Clockwork Subjects in the Seventeenth Century:

Shakespeare, Herbert, and Milton

by

Jennifer Downer

A Dissertation Presented in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Philosophy

Approved November 2018 by the
Graduate Supervisory Committee:

David Hawkes, Chair
Bradley Ryner
Cora Fox

ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY

December 2018

ABSTRACT

Among the many paradigm shifts brought about in the seventeenth century was an increased dissociation between the subject and time as a lived, shared experience. *Clockwork Subjects in the Seventeenth Century: Shakespeare, Herbert, and Milton* investigates how changes in the social understanding and experience of time, concurrent with changes in timekeeping technologies, were reflected in the literature of the period. This dissertation is closely concerned with the phenomenon of time from the perspective of the subject and the various ways subjects represent themselves as beings in time. Chapter One provides a theoretical introduction, establishing a Heideggerian framework of temporality and ontology, while emphasizing the characteristics of clock-time as time that is movable and separable from what Heidegger would term "originary time." Chapter Two analyzes metaphors of hearing in *Richard II* in relation to the play's pivotal conceit, in which a dethroned Richard compares himself to broken clockwork; exploring temporality in tandem with the phenomenon of hearing, I argue that aural captivation distorts Richard's perception of his placement in a larger historical framework. Chapter Three employs a reading of Augustinian time George Herbert's poems, "Even-song" and "Church-monuments," analyzing the soul's experience of time in contrast to temporal metaphors that ask, with Augustine, whether time can be measured *by* and *within* the self. Chapter Four, analyzing Milton's *Samson Agonistes*, explores Samson's attempt to act and interpret divine intent while in the middle of history, paralleling early modern efforts to construct an interpretive framework for nature and time.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction: Subjectivity and Time in the Seventeenth Century

Between Two Times: "Vast deserts" and "Man's eternal prime"

Henry Vaughan's poem, "The Evening Watch: A Dialogue," functions as a useful case study in some of the oppositions this dissertation explores: not merely the dichotomy of soul and body, but those of time and eternity, temporality and measured time. The Body begins a discourse with the Soul, where sleep foreshadows death and resurrection, "Farewell! I go to sleep; but when/ The day-star springs, I'll wake again." The Soul's rejoinder emphasizes the contraction of the body into dust:

> SOUL
> Go, sleep in peace; and when thou liest
> Unnumber'd in thy dust, when all this frame
> Is but one dram, and what thou now descriest
> In sev'ral parts shall want a name,
> Then may his peace be with thee, and each dust
> Writ in his book, who ne'er betray'd man's trust!

When the Body finally dies and returns to dust, it will be no larger than "but one dram." The somewhat cold comfort offered by the Soul in its first address anticipates the nature of the Body's fear, and indeed bodily fear at a root level—a fear of fragmentation. In its second portion of dialogue, the Body betrays its true anxiety concerning the separation of soul from body in death-like sleep. The question posed by the Body, "ere we two stray/ How many hours dost think 'till day?", indicates the kind of comfort the Body seeks from the Soul: the comfort of a known end, of counting down toward a predetermined endpoint. The Body's anxiousness to know the number of hours until day seems to justify the Soul's attempt at solace in the previous stanza; the Soul is already attuned to the

Body's preoccupation with counting, as illustrated in the Soul's final attempt at assurance:

> SOUL
> Ah go; th'art weak, and sleepy. Heav'n
> Is a plain watch, and without figures winds
> All ages up; who drew this circle, even
> He fills it; days and hours are blinds.
> Yet this take with thee. The last gasp of time
> Is thy first breath, and man's eternal prime.

The Soul's rejoinder in this stanza mirrors its earlier emphasis on "unnumber'd" dust; the substance of time that human beings measure out so carefully are, in the light of eternity, merely "blinds."

Although Vaughan's poem is not frequently anthologized, it illustrates a sometimes ambivalent attitude in the seventeenth century between counted time and the truth it attempts to measure. In declaring that "Heav'n/ Is a plain watch" and that "days and hours are blinds," Vaughan produces an analogy of human, measured time that runs parallel to the earlier concern about measured dust. In each, the anxiety is over the threat of contraction: to be reduced to "one dram" or to reach the "last gasp of time." At each point, however, the threat is paradoxically undermined as contraction becomes a means of revealing the truth of the subject's situation with respect to time. Vaughan's final irony in the poem, undermining the numbering of ages with the "prime" of eternity, is reminiscent of "vertiginous abbreviation," a term Giorgio Agamben uses to explain "the panoramic that the dying supposedly have of their lives, when the whole of their lives passes before their eyes in a flash."[1] This sort of irony, in which the illusory nature of time is brought into stark relief against time's measurement, is of particular interest

[1] Agamben, *The Time That Remains: A Commentary on the Letter to the Romans*, trans. Patricia Dailey (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2005), 77.

within an age in which hours and minutes increasingly marked out reality. As conceptions of temporality shifted increasingly to clock-time, England in the seventeenth century was suffused with the widespread belief that history was reaching its end (what might lend a shade of urgency to Vaughan's "last gasp of time"). In this century, more accurate timekeeping technology represented the belief that time could be divied up, while widespread and varied beliefs about the millennium and the apocalypse gave a sense of urgency to beliefs about time and history. Some of these end-times beliefs implied a literal chronology in keeping with a linear clock-time; others, however, implied a belief in history as disclosure, more akin to Vaughan's "eternal prime." As I argue in this dissertation, as these oppositions pile up, the position of the early modern subject in relation to time was often an ironic one.

Vaughan's "eternal prime" presents an opposite perspective on time to Marvell's "deserts of vast eternity" in "To His Coy Mistress," however ironically Marvell's verse may be coded. Instead of the generative possibility of the "last gasp of time" becoming a "first breath," as in Vaughan's poem, eternity to Marvell's speaker is a wasteland devoid of pleasure. The ironic position of the subject with respect to these contrasting versions of time—Vaughan's "eternal prime" and Marvell's "vast deserts"—reaches a critical moment in the seventeenth century. Clock-time denotes chronometry, the measurement of time, but chronometry disconnected from a referential basis in the civic or communal, or even the natural or social. Gerhard Dohrn-van Rossum observes, "Through clock-time indications, the times of assembly and council meetings...were potentially detachable

from the dense bundle of other municipal times and their signals."[2] Clock-time, in Dohrn-van Rossum's term, is "detachable"; Jacques LeGoff similarly highlights how the increasing rationalization of time lends time a "pliability," while Stuart Sherman describes its malleability.[3] These descriptors invite further questions: Detachable from what? Pliable and malleable towards whose ends? Clock-time is time abstracted from attachment to the world, and therein consists its moveability and pliability. While clocks do not necessitate this abstraction of time, they do heighten its possibility and likelihood within a historical moment increasingly defined by empiricism and scientific constructionism. To employ a much older example, French scholastic Guillaume d'Auxerre (1160-1229) criticized the practice of usury by arguing that the sale of time was a violation of nature in general (not just humans). He argued, "The usurer acts in contravention to universal natural law, because he sells time, which is the common possession of all creatures....Since, therefore, the usurer sells what necessarily belongs to all creatures, he injures all creatures in general, even stones."[4] As is well demonstrated, the same attitude toward usury is present in the Renaissance. Or, as David Hawkes argues regarding usury, Don Juan "sees his amoral life as a loan of time, imagines God as a usurer waiting to collect a debt..."[5] Marvell's poem includes a hint of usury in the lines "For, lady, you deserve this state, / Nor would I love at lower rate," where rate could be

[2] Gerhard Dohrn-van Rossum, *History of the Hour: Clocks and Modern Temporal Orders*, trans. Thomas Dunlap (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1996), 239.
[3] See Jacques Le Goff, *Time, Work, and Culture in the Middle Ages*, trans. Arthur Goldhammer (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1980), 38, and Stuart Sherman, *Telling Time: Clocks, Diaries, and English Diurnal Form*, 1660-1785 (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1996).
[4] qtd. in LeGoff, 289-290.
[5] David Hawkes, *The Faust Myth: Religion and the Rise of Representation* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 124.

speed or interest paid on a loan, a double-meaning that is difficult not to interpret with irony, preceded as it is by Marvell's satire of Petrarchan itemization.

In a manner similar to d'Auxerre's belief that time belongs to the world, temporality in Martin Heidegger's philosophy reminds us that the nature of being is to be bound via our attachments to the world, attachments that themselves create the experience of temporality. Stated inversely, I would argue that clock-time is time without attachment, time detached from everyday connection to the world outside the subject. These descriptions of detachment are enabled by the distinction that Heidegger draws between "originary time" and chronological time. Originary time is time in its raw form as it is experienced by the subject, prior to any attempt at measurement.[6] It is time without tense, meant to describe the subject's encounter with the world of phenomena and to delineate the relationship between subjects and what exists. Paul Ricouer does a good job of summarizing how this detachment is reflected in clock-time's abstraction, thereby spelling out the key difference in Heidegger's thought between temporality and clock-time:

> Saying 'now' becomes synonymous for us with reading the hour on the clock. But to the extent that the hour and clock are perceived derivations from the day, which itself links Care to the world's light, saying-now retains its existential meaning, but when the machines that serve to measure time are divested of this primary reference to natural measures, that saying-now returns to the abstract representation of time.[7]

So, insofar as it becomes detached from the ontic world, clock-time is an "abstract representation" that loses its relation to "the world's light." None of this is to say that

[6] Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, trans. John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson (Oxford: Blackwell, 2001), 377.
[7] Paul Ricouer, *Time and Narrative,* Vol. 1, trans. Kathleen McLaughlin and David Pellauer (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984), 63.

what Heidegger calls originary time—or, in general, temporality—is so intuitively known as to need no further description. Agamben has pointed out that, *chronos* is representable but not thinkable, but "if you reflect on a real experience of time, you end up with something thinkable, but absolutely unrepresentable."[8] It is hard to imagine time other than *chronos*, but it takes no effort to experience. Augustine, who is like Heidegger in distilling time to the phenomenal impressions it leaves on the subject, rejects Aristotle's notion than time is the measure of motion, but alternatively, this leaves no easy resolution to the question of what time is. Time may be nothing more than the "measure" of the mental effects of phenomena, but even the act of "marking" is called into question by the fact that the moment is always passing.[9] Before the early modern period, before clocks become increasingly relevant, the question persists: Why does the passing moment continually elude us? Why, like Marvell's "vast deserts of eternity," does the "now" always seem empty?

Saying Now

In *How Soon is Now?*, Carolyn Dinshaw points out that the *now* of desire, though seemingly empty, is actually "constituted by...'purposes and activities,' needs and attachments."[10] Dinshaw's analysis is one among many to be published in recent years, offering intriguing explorations of temporality, or time as it is humanly experienced, often in sensuous and asynchronous forms. The current trend in criticism about temporality is toward desire, since desire explains how the subject can have an

[8] Agamben, *The Time That Remains*, 64.
[9] Augustine, *Confessions*, trans. Maria Boulding (New York: Vintage Spiritual Classics, 1998), 11.27.36.
[10] Dinshaw, 4.

asynchronous experience of time, how temporality can diverge from *chronos*. In the background of these readings is Derrida's concept of *différance* as it applies to time. This refers, of course, to the idea that there is never a present that inheres in the moment, but that the present always defers to another time.[11] The emptiness of now, or framed in Derrida's terms, the present that always seem to constitute delay and deferment within itself, was as much a problem for Augustine as it has been for critics concerned with temporal *différance*. Augustine, for example, conceives of time as a nothing, only meaningful in describing the order of subjective perceptions: "What I measure is the impression which passing phenomena leave in you [my mind], which abides after they have passed by: that is what I measure as a present reality, not the things that passed by so that the impression could be formed."[12] While Dinshaw invokes Augustine at many points, Dinshaw's claim that the now is not empty but filled with "'purposes and activities,' needs and attachments" seems much more sanguine than Augustine's about the subject's position with respect to constitutive deferment. In Augustine, this lack of presence in turn prevents subjects from being self-present. Derrida's notion is that the present is filled with nothing other than traces, or signs whose meaning is never present because they both differ from and defer to the next in the chain of signification.[13] In this respect at least, Augustine's repeated lament that to experience time is to be distended,

[11] See Jacques Derrida, "Différance," *Margins of Philosophy,* trans. Alan Bass (The Harvester Press: Brighton, 1982).
[12] Augustine, *Confessions*, trans. Maria Boulding (New York: Vintage Spiritual Classics, 1998), 11.27.36.
[13] Derrida writes, "It is because of *différance* that the movement of signification is possible only if each so-called 'present' element, each element appearing on the scene of presence, is related to something other than itself, thereby keeping within itself the mark of the past element, and already letting itself be vitiated by the mark of its relation to the future element." "Différance," *Margins of Philosophy,* 13. Simon Critchley succinctly explains Derrida's notion of traces as follows: "The present is constituted by a differential network of traces. In order for the present to be present, it must be related to something non-present, something *différant*, and so not be present." *The Ethics of Deconstruction: Derrida and Levinas*, Second Edition (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1999), 37.

torn apart between past and future, seems to align with Derrida's insistence that the subject is likewise divided via the process of signification, that this process includes "everything that is thought on the basis of the present, that is, in our metaphyscial language, every being, and singularly substance of the subject."[14]

This examination of *différance* in literary-historical studies is relevant to my own analysis insofar as the present, the now, is central to any description of time as it is experienced by subjects. Prior to clock-time as universal (the rationalization of time that grew in the medieval era and was solidified with accurate and precise instruments during the seventeenth century), humans encounter self-division in the present, the experience of being out of synch with time. Clocks do not introduce anything new with respect to time. What clock-time does introduce, however, is an opportunity to elide and conceal these experiences of disjunction, to increasingly alienate the sacred and the secular, to make time individual rather than communal, shared, and "the common possession of all creatures." Edward S. Casey argues that the global reach of communication technologies are partially responsible for the new placelessness in the modern age. While not a traditional "communication" technology, the clock meets the criteria Casey outlines by "exhibit[ing] a dromocentrism that amounts to temporocentrisim writ large; not just time but speeded-up time (*dromos* connotes 'running,' 'race,' 'racecourse')...."[15] In the everyday experience of temporality, as previously discussed, the *now* is empty becase it always seems to reference another time; it never quite seems self-present. Ironically but fittingly, as time turns increasingly toward individual, personal use (and detached from

[14] Derrida, "Différance," *Margins of Philosophy,* 13.
[15] Edward S. Casey, *The Fate of Place: A Philosophical History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), xiii.

natural or communal ends), this aspect of *chronos* is heightened. Walter Benjamin has famously pointed out the "homogeneity" and "emptiness" that characterize this epoch.[16] Clock-time, as *chronos* taken off the hook and accelerated, is time not tied to place; this form of time reduces the multiplicity of place to the singularity of space. Casey writes, "It is as if the acceleration discovered by Galileo to be inherent in falling bodies has come to pervade the earth (conceived as a single scene of communication), rendering the planet a 'global village' not in a positive sense but as a placeless place indeed."[17] In becoming placeless, clock-time is tied, in Derrida's terms, to a present that can never be present.

For my purposes, the problem of time posed by *différance*, like the fear of disintegration in Vaughan's poem, is the threat to the subject as it seeks unity and self-coherence in the moment. However, as I seek to demonstrate in this dissertation, the moments when the subject's sense of coherence seems most threatened, most out of synch with time, are the moments when the subject's relationality to the world reveals itself. If *chronos* is secular time and *kairos* is sacred time, clock-time, in being a detached, empty, and accelerated *chronos*, essentially reduces all time to secular time.[18] Agamben's explanation of messianic time in *The Time That Remains* seems to contain an implicit critique of *différance* without ever mentioning Derrida; relevant to my purposes, it does so by means of an inversion of our traditional, *chronos*-driven, concept of the now. Agamben does not fail to take seriously the threat to subjectivity when humans are out of synch with time—when time never seems to cohere in the moment. However, in proposing messianic time as an operational time, his analysis indicates that the

[16] Qtd. in Sherman, 10.
[17] Casey, xiii.
[18] Agamben uses this secular/sacred distinction in relation to *chronos* and *kairos* throughout *The Time That Remains.*

constitutive deferral encapsulated by *différance* is a consequence of the way we represent time to ourselves. While chronological time is represented as past, present, and future lined up on a continuum, a representation known as a "time-image," operational time is defined as "the time the mind takes to realize a time image."[19] In other words, operational time is the time it takes to think a representation of time. The concept, borrowed from linguist Gustave Guillaume rather than the Saussurian linguistics that ground Derrida, entails the scale between potentiality and action established by Aristotle; Agamben sees this scale as "implicit in the Saussurian distinction between *langue* and *parole*, yet far more complex."[20] This concept aligns well with Agamben's emphasis on modality and aspect as realities of time, rather than simply tense.[21] This is not a time other than chronological time but a "time within time," a time not wholly captured by our spatial representation of chronological time. This is the crux of Agamben's argument as it is relevant to mine: our representations of chronological time, "time images," imply a non-representable time, a pure potentiality of thought, captured within the chronological time it takes to conjure them. Because a time image implies potentiality, it cannot simply be represented by the amount of time it takes to think about it, whether five seconds or five days; there will always be a remainder that escapes representation. However, this operational time, by allowing us to stand aside from the stream of *chronos*, is likewise what allows us to act within that stream.[22]

---

[19] This is the definition given by its originator, the linguist Gustave Guillaume, whom Agamben engages with extensively in describing operational time. *The Time That Remains*, 66.

[20] Agamben, *The Time That Remains*, 65.

[21] See Agamben's comments on prophecy on p. 60 and the Hebrew system of verbs in relation to the inversive *waw* on pp. 74-75 of *The Time That Remains.*

[22] "This ulterior time, nevertheless, is not another time, it is not a supplementary time added on from outside to chronological time. Rather, it is something like a time within time--not ulterior, but interior--which only measures my disconnection with regard to it, my being out of synch and in noncoincidence with

Here, Agamben's theory begins to make clear how and why the experience of being out of synch, dislocated in chronological time, may not be completely dooming for the subject. Agamben, in the following passage, addresses the threat posed when the self, out of synch with time, becomes self-divided and alienated:

> Whereas our representation of chronological time, as the time in which we are, separates us from ourselves and transforms us into impotent spectators of ourselves—spectators that look at the time that flies without any time left, continually missing themselves--messianic time, an operational time in which we take hold of and achieve our representations of time, is the time that we ourselves are, and for this very reason, is the only real time, the only time we have.[23]

Notably, Agamben does not mention *différance* but "our representations of chronological time." Agamben's explanation of messianic time as operational time implicitly points out the problem with *différance* being taken as a feature of time itself, and by extension, the argument that the subject's experience in time is nothing but self-division; this is implied by the statement that "our representation of chronological time...transforms us into impotent spectators of ourselves." One implication of Agamben's analysis is that the chain of signification in *différance* assumes the logic of represented *chronos* only. While time experienced in desire is one of continual deferral, a present that is emptied of everything but traces, operational time offers a time, not other than *chronos*, but at the disposal of *chronos*, a time which is "not entirely consumed by representation."[24]

In his *Nativity Ode*, Milton describes the music at Christ's birth as the music of creation, a messianic time that initiates a dislocation of past into present: "Time will run back, and fetch the age of gold." Earlier in the poem, he addresses the Muse as if it can

---

regard to my representation of time, but precisely because of this, allows for the possibility of my achieving and taking hold of it." *The Time That Remains*, 67.

[23] Agamben, *The Time That Remains*, 68.

[24] Agamben, 67.

outrun the "star-led wizards" in presenting gifts to the child Christ: "Oh, run, prevent them with thy humble ode, / And lay it lowly at His blest feet." Agamben's explanation of "the time of the now" (messianic time) not only provides a way of addressing the problem Derrida poses of the non-presence of presence, but it also overlaps with Heidegger's originary time. Messianic time, as a type of operational time, lies between two chronological events, the resurrection and the second coming, or *parousia*. While *parousia* refers to the end of time, it "literally signifies to be next to; in this way, being is beside itself in the present."[25] Heidegger's notion of temporality also rejects tenses in favor of "'ecstases' of temporality." Like the "beside itself" of *parousia*, "ecstasis" signifies the experience of standing outside of oneself.[26] However, the perpetual deferral of this time, as literal second coming and therefore end of an age, introduces a paradox of represented time. Delay in messianic time might be compared to a mathematical equation infinitely approaching a limit but never reaching it. This kind of delay, internal to a concept of time, escapes representation. An ecstatic relationship to time, in the sense of standing outside one's own experience, does not imply that the subject is continually self-divided in time, but it does imply that the subject is not at the center of their own experience of time and their own perceptions. Like Edgar's last lines in *King Lear*, "the weight of this sad time we must obey," our cares (*Sorge*) exercise a weight, a force of gravity on time. Ricouer has explained Heidegger's ontologoical concept *being-towards-death* as imposing "…the primacy of the future over the present and the closure of this

[25] Agamben, 73.
[26] Heidegger, *Being and Time*, trans. John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson (Oxford: Blackwell, 2001), 377.

future by a limit internal to all things and every endeavor."[27] Realizing an internal limit to time—an ending, and even the inevitability of one's own death—dislocates the subject in time and reminds them of their own contingency. In describing this raw experience of time, one cannot take for granted either the essence of things or the nature of one's encounter with what exists, driving home Heidegger's working principle that "Ontology is only possible as phenomenology."[28]

My interest in exploring metaphors of broken clockwork, disordered clocks, and more abstract disjunctions between various temporalities and their orders of meaning shares a Heideggerian foundation with many of these critics. While sharing these ground-level distinctions, however, my interest in temporality is focused in another direction than desire. In the next three chapters, my interest is engaged in encounters with time as they relate to the provisional nature of human understanding; put simply, my interest is less "time and desire" than "time and truth." In "The Question Concerning Technology," Heidegger argues that truth is not "correctness of representation" but that truth becomes revealed through relationality.[33] This emphasis on relationality implies a totality beyond our ability to reduce or dissect. Similarly, in the introduction to *Being and Time*, Heidegger points out the etymological connection between "*logos*" and "*legomenon*"; *legomenon* "can also mean what is addressed, as something that has become visible in its

---

[27] Ricouer, 61.
[28] Heidegger, "*Being and Time*: Introduction," *Basic Writings*, ed. David Farrell Krell (New York: Harper Collins, 2008), 80.
[29] Agamben, 73.
[30] Heidegger, *Being and Time*, trans. John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson (Oxford: Blackwell, 2001), 377.
[31] Ricouer, 61.
[32] Heidegger, "*Being and Time*: Introduction," *Basic Writings*, ed. David Farrell Krell (New York: Harper Collins, 2008), 80.
[33] Martin Heidegger, "The Question Concerning Technology," *Basic Writings*, ed. David Farrell Krell (New York: Harper Collins, 2008), 318.

relation to something else, in its 'relatedness.'" In this connection, "*logos* acquires the meaning of a relationship with and a relating to something."[34] The impression these observations create, in relation to both being and time, is that the individual's grasp of the whole is partial and provisional—something seen aslant and only experienced by means of relationship and attachment. This dynamic becomes important in my final chapter, on Milton's *Samson Agonistes,* where the difference in scale between divine knowledge and human knowledge makes interpretation important to the experience of temporality.

This same principle, where "relatedness" between things creates a partial knowledge, applies to Heidegger's nonlinear temporality. Temporality in *Being and Time* is described in terms of a totality, held together by care, or *Sorge* in the German. *Sorge* connotes anxious care, which Heidegger at one point inscribes as "concern and solicitude."[35] Heidegger says that "Temporality reveals itself as the authentic meaning of care"[36] and that care constitutes a "primordial structural totality."[37] Again, it is this emphasis on totality that implies the primacy of connection. Instead of abstract, measured time, temporality in Heidegger is determined by relationships within a totality, and it is this totality of attachments that is responsible for his nonlinear description of time and gets us beyond the description of merely subjective experience of linear time.

Rather than static, linear time, Heidegger's conception of *telos* and his conception of cause, both entailing temporality, are rooted in relationality. Heidegger defines *telos* as "that which gives bounds, that which completes" rather than as "aim" or "purpose,"

---

[34] Heidegger, "Being and Time: Introduction," 80.
[35] Heidegger, *Being and Time,* 238.
[36] Heidegger, *Being and Time,* 374.
[37] "Care, as a primordial structural totality, lies 'before' ['vor'] every factical 'attitude' and 'situation' of Dasein, and it does so existentially *a priori*; this means that it always lies *in* them." Heidegger, *Being and Time,* 238.

which he argues are misinterpretations.[38] Interpreted in the latter, more standard way, *telos* implies an unknown endpoint in which fulfillment will be reached; implicitly, therefore, this interpretation construes *telos* as future-oriented. Heidegger's whole philosophy works against this interpretation and against chronology as the basis of time. A key building block in this conception of *telos* is the Greek concept of "cause"; once again, driven by chronology, we tend to think of causes as existing along a chain and lined up like dominos. Heidegger reminds the reader that the Greek conception indicated indebtedness, and therefore co-responsibility. "The four causes," he writes, "are the ways, all belonging at once to each other, of being responsible for something else."[39] *Telos* in this sense also avoids a *chronos*-driven definition of the term; like his description of the primally concealed, *telos* here is about responsibility, or in other words, relationality.

Temporality in Heidegger reveals a deeper order to things, or a "coming to presence," that reveals (or "unconceals") the truth of a thing. In his essay, "The Question Concerning Technology," Heidegger writes:

> All coming to presence, not only modern technology, keeps itself everywhere concealed to the last. Nevertheless, it remains, with respect to its holding sway, that which precedes all: the earliest. The Greek thinkers already knew of this when they said: That which is earlier with regard to its rise into dominance becomes manifest to us men only later. That which is primally early shows itself only ultimately to men.[40]

Heidegger emphasizes technology, or tools (broadly construed as anything with use value), in the interplay between being and temporality because truth, or essence, "comes into presence" with regard to human awareness, and humans become aware only by interacting with the world. Heidegger's claim that "that which is primally early shows

[38] Heidegger, "The Question Concerning Technology," 315.
[39] Heidegger, "The Question Concerning Technology," 314.
[40] Heidegger, "The Question Concerning Technology," 327.

itself only ultimately" demonstrates that essence and time are closely related concepts in his ontology. The "primally early" closely relates to essence; therefore, only in a kind of messianic future is the true nature of things revealed, yet we can only arrive at this future by sticking very closely with the past: "Therefore, in the realm of thinking, a painstaking effort to think through still more primally what was primally thought is not the absurd wish to revive what is past, but rather the sober readiness to be astounded before the coming of the dawn."[41] This orientation of time toward the different degrees of truth's presencing, in turn, reflects Heidegger's understanding of *telos* as completion.

Why the Seventeenth Century?

The idea of time as "truth's presencing" was arguably very present in the early modern period. The proliferation of very literal and linear predictions about the end of history during this time, as well as the move toward an increasing governance by clock-time (an extension and result of a prior ongoing shift to rationalized time, as I will explore in the section on clock-time) created an ironic situation for early moderns who recognized time as erupting in the present.

Sherman's study on the intersection of clock-time and the literary form of diaries (though concentrated within 1660-1785, the period immediately following the one I focus on in this dissertation), argues that Christiaan Huygen's strides to perfect the drive that regulated a clock's oscillation enabled a temporality of its own, evidenced by the explosion of "diurnal" writing, such as diaries. According to Sherman, sameness and regularity in the intervals of a clock's tick, the isochronicity mentioned above, enable the

[41] Heidegger, "The Question Concerning Technology," 327.

"homogeneity" and "emptiness" that Benjamin points out; however, if time is empty, it can also be filled.[42] Sherman's argument posits that diary writing is structured on this very "uniformity, specificity, and seriality," heightened by increasingly regular clock time, but that it is precisely the regularity of this form that allowed diarists "to reckon fullness and hence to 'realize' it: to embody it palpably on the page."[43] Time in an unbroken series, repetitive in form and without any shaping narrative to history, is given a shape through the innovation of writing and daily, lived experience. Liturgy and devotional life have a similar structuring function, as my chapter on George Herbert explores. Sherman does not, however, argue that this version of "fullness" is somehow opposed to or does away with the emptiness that Benjamin identifies. Rather, "the openness of the calendar and the rigor of the clock" provide occasion for narrative innovation and for meaning—a shaping *kairos* in a stream of unbroken and undifferentiated *chronos*.[44]

Without challenging the brilliance of Sherman's analysis, one might still wonder about the relationship between space and place in this new, malleable time. In *The Fate of Place*, Edward S. Casey describes how Aristotle's account of place is haunted by the notion of emptiness between place and time "as if to say that to get out of place is to get into the void and to get into time is to get out of the void. Time is therefore one way of avoiding, indeed of devoiding the void—emptying its emptiness by introducing measured

[42] "Frank Kermode, E.P. Thompson, Michel Foucault, Benedict Anderson, and others have all argued that early modern Europe witnessed—indeed was brought into being by—a shift from what Walter Benjamin calls 'Messianic time' to a culture-wide acceptance of 'homogeneous, empty time.'" Stuart Sherman, *Telling Time: Clocks, Diaries, and English Diurnal Form, 1660-1785* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1996), 10.
[43] Stuart Sherman, *Telling Time: Clocks, Diaries, and English Diurnal Form, 1660-1785* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1996), 34.
[44] Sherman,

cadences and reliable rhythms into its abyss. These cadences and rhythms are dependent on motions and magnitudes that belong in turn to place."[45] Indeed, Casey rightly points out that as place became subsumed by space in the seventeenth century, the periods following also made place "subject to time, regarded as chronometric and universal."[46] If Casey is right in categorizing "measured cadences and reliable rhythms" as manifestations of place, then the ways that subjects fill the void should create a stronger sense of relationship to place and to what Heidegger calls the originary experience of time.[47] In answer to Sherman, therefore, I would posit that one corollary of this more malleable, empty time is its ability to be movable and separable from deeper rhythms of temporality, whether social, sacred, or natural. Time's very pliability entails its abstraction, and Ricouer's comment about reading the hour on a clock indicates a certain amount of ambivalence about what this sort of abstraction may intimate for the subject. In Shakespeare's *Richard II*, broken clockwork comes to illustrate in the way kingly identity may be out of time with history and change. The speaker in George Herbert's poetry, rhythms of private spiritual practice become the means of both marking time and revealing a deeper structure of temporality joined to God's eternity, thus divorcing it from the measurement and abstraction that subjects become caught in. Finally, in *Samson Agonistes*, Milton's Samson attempts to discover how to discern God's will while both time and God's will appear indeterminate; here, Samson discovers a more immanent approach to reading history and interpreting God's will while bound by time.

---

[45] Edward S. Casey, *The Fate of Place: A Philosophical History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), 67.
[46] Casey, x.
[47] Casey, 67.

Time as an open series, a corollary of empty time, implies that history has no inherent narrative apart from what is shaped by humans. Seventeenth century England was suffused with the widespread belief that history was reaching its end, an inevitability that, more than simply implying a chronology, entailed history as disclosure. In this century, prior to the more deistic era that is the object of Sherman's study (from 1660 into the late eighteenth century), the position of the early modern subject in relation to time was therefore an ironic one. In addition to being a time fertile for the experimentation and new inventions leading to accurate and precise timekeeping technology, the seventeenth century was also a time in which widespread and varied beliefs about the millennium and the apocalypse gave a sense of urgency to beliefs about time and history.

Apocalypse, in its basic sense, means "to uncover, disclose." Since cataclysmic revelation can happen at any point in history or any moment in the individual's experience, apocalypse construed as disclosure challenges the precise notion that the concept should assume a linear form. However, the concept is nevertheless inherently temporal; after all, Heidegger's description of time, in contrast to linear or measured time, is built upon a more primary understanding of Being disclosing itself.[48] Scholars of the Renaissance have long recognized that early moderns' preoccupation with the apocalypse often conveys a sense of the uncanny; those familiar with Freud will recall that this entails an inside-outside distortion of the subject via one's encounter with time. This is as evident in the art of the period as it is in tragedy. For example, in his discussion of Michelangelo's *The Last Judgment*, Pye discusses anamorphs, images in paintings that

[48] Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time,* trans. John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson (Blackwell, 2001), 377.

are oblique and distorted from a direct view (an anamorphic image of flayed skin, in this example). The angled view of the anamorph, one which would yield a correct view, "is oriented toward a vantage point no viewer on the chapel floor can inhabit."[49] Pye goes on to say that the "anamorphic figure falls...outside even the time of universal judgment and human history."[50] The painting is, in itself, an apocalypse—a disclosure or revelation in a manner similar to the ways I explore temporality erupting into chonological, linear time in this dissertation.

In this dissertation, I argue that the subject's experience of temporality is at times inextricable from, and at times jarringly disassociated from, clock-time. I use the term "clock-time," to refer to the abstract form of measured time, alienated from the things in the world—rising, eating, working, worshipping, sleeping—that require time to be marked. The phrase does not merely refer to the marking of time by a clock but to the unique temporality introduced by the increasing use of and reliance on the technology. I previously pointed out how clocks made it possible to separate the measurement of time from "natural and social frames of reference," which happened over the course of several centuries.[51] Clock-time denotes chronometry (temporal measurement), but a chronometry disconnected from a referential basis in the civic or communal, or even the natural, social, or biological that heretofore grounded time in the external world. Although clocks do not necessitate this abstraction of time, they do introduce its possibility and increasing likelihood into the everyday use and practice of marking time.

---

[49] Christopher Pye, *The Vanishing: Shakespeare, the Subject, and Early Modern Culture* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2000), 57.
[50] Pye, 60.
[51] Dohrn-van Rossum, 239.

