

**'PATTERNS OF PIETY AND FAITH':  
THE ROLE OF THE PSALMS IN THE CONSTRUCTION  
OF THE EXEMPLARY RENAISSANCE WOMAN.**

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## ABSTRACT

Whilst recent feminist criticism has established the importance of 'scripture' in the depiction of the exemplary Renaissance woman, my thesis seeks to refine this broad claim and therefore examines the significance of one particular scriptural discourse, that of the psalms. The objectives of this thesis are twofold: firstly, to establish the specific importance of the psalms as a discourse peculiarly suitable for women during the Renaissance; and secondly, to thereby facilitate a recontextualisation of the critical terms in which Mary Sidney's Psalmes are discussed.

The introduction outlines the importance of the psalms within Protestant theology in Renaissance England and situates my own work within the existing critical debates. It discusses Renaissance attitudes to translation from the perspective of modern theories of language philosophy and underlines the crucial significance of the psalms in the construction of contemporary Protestants' subjectivity.

Having demonstrated the general cultural significance of the psalms, the first part of my thesis examines the specific importance of this discourse for women in a variety of texts delineating the exemplary Renaissance woman. Chapter one outlines women's roles as readers and patrons of the psalms: it contends that the number of psalm texts dedicated to women and the amount of psalm based material in devotional texts - which, theoretically at least, formed the limit of women's education and provided a framework for their daily activities - reveal the pivotal significance of the psalms as an appropriate discourse for specifically female use. Chapter two focuses on Thomas Bentley's The Monument of Matrones. This text epitomises the variety of ways in which the psalms were appropriated in the construction of the exemplary woman in both writing for women (Theodore de Beze) and in writing by women (Elizabeth Tyrwhitt/Frances Abergavenny). Chapter three examines the way in which the speaking, singing and writing of the psalms were equated with exemplary female identity in biographies, funeral sermons and autobiographies.

The second part of the thesis focuses upon Mary Sidney, Countess of Pembroke, assessing the significance of the psalms in the production of her exemplary status. Chapter four examines the gendered assumptions implicit in modern critical accounts of Mary Sidney's writing. It then discusses the extent to which the dedicatory texts which represent her as exemplary, are premised upon her Psalmes. Chapter five explores the 'femininity' of the art of translation. By means of a detailed critical analysis of Mary Sidney's translations and with reference to the theoretical models established in the introduction, this chapter examines the difficulties of identifying her 'own' voice within her Psalmes.

By examining the cultural significance of the psalms for Protestantism in general and for Protestant women in particular, this thesis demonstrates that it is possible to relocate Mary Sidney's Psalmes within a 'female literary tradition'. The issues covered in this thesis have implications for other areas of Renaissance study; firstly, a reappraisal of the 'femininity' and 'marginality' of the art of translation; and secondly, a re-evaluation of the workings of confessional discourse in the representation of the female penitent. The complexities of the latter reveal the contradictions inherent in the production of the dominant image of the exemplary Renaissance woman as 'chaste, silent and obedient'.

FOR MUM AND DAD, WITH LOVE AND THANKS

FOR YOUR CONTINUAL SUPPORT

AND ENCOURAGEMENT.

## PREFACE

This thesis commenced as a study of the politics of Renaissance psalm translation. During the process of research, however, my focus altered and my main concern became an exploration of the pivotal significance of the psalms in texts delineating the 'exemplary woman' during this period. Consequently, rather than analysing inter-lingual psalm translations, I have concentrated upon cultural appropriations of psalmic discourse in texts both for and by women written in English. However, whilst translation is not my primary concern, the increased availability of vernacular psalms affected the way in which women were encouraged to use them. As a result, the thesis commences with a survey of the importance of the art of psalm translation in the Renaissance in order to illustrate their influence upon the construction of Protestant subjectivity generally and, thus, to contextualise my discussion of the specific importance of this discourse for women. The majority of texts I am considering are 'composite' psalms: that is, a melange of psalm quotations reworked to suit the particular writer's needs. As a result, although this was not my initial intention, I have been drawn into editorial work, particularly in regard to the texts from Thomas Bentley's The Monument of Matrones and women's diaries. For the purposes of this thesis, I have provided the psalm references for the extracts I have quoted with the aid of Cruden's Concordance. Consequently, unless otherwise stated, the psalm references provided are to a modern edition of the Authorised Version of the Bible. This is problematic in that most of these writers would have used either the Wycliffe, the Coverdale, or the Geneva Bible. However, it is outside the scope

of this thesis to provide a full edition of these texts and I see this as forming part of my future work on this topic. In the case of Mary Sidney, I have drawn upon the Geneva Bible and Calvin's commentaries as Gary F. Waller (who has edited Mary Sidney's writing) suggests that these texts influenced the Countess's translations.

I have followed the M.H.R.A guidelines in quoting texts from the sixteenth-century and seventeenth-century. Consequently, I have made the following alterations: 'u' and 'v', and 'i' and 'j' are substituted according to modern usage, the long 'ſ' is represented by 's', '/' have been altered to commas, and abbreviations ('y<sup>t</sup>' or 'commēd') have been extended. Footnotes appear as endnotes to each chapter and the first reference to a particular text gives full bibliographical details. Subsequent references give author, date and page number. Where one text is discussed in detail the first reference is given in full and further references to that edition are given after quotations in the main text. Early texts were printed in London and references are to the first edition unless otherwise stated.

This thesis is entirely my own work, but I would like to thank my supervisors - Professor Jonathan Bate and Professor Helen Wilcox - for their comments and criticisms over the past four years which have enabled me to develop my ideas. I would also like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the support of my female contemporaries at Liverpool University and, in particular, Melanie Hansen whose friendship and encouragement has sustained me in times of doubt.

**INTRODUCTION. PSALM TRANSLATION IN THE RENAISSANCE:**

**THEORETICAL APPROACHES.**

This opening chapter aims to outline my theoretical approach to the subject of psalm translation in the Renaissance. My work on this topic has been heavily influenced by the approaches to language philosophy delineated by theorists such as Bakhtin and Foucault which form the basis for my own analysis, even when not explicitly stated.<sup>1</sup> Whilst such an approach could be construed as historically anachronistic, these theories have been established as appropriate for analysing Renaissance texts by a wide number of contemporary critics - particularly by those involved with new historicist, cultural materialist and feminist critical approaches.<sup>2</sup> Whilst there have been other studies of sixteenth-century psalms, this work has tended to examine the numerous translations either as part of the development of literary forms, as part of the 'meditative' tradition, or more recently as of political importance.<sup>3</sup> These texts have been invaluable to my own research, but they have left a gap which I will be examining; that is, although they have remarked on the enormous increase of psalm translations and their importance to Protestantism, they have not explored the role which the psalms played in the social construction of gender. My own concern, then, is to explore the way in which the psalms represented a peculiarly appropriate form of expression for women in the Renaissance. This raises the question of why the psalms as a particular discourse should be so appropriate for women, and what this reveals about the power of this discourse to 'include' or 'exclude' certain groups through social hierarchies in discourse.<sup>4</sup> I am particularly interested in the role that the psalms played in contemporary constructions of the 'exemplary' woman and what this signifies about Renaissance attitudes to 'woman's'

relationship to 'language'.<sup>5</sup> Prior to examining the role of the psalms for women specifically, I will therefore outline modern theories about the construction of the subject in language and then contextualise my discussion by exploring the general cultural significance of the psalms in the Renaissance.

## 1. LANGUAGE PHILOSOPHY AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE SUBJECT.

The nature of the relationship between 'language' and 'reality' is that which forms the basis of the historical debate about how our linguistic communication system works. Broadly speaking, this debate centres on the discussion of whether language constitutes reality, or whether language merely reflects a pre-existing reality; that is, whether language 'speaks' and therefore controls us, or alternatively whether we 'speak' and therefore control it.<sup>6</sup> Modern theorists' position in this debate is dependent upon their perception of the nature of the relationship between the signifier, the signified, the speaker/writer, the addressee, and the social/historical environment in which the utterance occurs.

However, the biblical model of language theory is rather different. There the representation of language philosophy attempts to establish a direct connection between the signifier and the signified. In Genesis there is deemed to be an almost magical correlation between the signifier and the signified whereby the former produces reality, for example, 'And God said, Let there be light: and there was light'.<sup>7</sup> Throughout the first chapter of Genesis, it is God's speech which produces or constitutes the world and, indeed, the subject as the first version of the creation of 'man' is also the result of God's speech.<sup>8</sup> The relationship between

word and object is singular and absolute, making it a prime example of Bakhtin's 'authoritative' and 'monologic' discourse.<sup>9</sup> At this stage one concept has one name for, theoretically at least, only one language exists; in biblical terms the division of languages occurs at the Tower of Babel.<sup>10</sup> Initially, language produces reality as God speaks the world into existence and the ability to constitute reality through language is then appropriated by Adam in the naming of the animals and of Eve.<sup>11</sup> This idyllic representation of prelapsarian linguistic communication is commonly referred to by Renaissance writers as an ideal to be strived for, but also one which is acknowledged to be problematic in a post-lapsarian society.<sup>12</sup> The desire to return to a primaeval correlation between words and things is of paramount importance for theories concerning the translation of God's word; especially, perhaps, for the Protestant/Puritan concern with speaking only God's word, which required translations that were as 'literal' as possible. God's and Adam's expressions as represented in Genesis occurred in a finite social environment, permitting at least a theoretical conjunction of signifier and signified.<sup>13</sup> However, the development of more complex social structures and the recognition of a variety of languages required a more complex analysis of the operation of language and the construction of meaning. This complexity is revealed in both inter-linguistic and intra-linguistic expression and the ensuing appreciation of the 'gap' between signifier and signified is most definitely apparent in Renaissance writing.<sup>14</sup>

Recent studies of socio-linguistics have revealed how many different factors which affect our social identity are reflected in our speech, or discourse; similar differences are also represented in Renaissance discourses.<sup>15</sup> The language an individual uses is marked

in such a way as to reveal the influences of such factors as gender, age, class, education, geographical location, job and interests upon that individual; this plethora of different discourses, according to some theories of language, are those which constitute the individual. The traces of these influences can be quite consciously manipulated by an individual speaker/writer, but they can also be 'unconscious' markers of a particular ideological viewpoint.<sup>16</sup> Studies of this kind illustrate that language, although it can be used both to conceal and reveal different viewpoints, is never a neutral medium. The differences and demarcations in 'language' are both an indication of a 'living' language and a constant reminder of the social hierarchies which 'language' plays a role in perpetuating. This point is explicated by Bakhtin: 'At any given moment ... a language is stratified not only into dialects in the strict sense of the word [but is] stratified as well into languages that are socio-ideological: languages belonging to professions, to genres, languages peculiar to particular generations etc'.<sup>17</sup> Bakhtin and Foucault have examined the implications of this approach or understanding of 'language' in relation to the twentieth century, but this also has implications for the hierarchy within 'language' in Renaissance England. The late Tudor period was prior to the 'standardisation' of the English language which can be dated as commencing officially with the Royal Society.<sup>18</sup> Literature of the period demonstrates an intense awareness of the social differences as marked in linguistic usage, for example, the difference perceived between courtly and 'country' language. Renaissance England, particularly for the noble classes, was effectively a multi-lingual society; the English vernacular was only just beginning to be seen as an accepted discourse and the nobility were expected to write and speak French, Latin and Italian.

Even women of these classes were known to have been educated in these languages, although it would be true to say that men were more consistently educated in these tongues. So knowledge of both the vernacular and other languages was not only an indication of education but also of social position and of gender difference.<sup>19</sup>

In the aftermath of the Reformation, Counter-Reformation and the establishment of Protestantism, religious discourses in the late Tudor period were a particularly highly charged linguistic indicator of social identity.<sup>20</sup> With their emphasis upon the 'Word' of God, Protestant and Puritan religious practices placed an unprecedented significance upon the use of that word for reconstructing the self. In William Cowper's The anatomie of a christian man, for example, the Christian's body is identified by scriptural quotations and the believer is admonished to speak only God's word in order to identify themselves as a true believer.<sup>21</sup> John Boys indicates how being able to speak God's word reconstitutes the believer's actions:

If wee can once truely professe with the Psalmist, O  
God, my heart is ready, my heart is ready; praise the  
Lord, O my soule, & c. Then all that is either without  
us, or about us, instantly will do the same. Then our  
feete will bee ready to runne in his waies; our eyes  
readie to waite upon his will; our eares ready to heare  
his word; our hands ready to doe his worke. (22)

Many Protestant treatises of this period stress the necessity for a Christian's heart, mind, word and actions to be synonymous. If any gap between them could be perceived, then the 'truth' of any one of these factors was brought into question. Although assuming a new discourse was an indicator of a change in one's identity, in order for this to be verified it had to effect a change in action; as Miles Coverdale outlines in the prologue to his translation of the Bible: 'who so ever thou be, take these wordes of scrypture in to thy hart, and be not onely an outwarde hearer, but a doer thereafter, and

practyse thyselfe therin'.<sup>23</sup> Changing one's language might not, after all, actually alter one's identity as represented in action; which returns us to the question of whether an individual is constructed by discourse or whether the individual alters that discourse by speaking it in a new context.

The opposition between these two polarities can be questioned by approaching these texts with Volosinov's philosophy of language in mind. To some extent his theory of language does suggest that language is constitutive of reality, but as he is intensely aware of diachronic developments in language his theory acknowledges that although expression organises experience, there is also room for experience to alter expression. For Volosinov neither expression nor experience is static, nor are they in a consistent opposition to each other. The speaker enters a pre-existent system, but it is one which s/he is capable of influencing. Meaning, or comprehensibility, resides not solely in the language but also within the community which uses those expressions; in other words, the relationship between language, society and the individual is a dynamic process. Consequently, as Raymond Williams articulates it, 'any real theory of communication is a theory of community'.<sup>24</sup> This model of language is very valuable in the discussion of translation. Translation, after all, necessitates an awareness of difference between various cultures or generations, both in their perception of the world and their expression of it.<sup>25</sup> For translation is not only the transferral of words from one language to another; it is also the transferral of different concepts between different cultures and/or generations, which often requires an alteration not only of the specific words used, but also the form of expression.<sup>26</sup>

## 2. LANGUAGE PHILOSOPHY AND TRANSLATION.

Translation necessarily questions the stable relationship between the signifier and the signified as it highlights cross-cultural and, often, trans-historical alterations. This could also be viewed as illustrating processes which occur within any form of communication but which usually remain unacknowledged; in effect, translation could be said to 'lay bare' the devices and conventions upon which any form of communication depends. In this way a translator is actively engaged in questioning the relationship between language and reality, as s/he seeks to make one language or world view comprehensible to those who do not belong to that group. Translation theory is currently being re-evaluated and encompasses a wide variety of critical approaches to the translator's task.<sup>27</sup> From a different perspective, similar theoretical implications of translation were also discussed by many authors in the Renaissance. Their concerns centred on the need to revitalise the English language, together with the desire to promote understanding of reformist theology, and consequently they were acutely aware of the problems associated with translating the Bible into vernacular English. Numerous translators of this period participate in the intense debate which surrounded these issues, as F.R. Amos's survey indicates.<sup>28</sup> Her book is most useful for sources of information rather than for her own argument, although the latter is interesting primarily for the way in which she reveals contradictory approaches to the way in which language functions.<sup>29</sup> Amos represents the Medieval translator as having to struggle with question of the validity of either word-for-word or sense-for-sense translations. The dichotomy between these two approaches is associated with the

question of 'literal' or 'metaphorical' interpretative strategies and is linked to Medieval debates about levels of scriptural interpretation.<sup>30</sup>

Amos discusses a whole variety of approaches to the problem of translation in the early modern period. Proponents of the 'word-for-word' approach to translation include St. Jerome who wrote that 'in the case of the Holy Scriptures ... even the order of the words is a mystery,' and importantly a mystery which ought not to be tampered with. To alter God's word was tantamount to heresy. Thomas Norton displays a similar reticence about altering meaning in the process of translating Calvin's Institution of Christian Religion: 'I durst not presume to warrent myself to have his meaning without his words'.<sup>31</sup> In contrast to this Richard Knowlles and William Fulke indicate that the most important aspect of translation is not so much the words themselves as the 'sense' or 'meaning' which they convey; the translator seeks in the prior text: 'the true sense and meaning of the author, rather than precisely following the strict rules of a nice translator, in observing the very words of the author'.<sup>32</sup> And Fulke recognised that an alteration of language requires an alteration of expression: 'to translate precisely out of the Hebrew is not to observe the number of words, but the perfect sense and meaning, as the phrase of our tongue will serve to be understood'.<sup>33</sup> Here, then, the emphasis falls not upon the words themselves, but the sense which they convey. There is a tacit recognition that different languages articulate the world through different categories and that an ostensible change in the form of expression need not drastically alter the 'meaning'.

Although they were translating very different texts, Knowlles and Fulke illustrate a similar concern with the relationship between

the influences of culture and custom, and their effect upon linguistic usage and the construction of meaning. They recognise the linguistic shifts which occur in inter-lingual translation. However, some writers felt that there were difficulties with this approach; for example, Sir Thomas More criticized Tyndale for erasing history from his translation:

And I say that this common custom and usage of speech is the only thing by which we know the right and proper signification of any word, in so much that if a word were taken out of Latin, French or Spanish, and were for lack of understanding of the tongue from whence it came, used for another thing in English than it was in the former tongue: then signifieth it in England none other thing than as we use it and understand thereby, whatsoever it signifieth anywhere-else. (34)

More recognises here the importance of contextual application of words and usage as the process whereby meaning is established. He is suggesting that 'lack of understanding' could drastically alter the 'original' meaning, as the words become subject to the rules of meaning ascribed to them in English 'whatsoever [they] signifieth elsewhere'. Changing words indiscriminately could create a new meaning altogether.

This criticism did not go unheeded, and led to the production of a number of other Bibles in vernacular English. In the preface to the Geneva Bible, the translators state that although others have translated the Bible their version is necessary: 'yet considering the infancie of those tymes and imperfect knollage of the tongues, in respect of this ripe age and cleare light which God hath now reveiled, the translations required greatly to be perused and reformed'.<sup>35</sup> This statement is both a defence of their translation from Catholic criticism of the number of Protestant versions of the Bible, and plays its part in the defence of the Bible being translated into English at all. In 1535, Coverdale had also addressed

these issues, arguing that:

seying then that this diligent exercyse of translatyng doth so much good & edifyeth in other languages, why shulde it do evell in oures? ... Wherefore me thynke we have great occasyon to geve thankes unto God, that he hath opened unto his churche the gyfte of interpretacion and of pryntyng, & that ther are now at this tyme so many, which with suche diligence and faythfulness interprete the scrypture to the honoure of God & edifyenge of his people. (36)

In these cases translating the Bible into English seems to be a case of making the Bible synonomous with English ways of thinking; the words then signify only what the English allows them to. Thus the 'Word of God' is shaped by the language, or discourse, in which it is expressed - specifically here, the English vernacular. In the sense that using the vernacular meant that 'ordinary' people were less subject to earthly hierarchies both in linguistic form and in the fact that they had potentially their own access to God's word, this was advantageous. According to Greenblatt the appearance of English Bibles represented the 'repossession of God's word by the Christian people. The vernacular wrests the Bible from the hands of the priests, and the printing press assures that this liberation of the word is irreversible'. Translation therefore represented:

not the imposition of an intermediary between God's word and man but just the opposite - the tearing aside of a veil of deceit in order to present the text in full immediacy. If God's word was to be experienced by more than a handful of clerks as an unmediated address to the soul, then the language of the Bible could only be the vernacular. Even for a man well trained in Latin, the English Scriptures spoke to the heart in a way the Vulgate never could; the vernacular was the unself-conscious language of the inner man. (37)

The language used to represent God seemed natural and consequently the ensuing representations appeared to be truthful. The language of the soul is seen to be synonymous with the vernacular language of that society to which the individual believer belongs, or as Rossi-Landi and Pesari suggest 'our native tongue seems to be identical

with language, our way of thinking with thought'.<sup>38</sup> The mystical nature of God somehow becomes naturalised within our own language, and the soul is constituted by that language.

However, even the desire to translate the Bible into the 'vernacular' conceals many problems. Amos describes how some translators, who were supposed to be translating the Bible into the vernacular, admit 'that they are employing unfamiliar words, [saying] that it is a question of faithfulness to originals, and that the new words will easily grow to be current and familiar'.<sup>39</sup> This illustrates a desire not to reflect the existing vernacular, but rather to shape it. The next quotation illustrates precisely the differences which exist between speakers of the 'same language'. Here there is an acknowledgement that these terms will not become the peoples' 'own' and, therefore, that the 'nobles' should communicate to them in a way which they will understand: 'we are not Lords of the common speech of men for if we were, we would teach them to use their terms more properly; but seeing as we cannot change the use of speech, we follow Aristotle's council, which is to speak and use words as the common people useth'.<sup>40</sup> Those in 'higher' positions can alternate between different levels of discourse; whereas the 'common people' cannot. Fulke recognises the diversity of language, but there is an assumption that the higher level is somehow better: it uses its terms more properly than the 'common people'.

Here there seems to be a tacit recognition that, as Bakhtin illustrates 'a unitary language is not something that is given, but is in its very essence something which must be posited'.<sup>41</sup> Such a language strives to be that which 'all' must or ought to speak, but it necessarily ignores the fact that there are wide differences between speakers of even the apparently 'same' language. This

political divergence amongst speakers of the same language is witnessed not only in the content but also in the form of the writing. George Puttenham, for example, acknowledges that certain modes of expression were more relevant to some situations than others, that the terms had to be seen to benefit the topic: 'in speaking or writing of a prince's affairs and fortunes there is a certain decorum, that we may not use the same terms in their business as we might very well do in a meaner person's, the case being all one, such reverence is due to their estates'.<sup>42</sup> Political differences in discourse are also linked to questions about the degree of alteration that can be incurred. In contrast to this the Douay-Rheims translators argued that such a concern was unnecessary for 'why should we be squamish at new words or phrases in scripture, which are necessary: when we do easily admit and follow new words coined in court and in courtly or other secular writings'.<sup>43</sup>

This lack of concern about the inter-action between courtly codes of expression and biblical language would be anathema to proponents of the necessity of literal translation such as Tyndale, who professed that the Bible was easy to understand as 'its meaning lies directly in front of us, [and that] competing interpretations are perverse mystifications'. Tyndale also advised readers to avoid 'looking behind the words of the scripture for some hidden, mystical meaning'.<sup>44</sup> Yet Tyndale does recognise the various layers of meaning that can be ascribed to the same word in different contexts, but he tries to mitigate the importance of such differences, and advises the reader that '[he] should concern himself less with the ultimate abstract significance of a word than with its function in a particular, highly specific context.' 'A serpent figureth Christ in one place, and the devil in another; and a lion doth likewise'. The

meaning of key words is established not by institutional definition but by a reader's grasp of context: 'if this word congregation were a more general term than this word church, it hurteth not, for the circumstance doth ever declare what thing is meant thereby'.<sup>45</sup> This makes the reading of the Bible appear to be an unproblematic affair, and is perhaps based on the notion that as God's holy spirit would guide reader's interpretations only one meaning would evolve as the 'true' one. It also underestimates the political and religious significance of using the word 'congregation': the translators of the Authorised Version, for example, point out that this word had specific associations with extreme Puritanism.<sup>46</sup>

This approach indicates a very limited notion of 'truth' and conflicts with other contemporary Renaissance writers' recognition of the inadequacies of language; more precisely, the recognition that no one form of expression could include the whole variety of meanings that were possible. George Joye, for example, instructs the reader not 'to depend not whole[ly] on any man's translation'.<sup>47</sup> Coverdale also recognises the value of looking at more than one translation because of the differences rather than the similarities: 'for that one interpreteth something obscurely in one place, the same translateth another, or else he himself, more manifestly by a more plain vocable'.<sup>48</sup> Communal translation, or the simultaneous co-existence of a variety of translations, is declared by Coverdale to be an advantage rather than a threat to the stability of God's word. The plurality of meanings, or different representations of the same event did not obscure the 'truth' but clarified it. An interesting example of an individual polyvalent signifier is, in fact, Christ himself. In John's gospel Christ is equated with 'the Word,' he is the Word made flesh - God incarnate.<sup>49</sup> He is the single

representation of God. However, just as any individual has various aspects to their personality, so too does Christ. He is after all represented in many different ways throughout the Bible: Shepherd, Lamb, Lord, Lion, King, Judge are but a few examples. However, the New Testament also proclaims Christ to be the archetypal example of a static signifier: 'Jesus Christ; the same yesterday, and today, and forever' who also represented 'the Way, the Truth and the Life'.<sup>50</sup> Christ himself may be perceived as the embodiment of truth, but the variety of attempts to represent him seems to indicate that that Truth is not easily reducible.

The proliferation of representations of Christ is one example of the difficulties of translation. It seeks to convey a truth (especially as regards to the Bible), yet for there to be any real concept of what truth is there needs to be some sort of control over the way in which Christ was represented. In order to construct meaning there needs to be some notion of boundaries or context, or else the concept of 'meaning' in fact becomes meaningless. Calvin was acutely aware of this difficulty, so too was Thomas Cromwell: 'the frailty of man is such that the diversity thereof may breed and bring forth manyfold inconveniences as when wilful and heady folks shall centre upon the diversity of the said translations'.<sup>51</sup> There is an inherent threat to order as the theory of one authoritative interpretation is undermined. This has political as well as religious consequences, as the translation of the Bible itself was intricately connected with the political organisation of England. Henry VIII, for example, issued the following proclamation:

any books of divine scripture in the English tongue,  
with any additions in the margin or any prologue ...  
except the same be first viewed, examined, and allowed  
by the King's highness, or such of his majesty's coun-  
cil, or others, as it shall please his grace to assign  
thereto, but only the plain sentence and text. (52)

Henry's own censuring of the Wycliffe Bible underlines the political attempt to control religious discourses, particularly if they involved a commentary not acceptable to the reigning monarch.

For, although the Bible was the crucial 'authoritative' text forming the basis of any discussion of a wide variety of issues, its very applicability to a wide number of positions - depending on the reader's point of view - led to a desire for political control of biblical interpretation. The attempt to 'standardise' biblical interpretation can, perhaps, best be seen in the imposition of The Book of Homilies.<sup>53</sup> Somewhat paradoxically, and in opposition to the belief that God's spirit would guide all readers to the same interpretation of his word, the Protestant and Puritan emphasis upon individual reading and application of the Bible led to a proliferation of interpretations. Elizabeth I was not the first monarch to introduce central control of biblical interpretation through the Homilies but it was a tradition which she sought to maintain. Biblical language, and more particularly for this thesis, the specific discourse of the psalms in the late Tudor period, represented an attempt to standardise both language and the individual's self perception.

The need to standardise the Bible is perhaps most keenly exemplified by the Authorised Version, or 'King James's Bible'. The translators make their project sound like an academic, and therefore in some way disinterested, concern:

We have not tied ourselves to an uniformity of phrasing, or to an identity of words, as some peradventure would wish that we had done ... Truly, that we might not vary from the sense of that which we had translated before, if the word signified the same in both places (for there be some words that be not of the same sense everywhere) we were especially careful, and made a conscience according to our duty. (54)

They continue by arguing for liberty in translation: 'is the kingdom

of God become words, or syllables? Why should we be in bondage to them if we may be free, use one precisely when we may use another no less fit, as commodiously?'<sup>55</sup> Both of these quotations display a singular lack of regard for the particular words used, assuming that meaning is separated from the actual expression, and preferring to emphasise the importance of the contextual establishment of meaning.

The translators of the A.V. represented themselves as steering a middle course between the extremities of Catholicism and Puritanism, but rather than illustrating their neutrality, as the quotation below exhibits, they were firmly identified with the political authority of the King:

we hold it our duty to offer it to your Majesty, not only as to our King and Sovereign, but as to the principle Mover and Author of this work: humbly craving of Your most Sacred Majesty, that since things of this quality have ever been subject to censures of illmeaning and discontented persons, it may receive approbation and patronage from so learned and judicious a Prince as Your Highness is, whose allowance and acceptance of our labours shall more honour and encourage us, than all the culumnations and hard interpretations of other men shall dismay us. (56)

The translators humble themselves before the King, who is here equated with God or is at least represented within the same type of terminology. It is his authority that gives their work credibility, as opposed to the Genevan translators' insistence on the guidance of the Holy Spirit which is a direct source of inspiration from God. Those who offer alternative viewpoints are presented as 'illmeaning and discontented persons': a threat to the social order. What we can see here, I would suggest, is not the rational voice of the 'middle ground', but rather an attempt by those in powerful positions to consolidate that power by discrediting their opposition. It indicates a desire to repress opposition, illustrating Jameson's suggestion that 'the master code of any interpretative method is the ideology it

seeks to perpetuate'.<sup>57</sup> The aforementioned translators write the 'truth' as their King would like it, as far as is possible. Consequently it is important when looking at translation, to consider who the text was written by, for whom it was written, when it was written, and what significance there is in the choice of text. For as Macheray observed: 'the conditions that determine the production of the book also determine the forms of its communication'.<sup>58</sup>

By contrast Calvin claims to be writing under the influence of previous biblical commentators and translators, in order to get as close as possible to the 'truth'. Rather than relying solely on his own interpretation, Calvin seeks help from others in order to establish the 'truth' of God's word:

In the doing hereof I did not only trust my own wit or ability, but examined my whole doing from sentence to sentence throughout the whole book with conference and overlooking of such learned men, as my translation being allowed by their judgement, I did both satisfy my own conscience that I had done truly, and their approving of it might be a good warrent to the reader that nothing should have been delivered to him but sound, unmingled and uncorrupted doctrine, even in such sort as the author himself had first framed it. (59)

This attempt to deflect responsibility from one individual author is perhaps useful, but Calvin is unwittingly acknowledging the influence of a translator over his text whilst simultaneously denying the translator's role in the production of meaning, for this translation is even as 'the author himself had first framed it'. In the above model of translation it is God who controls the language, rather than the earthly translators. This is established by means of the Holy Spirit, whereby there is a direct link with God, and the human self disappears. When the translator is convinced that s/he represents the Holy Spirit the words used become insignificant; for they do not represent that speaker, but God; 'An for my part I ensure thee I am

indifferent to call it as well with one term as with the other, so long as I know that it is no prejudice nor injury to the meaning of the Holy Ghost'.<sup>60</sup> In relation to the translation of the Bible it was seen as important that the translator should in some way be negated and written out of their own text; in order that God could be represented objectively the writer must relinquish his/her own agency: 'respect for the original made the translator merely a mouthpiece and the English language merely a medium for a divine utterance'.<sup>61</sup>

It also suggests that the words do not matter that much as long as your reading, and their conception, is informed by the Holy Spirit: the Genevan translators' claim that 'God is our witness that we have by all means endeavored to set forth the puritie of the worde and right sense of the holy Ghost'.<sup>62</sup> The translators' language reflects the 'other world' (that is, heaven), and they assume that this makes their language in some way distinct from the political use of language in this earthly world. However it does matter what words are used, and they are of a political nature - even if they are political only in their desire to try and separate religion and politics. They still do have their own way of perceiving and representing the world: no matter how politically neutral they may think their language is it, perhaps unconsciously on their own part, does reflect their attitude to social/political/religious relations. By way of contrast, Miles Coverdale consciously alters his terminology as he demonstrates his awareness of the political nature of the terms penance and repentance:

And this maner have I used in my translacyon, callinge it in some place pennaunce, that in another place I call repentaunce, and that not onely because the interpreters have done so before me, but that the adversaries of the trueth may see how that we abhorre not this worde pennaunce (as they untruly reporte of us). (63)

In this example two words become the focus of ideological differences which Coverdale seeks to erase but has to admit are there. He also continues by explaining the difference between Catholic and Protestant beliefs about 'repentance' thereby substantiating Bahktin's claim that 'images of languages are inseparable from images of various world views and from the living beings who are their agents - people who think, talk, and act in a setting that is socially and historically concrete'.<sup>64</sup> The characterisation of translation as a submissive, passive and self-abnegating activity could partially explain why it was thought to be a fitting task for a woman.<sup>65</sup> However, translation was also an important part of men's education, particularly for their training in rhetorical strategies. Before condemning women to the margins of discourse in the art of translation a revaluation of translation is necessary; for, as Susan Bassnett-McGuire suggests, translation 'was by no means a secondary activity, but a primary one, exerting a shaping force on the intellectual life of the age'.<sup>66</sup>

### 3. LANGUAGE PHILOSOPHY, PSALM TRANSLATION AND THE CONSTITUTION OF THE SUBJECT.

Commencing her study of sixteenth-century psalm translations, Rivkah Zim asserts that the psalms represented a 'mirror of mankind's spiritual existence'. The psalms were also 'regarded as authoritative and eloquent texts, and were used to enrich the spiritual life of all Christians'.<sup>67</sup> This is a point on which all modern critics (as well as Renaissance commentators and translators) seem to agree. The wealth of material culled from prefaces, sermons, treatises and commentaries reveals the pivotal significance of the psalms during

this period; particularly their significance in providing a language for the individual in relation to God, as Anthony Gilby put it: 'whereas al other scriptures do teach us what God saith unto us, these praiers ... do teach us, what we shall saie unto God'.<sup>68</sup> The psalms in mirroring the believer's 'spiritual existence' and teaching them what to 'saie unto God' provided a discourse through which the individuals recognised themselves and which they could use as individuals to address God. According to Calvin the psalms represented "'An Anatomy of all the Parts of the Soul;" for there is not an emotion of which anyone can be conscious that is not here represented as in a mirror'.<sup>69</sup> The psalms draw each individual to 'the examination of himself in particular', preventing the reader from hiding from 'that most baneful infection, hypocrisy'. Calvin goes so far as to suggest that 'there is no other booke in which we are more perfectly taught the right manner of praising God, or in which we are more powerfully stirred up to the performance of this religious exercise'.<sup>70</sup>

In addition to their relevance to each particular believer, the psalms were also an important part of the church service, to be used in a public and communal setting. The Book of Common Prayer (1559) laid down the order of services which set a pattern whereby the New Testament was to be read through three times a year, the Old Testament once a year and the psalms to be read through every month.<sup>71</sup> Consequently the psalms were the part of the Bible most frequently read and repeated in liturgical use. As T.R. Wright has observed such 'routine ritual repetition' is the means by which 'the church as a whole preserves its identity'.<sup>72</sup> In this frequent repetition of the psalms the believer was both constituted as an individual, learning how to express him or herself to God, and

assimilated into a community which also used that discourse. One historian suggests that in parish churches in the 1550's: 'there was no music at all except the singing of metrical psalms according to the fashion popularised by Calvin at Geneva; together with psalm-singing, the bulk of the time in worship would be taken up by the sermon'.<sup>73</sup> Here, MacCulloch highlights the centrality of the psalms to Protestant services and their connection with the preaching of the word, perhaps signifying the typological connection between David and Christ.<sup>74</sup> The use of the psalms in public worship, the emphasis upon them for private use, the wealth of material concerning their use and interpretation, and the sheer volume of translations during the Renaissance suggest that they were a discourse which was 'open to all'. In conjunction with all this, the embedded use of the psalms in many other discourses suggests that they were widely used, although as Alan Sinfield points out this may not necessarily have been the case.<sup>75</sup> In this section I want to examine the significance of the psalms in the construction of the Christian subject, and the importance of contemporary attitudes to translation, especially poetic translation, to set up the context in which to discuss what the implications might be for a female translator (or a specifically female use) of the psalms during this period.

In her survey of Tudor devotional literature, Helen C. White examines the inter-section between public and private aspects of devotion and suggests that the books of private devotion 'violate the sanctities of private prayer' by their 'conscious effort to direct and guide private devotions into acceptable channels'.<sup>76</sup> Although she emphasises the influence of the Primer, White also stresses the role of the Psalter as the 'quarry out of which personal piety might supplement the prescribed prayers for the morning and evening

devotions'.<sup>77</sup> Here there is a recognition of the need to supplement prescribed public devotions to suit the needs of personal piety, but as White has already acknowledged, the institution of printed books establishing a pattern for private devotion makes even that private devotion a communal affair. This connection is also illustrated in the preface to the ubiquitous Sternhold and Hopkins Psalter, where the psalms are described as being:

newly set forth and allowed to be song in all churches, of all the people together, before and after morning and evening prayer: as also before and after the sermon, and moreover in private houses, for their godly solace and comfort, laying aparte all ungodly songes and ballardes, which tend onely to the nourishyng of vice, and corrupting of youth.(78)

Here, a text which was designed for church use is also claiming a position of authority for use in private devotion. The psalmist's and the commentators' instruction that the Word of God must be meditated upon day and night breaks down any opposition between the public and the private by encouraging individuals to use the same version in both spheres. The wide use of the psalms is commented upon by most critics and, in the following quotation by a disgruntled Catholic writer in the seventeenth century (itself much quoted), there is a testimony to this practice and the number of different people who engaged in it:

There is nothing that hath drawne the multitudes to be of their sects so much, as the singing of their Psalmes in such variable and delightful tunes: these the souldier singeth in warre, the artizans at their worke, wenches spinning and sewing, apprentices in their shoppes, and wayfaryng men in their travaile, little knowing (God wotte) what a serpent lyeth under these sweete flowers. (79)

This Catholic writer is lamenting the Protestant practice of public psalm singing from a doctrinal point of view, viewing them as being deceived by the 'sweete flowers' of poesie and music. Ironically, although this practice may have drawn believers to Protestantism and

Puritanism, there is another threat which they pose to the Queen.

This raises the question of the effects created by the psalms by virtue of their being poetic, and how this sacred poetry compares with contemporary secular poetry. Rivkah Zim resists the notion that the psalms replaced secular poetry by pointing out that many psalm translators also wrote secular poetry.<sup>80</sup> However, whilst this is true of the translators she concentrates upon, there are a number of references by commentators who display an explicit desire for the psalms to occupy this position, of which Miles Coverdale's argument is fairly typical:

O that men's lippes werè so opened, that theyr mouthes  
'myght shewe the prayse of God. Yee wolde God that oure  
mynstrels had none other thyng to play upon, nether  
oure carters and plow men other thyng to whistle upon,  
save Psalms, hymnes, and soch godly songes as David is  
occupied with all. (81)

In the seventeenth-century, George Wither hoped that his translation of the psalms might excuse his earlier secular poetry, and that other writers would imitate him in emulating David. In many texts David is held up as the exemplar whom all Christian poets ought to emulate - the most famous example being in Sidney's Apology for Poetry.<sup>82</sup> It was not, however, only the Psalms which presented the Christian writer with a sacred model, as Edward Leigh indicates: 'the book of Psalms, Job, and the Song of Moses, are the only pattern of true Poesie'.<sup>83</sup> In this association with the 'Word,' poetry could be re-evaluated and made productive by playing its part in leading both the author and the reader to virtue. In this psalm translation takes up a position in the development of what R.F. Jones calls 'The Eloquent Language' in which poetry played a significant part. Thomas Lodge, for example, claimed in 1593 that modern poets had 'brought the chaos of our tongue in frame'.<sup>84</sup> Poetry and particularly poetic translations played a significant role in revitalising the English

language. This development occurs concurrently with the establishment of Protestantism which makes the psalms an important part of developing an English identity and the English language. Simultaneously, the emphasis upon the English language widened access to biblical texts (one of the important foundations of the Reformation) and enabled a wider audience to reconstitute themselves within the specifically English 'Word' of God.<sup>85</sup> This promoted the process of self-identification with which the psalms were associated; as Coverdale writes in his preface to the psalms, 'may the Lorde': 'gyve thee grace so for to turne these songes of David, so to tempre them in thy understandyng & so to [n]ote them in thyne harte that thou also mayest be made a new David: a man accordyng unto the wyll of God'.<sup>86</sup>

Accordingly, Arthur Golding states that the most fitting form of expression for the psalms was poetry as they do not deal with 'facts' but rather with emotional outpourings to God, therefore poetry was declared to be the best way in which to represent the writer's feelings: 'for as much as it consisteth chiefly of prayer and thanksgiving ... and requireth rather an earnest and devout lifting up of the mind than a loud or curious utterance of the voice: there may be many imperfect sentences, many broken speeches, and many displaced words'.<sup>87</sup> This confusion is contrasted with the logical nature of other parts of the Bible:

for whereas the other parts of the Holy Writ (whether they be historical, moral, judicial, ceremonial or prophetic) do commonly set down their treatises in open and plain declaration: this part consisting of them all, wrappeth up things in types and figures, describing them under borrowed personages, and oftentimes winding in matters of prevention, speaking of things past as if they were in doing, and every man is made a betrayer of the secrets of his own heart. (88)

Here there is a correlation between the form of the words (broken

rather than full sentences) and the content (confusion/ emotion) and this is best expressed in the 'broken' form of language that we know as poetry. In the first quotation Golding makes a division between mind (thought) and voice (utterance). It is as if the displaced and broken words he speaks of should not be brought into speech, they must only exist in thought: in a way then the Psalms could be said to express what is inexpressible (unutterable). However the fact remains that these thoughts have been uttered which facilitates self-articulation and, consequently produces self-knowledge. This accords with the Protestant paradigm whereby 'the word of God teacheth ... us to know our selves'.<sup>89</sup> So far as the psalms were concerned, there was a growing recognition that the most apt way to translate them was in poetry, as 'the language of the Muses ... in which the Psalms were originally written, is not so properly expressed in the prose dialect as in verse'.<sup>90</sup>

This relates to the Bakhtinian notion of the word in constant flux, whose signifying power does not reside solely in the word but between words, speakers and generations. We need to understand the history of words to understand the way they can now be re-constituting our world; as Thomas Greene points out 'the poetic word achieves its brilliance against the background of a past which it needs in order to signify but which its own emergence is tendentiously and riskily shaping'.<sup>91</sup> This is a risk which biblical translators are taking and it is especially noticeable in the psalms. For in the psalms there is both a re-construction of the actual psalm, and an attempt to reconstruct the self in relation to it. By this I mean that in the expression of the psalm the author tries to represent his/her self to God within terms that are known to be acceptable because they are contained within the Bible. However at

the same time as trying to RE-present the self within sacred language, the present author also alters the language which is used: thus s/he re-shapes the means by which s/he addresses God. In the light of this it is interesting to distinguish between the language system of the psalms and the individual translations (or utterances) of them; this distinction offers a form of the Saussurian division between *langue* and *parole*. Although language always does, in one form or another, pre-exist the individual speaker, there is still the possibility for new expressions to evolve. At each new utterance the experience of the whole is unique, but never totally detached from that which has gone before: 'each cultural moment, each writer, each poem asks us to learn its tropes all over again and each learning is unique because each trope is unique'.<sup>92</sup> Such an approach to the question of meaning allows for a realisation of continuity in change, enabling us to communicate with the past and enhancing our present day communications.

Here a concept of rhetorical *imitatio* can be usefully applied to the psalms. As Nancy Streuver explains, 'rhetorical *imitatio*, with its concept of virtuosity as both a command of past techniques which possess continuous sanctions and a sensitivity to the unique demands of the present situation, provides a model of continuity in change'.<sup>93</sup> This is relevant to the almost timeless nature of the psalms, as they lend themselves to an awareness of their history but also an assumption of a universal need to communicate with God that can be made relevant to any given historical period. But the language used is also aware of its contemporary moment of utterance, as Greenblatt observes of Wyatt's translation of the penitential psalms: 'Wyatt does not give himself over entirely to the Word: theological self-fashioning - the power of the book over identity - cannot be

long separated from secular self-fashioning - the power of sexual and political struggles at court'.<sup>94</sup> Imitation is also an aspect of formulation, or to use Stephen Greenblatt's phrase 'Self-Fashioning'. This raises once more the question of whether language constitutes our social being, or whether the reverse is true. I mentioned above the idea that by entering into the pre-existent language of the Psalms the writer/reader can re-present his/her self to God in an acceptable language, and in a sense mould themselves into that image. Christ is the ultimate model for the believer and he is also, in a way, a text ('The Word') for the reader to imitate. The psalms are an ideal tool for trying to mould oneself to the image God desires, for the Psalms were ascribed to David who was a type for Christ and in addition to this they are a representation of every believer's relationship to God. In a manner of explication which is closely identifiable with that of Calvin's commentaries upon the psalms, John Donne suggests that 'in the booke of the Psalmes, every man may discern ... his own sinful inclinations expressed, and arme himself against himself'; similarly, George Wither argued that the the psalms were like a mirror: 'therein the Reader seeth as it were in a Glasse, the affections of his own heart discovered; and not only discovered but redressed also, if he will entertaine the graces that are thereby proffered unto him'.<sup>95</sup> Wither also suggests that the only language in which the believer can directly communicate with God is through using God's word, particularly the psalms. Wither's own psalm translations illustrate their effect upon both himself and his language; as does A preparation to the psalter, which closes with a poetic prayer composed of a number of psalm quotations.

This requirement to emulate the psalms, or to recognise oneself within the emotions expressed in the psalms, is based on the notion

of imitation or typology. Aristotle argued that 'imitation is natural to man from childhood ... he is the most imitative creature in the world, and learns at first by imitation'.<sup>96</sup> In this argument our identity is created in social relations with others; part of this fashioning of our identity is achieved by our hearing the stories which make the world intelligible to our parents, which they pass on to us which helps us to formulate ourselves. But one complication with this is outlined, rather pessimistically, by Ben Jonson: 'I have considered, our whole life is like a play: wherein every man forgetful of himself, is in travail with expression of another. Nay wee so insist on imitating others, as wee cannot (when it is necessary) returne to ourselves.'<sup>97</sup> But one of the driving forces of Christian imitation was precisely that the readers should not 'returne to ourselves'.

The process of imitation is not always conscious as we tend to assimilate ideas and regard them as natural. This is also a characteristic of translation, at least as Seneca the younger defines it. He suggests that: 'this is what our mind should do: it should hide away all the material by which it has been aided, and bring to light only what it has made of them ... I would have you resemble [the original] as a child resembles his father'.<sup>98</sup> This familial representation of the relationship between the original and the later text is quite appealing in some ways because it does not require an exact likeness between the two. Elsewhere imitation is represented as a form of 'digestion':

I have read Virgil, Horace, Livvy, Cicero, not once but a thousand times, not hastily but in repose, and I have pondered them with all the powers of my mind. I ate in the morning what I would digest in the evening; I swallowed as a boy what I would ruminate on as a man. These writings I have so thoroughly absorbed and fixed, not only in my memory but in my very marrow, these have become so much a part of myself, that even though I

should never read them again they would cling in my spirit, deep rooted in its inmost recesses. (99)

This is very similar to the notion that a believer must allow the Word of God to become a part of him/her: the act of reading is an act of becoming or self-fashioning. Rather as psalm 1 instructs readers, in a phrase constantly reiterated, to 'meditate on God's word day and night' so to is the process of imitation represented. This is very apt for the notion of emulating biblical models, especially David and Christ in theories of typology. It is more than this though, for the text must become part of the reader and must effect a change in the reader:

this is what we see nature doing in our own bodies without any labour on our own part; the food we have eaten, as long as it retains its original quality and floats in our stomachs as an undiluted mass, is a burden; but it passes into tissue and blood only when it has been changed from its original form. So it is with the food which nourishes our higher nature, - we should see to it that whatever we have absorbed should not be allowed to remain unchanged or it will have no part of us. We must digest it; otherwise it will merely enter the memory and not the reasoning power. (100)

Seneca uses our bodily needs as an analogy for our spiritual needs and this process is relevant to Protestant and Puritan theories of reading the Bible in the Renaissance.

Although the psalms relate to a specific speaker and his context, that is, David, they are also used as a representation of Christ and the individual believer. They are not only the presentation of an estranged and distanced speaker, but express the analogous exasperation of present day believers. This attitude towards the psalms was also in existence during the Renaissance, as Greenblatt indicates: 'the penitential psalms must be experienced as expressions of the reader's own consciousness: the distance between reader and text is effaced and the poems absorbed into the reader's inner life.'<sup>101</sup> Once more the reader, or translator, surrenders to

the text and supposedly allows the text (and God through the text) to reconstitute him/her. However it is not quite that straightforward, for while the reader or writer is expressing themselves to God they are also shaping the means by which they seek to represent themselves: they do not simply repeat the psalm, although this might be part of their activity, but also seek to make it relevant to them; they interpret or translate the psalms as well as trying to alter themselves.

The self becomes, in the extreme version, identical with the text; the two are indivisible. This is the standard to be aimed at, for to become one with the Word is to become one with Christ. There is a similar motivation behind the writing of Tyndale's text The Obedience of a Christian Man, of which Greenblatt observes that:

it is precisely designed to be absorbed: one should not in principle, be able to say where the book stops and identity begins. Thus absorption of the book at once provides a way of being in the world and shapes the reader's inner life; Christian obedience is simultaneously a form of action and an internal state. (102)

There is here no separation between the self and text, or rather it is this situation to which one should aspire. The inner life is synonymous with the external word. Or as Tyndale expresses elsewhere, like Calvin, Wither and others, a text, particularly the Bible, becomes self-referential to the reader and a consciousness of its application to the individual is emphasised for personal reading: 'as thou readest ... think that every syllable pertaineth to thine own self, and suck out the pith of the scripture and arm thyself against all assaults'.<sup>103</sup>

As I mentioned earlier, it is difficult to ascertain how far individuals allowed themselves to be altered by the biblical text and to what extent they actually alter the text on entering it. St. Augustine advises us to submit to the text completely, and allow God

to take control: 'Hands off yourself. Try to build up yourself and you build up a ruin'.<sup>104</sup> Here, individuality is passively acquired, for it was given to us before birth; which presents an image of God as sole determinator of our identity. Greenblatt illustrates the significance of the word fashioning by giving biblical examples, one of which is pertinent to my previous point: 'Did not one fashion us in the womb?' Here, individuals are allowed no agency, but must align themselves with a pre-existent order. In terms like this it is notable that God becomes synonymous with a fixed language that we must enter, as opposed to allowing us to formulate our own expressions. Tyndale describes the process here, and again the individual's agency is taken from him/her as the alteration is somehow done to the believer rather than in conjunction with the believer as the true Christian; 'feeleth ... him self ... altered and fashioned like unto Christ'.<sup>105</sup> All sense of self and meaning is given over to Christ. Individuality seems to be absorbed by and assimilated into the Church; or, put another way to emphasise the links with the previous discussion of imitation, the Church digests its followers as they digest the Bible and its doctrine.

The psalms represent a pre-existent symbolic order, into which the individual enters and against which s/he forms an identity. They represent a given, or acceptable, way of communicating with God, and a pattern of emotions which it is acceptable to experience. This experience is similar to that which Lacan describes as entry into the Symbolic Order, where individuals constitute themselves as such only through insertion into an already-existing symbolic order.<sup>106</sup> It is on entering this order that one becomes socialised, and entering the Psalms or using their language is to become part of, effectively, another World; it is to enter the language and society of God.

Possibly an attraction of the psalms was their ability to articulate the alteration of the self from a state of sinfulness and separation from God into a state of grace: the translation from doubt to faith. The choice of psalm though can be significant, as it indicates both the writers' attitude to God and also their perception of God's attitude towards either themselves or their society. Greenblatt's examination of Sir Thomas More's use of the psalms suggests that there is a real difference by the end of the sixteenth and the beginning of the seventeenth century with regard to the methods for applying the Bible to one's individual life. Greenblatt suggests that for More it is enough to insert oneself into the psalms as translated in the Bible, there is no need to re-write them as a personalised utterance. More uses the penitential psalms to "'know mine own vility and wretchedness," he expresses a lifelong perception of his condition, ritualized in such practices as self-scourging and the daily recitation of the Seven Penitential Psalms'.<sup>107</sup> More effectively re-writes himself within God's language, whereas Herbert, for example, openly alters the text. Herbert's version of psalm 23, although recognisable, has a rather different emphasis from biblical prose translations. The apparent lack of originality in the translations of the psalms is explicable in that the 'story' is already pre-determined: the pattern to be followed is already asserted by God. Hence 'the story follows a necessary path ... because it is the reading of a previously established model,' or, as Macheray explains 'the work is not created by an intention ... it is produced under determinate conditions'.<sup>108</sup>

These new words are haunted by the old, although they never exactly repeat them, as Bakhtin illustrates:

the word is not a thing, but rather the eternally mobile, eternally changing medium of dialogical intercourse. It never coincides with a single consciousness or a single voice. The life a word is in its transferal from one mouth to another, one context to another, and one generation to another. In the process the word does not forget where it has been and can never wholly free itself from the dominion of contexts of which it has been a part.

When a speaker appropriates the psalms, they are being identified with many different previous uses:

when each member of a collective of speakers takes possession of a word, it is not a neutral word of language, free from the aspirations and valuations of others, uninhabited by foreign voices. No, he receives the word from the voice of another, and the word is filled with that voice. The word arrives in his context from another context which is saturated with other people's interpretations. (109)

Consequently, the question of originality or literary merit has little relevance to my discussion of the art of psalm translation. Rather, I am concerned to examine the means by which the psalms were posited as a prioritised discourse for the expression of self in the Renaissance period, and a representation of self which was highly dependent upon others' words as a means of self formulation, but which, through the process of imitation and assimilation, and appropriation at different points became individualised.

In one sense the 'discourse' of the psalms was one that, in theory at least, was open to all; the liturgy demanded the monthly repetition of the psalms and Calvin and Luther, the founders of Protestantism, recommended constant use of the psalms in the process of self examination. In the relationship between the psalms and typological readings of the Bible, the psalms could be compared with the Lacanian 'Symbolic Order' into which believers must insert themselves in order to speak to God in 'His' own language'. Chana Bloch remarks that psalm singing was 'almost a national pastime' in

Renaissance England.<sup>110</sup> But whilst speakers, readers and singers of the psalms might seem to be articulating themselves in the same language, the contextual application of a particular psalm to a particular event in the individual's life made the variety of applications and meanings inherent in the psalms apparent. The psalms, then, might be seen as a pre-existent 'symbolic order' but did this mean that the individual user was reformulated through those words, that is, determined or constituted by the use of those words, or were they able to reformulate the psalms in relation to themselves? How might this apply specifically to women?

Having outlined the way in which the psalms represented a specific discourse for believers to reformulate themselves in relation to God in post-Reformation theology, the next three chapters are devoted to an examination of the function of the psalms in a wider social and cultural framework, in order to illuminate the social and cultural significance of the psalms for women during this period. The prioritised space which the psalms occupied as a discourse through which the 'self' could be articulated within Protestantism, discussed in this introduction, represented the 'self' as theoretically 'ungendered'; the psalms provided a new symbolic order into which all believers had to insert themselves and the various commentators and interpreters of the psalms used the generic term 'man' as a signifier of this all-inclusiveness, rather than as designating the individual as male. Yet in some senses the 'ungendered' nature of this approach veils the gendering process inherent in using the psalms in this way. For the majority of early commentators and translators were men and, despite doubts about authorship, the voice of the psalmist (intrinsically associated with David) was identified as male. Consequently a specifically 'male'

form of expression became the norm for 'mankind' and, as feminist critics in historical and literary studies have pointed out, this is part of more general pattern whereby the specifically male voice becomes 'ungendered' and therefore comes to represent female experience as well. According to some critics this effectively erases women from both history and literature, or forces them to internalise an alien discourse in order to express what patriarchy defines as 'themselves'. However, it is my contention that in contrast to this apparent all-inclusiveness and 'ungendered' use of the psalms, or even an inherently male use of the psalms, an examination of the application of the psalms in other contexts - conduct literature, educational treatises, household manuals, and devotional texts - discloses a significant emphasis upon them as a discourse particularly appropriate for women. Obviously this does not nullify the problems outlined above by feminist critiques of 'man-made language'. Accordingly, one issue I will be engaging with is the way in which women's use of the psalms entails a re-gendering of the psalmist's voice and the theoretical difficulties which result from their appropriation of a quintessentially patriarchal text.

To a certain extent both sexes actively promoted the psalms as a discourse which manifested a woman's exemplary status, and it is this feature of the psalms with which I am fundamentally concerned. For whilst on the whole I agree with the critical consensus that 'religious discourses' were relatively permissible for women during this period, I want to try and deconstruct the apparent universalising effect of such an assertion. Ingrained in such a broad definition is the potential to perpetuate an erasure of difference; an erasure which blinds the critic to both differences between women using the 'same' religious discourses, and consequently, to the

significance of which particular religious discourse an individual woman used or how she used it. Thus I will be focussing on the specific religious discourse of the psalms, and will be considering a variety of different ways in which they were used for and by women to construct (or resist) their identification as exemplary. This endeavour necessitates an enquiry into a number of different discourses, especially those concerned with defining the exemplary Renaissance woman, for theological concerns cannot be easily separated from other fields; as John Stachniewski points out:

theology itself will be poorly understood if it is considered apart from other areas of experience in which it was believed at the time to be fully concerned. Differently placed writers variously register an emotional and intellectual congruity between their theological comprehension of the world and their own social construction within it. (111)

Hence in the first part of my thesis, I will be examining: firstly, the importance of the psalms as proper reading for women; secondly, the part that women played in the promoting of the psalms through patronage; and thirdly, how women themselves translated the psalms, or incorporated them into other texts, in order to analyse the extent to which women's practice accorded with the theory promoted primarily by male writers. This analysis establishes the cultural connections between women and the psalms which will provide the framework for my recontextualisation of Mary Sidney's psalm translations in the second part of this thesis.

FOOTNOTES

1) The most influential texts being: The Dialogic Imagination: Four essays by M.M. Bakhtin, edited by M. Holquist & translated by C. Emerson (Austin, 1981); Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics: Mikhail Bahktin, translated by Caryl Emerson (Manchester, 1984); Diane Macdonell, Theories of Discourse: An Introduction (Oxford, 1987); Deborah Cameron, Feminism and Linguistic Theory (London, 1985); Michel Foucault, 'The Order of Discourse' in Untying the Text: A Post-Structuralist Reader, edited by Robert Young (London, 1981).

2) Some examples being: Rewriting the Renaissance: The Discourses of Sexual Difference in Early Modern Europe, edited by Margaret Ferguson, Maureen Quilligan, & Nancy J. Vickers (Chicago, 1986); Political Shakespeare: New Essays in Cultural Materialism, edited by Jonathon Dollimore & Alan Sinfield (Manchester, 1989); The Matter of Difference: Materialist Feminist Criticism of Shakespeare, edited by Valerie Wayne (London, 1991).

3) For a primarily literary evaluation of the psalms, see Rivkah Zim, English Metrical Psalms: poetry as praise and prayer, 1535-1601 (Cambridge, 1987) and Gary F. Waller, Mary Sidney, Countess of Pembroke. A critical study of her writings and literary milieu, Elizabethan and Renaissance Studies, No. 87 (Salzburg, 1979) For the use of the psalms in the meditative tradition, see Louis Martz, The Poetry of Meditation (New Haven, 1962); Anthony Low, Love's Architecture: Devotional modes in seventeenth-century English poetry (New York, 1978); Chana Bloch, Spelling the Word: George Herbert and the Bible (Berkeley, 1985); Barbara K. Lewalski, Protestant poetics and the seventeenth-century religious lyric (Princeton, 1979). For a more politicised interpretation of the psalms, see discussion in Margaret P. Hannay, Philip's Phoenix: Mary Sidney, Countess of Pembroke (Oxford, 1990) and her essay "'Doo What Men May Sing": Mary Sidney and the Tradition of Admonitory Dedication' in Silent But for the Word: Tudor Women as Patrons, Translators, and Writers of Religious Works, edited by Margaret P. Hannay (Ohio, 1985).

4) The principle of inclusion and exclusion in the ordering of discourses is explored in Michel Foucault, 'The Order of Discourse' in Untying the Text, edited by R. Young (1981), p. 62.

5) The ability to identify a specific female language is one which has produced intense critical and theoretical debate, ranging from such texts as Dale Spender's Man Made Language (London, 1987) which highlighted sexism in 'language' and argued that women are alienated from language because it is 'man made', to the writings of French Feminists such as Cixous and Irigaray who have identified women's writing with women's bodies (see New French Feminisms, edited by Elaine Marks & Isabelle de Courtivron (Brighton, 1981) and discussion of these theories in Toril Moi, Sexual/Textual Politics: Feminist Literary Theory (London, 1985)). In Feminism and Linguistic Theory (1985), Deborah Cameron explores the advantages and disadvantages of these, and other, theories of women's relationship to 'language,' pointing out that the term 'language' in itself needs to be more closely defined. She resists the notion that women are alienated from 'language', preferring to identify specific discourses from which women are excluded at different times.

6) For discussions of language philosophy which would suggest that we are controlled by language, see the work of Ferdinand de Saussure, and Jacques Lacan. For an alternative point of view, see Deborah Cameron (1985); M.M. Bakhtin (1981, 1984); V.N. Volosinov, Marxism and the Philosophy of Language (New York, 1973).

7) Genesis, 1. v.3.

8) Genesis. 1. v.26.

9) See 'Discourse in the Novel' in The Dialogic Imagination, edited by M. Holquist & C. Emerson (1981), especially his discussion of epic discourse as opposed to novelistic discourse: for the central discussion of the workings of authoritative discourse, see pp. 342-345.

10) The myth of the linguistic divisions occurring at Babel is recorded in Genesis, chapter 11. See especially verse 9: 'Therefore is the name of it called Babel; because the LORD did there confound the language of all the earth: and from thence did the Lord scatter them abroad upon the face of all the earth'. See also George Steiner, After Babel: Aspects of Language and Translation (Oxford, 1977).

11) Genesis, 2. vv. 20 & 23.

12) The question of the inadequacies of language post-Fall and post-Babel informs the Tudor debate about the appropriate language in which to address or talk about God. This is particularly apparent in discussions of poetry as is discussed in Richard Foster Jones, The Triumph of the English Language: a Survey of Opinions Concerning the Vernacular from the Introduction of Printing to the Restoration (Stanford, 1953); Barbara K. Lewalski (1979); and Rivkah Zim (1987).

13) According to the biblical representation language originates in a finite social environment, in that language originates with God and is spoken by only two human beings, Adam and Eve. The power to name, however, is even more restricted as only God and Adam have this power.

14) See for example Ben Jonson's The Alchemist and Shakespeare, whose plays reveal a common concern with the way in which acquiring a different language alters one's social position or identity. This is apparent in the comedies, the histories and the tragedies; for example, Bolingbroke's speeches to the people in Richard II, or Richard's language itself; Regan and Goneril's speeches of flattery in the opening scenes of King Lear, and numerous other examples in the comedies, such as Portia's 'legal' discourse in The Merchant of Venice or Viola and Malvolio's assumption of courtly discourses in Twelfth Night.

15) See Peter Trudgill, Sociolinguistics: An Introduction to Language and Society (Middlesex, 1983) and Robin Lakoff, Language and Women's Place (New York, 1975).

16) Such markers can be 'unconscious' in the sense that they were 'natural' to the speaker but can be read as traces of their social and/or ideological position. These markers can also be consciously

altered, as for example in the introduction to Feminism and Linguistic Theory, where Deborah Cameron states her reasons for using the pronoun 'she' rather than 'he'.

17) M. Holquist & C. Emerson (1981), p. xix. Bakhtin's theory breaks down the unitary term of 'language,' and indicates the existence of numerous discourses specific to profession, age and potentially gender. This is the sense in which I will be using the term discourse.

18) See Richard F. Jones (1953), especially the later chapters on 'The Eloquent Language'. For a discussion of the politics of standardisation, see Tony Crowley, The politics of discourse: the standard language question in British cultural debates, (London, 1989).

19) For one contemporary account of men's education and the importance of translation within it, see Roger Ascham, The Scholemaster (1570). For a discussion of this as being identified as a specifically male pursuit and as being involved with the assumption of power, see Walter J. Ong, 'Latin Language Study as a Renaissance Puberty Rite' S.P. 56. (1959), pp. 103-24. See also Lorna Hutson, Thomas Nashe in Context (Oxford, 1989), p. 27.

20) The importance of religious persuasion was enshrined in law, as evidenced by the following quotations from Tudor Constitutional Documents, 1485 -1603, edited by J. R. Tanner (Cambridge, 1948) : the Act of Uniformity, 1559 made church attendance compulsory 'all and every person and persons inhabiting within this realm or any other of the Queen's dominions, shall diligently and faithfully, having no lawful or reasonable excuse to be absent, endeavour themselves to resort to their parish church ... upon every Sunday and other days ordained and used to be kept as Holy Days' (p. 139) and sanctioned the use of The Book of Common Prayer, 1559. Anyone challenging the use of this book was subject to punishment. The Bull of Excommunication, 1570 made it an offence to give refuge to Catholics, particularly Jesuit priests, and the Act against Reconciliation to Rome, 1581 declared that 'all persons whatsoever which have, or shall have, or shall pretend to have power, or shall by any ways or means put in practice to absolve, peruse or withdraw any of the Queen's Majesty's subjects or any within her Highness's realms and dominions from their natural obedience to her Majesty ... shall be to all intents adjudged to be traitors, and being thereof lawfully convicted shall have judgement, suffer, and forfeit as in case of high treason' (p. 152). The same Act declared that 'every person which shall say or sing mass, being thereof lawfully convicted, shall forfeit the sum of two hundred marks and be committed to prison in the next gaol ... and that every person which shall willingly hear mass shall forfeit the sum of one hundred marks and suffer imprisonment for a year' (p. 153).

21) William Cowper, The anatomie of a christian man, second edition (1613). See especially 'Of his Tongue,' pp. 216-218.

22) John Boys, An Exposition of the Proper Psalms (1616), sig. B7v.

