Melancholy and the nonconforming godly in England, c. 1640-1700

FINOLA FINN

Melancholy and the nonconforming godly in England, c. 1640-1700

Finola Finn

Submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy
Department of History, Durham University
2018

Abstract

Melancholy and the nonconforming godly in England, c. 1640-1700

Finola Finn

This thesis explores representations of melancholy amongst Presbyterians, Independents, and Particular Baptists across the period c. 1640 to 1700. Faced with increasing accusations of melancholy from their Anglican opposition, the nonconforming godly grappled with how this condition should be interpreted and dealt with. In asserting that the histories of neither health nor religion can be understood through ideas alone, the study counters the conformist-focused, top-down, and intellectualised approach of the existing scholarship on melancholy at this time. Rather than focusing on the published views of ministers and physicians, the thesis draws upon a range of printed and manuscript sources to investigate the experience of melancholy from the perspective of laypersons.

In examining the use of health and the passions in godly writing, Chapter One considers the discourses from which attitudes towards melancholy stemmed, demonstrating that an embodied form of piety persisted throughout the period. Taking this stance further, Chapter Two contends that the heart was understood to react physiologically to duties and, ultimately, indicate the state of an individual's soul. Turning to the issue of melancholy, it is shown that the language of the heart was employed to assert or deny the spiritual significance of this condition. Through a series of case studies that draw upon both published and unpublished writings, Chapters Three, Four, and Five argue that a shift occurred across the latter half of the seventeenth century amongst the nonconforming godly towards a greater willingness to positively incorporate melancholy into accounts of spiritual experience. While other scholars have suggested alternative changes, pointing to a de-spiritualisation and heightened criticism of melancholy, these chapters argue that this condition, in practice, was carefully absorbed into existing frameworks of spiritual language and thinking by the nonconforming godly and, in turn, used to express their politico-religious identity.

Contents

List of illustrations

Conventions and abbreviations

Quotations from primary sources retain the original spelling and punctuation, except that i/j and u/v and vv/w have been silently modernised. In archival transcriptions, common abbreviations are written in full silently (e.g. 'the'), but the ampersand is retained ('&'). Square brackets are used to indicate where more unusual abbreviations have been expanded and punctuation added for clarity. Unless stated otherwise, any italics were in the original. All Bible quotations have been drawn from KJV. Please also note that the titles of seventeenth-century books have been shortened.

BL	British Library
CL	Congregational Library
DWL	Dr Williams's Library
JRL	John Rylands Library
KJV	King James Version
ODNB	Oxford Dictionary of National Biography
OED	Oxford English Dictionary
TNA	The National Archives, Kew

Acknowledgements

I wish to thank, most sincerely and warmly, Professor Ludmilla Jordanova and Dr Alex Barber. I am incredibly grateful to have had such insightful and supportive supervisors.

I also extend my gratitude to Durham University for funding this PhD through a Doctoral Studentship; the ever-helpful staff at Dr Williams's Library for making my archival research so enjoyable; and Dr Catherine Kovesi for encouraging me to pursue postgraduate studies in the UK.

A thousand thanks must also go to my parents, Niall and Christine Finn, for their unfailing kindness, encouragement, and assistance.

Introduction

In 1665, the ejected minister Henry Hickman wrote that he could not 'conceive much hopes' of the repentance of those 'who do so far wrong the Spirit, as to ascribe all his works of conviction and contrition, to the predominance of the melancholy humor, or to a cracked brain'.[1] While he admitted that the cries of 'I am damned, I am damned' of those fearing for their eternal condition 'maybe acknowledged somtimes to proceed from Melancholy', he asserted that they do 'more frequently proceed from the grieved [Holy] Spirit's withdrawing of himself'. Although careful to maintain that the spirit would 'seal up believers to the day of redemption', Hickman also wanted his readers to sufficiently fear being deserted by God and, as a result, needed to discourage them from dismissing feelings of abandonment as merely the results of melancholy.[2]

Twenty-six years later, the Presbyterian minister Timothy Rogers similarly deterred his audience from denying the significance of such feelings.[3] Rogers, however, was more open to viewing bodily disfunction as their primary cause. While he was careful to admit that 'it would be a thought very Atheistical to imagine, that all inward horror of Conscience comes from bodily distress', Rogers asserted that 'God … mak[ing] immediate impressions of his Wrath upon the Soul', as Hickman had earlier described, only accounted for one in twenty cases of 'Christians … under dreadful fears'. The 'inward trouble' of the other nineteen cases, Rogers held, 'comes either from a Melancholly Temper, or from a multiplication of sharp and severe outward Afflictions'.[4] The difference between Hickman's and Rogers' views is the launching point for this study. Did, as their words might suggest, a shift occur amongst the godly across the latter half of the seventeenth century towards a greater willingness to provide bodily explanations for