Rationonalized time therefore becomes increasingly "detachable," to invoke Dohrn-van Rossum's expression; highlighting different aspects of the same trend, Jacques Le Goff uses the term "pliability" while Stuart Sherman describes its malleability. Another example of how clock-time in its abstraction assumed this characteristic was in the separability of economic and religious spheres as the seventeenth century progressed. Advancements in the technology of timekeeping did not, in and of themselves, bring about secularized time--the time used by merchants to turn a profit. However, as Le Goff has demonstrated, clock-time leading up to the Renaissance was a natural extension of the rationalization of time, and one consequence of the rationalization of time was the separation of the sphere of economics from the sphere of religion.[52] The possibility of pursuing contradictory aims, usury and spiritual practice, was less about the merchant's individual hypocrisy than about how this distinction among times lent structural legitimacy to usurious practices. "Debts came inexorably to term," writes Le Goff, "and yet time was pliable, and it was in this pliability that profit and loss resided."[53] It was the medieval Church's practice of confession, beginning in the thirteenth century, that "closed the merchant's loophole," ostensibly reconciling conscience and interior motive with worldly action.[54] However, while confessional practices and their prescribed penances began as means of holding merchants accountable for sins specific to their profession, the content of these prescriptions dwindled over time,

[52] See Jacques Le Goff, *Time, Work, and Culture in the Middle Ages*, trans. Arthur Goldhammer (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1980). This appears to be the consensus among several exhaustive studies of timekeeping in both the medieval and renaissance. In addition to Le Goff, see David Landes, *Revolution in Time: Clocks and the Making of the Modern World* (Cambridge: Belknap Press, 1983) and Max Engammare, *On Time, Punctuality, and Discipline in Early Modern Calvinism*, trans. Karin Maag (Cambridge: Cambridge Univesity Press, 2010).
[53] Le Goff, 37.
[54] Le Goff, 38.

until they were, instead, largely left open to the individual's interpretation.[55] The end result was amelioration of the economic sphere rather than a true integration. Le Goff's expansive study also highlights how usury in the middle ages was despised in part because usurers were known to sell time, a notion that demonstrates the possibility of ethical ambivalence in time's separability and movability, which only increased in the early modern period.[56]

The drive to measure time is prior to any kind of technology made to answer the need. Chronometry, of course, does not begin or end with a clock. As Paul Ricouer notes in *Time and Narrative*, "It is because we do reckon with time and do make calculations that we must have recourse to measuring, not vice versa." Ricouer's description of temporality emphasizes the relational nature of language, which, in contrast to the abstraction of time, invokes frames of reference particular to human cares and ends, making it "possible.... to give an existential description to this 'reckoning with' [time] before the measuring it calls for."[57] Time is not detached from the "natural and social frames of reference" that Dohrn-van Rossum has mentioned, but attached to these via a "grammatical network." What Ricouer recognizes as part of the underlying role of language in shaping the perception of time—that human "reckoning" with time is a deeper process than the technology it produces and precedes—is confirmed by historian David Landes, who notes, "The clock did not create an interest in time measurement; the

[55] Le Goff, 39-40.
[56] Le Goff's notes include a comment by Guillaume D'Auxerre (1160-1229) on usury, which characterizes selling time as a violation of nature in general: "The usurer acts in contravention to universal natural law, because he sells time, which is the common possession of all creatures....Since, therefore, the usurer sells what necessarily belongs to all creatures, he injures all creatures in general, even stones" (qtd. in LeGoff, 289-290).
[57] Ricouer, 62.

interest in time measurement led to the invention of the clock."[58] Therefore, while clock-time was heightened by the advancement of technological precision in the seventeenth century, specific advancements in clockwork technology were not solely responsible for the ascendency of time over place, or the "empty," space-like nature of time.

However, the larger point leveraged by Ricouer in this passage clarifies the relationship between the shape given to time through narrative structure (the subject of Ricouer's analysis) and what philosopher Martin Heidegger conceives as the originary experience of time.[59] As I have just noted, clock-time is abstracted from natural measures, such that the abstraction only becomes the greater as technology improves. Yet even without technology, humans reckon, measure, and calculate time. When considered as prior[60] to the abstraction of clock-time, such instinctive forms of measuring are rooted in the world and in daylight.[61] This raw experience of time is driven by what Heidegger defines as care—in the German, *Sorge*, most closely translated as "anxiety." The word encompasses possibilities for both suffering and longing. It is care that structures one's relationship to the world, such that the subject is "within time" prior to any represented measure of time.[62] Despite the fact that Heidegger's investigation of historicality is separate from his discussion of within-time-ness, Ricouer connects this notion of an originary experience of time to his own theory of a framing narrative in order to illustrate

---

[58] Landes, 58.
[59] Ricouer employs "originary" in his translation; in the Blackwell edition of *Being and Time*, Macquarrie and Robinson use "primordial."
[60] I mean "prior" in the sense of logically prior to clock-time, rather than chronologically prior. There is, of course, no pure delineation in history between the "originary" experience of time that Heidegger describes and the use of time-technology that heightens abstraction, leading to a conception of time as flat and linear.
[61] Ricouer says, "Yet a day is not an abstract measure; it is a length that corresponds to our Care and the world in which it is 'time to' do something, where 'now' signifies 'now that….' It is the time of works and days," 63.
[62] Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 238.

an underlying, shared aspect of Care: "Narrative configurations and the most elaborated forms of temporality corresponding to them share the same foundation of within-time-ness."[63]

Emerging from this analysis is the understanding that it is not merely the subject's perception of time that is important, but the subject's experience of time in relation to the scene they inhabit. Indeed, time as empty runs parallel to the rise of space over place; time becomes increasingly linear as space dominates. As the revolution in science and epistemology in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries progressed, the world as a plenum, in which no empty spaces exist, was replaced by the concept of void.[64] The absence of place flattens time by reducing the world to a "single scene of communication."[65] Reducing place to a unitary whole and to mere lines of intersection has the same temporal effect as separating the subject from the scene. When Tim Ingold writes, "The notion that we can stand aside and observe the passage of time is founded upon an illusion of disembodiment," his statement acknowledges the importance of place to our experience of time, such that it is impossible for temporality to be disentangled from the environment in which we are fixed and which shapes our relationships with the world.[66] To escape this illusion is to be in place. Likewise, Ricouer's description of temporality as a "grammar" or "network" posits time as particular, social, and relational—something we are already in, not something we stand and observe. Yet, the trend of the seventeenth century, both in terms of the accelerated pace of timekeeping

---

[63] Ricouer, 62.
[64] See Steven Shapin & Simon Schaffer, *Leviathan and the Air Pump: Hobbes, Boyle, and the Experimental Life* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011).
[65] Casey, xiii.
[66] Tim Ingold, "The Temporality of the Landscape," *World Archaeology* 25.2: 159.

invention and in terms of the rise of space over place, is to create subjects who are separated from the scene.

Shapin has observed that "Galileo's work on the pendulum was cited to show the physiological utility of the doctrine of proportions—'the soul of the mathematicks themselves'" and that the corresponding mathematical framework of the pendulum became a heuristic for "the understanding of a corpuscular and mechanical universe."[67] In our modern era, Casey counts world wars and endless displacement, both forced and voluntary, as well as the global reach of communication technologies, as responsible for the new placelessness. The clock meets the criteria Casey sets out for such a technology in "exhibit[ing] a dromocentrism that amounts to temporocentrisim writ large; not just time but speeded-up time (*dromos* connotes 'running,' 'race,' 'racecourse')...." In a certain sense, the mechanism of the pendulum was more than simply a heuristic or a metaphor, but, in its precipitation of this more dromocentric time, it reduced the multiplicity of place to the singularity of space. Casey writes, "It is as if the acceleration discovered by Galileo to be inherent in falling bodies has come to pervade the earth (conceived as a single scene of communication), rendering the planet a 'global village' not in a positive sense but as a placeless place indeed."[68] If Galileo's discovery precipitated this effect, this observation is all the more applicable in Huygens' invention, which perfected Galileo's invention of the pendulum for use in clocks, as well as creating a mechanism for increased accuracy.[69]

---

[67] Steven Shapin, *The Social History of Truth* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1994), 319.
[68] Casey, xiii.
[69] See Joella G. Yoder, *Unrolling Time: Christiaan Huygens and the Mathematization of Nature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988).

At this point, a brief history of the inventions associated with advances in clockwork technology in the seventeenth century (and leading up to it) would serve to situate my larger points about the nature of clock-time and the rise of space over place. Although the mechanics of timekeeping developed gradually, the seventeenth century was significant to this history insofar as, first, timepieces themselves became increasingly accurate and precise, and second, these devices were adopted for everyday, personal use. Judged based on these grounds (increased precision and personal use), the most strident innovations in modern timekeeping occurred in the latter half of the seventeenth century. This "Horological Revolution," 1660-1760, saw the increased production of "clocks that were sufficiently accurate and sufficiently plentiful for the needs of urban man in society."[70] The rise of the individual subject seems to lie at the intersection between the material history of the mechanisms and Enlightenment values, such that the discussion of clockwork must inevitably involve speculation about the terms of modernity, to invoke Bruno Latour.[71] Though much ink has been spilled tying the Horological Revolution to the full emergence of Enlightenment ideology, few studies have paid attention to the influence of clockwork's history on the literature of England leading up to it. The swift advances of the Horological Revolution did not happen in a vacuum. In fact, the Renaissance and pre-Civil War era saw many important technological precursors that enabled the efficiency and technological precision of these later inventions.

Even more significantly for my purposes, the terms of modernity that necessitated the subject and object parting company did not occur in a vacuum, either; the

[70] Samuel Macey, *Clocks and the Cosmos: Time in Western Life and Thought* (Hamden: Archon, 1980), 17.
[71] See Bruno Latour, *We Have Never Been Modern*, trans. Catherine Porter (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1993).

establishment of the Royal Society was foregrounded by Baconian science and its destabilization of Aristotle, and Hobbes's mechanistic version of political representation was anticipated by Cartesianism. Arguably, the motivating factor that drove the need for increasingly precise timekeeping mechanisms is rooted in the Copernican turn. Not only did the grounds of philosophy and science shift away from the human as center (simultaneously opening a path for the new science that Bacon would later pioneer), Copernicus's conclusion about the earth's heliocentric orbit (published in 1543) necessitated practical changes to the field of astronomy, leading astronomers "[to become] ever more insistent in their demands for increased accuracy in time measurement." [72] It hardly seems coincidental that one of the first clockmaking guilds as such, in Paris, was formed merely a year after in 1544.[73]

Clockmaking demanded an interdependence of skills and crafts and was especially dependent on various kinds of metalworking.[74] Clockmaking in the Middle Ages was performed under the auspices of smithing guilds, and Dohrn-van Rossum speculates that the late medieval period "saw the first attempts by the guilds of smiths and locksmiths to restrict the making of clocks to their members."[75] Thus, the earliest English clockmakers were smiths who were skilled enough to bring a project to its

[72] Macey, 25.
[73] Landes, 439. There has been speculation that a clockmaking guild might have existed in Cologne as early as 1183, based on the translation of the German word "Gewerbe," which may be translated more broadly than the English, "guild," as well as a difficulty in interpreting the street name where the guild was supposed to be formed. Dohrn-van Rossum argues that such interpretations are inconsistent with what we know of the organization of trade in the Middle Ages, and "The name of the street is contradicted by the linguistic usage in Cologne and by the broader European historical context," 98. The burden of proof indicates that clockmaking guilds at least did not appear until the middle of the sixteenth century.
[74] For example, David Landes notes the complementarity between the smith work required for clockmaking and that for cannon founding; with the manufacture of small arms, some skills were interchangeable, driving clockmaking forward as well. "Clearly, in the context of that technology, a gifted metalworker or mechanic could move about from one device to another: what counted was a feel for the material, a sense of wheelwork and moving parts, and a good pair of hands" (204).
[75] Dohrn-van Rossum, 194.

fulfillment. Independent clockmaking guilds would not come on the scene on the continent until the middle of the 1500s. The Worshipful Company of Clockmakers, the first guild of its kind in England, was established in 1631, a late inception in comparison to the major clock- and watchmaking guilds on the continent, beginning with the one in Paris nearly a century earlier in 1544. The Augsburg clockmakers, though not officially separate from the smiths' guild, achieved some measure of autonomy in 1564; the Blois and Geneva guilds followed in 1600 and 1601, respectively.[76] However, England's Worshipful Company was assembled after guilds themselves were on the wane "so that almost from the start the functions of the Clockmakers' Company were more ceremonial than professional." The guild system did not prevent those from practicing the craft, usually by a nominal fee.[77] Yet, as Landes argues, the technological boom in the clockwork of the late seventeenth century was in part driven by trade in so-called "unincorporated areas," areas outside London where clock manufacture was essentially unrestricted.[78]

The improvements that followed the inception of clockmaking as an organized trade were demonstrably practical, each correcting a deficiency in the one that came before. Of course, it is necessary to acknowledge that developing and incorporating individual mechanisms into clockwork as a whole took time; there was usually a considerable lag between the date of an invention and the time it actually became

[76] Landes, 439.
[77] Landes, 217.
[78] This unrestricted trade was only known in England and Holland at that time, and "this freedom was both symptom and condition of the active clock and watch trade in both countries" (Landes 218). Another factor contributing to the growth of the trade was the influx of skilled French manufacturers fleeing anti-Protestant persecution in the latter part of the century and bringing these skills to England (219).

marketable.[79] For example, the earliest watches can be traced back to the mid-sixteenth century, though their portability was only made possible by the spring drive, which dates nearly a century further back. When the spring drive replaced weight-driven clocks in the mid-fifteenth, its use was mainly harnessed toward the production of table clocks, not watches.[80] The most important figure in precipitating accuracy and precision in clockwork was Christiaan Huygens. The first successful pendulum (for clocks) was achieved by Huygens in 1657, and the balance spring (for watches) was also perfected as a mechanism by Huygens by 1675. The two inventions served the same function in clocks and watches respectively: to regulate isochronous measurement (enabling time indication by measuring regular intervals independent of the motivating effects of spring or weight), resulting in increased accuracy. The balance spring provided a corrective, counteracting force to the earlier invention of the spring drive and entered the market at a time when the need for both portability and increased accuracy drove the development of the pocket watch forward. These technologies were not fully realized until demand in the market drove the need to invent and perfect existing mechanisms.[81]

As even this brief overview shows, the mechanical clock has a long, gradual history, and just as no single invention can be credited with the achievement of what we recognize as modern timekeeping, technological progress does not bear a direct and one-to-one correspondence to shifts in the representation and understanding of time. Although

[79] Eric Bruton, also notes that sometimes "inventors and styles took as much as half a century to spread in one country. Also styles recurred in cycles" *Clocks and Watches: 1400-1900* (New York: Frederick A Praeger,1967),191.
[80] Macey, 25. The clock's drive, either weight or spring, drove the rotation of the crown wheel, which in turn regulated the speed of the verge escapement's oscillation. The drive thereby determined the clock's rate of timekeeping. While a weight drive used weights to either increase or decrease inertia, the spring drive regulated oscillation speed by means of a coiled spring (See Bruton, 92-104).
[81] See Macey, 17-20, 29.

tracking the development of physical timekeeping is important and necessary, I operate under the assumption that, to get at an understanding of subjectivity in relation to time, one must not only consider the advance of the mechanisms themselves but also the social understanding of time and the use of temporal concepts that drove and enabled the inventions to be perfected and marketed--a supposition supported by Landes' observation mentioned earlier that time measurement preceded the actual inventions that enabled it.[82] Anecdotally, in terms of time in its social use, it has been noted that "at least until the end of the sixteenth century one simply cannot talk of a customary use of minutes, let alone seconds."[83] Perhaps not coincidentally, then, the Swiss clockmaker Jost Burgi's crystal clock, invented around the year 1600, measured hours, minutes, and even seconds on separate hands, marking "one of the first recorded uses of the second hand."[84] However, this invention does not count as rendering the social use of minutes "customary," especially given that minute hands only appeared gradually, around and after 1650.[85]

Case Study: Parousia *in Donne*

Early modern life was suffused with a widespread belief in a literal and eminent end-of-the-world. Scholars, sermon writers, and pamphleteers made precise predictions about when Christ would return to inaugurate his full, thousand-year reign. Not surprisingly, many of these systems for prophetically dating the beginning of the millennium coincided with political change and revolution.[86] One millenarian pamphlet

[82] Landes, 58.
[83] Dohrn-van Rossum, 282.
[84] Macey, 26.
[85] Bruton, 192.
[86] Barbara Lewalski, "Milton and the Milennium," *Milton and the Ends of Time*, ed. Juliet Cummins (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), 13.

writer, William Burden, premising his own calculation on the principle that "one day with the Lord is as a thousand years," assumed a parallel between historical time and the six days of creation (based on 2 Peter 3:8). He predicted Christ's reign would begin in 1666.[87] Belief in a history always on the brink of ending has the effect of heightening action, for good or for ill.[88] Conjuring anxiety as much as true concern, this drama of history links early moderns to a non-linear temporality. Belief in the end of the existing order, historical time as we know it, was at a premium. However, preparation for a literal "day of the Lord" or "day of visitation"[89] was not elided by more subtle, metaphorical manifestations of these terms.

It scarcely needs to be argued that early moderns believed Christ's return was close at hand chronologically; however, for many early moderns, Christ's *parousia*, his presence if not his literal coming, was considered to be "at hand" in a more pervasive sense. In *The Time That Remains*, Giorgio Agamben encourages the reader to read the scripture commonly interpreted as "the kingdom of God is within yourselves" as, instead, "the kingdom of God is close at hand," defining "at hand" as "within the range of possible action."[90] Definitionally, *kairos* is also a time at hand in this sense, since the word indicates a passing moment able to be grasped or seized. It is not enough to simply

[87] William Burden, *Christ's Personal Reign on Earth, One Thousand Yeers with His Saints*, 1654.
[88] Arthur H. Williamson argues that this heightened dramatic turn in history, characteristic of widespread cultural belief in a fast-approaching end of the world, precipitated more growth than otherwise. "The role of the apocalypse has almost always proved more fecund than destructive, and never more so than in early modern Europe." *Apocalypse Then: Prophecy and the Making of the Modern World* (Westport, Connecticut: Praeger, 2008), 1.
[89] In the sermon I will examine in the next few paragraphs, John Donne uses the term to suffering in this life: "The day of Death, and The day of Resurrection; We die in the light, in the sight of Gods presence, and we rise in the light, in the sight of his very Essence. Nay, Gods correction, and judgements upon us in this life, are still expressed so, *Dies visitationis*, still it is a Day, though a Day of visitation; and still we may discerne God to be in the action" (234). "John 11:21. Preached at the Funeral of Sir William Cokayne, December 12, 1626." *Sermons on the Psalms and Gospels*, ed. Evelyn M. Simpson (Berkeley, University of California Press, 1963).
[90] Agamben, *The Time That Remains*, 73.

identify a perception of time that is internal versus a linear and objective chronology. What Benjamin, Agamben, and others refer to as messianic time is not wholly opposed to chronology but introduces a tension with clock-time. In the same way that *kairos* is not qualitatively different from *chronos* but constitutes "contracted and abridged *chronos*," messianic time renders the promise of a second coming, continually deferred, able to be grasped.[91]

The problem I have posed in earlier sections is a problem inherent in the representation of time, pointing to a disjunction between the subjective experience of time (what Heidegger would call "originary" time) and chronological time represented linearly. This is the problem Ricouer locates when he notes that "saying now" in the modern sense has become identical to noting clock time (and Ricouer's analysis as a whole reinforces the same disjunction by seeking to separate human action from narrative). The paradoxical relationship of messianic time to fulfillment helps to define the ironies of representation brought to the forefront by the rise of clock time. Messianic time lies between two key events, the resurrection and the second coming. *Parousia* is used in the New Testament to refer to the second coming, but while its referent is the endpoint of chronological time, its denotative meaning is presence. However, the perpetual deferral of this time, as literal second coming and therefore end of an age, introduces a paradox of represented time. Delay in messianic time might be compared to a mathematical equation infinitely approaching a limit but never reaching it. This kind of delay, internal to a concept of time, escapes representation. However, Agamben expands

[91] Agamben writes, "*Kairos* (which would be translated banally as 'occasion') does not have another time at its disposal; in other words, what we take hold of when we seize *kairos* is not another time, but contracted and abridged *chronos*" (69).

on the denotative meaning of *parousia*, which, he says, "literally signifies to be next to; in this way, being is beside itself in the present."[92] In this expansion of meaning, *parousia* is situated in the now, rather than in an indefinite, continually delayed future; as such, it is "beside itself in the present"—or "at hand," "within the range of possible action."[93]

While chronological time is concerned with tense, a clear division of past and future that can be mapped onto a linear timeline, the subjective experience of time more closely involves aspect. Aspect concerns completion; as we have already understood through Heidegger's description of *telos* as completion rather than endpoint on a timeline, completion is a temporal concept but not necessarily a chronological one. Agamben explains the same principle: "The Hebrew system of verbs distinguishes between verb forms not so much according to tense (past and future) but according to aspect: complete (which is usually translated by the past), and incomplete (which is usually translated by the future)."[94] Agamben's explanation, however, introduces the possibility that temporality may not behave in the way we expect it to, and indeed may actively reverse our expectations about time. This is the case with messianic time, which, for both Jews and Christians, carries the expectation of fulfillment in the return of the Messiah, a final resurrection, and a renewal of all things instituted in the reign of the Messiah. However, while messianic time looks forward in this expectation of fulfillment, of completion, it is constituted by the delay and deferment mentioned previously. For this reason, Agamben uses the same metaphor of language embedded in Hebrew verbs to

[92] Agamben, 73.
[93] Agamben, 73.
[94] Agamben, 74-5.

explain messianic time: "If, however, you put a *waw* (which is, for this reason, called inversive or conversive) before a complete form, it changes into an incomplete, and vice-versa."[95] In other words, temporality can be experienced as a dialectic of fulfillment and unfullfillment.

In a sermon on death and resurrection, *Preached at the funerals of Sir William Cokayne Knight, Alderman of London, December 12, 1626*, John Donne illustrates this inversive quality of messianic time that enables fulfillment to be stood on its head. Donne's argument plays with time both directly and indirectly, exerting the poles between God's perfection and infinity and man's imperfection and finitude. Donne's argument is ultimately an argument for God's presence, his *parousia* (though Donne does not invoke this word) in the present, before the chronological fulfillment of a final resurrection promised in Christ's second coming. Donne's text is John 11:21, the words of Martha spoken to Jesus after the death of Lazarus: "Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died." Through an examination of the body in death, Donne divides the first part of his sermon between imperfection, illustrated by the quality of Martha's grief, and impermanence, proven in the decay and death of the body. The sermon ultimately hinges upon a tension between the death of the body and the final resurrection, a tension that is embedded in Donne's third point, namely, "the easiness, the propensnesse, the largenesse of Gods goodness towards us, in the acceptation of our imperfect Sacrifices."[96] This final point provides a natural resolution for the first two, and Donne's argument

[95] Agamben, 75.
[96] John Donne, "A Sermon Preached at the Funerals of Sir William Cockayne Knight, Alderman of London, December 12, 1627." *John Donne's Sermons on the Psalms and Gospels*, Ed. Evelyn M. Simpson (Berkeley: University of California Pres, 1963), 221.

implies a sense of inevitability in God's nature that prevents either spiritual defect or temporal impermanence from determining a judgment upon man in life or death.

Donne's insistence that God's perfection swallows up the imperfections of the created and temporal order is what ultimately enables a temporal inversion of his sermon text: "Lord, because thou wast here, our Brother is not dead." Here, one might notice an echo of the finality of "Death, thou shalt die" in Holy Sonnet X, but insofar as Donne's rhetorical purpose in the sermon is to provide comfort to his hearers, Donne's inversion of the expression of mourning from Martha locates the signs of a final resurrection, the death of death, in the present. In one respect, this exegesis is unsurprising; in Donne's acknowledgement at the end of the sermon that "In the person of Christ, [our brother] is risen already," his hearers would recognize standard theology of Christ's resurrection, typified in verses like 1 Corinthians 15:20, "But now Christ is risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept."[97] In this same theological vein, still mediated by the body in death, Donne classifies funerals themselves ("Buriall, and Christian Buriall, and Solemne Buriall") as "evidences, and testimonies of Gods presence."[98] Christian burial as a sign of the promise of final resurrection is still fundamentally future-oriented, however. Rather than dwelling wholly on the body in death, Donne departs from presence-as-sign by exploring the visible presence of God in the recent life of the deceased—a less symbolic spiritual mode and one more closely aligned with the present. For a comparatively brief passage in this sermon, Donne cites Knight's success in trade, his reputation for good business sense, and the enlargement of his estate as evidences of God's presence in his life. Setting aside the observation that this praise seems somewhat

[97] Donne, 240.
[98] Donne, 238.

lukewarm in comparison with the theological heights Donne soars to in the rest of the sermon, this passage reinforces a concern expressed throughout—that human action not be separated from divine meaning. Dwelling in the present, this meditation is even closer to the dilated *parousia* of messianic time, a presence that stretches into the present rather than being contained in the second coming as an end-of-history event.

Donne's anxiety that human action should express meaning shaped by God's presence is what enables his sense of temporality not to be shaped by *chronos*. His theology of death and the body expresses the in-between nature of messianic time, caught between Christ's resurrection in the past and a final resurrection of saints yet to be fulfilled in the future. In an apophatic aside in this same sermon, Donne condemns those Catholics who "antidate and postdate their prayers; Say to morrows prayers to day, and to dayes prayer to morrow, if they have other uses and employments of the due time betweene…." Here, Donne expresses a common post-Reformation suspicion of Catholic prayer and administration of sacraments, but it is also one that calls to mind the merchants' loophole mentioned earlier—the concern that the rationalization of time expressed in clock time allows time to be manipulated. Like the medieval merchants who used the growing separation between secular and religious time as an excuse to manipulate profit, certain Catholics, Donne essentially argues, exploit clock time by outsourcing their prayers. In so doing, they "make merchandise of prayers by way of exchange…."[99] By treating prayer as impersonal labor that can be reassigned, they erase the active part of faith in prayer and reduce it to ritual. Likewise, in ordinary life as well as in prayer, Donne argues for a re-centering of faith's activity according to redemptive

[99] Donne, 226.

history, an orienting that lies outside of simple *chronos*. Any human action or expression that may be termed "sacramental" may either rely too much on the sign of Christ's presence or may discount his presence altogether. For this reason, Donne attributes excess of sacramental thinking to Martha's complaint, since Martha's logic implies a confidence in Christ's physical presence rather than his authority as God.

> So is it an error, and a weaknesse to attribute too much, or too little to Christs presence in his Sacraments, or other Ordinances. To imprison Christ in Opere operato, to conclude him so, as that where that action is done, Christ must necessarily bee, and necessarily work, this is to say weakly with these Sisters, Lord, if thou hast beene here, our brother had not died. As long as we are present at thine Ordinance, thou are present with us. But to banish Christ from those holy actions, and to say, That he is no otherwise present, or works no otherwise in those actions, then in other times, and places, this is to say with Peter, in his astonishment, *Exi á me Domine*, O Lord Depart from me...[100]

In identifying Martha's logic as in *Opere operato* ("by the work worked"), Donne implicates a Protestant characterization of a Catholic doctrine of the operation of God's grace via the sacraments; whether or not this is a fair portrayal, Donne is clearly pointing to a reception of the sacraments that trusts to the sign for its efficacy rather than emphasizing the active faith of the recipient. Thus, in seeking a golden mean in everything that may be termed "sacramental," Donne seeks to keep Christ's presence paired with the ordinary actions of human life, a *parousia* in the *now*, and as such, his theology presents one version of closing the merchants' loophole.

For Donne, God's goodness is the means enabling a summary judgment to be spoken on behalf of man. Donne's funeral sermon develops a theology of the body, posited as index and summary of God's creative *logos*: "The world is a great Volume, and Man the Index of that Booke; Even in the body of man, you may turne to the whole

[100] Donne, 229.

world; This body is an illustration of all Nature; Gods recapitulation [italics mine] of all that he has said before, in his Fiat lux, and Fiat firmamentum, and in all the rest, said or done, in all the six dayes."[101] Donne's emphasis on man, especially man's body, as the "recapitulation" of God's creative word is reminiscent of Agamben's description of messianic time as "a summary recapitulation of the past, even according to the meaning of the adjective in the juridical expression 'summary judgment.'"[102] While messianic time also retains the aspect of deferral in regard to its fulfillment, that deferral (of Christ's return, of a new kingdom, of a final resurrection) is held in tension by what has already been fulfilled (Christ's resurrection). Messianic time constitutes the time between these two periods, both the unfulfilled and the fulfilled, but just as *kairos* is not qualitatively different from *chronos,* Agamben is careful to note that messianic time introduces a "remnant," a pause or gap, between the two times, rather than creating a third.[103] In the same way that *kairos* is condensed *chronos,* messianic recapitulation pronounces a "summary judgment" on the past, as if time had been fulfilled and the end of history had already been reached. In Donne's sermon, man as "Index" of creation not only implies that everything contained in the expansiveness of God's creative word reaches its fulfillment in man, but that this fulfillment may be expressed in abbreviated form. God pronounces his creation "very good"; likewise, embodied man constitutes God's "summary judgement" on creation. That this recapitulation should be positive illustrates the tension inherent in messianic time, the tension between fulfillment and unfillment experienced in the present. Even though the body is subject to the temporal effects of the

[101] Donne, 234.
[102] Agamben, 76.
[103] Agamben, 74.

fall, man's body is considered the recapitulation of God's creation in its original perfection; the body is not considered in its fallen, temporal state but from the vantage point of the resurrection, as if a final restoration or fulfillment had already been reached. This reading of Donne represents the tension that early moderns experienced between literal or linear representations of time (embodied by clock-time) and the eruptions of other temporalities into these measured moments.

Dissertation Summary

In "True Time Broke," I explore the fluid version of time represented by kingship in Shakespeare's *Richard II*. In the final act of this history play, the dethroned Richard employs the conceit of broken clockwork to represent his asynchronous relationship to time. Broken clockwork reveals a disjuncture within the subject. This goes beyond the mere question of the subject becoming an object, because even objects have preshaped ends, a *telos*. Somewhat counterintuitively, Heidegger posits the subject's overbearing mastery over nature as a defensive response to being figured forth by technology, to becoming standing reserve himself ("Standing-reserve" refers to matter viewed as available for use, prior to undergoing some kind of ordering that would render it actually useful).[104] The sovereign, already in a position of mastery, is all the more susceptible to an illusory relationship to the world and more inclined to view both history and the social as instruments for his own ends. Hearing is analogous to time insofar as hearing can be

[104] "As soon as what is unconcealed no longer concerns man even as object, but exclusively as standing-reserve, and man in the midst of objectlessness is nothing but the orderer of the standing-reserve, then he comes to the very brink of a precipitous fall; that is, he comes to the point where he himself will have to be taken as standing-reserve. Meanwhile, man, precisely as the one so threatened, exalts himself and postures as lord of the earth. In this way the illusion comes to prevail that everything man encounters exists only insofar as it is his construct." Heidegger, "The Question Concerning Technology," *Basic Writings*, 332.

selective, just as the modernist can be selective about the the narrative he represents. As soundscapes become standing reserve and history becomes instrumental, the clock becomes machine, rather than asynchronous tool, mediated by scale and relationality. In a positive sense, however, broken clocks reveal disruption and disjuncture in the subject, but in a way that reveals the subject's relationship to history and the larger social realm.

My third chapter, "Disorder'd Clocks," investigates the temporal structure of the devotional self in George Herbert's poetry. Arguing that Herbert's speaker assumes an Augustinian orientation to time, I explore limits of perspective, vanishing temporal horizons, and other modes of being that confine the speaker to the now—the only moment in time that Augustine admits as real. My reading focuses on poems influenced by the church calendar and by daily rhythms of prayer and reflection, and as such, emphasizes the ways in which Protestant devotional practices were Augustinian in nature. More importantly, I argue that Herbert, like Augustine, defined subjectivity in relationship to an ever-receding present.

Finally, my fourth chapter explores how Milton's *Samson Agonistes* can be read as a means of recovering a "middleness" to time even as it situates its protagonist within an "interpretive middle" (to borrow from Stanley Fish). Using Hannah Arendt's commentary on the reversal of thinking and action, I investigate the implications of this shift for Samson's hermeneutics of self, history, and meaning in time. For these purposes, my reading draws upon Victoria Silver's seminal study of deity and meaning in Milton, entailing the nature of the intelligibility of divine truth accommodated to human understanding. This relationship between divine intelligibility within time and the human

action, either ethical or instrumental, that attempts to uncover it is tied to midrashic hermeneutics, opening alternative reading as well as an alternative temporality.

Chapter One Bibliography

Agamben, Giorgio. *The Time That Remains: A Commentary on the Letter to the Romans.* Trans. Patricia Dailey. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2005.

Augustine. *Confessions*. Trans. Maria Boulding. New York: Vintage Spiritual Classics, 1998.

Bruton, Eric. *Clocks and Watches: 1400-1900.* New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1967.

Burden, William. *Christ's Personal Reign on Earth, One Thousand Yeers with His Saints.* 1654.

Casey, Edward S. *The Fate of Place: A Philosophical History*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998.

Donne, John. "John 11:21. Preached at the Funeral of Sir William Cokayne, December 12, 1626." *Sermons on the Psalms and Gospels.* Ed. Evelyn M. Simpson. Berkeley, University of California Press, 1963.

Engammare, Max. *On Time, Punctuality, and Discipline in Early Modern Calvinism.* Trans. Karin Maag. Cambridge: Cambridge Univesity Press, 2010.

Haraway, Donna. *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women: The Reinvention* of Nature. New York: Routledge.

Hawkes, David. *The Faust Myth: Religion and the Rise of Representation.* New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007.

Heidegger, Martin. "Being and Time: Introduction." In *Basic Writings*. Ed. David Farrell Krell. New York: Harper Collins, 2008.

Heidegger, Martin. "The Question Concerning Technology." In *Basic Writings*. Ed. David Farrell Krell. New York: Harper Collins, 2008.

Heidegger, Martin. *Being and Time*. Trans. John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson. Oxford: Blackwell, 2001.

Landes, David. *Revolution in Time: Clocks and the Making of the Modern World.* Cambridge: Belknap Press, 1983.

Latour, Bruno. *We Have Never Been Modern*. Trans. Catherine Porter. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1993.

Le Goff, Jacques. *Time, Work, and Culture in the Middle Ages.* Trans. Arthur Goldhammer. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1980.

Lewalski, Barbara. “Milton and the Milennium.” *Milton and the Ends of Time.* Ed. Juliet Cummins. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003.

Macey, Samuel. *Clocks and the Cosmos: Time in Western Life and Thought.* Hamden: Archon, 1980.

Pye, Christopher. *The Vanishing: Shakespeare, the Subject, and Early Modern Culture*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2000.

Ricouer, Paul. *Time and Narrative, Vol. 1*. Trans. Kathleen McLaughlin and David Pellauer. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984.

Shapin, Steven & Simon Schaffer. *Leviathan and the Air Pump: Hobbes, Boyle, and the Experimental Life.* Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011.

Sherman, Stuart. *Telling Time: Clocks, Diaries, and English Diurnal Form, 1660-1785*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1996.

Yoder, Joella G. *Unrolling Time: Christiaan Huygens and the Mathematization of Nature*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988.

"True Time Broke": Hearing Time and History in Shakespeare's *Richard II*

Whether in listening mode or stopping his ears to unfavorable counsel, *Richard II* is uniquely positioned to illustrate how the sovereign is connected to history and time by route of the ear. The varieties of hearing contained in Shakespeare's play—mishearing, selective hearing, active listening—carry particular moral valences. In Act Five, scene five, Richard willfully mixes metaphors of hearing and timekeeping. He laments that he "had not an ear" to discern the temporal cues leading up to Bolingbroke's advancement to the throne (5.5.48). In doing so, he acknowledges that hearing and timekeeping share a similar ethical component.