- 23) Prologue. Coverdale Bible (1537), sig. A7r. For a discussion of the trope of the heart see Barbara K. Lewalski, (1979). The importance of the relationship between heart, mind and actions is part of the division between Catholic and the Reformer's definitions of confession, see Thomas N. Tentler, Sin and Confession on the Eve of the Reformation (Princeton, 1977), especially pp. 349-361.
- 24) Raymond Williams, Culture and Society, 1750-1950 (London, 1976), p. 301.
- 25) See George Steiner (1977) and Susan Bassnett-McGuire, revised edition Translation Studies (London, 1991).
- 26) A modern example of this is that 'poisson d'avril' in French is the equivalent of the English phrase 'April Fool': a literal translation of the French phrase, however, would be rendered as 'April Fish' which could cause confusion to the English speaker, displaying the inadequacies of a word-for-word translation. This illustrates Saussure's argument that 'Languages do not simply name existing categories, they articulate their own' (Quoted by Jonathan Culler in Saussure (London, 1976), p. 22).
- 27) See introduction to Susan Bassnett-McGuire (1991) and Rethinking Translation: Discourse, Subjectivity, Ideology, edited by Lawrence Venuti (London, 1992).
- 28) F.R. Amos, Early Theories of Translation (New York, 1920).
- 29) On the one hand she recognizes the fact that translation theory has witnessed many stages of development and that has been a source of strength: 'forced to adjust itself to the facts of actual production, theory has had to follow new paths as literature has followed new paths, and in the process it has acquired fresh vigour and flexibility'. In the succeeding paragraph she reveals a desire for stability and, in effect, nullifies the need for translation: 'possibly some day the miracle may be wrought, and, in spite of changing literary fashions, we may have our English version of Homer in a form sufficient not only for an age but for all time' (p. 177).
- 30) For further discussion of Medieval theories of scriptural interpretation, see Barbara K. Lewalski (1979) and Thomas N. Tentler (1977). For a more stringent examination of the inter-section between word-for-word and sense-for-sense translation, see Rita Copeland, Rhetoric, Hermeneutics, and Translation in the Middle Ages (Cambridge, 1991). The four fold medieval exegesis is also explored by George Wither in A Preparation to the Psalter (1619).
- 31) Calvin's Institutes of the Christian Religion, translated by Thomas Norton (1578), sig. A2v. (Quoted by F.R. Amos (1920), p. 124.)
- 32) Bodin's Six Books of a Commonweal (1608), translated by Richard Knowlles. Preface. (Quoted by F.R. Amos (1920), p. 129.)
- 33) William Fulke, A Defence of the Sincere and True Translations of the holie Scriptures into the English Tong (1583). (Quoted by F.R. Amos, Early Theories of Translation (1920), p. 60.)

- 34) Thomas More's, Confutation of Tyndale. (Quoted in F.R. Amos, Early Theories of Translation (1920), p. 69.)
- 35) Geneva Bible (1560), sig. \*\*\* 4r.
- 36) Coverdale Bible (1537), sigs. A4v-A5r.
- 37) Stephen Greenblatt, Renaissance Self-Fashioning: from More to Shakespeare, paperback (Chicago, 1984), pp. 95 & 96.
- 38) Ferruccio Rossi-Landi and Massimo Pesaresi, 'Language' in Contact: Human communication and its history, edited by Raymond Williams (London, 1981), p. 36.
- 39) F.R. Amos (1920), p. 69.
- 40) William Fulke (1583). (Quoted by F.R. Amos (1920), p. 72.)
- 41) M. Holquist & C. Emerson (1981), p. xix.
- 42) F.R. Amos (1920), p. 116.
- 43) Preface. Douay-Rheims Bible. (Quoted in F.R. Amos (1920), p. 70.)
- 44) Stephen Greenblatt (1984), p. 100.
- 45) Stephen Greenblatt (1984), p. 102.
- 46) Preface. Authorised Version (1611). Reprinted in Olga S. Opfell, The King James Bible Translators (Jefferson & London, 1982), p. 161.
- 47) F.R. Amos (1920), p. 50.
- 48) Prologue. Coverdale Bible (1537). (Quoted by F.R. Amos (1920), p. 51.)
- 49) 'And the word was made Flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth' (John 1. v.13).
- 50) Hebrews 13. v.8. & John 14. v.6.
- 51) F.R. Amos (1920), p. 51.
- 52) F.R. Amos (1920), p. 66.
- 53) See Certaine Sermons of Homilies: Appointed to be read in churches in the time of Queen Elizabeth I. (1547 -1571), edited by Mary Ellen Rickey & Thomas B. Stroup (Florida, 1968).
- 54) Preface. Authorised Version (1611) in Olga S. Opfell (1982), p. 160.
- 55) Olga S. Opfell (1982), p. 160. See also Gerald Hammond, The Making of the English Bible (Manchester, 1982). Hammond opens his discussion of biblical translation with reference to this quotation from the Authorised Version preface. See also Richard Mulcaster, The

First Parte of the Elementarie which entreateth chiefe of the right writing of our English tung (1582). Mulcaster asserts that letters are 'but elves and brats of the pens breeding' which do not have any meaning 'by themselves or anie vertew in their form ... but onelie by consent of those men, which first invented them, and the pretie use therof perceaved by those, which first did perceive them'. (Quoted by Richard Foster Jones (1953) during lengthy discussion of Mulcaster, pp. 158-167.)

56) Epistle Dedicatory. Authorised Version (1611) in Olga S. Opfell (1982), p. 142.

57) William C. Dowling, Jameson, Althusser, Marx: An Introduction to the Political Unconscious (London, 1984).

58) Pierre Macheray: A Theory of Literary Production, translated by Geoffrey Wall (London, 1978), p. 70.

59) Calvin's Institutes, translated by Thomas Norton (1578). (Quoted F.R. Amos (1920), p. 83.)

60) Coverdale Bible (1537). (Quoted F.R. Amos (1920), p. 65.)

61) F.R. Amos (1920), p. 61. See also preface to Authorised Version: 'We affirm and avow, that the very meanest translation of the Bible in English, set forth by men of our profession ... containeth the word of God, nay, is the word of God' (Olga S. Opfell (1982), p. 154.)

62) Geneva Bible (1560), sig. \*\*\*4r.

63) Coverdale Bible (1537), sig. A6v.

64) M. Holquist & C. Emerson (1981), p. 48.

65) See discussion of Florio, introduction to Silent But for the Word, edited by Margaret P. Hannay (1985), p. 9.

66) Susan Bassnett-McGuire (1991), p. 58.

67) Rivkah Zim (1987), p. 1.

68) Anthony Gilby, The Psalmes of David (1581), sig. A3v. (Quoted in Rivkah Zim (1987), p. 28.) Although this seems to be a result of the Reformation it is important not to forget that the psalms have always occupied an important place in Christian theology, see Anthony Low (1978), especially p. 13. T.R. Wright in Theology and Literature (Oxford, 1988) points out their significance for Jewish worship, p.45. See also Dermot Cox. The Psalms in the Life of God's People (Slough, 1984).

69) Commentary on the book of psalms by John Calvin, edited by Rev. James Anderson, reprinted (Michigan, 1948), Vol. I. p. xxxviii.

70) Rev. James Anderson (1948), Vol. I. pp. xxxviii-xxxix. There are many other similar examples, of which the following are but a few: Matthew Parker, quotes St. Basil 'the booke of the Psalmes

comprehende in it selfe, the whole commoditie of al the doctrines aforesaid' (Quoted Barbara K. Lewalski (1979), p. 41). Parker also quotes Athanasius 'the alterations of every man's hart and conscience described and lively painted to his owne sight' (Quoted Rivkah Zim (1987), p. 27). John Donne also quotes these two church fathers: see Donne's Prebend Sermons, edited by Janel M. Mueller (Massachusetts, 1971). Martin Luther in A manual of the Book of Psalms, translated by Henry Cole (1837) declares that the Holy Spirit 'himself hath drawne up this manual for his disciples; having collected together, as it were, the lives, groans, and experiences of many thousands' has expressed 'the very hidden treasure of their hearts feelings - the very inmost sensations and motions of their soul' (Quoted Barbara K. Lewalski (1979), pp. 42-43). Thomas Becon in Dauids harpe ful of moost delectable armony (1542), sig. A7v. writes 'Certes, the Psalmody of David maye well be called the Treasure house of the holy Scripture. For it contayneth what so ever is necessary for a Christen man to know' (Quoted Rivkah Zim (1987), p. 30). See also preface to Coverdale Bible (1537): 'in the Psalmes we lerne how to resorte onely unto God in all oure roubles, to seeke helpe at him, to call onely unto him, satle our mindes by pactice, & how we ought in prosperitie to be thankfull unto him' (sig. A6v).

71) Barbara K. Lewalski (1979), p. 12. The calendar of readings were issued with first edition of the Prayer book in 1549. See also The Book of Common Prayer, 1559, edited by John E. Booty (Charlottesville, 1976). See also thesis Appendix 1.

72) T.R. Wright (1988), p. 88.

73) Diarmaid MacCulloch, 'The Myth of the English Reformation,' History Today, 41. (July, 1991) pp. 28-31. (p. 31).

74) See Barbara K. Lewalski (1979) for a full discussion of the typological connections between David and Christ. See also her essay, in Literary Uses of Typology, edited by Earl Miner (Princeton, 1977).

75) See for example Rivkah Zim's introduction to English Metrical Psalms (1987) where she surveys of some of the uses of the psalms in Shakespeare. In Literature in Protestant England, 1560-1560 (London,, 1983), Alan Sinfield suggests that 'people do not always believe what they are told to believe; the reiteration of a doctrine by authority may indicate not that it was generally accepted, but that it was widely mistrusted' (p. 3). However, the psalms were not solely promulgated the authorities and they become an important part of individual spiritual autobiographies indicating that they were used by a number of different figures (see Paul Delany, British Autobiography in the Seventeenth-century (London, 1969)).

76) Helen C. White, Tudor Books of Private Devotion (Westport, 1979), p. 7.

77) Helen C. White (1979), p. 31.

78) Sternhold and Hopkins Psalter (1567). (Quoted Helen C. White (1979), p. 44.)

79) Helen C. White (1979), p. 44. See also Anthony Low (1978), who quotes Nicholas Ferrar describing the 'Psalm children' of Little Gidding: 'The houses, and doores, and streers sounde out the sweet Musick of David's harpe in all places and at all times of the day, the woemen hearing and the children repeating and cunning the Psalms with out Book as they sat spinning and knitting: when as before time those childrens mouths and tongues were exercised dayly ... in singing of naughty, leaud, and at least Vain songes and Ballets' (p. 16). Thomas Becon's, David's Harpe indicated a desire that 'all Mynstrels in the world, yea and all sorte of parsons both olde and younge, woulde ones leave theyr lascivious, wanton and unclene balades, and synge such godly and vertuous songes, as David techeth them'. (Quoted by Anthony Low (1978), pp. 14-15.)

80) Rivkah Zim (1987), p. 4.

81) Miles Coverdale, Goostly Songes (1538). (Quoted by Anthony Low, Love's Architecture (1978), p. 14.)

82) See Sir Philip Sidney. Apology for Poetry, edited by Geoffrey Shepherd, second edition (Manchester, 1973). For references to David and the psalms, see pp. 99, 101-102, 115, 124, 125, 131.

83) Edward Leigh, Annotations on Five Poeticall Bookes of the Old Testament (1657). (Quoted Barbara K. Lewalski (1979), p. 7.)

84) R. F. Jones (1953) examines the relationship between poetry, the development of the English language and national identity, pp. 174-179. He gives a variety of quotations, one example being Gervase Markham, The Gentleman's Academie (1598): 'I observe as wel beseming the subject, and no whit disgracefull to the worke, our tong being not of such puritie then, as at this day the Poets of our age have raised it to: of whom and in whose behalf I wil say thus much, that our Nation may only thinke her selfe beholding for the glory and exact compendiousness of our language'.

85) For the importance of the Bible being available in the vernacular as a facilitator for self-examination see the preface to Authorised Version: 'happy is the man that delighteth in the scripture, and thrice happy that meditateth in it day and night. But how shall men meditate in that, which they cannot understand? How shall they understand that, which is kept close in an unknowen tongue?' (Olga S. Opfell (1982), p. 147). The translators go on to argue that 'translation it is that openeth the window, to let in the light; that breaketh the shell, that we may eat the kernall; that putteth aside the curtain, that we may look into the most holy place' (p. 148).

86) Miles Coverdale, A Paraphasis upon all the psalmes (1539), sig. A2r. (Quoted in Rivkah Zim (1987), p. 33.)

87) F.R. Amos (1920), p. 76.

88) F.R. Amos (1920), pp. 75-76.

89) Bishop John Jewel. (Quoted in Barbara K. Lewalski (1979), p. 150.)

- 90) F.R. Amos (1920), p. 76.
- 91) Thomas Greene, The Light in Troy: Imitation and Discovery in Renaissance Poetry (New Haven, 1982), p. 19.
- 92) Thomas Greene (1982), p. 22.
- 93) Nancy Streuver, The Language of history in the Renaissance (Princeton, 1970), p. 193. (Quoted Thomas Greene (1982), pp. 31-32.)
- 94) Stephen Greenblatt (1984), p. 116.
- 95) Donne's Prebend Sermons, edited by Janel M. Mueller (1971), p. 72. George Wither A Preparation to the Psalter (1619), p. 124.
- 96) Poetics 1448b. The Basic Works of Aristotle, edited by R. Mckeon (New York, 1941) p. 1457. (Quoted Thomas Greene (1982), p. 54.)
- 97) Ben Jonson, edited by C.H. Herford, Percy & Evelyn Simpson, (Oxford, 1947) 8; 590, 597. (Quoted by Thomas Greene (1982), p. 44.)
- 98) Thomas Greene (1982), p. 75.
- 99) Thomas Greene (1982), pp. 98-99.
- 100) Thomas Greene (1982), p. 74.
- 101) Stephen Greenblatt (1984), p. 119.
- 102) Stephen Greenblatt (1984), p. 84.
- 103) Stephen Greenblatt (1984), p. 96.
- 104) Stephen Greenblatt (1984), p. 2.
- 105) Stephen Greenblatt (1984), p. 2.
- 106) See discussion in Deborah Cameron (1985), pp. 122-125.
- 107) Stephen Greenblatt (1984), p. 52.
- 108) Geoffrey Wall, translator (1978), p. 48 & p. 78.
- 109) Mikhail Bakhtin, Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics, translated by R.W. Rotsel (np: Ardis, 1973), p. 167. (Quoted Thomas Greene (1982), p. 143.)
- 110) Chana Bloch (1985), p. 234-235. The question of 'originality' is dubious here. See David Quint, Origin and Originality in Renaissance Literature: Versions of the Source (New Haven, 1983), p.5.
- 111) John Stachniewski, The Persecutory Imagination: English Puritanism and the Literature of Religious Despair (Oxford, 1991), pp. 82-83.

PART ONE:

CULTURAL CONTEXTS.

CHAPTER 1: 'CONTINUALLY IN THEIR HANDS':

WOMEN AS READERS AND PATRONS OF THE PSALMS.

Let her every day repeat to you a portion of the scripture as her fixed task ... Let her learn the Psalter first, with these songs let her distract herself, and then let her learn lessons of life in the Proverbs of Solomon ... Let her then pass on to the Gospels and never lay them down. (1)

It was now no news in England to see young damsels in noble houses and in the courts of princes, instead of cards and other instruments of idle trifling, to have continually in their hands either psalms, homilies and other devout meditations ... and as familiarly both to read and reason thereof in Greek, Latin, French or Italian, as in English. (2)

In the first of the above quotations St. Jerome is addressing a mother concerning her newborn daughter's educational programme. Written in AD. 403 by a famous Catholic church father and well known misogynist,<sup>3</sup> this quotation may at first appear rather tangential to a discussion of women as readers of the psalms in the Renaissance. However, the practice which Jerome outlines in this letter continued to be influential in the educational practices prescribed for women through the Medieval period to the Renaissance. It is, therefore, indicative of the historical tradition of educating women through the scripture and identifies the position of the psalms as the first discourse through which a young girl learned to construct her subjectivity. St. Jerome represents the Psalter as the girl's primary education, which is a source of 'distraction' rather than serious study; the rules of life are acquired later through the Proverbs and, ultimately, the Gospels.<sup>4</sup> The second quotation, written by Nicholas Udall in 1548, demonstrates the continuing significance of the psalms as a focus of 'distraction' for women, particularly for noblewomen. This distraction though is plainly portrayed as preferable to 'cards and other instruments of idle trifling'. Significantly, and in

striking contrast to Jerome's depiction of the psalms as merely the foundation for reading the rest of the scriptures, Udall emphasises the connection between women reading the psalms, other scripturally based texts, and their acquisition of linguistic and discursive skills 'both to read or reason therof in Greek, Latin, French or Italian, as in English'. Udall reiterates this point elsewhere, and his assertion of women's capacity for translation and their interest and support of this activity informs his representations of Catherine Parr.<sup>5</sup>

In both these quotations, the psalms are specifically identified as part of women's educational and recreational activities. The context of Jerome's instruction makes it clear that the psalms were to be used as a means to teach the girl both how to read and how to write.<sup>6</sup> According to Susan Groag Bell, the Psalter was the primary text used in the education of children serving the function of an alphabet book in the Medieval period. Consequently numerous psalters were commissioned by women for the purposes of educating their children. To demonstrate this point, Bell cites the example of Isabeau of Bavaria whose accounts: 'show that she ordered a Book of Hours including psalms for her daughter Jeanne in 1398 and an alphabet Psalter, an 'A, b, c, d, des Psaumes,' for her daughter Michelle in 1403'.<sup>7</sup> It is worth noting that, when they received these texts, these two girls would have been about six or seven years old. Yet the psalms were also used by girls of an even earlier age. In 1550 Ann Hooper described the development of her daughter Rachel's education in a letter to Henry Bullinger, in the following manner:

First, you must know that she is well acquainted with English, & that she has learned by heart within these three months the form of giving thanks, the 10 commandments, the Lord's prayer, the apostles creed, together with the first & second psalmes of David. And now, as

she knows almost all her letters, she is instructed in the catechism. (8)

At the time of writing Rachel was merely three years old. The practice of using the psalms as an early educational tool for girls seems to have continued well into the seventeenth century. In her diary A Book of Remembrances, Alice Thornton recalls her monthly reading of the psalms and records her meditation upon a particular psalm verse in an entry which would place her at four years old.<sup>9</sup> The psalms were also used to teach male children, but the strictures of women's education alter the significance of the psalms as an educative tool for women in particular.<sup>10</sup>

The educational practices prescribed for women in the Renaissance cannot be separated from the delineation of the exemplary women in conduct literature; indeed, conduct literature and educational treatises often occupy the same cultural space as both are ultimately concerned with a woman's social definition. Equally important for an understanding of the purposes of women's education and for their concomitant social definition is the body of devotional literature which was produced for women's private meditational use. Although many critics have examined the relationship between conduct literature and women's education and some have also considered the importance of devotion for women, there has not been a close interrogation of the way in which devotional literature further codifies the practices which women were encouraged to develop in their scriptural studies or which aspects of the scriptures predominated within this genre.<sup>11</sup> Ruth Kelso, for example, in her seminal enquiry into this arena concludes that despite the emphasis upon religious training for women, 'little was said about it beyond the prescription of simple piety, true love of God, prayer, and humility, which teach fundamental lessons of service, goodness, and

admiration for virtue rather than things of this world'.<sup>12</sup> Yet letters and diaries written by women testify to their rigorous adherence to strict devotional practices of which such religious training was composed. By examining the interaction between conduct literature, educational treatises and devotional texts, I hope both to shed some light on what women's religious training consisted of and to demonstrate that the psalms occupied a more significant part in the construction of the exemplary woman than has previously been recognised.

#### 1. APPROPRIATE READING: EDUCATIONAL TREATISES.

As other critics have dealt with the subject of women's education, it is not necessary for me to examine this in great depth but rather to highlight the connections between the 'theory' propounded by educational treatises and the 'practice' demonstrated in devotional texts. A woman's education was restricted to spheres felt to be relevant to the social function she was expected to fulfill. Her access to knowledge was further restricted by the lack of schooling facilities for women, and a fear of potential sexual violation by her male tutor. Patricia H. Labalme outlines the various possible routes to education which were available to women and concludes that 'many of the learned women of the past were instructed directly by their learned fathers'.<sup>13</sup> In theory women were debarred from teaching positions themselves, for fear of their distributing false doctrine, but in practice women educated their children, their servants, and to a certain extent each other.<sup>14</sup> Labalme stresses the significance of piety for all women, learned or not: 'devotional concerns knew no class, and many a woman from the

lower echelons was learned in her Bible, knowing much of it by heart'.<sup>15</sup> Although lower class women's education is even harder to quantify than that of noblewomen, the emphasis upon orality suggests that the psalms would be a familiar text to women of these classes - at least for those who were regular church attenders.<sup>16</sup>

The focal point for the Humanist debate about women's education was whether it made them more, or less, able to conform to the definition of the ideal woman. Richard Hyrde depicts the opposing poles of this debate: 'I have herde many men put great dout whether it shulde be expedient and requisite or nat, a woman to have lerning in bokes of latin and greke. Also some utterly affirme that it is nat onely, nother necessarye nor profytable, but also very noisome and jeopardous'.<sup>17</sup> In contradistinction to this, Hyrde takes up the more positive position; the specific example of Margaret More-Roper enables him to argue that education is a means to improve women's social behaviour: 'this gentilwoman, whiche translated this litell boke hereafter folowing: whose vertuous conversacion, living, and sadde demeanoure, maye be profe evidente enough, what good learninge dothe, where it is surely roted: of whom other women may take example of prudent, humble, and wifely behaviour, charitable & very christian vertue' (A4v). Roper's education is here demonstrated to be a means by which her virtue is improved; being educated does not make her a threat, but makes her more suitable to fulfill her wifely duties. This identifies her as an exemplar for other women to imitate, both in the above portrayal of her and in the fact that the text is dedicated to another woman who is exhorted to imitate her.<sup>18</sup>

More-Roper is an exemplar for her scholarship, erudition and 'wifely behaviour' and is a suitable mirror for Hyrde's dedicatee to imitate. Similarly Katherine of Arragon is positioned as a mirror for

her daughter's emulation in the text which she commissioned for her daughter Mary's education. Vives's Instruction of a Christian Woman, is the self-proclaimed initiator of texts concerning the instruction of christian women and centres on the 'rules of living' appropriate for a woman.<sup>19</sup> The pivotal requirement for a woman's education according to Vives is to protect 'hir honestie and chastitie. Wherefore whan shee is infourmed of that, she is sufficiencyently appointed' (A3r). Despite this succinct summary, Vives writes a long text explaining the codes of behaviour 'sufficient' for a woman in the three stages of womanhood: maid, wife and widow. When treating specifically of women's learning Vives begins promisingly: 'of maydes some be but lyttel meete for learnyng, Lyke wyse as some men be unapt: againe some be even borne unto it, or at leste not unfete for it, Therefore they that be dulle are not to be discouraged and those that be apt, shuld be herted and encouraged' (C1v). In this quotation women, like their male contemporaries, are capable of varying degrees of study; knowledge here is not segregated according to a specifically gendered division, but on the grounds of different intellectual rigour. Consequently, Vives dismisses education for 'subtil and crafty' women for whom it is a damaging acquisition. Yet he does encourage reading for the improvement of women who, by reading of honest and holy women, are encouraged to 'be the keepers of chastitie & pureness, and the copies of vertues, and pryckes to pricke and to move folkes to continue in them' (C1v). Reading and knowledge can have a useful effect, for 'the study of learning is such a thing, that it occopieth ones minde holly, and lifteth it up unto the knowlage of most goodly matters, and plucketh it from the remembrance of such thinges as be foul' (C4r). Being occupied with study prevents any distractions, and it is particularly important to

keep a woman's mind occupied as otherwise it might wander onto unsavoury subjects.<sup>20</sup> According to Vives this will also encourage women to 'leave all suche lyght and triflyng pleasures wherin the lyght fantasis of maydes have delite, as songes, daunces, and suche other wanton and pyvishe plaies' (C4v). So it is important for a woman to study and to achieve wisdom: 'the which doth enstruct their maners & enfourme their livynge and teacheth them the waie of good and holy lyfe'.<sup>21</sup>

Vives' rules for women's instruction, then, centre on the need for moral guidance; whereas men are permitted to move from this into study of other disciplines, this for Vives is the limit of women's education. For although he states that 'I poynte none ende' to men's learning and 'no more I dooe to the woman,' this is undermined by his qualifying suggestion:

savyng it is mete that the man have knowlage of many and divers thynges, that may both profite him selfe & the common welthe, both with the use and encreasing of learnyng. But I wolde the woman shuld be altogether in that parte of philosophy, that taketh upon it to enforme and teache, and amende the condicions (D1r).

That is, the woman should only learn moral philosophy and her learning should only be directed towards her children and her sisters: 'finally lette hir learne for hir selfe alone and hir younge childrene, or hir systers in our lorde' (D1r). Although Vives's instruction here is obviously reliant on the Pauline doctrine of excluding women from instructing men, he does acknowledge that they are able to learn for themselves, their children, and their 'systers'. This limits a women's teaching to the home, but the importance of this should not be over-looked; for as Amanda Potterfield has argued in a different context, this placed women in a position of 'indirect authority': 'as primary supervisors of children and servants mothers had primary responsibility for shaping religious

experience ... in the context of their daily surveillance of household activities'.<sup>22</sup> From what I have already said, it is apparent that a central tool in the primary education of children, for which the mother was responsible, involved instructing their children in the psalms. (This is further substantiated in the organisation of household prayers.) Vives's advice that a woman should be primarily concerned with 'moral philosophy' appears contradictory, given women's association with Eve, but some critics have already argued that in many ways women were spiritually superior to men in this period.<sup>23</sup> In this concern with 'moral philosophy,' the psalms played an important role; for some of the central issues discussed throughout the psalms are moral questions directing the believer along the 'right' pathway to God, supplanting amongst other desires the 'foul ribaudy' of secular songs.<sup>24</sup>

One text which pays special attention to the role women could play in instructing other women and the role of the psalms as appropriate 'songs' for women to sing is Thomas Salter's The Mirrhor of Modestie.<sup>25</sup> Claiming that women were not conforming to the prescriptions outlined by writers like Vives, Salter aims to redress this lamentable situation by reiterating the methods by which mothers and matrons can ensure that their charges follow 'the directe and straight pathe to perpetuall felicitie' (A4v). The 'Matrone' who is assigned to care for the child must be of a grave, prudent, and modest disposition. In order to avoid the dangers of over-indulgence, Salter advises having a teacher other than a parent; he is particularly wary of the dangers of a father's instructions, for 'so sone as [their daughters] have any understandyng in readyng, or spellyng', father's encourage them 'to cone and learne by hart bookes, ballades, Songes, sonettes, and Ditties of daliance' (B2v).

Whereas mothers teach their daughters the psalms, fathers corrupt them with secular song. Like Vives, Salter recommends that the maiden should be encouraged to read the lives of 'godly and vertuous ladies ... out of the holy scriptures', which will incite her to virtue.<sup>26</sup> However, Salter vacillates over this question, suggesting elsewhere that a woman cannot be trusted to regulate her own reading.<sup>27</sup> Yet this does not, according to Salter's circuitous argument, preclude women from reading altogether:

and yet notwithstanding al this, I would not have a Maiden altogether forbidden, or restrained from reading, for so muche as the same is not onley profitable to wise and vertuous women, but also a riche and precious Jewell, but I would have her if she reade, to reade no other bookes but suche as bee written by godlie Fathers, to our instruction and soules healthe (C3r)

Similar complications arise when Salter attempts to define when a maiden should or should not speak, or in what circumstances she should learn from other women, or how she is to know which women it is right to emulate.

Salter's text is a prime example of an educational treatise which is primarily concerned with regulating women's social conduct. Yet, in contrast to other texts belonging to these genres, Salter inveighs against the perils of music for women. He argues that women who were trained to sing became 'wanton and effeminate' (C7r) and advises them to avoid playing instruments; Salter contends that this activity was: 'in all women to be eschewed' (C6r). Music opened the door to a multitude of vices, from all of which his ideal maiden must refrain. But this again places Salter in an anomalous position; for, despite berating the sins which ensue from musical activity in women, Salter has to retract from this position in order to justify their using the psalms:

I must confesse that the use of singing and delicate playyng uppon Instrumentes and sweete harmonie is necessarie, but for whom? For those that bee overworne with greef, sorowe, trouble, cares, or other vexasion ... [as] Saule in the holie Scripture, by the Harpe and sweete syngyng of David, who therwith pacified his fierce and furious passions, and revoked them to a milde and quiete Spirite (C6v).

Whilst his example is explicitly male-centred, the necessity for this retraction only becomes fully comprehensible when Salter positively advocates women's public performance of psalm singing. Importantly, however, this performance is also associated with confessional discourses and testifies both to the woman's spiritual prowess and her bodily continency. Psalm singing can correct vices, but similarly to the mandatory adherence to the excessive scrutiny of one's audience figured in courtly conduct literature, the parameters within which this performance is situated are subjected to a multiplicity of rules, attempting to control or police the signifying process involved in this performance.<sup>28</sup>

Having outlined a number of rules by which the woman was to regulate her behaviour, Salter turns his attention to displays of virtue

Likewise where it behoveth her to shewe her vertue, she shall bee readie but not to bolde, and by a sodaine blushyng, whiche immediatly will overspread her lillie cheekes with roseat read, she shall shewe that she beareth in her breaste a reverente harte, farre separated from infamous and reprochfull shame. In suche wise I saie, she shall with a cherefull countenance, and a well tempered gravitie, castyng her eyes to the yearth, shewe of her self that whiche never-the-lesse, although she] knowes it will redounde to her praise and commendation, she would willingly dissemble and faine not to care for. With this commendable confidence, when it behoves her through request to recite any Psalme, or other Spirituall song, or godlie sentence, she shall set her self forthe to doe it with a milde refusall, yet altogether voide of undecent affectyng, which thyng the moste parte of people can hardly eschewe ... [and] shall holde her in suspecte of her refuse (D4v-D5r).

Showing or proving her virtue is here demonstrably interconnected

with the public recitation of psalms and spiritual songs; thus, in contrast to Salter's earlier vacillation about the dubious associations of music and vice, here performing the psalms becomes interchangeable with virtue. Yet there are many contradictions and paradoxes within this passage, highlighting the complexities of the implicit scrutinising processes of public life for the middle classes during the late Tudor period. The requisite sprezzatura, famously associated with male courtier poets, is postulated for women here in relation to a different kind of performance. Of itself this presents an anomaly, but this is further problematised by the conflicting signs which the woman's body is required to emit; that is a 'cherefull countenance' combined with 'well tempred gravitie' and 'castyng her eyes to the yearth'. Of paramount significance, however, is the blush, which is itself carefully defined as being a particular degree of red ('roseat': russet) and a blush, which although it signifies innocence, later in the passage this is tantamount to knowledge. The woman 'knowes' that this act 'will redounde to her praise and commendation,' yet is simultaneously obliged to 'willingly dissemble and faine not to care for' this approbation.<sup>29</sup>

Ironically, therefore, the act which confirms her 'virtue' concurrently forces her into a position of dissimulation. Although this is required of her, it has inbuilt pitfalls regarding the gauging of the correct degree of dissimulation which could place her on the boundary of the 'infamous and reproachfull shame' that she is overtly eschewing. For the distinction between what constitutes a 'milde refusall,' yet which is 'altogether voide of undecent affectyng' is obfuscated by the plethora of demands which are postulated in this excerpt. Despite these inherent dangers, this is a performance which she cannot refuse without risking her reputation

which would consequently be 'suspecte'. From this attempt to protect the woman from damaging her reputation there ensues an enhancement of the problematics of performing even that which is recommended as a virtuous act. Whilst speaking the psalms was an act which generally signified the realignment of the self with God's word and, therefore, with virtue, the potential for ostentatious self-display made even such a commendable act fraught with dangers for the female performer.

## 2. 'SING PSALMS TOGETHER TO GOD'S GLORY': WOMEN'S ROLES IN HOUSEHOLD DEVOTION.

This highly regulated public performance represents a precarious manifestation of the woman's private virtue, even in the requirements of household entertainment. As the texts discussed above indicate, the woman's virtue was almost entirely composed of her disposition towards the reading of the 'scriptures'. Even in these general treatises there are some indications of the specific importance of the psalms, but, in order to illustrate this point further, it is necessary to consider some of the devotional exercises which were prescribed as a focal point of a woman's household activities. For example, Vives suggests that, other duties notwithstanding, the woman should spend all her time reading the word of God:

therefore on holy daies continually, and somtyme on workynge dayes, let hir reade or here suche as shall lifte up the mynde to god, and set in a Christen quietnes, and make the livynge better. Also it shoulde be beste afore shee go to masse, to reade at home the gospell and the epistle of the day, and with it some exposition, if she have any. Nowe whan thou comest from masse, and haste overlooked thy house as muche as pertainethe unto thy charge, reade with a quiete mynde some of these that I have spoken of, if thou canst reade, if not, here. And on some workynge daies do lyke-wise, if thou be not letted with some necessary busynes in thy house, and thou have bokes at hande: and specially if there be any longe space betwene the holy

daies. For thinke not that holy daies be ordained of the churche to plaie on, and to sitte ydell, and talke with thy gossyppes: but unto the entente that than thou maiest more intentively, and with a more quiete mynde, thinke of god, and this lyfe of ours, and the lyfe in heaven that is to come (D4v).

This pattern is closely emulated by Lady Hoby whose diary demonstrates the way in which devotional exercises frame her day.<sup>30</sup> According to Nicholas Udall this practice was also followed by Catherine Parr, who: 'when she was Queen, she employed herself days and nights in psalms and contemplative meditations in lieu of vain country past-times and gaming. And these she set forth in print, for the example of all noble women, and to the Ghostly consolation and edifyng of all that read them'.<sup>31</sup> Catherine Parr is here represented as a woman who, as the psalmist says in psalm one, meditates in God's word day and night; specifically here, meditating in the psalms. Additionally, she is praised for producing her own meditational text which, although not a direct translation of the psalms, is based upon them as a model providing in turn a model for other women to emulate through their publication.<sup>32</sup> Catherine Parr was not the only wife of Henry VIII to display an interest in the psalms; whereas Parr's texts were published for public consumption, Anne Boleyn used her influence within the household. Anne Boleyn is known to have patronised evangelical French humanists, including the psalm translator Clement Marot, and to have owned copies of Lefevre's Bible, an illuminated copy of The Book of Ecclesiastes and a 'manuscript French Psalter'.<sup>33</sup> In her recent essay, Maria Dowling discusses Anne Boleyn's role in the encouragement of vernacular scripture both in terms of publishing and in encouraging her 'household' to read the Bible in English and to discuss scripture at her table: 'she is said to have given her ladies prayer books to hang from their girdles, and a tiny manuscript of English metrical psalms

translated by John Croke may be one of these volumes'.<sup>34</sup> These two Queens' involvement in the promotion of vernacular scripture indicates an emphasis upon the psalms; both of these Queens were therefore promoting the Protestant practice of domestic psalm singing, for both private and family use within their own 'household'. In this they represent an exemplar for other householders to imitate, and indicate the influence women could exert over the establishment of household devotional practices, later codified in the texts examined below.

In The French Academie, for example, La Primaudaye addresses the question of the separation of household duties; the wife's duties include the educating of her children, managing the household affairs, and communicating on the sermon to the servants.<sup>35</sup> To be sure, La Primaudaye perceives a possible 'danger' in women's role in leading household prayer, warning that a wife needs to be 'ravished with her husbands brave discourses' so that she does not fall into the trap which other women fall into; namely of those who 'conceive and bring forth by themselves strange counsels, and extravagant passions'.<sup>36</sup> However, she must also be able to take on her husband's role in his absence; she must have 'authority over all things' and: 'be feared, reverenced, and obeyed of the children, men-servants and maid-servants, as himself'.<sup>37</sup> Apart from the organisational aspects of this conferred authority, this involves leading family prayers, which were organised around the psalms and daily catechisms, as other household manuals make clear.

The family unit represented a microcosm of the wider society, so it is perhaps no surprise that in a society which emphasised the use of the psalms this should also be apparent in the organisation of the household. In The Godly Forme of Household Government, Robert

Cleaver and John Dod identify the household as a little commonwealth and establish the hierarchical order of the household.<sup>38</sup> They aim to encourage Protestants to put their faith into practice in everyday living, maintaining that the family has to provide not only for bodily but also for spiritual needs (A3v). The family is divided into 'the governors (Father and mother) and those that are to be ruled (Children and servants). The father's position is equated with that of David in Psalm 101: 'wherein he sheweth, how he would rule not only himself, but his houshold, nay the whole Kingdome, by having an eye to them that were good, to reward them: and to them that were bad, to punish them, that so not onely himselfe but al his, might serve the Lord ' (p. 16). Not only do the psalms give the father authority, but they also shape the family's holy exercises: Psalm 43. v.4 gives the example of David being separated from God's house; Psalm 122. v.1 is an encouragement for meeting with others to praise God, and psalm 55. v.7 encourages them all to daily prayer 'Evening and morning, and at noon-tide, wil I pray and make a noise, he wil heare my voice'.<sup>39</sup> The Psalms are also part of the family's holy exercises in which the father must examine his family 'in that which they have heard, and causing them to conferre about it themselves, and to appoint some to reade the Scripture unto them, and all of them to sing Psalmes' (p. 30). However, even Dod and Cleaver emphasise that, albeit in her husband's absence, this role falls to the wife; moreover, the wife is always expected to be a teacher 'of good things and to instruct the younger [wives]'. She is also expected to instruct her children: 'a child wisely trained up by the mother in the young yeares, will bee the easlier brought to goodness, by the Fathers godly care' (p. 53). In order to pre-empt any complaints about the unsuitability for women as instructors, even of children,

the writers cite the biblical example of Timothy who 'was made acquainted with the scripture from a little child, by means of his godly Mother, and Grand mother; a good patterne for us' (pp. 53-54). The acquainting of children with scripture also necessitated the mother's knowledge of the scripture and, as the primary text for instructing children was the psalms, it would seem appropriate that the primary text with which a woman ought to be acquainted was also the psalms.

Richard Bernard's later text, Josuahs Resolution for the well ordering of his Household, also sets up a hierarchical family structure, in which the scriptures, catechisms and the psalms play an important function.<sup>40</sup> Interestingly this text, although primarily for family consumption, emphasises the individual nature of the spiritual journey. Any possible feeling of isolation resulting from this is modified by the reassurance that, as David says: 'we care not what men can doe unto us, for the Lord is on our side' (p. 8). Similarly to Cleaver, Bernard depicts the structure of the household and points out that the governor of the household, the father, must set up holy exercises for the family to participate in. These exercises are: 'reading of the holy Scriptures, the voyce of God, Catechising, telling some short storie of some notable example in the Word, making use thereof, singing of the psalmes, and when the publike sermon hath bin heard, to repeate thereof as much as is remembered' (p. 23). Once more, however, the wife's religious identity is significant: 'because she will often have to supply his place when he has to go away from home,' but more importantly because 'she is the first that instructs the childe, as beeing most with it, causing it to understande that whiche she doth please to teach it' (p. 30). What the wife 'pleases to teach' the child though is not left up to her discretion: Bernard

outlines two catechisms suitable for household use and defines prayer in a similar way to texts explicitly defined as devotional literature (p. 85). The preparation to prayer which Bernard outlines emulates the patterns prescribed in devotional texts, which are highly dependent upon the psalms; as exemplary prayers, the psalms served as apt models and useful verses provided a text to focus the mind on the particular meditation required.<sup>41</sup>

Women thus played a vital role in the household, both by taking the lead in household 'services' in the husband's absence and, consistently, in teaching the children and servants the scriptures. As the psalms formed such an important basis of Protestantism (both in public service and private prayer) and because they were repeatedly referred to as part of the household's devotional exercises, it seems reasonable to suggest that a large part of the wife's participation in this would involve her in teaching private devotional methods which, as I shall illustrate in the next section, prioritised the use of the psalms. Such an activity positions the wife as an exegete, or commentator upon the Word, an office which theoretically and publicly she was denied. There also seem to be specific connections between mothers and daughters in these acts of devotion, which I shall be exploring in more depth in chapter three. Whilst on the whole, the household treatises only permit women to lead the household prayers in their husbands' absence Dod and Cleaver make a point which may suggest that, for whatever reason, women had more influence in the household than is usually thought. They point out that in both material and spiritual provision the wife's: 'industrie and wisdom, may doo so much heerein, that though her husband shoulde be much wanting in his dutie, yet she might hold in the goale' (p. 81). Again this position is devolved upon her by her

husband's 'absence;' although this time it is not necessarily a physical absence but an inability to fulfil his role. In such activities the woman played an important function in a quasi-public sphere; but it is in the area of private devotion that the relationship between women and the psalms is of principal significance.

### 3. 'THE WORDS OF MY MOUTH, AND THE MEDITATIONS OF MY HEART': PRIVATE MEDITATION AND THE FORMULATION OF AN ACCEPTABLE DISCOURSE OF PRAYER.

As I indicated in my introductory chapter, the psalms represented an exemplary discourse for all believers, male and female, to express themselves to God: or, as Antony Gilby put it, the psalms posited 'what we shal saie unto God'.<sup>42</sup> The desire of the psalmist to reformulate his heart, words, and actions in accordance with God's laws is exemplified in psalm 19. v. 14: 'Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength and redeemer'. Helen C. White has traced the influence of the psalms throughout the sixteenth century and has examined the continued significance of 'religious literature' in the seventeenth century. Whilst she acknowledges the problems of her methodology, White points out that of the one hundred and thirty books entered in the Stationer's register in 1620: 'a little more than half were religious books, that is books of sermons, of scriptural exegesis, of religious controversy, of the various types of sacred verse, of prayers, of lives of and sufferings of martyrs, of the triumphs of the godly ... and of these at least a dozen were in purpose and scope clearly devotional'.<sup>43</sup> As yet there has been not been a full analysis of the gendered distinctiveness of devotional

literature, although Suzanne Hull's bibliography indicates that a fair proportion of devotional texts were dedicated to women.<sup>44</sup> One of her measures for identifying a text as intended for female consumption is a dedication to a female patron. Although there are also problems with this methodology (for example, the actual relationship between author and patron is hard to quantify and even if a text was dedicated to a woman this does not necessarily mean that the dedicatee read it), it is a useful starting point and it guides my choice of texts in both this section and the next.

For although to a certain extent all prayers and devotion are indebted to the psalms, those texts dedicated to women give us a glimpse of the specific ways in which women were encouraged to use the psalms in their daily devotions. Despite the fact that such daily devotion was an activity in which all Christians were expected to participate, the daily devotions prescribed for women in conduct literature and educational treatises, as well as their own recording of the daily practice of psalm readings and devotional exercises, exhibit the central significance of this discourse for women, in a way which is unparalleled by contemporary male writers. The books of devotion written for women identify the specific processes of this activity, which are only obliquely referred to elsewhere. In other words, by looking at these devotional texts for women, we gain an indication of how the prescriptive theory was more minutely prescribed for women's use both in private and also in preparation for public devotion.

Interestingly, these devotional texts create composite psalms; that is, they forge new psalms for particular occasions from a number of different psalm quotations. There is a long tradition of this, stretching at least from St. Augustine's Psalter designed for his

mother.<sup>45</sup> But this is also a process which women themselves had been using, before the texts I will be examining here. The popularity of these later texts, and the fact that 'religious literature' remained a dominant aspect of printed texts during the early seventeenth century, suggests to me that although modern feminist criticism tends to view these texts as 'marginal', they were actually part of a central discourse at their time of production. If the texts written by women were marginalised, then the logical conclusion can only be that it was because they were written by women, not that the particular genre in which the women were writing was an inherently marginal one. It could perhaps be argued therefore, that the male authors I am considering wrested the conventions of female devotions from female authors, rather than seeing the women as merely internalising the prescriptions of patriarchy.

The various books of devotion which seem to have been designed for women, place a great emphasis upon the psalms and in providing model prayers for the women either to read verbatim or to use as the basis of their own meditations. The devotional texts are thus simultaneously prescriptive and open to manipulation; for as at least one woman writer argued: 'private praier is for every mans private use; & therefore there is no certaine rule, neither can words be set downe what yee should say: for though we be all sinners, yet some are more troubled with one sinne, some with another'.<sup>46</sup> Whilst these texts depict patterns for daily meditation, then, they had to be amenable to individual use. Michael Spark's The Crums of Comfort with godly Prayers is a book of prayers apparently designed for general household use; it includes prayers for servants, and family prayers, as well as prayers for individual use before and after the sermon and catechising. The copy I looked at is of particular interest because,

although it contains no dedication or name, it seems likely that it was made for or owned by a woman.<sup>47</sup> This copy is a tiny pocket-sized text, bound in an embroidered cover depicting what seems to be Eve at the tree of knowledge, and is joined with an edition of the Sternhold and Hopkins Psalter. Thus the text facilitates both the reading of daily prayers and the daily reading of psalms which framed women's household devotions.

The intention of attracting a female readership is exemplified in the dedication, title and frontispiece to Daniel Featly's Ancilla Pietatis: Or, the Hand-Maid to Private Devotion.<sup>48</sup> The frontispiece depicts a woman at prayer being handed a book, presumably representing Featly's texts itself - as the subtitle of the text is 'Presenting a Manuell to her Mistresse furnished with Instructions, Hymnes and Prayers'. Further to this, the title describes the occasions for which these 'Instructions' were intended; they are 'fitted to the Daies of the Weeke, Feasts and Fasts of the Church'. The text is dedicated to the Duchess of Buckingham, whom Featly identifies as having been 'gained' by Protestantism in a recent conversion from Catholicism. In the light of this, Featly appears to be taking it upon himself to instruct her in the ways and methods of devotion which are appropriate to her new church; although he carefully explains that his writing could not possibly express the extent of her devotion, or that to do so would impair it.<sup>49</sup> Perhaps this is an example of a male author writing for the Duchess's particular requirements, by attempting to codify practices in which she is already privately engaged.

Designed for private devotion, specifically for use in the 'closet', this text serves as a means to regulate female thought during this activity. Although Vives and Hyrde suggested that

religious reading was a means to rein in women's wandering minds, there was a residual fear that women were susceptible to heresy and that, when alone, they 'thought evil'.<sup>50</sup> The need for such regulation is possibly related to the growing importance of private devotion within Protestantism. Although Featly, like other devotional writers was careful not to disparage public devotion, he highlights the importance of supplementing this with private devotional activity: 'I have good warrant to suspect the sinceritie of their Devotion altogether, who are not more devout in private than in public'. He argues that although afflicted souls should pray in church, they should also offer 'up often prayers with strong cryes at home' (pp. 4-5). This is stressed in his summary of the relationship between public and private devotion: the 'Publike is more solemne, but private ought to bee more frequent: Publike makes more noise, but private (for the most part) hath a deeper channell' (p. 6). Here Featly underlines the importance, even unwittingly prioritising, the practice of private devotion, which modern feminist readings perceive as constraining women during this period; that is the injunctions upon women's enclosure within the 'closet'. However, although this is limiting in one sense, because it precluded women from other activities, it also indicates that such solitary prayer was a highly valued aspect of Renaissance Protestant spirituality and yet an activity with which women were most closely identified.

The importance of his choice of dedicatee is reinforced by Featly's desire to produce devotions which inflame the spiritual desires of Protestants towards God. The one way in which the Protestant church manages to elicit the enrapturement that Featly desires is manifested in the psalms. To illustrate this point, Featly describes how he had need of spiritual refreshment (during a bout of

illness), which he could only obtain through the psalms: 'this heavenly musick, so ravished my senses, that I found by experience in the twilight, betwixt the day of life, and night of death, that inlightned thoughts afford nothing like comfort to enflamed affections' (A6r). Eschewing 'inlightned thoughts' or secular knowledge, Featly asserts the primary significance of 'enflamed affections' which the psalms both procure and express. The importance of such devotion is that it represents:

the hearts warmth, or rather lifes bloud of Religion:  
It is a sacred bond knitting the soule unto God: It is  
a spirituall muskle, moving onely upward, and lifting  
the hearts, eyes, and hands continually unto Heaven.  
And because it consisteth rather in the fervour of the  
affections, then light of the thoughts, or blaze, or  
lustre in the words, it is better felt than understood,  
and yet better understood then can be expressed (p. 2).

Devotion, as the 'life bloud' of religion, is that which moves the individual into an intimate relationship with God and is identified as being situated in the realm of the emotions where the relationship is 'better felt than understood'. As I explored in my introduction, this is peculiarly associated with the psalms; explications of the psalms emphasise their expression of emotion: the form of expression contained in the psalms is that which most approximates an understanding, or externalisation, of the inner emotions through which the believer is drawn to God.

Featly's text provides examples of devotional exercises for almost every conceivable experience; the devotions take the form of both a prose prayer and a composite psalm for each day of the week, for important feast days, and public and private fast days.<sup>51</sup> The composite psalms which Featly produces signify the seemingly endless renewability of the application and use of the psalms; by slicing up the psalms and pasting together similar verses, or even subsections of verses, a new psalm can be produced. Featly does provide

references, so the 'original' context of any particular psalm verse can be verified by the interested reader; however, the usual object of such composite psalms seems to be to renew the apparently static discourse of the psalms and display an active interpretative strategy at work. For the psalms provided here do not simply emulate the commentator's interpretations of them, or follow strictly the general application or interpretation provided for them in, for example, the Sternhold and Hopkins Psalter or the de Beze Psalter.<sup>52</sup> Featly displays no compunction about splicing the psalms to suit his own purposes and to encourage others to emulate this practice. And this despite the declared Protestant preference for 'plain style' or word-for-word translation and their anxiety about the sanctity of the 'Word' of God.

This strategy encapsulates how a stable or 'pre-existent Symbolic order' can be manipulated by an individual speaker or, in this case, writer. For the psalms as a whole anatomise the individual's experiences, and any one particular psalm can be manipulated to a variety of purposes. The individual can choose a verse or a number of verses from a single psalm and combine them with another psalm; although the overall meanings of the particular psalms concerned may be at odds, the chosen verses make a new and generally coherent request to God. This endeavour seems to be peculiarly associated with the psalms, but it perhaps crystallises Protestant reading strategies which in some sense apply to the whole of the Bible; symbolising the active interaction between text and reader to which George Herbert refers in 'The Holy Scriptures. II:

Such are thy secrets, which my life makes good,  
And comments on thee: for in ev'rything  
Thy words do find me out, and parallels bring,  
And in another make me understood. (53)

The whole of this poem is pertinent to the reading and re-writing

strategies which authors performed on the psalms; the honeyed word, to which the psalmist refers, is able to 'clear the breast, to mollify all pain,' it 'mends the looker's eyes'. But the text is 'Subject to ev'ry mounter's bended knee' neatly encapsulating both the subjection of the reader to the text, and the text's subjection to the requirement of its reader, as s/he makes the connections between apparently disparate verses: 'This verse marks that, and both do make a motion/ Unto a third, that ten leaves off doth lie'. Such shifts, or the active participation in the construction of meaning between text and reader, are represented in the psalms which Featly provides for daily morning and evening devotion. Each day focuses upon a particular aspect of the self and the individual's relationship to God; for example, Sunday's devotion is concerned with the 'devout soul's' expression of the desire and performance of 'holy duties requisite' for that day, and Monday's devotion is related to the 'work of redemption'.<sup>54</sup> From these examples it can be seen that, whilst a particular psalm might provide the focus of attention for the day's devotion, there is nothing scandalous about picking one verse out of context and weaving it into the day's psalm, or indeed of leaving out another verse which does not quite fit the particular purposes of the day.

The authority for using the psalms in this manner is outlined by Featly in his preparation to prayer:

My heart is indighting of a good matter; my tongue is the pen of a ready writer, saith the Kingly Prophet (Ps. 45. vv.1 & 2), and againe, My heart was hot within mee, while I was musing the fire burned, then spake I with my tongue (Ps. 39. v.3): If this sweete singer of Israel, first pricked the notes in his heart before he began to sing them; if he who was inspired by the holy Ghost, framed his Prayers, and Psalmes of thanksgiving in his minde, before hee delivered them by his tongue; ought not we who are as farre behinde him in his giftes, as we are below him in condition, much more

meditate before we utter anything to the Lord? (p. 18)

The Psalmist is thus an inspiration not only in the particular words, but also represents a pattern for the preparation to prayer. This preparation is connected with the model of prayer found in 'the Lord's Prayer', but also incorporates the central concerns which the psalms articulate; that is, humble confession, confident invocation or petition, and hearty thanksgiving.<sup>55</sup> In order to emphasise this point, Featly also provides 'A Preparatory Hymne collected out of diverse Psalmes, wherein the devout soule desireth a) Accessee, b) Audience, c) Assistance, d) Acceptance':

a) Thou sayest seek ye my face, my heart said unto thee, thy face Lord will I seeke (27. v.8).

Hide not thy face farre from mee, nor put thy servant away in anger (27. v.9).

Cast me not away from thy presence, and take not thy holy Spirit from me (51. v.11).

b) Heare, O Lord, when I cry unto thee; have mercy also upon me and answer me (27. v.7).

Ponder my words O Lord, consider my meditation (5. v.1).

My heart is inditing of a good matter; my tongue is the pen of a ready writer (45. v.1).

c) O Lord open thou my lips, & my mouth shall shew forth thy praise (51. v.15).

Let my prayer be set forth before thee as incense, and the lifting up of my hands as an evening sacrifice (141. v.2).

Set a watch, O Lord before my mouth, and keepe the doore of my lips (141. v.3).

d) Let the words of my mouth, and the meditations of my heart be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord my strength and my redeemer (16. v.14). (pp. 59-60)

Featly, then, gathers together and reworks the psalms to produce new versions appropriate for different circumstances and addresses them to a female audience.<sup>56</sup> Thomas Sorocold in The Supplications of Saints demonstrates a slightly different approach. His devotional text is dedicated to Princess Elizabeth, James I's daughter, and includes an acrostic of her name which essentially constructs a prayer for her to God out of the psalms.<sup>57</sup> Not only was this text dedicated to a female patron, but it was certainly read by at least

one woman, Lady Anne Clifford.<sup>58</sup> He also incorporates some of Elizabeth I's prayers, all of which identifies his primary audience as female, although the preface embraces the wider audience of 'all devout people'. Sorocold describes The Supplications as 'this handfull of flowers, picked, sorted, and tyed up into a bundle, according to my slender abilitie, both of judgement and invention' (A6r). Although such 'gatherings' have been identified as a 'masculine pursuit', Sorocold's self-abnegation ('my slender abilitie') uses the same kind of language which, when used by a woman, is taken to signify her nervousness in entering into a masculine domain. But, here, and I would suggest this is also applicable to the writings of Anne Wheathill or Elizabeth Grymeston, it displays the lack of concern with our nebulous concept of 'originality' and makes a virtue out of plagiarism.

Sorocold states his desire that the text might help to reformulate its readers and enable them to 'have also your part in the Communion of Saints' (A7r) and differentiates his texts from preceding prayer books; he has not, for example, mingled the prayers with 'discourse' or meditations. Instead he provides textual references to furnish his readers with a degree of liberty in their own interpretation: 'wherefore if ye find them worthy the name of prayers, use them: if otherwise, yet take them as meane grounds of Prayer and meditation, to set your devout thoughts a worke' (A8r). Here then the readers are overtly being presented with a pattern, but one which they are not rigorously tied to; they are instead actively encouraged to reformulate it in relation to their own requirements. In the second part of The Supplications, Sorocold provides prayers for particular occasions; as was noted in the household section, singing and reading of psalms played a central role in family

devotional practices. Again Sorocold presents particular psalm verses as a means to stimulate family devotion and to provide the framework for the day's prayer.<sup>59</sup> The family should commence its devotion with Psalm 108. v. 3 'I will prayse the Lord among the people: and I will sing prayses unto thee among the Nations' and in the evening with Psalm 116. vv. 21 & 13 'What shall I give unto the Lord, for all his benefits toward me? Because he hath inclined his eare unto mee, therefore will I call upon him as long as I live'. As has been seen in Featly's text, and in conjunction with the various tables, patterns of psalms being suited to particular purposes are emerging. Whereas in the second section, these patterns refer to communal occasions, in the third section, this becomes even more localised. Specific psalm verses are posited as appropriate for an individual, identified by their class or experience: the David alone section commences with Psalm 142. vv. 1 & 2 'With my voyce unto the Lord did I make my Supplication. I powred out my complaint before him' (p.265). Here Sorocold provides prayers for, amongst others, women in childbirth (Ps. 127. v.3, & Ps. 90. vv.16 &3), children (Ps. 37. v.5), orphans (Ps. 27. v.10) and midwives (Ps. 68. v.35).<sup>60</sup>

A devotional text which focuses on the Penitential Psalms, making them 'into a forme of familiar praiers' for 'easy use' is Seven Sobs of a Sorrowfull Soule for Sinne by William Hunnis.<sup>61</sup> Dedicated to Ladie Francis, Countess of Sussex ('one of the Ladies of hir Majesties most Honorable privie chamber'), Hunnis conventionally stresses her virtue, but most of the dedication is concerned with Hunnis's self-defined transgression in dedicating the text to her without first asking her permission. Hunnis combines a metrical translation of the psalms with an accompanying verse meditation: the words of the author in meditation upon each verse are inter-woven

with direct scriptural quotation, which is indicated by margin gloss.

For example:

- Stanza 50. MY HART IS TROUBLED SORE, Verse 10. Psalm 38.  
MY STRENGTH IS GONE ME FRO;  
LIKEWISE THE SIGHT OF BOTH MINE EIES  
FROM ME IS GONE ALSO.
51. The tribulations great,  
Wherewith my sinfull hart  
Is vext, and troubled night and daie,  
about in everie part;
52. Is, Lord, for feare of thee,  
and of thy punishment,  
Which thou shalt render unto me,  
for this my life mispent.
53. O lord, remove from me,  
this cloudie mist of mine,  
And with thy grace and mercie mixt  
annoint my dusked eie;
54. That I the way may see,  
wherein thou hast delight,  
And in the same my steps direct,  
to walke both day and night: AMEN (p. 27).

This short extract demonstrates the way in which the psalms both provided a discourse in which to speak to God, but which could be renewed by one's own additions; or, rather, by one's own paraphrasing of other psalms, which are recast without referencing to produce the illusion of an individual meditation. Hunnis's technique incorporates both a direct quotation and paraphrase or reworking, demonstrating the means by which the psalms provide both a pre-existing pattern but can be manipulated towards one's own ends. Here particularly, the process accentuates the confessional or penitential aspects of the psalms.

These devotional texts for women underline the practice of reformulating the discourse of the psalms to suit a particular individual's needs and requirements. Despite the Protestant emphasis upon the 'Word' of God, the psalms provide these writers with the liberty to reconstitute the text according to their own needs. This informs, or perhaps is informed by, the practices revealed in women's own devotional texts, which I will discuss in the next chapter. The

tables for the use of the psalms, the use of the psalms in devotional literature, and later in women's diaries, depict the practical applications of particular psalms. Identifying which ones were used and in what circumstances, provides a framework for analysing the interpretative strategies employed in reading the psalms, or, at least, an indication of the boundaries of meaning which were associated with them, outlining what Bourdieu calls the 'practical taxonomies' which organised Renaissance interpretations of the psalms. Bourdieu suggests that:

understanding ritual practice is not a question of decoding the internal logic of symbolism but of restoring its practical necessity by relating it to the real conditions of its genesis, that is to the conditions in which it functions, and the means it uses to attain them, are defined. It means, for example, reconstituting ... the significance and functions that agents in a determinate social formation can (and must) confer on a determinate practice or experience, given the practical taxonomies which organize their perception. (62)

The devotional texts, and the various psalm tables, indicate the determinate conditions for psalm interpretation, identifying the practices and processes through which they were read and applied to a specific experience which it sought to codify and explain for the reader entering a particular situation. Yet this attempt to codify the use of the psalms demonstrates the instability of 'The Word'. The psalms epitomise the proliferating meanings which could be derived from a text once it was applied to a particular situation by an individual reader. This is crucial for a consideration of women's use of the psalms. The psalms were bound up with the construction of the exemplary female subject, as they were promoted for her use in devotion, in the household and in fulfilling her role as an instructor of her children, and in all this helped to maintain the limitations of her social functions. However, the malleability of the psalms, the capacity to alter them to suit one's own purposes,

suggests that women readers would not simply have internalised the prayers prescribed for them, but could learn from the construction of these composite psalms a means whereby to express themselves through that word. This involves active choices in reworking the psalms to suit their own needs, rather than passively internalising the versions prescribed for them.

#### 4. PERSONAL PIETY AND PUBLIC PROFIT: WOMEN AS PATRONS OF THE PSALMS.

In some senses this section complements and consolidates the previous section, for those books of devotion were dedicated to female patrons and there is some evidence to suggest that the psalm commentaries addressed to female patrons served as a basis for household devotions. However, whereas the books of devotion were formulated primarily of composite psalms designed for use on particular days or for specific occasions, the commentaries are chiefly concerned with the exegesis of whole psalms (either of a single psalm, the whole of the psalms, or particular groups of psalms). The commentaries, as that very title implies, are concerned with explicating and expanding the psalms; in this, they function as mini-sermons, a role they take up due to the absence of sufficiently trained pastors.<sup>63</sup> The commentaries thus combine an apparent interest in the personal piety of the female dedicatee with a desire for public, or national, profit through the reading of the psalms. All of the patrons are, perhaps conventionally, chosen for their already established piety; they are thus situated as exemplars in their own right, but also as exemplars in their desire for a more informed and increasingly diligent study of the psalms. This endeavour is portrayed as of crucial importance both for their own spiritual

development and for the development of the nation.

The interweaving of these personal and political aims is indicative of the inter-relationship between individual activities, household organisation and political organisation depicted in treatises of social conduct: the 'greatest men' had a corresponding responsibility to set an example to the rest of society as corruption in the nobility was endemic in the rest of society.<sup>64</sup> Robert Fylles, for example, in his dedication to Lord Ferie suggests that: 'there can not come a more blessed thing to any Christian Realme than their Nobilitie to be endued with the knowledge of Gods most sacred & holy Worde'.<sup>65</sup> Lord Ferie is instructed in the use of the psalms in order to fit him to his public position, as an agent of the suppression of 'Papistrye' and purveyor of God's Word 'in those countreis where God hath placed you'.<sup>66</sup> In contrast, female patrons are identified as exemplars for other women, their neighbours, and as promoters of God's word to the 'unlearned' people of England. Although this might appear restrictive, it demonstrates women's continued influence in the promotion of 'lay piety' and that the psalms are of particular significance in this enterprise. Despite the fact that generally speaking there were fewer female patrons than male patrons, an analysis of Rivkah Zim's bibliography of sixteenth-century psalms translations reveals that roughly twenty per cent of these texts were dedicated to women.<sup>67</sup> As one significant motivation for dedicating a text to a particular patron was either their interest in, or expected interest in, the content of the text, this enhances the connections already established between women's reading and the psalms.<sup>68</sup> Additionally, the specific individuals to whom these texts are addressed confirms women's involvement in the promotion of the most radical texts, as all of them have radical Protestant, often

bordering on Puritan, connections.

One woman who was acknowledged not only as a motivator for others' biblical works, but as a producer of her own texts was Catherine Parr; she and 'her female associates,' as John N. King has recently dubbed them, played an important role in the promoting of Protestant piety. King argues that these women 'developed a reputation for patronizing more extensive religious reform than that officially permitted by the Crown'.<sup>69</sup> Significantly, this indicates they were not simply internalising prescriptions promulgated by the King, or Church leaders, in their biblical studies. On the contrary, they used as their focus of study the Bible translations by Coverdale and Tyndale which were, at that point, banned texts.<sup>70</sup> King's essay is persuasive in its representation of Parr's influence upon women's devotions, but what his essay does not address, due to his use of the umbrella term of 'religious discourses', is the striking predominance of the use of the psalms within the group of women associated with her. King suggests that Catherine Parr's contemporaries 'embarked on an ambitious program that fused Bible reading with private theological study' and that 'these women transmitted their unique blend of patronage and piety to succeeding generations for aristocratic women who came of age during the reign of Queen Elizabeth'.<sup>71</sup> The focus of this 'private theological study' was the psalms, and the transmission to which King refers is embodied in a woman whom he neglects to mention, Elizabeth Tyrwhitt. A Lady of Parr's chamber and appointed as Governess to the Princess Elizabeth in 1548, Tyrwhitt is named by John Foxe as one of the women questioned about Parr's 'dubious' reading habits.<sup>72</sup> Tyrwhitt's will reveals that she owned a copy of the Wycliffe Bible, and she also produced her own meditations, which include her own composite

psalms.<sup>73</sup> These psalms are contained in Elizabeth I's Girdle Prayer Book and are reprinted in Thomas Bentley's The Monument of Matrones.<sup>74</sup> Thus Tyrwhitt's meditations were 'transmitted' to the Queen and through Bentley's anthology were available to a wider audience.

Catherine Parr herself is reported to have been 'continually' reading the psalms. Without accrediting this any significance and without noting his source, King asserts that Catherine Parr's 'daily schedule was known to include regular household worship and prayer; one confidant reports that she studied the Psalms and contemplative meditation day and night'.<sup>75</sup> Nicholas Udall suggests that Parr had herself written some psalms, which have either been lost or perhaps refers to the psalmic nature of Parr's Prayers and Lamentations. Headmaster of Eton for eight years, Udall was also one of the earliest advocates of Protestantism and was known to be a Lutheran sympathiser, consolidating Parr's 'extremist' connections.<sup>76</sup> In one dedication, Udall describes the reasons why Catherine Parr deserves to be praised: 'not onely for dyvers moste godly Psalmes and meditacions of your owne penning and setting foorth: but also for procuryng this present worke ... to be translated to the use of the unlearned multytude, whiche can go no ferther then the under-standing or readyng of Englishe'.<sup>77</sup> Parr's importance is twofold, founded on both her own writing and her commitment to the promotion of others' writing, both of these activities define her as an exemplar of piety. Udall's description also situates her amongst biblical figures of female piety who were engaged in the promotion of the Gospel.<sup>78</sup>

In these activities, however, Catherine Parr is certainly not represented as passive; on the contrary, her promotion of the Gospels provokes a comparison which positions Parr, albeit metaphorically, as

a 'good [male] captain' who wisely marshalls her soldiers:

and as a good captain partely to the encourageyng of his forward soldiers, and partely to the shaming of dastardes or falsehearted loyteers, ledeth and guideth his armie and goeth hiymself before them: so your grace, ferre otherwise than in the weake vessels of woman sexe is to bee looked for, doe shewe unto men a notable example of forwardnesse in setting penne to the booke, partely to the great coumfortyng of such as fain would dooe good if they durst, and partely to the shame ... of sluggardes, who havynge good talentes doe kepe them fast lapped up in theyr napkins, and live idely. And by thys meanes dooeth your highnesse right well declare that all your delite, all your studie, and all your endeavour is by al possible meanes employed to the publike commoditie of all good Englishe people, the kyngs moste loving and obediente subjects, to be nouzled and trayned in the readyng of Goddes woorde. (79)

Here, Catherine Parr's endeavours in both her writing and her patronage, far outstrip the efforts of her male contemporaries. She is also singled out amongst her sex, in fact becoming through metaphorical representation more 'manly' than her male contemporaries. Although she symbolises an exceptional talent within the social restrictions upon her sex, as she obtains that which is not to be looked for 'in the weake vessels of woman sexe', her primary function is to indict men for their failures. For the men are 'dastardes', 'falsehearted loyteers', and 'sluggardes' who bring no profit to their country. Conversely, Parr centres her activities and energies upon the promotion of studies, which are eminently productive. Somewhat ironically - given Parr's suspect reading - she is represented as promoting 'the publike commoditie of all good Englishe people' which will in turn produce 'loving and obediente subjects'. This shaming of the male sex for not fulfilling their roles is a strategy which Roger Ascham also employs in his depiction of Elizabeth I's capacity for translation in The Scholemaster.<sup>80</sup>

Parr's commitment to the promotion or 'advancement' of God's word, is also recorded by Sir Anthony Cope, and it is this interest

which Cope identifies as his motivation for dedicating A Godly Meditation to her: 'when I consydered your gracious entent and godly purpose in the readynge and studie of holy scripture, and the avauncement of the trewe worde of God: I thought I coulde in no thyng do your grace a more pleasaunt service, then to make an exposition of certeyne psalmes of the noble prophete David'.<sup>81</sup> Cope's endeavours are referred to by John N. King, he suggests that Cope's text reduced 'Bible readings "to the kynde or fashion of prayers and contemplatife meditations"' in a way which paralleled Parr's own writing. Without realising the importance of his comment, King states that 'handwritten marginalia in one surviving copy (BL 697, g. 11) show how the volume was used in at least one household, for the glosses serve as a guide to daily prayer by assigning individual readings to specific days of the week'.<sup>82</sup> Cope's text was thus used as a household devotional manual, whereby a particular reader engaged in daily devotions. This example indicates that the psalms were being used for daily meditation by Protestants even in 1547, predating the books explicitly produced for household devotion by approximately seventy years.