Overly refined hearing, as manifested by Richard throughout the majority of the play, not only ignores surrounding context but actively practices decontextualization from outer reality, which not only constitutes a removal of the self from external, material reality, but from the temporal/historical situation as well. Richard's "dainty" hearing takes for granted a particular meter at play. Serres's model of time, topological rather than geometric (and therefore linear, a simple matter of cause and effect), seems most relevant to Richard's renewed hearing and his placement in a reconfigured temporal schema at the end of the play. The well-discussed example of the rumpled handkerchief, demonstrating the distinction between time and its measurement, emphasizes the multi-layered, or folded, nature of reality, and therefore temporality.[1] To experience time as in

[1] See Michel Serres and Bruno Latour, *Conversations on Science, Culture, and Time.* Trans. Roxanne Lapidus (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1995), 60-61. Also see, Jonathan Gil Harris, *Untimely Matter in the Time of Shakespeare* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009). Harris uses the same example to extrapolate a theory of temporality as conjunctive rather than linear, revealing the agency

its phenomenological array is to experience multiple dimensions at once, as one experiences music.

The passage of *Richard II* in Act Five, scene five, where I have chosen to ground my interpretation is one in which (a)synchrony comes into conflict with the drive to measure or "keep time." Here, a deposed and self-pitying Richard describes himself in terms of both broken music and broken clockwork:

> Music do I hear?
> Ha, ha, keep time! How sour sweet music is
> When time is broke and no proportion kept!
> So is it in the music of men's lives.
> And here have I the daintiness of ear
> To check time broke in a disordered string,
> But for the concord of my state and time
> Had not an ear to hear my true time broke.
> I wasted time, and now doth Time waste me;
> For now hath Time made me his numb'ring clock.
> My thoughts are minutes, and with sighs they jar
> Their watches on unto mine eyes, the outward watch,
> Whereto my finger, like a dial's point,
> Is pointing still, in cleansing them from tears.
> Now, sir, the sound that tells what hour it is
> Are clamorous groans which strike upon my heart,
> Which is the bell. So sighs, and tears, and groans
> Show minutes, times, and hours. But my time
> Runs posting on in Bolingbroke's proud joy,
> While I stand fooling here, his jack o' the clock. (41-60)

In this portion of Richard's soliloquy, two technologies are at work: the clock that marks time and the ear that listens. Clockwork becomes a central metaphor, entailing a connection to the temporal that is represented by the phenomenon of hearing.[2] Aural

---

of different historical moments as well as the agency of matter. My emphasis is less on the agency of matter than on the limits this agency places on the subject's will to know.

[2] There is reason to believe the "jack o' the clock" refers to a particular and well-known mechanized figure, a link which corroborates what I see as the passage's implicit connection between the human body and temporality. Adam Max Cohen writes, "Shakespeare and his audience members could have seen the original Jack o' the clock at Wells Cathedral, where a puppet known as Jack Blandifer moved his head and

captivation is itself a temporal problem, distorting Richard's perception of his placement in a larger historical framework. Clock technology, with all the accompanying and mounting expectations in the period for accuracy and precision, distorts perception in much the same way as faulty hearing. Mechanical timekeeping during Shakespeare's time signals an uneasy relationship between time as something communal and relation-centered, denoting particularities of different times and places and connections among them, and time as something abstract. Time in the abstract, as a colonized territory of space,[3] is easier to impose a mathematics and linearity upon; communal time, however, in being more premised on the relational and the social, is also more fluid—not in the sense that it is detachable and pliable in the sense that rationalized time comes to be, as mentioned in my introduction, but in the sense that it flows. Time in Richard is at once personal and asynchronous--in other words, out of step with the person.[4]

Certain core similarities between hearing and timekeeping emerge in the scene in which a dethroned and imprisoned Richard describes himself as broken clockwork. Time can be heard, as evidenced by the many clock towers in England that audibly struck the hour since the middle ages. Likewise, sound itself contains an inherent temporal order, a rhythm. The first meaning of "broken time" in Richard's soliloquy is musical time, "How sour sweet music is / When time is broke and no proportion kept!" (5.5.42-3), though further resonances of "broken time" as broken clockwork further complicate the conceit.

---

struck a bell on the hour" *Shakespeare and Technology: Dramatizing Early Technological Revolutions* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), 140.

[3] Edward S. Casey, *The Fate of Place: A Philosophical History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), x.

[4] Cohen writes, "This notion that private timekeeping could have encouraged individuality and personal achievement seems as plausible as McLuhan's theory that the private reading and interpretation of printed texts spurred the rise of individualism" (143). The individualization of time also runs parallel to the rise of capitalism.

As I demonstrate in this chapter, both hearing and timekeeping are grounded in the need to avoid individual bias, to reference what is outside the self in order to keep time accurately. As a form of sense experience, hearing is a useful metaphor for the subjective relation of the self to time. Changing one's ethics of hearing, as Richard does by the end of the play, means re-orienting the self in relation to the world and even to time. To hear time aright, Richard must reassess his very being and its placement. Ontology is at stake, as well as ethics, or rather, the two are inherently linked.

In the medieval period, time for the community, whether determined by the church or merchants, was often something sounded. Textile workers in Artois, France were the first in either England or the continent to hear their daily labour marked by a work bell, beginning in 1355. Clock bells united people across social and class divides to acknowledge time through a common experience of hearing.[5] Even though many clocks had elaborate faces designed to draw the eye, the same shared experience would not be possible through sight; hearing of the clock as it tolled was what rendered the experience communal. Therefore, it is possible to distinguish communal time from the rationalized ordering of time that was present in society even before accurate mechanisms gave rise to clock-time. This medieval context for an early modern play is important both because the term "communal time" needs grounding and because the references to clockwork in Richard's soliloquy in Act 5, scene 5 require a longer historical framework.

The problem that unfolds for Richard is how the individual ear can arrange a temporal ordering according to a subjective bias. The phenomenology of sound is therefore necessary in connection to a deeper temporality, a "true time" that avoids

[5] Jacques Le Goff, *Time, Work, and Culture in the Middle Ages*, trans. Arthur Goldhammer (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1980), 35.

placing the self (here, literally the sovereign self) at the center of both perception and history. My reading here is in some degree of contrast (though, I hope, not contradiction) with what other critics have noticed about the dominance of sight and the gaze in the play. In the argument that follows, I will be bringing to the fore aspects of early modern temporality, such as the temporality of music, which entail relativity built into the nature of time. These notions of scale demand a temporality that recovers place by putting different standards of measurement alongside one another, rather than the more spatial, more void-like sense of time represented by the sovereign, an experience of time that arguably predicts the condition of the modern subject. The asynchronicity revealed by broken clockwork, I would argue, serves to recover Richard's "true time"; the re-incorporation of the ear signals a restoration of Richard to this communal sense of time.

Sovereignty and the Subject in Time

The boundaries of the *polis* are what the sovereign body is commonly said to determine, and it is precisely this determination (the state and social whole) that makes the discourse of place central to the question of communal time. As Edward S. Casey puts it, "The very word 'society' stems from *socius*, signifying 'sharing'—and sharing is done in a common place."[6] Shared time, the kind that would have been dictated by a communal work bell or by the motions of Jack Blandifer, is also placed time. This departure from communal time is not natural to sovereignty per se, but problematizes the sovereign's shift away from a connection to the people, signified by listening. On the level of the phenomenal, hearing is the most effective metaphor when it comes to

[6] See Edward S. Casey, *The Fate of Place: A Philosophical History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997): xvi.

representing the sovereign's relationship to everyday rhythms of life, as well as determinable cycles of history (the more concrete manifestations of "temporality" in this chapter). In what sense is Richard's "true time broke," lacking "proportion" or "concord," and to what extent are these precipitated by a faulty ear?

From Act 3 onwards, the king's body begins to become placed, taken out of its mystical realm and recovering some of its human and finite character. In his seminal study investigating the roots of kingly identity, Ernst Kantorowicz cites the halo in late Roman art as "a special mark of distinction indicat[ing] that the figure was meant to represent in every respect a continuum, something permanent and sempiternal beyond the contingencies of time and corruption."[7] Kingly identity, then, was premised on being coextensive with time as "continuum," not subject to its vagaries. Mark Netzloff has convincingly argued that historicist interpretations of *Richard II* that read its political moment as one of transition repeat the same modernist tendency to read history only in light of its own interests.[8] If modernist history is a perspectival problem, perhaps the answer lies in recovering a heard history, rather than one that unnaturally stretches out time behind the modernist moment and along a field of optics. The identarian mode of history, basing its linear construction of time on identity and the system of similarity from which metaphor is derived, embodies all the flaws of faulty and selective hearing. According to Jonathan Gil Harris, such views of history strictly modeled on identity, like Hegelian Aufhebung, tend to cancel or ignore difference. The identarian mode illustrates one of the pitfalls of modernism in producing "an uncritical universalism that naturalizes

[7] Ernst Kantorowicz, *The King's Two Bodies: A Study in Medieval Political Theology* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1957), 79.
[8] Mark Netzloff, "Insurgent Time: Richard II and the Periodization of Sovereignty," *Richard II: New Critical Essays*, *Shakespeare Criticism* Vol. 25, Ed. Jeremy Lopez (New York: Routledge, 2012).

the assumptions of the present."[9] Recovering a cyclical view of history is insufficient for the sovereign subject determined to perceive history in light of his mystical body. Kantorowicz writes, "Political mysticism in particular is exposed to the danger of losing its spell or becoming quite meaningless when taken out of its native surroundings, its time and its space."[10] But when the sovereign is taken out of his space, he is necessarily put in place, returning to an awareness of his physical body, the site-specific needs of the community, and those aspects of state life that, not bounded by the idea of a mystical body, hold no self-interest. These communal interests are what turn hearing from an identarian mode to conjunctive, enabling the recognition of how different moments work together apart from the subject's activity; Richard's hearing thus becomes no longer selective but in tune with "the concord of [his] state and time."

One example of Richard's modernist mistake of placing his own identity at the center of history is when he relates to past kings only to identify with their martyrdom. Storytelling, in particular, takes control of historical narrative, enlisting the ears of its audience and positioning listeners in relation to time. Storytelling establishes a connection to the past by enacting a ritual of speaking and listening, but the nature of that connection remains ambiguous for Richard. Upon learning of the deaths of his favorites after Bolingbroke's rise to power, Richard's recourse is to channel grief via storytelling: "For God's sake let us/ sit upon the ground / And tell sad stories of the death of kings" (3.2.155-156). Despite the tone of self-pity so characteristic of the way Richard at equal times both repels and captivates his audience, the moment itself is emblematic of the

[9] Jonathan Gil Harris, *Untimely Matter in the Time of Shakespeare* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009): 2.
[10] Kantorowicz, 3.

need to recover a connection to cyclical history. Ernst Kantorowicz glosses this passage to highlight how Richard relates to past kings by identifying with their martyrdom and the sacred cycle of death and suffering: "The king that 'never dies' here has been replaced by the king that always dies and suffers more cruelly than other mortals."[11] Thus, even when relying on a cyclical view of temporality, in which patterns of repetition should offer interpretive clues about the present moment, the hearer of history can choose to be selective about the comparisons drawn; it is this selectiveness of hearing that most defines the "daintiness of ear" that Richard confesses in Act Five, scene five. Richard's macabre narration of "graves and worms and epitaphs" (3.2.145), insofar as it reveals how kingly death compels a hearing, might seem (at last) like a recognition of the truth of Gaunt's words: "O, but they say the tongues of dying men / Enforce attention like deep harmony" (2.1.5-6). Yet Gaunt's view of hearing removes agency to the narration itself, requiring the listener to become truly passive; even the speaker of the message, passing from life into death, is not fully agentive. Richard's shallow storytelling is not the same "deep harmony" that Gaunt has in mind. Rather, efficacious hearing in Richard involves a forced encounter, one that precludes the full exercise of agency in arriving at the truth and reveals the impossibility of even the sovereign being truly autonomous.

Clockwork Technology and Hearing

As I discussed in my introduction in relation to Heidegger, the subject's relationship to technology is untimely. We make and shape our inventions to answer particular ends, even as those ends reveal the ways we have arbitrarily ordered our own

[11] Kantorowicz, 30.

societies, states, and even histories. What, then, should we make of the subject's relationship to timekeeping technology, particularly the modern invention of the clock, which signifies the doomed efforts both to harness time as a resource and to accurately, minutely, represent it? Modernity's drive for precision in temporal measurement discloses its need to accurately represent, but this need is strangely at odds with its tendency to re-make the past in its own image. Shakespeare's *Richard II* demonstrates this self-contradictory predicament of the subject in relation to time. In Richard, sovereign hearing as a phenomenal activity possesses the same structural relationship as the modernist to history. Beginning with Richard's description of clockwork subjectivity and out-of-tune hearing at the end of Act Five and using this passage to make sense of what comes before, I argue that the re-incorporation of the ear signals Richard's restoration to communal time, insofar as communal time stands in opposition to modes wherein the subject projects his experience of the world a priori onto pasts and futures.[12] I am less interested here in revealing the nature of sovereignty per se than in illustrating how Richard, as sovereign, both enacts and resists the role of modernist subject. The drive to represent the self via technology only succeeds in revealing the subject's finitude and limited agency; similarly, employing clockwork technology to discern historical cues reveals the reality of the subject's untimely and asynchronous nature.

To understand why Richard's hearing cannot keep time, only fully realized near the end of the play, as well as the higher demand Gaunt's description places on a "deep harmony" of hearing in his death scene, it is necessary to say something about the

[12] This is Heidegger's concern with Kantian subjectivity, since, as Taylor Carman notes, "Some time after the Second World War Heidegger came to believe that Western metaphysics had moved beyond the Cartesian-Kantian subjectivism that projects the world as an objective 'picture' (Bild) over against itself" (xv). Forward to *Basic Writings* by Martin Heidegger, ed. David Farrell Krell (New York: Harper Collins, 2008).

phenomenal differences between hearing and sight. Walter J. Ong connects sound with consciousness and interiority; hearing is essentially the only sense that can perceive the interior of its object without leaving behind an impression on that object. Because sight is inherently analytical ("Sight isolates, sound incorporates," says Ong), its object is at a remove from the observer. Sound, however, is immersive, placing the listener in its center rather than approaching her from one direction and distance. Rather than the analytical "dissection" entailed by the structure of sight, "The auditory ideal...is harmony, a putting together."[13] Such differences also go part of the way toward explaining how agency is more limited in an auditory model of perception. The immersive aspect of sound means that reception is less easily controlled.[14] Harmony, then, situates the listener in a soundscape that is already relational, both among its own notes and vibrations and between itself and its perceiver.[15] Incidentally, this contrast is also indicative of what criticism of *Richard II* can gain by looking more closely at hearing phenomena, considering that criticism of the play tends to return most often to optics to demonstrate the groundless nature of sovereignty. Though Richard provides plenty of opportunities to perform such readings, particularly the broken mirror of the deposition

---

[13] Walter J. Ong, *Orality and Literacy: The Technologizing of the Word* (London and New York: Routledge, 2002): 70. Ong also references Maurice Merleau-Ponty in affirming that vision is dissective: "L'Oeil et I'esprit," *Les Temps modernes* 18: 184–5. Numéro special: "Maurice Merleau-Ponty" (1961): 193–227.

[14] Writer and theorist Ursula K. LeGuin usefully and succinctly sums up this point about reception and control: "Being on opposite sides of the head, ears are pretty good at telling where a sound comes from, but though the mind, the attention, can focus hearing, can listen to, the ear essentially hears *from*: it can't focus narrowly and can select only with effort. The ear can't stop hearing; we have no earlids; only sleep can shut off our reception. While we are awake our ears accept what comes." "Telling is Listening," *The Wave in the Mind: Talk and Essays on the Writer, the Reader, and the Imagination* (Boston: Shambhala, 2004).

[15] Marshall McLuhan and Edmund Carpenter highlight how sound demands something more relational between the auditor and the heard environment: "Auditory space has no point of favored focus. It's a sphere without fixed boundaries, space made by the thing itself, not space containing the thing. It is not pictorial, boxed in, but dynamic, always in flux, creating its own dimensions moment by moment...It is more immediately connected to the nervous system than anything visual." "Acoustic Space," *Explorations in Communication (*Boston: Beacon Publishing, 1960): 67.

scene, many such efforts to establish the empty and reified nature of sovereignty via the gaze (panoptics and synoptics) ultimately render ghostly and unreal not only the sovereign, but also the subject as such.[16] However, hearing encounters are at least as prevalent in the play as metaphors of vision. I use the term "encounter" consciously to denote the subject's limited autonomy through this model of perception, thus anticipating the relational and interdependent nature of communal time that I argue is Richard's restoration in the final moments of the play.

Most significant in Gaunt's dying utterance is the recognition that the evanescent nature of a dying man's speech is what "enforce[s] attention," in the same way that harmony forces a certain kind of reception. "More are men's ends marked than their lives before" (2.1.11); here, "mark" means "pay attention to." Gaunt's auditors can pay attention to his words, but the temporal moment of their utterance can only be referenced, not "marked" in the sense of noting or counting; dying speech escapes measurement as both the speaker and his message pass into nothing. As Ong observes, "All sensation takes place in time, but sound has a special relationship to time unlike that of the other fields that register in human sensation. Sound exists only when it is going out of existence."[17] This lack of a clear temporal referent can be traced to the problem of duration. Carolyn Dinshaw places the present--the now--at the center of her discussion of

[16] Both Slavoj Zizek and Christopher Pye read the play in terms of optics, interpreting metaphors of perspective in terms of nearly tangible realities created by the gaze and driven by illusion. For example, both scholars examine the exchange about how grief and tears affect vision in the exchange between the queen and Bushy in 2.2. Zizek notes that the queen's grief is "perceived in a distorted way, because outside this distortion, 'in itself,' it does not exist." *Looking Awry: An Introduction to Jacques Lacan through Popular Culture* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1991): 9.

Similarly, Pye notes that "Bushy raises the possibility that the queen's sorrow is more radically groundless than he intended; seen rightly, grief may be a shadow not of any prior substance at all but simply of 'what it is not.'" *The Regal Phantasm* (London: Routledge, 1990): 90.

[17] Ong, 31.

temporality (like Augustine does, as well, as I will explore in the next chapter). On first glance, the now seems empty, and as each moment of the present slips back into the past, now has no clear referent; it lacks duration. However, it is populated by attachments, held together by affect and desire. "Often, apparently," writes Dinshaw, "our experience departs from the metrical clocking of time that measures a succession of moments one after another."[18] Dinshaw's analysis is useful here because affect is what enables the distinction between a "lived sense of time" and a linear, measured time (for my purposes, the modernist dream of the clock). What unites the temporality of the clock and the temporality of the ear is the notion of synchrony, or its opposite, asynchrony, which Carolyn Dinshaw defines as "different time frames or temporal systems colliding in a single moment of now."[19] Not only does hearing fundamentally resist a model of linear mapping, hearing is even more poised than other senses or affects to be asynchronous and to interrupt the flow of time, since its perceptual object, sound, is itself impermanent. The technology of the clock is an attempt to measure what cannot be fully measured; the same attempt is mirrored in Richard's ambivalent employment of the clockwork metaphor to represent subjective life. The question becomes whether Richard's self-injunction to "keep time" is at least partially ironic—whether he realizes that this is not an autonomous endeavor and that "keep[ing] time" is less like counting and more like paying attention.

Place, Relationality, and the Measurement of Time

[18] Carolyn Dinshaw, *How Soon Is Now?: Medieval Texts, Amateur Readers, and the Queerness of Time* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2012), 9.
[19] Dinshaw, 5.

Tracing the history of time in the Middle Ages, LeGoff states, "The same process responsible for the rationalization of time was responsible for its secularization." This "rationalization of time," attributed to Aristotle's influence, was implemented by the Church but adapted by the merchants.[20] For scholastics in the Middle Ages, motion was central to time as a concept, since the dominant mode of theorizing time came from Aristotle filtered through Aquinas. In the *Physics*, Aristotle defines time as "the number of motion." Since mobility belongs to the physical world, Aristotelian time is tied to the world at large, to narrative, and to relationality.[21] As Dohrn-van Rossum explains, "measures, numbers, and weights were of interest only as relationships such as bigger-smaller, slower-faster, harmonious-unharmonious, or proportional-unproportional."[22] Clockwork technology, musical meter, and scientific theory related to time all show the same movement away from Aristotelian time as the Renaissance progresses.

Richard's extended metaphor of "keep[ing] time" is twofold; it begins by clearly referring to musical tempo but then overlays this conceit with that of clockwork's mechanical means of keeping time. Do these temporal metaphors, the musical and the mechanical, convey the same notion of time? In both, time as the measurement of

---

[20] Jacques LeGoff, *Time, Work, and Culture in the Middle Ages*, Trans. Arthur Goldhammer (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980): 36.

[21] Aquinas glosses Aristotle's principle by explaining that "when we discern a 'before' and 'after' and count them, then we say that time is produced. This is so because time is nothing less than 'the numbering of motion according to before and after': for we perceive time, as was said, when we count the "before and after" of motion. It is clear therefore that time is not motion, but accompanies motions inasmuch as it is counted. Hence time is the number of motion.

"But if someone objects against this definition and says that 'before and after' are determined by time, and consequently, that the definition is circular, he should remember that 'before and after' are placed in the definition of time inasmuch as they are caused in motion by magnitude, and not inasmuch as they are measured out of time" (Section 580). *Commentary on Aristotle's Physics, Book IV*, Trans. by Pierre H. Conway.

[22] Gerhard Dohrn-van Rossum, *History of the Hour: Clocks and Modern Temporal Orders*, trans. Thomas Dunlap (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1996), 284.

physical motion is central, a perspective that was waning leading up the Horological Revolution. Roger Mathew Grant makes a convincing case that conventions of metrical theory ran parallel to the changing conception of time in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, beginning with the Aristotelian notion of time as the measurement of motion and shifting to the Newtonian, wherein time becomes fully abstracted from any relation to physical space. Music theorists of the early and mid-seventeenth centuries defined a beat as fundamentally tied to the length of time it takes for the hand to move through the air on an upswing, "a motion theorists codified in the terms thesis and arsis respectively."[23] The temporal duration of the beat was therefore inherently linked to physical motion. The distinction between the notational bar (abstract musical measure) and the duration of physical motion that signified the beat did not come until later in the century. Moreover, motion-as-duration held such primacy in these earlier conceptions that triple meter is conceived as temporally uneven, or non-isochronous, precisely because its durations are based on the double movement of the hand (thesis and arsis) rather than an abstract theorization plotted on the bar.[24]

By situating Richard's temporality in terms of abstract duration rather than time bound up with embodiment and an interconnectivity between place and space, critics of Shakespeare can misread the clockwork conceit as simply an instance of Richard's objectification by time while overlooking the asynchronous quality inherent in the

[23] Roger Mathew Grant, "Epistemologies of Time and Metre in the Long Eighteenth Century," *Eighteenth Century Music* 6.1 (Cambridge University Press, 2009): 60. Agostino Pisa and Pier Francesco Valentini published treatises in 1611 and 1643, respectively, which situated metrical theory in motion rather than abstract duration.

[24] The non-isochronous nature of triple-meter is discussed and diagrammed in Valentini's treatise, *Trattato della battuta musicale* (1643). Grant states, "Therefore triple meter emerges as an unbalanced version of duple. The motion of thesis and arsis take precedence over beat cardinality (the number of beats per bar), even to the extent of yielding an asymmetrical triple meter" (62).

conception of the mechanism. For example, one critic is quoted in the Arden edition at 5.5.51-4 as follows: "The disturbed state of Richard's mind is reflected in the complexity of the metaphor: his thoughts are minutes and the frequent and regular sighs to which they give rise are the groaning of the pendulum which ticks them out (jar(s) Their watches)."[25] Though the detail may at first seem trifling, the jarred timekeeping that marks out minutes like sighs cannot be attributed to "the groaning of the pendulum," since the pendulum was not perfected for use in clocks until sixty years after the first performances of Richard (the pendulum was successfully incorporated into clockwork by Huygens in 1657). Older striking clocks with communal bells were weight-driven.[26] In terms of sound, "The tick is the sound of the whole system of gears supporting the weight being brought to a sudden stop after being momentarily released."[27] So ticking by the minute is not comparable to striking by the hour, since the former was the side-effect of the gears shifting into place and the latter was initiated by a separate device intended specifically for marking the time by sound. And as we may recall from the historical overview of clockwork technology, the pendulum enabled the mechanism to be isochronous; this meant that the driving force (the pendulum) could operate at a particular frequency without effecting the overall rate of timekeeping for the device. This is not the case for the weight-driven clocks which Richard's comparison draws upon. The relationship between thoughts and sighs, or minutes and their "outward watch" (entailing both sound and motion) on the clock's face, is the difference between internal and

[25] Originally from *Richard II*, ed. Richard Adams (Macmillan Shakespeare, 1975): 252.
[26] The pendulum replaced weights as the driving force regulating the rate of timekeeping in clocks that were marketable, but large cathedral clocks remained weight-driven. As Adam Cohen notes, ""Developed around 1300, the first weight-driven mechanical clocks using the verge-and-foliot escapement were located inside cathedrals, abbeys, and monasteries. The first such clocks in England date from the late 1300s. A mechanical clock is mentioned in Salisbury in 1386, and a Wells Cathedral clock is noted in 1392" (134).
[27] Bruton, 16.

external, but this relationship is more complex than a simple causal link. The weight-driven nature of a large tolling cathedral clock is a good analogy for Richard's weighty grief in this passage. However, that the marking of minutes should outwardly jar the entire machine is hardly an intentional aspect of the clock's design; rather, it is the gravity of the mechanism that creates this sigh-like "outward watch." Just as minutes cannot be said to drive jarring, Richard's thoughts do not unilaterally drive his sighs. The sighs exercise a natural gravity of their own, and as such, "the outward watch" on the clock face can never fully signify "minutes," or thoughts; there is no perfect synchronicity between inner and outer, between grief and its representation. Here, the lines betray a subtle distinction between minutes as abstract temporal units (that we might even poetically conflate with the driving force as theoretically moving the mechanism) and the minutes represented on the "outward watch"; the conceit becomes unwieldy insofar as the metaphor employs the same vehicle for time and inner reality and the same tenor for the measurement of time and outward representation.

There is no easy relationship between internal and external largely because the mechanism itself, especially clockwork mechanism at this stage in the Renaissance, is no easy metaphor for subjectivity. While it is easy, in our age, to take for granted a piece of technology as something almost self-maintaining, it was not until after later in the period that substantial improvements to clockwork accuracy would be seen. However, "In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries mechanical clocks moved out of church towers and into homes, watches were invented, and public and private timepieces became ubiquitous throughout England."[28] The increasing privatization of time coincided with the older

[28] Cohen, 128.

order of clock towers, and the great communal clocks were particularly dependent on regular human intervention. For example, a pin triggered a lever that released the striking hammer once on the hour, but the clock still needed to be set by human hands: "If fast, the clock had to be stopped until it indicated the correct time. If slow, it had to be tripped so that it ran down quickly until the correct time was shown by the hands."[29] In addition to the imprecise marking of minutes, which required human intervention, the "sound that tells what hour it is," which Richard compares to his "clamorous groans," was made possible by a device called the locking plate, or "count wheel."[30] The train of gears that motivated the clock's time and the device that precipitated the striking of the bell were separate, albeit connected mechanisms and operated independently.

It would be inaccurate to describe the modernization of time in the seventeenth century as a movement from qualitative to quantitative time. Although Aquinas, interpreting Aristotle, explains that "time is not determined by either [slow or fast] according to its quantity or its quality, because nothing is its own measure," what produces the standard of measure must be found in the physical world.[31] For example, Michele Savonarola in 1450 set the precedent for physicians in the Middle Ages determining a fevered pulse by comparing it with a normal pulse, rather than an objective measure of time. Not until the seventeenth century (after mechanical clocks with minute dials became common) did physicians begin consistently measuring the pulse of fevered

[29] Bruton, 119.
[30] Bruton, 22.
[31] "Every change and motion is either slow or fast; but time is not either. Therefore time is neither a motion nor a change. He [Aristotle] explains the minor premise thus: Slow and fast are determined by time—because that is fast which is moved a great distance in a short time and that is slow which is moved a short distance in much time. But time is not determined by either according to its quantity or its quality, because nothing is its own measure. Therefore, time is neither slow nor fast. And since he had proposed that change is fast or slow, without mention of motion, he adds that for the present it does not matter whether one says 'motion' or 'change'" (Aquinas 569).

patients using an objective standard of temporal units.[32] Dohrn-van Rossum notes, "In 1583, Galileo checked the regularity of the swings of a thread pendulum at first by the pulse. Only later did he arrive at the reverse concept, that of determining the rate of the pulse with the help of the swings of the pendulum."[33] There also appears to be a mutually influencing relationship between musical tempo and the pulse as standards of measure in the Middle Ages through the Renaissance. Early conducting derived tempo in common time by the pulse.[34] In ironically circular fashion, Savonarola also "evidently did not know of a suitable time measure for the pulse rate and thus recommended instruction by musicians in conductor's tempo." Whether in music or in the physical sciences, the demand for temporal measure in the Middle Ages is fulfilled by relying on systems of scale derived from comparisons with other systems. In this sense, it is not the case that temporal measure was arbitrary before the Renaissance and certainly not that theorists and practitioners were unconcerned with the accuracy of quantitative measurement. However, "Only since the 'Scientific Revolution' in the middle of the seventeenth century can one speak of experimentally quantifying scientific procedures and of conceptions of time as a scaled continuum of discrete moments."[35] The notion of the "moment" itself undergoes a large shift from being bound to place to being bound to space, though some would describe this as occurring on a much more gradual basis,

[32] Dohrn-van Rossum, 285-287.
[33] Dohrn-van Rossum, 287.
[34] The question in regard to these early accounts "is whether the pulse (usually in the range of 60-80 MM) corresponded to crotchets, minims, or semibreves in the standard tempo notated in the standard 'alla semibreve' common time." Though this element of scale remains ambiguous, pulse was clearly tied to tempo as a system of measure. See Ephraim Segermen, "Tempo in fifteenth-century music," *Companion to Medieval and Renaissance Music*, ed. Tess Knighton and David Fallows (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992): 338.
[35] Dohrn-van Rossum, 285-287.

rather than as a product of the renaissance science movement.[36] Thus, temporal measurement pre-Renaissance is more markedly place-bound in the sense that it is wrapped up with embodiment: the heartbeat, the pulse, the body in conducting, and, in a more social sense, the rhythms of communal life as a whole. It is in this sense that Richard has lost touch with communal time, and comes to represent a temporality that is not only dis-placed (in terms of the social) but also place-less, anticipating the temporal subject leading up to and after Newton.[37]

There appear to be two separate instances of the asynchronous at work in Richard's conceit, and each represents a contrast between new and old ways of keeping time. First, there is the explicit meaning of "true time broke," where the analogy of either broken tempo or broken clockwork occurs at a level where technology is expected to maintain some level of accuracy, pointing toward a notion of time as objective (spatial). This points forward toward newer analogies of time that come to fulfillment as the science movement progresses. Temporal technologies are expected to tell us something about the person. Second, there is the implicit meaning that must necessarily be read into the vehicle of the metaphor (a weight-driven clock with a communal bell), whose social meaning is tied to an older notion of temporal measurement as inherently asynchronous. Time in this instance is always already relational, rather than representing some pure, abstract Time, as it does later in the seventeenth century. In the old notion, timekeeping is something that must be enacted and requires humans to enact it; timekeeping more

[36] Casey is among those who argue for a gradual shift, though he admits that "the full ascendancy of space over place does not happen until the publication of Newton's *Mathematical Principles of Natural Philosophy* in the last part of the seventeenth century," and "the critical turning point in the debate between space and place occurs during the sixteenth century" (129). Thinkers such as Nicholas of Cusa (1401-1464) and Giordano Bruno (1548-1600) are key examples of the place/space discussion being increasingly complicated within scholasticism (See Casey, 116-129).

[37] See also LeGoff on space, pp. 34-37.

literally keeps time and time is as real as the community that enacts it. In the new model, however, timekeeping reveals a mathematically precise time that is objective and not bound by other relationalities. As old gives way to new, the accuracy of technology becomes increasingly important.

Hearing Time in Richard II

As a play concerned with determining the grounds of power, sovereignty in Shakespeare's *Richard II* is most often predictably configured by critics along the lines of sight and the gaze. It is Richard's faulty hearing, however, that implicates him as both out of tune with his own subjectivity and with time. Despite its pitfalls, the phenomenon of hearing reveals how the subject perceives and experiences history; hearing time becomes analogous to the ear mapping the subject's relationship to a larger aural field. Faulty, or selective, hearing is essentially a temporal problem; it distorts Richard's perception of his placement in a larger temporal (and ideological) framework. Like the "sad stories of the death of kings," he would like to maintain absolute agency in telling time and in telling history; as such, he assumes control of the aural field in a manner typical of monarchs. Sound, speech, and hearing had profound roles in framing the power dynamics of renaissance court life, entailing authority over the aural space, or what Bruce Smith terms a "soundscape."[38] In Smith's description, maintaining authority over the aural field involves a simultaneous subversion of the field of optics insofar as the spell-binding power of voice relies on the absent body, the absence of visible sign, and in a positive

[38] Bruce Smith, *The Acoustic World of Early Modern England* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1999). Smith also notes, "...Elizabeth tried to take absolute control of the acoustic environment: she managed to hold everyone's visual attention at the same [time] that she eluded their visual curiosity." (84).

sense, can force the kind of focused sensory encounter that engages with the world rather than immediately retreating to analyze it. Of course, this encounter involves a simultaneous relinquishing of agency, a problem posed by Richard's disarticulated hearing at the end of the play.

Emphasizing this loss of agency, clockwork Richard describes himself as objectified by time, as time's "numb'ring clock" and Bolingbroke's "jack o' the clock" (5.5.50-60). The clock conceit includes psychological as well as physical and affective categories in relation to time's measurement: thoughts as minutes, eyes as clock-face, sighs as the ticking mechanism. The analogy ends by comparing the sound of a striking clock to the involuntary rise of affect triggered by grief: "Now, sir, the sound that tells what hour it is / Are clamorous groans which strike upon my heart / Which is the bell" (5.5.55-57). Significantly, the ear is not included in this itemization; sound emanates from the subject against the will but is not perceived by the subject. This is quite the contrast to the Richard of Act 3, who, though almost fully overthrown and facing overwhelming political loss, not only still commands a listening but controls the telling of history.

To know an object external to the self, all the senses must be brought to bear, but hearing has unique implications. As Sokolowski points out, using the example of a cube to explain perception, "only vision and touch present the object as a cube; hearing, taste, and smell present the material the cube is made of, not its character of being shaped as a cube."[39] Hearing, then, is first of all distinctive with respect to its tendency to involve the subject in its very materiality (rather than the more indeterminate categories of mind

[39] Robert Sokolowski, *Introduction to Phenomenology, (*Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 18.

represented by vision and touch). Jonathan Gil Harris's theory of "untimely matter" seems relevant here; Harris defines matter as "not simply physicality but rather dynamic material worked—or reworked—by subjects in their 'sensuous' interactions with objects over time."[40] The activity and engagement suggested by Harris's definition should not give the impression that the subject is always aware of these interactions; the agency of both subjects and objects always seems to be implicated in temporality. For this reason, the agency of the hearer (and, weighed on the side of the phenomenal world, the agency of sound) poses a somewhat different problem than the agency of the viewer; different still are the implications for the hearer in time. We might summarize these trends by pointing out the underlying epistemological problem running throughout: the at once embodied and disembodied nature of sound (posing the question of where voice resides) challenges the Cartesian lapse into the self. Bruce Smith champions phenomenology as "counter[ing] the tyranny of Cartesian philosophy, with its privileging of visual experience, its ambition to speak with a single authoritative voice."[41] Panoptical vision, the idea that the king both commands and deflects the gaze of observers, is so wedded to the symbolic and illusory nature of kingship precisely because the physical body of the king is elided by the discursive, political one. Re-articulated hearing requires a more active participation on the part of the listener; aurality exacts a particular intentionality from the listener, who can neither take the apparent qualities of sound for granted or rely on faulty first principles.

Additionally, acoustics do not merely matter in the court, the sphere of the sovereign, but in the space of the theater, as well. Hearing, both in terms of its

[40] Harris, 175.
[41] Smith, 26.

phenomenology and its epistemology, is wrapped up with questions of absent and present bodies; in terms of performance, this involves the positioning of bodies/characters on stage, the position of audience members in relation to those voices. Although Serres defines amphitheatre not as "a space where people speak, but one where many see," it is also collective listening that properly focuses the attention of the audience.[42] Rather than mapping hearing onto the same geometric lines of the gaze, implied by interpreting aurality as simply as ensnarement to the external world and as revealing the liminality of the subject, aural fields on stage can provide a means to read the subject as conjunctively engaged with the external world. *Richard II* provides many such moments of aural metatheater, where anxieties about concealed or absent listeners betray larger concerns about whose voice wins out in the political melee.

While spatial metaphor is often employed in the service of converging lines of sight in order to disclose difference, hierarchy, or authority, place is more closely linked to communal time. The trend throughout several key scenes I examine is the revealing of hearing divorced from its context, and therefore, from temporality that would necessitate place and embodiment. When Richard laments his "daintiness of ear," he calls attention to a tendency toward an overly precise, sensual aurality that discerns faulty rhythm and time-keeping. Dainty hearing calls to mind York's accusation that Richard's ear is open to the "lascivious meters" of flattery "to whose venom sound / The open ear of youth doth always listen" (2.1.19).[43] In the second instance, lascivious conveys an implicit condemnation of Richard's court life, and according to the *OED*, the word at least

[42] Michel Serres, *The Five Senses: A Philosophy of Mingled Bodies,* Trans. Margaret Sankey and Peter Cowley (New York: Continuum, 2008), 87.

[43] In both passages, the Arden edition points out a correspondence to the courtly entertainments of Edward II and that both Marlowe's and Shakespeare's plays of the same name emphasize the sensuality of music and poetry in Edward's court.

conveys "voluptuous, luxuriant," as of a sensualist, if not carrying sexual overtones as well. An epistemological dilemma is posed here: how does Richard's tendency toward sensuousness—an overly refined or hyper-tuned ear—actually limit his access to knowledge through the senses? In other words, how can hearing become too refined for the purposes of knowing and understanding the external, temporal world? We might parse out the question in relation to Bacon's injunction to "stay faithfully and constantly with things, and abstract our minds no further from them than is necessary for the images and rays of things to come into focus (as in the case of sight)...."[44] Bacon advocates a pragmatic method, wherein the organs of sense are sharpened as much as possible apart from the ideological effects of mind. Richard's voluptuous ear, "stopped with other, flatt'ring sounds" (2.1.17), does not indicate a heightening of sense-as-instrument, but a very ideologically driven fixation on sense experience itself. When sense is reified, it becomes disarticulated, both from the soul and from the world; in the same way, Richard-as-clockwork, taken as a whole analogy along with the metaphors of music and hearing, portrays the ear as out of sync with the rest of the self.

Though it does not include hearing, Richard's changing phenomenological relationship to temporality can arguably be located in Act 3, scene two; after returning from Ireland to learn that most of his militia has defected to Bolingbroke, Richard fixes on the matter of blood, a discursive trope in the play that stands in for sovereignty and its iteration in time, by accounting for the color draining from his face: "But now the blood of twenty thousand men / Did triumph in my face, and they are fled" (3.2.76-77). Blood as life force--the now flushing, now paling face as sign of mutability--reinforces the

[44] Francis Bacon, *The New Organon*, ed. Lisa Jardine and Michael Silverthorne (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 11.

king's ultimate dependence on the militia as political life force. Richard still associates his own physical body with the body politic, but this moment reveals an incipient realization of the untimely relationship between these two bodies: one real and one discursive. These lines seem to be, at least partially, an answer to Salisbury's prior exclamation at line 69, "O, call back yesterday, bid Time return." Richard has, after all, arrived a day too late. The productive (or "sensuous") involvement of humans in a social and historical sense reveals history in its virtuality, and in those terms, the scene heralds Richard's forced recognition that the discourse of kingship is insufficient. Richard's view of history is rooted in a symbolic and language-driven conception of his own body; time orients itself in reference to the body politic. It is no coincidence that the metaphors of physicality, once used by Richard purely to identify with the state, take on an increasingly material turn by the end of the play. Richard's "true time broke" is revealed only after he is reacquainted with embodiment as such. The agency of different historical moments (reinforcing the enfolded nature of time, as with the example of the handkerchief) exert themselves on the body, forcing engagement with the external social and temporal reality while also revealing the subject's limited autonomy in coming to knowledge.

Through the instrument of the dying voice, Gaunt's words to Richard, attempting to "undeaf" his ear, which has been "stopped with other, flatt'ring sounds" and "lascivious metres" (2.1.17-21) actually illustrate how temporality makes itself apparent to perception through a forced encounter with mortality and embodiment. Gaunt's declaration that "the tongues of dying men / Enforce attention like deep harmony" (2.1.5-6) argues for a view of time marked out by death as a means to bring the subject to

knowledge. However, the rest of the Gaunt's speech emphasizes not just words themselves as commanding attention, but voice itself, aspirated and embodied, as holding a special kind of time-marking power:

> Where words are scarce, they are seldom spent in vain,
> For they breathe truth that breathe their words in pain.
> He that no more must say is listened ore
> Than they whom youth and ease have taught to glose.
> More are men's ends marked than their lives before.
> The setting sun and music at the close,
> As the last taste of sweets, is sweetest last,
> Writ in remembrance more than things long past.
> Though Richard my life's counsel would not hear,
> My death's sad tale may yet undeaf his ear. (2.1.7-16)

Death, particularly the voice of the dying, reveals history in its virtuality by bringing certain moments to presence while others become part of the perceptual background.[45] As this chapter seeks to establish, Richard's sensual hearing indicates an oversensitivity to certain rhythms to the expense of the wholeness of perception. This indicates the complicated relationship between sense experience and the will to acquire knowledge; over-refinement in one area may betray the will, or reveal that the subject was never fully autonomous to begin with.

In contrast to hearing, the structure of the subject along the lines of sight always seems to reveal, not simply a lack of autonomy, but a split subject who has no access to true knowledge of the world external to the self. Of course, the scene that provides the most potential for reading the gaze and its relationship to subjectivity is when Richard calls for a mirror after his deposition: "Was this the face / That like the sun did make the

[45] Using the cube as an example, Sokolowski explains how an object is perceived via profiles and how these profiles are perceived in time: "As I turn the cube or walk around it, the potentially perceived becomes the actually perceived, and the actually perceived slips into absence; it becomes that which has been seen, that which is again only potentially seen...A profile is a temporally individuated presentation of an object" (19).

beholders wink?" (4.1.283, 284). Richard's image reflected in the looking glass not only reveals the mortality of his body (thereby rendering him untimely) but the insufficiency of visual referents, either to constitute the subject or to reveal knowledge. Asserting the superiority of mind via the lines of sight in an attempt always seems to reveal a split, not just between mind and body or between self and world, but in the subject himself.[46] Examining the gaze in Renaissance anatomy art (though coming to fruition later in the period, Rembrandt's Anatomy Lesson (1632) is an example), Jonathan Sawday argues that the corpse not only stood in as a vanitas symbol, but the criminal's body represented the need to contain a political threat: "The corpse, then, was the remnant of a deviant 'will' -- a potential threat to the social fabric mastered by the rational power."[47] Likewise, Richard's mirror reflects back his objectified "dead" flesh, already under the scrutiny of the onlookers who act as scientists. Bolingbroke's comment, "The shadow of your sorrow / hath destroyed the shadow of your face" (4.1.292-3) illustrates the play's overall anxiety that vision only gives access to the world of referents. In a similar moment in 2.2.14-15, Bushy attempts to assuage Queen Isabel's sorrow, which views Richard's leave-taking as heralding grief to come: "Each substance of a grief hath twenty shadows, / Which shows like grief itself, but is not so" (2.2.14-15). It is not difficult to observe, as Zizek does, an underlying parallel between the *objet petit a*, the Lacanian object of desire which posits itself as its own cause, in Bushy's description of "sorrow's

[46] Sawday writes, "The impossibility of sustaining the 'link between soul and body was itself based on a radical anatomy of the human subject. Indeed, it was the susceptibility of the body (as opposed to the mind) to the process of division which confirmed the distinction between body and mind inherent within the Cartesian project. Since bodies could be divided whilst minds appeared to be entirely resistant to division, then, as Descartes observed in the sixth of the Meditations on First Philosophy, no matter that as a 'thinking thin' the subject may have never perceived itself as 'one single and complete thing', the human subject was bifurcated" (146). Jonathan Sawday, *The Body Emblazoned: Dissection and the Human Body in Renaissance Culture* (New York: Routledge, 1995).

[47] Sawday, 152.

eye, glazed with blinding tears," which "Divides one thing entire to many objects" (2.2.16-17). Grief creates its own gaze, and the only way to correct this distorted gaze is by "looking awry" (2.2.21). Yet even so, Bushy implies that the gaze can never truly represent its object, since grief itself consists of "naught but shadows / Of what it is not" (2.2.23-24).[48] Likewise, Bolingbroke's play of words demonstrates an overall distrust of visual experience to provide mastery over the world of referents.

While the visual metaphor in the deposition scene provides a means of revealing the baselessness of sovereign power, the device of the mirror should be juxtaposed against the much differently constructed clockwork metaphor of Act Five, scene five. In Richard's own view, his identity as Sun-king produces an image that deflects the castrating gaze of observers. Interpreting the looking-glass passage as a moment wherein the spectral, phantasmic nature of sovereignty is revealed, Christopher Pye's analysis of the gaze in *Richard II* problematizes Stephen Greenblatt's formulation that subversion actually authorizes the power it seeks to overturn.[49] The bodily presence of the king "remains irredeemably 'untimely' because, like the sign of treason, it is a sight that cannot be separated from the response it provokes."[50] Pye's "sign of treason" refers to the belief that the king's presence is powerful enough to make traitors reveal their secrets. In this reading, vision is anamorphic insofar as it causes a fundamental split as the self

[48] A few scholars have commented on the resemblance of Bushy's elaborate conceit of the teary gaze to Lacan's *objet petit a*. Zizek notes that the queen's grief is "perceived in a distorted way, because outside this distortion, 'in itself,' it does not exist" (*Looking Awry*, 9). Similarly, Christopher Pye notes that "Bushy raises the possibility that the queen's sorrow is more radically groundless than he intended; seen rightly, grief may be a shadow not of any prior substance at all but simply of 'what it is not.'" *The Regal Phantasm* (London: Routledge, 1990): 90.

[49] Pye, *The Regal Phantasm*, 84.

[50] Pye's explanation of response is fundamentally Lacanian insofar as it is similar to the *objet petit a*, where temporal order and causality or confused insofar as the object of desire cannot be distinguished from its cause. *The Regal Phantasm,* 101.

becomes both as subject and as object of the gaze.[51] An anamorphic subject becomes untimely only after some measure of agency is lost. While the broken reflection, through the hard lines of sight, indicates the ideologically-driven nature of sovereign subjectivity, the loss of that autonomous subjectivity heralds its replacement by a historically and contextually situated version of selfhood: "Ha, ha, keep time! How sour sweet music is / When time is broke and no proportion kept! / So is it in the music of men's lives" (5.5.42-44). Richard's broken, individuated time, a symptom of sovereignty, gives way to a realization of temporal situatedness and the need for "concord [between]" state and time" (5.5.47). Richard's body in the second instance is compared to a mechanized figure ("Jack o' the clock") whose automated movements marked out measured time, rather than the sun by which clocks are set. The rise of perfected timekeeping mechanisms during Shakespeare's time also signals a shift from the conceptualization of time as something fluid and communal to something measured, both personal and asynchronous.[52] The re-incorporation of the ear signal a restoration of Richard to communal time.

Hearing, therefore, can be distanced from the entrenchment of subjectivity in a way that vision cannot. Descartes located the soul in the pineal gland, in reason and in the brain, but for Serres, the soul is located it in the solar plexus—engagement with the world, the drive of the senses. Serres writes:

---

[51] Pye writes, "To know itself at all, the subject must enter into a dialectical oscillation between object and subject, a dialectic of loss and restoration. And yet, neither exactly a subject nor exactly an object, the anamorphic figure falls outside such dialectics of identity altogether, outside even the time of universal judgment and human history" (60).

[52] Cohen writes, "This notion that private timekeeping could have encouraged individuality and personal achievement seems as plausible as McLuhan's theory that the private reading and interpretation of printed texts spurred the rise of individualism" (143). The individualization of time also runs parallel to the rise of capitalism for obvious reasons.

> I only really live outside of myself; outside of myself I think, meditate, know; outside of myself I receive what is given, enduringly; I invent outside of myself. Outside of myself, I exist, as does the world. Outside of my verbose flesh, I am on the side of the world.
>
> The ear knows the distance all too well. I can put it out the window, project it far away, hold it distant from my body.[53]

By this line of thinking, the subject is split—anamorphic, untimely, suffering a loss of agency. However, hearing as encounter reveals how this divide happens on the boundaries of the person and the world. Richard's broken image may represent loss, according to Pye's description of anamorphic subjectivity as "a dialectic of loss and restoration," but the metaphors of hearing at the end of the play ironically signal the corresponding restoration of subjectivity. Interpreting the subject (particularly the sovereign subject) in terms of its visibility--the self-same gaze--entails reading the subject as ultimately symbolic, interpellated by the world of objects. For example, in analyzing Hamlet, Pye writes, "The more [Hamlet] seeks to constitute himself, the more his reiterates an originative split within himself; the more he asserts difference from the object of revenge, the more he effaces difference."[54] Difference, producing endless binaries, finds its absent center in the subject; in gaze-centered approaches to epistemology, visibility produces signs of difference. The subject has no true connection to the phenomenal world because the split lies within. In contrast to this determination of subjectivity via semiotics, Serres's term, "verbose flesh," indicates his concern with how subjects are, in their Cartesian outlook on the world, addicted to language and experience reality mediated through words rather than the senses. Voice as something embodied and

[53] Serres, *The Five Senses,* 94.
[54] Serres, *The Five Senses,* 111.

felt through the senses is important in this context. Thus, Gaunt's dying voice commands attention not through words alone but through "dying breath."

Present in Cartesianism is an implicit distrust of voice, because of "the possibility that something might remain hidden, unseen, unsaid."[55] It is this anxiety that, ironically, prompts speaking as the instinctive response to skepticism of another's voice. When the queen cries, "O, I am pressed to death / Through want of speaking!" she can no longer refrain from expressing anger at the gardener's prophecies of doom for Richard (3.4.83-4). There is even some comic potential in the way the queen urges a prompt answer while delivering a string of questions that allow the listener no opportunity to respond: "Why dost thou say Richard is deposed? / Dar'st thou... / Divine his downfall? Say where, when, and how / ...Speak, thou wretch!" (77-80). Performance of this speech, regardless of delivery style, must be simultaneously a silencing and a calling to account. It is reminiscent of her husband's earlier response to Gaunt's prophetic admonitions: "Darest with thy frozen admonition / Make pale our cheek...?" (2.1.117-8); likewise, it reiterates the overall concern, for those siding with Richard, that an ontological order of subjects be the deciding factor in determining who is telling the truth or who has the right to speak. Of course, the political nature of such an epistemology, and the extent to which it may be negotiated or claimed as a matter of competition, is present in the very first scene of the play, in the conflict between Bolingbroke and Mowbray.[56]

Being present in the moment means being by to hear; yet, in a more judicial sense, the play is also concerned that a subject be permitted this access in the first place.

---

[55] Smith, 26.

[56] Smith points out how this scene "plays out an aural competition in which Richard is the loser. His failure to establish verbal authority in this opening scene--in rhetorical effectiveness, Bolingbroke clearly carries the day--predicts the silencing of Richard's voice in the end" (277).

In Act Four, scene one, the Bishop of Carlisle argues on the king's behalf that determinations of guilt require the accused to be within hearing:

> Thieves are not judged when they are by to hear,
> Although apparent guilt be seen in them;
> And shall the figure of God's majesty,
> His captain, steward, deputy elect,
> Anointed, crowned, and planted many years,
> Be judged by subject and inferior breath
> And he himself not present? (124-30)

Carlisle argues that a fair and judicial determination of guilt requires the hearing presence of the accused. "Apparent guilt" may be seen with the eyes, but sight is insufficient for determining guilt, innocence, or any other kind of knowledge. Like the queen, Carlisle believes that the ontological order of subjects leads to a corresponding epistemic uncertainty when that order is upset. However, unlike her almost comical attempt to pit one aural field against another, Carlisle's speech advocates an orderliness to both speaking and listening. Carlisle's advocacy for listening illustrates how the play's phenomenology of hearing institutes its own ethics of hearing, as well. Richard's fatal flaw as king was his tendency to see problems rather than listen to others. Hearing his "True time broke" entails not only recognizing his own limited autonomy, but understanding the agency of multiple aural fields in exerting themselves upon a particular historical moment. Re-tuning Richard's ear does not mean curing deafness; his ear was always hypersensitive to the wrong cues. Rather, it means learning to listen.

Chapter Two Bibliography

Aquinas, Thomas. *Commentary on Aristotle's Physics, Book IV.* Trans. Pierre H. Conway.

Bacon, Francis. *The New Organon*, ed. Lisa Jardine and Michael Silverthorne. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004.

Carman, Taylor. "Forward to Basic Writings." In *Basic Writings*, by Martin Heidegger. Ed. David Farrell Krell. New York: Harper Collins, 2008.

Casey, Edward S. *The Fate of Place: A Philosophical History.* Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998.

Cohen, Adam Max. *Shakespeare and Technology: Dramatizing Early Technological Revolutions.* New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006.

Dinshaw, Carolyn. *How Soon Is Now? Medieval Texts, Amateur Readers, and the Queerness of Time.* Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2012.

Dohrn-van Rossum, Gerhard. History of the Hour: Clocks and Modern Temporal Orders, trans. Thomas Dunlap. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1996.

Le Goff, Jacques. Time, Work, and Culture in the Middle Ages. Trans. Arthur Goldhammer. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1980.

LeGuin, Ursula K., "Telling is Listening." *The Wave in the Mind: Talk and Essays on the Writer, the Reader, and the Imagination.* Boston: Shambhala, 2004.

Kantorowicz, Ernst. *The King's Two Bodies: A Study in Medieval Political Theology*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1957.

Grant, Roger Mathew. "Epistemologies of Time and Metre in the Long Eighteenth Century." *Eighteenth Century Music 6.1*. Cambridge University Press, 2009.

McLuhan, Marshall and Edmund Carpenter. "Acoustic Space." *Explorations in Communication.* Boston: Beacon Publishing, 1960.

Merleau-Ponty, Maurice. "L'Oeil et I'esprit." *Les Temps modernes 18: 184–5. Numéro special: "Maurice Merleau-Ponty"* (1961): 193–227.

Netzloff, Mark. "Insurgent Time: *Richard II* and the Periodization of Sovereignty." Richard II: *New Critical Essays, Shakespeare Criticism, Vol. 25*. Ed. Jeremy Lopez. New York: Routledge, 2012.

Ong, Walter J. *Orality and Literacy: The Technologizing of the Word.* London and New York: Routledge, 2002.

Pye, Christopher. *The Regal Phantasm*. London: Routledge, 1990.

Sawday, Jonathan. *The Body Emblazoned: Dissection and the Human Body in Renaissance Culture.* New York: Routledge, 1995.

Segermen, Ephraim. "Tempo in fifteenth-century music." *Companion to Medieval and Renaissance Music*, ed. Tess Knighton and David Fallows. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992.

Serres, Michel. *The Five Senses: A Philosophy of Mingled Bodies*. Trans. Margaret Sankey and Peter Cowley (New York: Continuum, 2008).

Serres, Michel and Bruno Latour. *Conversations on Science, Culture, and Time.* Trans. Roxanne Lapidus. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1995.

Smith, Bruce. *The Acoustic World of Early Modern England.* Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1999.

Sokolowski, Robert. *Introduction to Phenomenology.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000.

Zizek, Slavoj. *Looking Awry: An Introduction to Jacques Lacan through Popular Culture*. Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1991.

"Disorder'd Clocks": Augustinian Time and the Devotional Self in George Herbert's *The Temple*

When George Herbert's good friend, Nicholas Ferrar, wrote, "The best minds are like clocks, that to go right need daily winding up,"[1] his words were borne out by the "winding up" of daily liturgy in his own home, Little Gidding. Reactions to the structure of household worship at Little Gidding were varied and complex, such that "the sympathetic among Ferrar's contemporaries applauded the hourly readings as evidence of exemplary spiritual fervor while others feared them as the not-very-thin end of the Romish monastic wedge."[2] One anonymous detractor described the household devotional practices at the Ferrar's home as a "lip-labour of trolling out the litany four times a day" and "promiscuous private prayers all night long," the latter referring to the household's infamous "Night Watches."[3] Such reactions indicate a certain climate of generalized Protestant anxiety about proper times for worship and prayer. Personal or household devotions were encouraged by Protestants, but devotional practices that were too regulated were suspect. Dohrn-van Rossum notes, "Although it was repeatedly emphasized—following the original conceptions—that Christians were not bound to specific days and hours in their devotions and prayers, in practical terms all religious

[1] Nicholas Ferrar, *The Story Books of Little Gidding: Being the Religious Dialogues Recited in the Great Room, 1631-2* (New York: E.P. Dutton and Co., 1899), 162.
[2] Joyce Ransome, *The Web of Friendship: Nicholas Ferrar and Little Gidding* (Cambridge: James Clarke & Co., 2011), 67. The latter, unsympathetic reaction is corroborated by the author of *The Arminian Nunnery* (London, 1641) in his description of the household as "monsasticall."
[3] *The Arminian Nunnery: Or, A Briefe Description and Relation of the Late Monasticall Place, called the Arminian Nunnery at Little Gidding in Huntington-Shire* (London, 1641).

ceremonies were given a 'particular time and hour.'" [4] Some Protestants during the height of the Reformation were concerned about "secret masses," reflecting the fear that worship without a "particular time and hour" may be part and parcel of mystery in time as well as worship.[5]

Calvinist Protestantism has been characterized both as invested in strict scheduling and, like the anonymous critic of Little Gidding, wary of timekeeping practices that were too ritualistic and smack of Catholicism. The former characterization, of course, has been cemented by Max Weber's depiction of the Protestant work ethic.[6] While examining Protestantism may reveal some internal contradictions in its attitude toward timekeeping, George Herbert, in poetry and in life, seems to derive a certain consistency in his attitudes toward the spiritual practices of timekeeping precisely because he does not easily align with the attitudes of his day. While Herbert's understanding of human nature is decidedly Calvinist, his beliefs about the structuring of devotional life and private liturgies are inflected by wider practices, including Arminian. Herbert read and admired the devotional works of Catholics such as Francis de Sales and Juan Valdesso, including a translation of Valdesso's *Considerations* by Ferrar that was praised by Herbert.[7] Herbert reveals a strong valuation of scheduling in one's personal life, but so do the writings and spiritual practices of his Arminian friend, Nicholas Ferrar. Timekeeping as an extension of devotional practice was emphasized by Calvinists and Arminians alike. However, Herbert and his inner circle welcomed a higher rigor of

[4] Gerhard Dohrn-van Rossum, *History of the Hour: Clocks and Modern Temporal Orders,* trans. by Thomas Dunlap (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1996), 263.
[5] Dohrn-van Rossum, 265.
[6] I will add in the full reference later.
[7] Greg Miller, *George Herbert's "Holy Patterns": Reforming Individuals in Community* (New York: Continuum, 2007), 64.

frequency and precision in personal liturgy and did not treat such regimen with suspicion as betraying an element of Catholic "mystery" or obedience to ritual.[8] In describing the household liturgies performed at Little Gidding, Ransome notes, "Surviving accounts describe these exercises as 'hourly' without being absolutely clear if those 'hours' were literal or canonical," and "The content of their sessions, as opposed to their frequency, excited no such controversy, being impeccably biblical if somewhat unusual."[9] Although the religious and cultural context of the seventeenth century places certain of these beliefs and spiritual practices in tension, I would argue that their coherence in Herbert's poetry stems from a deeper influence: a theology of time rooted in Augustine.

Timekeeping and the Self

Pervading George Herbert's lyrics in *The Temple* is a deep consciousness of the importance of personal timekeeping to spiritual practice. In "Justice" (I), for instance, Herbert writes, "My soul doth love thee, yet it loves delay" (l. 12). A common use of the clock metaphor in this period, and in Herbert particularly, is to reinforce man's need for a rule of life. Likewise, the fuller context of Nicholas Ferrars' comparison of clocks and minds, referenced in the opening of this chapter, highlights the need for routines and schedules, "perpetual motions," to ground being in virtuous habit:

> The best minds are like Clocks, that to goe right need dayly winding up. There be some very long, but no perpetual motions to be found. Many grounds there be of longer continuance in some kind of good things, but in the end there alwaies an abandoning of them, but where the Necessities of giving accompt holds forcibly. And where this Necessitie lyeth hard there may evidently be observed a greater

[8] Of clocks in the Ferrar household, Ransome notes that he "reinforced his metaphor of the mind as clock or watch by providing within the house some sort of timepiece in every room as well as a clock with a sonorous bell to summon participants at appropriate times. He also placed sundials on three sides of the church tower, each with an appropriate motto" (65, 66).

[9] Ransome, 66 and 67.

> progresse to be made by dull capacities then by the most excellent witts that may be found, if left at randome to their own libertie.[10]

Ferrars' concern for consistency and regularity as a means of giving an account of one's time holds with Herbert's general advice in "The Church-porch," where Herbert includes a metaphor very similar to that of Ferrars. Here, he compares regular times for reflection and devotion to the winding of one's watch:

> if with thy watch, that too
> Be down, then winde up both; since we shall be
> Most surely judg'd, make thy accounts agree. (ll. 453-5)

As if anticipating accusations of legalism that might arise in response to this primarily didactic poem, Herbert defends a life of rule-following by linking the need for rules with the nature of man:

> Slight those who say amidst their sickly healths,
> Thou liv'st by rule. What doth not so, but man?
> Houses are built by rule, and common-wealths.
> Entice the trusty sunne, if that you can,
> From his Ecliptick line: becken the skie.
> Who lives by rule then, keeps good companie. (ll. 133-138)

To misunderstand the laws which govern man for the good is like believing that the sun can be drawn out of the path of its daily circuit. Thus far, Herbert agrees with Ferrars about the need for regularity in daily life as a spiritual necessity and that "Man is a shop of rules, a well truss'd pack,/ Whose every parcell under-writes a law" (ll. 141-142).

If minds and souls are so closely aligned with clocks, it is clear why a well-running clock would be a useful invention for these moral purposes. However, I would argue that these examples of outward action enabling spiritual practice (what modern society might refer to as habit formation) are necessary but not sufficient to a holistic

[10] Ferrar, *The Story Books of Little Gidding,* 162.

understanding of the soul in time, as it is represented in Herbert's poetry. For Herbert, clockwork subjectivity addresses the central question, posed with particular precision by Augustine, of whether time can be measured by and within the self.[11] This is the missing, integrative vision that Augustine's version of time supplies, since Augustinian time also implicates a thorough doctrine of the soul. If man's "every parcel under-writes a law," then one might suppose that the clock-like regulating of daily life guarantees a well-ordered inner man and that this order extends to the soul's experience of time. However, more nuance is required to show how Herbert follows Augustine's lead; in both, the experience of a wholly unified self, at presence with itself and with God, only exists beyond a vanishing horizon. Even in prayer, as my analyses of "Evensong" and "Church-monuments" to come will demonstrate, the soul may be distracted, even fragmented. No matter how well-regulated the patterns of life, the disorienting effect on temporal consciousness is inevitable. In "Justice" (II), for example, there are spiritual consequences to "lov[ing] delay" (l. 11). A few lines prior, the speaker laments, "My prayers mean thee, yet my prayers stray." Delay in this poem is not merely literal but reads as a spiritual category that exceeds the rule-derived category of personal timekeeping.

Augustine has a term for this in Book 11 of *Confessions*. It is the experience of *distentio animi*, or a distention of the soul. Because our minds are only able to process moment by moment, the only real moment is the indivisible present; thus, even past and future may be described in terms of a certain mental ordering that occurs only in the

[11] Ricouer writes, "…the thesis that time is 'in' the soul and finds 'in' the soul the principle of the measurement of time, is sufficient in itself inasmuch as it replies to the aporias found within the notion of time," *Time and Narrative, Vol. 1,* trans. Kathleen McLaughlin and David Pellauer (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984), 22.

present. This is Augustine's notion of a "threefold present," the means whereby time is translated in the mind via expectation (the present of the future), memory (the present of the past), and attention (the present of the present).[12] However, *distentio animi* is more than just the effect of time on the soul, whereby the soul is stretched out; it is the mind's effort to overcome its own temporal lack. It is only when time is compared with eternity that time is recognized as something bounded by non-being and absence, and therefore, the stress of *distentio* is felt.[13] Andrea Nightingale points out, "The key cause of this tension [between time and eternity] is the temporalization of the human being (which is the punishment for sin)."[14] We have no means of describing consciousness except in terms that are inherently temporal, such that a superficial understanding of Augustine's version of time might give the impression of being virtually indistinct from God's eternity.[15] What distinguishes human consciousness from the divine is that God experiences all moments at once.[16] The human present is marked out and distinguished by the non-being of the past and future, but God's eternal present, constituting unbounded, pure being, needs no such distinctions to define it.

---

[12] Ricouer, 9.

[13] Ricouer states, "It is the recoil effect of this 'comparison' [of time with eternity] on the living experience of the *distentio animi* that makes the thought of eternity the limiting idea against the horizon of which the experience of the *distentio animi* receives, on the ontological level, the negative mark of a lack or a defect in being" (26).

[14] Andrea Nightingale, *Once Out of Time: Augustine on Time and the Body* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2011): 110.

[15] See Richard Sorabji for further discussion of Augustine's psychological time. *Time, Creation, and the Continuum: Theories in Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages* (London: Gerald Duckworth & Co., 1983), 29.

[16] See Hermann Hausheer, "St. Augustine's Conception of Time," *The Philosophical Review* 46.5 (1937). Hausheer comments, "Whereas human consciousness always knows exactly at which point of its unwinding activity it is, divine consciousness is unchangeably self-subsisting on its level.": 509.

Insofar as all times are figured to be the mind's emanations in the the irreducible present moment, the now, the present moment is bounded by non-being on both sides.[17] Augustine raises the problem of whether the past or future may truly be said to have being: "If, therefore, the present's only claim to be called 'time' is that it is slipping away into the past, how can we assert that this thing is, when its only title to being is that it will soon case to be? In other words, we cannot really say that time exists, except because it tends to non-being."[18] The present is an irreducible moment that escapes measurement; however, the present only achieves its status as the present by ceaselessly flowing into the past. The future, equally ephemeral, only comes into being in the moment that it becomes the present. Theorist Paul Ricouer notes how Augustine builds his discourse on the human experience of time by introducing an aporia, a logical impasse, only to "resolve" this complexity by introducing a yet deeper aporia.[19] Human inability to truly measure moments as they pass, apart from their mental effects, is what Paul Ricouer identifies as the central aporia of time that Augustine attempts to resolve.[20] Our minds sense the passage of time whether an object is moving, interrupted, or at rest, and therefore, measuring the duration of an object's movement through space does not express the measurement of time or our relationship to time, according to Aristotle's theory that time is the measurement of motion.[21]

---

[17] Paul Ricouer, *Time and Narrative,* Vol. 1, Trans. by Kathleen McLaughlin and David Pallauer (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1984), 7-16.
[18] Augustine, *Confessions*, trans. Maria Boulding (New York: Vintage Books, 1998), 11.14.17.
[19] Ricouer, 5.
[20] Ricouer, "The notion of *distentio animi*, coupled with *intentio*, is only slowly and painfully sifted out from the major aporia with which Augustine is struggling, that of the measurement of time. This aporia itself, however, is inscribed within the circle of an aporia that is even more fundamental, that of the being or the nonbeing of time. For what can be measured is only what, in some way, exists," 7.
[21] *Confessions*, 11.24.31, "Therefore, if the motion of an object is one thing, and the standard by which we measure its duration another, is it not obvious which of the two has the stronger claim to be called time?

This paradoxical relationship between being and nonbeing is only addressed, according to Ricouer, by reconciling the immanence of *distentio* with the mental action of *intentio*.[22] Both are temporal concepts, but *distentio* carries the weight of lack even as it stretches out the soul in a hollow parallel of eternity. Augustine's concern with the question of how to describe time, if not with respect to measurement and duration, is not one he resolves in any way that re-establishes a strong foundation of chronological time or linearity, in part because he does not view spatial motion as a reference point for the measurement of time. Instead, he turns to a more nuanced model of the soul, in which temporality derives meaning and through which we may understand the passage of time. By enlisting the language of Paul in Philippians 3:12-14, Augustine attempts to resolve the problems he raised about measurement and duration in the beginning of Book 11 and to, at the same time, determine the means of overcoming distention. "Forgetting the past and moving not toward future things that are transitory but into the things that are before—not being distended but extended [*non distentus sed extentus*], and not in the mode of distention but with active-attention [*non secundum distentionem, sed secundum intentionem*]" (11.29.39).[23]

I would argue that "Sin" (II), "Evensong," and "Church-monuments" may be read as a group of three. Where "Evensong" depicts the central crisis, "Church-monuments" provides the resolution. "Sin" (II), paradoxically concerned with sin's insubstantiality and the speaker's corresponding need to see it, ends with a pun on "perspective."