Cope's A Godly Meditation is particularly appropriate for this usage because he identifies the psalms as songs which reformulate those who use them, providing productive entertainment. Cope writes that 'our celestial Orpheus the prophete David hath so sette forth his songes that they have strength and force to cause men which be carnall and beastly, to become spiritual and heavenly. Who so wyll learne to geve to God dewe honoure and prayses: maye in them take a perfect patron'.<sup>83</sup> The ability of the psalms to vanquish such corruption, despite Salter's vacillations about the influence of music upon women, is also the subject of John Marbecke's preface to

The Holie History of King David, dedicated to Elizabeth Barret. This is not actually a translation of the psalms, it is a metrical version of the story of David's life in the first and second books of Samuel. Marbecke's motivation for writing this text was partly a desire to supplant the emphasis upon saints, but also to encourage the erasure: 'of all filthy, fonde, and unsavery songs, bookes, and fancies, farre unfit and ill beseeming the eies of baptized Christians'.<sup>84</sup> David's life as well as his psalms was, it seems, a fitting source of emulation for women readers.

It was not only Catherine Parr to whom psalm translations and psalms commentaries were dedicated, nor was she the only woman to be perceived as gaining profit from such reading. It is a striking characteristic of these dedications that time and again they emphasise the personal profit the woman will gain from this reading. The Psalmes of David by Anthony Gilby is dedicated to Lady Katherine Hastings, Countess of Huntingdon: Gilby describes himself as 'bold to put foorth some part of the same into English, which I thought most expedient for you'.<sup>85</sup> In fact, Gilby translates the whole of de Beze's commentaries on the Psalms, including a table and an index defining the issues and experiences for which a particular psalm was appropriate. The choice of text - both for the translator and the recipient - seems particularly appropriate: Katherine's husband was Henry Hastings, the 3rd. Earl of Huntingdon, whom Camden proclaimed to be 'a zealous puritan'. Hastings himself also attempted to claim succession to the throne and supported the Huguenot's, all of which identifies him as one of the 'psalm singing Protestants' who were a threat to Elizabeth I.<sup>86</sup> Gilby's Puritan credentials are witnessed both by his translation of de Beze's Psalm commentaries and his participation in the translation of the Geneva Bible.<sup>87</sup> In addition

to this Katherine was the daughter of John Dudley, Earl of Northumberland, which emphasises the ardent Protestantism/Puritanism of the familial connections and relates her to the Sidney family.<sup>88</sup>

As Henry Hastings was Gilby's main patron it is not altogether surprising to find him dedicating this text to Lady Katherine; what is interesting though is the way in which Gilby's dedication intertwines personal and political aims. Commencing the dedication by stating its 'expediency' or relevance for Katherine Hastings, Gilby continues to outline the 'profitability' of this text for her personal development: 'I do beseech your honour to consider it, as a preparative to move your godlie mind to the more diligent meditation of these Arguments of the Psalmes, which are very profitable, and to this Paraphrasis, which is a briefe and a plaine declaration of the meaning of the holie Ghost' (a2r-a2v). Gilby's text is designed as a 'preparative' which encourages Lady Hastings to 'diligent meditation' of the arguments of the psalms, which brings profit and enables her to use the psalms for specific purposes, but the 'meaning' of the psalms is then said to be codified by the 'Paraphrasis'. In the light of Jerome's earlier comments, that the psalms are a source of 'distraction' for women, Gilby's dedication is an indication of the contrary potential for the psalms to become the objects of 'diligent meditation,' a point which Gilby reasserts more forcefully later in his dedication when discussing the political importance of the psalms:

To this purpose is this Booke of the Psalmes most necessarie for everie Christian, not to reade them for fashion and custome onlie, either in a knowne or an unknowne language, which were to take the name of God in vaine, but to meditate them in their hearts, and so by earnest and continual invocation and hartie praiers to move the Lord our God to mercies, as his holie servants have by the like meanes alwaies found mercie before us (a3v).

The concerns to which Gilby directs his text are not purely for Lady Katherine's personal spiritual welfare. On the title page, the psalm quotation Gilby chooses for an epigraph is 'Our fathers called upon thee, and were delivered: they trusted in thee, and were not confounded' (Ps. 22. v. 5). As the above quotation illustrates, Gilby was advocating a form of typological reading of the psalms which enabled contemporary Christians (specifically Protestants) to gain hope from the prior experiences of Jewish history. They could view the history of God's saving of his people as a confirmation of God's saving graces to be performed towards them.<sup>89</sup> Gilby considers God's threatenings towards his chosen people in the second book of Kings, relating this to the contemporary political situation in England: 'the which terrible words and threatnings against Gods chosen people, when I read them, they cause me to tremble and feare for our state here in England' (a3r). This fear is connected to the need for further reform of the Church, which even after twenty-two years of 'reform' is 'not yet brought to ful perfection'; indeed, 'the horrible sinnes of former times are not yet purged with true teares of repentance' (a3r). Gilby simultaneously censures the church for its failings and individuals who read the psalms 'for fashion and custome onlie'. This echoes the terms in which Udall described women's use of the psalms; it was, he said, their 'fashion' and 'custom' to read these texts, and not only in English. Here Gilby is perhaps concerned that such reading was now merely customary and formulaic, rather than the object of proper study.

Curiously Gilby suggests that the psalms inspire the desire for virtue by illustrating 'our' degeneracy: 'the perusing of these Psalmes can worke no more in us, but to cause us to consider how far we are from that zeale of Gods glorie ... yet wil they be verie

profitable unto us, to be diligentlie read and wel weighed in our mindes' (a4r). The psalms thus inspire the reader to virtue precisely by demonstrating the reader's lack of virtue. This situates the psalms as a problematic text for a female readership. For a recurring point of debate in treatises on women's reading is the concern with women reading texts which depict subjects of dubious morality. Despite this contradiction, the psalms are promoted as appropriate reading. Directing his text to his 'unlearned countremen', Gilby addresses it to a woman whom, although identified as virtuous, is not recognised or designated as learned; Lady Hastings as well as the 'unlearned countremen' is in need of direction in order to reformulate both themselves and their nation.

Another English translation of a de Beze text, Christian Medatations, is dedicated to Lady Ann Bacon, a woman who was described as 'learned'.<sup>90</sup> Like other psalm commentaries, this version was also commissioned by a woman, as an aid to her private meditations: 'beeing required by a great & vertuous princesse, to frame for her some forme of prayers: I tooke them a fresh into my hands, polishing them over, and that with hope of publishing them'.<sup>91</sup> Such private commissioning confirms that the psalms were of particular interest to women for private prayer, and this text is an indication of the primary importance of the Penitential psalms for women.<sup>92</sup> Both Lady Hastings and Ann Bacon are identified as exemplars for their profession of the Gospel, within the spheres appropriate to women. Lady Bacon is described as a: 'good ensample of your owne houshold, and a shining light among your neighbours' (A3r). Both de Beze and John Stubbs dedicate the commentary to Ann Bacon; unlike Lady Hastings perhaps, Bacon herself would not have needed the commentary to be translated for her own understanding. John Stubbs

identifies the importance of the psalms for every Christian reader, but suggests that they are particularly appropriate for Lady Ann Bacon herself:

besides the common helpe it brings to all, for more cleare understanding and expounding those eight psalmes: it is singularly medicinable to wounded and cast downe consciences, who after their laborsome combate with sinne, and profitable humiliation there-through, may againe by these sweete Meditations arise with joy, finding happie issue of their troubles ... which was one thing that made me, among others, to thinke of you, good Madame, as to whose tender conscience it might be welcomly applyed (A2r-A2v).

It is her personal situation that positions her as ideal patron for these psalms, although her 'personal troubles' have political connections because of her son's situation 'during those great calamities publique to the realme, and particular to him and his whole familie' (A5v).

Although both de Beze and Stubbs acknowlege Lady Bacon's learning, they advise her to take a rest from the dizzy heights of Greek and Latin and look instead to a 'lower', yet equally or more improving text:

you might perhaps therein finde some consolation, after the reading of those great and holy doctors Greeke and Latin so familiar to you, for your better confirming in the meditation of spiritual things, and in this constancie and Christian patience wherewith God hath so beautified you, that in you is verily acknowledged that Christianly high minded courage (A5r).

Although like Catherine Parr, Bacon is acknowledged to have 'Christianly high minded courage', she is being encouraged to remain within the realms of proper female reading. And this despite the fact that her own translations were of 'scriptural' texts; the psalms represented an even safer discourse, especially when written in English and with their emphasis upon individual experience. In a way this positions the psalms as a limitation on women's educational and spiritual development; the psalms were the first part of scripture

they would learn, and, here, it seems that they are not being encouraged to move beyond them.

Despite this limiting factor, it is important to stress the fact that all of these female patrons have radical Protestant connections, which politicises even the most personal individual association with the psalms. Additionally most of these women actively commission the texts which were dedicated to them, an act which suggests an active interest in the text, rather than it being simply imposed upon them. The number of psalm commentaries dedicated to women, as well as the number of devotional texts which prioritised the specific discourse of the psalms, suggests that the discourse which formed their early subjectivity remains a significant mode of self-expression throughout their life. Their positions as patrons identifies these women as instigators of the promotion of vernacular texts which were perceived as profitable, both for the individual patron and the nation as a whole. Their predisposition to virtue partially informs the dedications of these commentaries to particular women, in this and in their use of these texts the women's exemplary status is confirmed. In one sense, therefore, the psalms are obviously being promoted as a permissible discourse for women to use; the psalms provided a discourse which enabled women to fulfil the social functions prescribed to them: as mothers (teaching children to read with alphabet psalters), and as wives (encouraging household devotions). But the process of subjectivisation established through this usage does not position women in a purely passive position. For, as the use of the psalms in devotional texts demonstrates, the psalms were an endlessly renewable text; the variety of patterns presented and the number of tables attempting to classify and codify the psalms, actually reveals the variety of applications for any one particular

psalm rather than establishing a static, or prescriptive definition of its use. Whilst in one sense the psalms represented a 'permissible' discourse for women, it is also a discourse which, as I shall be discussing in the next chapter, enabled some women writers to reformulate and appropriate God's word to their own situation and their own needs. This was an enterprise in which these women writers are active participants in the creation of the 'meaning' of a particular psalm rather than being simply forced to internalise an inherently 'man made language'.

FOOTNOTES

- 1) St. Jerome, Selected Letters, Loeb Classical Library (London, 1933), pp.343-65. (Quoted in Susan Groag Bell, 'Medieval Women Book Owners: Arbiters of Lay Piety and Ambassadors of Culture' Signs, 7. No. 4 (Summer 1982), 742-68 (p. 754).)
- 2) Nicholas Udall, Erasmus: Paraphrases Upon the New Testament, (1548), Preface to St. John's Gospel. (Quoted by Betty Travitsky, The Paradise of Women: Writings by Englishwomen of the Renaissance (Connecticut, 1981), p. 90.)
- 3) See discussion of St. Jerome in Not in God's Image, edited by Julia O'Faolain and Lauro Martines (London, 1973).
- 4) Proverbs 31, incorporates the (in)famous cataloging of the ideal wife's duties and actions. It is also worth noting that the Renaissance mode of interpreting the psalms in relation to the New Testament owed much to St. Augustine. See Edward A. Gosselin, The Kings Progress to Jerusalem: some interpretations of David during the Reformation Period and Their Patristic and Medieval Background (Malibu, 1976), p. 4.
- 5) Elsewhere Udall states that: 'it was now a common thing to see young virgins so trained in the study of good letters, that they willingly set all other vain pastimes at nought, for learning sake. It was now no news at all, to see Queens and ladies of most high estate and progeny, instead of courtly dalliance, to embrace virtuous exercises of reading and writing, and with most earnest study both early and late, to apply themselves to the aquiring of knowledge, ... most especially of God and his most holy word'. (Quoted Betty S. Travitsky (1981), p. 5.) See also Roland H. Bainton, 'Learned Women in the European Sixteenth-Century' in Beyond Their Sex: Learned Women of the European Past, edited by Patricia H. Labalme (New York, 1980), pp. 117 - 128. He points out that upper class women were well 'versed in the humanist disciplines involving acquaintance with the ancient classical and Christian literature and the ability to handle Latin and Greek' (p. 117), citing the example of Plympia Morata who 'was able even to translate the Psalms from Hebrew into Greek' (p. 120).
- 6) For full reference, see note 1. Jerome continues: 'Have a set of letters made for her of boxwood or of ivory and tell her their names ... When she begins with uncertain hand to use the pen, either let another hand be put over hers or else have the letters marked on a tablet'.
- 7) Bell, Signs (1982), p. 756.
- 8) Ruth Hughey, Cultural Interests of Women in England, 1524-1640, (Cornell: PhD., 1932), p. 174.
- 9) Alice Thornton, A Book of Remembrances of all the remarkable deliverances of myself, husband and children (1668?) in Her Own Life: Autobiographical writings by seventeenth-century Englishwomen, edited by Elspeth Graham, Hilary Hinds, Elaine Hobby and Helen Wilcox (London, 1989), 147-164 (p. 150). The entry concerned is that for 1631. According to the entry on Alice Thornton in A Biographical

Dictionary of English Women Writers, 1580 - 1720, edited by Maureen Bell, George Parfitt and Simon Shepherd (Hertfordshire, 1990), p. 191, Thornton was born in 1627. Thus, this entry supposedly represents her at three or four years old. I will be returning to this passage in more detail in chapter three and will examine the implications of the retrospection of this account there.

10) For an example of the connections between male education and the use of the psalms in constituting their social identity, see Sir Edmund Coote, The English Schoolmaster (1596). This text includes translations of psalms 119 (vv. 1-16), 1, 4, 50, 51, 67, 104, 112, 113, 120, 126, and 148 (pp. 49 -63), but the way in which these psalms are to be used is not clarified.

11) Many critics have examined the relationship between conduct literature and women's education. See for example, Ann Rosalind Jones, 'Nets and Bridles: early modern conduct books and sixteenth-century women's lyrics' in The Ideology of Conduct: Essays in Literature and the History of Sexuality (London, 1987) and 'Surprising Fame: Renaissance Gender Ideologies and Women's Lyric' in The Poetics of Gender, edited by Nancy K. Miller (New York, 1986); Constance Jordan, 'Feminism and the Humanists: The Case for Sir Thomas Elyot's Defences of Good Women' in Rewriting the Renaissance, edited by Margaret W. Ferguson et al (Chicago, 1986). See also Patricia H. Labalme (1980) and Ian Maclean, The Renaissance Notion of Woman: A Study in the Fortunes of Scholasticism and Medical Science in European Intellectual Life (Cambridge, 1980).

12) Ruth Kelso, Doctrine for the Lady of the Renaissance (Urbana, 1956), p. 45.

13) Patricia H. Labalme, ed. (1980), p. 2.

14) The theoretical directives about the limitations about women's involvement in education are discussed by Thomas Salter, A Mirrhor mete for all Mothers, Matrones, and Maides, intituled the Mirrhor of Modestie (1579) and another translation of the same text by W.P., The Necessarie, Fit and Convenient Education of a Gentlewoman (1598). Household treatises outline women's participation in instructing their servants, which Dorothy Leigh is very concerned within The Mothers Blessing: Or, The godly Counsaile of a Gentle-woman, tenth edition (1627). Bainton points out that Erasmus assigned the early education of women to the mother in Patricia H. Labalme, ed. (1980), p. 123. Apart from St. Paul's injunctions against women teaching, Vives summarises the fear of women spreading erroneous doctrine: 'therefore a woman shulde not teache least when she hath taken a false opinion and beleve any thyng, she spred it to the hearers, by the auctoritie of maistershypp, and lyghtly bryng other in the same error'. Vives: The Instruction of a Christian Woman, translated by Richard Hyrde (1557), sig. Dv.

15) Patricia H. Labalme, ed. (1980), p. 4.

16) The ability to recite Psalm 51 was also accepted as proof of literacy. See Divine Right and Democracy: An Anthology of Political Writing in Stuart England, edited by David Wootton (Harmondsworth, 1986), p. 25.

17) Erasmus: Devout Treatise upon the Pater Noster, translated by Margaret More-Roper, edited by Richard Hyrde (1524), sig. A2r.

18) The dedicatee, Lady Fraunces, is encouraged to: 'folowe styll on her steppes, looke ever upon her lyfe, to enforourme your owne therafter, lyke as ye wolde loke in a glasse to tyre your body by' (sig. B3r).

19) Richard Hyrde, trans. (1557), sig. A2v.

20) The justification of women's education on these grounds is depicted by Richard Hyrde in the preface to More-Roper's Devout treatise (1524). According to Hyrde, the: 'reding and studieng of bokes so occupieth the minde, that it can have no leiser to muse or delite in other fantasies, whan in all handy werkes, that men saie be more mete for a woman, the body may be busy in one place, and the minde walkyng in another & while they sit sowing & spinning with their fingers, maye eassie and compasse many pevisse fantasies in their mindes' (sig. A4r).

21) Richard Hyrde, trans. (1557), sig. C4v. The psalms present the possibility of learning true faith and virtue and were, therefore particularly applicable to women to whom this was the extent of their learning.

22) Amanda Porterfield, Female Piety in Puritan New England: The Emergence of Religious Humanism (Oxford, 1992), p. 94.

23) For discussions of women's superiority in religion, see Amanda Porterfield (1992) (especially chapter 3) and Ian Maclean (1980). Somewhat surprisingly, Ruth Kelso (1956) suggests that Renaissance male writers were: 'ready to derive woman's true greatness and equality with men from her intellectual gifts, her capacity to profit from the study of books, [and] to engage in speculation on high matters' (p. 30).

24) Vives sought to censor such songs which he suggests were made with 'none other purpose, but to corrupte the manners of yonge folkes, and they dooe none other wyse, than they that infecte the common welles wyth poyson' (sig. D2v).

25) Thomas Salter, The Mirrhor of Modestie (1579). See also W. P., The Necessarie, Fit and Convenient Education of a Gentlewoman (1598). See Thomas Salter, The Mirrhor of Modesty (1579) edited by Janis Butler-Holm, 'The Renaissance Imagination', Volume 32 (New York, 1987) for textual details and the relationship between these two translations. Further references to Salter's translation are from the original copy and are referenced in the text.

26) Salter (1579), sig. B3r. Salter emphasises the importance of the 'Distaffe, and Spindle, Nedle and Thimble' as opposed to the 'well using a penne or wrightyng a loftie vearce' (sig. C2r). The position which Salter expresses here is parodied by Emilia in Baldesar Castiglione's The Book of the Courtier, translated by George Bull (London, 1976) : 'God grant that we do not happen to give this task to some fellow conspirator of signor Gaspare's who might fashion a Court lady knowing only how to cook and spin' (p. 202).

27) Salter suggests that 'our wise Matron, shall reade or cause her Maidens to reade, the examples and lives of godly and vertuous Ladies' which 'will pricke and make their hartes, to follow virtue' (sigs. B2r-B3v), but see sig. B7r for a contrasting viewpoint.

28) Primary texts which delineate these processes, apart from those already referenced, include The Civile Conversation of M. Steeven Guazzo, translated by George Pettie (Books 1-3), 1581, & Barth. Young (Book 4), 1586, edited by Sir Edward Sullivan, three volumes (London, 1925); Galateo, Of manners and behaviours in Familiar Conversation by Giovanni Della casa, translated by Robert Peterson, 1576, edited by Herbert J. Reid (Private Printing, 1892). Although these texts deal primarily with men, they each address women within that context. For critical enquiries into this scrutinising process see: Frank Whigham, Ambition and Privilege: The Social Tropes of Elizabethan Courtesy Theory (Berkeley, 1984); Daniel Javtich, Poetry and Courtliness in Renaissance England (Princeton, 1978); Norbert Elias: The Civilising Process: The History of Manners, translated by Edmund Jephcott (Oxford, 1978); Marvin V. Becker, Civility and Society in Western Europe, 1300-1600 (Bloomington, 1988); Anna Bryson, 'The Rhetoric of Status: Gesture, Demeanour and the Image of the Gentleman in Sixteenth and Seventeenth Century England' in Renaissance Bodies: The Human Figure in English Culture, c.1540-1660 (London, 1990).

29) In her paper 'The Iconography of the Blush: Virgin Literature of the 1630's' Danielle Clarke discussed the significations of the blush, which simultaneously emits signals of both innocence and prohibited knowledge. Voicing Women: Gender, Sexuality, Writing, 1500-1700 Conference held at Liverpool University, April 1992.

30) See The Diary of Lady Margaret Hoby, 1599 -1605, edited by Dorothy M. Meads (London, 1930).

31) Nicholas Udall, preface to Catherine Parr, Prayers stiryng the mynd to heavenly meditations (1545). (Quoted by Ruth Hughey (1932), p. 17.

32) Both of Catherine Parr's texts - Prayers (1545) and The Lamentations of a Sinner (1545) - emulate the psalms. According to Foxe, Catherine Parr was zealous in promoting the gospel, which included buying her own books and encouraging them to be read by her Ladies (John Foxe, Actes and Monuments, two volumes, fourth edition (1583) II., pp. 1242-1245).

33) Maria Dowling, 'A Woman's Place? Learning and the wives of Henry VIII' History Today, 41 (June 1991), 38-42 (p.39). Her patronage relationship with Marot suggests that 'the manuscript French Psalter' may have been an early version of the Marot/de Beze Psalter.

34) Dowling (1991), p. 40.

35) The French Academie, by Pierre de la Primaudaye, translated by T.B., fifth edition (1614).

36) T.B., trans. (1614), p. 473.

37) T.B., trans. (1614), pp. 475-476.

38) John Dod and Robert Cleaver, The Godly Forme of Householde Government: For the Ordering of private Families according to the direction of God's word (1598), p. 1.

39) Dod and Cleaver (1598), pp. 25, 28, & 36.

40) Richard Bernard, Josuahs Resolution for the well ordering of his Household. A Two fold catechism: One Short, the other more large; both for instruction. In the End, Certaine Rules, for the guiding to a holy Conversation, third edition (1629).

41) Richard Bernard (1629), pp. 86-87. See also Richard Greenham, 'Short rules for a Gentlewoman troubled in her minde, for her better Direction and Consolation, as also very necessary for every Christian to be exercised withall' in Richard Rogers et al, A Garden of Spiritual Flowers (1609). This text also includes a text by George Webbe defining prayer and proposing particular prayers for daily use. Greenham's text is the only one explicitly directed to an unidentified women, but the copy I looked at was owned by one Anne Slingsby. (BL. C. 53 h. 8)

42) Antony Gilby, The Psalmes of David (1581), sig. a3v.

43) Helen C. White, English Devotional Literature [Prose] 1600-1640 (Madison, 1931), p. 11.

44) Suzanne Hull, Chaste, Silent and Obedient: English Books for Women, 1475-1640 (San Marino, 1982).

45) St. Augustine's Psalter will be discussed in chapter three.

46) Dorothy Leigh (1627), p. 150.

47) Michael Spark, The Crums of Comfort with godly Prayers, seventh edition (1628). Copy number B.L. C.65.i.7 (2).

48) Daniel Featly, Ancilla Pietatis: Or, the Hand-Maid to Private Devotion, third edition (1628).

49) Daniel Featly (1628), see sig. A2v.

50) See Malleus Maleficarum: The Classic Study of Witchcraft, edited by Montague Summers, third edition (London, 1986), p.115.

51) The feast days are New Year, Easter, Ephiphany, Ascension, Whitsunday, and a psalm celebrating the survival of the Gunpowder Plot. The fast days are Ash-Wednesday, and Good-Friday. See also appendix 3C for Featley's psalm for childbirth.

52) See Appendices 1 & 2 for these tables.

53) George Herbert, 'The Holy Scriptures. I & II' (lines 9 -12) from The Temple in George Herbert and Henry Vaughan, edited by Louis L. Martz (Oxford, 1986), p. 50.

54) Featly, Ancilla Pietatis (1628). Sunday: Ps. 119. vv.55, 147, 59, 58; 51. v.3; 19. v. 12; 32. v.6; 51. v.19; 102 vv. 13, 14; 72.

vv. 1, 2, 4; 132. v.9; 43. v.3; 122. v.1; 118. v.19; 99. v.5; 68. v.11; 85. vv.8,9; 16. vv.2, 3; 58. v.7. (pp. 179-182). Monday: Ps. 63. vv. 7, 8, 9; 69. vv. 1, 2; 65. vv. 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12, 13; 33. v.7; 148. vv.1, 4, 7, 8; 68. vv. 32, 33, 34. (pp. 202-205).

55) The psalm texts associated with these aspects of prayer are as follows: Majesty Ps. 104. v.1; 68. v.17; 24. v.10; 50. v.1; 72. v.18 (pp. 30-31). Confession Ps.8. v.4; 39. v.11; 103. v.14; 14. v.3; 51. v.5; 19. v.12. (pp. 37-38). Invocation Ps. 145. v.18. (p. 39). Thanksgiving Ps.68. v.26; 92. v.1; 105. v.1; 111. v.1. (pp. 47-48).

56) I have also appended two other composite psalms created as a preparation to prayer (Appendix 3 A & B).

57) Thomas Sorocold, The Supplications of Saints : A Booke of Prayers: Divided into three parts (1612).

58) Sorocold's text was read to Lady Anne Clifford. See The Diaries of Lady Anne Clifford, edited by D.J.H. Clifford (Gloucestershire, 1992), March 1619, p. 70.

59) Except for Sunday evening which has instead, Gen. 18: 27, 30, and the noon day prayers (p. 9). Noon day prayers are possibly derived from The Books of Hours. See Martha W. Driver, 'Pictures in Print: Late Fifteenth century and early Sixteenth century English Religious Books for Lay Readers' in De Cella Seculum: Religious and Secular life and devotion in Late Medieval England, edited by Michael G. Sargent (Cambridge, 1989), pp. 229-244. The frequency of prayer is also referred to by Richard Daye, A Booke of Christian Prayers (1578), sigs. A3r-A3v.

60) These are to be found on the following pages (in the order listed in text): p. 308, p. 303, p. 316, p. 319, p. 301.

61) William Hunnis, Seven Sobs of a Sorrowfull Soule for Sinne (1583). Another Psalm based text was also dedicated to Lady Frances Radcliffe: Niels Hemmingsen. The Faith of the Church militant, in this exposition of the 84. Psalme, translated by Thomas Rogers (1581).

62) Pierre Bourdieu, Outline of a Theory of Practice. (Quoted by Frank Whigham (1984), p. 4.)

63) See Antony Gilby (1581), sig. A5r.

64) See, for example, Petrarch, 'How a Ruler ought to Govern his State'. (Quoted in Marvin B. Becker (1988), pp. 9-10.)

65) Robert Fylles, Godly Prayers and Meditations, paraphrastically made upon all the Psalmes (1577), sig. A2r.

66) Robert Fylles (1577), sig. A3v.

67) Rivkah Zim (1987) provides a bibliography of the metrical psalms during the Sixteenth-century. Those dedicated to or associated with women are the following: John Bale, (ed.), Anne Askewe (Wesel, 1546); Sir Anthony Cope, A Godly Meditacion upon .xx. Psalmes (1547); John

Bale, (ed.), A Godly Medytacyon of the Christen sowle (Wesel, 1548); Thomas Paynell, The Pithy and Moost notable sayinges of al Scripture (1550); Thomas Bownell, A Godly Psalme, of Marye Queene (1553); John Knox, An Exposition uppon the syxt Psalme of David ([1554]); The Boke of Psalmes (Geneva, 1559); James Cancellar, (ed.), A Godly Meditation of the Soule (1568); Anthony Gilby, The Psalmes of David (1581); Thomas Bentley, The Monument of Matrones (1582); John Stubbs, Christian Meditations upon eight Psalmes (1582); William Hunnis, Seven Sobs of a Sorrowful Soule for Sinne (1583); William Patten, Ann: foelicissimi Reginae Elizabeth (1583); Abraham Fraunce, The Countess of Pembroke's Emanuel (1591); Henry Lok, Ecclesiastes, otherwise called the Preacher (1597); William Patten, Anno foelicissimi Regni Auguste Reginae nostre Elizabeth (1598); Richard Verstegan, Odes in Imitation of the Seaven penitential psalmes (Antwerp, 1601); Lady Elizabeth Fane, 'Her certaine psalmes of godly meditation in number 21. with a 102. proverbs' printed by Robert Crowley, 1550 (now lost).

68) See the introduction to Patronage in the Renaissance, edited by Guy Fitch Lytle & Stephen Orgel (Princeton, 1981).

69) John N. King, 'Patronage and Piety: The influence of Catherine Parr' in Margaret P. Hannay, ed. (1985), p. 45.

70) John N. King (1985), p. 46. See also, 'A Proclamation for the abolishing of English bookes', 8. July 1546 in Foxe (1583) II. p. 1246.

71) John N. King (1985), p. 43. For a different evaluation of Parr's patronage influence, see Retha M. Warnicke, Women and the English Renaissance (Connecticut, 1983), p. 93. According to Franklin B. Williams, Index of Dedications and Commendatory Verses in English Books before 1641 (London, 1962), only two texts were dedicated to Catherine Parr (by Nicholas Udall and Sir Anthony Cope). Although, as Parr's D.N.B entry indicates and other sources confirm, Elizabeth I presented a translation of Marguerite de navarre's Mirror of a Godly Soule to her step mother. This translation also included a translation of psalm 13.

72) John Foxe (1583), II. p. 1243.

73) The Holy Bible, edited by Josiah Forshall & Sir Frederic Madden, 4 volumes (1850), I., p.liv. Item 112. Cam. U.L. MM 215. Tyrwhitt gave her Bible to Anne Weldon. There is a note stiched into the Bible prefacing the psalms: 'Sethen I knowe my life is short,/ And that my book & I must part,/ to you my dere & faythful frende/ My chefest juel I do comend. Your pooer and faythful friend in the Lord. Elizabeth Tyrwhytt'.

74) Elizabeth Tyrwhitt, Morning and Evening praiers, with divers psalmes, Hymnes, and Meditations in The Monument of Matrones: containing seven severall Lampes of Virginitie, edited by Thomas Bentley, 3 volumes (1582), I. pp. 103-138. These meditations are listed in the British Library Catalogue as being contained in Elizabeth I's Girdle Prayer Book. Additionally: 'legend has it that the book was presented to Elizabeth Tudor when she was confined in the Tower of London ... and that she wore it hanging at her girdle'.

A Biographical Dictionary of English Women Writers, 1580-1720, edited by Maureen Bell et al (1990), p. 199.

75) John N. King (1985), p. 46. This could be a reference to the Nicholas Udall quotation which heads this chapter, but later King also uses this quotation (pp.48-49) and there he does accredit it to Udall. It would therefore seem likely that King is referring here to someone-else.

76) D.N.B., Vol. lviii, edited by Sidney Lee (London, 1899), pp. 6-9. (Nicholas Udall). See also entry for Catherine Parr, D.N.B., Vol.ix, edited by Leslie Stephen (1887), pp. 308-312, for further information about Nicholas Udall's and Princess Mary's involvement in the translation of Erasmus' Paraphrases.

77) Nicholas Udall, The First Tome of the Paraphrases upon the New Testament: Desiderius Erasmus (1548). Preface to the 'Acts of the Apostles', sig. C1v.

78) Nicholas Udall (1548). Preface to Luke's Gospel, sigs. Cr-Cv.

79) Nicholas Udall (1548). Preface to Luke's Gospel, sig. C2v.

80) Roger Ascham, The Scholemaster (1570/1572), edited by Edward Arber (London, 1923). Ascham describes Elizabeth's abilities thus: 'it is to your shame, (I speake to you all, you yong Gentlemen of England) that one mayde should go beyond you all, in excellencie of learnyng, and knowledge of divers tonges' (pp. 67-68).

81) Sir Anthony Cope, A Godly Meditation upon xx. select & chosen Psalmes (1547), sig. \*2v. Catherine Parr was not, of course, the only Queen to be praised for her encouragement of the people's understanding of the scripture through patronage; Elizabeth I is also identified in this way by William Fulke (1583): 'under your most gracious and Christian protection, the people of your Highnes dominions, have enjoyed the most necessarie and comfortable reading of the holy scriptures in their mother tongue and native language' (sig. A1r).

82) John N. King (1985), p. 48. In this copy each of the psalms - except the penitential psalms - are attributed to a different day of the week.

83) Sir Anthony Cope (1547), sig. \*2v.

84) John Marbecke, The Holie History of King David (1579), sigs. A2r-A2v.

85) Anthony Gilby (1581), sig. A2r.

86) D. N. B., Vol. xxv., edited by Leslie Stephen & Sidney Lee (1891), pp. 126 -128 (Henry Hastings). Camden quotation (source not given), p.127.

87) D. N. B., Vol. xxi, edited by Leslie Stephen (1890), pp.339-340 (Anthony Gilby). Gilby also translated de Beze's Paraphrase of 14 Holy Psalmes (1590), which are added to the 1590 edition of The

Psalms of David. These are 'psalms' from the Bible, including the songs of Deborah and Hester. See also Michael Drayton, The Harmony of the Church (1591) in Poems by Michael Drayton, edited by J. Payne Collier, Roxburghe club (London, 1856). This text was dedicated to Lady Jane Devoreux and includes the songs of Hannah, Deborah, Judith and Hester.

88) D. N. B., Vol. xvi, edited by Leslie Stephen (1888), pp.109-111 (John Dudley). Dudley's daughter, Mary, married Sir Henry Sidney; they were the parents of Mary Sidney Herbert, Countess of Pembroke and Sir Philip Sidney.

89) For the history of development of this kind of reading of the psalms, see Edward A. Gosselin (1976).

90) Theodore de Beza: Christian Meditations upon eight Psalmes of the Prophet David, translated by John Stubbs (1582). Both versions of this text are dedicated to Lady Anne Bacon, but it would seem that she was 'second choice' as the intended female patron (who had commissioned the text) died before it was published. For references to Lady Anne Bacon's learning, see Elaine V. Beilin Redeeming Eve: women writers of the English Renaissance (Princeton, 1987) and D.N.B. entry. Further quotations are taken from the translation by John Stubbs and references follow the quotations in the text. Stubbs and Bacon are also of a 'Puritan' disposition. See D. N. B., Vol. lv., edited by Sidney Lee (1889), pp. 118 -119 (John Stubbs) and D.N.B. Vol. II, edited by Leslie Stephen, (1885), pp. 323-324 (Lady Ann Bacon) Stubbs presumably wrote his translation of this text with his left hand; the right one having been severed for writing 'seditious' material.

91) Stubbs, trans. (1582), sig. A4v. For other psalms commissioned by women, see Robert Rollock An Exposition upon some Select Psalmes of David, translated by C.L. (Edinburgh, 1600). Lilius Gilbert, the dedicatee provided the motivation for the text; after hearing him read some of the exposition on psalm 42: 'Ye desired me very earnestly to translate the whole booke; which thyng I granted to, and promised to performe' (p. 3). See also John Fysher, Treatise concernynge the frytfull sayinges of Davyd the kynge and prophete in the seven penytencyall psalmes (1505), which was written 'at the exortacion and steryng of the most excellente Prynces Margaret Countesse of Richmount and Derby, and mother to our Sovereigne Kynge Henry the Seventh' (sig. A2r). Fisher, however, was hostile to Luther and was firmly committed to Catholicism, being imprisoned for not complying with the Act of Succession. D.N.B., Vol.xix., edited by Leslie Stephen (1889).

92) The Penitential Psalms are numbers 6, 32, 38, 51, 102, 130, 143. Stubbs and de Beze also include Psalm 1.

CHAPTER TWO. 'MEDITATION, INSTRUCTION, AND IMITATION':

THOMAS BENTLEY'S THE MONUMENT OF MATRONES.

I have undertaken in the name and feare of God, love of his church, obedience of your Majestie, and hartie good will of my countrie, out of the admirable monuments of your owne Honourable works, and some other noble Queenes, famous Ladies, and vertuous Gentlewomen of our time, and former ages, to addresse and make readie these seven Lamps of your perpetuall virginitie, to remaine unto women as one entire and goodlie monument of praier, precepts, and examples meet for meditation, instruction, and imitation to all posteritie. (1)

In this dedicatory address to Queen Elizabeth, Thomas Bentley identifies the range of objectives upon which his anthology, The Monument of Matrones, was compiled. In fact, his 'one entire and goodlie monument' incorporates the whole gamut of prescriptive material which I discussed in the previous chapter. In this respect, Bentley's endeavour epitomises the convergence of the apparently diverse discourses depicting women's social roles by underlining the pivotal significance of religious devotion and its corollary, women's 'perpetuall virginitie'. The three major functions which Bentley establishes for his text exemplify this convergence; his monument consists of 'praier' for women's 'meditation' (providing texts for their devotional use), 'precepts' for their 'instruction' (providing guidelines for their education), and 'examples' for their 'imitation' (promoting models for their proper social conduct). However, in contrast to other texts in these genres, Bentley intimates that his anthology is primarily compiled 'out of the admirable monuments of your owne Honourable works, and some other noble Queenes, famous Ladies, and vertuous Gentlewomen of our time and former ages'. Yet this suggestion is actually rather misleading; for, apart from occasional prayers in Lampe 4, the only part of the anthology which includes writing attributed to identified women writers is Lampe 2. The other six Lampes anthologise texts written by male authors for

women's edification and instruction.<sup>2</sup>

Despite this imbalance, it is nevertheless significant that Bentley draws attention to women's writing. Anticipating modern concerns about the (lack of) availability of women's writing, Bentley complains that these 'excellent and rare works' have been 'dispersed into severall pamphlets, and in some part some thing obscured and worne cleane out of print, and so out of practise' (B1r). As a result of which, Bentley takes it upon himself to make these texts available 'in the name and feare of God, love of his church, obedience to your Majestie, and hartie good will of my countrie'. Throughout his address to his readers, Bentley repeatedly stresses the profitability of such an enterprise. Having found these texts personally enlightening, he argues that if the texts were more readily available 'great profit, and singular pleasure might thereby come also to other of like mind to my selfe' (B1r). Indeed Bentley seems almost to have taken up the gauntlet thrown down by Udall and Ascham in their indictment of men for not equalling women's exertions in furthering the spread of God's word. For Bentley underlines not only the personal and public profit which proceeds from this enterprise, but also how this identifies him as a productive member of his society: 'mee thought I could not better spend my time, nor emploie my talent, either for the renowne of such heroicall authors and woorthie women, or for the universall commoditie of all good christians' (B1r).

However, although to a certain extent Bentley does promote The Monument as profitable reading for both the sexes, his paramount concern lies with his women readers, whom he clearly expects to be his primary audience.<sup>3</sup> Bentley positions himself as a defender of women, portraying his text as a permanent record of the 'perfect presidents of true pietie and godlinesse in woman kind to all

posteritie' (B1r). In its cataloguing of exemplary women from history, Bentley is aligned with other authors, such as Anthony Gibson and Sir Thomas Elyot, but his inclusion of women writers also aligns him with Richard Hyrde as he posits women as able to teach men as well as each other, in a manner which brings profit to the nation.<sup>4</sup> Bentley effectively 'canonises' the particular women writers he chooses to include in his volume. He states that the writing in Lampe 2 is merely a 'tast' of women's writing, explaining that he has reduced 'these their manifold works into one entire volume, and by that means, for to register their so rare and excellent monuments' (B1r).

In the light of women's educational disadvantages it is not surprising that the writers whom Bentley anthologises are of at least genteel social status; these writers include Elizabeth I, Catherine Parr, Elizabeth Tyrwhitt and Frances Abergavenny. However, he is anxious to promote a widened access to these texts, which he argues entails more than simply re-printing them. Motivated by a desire to ensure that his collection is 'an absolute and perfect booke for the simpler sort of women', Bentley justifies his inclusion of books of 'divine matter' that 'have beene penned by divers godlie learned men' which he claims to have altered so as to 'particularlie applie that unto them, women I meane ... both for private and publike use, adding thereunto such plentie of heavenlie and spiritual helpes' (B1r-B1v). Yet he neither acknowledges his sources, nor provides scriptural references to facilitate a deeper understanding or intense reflection upon these writings. Instead he encourages both learned and unlearned women to use this material as a means 'to exercise their faith, to stir up their devotion, and to satisfie their godlie desires'.<sup>5</sup>

With this objective it is not surprising that none of the women

writers included in Bentley's text are overtly radical in a modern sense. Framing his text with reference to the parable of the wise virgins, Bentley is engaged in the task of defining exemplary women and chooses writers who produce texts which can be broadly defined as religious meditations.<sup>6</sup> Whilst it would be an exaggeration to claim that his volume is entirely composed of psalmic discourse, the amount of psalm-based material within the text is worthy of detailed attention. For whilst Rivkah Zim and Elaine Beilin have noted the inclusion of psalm texts in The Monument of Matrones, they neither catalogue the whole of the psalm texts included nor pay any more attention to this aspect of the text than to remark in passing that 'the final items in Bentley's 'Second Lampe' give special emphasis to the Psalms, the fundamental text of Protestant piety'.<sup>7</sup> Beilin does not pursue this point; instead, she collapses the significance of the psalms as a specific discourse by simply stating that 'again, Scripture enabled and authorized a feminine contribution to the Protestant mainstream'.<sup>8</sup> In fact, nearly all of the texts by women display a connection with the psalms, ranging from a direct translation of the psalms, to the creation of composite psalms and prayers based on the psalms. In addition to this there are a number of psalm translations and commentaries written by men, which have either been re-gendered in order to apply to specifically female experience (especially that of childbirth) or were written for a particular woman. The amount of this psalm-based material suggests that the specific discourse of the psalms is inextricably connected to the construction of the exemplary woman.

It is therefore of the utmost importance that, in the process of constructing the exemplary woman, Bentley authorises women's own writing and promotes the practice of women instructing each other.

For this undermines other prescriptive treatises and challenges the stereotype of 'woman' as an Eve figure, easily led astray by heretical doctrine. Bentley, like the male writers of the dedications discussed in the previous chapter, challenges current critical opinion about the status of women's translation in the Renaissance by asserting that men could learn from women:

Having my selfe taken no small comfort (good Christian Reader) by the reading and perusing of divers verie godlie, learned, and divine treatises, of meditations and praier, made by sundrie right famous Queenes, noble Ladies, vertuous Virgins, and godlie Gentlewomen of all ages (who to shew themselves woorthie paternes of all pietie, godlinesse, and religion to their sex, and for the common benefit of their countrie, have not ceased, and that with all carefull industrie and earnest indeavour, most painfullie and diligentlie in great fervencie of the spirit, and zeale of the truth, even from their tender & maidenlie yeeres, to spend their time, their wits, their substance, and also their bodies, in the studies of noble and approved sciences, and in compling and translating of sundrie most christ-ian and godlie bookes (Blr).

Here, Bentley proffers several crucial points which counteract modern perceptions of the marginality of women's translation and apparently contravene prescriptive restrictions upon women's roles as instructors. Far from being passive regurgitators of other men's texts, these women are 'earnest' and 'diligent' purveyors of God's word, writing with 'great fervencie of the spirit, and zeale of the truth'.<sup>9</sup> Furthermore, women's role in the translation and compilation of devotional texts is not simply an indication of their own personal piety or for their own personal use, but rather stimulates Bentley's own spiritual well being and, additionally, is of 'common benefit' for 'their countrie'. The latter assertion identifies women's role in the creation of a national identity, positioning them as ambassadors for their country, establishing the piety of England. Admittedly this occurs within the confines of 'approved sciences,' but, especially considering women's exclusion from educational insitutions, it is

important that women are acknowledged to have the capacity for 'diligent' study; for the same reason it is significant that the texts which Bentley includes disclose an indebtedness to the psalms, for the psalms performed a vital function in women's everyday education. In the above description women are active agents in the writing and promotion of 'sundrie most christian and godlie bookes'. Informed by their 'fervencie of the spirit' and able to represent the 'truth,' these women embody (literally according to Bentley's above description) 'paterns of pietie, godlinesse, and religion to their sex, and for the common benefit of their countrie'.

The fact that the psalms play such an important role in this text exhibits the centrality of the psalms in women's reading and devotional experiences. In a similar manner to the devotional texts, Bentley orientates his anthology for both private and public consumption, imploring the women to keep his text as a 'register of holie praier for all women generally to have recourse unto, as to their homelie or domesticall librarie' (B1v). It is intended for those who are serious about their devotion to God, those who - like the psalmist - seek to meditate in God's word day and night. Bentley states that his 'labour' has been for those whose desire is:

daie and night continuallie and incessentlie, either silentlie ... or openlie in mouth ... spend their whole life, and make it their whole worke to praie, meditate, and read God's word with other such good bookes, or at least to allow to themselves some little portion or part of the daie and night, to prostrate themselves apart from all companie in praier and meditation before the Lord. (10)

This kind of devotion, as Vives and others promote and women like Lady Hoby testify to, formed the focus of women's daily activities. No doubt this is also indicative of the limitations of women's education. However, the active reformulation of the word which these women writers display and the fact that the psalms gave them a

discourse in which to express themselves, permitting them to have their own conscience, is crucial for developments in women's writing.

Thus, in The Monument of Matrones Bentley attempts to encapsulate the entire compass of reading which was thought suitable for women in the 1580's, advancing his text as one that that would endure for 'all posteritie'. A significant proportion of his anthology is heavily indebted to the discourse of the psalms, providing exemplars for women in their search for an appropriate language in which both to express their devotion to God and through which to manifest their exemplary social status. Consciously defending the profitability and the piety of the women writers' endeavours, Bentley's anthology depicts a 'female literary traditon', which although conforming to certain patriarchal prescriptions, simultaneously subverted prohibitions against female creativity and instruction. The strategies these writers employed demonstrate the wide variety of applications which the psalms supplied for women during this period. However, not all of the psalm texts included in The Monument were written by women, thus although I will be focusing on the texts by women I will also be examining the texts by men, in order to analyse the extent to which the psalms written by women conform to the parameters promulgated for them by male authors. The variety of psalm texts contained in The Monument discloses the array of applications to which the psalms could be assigned for women at different stages of life; they were promoted for both private and public devotion, for use between mothers and daughters, for household reading and for political interpretation. As the text is dedicated to Elizabeth I and the psalms associated with her traverse a number of these categories, it seems apt to commence by analysing the personal

and political significance of aligning the Queen's exemplary status to the discourse of the psalms.

1. 'ALPHABETICALL FORME' AND 'COMFORTABLE MEDITATIONS': PERSONAL AND POLITICAL APPLICATIONS OF THE PSALMS TO ELIZABETH I.

Bentley's compilation encompasses an extensive assortment of psalm translations and psalm-based texts which display direct connections with Elizabeth I. The initial association is established by the reproduction of Elizabeth I's own translation of 'certaine godlie Sentences out of the 13. Psalme'.<sup>11</sup> In fact, these 'godlie Sentences' are Latin, French, and Italian translations of the same verse. Although Elizabeth had translated the whole of psalm 13, a version of which is appended to John Bale's edition of A godlie Medititation (1548), this is not included in The Monument.<sup>12</sup> Instead Bentley reproduces some of Elizabeth's prayers.<sup>13</sup> The excerpts which Bentley includes in his volume position the Queen as a learned woman with an aptitude for at least three languages. These 'godlie Sentences' seem to me to be simply exercises in translation, such as could be expected to play an important part of her educational programme under the influence of Ascham.

But it also seems not to be coincidental that the Princess Elizabeth should append a psalm translation to a text presented to Catherine Parr. A godlie Medititation itself, like the psalms or Catherine Parr's own writings, interrogates the psychological state of a believer and examines the soul's relationship with God and the church.<sup>14</sup> Within such a context psalm 13 is particularly appropriate; according to de Beze, this psalm depicts 'the corruption of the natural man chiefly uttering itselife against the church'. The

numbering of the psalm indicates that Elizabeth used either the Vulgate or the Coverdale translation as the basis of her verse paraphrase. For in contrast to later prose translations, Elizabeth included the verses 'not in the Hebrue'.<sup>15</sup> The psalm is an indictment of the fools who say in their heart, that 'there is no God' and Elizabeth's translation forcefully represents the activities of the wicked:

In heart and tongue have they deceit,  
Their lips throw forth a poisoned bait.  
Their minds are mad, their mouths are wode,  
And swift they be in shedding blood.  
So blind they are, no truth they know,  
No fear of God in them will grow.  
How can that cruel sort be good,  
Of God's dear flock which suck the blood? (ls. 9-16)

Her vivid characterisation of the 'Fools that true faith never yet had' (l. 1) whom 'Despair will so their hearts appall' (l. 18) contrasts strongly with the ultimate faith in God's protection at the end of A godlie Meditation and of the psalm:

At all times God is with the just,  
Because in him they put their trust. (ls. 19-20)

From an early age Elizabeth was acquainted with the psalms; her versification of this psalm is striking in its damning of the wicked and the assertion of the speaker's eventual victory. Bradner terms this translation a 'free paraphrase'. The individuality of Elizabeth's version of this psalm conflicts with Valerie Wayne's portrayal of women copying out 'some sad sentence': 'she copies the words of another, who is surely of another sex, and she is told to make his words a part of her mind and memory' and 'as she shapes her letters, she is being shaped by another's moral and religious precepts'.<sup>16</sup> Although, of course, in one sense Elizabeth was being shaped by others' 'moral and religious precepts' she is also reformulating those precepts toward her own needs which is

demonstrated not only in her psalm translation, but also in her poetry and prayers.<sup>17</sup> The ultimate faith in God, dramatised both in the psalms generally and particularly in the above version of psalm 13, is also evident in Elizabeth's poem 'Written on a wall at Woodstock'. There, the speaker describes fortune's 'wresting wavering state' which 'causedst the guilty to be loosed/ From bands where innocents were enclosed'.<sup>18</sup> Although fortune's vacillations 'hath fraught with cares my troubled wit' (l. 1) and injustice reigns, the speaker retains a quiet confidence:

But all herein can be nothing wrought,  
So God send to my foes all they have thought (ls. 9-10).

In the light of psalm 13's representation of the wicked, this quiet confidence veils a more menacing threat. A threat which the psalmist also points out to the 'wicked': 'Beholde, he travayleth with myschefe, he hath conceaved unhappynesse, and brought forth a lye. He hath graven and digged up a pytte, but he shal fall himself into the pytte that he hath made. For his unhappynes shall come upon his owne heade, & his wickednes shall fall upon his owne pate'.<sup>19</sup> The confidence in God's protection depicted in her translation of psalm 13 and later alluded to in the Woodstock poem demonstrates Elizabeth I's use of the psalms to construct her own identity.

Another way in which Bentley's anthology exhibits a connection between Elizabeth I and the psalms is by reproducing acrostic prayers compiled out of the psalms which in 'alphabetically forme' construct a voice for Elizabeth, effectively formulating an identity for her. The third Lampe contains two such acrostics, the first of which was written by James Cancellor to accompany his edition of A Godly Meditation.<sup>20</sup> Using the same format and the same source - that is, psalm compilations structured under the authorising and organising letters of Elizabeth/ Elizabeth Regina - each writer provides a

distinct representation of their Ruler's expression. Yet, although each acrostic is derived from a different psalm, they share similar preoccupations. Despite the fact that these acrostics represent the 'Queen's' voice, and her authoritative status is denoted by the term 'Regina,' essentially Elizabeth is represented as a female penitent.

Cancellor's dedication, in a manner similar to other male editors of women's writing, eulogises contemporary noblewomen's abilities in the art of translation:

it is to be considered most gracious Queene, the great number of noble women, which in this our time are now not onely given to the studie of humane Sciences, and of straunge tongues: but also are able to compare as well in endyting of godly and fruitfull Treatsies, as also in translating out of Latine, Greeke, Italian, and French, good and godly bookes, to the greate profite and commoditie of such as are ignoraunt in the sayde tongues: whose actes for their wit, learning, and eloquence, are worthy perpetuall fame and memorie (A2r-A2v).

In a move characteristic of defenders of women, Chancellor contextualises his representation of contemporary learned women with biblical exemplars to authorise his own validation of their endeavours (A2v-A3r). Like Bentley and Udall, Chancellor also perceives their activities in the art of translation as one which was of 'great profite and commoditie' to those that 'are ignoraunt in the sayde tongues'; later, he expresses the profitability of this endeavour for the happiness of the country.<sup>21</sup> Referring directly to Queen Elizabeth's translation of Marguerite de Navarre's text, Chancellor states that this demonstrates her indubitable capacity for a variety of tongues:

in the which woorke your Maiestie no lesse have showed your selfe to be (in your tender and Maydenly yeares) expertly learned in the Latin tongue, than in the Greeke, Italian, and Frenche. In the which foure tongues your hyghnesse ... hath exactly set forth to the comfort of the famous learned of your realme in the beginning of the sayde Booke, goodly sentences out of the thirtene Psalme of the Prophete David, in the sayde

tongues: So livelye Apothegemes, or quicke sentences, respecting Christianitie, have seldome come from women (A3r-A3v).

This extolling of her excellence in the art of translation reaffirms Roger Ascham's representation of Elizabeth as the best translator in England. Despite Cancellor's praise of the number of women involved in translation, he is careful to represent Elizabeth as excelling them and suggests that she is unique in her ability to provide such 'livelye Apothegemes'. The interest in the psalms which Cancellor interprets this activity as denoting provides his justification for adding to her own translation: 'further to enlarge the same with godly Psalmes and prayers, to the comfort of the godly Reader of the same' (A4r). Unlike Elizabeth's apothegemes, which are 'set forth to the comfort of the famous learned of your realme,' Cancellor's acrostic is in English: perhaps suggesting that although the text represented the 'Queen's' voice, they were directed towards the less learned readers for their imitation.

The 'Holie Praiers, and godlie Meditations, deciphering in Alphabeticall forme, the Roiall name of our vertuous Soverigne, Queene Elizabeth' which Cancellor composes are primarily based on the central Penitential Psalm, number 51 'Have mercie upon me, O God' which identifies the focal confessional aspect of this construction of Elizabeth.<sup>22</sup> Initially, the Queen is represented as being in as much need of God's mercies and redemption as any other human being: 'Enter not into judgement with thy servant, O Lord: for no flesh is righteous in thy sight'.<sup>23</sup> This alphabet moves from a general invocation of God's mercies as necessary for all, to a personal invocation: 'Lord, looke thou no more on my sinnes: but according to the multitude of thy compassions, wipe awaie all mine iniquities'.<sup>24</sup> God is represented as Elizabeth's helper 'in the day of trouble'; she

enters the church as a place in which to address God properly and calls to God: 'A pure heart create in me, O God, and a right spirit renew in me'.<sup>25</sup> The emphasis here is upon Elizabeth's individual relationship with God, highlighting the fact that she, like anyone else, must confess her sinfulness to God. Confession is again followed by an invocation to God to 'restore me unto the joie of thy saving health'.<sup>26</sup> The love of truth is the source of her power, upon which basis God reveals the 'unknowne' to her and for which she offers up 'true sacrifices'.<sup>27</sup> A similar pattern frames the acrostic representation of the term Regina; thus whilst the application of the psalms to the Queen would seem to indicate an inherent politicisation of the psalms, especially as they are bound up with and organised in relation to her name, in actual fact they serve to postulate a representation of Elizabeth as the ideal penitent: her penitence, her virginity, and her subjection to God are the qualities which this acrostic emphasises.

In Cancellor's acrostic each letter is associated with a specific psalm verse and followed by a meditative prayer upon that text, in which the head quotation is embedded and constantly repeated. In The Monument of Matrones, this is accompanied by another acrostic. This second version is rather more succinct than Cancellor's. It is not prefaced by a psalm quotation, but the text is almost entirely composed of psalm quotations, which again emphasise the penitential aspects of the psalms. The letter 'I' for example is identified in the following manner:

I

I have broken thy fold, and wandered long as a lost sheepe: let me returne, O Lord, because I have not forgotten thy commandements. The misdeeds and ignorances of my tender yeeres remember not Lord, but according to thy mercie have mind on me. For thy goodnesse, O Lord, keepe my soule, and deliver me: let me not be ashamed, because I have trusted in thee. Turne

my heavynesse into joie, cut off my sacke of sorowes,  
and gird me with gladnes, that my glorie may signe unto  
thee, and I shall not be greeved (I. p. 297)

Although the sources are not referenced, this whole passage is compiled of psalm quotations.<sup>28</sup> What this passage demonstrates is that the habit of compiling new meanings from a variety of psalms intrinsic to devotional texts actually had a wider use. The above passage is compiled from the following psalms:

I go astraye, like a shepe that is lost: Oh seke thy  
servant, for I do not forget thy commandements (119.  
v. 176).

Oh remembre not the synnes & offences of my youth, but  
accordinge unto thy mercie thynke upon me (O Lorde) for  
thy goodnesse(25. v.7).

O kepe my soule, and delyver me: let me not be confoun-  
ded, for I have put my trust in the (25. v.20).

And so thou hast turned my hevynesse into joye: thou  
hast put of my sack cloth, and gyrded me with glad-  
nesse. That my honour might synge prayses unto the  
without ceassyng (30. vv.11-12a).

Although I have had to look up the references to demonstrate the psalmic sources for this prayer, as a result of the repeated use of the psalms a sixteenth-century reader would instantly have recognised the psalm form of the text. These sources demonstrate both the literalness of the psalm quotations and their reformulation into a new and coherent prayer.

Although both acrostics emphasise penitence, whereas Cancellor's focuses upon psalm 51, the second version is more dependent upon psalm 119. This latter psalm is primarily concerned with the function of the word of God as a means to instruct believers in God's ways. Additionally, in the above example, the three psalms which comprise this particular meditation are assigned the following principal meanings in de Beze's tables: 25, 'A Praier for faith, forgivenes of sin, direction of the holie spirit, and for God's merciful protection'; 30, 'A thankesgiving for deliverance from great danger'; 119, 'a long and fervent praier, for the true meditation and exercise

in God's holie word'. In this example then, psalms whose principal object is prayer and thanksgiving have been re-appropriated and joined together to enhance and consolidate this meaning. The first-person narrative voice indicates an expectation that they would be read by Elizabeth; in these examples, male authors constitute an exemplary discourse for the Queen to use. Yet, this text also functions as an exemplar for the women readers of Bentley's anthology through which to emulate 'the Queen', or as a model by which to construct their own identity. As I will discuss in the next section at least one women writer, Lady Frances Abergavenny, adapted the practice of constructing an individual's identity through the psalms, for herself and her daughter.

The third Lampe of The Monument of Matrones does, however, incorporate some psalms addressed to Elizabeth which stress the integration of the considerations of the symbolic significance of the Queen's individual penitence and its affinity with her position as a ruler. This Lampe opens with 'Right godlie Psalmes, fruitfull Praiers, and comfortable Meditations to be said of our most vertuous and deere Sovereigne Ladie Queene Elizabeth' (p. 253). These psalms are designed for both general use and 'especiallie upon the 17. daie of November, being the memorable daie of hir Maiesties most joyfull deliverance out of trouble,' which is the date of her accession. These Psalmes and prayers were translated and written by Theodore de Beze, who was one of the translators of the Geneva Bible, co-author of the Marot/de Beze Psalter, and in 1564 had succeeded Calvin as Moderator of the Council of Pastors.<sup>29</sup> The position of the Genevan exiles, the dedication of the Geneva Bible to Elizabeth and the identification of Elizabeth as ruler of the 'New Jerusalem' partially explain the political slant to the texts which de Beze prepared for

the Queen. However, de Beze's involvement with European Civil wars and his Huguenot connections means that his writings did not simply assert the theoretical divine right of kings. Although in 1559, he had suggested that Christian subjects must completely obey their governors, this represented a temporary regression from a more threatening standpoint - at least from a ruler's point of view. Prior to this time he had argued that Princes must be subject to the law because they ruled by public consent and, following the St. Bartholomew's Eve massacre in 1572 he argued more explicitly that: 'those who have the power to create a King also have the power to dispose him'.<sup>30</sup>

The two psalms reproduced in Bentley's anthology (18, 118) are, according to de Beze's own table representations of 'God's marvellous power in delivering his people'. Thus, whilst in an elementary way these psalms are reformulated specifically for Elizabeth's subjects to pray for her 'prosperitie,' these utterances are double-edged as there is a latent threat that, if she does not keep to the laws which God had instituted, God - or the people - could legitimately depose her:

I beseech thee, O Lord, preserve the Queene that is  
given us from heaven. I praie thee, I saie, I praie  
thee O Lord give the Queene Elizabeth all prosperitie.  
Let hir have prosperitie and blisse, that commeth to  
governe us in the name and commandement of God. We wish  
prosperitie to you also, that are the neerer inhabit-  
ants of the house of the Lord. (31)

According to the marginal gloss in the Genevan translation, the only specific person to be blessed is the priest that 'commeth from God': here, and later in 'The King's Heast', this position is attributed to Elizabeth. But this does not give Elizabeth total freedom, rather she is reminded of her dependence upon God for her position of power: she might act in the 'name' of God but she is also subject to his

'commandement'. This subjection is further displayed in the prayer following this psalm, where Elizabeth is portrayed as prostrating herself before God: 'behold, I thine handmaid prostrate here before the throne of thy divine Majestie, meeklie confesse thee to bee my mercifull God, my highest king, and everlasting Saviour' (p. 261) and 'with the unfeigned resignation' avers to God's omnipotent control: 'of all empire, kingdome, power, rule, dominion, majestie and glorie, both in heaven and in earth, as to thee onlie, and most justlie belongeth' (p. 265).

This emphatic representation of the power of the Queen and her concomitant dependence upon God is further highlighted in the final two texts of the third Lampe: 'The King's Heast, or Gods familiar speech to the Queene' and 'The Queenes Vow, or selfe-talke with God' both of which are also 'Collected out of the Psalmes' by de Beze (pp. 306-362). As the titles signify, these two texts exhibit the twin facets of the linguistic functions of the psalms; that is, the fact that they display God's direct speech to the individual and supply the individual with a language in which to address God. This time the primary focus of these prayers is to reflect Protestant perceptions of the way in which the political state ought to be organised. But this necessitates an emphasis upon the 'humanity' of the Queen, her total dependence upon God, and thus ultimately again situates her as a female penitent. The preface to 'The King's Heast' summarises its contents:

Wherein almightie God ... doth first declare his mercifull providence in preserving hir, and his gracious goodnesse in exalting hir to the Crowne, exhorting her therewithall, humblie to acknowledge his sovereigntie over all earthlie powers, and to worship him. Secondlie, he describeth unto hir Grace, the woorthie properties that are required to bee in everie godlie Prince, and wise Governour ... Thirdlie, he exhorteth hir Majestie to the faithfull discharge of hir office and dutie in his feare and service ... he fourthlie

promiseth, not onlie to be hir continuall defender against all hir enemies; but also to blesse hir, and hir Realme, with manie large, sweet and comfortable benefits ... namlie, upon this condition: if finallie she persevere in the perfect love and due obedience of hir spirituall spouse Christ Jesus (p. 306).

De Beze's preface carefully avoids any reference to his own part in the construction of this text; the speaker is unequivocally 'God' who directly addresses Elizabeth 'as he sometime did unto David,' although the preface does ruefully admit that this does not occur in quite 'so mysticall maner' as it did to David. In the style of a truly self-abasing translator, de Beze effaces his own influence over the text; the words and direction therein contained are 'God's'. The first chapter of 'The King's Heast' commences by establishing an intimate father/daughter relationship. Although above Elizabeth is also situated as the direct descendent of David ('hir father David'), in the main text she is identified as 'Elizabeth, thou Virgin mine, the King's Daughter, and fairest among women .. Thou art my Daughter in deede, this daie have I begotten thee, and espoused thee to thy king Christ' (p. 307). Recalling not only God's words to Christ after his baptism but also psalm 45, the marriage song of Solomon (which was interpreted as a prefiguring of the marriage between Christ and the church), Elizabeth is simultaneously assured of her anointing and forcefully reminded that she is dependent upon her (Heavenly) father for this position: 'and albeit I have embraced you with speciall favour, as a father his children; yet thinke that I have not exempted you from my power and authoritie: and that though you be Princes and Magistrates, yet knowe that you are mortall, even as other men' (p. 309). Thus she, like all other mortals, must 'directlie followe the waies that I have appointed' (p. 310).

These 'waies' are depicted in God's word; specifically here in the psalms delineating the role and responsibilities of the ruler.<sup>32</sup>

Elizabeth is advised that she has been appointed to restore God's people 'to that ancient and most right godlie order of justice, religion and faith'. In order to effect this re-establishment of God's 'true' religion, the Queen is commanded to appoint godly counsellors and to 'expell and thrust out of thy Court and house, all the unwoorthie and ungodlie men, flatterers, parasites, jesters, atheists, and revengers of bloud' (p. 311). Elizabeth's court is to be constructed along the same lines as those espoused by the writers of household treatises: as the Ruler she has a responsibility to set an example for others to follow. On the condition that she fulfils these obligations, 'God' promises that: 'My hand, I saie, shall establish thee, and mine arme strengthen thee: so that no enimie shall overcome thee by subtiltie, nor anie wicked man oppresse thee by force' (p. 313). Even the Queen, consistently referred to as 'my Daughter,' is identified as an 'obedient child' who must win her 'father's' love and favour. One way in which the Queen can win God's favour is by producing spiritual offspring: 'here in my house the Church thou shalt see thy children and offspring (who by publishing and promoting my Gospell, thou hast borne after a maner unto thy husband Christ)' (p. 318). There is, then, a slight acknowledgment, even here, of Elizabeth's role in the promotion of the Gospel referred to more openly by Bentley and Cancellor: Elizabeth may be a physical virgin, but she can bear her spouse children through the promotion of God's word. Essentially, 'God's' address to Elizabeth reiterates the advice to mothers and daughters in conduct literature, situating her - albeit on a larger scale - as a mother instructing children in God's word.<sup>33</sup>

'The Queenes Vow, or selfe-talke with God' depicts Elizabeth's 'exemplary' response to 'The Kings Heast': 'it was thou my King, and

my God ... which hast exalted mee thine handmaid, and given unto me thine absolute authoritie, over all the great Princes and people of England; that I should governe the verie Magistrates & Commons thereof, by the direction of thy word, wisdom, and counsell' (pp. 328-329). However, 'The Queenes Vow' reinforces the significance of Elizabeth's role in the promotion of God's Word, underlining her role as the head of the Church and her identification in de Beze's writing as a 'priest'. A large portion of the text represents Elizabeth in the position of an instructor in the art of praising God:

I, with the residue of my dominion, as a mother with hir daughters, and the virgin with virgins ... will magnifie the holie remembrance of thee ... For to this end chieflie thou, O Lord, hast consecrated and set me over them, that I should diligentlie exercise the rites of thy divine worship among them. Therefore I will delight my selfe in setting foorth thy praises more and more (pp. 345-346).

Further to this, Elizabeth is equated with David in her role of leading the people to Church. Her capacity to fulfil this required function is founded upon her continual reading of God's word: 'Oh how do I love thy doctrine! Surelie thou knowst Lord, that I am woont to consume whole daies and nights in meditating of thy lawes'. It is this which enables her to lead others in God's ways, makes her a wise ruler and enables her to overcome her enemies. It also positions her as 'wiser than her teachers': 'Yea thou hast made me better learned than my teachers and maisters, even because I have given my selfe wholie, not to mans inventions, but to meditate those things onlie, which thou hast given unto us for sound learning' (p. 353). Although this text is written by de Beze as a means to instruct her in her subjection to God, it is also a powerful representation of the potential power that using that word could provide for a woman. Obviously, Elizabeth was in a unique position for utilising the power

of that word as a Monarch. Yet, on a larger scale, this demonstrates the potential power for women as continual readers of the scriptures and instructors in family prayer within the household, a power which could make them wiser than their (male) teachers.

Another text which provides a pattern of expression primarily directed towards Elizabeth, but also intended for a wider audience is Thomas Rogers' A Golden Chaine.<sup>34</sup> Like de Beze, Rogers appropriates the words of the psalms to create a treatise on the duties and responsibilities of the Monarch; although Rogers' text is aimed at the 'unlearned' (A4v). Elizabeth's position is explicitly identified with that of David and Solomon; there is, writes Rogers, a 'wonderful resemblance which many of your Graces deedes have with the doings of those famous Kings'.<sup>35</sup> In his cataloguing of the connections between Elizabeth and David, Rogers once more draws attention to Elizabeth's role in the promotion of God's word, comparing 'his affliction with your imprisonment; his persecution with your troubles; his singing of godlie songs with your godlie bookes; his love of God, with your promoting his glorie and defending of pure religion' (A5r-A5v).

A Golden Chaine is divided into three sections: the first describes God's omnipotence and overall control of the world, the second defines prayer, and the third proffers models for praise and thanksgiving. In this respect Rogers' text interweaves private devotion with the construction of political order, in a way not dissimilar to de Beze's psalms for Elizabeth. Rogers represents A Golden Chaine as a book in which 'any may see, both what dutie they owe unto God, and what unto man; be they of what calling, or condition soever' (A4v-A5r). In this instance, the psalms operate as a discourse which eradicates social differences whilst simultaneously demarcating those differences. Unlike the books of devotion, Rogers

does not provide specific psalms for people with different social roles, but rather conflates social distinctions by providing prayers which all can use according to their experience. Whilst this produces the illusion that each member of society has equal access to this discourse, it operates as a means to encourage subjects to be obedient to their ruler rather than, as in de Beze's text, to reinforce the responsibilities of the ruler to the subjects.

Thus, male authors employed a variety of strategies to manoeuvre the range of concerns contained within the psalms to compose new texts which sought to construct a voice for Elizabeth. The voice or identity created for her positions her primarily as an exemplar of piety, which in turn situates her as an exemplary ruler. Elizabeth's translation of psalm 13 depicts her own interest in the psalms and suggests that she, like other women, was taught the psalms from an early age. And in such a way as to teach her that she was one who had 'true faith' and that those who opposed her would be destroyed by God. Her confidence in God's protection, expressed in her prayers, seems to have sustained her through her times of imprisonment: the use of the psalms to bring comfort in such times of affliction also brought solace to Lady Jane Grey.<sup>36</sup> The word of God or more particularly the psalms (in their capacity to dramatise the emotional, physical and spiritual afflictions which a 'true' believer could expect to encounter), enabled the user to obtain the psychological power to resist their 'enemies'. Lady Jane Grey, Anne Askewe, and Elizabeth I are all depicted as using the psalms in such times of crisis by later authors like Foxe and Bentley; this activity is deployed to articulate their exemplary identity and as an indictment of their persecutors.<sup>37</sup>

The texts written by these male authors who sought to construct

Elizabeth's identity and emphasised her subjection to God, in one sense appear grossly impertinent. Yet, as there is no evidence of punishment for the authors concerned, presumably Elizabeth herself did not perceive their writing as such, despite the latent political threat in de Beze's writing. Also, whilst they appropriate her name, these texts serve less as an instruction for Elizabeth herself, than to position her as an exemplar for emulation by other readers. As I will discuss in chapter three, this is especially significant for mothers and daughters in the act of praying for their nation. Importantly, albeit through a man's representation, these texts do allow Elizabeth direct communication with God; she is the leader of the church and her power is derived from God and her knowledge of his word.<sup>38</sup> If King's assertions about Catherine Parr are correct, Elizabeth herself would have been at least partly instructed by her step-mother's ardent Protestantism, and the inclusion of Elizabeth Tyrwhitt's meditations in her Girdle Prayer book, suggest that she was not entirely opposed to women expounding God's word. In various respects, Elizabeth is positioned as a woman who is both constituted by God's word and able to use that word to fashion herself through her own meditations in the psalms; this dualism inherent in the social function of the psalms is also apparent in the meditations and prayers written by women, which Bentley reproduces in Lampe 2 of The Monument.

## 2. 'FRUITFULL AND GODLIE EXERCISES': SELF-EXAMINATION, THE PSALMS AND WOMEN'S MEDITATIONS.

The prayers and meditations included in Lampe 2 of Bentley's anthology epitomise the manifold difficulties associated with the

'recovery' of a specifically feminine voice from the late Tudor period. Elizabeth Tyrwhitt, Frances Abergavenny, Dorcas Martin, and an anonymous 'godlie harted Gentlewoman' are all 'canonised' through their inclusion in this volume, but very little else is known about them. The relative paucity of material written by women and the lack of historical records of women are of course the main stumbling blocks to research. But an additional obstacle for modern feminist criticism is the fact that those women who did write, especially those of the late Tudor period, have been identified as internalising, rather than challenging, the dominant patriarchal views of how their identity ought to be constructed. Consequently, critical texts have asserted that women writers of the late sixteenth century demonstrate the least resistance to their male-defined identity; for example, when exploring the negotiations women had to make on entering the public world of writing, Ann Rosalind Jones states that 'the most submissive response was to deal only with the domestic and religious concerns considered appropriate for women and to write without any ambition for publication'.<sup>39</sup> Other critics identify these women writers as being 'on the margins of discourse' who lack an 'authentic' language of their own.<sup>40</sup>

Whilst acknowledging the severe constraints which sought to police female expression at this time, I am concerned that our own expectations of what constitutes an 'authentic' female expression - based on a notion that women ought to write differently from men - should not prevent us from exploring the negotiations involved in writing within a 'male' discourse. As has been recently stated: 'if we are to read women's writing ... then we should start by looking at what women actually wrote, rather than at what they did not'.<sup>41</sup> The very existence of Bentley's anthology and his ardent defence of their

writing as profitable for the nation, demonstrates the resistance to even this 'permissible' activity. For the women writers in Bentley's volume were engaged in appropriating the dominant discourse of religious expression for themselves, rather than simply reading those texts written by men, enabling them to bypass the 'covering' of their husband and to represent themselves as promoters or preachers of God's word. Paradoxically, the foundation for these activities is the Protestant emphasis upon self-examination. Although this practice is partially responsible for instituting self-censuring and self-policing, it also identified the importance of the individual. The importance of the psalms in this process is witnessed by the way in which women used the words of the psalmist not only to articulate their expressions to God, but also as a means of authorising their endeavours in the promotion of his praises and the spread of his word which they represent as profitable to themselves, their household, their neighbours and the nation.

I have already made reference to one of the women whose Morning and Evening praiers, with divers Psalmes, Hymnes, and Meditations are reprinted in The Monument.<sup>42</sup> Elizabeth Tyrwhitt's meditations include prayers, psalms, poems and Biblical citations for private use. Tyrwhitt wrote seven composite psalms (three for the morning and four for the evening), which, like those in the books of devotion, frame a new psalm for her own specific use. She demonstrates her dependence upon God at the opening of her first morning psalm: 'O Lord heare my words, marke my crieng, O my King and my God, for unto thee onelie come I to praie: neither doo I looke for succour anie where else than of thee'.<sup>43</sup> Although in one sense this is conventional, it depicts her total reliance upon God, who is the source of her strength and ability to promote his word. For in the

second psalm, she continues:

Oh Lord, bring to passe that I may burne in the desire of thy lawe, that upon the advancement of thy word my mind may alwaies be occupied, that I may evermore choose that which is most pleasant to thee, and hate that both in my selfe and others, which to thee is displeasent.

Make I praie thee that I may be a tree planted by the sweet rivers of thy ghostlie waters, to the intent that I may bring foorth fruit to thy glorie, and to the profit of my neighbour, as often as thou shalt minister time and occasion thereunto.

Least my leaves, which are my words and works should fade and fall awaie; but that all things may prosper, whatsoever I shall doo in thy name (p. 108).

This second composite psalm is primarily based upon psalm 1, but the above extract illustrates the way in which Tyrwhitt interweaves her own words into her paraphrase. Rather than simply meditating on God's word for her own private instruction (v. 2), Tyrwhitt's desire for 'thy lawe' is a means by which to regulate her own behaviour and to interpret others' actions, but this is accompanied by a desire to be involved with 'the advauncement of thy word'. This morning prayer is identifying Tyrwhitt's desire to be aware of the opportunities for spreading God's word and demonstrating her piety in the day ahead. She retains the metaphor 'he shall be like a tree,' but unlike the Bible translations she enhances the 'rivers of water' to 'the sweet rivers of thy ghostlie waters' which is a reference to the Holy Spirit. The fruit, therefore, is probably a reference to the 'fruits of the Holy spirit' which Tyrwhitt desires to 'bring foorth' as a means of glorifying God and 'to the profit of my neighbour'.<sup>44</sup> Importantly this can only occur 'as often as thou shalt minister time and occasion thereunto'. It is through this sensitivity to the prompting of God's spirit that her 'leaves' (her 'words and works') bear fruit, or bring profit to both others and herself: without this guidance they would 'fade and die'. Through the codifying of her 'leaves' in writing and its reproduction in Bentley's anthology, her

work of words is able to bring profit to a wider audience than her particular neighbours.

In a later prayer, despite identifying herself as a 'most sinfull and wretched wretch,' Tyrwhitt also offers 'humble thanks, for thine inestimable goodnesse shewed towards me, in creating me to thine owne likenesse, and making me capable of thine everlasting glorie ... [and] for having singled me amongst so many millians that knowe thee not' (p. 119). Along with the self-abnegation requisite in Protestant theology there is the accompanying assurance that she has been singled out by God for election. Importantly, Tyrwhitt asserts that she, even as a woman, has been created in God's 'owne likenesse' and it is through Adam rather than Eve that the sins of the flesh are rooted. In contrast to the images of life associated with her endeavours in the spreading of God's word, these sins are described as 'in Adam fallen as a rotten apple from a living tree' (p. 128). In her evening psalms, Tyrwhitt reiterates her need for God's protection and her dependence upon God's mercies as the pre-requisite for her capacity to bring relief to the troubled by her own testimonies of God's protection:

Then shall I blowe abroade thy name with all praises  
unto my brethren, and in the assemblie of the holie  
persons I shall commend thee.

Despise not the praiers of the poore, turne not awaie  
thy face, heare my crie, for I will record this thy  
goodnesse among the miserable, painefull, and trouble-  
some consciences, that they thereof may take hart of  
comfort, growe in hope, cleave more ferventlie unto  
thee, blowe abroade thy most glorious name, and give  
thee everlasting thanks for their salvation (p. 126).

In the above extract, Tyrwhitt commences by paraphrasing psalm 22. v. 25 and then connects three repeated phrases from a number of psalms, of which the following references are just one example: 'Despise not the praiers of the poore' (102. v.17), 'turne not awaie thy face' (27. v.9), 'heare my crie' (61. v.1). The rest of the extract echoes

David's promises to tell of God's goodness to him in various assemblies, but here Tyrwhitt identifies herself as bringing the good news particularly to those suffering in their consciences, and takes upon herself the responsibility for nurturing their faith.

The importance of bringing comfort to such afflicted souls is underlined by Tyrwhitt's awareness of the impending 'Judgment Day'. And her involvement with the promotion of God's word includes individual attention both to afflicted consciences and to the development of religion nationally. In this her role is twofold: firstly in praying for the Queen, that through her God 'wilt confound all Idolatrie and superstition, and set up thy true and holie religion, that thy faithfull servants may triumph and rejoyce in thee with merie harts, and sing unto thy praise'. Secondly, through including herself in a prayer echoing the concerns of the above psalm as involved in the promotion of his word: 'I commit to thy mercie all those that doo faithfullie professe thy holie Gospell, beseeching thee to give us grace to live according to thy lawes, that by well doing we may stop the mouthes of the ungodlie adversaries of the Gospell, and thereby win them to the right waie, that all may with one hart, and one mouth, glorifie thee'.<sup>45</sup> In this Tyrwhitt both prays for others involved in these endeavours, but also includes herself in the battle for souls through her words and actions.

Unlike Tyrwhitt's original meditations, An Instruction for Christians, conteining a fruitfull and godlie exercise is said to be 'translated out of French into English' by the 'vertuous and godlie' Dorcas Martin.<sup>46</sup> I have not been able to trace the source of this text, or to find out anything about the translator. Thus, although the text begins with a poetic translation of psalm 119, vv. 37 & 133 and incorporates other psalm references, it is impossible to tell the

extent to which Martin has altered her original. However, the translation of the opening psalm verses illustrates the main concerns of her text:

From vaine desires and worldlie lusts,  
Turne backe mine eies and sight:  
Give me the spirit of life and power,  
To walke thy waies aright.  
Direct my footsteps by thy word,  
That I thy will may knowe:  
And never let iniquitie,  
Thy servant overthrowe (p. 221).

Martin's translation is more specifically concerned with reformulating herself according to God's word, and with her role within the household. It is also worth noting that it includes a catechism explicitly designed to guide a mother in her role as an instructor of her child in the main principles of religion.

Another edition of original meditations, Frances Abergavenny's Praiers, focuses more clearly upon a mother/daughter relationship.<sup>47</sup> Identified by Elaine Beilin as belonging to the genre of 'Mother's Advice Books,' Abergavenny's Praiers were 'committed at the houre of hir death, to the right Worshipfull Ladie Mary Fane as a Jewell of health for the soule'.<sup>48</sup> Beilin and Maureen Bell identify her as 'Frances Manners Aburgavennie, daughter of the Earl of Rutland, wife of Henry, sixth Lord Bergavenny'.<sup>49</sup> On the authority of Elaine Partnow, the editors of A Biographical Dictionary identify Abergavenny as a poet, although they state that Partnow 'quotes only prose extracts from "The precious perles of perfect Godliness"'. However, apart from the Praiers in Lampe 2 and two extra poems in Lampe 4, I have not found this text in Bentley's collection. Intriguingly though, the Biographical Dictionary claims that Abergavenny was 'also known as Elizabeth Fane'. Although I have not been able to substantiate this assertion, if it is correct it would make her the author of the 'twenty one psalms and 102 proverbs,'

which have been lost. Whether or not this connection is provable, the Praiers in the second Lampe reveal a high dependence upon the psalms. They provide the basis of many of her prayers, for her alphabetical prayers in her daughter's name, Mary Fane, and for an acrostic poem of her own name.

Abergavenny's prayers emulate the patterns of meditation prescribed in the books of devotion and at times the language used in The Book of Common Prayer; both of which situate her as a mainstream Protestant. In her first prayer Abergavenny displays both an awareness of the prescriptions for women and of the importance of avoiding 'sectarianism':

let my lips be locked up from all scurillitie and un-  
comlie talke: let mine eares loath and abhor to heare  
thy glorious and blessed name blasphemed, and thy truth  
by anie Sectarian ill spoken of, & slandered: keepe and  
defend me under the wings of thy comfortable protect-  
ion, from all errorrs, schismes, and detestable  
heresies. (50)

I have footnoted the psalms from which this text is partially derived, but it is also influenced by the prescriptions enjoining women to silence - or at most godly expression - during this period. It is possibly also influenced by the likelihood of women being 'led astray' by heretical doctrines; in this context, this reference is more likely to refer to radical Protestantism than to Catholicism. Abergavenny continues by asking God to help her avoid this by his direction through his word: 'so direct my footsteps in this vale of miserie, that I may tread the path that leadeth to thee, with whom my soule thirsteth to rest as vehementlie as the Hart longeth after the water brookes'.<sup>51</sup>

The prayers which are most heavily dependent upon the psalms are those concerned with confession and penitence, those which seek to revile the 'fellowship of the ungodlie,' or those which express a

desire to live 'uprightlie'. One such prayer, 'that we may live so uprightlie in this life, that at last we may dwell in the everlasting tabernacle,' muses on the distinctions between worldly pleasures and heavenly pleasures, culminating in a melange of psalm quotations:

Oh how amiable are thy tabernacles! My soule hath a desire to enter into the courts of the Lord. My hart and my soule rejoyce in the living God; blessed be they that dwell in thy house, they may be always praising thee. One daie in thy courts, is better than a thousand elsewhere. I had rather be a dore-keeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of ungodlinesse. The Lord God is a light and defence. My soule is athirst for God, even for the living God. When shall I come before the presence of my God? My flesh longeth after thee in a barren and drie land, where no water is. (52)

This is but one example of the way in which the psalms provide the basis of Abergavenny's prayers. At other times the influence is present in the forms and concerns of the prayers, rather than direct quotations. Intermingled with these influences are echoes of the prescriptions delineating exemplary female conduct, particularly in the acrostics.

The first of these follows a similar pattern to the acrostic prayers depicting Elizabeth I. This time the acrostic spells the name of Mary Fane, Abergavenny's daughter, and it combines psalm texts with instructions in the way to live a godly life. Again there is an emphasis upon penitence and the speaker's dependence upon God:

M

Most mightie art thou Lord in all thy deedes, and holie in all thy works. Have mercie upon me, and give me understanding therefore from above, to consider the substance whereof thou hast framed me; and by the knowledge thereof, make me to consider mine owne weaknesse and infirmitie to be such, that unlesse thou set to thy hand speedilie to helpe me that am oppressed with sinne, I shall perish in my wickednesse. (53)

The next two prayers continue this portrayal of the speaker's total dependence upon God, with the ultimate aim of obtaining entrance into God's Kingdom; given its time of writing, this is a concern which

would be particularly apt for Abergavenny herself. The next three prayers address specific attributes, either to be avoided or sought after: 'Ydlenesse', 'Faith', and 'Abstinence'. The last of these combines psalm texts with advice for godly living which would almost be in place in the more secular conduct literature concerning bodily function proposed for men.<sup>54</sup> Identifying herself as one who follows God's commandments, the speaker - using the words of the psalmist - invokes God's justice upon those who disobey them, or make it difficult for her to do so:

Finallie, abate I beseech thee, the pride of the ungod-  
lie that trouble me. Confound in thy justice the imag-  
inations of the foolish, which sticke not to saie in  
their harts, There is no God. Breake the jawe bones of  
those in sunder, that consult and take counsell  
together how they may harme the innocent and weake.  
From the bloud-thirstie and deceiptfull man, deliver  
me, O Lord my God. Looke favourablie upon me, glad thou  
my hart with the cheerefull lookes of thy gracious and  
loving countenance. Saie unto my soule, I am thy safe-  
guard. Be thou ever with me, then shall I not need to  
feare the power of my subtile and cruell enimies. (55)

None of these quotations are referenced, and unlike the previous examples of Elizabeth Tyrwhitt and Elizabeth I there is no direct allusion to the psalms; they are not, for instance, entitled 'Psalmes' or said to be 'collected out of the Psalmes'. Yet the presence of the psalms pervades these prayers, in both overt and covert ways. Certainly, the sections quoted above appear to emulate the style of the composite psalms discussed elsewhere, which could mean that Abergavenny is consciously inserting herself into not only the specific discourse of the psalms, but a particular method of using them. This method corroborates my contention that the psalms were a particularly important discourse for women, and a source of instruction between women: Abergavenny presents her daughter with a pattern for constructing her own meditations drawing primarily upon psalm texts. Equally though it could demonstrate that the discourse

of the psalms was so familiar to these writers that they unconsciously incorporated it into their own expression; that is to say, that God's (or David's) words were their own words.

A rather less obvious, but nevertheless significant use of the psalms is apparent in Abergavenny's poetic acrostic of her own name which concludes her Praiers:

F From sinfulnessse preserve me Lord,  
R Renew thy spirit in my hart,  
A And let my tongue therewith accord,  
U Uttering all goodnesse for his part.  
N No thought let there arise in me,  
C Contrary to thy statutes ten,  
E Ever let me most mindfull be,  
S Still for to praise thy name: Amen.

A As of my soule, so of my bodie,  
B Be thou my guider, O my God:  
U Unto thee onlie I do crie,  
R Remoue from me thy furious rod.  
G Graunt that my head may still devise,  
A All things that pleasing be to thee,  
V Vnto mine eares, and to mine eyes,  
E Ever let there a watch set bee,  
N None ill that they may heare and see,  
N No wicked deede let my hands do,  
Y Yn thy good paths let my feete go (p. 213).

Here, in pithy proverbial sayings Abergavenny constructs her own representation of herself as a David figure which simultaneously situates her as an exemplary woman. Abergavenny expresses both awareness of God's word and a desire for further instruction to ensure that she keeps to that path.<sup>56</sup> From the outset, psalm 1 sets up the binary opposition between the blessed and the wicked, the righteous and the sinful; an opposition which frames Abergavenny's self-expression. This, as the psalmist teaches, can only be achieved through dependence upon God's preservation.<sup>57</sup> In the first stanza the speaker is primarily concerned with the preservation of the soul from sin by acting in accordance with God's word or commandments, which is the focal concern of psalm 119. Psalm 51. verse 10 expresses the desire for a right spirit: 'Create in me a clean heart, O God; and

renew a right spirit within me,' and the psalms constantly reiterate the need for the heart and tongue to be in 'accord'. The freedom from sin and the following of God's commandments is that which enables the psalmist - and Abergavenny above - to offer praise to God.<sup>58</sup>

The first line of the second stanza provides a bridge between the primary concerns of the two stanzas; the former being concerned with spiritual identity and the preservation of the soul through the spirit and the word, the second with the actions of the body - the head, the ears, the eyes, the hands and the feet. When the speaker requests that God should be her guide, she echoes the words God spoke to David in the 32nd psalm, and psalm 28 commences with the invocation 'Unto thee will I cry, O Lord'.<sup>59</sup> God's rod is figured in the psalms primarily as a symbol of God's judgement, as for example in psalm 89. v. 31-32: 'if they break my statutes, and keep not my commandments; Then will I visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes'. Not unsurprisingly therefore, Abergavenny seeks to disassociate herself from such transgressors and, echoing psalm 101, desires a watch to be set before her ears and eyes, and, echoing prescriptive literature, eschews the company of the ungodly.<sup>60</sup> Throughout, Abergavenny posits her own meditations and her own methods of self-articulation as a pattern for her daughter. In this process she reformulates the Word, particularly the words of the psalms, for her own ends. Whilst it is not particularly radical, Abergavenny's text thus displays the crucial significance of the psalms as a discourse through which women could both express their own piety and leave a legacy for the education of their daughters.

From the construction of Elizabeth as an exemplary figure by male authors to the self-constitution of Abergavenny's acrostic, the above meditations and prayers depict the centrality of the psalms as

a discourse through which women could manifest their piety and, thus, their exemplary status. Exhorted to read The Monument as a whole for their 'meditation, imitation, and instruction,' the women readers were both constituted by that discourse and, through the examples of the women writers included in the volume, encouraged to create their own meditations. Whilst these meditations focus on self-abnegation and penitence, with which women were especially associated in this period, it should be remembered that this was a central tenet of Protestant theology, rather than simply a gendered activity. Additionally, such self-abnegation is belied by a number of factors: their writing at all; their writing being included in an anthology which ensures that they will not be forgotten (here it is important to note that, apart from de Beze and St. Augustine, no male authors are named, whereas the women are); and for Abergavenny, in a rudimentary way, using the word to authorise herself and to insert herself into the text; or for Elizabeth Tyrwhitt, this very abnegation enabling her to promote God's word. Furthermore, the act of self-examination, whilst promoting self-policing, also encourages women to read the word for themselves, providing them with a legitimate private space in 'a room of their own,' to recognise their own individual importance to God, and to speak to God directly. The last point is specifically highlighted by Dorothy Leigh: 'the most excellent vertue and happinesse, that belongeth to private prayer, no man by any means can deprive a man of it ... this is the greatest comfort that all good Christians have, that no man can bar them from private conference with God'.<sup>61</sup> Moreover, although the text was primarily aimed at women, Bentley explicitly identifies the women writers as exemplars for men, thus enabling them to override the prescriptions against women teaching. According to Bentley's

introduction, the female audience was wide ranging: to substantiate this point, he incorporates texts from those designed for the Queen to those addressed to maidservants. Yet a significant part of his collection is specifically addressed to mothers and daughters. This is partially illustrated in Abergavenny's and Martin's writing, but is more conspicuous in Lampe 4 and in other texts by women in the early seventeenth century, especially women's autobiographies; by a variety of strategies these women portray themselves, and their mothers or daughters, as 'patterns of piety and faith' through the discourse of the psalms.

FOOTNOTES

- 1) The Monument of Matrones: conteneing seven severall Lamps of Virginitie, edited by Thomas Bentley, 3 Volumes (1582), I. sigs. A2r-A2v. Dedication to Queen Elizabeth. All references to The Monument of Matrones in this chapter are to volume one.
- 2) Or rather, the implication is that those texts not defined as being by women are by male authors. Lampe 4, for example, commences with a prayer from Thomas Becon and includes meditations by 'W. H.' (William Hunnis). The only texts which Bentley explicitly states to be by men are those by de Beze in Lampe 3, and St. Augustine's Psalter in Lampe 4. The women's writing comprises approximately one sixth of Bentley's complete text (or a quarter of the first volume).
- 3) In his dedication, Bentley suggests that his anthology should also be read by men and occasionally heads a prayer with a direction for male use. However, the overwhelming majority of his anthology is explicitly addressed for female users, as his dedication indicates.
- 4) Anthony Gibson, A Woman's Woorth (1599) and Sir Thomas Elyot Defence of Good Women (1540). See also Half Humankind: Contexts and Texts of the Controversy about Women in England, 1540-1640, edited by Katherine Usher-Henderson and Barabara F. McManus (Chicago, 1985).
- 5) Thomas Bentley (1582), sig. B1r. The texts by men are meant to assist women's creation of their own devotions. Although Bentley acknowledges that a number of texts already serve this purpose, he claims that there is still a necessity for his collection (sig. B1v).
- 6) The Parable of the Wise Virgins, Matthew 25.
- 7) Elaine V. Beilin (1987), p. 84. Appendix 4 provides a full list of the psalm texts included in Bentley's volume.
- 8) Elaine V. Beilin (1987), p. 85.
- 9) There are in fact only two actual translations by women in Lampe 2. Elizabeth I.'s translation of Margueritte de Navarre's The Mirror of the Godly Soule and Dorcas Martin's An Instruction for Christians.
- 10) Thomas Bentley (1582), sig. B1v. See also, Psalm 1. v. 2: 'Blessed is the man whose delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his word doth he meditate day and night'.
- 11) Bentley (1582), sig. F2v. 'Certaine godly Sentences out of the 13. Psalme, written by the Queenes Maiestie, in Latine, French, and Italian'. These are, in fact, all translations of the same verse: 'The foolish bodyes saye in their hertes: Tush, there is no God. They are corrupte, and become abhominable in their doynges, there is not one that doth good' (Coverdale Bible). Also printed in A Godly Medytacyon of the Christen Sowle, edited by John Bale (Wesel, 1548).
- 12) The full version of Elizabeth's translation of psalm '13' is also included in The Poems of Queen Elizabeth I, edited by Leicester Bradner (Rhode Island, 1964). The referencing of the psalm as number 13 and the date of publication, 1548, indicates that Elizabeth was

either using the Vulgate Bible, or perhaps, given her association with Catherine Parr, the Coverdale Bible (which retains the Vulgate numbering and the Latin titles). Although Bentley makes references to the Geneva Bible in his preface, he does not alter the numbering.

13) One of these prayers, 'made by hir Majestie, when she was in great feare and doubt of death, by murther', is compiled out of the psalms. See Thomas Bentley (1582), p. 36.

14) There are psalm references in the text, although it is also highly dependent upon the writings of St. Paul. The references are supplied in A Godly Meditation of the Christen Soule,.. translated ... Princesse Elizabeth, edited by James Cancellor (1580).

15) This is stated in the marginal gloss to the Coverdale Version of the Psalter. These lines have been erased by the Genevan translation. The translation of Psalm 13 is quoted from Bradner (1964), p. 13.

16) Valerie Wayne 'Some Sad Sentence: Vives' Instruction of a Christian Woman in Margaret P. Hannay, ed. (1985), pp. 21 & 28.

17) Ironically, Wayne ends her essay by quoting Elizabeth I's marginal notes in her copy of St. Paul's Epistles: 'I walk so many times into the pleasant fields of the holy Scriptures, where I pluck up the godlisome herbe of sentences by pruning, eat them by reading, chew them by musing, and lay them up at length in the high seat of memory, by gathering them together. That so having tasted the sweetness, I may the less perceive the bitterness of this miserable life' (p. 29).

18) Leicester Bradner (1964), p. 3. ls. 1, & 5-6. This injustice on fortune's part conflicts with God's justice in Psalm 145: 'The Lorde loseth men out of preson, the Lord geveth sight to the blynde .. he defendeth the fatherlesse and wyddowe: as for the waye of the ungodly, he turneth it upsyde downe'. Coverdale Bible.

19) Psalm 7. Coverdale Bible.

20) James Cancellor, ed. (1580). I have not found the source for the other acrostic. A similar acrostic appears in Thomas Sorocold, The Supplications of Saints (London, 1612). Again the name is Elizabeth, but was written for Princess Elizabeth, daughter of James I to whom the text was dedicated. In his edition of A Godly Meditation Cancellor even produces a mnemonic, cataloguing the attributes which Elizabeth should strive for. Her Christian name is identified with individual virtues and Christian practices, whereas Regina, her social title is identified with the attributes required for her office (Sig. G8v).

E Embrace Vertue	R Rule Prudently
L Love perfectly	E Execute justice
I Imitate Christ	G Give bountifullie
Z Zealously pray	I Incline to humilitie
A Aske heavenly giftes	N Nourish friendly amitie
B Be mercyfull	A Advaunce civill pollicie
E Expell vice	
T Trust not flatterie	
H Hate worldly vanitie	

21) James Cancellor, ed. (1580), sig. A3r: 'How happie then is that countrie and people, for whose behoofe and edifying, Queenes and Princes spare not, ne cesse not, with all earnest indeavour and sedulitie to spende their tyme, their wits, their substaunce, and also their bodyes in the studdies of noble sciences?'

22) James Cancellor, ed. (1580), sigs. Hr-K7r. See also Thomas Bentley (1582), pp. 280-296.

23) Thomas Bentley (1582), p. 280. See also Psalm 143. v.2.

24) Thomas Bentley (1582), p. 281. See also Psalm 51. v. 1.

25) Thomas Bentley (1582), p. 283. See also Psalm 120. v.1 and p. 285, see also psalm 51.v.10.

26) Thomas Bentley (1582), p. 286. See also psalm 51. v.4. and p. 287, see also psalm 51. v.12.

27) Thomas Bentley (1582), p. 288. Psalm 51. v.6. and p. 289. Psalm 51. v.16.

28) The ensuing quotations are from the Coverdale Bible. I have used the Coverdale version because the prayer seems to be closest to that translation. As I do not know the source of this acrostic, it is difficult to ascertain which translation might have been followed by a simple dating proceedure. The Coverdale version, apart from the different numbering of the psalms, also does not use verse divisions; this was only instituted with the Geneva Bible. The references are therefore from the later numbering; thus, although the reference is, for example, to 25. v. 20, this is from the Coverdale version of psalm 24.

29) See Edward A. Gosselin (1976), p. 97.

30) Theodore de Beze, Du Droit des Magistrats (1574). (Quoted by Edward A. Gosselin (1976), p. 98.)

31) Bentley (1582), p. 260.: 'O Lord, I praie thee, save now: o Lord, I praie thee now give prosperitie. Blessed be he, that commeth in the Name of the Lord: we have blessed you out of the house of the Lord' (Psalm 118. vv. 25 -26. Geneva Bible)

32) The responsibilities of the ruler are specifically outlined in psalm 72. A version of this psalm is included in Lampe 4 of The Monument.

33) For a discussion of the variety of ways in which Elizabeth I was represented, see Philippa Berry, Of Chastity and Power: Elizabethan Literature and the Unmarried Queen (London, 1989) and Frances Yates, Astraea: The Imperial Theme in the Sixteenth Century (London, 1985). See also Louis Montrose's discussion of 'the image of the Queen as a wet nurse' in 'A Midsummer Night's Dream and the Shaping Fantasies of Elizabethan Court Culture' in New Historicism & Renaissance Drama, edited by Richard Wilson & Richard Dutton (London, 1992), p. 111.

34) Thomas Rogers A Golden Chaine, Taken out of the rich treasure house the Psalmes of King David (1587). Dedicated to Elizabeth I. This copy owned by Anne Heigham at some point, but not dated (B.L. 3090. a. 16).

35) Thomas Rogers (1587), sig. A5r. See also Henry Lok, Ecclesiastes, Otherwise called the preacher (1597). Dedicated to Elizabeth I. Title page quotations are from the psalms, although the main text is from Proverbs. Elizabeth is again identified as a 'type' of King derived from David and Solomon (sig. A6v).

36) Both Bentley and Foxe report Lady Jane Grey's citation of psalm 51 at her execution. Bentley also reproduces a prayer 'made by the Lady Jane Dudley, in the time of hir trouble, a little before hir death' (pp. 98-100).

37) See Anne Askew's prayer reproduced in Thomas Bentley (1582), p. 214 and John Foxe (1583) II., p. 1240. See John Swan's 'A True and Briefe Report, of Mary Glovers Vexation' in Witchcraft and Hysteria in Elizabethan London: Edward Jordan and the Mary Glover Case, edited by Michael MacDonald, Tavistock Classics in the History of Psychiatry (London, 1991). Swan emphasises the use of the psalms during the process of relieving Glover from her 'vexation' and reproduces a version of psalm 116 as 'Mary Glovers meditation' after her release from her 'possession'.

38) See discussion of women rulers in Retha M. Warnicke (1983), John Knox, The First Blast of the Trumpet against the Monstrous Regiment of Women (1558) and John Aylmer, An Harborowe for Faithfull and True subjectes, agaynst the late blowne Blaste, concerninge the Government of Weman (1559).

39) Ann Rosalind Jones, The Currency of Eros: Women's Love Lyric in Europe, 1540-1620 (Bloomington, 1990), p. 29.

40) See especially, Gary F. Waller 'Struggling into Discourse: The Emergence of Renaissance Women's Writing' in Margaret P. Hannay, ed. (1985), pp. 238-256.

41) Maureen Bell et al, eds. (1990), p. xiv.

42) Elizabeth Tyrwhitt, Morning and Evening Praiers, with diverse Psalmes, Hymnes, and Meditations in Thomas Bentley (1582), pp. 103-138.

43) Thomas Bentley (1582), p. 106. See also Ps. 5 v.2.

44) See Galatians 5. vv. 19-22.

45) Bentley (1582), p. 133. For examples of praise, see the end of the first psalm for evening meditation, p. 124.

46) Dorcas Martin, An Instruction for Christians in Thomas Bentley (1582), pp. 221-246.

47) Frances Abergavenny, Praiers in Thomas Bentley (1582), pp. 139-123.

48) Thomas Bentley (1582), p. 139. See also Elaine V. Beilin (1985), p. 83.

49) Elaine V. Beilin (1985), p. 83. See also Maureen Bell et al, eds. (1990), p. 3 and The Quotable Woman: From Eve to 1799, edited by Elaine Partnow (New York, 1986).

50) Thomas Bentley (1582), p. 140. See the following psalms for the basis of Abergavenny's prayer: 'Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth; keep the door of my lips' (141. v.3); 'the foolish people have blasphemed thy name' (74. v.18); 'hide me under the shadow of thy wings' (17. v.8).

51) Thomas Bentley (1582), p. 141. Echoes psalm 23, and psalm 42. v.1. 'As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee'.

52) Thomas Bentley (1582), p. 160. See the following psalms: 'How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts! My soule longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the Lord: my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God. Blessed are they that dwell in thy house: they will be still praising thee. For a day in thy courts is better than a thousand. I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness. For the Lord God is a sun and a shield' (psalm 84. vv. 1, 2, 4, 10, 11); 'My soule thirsteth for God, for the living God: when shall I come and appear before God?' (psalm 42. v.2); and 'My soule thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is' (psalm 63. v.1).

53) Thomas Bentley (1582), p. 207. See Psalms 145. vv. 6 & 17; 51. v.1; 103. v.14; 6. v.2; 119. v.92.

54) Thomas Bentley (1582), pp. 209-210. Abstinence is identified as a virtue to be sought as it prevents the growth of pride: 'Give me grace then with praier, to exercise such fasting, as may hold downe the man of sinne, that he swell not in pride, excesse, gluttonie, or superfluous eating or drinking'.

55) Thomas Bentley (1582), p. 210. See also: 'Lord, how are they increased that trouble me ... Arise, O Lord and save me' (psalm 3. vv. 1 & 7); 'The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God' (psalm 53. v.1. & psalm 14. v.1); 'Break their [the wicked's] teeth, O God, in their mouth' (psalm 58. v. 6); 'O deliver me from the deceitful and unjust man' (psalm 43. v.1); 'For thou hast made him most blessed for ever; thou hast made him exceeding glad with thy countenance' (psalm 21. v.6). 'What time am I afraide, I will trust in thee ... in God have I put my trust; I will not fear what flesh can do unto me' (psalm 56. vv. 3 & 4).

56) 'Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path' (psalm 119. v.105).

57) See psalm 121 which teaches the individual to look always to God who will provide help in keeping the individual on the right path, 'the Lord shall preserve thee from all evil: he shall preserve thy soul' (v.7).

58) See, for example 'I will bless thy name for ever and ever. Everyday will I bless thee; and I will praise thy name for ever and ever' (psalm 145. vv. 1-2).

59) 'I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye' (v. 8). Psalm 28 commences with the invocation 'Unto thee will I cry, O Lord'.

60) See psalm 101 'I will set no wicked thing before mine eyes: I hate the work of them that turn aside; it shall not cleave to me' (v. 3) and contrastingly promises that 'mine eyes shall be upon the faithful of the land' (v. 6). In psalm 141. v. 3, the psalmist asks God to 'set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth; keep the door of my lips'. For the end of the poem, see psalm 34. vv. 13 & 14 'keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from speaking guile'; 'depart from evil and do good'. See also psalm 119. v.105 (and note 56 above).

61) Dorothy Leigh (1627), pp. 102-103.

CHAPTER THREE. 'PATTERNS OF PIETY AND FAITH':

THE PSALMS AND EXEMPLARY WIVES, MOTHERS, AND DAUGHTERS.

She was an example and pattern of piety, faith and patience in her greatest torment, still with godly instructions, gentle rebukes for sin, a continual praying of psalms, speaking to God in his phrase and word, saying that we could not speak to him from ourselves in such an acceptable manner, as that by which was dictated by his own most holy spirit. (1)

The above description is Alice Thornton's representation of her mother's behaviour on her death bed. Defining her mother as 'an example and pattern of piety, faith and patience' even amidst her 'greatest torment', Alice Thornton's portrayal recalls the prescriptive discourses of women's conduct literature and echoes the conventions of male-authored biographies of women, thus constructing an image of her mother as the archetypal exemplary woman. Within the framework of A Book of Remembrances, this passage serves not only to establish the mother's exemplary status, but also to authorise and validate Alice Thornton's identity: a connection which attests to the importance of genealogy in the constitution of an exemplary woman. But of particular relevance to my enquiry in this quotation is the key function of the psalms as a manifestation of her mother's exemplary status. Her mother is a model for her 'godly instructions' and 'gentle rebukes for sin', but more importantly for her 'continual praying of psalms' through which she speaks 'to God in his phrase and word'. The fact that Thornton's mother 'still' engages in these pursuits indicates that these activities were habitual practice for her, suggesting that she - like many other women - followed the practice of daily psalm reading. In a limited way, she assumes the position of a preacher; reiterating the words of many a biblical commentator (particularly psalm commentators),<sup>2</sup> Thornton's mother instructs her listeners that the best way in which to please God is

to address him 'in such an acceptable manner, as by that which was dictated by his own most holy spirit'. As her listeners are her family, she exemplifies the mother's role in encouraging her offspring in the reading of the psalms. It was certainly a lesson that Alice herself learned thoroughly; not only does she record her daily reading of the psalms, but many of her entries are based upon the psalms.

The connection between the psalms and the representation of an individual 'exemplary' woman made here by Thornton is by no means an isolated occurrence: it could be an excerpt from a number of exemplary biographies or funeral sermons in the Renaissance. In 1619 John Mayer described how one Lucy Thornton 'lay in her sicke bed as in heaven, full of heavenly speeches, and of heavenly comfort. Now all her practice was praying, confessing of sinnes, singing Psalmes, and godly conference'.<sup>3</sup> Mayer also draws analogies between Lucy Thornton's daily behaviour and David's practices: 'shee did not lose her time in hearing, reading, discourse, and meditation: but profited more then many more ancient, to apply that of David unto her: I am become wiser then the ancient, because I keepe thy commandements'.<sup>4</sup> Once more, reading the psalms is aligned with profitable reading, and shortly after it is made clear that this assists her in promoting God's word and commandments to others. Lucy Thornton was, writes Mayer, exceedingly zealous in 'opposing sinne, and maintaining vertue in those that were about her: As David, in setting forth his zeale, so it may truely be said of her; A wicked person shall not stand in my sight'.<sup>5</sup> This situates Thornton as one who kept to the prescriptions outlined in the household treatises, but also justifies her correction of or avoidance of 'her betters'. For Mayer continues: 'if any were near in alliance or great in worldly respects, yet if

they were notorious for sin, she took no delight but rather a loathing of their company'.

Similarly, Philip Stubbes portrays his wife Katherine as one who 'when she was not reading, she would spend the time in conferring, talking and reasoning with her husband of the worde of God, and of religion ... so that shee seemed to bee, as it were ravished with the same spirite that David was, when hee saide: The zeale of thy house hath eaten me up'.<sup>6</sup> Additionally, Stubbes reports that Katherine herself states, quoting the psalmist, that: 'I had rather bee a doore keeper in the house of my God, then to dwell in the tentes of the wicked'.<sup>7</sup> As in the previous examples, on her death bed Katherine Stubbes sang 'diverse Psalms most sweetly, and with a chearefull voice: which done, she desired her husband that the 103 Psalme might bee sung before her to the Church'.<sup>8</sup> Although in both the examples of Lucy Thornton and Katherine Stubbes the references to the psalms display their exemplary status, both biographies similarly emphasise their zealous promotion of the word among their neighbours and that this endeavour provoked them to disregard social distinctions and become embroiled in arguments; neither of which activities are intrinsically 'exemplary', but for the sake of the 'Truth' they become permissible.

In 1627, John Donne illustrates the continuing significance of the psalms as a family activity; this practice contributes to Lady Danver's exemplary status: 'with her whole family, (as a Church in that elect Ladies house, to whom John writ his second epistle) did every Sabbath, shut up the day, at night, with a generall, with a cheerful singing of Psalmes; This Act of cheerfulness, was still the last Act of that Family united in it selfe, and with God'.<sup>9</sup> John Ley's biography of Jane Ratcliffe in 1640, not only associates

Ratcliffe herself with the psalms, but takes the analogy of the relationship between David and Jonathan - presumably the early part of their relationship - as a means to encourage his dedicatees to learn from Ratcliffe as A Pattern of Pietie. He assures Lady Brilliana Harley and Lady Alice Lucie that: 'if divine providence had so disposed of your dwellings that you might have consorted with [Jane Ratcliffe] oft enough to be sufficiently acquainted,' then 'you would have communicated together with no lesse truth and strength of affection in your kinde ... then David and Jonathon did in theirs'.<sup>10</sup> As in The Holie History of King David, it is not solely David's words in the psalms that women were expected to emulate, but also his life. Using the psalms, or being identified with the actions of the psalmist positioned these women as exemplary mothers, wives and daughters.

1. MOTHER'S ADVICE BOOKS: INSTRUCTIONS IN PRAYER.

God is glad when the craftsman at his bench ... the  
farmer at his plough ... [and] the mother at the cradle  
break forth in hymns of prayer, praise and instruct-  
ion. (11)

Prefacing her collection of hymns Katherine Zell, a sixteenth-century German Protestant, illustrates that members of the lower social orders can please God through their espousal of 'hymns of prayer, praise and instruction'. The female participation in this endeavour is integrally connected with their function as mothers, instructing their children in this manner from the cradle. Zell also translated the penitential psalms ('Den Psalmen Misere') and her own hymns are based on the psalms; thus the hymns to which she refers signify the central significance of this discourse for the mother.<sup>12</sup> The genre of texts which Beilin has dubbed 'Mother's Advice Books' illustrate the influence of the psalms, both upon their own self-expression, and as a means through which to educate their children:

the authority for which is grounded upon their own experience.

Elizabeth Grymeston's Miscelanea, Meditations, Memoratives is one such text.<sup>13</sup> Her dedicatory epistle commences:

My dearest sone, there is nothing so strong as the force of love; there is no love so forcible as the love of an affectionate mother to hir natural childe: there is no mother can either more affectionately shew hir nature, or more naturally manifest hir affection, than in advising hir children out of hir owne experience, to eschue evill, and encline them to that which is good (A3r).

Through this use of syllogisms, Grymeston establishes for herself a position from which to express herself within the contemporary patriarchal definitions of motherhood, particularly the onus upon the mother to be the first moral guardian and hence instructress of her children. Careful as she is to define herself solely through her function as a mother, Grymeston also importantly justifies her writing on the basis of 'hir own experience'. Her experience is encapsulated in the text, she argues, by virtue of the fact that it provides 'the true portraiture of thy mothers minde'. By this method Grymeston places a moral obligation upon her son to follow her advice:

I leave thee this portable Veni Mecum for thy counselor, in which thou maiest see the true portraiture of thy mothers minde, ... hoping, that being my last speeches, they will be better kept in the conference of thy memorie; which I desire thou wilt make a Register of heavenly meditations (A3r-A3v).

Thus whilst Grymeston ostensibly defers to the patriarchal definitions of her position as a mother, she negotiates with the potential power this presents to her by instructing her son to remember these words, and to remember them particularly as they are 'my last speeches'. Self-consciously relying on moral obligation and the emotional impact of such a statement to gain authority for her own expression, Grymeston encourages her son to the pursuit of

'heavenly meditations'. Despite this avowed aim, Grymeston's text combines primarily secular quotations and her main concern is advising her son about how to choose 'a good wife'.<sup>14</sup>

Despite the fact that her dedication has been read as a depreciation of her abilities, representing an apologia for her entry into this male world, Grymeston turns the tables on conventional representations of women's study. She warns her son not to forget her advice should he progress to books of higher intellectual calibre: 'remember,' she says, 'that as it is the best coine that is of greatest value in fewest pieces, so is it not the worst booke that hath most matter in least words' (A3v). Her son should respect quality rather than quantity; also, he should learn from her eclecticism. Grymeston makes a virtue of what we would term plagiarism:

and as the spiders webbe is neither the better because woven out of his owne brest, nor the bees hony the worse, for that gathered out of many flowers; neither could I ever brooke to set downe that haltingly in my broken stile, which I have found better expressed in a graver author (A3v)

Although this is linked to a deprecation of her own 'broken stile,' Grymeston posits this as in itself a virtue which her son should emulate:

God send thee too, to be a wits Camelion,  
That any authors colour can put on (A3v).

One of the authors whose colours Grymeston appropriates is Richard Verstegan.<sup>15</sup> In contrast to the other women I have been considering, this situates Grymeston as a Catholic. Verstegan's Odes. In Imitation of the Seaven Penitential Psalmes were published three years prior to Grymeston's Meditations. Presumably, as these psalms are reproduced verbatim, Grymeston owned a copy of Verstegan's Odes. Although Grymeston does not alter the actual text of these psalms, by

situating them in a new context she changes their readership. For Verstegan's text is dedicated 'To the Vertuous Ladies and Gentlewomen readers of these ditties' (A2r). He situates the psalms in the context of the right form of singing for women and it is their voices which, Verstegan argues, will sanctify his writing: 'whose sweete voyces or virginalles may vouchsafe so to grace them, as that thereby they may be much bettered', allowing them to accompany them with whatever tunes they can obtaine from 'some skilful Musitian' (A2r). Verstegan's edition also contains other metrical devotions centring (as one would expect in a Catholic text) upon the Virgin Mary. Yet, although this is the context in which Elizabeth Grymeston would no doubt have come across these psalms, no such context is provided for her son. Although the psalms are provided as a form of meditation, as they were in Verstegan's text, they are no longer associated primarily with women or women's experiences but incorporated into a text devoted to guiding a male child in the way to order his life. She has appropriated that which is suitable for her son and omitted the surrounding information: 'hir own experience' has taught her the virtue of these psalms and she attempts to instil this into him. But, recognising that he will move on to higher intellectual pursuits (hence her need to remind him of the importance of her advice) means that, although the penitential psalms are applicable to his experience, they are not used to define him in the way that they defined Mary Fane, or located as the limit of his education as is illustrated in the other 'Mother's Advice Books' written by Dorothy Leigh and Elizabeth Jocelin.

In The Mother's Legacie Elizabeth Jocelin addresses her 'unborn childe'; thus, Jocelin did not know that she was going to give birth to a daughter and her book provides information for children of

either sex.<sup>16</sup> Jocelin is desirous to fulfil her motherly role in instructing the child in its 'religious training' and is very aware of the risks involved in childbirth which might prevent her from fulfilling that duty (B1v). She was also conscious of the risk she was taking in writing, but states that no other option was open to her: 'when I could find no other means to expresse my motherly zeale, I encouraged my selfe with these reasons'.<sup>17</sup> These reasons were that it was apt for a woman to write for a child; any errors can be excused because she wrote for her own child; and that God prospered those who had good intentions. Jocelin, although obviously herself well educated, followed the prescriptions for women's education in her advice about a potential daughter's education: 'I desire her bringing up may be learning the Bible, as my sisters doe, good housewifery, writing, and good workes: other learning a woman needs not' (B5v). In the preface, Jocelin is described in exemplary terms; for, although she wrote poetry, she hid it from public view and preferred to employ her gifts - which included an excellent memory - 'in carrying away an entire Sermon, so that she could (almost following the steps of the words) write it down in her Chamber' (a3v-a4r). Even The Mother's Legacie was 'unfinished' and 'found in her desk'.

Jocelin provides eight main prescriptions or rules whereby her child ought to order its life; although they apply to both sexes, Jocelin is particularly concerned with a daughter's use of these prescriptions, saying that: 'my love and care of thee and thy salvation is as great, as if thou wert a sonne, and my feare greater' (pp. 8-9). The child is instructed to remember God in its youth, to meditate daily on God's mercies, 'the maliciousness of the devil, and thine owne weaknesse,' to avoid offending God ('The Lord will not

despise a contrite heart, and though hee lett thee kneele long, he will have mercy at the last' (p. 26)), to avoid sin, especially pride (which is a particular problem for a daughter), to spend time in private prayer, and to always remember God whenever speaking. She recommends the use of 'Dr. Smith's' prayer book and above all advises the child (especially a daughter) to find pleasure in God's word:

if thou covet pleasure, set Davids delight before thine eyes, I have had more delight in thy testimonies than in all manner of riches, Psal. 119. And in the 92. Psalme hee saith, Thou Lord hast made mee glad by thy workes. In the 4. Psalme, Thou hast given mee more joy of heart, & c. and reading the 91. Psalme, thou shalt see what manner of blessings they are that God makes his children merry withall. And when thou hast once fixt thy heart to this study, it will be so sweet, that the more thou learnest, the more thou wilt desire, and the more thou desirest, the more God will love thee (pp. 49-50).

Although Jocelin has recourse to many other scriptural references through the duration of her text, here the psalms take precedence in outlining the practice of prayer and in encouraging her child in the study of God's word. Like the male authors of books of devotion, Jocelin displays the habit of compiling a number of psalm quotations to suit a given end. The references enable her child to refer to the source; a practice which is especially important in her recommendation of psalm 91, which must be read in order for the child to find out what God's blessings are.

A reference to the psalmist is also invoked in order to prevent her child from growing discouraged when 'thou seest others thrive & grow great in such [dishonest] courses'. In such a situation, Jocelin instructs her child to:

read the 73. Psalme, there thou shalt see David himselfe confesses his foot had wel-nigh slipt when he saw the prosperity of the wicked: Hee describes all their felicities, but at the last when hee went into the Sanctuary, hee found what their end was, how they were set in slippery places, & c. and then hee cries, Whom have I in Heaven but thee? And I have desired none in

the earth with thee (pp. 62-63).

Although this draws upon the Protestant traditions of psalm interpretation, such as those by Calvin and de Beze, Jocelin represents her explanations in simple terms, as would be suitable to a younger audience. Again echoing the psalmist, the child is enjoined to 'alwaies keepe a watch before thine owne lips', which is particularly applicable to the daughter: 'If thou beest a Daughter, remember thou art a Maid, and such ought thy modesty to bee, that thou shouldest scarce speak, but when thou answerest'.<sup>18</sup> Whilst Jocelin's text is not wholly dependent upon psalm quotations, in the way in which the writers of prayers anthologised in The Monument of Matrones are, her Legacie demonstrates how the psalms permeated her prayers and the way in which they represented the pivot of devotional exercises. She provides examples of her own use of the psalms through her instructions to her child, providing her child with a glimpse of how it ought to construct its interpretation of those crucial texts.

Whereas Jocelin is 'protected' by her death and the approbation from recriminations against her for transgressing the limitations of her sex, Dorothy Leigh writes her own dedication, to Princess Elizabeth, which states that she wrote to ensure that her children followed the right path, and that they need information and direction, 'lest for want of warning they might fall where I stumbled'.<sup>19</sup> As with Elizabeth Grymeston her experience is the authority upon which her text is based. But unlike the two previous examples, Leigh self-consciously promotes her writing as a text to instruct other parents in the best way to bring up their children. Although she describes herself as imperfect, Leigh is willing to risk censure and simultaneously describes herself as a 'loving Mother and a dutifull wife', in which she becomes a pattern for all other

parents to emulate. Although aware of these censures, Leigh is not deterred from her project and, additionally, admits later to a desire to lead people in the ways of prayer; to be the minister she hopes her sons will become. Indeed she displays no doubt that that is a role which she could more than adequately fulfill: 'Me thinkes that if I were a man & a Preacher of Gods Word ... I surely perswade my selfe, that through Gods grace I should bring many to pray rightly, which now pray unadvisedly, or not at all' (p. 128).

Certainly Leigh goes quite a way to achieving this in The Mothers Blessing, which is primarily concerned with how to pray. She reiterates much of what is said in prayer books written by men, but this would seem to me to confirm her capacity to fulfil the male role of preacher - were it not denied to her by social and religious prescriptions. Rather than leaving a model of her own meditations, Leigh provides the maxims by which her children can learn to frame their own meditations. It is significant that, unlike Jocelin, Leigh knew she was writing for male children. Leigh announces that the only way to be prepared for death is always to be prepared to die and, in conjunction, to live well. She instructs her sons thus:

meditate in the Law of the Lord day and night, (as the Psalmist saith) and then thou shalt be fit to bring forth fruit in due season: then shalt thou be fit to serve God, thy King, and Country, both in thy life & in thy death, & alwaies shalt shew thy selfe a good member of Jesus Christ, a faithfull Subject of thy Prince, and alwaies fit to governe in the Christian Commonwealth, and then thou maist faithfully and truely say, Whether I live or dye, I am the Lords. But without continuall meditation of the Word, this cannot be done (pp. 21-22).

Although Leigh advises her sons to instruct all their children (of either sex) in the Bible, the gender distinctions inherent in this are apparent in the above quotation. The male is to be instructed in the word for the profit of his country and to befit him to the role

of governor, rather than for the instruction of the family. Leigh also reminds her sons to: 'remember, your servants are Gods servants as well as yours: if they be not, say as David said: There shall not an ungodly person dwell in my house: he that loveth or maketh lies, shall depart out of my sight'.<sup>20</sup> In this respect, she emphasises the instructions in the earlier household treatises, and indicates the foundations upon which her own household was organised. In each of these examples an important part of the mother's advice to their offspring is to provide them with examples of how to read the psalms and apply them to their 'own experience'. Thus these texts represent a progression from the Medieval practice of women commissioning or buying psalters for their children; by the early seventeenth-century a few women wrote these texts for themselves.

## 2. PSALTERS FOR THEIR MOTHERS: ST. AUGUSTINE AND JOHN KNOX.

St. Augustine's Psalter 'composed out of everie Psalme a verse, for the use of his Mother' is reprinted in Lampe 4 of Thomas Bentley's The Monument of Matrones.<sup>21</sup> Augustine's Psalter is truly an 'epitome' of the psalms, although it is not exactly correct in its titular claim to incorporate 'out of everie psalme a verse'.<sup>22</sup> For Augustine's text at times incorporates only half of a verse and reformulates it by connecting it with half a verse from the next psalm. In this respect, Augustine establishes an authoritative precedent for the practices witnessed in the books of devotion, and increases the malleability of the psalms as a discourse for self-expression. The basic tenor of this Psalter emphasises the personal relationship between the speaker and God; it represents the 'private talke' between the soul and God, the need for individual penitence

and total reliance upon God's mercies. In the process Augustine almost completely annihilates the political and historical dimension of the psalms.<sup>23</sup> Furthermore, each of the chosen verses is in the first person and, therefore, the communal dimension of the psalms is eradicated, as this extract demonstrates:

Create in me a cleane hart, O God, renew a right spirit within me, that I may appeare like a greene olive tree, in the house of my God, **[e]** and there with Jacob rejoyce, **[f]** and everlastinglie be glad with Israel.

Save me, O God, by thy name, **[g]** and by thy power judge me.

Hide not thy selfe from my supplication, **[h]** but be mercifull unto me.

Send thou from heaven, **[k]** and saue me from the reproofe of them that would swalowe me up.

Breake their teeth, O God, in their mouths: **[l]** breake the jaws of the yong lions, O Lord.

Thou art my defence, and my mercifull God. **[m]**

Helpe me with thy right hand, **[n]** and under couering of thy wings let me be protected, **[o]** when thou art to render euerie man according to his works. **[p]**

While my soule thirsteth for thee, **[q]** hide me from the conspiracie of the wicked. **[r]**

Sith all flesh shall come unto thee, **[s]** put not backe thy mercie from me. **[t]** (24)

The alphabetical referencing is the system used by Thomas Rogers. I have put these references in bold in order to highlight the number of psalms which are interwoven in a comparatively short extract.

There is a discernible rationale in this splicing and redrafting of the psalms. Whilst it creates a new text, it retains the biblical layout and, in a way, Augustine makes his psalter more coherent than the biblical versions. He follows the developments and regressions of individual penitence, emphasising God's grace: this is a central concern of the psalms, but by eradicating the historical and political references Augustine can trace these developments much more clearly. This Psalter focuses on the self; when the individual asks for God's protection, it is not for protection from external enemies but from the 'internal enemy' of sin. His version also

anticipates the pattern of prayer and petitions outlined in the books of devotion; that is, he commences with an acknowledgment of God's power and majesty ('O Lord God almightie, and King of eternall glorie'), moves into an acknowledgement of individual sin, and then progresses to exhortations, culminating in praise ('with the sounding Cymbals of my lips praise and magnifie thy name: the which is holie and glorious, and reigneth now and euerlastinglie'). Augustine's psalter makes the psalms more readily digestible and more coherent than any one individual psalm actually is. But his focus on individual penitence is not directly stated or explained; it is what he has omitted, which gives his text coherence - or, rather, exposes the ideology which Augustine thus promoted.

In contrast to this, An Exposition upon the Syxt Psalme of David is situated in a rather more specific context: it forms part of John Knox's correspondence with his mother-in-law, Mrs. Bowes, and is clearly intended to persuade her that she is one of the elect.<sup>25</sup> Knox's letters demonstrate that Mrs Bowes was in some doubt of her salvation; in 1553 he wrote: 'Efter the sycht of your letter, ressavit fra your servand ... I partlie was moved in my spreit, weying with my self your continewall trubill, whilk procedeth fra the infirmitie and weaknes of your saule, whilk ever thristis the presence of your Fatheris mercie, whilk na mortall man can haif at all tymes'.<sup>26</sup> He discusses the bodily and spiritual battle and in a postscript to this letter informs her as to the reasons for the delay of the promised exposition: ' I may not answeir the places of Scripture, nor yit wryt the Expositioun of the Sixth Psalme, for everie day of this weik must I preache, if the wickit carkas will permit'.<sup>27</sup> Mrs. Bowes describes herself thus: 'Alas, wretched woman that I am, for the self same sins that reigned in Sodom and Gomorrhagh

reign in me'.<sup>28</sup> Knox's Exposition attempts to reassure her that this is not the case and, by illustrating how her experiences mirror those of David, attempts to bring her comfort in her distress.<sup>29</sup>

However, although Knox's commentary is directed to Mrs Bowes' particular situation, it is not specific about her anxieties: or, rather her situation through the analogy of David is representative of the depths of despair that Protestantism provided a means of expressing.<sup>30</sup> Knox's lengthy commentary makes many explicit connections between both Mrs. Bowes' experiences, his own experiences and David's expressions in this psalm: for example, 'here must I put you in mynde (dearly beloved) howe ofte have you & I talked of these present dais tyll neither of us bothe coulde refrayne teares' (A5v). But Knox is at pains to point out that whilst they share common concerns and similar troubles, her situation is harder than his own. Yet he argues that this should be a source of comfort to her, as these troubles are sent by God to refine, test, and prove that they - and she especially - are indeed members of the elect: 'and therefore (dearly beloved) dispayre you not, albeit the flesh sometime burst out into heavy complaints, as it were accusinge God: you are not more perfect then was David & Job' (A7r). Furthermore, Knox points out that even Christ (in his 'Complaint on the Crosse') experienced moments of doubt.<sup>31</sup> Knox identifies Mrs. Bowes' main problem as her 'tender conscience' which makes her vulnerable to the attacks of the devil, but simultaneously this very vulnerability identifies her as beloved of God. He is resolute that her sense of sin, her feelings of abjection, and her desire to repent are the very attributes which assure her of her salvation:

These thyngs put I you in mind of beeloued mother, that  
albeit your paynes some tymes bee so horrible; that no  
release nor comfort you fynde, neyther in spirite nor  
body: yet if the hart can only sobbe unto God, despaire

not, you shall obtayne your hartes desier ... to sobbe unto god, is the demonstracion of the secrete seede of god, which is hyd in Goddes elect children (C6v-C7r).

Knox's commentary also encourages her to remember her own previous experiences of God's benefits, to make her consider her positive experiences: 'Sure I am, that your owne harte must confesse that ye haue receavede even lyke benefites of the handes of God, as David dyd' (D5r). In order to bolster his mother-in-law's own sense of self-worth, Knox recalls how her faith has been a source of inspiration to him: 'what boldenes I have sene with you, in all suche conflictes, it neadeth not me to reherce ... I have wondred at that bold constancy, whiche I have founde in you at such tyme, as myne own hart was faynte' (D5v-D6r). This kind of comment recurs throughout the exposition, and illustrates the dichotomy between his perception of Mrs. Bowes and her own perception of her self: he represents her as a woman of strong faith, she perceives herself as the unworthiest of sinners.<sup>32</sup>

Knox catalogues Mrs. Bowes' perception of her deficiencies in order to make her re-evaluate her self-perception:

ye founde your faith faynte, that you coulde not repente youre former evell lyfe, that ye founde no disposition nor readynes too good workes, but were rather carryed away of synne & wickednes ...[and] that ye delyghted in those thynges, whiche too you were mooste displeasyng (E7v).