Moreover, if the motion is irregular, so that the object is sometimes moving and sometimes stationary, we measure not only its motion but also its stationary periods[...]."

[22] See Ricouer, 16-22.

[23] It is useful to compare translations here. Maria Boulder translates this passage in the following way: "...forgetting the past and stretching undistracted not to future things doomed to pass away, but to my eternal goal. With no distracted mind but with focused attention I press on to the prize of our heavenly calling [...]."

"Evensong," as we have seen, is primarily retrospective. Meanwhile, the subsequent poem, "Church-monuments," the dissolution of the self, the body, and even time, in part by using the metaphor of flesh as an hourglass through which time descends. In each of these poems, the speaker's relationship with God is bound on all sides by nonbeing, by all the places God seems to be absent. Similarly, true perspective is limited by false perception, a theme built into the images of the mirror in "Sinne" (II), the ebony box in "Evensong," and the return to dust of both bodies and inscriptions in "Church Monuments." The expectations of devotional life conveyed in these poems imply a relationship between one's spiritual life and one's experience of time. As the speaker posits himself as a devotional self, these positions also limit the speaker in time, driving him to the most singular moment of the present as the closest possibility for communion with God. In the sections that follow, I will examine the speaker's experience of time from an Augustinian time in "Even-song" and "Church-monuments"; commentary on the Augustinian context of sin and being in "Sinne" (II) which grounds the notion of time in the other two poems will be threaded throughout.

In contrast to God's eternal present, in "Evensong," the human mind is its own clock, both measuring time as time unwinds and needing its own winding to properly mark it. Our measuring of time may be faulty, but the human mind's innate capacity to measure time is part of the created order. The implication, as in "The Church-porch" (ll.451-456), that one's watch may need winding in order to "make thy accounts agree," or, as in "Evensong," that "disorder'd clocks" must receive new wheels, assumes a disorder in one's sense of time, even in the midst of scheduling and repeated action. Temporal disorder, ultimately mental and spiritual, has a direct effect on the speaker's

relationship to the spiritual tasks, such as prayer and confession, which patterns of daily prayer, in the rhythms of liturgical time, are meant to fulfill.

My argument leads later in this chapter to an examination of dissolution in "Church-monuments"; I argue that this poem enacts a tension between two modes of Augustinian time: distention, or the self being pulled apart and stretched by time, and intention, a kind of self-cohesion experienced in the present as it passes. Clock-time provides its users with a means of marking time in ever-increasingly small units of measurement. However, by Augustine's view, time is also measured within the self; if the soul is driven by external measures of time but unable to measure time in the inner man, scheduling and keeping time are vexed endeavors, leading to fragmenting, not peace or union with the divine. The next section begins with a reading of "Evensong," followed by "Church Monuments." I adopt this out-of-order approach because the Augustinian version of time that resonates in Herbert is illustrated particularly clearly in "Evensong."

"Evensong"

By centering his meditation on the superiority of day versus night, the speaker in George Herbert's "Even-song" raises the question of how and when God's grace intervenes in the life of the believer. Evidently, this intervention is continual, since with each new day, God puts "our amendment in our way/ And give new wheels to our disorder'd clocks" (ll. 23-24). This striking image of the metaphorical human clock and its need for adjustment recalls Francis de Sales' comparison of regular times of prayer in the daily life of a Christian to a mechanical clock's need for consistent repair:

> No clock, no matter how well-made, can avoid needing to be wound or adjusted twice a day, morning and evening. Then beyond that, at least once a year the

> clock must be completely taken apart, to remove any rust that may have appeared, to reshape any parts that have been damaged, and to repair the parts that are worn.[24]

Sales uses precise mechanical imagery to develop an analogy to spiritual entropy. A life of daily, habitual prayer is needed because the natural state of the soul is to wear down and become more worldly and sinful. This passage in *Introduction to the Devout Life* would most likely have been familiar to Herbert; the devotional treatise was a favorite at Little Gidding.[25] Sales admonishes his reader, or "he who is truly concerned about his dear soul," that he "must wind it up before God at night and in the morning following the exercises described above."[26] However, even given the precise recommendations Sales gives for prayer and meditation, he does not emphasize a particular schedule for prayer. Max Engammare observes that Sales in this passage "had no interest in clocks as instruments to measure time but simply as mechanisms that needed to be cared for."[27] As a metaphor for the soul, Sales' clockwork imagery is therefore almost exclusively concerned with the mechanical nature of clockwork rather than its use as a device for keeping time. Regularity is important in the upkeep of the soul; however, the passage of time is not acknowledged as essential to its purpose.[28] By contrast, the "disorder'd clocks" of "Evensong" do not merely concern inner workings, repetition and recurrence,

---

[24] qtd. in Max Engammare, *Time, Punctuality, and Discipline in Early Modern Calvinism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 241.
[25] Louis Martz, *The Poetry of Meditation: A Study in English Religious Literature of the Seventeenth Century* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1976), 126.
[26] qtd. in Engammare, 241.
[27] Engammare, 241.
[28] See pp. 240-242 in Engammare for a fuller commentary on this passage, including ways in which Sales overlooks precise temporal wording. Engammare's purpose is to contrast Sales' spiritual analogy with the strict scheduling practices of Geneva. The example of Sales illustrates that, while regular, recurring spiritual disciplines were emphasized in the lives of both Protestants and Catholics alike (to name two ends of a broad spectrum), Catholic practice seems to place less of an emphasis on scheduling one's spiritual and secular life down to the minute.

but also the purpose (*telos*) of the clock as a timekeeping device. For Herbert, human consciousness is decidedly temporal.

In "Evensong," the speaker's main preoccupation concerns day and night and "which shows more love" from God (l. 25). In mirroring motion throughout the poem, the gifts of each, day and night, are placed in opposition: labor and rest, work and grace. In title and in theme, "Evensong" ties devotional life to recurrence and to the communal life of the church as a body of worshippers. In fact, "Mattens," after all, comes only a few poems before. Rickey situates "Evensong" as the last in a group of seven, which, "like its companion pieces, interprets certain of the Propers for Whitsuntide."[29] Continuing this argument, "Evensong" is focused on what would have been the reading for Whitsunweek Monday, John 3, with Herbert's "God of love" in the first stanza resonating with John 3:16, "For God so loved the world." In the poem's first stanza, these elements of divine love from the gospel passage combine with the elements of thanksgiving prayer present in the service of evensong.[30] Likewise, Wilcox points out that the service of prayer at evensong involves a "twin motivation of confession and praise," two mirroring modes of prayer.[31] Prayer is something that creates and sustains a rhythm of spiritual life, organizing one's day as well as one's approach to God. For Christians of all traditions, the means of grace are to be regular and recurring; time is marked by regular prayer, by liturgy, and by the church calendar. In "Evensong," however, it is not repetition and recurrence, in and of themselves, that unite the believer to Christ; it is what they reveal

[29] Mary Ellen Rickey, *Utmost Art: Complexity in the Verse of George Herbert* (University of Kentucky Press, 1966),169.
[30] See Rickey, 169-170.
[31] Helen Wilcox, *The English Poems of George Herbert* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 230.

about the reality of God's presence in the now. I would argue that Herbert's temporality is not liturgical in its essence and theology and that his temporality is actually closer to Calvinism as an extension of Augustinian time.

Arguably, prayer for Herbert stitches together the increasingly separate and purified spheres of labor and devotion, measured time and the time of divine grace. Herbert lived and wrote during a period of unprecedented increase in the technological precision of clockwork of all kinds, leading to sharp contrasts between the carefully measured, instrumental value of time and temporalities connecting human and divine. From a divine perspective, grace is ever-present, not divvied up into measured minutes. Nevertheless, human beings are confined to hours and minutes, as well as cycles of day and night, work and rest. The breakdown of that human clockwork, the soul, is not merely a mechanical breakdown, and "amendment" is not merely mechanical in the same way any machine might eventually need repair. The breakdown speaks to the nature of the clock as timekeeping device; amendment is needed, not just because human beings sin, but because souls dwell in created time and therefore experience time differently than God.

The role of "liturgy" of any form in early modern religion is a complicated affair. Protestantism did not replace communal worship with individual devotional life, and Calvinism and Arminianism existed both within and without the formal structures of the English church. However, there are differences in how and whether lay devotion is inscribed within the system and practices of the church.[32] Advances in timekeeping

[32] For example, Eamon Duffy calls the Book of Hours "not so much a rival to the religion of the official church as an aspect of it, cementing the lay devotee more closely to the institution by encouraging him or

technology during Herbert's era illustrate the drive to rationally order time; however, presuppositions about temporal order reveal many competing theologies. Engammare associates liturgical time with cyclical time in observing that Calvin's "understanding of time...did not emphasize the eternal round, perhaps because his time was not primarily liturgical."[33] Dohrn-van Rossum notes that "The intention of the Reformers was to secure the greatest possible attention and participation for a smaller number of masses by fixing them precisely in time." At least in early Calvinism, order was not theologically important; its importance arose from its utilitarian value in furthering the internalizing of belief.[34] On the other hand, Rosendale posits English liturgical form as a means of preserving an internal communal order against the "burgeoning multiplicity of unruly English individualisms" that England projected as a nation after the Reformation. "Upon the inexorable flow of time and quotidian events, it imposed a vision of divinely sanctioned time which transcended the uncontrollable linearity of the daily by touching the eternal."[35] Daily, private prayer as well as liturgy can both reinforce the communal and structure interior life. The framework and placement of Herbert's "Evensong" in a liturgically resonant sequence does express this "touching [of] the eternal"; however, in the temporal theology of the poem, divine time does not erupt into human time. Instead, quotidian structures reveal where human experience and consciousness fall short of recognizing the time in which God is already present.

---

her to participate in its formal worship." *Marking the Hours: English People and Their Prayers, 1240-1570* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006), 59.

[33] Engammare, 12.

[34] See Gerhard Dohrn-van Rossum, *History of the Hour: Clocks and Modern Temporal Orders,* trans. by Thomas Dunlap (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1996), 264.

[35] Timothy Rosendale, *Liturgy and Literature in the Making of Protestant England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 39.

While "Evensong," like Sales' discussion of prayer and clockwork, implies the necessity of regular upkeep of the soul by the believer, Herbert's "new wheels to our disorder'd clocks" is involved in a larger temporal schema that assumes not only consistency and regularity but rational predictability of divine providence, mirroring the operations of day and night. Herbert's poem indicates a concern for keeping time, not merely by emphasizing the patterns of morning and evening prayer but most particularly through the implication that God's love is present and available in every moment: "Not one poor minute scapes thy breast, but brings a favour from above" (ll. 30-1). This emphasis on all time being God's time reveals a Calvinist view of providence and grace being continual. Calvin writes in the *Institutes*:

> This very might lead us to ponder his eternity; for he from whom all things draw their origin must be eternal and have beginning from himself. Furthermore, if the cause is sought by which he was led once to create all these things, and is now moved to preserve them we shall find that it is his goodness alone. But this being the sole cause, it ought still to be more than sufficient to draw us to his love, inasmuch as there is no creature, as the prophet declares, upon whom God's mercy has not been poured out [Ps. 145:9; cf. Ecclus 18:11; 18:9, Vg.].[36]

Less austere than his reputation for work ethic might imply, Calvin's doctrine here conveys that God's love continually intervenes to uphold creation moment by moment. This model of God's relationship to creation is opposed to the concept of a clockwork universe that, once set in motion, operates according to its own laws and is self-maintaining. For Calvin, there is a clear relationship between God's initial act of creation and the sustaining acts of providence motivated by his love, a philosophy of time and history drawn from Augustine. The smallest division of moments, such as "one poor

[36] John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, trans. Ford Lewis Battles and ed. John T. McNeill (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1960), 59.

minute," is important within Calvinism because God is acting in every moment to guide or preserve.

Herbert's "ebony box" (l. 21), only a few lines before "disorder'd clocks" (l. 24) has its own effect on the temporality of the poem. Critics almost universally agree that the "ebony box" has some resonance of sleep, death, or both; thus much is certainly clear from context and the lyric's recurring motifs of day and night.[37] Others see the box as an image of enclosure and containment, prevalent throughout *The Temple*.[38] This strand of interpretation situates the image among its larger thematic uses but ignores its particularity, especially as it stands in relation to the moving parts of the clock metaphor only a few lines later. In keeping with other images of the box in *The Temple,* it is possible to read more technology into this metaphor. For example, in Vertue, "Sweet spring," in keeping with the other "sweets" of preceding stanzas, indicates the season of spring and its potentiality.[39] However, one critic has made the argument that the "box where sweets compacted lie" also has the resonance of a music box.[40] The "spring," or spring drive mechanism found within a music box, drives the music's "closes" (l. 11). This more material gloss of the metaphor complements and enhances the first meaning, since, like the season, the box depends upon a precise timing for its sweetness to be

---

[37] Wilcox identifies four levels of reference for the ebony box: 1) containment or enclosure; 2) the medicinal properties of ebony; 3) a coffin, associated with death and sleep; and 4) a "place of repose" likened to Christ's tomb (*The English Poems of George Herbert*, 233).

[38] Frank Huntley defends this interpretation in "George Herbert and the Image of Violent Containment," *George Herbert Journal* 8.1 (1984): 17. See also Robert Higbie, "Images of Enclosure in George Herbert's *The Temple*," *Texas Studies in Language and Literature* 15 (1974): 268-279.

[39] On this level of interpretation, Wilcox describes line 10 as conveying "the potential for sweetness enclosed in spring and enjoyed in that season, though only fully released in summer" (318).

[40] Michael F. Moloney, "A Suggested Gloss for Herbert's 'Box Where Sweets Compacted Lie," *Notes and Queries* 1 (1954): 50. Moloney quotes Percy A. Scholes, *The Oxford Companion to Music* (London, 1950) in enumerating a mechanical virginal owned by Henry VIII and, in the gift of Elizabeth, "an organ with carillon combined operated by keyboard, or by touching a spring, and also by the automatic action of a clock...which released the spring every six hours."

released. This interpretation of Vertue is dependent on reading spring in connection with the box of sweets and attributing more material precision to both. A more concrete vehicle, even a technological one, does not prevent a conceit from unfolding meaning in the poem or limit possibilities for interpretation. Similarly, the ebony box, often read as a self-contained conceit, can be read in connection with disordered clocks as a technologically resonant metaphor. The spring drive, the same mechanism that enabled the compactness and portability of the music box, also enabled the table clock, common since its invention around 1430.[41]

In modern parlance, a black box is a part of a system that cannot be observed; it has come to mean any knowledge that is bracketed off or inaccessible. Only the input and output of a black box can be read, not its internal workings. There is also a temporality inherent to the scientific concept of a black box because, as methodology, the black box involves a deferral of knowledge. Michel Serres writes, "When we do not understand, when we defer our knowledge to a later date, when the thing is too complex for the means at hand, when we put everything in a temporary black box, we prejudge the existence of a system."[42] In Herbert's poem, the system being presupposed is God's grace and its operations, which always exceed the speaker's limited understanding, informed by notions of work and debt (ll. 9-12). Clockwork in this period, as metaphor for the universe or nature, came to represent the hiddenness of causes: the internal mechanism, concealed from view, which enabled the turn of clock hands. Feldhay observes, "The clock metaphor related observable natural phenomena (clock hands) to

[41] Eric Bruton, *Clocks and Watches: 1400-1900* (New York, Frederick A. Praeger, 1967), 191.
[42] Michel Serres, *The Parasite*, Trans. by Lawrence R. Schehr (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1982), 73.

invisible mechanisms (clock weights and wheels) variously posited as 'explanations' or 'causes' of the phenomena, or at least as 'hypotheses' about those causes."[43] Just as endless diurnal cycles may be counted on and predicted, they also ensure that there is always a night to limit the horizon of human sight. Likewise, there is a rational predictability to God's grace and providence; these may be known, but not beyond a certain horizon of human understanding.

Similarly, the ebony box indicates hiddenness from both divine and human perspectives. From man's perspective "inclosed" in the ebony box, God's providential purposes are hidden; outside of it, man's sin is hidden from God's sight. In keeping with this reading, the *Thus* of "Thus in the ebony box / Thou does inclose us" is not merely a logical continuation of the last line of the preceding stanza, "Henceforth repose; your work is done" (l. 20), implying that God imposes a rest from sin, works, and the troubled labor of devotional reflection upon both. This is certainly the case, but the resolution also proceeds from the second stanza, in which the speaker describes the blindness God adopts with respect to human sin.

> But much more blest be God above,
>
> Who gave me sight alone,
> Which to himself he did denie:
> For when he sees my waies, I dy:
> But I have got his sonne, and he hath none. (ll. 4-8)

In this case, "your work is done" also carries the sense that God, in grace, declares the speaker's imperfect works "done" because the speaker has the Son. It may be tempting to read these lines as a rushed anticipation of something not fully realized in the speaker's

[43] Rivka Feldhay. "Religion." *The Cambridge History of Science, Volume 3: Early Modern Science*. Ed. Katherine Park and Lorraine Daston (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 749.

relationship with God. Does God really deny himself sight of the speaker's sin? Helen Vendler observes a "palpable falsity" in lines 4-8 on the part of the speaker, which, "evident in their logical exclusiveness as well as in their apparent complacency—ensures their insufficiency as a solution to Herbert's own remorse."[44] I disagree with Vendler here in part because I see the logic of these lines resolving precisely by means of the "Ebony box," read not simply as rest or refuge for the speaker but also as a manifestation of divine grace. In theological terms, there is no game here; that the speaker "has" the Son is the reason God chooses to not see sin in the speaker. God has no need of the sun that divides day from night, since He dwells in eternity; as Vendler rightfully acknowledges, this does not rob God of any light, since He is Himself the source of light.[45] However, this view of Christ eclipses the sins of the speaker, and the redemptive reality of Christ's death and resurrection is also an eternal reality. For both senses of "sun/Son," God chooses to look upon the eternal, not the temporal.

Such a reading ascribes profound intentionality to God's "inclosing" humanity; arguably, this implies more than the daily round of sleep and renewal. God adopts a forced perspective in hiding man's sins from His view, yet this forced perspective cannot endure past death. This perspective of "hiddenness" is echoed by another Herbert poem, Colossians 3:3, a gloss on "My life is hid with Christ in God," where the "double motion" of the speaker's physical and spiritual lives create two temporal and directional paths: the first straight and "diurnall," tending toward earth, and the second "obliquely bend[ing]" toward Christ.[46] Just as this poem ends with the hope that the second temporality will

[44] Helen Vendler, *The Poetry of George Herbert* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1975), 158.
[45] Vendler, 159.
[46] See Chauncey Wood, "A Reading of Col. 3:3," *The George Herbert Journal* 2.2 (1979): 15-24.

overtake the first, in “Evensong,” there is a note of futurity in the promise of “new wheels to our disorder'd clocks,” such that “day” conveys both the day at hand and an unspecified final “day” after death, when such adjustments to our spiritual gears will be permanent. The grace that conceals the speaker’s sin through God disavowing sight of that sin (ll. 5-6) and the grace that provides rest from fruitless spiritual labor both meet in the image of the ebony box.

In Herbert’s “Evensong,” time, whether worked out as order, sequence, or repetition are not the means of spiritual ascent; rather, these expressions of time reveal the limits of human consciousness in recognizing God’s presence in the now. Martz is among those who ties “Even-song” to practices of morning and evening self-examination, emphasized in devotional treatises of the time. He views the poem unfolding “in a manner similar to that recommended by the handbooks, which suggest that the nightly examination of conscience be preceded by a reckoning of benefits received and a thanksgiving for them.”[47] However, Martz's reading applies most directly to the first half of the poem (the first sixteen lines). In these lines, the speaker follows the devotional form by thanking God for “eyes, and light, and power” (l. 2) the provisions of the day; notably, however, the speaker's analysis leads to frustration and, of itself, is insufficient to resolve the “balls of wilde-fire to [his] troubled mind” (l. 16).The backward-looking glance of devotional form provides the opportunity to recognize sins and futility; however, relief and resolution are not found in the form itself or in its repetition but in the turn toward the ever-present moment of grace.

[47] Martz, 120.

This orientation of time that supplies the poem's resolution is Augustinian in nature. The preoccupation with perspective in "Even-song" is continued from "Sinne" (II), the previous poem in the sequence, which conveys a distinctively Augustinian account of sin: "Sinne is flat opposite to th' Almighty, seeing / It wants the good of vertue, and of being" (ll. 4-5).[48] Augustine's doctrine of sin is like his concept of time; both rest on an understanding of being and nonbeing tied to consciousness. In "Sinne" (II), sin has no substance of its own but is able to produce an effect, like an impression on the senses, which shapes perspective. While it was noted earlier that the ebony box in "Even-song" plays with the idea of concealment and hidden perspective, "Sinne" (II) explores the doctrinal implications of "seeing" sin, a nothing. Wilcox notes that there is most likely a punning meaning of "perspective"/"prospective" in the last lines: "Yet as in sleep we see foul death, and live: / So devils are our sins in perspective" (ll. 9-10). Like his doctrine of sin, Augustine's concept of time also rests upon an understanding of being and nonbeing tied to consciousness, and Herbert's poetry follows suit in its doctrine of time, mirroring Augustine's departure from the Aristotelian account of time as the measurement of motion.[49]

However, while "Sinne" (II) explores the doctrinal implications of "seeing" sin, "Even-song" explores the both the orderliness and the limits of devotional practice. This apparent contradiction echoes Herbert's admonition in "The Church-porch" to "Summe up at night, what thou hast done by day / And in the morning, what thou hast to do" (ll.

[48] Wilcox cites *Confessions* 7.18 as a doctrinal influence on Herbert's depiction of sin as nothingness in "Sinne" (II): "whatsoever is, is good. That evil then . . . is not any substance: for were it a substance, it should be good." *The English Poems of George Herbert*, 52.

[49] Gareth B. Matthews points out that the theory of time in *Confessions* is markedly different from that of *City of God*, where Augustine appears to be more in line with Aristotle. *Augustine* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2005), 82.

451-452). Again, Herbert's blueprint for twice-daily prayer and meditation mirrors the devotional handbooks of his time. Summing up one's deeds at the end of the day is retrospective and therefore analytical, but in the morning, it is prospective. The order of these motions are reversed in "Sin" (II) and "Evensong," with the retrospective framing of "Evensong" coming after "Sin" (II). In "Evensong," there is the promise of "amendment" (l. 24), and the diurnal pattern of reflection and rest contained in the poem suggests the hope of a new day. Reflection on sins and shortcomings, which involves analyzing whether one has spent his time wisely, is necessary but not sufficient for renewal, and while the speaker in "Sinne" (II) desires to see his sin aright, the speaker in "Evensong" almost seems to have achieved this correct sight. After all, the gifts of the day are "eyes, and light, and power" (ll. 2), and he has received sight of his own sins that God denies to himself (ll. 5-8): "Thy diet, care, and cost / Do end in bubbles, balls of winde" (ll. 13-14).

Since the indivisible present moment is the only orientation of time that escapes measurement, it is the closest to eternity. God is therefore the author of time but does not dwell in it. Thus, when Herbert says of God, "Not one poore minute scapes thy breast, / But brings a favour from above," he uses accommodated language to represent man's understanding of God's grace dispensed, as its recipient perceives it, moment-by-moment. From a divine perspective, grace is ever-present, not divvied up into measured minutes. Nevertheless, human beings are confined to hours and minutes, as well as cycles of day and night, work and rest. The breakdown of that human clockwork, the soul, is not merely a mechanical breakdown, and "amendment" is not merely mechanical in the same way any machine might eventually need repair. The breakdown speaks to the nature of

the clock as timekeeping device. Amendment is needed because human souls no longer fulfill the *telos* of created time. Engammare explains that "for Calvin time is not measured by the passing of the hours but by the presence or absence of God, mirrored by human faith or unbelief."[50] This presence is not only what restores the "disorder'd clock" of the human soul—harried, sinning, and recognizing futility in its own labors—but it is also what restores the speaker to a recognition that God's rest is everywhere. The next-to-last stanza posits this rest in a slower cadence that forces the reader to contemplate the dialectic relationships of supposed opposites: day/night, gale/harbour, walk/arbour, and garden/grove. It has been noted that these oppositions grow increasingly less distinct, until garden and grove seem more alike than oppositional. Put another way, it might be said that these verses resemble a clock that is moving from a jarring, "disorder'd" tick to self-synchronized harmony.[51]

"Church-monuments"

If "Evensong" moves toward harmony and the kind of self-presence that Augustine identifies as so elusive for the human soul, the next poem, "Church-monuments," complicates this move toward unity and synchronicity. Where "Evensong" is concerned with finding God's presence in the now by means of recurring spiritual practices, "Church-monuments" introduces a tension in the speaker's experience of time that it does not fully resolve. Although the poem does not include a "clock" as such, the central conceit of the final stanza does employ another timekeeping device—an

[50] Engammare, 17.
[51] For a discussion of the shift from dialectical opposition to a "sense of the sameness" in these lines, see *Self-Consuming Artifacts: The Experience of Seventeenth Century Literature* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1972), 163-164.

hourglass. The discord between the measurement of time and God's eternity occurs once again; in this poem, it is portrayed in the human inability to properly "mark" dissolving boundaries of meaning, or to make time cohere as a unified experience. As the poem moves toward its *memento mori* resolution, paralleling the crumbling of stone monuments with the body's continual descent toward death, flesh is an hourglass through which the dust of existence disappears. As Joseph Summers has illustrated, this conceit is everywhere echoed in the formal aspects of the poem, particularly as "the sentences sift down through the rhyme scheme skeleton of the stanzas like sand through the glass."[52] As the poem mirrors the body's return to dust at every turn, it imitates Augustine's paradoxical (Ricouer would call them aporetic) meditations on whether time can be measured in the soul. In the argument that follows, I place the poem's enactment of dissolution in conversation with Augustine's temporal categories of distention (*distentio*) and intention (*intentio*), both psychological modes of experiencing time and both entailing opposing, yet interdependent, spiritual realities.

In addition to completing an arc beginning with "Sinne" (II) and "Even-song," "Church-monuments" also marks a transitional moment in *The Temple*, inaugurating a series of poems focused on the structure to spirituality afforded by the Church. These poems are "Church-musick," "Church-lock and key," "The Church-floore," and "The Windows."[53] In this series, individual liturgies are employed to convey spiritual realities of the Church as a whole. A good deal of critical discussion of George Herbert's "Church-monuments" focuses on the "dissolution" of bodies and inscriptions in line 10, therefore turning upon the movements in the poem that lead to a collapse in

[52] Joseph Summers, *His Religion and Art* (Eugene: Wipf & Stock, 1954), 134.
[53] Rickey, 118.

representation. Herbert scholars as diverse as Stanley Fish, Joseph Summers, and Barbara Leah Harman recognize "dissolution" (l. 10) of the self, the body, and even time as most central to "Church-monuments," both in form and theme. Commenting on this poem, Stanley Fish observes that "to read many of Herbert's poems is to experience the dissolution of the lines of demarcation we are accustomed to think of as real."[54] This comment usefully closes in on the poem's tendency to dissolve boundaries and signs before meaning can be fixed. While the poem finds its center in a complex conceit exploring how bodies (in dust and ashes) measure time, Herbert's concern with how the soul measures time should not be overlooked.

According to Augustine, humans "are pulled many ways by multifarious distractions" (11.29.39). The enactment of dissolution in "Church-monuments," I would argue, resembles Augustine's concept of *distentio,* the experience of being spread out in time and a mental effect of the fall. Its spiritual and temporal contrast is *intentio,* or intention, which may also be translated as "active attention" or "concentration." *Intentio* opposes the "tearing apart" of *distentio* with a "flowing together." Says Augustine in Book 11 of *Confessions*, "In the most intimate depths of my soul my thoughts are torn to fragments by tempestuous changes until that time when I flow into you, purged and rendered molten by the fire of your love" (11.29.39). While *distentio* spreads the experience of time apart, *intentio* pulls it together toward unity, coherence, and focus. French theorist Paul Ricouer explains the spiritual grounding of these two temporal modes in this way: "While the *distentio* becomes synonymous with the dispersal into the many and with the wandering of the old Adam, the *intentio* tends to be identified with the

[54] Stanley Fish, *Self-Consuming Artifacts: The Experience of Seventeenth Century Literature* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1972), 164.

fusion of the inner man ('until...I am fused into one with you' [29:39.])."[55] *Intentio* reflects the focused characteristics of devotional practice. As Nightingale points out, intention "works against distractions and interruptions" as a means of organizing one's approach to God, but she is careful to note that intention alone is not sufficient to overcome distention. Intention "uses specific memories and expectations to carry out activities that allow one to worship God (e.g., by controlling one's body, helping one's neighbor, etc.)."[56] Indeed, memory and expectation, aspects of the "threefold presence" explained in the beginning of this chapter, are already and inherently subject to distention. Intention, therefore, merely draws upon and attempts to organize this already-distended experience of reality in time.

In this poem, the speaker's relationship to time is marked out—at first, by experiencing time mediated via objects, signs, and markers, and later, by anticipating the final descent into dust by recognizing the speaker's own unity with dust here and now. The coherence that the speaker attempts to make room for is evident from the first lines, which establish a sense of immediacy and presence as the speaker describes private prayer before sleep as embodying a rich symbolism that anticipates the sleep of death. Fish has commented on this immediacy, observing a distancing effect within the first two

[55] Ricouer, 27. Compare the translation of this passage provided by Ricouer with the one quoted a few sentences earlier: "until…I am fused into one with you" in Ricouer versus "until…I flow into you" in Maria Boulding. These nuances in translation make clear how positively Augustine views the "fusion" of *intentio*. Likewise, my argument aims to show that dissolution ultimately takes on this positivity, as well.

[56] The whole passage from Nightingale is enlightening here: "*Intentio* gathers together disordered memories in its effort to construct a plan of an action that involves concentrated focus. But it can shape events only by actively focusing the mind on a specific set of memories and expectations. It does not overcome distention; rather, it offers a more coherent experience of time. Working against mental clutter, it uses specific memories and expectations to carry out activities that allow one to worship God (e.g., by controlling one's body, helping one's neighbor, etc.). In short, it directs and concentrates the mind but cannot overcome distention or integrate the psyche. Only God will gather together and unify the psyche at the end of time. On earth, humans must use *intentio* as a way to stay focused on God and on activities that support this orientation. *Intentio* works against distractions and interruptions and, for brief periods, can reduce the feeling of being scattered and torn apart in time" (99).

lines as the speaker adopts a stance of objectivity by employing indicators of time and space, "While" and "Here." This entrenched stance, giving a "strong impression of local identities, separable objects, discrete and specifiable," works against the building sense of the poem, where such specifications become meaningless.[57] Even in this first stanza, the question is raised whether the speaker is properly equipped to read himself as part of the various dissolutions that emerge as the poem moves to its conclusion.

"Church-monuments" begins in the following way:

> While that my soul repairs to her devotion,
> Here I intombe my flesh, that it betimes
> May take acquaintance of this heap of dust;
> To which the blast of deaths incessant motion,
> Fed with the exhalation of our crimes,
> Drives all at last.

Of this first stanza, Harman observes that the speaker struggles with "the difficulty of maintaining the body's integrity in the face of the tendency of one body to merge with another, of dust to merge with dust. When present bodies study future ends they press themselves, dangerously, toward those ends."[58] The poem begins with the speaker's soul "repair[ing] to her devotion," a process that throws off the distractions of daily life to focus the soul on eternal realities. Yet, the prayerful focus that should provide the speaker with the means to attend, in the mode of *intentio*, reminds the speaker of his own lack; indeed, the speaker's act of recognizing limitation and lack provides the very means of enacting his soul's devotion. This attentiveness to human limits, with respect to death and mortality, is already obvious to the reader, but, as this portion of my argument will attempt to demonstrate, the poem implies a temporal lack in the speaker, as well.

---

[57] Fish, 165.
[58] Barbara Leah Harman, *Costly Monuments: Representations of the Self in George Herbert's Poetry* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1982), 114.

Harman's observation about the dangers of pressing too close to future ends should indicate that the spiritual paradox of the poem also implicates the speaker's relationship to time. In the closing lines, the speaker instructs his flesh, "wanton in [its] cravings" (l.19) to "Mark here below" (l.22). But what can be usefully "marked" when all boundaries of difference have collapsed? How can the soul "take acquaintance" (l.3) of the body's beginning and ending in dust and dissolution, while still maintaining its integral unity as a self, an identity?

In the second line, the notion of entombing the flesh reinforces the position of the body in sleep while also drawing a parallel to monuments marking the dead. The speaker's intent to "entomb [his] flesh" calls to mind tombs bearing effigies of the deceased, often figuring the deceased person reclining in peaceful sleep, or *transi*, a subset of effigies depicting the body as corpse, or even in a state of decomposition. The tomb of Herbert's father, Richard, bears a typical skull and bones and a Latin inscription that translates to "I was once like you. You shall become like me."[59] Richard's tomb was decorated with stone effigies of himself and his wife, Magdalen, as if sleeping, contrasting sharply with the transi below—Richard's corpse in a winding sheet. Greg Miller views the contrasting images of this monument as "reenact[ing] this double motion of death and salvation, as does the double vision of the deceased as merely sleeping, at the imagined penultimate moment of being 'made alive,' with the represented figural reality of the corpse."[60] A similar tension underlies "Church-monuments," but is not limited to the tension between death and resurrection, or between death and its

[59] Greg Miller, *George Herbert's "Holy Patterns": Reforming Individuals in Community* (New York: Continuum, 2007), 21.
[60] Miller, 24.

prefigurement in sleep. Rather, the decay of the body as it comes to represent the dissolution of signs echoes what Nightingale identifies as operative in Augustine's *Confessions*: the "tension between fragmentation and unification, between dispersal and self-collection, between time and eternity."[61]

The poem's enactment of dissolution calls into question the status of the self in the poem. At every turn in the poem, the temporal paradoxes give way to questions about representation and the self, topics which already underpin criticism of Herbert's poetry in general. Fish's point that the speaker reads dissolution within a framework that ultimately dissolves reminds us that the speaker cannot properly read dissolution, or therefore enact the kind of devotion he anticipates, because he is also the object of dissolution. The speaker's attempt to read dissolution, therefore, reveals the speaker as self-divided and fragmented, or in Augustine's temporal language, distended.