Knox counteracts this evaluation by two methods: firstly, by pointing out that this aligns her with St. Paul who 'did what he did not desire and did not what he desired to do', and secondly by providing his own testimony of her actions: 'the teares of youre eyes have witnessed before God, that ye delyted not in suche thynges ... Ye have mourned for youre weakenes, and have desyred your imperfection to be removed, and ye have detested all sortes of idolatrie. Howe then can ye thynke that ye take anye pleasure in the same?' (E8r).

Through these approaches, Knox seeks to resolve her doubts; the base point of his argument is to reiterate the belief that the individual is inherently sinful. Any righteousness comes from God and in her desire to purify her body from sin Mrs Bowes exhibits the presence of God's spirit within her. Knox ends his commentary with an admonishment to continue in the very paths she is already engaged in and which demonstrate her fervency and zeal for God. Deploying a variety of strategies, Knox takes on the expected male role - which is also his social role - to be a priest unto her. In the process, Knox represents her as a pattern of piety and faith: a pattern which he himself seeks to emulate, and which becomes a pattern for others through Abraham Fleming's publication of this commentary. The very attributes which Mrs. Bowes apparently detests in herself are those which suit her for this position, as she represents an idealised figure of female penitence.

### 3. FOR THE PRESERVATION OF QUEEN AND COUNTRY: PSALMS FOR MOTHERS AND DAUGHTERS.

Whilst Knox and Augustine used the psalms to provide exemplars and instructions for their mothers during times of individual despair about their salvation, Lampe 4 of The Monument of Matrones provides almost a complete service specifically for mothers and daughters: 'Sundrie formes of Christian praiers and thanks-givings ... for the preservation of ... our most dear and dread sovereing Queene'.<sup>33</sup> These prayers and psalms are to be said by mothers and daughters pertaining both directly to Queen Elizabeth and to different issues affecting the 'realme'. This collection identifies the role which women would have played in the practice of household prayers and how

this presented them with an oblique opportunity to be involved in political events. Although excluded from political office or active defence of the realm in a military sense, the mothers and daughters represented in these prayers play their part in the 'Church Militant' and, subsequently, in the reformation of their nation, by exerting their will upon events through the force of prayer. These prayers are to be used in 'honourable remembrance of that joyfull Sabbath ...[which] brought to us the banished exiles of England, and persecuted members of Christ, by the most happie entrance of hir most roiall and excellent Majestie, into this hir Emperiall Crowne and kingdome' (p. 683).

In these prayers the mothers and daughters are represented as privately performing a vital function for the constitution of England as 'God's chosen Nation': for they seek the continued improvement of the spiritual well-being of their monarch, themselves and their society. Although these prayer are written for them, and therefore perpetuate the notion of women being instructed by men in what to say, they also demonstrate the peculiar connections between mothers and daughters in the realm of spirituality. The mother takes on the priestly role of directing the daughter in prayer, and paralleling the Church services, for the most part the daughter's main function is to respond to the mother's prayer by saying the 'Amen'. However, this section also includes two composite Psalms in which both mother and daughter play an equally active role. This role both emphasises the specific links between the psalms and women's household devotional practices, and serves as an indicator of the social profitability of these activites. Signified as 'Mother' and 'Daughter' the speakers take on an exemplary status through their functional social identification, exhorting each other and thus all

mothers and daughters to the proper praise and address to God in relation to these issues.

The 'Sundrie formes of Christian praiers and thanks-givings' commences with 'A Psalme' exhorting all believers to come together to praise God. In direct contrast to the texts by Knox and Augustine, the archetypal mother and daughter are situated in a communal context; one which acknowledges the historical setting of the psalms and highlights their re-appropriation in the contemporary political situation. The psalm opens:

Mother: Come O all you that feare God, come hither I praie you, and give eare a while, and rehearse with me the great benefits that he the Lord hath bestowed upon us.

Daughter: For lo, when the most mightie men gathered their power against us, and laie in wait for our life, they conspired together to worke our destruction, as though the Lord had determined the same; and exhorted one another, saieng, God hath forsaken them, therefore persecute them now flieng awaie, and take them destitute of all helpe. (34)

The two female figures call upon the faithful to repeat and remember God's past benefits to his people and thereby to awaken faith in the continuance of his favours, despite appearances to the contrary. The fact that they are attacked by 'mightie men' is made all the more resonant by the fact that the speakers are female, who, through the duration of the psalm prove their total faith in God's protection. The adversaries are later explicitly described as 'men' who, like cruel enemies, attempt to devour the women like 'raging and roring lions'.<sup>35</sup> Their vulnerability is expressed thus by the daughter 'For thy sake O Lord alone were we killed everie daie, neither were we in anie better condition than shepe appointed of butchers to the slaughter'.<sup>36</sup> The women are obviously expressing not solely their individual position, but that of the nation: in the above example and elsewhere the stress is upon plural pronouns 'we,' 'us,' and 'our.'

Recalling the Israelites wandering in the wilderness, the women praise God for the reunification of their nation and ultimately offer up their praises for its deliverance:

**Moth:** He gathered us home which were scattered from the East & the West, from the North & South, and brought us from the dungeons of the prisons, and darknesse of death, breaking the fetters and giues of iron in peeces.

**Daugh:** The Lord hath delivered our life from death: he staid the teares of our eies, and established our feet, that they did not fall: he hath brought us out of our distresse. Hence have we our light, whereby he causeth us to shine, and hath driven awaie our darknesse.

**Moth:** Therefore will we praise thee, O Lord, among the nations, and will sing lauds unto thy Maiestie: yea, we will declare thy power, and will shew forth thy praise, and mercie earlie in the morning: because thou hast defended us, and wast our refuge in extreme dangers.

**Daugh:** Oh acknowledge, and declare ye openlie, that the Lord is good: for his bountious goodnesse is for ever. Let all the sincere worshippers of the Lord now confesse, that his loving kindnesse is perpetuall. Praise ye the Lord. (37)

As well as being representative 'types' of 'the mother' and 'the daughter', these women speak for the whole community, exhorting themselves and the readers to the trust and faith in God which prepares them to pray more specifically for the monarch and the kingdom.

For subsequent to this psalm of preparation, there is a translation of psalm 72 in which the women pray for their Queen.<sup>38</sup> According to the interpretative strategies of Genevan Protestantism, this psalm outlines the responsibilities of the ruler. Initially, the prayer in Bentley's collection appears to be a fairly straightforward translation of psalm 72. However, by virtue of the necessity for the regendering of the psalms to apply to a female ruler, this psalm constitutes a contribution to the contemporary debate about women rulers. This prayer emphasises the degree to which Elizabeth will be praised by all her male counterparts: 'all Kings shall have hir in admiration, for hir renowne and vertue, and all

nations shall reverence hir name and maiestie. For hir righteousnesse shall bee praised through out the whole world'.<sup>39</sup> In addition to this rudimentary alteration of pronouns, this translation incorporates specific references to Elizabeth and identifies her numerous functions, which also illustrate the appositeness of the psalms for the explication of contemporary politics. This extract is an insertion between verses 15 and 16 of the biblical psalm:

And seeing the safetie of all the families of our nation consisteth in the preservation of hir Maiestie, let us hartilie (as we have good cause) praie incessantlie for hir Grace, and for the safetie and welfare of the Church, and of all those that love and favour hir therein. Defend, O God, with thine owne hand, this woorthie woman and sacred Queene, whose endeavour thou hast used to restore peace to thy Church, and religion to thy people. O save this woorthie Princesse Elizabeth, I saie, whome for this purpose thou hast indued with most rare and singular wisdom, power, constancie, and roiall gifts of grace. And grant that all men may dutifullie honour and obeie hir, as a prince of peace; a mother of Israel; a nurse of thy Church, woorthilie for hir vertues set over us by thee, O God, to reigne. Finallie grant, that in this government of our pastor & chiefe shepheard, there may want neither integritie, & uprightnesse in taking of counsell, neither wisdom in performing all hir enterprises according to thy will (pp. 713-714).

In the light of the debate about female rulership, this translation constitutes a powerful commendation of the sanctity of Elizabeth's rule, representing her as a blessing from God. This extract displays the variety of biblical roles which the Queen is able to fulfil, but which underline the interaction between the masculine and the feminine which she represents. There remains a reliance upon her 'vertues' and her identity as 'mother' and 'nurse' but this is combined with the role of 'prince' and 'chiefe shepherd': in combination these roles situate Elizabeth as 'an example of all pietie and felicitie unto all kingdoms & nations of the world, which shall accept hir blessed among women' (p. 714). Elizabeth becomes a symbol of exchange in which she personifies the glory of her nation

and represents the Protestants' answer to the Virgin Mary.

Following the prayers specifically for Elizabeth are a number of prayers for society in general and particularly the church: 'A compendious forme of praier for the whole estate of Christes church' (p. 729). Another composite psalm for mother and daughter serves as a means to 'prepare the hart to praier'. This psalm is more overtly concerned with potential sins and the need to frame one's life in the word of God, but again this is represented in the plural, representing a number of speakers rather than being directed to an individual speaker. Once more the women are represented as exemplars and instructresses to the 'congregation'. Although this is contained within the household, and possibly to only two participants, with the association with Elizabeth as the leader of the church, these psalms depict women as capable of instructing at least each other in prayers for their nation.

#### 4. 'IN LONG AND SORE LABOUR CAL EARNESTLIE UPON GOD': THE PSALMS AND CHILDBIRTH.

An area in which the psalms were appropriated to articulate a specifically female experience was with reference to childbirth. The use of the psalms in this process has its roots in the Catholic purification ceremony, which focussed on the use of psalm 22, Christ's lament on the Cross. The psalms collected together for this purpose in Bentley's anthology make this association explicit, for these prayers are to be used 'at their churching or purifieng (as they call it)'.<sup>40</sup> On the one hand this practice apparently signifies another means by which men sought to regulate the expression of women's experiences. However, with the growth of medical science and

the attempts to classify midwives as witches and curtail women's influence in this area, the fact that the women could use these practices in their own home without a male presence obviously also represented an area in which they were perceived to be beyond male control. The association of the psalms with childbirth requires a re-rendering of the text and thus, albeit in a limited way, acknowledges sexual difference in the use of this discourse.<sup>41</sup> Another important aspect of these psalms is that as well as acknowledging the sex of the speaker, they also distinguish between women of different social status: there are different prayers for Queens, Ladies, Gentlewomen, 'ordinary' women and midwives. Despite this, as might be expected, the various prayers display similar concerns. Broadly speaking in each prayer the woman laments her sinfulness, identifies herself with Eve (acknowledging her as the cause of her pain), and prays to God for her own and her child's protection before, during and after the birth. A curious exception to this are the two prayers included in this section by Lady Frances Abergavenny. These two prayers, like those discussed earlier, do not make any reference to Eve, instead they project the blame for pain in child birth to the sins of Adam.<sup>42</sup>

Again the major focus of these psalms is upon penitence, which is peculiarly appropriate for the process of childbirth.<sup>43</sup> Additionally, the woman could use 'this 22. Psalme of David following, called 'The Complaint of Christ on the Cross' (p. 109). This translation of psalm 22. inserts references to fore-mothers as well as the biblical reference to fore-fathers and alters pronouns and other personal references to identify the woman with Christ on the cross during her 'travaile'.<sup>44</sup> Whilst the woman reader is asked to identify her experience with that of Christ, femininity is

simultaneously inscribed into a patriarchal text: here it is important to note the continuing associations which later women writers make between themselves and Christ and to acknowledge Irigaray's argument that 'Christ is the most feminine of all men'.<sup>45</sup> When describing the laughter of her 'mockers' and their expressions, the speaker is called upon to insert herself into the text:

She is wont to boast and glorie that she is in great  
favour with God, wherefore let God now deliver hir, if  
he love hir so well.  
By thy procurement, O Lord, I came out of my mothers  
wombe, and thou gavest me good comfort, euen when I  
sucked my mothers breasts. (46)

After delivery the woman is encouraged to 'saie or sing to the glorie of God, and your owne edifieng, the 103. the 30. and the 116. Psalmes of David' (p. 123). Each of these psalms is identified by de Beze as psalms of thanksgiving to God for his deliverance in time of danger. This is swiftly followed by a translation of psalm 121: 'I haue lifted up mine eies unto the hils, from whence commeth my helpe', the whole focus of which is God's protection 'at my going out and my coming in' accentuating the intrinsic connections between birth and death.

Although these prayers were mostly promoted by male authors for women and Frances Abergavenny's prayer demonstrates that women used them as a pattern whereby to construct their own versions of their experience, a later poem by Mary Carey demonstrates how the psalms could provide comfort to her in an experience which the male writers overlook; that is, in the case of a miscarriage.<sup>47</sup> In 'Upon ye Sight of my abortive Birth' Carey echoes the prescriptions in the prayers by male authors, but incorporates the psalms into her expression of grief and her advocacy of her faith, despite what appears to be a punishment from God. Her poem commences with a poignant description of the foetus:

What birth is this; a poore despissed creature?  
A little Embrio; voyd of life, and feature. (48)

This 'poore despissed creature' contrasts with the 'Stronge, right-proportioned, lovely Girles, & boyes' to whom Carey has already successfully given birth: 'Seven tymes I went my tyme' (l. 3). Carey seeks to persuade herself that all things are controlled by God and that, just as he protected her and her children in previous births, he has allowed this 'child' to die:

That was great wisedome, goodnesse, power love praise  
to my deare lord: lovely in all his wayes:

This is no lesse; ye same God hath it donne;  
submits my hart, thats better than a sonne:

In giveing; taking; stroking; striking still;  
his Glorie & my good; is. his. my will:

In that then; this now; both good God most mild,  
his will's more deare to me; then any Child (ls. 7-14);

Carey glosses her self-expression with biblical references; these references are not so much the source of her expression, in that they are not direct quotations, but they accentuate and explain what she is writing. At times, she also incorporates direct quotations from the psalms into her poem.<sup>49</sup> The individual child and Carey's own desires are here submitted to the will of God. Although this remains the professed focus of her desire, there is a tension throughout the poem as she attempts to reorientate her expression and desires in relation to what she perceives to be God's will. Carey is anxious to demonstrate her understanding of God's will and her willingness to praise him in all circumstances:

So doth my God; in this, as all things; wise;  
by my dead formlesse babe; teach me to prise (ls. 25-26).

In order to substantiate her recognition of God's ways, Carey glosses her citation of her two children (Nat & Bethia) as 'My living prety payre' and refers to Maria as one whom 'God yett lends',

with a reference to Psalm 119, verse 65: 'O Lord, thou hast delt graciously with thy servant according unto thy worde'.<sup>50</sup> Here God's former benefits provide a means through which Carey learns to trust all God's actions:

Praisd be his name; these tow's full Compensation:  
For all thats gone; & that in Expectation: (ls. 29-30)

Carey again seeks to express her obedience to God's word, but in the process of so doing, she illustrates a doubt about her own ability to do as God commands: for the 'abortive birth' is the result of her sins, which is a possibility that the prayers promoted for women in childbirth emphasise:

And if heere in God hath fulfill'd his Will,  
his hand-maides pleased, Compleatly hapy still:

I only now desire of my sweet God  
the reason why he tooke in hand his rodd?

What he doth spy; what is the thinge amisse  
I faine would learne; whilst I ye rod do kisse:

Methinkes I heare Gods voyce, this is thy sinne;  
And Conscience justfies the same within:

Thou often dost present me with dead frute;  
Why should not my returns, thy presents sute:

Dead dutys; prayers; praises thou dost bring,  
affections dead; dead hart in every thinge: (51)

Carey writes that it is her own sins which have caused this 'dead frute'. Her inability to secure her child's survival is explicitly linked to her 'barrenness' or 'dead dutys' of prayer and praise which she has offered up to God. She represents God's voice to her, reprimanding herself for not conforming to his word. She 'kisses the rod' of God's correction and attempts to reconstitute herself through God's word, by applying it to her self and using it to construct her responses.

Carey represents the loss of her child as a just punishment for her former sins.<sup>52</sup> But more importantly, the miscarriage becomes a

metaphor for her own spirituality: in contrast to her previous actions, Carey desires to be like the true vine or the olive tree, so that she might flourish through this correction and bring forth 'pleasant frute':

Lett not my hart, (as doth my wombe) miscarrie:  
but precious meanes received, lett it tarie;

Till it be form'd; of Gosple shape, & sute;  
my meanes, my mercyes, & be pleasant frute (ls. 73-76).

She ends her poem by appropriating the discourse of travail in childbirth as a metaphor for her own spiritual journey; which she hopes will culminate in the manifestation of the fruits of the spirit in her own life:

And let the Presence of they spirit deare,  
be witnessd by his fruts; lett them appeare;

To, & for the; Love; Joy; peace; Gentlenesse;  
longsuffering; goodnesse; faith; & much meeknesse,

And lett my walking in the Spirit say,  
I live in't; & desire it to Obey:

And since my hart thou'st lifted up to the;  
amend it Lord; and keepe it still with thee: (53)

Carey does make use of other scriptural quotations in her poem, but the psalms are by far the most predominant. Curiously, rather than emphasising the penitential psalms, as the prayers for women in childbirth do, Carey stresses the importance of psalm 119 which deals most directly with the ordering of the self in relation to God's word. This means that, although Carey is referring to the need for penitence in these prayers, she is primarily concerned with constructing her own identity, as God's daughter. To achieve this she both incorporates and makes references to the psalms. It is primarily that specific discourse through which Carey is able to reconstitute her experience and gain an understanding of herself and God. She interprets, rewrites, and references those words in order to

formulate her own self-expression: all of which strategies are employed by other women to express their 'own life' through their diaries and autobiographies.

5. 'PATTERNS OF PIETY AND FAITH': LADY HOBY, ALICE THORNTON, AND LADY ANNE CLIFFORD.

Whilst this lady remained in this naturall life, she helde a constant religious course in performinge the duties required of every faithful Child of God, both in their publike and private callings: not only by propagatinge his holy word in all places where she had power, but alsoe by exercisinge her selfe dayly in all other particuler christien duties.

This description of Lady Hoby forms part of the epitaph upon a monument erected to her memory by her husband.<sup>54</sup> The characteristics ascribed to her situate her as the ideal, or 'exemplary' woman according to the conventions of biographical representations discussed at the beginning of this chapter. As the epitaph was commissioned by her husband, it is perhaps more an indication of his preoccupations than an accurate representation of Lady Hoby. However, Lady Hoby's own Diary reveals similar preoccupations: although the roles ascribed to her are conventional, these are the roles which she describes herself as fulfilling. Her Diary records her daily meditations, the frequency of which suggests that she embodies the ideal which Vives described in The Instruction. Although she does make reference to her household duties, the vast majority of her time is spent in 'meditating in the word, day and night'. Her conscientiousness in these activities is perhaps partially explained by her familial connections. Meads suggests that she spent a fair proportion of her childhood in the Countess of Huntingdon's household, and through her marriages she was connected to the

Devereuxs, the Sidneys, the Russells and the Bacons: all of whom had pronounced Protestant beliefs and most of whom had a specific connection with the promotion of psalm translation or psalm commentaries.

These households would undoubtedly have promoted the practices of communal psalm-singing outlined in the household treatises. That this practice was followed in Lady Hoby's household is apparent in the proceedings of a court case, where one of the Hoby's servants testifies to the disruption of their evening services by some youths on a hunting trip:

when [we] were singing of the psalms, three of the guests' servants came and stood in the hall, laughing and making of a noise during the whole time of prayers. In the chamber over them the guests also made a noise, and some coming out to the stairs that led down to the hall, made a noise, with singing of strange tunes which, [the witness] was sure, were not psalms (p. 41).

This servant neatly encapsulates the conflict between the singing of godly songs and the singing of bawdy songs which they were intended to displace. But more importantly the passage explicitly points out that the evening 'publike prayers', which Lady Hoby routinely attended, incorporated the singing of psalms.

Initially, Lady Hoby's diary appears to give little away about the 'self' which produced the text. Dorothy Meads comments that 'we are rarely allowed a glimpse of the living woman', and laments the fact that 'it is not nearly so full as we would have it'. Meads recognises 'the record seems to have been kept largely as a means of assisting in the religious exercise of self-examination', whilst stating that although Hoby's 'personal record is very introspective, yet she shows no real capacity for self knowledge or ability in self-analysis, for she sets down more or less conventional religious expressions of self-disparagement' (p. 47). In comparison with Alice

Thornton's and Lady Anne Clifford's diaries (the second of which Meads refers to in order to explicate the 'gaps' in Hoby's Diary), Lady Hoby's does appear to be rather sparse and less revealing of the 'self' who composed it. But the distinctions between them do not simply mean that Lady Hoby was less capable of introspection, rather it is indicative of the difference in purpose for which her diary was designed.

Unlike the later diaries, Lady Hoby's seems to have been intended for purely personal use, rather than as an attempt to vindicate God and thus oneself (Alice Thornton) or to vindicate oneself and family and thus God (Anne Clifford). The formulaic patterning of Lady Hoby's Diary is not intended to tell others of her self, but serves as a record which would provide a key to her own memory. The ritualised and repetitive nature of her devotions is significant in itself; for these rituals frame her life and have a vital role to play in the construction of her subjectivity. Within this framework the parameters within which she interprets her life, actions and feelings are determined. Her devotional exercises form the mainstay of this record, yet she is rarely specific about them. However, given the formulaic nature of her entries the times at which she is more explicit become significant. On two different occasions she mentions reading the book of James and Revelation, and makes reference to reading or hearing the sermons of a number of Puritan preachers.<sup>55</sup> She also mentions the psalms distinctly on a variety of occasions. Her first precise mention of the psalms is in her entry for Sunday 18th. November, 1599:

After priuat praier I went to church, and, when I Came home, I praised god for his meries ther offered me: After I dined, I went to church againe and hard catezisinge and sermon: then I talked and song psalmes with diuerse that was with me, and, after that, I praied priuatly and examened my selfe with what Integretie I

had spent the day, and then went to supper: after that,  
to publeck examination and praers, and so to bed  
(p. 84)

Assuming that Hoby used the psalms which the Sternhold and Hopkin's Psalter table designates as appropriate for that day (psalms 92-94), they are firstly defined by de Beze as psalms for the Sabbath, but perhaps more importantly the latter psalms are concerned with assuring the believer of God's help if they trust in him, praising God for his promises and recognising God's ability to fulfil those promises and protect the individual from the power of 'tyrants' or enemies. This is significant because in her entry for the preceding Wednesday Hoby writes a more explicit entry than usual, in which she decries the fact that in her self-examination she found 'what it was to want the Continueall preachinge of the word by my Couldnes to all sperituall exercises' and beseeches God to 'pardon my seuerall defectes and restore me to my former Life, for thy mercies sake, with increase of his spiritt, and so much more spirituall Comfort as now is wantinge' (pp. 83-84). By the Sunday she has enough spiritual comfort to be able to participate in God's praises, and to extend them beyond the actual church service. She also records the 'Integretie' with which she has spent the day; an analysis which she usually associates with unprofitable exercises or conversation: the week preceding her participation in communal psalm singing, she has spent much time with 'strangers' and thus has less time to fulfill her spiritual duties, or to talk 'profitably'.

Most of her references to the psalms occur when she is in company: the entries for Thursday December 6th and 27th illustrate this: 'after, to publeck praers, then I talked and song a psalme with diuerse that were with me' (pp. 87-88), and 'after dinner I talked with diuers of good thinges and then songe spsalmes with some of my

cosins' (p. 92). This signifies the use of the psalms as a profitable entertainment, such as Salter outlined. The only time she mentions singing a psalm on her own is after a period of illness, which also coincides with the various preparations she had to make for her journey to London on Tuesday 7th October, 1599: 'after supper I hard the lecture then sunge a psa: and, when I had praied, I went to bed'(p. 148). The psalms for that day include references to God's mercies and protection against wicked men (psalms 35-37). As she records this as part of her evening devotions, the psalms she sang may well have been psalm 37, which expresses trust in God and protection of one's ways. The next mention of psalm singing again occurs on a Sunday, January 22nd 1600, three days after the arraignment of the Earls of Southampton and Essex for their rebellion, which Hoby briefly records in her entries for the 19th. and 20th. January: on the sunday 'this day was rainie so that I Could nor durst goe abroad but exersised in the house, with prainge and reading and singing psa.' (p. 164). The psalms for that day, 107, 108, and 109 are (according to de Beze) psalms of praise for God's providence, and a most terrible imprecation against the enemies. With her familial connections it is not unreasonable to suggest that psalm 109 would have particular resonance on that Sunday: especially as Hoby makes clear her disapproval of the rebellion. She also mentions singing a psalm with her mother (who's continually ill throughout the diary) Sunday Aug 16th, 1600 'I walked with my Mother abroad, and went at my time to priuat praier and writinge, after we had sunge a psa.' (p. 183).

Each time she makes a specific reference to the psalms, there is something unusual in the surrounding circumstances; an incident or someone different is present and the fact that they sing psalms

together seems to be a means to remember a particular event. Her attendance at evening prayers and her regular church attendance, in addition to the possibility that she, like other women, read the psalms daily, indicate that the psalms were a discourse with which she was particularly familiar. She also spends a great deal of time reading to and with other women, including her servants and records reading 'Mrs. Bowes' meditations'.<sup>56</sup> Occasionally she regrets that her conversations have not been as 'profitable' as they might have been intimating that, despite her 'exemplariness,' she perceived herself as indulging in 'gossip'. Importantly, Hoby makes repeated references to her 'spiritual advisors', Mr Rhodes and Mr Ardington. In this respect, Hoby is under the 'covering' of a man but it is important that it is not her husband; her record illustrates his regular absences and their lack of communication - particularly with reference to spiritual matters. Additionally, her consistent praying alone and her discussion of doctrinal matters suggests that she developed her independent reading of the Bible. Although she conforms to patriarchal prescriptions in many ways, her distance from her husband and her apparent self-reliance, arising from her solitary meditations also gives her autonomy.

A contemporary woman diarist, Grace Sherrington Mildmay, also illustrates the autonomy which could arise from solitary meditations. And, more explicitly than Hoby, she reveals how this involved her in daily psalm reading. The practice of psalm singing is associated with other exemplary activities for women to be involved in. Referring to her childhood years, Mildmay tells of how her governess (her father's niece, Mistress Hamblyn), kept her occupied:

when she did see me ydly disposed she would sett me to cypher with my pen ... to write a supposed letter to this or that body concerning such and such things ... and other times sett me to sing psalmes, and at other

times sett me to some curious work; for she was an excellent work-woman in all kinds of needlework, and most curiously would she perform it. (57)

Letter writing, psalm singing and needlework are all exemplary activities for the occupying of an 'ydle' woman's mind. Sherrington confirms the importance of such activities in her later life. In common with Katherine Stubbes, who also did not dare 'go abroad' whilst her husband was absent, Sherrington spent 'the best part of my youth in solitarinesse, shunning all opportunities to remove into company, lest I might be inticed and drawn away by evill suggestion' (pp. 51-52). Instead of attending feasts, marriages and plays, Sherrington spent her time in reading God's word:

God did put into my mynde many good delights, wherein I spent my time allmost continually. First in divinitie everyday, as my leasure would give me leave, and the Grace of God permitt and drawe me. I did read a chapter in the book of Moses, another in one of the prophets, one chapter in the Gospells, another in the Epistles to the end of Revelation, and the whole psalmes appointed for the day. Also every day I spent some tyme in playing on my lute, and setting songs of five parts thereunto, and practised my voice in singing of psalmes and prayers and confessing my sinnes (p. 52).

Mildmay's routine also included the reading of 'the Herball' and other books of 'phisick', ministering her learnings unto those in need. Additionally she writes that: 'every day I spent some tyme in works of myne owne invention,' that is, needlework and drawing. All of which activities, Lady Mildmay records, 'did greatly recreate my mynde' (p. 52). Mildmay's journal specifies her daily reading, incorporating the Protestant emphasis upon the prophets, New Testament and the psalms. The fact that she reads 'the whole psalmes appointed for the day' suggests that she followed the readings prescribed in the Sternhold and Hopkins Psalter, from the 'Anglican' service. Although there are other tables for psalm reading, this is the only one which divides, or appoints, the psalms for particular

days.<sup>58</sup> Such a pattern of devotional reading explains the enormous amount of time which Lady Hoby sets aside for her reading. In addition to this, Lady Mildmay is obviously fond of singing the psalms, as not only an act of devotion but also a means of practising her voice.

The daily practice of psalm reading occupies a central space in Alice Thornton's A Book Of Remembrances. Thornton frames her entries with an appropriate psalm quotation: 'Bless thou the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits'.<sup>59</sup> Self-consciously constructing her text as a record of God's 'remarkable deliverances of myself, husband and children', Thornton's Diary seeks to vindicate God through her own testimony of his 'deliverances' to her and her family. The psalms offer a particularly appropriate discourse through which to articulate these experiences, as one of their central concerns is with testifying to, or requesting God's deliverance of, either the individual or the nation. By this method Thornton situates her Remembrances within the historical genealogy of the experiences of the tribes of Israel through typological analogy. Yet, more specifically, she constitutes her own family's genealogy in a way which also situates herself as exemplary. In her entry for 1632, she recalls her upbringing, which illustrates that she was educated according to the directions of prescriptive material.<sup>60</sup> As I illustrated at the opening of this chapter, Thornton explicitly identifies her mother's piety with her habitual practice of using the psalms, and this seems to have been a practice to which she also subscribed and which she had learnt from her mother's example.

An early entry depicts her own daily reading of the psalms and represents a retrospective account of the interpretative strategies which she brought to bear on that practice. In her 'remembrance' of

God's deliverance of her and her brother from smallpox, Alice Thornton paraphrases the Psalmist: 'I will praise the Lord our God for my preservation and deliverance' and 'Oh, let me speak good of the name of the Lord, magnify his goodness to myself and my brother'.<sup>61</sup> Subsequent to this general evocation of God's goodness, Thornton describes in detail her response to this sickness and how the psalm for that day enabled her to interpret her experience:

After this, it pleased the Lord to begin to come into my soul by some beams of his mercy in putting good thoughts into my mind and to consider his great and miraculous power in the creation of the heavens, the earth and all therein contained, upon the reading of my daily psalms for the months, which happened that day to be Psalm 147:4: 'He counteth the stars and calleth them all by their names.' From whence there came a forcible consideration of the incomprehensible power and infinite majesty of almighty God, who made all things in the heavens and the earth, being above all his creatures in the world and knew what was in my heart and thoughts, and knew I was but a child in age and understanding, not able to do any good thing, which caused a deep and great apprehension and fear with awe of his glorious majesty, lest I should offend him at any time by sin against him or my parents, and that he would punish all sins. It also caused in me a love to him my creator, that had made me to serve him and his particular love and grace to me, a little child, in giving me understanding and reason to know there is a God that ruleth in heaven and earth, and to reward them that serves him truly with joy in heaven that should never have end (p. 150).

Thornton's exposition of this psalm is both a fascinating representation of her psychology and a representation of the way in which readers internalise particular reading strategies. However, this is not a purely conventional, imposed reading, but one which she personalises by producing the meaning for herself actively, via a variety of options open to her. God's presence with her (coming 'into my soul') is manifested through the 'beams of his mercy in putting good thoughts into my mind'. She is apparently passive, receiving the word from God, but the fact that it enters her like a beam of light denotes the way in which she is ravished by God's word in her private

devotions: such an experience acts as a guarantor of her faith, which her text seeks to validate. 'After this' (that is her and her brother's sickness), Thornton is directly moved to contemplate the greatness of God's mercies. She moves from the individual to the general, thus situating and confirming her experience as a direct manifestation of the mercies of God, which had been poured out on previous generations and now upon herself. The relationship between the individual and the cosmos, frequently represented in early diagrams of the universe, is appropriated by Thornton for her own purposes. This recurs at the end of the passage where she assures herself of her being a child of God, paralleling her experience at the moment she is recalling. The retrospection of this passage, however, places this experience not only within the universality of God's omnipotent knowledge of all events, including her own sickness, but also becomes a sign of her own salvation.

Although Thornton had obviously internalised a fear of God's 'Law,' a law which she retains a fear of transgressing even at the point of writing, this also serves to identify her consistent acknowledgment of God's word as a means to understand her experience which demonstrates her conformity to that law. The event recalled occurred at the age of four, verifying her own piety through its illustration of her engagement in the ideal forms of learning through which women were supposed to constitute their identity. But perhaps even more importantly, particularly in the light of its retrospection, this exposition and application of the psalms to her experience suggests that this was a practice she maintained throughout her life.<sup>62</sup> Indeed, the repeated references to the different psalm versions of 'Bless thou the Lord, O my soul' suggest that Thornton is consciously using the psalms as a frame for her

text, and is perhaps indicative of what she was reading at the time of writing, rather than at the time which she is recalling.

The way in which Thornton assimilates the discourse of the psalms within her own expressions indicates to me that her use of these texts is partially unconscious. Although the above refrain frames her text, she does not reference *it* and, at other times references to the psalms are embedded in her own expressions: apart from her specific reference to psalm 147, Thornton makes no overt distinction between her words and God's words in her attempt to communicate her life to others. She seems to me to have internalised the patterns of expression contained within the psalms to the extent that she incorporates them, perhaps unknowingly, into her own text. In her entry for 1668, for example, Thornton describes her husband's illness and subsequent death, and another of her own illnesses. Significantly, this 'illness' occurs as a result of what Thornton perceives as a wrongful accusation or defamation of her and her family.<sup>63</sup> Thornton describes how she suddenly became ill, having been seized by 'a sudden grief and terror' in her neice's chamber: 'when her maid, Barbara Tod, did impudently accuse, before my face, my servant Hanna Alleson for telling her from our Mary Beaks of several stories, which were very great lies and falsehoods against myself, of such a nature as did much unbecome any to hear, and not to have acquainted me with at the first' (p. 157). Thornton establishes, to her satisfaction that her maid is innocent, but 'the other woman' continued her accusations of 'the honour of some of the persons of my family, and before her mistress' (p. 158). The danger this presents to her family's and her own honour causes Thornton great distress: 'I fell presently into a great and sad excess of weeping and lamentable sorrow that it had like to have lost me my life, having only God and

my own conscience to give me testimonies of comfort' (p. 158). To a certain degree even here she echoes David, but more importantly this accusation and persecution came from those who were living under her own roof: 'the highest aggravation of injury in those persons, that was done by my bosom friend that knew my innocency all my days' (p. 158). This expression directly parallels David's plea (also in a time of wrongful accusation) that: 'all that hate me whisper together against me: against me do they devise my hurt ... Yea, mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, hath lifted up his heel against me'.<sup>64</sup>

Thornton continues her narrative by castigating her self, or rather her soul, for its unbelief: eventually she reorientates herself towards an acceptance and understanding of this experience through a series of psalm references:

Oh my soul, bless thou the Lord, that he will please to give thee to suffer and go in such steps as he himself has trodden out the path of life in. Has he not preserved thee from the evils of sin and all those enormous crimes the vild world now lies wallowing in? And will thou not show thy gratitude to thy redeemer that gives thee cheer in sufferings and not with partakers of their wickednesses? ... My hope is in God who redeemed thee from all sin and wickedness and gives thee a stay and support in all thy anguish of spirit and preservation from the designs of those who would and cruelly do devour thy honour as much as in them laid. (65)

Her central concern is with her 'most valued jewel,' that is, her honour. When that is restored, so too is her health. Her expression here combines direct psalm quotations with the definitions and readings of the psalms identified by Calvin, de Beze and others. Rather than quoting specific psalms, Thornton in a similar vein to the use of composite psalms in the books of devotion, or by Elizabeth Tyrwhitt and Augustine, echoes and renews the discourse of the psalms in their application to her experience as the subject of wrongful persecution. Like David, Thornton turns to God in her distress; she

separates her 'self' and her experience from those whom she defines as 'partakers of wickednesses'. Attempting instead to 'bless the Lord' for testing her faith, she laments her inability to take pleasure in this trial and by referring herself to the psalms she attempts to reconstruct her experience in accordance with God's word. She ends her narrative for this entry by returning to the phrase which has already been noted to frame her text:

Oh that my soul may forever be thankful to the most high God that had regard to his poor and humble handmaid. What am I, oh Lord, that should have this testimony of thy mercy? [8.4] I will give thee glory of thy works, mercies and favours for ever [103.17], and most humbly beg, on the account of my Christ's intercession, that I may have the grace of perserverance and a truly thankful heart to walk worthy of these unestimable mercies and glorify thee in the midst of all my trials and sufferings that makest me pray to escape [ps. 86.] Now praise the Lord, oh my soul, and forget not all his benefits.[103.2] Amen (p. 160).

In this she emulates the advice of prayer manuals, psalm commentaries, and the progression of the psalms themselves by illustrating the movement from persecution, doubt and fear to trust in the Lord and a declaration of his comfort and goodness to those who trust in him, identifying herself in this manner as one of God's chosen. References to the psalms predominate and pervade Thornton's Remembrances. By identifying her self with David's experiences and echoing his expressions, Thornton is able to create a coherent narrative in the trials and tribulations in which she finds herself: this effectively situates her own life (as her mother's was to her) as a model or pattern for others to follow, in which they can learn of piety, faith, and patience.

In a sense this is also true of Anne Clifford's Diaries, which also record God's benefits to her family, especially to herself and her mother.<sup>66</sup> In Clifford's case, however, the psalm quotation which recurs throughout her Diaries is directly related to the main

function of her text, that is to record her battle for the lands of Westmoreland: 'The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places; yea, I have a goodly heritage' (psalm 16 v.6). Anne Clifford references all her scriptural quotations (at least in The Kendal Diary) and it is, I believe, highly significant that she never mentions reading the New Testament. By way of contrast, she frequently records her reading of the Old Testament and the majority of her scriptural references are from the psalms, as well as Job, Proverbs, and Ecclesiastes. This reflects the fact that Clifford, at least in her diary, does not appear to be centrally concerned with her own individual salvation, unlike the other writers I have discussed. Her central preoccupation is with demonstrating God's vindication of her claim for the lands of Westmoreland, both through her own lineage and by aligning it with that of the Israelites. Clifford painstakingly constructs and (in 'The Kendal Diary') repeatedly reaffirms her lineage: significantly she, like Alice Thornton, pays especial homage to her mother.

Clifford's mother is described in exemplary terms. She was: 'truly Religious, Devout and Conscientious, even from her very childhood, and did spend much time in reading the Scriptures and other goodbooks, and in heavenly Meditations and in prayers fastings and Deeds of charity'.<sup>67</sup> In her diary, Clifford constantly refers to her mother's prayers and attributes this as one reason for her eventual victory in the case over the inheritance of Westmorland. Dorothy Meads comments that in 'The Great Picture' at Appleby Castle, Anne Clifford was drawn with 'a book of Psalms in her hand, and on the shelf behind her lie the Bible, a book on Alchemy, and Seneca'. This combination of texts parallels Clifford's own self-representation, which produces an image of a woman who was a curious mixture of the exemplary traits expected of women of her age, and

those which were definitely dubious.<sup>68</sup> Yet Bishop Carlise's funeral sermon for Anne Clifford states that she 'never omitted her daily reading of the Psalms' and that she also encouraged her household to piety: 'she took care that several books of Devotion and Piety might be provided four times in the year, that every one might take their choice of such book as they had not before, by which means those that lived in her house long, and she seldom turned any away, might be furnished with books of Religion and Devotion in every kind'.<sup>69</sup> Exemplary in her own devotions, throughout her Diaries Anne Clifford appropriated the discourse of the psalms so that it 'truly applied unto [myself]'. Although Clifford is more involved in the court circle than these other two writers and her autobiography reflects a variety of interests, the main purpose of her diary remains her concern with the court case, the establishment of her genealogy and, therefore, of the veracity of her inheritance.<sup>70</sup> In order to substantiate this claim, Clifford demonstrates a deep seated faith in God's providence. Although it does not appear to be so central in 'The Knole Diary' much of what she only obliquely refers to there is consolidated and expanded in 'The Kendal Diary'. It seems to me that it is precisely her religious beliefs and her strong attachment to her mother which provide Clifford with the strength to stand firm in her desire to retain the lands of Westmoreland, in opposition to her husband and the King.

Prayer is a constant support to Clifford in her long fight to retain Westmoreland. Finding herself isolated and constantly encouraged to give in to 'her Lord's' demands and to submit herself to the King's judgement, Clifford relies upon God. Her assurance of God's presence accounts for her ability to confront the King and to express her determination to retain her lands: 'this Day I may say I

was led miraculously by God's Providence' (p. 47). Moreover, she receives comfort from the experiences of the psalmist throughout 'this business': 'my Lord wrote me a Letter by which I perceived my Lord was clean out with me, & how much my enemies have wrought against me' (p. 48). When reminded of others' condemnation of her, Clifford knelt down and prayed to God 'to send a good end to these troublesome Businesses, my Trust being wholly in Him that always helped me'.<sup>71</sup> Later she requests that God would 'send me some End of my Troubles, that my Enemies might not still have the upper hand of me'.<sup>72</sup> In a moment of transitory doubt, Clifford writes: 'by these proceedings I may see how much my Lord is ofended with me, & that mine enemies have the upper hand of me,' yet she declares that: 'I am resolved to take all patiently, casting all my care upon God'.<sup>73</sup> One character specifically identified as 'a violent man,' is her brother-in-law, Sir Edward Sackville, whom Clifford says had a 'malicious hatred' of her.<sup>74</sup> In her portrayal of his attempts to thwart her, Clifford declares that her escape from his wiles was the result of God's providence: 'for he [Edward] out-lived his brother 28 years and almost 4 months, and I then lay in Skipton castle in Craven, at the time of his death, but I, whose destiny was guided by a Mercifull and Divine Providence escaped the subtlety of all his practises & ye evils he plotted against me. Pss. 35, 37 & 140; Ps. 3.10'.<sup>75</sup> This time Clifford herself provides the psalm references through which she interprets her experience.

In another entry Clifford describes her situation, depicting her position through a series of oppositions:

All this time my Lord was in London where he had all and infinite great resort coming to him. He went much abroad to Cocking, to Bowling Alleys, to Plays and Horse Races, & [was] commended by all the World. I stayed in the Countrey having many times a sorrowful & heavy Heart & being condemned by most folks because I

would not consent to the Agreement, so as I may truly say, I am like an Owl in the Desert (p. 33).

In drawing this distinction between the representation of herself and her husband, Clifford evokes the oppositions between the court and country. This portrayal heightens the contrast between her husband's support and her own isolation, exposing the 'worldly' values upon which this support is based in contrast to her own rejection. In this, and in the description of her 'sorrowful & heavy Heart' Clifford is aligned with the psalmist. Furthermore, her statement 'so as I may truly say' is a characteristic precursor to her referenced quotations of the psalms in her later 'Kendal Diary'. In this instance, although she does not reference it as such, the description of herself as 'like an Owl in the Desert' is derived from psalm 102. v.6. This psalm is particularly apposite for Clifford's situation at this point, for it commences with an invocation to God to 'hear my prayer' and to 'hide not thy face from me; in the day when I am in trouble' for 'mine enemies reproach me all the day'. Appropriately enough, however, the psalm ends with a confirmation of God's protection of his people; the speaker's enemies will perish, but 'the children of thy servants shall continue, and their seed shall be established before thee'. Later Clifford has cause to return to this reference, defining its relevance to her own experience, both with regard to herself (as the child of God's servant, her mother) and to her own children and grandchildren.

For in 'The Kendal Diary', by which time Clifford has regained her lands, she extols the virtues of the 'Retyred life' saying that 'I found by experience ... that saying to be true: Eccles. 7. 13. Pss. 104. 13, 24; 16.6'.<sup>76</sup> These texts vindicate God's controlling goodness and providence in the world of nature and introduce a theme to which Clifford consistently returns throughout this diary, that

is, the last quotation: 'the lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places; yea, I have a goodly heritage'. Within this context Clifford relates the story of her first grandchild's visit to her at Skipton: 'this was the first tyme that I saw him or anie of my Grandchildren at Skipton, or in anie part of the Landes of myne Inheritance. Ps. 45. 16'. This reference, in the Authorised Version reads: 'Instead of thy fathers shall be thy children, whom thou mayest make princes in all the earth'. In Clifford's case this both refers to the displacement of her father and the establishment of her children as inheritors of her lands.

Clifford continues to emphasise the relationship between country contentments ('I doe more and more fall in love with the contentments and innocent pleasures of a Country Life') and the inheritance of her rightful possession of her lands. She argues that just as her genealogy justified her inheritance, so too should her children continue this inheritance. She hopes that they will inherit her love of the lands and make their lives in these houses 'the place of Selfe fruition'. Yet she recognises that:

this must be left to a Succeeding Providence, for none can know what shall come after them. Eccles. 3.22. But to invite them to itt that saying in the 16th Psalme, vv 5, 6, 7, and 8, may bee fittingly applyed: 'The Lott is fallen unto mee in a pleasant place. I have a fair Heritage.' And I may truly say that here:

From many Noble Progenitors I hold  
Transmitted Lands, Castles and Honours, which sway'd  
of old.

All which Benefits have been bestowed upn mee for the heavenly goodness of my Deare Mother, whose fervent prayers were offered upp with greater zeale to Almighty God for mee and mine, and had such return of Blessings followed them, as that though I mett with some bitter and Wicked Enemies and many greate oppositions in this world, yet were my Deliverance so greate, as would not befall to any who were not visibly susteyned by a Divine favour from above. Psalm 41. And in this Country Life of mine I find also that saying of the Psalmist true: 'The Earth is full of the Goodnesse of the Lord.' Pss. 33.5; 104. 24; 119. 64 (pp. 112-113).

This echoes the entries in her earlier diary in which she was standing firm against strong enemies. Her recognition of the power of her mother's prayers, and her desires to vindicate her mother, perhaps indicate that Clifford's mother also used the psalms to articulate her experience, teaching her daughter to have faith in God's protection of a just cause.<sup>77</sup> Clifford uses the psalms as a means to express publicly her thanksgiving to God for all his benefits: 'What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits toward me ... I will pay my vows unto the Lord now in the presence of all his people'.<sup>78</sup> Her autobiography, as well as being a record of her own personal victory, faith in God, and a record of her family, serves to testify to God's providence for the example of her readers 'in which long time I past through many strange and hard fortunes in the sea of the World. Soe as I may apply that saying to myself: ps. 107 & 109. 27' (p.120); that is, 'that they may know that this is thy hand; that thou, Lord, hast done it'. The rest of Clifford's 'Kendal Diary' is primarily a record of family visits, interspersed with references to her ancestors. By this method, she weaves a pattern of connections which verify her claims, establish her lineage and posit what is to come, substantiating her use of the 'this is my heritage' quotation. All this is framed by the psalm quotations, informing and organising her interpretation of her life, enabling her to make a powerful statement vindicating women's rights of inheritance against the predominant social order.

Another use of the psalms is demonstrated in the records of 'The Last Months' in 1676. Here, Clifford dictates her remembrances, which provide an epitome of her earlier records. But at this stage her recalling of her life and her family history serves not only as a vindication of her actions to others, but as a means to prepare

herself for death. It is in these entries that the indissoluble links between her family history and her religious beliefs come to the fore. Clifford is more explicit about her religious practices, although the way in which she describes these practices implies that they had always formed an important part of her life and had informed the organisation of the earlier diaries. Accordingly, her referencing of scriptural quotations increases, as do her allusions to church services. As in her earlier diaries, the emphasis is upon Ecclesiastes, Proverbs and the Psalms. Although I am wary of the omissions in D. J. H. Clifford's edition, the extracts contained in 'The Last Months' depict a cyclical use of particular psalms.<sup>79</sup> Clifford does not, as one might expect, make any special use of the penitential psalms. Instead she obsessively repeats psalms 1, 23, and 121 with individual references to psalms 55 and 12. Thus it would appear that these psalms have a particular resonance for Clifford herself. The first of these emphasises the distinctions between the godly and the ungodly: 'the Lord knoweth the way of the righteous: but the way of the ungodly shall perish' (1. v.6). It then affirms God's protection of the godly 'man' who meditates in the word day and night (1.v.2). Psalm 23 is still used today in many Protestant churches during the funeral service and has become part of 'general knowledge' ('The Lord's my shepherd, I shall not want'). Psalm 121 is a powerful testimony of faith in God's protection and preservation, which is worth quoting in full, especially as it is the final reference in Clifford's diary:

I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence  
commeth my help.  
My help commeth from the Lord, which made heaven and  
earth.  
He will not suffer thy foot to be moved: he that  
keepeth thee will not slumber.  
Behold, he that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber  
nor sleep.

The Lord is thy keeper: the Lord is thy shade upon  
thy right hand.  
The sun shall not smite thee by day, nor the moon by  
night.  
The Lord shall preserve thee from all evil: he shall  
preserve thy soul.  
The Lord shall preserve thy going out and thy coming  
in from this time forth, and even for evermore. (A.V)

The books which figure so prominently during these 'last months' are also those which frame her perspective upon her earlier life. Anne Clifford, then, uses not 'scripture' in the general sense, but specific books of the Bible, which are particularly resonant for her experience and give her life authority. The psalms predominate in her text, offering her the positive assurance of God's protection and enabling her to stand firm in her opposition to her husband and the King. Despite her use of a quintessentially patriarchal text, Clifford is far from the 'Chaste, Silent and Obedient' woman of the Renaissance ideal. Her private devotions, whilst they demonstrate a certain acquiescence to the prescriptive ideals, provide her with an opportunity for respite, and form the basis upon which she can establish her opposition to other prescriptions. Born in 1590 and living until she was 86, Clifford obviously experienced a number of social changes throughout her lifetime. But at the time of her birth the educational practices which I described in chapter two were those by which she would have been formed, and in which the psalms played a significant role (and which, as Alice Thornton's Remembrances indicates remained influential). Her practice of reading the psalms daily, inherited from her mother, provided her with an authoritative context in which to situate her own family history in relation to the history of God's Chosen people. Throughout these diaries, both explicitly and implicitly, Clifford draws upon her reading of the psalms to apply unto her self the words of God uttered to David, establishing her self as one of God's beloved. Although she proclaims

that she has written her record so 'that they may know that this is thy hand; that thou, Lord, hast done it' (ps. 109. v.27) this serves not to deny her own agency but to vindicate herself. Anne Clifford represents a 'pattern of piety and faith' but one whose patience and trust in God enables her to resist male demands for compliance and to regain her 'goodly heritage'.

This part of my thesis has demonstrated the variety of ways in which the psalms performed a crucial role in the construction of the exemplary woman. The psalms were the first scriptural discourse with which children were acquainted, using it to learn their alphabet and thus to read and write. Although this was the case for children of both sexes, I am suggesting that the limitations upon women's educational expectations (as outlined in the educational treatises and conduct manuals) means that the psalms remained a crucial text for women: both for how they were represented by men and how they learned to articulate themselves. Whilst the conduct literature and educational treatises are sometimes vague about what women should learn, they all agree on the pivotal significance of devotional practices. Within Protestantism generally and especially in devotional literature produced for women, the psalms occupied a prioritised space in this activity. These devotional activities framed the lives of women of the gentry and the aristocracy, both in their private devotions and in their household roles as instigators of devotional practices for the household and as mothers teaching their children.

The devotional texts written by women authors disclose their own appropriation of the psalms as a means to articulate themselves, and

provide patterns of meditation for other readers, as is illustrated by Elizabeth Tyrwhitt. A development of using the psalms to learn the alphabet seems to me to be the practice of constructing an individual's identity from the letters of their names accompanied by prayers from the psalms. In the case of Elizabeth I this illustrates a male-authored construction of the female subject, but for Frances Abergavenny this was a means to construct herself and instruct her daughter. Although these women were actively using the psalms to construct their own identity, in the sense that they chose to combine the psalm quotations according to their own requirements, they do not on the whole regender the psalms; rather they assimilate themselves to the psalmist's experiences. However ironic it may seem, it is male authors who make use of this strategy, particularly in the psalms for women in childbirth: a specifically female experience is therefore encoded in a male text, but forces the reformulation of that text in the process.

In exemplary biographies of women, in funeral sermons, and in their own autobiographies, women's use of the psalms is a significant factor in the identification of the particular woman as 'exemplary' through all her actions from the cradle to the grave. The fact that nearly all the women discussed here are from the courtly classes perhaps bears witness to Udall's claim that such women in England were more likely to be found reading the psalms than playing at cards. In this depiction, these women become ambassadors for, or symbolic of, the purity of the nation: epitomised in Elizabeth I as the new David. In this respect, the women writers of these 'Prayers and Meditations' are not only exemplars in their private lives, but exemplary in their promotion of texts of national and cultural significance. Through their writing, their patronage, their promotion

of 'the Word' in their families and to their neighbours, and through exercising their will in private prayer, these women played a vital role in development of both Protestantism and the 'eloquent language' which, in Bentley's words, contributed to 'the common benefit of our countrie'.

These women were in one sense conforming to patriarchal expectations of them; they did after all use a discourse which was relatively acceptable. But the very need for Bentley's anthology and his and others' spirited defence of their activities suggests that even this required male protection and was, therefore, on some level threatening. Perhaps Anne Clifford personifies this threat. For in the act of compiling her own devotions, reinterpreting the psalms in the process, Clifford demonstrated her capacity to take control of that discourse, rather than allowing it - or male expectations - to control her. The women writers so far discussed all produced prose texts which, in one way or another, appropriated the psalms, 'translating' them into their own experience. However, one 'exemplary' woman, the subject of the second part of my thesis, produced a poetic translation of the psalms: Mary Sidney, Countess of Pembroke, 'that excellent Countess, and in poesie the mirroir of our age'.

FOOTNOTES

- 1) Alice Thornton, A Book of Remembrances, (c. 1657) in Her Own Life: Autobiographical writings by seventeenth-century Englishwomen, edited by Elspeth Graham, Hilary Hinds, Elaine Hobby and Helen Wilcox, (London, 1989), p. 155.
- 2) See, for example, Daniel Featly (1628) 'it seemeth to mee most agreeable to speak to God, as neare as we can, in the same language he speaks to us, which is the sanctified language of the Bible ... we ought most of all to deny ourselves, and to captivate not onley our thoughts to the conceptions, but our tongues to the words and phrases of the inspired Oracles of God' (p.142).
- 3) John Mayer, A Patern for Women, Setting forth the most Christian life and most comfortable death of Mrs. Lucy Thornton, late wife to the worshipful Roger Thornton, Esquire, of Little Wratting in Suffolk (1619), pp.25-26
- 4) John Mayer (1619), p. 11. Psalm 119. v.100.
- 5) John Mayer (1619), pp. 13-14. Psalm 101. v.7.
- 6) Philip Stubbes, A Christal Glasse for Christian Women Contayning An excellent Discourse, of the godly life and Christian death of Mistresse Katherine Stubbes (1591), sig. A2v.
- 7) Philip Stubbes (1591), sig. A4r.
- 8) Philip Stubbes (1591), sig. C3v.
- 9) John Donne, A Sermon of Commendation of the Lady Danvers (1627), p. 133.
- 10) John Ley, A Pattern of Pietie, Or, The Religious life and death of that Grave and gracious Matron, Mrs. Jane Ratcliffe (1640), sig. A4r. See also 'The Life, and death of Mrs. Jane Ratcliffe' in Samuel Clarke, A Collection of the Lives of Ten Eminent Divines ... and some other Eminent Christians (1662), pp. 415-448.
- 11) Katherine Zell, preface to her collection of Hymnes (1534). Quoted by Elaine Partnow, ed. (1985), p. 91.
- 12) Katherine Zell, nee Schutzinn, was a church worker and was married to Matthew Zell, a Protestant minister. In 1524, she wrote the 'Apology of Katharina Schutzinn' in which she states: 'You remind me that the Apostle Paul told women to be silent in Church. I would remind you of the word of this same apostle that in Christ there is no longer male nor female' (quoted Elaine Partnow, ed. (1985), pp. 488 & 91).
- 13) Elizabeth Grymeston, Miscelanea, Meditations, Memoratives (1604).
- 14) D.N.B, Vol xxiii, edited by Leslie Stephen and Sidney Lee (1890). They assess Grymeston's text in the following manner: 'The 'Memoratives' are a number of moral maxims, which, if not original,

are at least pointed and well chosen. The dedication, addressed to the author's son, is a quaint piece of composition, containing good advice for moral guidance and on the choice of a wife' (pp. 256-257).

15) Although Grymeston's psalms are included in The Female Spectator as an example of an early woman's writing they are (as Rivkah Zim notes) actually a copy of Richard Verstegan's Odes. In Imitation of the Seaven Penitential Psalmes (Antwerp, 1601). For some reason, the penitential psalms have been printed in reverse order in Grymeston's Meditations.

16) Elizabeth Jocelin, The Mother's Legacie, To her unborne Childe (1624).

17) Elizabeth Jocelin (1624), sig. B3r. Jocelin's text is prefaced 'The Approbation' which justifies the validity of this text, sigs. (A3r-A3v).

18) Elizabeth Jocelin (1624), pp. 68 & 69. Nb. She recommends the use of 'Dr. Smith's' prayers, naming the morning prayer (p. 45) and the evening prayer. (p. 77). It may be that she is referring to the same Dr. Smith whose prayer (in sickness) Alice Thornton's mother wants to be read to her. Despite the number of Smith's listed in the S.T.C., there is only one text which would appear to fit the description and could therefore be the text to which both writers refer; that is Henry Smith, Three Prayers, one for morning ... evening ... sick man (1591).

19) Dorothy Leigh, The Mothers Blessing: Or, The godly Counsaile of a Gentle-woman, not long since deceased, left behind her for her children: Containing many good exhortations, and godly admonitions profitable for all Parents, to leave as a Legacy to their children, tenth edition (1627), sig. A2v.

20) Dorothy Leigh (1627), pp. 57-58. Psalm 101. v.7.

21) The Psalter, which S. Augustine composed out of everie Psalm of David a verse, for the use of his mother in Thomas Bentley (1582), II. pp. 937-943. I have also used a later edition of this psalter, St. Augustine: A Pretious Booke of Heavenlie Meditations, called A private talke of the Soule with God, translated by Thomas Rogers (1597), pp. 219-233.

22) In contrast to Richard Taverner's Epitome of the Psalmes (1539) which contains extended verse paraphrases of the psalms. See also Thomas Paynell, The Pithy and moost notable sayinges of al scripture (1550), dedicated 'to the right excellent and mooste gracious lady, my Ladye Maryes good grace' which contains 'pithy sayinges' from the psalms (fol. xliiir-xlviir).

23) Whilst this may partly reflect a desire to make his mother focus on the penitential aspects of the psalms, because she was female, it may also reflect Augustine's own opinion of the proper way in which to read the psalms, see Edward A. Gosselin (1976), p. 22.

24) Thomas Bentley (1582), II., p. 939. References from Rogers (1597): e) 52. 8, f) 53. 6, g) 54. 1, h) 55. 1, i) 56. 1, k) 57. 3,

1) 58. 6, m) 59. 17, n) 60. 5, o) 61. 4, p) 62. 2, q) 63. 1, r) 64. 2, s) 65. 2, t) 66. 2.

25) John Knox, An Exposition upon the Syxt Psalme of David, wherein is declared hys crosse, complayntes and prayers (London? 1554).

26) The Works of John Knox, edited by David Laing, four volumes (Edinburgh, 1846-1864), III. p. 353.

27) David Laing, ed. (1846-1864), III. p. 355.

28) Elizabeth Bowes, Letter to Knox, c. 1550. (Quoted by Elaine Partnow (1985), p. 120.

29) It is written for this specific purpose: 'touching your continual troble, geuen vnto you by God, for better purpose then we can presentlye espie: I haue begon vnto you the exposition of the sixt Psalm' (John Knox (1554), sig. A2v).

30) See Keith Thomas, Religion and the Decline of Magic: Studies in popular beliefs in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries (London, 1971) and John Stachniewski (1991).

31) Christ's 'Complaint on the Crosse' is found in psalm 22.

32) This diction is confirmed by their correspondance. Knox quotes Mrs Bowes' representation of herself which displays a similar self doubt to the previous letter (see note 28 above).

33) 'On the seventeenth daie of November, commonlie called The Queenes daie' in Thomas Bentley (1582) II. pp. 683-729.

34) Thomas Bentley (1582), II. p. 683. See Psalm 78, and psalms 71. v.10; 119. v.95; 71. vv.11 & 13.

35) Thomas Bentley (1582), II. p. 684. See psalms 25. v.19; 74. v.19; 17. vv.9-12; 7. v.2.

36) Thomas Bentley (1582), II. p. 684. Psalm 44. v.22.

37) Thomas Bentley (1582), II. pp. 684 -685. See Psalms 107. v.3; 146. v.7; 107. v.14; 116. v.8; 107. v.6; 108. v.3; 57. v.9; 59. v.16; 107. v.1; 107. v.8; 107. v.43.

38) Thomas Bentley (1582), II. pp. 712-714 'Psalme 72. Another praier for the prosperous estate and flourishing reign of our right vertuous sovereigne Queene Elizabeth'.

39) Thomas Bentley (1582), II. p. 713. In contrast, the A.V. translation reads simply 'Yea, all kings shall fall down before him: all nations shall serve him' (v.11).

40) Thomas Bentley (1582) III. p. 119.

41) Perhaps the most extreme example of the regendering of the psalms is St Bonaventure's 'Our Ladyes Psalter'. See John Foxe (1583), II., pp. 1598-1600.

42) See Fraunces Abergavenny in Bentley (1582): 'Almightie God, my heavenlie and most mercifull father, Ifeele thy promised punishment at this present to take effect on me, which for the gilt and transgression of my progenitors, hath beene bythine divine maiestie, iustlie pronounced against me, and the whole generation of Adam' (II. p. 106).

43) Thomas Bentley (1582): 'In long and sore labour cal earnestlie vpon God, and say to your comfort the 6. 38. 51. 102. 130. and 142. Psalmes of David, commonlie called the seaven penitentiall Psalm, or the psalme of a penitent sinner' (II. p. 109).

44) See Daniel Featly (1628), p. 716-717; William Hunnis (1583), pp. 23 -25; Thomas Sorocold (1612), pp. 303-307; Thomas Becon, The Floure of godly prayers (1551), sigs. F7r-F7v.

45) See discussion of Irigaray in Toril Moi Sexual/Textual Politics (London, 1985), especially p. 137.

46) Thomas Bentley (1582), III., p.110. Psalm 22. vv.8-9.

47) Mary Carey, 'Upon ye Sight of my abortive Birth ye 31th. of December 1657' in Kissing the Rod: An Anthology of Seventeenth-century Women's verse, edited by Germaine Greer, Susan Hastings, Jeslyn Medoff & Melinda Sansone (1988) pp. 158 -161.

48) Germaine Greer, ed. (1988), ls 1-2, p. 158. The editors link this with Mary Sidney's translation of Psalm 58, p. 161.

49) In stanza 4, for example, she echoes psalm 145. 17 'The Lord is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works'.

50) The fact that Maria is 'lent' to her suggests that she might be ill, unlike the 'prety payre' which are presumably healthy. Carey herself had certainly experienced the trauma of losing her children in their early years, as the two poems on the death of her sons preceeding this poem in Kissing the Rod demonstrate.

51) Germaine Greer, ed (1988), ls. 31-42, p. 159. See psalm 89. verses 31 & 32 'If they breake my statutes, and kepe not my commandements: Then will I visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquitie with strokes'.

52) Carey glosses these lines with references to psalm 119. vv. 71 & 65. Verse 71 reads 'It is good for me that I have been afflicted, that I maie learne thy statutes'. The introduction to Carey in Kissing the Rod quotes an autograph where she writes of her regret for her early life as she spent too much time 'in Carding, Dice, Dancing, Masquing, Dressing, vaine Compayne, going to Plays, following Fashions, & ye like' (p. 155). Carey glosses her next stanza ('My dearest Lord; thy Charge, & more is true;/ I see't; am humbled, & for pardon sue') with a rference to psalm 25. 7 & 11: verse 7 reads 'Remember not the sinnes of my youth, nor my rebellions, but accordng to thy kindnes remember thou me, even for thy goodnes sake, O Lord'.

53) Germaine Greer, ed. (1988), ls. 85-92, p. 161.

54) Diary of Lady Margaret Hoby, 1599-1605 edited by Dorothy M. Meads (London, 1930), pp. 39-40.

55) These include sermons by [William] Perkins, Gervase Babington, Thomas Wilson, and [Thomas] Fuller. She also mentions a conference with Fuller, Friday 16th January, 1600 'I was vésited in the afternone wth. Fuller, wth. whom I had good Christian Conference, how Expounded a Psa: vnto me,' he also expresses his desire and prayer to God that 'in the actions of god which he was to perform, none of his owne affections might be mingled' (Meads (1930), p. 162).

56) See entry for Nov. 10 & 11, 1601 in Dorothy M. Meads (1930), p. 191.

57) Dorothy M. Meads (1930), p. 50. Meads does not give full references, but the quotations are taken from R Weigall, 'An Elizabethan Gentlewoman. The Journal of Lady Mildmay, c. 1670 -1617', Quarterly Review Vol. ccxv (July, 1911) and H. A. Mildmay, A Brief Memoir of the Mildmay Family (Privately Printed, 1913).

58) Lady Mildmay's reading of the psalms was probably also influenced by de Beze. Meads discovered that a copy of de Beze's Pithie summe of the Christian Faith belonged to Lady Mildmay.

59) 'Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits' (psalm 103. v.2). A second attack of small pox, also provokes a psalmic exclamation of God's providence: 'Bless the Lord, oh my soul, and all that is within me praise his holy name forever. Amen' (p. 152). See Psalm 103. v.1. Her response to the safe birth of her first child evokes a similar response (Elspeth Graham, et al (eds.) (1989), p. 154).

60) See Elspeth Graham et al (eds.) (1989), p.151.

61) Elspeth Graham et al (eds.) (1989), p. 150. See also psalm: 145. vv. 5 & 21; 34. v. 3.

62) If Alice Thornton was following the Sternhold and Hopkins table, this means that her diary entry, dated only as 1631, would be the last day of the month.

63) The cause of Thornton's anxiety here, exactly mirrors that of Mary Glover. See Stephen Bradwell, 'Mary Glovers late woeful case, together with her joyfull deliverance' (1603) in Michael MacDonald, ed. (1991), p. 3.

64) Psalm 41. vv.7 & 9. See also Psalm 55. 12-14 'For it was not an enemy that reproached me; then I could have borne it: neither was it he that hated me that did magnify himself against me; then I would have hid myself from him; But it was thou, a man mine acquaintance. We took sweet counsel together, and walked unto the house of God in company'.

65) Elspeth Graham, ed. (1989), p. 159. See psalms: 11. v.5; 31; 41; 64; 140. v. 7; 121. v.7; 19. v.14; 33. v. 21; 86. vv.11 & 16; 39. v. 7; 56.

- 66) The Diaries of Lady Anne Clifford, edited by D.J.H. Clifford (Gloucestershire, 1991).
- 67) Dorothy M. Meads (1930), p. 48.
- 68) See list of her reading. Dorothy M. Meads (1930), p. 55.
- 69) Dorothy M. Meads (1930), p. 60. This is verified by an entry in 'The Last Months': 'and about 5 of ye clock this evening did George Goodgion bring me 28 bookes of Devotion hee bought for mee at Penrith, and I then saw them paid for & gave them all away but six to my servants' (Clifford, ed. (1991), p. 235).
- 70) This becomes particularly prominent in her Kendal Diary, see for example: 'but before that it was the chiefe and beloved habitation of Idonea the younger Daughter and Coheire of Robert de Viteripointe my Auncester, she dying without issue (as appeare by Inquisition) later after her detah in the 8th yeare of Edward the third; and then all her Inheritance in Westmerland came to her eldest Sister Isabella's Grandchild Robert, Lord Clifford and his posteritie to whom I am heire by a lineal descent' (p. 154).
- 71) D.J.H. Clifford, ed.(1991), p. 48. See psalm 71. vv. 1 & 5.
- 72) D.J.H. Clifford, ed. (1991), p. 49. See psalm 25 v.2.
- 73) D.J.H. Clifford, ed. (1991), p. 56. See psalm 55. v.22.
- 74) D.J.H. Clifford, ed. (1991), p. 87. The editor calls this section 'the years inbetween [the two diaries]' and does not give full references for his sources.
- 75) D.J.H. Clifford, ed. (1991), p. 87. There is, however, no verse 10 to psalm 3. Another example of such providence results in Clifford singing psalms of praise to God for preventing her house from being robbed, p. 88.
- 76) D.J.H. Clifford, ed. (1991), p. 106 . Psalm 104. vv. 13 & 24: 'He watereth the hills from his chambers: the earth is satisfied with the fruit of thy works' and 'O Lord, how manifold are thy works! in wisdom hast thou made them all: the earth is full of thy riches'. and 16.6 'The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places; yea, I have a goodly heritage'.
- 77) Her mother's influence is again expressed in these terms in a later entry, see p. 115.
- 78) D.J.H. Clifford, ed. (1991), p. 118. See psalm 116. vv 12 -14.
- 79) Rather frustratingly, the edition I have used states that, because 'almost every entry is followed by copious quotations from the Old Testament, particularly the psalms, Ecclesiastes and Job ... in the interests of brevity, most of these have been omitted' (p. 230).

P A R T . T W O .

'THAT EXCELLENT COUNTESS AND IN POESIE THE

MIRROIR OF OUR AGE':

MARY SIDNEY, COUNTESS OF PEMBROKE.

CHAPTER FOUR. 'THAT EXCELLENT COUNTESS, AND IN POESIE

THE MIRROIR OF OUR AGE': MARY SIDNEY, COUNTESS OF PEMBROKE.

Whereas the first part of this thesis has been devoted to establishing the variety of cultural contexts within which women's association with the psalms denoted their exemplary status in the Renaissance, this part of my thesis focusses upon one particular woman whose connections with the psalms are crucial to the construction of her identity as an exemplary woman - both by others and her self, Mary Sidney, Countess of Pembroke. One of my objectives, both for the thesis as a whole and particularly in these last two chapters, is to facilitate a re-contextualisation of the parameters within which Mary Sidney's psalm translations are discussed. Although the influence of feminist criticism upon Renaissance studies has promoted more detailed discussion of Mary Sidney as a figure of note in her own right, historically the critical appreciation of her writing has long been overshadowed by her relationship with her brother, both in terms of family connections and literary influence; indeed, these links remain highly influential even in some of the most recent critical evaluations of Mary Sidney's writing.<sup>1</sup> As Elaine Beilin succinctly points out, what has 'probably most distorted our view of Mary Sidney is the influence of her brother, Philip Sidney ... we find a woman who has been associated at every turn with a close relative, a beloved man who himself represents an important ideology of life and literature'.<sup>2</sup> In this manner Beilin highlights the history of criticism's 'blindness to the gender-related particulars' of Mary Sidney's writing.<sup>3</sup> Yet, the current critical emphasis upon the 'gender-related particulars' of both Mary Sidney's and other women's writing in this period, has led to a tendency to stress the historical constraints upon women's

expression; critics have concerned themselves less with 'what women's writings "say" so much as what they did or could not say, and why'.<sup>4</sup> Although such a strategy is undeniably useful in exposing the severe constraints upon women's expression during this period, it also potentially perpetuates the 'marginality' to which women's writing has been consigned; for it effectively precludes an emphasis upon, or re-appraisal of, what any particular woman did write, and maintains the negative defining of women's writing in relation to men's. More precisely in relation to Mary Sidney, there is a tendency, even from feminist critics, to lament that 'she wrote, but it was only a translation'.<sup>5</sup> In contrast to this, by relocating my discussion of Mary Sidney's Psalmes within the parameters of the general cultural significance of the psalms in the construction of female subjectivity during the Renaissance, I hope to challenge the extent of Philip Sidney's influence upon his sister and the assumption that, as a psalm translator, Mary Sidney was writing in an inherently marginal genre.

As a preliminary indication of my redefining of the significance of the psalms for Mary Sidney's identity during the Renaissance, I have adopted a quotation from Sir John Harington for the title of this chapter. As it stands this quotation identifies Sidney by her social position as an 'excellent Countess', for which reason, she is a positive role model for her neice, Lucy, Countess of Bedford. But, it also identifies Sidney by her 'poesie'. Of itself this is a significant statement about a woman in the sixteenth century, but, more importantly, the context of the letter reveals that this is directly linked to her psalms:

Right Honourable, and my most honored good Ladie, I  
have sent you heere the devine, and trulie devine  
translation of three of Davids psalmes, donne by that  
Excellent Countesse, and in Poesie the mirroir of our

Age; whom, as you are neere unto in blood, of lyke degree in Honor; not unlike in favore; so I suppose none coms more neere hir then your self in those, now rare, and admirable guifts of the mynde, that clothe Nobilitie with vertue. (6)

Harington's letter epitomizes the pivotal connections between the construction of the exemplary woman in the Renaissance and their association with the psalms. He unequivocally praises Sidney's psalms as being 'devine, and trulie devine' choosing three of them to protect his own additions.<sup>7</sup> These he describes as 'attending' or waiting upon the psalms and states that it is not his intention 'to conjoyne theis with them; for that were to piece sattin with sack-cloth, or patch leade upon golde'. Obviously this is part of the declamatory conventions of dedicatory writing, but it is also an important acknowledgement of his appreciation of Mary Sidney's translations, especially in combination with his statement that her 'Poesie' is 'the mirroir of our age'. Yet Harington is more often quoted as crediting Sidney's Psalmes to her chaplain, for 'it was more than a woman's skill to express the sense so right as she hath done in verse'.<sup>8</sup> The emphasis on Harington's latter remark co-exists with critical concentration upon what women 'did not, or could not' write. Not only does this dismiss an evident contradiction in one particular man's attitude to Sidney's Psalmes, but it prevents an examination of why, in this context, Harington should chose to represent them rather more positively. It seems to me that one motivation for such an evaluation in this context is due to the positive value placed upon the psalms in the construction of femininity: thus in this letter describing the Countess of Bedford's 'vertue' produces a favourable recommendation of Mary Sidney's psalms.

In fact, this letter is not the only time that Harington praises

Mary Sidney's Psalmes. One of Harington's epigrams, 'In prayse of two worthy Translations, made by two great Ladies' consolidates his high evaluation of her writing.<sup>9</sup> As in the letter to the Countess of Bedford, the psalms are linked to Sidney's exemplary identity and her 'Nobilitie':

My soule one only Mary doth adore,  
Only one Mary doth injoy my hart;  
Yet hath my Muse found out two Maryes more  
That merit endless praise by dew desart;  
Two Maryes that translate with divers arte  
Two subjects rude and ruinous before;  
Both having nobless great and bewties store,  
Nobless and bewty to their works imparte;  
Both have ordayne against deaths dreadfull darte  
A sheeld of fame enduring evermore,  
Both works advance the love of sacred lore,  
Both helpe the soules of sinners to convarte.  
Their learned payne I prayse, her costly almes;  
A Colledge this translates, the tother Psalmes.

Whilst the 'two Maryes' do inspire Harington to write and he praises them for their nobility and 'bewty', the emphasis here is very firmly upon their writing, for which they 'merit endless praise by dew desart'. Their 'arte', in combination with their nobility and virtue, enables them to renovate subjects which were 'rude and ruinous before'. Not only do they deserve praise for their art, but it also provides them with 'a sheeld of fame enduring evermore'. This fame is the result of their own writing, rather than for being passive muses or the subjects of verses by male contemporaries. Although both women are writing in the 'acceptable' genre of sacred translation, their identities are not negated or excluded from their texts. On the contrary, it is their own 'Nobless and bewty' which is 'imparted' to their works and which makes their works worthy of fame. And, despite the injunctions against women preaching, these texts advance God's 'sacred lore' and help to convert sinners' souls.

Thus, although Harington is more usually associated with a demeaning statement about Mary Sidney's Psalmes, it would seem that

that remark is outweighed by his other assertions. And, whatever Harington's 'true' evaluation of her writing, when he refers to Mary Sidney, it is her Psalmes that symbolise her 'excellency' in body, spirit and 'Poesie'. In neither of these examples does he make even a reference to her brother; indeed, in Harington's references it is she, rather than Philip, who is 'in Poesie the mirroir of our age'. Harington's representation of Mary Sidney is not the only example of an appreciation of her which has been skewed by historical interpretation. The various texts which were dedicated to her have been similarly overlooked.<sup>10</sup> What has been particularly overlooked is the way in which these dedications make reference to her Psalmes, or the fact that the texts they are attached to demonstrate a variety of connections with the psalms. Consequently, the first section of this chapter is concerned with re-evaluating those dedications and examining the extent to which Mary Sidney's connection with the psalms situate her as both exemplary in her own right and as an exemplar for others to imitate.

1. 'A PATTERNNE AND A PATRONESSE': MARY SIDNEY AND EXEMPLARY FEMALE IDENTITY.

A Patterne and a Patronesse she was  
Of vertuous industry, and studious learning:  
And she her earthly Pilgrimage did passe  
In acts which were high honour most concerning.(11)

When examining the dedications to Mary Sidney, Elaine Beilin states that the majority of them do not praise Sidney for her writing, but position her as 'a beloved lady and a muse to inspire others' or as 'the glory of the traditional learned and virtuous woman: chaste, distant, inspiring'.<sup>12</sup> Additionally, Margaret P. Hannay suggests that, as Sidney's position as 'Patronesse' is

dependent upon both her marital status and her relationship to Philip, she 'held a position analogous to that of the medieval lady in the castle,' in which male poets 'jostling for positions in the service of the lord, ... served the lady in order to attract the attention of her husband. "The lady would thus be the mediator in a symbolic transference of status between two men of different social classes"'.<sup>13</sup> The praise which was bestowed upon such a lady was dependent upon her socio-economic position: if she lost this, then she lost her troubadours. In the light of this, it is interesting to examine John Taylor's comment in The Needles Excellencie (1624), which heads this section, for, by this time, not only was Mary Sidney's husband dead, but so was she. Taylor's 'dedication', then, should more properly be read as an epitaph, but it does form part of his dedication to this work. Here, posthumously, Mary Sidney becomes significant in her own right and, importantly, she is represented firstly as a 'Patterne' and secondly as a 'Patronesse'. Her exemplariness is associated with the traditionally feminine activity of needlework (her 'vertuous industry') but also with her 'studious learning'. For these reasons she is an exemplar suitable for other women to emulate; her virtue, industry and learning (in conjunction with her social position) qualify her for the role of patroness. Yet, although many of the dedications to Mary Sidney do situate her as a mediator between different men, a number of them do stress her learning and her writing - particularly her Psalmes. Furthermore, the content of the texts to which these dedications are prefaced underline this connection; in these dedications, it seems to me that the 'symbolic transference of status' which is at stake in Mary Sidney's mediation operates between male author and female reader, or male author and Mary Sidney as writer, by way of the Psalmes.

The Needles Excellencie is a case in point. For it has not, I think, previously been noted that the 1631 edition is prefaced by six dedicatory sonnets, which explicitly connect virtuous femininity, needlework and the psalms. Five sonnets address 'exemplarly' women: Catherine Parr, Mary Tudor, Elizabeth I, Mary Sidney, and Elizabeth Dormer. Apart from the fact that they are all dead, most of these women have another connection in common, in that they are linked with the psalms.<sup>14</sup> Thus, although in this context, they are primarily praised for their accomplishments in needlework, they also conform to the prescriptions of piety required of virtuous women. Even more important than this, however, is the fact that Taylor's first sonnet justifies needlework from the psalms:

King David by an apt similitude  
Doth shew, with Majesty the CHURCH her worth:  
And to a Kings faire Daughter, doth allude,  
Where to her spouse, he bravely brings her forth,  
In Garments wrought of NEEDLE-WORK and Gold,  
Resplendent and most glorious to the eye:  
Whose out-side much more glory did infold,  
The presence of the'ternall Majesty.  
Thus may you see Records of holy Writ  
Set downe (what Death nor Time can nere deface.)  
By these comparisons, comparing fit.  
The noble worth of Needle-workes high grace.  
Then learne faire Damsels, learne your times to spend  
In this, which such high praisings doth commend. (15)

In this sonnet, Taylor is drawing upon psalm 45 for his imagery; this psalm was often read as an analogy for the relationship between Christ and his church, and thus, usually refers to spiritual finery. By combining references to spiritual and bodily finery, Taylor's sonnet attests to the interconnection between secular and spiritual conduct books, or social discourses defining exemplarly female identity: biblical models, of course, being central to the construction, or production of the ideal woman. But, more precisely, it is the psalms which denote these connections; both between the women cited, between the women and the subject of the text, and

between a male author and his, presumably, female readers.

These women are connected in terms of their virtue, industry and learning; the combination of these qualities appears to be a prerequisite for women to be ascribed to the position of patroness; only women who are recognised as conforming to the cultural 'ideals' of femininity, as well as being of high social position, have works dedicated to them. In this manner, these women, and Mary Sidney in particular, could appear to symbolize the very constraints which sought to maintain women's subjected position, in that their own conformity to these prescriptions places them in a position which sought to encourage other women to internalise such subjection. However, I would suggest that whilst upholding that position Mary simultaneously subverts it, for although Sidney is often praised for traditionally feminine attributes, she is also consistently praised because of her own writing, making her a curious anomaly in an age which defined the virtuous woman as 'chaste, silent, and obedient'. It should also be remarked that, as the number of works dedicated to her was only surpassed by those to Elizabeth I, Mary Sidney was an exceptionally prominent 'exemplary woman'.<sup>16</sup> In representing her exemplariness male writers may have sought to prescribe or contain other women's expressions, but she was also a powerful example of a woman writer. In this, it seems to me, Mary Sidney is a focus for the inherent contradictions in male representations of virtuous women; for, in seeking to encourage others to be private and silent, they promote exemplars who through this very representation become public figures and thus contravene the 'ideal'. These contradictions, and others, were already being debated by women during the sixteenth century and, I think, pave the way for further challenges to these prescriptions by women in the early seventeenth century.<sup>17</sup>

As Mary Sidney's identity as a patroness was dependent upon her socio-economic position, it is not that surprising that many dedications make reference to her familial connections. It would also appear that the connection was reciprocal, as she was most active as a patroness of poets who praised her family and who supported the protestant alliance.<sup>18</sup> Hannay suggests that poets asked for the Countess's patronage in her brother's name because he had 'bequeath'd [her] the secrets of his skill'. She also emphasises Sidney's identification as 'Philip's Phoenix', to the extent that 'even when the metaphor is not present, writers assert that Mary Sidney reincarnates her brother'.<sup>19</sup> What Hannay does not stress is that this connection, although it defines Mary Sidney by her brother, also indicates that these writers recognised her poetic ability. This is an attribute which is not usually associated with women during this time. Moreover, it suggests that she has more poetic capability than her male contemporaries. Through this representation as an 'honorary man' (in the guise of Philip) her expression becomes permissible and creates a space for her to subvert the safe (marginal) space ascribed to her by outshining him in her psalm translations; and bears the promise that, posthumously (like her brother), she will be associated with the poetic Laurel; as Drayton writes of her, 'Upon thy Toombe shall spring a Lawrell tree'.<sup>20</sup>

The fact that Mary Sidney was represented as the inheritor of her brother's poetic skills is illustrated in the title 'Philip's Phoenix' which Hannay ascribes to her. As far as I am aware none of the dedications use this actual title. They do refer to her as a 'Phoenix', but I would suggest that the ascription of this title to Mary Sidney displaces her brother, rather than asserts his influence upon her. For example, in his elegy to Philip Sidney included in

Amoris Lachrimae, Nicholas Breton names him 'Phoenix', but in the Countess of Pembroke's Love it is Mary Sidney who has become the Phoenix.<sup>21</sup> Additionally, the term 'Phoenix' is not specific to addresses to Philip and Mary Sidney; in The Courtier's Academie, for example, when discussing exemplarly figures, Annibale says that:

when I name the good, I meane not onely that excellencie of goodnesse, which is not any way imperfect, and which is in a manner as rare on earth as the Phoenix: but I include in that number, all those which are well reported and reputed in the world and which approach so neare as they can to that excellencie. (22)

The Phoenix is thus a hyperbolic term for an exemplary figure, one which both does, and does not, exist: being called a Phoenix does not, therefore, necessarily link Mary Sidney with her brother, but rather demonstrates her own 'rare' virtue. This may indicate Mary's own 'exceptional' position, but she is not alone in being ascribed this title. Samuel Brandon's dedication to Lady Lucy Audley, prefacing the Virtuous Octavia (1598) names her also as a 'rare Phoenix': Lady Audley is a 'Rich treasurer, of heavens best treasuries'. Ultimately, Audley is a protectress of the honour of Brandon's writing, for he concludes that:

These lines, wherein, if ought be free from blame,  
Your noble genius taught my pen the same. (23)

The fact that at least one other woman was identified in these terms suggests that the title 'Phoenix', in itself, does not necessarily identify the Countess of Pembroke by her brother, but rather illustrates the anomaly, or rarity, of an educated and virtuous woman.<sup>24</sup>

The most famous example of the literary connections between the two siblings is in the dedication prefacing The Countess of Pembrokes Arcadia. Frances Berkeley Young, whose biography of Mary Sidney has only just been supplanted by Hannay's, considered that 'any survey of

Lady Pembroke's literary work should naturally begin with her brother's novel Arcadia, and her connection with that work'.<sup>25</sup> Whilst this is no longer a necessary starting point, it is a connection which cannot be totally ignored, for it is in relation to this work that Mary Sidney first publicly displays her 'three-fold role' in the creation of the Sidney legend; those roles being writer, editor and patron.<sup>26</sup> Philip's dedication ascribes to her the role of patron and muse, and Standford's address 'To the Reader' effectively, positions her as both writer and editor: 'most by her doing, all by her direction'. Mary Sidney is represented as 'taking in hand':

the wiping away of those spots wherewith the beauties thereof were unworthily blemished. But as often as in repairing a ruinous house the mending of some old part occasioneth the making of some new, so here her honourable labour, begun in correcting the faults, ended in supplying the defects, by the view of what was ill done guided to the consideration of what was not done. (27)

Her editorial role is illustrated by her 'wiping away [of] those spots,' and as writer she is perceived as 'supplying the defects,' that is correcting them; sensing, from her reading of what was there, what ought to be added. In this, as with the psalms, she was influenced by what Philip had already written, but alters the emphasis of the work.<sup>28</sup> Standford concludes that the Arcadia is now doubly hers: 'it is now by more than one interest The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia - done, as it was, for her; as it is, by her' (p. 60). Her passive role as inspirer, or commissioner, of the work, becomes active; the motivation is centred on her love for her brother, but the emphasis in this preface is upon her role in altering the work, which culminates in the text being 'done ... by her'.

In The Silkwormes, and their Flies, Thomas Moffatt identifies Mary Sidney as 'Arcadias heire most fitte', thus situating her as the

most pertinent inheritor of her brother's gifts and immediately associating this with her own writing:

Vouchsafe a while to lay thy taske aside,  
Let Petrake sleep, give rest to Sacred Writte (29).

Moffatt invites her to leave aside these endeavours and distract herself with his text. Throughout Moffatt makes references to his patron, obviously expecting her to read the whole text. At the opening of the second book, he praises her writing once more, specifically her Psalmes:

O Thou whose sweet & heav'nly-tuned Psalmes  
The heav'ns themselves are scarce enough to praise!  
Whose penne divine and consecrated palmes,  
From wronging verse did Royall Singer raise (p. 41).

In this instance, Moffatt is not directly situating Mary Sidney as a mediator between himself and her husband; rather, he desires that she infuse into his text some of the skill which she has inherited from her brother.<sup>30</sup> Whilst he does associate her poetic skills with her brother, Moffatt also underlines the talent with which she translated the Psalmes. Nor is he alone in his assertion that her translations have liberated the psalms 'from wronging verse', as I shall discuss in section two.

Other dedications connecting Mary Sidney with her brother position her primarily as his chief mourner. A prime example of this is found in Spenser's 'The Ruines of Time' in which he premises his address to the Countess on the basis of their mutual love and admiration for her brother.<sup>31</sup> The poem seeks to immortalise some of the achievements of the Sidney family; it is 'speciallie intended to the renowing of that noble race, from which both you and he sprang, and to the eternizing of some of the chiefe of them late deceased' (Alr). Whilst Mary Sidney was not able to take part in the actual funeral of her brother, subsequent to this she becomes his chief

mourner; in a rather more complex manner than the experiences of Dorothy Leigh and Elizabeth Jocelin, this creates a space for Mary Sidney to express herself legitimately. Or, rather, with regard to Spenser's text, it presents an opportunity for a male author to represent her expression.<sup>32</sup> For the Countess's sorrow and mourning both inspires and guides Spenser's writing. However, his poem culminates in an invitation to Mary to cry again at his depiction of her experience and her brother:

And ye faire Ladie th'honour of your daies,  
And glorie of the world, your high thoughts scorne;  
Vouchsafe this monument of his last praise,  
With some few silver dropping teares t'adorne:  
And as ye be of heavenlie offspring borne,  
So unto heaven let your high minde aspire,  
And loath this drosse of sinfull worlds desire (D4v).

Mary Sidney's tears, called forth by Spenser's text, would testify to the veracity of Spenser's representation. Additionally, although Spenser is at first inspired by the Countess's sorrow, by the end of the text he intimates that he is instructing her to continue this mourning. He wishes her to 'scorne' 'high thoughts' but simultaneously to let her 'high minde aspire' unto heaven. In this manner Spenser both constructs Mary Sidney as an ideal or exemplary woman ('th'honour of your daies,/ And glorie of the world'), but seems to be reminding her of the means to maintain this position. There is, perhaps, a hint of implicit criticism in the contrast between the Countess as the 'glorie of the world' and also one who ought to 'loath this drosse of sinfull worlds desire'. Spenser is reminding the Countess to keep her thoughts on heaven, rather than on earthly 'glorie'.

This emphasis upon heavenly thoughts is apparent in other texts dedicated to Mary Sidney which situate her as an exemplary figure of the female penitent; a position which is closely aligned to her

identification as her brother's chief mourner. In this association, Mary Sidney is affiliated with biblical figures of penitence, most commonly David and Mary Magdalene. This connection is most noticeable in Nicholas Breton's writing and in Robert Newton's The Countess of Montgomeries Evsebia.<sup>33</sup> Despite the title, the main dedicatee is Mary Sidney; she is the 'noble root of Honor and vertue', the others mentioned are 'her illustrious branches'. In this representation it is Mary Sidney's own piety which is inherited by her children and relations; consequently they also represent the 'Piety' which is the subject of Newton's text: 'the subject of this worke is Piety; whereto as the world doth witnessse you All to bee adicted, devoting yourselves most religiously to God, in your owne persons, being patternes of it to others' (A4r-A4v). Once more Mary Sidney is an exemplary figure for others to emulate; like her brother she is an example of piety, but not in the public sense of a Protestant crusader, rather for the feminine attributes of prayer and confession.

In Newton's text, these confessional acts are primarily associated with the penitent David. However, although this connection is well established within Protestant doctrine, another significant model of penitence within Protestantism was Mary Magdalene.<sup>34</sup> The texts which Nicholas Breton dedicates to Mary Sidney combine references to both of these figures; Mary Sidney is, to a certain extent, represented as a contemporary Mary Magdalene figure and the words which Breton places in her mouth consistently echo the psalms. The gender specificity of the connection between Mary Sidney, penitence and psalmic discourse is particularly noticeable in Breton's works; especially in comparison with texts that he dedicates to male patrons.<sup>35</sup> The texts which Breton dedicates to Mary Sidney

have recourse to a particular woman who is designated as speaker; the reader in these texts is not openly addressed, or directed about how to emulate the process they are witnessing, but is invited to identify herself with the woman represented.<sup>36</sup> Both Elaine Beilin and Margaret P. Hannay have noted the problematics associated with a male author giving 'Mary Sidney' a voice.<sup>37</sup> However, although I sympathise with the objections they raise, I think that the method Breton uses reveals another aspect of the significance of psalmic discourse for women during this period and particularly its significance for Mary Sidney. For, in each of these texts, references to the psalms abound and this, coupled with Breton's own admiration of the psalms as the highest form of poetry, leads me to suggest that Breton's texts (whilst they are concerned with receiving a financial reward) do not simply represent Mary Sidney as a passive receptacle mediating between Breton and Lord Pembroke.<sup>38</sup> For these texts are directed at a female audience, both in terms of their patron and the subject of the text; they use a discourse which, as I have demonstrated, was peculiarly associated with women during this period and which expresses a central Protestant activity of personal and individual acts of confession or self examination; moreover, those dedicated to Mary Sidney identify a woman who was herself closely associated with the psalms as an exemplar for imitation. Given his own admiration of the psalms, I would suggest that Breton chooses the Countess of Pembroke as patron partly for this connection and that, rather than being a negative example of a man placing words in a woman's mouth, it is an indication of the femininity of confession which requires a female voice and which Breton in his 'own' (male) voice cannot represent.

In Breton's writing generally, there is an apparent gender

distinction between different texts; however, this distinction is also apparent within one particular text: The Pilgrimage to Paradise, joined with The Countess of Pembroke's Love.<sup>39</sup> Although both sections of this text deal with the earthly pilgrimage to spiritual wholeness, each 'pilgrim' achieves this heavenly aim by very different means. The first section deals with a male pilgrim who is represented as embarking upon an actual physical journey, which also, of course, has a metaphorical spiritual significance. This pilgrim commences his journey in the woods, his senses coming under assault from various vices (represented by female mythical figures) and the seven deadly sins. On the way he meets various people at different stages of their own pilgrimage, and has discussions with them; he also travels across the sea, enters a university town, attends the (earthly) court, witnesses victorious battles and terrifying defeats, and, finally, finds the 'true church' and enters the 'heavenly court of the high King of Kings' (I1v). Having traversed the various terrains of the world, this pilgrim proves himself to be steadfast; informed by God's word, guided by an angel and visions, he keeps to the straight path. Although, when he finds the 'true church' this pilgrim discovers that :

The gate, is Grace, Contrition, is the key,  
The locke, is love, the porter, Penitence,  
where humble faith, must heavenly favour stay (H4r),

he is not actually represented as engaging in either public or private penitence.

In contrast to this, the second section, 'The Countess of Pembroke's Love,' emphasises private penitence; although this privacy is intruded upon narratorially by 'Breton':

Now when she saw the world was gone indeede,  
Her selfe alone, save but myselfe unseene (I3v),

and, through publication, her 'privacy' becomes scrutinised by a

number of readers. Also, although the Countess experiences many of the same temptations as the male pilgrim, the means by which she encounters, and overcomes, them is differentiated. This difference upholds the public/private dichotomy between the sexes. For the Countess remains within her 'house,' or court, and the world, effectively, comes to her. Whereas the male pilgrim met women, soldiers, peasants, merchants, lawyers, courtiers, scholars, sailors and poets on his travels, in the second narrative they come to the Countess. All of these figures try to 'tempt' her away from her 'true love' and are baffled by her rejection of their gifts:

But when the world, could not come neare her wish,  
And saw in vaine it was her will to seeke: ...  
Some with a sigh, other, with pitteous mone,  
All went awaie, and left her all alone (I3r).

In this isolated state, the Countess retires to her 'closet' and proceeds to reveal, through the narrator's 'overhearing,' what she desires: that is, the love of Christ. Her pilgrimage, although representative of the love between Christ and his church, is portrayed as a personal relationship with Christ, and one which focuses on repentance, grace and forgiveness. In her closet the 'Countess' undergoes the Protestant process of self-examination, and the most prominent discourse she uses to express herself is the psalms. There is, as in Mary Sidney's own psalm translations, an emphasis on Calvinist readings of the psalms, commencing with a rejection of earthly power and a recognition that:

Power is no power, but where thou dost assist,  
Downe goes the world, that doth thy will resist (I4r).

She recognises her own unworthiness and asserts that 'thy Religion is the rule of life'.<sup>40</sup> On this premise, she proceeds to describe the relationship between the world, God's love and herself in a combination of psalm quotations:

Above all height, thy love doeth live on high,  
And who can sounde, the depth of thy loves treasure?  
Or limit out the lengths of thy loves eie,  
which heaven and earth doth in thy mercy measure,  
No, let all height, depth, length, and bredth confesse,  
Thy love is blessed, in all blessednes.

But, what shoulde I? Shall I? or can I give?  
To thee: for all, that thou hast given to me:....  
Nothing I have, but, if that ought be mine,  
All doe I give unto that love of thine. (41)

From this the 'Countess' inquires 'what is man? that thou man should love so much?'<sup>42</sup> This moves her to contemplate her sin and to a recognition that human desires, like the world, ought to be ordered in accordance with God's word.<sup>43</sup> As she continues to meditate upon the gulf between God and man, and cries to God to love her, the narrator observes that 'trickeling teares distilled downe her eies' (L2r). She laments her 'sicknes' (sin) and then finds renewed faith in God's forgiveness, asking for guidance from his word in a summary of psalm 1 :

Oh that my soule could see that sacred light,  
That might but leade me to thy holy will,  
And learne the rule, that keepes the soule aright,  
In perfect faith, thy precepts to fulfill:  
And might so neere, unto thy hand abide,  
As from thy love, might never steppe aside (M1r).

She is oppressed by the burden of her sin and identifies herself with Mary Magdalene, desiring more of God's word and thus to maintain the path of faith. Like the male pilgrim, the Countess has a vision, but hers is of Christ and it leads her to further repentance and tears, rather than enabling her to continue to battle against external temptations. Her vision is of union with Christ, but, unlike the first pilgrim (who enters heaven), the Countess remains on earth and represents the continual desire for God which characterises the psalms.

Throughout this text, then, the 'Countess' imitates the progression of faith and doubt, assurance and fear that the psalms

postulate as the believer's experience in relation to God. Although the words were written by Breton, Mary Sidney becomes an exemplar of female penitence: in this depiction, her intimate association with the psalms plays a crucial role. In this way, Breton's representation echoes the language of the conduct books for women generally, but, as the text was published in 1592, I would suggest that this representation is also influenced by the Countess's own individual association with the psalms. For Breton was a member of the Wilton circle and was, therefore, familiar with her writing, and by this time her work was nearly complete. Thus, although Breton is being rather audacious in placing these words in her mouth, they are also words with which the Countess was very familiar; additionally, as other women's diaries and private devotions illustrate, this discourse is certainly one which many women did actually use to frame their lives.

The other two texts Breton dedicated to Mary Sidney display similar appropriations of psalmic discourse and identify her with other exemplary figures of female penitence. Auspicante Jehova depicts exemplary women from the gospels, culminating with a prayer upon the magnificat, the 'fruit' of which is 'the joy of the soule that is ravished with the love of Christ'.<sup>44</sup> The speaker in this prayer asks Christ for help to honour him, to know how to speak to him, and, ultimately, throws herself at Christ's feet, crying inwardly and outwardly. This prayer, and in fact the text, ends with the plea that Christ will:

worke mee onely to thy will: drawe me to thee, by thy holy spirit, hold mee to thee, by thy holy Love, and inspire mee, with thy holy wisdom, that loathing the worlde with the vanities thereof, in thy onely mercy, I may see the paradise of my soule: that having with patience passed my purgatory in this life, & in the merit of thy mercy, receiving the comfort of my Salvation, where the Angells of thy Love, doe sing in Glory of thy

grace, my poore humble Soule may sing Amen to their  
Musique. Gloria in Excelsis Deo (D6r-D7v).

Here the speaker desires to be in the position which Mary Sidney, as translator of the psalms was actually in: that is singer of heavenly songs to God's glory.

In 'A Divine Poeme. The Blessed Weeper and the Ravisht Soule', the psalms are again paraphrased in a text which is both dedicated to Mary Sidney and attempts to situate her voice as the narrating voice of the text.<sup>45</sup> 'The Ravisht Soule' part of the poem commences thus:

Sing, my soule, to God thy Lord  
All in glorie's highest keye;  
Laie the Angells quier aboorde,  
In their highest holy daie;  
    Crave their helps to tune thy heart  
    Unto praise's highest parte.

Tell the world no world can tell  
What the hand of heaven deserveth;  
In whose onely mercies dwell  
All that heaven and earth preserveth;  
    Death's confounding, Sinnes forgiving;  
    Faith's relieving, Comfort's living.

Grace and glory, life and love,  
Be the summe of all thy dittie,  
Where a sinner's teares may prove  
Comfort's joy in Mercie's pittie:  
    Every note in love alluding,  
    Endlesse glory in concluding.

This paraphrases the content of the psalms which all praise God and 'tell the world' of his goodness and mercy. In this Breton seems to be echoing Mary Sidney's own translations, but also alluding to what she wrote in 'To the Angell Spirit'. The way that Breton ends this text makes an interesting connection, not only with 'To the Angell Spirit' but also with Daniel's dedication to the Countess prefacing Cleopatra.<sup>46</sup> For, at the end of the text, Breton indicates that the 'abstract' 'Ravisht Soule' is, in fact, the Countess's soule as represented in her writing:

And God Himselfe so neere Himselfe will set you,  
    In Grace's seate where mercy so will love you,

That Faith's regard will never more forget you,  
Nor sinne, nor death, nor devill shall remove you.

But where the saints and angels are reciting  
The heav'nly trueth of high Jehova's story;  
Your ravisht soule in such divine enditing,  
Shall evermore be singing of His glory. (47)

The singing of such spiritual songs, or psalms, culminates in 'the speaker,' or 'the Countess' being allowed to come into God's presence. In this poem, as in the others which Breton dedicates to Mary Sidney, he demonstrates an intimate connection between the discourses he gives to his female speakers and the psalms. This, as opposed to her family connections, is what Breton most emphasises about the Countess and it is this which constitutes her qualification for the position of exemplar for other women. Thus, although Breton places words in Mary Sidney's mouth, they have a direct connection with both cultural expectations of virtuous or exemplary women's expressions, and with her own connection to the confessional discourse of the psalms.<sup>48</sup>

2. 'WE THY SYDNEAN PSALMES SHALL CELEBRATE': DAVIES, DONNE, AND LANYER.

Whilst Breton, Newton, and Taylor celebrate Mary Sidney's Psalmes by oblique references to the psalms both in their dedications and in the content of their texts, other writers specifically celebrate the 'Sydnean Psalmes', or indeed Mary Sidney's Psalmes in particular, for their contribution to the development of English divine poetry, reinforcing Harington's earlier remarks. John Davies, who made a presentation copy of the Sidneian Psalmes, for example, described them as 'a Worke of Art and Grace' and stated that:

So sweet a Descant on so sacred Ground  
No time shall cease to sing to Heav'nly Lyres:

For, when the Spheares shall cease their gyring sound,  
The Angels then, shall chaunt it in their Quires. (49)

These heavenly songs, according to Davies, will be sung unceasingly both on earth and in the heavens, thus ensuring Mary Sidney's immortality. That this immortality is specific to her Psalmes is further explicated in dedicatory poems to the Countess by John Donne and Aemilia Lanyer.

In 'Upon the translation of the Psalmes by Sir Philip Sydney, and the Countesse of Pembroke his Sister', John Donne suggests that whereas others' attempts to 'Seeke new expressions' for God's praises 'doe the Circle square', the Sidneian translations represent: 'the highest matter in the noblest forme'.<sup>50</sup> In Donne's representation, the two writers become indivisible, both from each other and from David; Donne argues that 'as thy blessed spirit fell upon/ These Psalmes first Author' (ls. 8-9):

So thou hast cleft that spirit, to performe  
That worke againe, and shed it, here, upon  
Two, by their bloods, and by thy spirit one;  
A Brother and a Sister, made by thee  
The Organ, where thou art the Harmony (ls. 12-16).

Thus, although in this poem Donne is associating Mary Sidney with her brother, there is no distinction between their relative poetic gifts; rather, both of them inherit their skills from God. Moreover, they are both equally positioned as instructing their readers, through their Psalmes in the best way to praise God:

And who that Psalme, Now let the Iles rejoyce,  
Have both translated, and apply'd it too,  
Both told us what, and taught us how to doe.  
They shew us Ilanders our joy, our King,  
They tell us why, and teach us how to sing (ls. 18-22)

Significantly this instruction is specifically situated as occurring within the 'Iles' of England and the Sidneian Psalmes are explicitly identified as enhancing the English vernacular. For Donne laments the fact that 'these Psalmes are become/ So well attyr'd abroad, so ill

at home' (ls. 37-38). In this Donne is presumably drawing a contrast between the poetic quality of the Marot/de Beze Psalter and the ignominious Sternhold and Hopkins Psalter.<sup>51</sup> Donne declares that the English Church cannot truly be called 'reform'd' until the language in which God's praises are expressed truly encapsulates his glory. This becomes an issue of national honour, as Donne points out that this is both an insult to God and prevents England from leading other nations in God's praises. 'Shall our Church', asks Donne, 'unto our Spouse and King/ More hoarse, more harsh than any other, sing?' (ls. 43-44). This question operates rhetorically as Donne continues:

For that we pray, we praise thy name for this,  
Which, by <this> Moses and this Miriam, is  
Already done; and as those Psalmes we call  
(Though some have other Authors) Davids all:  
So though some have, some may some Psalmes translate,  
We thy Sydnean Psalmes shall celebrate (ls. 45-50).

In Donne's evaluation, then, the 'Sydnean Psalmes' represent 'the highest matter in noblest forme' and, as Harington suggested earlier, rescue the psalms from their previous 'ill attyr'. Although Donne commences by representing Philip and Mary Sidney as the instruments of God's spirit in their act of translation, by the end of the poem it is their authorship which is prioritised.

A similar emphasis upon authorship is established in Lanyer's dedicatory poem prefacing Salve deus Rex Judaeorum: this time, however, it is the Countess of Pembroke who, alone, occupies centre stage in a text which has been described as a 'comprehensive "Book of Good Women"'.<sup>52</sup> Distinctively, Lanyer ascribes a central role to poetry as an indication of feminine virtue.<sup>53</sup> It is, therefore, of great significance that Mary Sidney should be so highly praised by Lanyer. This praise indicates that Mary Sidney's example was partially responsible for Lanyer's own writing. To the extent that they perpetuate the notion of virtuous and idealised women, these

writers do not openly contest male definitions of women. However, by using those very definitions, both writers give women a more positive evaluation: that is to say, as Elaine Beilin has suggested, that 'by praising such women as the Countesses of Kent, Cumberland, and Pembroke, Lanyer attempts to realise Christian virtue in living women, to warn misogynists of their impiety, and to inspire other women'.<sup>54</sup> The most important inspiration for Lanyer herself, in terms of poetry, has to be Mary Sidney.<sup>55</sup> Lanyer's dedication uses the conventions of the genre and yet makes this a specifically feminine act, focussing upon Mary Sidney. Lanyer, in an address typical of the conventions of the genre, apologises for the relative unworthiness of her work in relation to the Countess's:

Though the many books she writes that are more rare  
Yet there is honey in the meanest flowers

Which is both wholesome and delights the taste:  
Though sugar be more finer, higher prized,  
Yet is the painfull bee no whit disgraced,  
Nor her fair wax, or honey more despized.

And though that learned damsel and the rest,  
Have in a higher style her trophy framed;  
Yet these unlearned lines being my best,  
Of her great wisdom can no whit be blamed. (56)

However humble this position is, it is also an attempt at self-affirmation. In an appropriation and revision of the usual male conventions of dedications, the Countess's spirituality reaffirms Lanyer's own spirituality. It is as a direct result of Mary Sidney's own writing that Lanyer is able to identify her work in relation to another woman's writing rather than a male contemporary.

Lanyer's dream vision poem places Mary Sidney firmly in a position of fame, virtue and wisdom. The graces all pay their respects to Mary who is in an unassailable position:

She whom I saw was crowned by noble Fame,  
Whom Envy sought to sting, yet could not touch (57)

This reflects the Countess's own Psalmes which emphasise a quest for fame, and an awareness of others' envy. The Countess is described as walking in Edenic bowers with Pallas who invites the women present to 'sit and to devise/ On holy hymns' which are identified as:

Those rare sweet songs which Israel's King did frame,  
Unto the Father of Eternity,  
Before his holy wisdom took the name  
Of great Messias, Lord of unity.

Those holy sonnets they did all agree,  
With this most lovely Lady here to sing;  
That by her noble breast's sweet harmony,  
Their music might in ears of angels ring.

While saints like swans about this silver brook  
Should Hallelujah sing continually,  
Writing her praises in th'eternal book  
Of endless honor, true fame's memory (p. 79).

Her companions sing the psalms of David 'with this most lovely lady', but in a version which is transformed into the heavens by 'her noble breast's sweet harmony'. This suggests that Lanyer is referring directly to Sidney's own Psalmes and that, in conjunction with the last verse, the subject being praised is the Countess herself rather than God: the 'Hallelujahs' establish her praise, honour and fame.

Mary Sidney's virtue is designated by her 'virtuous studies of divinity', in which she 'her precious time continually doth spend' (p. 80). In this, Mary Sidney is identified as an exemplary Renaissance woman, whose daily meditations would have included meditations upon the psalms. The Countess's exemplariness is compared and contrasted to that of her brother: Lanyer names her as 'sister to valiant Sidney' and praises him as a Protestant exemplar 'whose clear light/ Gives light to all that tread true paths of Fame' (p. 80). But the Countess, in Lanyer's representation, also displaces her brother. For it is clear that Lanyer is prioritising Mary Sidney's role in their psalm translations as, although Philip Sidney's 'clear light' indicates the way to fame, it is his sister who achieves it:

Directing all by her immortal light  
In this huge sea of sorrows, griefs, and fears;  
With contemplation of God's powerful might,  
She fills the eyes, the hearts, the tongues, the ears

Of after-coming ages, which shall read  
Her love, her zeal, her faith, and piety;  
The fair impression of whose worthy deed,  
Seals her pure soul unto the Diety (pp. 80-81)

The Countess's light is 'immortal' and, interestingly, this places her in an analogous position to that of her brother; in Greville's biography it is Philip who guides others through the troubled waters of life.<sup>58</sup> It is her writing which 'fills the eyes, the hearts, the tongues, the ears' of succeeding ages; it is her words which are valorised. This, in turn, makes her precious to God; an accolade which Daniel also attributes to her psalm translations. Lanyer also alludes to the psalms within the poem upon the passion, which Lewalski interprets as a possible 'gesture of discipleship to the Countess of Pembroke'.<sup>59</sup> However, I would suggest that the discipleship is grounded more upon the fact that Mary Sidney translated the psalms poetically than the presence of psalmic discourse in itself. Many other women appropriated the psalms in their religious writing and they thus became a peculiarly appropriate discourse for women, but only Mary Sidney translated them poetically.

Lanyer's dedication is very important as an example of the way in which a woman writer made use of the 'male conventions' of dedicatory discourse. She praises women for essentially the same attributes that male writers did and yet revises the perspective. Lanyer erects 'monuments' to these women and, very self-consciously, establishes and defines herself by this endeavour; writing of their fame is also a claim for her own. The major difference between what Lanyer does and her male contemporaries do, lies not in the words or the style of her dedications, but in the number of dedicatees and the

argument of the rest of her text. This is significant for questioning the way in which dedications are read: do we have to take literally the self abasing comments women make about themselves because it seems to indicate their 'internalisation' of what 'patriarchy' says about them? Obviously this is influential, but could it not also be that women were using these conventions in the same way as their male contemporaries; that is, to assert themselves through this apparent negation? If so, what differences could this make to a reading of Sidney's dedications to her brother and Elizabeth I? In order to pursue this point I want to examine Samuel Daniel's dedications to Mary in relation to her dedications to see where the gendered difference actually lies.

3. 'THOSE HYMNES ... UNTO THY VOYCE ETERNITIE HATH GIVEN': SELF-PRESENTATION IN DANIEL'S AND MARY SIDNEY'S DEDICATORY POEMS.

Samuel Daniel's dedication to Mary Sidney prefacing his version of Cleopatra is the only example which Elaine Beilin produces as an example of a male writer praising Mary Sidney for her writing.<sup>60</sup> Interestingly, although Cleopatra was 'commissioned' by the Countess and forms a pair with her version of Antonious, Daniel does not refer directly to her translation of Garnier's play. Instead, he centres his claim for her literary worth and fame on her translations of the psalms. Importantly, Daniel makes no mention of her brother's role in this activity but, like Lanyer, gives sole praise to the Countess:

Those Hymnes which thou doost consecrate to heaven,  
Which Israels Singer to his God did frame:  
Unto thy voyce eternitie hath given,  
And makes thee deere to him from whence they came.  
In them must rest thy ever reverent name,  
So long as Syons God remaineth honoured;  
And till confusion hath all zeale beareaven,  
And murdered Fayth, and Temples ruined.

By this (Great Lady,) thou must then be knowne,  
When Wilton lyes low levell'd with the ground:  
And this is that which thou maist call thine owne,  
Which sacriligious time cannot confound;  
Heere thou surviv'st thy selfe, heere thou art found  
Of late succeeding ages, fresh in fame:  
This Monument cannot be overthrowne,  
Where in eternall Brasse remains thy Name. (61)

Here it is her Psalmes which 'Unto thy voyce Eternitie hath given' and it is in them that her 'venerable name' rests for eternity. Through this Mary Sidney supplants David and her brother as it is her voice which is eternalised in her psalms. Although this is connected with God (for her fame will remain 'So long as Sions God remaineth honored'), she is given ownership of the psalms in a way which undermines the passivity and self-negation of biblical translation; reiterating Donne's representation above. The words 'which thou maist call thine owne,' that is, possess, will not be threatened by decay or 'sacriligious time'. Through these words (her 'own' words) Mary Sidney 'survivest' and, Daniel writes prophetically, will be found by 'late succeeding ages, fresh in fame'. The fact that these two verses are so often quoted illustrates that they are the most crucial verses for revealing this connection; certainly, they make Daniel's argument most succinctly. There are, however, other important aspects of this dedication which make it an interesting piece to bear in mind in relation to both Mary Sidney's dedication to Philip and Donne's poem about the Sidneian psalms.

In comparison with general sixteenth-century concerns and conventions about immortality through writing, Daniel's dedication suggests that it is Mary's writing which will gain her immortality. Yet, co-existent with this is the possibility that his monument to her (that is, his dedication) assures the continuation of that fame. Potentially this is an example of an author praising another in order to reinforce their own fame: Daniel ensures the continuation of Mary

Sidney's fame and also his own. The complex inter-relationship between poet and patron is present throughout Daniel's dedication. He vacillates between humility in relation to Mary, and an assertion, thereby, of his own position. For example, he writes that 'the better part of me will live:

And in that part will live thy reverent name,  
Although thy selfe dost farre more glory give  
Unto thy selfe, then I can by the same (A2r).

Here, the Countess is equated with Daniel's 'better part', placing her in the traditional female position of inspiration to virtue. Yet, though this part of him lives through her, she also lives through him: it is this which gives life to her 'reverent name'. Daniel then uses a typical humility topos by claiming that she creates more glory for herself than he can, but by this process sets up a complex dialectic.

What this inter-relationship reveals is the complications of designating self and other in relation to dedications. This is related to the discussions surrounding, for example, the composition of sonnet sequences and the position of the beloved lady within them; that is, the 'presence' or 'absence' of the addressed woman.<sup>62</sup> The critical consensus is that the centre of attention is actually the 'poet-lover' or speaker of the poem. However, when the 'poet-lover' is female somehow the critical consensus seems to be that the woman's use of, for example, the humility topos is a literal humility, or a facade which she is forced to use in order to be able to speak at all. This kind of approach has dominated discussions of Mary Sidney's 'To the Angell Spirit', although more recently Hannay and Beth Wynne Fiskin have cautiously begun to move towards a different approach to both 'To the Angell Spirit' and 'Even Now That Care'. Both critics recognise the potential self-presentation and ambition which is

simultaneously revealed and concealed within 'To the Angell Spirit'. Wynne Fiskin, for example, suggests that the poem indicates the Countess's 'intense personal ambitions as a poet' as well as her 'public aspirations as a political mediator'.<sup>63</sup> However, Wynne Fiskin reads this conflict as Mary Sidney's 'own' recognition of the 'disjuncture' between her 'internalised definitions of her role as a woman and her burgeoning ambitions as a writer' (p. 267). Fiskin accounts for the 'indirectness' of her expression and use of 'the conventional stances of apology and humility' as 'a reflection of her internalisation of cultural strictures against women speaking, and writing in public modes, which were assumed to be, morally, exclusively masculine domains' (p. 265). Thus, although Wynne Fiskin recognises the 'conventionality' of the use of apology and humility, ultimately she links this not to the genre in which Mary Sidney was writing, but solely to her sex.

Whilst the fact that Mary Sidney was female does accentuate the significance of the pose of humility and may serve to deflect contemporary criticism of her public expression, I am not convinced that Mary Sidney was as constrained by these prescriptions as many of her female contemporaries. For, the dedications she did write are both highly competent and very confident; moreover, it should not be forgotten that she did not preface her translation of Antonious with a dedication of any kind, even though drama represents a potentially more public discourse than that of the Psalmes.<sup>64</sup> The two dedications prefacing her Psalmes themselves make use of the psalms.<sup>65</sup> Additionally, her dedications situate two significant exemplary Renaissance figures in the position of muse. In the first instance, I would argue, this means that Mary Sidney places her brother in the traditionally feminine role of absent 'muse' in order to express her

own desires and ambitions. In the second case, Mary Sidney reiterates the identification of Elizabeth I as the 'New David', but in so doing emphasises the link between women and the psalmic discourse during this period, removing it from an entirely private or confessional discourse towards a more overt politicisation of that discourse. Her psalms also exhibit her 'ambition and talent' as well as a desire for fame, situating her at the centre of a previously male domain. For in her dedications she uses the male-defined conventions of this genre in order to justify her own expression and, consequently, subverts the constraints they represented. As a recipient herself of numerous dedications and as a result of her social position, Mary Sidney was well acquainted with the conventions of dedications, particularly the way in which depreciation was, in fact, an act of affirmation. Or, as Bacon put it: 'excusations, cessions, modesty itself well governed, are but the arts of ostentation'.<sup>66</sup> If Mary Sidney's femaleness required an apologia, this was precisely because she was being 'ostentatious'. The major complicating factor in Mary Sidney's dedications is the critical stress upon the personal expression in the dedication to her brother; consequently, what she writes to him is assumed to be personal and 'genuine'. Yet, what she writes to her brother follows the conventions of the dedication, makes use of the theories of petrarchanism and neo-platonism and, despite being 'sadd characters of simple love' is aware of contemporary aesthetic theories about expression.

In order to elucidate some of the conventions which Mary Sidney appropriates in 'To the Angell Spirit,' it is useful to compare it with Daniel's dedication to Mary prefacing Delia. It is more formal and is not a lament, but reveals interesting connections in terms of the positioning of writer and patron and how this relationship is

read:

Wonder of these, glory of other times,  
O thou whom Envy ev'n is forst t'admyre:  
Great Patroness of these my humble Rymes,  
Which thou from out thy greatnes doost inspire:  
Sith onely thou hast deign'd to rayse them higher,  
    Vouchsafe now to accept them as thine owne,  
    Begotten by thy hand, and my desire,  
    Wherein my zeale, and thy great might is showne.  
And seeing this unto the world is knowne,  
    O leave not, still to grace the world in mee:  
    Let not the quickning seede be over-throwne,  
    Of that which may be borne to honour thee.  
Whereof, the travaile I may challenge mine,  
But yet the glory, (Madam) must be thine. (67)

In both cases the dedicatee is positioned as a muse or 'inspirer', in relation to which the authors situate themselves in a lower position.

Mary Sidney commences 'To the Angell Spirit':

To thee pure sprite, to thee alones adres't  
    this coupled worke, by double int'rest thine:  
    First rais'de by thy blest hand, and what is mine  
inspird by thee, thy secrett power imprest.  
    So dar'd my Muse with thine it selfe combine,  
    as mortall stufte with that which is divine,  
Thy lightning beames give lustre to the rest. (68)

In Daniel's dedication, Mary Sidney 'inspires' his 'humble Rymes' as a result of her 'greatnes' and, thus, raises 'them higher'. She is entreated to 'accept' them as her 'owne' because they were 'Begotten by thy hand, and my desire'. They display Daniel's 'zeale' but also Mary Sidney's 'great might'; ultimately, the 'glory' is hers. Similarly, in 'To the Angell Spirit' Philip 'inspird' her humble verses ('mortall stufte') and his acceptance of her work raises it to 'divine' status. She later invites him to 'Receive' these hymnes 'if any marke of thy sweet sprite appeare' because they were 'rais'de by thy blest hand'. Her writing displays her 'zeale' and shows Sidney's might or perfection. She calls her brother the 'wonder of men' whom all must admire and Daniel calls her 'wonder of these times,' whom even 'Envy ... is forst t'admyre'. In these dedications display some similarities, but there are differences. Daniel is aware of the

possibility of losing the Countess as his inspiration for work at which he 'travailes' and which brings her 'glory'. Mary Sidney's 'muse' is already dead and it was, ironically, this death which enabled her both to 'travaile' as a writer and bring herself and Philip glory. In both dedications there is an awareness that the patron/author or muse/author relationship brings glory to both parties. Daniel's accompanying work, whose title is an anagram for 'ideal' addresses an ideal lady and Mary Sidney addresses Philip as an 'ideal' man in her dedication.

The major difference lies in the length and the personalised nature of Mary Sidney's dedication, but even so she uses some conventional phrases in praising Philip as is illustrated by the above. However, by idealising her brother she places him in a position analogous to that of the idealised lady in sonnet sequences, or, indeed, in the conventionally female role of muse: in both cases, the consensus of critical opinion has it that the central emphasis is not upon the lady, but upon the male writer. Correspondingly, Mary Sidney's dedication to Philip actually places great emphasis upon her sorrows and struggles. Although she does define herself in relation to him, she is not afraid to use the 'lyric I': 'Infinits I owe', 'I call my thoughts', 'Truth I invoke', 'I render here', 'I can no more', and 'I take my leave'. She also uses the possessive pronoun 'my' in relation to her Muse, thoughts, woe, sences, day, life, hart. Again in comparison with the poet-lover her day is 'put out, my life in darknes cast' and in attempting to make an 'Audit' of her woes, she is struck 'dumbe'. Rather than representing a woman struck dumb by the prescriptive codes of her day, Mary Sidney's dedicatory poem to her brother demonstrates a keen awareness of self-presentation.

Although this self-presentation increases as the poem develops,

the potential for this development is apparent from the opening of the poem. Her work is addressed to Sidney 'alones', yet it is also dedicated to Elizabeth I and, at another level, the psalms themselves are addressed to God. Additionally, Mary Sidney calls the psalms a 'coupled work, by double int'rest thine', reversing Stanford's address prefacing the Arcadia, and although 'what is mine' was inspired by her brother, she does 'dare' to combine her muse with his. And, despite her claim that his muse is 'matchlesse' and that the psalms are now a 'halfe maim'd peece', she is bold enough to circulate them and present them to the Queen. By addressing Philip as a 'pure sprite' and 'Deare Soule', Mary Sidney capitalises on the notion of her having inherited his poetic gifts, 'thy secrett power imprest'. She also refers to him as a 'Phoenix' although by this time her contemporaries call her by that name. She does desire him to 'behold' this 'finish't' work, lamenting the fact that he can not do so. This is possibly disingenuous, given the fact that, had he been alive, she would not have had the same opportunity to be involved in this work. Importantly, this statement reinforces the fact that Sidney is absent, underlining her own completion of this work; a work which was 'left by thee undone'. This stressing of her own completion of the work simultaneously undermines her own later claim that '[to] thy rare works ... no whitt can adde'. Not only has she done so in the psalms themselves, but also in her work as editor and publisher of his writing. When Mary Sidney writes of her brother's works as 'Immortall Monuments of thy faire fame' where 'will live thy ever praised name', it validates her own involvement with this process, of which 'To the Angell spirit' is another example. Like contemporary dedications by male authors to their patrons, the glory belongs to both parties.

Throughout the poem Mary oscillates between an idealised presentation of Philip which demands her own self-abnegation and an assertion of her sorrow which makes her feelings the centre of attention. Yet this ambivalence also ensures her fame, positions her as his chief mourner, and denotes her inheritance of his poetic skill. This reaches its culmination in the last two stanzas, which refer to the 'Immortal Monuments' of Sidney's writing, but are also representative of Mary's own monuments:

To which these dearest offrings of my hart  
dissolv'd to Inke, while penns impressions move  
the bleeding veines of never dying love:  
I render here: these wounding lynes of smart  
sadde Characters indeed of simple love  
not Art nor skill which abler wits doe prove,  
Of my full soule receive the meanest part.

Recieve these Hymnes, these obsequies recieve;  
if any marke of thy sweet sprite appeare,  
well are they borne, no title else shall beare.  
I can no more: Deare Soule I take my leave;  
Sorrowe still strives, would mount thy highest sphere  
presuming so just cause might meet thee there,  
Oh happie change! could I so take my leave. (69)

Earlier Mary Sidney has referred to her 'hart teares', the true tears signifying the accord of heart, word and action; now these 'tears' are 'dissolv'd to inke' and are the issue of 'the bleeding veines of never dying love'. It is this love which positions her as Sidney's chief mourner and provides her with the space to express her self and her sorrow; specifically to express her self in 'inke'. The 'simplicity' of her expression denotes its truth, in accordance with Protestant emphasis upon clarity of expression in relation to the word of God. This prioritises her expression over that of 'abler wits', for they are not able to approach her 'full soule'. Here the Countess takes upon herself the role which other writers have ascribed to her, that of Sidney's chief mourner. She returns again to conventional humility by stating that the psalms gain their worth

from his recognition and acceptance. However, as she has demonstrated earlier, she is fully aware of his absence. Consequently, she provides the answer herself by publishing them. Also, despite the overt self-deprecation of this statement, in order for the psalms to bear Sidney's eloquence, they need have only a 'marke' of his 'sweet sprite'. Her final exclamation indicates her desire to join Philip in 'thy highest sphere', which she has effectively achieved by representing him singing their Psalmes in heaven. More importantly, this means that the ultimate focus of the poem is upon Mary Sidney in the position of the poet-lover whose beloved remains absent; thus, the emphasis of the poem falls upon her feelings and her conflict.

'To the Angell Spirit', in its representation of faith, doubt and re-affirmation of faith emulates the psalms. The language Mary Sidney uses, both in her dedications and in the psalms themselves, combines the piety of psalmic discourse with the language of petrarchanism and courtly love poetry. By merging these different discourses, Mary Sidney's translations demonstrate the significance of the psalms not only for the Protestant practices of personal confession and ritual praise, but also for the construction of a national 'English' identity. Mary Sidney's Psalmes play a role in this latter endeavour: a role which she recognises herself (in the dedication to Elizabeth), as do both John Donne and Samuel Daniel. Mary Sidney's exemplariness, typified by her psalms and her position as a female penitent, is also closely associated with an 'English' identity and the affirmation of English poetry.

Daniel's dedication makes similar remarks about the Sidneian psalms to Donne's, except that Daniel emphasises the Countess's role in these translations. He tackles the question of poetry and national identity and the role of the psalms in teaching others how to sing or

write. Daniel specifically places Mary Sidney, as a writer, in the position of being able to outshine foreign words and translations. Her connection with the psalms exemplifies not only her position as an exemplary woman (given the role of the psalms in the construction of this identity generally) but, primarily, what this means for the English language and, consequently, English identity. Daniel progresses to discuss the effect of her writing on foreign hearers. In this, she becomes an instructor not only for her male English contemporaries but also for foreign hearers, who 'list'ning to our Songs another while,/ Might learn of thee, their notes to purifie'. The 'our' in this context refers to writers in general, whom Mary Sidney teaches to write and sing pure notes. In this she brings forth praise not only for herself but for her country; for, her writing represents:

Our accents, and the wonders of our Land,  
That they might all admire and honour us. (70)

Here Mary Sidney's psalms represent a form of ambassadorship; both as an example of English poetry, but also, in connection with an earlier comment from Nicholas Udall, an example of the virtue and piety of noble Englishwomen.<sup>71</sup> By the mid 1590s, Mary Sidney had not only had the psalms continually in her hands, but had made them her 'own' through translation; later she commissioned a portrait by Simon de Pass of herself holding her psalms.<sup>72</sup> This indicates her own desire for self-presentation, in which the psalms played a major role. It also defines her as an exemplary Englishwoman; but, rather than limiting her to household activities, this positions her as a symbolic ambassador for her nation and sex. The fact that the Countess's psalms were important for national identity is reiterated in the penultimate stanza of Daniel's dedication, where he encourages readers to take delight in such home-grown treasures, rather than

look abroad; even if others should ignore the 'delights' which the Countess has produced, Daniel advises that 'we' should:

Content our selves, whose error ever is  
Strange notes to like, and to disesteeme our owne. (73)

Thus, in this dedication, Daniel affirms Mary's significance which is based upon her writing: specifically upon her psalms, and their significance for both her own and her country's identification.

In her dedication to Elizabeth I, Mary Sidney makes her own claims for the national significance of the psalms. In a manner similar to that in which she addressed her brother, the Countess dares 'as humbleness may dare' to address her psalms to the Queen. According to Daniel and Donne her psalms teach other how and what to sing; here, Mary Sidney explicitly instructs the Queen both how to sing and how to be an exemplary Monarch.<sup>74</sup> She also refers to her brother in this dedication, but again emphasises his physical absence, saying that although the Psalmes were 'once in two [subjects]', they 'now in one subject goe'.<sup>75</sup> This is compounded by her later statement that 'hee did warpe, I weav'd this webb to end' (l. 27). Although she admits 'the stuffe not ours', she asserts that she has played a part in the anglicising of the psalms and that hers are an improvement on previous translations:

Wherein yet well we thought the Psalmist King  
Now English deizend, though Hebrue born,  
woold to thy musicke undispleased sing  
Oft having worse, without repining worne (ls. 29-32).

This point is heightened by the title page of the Psalmes, which states that the text contains 'The Psalmes of David translated into divers and sundrie kinds of verse, more Rare and Excellent for Method and Varietie than ever yet hath been done in English'.<sup>76</sup> Mary Sidney presents the psalms 'in both our names' and suggests that this will 'cause our neighbours see' England's power. This power is embodied in

Elizabeth and is connected to her patronage of the poets:

For in our worke what bring wee but thine owne?  
What English is, by many names is thine.  
There humble Lawrells in thy shadow growne  
To garland others woorld, themselves repine.  
Thy brest the Cabinet, thy seat the shrine,  
Where Muses hang their vowed memories:  
Where Wit, where Art, where all that is divine  
Conceived best, and best defended lies (ls. 41-48).

Elizabeth represents and defends England and particularly here English writing, which, by association, Mary Sidney is attributing to herself. Mary then launches into a lengthy comparison of Elizabeth with David, which follows Protestant theories about the connection between the psalmist and contemporary Monarchs (as demonstrated in the psalms addressed to Elizabeth in The Monument of Matrones). She then 'restrains' her muse; 'but soft my muse, Thy pitch is earthly lowe;/ Forbeare this heav'n, where only Eagles flie' and yet moves into praising Elizabeth for being a female monarch whom men are 'drawne ... to obey'. The end of the dedication prays that Elizabeth's reign will be more extensive than the psalmist's:

In more than hee and more triumphant yeares,  
Sing what God doth, and doo What men may sing (ls. 95-96).

That is to sing as Mary Sidney advises and, in conjunction with what Sidney writes of herself and what Daniel and Donne write about her accomplishment, to sing her psalms.

In both the dedications to Mary Sidney and her own dedications, an image of her emerges which emphasises her exemplariness. Although this is partially the result of her socio-economic position and her relationship to her brother, there is a predominant and consistent association of her suitability for this position with the psalms and/or confessional discourse. In this she confirms the prioritising of the psalms for women during the period, or as Sir Edward Denny states she is 'vertuous and learned' because she 'translated so many

godly books, and especially the holly psalmes of David'.<sup>77</sup> Whilst this apparently confirms her 'internalisation' of patriarchal prescriptions for ideal female behaviour, it also undermines it. Mary Sidney is an exemplar not merely of female passivity and chastity but of the possibility for female knowledge: she is virtuous not because of her inaction and containment, but rather for her action in writing and studying. Many writers acknowledge her literary achievements, referring particularly to her psalms. Although this was 'limited' to translation, the way that Mary used the psalms (especially in her dedications to Philip and Elizabeth I) subverts the private, confessional mode of the psalms and enters the public and political arena. In this she creates a model for later writers, such as Aemilia Lanyer, further to contravene the constraints upon female expression. Insofar as her psalms 'tell us why and teach us how' to sing, Mary Sidney instructs her readers in the art of meditation and in poetry. She appropriates the male conventions of dedicatory address and revises them, providing herself a space for self-presentation and indicating her own desire for fame; themes which are prevalent in her translations. Hannay has argued that it is in her dedications that we 'hear' Mary Sidney's 'own voice most clearly'.<sup>78</sup> In the sense that these poems are 'original' creations, this argument contains some truth. However, although the identification of an individual's 'own voice' is highly problematic (especially in relation to translation), it seems to me that by following Protestant doctrine, applying the psalms to her own experience and recreating them through her own translations, Mary Sidney's psalms also reveal her 'own voice'. The problematics of reconstructing that 'voice' and the need to reassess the 'marginality' of Mary Sidney's Psalms is the subject of my final chapter.