Just as "Even-song" employs the Augustinian notion of an indivisible present to emphasize the importance of recurrence to spiritual maintenance, in "Church-monuments," the speaker's increasingly distended experience of time is balanced with his effort to unify, to actively focus on "taking acquaintance" of death, mortality, and the move toward dissolution. The act of remembrance is implicitly an attempt to filter out distractions, which distend (*distentio*) from the present moment into useless fears. Both *distentio* and *intentio* assume the perceiver only experiences time via a series a passing nows, and both modes mirror eternity in some sense; while *distentio* illustrates spiritual futility ("wandering") in its attempt to imitate the eternal by being spread out in time, *intentio* joins the self with the eternal through a practice of active presence. To the extent

[61] Nightingale, 110.

that Herbert's poetry employs devotional modes, his poems arguably aim for this "fusion of the inner man" with Christ, which determines the speaker's experience of time. However, *distentio* is more than just the effect of time on the soul, whereby the soul is stretched out; it is the mind's effort to overcome its own temporal lack. It is only when time is compared with eternity that time is recognized as something bounded by non-being and absence, and therefore, the stress of *distentio* is felt.[62] The constantly dissolving boundaries in "Church-monuments" would appear, therefore, to have a complex relationship with both *distentio* and its countering concept, *intentio*, which implies union with Christ, as well as a cohesive self.

Much like the "flowing together" of *intentio*, the enactment of dissolution leads the speaker to understand death as a joining, a fall toward "tame ashes" in the final lines. As Joseph Summers points out, the speaker's inevitable "fall" (l. 24) is reinforced by the structure of the poem: "The movement and sound of the poem suggest the 'falls' of the flesh and the monuments and the dust in the glass. The fall is not precipitous; it is as slow as the gradual fall of the monuments, as the crumbling of the glass, as the descent of the flesh from Adam to dust."[63] The poem's motion through these various falls reduces the field of representation until monuments, inscriptions, the body, and even time itself are no longer adequate signs. The poem, therefore, reduces multiplicity, the various ways that the soul reminds itself of death, until all that is left is dust.

---

[62] Richard Kearney restates Ricouer's analysis of Augustine in the following way: "...by thinking about time *in contrast to eternity* we learn to re-situate speculation about time within the horizon of a limiting idea that invites us to reflect simultaneously on *what is time* and on *what is other than time*." "Time, Evil, and Narrative: Ricouer on Augustine," *Augustine and Postmodernism: Confessions and Circumfession*, Ed. John D. Caputo and Michael J. Scanlon (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2005), 147.

[63] Summers, 134.

While *distentio* is characterized by the soul being unnaturally stretched, torn asunder between past and future, *intentio* also involves a tendency to unmake the self, but by breaking down the distinctions that separate the soul from Christ. Although the two modes of temporality represent separate experiences, the concepts are interdependent. Augustine's example of reciting a poem from memory demonstrates how the consciousness is divided by time even as the mind strives for active attention: "...whatever I have plucked away from the domain of expectation and tossed behind me to the past becomes the business of my memory, and the vital energy of what I am doing is in tension between the two of them: it strains toward my memory because of the part I have already recited, and to expectation on account of the part I still have to speak" (11.38). As the words he anticipates speaking become the words already spoken (or, as the anticipated future moves into the past), active attention is demanded. Here, even as active attention (*intentio*) increases, the self is pulled asunder between memory (what is already recited) and expectation (what is left to recite). Paradoxically, active attention on the present moment does not do away with the distending effects of expectation or memory. Ricouer notes that this passage in Augustine "marks the point at which the theory of *distentio* is joined to that of the threefold present. The theory of the threefold present, reformulated in terms of the threefold intention, makes the *distentio* arise out of the *intentio* that has burst asunder."[64] In other words, Augustine's illustration of the mind during recitation shows how intention is stretched beyond its capacity to focus in any active and unified way. All actions of the mind described here occur within the threefold present (present of the past, present of the present, present of the future); the mind may

[64] Ricouer, 19-20.

experience one moment at a time, but the act of intention can no longer hold these together in indivisible focus and the active attention of *intentio* "bursts asunder." For temporal beings, this experience of time cannot be overcome, and intention and distention continue to live in tension with each other.

Thus, in the effort to actively attend, the mind is distended, stretched between expectation and memory. In Herbert's poem, the shortcomings of the speaker's active attention to "mark" dissolution, already a form of recitation that escapes measurement, previews this same paradox of time measured within the soul. To "take acquaintance of this heap of dust" is the purpose related in the introductory lines of "Church-monuments." Notably, death approaches from the same direction that Augustine describes time moving, from the future to the present, a gradual wearing down that "Drives all at last" (l. 6). Although its "blasts" are "incessant," death itself is something of a non-entity; it is characterized by motion but not by being. The reader calls to mind a strong wind reducing everything in its path to dust, yet this wind is not self-born but "Fed with the exhalation of our crimes" (l. 5). This description of death as nourished by an exhalation is reminiscent of "Sinne" (II), in which sin is described as "want[ing] the good of virtue and of being." In "Church-monuments," death, by feeding on sin, feeds on a nothing.

By the end of the poem, the performance of devotion inevitably entails "marking" what can no longer be meaningfully marked--the distinction between flesh and dust. The poem concludes:

> Deare flesh, while I do pray, learn here thy stemme
> And true descent; that when thou shalt grow fat,
>
> And wanton in thy cravings, thou mayst know,

That flesh is but the glasse, which holds the dust
That measures all our time; which also shall
Be crumbled into dust. Mark here below
How tame these ashes are, how free from lust,
That thou mayst fit thy self against thy fall.

Does the speaker accomplish his initial purpose to "take acquaintance"? Does recognizing one's "stemme/ And true descent" (ll. 17-18) adequately address the speaker's fleshly experience of time? Stanley Fish understands these last lines above to be portraying a "facile" conclusion on the part of the speaker, which also betrays the "easy and pious" desires of the reader. The injunction to "Mark here below" (l. 22), like the internal contradiction of "dustie heraldrie," is another example of the "use of language--not to specify, but to make specification impossible--is on display in the final lines, where to monuments and bodies and sentences and questions is joined time...."[65] Dissolution in "Church-monuments" demonstrates how time is in many ways indistinguishable from the objects that measure it. Similar to the way that "disorder'd clocks" of "Even-song" indicate a distemper in the soul, the glass of time referenced in lines 20-21 is the body: "flesh is but the glasse, which holds the dust/ That measures all our time" (20-21). Instead of indicating a faulty measurement of time, bodies indeed measure time, but this measurement is ultimately meaningless, since time itself "also shall be crumbled into dust" (l. 22).

The problem of indistinguishability that both Fish and Harman locate would seem to create a barrier to complete resolution. Here, Ricouer's earlier question arises again: Can time be measured in the self? The slippage expressed when the speaker attempts to resolve the paradox of dissolution by "marking" is mirrored by the slippages that present

[65] Fish, 168-9.

themselves when the soul attempts to measure time within the self. This raises the question: what, after all, do prayer, liturgy, and the other forms of devotional time employed to join the speaker to eternity and to Christ actually accomplish?

Arguably, however, the possibility that the speaker may come to understand his "stemme/ And true descent" presents the possibility of another, equally true, perspective. The "stemme," with its clear reference to Christ, is coupled with "true descent." But what kind of "descent" is true? Descent is a stem, a source, a genealogical root. The lines contain a clear resonance with Isaiah 11:1, "And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse," appears to be obvious, a reading which is in keeping with the emphasis on birth and "dustie heraldrie" in lines 8-9, the records of origin written on gravestones.

A second, contrasting meaning of "true descent" is almost inevitable: while one may trace one's lineage to dust, one necessarily returns, or descends, back into the dust, and therefore the line echoes the "falls" that Summers identifies as building throughout the poem. But while most critics acknowledge the connection between the "stemme" in the third stanza and "dustie heraldrie" in the fourth, implying both origins and ends, few seem to acknowledge the presence of a spiritual genealogy that connects these two stanzas. Beginning in line 6, the poem reads:

> Therefore I gladly trust
>
> My bodie to this school, that it may learn
> To spell his elements, and finde his birth
> Written in dustie heraldrie and lines;
> Which dissolution sure doth best discern,
> Comparing dust with dust, and earth with earth.

In keeping with the principle of dissolution that governs the poem, this reading flows naturally into the next lines, where "spelling" and reading ("find[ing] his birth") are

undercut by the mode of writing: dust written on dust. While the obvious referent for "his" in "his birth" is the speaker's body, I would suggest another possible level of meaning. While critical consensus of this poem accepts "dissolution" as a principle of interpretation, the Augustinian sense of time brought to the fore in this analysis should remind us that fusion of the inner man with Christ, in the mode of *intentio*, is also written into the various falls toward dissolution.

First, there is some instability in the variety of pronouns employed to reference the self. The first line employs the typically feminine to reference the soul, i.e., "her devotion." The use of the male pronoun in the next stanza to speak of the body, "his elements" and "his birth," therefore seems unsurprising. However, the line before this employs the gender-neutral pronoun to clearly reference the body: "My bodie...that it may learn" (l. 7). With this abrupt change in pronouns, the possibility is introduced that the line does not merely refer to the speaker, but to Christ, to whom the speaker's prayers are directed and to whom these mortal elements belong: "that it may learn to spell his [Christ's] elements, and finde his [Christ's] birth." This reading of the line reinforces the connection to the Christological reference in lines 17-18.

Second, the instability introduced by the poem's use of pronouns should also invite us to question the role of the speaker's agency. Is the speaker in prayer (and by extension, prayer itself) passive or active? The critical conversation on "dissolution" teaches us to be skeptical of the speaker's agency, since the poem's structure seems to undermine any agency the speaker may think he possesses. For the speaker to "spell his elements," in the sense of recognizing that he, too, is made of mortal stuff that is subject to decay, he must perform two kinds of spelling. He performs the kind of spelling that is

also reading; thus, "to spell" and to "read" indicate the same act—the act of reading the inscriptions written on tombs. However, insofar as the speaker's own body, schooled by prayer, is still implicated in this act, the speaker both becomes the writing and construes what is written there. Understanding this second implication leads us to place distance between the speaker and the object of reading. Several of Herbert's poems include a reference to "spelling," such as "The Holy Scriptures" (II), "Jesu," "The Temper" (I), "The Flower." Janis Lull argues that "spelling" in Herbert becomes "a synecdoche for all that is positive in human behavior."[66] Understanding the speaker as "spelling," or cohering, God's elements in his own body, recognizing his own created status, accomplishes not only a self-identity but an identity with Christ, as in Augustine's description of *intentio*, "until I am fused as one...with [Christ]." As "spelling his elements" takes on this larger sense of spelling, dissolution is not merely, or pessimistically, an erasure of the self. Rather, it is a joining of the self to Christ, pointing the reader to an enduring spiritual genealogy in Christ, present even in the midst of dissolution, which every member of Christ's family participates in.

Conclusion

Herbert's poem "Hope" captures some of the same tension between expectation and fulfillment, so essentially Augustinian in his poetry, which I have analyzed in "Even-song" and "Church-monuments":

I gave to Hope a watch of mine: but he

[66] Lull further states, "To 'spell' is to read according to God's intentions. In the text-oriented environment of The Church, 'spelling' defines a kind of Bible reading in which the human reader's will is neither annihilated nor exalted, but merged with the will behind the Word." *The Poem in Time: Reading George Herbert's Revisions of* The Church (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1990), 22.

An anchor gave to me.
Then an old prayer-book I did present:
And he an optick sent.
With that I gave a viall full of tears:
But he a few green eares:
Ah Loyterer! I'le no more, no more I'le bring:
I did expect a ring.

Vendler parses the concluding lines as, "I expected commitment, and all I kept receiving was postponement."[67] It is no coincidence, of course, that expectation and fulfillment are so intermingled in a poem that begins with a watch. While the speaker invests time, expecting a return, Hope returns an anchor; while the emblematic significance of an anchor is hope itself,[68] the nature of the image as trope is more ambivalent, signifying hope as something both grounded and far off; to someone expecting a more immediate reward for his time, the anchor is delay. The rest of the poem follows the same pattern. In the passage where Augustine articulates his desire to "not [be] distended but extended, and not in the mode of distention but with active-attention" (11.29.39), Nightingale has argued that eschatological hope (contra Ricouer, who identifies it with *intentio*) is associated with extentio, extension, expressing the "hope for the last things."[69] Here, the movement of desire that Nightingale describes both involves eschatology and grounds this hope in the present moment. It is this same dialectic, the tension of the conscious mind, torn between time and eternity, between the psychological experience of time and time as measured moments, that characterizes both "Even-song" and "Church-monuments."

[67] Vendler, 64.
[68] Barbara Lewalski, *Protestant Poetics and the Seventeenth Century Religious Lyric* (Princeton: Princeton University Press), 203.
[69] Nightingale, 98.

Chapter Three Bibliography

Anonymous. *The Arminian Nunnery: Or, A Briefe Description and Relation of the Late Monasticall Place, called the Arminian Nunnery at Little Gidding in Huntington-Shire.* London, 1641.

Augustine. *Confessions*. Trans. Maria Boulding. New York: Vintage Books, 1998.

Bruton, Eric. *Clocks and Watches: 1400-1900.* New York, Frederick A. Praeger, 1967.

Calvin, John. *Institutes of the Christian Religion.* Trans. Ford Lewis Battles and ed. John T. McNeill. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1960.

Dohrn-van Rossum, Gerhard. *History of the Hour: Clocks and Modern Temporal Orders.* Trans. Thomas Dunlap. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1996.

Duffy, Eamon. *Marking the Hours: English People and Their Prayers, 1240-1570.* New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006.

Engammare, Max. *On Time, Punctuality, and Discipline in Early Modern Calvinism.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013.

Feldhay, Rivka. "Religion." *The Cambridge History of Science, Volume 3: Early Modern Science.* Ed. Katherine Park and Lorraine Daston. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008.

Ferrar, Nicholas. *The Story Books of Little Gidding: Being the Religious Dialogues Recited in the Great Room, 1631-2.* New York: E.P. Dutton and Co., 1899.

Fish, Stanley. *Self-Consuming Artifacts: The Experience of Seventeenth Century Literature.* Berkeley: University of California Press, 1972.

Harman, Barbara Leah. *Costly Monuments: Representations of the Self in George Herbert's Poetry.* Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1982.

Hausheer, Hermann. "St. Augustine's Conception of Time." *The Philosophical Review 46.5* (1937).

Higbie, Robert. "Images of Enclosure in George Herbert's *The Temple*." *Texas Studies in Language and Literature 15* (1974).

Huntley, Frank. "George Herbert and the Image of Violent Containment." *George Herbert Journal 8.1* (1984).

Kearney, Richard. "Time, Evil, and Narrative: Ricouer on Augustine." *Augustine and Postmodernism: Confessions and Circumfession.* Ed. John D. Caputo and Michael J. Scanlon. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2005.

Lewalski, Barbara. *Protestant Poetics and the Seventeenth Century Religious Lyric.* Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Lull, Janis. *The Poem in Time: Reading George Herbert's Revisions of The Church*. Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1990.

Martz, Louis. *The Poetry of Meditation: A Study in English Religious Literature of the Seventeenth Century.* New Haven: Yale University Press, 1976.

Matthews, Gareth B. *Augustine*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2005.

Miller, Greg. *George Herbert's "Holy Patterns": Reforming Individuals in Community.* New York: Continuum, 2007.

Moloney, Michael F. "A Suggested Gloss for Herbert's 'Box Where Sweets Compacted Lie." *Notes and Queries 1* (1954).

Nightingale, Andrea. *Once Out of Time: Augustine on Time and the Body.* Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2011.

Ransome, Joyce. *The Web of Friendship: Nicholas Ferrar and Little Gidding.* Cambridge: James Clarke & Co., 2011.

Rickey, Mary Ellen. *Utmost Art: Complexity in the Verse of George Herbert.* University of Kentucky Press, 1966.

Rosendale, Timothy. *Liturgy and Literature in the Making of Protestant England.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007.

Serres, Michel. *The Parasite.* Trans. by Lawrence R. Schehr. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1982.

Sorabji, Richard. *Time, Creation, and the Continuum: Theories in Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages.* London: Gerald Duckworth & Co., 1983.

Summers, Joseph. *His Religion and Art*. Eugene: Wipf & Stock, 1954.

Vendler, Helen. *The Poetry of George Herbert.* Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1975.

Wilcox, Helen. *The English Poems of George Herbert.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007.

Wood, Chauncey. “A Reading of Col. 3:3.” *The George Herbert Journal 2.2* (1979).

Samson Archimedes: Action, Interpretation, and Time in Milton's Play

> "The image of watch and watchmaker is so strikingly apposite precisely because it contains both the notion of a process character of nature in the image of the movements of the watch and the notion of its still intact object character in the image of the watch itself and its maker."
>
> —Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition*, 297

The beginning of Milton's *Samson Agonistes* dramatizes an effort to reconcile temporal difference: even in a place of quiet, Samson's unruly thoughts "present/ Times past, what once I was, and what am now" (21-22).[1] These lines dwell on time even as they offer a challenge for interpretation. Samson wrestles with the present, his Philistine captivity, in light of his past, his origins as God's chosen. However, reading the past as a map of the present is not always reliable methodology. Noting that lines 21-22 are "composed entirely of temporal signatures," Stanley Fish looks for an interpretive "middle" between past and present.[2] In dealing with temporal difference, we deal with missing evidence, the information hidden in the black box. Samson must rightly understand the past in order to take action, but at the beginning of the play, he does so from inside a narrative that he is not fully conscious of. Julian Yates's description of the all-seeing vision of the Enlightenment (what Donna Haraway terms its "god trick")[3] is relevant here: "Choose your technology; freeze time; study the scene, and act upon it

---

[1] All references to Milton's poetry and prose are taken from *Complete Poems and Major Prose*, Ed. Merritt Y. Hughes (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing, 2003).

[2] Stanley Fish writes, "Given that this line is composed entirely of temporal signatures, it is difficult not to read the verb 'present' as a pun that telegraphs the questions that follow: How do we present the past? How can we make sense of it? How can it be seen as congruent with the past? How has this happened...There must be something--shall we call it a middle?--to occupy (and thereby to obliterate or cover up) the space between what was and what is now." "Spectacle and Evidence in *Samson Agonistes*," *Critical Inquiry* 15.3 (1989): 557.

[3] Donna Haraway, *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women: The Reinvention of Nature* (New York: Routledge), 189.

without being implicated in it."[4] In this way, the totalizing demands of Samson's narrative mirror the paradox of early modern experimental science in its effort to construct an all-encompassing interpretive framework for nature and, at the same time, to leave no trace of a human mind or a subject.

In the years leading up to the Restoration, revolutionaries, and Milton among them, were looking for a narrative, an interpretive framework, with sufficient explanatory power to account for the failures of the revolution. In other words, they were searching to recover the interpretive or epistemological "middle" that Fish identifies, one that would make sense of God's expressed will in historic events. Clergymen compared England's revolution and its aftereffects to the Israelites' journey out of exile and into the Promised Land and compared a potential restoration of monarchy to a return to Egyptian captivity—a thread of analogy that was so topical that Christopher Hill refers to it as a "Puritan cliché."[5] As Shawcross has noted, "The hope in and expectation of millennium, and its subsequent failure to arrive, intensified deistic thinking and gave, for many, a death knell to revelation as proof of God and his works."[6] At the same time, in the scientific context of Milton's time, an intelligible universe is one that yields predictable results. These two overlapping spheres of narrative and scientific constructionism bring surprisingly similar questions to the fore: Where does political action derive a mandate? When is the right time to act?

My approach in earlier text-centered chapters was to analyze clockwork metaphor active in the texts; my reading in this chapter performs a different task. As the reader will

[4] Julian Yates, *Error Misuse Failure: Object Lessons from the English Renaissance* (Minneapolis: University of Minneapolis Press, 2003), xii.
[5] Christopher Hill, *Milton and the English Revolution* (New York: The Viking Press, 1978), 206.
[6] John T. Shawcross, "Confusion: The Apocalypse, The Millennium," *Milton and the Ends of Time*, ed. Juliet Cummins (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 107.

be aware, Milton is more grounded in classical allusion than in technological metaphor. However, examining texts only in order to parse metaphor would not fully accomplish my goal of tracking parallel shifts in temporality and in representation. Clockwork, according to Hannah Arendt, dramatizes the contradictory approaches to nature, to knowledge, and to the world at the beginning of the modern era; these are questions that are likewise present to Milton in *Samson Agonistes*. In the quotation that opens this chapter, Arendt highlights an irony in clockwork as it came to represent the operations of nature. The watch or clock is an apt metaphor for nature because it accounts for both the "process character" and the "object character" of nature itself. Arendt's point neatly illustrates the pliability of the clockwork metaphor; the metaphor at once represented the internal workings of nature to be known and discerned and its character as an intact object, which highlighted the usefulness of the invention.[7] Arendt makes this point to reinforce her argument that the approach to knowledge in the modern era (or, after the seventeenth century) shifted the role of action in the world. Action was no longer the practical manifestation of thinking but a mode of knowing only by making.[8] The purpose of action was no longer to reveal or disclose the human story; instead, action evidenced humans' trust only in knowledge that they themselves could produce.[9]

I argue in this chapter that Milton's Samson undergoes a revised understanding of time. Rather than viewing divine intent as something that can be confirmed through his own action--an instrumentalist view, by the end of the play, he understands history as revelatory. Arendt's observation serves as a reminder that clockwork, as a metaphor since

[7] Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1958), 297-8.
[8] "In the place of the concept of Being we now find the concept of Process. And whereas it is in the nature of Being to appear and thus disclose itself, it is in the nature of Process to remain invisible, to be something whose existence can only be inferred from the presence of certain phenomena" (Arendt, 296-7).
[9] Arend, 298-9.

early modernity, did not just signify the passing of time; its machine aspect also signified nature, divine providence, and—with varying interpretation—the human ability to understand or reveal the secrets concealed by the first two. But as Fish's commentary on the epistemological "middle" makes clear, time and the operations of knowledge are closely connected. This intersection, between meaning and the experience of temporality that frames it, forms the premise of *Samson Agonistes.* I began this dissertation with an explication of Heidegger's understanding of time, which teaches the reader to view temporality as a structuring of existence. Understanding Milton's view of meaning, I would argue, requires that we understand temporality, an implicit connection already pervasive in Milton's body of work. Critical discussion of Samson over the years has, in fact, centered on divine intelligibility—implicating questions of meaning and interpretation. In the argument that follows, I continue this thread of criticism by examining Milton's *Samson Agonistes* as a test case for Miltonic temporality; this requires that the reader make sense of action within time, as well as the holistic frameworks that enable humans to make meaning of their contexts, limited by time and partial knowledge. In *Areopagitica*, for example, the search for Truth (to preserve Milton's capitalization) is compared to "the careful search that Isis made for the mangled body of Osiris," and, after Truth's body is dismembered, "[the sad friends of Truth] went up and down gathering up limb by limb still as they could find them."[10] While Milton is careful to make clear that Truth entered the world in wholeness and perfection ("a perfect shape most glorious to look on"), the postlapsarian condition of Truth is portrayed as partial, fragmented, and "mangled." In Milton's framing, the fragmentation of Truth

[10] Milton, *Areopagitica*, 742.

assumes its prior wholeness, and Truth is reassembled through human activity, "limb by limb"—in other words, by putting things alongside one another. In unexpected parallel, Heidegger argues that time is a "primordial structural totality," and the fact that we become more conscious of time only as we are "thrown" into the everyday cares of the world only serves to underline time's relational nature.[11] In keeping with Heidegger's assertion that temporality "reveals itself as the meaning of authentic care,"[12] Milton's reinvented mythology imagines that the severed limbs of "virgin Truth," like Osiris, are gathered up and put back into place through "careful search."

In Miltion's view, then, arriving at the truth demands activity. However, this is not the instrumental action that seeks to confirm its hypotheses through artificial means, but ethical action that approaches divine knowledge by assuming its own incompleteness—the fragmented nature of human knowledge. The clock metaphor dramatizes a tension between the rational predictability of nature, and a universe in which causes are at least partially concealed, and therefore, divine providence is viewed with a greater sense of impenetrability. That the human experience of meaning might be revelatory in time, rather than derived from a predetermined *telos* fully known, is in keeping with what Silver identifies in Wittgenstein and sees as operative in Milton's view of deity, "that the meaning of our expressions is created by their use and cannot consist in a single continuous reference or analogy to things in the world."[13] Considering the ways that God exceeds Samson's and the reader's knowledge places more pressure on Samson's claims to knowledge and divine inspiration as the play progresses. Victoria

[11] Heidegger, *Being and Time*, trans. John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson (Oxford: Blackwell, 2001).
[12] Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 374.
[13] Silver, 116.

Silver, in accounting for the reformers' view of faith as well as Milton's, has commented that "…religious contradiction throws us back upon ourselves in such a way that we are impelled to discover not the wonders of the invisible world, but a revised meaning for the ordinary one which at some point or other we have experienced as intolerably conflicted."[14] As I will explore in this chapter, these observations run parallel to the logic of midrash, which Milton would have been familiar with in Latin translation.[15]

What Samson believes about the intelligibility of God's will determines what he assumes about the predictability of God's will; his own ethics at the beginning of the play are drawn from what he infers about divine intent, affirmed through his own actions.[16] Silver's point about religious contradiction rejects the direct chain of inference from human to divine. In Arendt, critiquing the same trend means noticing the altered role of reason and action in modernity. In other words, reason in the wake of Cartesianism became automized, according to Arendt: "Reason, in Descartes no less than in Hobbes, becomes 'reckoning with consequences,' the faculty of deducing and concluding, that is, of a process which man at any moment can let loose within himself."[17] The earlier observation from Arendt about clockwork as both process and as object indicates how the character of reason used to understand nature began to take on the essence of nature that it attempted to investigate.[18] This is arguably the version of "reason" that Milton critiques through the voice of the Chorus, when they exclaim, "Down Reason then, at least vain reasoning down" (l. 322). The Chorus in the context of this passage resists both

[14] Silver, 25.
[15] See Golda Werman, *Milton and Midrash* (Washington: The Catholic University Press, 1995).
[16] Fish backs up this point by saying, "Samson, Manoa, and the chorus will go to any length in their joint effort to piece together a story that can be read as confirmation of the reasonableness (and therefore the predictability of events in the world)" ("Spectacle and Evidence," 558).
[17] Arendt, 283.
[18] Arendt, *The Human Condition*, 297.

atheism, whose "Doctrine never was there School/ But the heart of the fool" (ll. 297-8), and the skepticism of those who doubt God's justice because they rely on their own restrictive internal logic, until "by their own perplexities involv'd/ They ravel more, still less resolv'd,/ But never find self-satisfying solution" (ll. 304-6).

Even though critical trends examining *Samson Agonistes* have been concerned with these questions of meaning, rarely has this thread of criticism intertwined with the thread concerned with Milton's Hebraism. Whether or not one agrees with Stanley Fish in characterizing Samson's problem as one of "interpretive lust," the reader is necessarily forced to adopt an ethical position with respect to Samson and Samson's God. The options are limited; one must either perform theodicy by justifying Samson's actions against the Philistines at the end of the play or condemn Samson's "rousing motions" as resulting from epistemological error.[19] Critics such as Virginia Mollenkott and Angela Balla have explored the absence of positive evidence in the play, a challenge to interpretation which is heightened by the absence of clear or direct divine intervention. Samson's unique status as a Nazarite is implicated in questions surrounding God's hidden will; the secrecy surrounding Samson's strength is a mark of blessing and consecration, yet Samson's own actions seem deeply flawed from the beginning. Mollenkott resolves the play's ethical dilemma by separating the action into two categories, "absolute conflict of God versus Dagon and the humanly relativistic conflict of Samson with his contemporaries,"[20] an approach which aligns Milton with God's judgment against idolatry while holding Samson accountable for his actions against the Philistines. However, such a separation of both dramatic meaning and divine/human intent seems

[19] See Stanley Fish, *How Milton Works* (Cambridge: Belknap Press, 2001), 450.
[20] Virginia Mollenkott, "Relativism in *Samson Agonistes*," *Studies in Philology* 67.1 (1970): 90.

like an artificial solution. Throughout the play, Samson invokes his special status "As of a person separate to God, / Design'd for great exploits" (ll. 31-2) to justify his actions; his consecrated role before God, before his nation, and in redemptive history implicates God, as well as himself, since expression of the divine is inextricably intermingled with what is "sacred" or "set apart." A more thorough justifying of the ways of God to men means examining how divine intent is expressed either positively or negatively in human action.

A key example of the use of clockwork as a metaphor for invisible cause and visible effect in the natural world comes from Descartes, whose illustration runs as follows:

> For just as an industrious watchmaker may make two watches which keep time equally well and without any difference in their external appearance, yet without any similarity in the composition of their wheels, so it is certain that God works in an infinity of diverse ways (each of which enables Him to make everything appear in the world as it does, without making it possible for the human mind to know which of all these ways He has decided to use). And I believe I shall have done enough if the causes that I have listed are such that the effects they may produce are similar to those we see in the world, without being informed whether there are other ways in which they are produced.[21]

Nature, in other words, is like a clockwork mechanism because, just as a clock's inner workings vary according to the design of the device, hypotheses about the hidden causes of its workings (its wheels) cannot simply be inferred from outer appearance. In this analogy, Descartes represented a concern that would become central within the broader development of mechanistic philosophy coming after him, one which has been referred to as "the root metaphor of the mechanical philosophy."[22] It is a key illustration of the

[21] Quoted in Laurens Laudan, "The Clock Metaphor and Probabilism: The Impact of Descartes on English Methodological Thought, 1650-65," *Ann. Sci.* 22 (1966), 77-78.

[22] "...nature was like a clock: man could be certain of the hour shown by its hands, of natural effects, but the mechanism by which those effects were really produced, the clockwork, might be various." Steven Shapin & Simon Schaffer, *Leviathan and the Air Pump: Hobbes, Boyle, and the Experimental Life* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011), 24.

probabilistic view of knowledge, in which nature's hidden causes are treated in terms of probability and not certainty. While much can be observed from the outward effects of nature, enough to form a system and knowledge of outcomes, less may be said about the causes themselves.

In previous chapters, my argument addressed how measurement was important to timekeeping. However, the driver to measure time was equally (and perhaps more fundamentally) demanded by what may be termed, in the fashion of Arendt, the process character of reason. "Reckoning with consequences," in this sense, implying a particular view of both reason and the phenomenal world, necessarily becomes reckoning with time. As noted in my introduction, Ricouer rightfully points out that temporality precedes any measurements we perform on its behalf:

> It is because we do reckon with time and do make calculations that we must have recourse to measuring, not vice versa. It must be possible, therefore, to give an existential description to this 'reckoning with' before the measuring it calls for. Here expressions such as 'have the time to,' 'take the time to,' 'to lose time,' etc. are very revealing. A similar thing can be said about the grammatical network of the verbal tenses and the highly ramified network of temporal adverbs: then, after, later, earlier, since, until, so long as, during, all the while that, now that, etc.[23]

While Samson's version of narrative observes itself from a point on the inside while assuming an outside perspective of such things as narrative or historical consciousness, Ricouer's description of the temporality that underlies all attempts at narrative requires an alternative approach to the reasoning process that constructs narrative. In describing temporality as a "network," Ricouer highlights its relational nature. In other words, temporality is not a framework imposed from above but something that can be more

[23] Paul Ricouer, *Time and Narrative*, Vol. 1, trans. Kathleen McLaughlin and David Pellauer (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984), 62.

rightfully discerned by putting things alongside one another, like the torn limbs of Osiris. Our understanding of temporality, therefore, influences our understanding of reason and interpretation, the conditions under which divine will may be said to be rendered "intelligible" in the play.[24]

The rise of experimentalism entailed a corresponding shift, as Arendt argues, between action and thinking, with action taking primacy. After Descartes and even after Galileo, knowledge is increasingly identified with having, in the words of Charles Taylor, a "correct representation of things—a correct picture within of outer reality," entailing a shift in the order of ideas from outer world to inner self. "As the notion of 'idea' migrates from its ontic sense to apply henceforth to intra-psychic contents, to things 'in the mind,'" writes Taylor, "so the order of ideas ceases to be something we find and becomes something we build."[25] Thus, while ideas themselves once designated the "bare facts"[26] of the world outside the self, they instead become the mental impressions of that world.[27] What appears to be most culpable about an interpretive framework guided by ego-affirming perceptions is that this act of interpretation renders the external world lifeless and inert. By implication, Samson's interpretations are ego-driven at the beginning of the play, a distancing between self and world.

---

[24] The influence of Heidegger's notion of "within-time-ness" (*Innerzeitigkeit*) on Ricouer is expressed in this section of his argument. Ricouer defines "within-time-ness" as "defined by a basic characteristic of Care, our being thrown among things, which tends to make our description of temporality dependent on the description of the things about which we care. This feature reduces Care to the dimensions of preoccupation (*Besorgen*)," 62.

[25] Charles Taylor, *Sources of the Self: The Making of the Modern Identity* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press: 1989), 144.

[26] A fairly well agreed-upon definition of "ontic."

[27] In "The Question Concerning Technology," Heidegger also challenges the assumption that truth is merely representational, and he does this by expanding on the meaning of "technology." He points out that "the word *techne* is linked with the word *episteme*. They both mean to be entirely at home in something, to understand and be an expert in it." *Basic Writings*, ed. David Farrell Krell (New York: Harper Collins, 2008), 318, 319.

Epistemology in accordance with Luther's *Deus Absconditus*, the Hidden God, is shaped by what is not known—what cannot be fully understood about God according to human capacity; for this reason, it contrasts with the totalizing nature of Cartesianism. This notion of the Hidden God necessarily forms the basis of Silver's implicit critique of the cogito; all attempts to reconcile ideas of human and divine are fundamentally defined by the limits of human conception. What Silver describes in terms of Luther's *facere Deum* is a model of "mutuality" between mind and world which is wholly out of keeping with Cartesianism.[28] According to Silver, "When God's hiddenness is understood in the reformers' sense, there can be no stable 'object,' whether perceptible or metaphysical, to which our ideas of the divine can refer," and because "there can be no 'object,' no 'outside,' no 'view' to scripture's expressions about God, they involve a sort of catachresis, a 'wrenching of words."[29] What Haraway terms the "god trick" of human perspective, Silver identifies with the cogito, a brand of solipsism characterized by Milton's Satan, including "a false Stoic imperturbability that denies the claim of suffering."[30] The activity of faith implying a creative capacity to reason that Silver characterizes as an alternative is close to the Hebraic approach to meaning. Midrash's approach to knowledge and reality is close to what Silver describes in her description of an immanent approach to a hidden God—an approach that requires re-imagining a relationship with God even when his actions in the world seem absurd or unjust.[31]

The Ontology of Action

[28] Silver, 51.
[29] Silver, 57, 127.
[30] Haraway, 188 and Silver, 237.
[31] Silver, 103.

With a false ontology in place, Samson reads into God's silence and constructs a system of ethics upon what he perceives about the world. Samson is not blameworthy because he is tormented by God's apparent absence and the loss of meaning entailed. Samson is blameworthy because of how he deals with missing information, how he interprets and acts based on what the Reformers recognize as *Deus Absconditus*, the Hidden God. The appearance of inconsistency or injustice when one encounters a God whose purposes are hidden, rather than canceling out a particular avenue of interpretation, may become the occasion for a more immanent approach to revealed truth.[32] According to Silver, there is "discrepancy between our ideas of God on the one hand and deity as it is actually made known to us on the other."[33] This is Silver's interpretation and application of Luther's *facere Deum,* the activity of faith by which we "make God," a concept that Milton takes up. *Facere Deum* does not suggest anything idolatrous in the "making"; rather, it sustains an image of deity that is consistent with the idea of deity, in the face of apparent contradiction. This is not blind faith but dynamic activity, where reason plays a role but where we are forced to acknowledge its limitations in light of divine incommensurability.[34] This approach is opposed to imposing a transcendent framework that may force an artificial commensurability between human experience and divine truth.[35] Silver's account of the Reformed understanding of divine intelligibility describes immanent knowledge rather than transcendent understanding; this description mirrors a Talmudic theodicy.

---

[32] Silver, 103, 107.
[33] Silver, 103.
[34] *Facere Deum* uncovers truth's immanence by bringing order to disorder, what Silver calls "a cosmic version of rhetorical *kairos* or opportune ordering," 102.
[35] Silver, 108.

That the model of theodicy and human action undergirding the Samson drama is uniquely Hebraic should come as no surprise: a sizable portion of critics have investigated the Hebraic strains and influences in Milton's poetry and polemics, including parallels between Milton's Samson and the Samson of midrashic commentary.[36] Rabbinical commentary on the Samson story takes for granted the ethical ordering in Judaism of doing before understanding. This ethical and interpretive ordering parallels the immanent approach to knowledge of the divine inscribed in the reformers' ideas of God's hiddenness (*Deus Absconditus*) and faith as dynamic activity in *Facere Deum*. Levinas writes that the Talmud "extracts ethical meaning [from the Torah] as the ultimate intelligibility of the human and even of the cosmic."[37] Arendt speaks of the rise of action that says characterizes modernity and replaces thinking with doing (or, an epistemological trust only in the things that humans can produce). By contrast, the talmudic approach to reason does not, according to Levinas, "transform action into a mode of understanding but...[constitutes] a mode of knowing which reveals the deep structure of subjectivity…."[38] Midrash, as a hermeneutic, restores the order before the reversal that Arendt describes; rather than action—in the sense of instrumental action, producing technology, inventions, the knowledge produced in laboratories—replacing thinking, ethical action expresses "the ulimate intelligibility" of what can be known. The difference between these two forms of action—instrumental and ethical—also necessitate vastly different implications for subjectivity. Teasing out Levinas's argument above, the

[36] See Jeffrey S. Shoulson, *Milton among the Rabbis: Hebraism, Hellenism, and Christianity* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001); Golda Werman, *Milton and Midrash* (Washington: The Catholic University Press, 1995); Jason P. Rosenblatt, *Torah and Law in* Paradise Lost (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994).
[37] Emmanuel Levinas, *Nine Talmudic Readings*, Trans. Annette Aronowicz (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994), 42.
[38] Levinas, *Nine Talmudic Readings*, 42.

ethical ordering of doing before fully understanding is precisely that which, paradoxically, renders the Law "intelligible." The point about subjectivity here, in which obedience to what is not immediately known or understood produces a new kind of knowledge, is very similar to Silver's point regarding *Facere Deum*: the human experience of the world "throws us back upon ourselves" such that, as quoted earlier, "we are impelled to discover not the wonders of the invisible world, but a revised meaning for the ordinary one..."[39]

Levinas calls Talmudic writing "the permanent renewal of the letter by the intellect."[40] Rather than spirit replacing letter, the spirit is folded into the letter, such that scripture in the Torah attains what one Levinas critic describes as "infinite density."[41] The meaning of the letter as it unfolds, dense and weighty, is experienced at the level of the subject. Midrash is closer to a mode of commentary than a method of interpretation. The recursiveness of the midrashic mode of commentary (the "permanent renewal of the letter") has much in common with the view of meaning and language that Silver interprets in Luther. This analysis of divine meaning in light of human understanding, or experiences of perceived injustice that precipitate a "crisis of coherence," is drawn from Wittgenstein's view of language as a "practical, functional aspect of human being" (thus avoiding either skepticism on the one side or human egoism on the other).[42] According

[39] Silver, 25.
[40] Emmanuel Levinas, *Nine Talmudic Readings*, Trans. Annette Aronowicz (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994): 79.
[41] Catherine Chalier, "Levinas and the Talmud," *The Cambridge Companion to Levinas*, Ed. Simon Critchley and Robert Bernasconi (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004): 103.
[42] Silver also says, "For both of them [Luther and Wittgenstein], the trial of incoherence is not to be proved against language itself but against its interpreters, who are incline to refuse any order of meaning that conflicts with their own conceptual customs, no matter the human suffering that ensues. Since human egoism automatically assigns primacy to its notions alone, we must be chastened by contradiction if we are to relinquish them," 23.

to Silver's reading, Luther's difficulty with the seeming cruelty of the phrase "the righteousness of God" was transformed by "a certain grammatical usage, the Hebrew genitive," which shifted the meaning of this phrase out of analogical reasoning that equated the human with the divine.[43] Similarly, midrash also avoids interpreting the divine in light of the human by avoiding reasoning by analogy or all-encompassing symbolism. Daniel Boyarin, for example, has characterized midrash as "a hermeneutics of opacity" in contrast to a Pauline "hermeneutics of transparency," a privileging of spirit over letter.[44]

Boyarin defines interpretation as "virtually all of our methods of formal response to texts by which the text is taken to mean something, by which meaning is extractable from a text and presentable, even if incompletely and not exactly, in paraphrase."[45] As opposed to a mode of interpretation in the traditional sense, Boyarin further defines the hermeneutic of midrash as "the dominant mode of commentary in a culture within which value is expressed in terms of an abstract, universal, and in itself, substance-free standard: the coin." Interpretation defined in this logocentric sense, then, assumes absolute commensurability between divine and human meaning, that divine meaning is easily adaptable to human value—which is precisely what Silver's account of the reformed belief in divine incommensurability argues against. In contrast to interpretation, Boyarin

[43] Silver, 22.

[44] Daniel Boyarin, *Sparks of the Logos: Essays in Rabbinic Hermeneutics* (Boston: Brill, 2003), 187. Boyarin is pushing against Paul's reading of the veil of Moses in 2 Cor. 3:7-18. In this passage, as commonly interpreted, Paul glosses the veil over the face of Moses as the veil that remains over the hearts of Jews of the old covenant when they hear the law read; the veil is said to be lifted in the Spirit, the hearer "beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord." However, Boyarin moves away from an alignment with Paul that would reinforce a split between letter and spirit, which he reads as running counter to the hermeneutics of midrash. Boyarin resists privileging the figurative in part to resist Paul's figurative reading of the Church as the new Israel (either supersession or ongoing spiritual reality). More pertinently, he views this as more in line with Judaism's concern with physicality and its ethical emphasis on doing, embodied by the letter.

[45] Boyarin, 144.

calls midrash "the dominant mode of commentary in a signifying economy without the 'universal equivalent.'"[46] Jeffrey S. Shoulson has explored how midrashic texts shaped Milton's understanding of the economy of meaning, and therefore ontology, of redemption in the Samson story. One notable example is the rabbinical interpretation of one of the background stories of Samson in Judges, which provides a gloss for Samson's riddle to the men of Timnah, "Out of the eater came forth meat, and out of the strong came forth sweetness" (Judges 14:14). The rabbis reason that the incident of Samson eating honey from a lion carcass (Judges 14) is striking for the same reason that the destruction of Nadav and Abihu (priests in Leviticus 10) is striking. The priests are consumed by fire from heaven for profaning the sacrificial fire, thereby their bodies are substituted as the objects of sacrifice. Like the eater whose body provides food (a lion producing honey), therefore, the priestly deaths are figured as sacrifices themselves. The fire from heaven is not merely an act of retributive justice but constitutes God's act of supplying a sacrifice in place of the one desecrated. As Shoulson's summary makes clear, this deft movement in the logic of the rabbinical commentary "extends the talionic nature of this story" by fulfilling the demands of justice not merely through retribution but through the provision of a sacrifice.[47] Shoulson writes, "If God's ways are just, man's ways are mutable; yet because God's ways can only be known through the ways of men, justice and mutability stand not in opposition to each other but rather as mutually constitutive."[48]

---

[46] Boyarin, 144.
[47] Jeffrey S. Shoulson, *Milton among the Rabbis: Hebraism, Hellenism, and Christianity* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001), 251.
[48] Shoulson, 247.

Shoulson's point is an interesting one in light of what Silver has inferred about the reformers' approach to reconciling (if it may be termed that) the appearance of God's incoherence or injustice with human understanding. That God's justice and human mutability are "mutually constitutive" implies that divine revelation, accommodated to human understanding, is embodied in and through human action. What the rabbinical commentary makes clear, however, is that the question of ethical human action may not have a primary role in this constitutive relationship. God's justice is often revealed in contrast to human injustice and error. This describes the somewhat paradoxical nature of accommodation. Accommodation both reveals something of divine nature and marks the limits of its revelation. The two ends of this spectrum might be described as theodicy, man justifying the ways of God to man, and theophany, God revealing himself to man (and thereby delineating the limits of this revelation).

Borrowing her terminology from Wittgenstein, grammar according to Silver is a system of ordering meaning, particularly relational meaning between divine and human.[49] Silver argues that "neither Miltonic truth nor Miltonic reason is even remotely axiomatic: he seeks what Adorno calls 'the open thought'—the sort of meaning that does not foreclose other avenues of significance."[50] Boyarin's discussion of *gramma* (letter) mirrors Silver's "grammar" but with a different emphasis. In reference to a midrash of the Job story, Boyarin points demonstrates that flesh (the embodied expression of the gramma, the carnal letter), suffering, circumcision, and erotic life all point to an understood truth in midrash, "the body...seen as the vehicle of encounter with God."[51]

---

[49] See Silver, 114-117.
[50] Silver, 107.
[51] Boyarin, *Sparks of the Logos: Essays in Rabbinic Hermeneutics* (Boston: Brill, 2003), 198.

The midrash therefore connects Job's peeling skin to circumcision, implying this same encounter.[52] Similarly, as Silver's explication of Job makes clear, suffering [signals] a "fearful indeterminacy of human things," which is irreducible in meaning and cannot explain God's actions by invoking "past to present action, ordinary to religious meaning, the seen to the invisible." Similar to Shoulson's examination of the ambivalent meaning between justic and sacrifice in midrash, Silver's analysis of Job examines Job's accusations that his sufferings are the result of divine retributive justice:

> The idea that appalls Job is not whether his suffering implies his sinfulness, as a magical bane inexorably following upon some evil he or his children may have committed and for which he is now penalized. Von Rad comments that, for all that Job forcibly rejects it, this idea of an unknown, redounding evil speaks to his deepest and most perverse inclination; yet it holds no more terror for him than it does for the friends who expound it. That is because the analogy argued by divine retribution—of past to present action, ordinary to religious meaning, the seen to the invisible—would circumscribe the fearful indeterminacy of human things which his [Job's] suffering otherwise signals.[53]

Suffering—especially the physically visceral suffering of Job, similar to Samson's bodily suffering—is not reducible to the tidy logic of analogy. Although the causes of Samson's suffering are unlike Job's in being much less innocent, his blindness, his shorn hair betraying the secrecy of his strenth betray a similar "fearful indeterminacy."

In terms of how the travails of the flesh implicate time, Andre Furlani, distinguishes between *kairos* in the play as the traditionally-interpreted "opportune moment" and other instances of Greek usage, including *kairos* read as a "fatal stroke," a wound on the body such as the place where Agamemnon is struck. Furlani states, "The distinction here between temporality and fateful points could scarcely be clearer, for

[52] In midrashic readings, says Boyarin, "the performance of the rite was understood as a necessary condition for the divine-human erotic encounter--for seeing God" (36).
[53] Silver, 31.

kairoi are not subordinate aspects of time or their issue, but discrete realms of opportunity."[54] While this is a useful distinction in meaning, this argument seems to overlook the fact that temporality—or in the case of *kairos*, a decisive moment of action—is often described in terms of place or situatedness. In concluding that *kairos* in the play is "neither temporal nor redemptive, but rather spatial and tragic,"[55] Furlani sets up a false opposition between time and space, rather than considering that temporality can assume the characteristics of either space or place.

Time and the Rise of Action

Samson, in reflecting back on his own actions and in agonistic dialogue with other characters, seems to arrive at a more self-critical understanding of his past actions and of the partially-known nature of God's revealed will. This newfound self-reflection is manifest in his acknowledgement that disproportionate strength and wisdom "drove [him] transverse" (l. 209). Samson acknowledges that, because his strength is imbalanced with weakness of mind, strength is actually a liability:

> O impotence of mind, in body strong!
> But what is strength without a double share
> Of wisdom? Vast, unweildy, burdensome[...] (ll. 52-55)

This disproportion between strength and wisdom is also applied by Samson and the Chorus to Israel's leadership in lines 241-289. The imbalance between strength and wisdom that results in "transverse" action works in the other direction, as well; or, more accurately, the imbalance described here is not the result of the exercise of true wisdom (any more than Milton is deriding true reason when he has the Chorus pronounce "Down

[54] Andre Furlani, "'In Place': *Kairos* in *Samson Agonistes*," *The Seventeenth Century* 10.2 (1995): 220.
[55] Furlani: 219.

Reason!"). Rather, the imbalance is the reslt of calculation or cunning, in the same way that Samson's use of strength is often violence.

Often when clockwork is used as metaphor or simile in this period, it seems to betray an underlying anxiousness, either for control or certainty (much like its use as metaphor for virtue or regularity of habit, which George Herbert made use of). John Suckling (1637) uses the image of winding one's own watch to conform to an "authentic watch," a more accurate device, as a vehicle for conveying the need to rectify one's personal judgments in keeping with a greater degree of certainty.[56] Suckling's use of clockwork simile, therefore, invokes clockwork as universal standards or authorities that might regulate private thoughts or conduct. Like clockwork kingship in *Richard II*, clockwork in the seventeenth century could be associated with order or authority. The clockwork metaphor could encompass the state as a whole, thereby indicating the smooth running of history, or it might represent the predictability of rebellion and sedition, a caution to rulers. Of the latter description is an analogy offered in 1662 by royalist pamphleteer Roger L'Estrange, who claims that "We are to take for granted, that sedition is a kind of clockwork, and that the main spring of all rebellions is ambition." All sedition, in L'Estrange's view, can be traced back to the same cause—ambition. Given the erosion of authority entailed by this secret "spring" of ambition, regime change follows a predictable route, degrading to aristocracy and then to popular government. The metaphor takes for granted that sedition is as much a natural state of history as monarchic authority; sedition itself can be predicted, and therefore rulers must therefore be cautious,

[56] But as when an authentic watch is shown,
Each man winds up and rectifies his own,
So in our very judgments.
John Suckling, *Aglaura*, *The Poems, Plays, and Other Remains of John Suckling, Vol. 1*, ed. W. Carew Hazlitt (London: Reeves and Turner, 1892).

keeping a close eye on those looking to overturn the orderliness of the system.[57] Similarly, John Spencer, early modern author of a so-called "storehouse of similes," compares a clock to the operations of justice. In doing so, he indicates that threats to justice are more often precipitated by the "lesser wheels," the witnesses, lawyers, and jury who act as "under-agents and instruments" and thereby render the system as a whole vulnerable to subversion.[58]

Each of the above instances emphasizes authority and certainty in some manner, and in the latter two examples, clocks are used as emblems of vulnerable systems. L'Estrange's royalist paranoia about the constant threat of ambition and Spencer's skepticism toward systems with many actors, or "lesser wheels," are best explained with recourse to Shapin's commentary on beliefs about the relationship between trust and free action in early modern society. As Shapin says, "Much early modern culture puts free action at the center of its practice of power and its theorizing about power. Society's free actors were considered to be society's powers."[59]

As foundational as clock technology has been to the development of modern society, advanced timekeeping was an indirect consequence of the more general drive to

[57] The quotation continues: "We may be again as confident, that never any one monarchy was destroyed, but with design to set up another. (The talk of this or that form of government; or of this or that shape of religion, being no more than a ball tossed among the people, for the knaves to keep the fools in play with). It's truth, that a sinking monarchy lapses into an aristocracy; and that again into a popular state." Roger L'Estrange, *A Memento. Directed To all Those that Truly Reverence the Memory of King Charles the Martyr.* 1662.

[58] "A clock, let it be of never so good metal and making, will not strike orderly and truly, but much therein will be out of frame and fashion, if the lesser wheels as well as the greater, keep not their due and regular motion: So in the curious clockwork of justice, there will be many exorbitances (albeit the chief agents and movers therein be never so sound in their integrity) if the under-agents and instruments of justice, (as witnesses in proving the action, counsellors in pleading and prosecuting the cause, jury-men in sifting and censuring the evidences and allegations) do not also take care, and make conscience in discharge of their several duties." John Spencer, *Kaina Kai Palaia: Things new and old.* 1658.

[59] Shapin, 39.

attain scientific knowledge. Notably, Arendt also notices the role of clock technology in the advance of scientific constructionism:

> Thus, the watch, one of the first modern instruments, was not invented for the purposes of practical life, but exclusively for the highly "theoretical" purpose of conducting certain experiments with nature. This invention, to be sure, once its practical usefulness became apparent, changed the whole rhythm and the very physiognomy of human life; but from the standpoint of the inventors, this was a mere incident.[60]

Arendt is describing the clock as representative of the tendency in scientific experimentalism to prioritize mastery over nature above use or purpose.[61] With the invention of clockwork and the contributions of inventors like Galileo and Huygens, the purpose of clockwork to the everyday uses of timekeeping was secondary to what the process of experimentation contributed to theoretical knowledge; the pendulum alone was considered to demonstrate "'the soul of the mathematicks themselves.'"[62] More precisely, the methods that led to the greater perfection and accuracy of the clock as an instrument were enabled by a shift in the nature of thinking, which is Arendt's larger argument concerning *homo faber*, referring to man as the maker of tools, man as fabricator of inventions. This shift, Arendt argues, was precipitated as science assumed an uncritical approach to the phenomenal world by acting in order to know.

The prioritizing of doing in experimentation is representative of a larger epistemological shift. The approach to epistemology following scientific constructionism

---

[60] Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition*, Second Edition (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1998), 289.

[61] Similar to Arendt's notion that theoretical drive preceded the practical use of the inventions resulting from it, Martin Heidegger has the thesis that "technology" is an essence that preceded the material progress that made it possible: "Surely technology got under way only when it could be supported by exact physical science. Reckoned chronologically, this is correct. Thought historically, it does not hit upon the truth." "The Question Concerning Technology," 327.

[62] Steven Shapin, *A Social History of Truth: Civility and Science in Seventeenth Century England* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1994), 319.

is to deal with an apparent world in order to arrive at a picture of being. According to Arendt, man as *homo faber* creates a framework for interpreting the world prior to knowing it, and experimentalists handle a "hypothetical nature" in order to establish and know the real nature. In order for anything new to be made, nature must be fabricated. Thus appears the advent of the watch, the efficiency of which was a secondary outcome of scientific attempts to understand nature by recreating its conditions. As promising as this picture of scientific advancement may seem to be, Arendt intervenes to pose a problem: man as tool-maker never really gets beyond his tools.[63] Similar to Yates's description of Enlightenment thinking as the attempt to "act upon [the scene] without being implicated by it," Arendt describes philosophy following the growth of empiricism as "Archimedean." In other words, nature is treated as a whole edifice to be moved from a point outside of itself, while human beings ignore their placement within that edifice. Arendt writes, "Without actually standing where Archimedes wished to stand (dos moi pou sto), still bound to the earth through the human condition, we have found a way to act on the earth and within terrestrial nature as though we dispose of it from outside, from the Archimedean point."[64] When Arendt emphasizes "act[ing] on the earth and on terrestrial nature" in order to know, this is not so much a critique of the scientific method as it is a critique of the more endemic privileging of phenomena in the search for truth. Arendt is describing a new way of arriving at "truth," one which ignores the subject's limited perspective. In this new mode, action precedes thinking; one acts in order to

[63] Arendt writes, "If, therefore, present-day science in its perplexity points to technical achievements to 'prove' that we deal with an 'authentic order' given in nature, it seems it has fallen into a vicious circle, which can be formulated as follows: scientists formulate their own hypotheses to arrange their experiments and then use those experiments to verify their hypotheses; during this whole enterprise, they obviously deal with a hypothetical nature," 287.
[64] Arendt, 262.

know. Insofar as doing-in-order-to-know, expressed in the rise of experimental science after Bacon, resulted in a steady proliferation of technological progress in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the intellectual trend (if it can be called such) was a boon to the development of reliable clocks and watches—pocketwatches in particular. However, the implications of this shift apply more broadly to the ways that reality is received and what counts as confirmation of truth.

In the wake of *homo faber*, not only does truth become phenomenal, but the whole process by which we make meaning out of history is driven by phenomena as well. Arendt argues that instrumental thinking results in an instrumental view of time and history when she describes the resulting historical consciousness as centering on objects and concerned with "human activity"—i.e., inventions. "The modern discovery of history and historical consciousness," says Arendt, "owed one of its greatest impulses neither to a new enthusiasm for the greatness of man, his doings and sufferings, nor to the belief that the meaning of human existence can be found in the story of mankind, but to the despair of human reason, which seemed adequate only when confronted with man-made objects."[65] Thus, a ready-made ontic world becomes the grounding for history and narrative as well as truth. In this construction, action (in the form of doing or making) has the status of confirming truth, rather than following upon "truth" already confirmed through thinking processes. Action in this sense was not merely observation or testing of nature and data, but packaged in the more fully-fledged form of objects and inventions. "Instead of objective qualities, in other words, we find instruments, and instead of nature

[65] Arendt, 299. In another passage, Arendt also writes, "It was an instrument, the telescope, a work of man's hands, which finally forced nature, or rather the universe, to yield its secrets," 290.

or the universe...man encounters only himself."[66] Since this sense of thinking is preceded and driven by doing, the version of meaning associated with it is instrumental, and its historical consciousness is instrumental, as well. "Thinking" of this sort is a newer version of logocentricism in which phenomena informs the deeper structure of knowledge and "truth" becomes self-referential.

Early in the play, Samson seems to undergo the realization that prophecy can be fulfilled with or without his own active participation in God's will: "what if all foretold/ Had been fulfill'd but through mine own default,/ Whom have I to complain of but myself?" (ll. 44-46). As in Greek tragedy, the form of which Milton is imitating, Samson understands that his "default" may become the occasion for the fulfillment of prophecy. The Greek subtext concerning the ineffectualness of individual action in the face of fate is clear and the examples are well known: Oedipus's attempts to escape the prophecy of killing his father and marrying his mother end up fulfilling it. This inescapability, not of fate but of God's providence, becomes a through-line that ties Samson's reflections in the beginning of the play with the logic of his final action against the Philistines, "that [God] may dispense with me or thee/ Present in Temples at Idolatrous rites/ For some important cause" (ll. 1377-9). In lines 290-2, a similar logic divorces Samson's action from God's dispensation, implying that God's purposes can be vindicated even through Samson's own neglect: "Mee easily mine [my people] may neglect,/ But God's propos'd deliverance not so." Yet the play implicitly offers an ironic gloss on the Greek tradition that it invokes. First, the play begins with Samson reflecting back on his past indiscretions, implicitly disarming the audience's or reader's first impulse to anticipate

[66] Arendt, 261.

that, like the figures of Greek tragedy, Samson's hamartia will unfold in the play itself. It seems to be in the past. Second, Samson is not trying to escape prophecy but to fulfill it; the problem is not that he cannot avoid a predicted fate but that his attempts to fulfill prophecy are nearly always precipitated before their time. His actions are premature.

The problem posed by Samson's egoistic hermeneutics therefore runs much deeper than mere arrogance. In the midst of circumstances in which divine purposes seem hidden (apart from what has been revealed through Samson's own Nazarite calling), Samson is challenged to recover a strong enough sense of God's will to act decisively. While Fish accuses Samson of "interpretive lust," Samson's problem is also akin to what Victoria Silver describes as "interpretive egoism," the human desire "to believe in a certain immediacy, elegance, precision, and self-evidence to our perceptions of the world, because these dignify our position in it."[67] It is a representational version of knowledge, in which phenomenal impressions are mistaken for objective truth, that determines the conditions of Samson's egoism. In the beginning of the play, Samson endeavors to account for God's seeming absence from history and from his own context of suffering by relying on a totalizing and logocentric approach to interpretation. Samson's self-referential interpretive framework at the start of the narrative is not only egocentric, but fundamentally logocentric. Ricouer's earlier description of narrative is helpful because it highlights the relational nature of narrative, demonstrating how our descriptions of temporal experience and our uses of language actually presuppose a relational framework.

[67] Silver, 24.

Insofar as Samson places himself and his own representations at the center of interpretation, his version of knowledge is suspect. Although Samson appears to avoid the guilt of doubting God's justice, the Chorus's cautions about "vain reasonings" (l. 322) indicate that such doubts are vulnerabilities, if not outright temptations:

> Yet more there be who doubt his ways not just,
> As to his own edicts, found contradicting,
> Then give the reins to wand'ring thought,
> Regardless of his glory's diminution;
> Till by thir own perplexities involv'd
> They ravel more, still less resolv'd,
> But never find self-satisfying solution. (Ll. 300-306)

"Giv[ing] the reigns to wand'ring thought" until one has completely lost one's way provides a portrait of reason leading to overcomplexity rather than simplicity. When the Chorus warns about the dangers of doubting divine justice and relying too much on one's own labyrinthine reasoning, there is an echo of Samson's earlier lament, "Thou art become (O worst imprisonment!) / The Dungeon of thyself; thy Soul" (ll. 154-5).

Moreover, Samson's justification of his marriage to the woman of Timna is used to explain his subsequent marriage to Dalila. Samson presents the first marriage as justified by divine prompting; the second is described as an error in judgment.

> The first I saw at Timna, and she pleas'd
> Mee, not my Parents, that I sought to wed,
> The daughter of an Infidel: they knew not
> That what I motion'd was of God; I knew
> From intimate impulse, and therefore urg'd
> The marriage on; that by occasion hence
> I might begin Israel's Deliverance,
> The work to which I was divinely call'd.
> […] I thought it lawful from my former act,
> And the same end; still watching to oppress
> Israel's oppressors [….]. (219-226, 231-236)

Samson claims that his error was in assuming the first marriage to be a prototype ("I thought it lawful from my former act") rather than an exception. This logic leads the reader to question Samson's judgment, but it also casts an implicit doubt on the "intimate impulse" that is privileged in Samson's hermeneutics. While the reader is led to question this basic source of truth, Samson questions his own reasoning processes and application of divine inspiration only, rather than the inspiration itself. He takes for granted that "what [he] motion'd was of God." If Samson's inspiration is open to question in this case, how much more so when his "rousing motions" (l. 1382) lead him to commit his final act of destroying himself and the Philistines?

Low observes that the play illustrates the "traditional distinction related to the controversy over the merits of the active and the contemplative lives."[68] According to Low, the Chorus makes the same division in lines 1268 to 1296 when comparing "invincible might/ To quell the might of the Earth" (ll. 1271-2) with "patience [which] is more oft the exercise/ Of Saints" (1287-8). These offer two possibilities for the kind of hero Samson might be, and tends to split the vote among critics. However, these two versions of heroism fit the drama into a framework that is either tragic (if we read Samson as heroic by virtue of action) or redemptive (if we read Samson saintly and suffering). The division between action and contemplation is expressed early on in the play, particularly in Samson's exchanges with the Chorus. For example, contemplation is at least partially associated with wisdom, and Samson attributes his captivity to a badly proportioned pairing of ordinary wisdom with extraordinary strength.

> Immeasurable strength they might behold
> In me, of wisdom nothing more than mean;

[68] Anthony Low, "*Samson Agonistes* and the Irony of Alternatives," *PMLA* 84.3 (1969): 515.

This with the other should, at least, have pair'd,
These two proportion'd ill drove me transverse.

Chorus: Tax not divine disposal; wisest Men
Have err'd, and by bad Women been deceiv'd;
And shall again, pretend they ne'er so wise.
Deject not then so overmuch thyself,
Who hast of sorrow thy full load besides;
Yet truth to say, I oft have heard men wonder
Why thou shouldst wed Philistian women rather
Than of thine own Tribe fairer, or as fair,
At least of thy own Nation, and as noble. (Ll. 206-218)

The Chorus's response in this passage does not seem to be typical of Milton's emphasis on human freedom. Like elder city-statesmen in a Greek tragedy, the Chorus appears on first glance to occupy a role of comforting and advising. Yet there appears to be an ironic undertone to the Chorus's responses. The Chorus's encouragement to Samson, "Deject not then overmuch thyself," is quickly followed by the disjunctive "Yet truth to say" and passive speculation about the very thing that leads Samson to question his wisdom—namely, his marriages to Gentile women.

If the rise of action is a reversal between thinking and action, the nature of thinking undergoes a change as a result of this reordering. Prior to the rise of action, thinking functioned as inner dialogue—the process of arriving at truth which can be contemplated, but later, "contemplation, in the original sense of beholding the truth, was altogether eliminated."[69] With the rise of action in the process of knowledge seeking, thinking and contemplating are no longer sufficient as means of establishing epistemological authority. The development and privileging of action and the deletion of contemplation helps to explain what Milton's Samson may implicitly be attempting to reconcile. Arendt describes the bifurcation of being and appearance as the pre-eminent

[69] Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1958), 291.

change of the seventeenth century and an inevitable consequence of Cartesianism. Although thinking implies a more active internal process than contemplation ("beholding"), before the reversal, the quietude of contemplation, not action, was the end goal of thinking.

Whenever we do epistemology, we deal with meaning, either implicitly or explicitly, in the form of a narrative. Meaning requires tense, a temporal framework or historical consciousness. However, if we assume that "meaning" equates to an imminently readable interpretation of signifier and signified, we will begin by eliding the transformed sense of "thinking" that Arendt's account of *homo faber* critiques. Milton's Samson takes for granted his own limited perspective and acts on behalf of God and God's redemptive purposes. Therefore, Milton's Samson is not only *Samson Agonistes* but Samson Archimedes. As he endeavors to make sense of his own suffering, he ends up enacting a totalizing and arbitrary conception of time and history, one which embodies some of the problematic features of epistemology leading up to the Enlightenment, values embedded in the history of the clock's technological development. This epistemological shift happens alongside political upheaval, which demanded a strong narrative framework to interpret providential purposes in history. While gaps in information demand interpretation, the wrong approach implicates human action, God, and the external world itself. Particularly insofar as *Samson Agonistes* has, for most critics, represented his attempt to provide an explanatory framework for contemporary events, part of my project in this chapter is to locate Samson within an ontology of action in time. The illusion that one can have an outside perspective on time illustrates the implications about time and

historical consciousness for a figure occupying the space of an Archimedes, which I will explore in the next section.

The Problem of Intelligibility

Samson's self-absorption produces its own temporality, just as it produces its own experience of phenomena and of deity. Karen Edwards attributes Samson's final action against the Philistines, the source of his "rousing motions," to the temporally-inflected nature of Samson's suffering, portrayed as a kind of mind-absorbing melancholia. Edwards argues that the indeterminate nature of Samson's final inspiration arises from the indeterminate nature of his melancholy. Melancholic thought inflects Samson's sense of time because it "erases the future by transforming the present into a prospect of unrelieved, indefinitely extended pain."[70] Waiting on God's justice is excruciatingly slow, not primarily because of any outward affliction but because the pain originates from inward chaos and confusion, the thoughts that, "like a deadly swarm/ Of Hornets arm'd" (ll. 19-20), absorb his attention. Distinct from contemporary descriptions of melancholy influenced by Burton, Samson is not afflicted by the distorted idea-form of "objects or conceptions" but, in Edwards's words, "a tormented inwardness, a painful consciousness of his thoughts as thoughts."[71] Samson's turn inward to himself renders his experience of time torturously dilated. Without a grounding in external knowledge, Samson's mental attention does not narrow to a focus but becomes increasingly distended by complexity directed inward. This view of Samson as a melancholic hero enriches our understanding

[70] Karen L. Edwards, "Inspiration and Melancholy in *Samson Agonistes*," *Milton and the Ends of Time*, ed. Juliet Cummins (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), p. 231.
[71] Edwards, 229-230.

of the temporal nature of Samson's mental processes, as well how waiting and suffering inform the flow of time in the play. At the same time, these observations about the temporality of suffering have their basis in Samson's pronounced self-absorption.

The sense of time in *Samson Agonistes* reflects Samson's impulse to interpret a seemingly hidden divine providence, one which acts in human history in ways that defy interpretation. Investigating Milton's view of God, Victoria Silver explains the the role of reason in Reformation theology as not to transcend the radical difference we experience between creator and the created order but to reorder what is felt on the level of being as "a crisis of coherence, when things we had assumed abruptly become disordered, inexplicable, unjust to us."[72] I would argue that this reordering of meaning based on what may be immanently known restores ontic value to the world. In other words, rather than a mind separated from the world, the more immanent approach to knowing instigated by a "crisis of coherence" makes the world become revelatory. In this process, Silver avers, "we render an unknowable God intelligible, palpable, and historical—bringing deity as it were back into the world—so that relationship with him is possible."[73] Samson's predicament, his difficulty determining God's purposes and his own future part in the promised deliverance of Israel, is intertwined with his concept of the divine. By extension, his understanding of divine intervention in history and his subjective sense of time, shaped by this retreat from the world, is similarly troubled. Silver encourages the reader to see the approach to reason (in Milton, but also in Luther and Calvin) as

[72] Silver, 103.
[73] Silver, 51.

paralleling the conception of God, since "[…]the idea of meaning and the idea of deity have always been mutual and mutually entangled[...]."[74]

This mutuality between meaning and deity is reinforced thematically by aspects of inwardness and hiddenness implicit in Samson's Nazarite gift. James Dougal Fleming argues against the view that Samson's fatal flaw is his inability to keep the secret of his strength, since this view is premised on the belief that "radical mental sequestration from the world" (entailed by Samson keeping his secret) be viewed positively, which is essentially Satan's view in Paradise Lost.[75] Samson's conscience "has ceased to be a knowledge joined to a knowledge: a mental secret constituted, paradoxically, by its divine sharing. Instead, the secret has been torn from the divine, and has therefore been committed to incoherent reflexivity."[76] Any analysis of Samson's world picture must consider the implications of dualism, not simply in terms of the split between self and phenomenal world but also in terms of the split between self and God. A mind that sequesters not only treats the objective world as inert but regards any concept of deity as removed from human experience. Depicting human experience as its own sphere that never reveals divine nature or intent renders knowledge of the divine wholly transcendent and other, rather than immanently known.