FOOTNOTES.

- 1) See especially the discussion of the Countess's Psalmes in Gary F. Waller, Mary Sidney, Countess of Pembroke. A critical study of her writings and literary milieu, Elizabethan & renaissance Studies, no. 87 (Salzburg, 1979) and Rivkah Zim (1987).
- 2) Elaine V. Beilin (1987), p. 123.
- 3) Gary F. Waller, 'The Countess of Pembroke and Gendered Reading' in The Renaissance Englishwoman in Print, edited by Anne M. Haselkorn & Betty S. Travitsky (Amherst, 1990), p. 327. Here Waller attempts to revise his own 'gendered reading' of Mary Sidney's writing.
- 4) Gary F. Waller, 'Struggling into Discourse: The Emergence of Renaissance Women's Writing' in Margaret P. Hannay, ed. (1985), p. 239.
- 5) Here I am paraphrasing Joanna Russ's catalogue of the means by which women's writing has been excluded from the canon, in How to Suppress Women's Writing, second edition (London, 1984). See Diane Bornstein's lament in, 'The Style of the Countess of Pembroke's Translation of Philippe de Mornay's Discours de la vie et de la mort in Margaret P. Hannay, ed. (1985), p. 134. See also the introduction to Betty S. Travitsky (1981): she excludes Mary Sidney's Psalmes on the grounds that translation is 'essentially derivative'.
- 6) Sir John Harington, 'Letter to the Countess of Bedford. Dec. 19, 1600' from The Letters and Epigrams of Sir John Harington, Together with the Prayse of Private Life, edited by Norman Egbert McClure (Philadelphia, 1930), p. 87.
- 7) These psalms may have been chosen out of the four psalms found among Harington's papers, that is numbers 51, 104, 137, 69. See Nugae Antiquae: being a Miscellaneous Collection of Original Papers in Prose and Verse ... by Sir John Harington, 2 Volumes, edited by Henry Harington (London, 1769-1775), Vol. II, pp. 57-59.
- 8) Harington, cited in H.T.R., 'Lady Mary Sydney and Her Writings,' The Gentleman's Magazine, 24 (1845), 366. (Quoted by Hannay, ed. (1985), p. 2.) It should also be noted that Harington himself was later involved in translating the psalms, see letter to King James, 1612, in Norman E. McClure, ed. (1930), p. 143. McClure's edition includes an epigram by Harington addressed to Queen Elizabeth, 'Of King David. Written to the Queene', p. 223.
- 9) Norman E. McClure, ed. (1930), p. 310.
- 10) In Philip's Phoenix (1990), Margaret P. Hannay does commence a re-reading of these dedications.
- 11) John Taylor, The Needles Excellencie (1624). (Quoted by Margaret P. Hannay (1990), p. 130.)
- 12) Elaine V. Beilin (1987), p. 125.

- 13) Meg Bodin, The Troubadours (New York, 1976), p. 56. (Quoted by Margaret P. Hannay (1990), p. 106.
- 14) I have not traced Elizabeth Dormer, but the other women are associated with psalm based texts: Catherine Parr, The Lamentations of a Sinner (1545); Queen Mary and The Mary Psalter; Queen Elizabeth I, prayers and psalm translation.
- 15) John Taylor, The Needles Excellencie (1631), sig. Br. See psalm 45.
- 16) For a catalogue of the texts dedicated to Mary Sidney, see Franklin B. Williams, Index of Dedications and Commendatory Verses in English Books before 1640 (London, 1962) and Suzanne Hull, Chaste, Silent and Obedient: English Books for Women, 1475-1640 (San Marino, 1985). For an evaluation of Mary Sidney's role as a patron, see Michael G. Brennan, Literary patronage in the English Renaissance: the Pembroke family (London, 1988).
- 17) Mary Sidney's influence as a writer upon other women writers is beginning to be discussed. Barbara K. Lewalski indicates her importance for Aemilia Lanyer in 'Of God and Good Women: The Poems of Aemilia Lanyer' in Margaret P. Hannay, ed. (1985), pp. 203-224. Hannay herself has recently discussed Sidney's influence upon her niece, Lady Mary Wroth in "'Your vertuous and learned Aunt": The Countess of Pembroke as a Mentor to Mary Wroth' in Reading Mary Wroth: Representing Alternatives in Early Modern England, edited by Naomi J. Miller and Gary Waller (Knoxville, 1991), pp. 15-34.
- 18) Margaret P. Hannay (1990), p. ix.
- 19) Margaret P. Hannay (1990), p. 82.
- 20) Margaret P. Hannay (1990), p. 115.
- 21) Nicholas Breton Amoris Lachrimae in George Whetstone, Sir Philip Sidney. His Honorable Life, His Valiant Death, and True Vertues (1587) and Nicholas Breton, The Pilgrimage to Paradise, joyned with the Countess of Pembrokes Love (Oxford, 1592), preface. See also John Case's prefatory letter. Breton reiterates the connection between Mary Sidney and the 'Phoenix' (sig. I2r). Later he uses it to associate her with Christ (sigs. L3v-L4r).
- 22) The Courtiers Academie. (Quoted by Frank Whigam, Ambition and Privilege: The social tropes of Elizabethan courtesy theory (Berkeley, 1984), p. 43.)
- 23) Samuel Brandon, Virtuous Octavia (1598), dedication. (Quoted by David M. Bergeron, 'Women as Patrons of English Renaissance Drama' in Guy Fitch Lytle and Stephen Orgel, eds. (1981), p. 280.
- 24) Aemilia Lanyer also makes use of the term Phoenix in her dedication to Lady Arabella in Salve deus Rex Judaeorum. See Eliane V. Beilin (1987), pp. 188-9.
- 25) Frances Berkley Young, Mary Sidney, Countess of Pembroke (London, 1912), p. 123.

- 26) Margaret P. Hannay (1990), p. 60.
- 27) Sir Philip Sidney: The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia, edited by Maurice Evans (London, 1977), p. 59.
- 28) For discussions of the various editions of the Arcadia and their relative 'literary value', see: Frances B. Young (1912); David Norbrook, Poetry and Politics in the English Renaissance (London, 1984); Caroline Lucas, Writing for Women: The example of the woman as reader in Elizabethan romance (Milton Keynes, 1989).
- 29) Thomas Moffatt, The Silkwormes, and their Flies (1599), Dedication.
- 30) 'Vouchsafe from brothers ghost no niggards almes,/ Now to enrich my high aspiring layes' (Thomas Moffatt (1599), p. 41).
- 31) Edmund Spenser, Complaints. Containing sundrie small poems of the Worlds vanitie (1591).
- 32) 'Then will I sing, but who can better sing,/ Than thine owne sister, peerless Ladie bright,/ Which to thee sings with deep harts sorrowing' (Edmund Spenser (1591), sig. C2r).
- 33) Robert Newton, The Countess of Montgomeries Evsebeia, Expressing briefly the soules praying robes (1620). As the subtitle indicates, Newton's text is a prayer manual.
- 34) See, for example, Teares of the Beloved (1600) and Mary Magdalene's Teares (1601) by Gervase Markham, edited by Alexander B. Grosart (Private, 1871) and 'Breton's' Mary Magdalene's Love (1595).
- 35) See Nicholas Breton Wits Trenchmour (1597) and Divine Considerations of the Soule (1608). Both are examples of texts dedicated to male readers and patrons and their style and content is very different from those dedicated to women.
- 36) Breton dedicated three texts to Mary Sidney: Auspicante Jehova, or Maries Exercise (1597); A Divine Poeme dividied into two partes The Ravisht Soule and The Blessed Weeper (1601); The Pilgrimage to Paradise, joined with The Countess of Pembroke's Love (Oxford, 1592). The Countess of Pembroke's Passion has been, doubtfully, attributed to Mary Sidney, but is now identified as by Breton. Although A.B. Grosart keeps this text under this title, it was never printed in this form: according to Michael G. Brennan, although the text was dedicated to Mary Sidney in manuscript, it was printed as The Passion of the Spirit (1594) and dedicated to Lady Mary Houghton. Another text is dedicated to Lady Sara Hastings, The Soule's Harmony (1602).
- 37) For a discussion of the problematics involved in a male author giving a voice to a female speaker, see Margaret P. Hannay (1990), p. 137 and Elaine V. Beilin (1987), p. 128.
- 38) See Nicholas Breton An Excellent Poeme, Upon the Longing of a Blessed heart (1601), for example. Stanza 32 examines the importance of the psalmist and the poem is concerned with expressing God's praises.

39) Nicholas Breton, The Pilgrimage to Paradise, joyned with The Countess of Pembrokes Love (1592).

40) Nicholas Breton (1592), sig. K1v. See also psalm 119, and psalm 16. v.11.

41) Nicholas Breton (1592), sigs. K2v-K3r. See psalms: 148 (especially v. 1); 104; 8. v. 4; 40. v. 6.

42) Nicholas Breton (1592), sig K4r. See also Breton's Divine Considerations of the Soule (1608), sig. B2r in which this refrain is central. It is a quotation from psalm 8. v.4.

43) Nicholas Breton (1592), sig. L1r. See psalm 104. See also Francis Bacon's translation of this psalm which emphasises the boundaries upon the individual and the world which God's 'holy Lore' effects (The translation of certaine psalmes into English verse (1625), sig. B4r).

44) Nicholas Breton, Auspicante Jehova, Or Maries Exercise (1597), p. 28. The same emphasis upon 'ravishment' is present in 'The Countess of Pembroke's Love' and 'A Divine Poeme'.

45) 'The Blessed Weeper' is connected again with Mary Magdalene, see discussion Margaret P. Hannay (1990), p. 138.

46) Samuel Daniel's, Delia and Rosamond Augmented. Cleopatra (1594) and 'To the Angell Spirit' are discussed further in section three.

47) Alexander B. Grosart, ed. Breton (1879), I., p. 9.

48) This connection with the psalms is not only apparent in Breton's writing. Abraham Fraunce's The countess of Pembroke's Emanuel (1591) has a number of psalm translations appended to it (nos. 1, 6, 8, 29, 38, 50, 73, 104). See also Gervase Babington, A Brief conference betwixt a mans frailtie and faith, second edition (1584), and A Profitable Exposition upon the Lord's prayer, second edition (1588), where Babington encourages the Countess to continue her 'poesie' and set her desire upon God.

49) John Davies, Divine Meditations. (Quoted Margaret P. Hannay (1990), p. 193).

50) John Donne 'Upon the Translation of the Psalmes by Sir Philip Sydney, and the Countesse of Pembroke his Sister' in Donne: Poetical Works, edited by Herbert J. C. Grierson (Oxford, 1985), pp. 318-319. Is. 2 & 11.

51) See Clement Marot et Theodore de Beze, Les Psaumes en vers Francois avec leur melodies, 1562, edited by Pierre Pidoux (Geneva, 1986). The Marot/de Beze Psalter was dedicated to the King and the ladies of France. It was adopted by calvin and 'its reforming tendency is shown by its being promptly added to the list of Heretical Books forbidden by the Church of Rome' (Henry Alexander Glass, The Story of the psalters: A History of the Metrical Versions of Great Britain and America from 1549-1885 (London, 1888), p. 6).

52) Barbara K. Lewalski in Margaret P. Hannay, ed. (1985), p. 207. For a different approach to Lanyer's dedications, see Lorna Hutson 'Why the ladies eyes are nothing like the sun' in Women, Texts & Histories, 1575-1760, edited by Clare Brant & Diane Purkiss (London, 1992), pp. 13-38.

53) See also Elaine V. Beilin (1987): 'poetry is central to Lanyer's piety and her attempts to establish the spiritual pre-eminence of women' (p. 206).

54) Elaine V. Beilin (1987), p. 182.

55) As Lewalski has commented this dedication is marked out by 'its form, length, genre and central position', and she concludes that this testifies to 'the importance of the Countess of Pembroke as model for Lanyer's conception of herself as a learned lady and poet' (in Margaret P. Hannay, ed. (1985), p. 210).

56) Aemilia Lanyer, 'The Author's Dream to the Lady Mary, the Countess Dowager of Pembroke' from Salve Deus Rex Judaeorum (1611), reprinted in The Female Spectator: English women writers before 1800, edited by Mary R. Mahl & Helene Koon (Bloomington, 1977), pp. 75-82. (p. 82).

57) Mary R. Mahl & Helene Koon, eds. (1977), p. 77.

58) See Sir Fulke Greville, The Life of the Renowned Sir Philip Sidney (1652).

59) Lewalski argues that stanzas 10-18 of Salve Deus 'comprise an embedded psalmic passage praising God as the strong support of the just and the mighty destroyer of all their enemies' (in Margaret P. Hannay, ed. (1985), p. 214).

60) Beilin (1987), p. 125. Beilin interprets Daniel's, 'extended notice of the psalms' as indicating 'something beyond the empty praise of a Patron's deeds' and implies that 'Daniel recognised how much this writing defined Mary Sidney's being' (p. 126).

61) Samuel Daniel Delia and Rosamond Augmented (1594), sigs. A2r-A2v. See also David M. Bergeron, 'Women as patrons of English Renaissance drama' in Guy Fitch-Lytle and Stephen Orgel, eds. (1981), pp. 274 -290. Bergeron traces the changes in Daniel's dedication to the Countess of Pembroke.

62) For an examination of 'presence' and 'absence' in the sonnet sequences, see Mariann Sanders-Regan, Love words: the self and the text in Medieval and Renaissance poetry (Ithaca, 1982).

63) Beth Wynne Fiskin, "'To the Angell Spirit...": Mary Sidney's Entry into the "World of Words"' in The Renaissance Englishwoman in Print: Counterbalancing the Canon, edited by Anne M. Haselkorn & Betty S. Travitsky (Amherst, 1990), p. 265.

64) Mary Sidney, The Discourse of Life and Death, and Antonious (1592).

- 65) Wynne Fiskin states that way in which the Countess talks about her brotheris usually 'reserved for God' and that this poem emulates the passage from faith, to doubt, to a re-affirmation of faith which characterises the psalms' (in Anne M. Haselkorn & Betty S. Travitsky, eds. (1990), p. 270).
- 66) Cited Frank Whigham (1984), p. 102.
- 67) Samuel Daniel (1594), sig. A2r.
- 68) Mary Sidney, 'To the Angell Spirit' in The Triumph of Death and other unpublished and uncollected poems by Mary Sidney, Countess of Pembroke, 1561-1621, edited by Gary F. Waller, Elizabethan and Renaissance Studies, no. 65 (Salzburg, 1977), pp. 92-95 (p. 92. ls. 1-7).
- 69) Gary F. Waller (1977), pp. 94-95 (ls. 78-91).
- 70) Samuel Daniel: Complete Works, edited by Alexander B. Grosart, three volumes (Private, 1885), III., p. 26. ls. 79-80 and ls. 87-8.
- 71) Quoted Betty S. Travitsky (1981), p.90.
- 72) See Margaret P. Hannay (1990) for details of this portrait, p.
- 73) Samuel Daniel in Alexander B. Grosart (1885), III., p. 27. ls. 103-104.
- 74) See Margaret P. Hannay 'Doo What Men May Sing' in Hannay, ed. (1985), pp. 149-165.
- 75) Mary Sidney, 'Even now that Care' (l. 21) in Gary F. Waller, ed. (1977), pp. 88-91.
- 76) Gary F. Waller, ed. (1977), p. 87.
- 77) Edward Denny to Lady Mary Wroth, 26 February 1621/22. (Cited Margaret P. Hannay (1990), p. 209.
- 78) Margaret P. Hannay, ed. (1985), p. 149.

CHAPTER FIVE. THE LANGUAGE OF PRAISE AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF  
MARY SIDNEY'S 'VOICE' IN THE PSALMES.

My tongue the pen to paynt his praises forth,  
Shall write as swift as swiftest writer maie. (1)

The above quotation from Mary Sidney's version of psalm 45 identifies her desire to praise God, a praise which she 'paints' forth with her 'pen'. Moreover, it is a pen which she equates with that of the 'swiftest writer'. This is not an isolated occurrence within Mary Sidney's psalm translations. Thus, although translating the psalms would seem to indicate that Mary Sidney was conforming to male prescriptions upon female expression, she is simultaneously challenging the boundaries of those prescriptions, for she presents 'an argument of worth' (45. 1. 1), proclaiming her right to instruct others in God's word, and uses God's praises as a means to establish her poetic identity. This identity is both self-promoted and, as I have demonstrated in the previous chapter, a means by which others identify her as an exemplary woman. Whilst there was a 'tradition' of women reading the psalms in personal devotion and even of translating them for publication, Mary Sidney's poetic achievements represent an important turning point for women's use of the psalms and, ultimately, for the development of women's writing. In revising her brother's psalms and translating the rest herself, circulating them in manuscript form, preparing a presentation copy for Elizabeth I, and commissioning a portrait of herself holding the psalms, Mary Sidney used her connection with the psalms to establish a public identity.<sup>2</sup> Whilst other critics have concentrated on the confessional, devotional, or political aspects of her Psalmes, I will be focussing on the means by which painting God's praises enables Mary Sidney to assert that her 'pen' writes 'as swift as swiftest writer maie'.

However, in order to establish the means by which Mary Sidney achieves this in her Psalmes I want firstly to outline some of the difficulties involved in identifying Mary Sidney's 'own voice' and to suggest some possible means of surmounting them. Whilst Hannay asserts that it is in the dedications to her brother and Elizabeth I that we hear Mary Sidney's voice 'most clearly', the 'clarity' of that voice is questioned by both the general conventions governing dedicatory expression and the influence of Genevan models upon her expression. Thus, Mary Sidney is both borrowing words from others and testifying to her individual association with this particular viewpoint. The apparent clarity of her voice in the dedications is predicated upon post-Romantic distinctions between 'original' discourse and translation as a derivative activity. This distinction is being challenged by recent theorisations of translation, but, perhaps more importantly in relation to Mary Sidney, I think that it is also necessary to re-evaluate the significance of translation during the Renaissance. For although women translators have been assigned to the 'margins of discourse' by modern critics, the activity of translation was far more highly regarded in the Renaissance than it is today.<sup>3</sup> Translation and imitation were a significant part of male students' and poets' training. Imitation especially was not viewed as a 'secondary' activity but represented the creation of a new and original work.

Yet, critical approaches to women's translation during this period emphasise the femininity of the art of translation. Mary Ellen Lamb, for example, basing her argument on Florio's assertion that 'all translations are reputed femalls', suggests that:

Translations were 'defective' and therefore appropriate to women; this low opinion of translation perhaps accounts for why women were allowed to translate at all ... Translation, especially translation of works by

males, was allowed to women because it did not threaten the establishment as the expression of personal viewpoints might.(4)

Lamb's approach is premised upon an essentially deterministic attitude to language and the pivot of Lamb's analysis is the assumption that translation - especially of 'works by males' - precluded 'personal viewpoints'.<sup>5</sup> Co-existent with this assumption is the corollary that it is only by expressing such 'personal viewpoints' that women could 'threaten the establishment'; translation, especially translation of texts written by men, according to Lamb situates women as passive regurgitators of male viewpoints. She continues to argue that women's translations did not pose any threat to 'male superiority' because 'any competence they displayed could be dismissed by denigrating the task of translation itself'.<sup>6</sup> Ironically, Lamb's analysis perpetuates this potential denigration, as is demonstrated by her evaluation of women's translations.<sup>7</sup>

It is important to note that Lamb uses only one quotation from Florio to back up her assertion of the 'femininity' of translation. Yet Florio is a problematic authority in this arena, not least because he himself was a translator. Additionally, the denigration which Lamb perceives in Florio's assertion that 'all translations are reputed femalls' and his dedication of Montaignes Essayses to female patrons must, I think, be questioned. For Florio's playful style undermines the face value of his assertions; it is evident that Florio has, in fact, a very high opinion of translation and is castigating male scholars who do not share his evaluation of his own and others' endeavours in this activity. In his address to the reader prefacing book one, Florio enquires 'shall I apologise translation?'<sup>8</sup> He then asserts the importance of translation as a means of education

and, particularly, for its capacity to improve the people's virtue, citing the example of the Greeks. The main object of Florio's satire is not the innate 'femininity' of translation, but the elitism of those that denigrate translation. Those that resist translation also resist wider access to learning, fearing that their own power would thereby be wrested from them (A5r). In response to these fears Florio laconically suggests that in order to maintain their 'privilege of preheminance', these scholars should themselves become translators (A5r). Thus I would suggest that Florio is presenting a positive evaluation of translation and that by dedicating his text to female patrons he is not suggesting that translation is a secondary activity but using these dedications as a means to indict men. It is also perhaps a recognition of women's involvement in this activity, which Florio encourages elsewhere by praising Lucy Harington, Countess of Bedford.<sup>9</sup> Moreover, within a wider context, women's involvement in translation, as illustrated by Bentley, Udall, and John Bale was perceived as significant and as profitable for the nation. If, then, women's translations were devalued it was not because translation itself was an inherently 'marginal' or 'feminine' discourse, but because of the author's sex and cultural attitudes towards women.

This is particularly pertinent to a discussion of Mary Sidney's Psalmes as the significance of the psalms within Protestantism, and the fact that so many of her male contemporaries attempted to translate the psalms, suggests that Mary Sidney was using a discourse which was a crucial and central discourse during this period; but her achievement has been overshadowed by critical emphasis upon her dependence upon her brother.<sup>10</sup> However, as I have already illustrated in the introduction and in part one of this thesis, the psalms were a powerful discourse in the constitution of Christian subject-

ivity generally during this period and remained central to discourses governing specifically Christian women's subjectivity in the seventeenth century. However, although the psalms represented a linguistic 'prison house,' which defined and delimited the boundaries of Christian subjectivity, they were also endlessly re-interpretable as they are repeated in new and different contexts, by new and different individuals.<sup>11</sup> Therefore, it becomes very difficult to associate any one psalm with a particular situation or to attempt to draw from this what it might have meant for the particular user, in this case Mary Sidney.

Any attempt to reconstruct Mary Sidney's 'voice' from her Psalmes is, then, fraught with difficulties, although Beth Wynne Fiskin has little difficulty in asserting that Mary Sidney found the 'poetic equivalent for her own small personal voice' in the phrase 'my self, my seely self in me'.<sup>12</sup> As this is one of Mary Sidney's additions it is tempting to read this as an individual expression of her 'own' self-image. However, even if this is an example of her 'own voice' it is only one of a variety of subject positions ascribed to the speaker in the psalms. Fiskin prioritises the confessional aspects of Mary Sidney's Psalmes and suggests that 'our voices' are 'subsumed' by the psalmist's: 'the God imaged in these psalms penetrates the recesses of our souls and speaks to us in our own language to make us understand His will' and, further, that Mary Sidney's Psalmes 'are centred in the world as we know it; God speaks to us in our own words' (p. 182). This takes the supposed unity between psalmist, speaker and reader rather too far and effectively precludes any possible recognition of Mary Sidney's 'voice'. The 'language' given to God in her Psalmes is not 'ours'; it is a variety of discourses produced in the sixteenth century, using images,

metaphors and stylistic devices which are not at all what 'we' speak today.<sup>13</sup> The words of these psalms are not 'our' words, they are the language of another time and, to a certain extent, of another person, Mary Sidney. These differences reveal the 'individuality' of her Psalms and make it possible to identify her 'own' voice. -

The identification of this 'voice' is further complicated by the different narratorial voices within the psalms. Both within a particular psalm and in the psalms collectively, a wide variety of 'voices', as well as topics, are postulated. The primary speakers are the psalmist, the community of believers or their enemies and God. The topics covered include faith, doubt, fear, instruction in righteousness, instruction of the monarch and exhortation to praise, which suggests that there is no apparent order or coherence in the psalms. Many commentators, however, have tried to demonstrate the coherence of the psalms by categorising them into various groups.<sup>14</sup> St. Augustine organised the psalms into three groups of fifty, representing three distinct stages of the spiritual life:

For it seems to me not without significance, that the fiftieth is of penitence, the hundreth of mercy and judgement, the hundred and fiftieth of the praise of God and His saints. For thus do we advance to an everlasting life of happiness, first by condemning our own sins, then by living aright, that ... we may attain to everlasting life. (15)

These different categorisations mean that certain psalms were identified with particular experiences.<sup>16</sup> These contemporary and inherited methods of categorisation illustrate that Mary Sidney's translations (44-150) incorporate all the psalms which were most readily associated with praise. Consequently, her position as poet-praiser of God is partly determined by the content of the psalms she translated.

The factors I have been discussing illustrate the particular

difficulties involved in identifying the 'author's voice' in psalm translation. However, this does not mean that this 'voice' is not present. What it does mean is that this 'voice' is refracted through many different discourses which comprise that voice. In order to establish how this voice might be recognised, I think it is useful to consider Bahktin's notion of 'novelistic discourse'. He writes that the author 'cannot be found at any one of the novel's language levels: he is to be found at the centre of organisation where all levels intersect'.<sup>17</sup> The different speakers and topics contained within the psalms, in conjunction with stylistic alterations and images from Mary Sidney's contemporary culture means that it is only by looking at how these different codes intersect that we can appreciate, or recognise, Mary Sidney's 'voice' or, more precisely, 'voices'. Thus whilst I will be prioritising the discourse of praise, I will also be considering the confessional and political aspects of the psalms. For it is precisely the intersection of the multiplicity of subject positions ascribed to the psalmist, combined with the specifics of Mary Sidney's cultural and historical position, which enable an identification of her 'voice'. Through appropriating the discourse of the psalms Mary Sidney constructs herself as a poet and reformulates 'the Word' into her, or 'my word'. The different discourses which comprise Mary Sidney's 'voices' are present in her stylistic alterations, echoes of contemporary expressions and the incorporation of other writers' commentaries upon the psalms.<sup>18</sup> Other critics have begun to explore the literary, confessional and political aspects of Mary Sidney's Psalmes, but have dealt with these in distinction from each other and, generally, ignored the crucial aspect of praise. Yet it is through the prevailing discourse of praise, so fundamental to the psalms, that Mary Sidney was able to

engage with these other topics. Praise, as both an individual and communal form of expression, was a peculiarly public discourse. This, in conjunction with Mary Sidney's poetical aims and self-presentation pushes the use of the psalms for women into a new arena and enables Mary Sidney to 'write as swift as swiftest writer maie'.

#### 1. INSTRUCTING THE MONARCH IN SONG: POETRY, PRAISE, AND POLITICS.

The greater that you are of birth and calling,... the greater gifts of Nature, the more gifts of mind, the more worldly benefits that God hath bestowed upon you, the more you are bound to be thankful unto him. But thankful you cannot bee without true knowledge of him, neyther can you know him rightly but by his word. For his word is the lanterne of your feete, and the light of your steppes. Whosoever walketh without it, walketh but in darkness. (19)

Although the whole world be set against the people of God they need not fear, so long as they are supported by a sense of their integrity, to challenge kings and their counsellors, and the promiscuous mob of the people. (II. p. 369)

Praise, praise our God; praise, praise our king,  
Kings of the world your judgement sound,  
With Skillful song his praises ring (47. ls. 13-15).

From the psalm-singing Protestants at Geneva to the Cromwellian battle anthem of psalm 117, the political aspects of the psalms provided a host of religious groups with a discourse within which to express criticism of present governments, the potential to identify themselves with the Israelites and the basis upon which to claim that 'God is on our side'. The psalms represented one of the many discourses which could be called upon to identify the 'ideal' attributes of the monarch and addressed the question of the relationship between ruler, God and the people. Consequently, in identifying Elizabeth with David in her dedication, Mary Sidney was following a Protestant tradition. As Margaret P. Hannay has

discussed, the politicised expression of the psalms in a public context had a rather different effect to psalm singing in the church, or the home (either with the family or in private devotion). Mary Sidney's familial political connections, combined with her dedications to Elizabeth and her brother and the preparation of a presentation copy of her Psalmes for the Queen indicate that Mary Sidney is aware of operating within this context. Whilst the political intent of her Psalmes follows the radical usage of this aspect of the psalms, the 'high' literary and poetic discourse in which they were written and the audience of them, through manuscript circulation, means that they did not constitute such a threat to Elizabeth as the English psalm-singing Protestants on the streets emulating the Genevan example. Rather Mary Sidney's Psalmes were directed to a literate and courtly audience, through which she instructs both them and the Queen about the expectations of people in their position, inviting them to sing her 'skillful songs'.

I have already discussed the fact that the psalms represented a form of 'symbolic order' which delineated Christian subjectivity. Although theoretically this applied to all, David as an exemplar was particularly relevant to a ruler. Golding's address to Edward de Vere, prefacing his translation of Calvin's commentaries upon the psalms, refers to the expectations of those of 'greater birth and calling'. The responsibility of that position carried an increased requirement for thankfulness, acknowledging the rulers' dependence upon God for the maintenance of their authority. The ability to fulfil the requisite thankfulness is dependent upon a knowledge of God which is dependent upon the 'right' reading of God's word. The simultaneous security and vulnerability of those in power, the rights and the obligations that correspond to that position, are hinted at

in both this advice and Calvin's apparent approval of the ability to 'challenge' Kings, Counsellors and 'the promiscuous mob' of the people' by 'the people of God'. The psalms both inform, and their use was informed by, contemporary debates about the 'nature' of rule - especially rule by divine right. Conscience, or 'a sense of integrity' is that which enables 'the people of God' to challenge earthly rulers and which effects an emphasis upon God as 'ultimate ruler'.

The importance of judgement is underlined in the quotation from Mary Sidney's version of psalm 47. Right judgement is especially necessary in the translation of God's word. According to Calvin, such judgement arises from meditating upon God's word 'day and night' - something which Mary Sidney, having read and revised the psalms, can lay claim to have done. Her translation advises kings to be wise, or of sound judgement, and praise God 'with skillful song'. Skillful song, or wise expression again can only be acquired by intimate knowledge of God's word. Elsewhere, Mary Sidney refers to 'bestowing' her 'uttmmost skill' in the praise of God (111. 1. 2) and, in her dedications establishes her translations as songs worthy to be sung. Although Margaret P. Hannay emphasises the political aspects of the psalms (concentrating on psalms 82, 83 and 101) and mentions the connection with Mary Sidney's instruction to Elizabeth at the end of the dedication to 'Sing as men doth, and doo as men may sing', she concentrates on the references to political contexts and other texts, rather than the connections within Mary Sidney's psalms between political advice, praise and the art of poetry.<sup>20</sup> Yet it is the very inter-section of poetry, praise and politics in Mary Sidney's Psalmes which, particularly in Daniel and Donne's dedications, position her as a writer who symbolises the possibilities of the English language

- effectively positioning her as a cultural ambassador for her country. By praising God and the 'ideal' monarch, Mary Sidney simultaneously elided social prescriptions upon female expression and commented upon political issues.

Psalm 47, from which the above quotation is derived, is primarily a psalm exhorting 'all people to the worship of the true and everliving God'.<sup>21</sup> However, whereas Calvin's commentary and the Genevan version emphasise the all-inclusiveness of this exhortation to praise, Mary Sidney's version moves from this to a direct application of this exhortation to earthly kings. This is anticipated in her version of the opening of the psalm:

All people, to Jehova bring  
A glad applause of clapping hands:  
To God a song of triumph sing  
Who high, and highlie feared stands,  
Of all the earth sole-ruling king (47. ls. 1-5);

Characteristically, Mary Sidney's version states God's authority as 'sole-ruling king' and the punctuation accentuates the causal relationship between that power and the ensuing power, and security, that this confers upon the 'chosen' nation.<sup>22</sup> This heritage, derived from God's 'almightie grace', relates to victories over other nations:

That nations by our power opprest;  
Our foote on humbled countries goes (47. ls. 7-8).

In accordance with the Protestant tradition, Mary Sidney emphasises the chosenness of God's people which would unquestionably have been read as signifying England, specifically English Protestants. This anticipates the direct application of the requirement to praise in association with the monarch as it emphasises God's ultimate power. Therefore, even earthly rulers are subject to God as 'sole-ruling king'. The conclusion of her version of this psalm, through repetition, reiterates God's power and contrasts this with the power

of earthly princes:

Hee, greatest prince, greate princes gaines;  
Princes, the shields that earth defend (47. ls. 19-20)

Calvin writes of this psalm that it illustrates 'the favour which God sheweth towards his chosen, pertaineth not universally to all men, but is a priviledge whereby he separateth a few from the greater number' (II. p. 5). Mary Sidney's version seems to take up this comment and emphasise its significance for the 'few' who hold earthly power. Calvin writes, of verse six:

he exhorts all that have skill in singing to this exercise. But although he speaks of the knowledge of music, yet he requires true understanding in singing of God's praises, that men's tongues should not roar only ... to the lawful office of singing there is required knowledge, that the name of God be not profaned with empty noise (II. p. 6)

and his own translation directs the exhortation to praise to 'every one of you that hath understanding'. The Genevan version reads 'Sing praises to God, sing praises: sing praises unto our King, sing praises'. However, Mary Sidney's version becomes:

Praise, praise our God; praise, praise our king,  
Kings of the world your judgement sound,  
With Skillful song his praises ring (47. ls. 13-15).

Thus, Mary Sidney's version combines parallel exhortations to praise from the Genevan version and the important concept of the necessity for understanding, or 'judgement,' to sing truly of God's praise from Calvin's commentaries. However, in the process, she restricts the application of this to 'Kings of the world'. In conjunction with her emphasis of the dependence of earthly rulers upon God, and having instructed Elizabeth in her dedication to 'Sing what God doth, and doo what men may sing,' Mary Sidney's own 'skillful song[s]' illustrate the manner in which this could be achieved. In so doing, she effectively ascribes to herself the position of having the understanding, to which Calvin referred, to produce such 'skillful'

verses. In this Mary Sidney both exemplifies the art of praise and instructs others, here particularly the monarch, in the way to 'doo' this.

Inevitably, Mary Sidney's Psalmes do not only instruct the monarch in the art of praise, but also in the qualities that are required of a person occupying that position. The most direct example of this is, perhaps, psalm 101.<sup>23</sup> In this she assumes the 'voice' of political counsellor and instructs herself, the people and the monarch in the 'rule of life' that God's word delineates, thereby eliding St. Paul's prescription against women teaching scripture. Psalm 72 also explores 'true hapiness in right government' and is a request to 'Teach the kings sonne' (III. p. 99). God is asked to teach the prince his 'judgements', but the qualities required are clearly defined by the psalmist. Calvin's commentary upon the definition of 'good' and 'bad' government displays him as being firmly located in the kind of approaches more famously taken by John Knox and Machiavelli:

licentiousness must necessarily prevail under an effeminate and inactive soveriegn, or even under one who is under a disposition too gentle and forbearing. There is much truth in the old saying, that it is worse to live under a prince through whose levity everything is lawful, than under a tyrant where there is no liberty at all (III. pp. 205-6).

Mary Sidney's version emphasises, by repetition and reiteration, the need for 'justice' and 'judgement', both of which qualities can only be gained by a 'right' emulation of God and a knowledge of God's laws:

Teach the kings sonne, who king hym self shalbe,  
Thy judgements lord, thy justice make hym learn:  
To rule thy realme as justice shall decree,  
And poore mens right in judgement to discern.  
Then fearlesse peace,  
With rich encrease  
The mountaynes proud shall fill:  
And justice shall

Make plenty fall  
On ev'ry humble hill (72. ls 1-10)

The 'righteousness' of the ruler is reflected in the increase and bounty of the land. Mary Sidney's translation, though, also makes explicit the issue of exemplariness associated with the ruler. This, along with the bountifulness of the land, displays his right to rule. Whereas the Geneva Bible simply states that 'all nations shall blesse him, and be blessed in him' (72. v.17), Sidney writes:

The dwellers all  
Of earthly ball  
In hym shall hold them blest:  
As one that is  
Of perfect blisse  
A patterne to the rest (72. ls. 75-80).

This patterning, or exemplariness, in the heir makes the 'king' a 'little God' and enhances not only the individual nature of David as an example to all believers, but the connection with Christ. The particular monarch becomes an example to other nations and individuals: 'a patterne to the rest'.

Her own songs provide an exemplar for the Monarch who, in connection with David's acknowledged status as an exemplar in the sixteenth century, then becomes an exemplar for others. Mary Sidney, through the act of translating the psalms becomes similarly positioned as an exemplar; significantly this is associated with what can be produced within the English language. The emphasis upon the English language is closely connected to the quest to define England as a nation, which has political as well as aesthetic implications. The Protestant reading of the psalms identified 'England' with the 'new Jerusalem' and thus references to Jerusalem become synonymous with England. In psalm 46, Mary Sidney's translation emphasises the proximity and immediacy of God's protection of his land and his city or 'church'. The Genevan Bible titles this psalm 'A Song of triumph

or thanksgiving for the deliverance of Jerusalem' and Calvin emphasises that this psalm:

exhorts the faithful to commit themselves confidently to his protection, and not to doubt that, relying fearlessly upon him as their guardian and the protector of their welfare, they shall be continually preserved in safety from all the assaults of their enemies, because it is his peculiar office to quell all commotions (I. p. 194).

Sidney's translation captures this confidence and applies it specifically to 'our land'. This connection becomes more explicit later in the psalm, but she commences by emphasising God's protection of his people:

God gives us strength, and keeps us sounde,  
A present help when dangers call (46. ls. 1-2);

She represents vividly the 'apocalyptic' nature of this psalm, dramatising the portents (46. ls. 3-4) and then proceeds to exemplify why 'we' need not fear:

For lo, a river streaming joy,  
With purling murmur saflie slides,  
That cittie washing from annoy,  
In holy shrine where God resides.  
God in her center bides:  
What can this cittie shake?  
God earlie aides and ever guides,  
Who can this cittie take? (46. ls. 9-16)

Such questions, when combined with the preceding assurances of God's presence in the 'cittie', function rhetorically: they do not require an answer, but rather serve to emphasise God's protection. Despite Calvin's rejection of the female pronoun as 'superfluous', Mary Sidney retains the 'femininity' of the city both here and in the next stanza.<sup>24</sup> In connection with her later identification of this psalm with 'our land' and her reference to Elizabeth's 'seat' being the 'shrine' of 'all that is divine,/ Conceived best, and best defended lies', this invites a specific connection between the city, England and Elizabeth.<sup>25</sup> An explicit connection between this psalm and

England is evident in Sidney's alteration of verse 8 of this psalm. The Genevan version of this verse reads, 'Come, & beholde the workes of the Lord, what desolations he hath made in the earthe,' in Sidney's version this becomes:

O come with me, O come and view  
The trophes of Jehovas hand:  
What wracks from him our foes pursue,  
How cleerly he hath purg'd our land (46. ls. 25-28).

The repetition of the invitation 'O come' is similar to her strategies in the hymnes or songs of praise in the later psalms, inviting and including the reader in her vision. More importantly though, she invites the reader to remember what God has done in 'our land' rather than generally 'in the earth'. Specifically, she invites them to recall the way in which 'our land' has been 'purg'd' of 'our foes'. In so doing, Mary Sidney reveals tensions within 'our Land'; those who are included in the 'our' seems to be specifically those in the 'church'. For Calvin identifies God's protection as being primarily directed at the church, thus, the enemies to which he refers above are not only external enemies but also those within.<sup>26</sup> Remembering God's 'favour towards us in preserving us' is necessary, for Calvin, in order to establish 'in our hearts a persuasion of the stability of his promises'.<sup>27</sup> By making this specific to 'our land' Sidney encourages this act of remembrance which gives rise to faith in God. This is also achieved structurally in her poem by the refrain. Having commenced the psalms with 'God gives us strength, and keepes us sounde', Sidney echoes this in her rendition of verses 7 & 11:

To strength and keepe us sound  
The God of armies armes:  
Our rock on Jacobs God wee found,  
Above the reach of harmes (46. ls. 21-24).

Although the latter two verses are repeated in the psalm 'itself' by

connecting this with the opening line, Sidney emphasises God's protective role throughout and ensures that the final focus is upon God.

Sidney's translation depicts God's protective role and thus reminds rulers and people alike that God has ultimate control. In this she assumes the position of the truthful counsellor which is also significant in Psalm 101. That psalm, rather than addressing internal troubles, refers to external conflicts. In either situation though, Mary Sidney's translation emphasises the role of the speaker in expressing God's faithfulness, both to 'her' as an individual and her country. Singing God's praises and affirming his faith to the believer means that Mary Sidney does not have to respect earthly hierarchies, or the prescriptions against women speaking. For example, she commences psalm 138 by stating:

Ev'n before kings by thee as gods commended,  
And angells all, by whom thou art attended,  
In hartie tunes I will thy honor tell (138. 1s 1-3).

Her presentation of her Psalmes to Elizabeth and her reference to her brother as an 'Angell' in her dedicatory poem suggests that she was intending her poems to be read by such an audience. Her translation here declares 'There will I sing ... of thy mercy' and, again prefaced by 'There will I sing', of the strength received from God. In hearing her story and praises, the hearers also cannot fail to praise God. As the central emphasis is on the speaker's ability to tell of 'thy honor,' this could refer to the work of writing God's praises in the translations of the psalms themselves.:

Thou Lord shalt finish what in hand I have:  
Thou Lord, I say, whose mercy lasteth ever,  
Thy work begun, shall leave unended never(138. 1s. 22-24).

In the Genevan version, the speaker is more passive: 'The Lord wil performe his worke toward me' and ends with a request to God to

'forsake not the workes of thine hands'. Sidney's version displays much more confidence in the completion of that which is 'in hand'; the speaker affirms through speech ('I say') that 'Thy work begun, shall leave unended never'. This is reinforced by the speaker's confident address to God in the previous stanza:

Sure Lord, all Kings that understand the story  
Of thy contract with me, nought but thy glory  
And meanes shall sing whereby that glory grew  
(138. ls. 13-15)

Although the connection with the words being uttered by the psalmist encouraging others to praise God is implicit in the Genevan version, it does not reveal the same causal link as Mary's translation does. The former version says that they have heard 'the wordes of thy mouthe' (v. 4) and they sing 'of the waies of the Lord' (v. 45). Sidney's version places a heavier emphasis upon the teller of the story expounding the experience of God's assistance. The direct address 'Sure Lord!', indicates a confident expectation of being heard without the need for mediation by priest or husband. As in psalm 49, Mary Sidney adds the reference to 'understanding'. Only Kings who 'have understanding' will praise God because of her experience: 'the story/ Of thy contract with me'. Her hearers are reminded of the need for understanding and are urged to understand the 'story' which she is relating.

This 'story' is primarily concerned with God's beneficence to the individual and society. This also requires an explication of God's judgment. Psalm 75 is headed in the Geneva Bible as a psalm of praise, awaiting God's timing and judgement of the wicked. In the marginal glosses, verses 2-4 are a representation of God's voice, which is a voice ascribing judgement, promising that the wicked will obtain their just deserts. However, the connections, in divine right theory between the monarch and God, means that these words could

equally be ascribed to Elizabeth maintaining her position:

The people loose, the land I shaken find:  
This will I firmly prop, that straitly bind (75. ls. 7-8).

This connection is easily made because of the way in which the end of the psalm echoes the phrasing which Mary uses in her dedication to the Queen. The psalm ends:

My princely care shall crop ill-doers low,  
In glory plant, and make with glory grow  
Who right approves, and doth what right approveth'  
(75. ls. 28-30).

The speaker in this psalm draws attention to the expression of God's judgement and praises. In the Geneva version the penultimate verse reads 'But I wil declare for ever, and sing praises unto the God of Jacob'. Mary Sidney's version accentuates the position of the speaker as a poet:

And I, secure, shall spend my happie tymes  
In my, though lowly, never-dying rymes,  
Singing with praise the God that Jacob loveth  
(75. ls. 25-27).

Whilst, in one sense, this is inherent in the psalm, Sidney's evaluation of her expression explicitly defines it as poetry, or 'rymes'. In her dedication to her brother, she names her versions of the psalms as lowly in comparison to his, yet Daniel and others decalare that her Psalmes make her immortal. Identifying with and appropriating the psalmists voice, enables Mary Sidney to illustrate her awareness of her own craft. As in her own dedications, there is an oscillation between humility and self-assertion: although she describes her 'rymes' as 'lowly,' they are still 'never-dying'.

## 2. CONFESSING SIN AND PROCLAIMING GOD'S PRAISES.

Though it is true that God must supply us with words,  
and that if he do not, we cannot fail to be silent in  
his praise, David seems rather to emulate that his

mouth must be shut up until God called him to the exercise of thanksgiving by extending pardon ... [he] signifies the gratitude which he would feel, and which he would express, intimating, that he sought the mercy of God with no other view than that he might become the herald of it to others (III.. p. 303).

This is true prayer - not the mere idle lifting up of the voice, but the presentation of our petitions from an inward principle of faith. [David] to beget in himself a persuasion of obtaining his present requests from God, ... recalls to his mind what deliverances God had already extended to him ... and from this derives comfort to his faith (V. p. 229).

The first quotation from Calvin's commentaries is his explication of the verse which Mary Sidney translates as:

Unlock my lipps, shut up with sinfull shame:  
Then shall my mouth, O Lord, thy honor sing.  
(51. 1s. 43-44)

Here, the ability of the believer to express God's praises is shown to be dependent upon receiving God's 'pardon'. The individual's lips ('shut up with sinfull shame') need to be released from this 'sin' in order to 'sing' of 'his honor'. Here, according to Calvin, God's mercy is sought explicitly to enable the individual to praise God; it is not for oneself that release is sought but in order that 'he might become the herald of it to others'. Thus the purpose of prayer and confession is to affirm God's mercy and represent it to others; to testify publicly, through song, of God's power to release an individual from the bonds of 'sinfull shame'. However, this is not only directed at others: it also provides an affirmation of one's own faith. For, as the second quotation illustrates, 'true prayer' consists of 'recalling' God's prior 'deliverances' the remembrance of which 'derives comfort to his faith'. Remembrance of previous aid helps 'David' to 'beget in himself a persuasion of obtaining his present requests from God'. In the relationship between confession of sin and profession of faith the division between public and private experience is broken down. Although there seem to be two distinct

aspects of praise and confession (one being directed towards other hearers (public) and one being directed towards the self (private)), each aspect can, in fact, serve both purposes. For 'private' faith or experience must be publicly expressed: 'we must manifest our piety, not only in our secret affection before God, but also by an open profession in the sight of men' (IV. p. 374). Conversely 'public' confession provides an example which comforts the individual when experiencing times of doubt.

Beth Wynne Fiskin asserts that Mary Sidney's 'crying voice' is stylistically emphasised in her Psalmes and that this was what most interested her as a writer. However, this need not necessarily be read as an example of a woman accepting the internalisation of the rules of confession and self-examination delineated by Protestant doctrine. Although the representation of the penitent woman in conduct books testifies to the significance of confessional discourse as prioritised for women, co-existent with this need to confess sin is the requirement to profess faith - and to do so publicly. The psalms concerned with expressing sin and separation from God ultimately reaffirm a union with God and thus become a profession of faith. Calvin's comment above outlines the necessity for this profession to be a public one. This, perhaps, partly explains the contradictions in male definitions of female expression which, while condemning female expression generally, advocated a profession of faith. This profession of faith, as long as it was the 'right' faith, enabled women to speak. Thus, although Mary Sidney conforms by using a 'permissible' female discourse (biblical translation), by accentuating the public aspect of praise and using a 'high' poetic discourse to achieve this, she simultaneously challenges this ideal. For in assuming 'David's' position as an exemplar to others, she also

becomes an exemplar and a teacher, not just of women but also of men. Her recurrent addition of the expression 'I say,' in combination with other references to the speaking voice of the psalms makes 'her' presence central to the subjects she is expounding. Although she does highlight the 'plight of the despairing soul', she seems to me to be equally interested in representing the confidence derived from faith. This ultimate assurance makes her a positive exemplar for others to emulate, for while she instructs others in the art of self examination and confession this leads to the ability to praise God publicly.

In his commentary on psalm 106, Calvin asserts that 'the only way to please God is to institute a rigid course of self-examination' (IV. p. 211). This is the point from which a 'right' relationship with God must commence. Mary Sidney's translations accentuate this aspect of the psalms. Her representation of the sinful penitent is exemplified by her translation of psalm 51, one of the Penitential psalms. Calvin's commentary on this psalm states that it did not represent David's 'actual' separation from God but taught 'the duty of humbly complying to the calls to repentance' (II. p. 282). Mary Sidney's version incorporates this commentary by stressing the humility of the speaker in relation to God:

O Lord, whose grace no limits comprehend;  
Sweet Lord, whose mercies stand from measure free;  
To mee that grace, to mee that mercie send,  
And wipe O Lord, my sinnes from sinfull mee  
O clense, O wash my foule iniquitie:  
Clense still my spotts, still wash awaie my staynings,  
Till staines and spotts in me leave no remaynings.

For I, alas, acknowledging doe know  
My filthie fault, my faultie filthiness  
To my soules eye uncessantly doth show (51. ls. 1-10).

The Genevan version mentions the addresse ('O God') only once in the first verse. In contrast Sidney's version uses 'O lord' twice, and

also provides an evaluative adjective 'Sweet' designating the character of the addressee and establishing the basis of the relationship. In this Mary Sidney's translation provides a more direct address to God, creating an interactive dialogue.

This dialogue reinforces the relationship between speaker and addressee, which characterises the inter-dependence of God and speaker referred to by Calvin in relation to the forgiveness of sin:

when he speaks of his sin as remissable, [it is] only through the countless multitude of the compassions of God, he represents [sin] as peculiarly atrocious. There is an implied antithesis between the greatness of mercy sought for, and the greatness of the transgression required them (II., p. 283).

This 'implied antithesis' is clarified by Mary Sidney's respective characterisations of the speaker and addressee: 'O Lord, whose grace no limits comprehend;/ Sweet Lord, whose mercies stand from measure free', in comparison with the emphasis upon the speaker's 'filthie fault, my faultie filthiness' or 'my foule iniquitie' and the repeated desire for 'cleansing' from 'staines and spotts'. Here, her version becomes a more personal exclamation of sin, an exclamation which openly acknowledges the speaker's dependence upon God and represents active self-examination. Instead of saying, with the Geneva version: 'For I know my iniquities, & my sinne is ever before me'. Mary Sidney's version indicates the process of self examination through which, according to Calvin, the believer comes to know him or her self. The 'alas' signifies an evaluation of the self from the perspective of her 'soules eye' which refers to the process of self-examination by which 'I' 'acknowledging doe know/ My filthie fault'. Her use of inverted parallelisms here contrasts the definition of the fault in relation to the limitless mercy and grace necessary from God to obtain purity. In contrast to the statement of sinfulness in the Genevan version ('Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquities, and

cleanse me from my sinne'), Mary Sidney's version provides exclamatory appeals for God's mercy prefaced by an imperative direct address: 'O clense', 'O wash'. More usually this exclamatory 'O' prefaced a direct address to God or the Lord. Here the subject is replaced with a verb which emphasises the direct action necessary for the purification from sin. This almost hyperbolic statement of one's sins is required perhaps by Calvin's comment that true forgiveness will never be attained until 'we have obtained such a view of our sins as inspires us with fear' (II., p. 284).

Later in the same psalm the speaker makes clear that this provides an example for others. The speaker implores God's protection and promises, in return, to praise God. As the opening quotation from Calvin illustrated, the experience of separation from God culminates in being able to testify of God's goodness to others:

Soe I to them a guiding hand wilbe,  
Whose faultie feete have wandred from thy way:  
And turn'd from sinne will make retorne to thee,  
Whom, turn'd from thee, sinne erst had ledd astraie.  
O God, God of my health, O doe away  
My bloody crime: soe shall my tongue be raised  
To praise thy truth, enough cannot be praised.

Unlock my lipps, shut up with sinnfull shame:  
Then shall my mouth, O Lord, thy honor sing:  
(51. Is. 36-44).

Sidney's version refers back to the opening of the psalm: recalling the speaker's own 'filthie faulte', the speaker now provides a 'guiding hand' to those 'whose faultie feete' have also fallen from God's path. The 'bloody crime' echoes the need for excessive grace from God and the ability to express God's praises, as in other psalms, is associated with the contents of the speaker's heart. The Genevan version asks 'Open thou my lipps, O Lord, and my mouth shall shewe forthe thy praise'. Mary Sidney makes an explicit connection between the ability to speak and the freedom from 'sinnfull shame'.

This perhaps indicates her incorporation of Calvin's commentary and reveals the causal link which is not so readily apparent in the Genevan version. The psalm ends by defining the true sacrifice of praise as 'the heart broken soul, the spirite dejected'; although this represents an individual 'soul', it is symbolic of the attitude that all must acquire in order to praise God in the right way. The injunction to praise shifts the focus of the psalms from an analysis of the individual's relationship with God to the community's; as is illustrated by the final comment being that God's praises will be sung in Sion.

Two other psalms follow a similar pattern of progression from self-examination and recognition of sin to a position of faith and praise (56, 57; both of which, like psalm 51 are entitled 'Miserere Mei, Deus' indicating their comparable subject matter). Psalm 56 is a prayer which 'assauges distress' in the psalmist's 'mind by meditation upon the mercy of God' (II., p. 347). Here the Protestant theory of self-examination and its connection with theories of the control of the passions becomes apparent. The 'humanity' of David and, therefore, his appropriateness as model for believers is illustrated by Calvin's comment that he:

makes no pretension to that lofty heroism which contemns danger, and yet while he allows that he felt fear, he declares his fixed resolution to persist in a confident expectation of the divine favour. The true proof of faith consists in this, that when we feel the solicitations of natural fear, we can resist them, and prevent them from obtaining an undue ascendancy (II., p. 349).

This 'fixed resolution' or control over the passions is carefully expressed in Mary Sidney's version. This aspect of Protestantism perhaps explains the appeal of the stoicism revealed in Mary Sidney's translation of de Mornay's The Discourse of Life and Death.<sup>28</sup> In Mary Sidney's version the speaker 'boasts' of the security derived from

God's word. This analogy is taken from Calvin's commentary and her version accentuates the security rather than the fear which this provides.<sup>29</sup> Her version shifts attention onto the speaker's experience of regaining faith (56. ls. 31-45) and characteristically, increases the interactive quality of this psalm: incorporating interjections, questions, explicit connections, and textual comment. As in psalm 51, the ultimate object of this psalm is to encourage others in faith and Mary Sidney's version accommodates this interpretation by professing faith before admitting to fear. This admission is followed by the rhetorical question 'what can mortall man doe unto me?'. By adding, in stanza 8, 'For this' she clarifies the connection between God's help and the believer's praise. The 'Ah' expresses the recognition that this help cannot be adequately repaid - except ('But') through resounding praises, that is, testifying to God's help.

In psalm 57, this quality of affirming God's praise in situations which could inspire doubt also displays the emphasis which Mary Sidney's translations place upon the necessity for praise:

My hart prepar'd, prepared is my hart  
To spread thy praise  
With tuned laies:  
Wake my tongue, my lute awake,  
Thou my harp the consort make,  
My self will beare a part.

My self when first the morning shall appeare,  
With voice and string  
So will thee sing:  
That this earthly globe, and all  
Treading on this earthly ball,  
My praising notes shall heare (57. ls. 31-42).

The speaker is more noticeably present than in the Genevan translation: 'My hart,' 'my tongue,' 'my lute,' 'my harp,' 'my self,' and 'My praising notes'. She is also aware of spreading 'tuned laies' and bearing a part in accompaniment with the instruments associated

with praise. Her voice and 'praised notes' will be heard by all. This emphasis upon singing, tuning and harmony is very closely associated with the psalms in general. However it is singled out by Donne as a defining factor of the Sidneian Psalmes, and by Lanyer of Mary Sidney's contribution in particular.<sup>30</sup>

These psalms also display a distinct concern with death. When death is represented in the psalms, it is either a threat of judgement to the 'enemies' of God's people or it is associated with the need for a speaker to 'tell God's story' and to 'record' God's glory. Primarily 'death' is linked with the consequent lack of people to praise God. Interestingly Mary Sidney's Psalmes often extend references to this theme. This seems to indicate an awareness that expression, especially written, poetic expression, confers 'fame' on both the subject and the teller. Many of the dedications, discussed in the previous chapter, reveal that it is precisely Mary Sidney's Psalmes which give her 'immortality', for which she will be remembered. This fear of death, associated with the prevention of the spread of God's praises, is often uttered in psalms where the speaker is expressing a feeling of isolation - from both God and other believers.

One such Psalm is number 88. Calvin suggests that this psalm provides encouragement to the afflicted: God has '[here] furnished us with a form of prayer for encouraging all the afflicted who are, as it were, on the brink of despair to come to himself' (III., p. 401). It is, perhaps, a psalm like this which creates the temptation to read it as a 'personal lament' by Mary Sidney for the deaths of her parents and her brother.<sup>31</sup> However, her translation also accentuates the consistency of the speaker's prayers to God. Where the Geneva translation reads simply 'O Lord God of my salvation, I crye day and

night before thee', Mary Sidney translates this:

My God, my Lord, my help, my health;  
To thee my cry  
Doth restless fly,  
Both when of sunn the day  
The treasures doth display  
And night locks up his golden wealth (88. 1s 1-6).

Again, Sidney's translation is much more direct in its address to God and reiterates the personal pronoun 'my'; this is indicative of an intimate relationship, reflecting the content of 'my cry' which 'restless[ly]' addresses God. The fact that it flies indicates not only the intimacy between them, but also the distance: Mary Sidney's translations consistently stress the hierarchical relationship between the speaker and God, whilst simultaneously claiming this intimacy. This position is reinforced in the second stanza: 'O bow thine eare/ My cry to heare' (1s. 8-9). The perceived absence of God is represented in stanzas 3 & 4, making it abundantly clear that the speaker is 'Quite, quite cut off from thy support'. The Geneva version only refers to God's hand. Although this is metaphorically associated with God's support, it also symbolises his judgement. Here Sidney's translation omits the judgement by signifying only the absence of support. It is not only God who is absent here, so too are friends. Yet, despite this isolation, the speaker continues to pray:

My wasted eye doth melt away  
Fleeting amaine,  
In streames of paine  
While I my praiers send,  
While I my hands extend,  
To thee, my God, and faile noe day (88.1s. 37-42).

Sidney's translation represents the division of self so typical of the psalms. 'My wasted eye' cries 'streames of paine,' yet still the 'I' prays daily with extended hands. Thus, this psalm evokes the need for God's support and a determination to receive it.

Mary Sidney's version powerfully reminds God that the dead

cannot praise him. In order to achieve this she retains the rhetorical questions from the Genevan version but extends them. That version translates verse 10-11: 'Wilt thou shewe a miracle to the dead? or shal the dead rise & parise thee? Selah. Shal thy loving kindenes be declared in the grave? or thy faithfulness in destruction?' Whereas Mary Sidney transforms them into a personal lament:

Alas, my Lord, will then be tyme,  
When men are dead,  
Thy truth to spread?  
Shall they, whome death hath slaine,  
To praise thee live again,  
And from their lowly lodgings clime?

Shall buried mouthes thy mercies tell?  
Dust and decay  
Thy truth display? (88. ls. 43-51).

Wynne Fiskin refers to these questions as 'tumbling headlong' and 'dramatising the speaker's despair'. Whilst this is the effect of these lines, the questions are not original to Mary Sidney. The 'despair' is not so much in the questions as in the expression 'Alas' which is not in the Genevan version. For that word signifies the mood of the passage and is an expression of grief, pity or concern. From this point of despair, Sidney's translation then defines the speaker's persistent calling upon God as 'Good reason' and moves towards an affirmation of God. This echoes Calvin's comment that following 'David' correctly means that the believer must 'repress the turbulent passions of his mind, ... [and should] employ his desires and affections in seeking to advance the glory of God' (III., pp. 167-8).

This ability to overcome the immediate situation by calling upon God is illustrated in psalm 116:

Fast bound in bonds of death,  
With deadly anguish thrall'd:  
When grief nigh stopt my breath,

Upon his name I called (116. ls. 5-8).

Calvin comments that 'David' has been robbed of his peace, but that 'the grace of god is adequate to quiet all these troubles' (IV. p. 363). However even in this psalm of distress, it is praise and thankfulness, or a recognition of God's mercy which enables the believer to surmount the immediate trials. Praise, in all situations, is something which God requires of all the world. This is revealed in Calvin's commentary on psalm 115: 'the prophet here expressly declares that the world is employed by God, for the sole purpose of testifying his paternal solicitude towards mankind' (IV. pp.355-6). The necessity for all those who praise the Lord to live, record and utter his praises is a constant concern of the psalmist, but also, famously, a concern of sixteenth-century poets. It is in writing and recording God's praises that Mary Sidney writes and records her self. In psalm 142, although the speaker commences by saying 'My voice to thee it self extremely straying,/ Cries praying, Lord, againe it creying praieth,' the psalm ends with an affirmation that release from this situation will lead to praise:

O change my state, unthrall my soule enthralled.  
Of my escape then will I tell the story:  
And with a crown enwalled  
Of godly men, will glory with thy glory (142. ls.21-24).

Once again, a psalm of lament progresses to a psalm of praise. Praise seems almost to create faith and is bound up with telling of God's glory. Here, however, there is an indication that in telling of God's glory the speaker partakes of that glory. The speaker tells the story and 'will glory with thy glory'. It is to the psalms specifically concerned with individual and communal praise that I now turn to examine the means by which Mary Sidney instructed herself and others in the 'art' of praise.

3. 'MY PRAISES UTIMOST SKILL': THE PSALMES AND THE ART OF PRAISE.

There is [in the Psalms] prescribed to us an infallible rule for directing us with respect to the right manner of offering to God the sacrifice of praise, which he declares to be most precious in his sight, and of the sweetest odour ... in short, there is no other book in which we are more perfectly taught the right manner of praising God, or in which we are more powerfully stirred up to the performance of this religious exercise. (32)

My God, my King, to lift thy praise  
And thanck thy most thank-worthy name  
I will not end, but all my daies  
Will spend in seeking how to frame  
Recordes of thy deserved fame  
Whose praise past-praise, whose greatness such,  
The greatest search can never touch (145. ls 1-7).

Although Mary Sidney's Psalmes do represent many 'voices,' the overwhelming majority of them are primarily concerned with praise. This is partly the result of the particular psalms which she was involved in translating and, as the above quotation from Calvin illustrates, because the psalms as a whole 'perfectly' teach 'the right manner of praising God'. Sidney's Psalmes manifest her 'performance of this religious exercise' which serves as an example to others. They also attest to her search for 'the right manner' in which to praise God, which is combined with an exploration of poetry and an emphasis upon the role of the speaker. In the quotation from psalm 145, the speaker is actively engaged in a search for this 'right manner of praising'. God's praise is 'past-praise' and cannot be 'touched', yet the speaker desires to spend 'all my daies...in seeking how to frame/ Recordes of thy deserved fame'. However, this activity also represents a 'recorde' of Mary Sidney's fame. Particularly in the psalms of praise, Mary Sidney's translations accentuate the role the writer and the 'manner of telling'. Consequently these psalms are especially important for illustrating Mary Sidney's awareness of her role as a writer and the process by

which this establishes her as an instructress of others: in poetry, praise, and devotion.

The connections between praise and poetry can perhaps be most explicitly perceived in two of the shortest psalms. In the Genevan version, psalm 117 is a simple exhortation to praise: 'All nacions, praise ye the Lord: all ye people, praise him. For his loving kindenes is great toward us, and the trueth of the Lord endureth for ever. Praise ye the Lord'. In Mary Sidney's version this becomes:

P raise him that ay  
R emaines the same  
A ll tongues display  
I ehovas fame  
S ing all that share  
T his earthly ball  
H is mercies are  
E xpos'd to all:  
L ike as the word  
O nce he doth give,  
R old in record,  
D oth tyme outlive.

In her praise of God, Mary Sidney's translation renews the devices used to exhort others to praise, and calls attention to the poetic nature of this work - through defamiliarisation, Mary Sidney's version draws attention to the poet, as does her version of psalm 111:

At home, abroad most willingly I will  
Bestow on God my praises uttmost skill:  
Chaunting his workes, workes of unmatched might,  
Deem'd so by them, who in their search delight  
(111. ls 1-4).

Importantly, although the Genevan version refers only vaguely to the public context of this psalm, Mary Sidney's version attests to her desire to express God's praises both at home and abroad. Her versions provide a more direct address which increases the activity and control of the speaker of these praises. Here, instead of praising God with her 'whole heart,' Mary Sidney's speaker 'willingly' bestows her 'uttmost skill' on these praises. The 'skillful songs' previously

addressed to the monarch here become aligned to the poet/psalmist's expression. The 'intended' audience is defined as those who are also searching for the best way to praise God; a position which Mary Sidney herself is perceived as fulfilling.

Almost from her very first psalm Mary Sidney's translations refer to 'my self' who 'thie name in lasting verse will sing' (45. 1.63). In psalm 47, as I have already mentioned, she advises kings 'with Skillful song his praises sing'. In psalm 57, she desires to 'spread thy praise/ With tuned laies,' and within this 'My self will beare a part'. In psalm 77 Mary Sidney makes it clear that the 'songs of the night' (Geneva version) that are being remembered are 'What in my former rimes/ My self had of thee told' (77. 1s.31-32). All of these references link the subject discussed with the specific teller and the poetic mode in which this is expressed. The search for the 'right manner of praising' God is explicitly addressed by Mary Sidney's version of Psalm 106. This psalm combines praise with the confession of sin, and is concerned with identifying who can express God's praises in the right manner. According to Calvin the 'encouragement' of this psalm is the assurance that 'although ability may fail us, the praises which from the heart we offer to God are pleasing to him' ( III. p.208). In the Genevan version this psalm commences with the statement: 'Praise ye the Lord because he is good, for his mercie endureth forever' and then asks who is able to praise God 'Who can expresse the noble actes of the Lord, or shewe forth his praise?' In contrast Mary Sidney's version opens by lamenting the lack of poems praising God and the qualifications of those who would rectify this:

Where are those hymnes, where are the honors due  
To our good God, whose goodness knowes no end?  
Who of his force can utter what is true?  
Who all his praise in praises comprehend? (106. 1s.1-4)

By extending these questions Mary's version introduces and underlines the question of who is fit to speak God's praises. As with other psalms, the role of the speaker is made central to the expression of the subject matter. In verse 5 she repeats the construction 'That I may' and in verses 6 and 7 she interjects '(that I may begin where they begun)' and 'At the Red Sea, they did, I say, rebell'. She uses parentheses again later to provide her commentary on events: 'Yet God, (O goodness), saved from his name/ These Mutiners that this his might might show'. In the Genevan version God 'saved them', but there is no characterisation of God's goodness and thus this connection is only implicit. Later, Mary Sidney makes use of rhetorical questions which both indicate her point of view and demand a more active response from the reader.<sup>33</sup> None of the questions are posed in the Genevan version, which is an apparently straightforward recording of history. Mary Sidney's version, whilst it again makes the connections between different aspects of the psalm more explicit, also encourages communal agreement about the answers she provides. The rhetorical nature of these questions preclude disagreement and, thereby, serve to underscore the shared assumptions upon which a reading of this psalm (and the psalms in general) is based.

The culmination of this psalm is an application of the meaning of the previously recounted events for the 'present' reader.

Goe on, O God, as them, soe us to save:  
Rally thy troopes that widely scattred be,  
That their due thanks, thy holynesse may have;  
Their glorious praise, thy heav'nly pow'r may see.  
O God, of Izrael our God, our Lord,  
Eternall thanks be to eternall thee:  
Lett all the earth with praise approve my word.  
(106. ls. 113-119).

These 'troopes' are 'widely scattred' but there is no mention of the 'heathen' as in the Geneva version and the 'God of Izrael' becomes 'our God, our Lord': the implications of which strategy I have

already discussed. The Genevan version refers to praising God but without identifying a particular speaker of that praise: 'let all the people say'. Sidney's version ends with a specific plea for approval of 'my word'. In conjunction with the opening of the psalm and the presence of the particular speaker, this seems to refer back to the opening question by affirming that these words, 'my word,' are adequate representations of God's praises.

Representing God's praises requires an acknowledgement of the humility of 'man' in relation to God. Such a position is evident in Mary Sidney's translation of psalm 104. This is a psalm of praise to God for the ordering of the world. At the opening of this psalm the speaker instructs its soul in the way to praise God: 'Make O my soule the subject of thy Songe/ Th'eternall Lord'. The speaker contrasts the smallness or 'seely[ness]' of itself with the vastness of God's creation:

How I amaz'd thy mighty works admire!  
Wisdome in them hath every part possesst,  
Wherto in me, no wisdome can aspire.(78-80)

There is here a sense of humility in the speaker's position in relation to God, which in combination with later statements represents the doctrine of the 'worthlessness' of 'man' in relation to God, and is not necessarily a clear indication of Mary's 'own small poetic voice':

As for my self, my seely self, in me  
While life shall last, his worth in song to show  
I framed have a resolute decree,  
And thankfull be, till being I forgoe (104. ls. 101-104).

Here, as elsewhere in Mary Sidney's Psalmes and her dedications, there is a vacillation between humility and the assertion of poetic skill. For although the self here is represented as 'seely', it is that self which 'frames' a 'resolute decree' to express God's 'worth in song'. The reason for the speaker's existence is to praise God.

As in psalm 106, Mary Sidney's translation here echoes the opening and returns to the question of who has the ability to express God's praises. The speaker makes an active choice ('a resolute decree') which 'I' 'my self' have 'framed' to praise God, revealing 'his worth in song'. This is not an isolated incident in Mary Sidney's translations, and she does also refer to her songs in the dedications. This, coupled with the reception of her Psalmes, suggests that it is not only the subject of her poetry which receives attention but, very specifically, the style in which she wrote. Echoing Calvin's commentary upon this psalm, Mary Sidney's version makes this an example that others should emulate:

Meane while, my soule, uncessantly employ  
To high Jehovas praise my mouth and mynd:  
Nay, all (since all his benefitts enjoy)  
Praise him whom bands of time noe age can binde  
(104. ls.109-112).

Having first reiterated the instruction from the opening of the psalm to 'my soule' to 'uncessantly employ' her 'mouth and mynd' in singing 'Jehovas Praise,' the speaker then instructs others in 'how and why' to sing. Having established herself as a model, the exhortation to praise is extended to 'all (since all his benefitts enjoy)'.

The exercise of praise, as well as self-examination, is a crucial element of the believer's actions. Commenting on psalm 135, Calvin writes that the purpose of this psalm is 'that we may not undervalue, or grow careless in this devotional exercise'(V. p. 171). Sidney's translation highlights the 'sweetness' or enjoyment which is derived from the activity of praise. This is linked to the believer's understanding of their relationship with God. Instead of saying that she knows 'God is good', she writes: 'My tongue shall speake, for well my conscience knowes,/ Greate is our God' (135. ls. 10-11). Again attention is drawn to the tongue, conscience or knowledge of

the believing speaker, reiterating the speaker's qualification to praise God:

O praise the name whereby the Lord is known  
Praise him I say, you that his servants be:  
You whose attendance in his howse is shown,  
And in the courtes before his howse we see,  
Praise God, right teamed God, for good is he:  
O sweetly sing  
Unto his name, the sweetest, sweetest thing (135. ls.1-7).

Her version clarifies the reciprocity of the language of praise, in that the believer 'sweetly sings' of God's name which is correspondingly defined as 'the sweetest, sweetest thing'. The subject of praise determines the means, form and language through which its praise is expressed.

As I have mentioned previously, Mary Sidney's alterations to the opening addresses of the psalms create a more interactive dialogue with the reader than the Genevan version. In psalm 78, she stresses the capacity of this psalm to instruct its hearers:

A grave discourse to utter I entend;  
The age of tyme I purpose to renew,  
You, O my charge, to what I teach attend;  
Heare what I speake, and what you heare ensue.  
The thinges our fathers did to us commend,  
The same are they I recommend to you:  
Which though but heard, we know most true to be:  
We heard, but heard, of who them selves did see  
(78. ls. 1-8).

In this, her version truly does 'renew' old stories, not only in retelling them and therefore perpetuating them, but also in the style of expression and the poetic format. Donne received her Psalmes as 'new songs', echoing the psalmist's own request for 'dailie new songs' from believers. In psalm 105, Mary Sidney's version serves not just as a provocation to praise but, potentially, as an invocation to others to make their own songs. Mary Sidney invites her readers to 'frame' songs of God's 'fame':

Jehovas praise, Jehovas holy fame  
O shew O sound, his actes to all relate:

To him your songs, your psalmes unto him frame;  
Make your discourse his wonders celebrate (105. ls. 1-4).

Her translations, as Donne observed, 'tell us why, and teach us how to sing'. They do not shy away from instructing others in penitence, doctrine, the political obligations of the monarch and their duty to praise God. In all this, the authority conferred upon Mary Sidney by assuming the role of the psalmist, enables her to escape many of the constraints upon women's expression in her society. Importantly, she assumes the exemplary role which David represented to instruct others in the art of praise. This is directed at a public audience and represents much more than private devotion, for, although her Psalmes were not published, she did intend them for the Queen and the accolades of Donne, Daniel and Lanyer (among others) demonstrate that they did reach an audience outside of her own family.

#### 4. 'SAY YOU WITH ME, WITH ME RESOUND': INSTRUCTING THE COMMUNITY IN PRAISE.

Whoever would follow [David] aright, must not allow himself to break forth with reckless and blind impetuosity into the language of imprecation; he must, moreover, repress the turbulent passions of his mind, and, instead of confining his thoughts exclusively to his own private interests, should rather employ his desires and affections in seeking to advance the glory of God (III., pp. 167-8).

Mary Sidney's Psalmes, whilst they do explore techniques of self-examination, also emphasise the crucial public role of praise which is so fundamental to the psalms. Although Beth Wynne Fiskin argues that Mary Sidney is most actively engaged as a poet in her psalms of complaint, as the previous section illustrates, it is in the psalms of praise that Mary Sidney plays with form and acknowledges her role as 'teller' of God's praises. The lack of attention to Mary Sidney's psalms of praise seems to me to be partly

due to the question of 'voice' which they raise. For although most of the psalms I dealt with in the previous section are centred on individual utterances of praise, the majority of psalms of praise have a communal voice. Thus they do not, at first glance, appear to be Mary Sidney's 'own' expression. However, the stylistic traits which Fiskin locates in her psalms of complaint also play a central role in the psalms of praise and, to that extent, her 'voice' is as present here as elsewhere. In addition to this, it is precisely the communal and, therefore, public aspects of the psalms of praise which are significant in both Mary's own attitude to her psalms, as displayed in the dedications; and in the response of others. In this role as 'singer' Mary Sidney usurps to herself the means to instruct others in the art of praise. The effect that this had upon other writers has been explored by a number of critics; but their primary concern is not with Mary Sidney, but rather with George Herbert.<sup>34</sup> In this Mary Sidney is positioned as the 'precursor' poet who is ousted by the 'stronger' successor. What has consequently escaped the notice of other critics is the peculiarly public position which the element of praise in the psalms affords Mary Sidney. It is this public aspect of praise which enables the address of the monarch and the instruction of others. In this Mary Sidney uses the psalms very differently to other women writers. Through the appropriation of a permissible discourse, Mary Sidney uses this discourse to establish herself as a poet and 'resound' God's praises rather than her own 'worthlessness' or to internalise the prescriptions of confessional discourse. More than confession, Mary Sidney's Psalmes represent a profession of faith, confidence and above all praise; they issue the invitation:

Say you with me, with me resound  
Jehovas praise with thankfulness (107. ls. 5-6).

This invitation to praise is a characteristic of Mary Sidney's translations. By increasing the references to the speaker and interjecting 'I say', her translations become a direct address to the reader and emphasise the role of the teller. The quotation above, from psalm 107, for example, has no immediate source. In the Genevan version there is no reference to the speaker, the voice is disembodied: 'Let them, which have been redeemed of the Lord, shewe how he hath delivered them from the hand of the oppressor' (v.2). This verse does direct others to tell of how God has released them from oppression, but does not specify who 'they' are. Mary Sidney's version makes a direct address to 'you'; the third person impersonal becomes the first person, directly addresssing the reader. By combining this with a reference to 'herself' as speaker ('say you with me') she draws attention to the role of this speaker in instructing others to praise God.

This makes the psalm more immediately aware of its audience and, therefore, accentuates the public nature of this expression. The Genevan version refers to confession 'before the Lord' (v.31.), but Sidney's version alters the public context in which this is uttered (107. ls. 85-88). Whereas the Genevan version refers only to speaking of God before the 'sonnes of men,' but positions this confession explicitly in the vicinity of the church (the 'congregacion of the people,' and 'the assemblie of the Elders'), Sidney's translation conversely emphasises the political context of this expression: the 'peoples presse' and 'at princes thrones'. This alteration, combined with her action in preparing a presentation copy for Elizabeth I and dedicating her text to her, underlines the political aspects of praising God. This strategy also enabled her to transgress the prescriptions against women teaching doctrine. For not only do Mary

Sidney's translations incorporate Calvin's commentaries, making her Psalmes an expression of doctrine, but she also draws attention to the speaker expounding that doctrine. This occurs not only in the more personal psalms of complaint, but also in the psalms of praise. The 'intimate relationship' between God and the speaker which Fiskin notes of the psalms of complaint, serves another function in the psalms of praise. Here it serves to facilitate an identification of the reader with the subject being explored. Mary Sidney's translations make frequent use of the pronouns ('we', 'you', and 'us') which serve to highlight the reader's inclusion in the exhortation. Psalm 95, for example repeats the injunction to praise God:

Come, come lett us with joyfull voice  
Record and raise  
Jehovas praise:  
Come lett us in our safties Rock rejoyce.  
Into his presence lett us goe  
And there with Psalmes our gladdness show;  
For he is God, a god moste greate,  
Above all gods a king in kingly seate (95. ls. 1-8).

The repetition of 'Come' at the commencement of this psalm serves firstly as an indirect imperative. It is only in connection with the rest of the stanza that the object of that command is made clear. The use of such imperatives is another characteristic of Mary Sidney's psalms. In psalm 99, she alters the declarative mode of the Genevan version to an interrogative which directly addresses the reader. As elsewhere, Sidney's translation suggests an immediacy of application that is not so apparent in the Genevan version:

What if nations rage and frett?  
What if Earth doe ruine threate?  
Loe our state Jehova guideth,  
He that on the Cherubs rideth (99. ls. 1-4).

Here, God guides 'our state' and, therefore, there is no need to be terrified: in accordance with Protestant doctrine, God is represented

as protecting his 'chosen' people. The opening questions are again rhetorical and are almost scornful of apparent dangers. Rather than concentrating on the immediate context, the reader is here exhorted:

O then come Jehova sing:  
Sing our God, our Lord our king:  
At the footstoole sett before him,  
(He is holy) come, adore him (99. ls. 13-16).

Praise is connected not solely with thankfulness for God's deliverance of the individual from sin, but also for his protection of the nation. The psalms which deal with this situation, like Mary Sidney's psalms of confession, ultimately affirm God's presence, acknowledging him in 'song' as 'our Lord our king'.

This directness of approach is also illustrated in psalm 100 'Jubilate Deo.' As with the above examples, Mary Sidney's version represent the dominant Protestant reading of the psalms as pertaining to England as the 'new Jerusalem':

O all you landes, the treasures of your joy  
In mery shout upon the lord bestow:  
Your service cheerfully on him imploy,  
With triumph song into his presence goe ...  
We are his folk, and he upholds our state.  
With thankfullnesse O enter then his gate:  
Make through each porch of his your praises ring,  
All good, all grace, of his high name relate,  
He of all grace and goodnesse is the spring  
(100. ls. 1-4 & 9-12).

The readers are assured that 'We are his folk, and he upholds our state' and are encouraged to sing songs of triumph when entering God's presence. Here, praise is the price of entry into God's kingdom, the music of the psalms was generally held as a means to overcome differences and represent the language of the soul to God. Here this is combined with a political context. The believers' dependence upon God's goodness, which Calvin emphasises, is illustrated here in Mary Sidney's two line expansion of 'The lord is good'. As with the psalms of individual confession, Mary Sidney

emphasises the community's dependence upon God's 'grace' and 'goodness'. However, there is also reference to the need for people to 'relate,' 'sing' and 'shout' these praises.

In her translation of these psalms of communal praise, Mary Sidney makes consistent use of alliteration and inverted repetitions which are particularly appropriate for communal reading or reciting. This is particularly apparent in her translation of Psalm 66, 'Jubilate Deo'. This psalm is not primarily directed toward God, but toward other believers who are to be taught how to praise God. In Sidney's opening lines, 'tunes' of 'triumph' are defined as the singing of God's 'praisefull glory' in a manner which makes the 'story' or telling of his praises 'glorious' in itself (66. ls. 1-4). The instruction to praise here is addressed to a 'human' audience. In the Genevan version, the 'I' of the psalmist does not appear until verse 13. However, Sidney's version accommodates that 'I' much earlier in an extension of verse 4:

All earth, and ev'ry land therefore  
Sing to this God, this God adore:  
All earth, I say, and all earth dwellers,  
Be of his worth the singing tellers (66. ls. 9-12)

The 'I' which says or instructs others how to speak to God and of God is increasingly apparent in Mary Sidney's Psalmes. The repetition of the phrase 'I say' serves to emphasise the necessity for people to praise God and tell of God's glory. The specifics of God's glory consists in re-telling his past deliverances, and by applying them to present experience. The examples are of historical and 'mythical' deliverances performed by God for his people: for example, the parting of the Red Sea. The psalm moves from the all-inclusive 'All earth' or 'all earth dwellers' to the specifics of God's help to the faithful and, eventually, to individual praise of the psalmist. Thus by interjecting an 'I say' this early on Sidney's translation alters

the movement of the poem and asserts the particular teller's or instructor's presence.

This also necessitates attentive or active listening to the experiences of other believers: Sidney's version desires the 'attentive eare' of her listeners, whilst her 'tongue' expresses publicly how 'he my soule hath blessed' (66. ls. 49-52). The inter-connection between the public and the private aspects of praise is displayed here. For the speaker is publicly expressing what God has done to 'my soule'. Having discussed God's general might and worth and the specific helps to his people, or flock, the psalm ends by stressing the way in which God helps individual believers. It ends with an affirmation of the individual's duty to praise God (66. ls. 61-64). However, although this is an affirmation of the individual's duty to praise, it also provides an example for other individuals - that is, the community - to emulate.

In psalm 49, Mary Sidney's version alters the position of the speaker in relation to the subject which is being expressed:

World-dwellers all give heede to what I saie;  
To all I speake, to rich, poore, high and low;  
Knowledg the subject is my hart conceaves,  
Wisdome the wordes shall from my mouth proceed:  
Which I will measure by melodious eare,  
And ridled speech to tuned harp accord (49. ls. 1-6).

In six lines her version encapsulates the first four verses of the psalm:

1. Heare this, all ye people: give eare, all ye that dwel  
in the worlde,
2. Aswel lowe as hie, bothe riche and poore.
3. My mouth shal speake of wisdome, and the meditacion of  
mine heart is of knowledge.
4. I will incline mine eare to a parable, and utter my  
grave matter upon a harpe. (Geneva Bible)

The last two lines of Sidney's version alter the metaphor and, thus, the actual content of the psalm, but also the form of address alters the signification of the relationship between the speaker and the

addressee; in this case, the 'people'. Sidney's version alters the syntactical relationship between subject, speaker and audience by using a more direct mode of articulation. The audience is immediately addressed and positioned as 'World-dwellers' indicating not only the locale of the audience but also involving a presupposition about their status as worldly-orientated rather than heavenly-directed. This is contrasted with the speaker's position, which is one of 'knowledge'. Mary Sidney's version introduces the speaker in the opening line, and rather than the disembodied voice representing universal truth in the Genevan version, this heightens the imperative mode drawing attention to the speaker issuing this command. The speaker instructs the listener not only to hear the words but to 'give heede to what I saie'. This construction expects a response from the listener. The second line (second verse) stresses the all-inclusiveness of her individual address to all hearers. By immediately introducing the authority of her subject, Mary Sidney gives that subject priority and then announces the means by which this will be expressed (ls. 3-4). The last two lines emphasise the mode of speech which will be used and creates a causal link between them:

Which I will measure by melodious eare,  
And ridled speech to tuned harp accord.

The measuring by 'melodius eare' indicates the exegesis and translation from prose to poetry which Mary as author is effecting here, drawing attention to the construction of the expression and the speaker constructing it.

With the psalmist, Sidney's version reiterates the fact that God deserves 'new songs'. Although this is embedded in the structure of the psalms, the Countess's versions associate this more explicitly with the voice of the speaker. In psalm 144, for example, she writes:

Then in new song to thee  
Will I exalt my voice:  
Then shall, O God, with mee  
My ten-string'd Lute rejoyce. (144. ls. 33-36).

As with other psalms, the Countess's version heightens the role of the singer in creating these songs, exemplifying her own skill in creating or framing songs of praise to God. Here the speaker's voice both exalts God through praise, and simultaneously the speaker's voice is 'exalted' in the act of praise. The instruments are identified explicitly as accompaniment. Whereas in the Genevan version the speaker sings through the instruments, here it is the speaker who actively makes the instrument praise God: the lute praises God 'with mee'. The reason for this rejoicing is given in the latter half of the stanza, or next verse; that is, for God's protection of Kings. As the speaker has represented itself as praising God, the direction and implication of this is turned outward, for others to rejoice in God as the speaker instructs or tells them how and why to sing.

The connection between the tuneful voice and instruments of praise is a theme which Mary Sidney adds where her sources do not explicitly refer to it. In psalm 135, for example, she extends the references to praise as a 'sweet thing' when the Geneva version refers to praise as 'comlie' and, in psalm 147, where the Genevan version again refer to praise as 'comlie', her version connects this with tuned voices and instruments (147. ls.1-4). Here, she uses rhetorical questions to incorporate the response of her readers into her writing. She seems to assume that her readers will accept her definitions of what constitutes 'seemly pleasure'. Culturally, this is what the psalms represented, especially for women. The combination of singing and playing instruments is illustrated further on in the psalm. In Mary Sidney's translation the act of singing is connected to the subject of that song (147. ls. 21-23). In the first sentence

here she indicates that praise of God is rooted in 'causefull honor' and by her punctuation displays that one such cause is God's involvement in creation, and regulation of the seasons.

The final psalm, 150, is known as a psalm of praise. According to St. Augustine, the last fifty psalms represented the soul when it had achieved grace. In this state the soul was in harmony with its surroundings and, therefore, knew how to praise God. In psalm 149, Mary Sidney's translation acknowledges that praise is a means to reformulate 'man': 'thou with joy relate/ Him that hath refram'd thy state' (149. ls. 5-6). Calvin suggests, in relation to psalm 150, that it is not 'without reason that God under the law enjoined this multiplicity of songs, that he might led men away from those vain and corrupt pleasure to which they are excessively addicted, to a holy and profitable joy' (V. p.320). Joy, pleasure, and praise of God are a central part of Mary Sidney's Psalmes, all of which are revealed in the last psalm hyperbolic expression of God's praises, whereas the Genevan version signals the exhortation to praise by such expressions as 'Praise ye God', 'praise ye him', and then 'Let evrie thing that hath breath praise the Lord. Praise ye the Lord'. Sidney's version explores a variety of different means of expressing praise:

O laud the Lord, the God of hosts commend,  
Exault his pow'r, advance his holynesse:  
With all your might lift his allmightinesse:  
Your greatest praise upon his greatness spend.

Make Trumpetts noise in shrillest notes ascend:  
Make lute and lyre his loved fame expresse:  
Him lett the pipe, him lett the tabret blesse,  
Him organs breath, that windes or waters lend.

Lett ringing Timbrells soe his honor sound,  
Lett sounding Cymbals soe his glory ring,  
That in their tunes such mellody be found,  
As fitts the pompe of most Triumphant king.  
Conclud: by all that aire, or life enfold,  
Lett high Jehova highly be extold (ps. 150).

Here the speaker advances or continues God's power by praising his holiness. Playing with assonance, Sidney 'lauds' the 'lord' and exhorts the reader to use 'all your might' to express God's 'allmightnesse'. As earlier, there is a reciprocity between the act of speech or praise and the subject being praised: Mary Sidney bestows her 'uttmost skill' on God's praises, presenting her praises in 'the highest matter in the noblest form', here, specifically, in the form of the English sonnet. As in psalm 144, the people must 'make' their instruments 'his loved fame expresse'. The instruments, as the words which Mary Sidney uses must be made to fit their subject: 'the pompe of most Triumphant king.' Here, Mary Sidney self-consciously concludes not only this psalm but her Psalmes, summing up the purpose of the psalter and her own poetic endeavour in a rhyming couplet:

Conclud: by all that aire, or life enfold,  
Lett high Jehova highly be extold.

Mary Sidney's Psalmes played a significant part in the creation of her identity as a both a learned and virtuous Lady, and as an accomplished poet. Although in translating the psalms Mary Sidney seems to be following contemporary prescriptions upon female expression, in making these psalms her own, she simultaneously challenged this containment. She was not a prisoner of a 'man made' discourse, but appropriated that discourse to express her faith, if not, necessarily, her femininity. Rather than placing her on the 'margins' of discourse, I would argue that she was translating a text which was crucial for the dominant culture of the period. In this, Mary Sidney as a woman translator is not, in Derrida's words, 'simply subordinated, she is not the author's secretary', but her translation is 'writing; that is, it is not translation only in the sense of

transcription. It is a productive writing called forth by the original text'.<sup>35</sup> Mary Sidney's Psalmes answered a need for an English poetic translation of the psalms of greater literary merit than that of the Sternhold and Hopkins Psalter. Using this discourse enabled her to transcend earthly rules for female expression, experiment with a wide variety of poetic forms, and to influence the development of metaphysical poetry. Consequently, her Psalmes position her as an instructress of men - particularly male poets. In rewriting the psalms, Mary Sidney was both constituted by that discourse and reconstructed that discourse in relation to her own experience and formal poetic requirements. Her self-proclaimed position as poet-praiser of God, and contemporary evaluations of her translations, situate her Psalmes in a very different context to the women I have discussed previously. In circulating her manuscripts and presenting a copy to the Queen, Mary Sidney transgresses the codes for female expression; she did not merely read the psalms in her closet, to her family or during church services. Through her display of linguistic dexterity, manifested for example in the variety of metrical forms contained in her Psalmes, Mary Sidney runs perilously close to the exhibitionism that Thomas Salter (even while encouraging the public recitation of psalms for women in The Mirrhor of Modestie) warned against. Mary Sidney's poetic translations push women's use of the psalms into a new arena: the psalms of praise necessarily require a public profession of faith, the psalms addressing the monarch (in combination with her dedications) involve political comment, commissioning a portrait of herself holding the psalms indicates her own use of the psalms in constructing her identity. In connection with this, the increased role of the speaker or 'lyric I' within the psalms, and the emphasis upon the psalms as poetry and works of art,

means that Mary Sidney was presenting herself to public view: God's word became 'my word'. And, as one that was able to represent the 'highest matter' in the 'noblest forme', she embodied both female 'excellencie' or exemplariness and through her 'poesie' became the 'mirroir of our age'.

FOOTNOTES

1) The Psalms of Sir Philip Sidney and the Countess of Pembroke, edited by J.C.A. Rathmell (New York, 1963), psalm 45. ls. 3-4. All references to Mary Sidney's Psalmes are taken from this edition and follow quotations in the main text. For clarity and brevity, I have referenced quotations by psalm number and line reference.

2) Margaret P. Hannay (1990), pp. x-xi.

3) For a theorisation of translation, see the essays in Lawrence Venuti, ed. (1992). Many of these essays make reference to Walter Benjamin's, 'The Task of the Translator' in Illuminations, edited by Hannah Arendt, translated by Harry Zohn (London, 1955), pp. 69-82 and Jacques Derrida, The Ear of the Other, edited by Christie V. McDonald and translated by Peggy Kamuf (New York, 1985). Yet even the most recent book on Renaissance women's translation suggests that although: 'in the Renaissance translation was much more highly ranked than it has been since, it was still a less active and hence less masculine literary activity than original composition' (Tina Krontiris, Oppositional Voices: Women as Writers and Translators of Literature in the English Renaissance (London & New York, 1992), pp. 20-21).

4) Mary Ellen Lamb, 'The Cooke Sisters: Attitudes toward Learned Women in the Renaissance' in Margaret P. Hannay, ed. (1985), p. 116.

5) Lawrence Venuti (1992) succinctly defines the hierarchical distinction which is implicit in Lamb's argument (p. 3).

6) Mary Ellen Lamb in Margaret P. Hannay, ed. (1985), p. 116.

7) Mary Ellen Lamb in Margaret P. Hannay, ed. (1985): 'the translations by Renaissance women are different from the translations of Renaissance men in being exceedingly literal' (p. 124). Thus, Lamb seems to be objecting to the 'quality' of women's translations, rather than establishing the position of translation as an art form in the Renaissance. For a contrasting opinion of the status of translation for women, see Retha M. Warnicke (1983), p. 187.

8) The Essayes, Or Morall, Politike and Millitarie Discourses of Lo. Michaell de Montaigne, translated by John Florio (1603), sig. A5r.

9) Florio dedicated A Worlde of Wordes or dictionaries in Italian and English (1598) to Lucy Harington (who is also the first dedicatee for the Essayes), acknowledging her aptitude for foreign tongues. (Cited by Retha M. Warnicke (1983), p. 187).

10) Gary F. Waller (1979) defines her brother's influence upon the Countess as 'ultimate and most pervasive' because she had 'lived with Philip's translations for over ten years' (p. 199).

11)) Here it is important to note Bakhtin's theory that 'Repetitiveness is not repetitiousness' (The Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics, translated by Caryl Emerson, Theory and the History of Literature, Volume 8 (Manchester, 1984), p. xxxv).

- 12) Beth Wynne Fiskin, 'Mary Sidney's Psalmes: Education and Wisdom' in Margaret P. Hannay, ed. (1985), p. 170.
- 13) For modern day translations (but still ones that our not necessarily 'our' own), see Appendix 5.
- 14) Luther, for example, divides them into five groups: prophecy, doctrine, consolation, supplication or prayer, and thanksgiving. This method is closely imitated by Theodore de Beza. See discussion in Barbara K. Lewalski (1979), pp. 41-51.
- 15) Barbara K. Lewalski (1979), pp. 49-50.
- 16) A famous 'group' of psalms are, of course, the penitential psalms (6, 32, 38, 51, 102, 130, 143). Perhaps lesser known are the specific psalms associated with praise. In one sense all the psalms are praise, but the most notable ones are psalms 8, 19, 66, 103, 104, the Alleluia psalms (113-118), the Gradual psalms (120-135): in fact, all the last fifty psalms.
- 17) Michael Holquist & Caryl Emerson, eds. (1981), p. 48.
- 18) Mary Sidney retains the Latin psalm titles from the Vulgate (which were also retained in the Coverdale Bible). In this, to paraphrase Bakhtin, her translation is aware of the history of contexts of which it has been a part.
- 19) Arthur Golding to Edward de Vere, prefacing his translation of Calvin's commentaries, reprinted in Commentary upon the Book of Psalms by John Calvin, edited by Rev. James Anderson, 5 volumes, reprinted (Michigan, 1948-49), I., p. xxvii.
- 20) See Margaret P. Hannay's essay in Hannay, ed. (1985).
- 21) The title is taken from The Geneva Bible (1560).
- 22) See also Mary Sidney's version of psalm 97. ls. 34-35.
- 23) See Margaret P. Hannay (1990) for discussion of psalm 101, p. 102.
- 24) Rev. James Anderson (1948), I. p. 200.
- 25) 'Even now that Care' (ls. 47-48) in Gary F. Waller (1977), p. 89.
- 26) Rev. James Anderson (1948), I. p. 195 & p. 202.
- 27) Rev. James Anderson (1948), I. p. 203.
- 28) Mary Sidney, Antonious. Discourse of Life and Death (1592). See also Mary Ellen Lamb, 'The Countess of Pembroke and the Art of Dying' in Women in the Middle Ages and Renaissance, edited by Mary Beth Rose (Syracuse, 1986).
- 29) Rev. James Anderson (1948): 'to praise, is here synonymous with glorying or boasting' (II. p. 350).

- 30) John Donne, 'Upon the translation of the Pslames ...' (l. 26) and Aemilia Lanyer in Mary R. Mahl and Helene Koon, eds. (1977), p. 79.
- 31) See for example, psalm 88. ls. 73-78.
- 32) Rev. James Anderson (1948), I. pp. xxxviii-xxxix.
- 33) See psalm 106. ls. 40-43, 50-52, 78-79.
- 34) See Coburn Freer, Music for a King: George Herbert's Style and the Metrical Psalms (Baltimore, 1972), Barbara K. Lewalski (1979), and Chana Bloch (1985).
- 35) Jacques Derrida, The Ear of the Other, edited by Christie V. McDonald, translated by Peggy Kamuf (New York: Scheken, 1985), p.153, quoted by Lori Chamberlain 'Gender and the Metaphorics of Translation' in Lawrence Venuti, ed. (1992), p.70.

### CONCLUSION

Whilst recent feminist criticism has played a vital role in opening up the study of women's lives and writing during the Renaissance, it has become a truism that women during this period were constrained by religious discourses. This is highlighted in a collection of essays to which I have made many references, Margaret P. Hannay's Silent But For The Word: although the introduction acknowledges that women 'found their own voices' through the use of 'scripture', overall the essays are premised upon an essentially deterministic approach to language philosophy which precludes female agency. Even though I acknowledge the constraints which sought to regulate female expression during the Renaissance, it seems to me that if we are to comprehend the influence of 'scripture' upon women's lives, it is imperative that we scrutinise which particular scriptural discourses Renaissance women writers appropriated. For this approach, combined with close attention to the relationship between the discourse used, the context of the expression and the addressee of the text or expression, will enable us to appreciate more clearly the distinctions between different women's use of the 'scripture'.

Accordingly, in this thesis I have sought to examine the use of one particular scriptural discourse (the psalms) and to display the variety of ways in which it has been deployed for the purposes of constructing the image of the 'chaste, silent, and obedient' exemplary woman of the Renaissance. As I have demonstrated, the psalms figure prominently in texts dedicated to female patrons, in devotional texts which were designed for women's use and which from an early age were used as a means to instruct them in writing and reading. As such, they represent a crucial discourse through which

these women would have learned to construct their own sense of identity. This is in part a reflection of the constraints upon women's position within Renaissance society, in that the psalms epitomised the limits of their education - especially when this is contrasted with the expectations of male education. (Here, it is important to note the compounding of this perspective in critical accounts of male and female use of the psalms: for example, Milton's psalm translations are perceived as merely youthful forays into the realm of poetry which are best forgotten in the light of Paradise Lost.)

It could, therefore, be suggested that these women are simply internalising the laws of patriarchy and are thus consigned, in Gary F. Waller's words, to 'the margins of discourse'. On the one hand this appears undeniable, but the process of acquiring a subject position is a complex one which is not adequately explained by a theory of internalisation. In their use of the discourse of the psalms, writers such as Elizabeth Tyrwhitt and Frances Abergavenny demonstrate their capacity to reformulate 'the Word' and reconstruct it to suit their own purposes. But their writing presents problems to modern criticism, primarily because it appears that they are not using their 'own' words but are simply repeating the quintessentially patriarchal discourse of the Bible. It is far easier for modern readers to acknowledge the 'radical' re-writing or re-appropriating of biblical discourse in Aemilia Lanyer's poetry, in Anne Clifford's Diaries, or in other texts by women in the civil war period.

But one of the questions underpinning this thesis is the exploration of the point at which any expression becomes an individual's own and, therefore, represents a unique example of self-expression. Our understanding of sixteenth-century women writers in

particular is clouded by our own expectations of what constitutes an intrinsically 'feminine' discourse: if the writers do not comply with this, then they are of necessity conforming to, or internalising, patriarchal expectations of them. This equation is problematised with regard to religious faith (which itself poses difficulties for predominantly secular modern critical approaches). On the one hand faith is that which acts as a means to regulate women's behaviour, but it is also that which enables them to define themselves and thus to redefine the meaning of that faith. It is, albeit paradoxically, the very Word which seeks to subjugate them that they use to assert their own identity. It is we who define these texts as being more or less radical in relation to a loosely defined norm based upon our own distinctions between 'derivative' and 'original' discourses. Thus, the Diaries of Anne Clifford or women writers of the civil war period are perceived to be radical, whereas the writings of Dorcas Martin, Elizabeth Tyrwhitt and Frances Abergavenny are not. But are these the right premises or expectations? For at a time when women's access to education was extremely limited and women were deemed to be susceptible to all forms of heretical doctrines, the very fact that these women are demonstrating their capacity to interpret the scripture 'acceptably' epitomises the inherent contradictions in male representations of women; these women may well have been chaste but, as they were not silent, they cannot be easily defined as obedient.

These women also provide examples upon which later writers could model themselves: Barbara Lewalski has highlighted Mary Sidney's importance as a source of inspiration for Lanyer and, more recently, Margaret P. Hannay has argued that her example was not simply debilitating for her niece, Lady Mary Worth. But, in my analysis, Mary Sidney herself is also positioned within a 'female literary

tradition'. Whilst the poetic form of her Psalmes moves women's association with that discourse into another arena, it also demonstrates the continued influence of the psalms as a discourse for female use. They need not, therefore, be seen as directly reflecting her love for her brother or her lament for his, her mother's and father's deaths. Mary Sidney's association with the psalms and the fact that she is 'only' a translator identify her as subject to a patriarchal discourse which she cannot 'own'. But the fact that at one point Harington could have suggested that her chaplain must have written them (as it was 'more than a woman's skill to have expressed the sense so right') indicates that in some senses she was, as Anne Finch puts it, an 'intruder on the rights of men'.<sup>1</sup> In addition to this, the evaluations of her work by Daniel, Donne, Drayton and Lanyer point out that she was able to play a vital role in the establishment of the aesthetic possibilities of the English language.

This raises the question of the 'femininity' of translation, which is an area which warrants further investigation. The disbelief in Mary Sidney's ability and the praise bestowed on female translators by male editors such as Bale, Bentley, and Cancellor (in conjunction with the number of men who were engaged in this activity) indicates to me that translation was neither intrinsically 'feminine' nor inherently 'marginal', but of vital importance in both the establishment of the English language and the dissemination of Protestantism. This is especially true of psalm translation, but this has led me to question modern evaluations of women's translations. I see this as an area for future research, particularly as 'translation' is receiving renewed critical attention. A possible way forward in this area is to explore women's translations from the premise that they were engaged in promoting the English language and

the Protestant religion: this connection, as Thomas Bentley puts it, situates their translations not as 'marginal' or 'feminine' but as vital 'for the common benefit of our countrie'.

Another issue raised by this thesis which demands further enquiry is the conflicting uses in which biblical models of exemplary women can be employed and how they relate to texts delineating the 'deceit of women'. In her poem 'The Introduction', Anne Finch points out that women have been alienated from their own history as that history has been interpreted from a male perspective. Finch argues that although social prescriptions seek to contain women within the house and warn them against attempting to write, biblical models can overturn this perspective:

Sure, 'twas not ever thus, nor are we told  
Fables, of women that excelled of old;  
To whom, by the diffusive hand of heaven,  
Some share of wit and poetry was given (ls. 21-24).

Finch invokes the stories of the women who heralded the return of the Ark of the Covenant with song. Her portrayal of these women echoes the terms in which Donne praises Mary Sidney's Psalmes:

Here, holy virgins in the concert join,  
The louder notes to soften and refine,  
And with alternate verse complete the hymn divine  
(ls. 30-33).

Although Finch's narration depends upon identifying stereotypically 'feminine' traits ('soften and refine'), she demonstrates that women's roles in biblical events have been misrepresented and that they have a distinctive voice in which to praise God. She also draws attention to the women who greet the conquering David (I Samuel 18. v.6). It is they, according to Finch, who precipitate Saul's downfall by aligning themselves with 'the young poet, after God's own heart,/ By him inspired and taught the Muses' art' (ls. 34-35). Finch thereby connects the women's capacity for praising God with the model of the

psalmist.

She proceeds to depict Deborah as a woman whose poetry and actions enable her to rule the land (Judges 4 & 5):

A woman here leads fainting Israel on,  
She fights, she wins, she triumphs with a song,  
Devout, majestic, for the subject fit,  
And far above her arms exalts her wit,  
Then to the peaceful, shady palms withdraws,  
And rules the rescued nation with her laws (ls. 45-50).

By invoking these images of women, Finch attempts to reinscribe them into biblical and literary history from a perspective which celebrates their roles. Strictly speaking, it is not true that women had not been told 'fables, of women that excelled of old': these images recur throughout conduct literature, but not as models for their poetic gifts. Yet the songs of Deborah, Judith, Anna and Hester are included among additional Old Testament psalms in the 1590 edition of Anthony Gilby's translation of de Beze's Psalmes and form part of Michael Drayton's The Harmony of the Church (1591). In these contexts these women represent exemplars of piety, but are simultaneously examples of female poets, providing writers such as Mary Sidney and, later, Anne Finch with models for a different kind of imitation to that which, presumably, was intended. Additionally, Deborah's song includes a vindication of Jael's killing of Heber: a murderess, as long as she is acting according to God's will, is a suitable subject for thanksgiving. The conflict intrinsic to biblical representations of women, for they are at once exemplary and transgressive, is a source which needs to be tapped. Finch's use of Deborah invokes her power and highlights male inadequacies, in a way which is more reminiscent of texts dealing with the deceit of women, based on classical models. How were such conflicting representations to be reconciled?

Despite the fact that biblical models were utilized as means to

maintain women's subjection to patriarchal constraints, they simultaneously position women as transgressing that subjection. In the process of my research, I have already begun to explore the contradictions inherent in the prescriptions defining women's association with silence and confession. By examining the conflicting definitions of silence in conduct literature and the representation of female Catholic martyrs, and the requirement of speech in witchcraft pamphlets and tracts depicting possessed women, I have discussed the limitations of the universal equation of 'silence' with 'chastity and obedience'. The use of the psalms is also pertinent in this context. In one sense this discourse designates the female speaker as exemplary, but the use of that discourse in certain situations identifies the speaker as transgressive: particularly in the examples of Lady Jane Grey, Anne Askew and Mary Glover. These women use the psalms to resist earthly Laws, rather than to submit to social prescriptions. They are also figures of female penitence, an image which pervades representations of women during the Renaissance. The language of penitence is, not surprisingly, closely associated with the psalms, but also with the figure of Mary Magdalene who, perhaps, supplants the image of 'Our Lady' for Protestant women. In Mary Magdalenes Love, she is also a figure for male imitation which opens up a field of investigation for the gendering of the language of confession during the Renaissance.<sup>2</sup>

Finch suggests that women are 'Educations more than Natures fools' for believing the stories that have been told to them, rather than reinterpreting those stories from an angle which recognises women's ability to resist earthly constraints by the power invested in them by God. Finch obviously gains inspiration from her recognition that God gave these women 'some share of wit and poetry'.

While the women I have been looking at through the thesis have, so far, been seen as simply internalising patriarchal prescriptions, it seems to me that they - especially Mary Sidney - provide contemporary models of women who had received from God 'some share of wit and poetry'.

FOOTNOTES

1) Anne Finch, 'The Introduction' (l.10) in Anne Finch Countess of Winchelsea: Selected Poems, edited by Denys Thompson (Manchester, 1987), pp. 26-28.

2) Nicholas Breton, Mary Magdalenes Love (1595).

APPENDIX 1.

1A. The Book of Common Prayer (1549).

The Ordre how the Psalter is appoynted to be rede (sig. A1v).

The Psalter shalbe red through, once every Moneth, & because that some monethes, be longer then some other be: it is thought good, to make them even by this meanes.

To every moneth, as concernyng this purpose, shalbe appointed just xxx dayes.

And because January and March hath one daye, above the sayd noubre, and February whiche is placed betweene them bothe, hath only xxviii daies, February shall borowe of either the Monethes of January and Marche one daie, and so the Psalter which shalbe red in February, muste bee begun the last daie of January, & ended the first daie of March.

And whereas Maie, July, August, October, and December, have xxxi dayes a peece, it is ordered that the same Psalmes shalbe redde the laste daye of the said Monethes, which were red the daie before: so that the Psalter maye bee begon agayne the firste daye of the nexte Monethes ensuyng.

Now to knowe what Psalme shalbe red every daye, loke in the kalendar the noubre that is appoynted for the Psalmes, and then finde the same noubre in this table, and upon that noubre shall you se, what Psalmes shalbe sayd at Matyns, and Evensong.

And where the cxix Psalme is devided into xxii porcions, and is over long to be red at any one tyme: it is so ordered that at one time shall not be red above iiii or v of the said porcions, as you shall perceive in this table.

And here is also to bee noted, that in this Table, and in all other partes of the service, where any Psalmes are appointed the noubre is expressed after the greate English Bible, which from the ix Psalme unto the cxlviii Psalme (folowyng the division of the Ebrues) doth vary in nombres from the common Latyn translacion.

1B. Table (sig. A2r).

DAY	MATINS	EVENSONG
1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	6, 7, 8
2	9, 10, 11	12, 13, 14
3	15, 16, 17	18
4	19, 20, 21	22, 23
5	24, 25, 26	27, 28, 29
6	30, 31	32, 33, 34
7	35, 36	37
8	38, 39, 40	41, 42, 43
9	44, 45, 46	47, 48, 49
10	50, 51, 52	53, 54, 55

11	56, 57, 58	59, 60, 61
12	62, 63, 64	65, 66, 67
13	68	69, 70
14	71, 72	73, 74
15	75, 76, 77	78
16	79, 80, 81	82, 83, 84, 85
17	86, 87, 88	89
18	90, 91, 92	93, 94
19	95, 96, 97	98, 99, 100, 101
20	102, 103	104
21	105	106
22	107	108, 109
23	110, 111, 112, 113	114, 115
24	116, 117, 118	119 inde iiiii
25	inde v	inde iiiii
26	inde v	inde iiiii
27	120, 121, 122, 123, 124, 125	126, 127, 128, 129, 130, 131
28	132, 133, 134, 135,	136, 137, 138
29	139, 140, 141	142, 143
30	144, 145, 146	147, 148, 149, 150

## APPENDIX 2. TABLES FOR THE USE OF THE PSALMS.

### 2A. Starnhold & Hopkins The Whole Booke of the Psalmes (1562).

The table below is extracted from Athanasius' treatise prefacing the Sternhold and Hopkins Psalter. As the treatise is seven pages long, I have summarised the application of the majority of the psalms; quotation marks indicate a direct quotation from the treatise (+7v-A3v).

1. 32. 41. 112. 119. 128: define happiness.
- 3: persecution by acquaintances.
4. 115: thanksgiving to God for hearing prayer in time of persecution by acquaintances.
- 5: against evil and for prayers heard.
6. 37: 'If thou feelest the threatninges of God, and thereby perceyvest thy selfe to be dismaied'.
- 7: 'If any consult or conspire against thee as Achitophel agaynst David, and some man tell it thee'.
- 8: grace of Saviour to mankind.
8. 81: of God's wonderous works & thanksgiving.
- 9: stopping enemies & trust in God.
- 10: 'If any man wil make thee afrayed, thou with trust in the Lord shalt syng'.
- 11: when malice and pride abounds.
- 26: if the above continues, do not stop calling on God.
14. 53: against blasphemy.
- 15: 'If thou wilt know after what sort the life of a citizen of the kingdome of heaven is, syng the 15. Psalme.'
17. 86. 89. 142: prayer in time of persecution.
- 90: how Moses prayed.
- 18: escape from enemies, prayer for deliverance.
19. 26. 27: wonder at God's creation.
- 20: 'If thou seest any man troubled, comfort them, and praying for

- them, say the wordes of the Psalme 20'.
- 23: 'If thou seest thy selfe kept of the Lord and that thou prosperest, rejoyce and syng'.
- 25: against enemies.
26. 35. 43: against persecution from enemies seeking to kill you.
- 46: despite numerous enemies, have no fear.
- 48: 'If thou wilt know how thou ought to go unto the Lord when thou wilt geve him thanks: playnly thou shalt understand and sing 48. Psalme.'
49. 127: renewal of spirit and body.
- 31: at christenings.
- 33: sing with just men.
- 34: escape from enemies.
- 36: do not think that the wicked prosper.
- 39: arm yourself against attacks from the Devil.
- 41: pity for beggars and poor men.
44. 79. 80. 102. 106. 107. 114: remembrance of God's benefits to our Fathers.
- 46: give thanks.
- 51: 'If thou haste sinned & being turned, fallest to repentance, and wouldest obteyne mercy, thou hast the words of confession in the. 51. Psalme.'
- 52: when suffering false accusation.
54. 56: when suffering betrayal and false persecution.
57. 142: comfort in time of persecution.
- 59: thanks for escape from persecution.
- 4: if weak.
- 58: against hypocrites.
- 62: comfort in persecution.
- 63: fleeing persecution, not alone in the desert.
64. 68. 70. 71: in times of continuous persecution from enemies.
- 65: praise to God.
- 80: to instruct others in the mystery of resurrection.
- 74: comfort in the time of God's anger.
71. 75. 92. 105. 106. 108. 111, 118. 136. 138: psalms of confession.
81. 95: 'If thou wilt sing to the Lorde in solemnitie, call together the servauntes of God and sing '
- 92: to be sung on the Sabboth.
- 13: Sunday praise.
- 95: second Sabboth praise.
- 93: day of preparation.
- 94: fourth Sabboth.
- 100: instruction in faith and obedience.
- 101: for judgement and mercy.
- 103: praising God.
113. 127. 146. 133. 147. 148. 149. 150: 'If thou wilt praise God, and know how to praise him for any thing, and what wordes he that prayeth ought to use, thou hast the ... Psalmes.'
- 137: psalm of confession.
- 139: in time of trial and temptation.
- 140: deliverance from enemies.
5. 141. 142. 143. 144: 'If thou wilt make thy prayer, say.'
96. 98: singing to God.
105. 106. 107. 111. 112. 113. 114. 115. 116. 117. 118. 119. 134. 145. 147. 148. 149. 150: singing of obedience.
25. 110: particular psalms concerning the Saviour.

2B. Antony Gilby, The Psalmes of David (1581). This text is a translation of Theodore de Beze's commentaries upon the Psalms, and it is his table which Gilby reproduces, sig. a7r, and which I have recorded below:

The Psalmes Digested into a briefe Table, and brought to certain principal heades, according to the direction of M. Beze.

|  |   |   |  |
|--|---|---|--|
| The general matter of this whole Booke of PSALMES concerneth | { | Doctrine onelie, as Psalme  | { 1. 14. 15. 19. 24. 29. 32. 36. 37. 45. 49. 50. 53. 73. 77. 87. 90. 95. 107. 110. 125. 127.133. 134.  |
|  |   | Doctrine  | { Political, as Psalme. 72. 101. Ecclesiastical, as Psalme. 78. Domestical, as Psalme. 128.  |
|  |   | Prophesie, as Psalme.   | 2. 117.  |
|  |   | Doctrine and Prophesie, as Psalme.  | 40. 97. 98.  |
|  |   | Praier , as Psalme  | { 3. 5. 6. 7. 12. 13. 17. 20.25. 26 28. 31. 35. 38. 43. 44. 51. 54. 55. 56. 57. 59. 70. 71. 74. 79. 80. 83. 84. 85. 86. 88. 89. 109. 115. 119. 120. 123. 130. 132. 140. 141. 142. 143. |
|  |   | Prophesie and Praier, as Psalme.  | 22. 69.  |
|  |   | Consolation, as Psalme  | { 4. 11. 27. 39. 42. 52. 58. 93. 94. 99. 102. 106. 112. 121. 122. 131. 137. 139.   |
|  |   | Praier and Consolation, as Psalme.  | 10.  |
|  |   | Thankes-giving, as Psalme   | { 8. 9. 21. 23. 30. 67. 75. 76. 81. 82. 92. 100. 103. 104. 105. 111. 113. 114. 116. 118. 124. 126. 129. 135. 136. 144. 145. 146. 147. 148. 149. 150.                                   |
|  |   | Doctrine and thankesgiving, as Psalme.  | 34.  |
|  |   | Thankesgiving & prophesie, as Psa.  | 16. 18. 96.  |
|  |   | Victories or Triumphes, as Psalme.  | 46. 48.  |
|  |   | The residue of the Psalmes, which be not particularlie applied to anie of the former heades by BEZA, have this relation by TREMELLIUS, to | { Doctrine. 62. 9. Praier and } 63. 64. Doctrine. } Praier. 60. 61. 108. Praier and } 41. 138. Praise. } Praise. 65. Thankesgiving 66. and Praise.                                     |

2C. There is also another table of the psalms appended to the end of de Beze's commentaries. This table is unpaginated, but effectively commences on page 358. For easy access and to save space, I have grouped similarly entitled psalms together (my additions are indicated by square brackets); the table itself provides a sentence introduction stating the main purpose of each individual psalm.

**A Brief Table of the Princial Points of everie Psalme, whereby Everie man may meditate in them, as his mind is most affected.**

1. [73]. [112]. [128]: Who are blessed, who are miserable.
- 2: A prophesie of the kingdome of Christ.
- 3: A comfort in great troubles by the mercie of God.
- 4: He reproveth his adversaries, and staieth himselfe upon the loving kindnes of God, not upon worldlie commodities.
- 5: God, our God and our King, wil punish the wicked for his own glorie.
- 6: A conflict of the conscience with sinne, and comfort in the end.
- 7: We must set the defence of God against reprochful slanders.
- 8: A thankesgiving to God for our creation and redemption in Christ.
- 9: A thankesgiving for benefites received, and comfort against imminent miseries.
10. [94]. [129]: Al the enterprises of the giants and tyrants against the Church shal come to naught, for the Lord will heare the poore.
- 11: The Lord trieth the good men, and destroieth the wicked.
- 12: Cal upon God when al things seeme desperate, and past al hope.
- 13: The more desperate that things appeare, more earnestlie must we praie.
- 14: The corruption of the natural man chieflie uttering it selfe against the Church.
- 15: Who shal be the inhabitants of the heavens.
- 16: An exercise of the faithful soule.
- 17: A complaint of the pride and crueltie of the enimies.
- 18: Gods marvellous power in delivering his people.
- 19: A briefe sum of al godlie knowledge, with a praier for the atteining therunto.
- 20: The people praie for their king.
- 21: A thankesgiving for a victorie, wherof al the praise is given to God.
- 22: Of Christs agonie & grevous sorowe which he suffered & overcame for us.
- 23: The Lord is my shepeheard, I can not want.
- 24: God is the Lord of al, but chieflie of his Church, in the which we must pray, that God may reigne and set forth his glorie.
- 25: A praier for faith, forgiveness of sin, direction of the holie spirit, and for Gods merciful protection.
26. 27. 28.: A meditation for them that live amongst the wicked.
- 29: A necessarie meditation of the majestie of God.
30. [31]: A Thankesgiving [prayer] for deliverance from some great danger.
- 32: The blessednes of man is in the forgiveness of sinne.
- 33: Praise God with a pure heart.
- 34: A thankesgiving, and other necessarie doctrine.
- 35: Against the flatterers of the wicked, and false accusers of the godlie.
36. 37: The wickednes of men, the providence of God, and his mercie.
- 38: Sin is the cause of our miseries, yet put awaie by faith, although temporal punishments do folowe for our amendment.
- 39: A meditation of the shortnes of mans life, and his miseries.
- 40: Manie godlie lessons.
- 41: A comfort of the miserable against traitors.
42. [84]: An earnest desire to be in the assemblie of the Church.
44. [43]: An earnest praier for helpe in present miseries, by the consideration of former mercies.

- 45: The marriage song of Salomon.
- 46: A thanksgiving for some great deliverance of the Church.
- 47: An earnest exhortation to praise God.
- 48: God is chiefly to be praised for the defence of his Church.
- 49: Outward felicitie & worldie honor is nothing.
- 50: The worship of God is spiritual, and the outward ceremonial hypocrisie is detestable.
- 51: A most earnest praier for the forgivenes of sinnes.
52. 53. [77]: The crooked nature, crueltie, and punishment of the wicked, with comfort to the godlie in the end of them both.
- 54: The saints being in great dangers, powre forth their praier, and doubt nothing of their deliverance.
55. 56. 57: Against traiterous enimies, with hope of deliverance.
- 58: Against wicked judges, he appealeth to Gods judgement.
59. [64]: Against his cruel adversaries, with comfort in the end.
60. 70: Though the Church be afflicted, yet shal it be comforted againe.
- 61: A zealous praier with great faith and confidence.
62. 63: By the example of David we may confirme our faith in troubles.
65. 66: A praise and thanksgiving unto God for the preservation of the Church.
67. [103]. [104]. [105]: A praier [thanksgiving] for spiritual and temporal blessings.
- 68: The great mercie of God toward his people.
- 69: The complaint and anguish of David as a figure of Christ.
- 71: For comfort & constancie in the old age, when feigned friends doe faile.
72. [75]. [82]. [101]: A praier conteining the sum of godlie government.
- 74: A fervent praier against the spoilers of the Church.
76. [78]. [81]: God is knowne by preserving his Church, and destruction of the enimie.
79. [80]. [83]: Against the oppressers of the Church who fight against God.
- 81: An exhortation to praise God for his benefits, and a reproach of their ingratitude.
85. [86]. [125]: In the midst of miserie we must hope for mercie.
- 87: That the Church after the captivitie should be restored to such glorie, that everie man should count himselfe happie, that is accepted as a member thereof.
88. [89]: A most doleful lamentation [with consolation at the end].
- 90: An excellent praier of Moses.
- 91: An assurance unto him that putteth his trust in God.
- 92: An exhortation to praise God, with a comparison betwixt the wicked and the just.
- 93: The power of God and his promises.
- 95: The praise of God, and a terror to the unthankful.
96. [98]. [99]. [100]. [117]. [118]: An exhortation to praise God chiefly for Christs coming.
- 97: Christ dreadful to the rebels, but joyful to the just.
- 102: A lamentation, a consolation, a prophesie of the dignitie of the Church, a song of Triumph.
- 106: A thanksgiving for Gods mercies, with a declaration of the stubbornesse of the people, and a praier for ful deliverance.
107. [127]: To praise God for his marvelous and woonderful providence in al maner of things.

- 108: David praiseth God with great confidence.  
109: A most terrible imprecation against the enimies.  
110: An epitome of the Gospel.  
111: A thanksgiving and declaration what is true wisdom.  
113: God worketh above nature in his Church.  
114. [115]. [126]. [138]: Praiers for deliverance.  
116: David protesteth that he wil give thanks, and acknowledgeth that he can render nothing else for Gods great benefites.  
119: A long and most fervent praier, for the true meditation and exercise in Gods holie word.  
120: A praier against slanders, and a lamentation for his long abode amongst the wicked.  
121. 123. [124]: The Lord must onelie be looked to in troubles.  
122: David rejoiceth, and praieith for the prosperitie of the Church.  
130: The faithful crie unto the Lord in their miseries, they confesse their sins, and are delivered.  
131: Man may not exalt himselfe, but wait upon the Lord.  
132: The people praie for the posteritie of David, and for the building of the temple: that is, both for their spiritual King the Messiah, and for religion.  
133: A commendation of brotherly love and concord.  
134. 135. 136.: A thanksgiving to the Lord for the benefites bestowed upon his Church.  
137: There is a time of silence under the crosse, so that neither faith nor zeale decaie.  
139: A most excellent Psalme dailie to be meditated.  
140: The state of the godlie in this world, and the staie of their faith.  
141: David praieith for the brideling of his tongue, and that he joine not with the wicked: but that just men may admonish him.  
142: An earnest praier with great confidence.  
143: An earnest praier for remission of sinnes, the cause of miserie.  
144: He praiseth God with great humilitie.  
145: He praiseth God for his wisdom, mercie, power, and justice, and for his benefites toward his Church.

The other foure Psalms are exhortations also to praise God chieflie for his mercies toward his Church. And whereas musical instruments are named, they were agreeable to that ceremonial time: but now al ceremonies being ceased, we must worship in spirit and truth, and so sing Psalmes with the voice, as our heart may be most stirred up to praise and magnifie the Lord our GOD.

### APPENDIX 3: COMPOSITE PSALMS IN DEVOTIONAL TEXTS

From Daniel Featly, Ancilla Pietatis: Or, the Hand-maid to Private Devotion (1628)

#### 3A. MORNINGS DEVOTION: Hymne for the Morning (pp. 151-153).

O Lord, thou art my God, early will I seeke thee; my soule thirsteth for thee; I will sing aloud of thy power, and mercy in the morning (63. vv.1,2; 59. v.16).

O Lord thou art my God early will I seeke thee, my soule thirsteth for thee (63. v.1),

I will sing aloud of thy power, yea I will sing aloud of thy mercy in the morning (59. v.16).

My tongue shall speake of thy righteousnesse, and thy praise all the day long (35. v.28).

I layed me downe, and slept, for thou Lord sustainedst me (3. v.5).

I have dwelt in the secret place of the most High, and abode under the shadow of the Almighty (91. v.1).

He shall cover me with his feathers, and under his wings will I trust; his faithfulness and truth shall bee my shield, and buckler (91. v.4).

Lord arise and lift up the light of thy countenance upon mee (4. v.7).

Teach me to number my daies that I may apply my heart unto wisdom (90. v.12).

Instruct me in the way which I shall goe, and guide mee with thine eye (32. v.8).

Teach mee thy way O Lord, and I will walke in thy truth; O knit my heart to thee, that I may feare thy Name! (86. v.11)

Hold up my goings in thy path, that my footsteps slip not (17. v.5).

O satisfie mee earlie with thy mercy, and that soone that I may rejoyce, and be glad all my daies! (143. v.8)

Let the beauty of the Lord my God be upon me; establish thou the worke of my hands upon me; O prosper thou my handy work (90. v.17).

### 3B. EVENINGS DEVOTION: A Hymne for the evening (pp. 165-166).

It is a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord, and to sing praises unto thy Name, O thou most high (92. v.1).

To shew forth thy loving kindnes in the morning, and thy faithfulness every night (92. 2).

For day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night, sheweth knowledge (19. v.2).

Let the Saints be joyfull in glory, let them sing aloud upon their beds (149. v.5).

Behold he that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber, nor sleepe (121. v.4).

The Lord is my keeper, the Lord is my shade on my right hand (121. v.5).

The Sun shall not smite me by day, nor the Moone by night (121. v.6).

The Lord shall preserve me from all evil; he shall preserve my soule (121. v.7).

I will lay me downe in peace, and take my rest, for thou Lord makest me dwell in safety (4. v.9).

Lighten my eyes that I sleepe not the sleepe of Death (13. v.3).

With thee is the fountaine of life; in thy light shall I see light (36. v.9).

Thou wilt light my candle, and wilt make my darknesse to be light (18. v.28).

3C. A PSALM FOR WOMEN IN TRAVAIL. (pp.716-717)

In thee O Lord doe I put my trust: let mee never bee put to confusion (71. v.1).

Deliver me in thy righteousnes, and cause mee to escape: incline thine eare unto mee, and save me (71. v.2).

Lord strengthen me upon the bed of languishing: make all my bed in my sicknesse (41. v.3).

Lord bee mercifull unto mee, heale my soule, for I have sinned against thee (41. v.4).

Make haste O God to deliver me: make haste O Lord to helpe me (70. v.1).

For thou art my hope O Lord God: thou art my trust from my youth (71. v.5).

By thee have I bene holden up ever since I was borne: thou art hee that tooke mee out of my mothers wombe: my praise shall bee continually of thee (71. v.6).

I am feeble, and sore broken: I have roared by reason of the disquietnesse of my heart (38. v.8).

Lord, all my desire is before thee: and my groaning is not hid from thee (38. v.9).

My soule is bowed downe to the dust; my belly cleaveth to the earth (44. v.21).

Make haste to helpe me O Lord my salvation (38. v.22).

Lord heare mee in this day of my trouble; thy name O God of Jacob defend me (20. v.1).

Send mee helpe from the Sanctuary; and strengthen mee out of Sion (20. v.2).

Blesse me Lord, and blesse the fruit of my wombe.

APPENDIX 4.

From Thomas Bentley, THE MONUMENT OF MATRONES (1582).

**Lampe Two:**

sig. F2r. 'Certaine godlie Sentences out of the 13. Psalme, written by the Queenes Maiestie, in Latine, French, & Italian.

pp. 98-102. 'Praiars' by Lady Jane Dudley.

pp. 103-138. Elizabeth Tyrwhitt, Morning and Evening Praiars, with diverse Psalmes, Hymnes, and Meditations.

pp. 139-213. Frances Abergavenny, Praiars.

p. 214. Anne Askew, 'Prayer before hir death'.

p. 215-220. 'Other godlie praiars taken out of the Psalmes, written by a godlie hearted Gentlewoman'.

pp. 221-248. Dorcas Martin, An Instruction for Christians.

**Lampe Three:**

pp. 253-279. Theodore de Beze, Right godlie Psalmes, fruitfull Praiars, and comfortable Meditations.

pp. 280-296. [James Cancellor], Holie Praiers, and godlie Meditations, deciphering in AlphabeticaII forme ... Queene Elizabeth.

pp. 297-302. Another.

pp. 306-319. Theodore de Beze, The King's Heast, or God's Familiar speech to the Queene.

pp. 320-362. Theodore de Beze, The Queenes Vow, or selfe-talke with God.

**Lampe Four:**

pp. 403-404. Two Psalmes [to be used going into church].

pp. 408-409. Two Meditations [to be used on entering the church].

pp. 419-425. Three Psalmes [to be used in preparation for morning and evening prayer].

pp. 425-427. Psalme [exhorting all creatures to praise God].

pp. 427-429. Psalme [of the beautie of God's house, and the soules delight to be therein].

pp. 429-430. Psalme [for the prosperitie of the Church, and that all people may praise and blesse the Lord].

pp. 490-495. Psalmes and praiers to be said in the times of the common plague, or anie other kind of sicknesse, trouble, or affliction.

pp. 683-685. Psalm for 17th. November [mother and daughter]

pp. 712-714. Psalme 72.

pp. 729-730. A Psalme preparing the heart to prayer [mother and daughter].

pp. 895-903. The Dolefull Doove, Or David's penitentiall Psalmes.

pp. 903-931. Other Psalmes or Praiers ... to be used of the afflicted soule, for obtainng the remission of sinnes, and mitigation of miseries.

pp. 937-943. The Psalter, which S. Augustine composed out of everie Psalme of David a verse, for the use of his mother.

pp. 943-955. Praiers [composed of psalms].

pp. 971-975. A forme of prayer, conteining a paraphrasis of these words of David in his 119 Psalme: Order my steps in thy word, and so shall nowickednesse have dominion over me.

pp. 991-992. Being new lain in your bed, saie this Psalme.

Lampe Five:

pp. 109-112. The Complaint of Christ on the Crosse, for women in labour.

pp.112-120. Praiers [for childbirth, composed from psalms]

pp.123-124 & 154. Directions to use the following psalms after childbirth: 103, 30, 116, 121, 8, 127, 128.

pp. 185-191. Psalme [for an old woman]

#### APPENDIX 5.

A. From Nicaraguan New Time: Poems by Ernesto Cardenal, translated by Dinah Livingstone (London, 1988), p 31. (Cardenal is a Catholic and, therefore, although this is a translation of Psalm 57, it is number 58 according to Protestant usage).

#### Psalm 57

You defenders of Law and Order  
isn't your law on the side of one class?  
Civil Law to protect private property  
Penal Law to harass the oppressed  
The freedom you speak of is freedom for capital  
your 'free world' is free exploitation  
Your law is gunlaw and your order the jungle  
the police are yours  
the judges are yours  
There are no big landowners or bankers in prison.

The bourgeoisie go wrong from their mother's womb  
they have class prejudices from the day they are born  
as the rattlesnake is born with poisonous glands  
as the tiger-shark is born to eat people.

O God put an end to the status quo  
draw the oligarchs' fangs.  
Flush them away like lavatory water  
let them wilt like grass under insecticide.

They are the 'worms' when the Revolution comes  
They are not cells in the body but microbes  
aberrations the new human being must blot out.  
Before they sow thorns let the tractor uproot them  
The people shall enjoy themselves  
in the exclusive clubs  
they will take possession of private firms  
the just will rejoice in Courts for the People  
In great city squares we shall celebrate  
the anniversary of the Revolution  
The God who exists is of the proletariat.

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