Milton's play has been identified as having a "Hebraic historical consciousness" because of its structure, beginning near the end of what constitutes the biblical account and therefore relying on remembrance of the past to create the context of the tragedy.[77]

---

[74] Silver, 19.
[75] James Dougal Fleming, *Milton's Secrecy: And Philosophical Hermeneutics* (Burlington: Ashgate Publishing, 2008), 93.
[76] Fleming, 96.
[77] David Loewenstein, *Milton and the Drama of History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 129.

Samson's role as God's chosen is impossible without this recursive relationship with the past. However, it is not simply memory, enabling connection to the past and to a larger context to inform about divine purpose, that locates the play's sense of time as "Hebraic." Samson's subjective sense of time is frustrated by the larger historical consciousness that structures it; as David Loewenstein points out, "the effect of sharply juxtaposing the past with the present is also to make the process of history itself seem deeply ruptured and discontinuous, and God's purposes inscrutable."[78] The implication that the past may not always neatly map onto the present in fluid lines or easily disclose God's purposes is accounted for by midrash as a methodology, one which opposes logocentric interpretation by providing commentary rather than reductive explanation that seeks to close all gaps. If the presence of rupture is what identifies Milton's historical consciousness as "Hebraic," the interpretive ethos that challenges any reader of *Samson Agonistes* is likewise premised on an embrace of discontinuity.

The challenges that the juxtaposition of past and present in *Samson Agonistes* pose to a temporal hermeneutics reflect a tension between desire and fulfillment. Eugene Johnson argues that Samson, as well as the Chorus, "lacks a sense of messianic time" for a majority of the play.[79] For Johnson, Samson constitutes a deconstructed jeremiad, parodying Milton's own idealistic use of this form in earlier prose works, especially Areopagitica. *Samson Agonistes*, according to Johnson's argument, follows the form of the jeremiad by addressing the sins of the past, but the doubt cast by the Chorus on Samson's prophetic role calls into question the possibility of a redemptive future, or at

[78] Loewenstein, 129.
[79] Noting that the genre of the jeremiad "classifies the community's existence within a liminal state" (186), Johnson places it within the context of Benjamin's description of messianic time as "every second of time was the strait gait through which the Messiah might enter" (187). Eugene Johnson, "The Failed Jeremiad in *Samson Agonistes*," *Studies in English Literature* 46.1 (2006).

least that such a future will be brought into being through Samson's action. The jeremiad functions by emphasizing the "gap between fact and ideal" in the past, present, and future states of affairs in the community, in contrast to its more optimistic treatment in Areopagitica, Johnson views Milton in *Samson Agonistes*. Johnson writes, "By declaring the gap between fact and ideal as resulting from the unfulfilled state of the present community, the genre partially defers individual dissent to a future time."[80] In Johnson's reading, Milton in Samson therefore seems to be performing something of a midrash on his own earlier pamphlet writing.

Conclusion

To understand history and temporality as revelatory requires that time and meaning be seen as conjunctive. Levinas expresses this connection in describing a condition that resembles Samson's past actions and reasoning: "A reason liberated from temporal contingencies, a soul co-eternal with the Ideas, such is the self-image projected by a reason which has forgotten itself or is unaware of itself, a reason which is naive."[81] Distinguishing between "a reason liberated from temporal contingencies" and an understanding that takes account of its temporal limitations requires that the reader tie the character of intepretation (the unfolding of meaning available to humans) to the character

[80] Eugene Johnson, "The Failed Jeremiad in Samson Agonistes," Studies in English Literature 46.1 (2006): 181.

[81] The quotation continues: "Ontology, consider[sic] authentic, coincides with the facticity of temporal existence. To comprehend being as being is to exist here below. Not that the here below, the trials which it imposes, elevates and purifies the soul, enabling it to acquire a receptivity in regard to being. Not that the here below opens a history, the progress of which alone would make thinkable the idea of being. The here below gets its ontological privilege neither from the ascesis which it demands, nor from the civilization to which it gives rise. Already in these temporal cares the comprehension of being is spelled out. Ontology is not accomplished in the triumph of human beings over their condition, but in the very tension whereby this condition is assumed." Emmanuel Levinas, "Is Ontology Fundamental?" Trans. Peter Atterton, *Philosophy Today* 33.2(1989), 121.

of history (the human experience of meaning in time). Milton himself does this at the beginning of *Areopagitica,* when he opposes truth to custom: "Truth is compared in scripture to a streaming fountain; if her waters flow not in a perpetual progression, they sicken into a muddy pool of conformity and tradition."[82] As a "streaming fountain," truth progresses fluidly, yet not without interruption; alternatively, custom may stagnate progress but never inhibit its flow altogether. Much as the reader's interpretation of *Samson Agonistes* emerges through the multiple agons that pit Samson against interlocutors, Milton views truth's emergence in history as dialectical. Levinas observes that, "Ontology is not accomplished in the triumph of human beings over their condition, but in the very tension whereby this condition is assumed." Action does not equal pure intention, since every action leaves "traces," as Levinas points out. A robust understanding of Samson as a Hebraic figure, as well as a Christian or typological one, can inform the reader's understanding of the dialectic between knowing and doing and the time that lies between, questions implicated in theodicy and divine revelation. However, it is the unintended consequences of action, the "traces" left behind, that produce knowledge.[83]

[82] Milton, *Areopagitica,* 739.

[83] Levinas, "Is Ontology Fundamental?": 122-3. The version of action characterized here is in keeping with the larger structure of the philosopher's thinking, in which he derives ontology from ethics rather than the other way around. The full passage reads as follows: "The comedy begins with the simplest of our movements, carrying with them every inevitable awkwardness. In putting out my hand to approach a chair, I have creased the sleeve of my jacket, I have scratched the floor, I have dropped the ash from my cigarette. In doing that which I wanted to do, I have done so many things that I did not want to do. The act has not been pure for I have left some traces. In wiping out these traces, I have left some others....When the awkwardness of the act turns against the goal pursued, we are at the height of tragedy."

Chapter Four Bibliography

Arendt, Hannah. *The Human Condition*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1958.

Bacon, Francis. *The New Organon*, ed. Lisa Jardine and Michael Silverthorne. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Balla, Angela. "Wars of Evidence and Religious Toleration in Milton's *Samson Agonistes*." *Milton Quarterly 46.2* (2012).

Boyarin, Daniel. *Sparks of the Logos: Essays in Rabbinic Hermeneutics.* Boston: Brill, 2003.

Chalier, Catherine. "Levinas and the Talmud." *The Cambridge Companion to Levinas.* Ed. Simon Critchley and Robert Bernasconi. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004.

Edwards, Karen L. "Inspiration and Melancholy in *Samson Agonistes*." *Milton and the Ends of Time.* Ed. Juliet Cummins. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003.

Fish, Stanley. "Spectacle and Evidence in *Samson Agonistes*." *Critical Inquiry 15.3* (1989).

Fish, Stanley. *How Milton Works.* Cambridge: Belknap Press, 2001.

Fleming, James Dougal. *Milton's Secrecy: And Philosophical Hermeneutics.* Burlington: Ashgate Publishing, 2008.

Furlani, Andre. "'In Place': *Kairos* in *Samson Agonistes*." *The Seventeenth Century 10.2* (1995).

Haraway, Donna. *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women: The Reinvention of Nature.* New York: Routledge.

Heidegger, Martin. *Being and Time*. Trans. John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson. Oxford: Blackwell, 2001.

Heidegger, Martin. "The Question Concerning Technology." *Basic Writings*. Ed. David Farrell Krell. New York: Harper Collins, 2008.

Hill, Christopher. *Milton and the English Revolution*. New York: The Viking Press, 1978.

Ingold, Tim. "The Temporality of the Landscape." *World Archaeology 25.2* (1993).

Johnson, Eugene. “The Failed Jeremiad in *Samson Agonistes*.” *Studies in English Literature 46.1* (2006).

Laudan, Laurens. “The Clock Metaphor and Probabilism: The Impact of Descartes on English Methodological Thought, 1650-65.” *Ann. Sci. 22* (1966).

L’Estrange, Roger. *A Memento. Directed To all Those that Truly Reverence the Memory of King Charles the Martyr.* 1662.

Levinas, Emmanuel. “Is Ontology Fundamental?” Trans. Peter Atterton. *Philosophy Today 33.2* (1989).

Levinas, Emmanuel. *Nine Talmudic Readings*. Trans. Annette Aronowicz (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994).

Loewenstein, David. *Milton and the Drama of History.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990).

Low, Anthony. “*Samson Agonistes* and the Irony of Alternatives.” *PMLA 84.3* (1969).

Milton, John. *Complete Poems and Major Prose.* Ed. Merritt Y. Hughes. Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing, 2003.

Mollenkott, Virginia. “Relativism in *Samson Agonistes*.” *Studies in Philology 67.1* (1970).

Ricouer, Paul. *Time and Narrative, Vol. 1.* Trans. Kathleen McLaughlin and David Pellauer. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984.

Rosenblatt, Jason P. *Torah and Law in* Paradise Lost. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994.

Shapin, Steven. *Social History of Truth: Civility and Science in Seventeenth Century England* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1994).

Shapin, Steven, & Simon Schaffer. *Leviathan and the Air Pump: Hobbes, Boyle, and the Experimental Life.* Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011.

Shawcross, John T. “Confusion: The Apocalypse, The Millennium.” *Milton and the Ends of Time.* Ed. Juliet Cummins. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003.

Shoulson, Jeffrey S. *Milton among the Rabbis: Hebraism, Hellenism, and Christianity.* New York: Columbia University Press, 2001.

Silver, Victoria. *Imperfect Sense: The Predicament of Milton’s Irony.* Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001.

Spencer, John. *Kaina Kai Palaia: Things new and old*. 1658.

Suckling, John. *Aglaura, The Poems, Plays, and Other Remains of John Suckling, Vol. 1.* Ed. W. Carew Hazlitt. London: Reeves and Turner, 1892.

Taylor, Charles. *Sources of the Self: The Making of the Modern Identity.* Cambridge: Harvard University Press: 1989.

Werman, Golda. *Milton and Midrash.* Washington: The Catholic University Press, 1995.

Yates, Julian. *Error Misuse Failure: Object Lessons from the English Renaissance.* Minneapolis: University of Minneapolis Press, 2003.

Conclusion

Overview

The central figures who have dominated my analysis—Shakespeare's *Richard II*, the speakers of Herbert's devotional poetry, and Milton's Samson—share some significant similarities. While the figures in all three of these chapters find themselves out of the flow of time in some way, each textual self struggles to reconcile a personal orientation of time with the rhythms of a larger, external temporal schema. In turn, each textual self has demanded a different theoretical and methodological approach as a consequence of both theme and genre.

First, despite the assumption that his sovereign status entails co-extension with a temporal continuum, Richard's selective hearing parallels his inability to "keep time" with the socius, his inability to listen to communal rhythms that lie outside kingly identity. To demonstrate this tension between the time associated with a mystical sovereign identity and the rhythms of communal time, a phenomenological reading was necessary in order to demonstrate how temporality is connected to what lies beyond the self, and I examined the play's use of metaphors that unite time and music via hearing.

Next, for the devotional selves in Herbert's poetry, clock-time, or the everyday experience of secular time, provides a continual reminder that the subject is already out of synch with God's eternity, and even the attempts to recover a sacred time built by daily rhythms and habits can be an exercise in remembering the ways in which the spiritual self is torn apart in time. In Herbert's poetry, the devotional self is constructed—almost dramatized—through internal conflict, conflict between desire and devotion, and between the acceptance of grace and the continual striving of the law. The Augustinian

reading of Herbert's time that I advance in the third chapter, while never "resolving" such conflicts in a traditional sense, clarifies the nature of the tensions that arise from the subject's attempt to mark time within the self.

Finally, closely paralleling the way in which Richard's orientation to time is biased by his sovereign status, Milton's Samson must confront his misconceptions about divine intent and his role in providential history. Arendt's argument that action ceased to be an extension of thinking in the modern era provides a lens for Samson's rash attempts to act in order to know, stemming from assumptions about his role as God's anointed and the implications of that role for the unfolding of history. Not only Samson, but the selves in all three text-centered chapters echo Richard's exclamation upon hearing discord in music: "Ha, ha, keep time..." (*Richard II* 5.5.42).

Thrownness and Keeping Time

Most fundamentally, in each text, the acknowledgement of a temporality other than the linear metrics of clock-time is the consequence of a reckoning with death, suffering, and limitation. When Richard comes to terms with his temporal discord, he does so from his prison in Pomfret Castle. Likewise, Samson begins to reexamine the temporal implications of his role as God's anointed while blinded and imprisoned by the Philistines. In Herbert's "Even-song," renewal comes with surrender to limitations and a sleep that mirrors death, enclosed in an "ebony box," while in "Church-monuments," the very act of "intomb[ing] [the] flesh" in sleep as an attempt to "mark" the final dissolution of the body is paradoxical, reminding the reader that the attempt to mark time is equally doomed.

Despite differences across genre, as well as the theoretical approaches demanded by each text, one could argue that all of these figures provide key illustrations of Heidegger's concept of *thrownness*, the idea that subjects are thrown into the cares of daily life.[1] This concept is closely tied, conceptually and linguistically, with the *da-* ("there") of *Dasein*; to be thrown is to understand that we are already placed in the midst of existence, with all of its struggles and anxieties. Simon Critchley puts it well when he describes *thrownness* in Heidegger as "the simple awareness that we find ourselves somewhere, namely delivered over to a world with which we are fascinated, a world with which we share with others."[2] Likewise, as I have stressed in the introductory chapter to this dissertation, when Heidegger defines Care as the structure of temporality, he is defining temporality as relational.[3] Temporality, as a rhythm of life, connects us to a shared world, and at the same time, it puts us in touch with the reality of our own suffering. Both the shared world and personal suffering are a reminders of limitations and contingency. For the seventeenth century texts that this dissertation has been concerned with, these reminders of the contingent life of the subject stand in contrast to the rise of the Cartesian self. Hannah Arendt, in *The Human Condition*, observes this lack of recognition of human contingency as concurrent with various changes in the modern age and resulting in a denial of *telos*:

> It is only and perhaps not even primarily the development of commercial society that, with the triumphal victory of exchange value over use value, first introduced

[1] "This characteristic of Dasein's Being—this 'that it is'—is veiled in its 'whence' and 'whither,' yet disclosed in itself all the more unveiledly; we call it the '*thrownness'* of this entity into its 'there'; indeed, it is thrown in such a way, as Being-in-the-world, it is the 'there.' The expression of 'thrownness' is meant to suggest *the facticity of its being delivered over*." Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, trans. John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson (Oxford: Blackwell, 2001), 174.
[2] Simon Critchley, "Being and Time, part 4: Thrown into this world," *The Guardian*, 29 Jun 2009, https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/belief/2009/jun/29/religion-philosophy.
[3] Heidegger, *Being and Time,* 374.

> the principle of interchangeability, then the relativization, and finally the devaluation, of all values. For the mentality of the modern man, as it was determined by the development of modern science and the concomitant unfolding of modern philosophy, it was at least as decisive that man began to consider himself part and parcel of the two superhuman, all-encompassing processes of nature and history, both of which seemed doomed to an infinite progress without ever reaching any inherent *telos* or approaching any preordained idea.[4]

Somewhat ironically, just as man comes to view himself as "part and parcel of the two superhuman, all-encompassing processes of nature and history" (both processes that the clockwork metaphor represented in the seventeenth century), he also reduces himself to processes that deny meaning, that relativize value.

This is the temptation of the modern man in the chapters I have covered in this dissertation; in terms of the new clock-time, it constitutes a draw toward a self-absorbed temporality that aligns the self with a *chronos*-driven, universal time, rather than the communal rhythms that put the subject back into place. In each chapter, I have attempted to explore how subjects overcome this illusory relationship with time by rediscovering being as a relationship to what lies beyond the self—in the socius, daily habits of prayer and reflection, in communal time, in contingent action and partial knowledge. In *Totality and Infinity*, Emmanuel Levinas writes in critique of Heidegger's description of *Sorge* (care, anxiety) in *Being and Time*, "Life is love of life, a relation with contents that are not my being but more dear than my being: thinking, eating, sleeping, reading, working, warming oneself in the sun."[5] This is Levinas's response to the description of existence in *Being and Time* as (in Levinas's words) "the naked will to be."[6] However, a fuller picture of Heidegger's description of being is supplemented by his later essays: the

[4] Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1958), 307.
[5] Emmanuel Levinas, *Totality and Infinity*, Trans. Alphonso Lingis (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers), 112.
[6] Levinas, 112.

previously described connection between *logos* and *legomenon* ("relatedness") in "The Question Concerning Technology,"[7] as well as the description of " *bauen*," "to build," in his essay "Building, Dwelling, Thinking."[8] In the latter, Heidegger traces the etymology of *bauen* to its etymology in the Old High German, where it means, "to dwell," and finally to its relation to the verb form "to be." Heidegger writes, "To be a human being means to be on the earth as a mortal. It means to dwell."[9] Here, Heidegger's description of being is not far from that of Levinas; to exist is to dwell, to live in relationship with what is, in Levinas's phrase, "more dear than my being." To be thrown into the world is to realize one's being belongs to the world, but rather than constituting a mere will to exist, the contingency of being thrown can also provide the means of overcoming this *thrownness* through connection and placement.

Clockwork Subjects in the Twenty-first Century

As this conclusion has already touched upon, one central purpose of this analysis has been to examine how changes to the use and perception of time in the early modern era introduced a tension in subjects' experience of temporality—a tension reflected in the literature of the period. As my examination of the literary subjects' awareness of being thrown into time draws to a close, it seems fitting to ask what the experience of time looks like in the current era. The stakes of this argument extend well beyond the seventeenth century and into the twenty-first. What does *thrownness* look like in the twenty-first century, with its digital advancements? It seems fitting that we are

[7] Martin Heidegger, "The Question Concerning Technology," *Basic Writings*, ed. David Farrell Krell (New York: Harper Collins, 2008), 318.
[8] Martin Heidegger, "Building, Dwelling, Thinking" *Basic Writings*, ed. David Farrell Krell (New York: Harper Collins, 2008), 348-9.
[9] Heidegger, "Building, Dwelling, Thinking," *Basic Writings*, 349.

increasingly tied to devices that moor us both to time, displayed on our smart phones, and instant communication via various applications and social media platforms. Casey's observation about Galileo's discovery of the gravitational force of the pendulum introducing an acceleration that reduced the world to "a single scene of communication" is more relevant than ever.[10] The temporal rhythms of our lives are more asynchronous than ever, as it has become possible for individuals to exist within their own time streams, to communicate asynchronously; however, rather than asynchronicity producing a jarring effect, an opportunity to recognize one's illusory relationship with time, our technology tends to preserve our illusions of control and fluidity.

My argument concerning the role of clock-time in the seventeenth century has been founded on other descriptions of clock-time as both personal and "pliable," empty and accelerated.[11] With these descriptions at hand, I have argued that the subject's experience of time in the seventeenth century came at an intersection between the new, highly individualized time and the recurring rhythms of communal temporality. As these two times entered juxtaposition in the seventeenth century, the new clock-time, I have argued, began to elide the problems that arise when a subject is alienated from (what Heidegger defines as) the raw experience of time. The experience of temporality that entails a connection to place, to shared history, and even to ethics is not something that the subject can fully divorce from, but it is something subjects can ignore, fail to

[10] Edward S. Casey, *The Fate of Place: A Philosophical History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), xiii.

[11] As noted in the first chapter, the description of time as "pliable" comes from Jacques Le Goff, *Time, Work, and Culture in the Middle Ages*, trans. Arthur Goldhammer (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1980), 38; the discussion of "empty time" comes from Stuart Sherman's dissection of Walter Benjamin's phrase in *Telling Time: Clocks, Diaries, and English Diurnal Form*, 1660-1785 (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1996), 10; and the discussion of accelerated time comes from Edward S. Casey, *The Fate of Place: A Philosophical History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), xiii.

acknowledge, or renounce, particularly as the space that lies outside self begins to be viewed as an extension of the mind. While the seventeenth century introduced a tension between the new, increasingly dominant clock-time and the originary experience of time, expressed in older rhythms of communal and sacred time, our current era has all but obliterated this tension. Perhaps it would be inaccurate to describe the everyday temporality of the twenty-first century as "clock-time"; we are less reliant on timepieces, yet our daily habits are dictated by the temporal strictures of productivity apps, and our personal value is increasingly determined by the pressure to produce more in less time. In confronting these pressures and illusions, it becomes possible to break step with the illusory order of clock-time and, in the words of Shakespeare, to "keep time," or in the words of Herbert, "give new wheels to our disorder'd clocks."

Conclusion Bibliography

Arendt, Hannah. *The Human Condition.* Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1958.

Casey, Edward S. *The Fate of Place: A Philosophical History*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998.

Critchley, Simon. "Being and Time, part 4: Thrown into this world." *The Guardian*, 29 Jun 2009. https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/belief/2009/jun/29/religion-philosophy.

Heidegger, Martin. "Building, Dwelling, Thinking." In *Basic Writings*. Ed. David Farrell Krell. New York: Harper Collins, 2008.

Heidegger, Martin. "The Question Concerning Technology." In *Basic Writings*. Ed. David Farrell Krell. New York: Harper Collins, 2008.

Heidegger, Martin. *Being and Time.* Trans. John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson. Oxford: Blackwell, 2001.

Le Goff, Jacques. *Time, Work, and Culture in the Middle Ages.* Trans. Arthur Goldhammer. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1980.

Levinas, Emmanuel. *Totality and Infinity*. Trans. Alphonso Lingis (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers).

Sherman, Stuart. *Telling Time: Clocks, Diaries, and English Diurnal Form, 1660-1785*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1996.

Bibliography

Agamben, Giorgio. *The Time That Remains: A Commentary on the Letter to the Romans.* Trans. Patricia Dailey. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2005.

Anonymous. *The Arminian Nunnery: Or, A Briefe Description and Relation of the Late Monasticall Place, called the Arminian Nunnery at Little Gidding in Huntington-Shire.* London, 1641.

Arendt, Hannah. *The Human Condition.* Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1958.

Augustine. *Confessions*. Trans. Maria Boulding. New York: Vintage Spiritual Classics, 1998.

Aquinas, Thomas. *Commentary on Aristotle's Physics*, Book IV. Trans. Pierre H. Conway.

Bacon, Francis. *The New Organon*, ed. Lisa Jardine and Michael Silverthorne. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004.

Balla, Angela. "Wars of Evidence and Religious Toleration in Milton's *Samson Agonistes*." *Milton Quarterly 46.2* (2012).

Boyarin, Daniel. *Sparks of the Logos: Essays in Rabbinic Hermeneutics*. Boston: Brill, 2003.

Bruton, Eric. *Clocks and Watches: 1400-1900*. New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1967.

Burden, William. *Christ's Personal Reign on Earth, One Thousand Yeers with His Saints*. 1654.

Calvin, John. *Institutes of the Christian Religion*. Trans. Ford Lewis Battles and ed. John T. McNeill. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1960.

Casey, Edward S. *The Fate of Place: A Philosophical History*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998.

Carman, Taylor. "Forward to Basic Writings." In *Basic Writings*, by Martin Heidegger. Ed. David Farrell Krell. New York: Harper Collins, 2008.

Chalier, Catherine. "Levinas and the Talmud." *The Cambridge Companion to Levinas.* Ed. Simon Critchley and Robert Bernasconi. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004.

Cohen, Adam Max. *Shakespeare and Technology: Dramatizing Early Technological Revolutions.* New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006.

Critchley, Simon. "Being and Time, part 4: Thrown into this world." *The Guardian*, 29 Jun 2009. https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/belief/2009/jun/29/religion-philosophy.

Dinshaw, Carolyn. *How Soon Is Now?: Medieval Texts, Amateur Readers, and the Queerness of Time.* Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2012.

Donne, John. "John 11:21. Preached at the Funeral of Sir William Cokayne, December 12, 1626." *Sermons on the Psalms and Gospels*. Ed. Evelyn M. Simpson. Berkeley, University of California Press, 1963.

Dohrn-van Rossum, Gerhard. *History of the Hour: Clocks and Modern Temporal Orders*, trans. Thomas Dunlap. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1996.

Duffy, Eamon. *Marking the Hours: English People and Their Prayers*, 1240-1570. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006.

Edwards, Karen L. "Inspiration and Melancholy in *Samson Agonistes*." *Milton and the Ends of Time.* Ed. Juliet Cummins. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003.

Engammare, Max. *On Time, Punctuality, and Discipline in Early Modern Calvinism.* Trans. Karin Maag. Cambridge: Cambridge Univesity Press, 2010.

Feldhay, Rivka. "Religion." *The Cambridge History of Science, Volume 3: Early Modern Science*. Ed. Katherine Park and Lorraine Daston. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008.

Ferrar, Nicholas. *The Story Books of Little Gidding: Being the Religious Dialogues Recited in the Great Room, 1631-2.* New York: E.P. Dutton and Co., 1899.

Fish, Stanley. *How Milton Works.* Cambridge: Belknap Press, 2001.

Fish, Stanley. *Self-Consuming Artifacts: The Experience of Seventeenth Century Literature.* Berkeley: University of California Press, 1972.

Fish, Stanley. "Spectacle and Evidence in *Samson Agonistes*." *Critical Inquiry 15.3* (1989).

Fleming, James Dougal. *Milton's Secrecy: And Philosophical Hermeneutics*. Burlington: Ashgate Publishing, 2008.

Furlani, Andre. "'In Place': *Kairos* in *Samson Agonistes*." *The Seventeenth Century* 10.2 (1995).

Grant, Roger Mathew. “Epistemologies of Time and Metre in the Long Eighteenth Century.” *Eighteenth Century Music 6.1.* Cambridge University Press, 2009.

Kantorowicz, Ernst. *The King’s Two Bodies: A Study in Medieval Political Theology.* Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1957.

Haraway, Donna. *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women: The Reinvention of Nature.* New York: Routledge.

Harman, Barbara Leah. *Costly Monuments: Representations of the Self in George Herbert’s Poetry.* Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1982.

Hausheer, Hermann. “St. Augustine's Conception of Time.” *The Philosophical Review* 46.5 (1937).

Hawkes, David. *The Faust Myth: Religion and the Rise of Representation*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007.

Heidegger, Martin. “Being and Time: Introduction.” In *Basic Writings*. Ed. David Farrell Krell. New York: Harper Collins, 2008.

Heidegger, Martin. “Building, Dwelling, Thinking.” In *Basic Writings*. Ed. David Farrell Krell. New York: Harper Collins, 2008.

Heidegger, Martin. “The Question Concerning Technology.” In *Basic Writings*. Ed. David Farrell Krell. New York: Harper Collins, 2008.

Heidegger, Martin. *Being and Time.* Trans. John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson. Oxford: Blackwell, 2001.

Higbie, Robert. “Images of Enclosure in George Herbert’s *The Temple*.” *Texas Studies in Language and Literature 15* (1974).

Hill, Christopher. *Milton and the English Revolution.* New York: The Viking Press, 1978.

Huntley, Frank. “George Herbert and the Image of Violent Containment.” *George Herbert Journal 8.1* (1984).

Ingold, Tim. “The Temporality of the Landscape,” *World Archaeology 25.2* (1993).

Johnson, Eugene. “The Failed Jeremiad in *Samson Agonistes*.” *Studies in English Literature 46.1* (2006).

Kearney, Richard. “Time, Evil, and Narrative: Ricouer on Augustine.” *Augustine and Postmodernism: Confessions and Circumfession.* Ed. John D. Caputo and Michael J. Scanlon. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2005.

Landes, David. *Revolution in Time: Clocks and the Making of the Modern World.* Cambridge: Belknap Press, 1983.

Latour, Bruno. *We Have Never Been Modern*. Trans. Catherine Porter. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1993.

Laudan, Laurens. "The Clock Metaphor and Probabilism: The Impact of Descartes on English Methodological Thought, 1650-65." *Ann. Sci. 22* (1966).

Le Goff, Jacques. *Time, Work, and Culture in the Middle Ages.* Trans. Arthur Goldhammer. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1980.

L'Estrange, Roger. *A Memento. Directed To all Those that Truly Reverence the Memory of King Charles the Martyr.* 1662.

Lewalski, Barbara. "Milton and the Milennium." *Milton and the Ends of Time.* Ed. Juliet Cummins. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003.

Levinas, Emmanuel. "Is Ontology Fundamental?" Trans. Peter Atterton. *Philosophy Today 33.2* (1989).

Levinas, Emmanuel. *Nine Talmudic Readings.* Trans. Annette Aronowicz (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994).

Levinas, Emmanuel. *Totality and Infinity*. Trans. Alphonso Lingis (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers).

Loewenstein, David. *Milton and the Drama of History.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990).

Low, Anthony. "*Samson Agonistes* and the Irony of Alternatives." *PMLA* 84.3 (1969).

Macey, Samuel. *Clocks and the Cosmos: Time in Western Life and Thought.* Hamden: Archon, 1980.

Martz, Louis. *The Poetry of Meditation: A Study in English Religious Literature of the Seventeenth Century.* New Haven: Yale University Press, 1976.

Matthews, Gareth B. *Augustine*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2005.

McLuhan, Marshall and Edmund Carpenter. "Acoustic Space." *Explorations in Communication.* Boston: Beacon Publishing, 1960.

Merleau-Ponty, Maurice. "L'Oeil et I'esprit." *Les Temps modernes 18: 184–5. Numéro special: "Maurice Merleau-Ponty"* (1961): 193–227.

Miller, Greg. *George Herbert's "Holy Patterns": Reforming Individuals in Community.* New York: Continuum, 2007.

Milton, John. *Complete Poems and Major Prose*. Ed. Merritt Y. Hughes. Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing, 2003.

Mollenkott, Virginia. "Relativism in *Samson Agonistes*." *Studies in Philology 67.1* (1970).

Moloney, Michael F. "A Suggested Gloss for Herbert's 'Box Where Sweets Compacted Lie." *Notes and Queries 1* (1954).

Netzloff, Mark. "Insurgent Time: *Richard II* and the Periodization of Sovereignty." *Richard II: New Critical Essays, Shakespeare Criticism, Vol. 25.* Ed. Jeremy Lopez. New York: Routledge, 2012.

Nightingale, Andrea. *Once Out of Time: Augustine on Time and the Body.* Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2011.

Ong, Walter J. *Orality and Literacy: The Technologizing of the Word*. London and New York: Routledge, 2002.

Pye, Christopher. *The Regal Phantasm*. London: Routledge, 1990.

Pye, Christopher. *The Vanishing: Shakespeare, the Subject, and Early Modern Culture.* Durham: Duke University Press, 2000.

Ransome, Joyce. *The Web of Friendship: Nicholas Ferrar and Little Gidding*. Cambridge: James Clarke & Co., 2011.

Rickey, Mary Ellen. *Utmost Art: Complexity in the Verse of George Herbert*. University of Kentucky Press, 1966.

Ricouer, Paul. *Time and Narrative, Vol. 1*, trans. Kathleen McLaughlin and David Pellauer. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984.

Rosendale, Timothy. *Liturgy and Literature in the Making of Protestant England.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007.

Rosenblatt, Jason P. *Torah and Law in Paradise Lost.* Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994.

Sawday, Jonathan. *The Body Emblazoned: Dissection and the Human Body in Renaissance Culture.* New York: Routledge, 1995.

Segermen, Ephraim. “Tempo in fifteenth-century music,” *Companion to Medieval and Renaissance Music,* ed. Tess Knighton and David Fallows. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992.

Serres, Michel. *The Parasite,* Trans. by Lawrence R. Schehr. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1982.

Serres, Michel. *The Five Senses: A Philosophy of Mingled Bodies,* Trans. Margaret Sankey and Peter Cowley (New York: Continuum, 2008).

Serres, Michel and Bruno Latour. *Conversations on Science, Culture, and Time*. Trans. Roxanne Lapidus. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1995.

Shapin, Steven. *Social History of Truth: Civility and Science in Seventeenth Century England* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1994).

Shapin, Steven & Simon Schaffer. *Leviathan and the Air Pump: Hobbes, Boyle, and the Experimental Life.* Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011.

Shawcross, John T. “Confusion: The Apocalypse, The Millennium.” *Milton and the Ends of Time.* Ed. Juliet Cummins. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003.

Sherman, Stuart. *Telling Time: Clocks, Diaries, and English Diurnal Form, 1660-1785*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1996.

Shoulson, Jeffrey S. *Milton among the Rabbis: Hebraism, Hellenism, and Christianity*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2001.

Silver, Victoria. *Imperfect Sense: The Predicament of Milton’s Irony*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001.

Smith, Bruce. *The Acoustic World of Early Modern England*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1999.

Sokolowski, Robert. *Introduction to Phenomenology*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000.

Sorabji, Richard. *Time, Creation, and the Continuum: Theories in Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages*. London: Gerald Duckworth & Co., 1983.

Spencer, John. *Kaina Kai Palaia: Things new and old*. 1658.

Suckling, John. *Aglaura, The Poems, Plays, and Other Remains of John Suckling, Vol. 1.* Ed. W. Carew Hazlitt. London: Reeves and Turner, 1892.

Summers, Joseph. *His Religion and Art*. Eugene: Wipf & Stock, 1954.

Taylor, Charles. *Sources of the Self: The Making of the Modern Identity*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press: 1989.

Vendler, Helen. *The Poetry of George Herbert*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1975.

Werman, Golda. *Milton and Midrash*. Washington: The Catholic University Press, 1995.

Wilcox, Helen. *The English Poems of George Herbert*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007.

Yates, Julian. *Error Misuse Failure: Object Lessons from the English Renaissance*. Minneapolis: University of Minneapolis Press, 2003.

Yoder, Joella G. *Unrolling Time: Christiaan Huygens and the Mathematization of Nature.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988.

Zizek, Slavoj. *Looking Awry: An Introduction to Jacques Lacan through Popular Culture.* Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1991.