---

[1] Hickman wrote many polemical writings, sometimes anonymously. One of his most notable exchanges was with Thomas Pierce and Peter Heylin, who accused him of a high Calvinism that would lead to 'Rantism'. Hickman, in response, defended his Calvinist views and denounced his opponents' 'pelagian' stance. See, for example, Thomas Pierce, *An impartial inquiry into the nature of sin* (London, 1660); Henry Hickman, *A justification of the fathers and the schoolmen* (Oxford, 1659); idem, *Plus ultra* (London, 1661). For further details, see *ODNB,* s.v. 'Hickman, Henry'. For the quotation, see idem, *The believers duty towards the spirit* (London, 1665), 22. The text, unchanged, was republished in 1700.

[2] Hickman, *The believers duty*, 37, 78. For similar expressions from other godly authors, see, for example, Simon Ford, *The spirit of bondage and adoption* (London, 1655), 21: 'men too often look upon troubles of spirit as bare effects of a *melancholy distemper,* more proper for the *Physician* to deal withal then the *Divine*'; John Brinsley, *The drinking of the bitter cup* (London, 1660), 238: 'When experiencing the most bitter cup of them all [affliction of spirit], you must accept it and not disregard it as merely a melancholic passion.'

[3] *ODNB*, s.v. 'Rogers, Timothy'.

[4] Timothy Rogers, *A discourse concerning trouble of mind and the disease of melancholly* (London, 1691), 183-4.

feelings of spiritual distress and disruption? And, if so, how, and why, did this change come about?

In addressing these questions, this thesis joins other recent scholarship in bringing together the histories of religion and health and, in doing so, reveals the importance of physiological phenomena to the spiritual experiences of the nonconforming godly. Considering the body and its workings as a nexus for the formation and expression of religious, political, and social identity, the study turns its attention to melancholy; a condition so often associated with nonconformists, unjustly or otherwise, by contemporaries and historians alike. Rather than viewing the nonconforming godly as the passive receivers of criticism, the voices of this group are given room to reveal their own stances on melancholy, and the ways it played into their lives. By closely examining descriptions of melancholy amongst the nonconforming godly across the tumultuous decades of 1640-1700, new insights are provided into how well-being helped shape post-Restoration confessional identities, and by what processes of expression this was achieved.

Indeed, changes in the nonconforming godly's willingness to include melancholy within accounts of spiritual experiences can only be understood by investigating how individuals themselves identified, experienced, and dealt with this protean condition. Specific questions must be asked of primary sources from multiple genres: If 'somtimes' spiritual trouble could 'proceed from Melancholy', how could these cases that 'somtimes' occurred be recognised in oneself? How did processes, such as writing and the sharing of religious experiences, aid this process of recognition, and how did the expression differ depending on audience? Moreover, once melancholy had been distinguished as the underlying cause of spiritual turmoil, what significance, if any, did this have for one's assurance of salvation, and godly identity more broadly? Should melancholy be cured through physic, spiritual consolation, both, or not at all?

These questions, surrounding the identification and treatment of melancholy, are not only important for this research; they were also vitally important on an individual, internal level across the period under examination. Their answers had implications for an individual's sense of godliness, as well as practical consequences in terms of recovery. But the issues tied up in these questions went far beyond individual experience; they also had wider theological, political, and social ramifications, given the rise and subsequent reduction of the godly party's power in England and the increasing accusations of melancholy that they faced from their opponents. Within a context of theological dispute

and reversals in political power throughout the civil war, interregnum, Restoration, and Glorious Revolution, the taint of melancholy amongst the nonconforming godly had the potential, more than ever, to undermine both internal and external, public and private, significations of religiosity.

A 'diversity of Significations': melancholy, the godly and nonconformism

Before the risks of melancholy for nonconformists can be fully appreciated, however, two key terms require explanation. What did contemporaries mean by the term 'melancholy', and who were the nonconforming godly? We will first turn to the definition of the latter - which, given that the identity and reputation of 'the godly' lay in the eyes of the beholder, is by no means straightforward. The phrase was used by ejected minister Richard Baxter, for example, to refer to Protestants who pursued 'true Religion' and reform; while the conforming, Arminian minister Samuel Parker used 'the godly party' pejoratively to single out nonconformist, Calvinist Protestants.[5] Fusing aspects of both these interpretations, this thesis uses the term 'nonconforming godly' to refer to those clearly Christian members of 'the godly' who did not align themselves with the established church after the Restoration, including Presbyterians, Independents, and Particular Baptists.[6]
'Nonconforming godly' is a capacious term, intended to allow for the varied views, often

---

[5] For Baxter, 'true Religion' consisted chiefly of 'Heaven-work and Heart-work'. See Richard Baxter, *The cure of church-divisions* (London, 1670), 209, 17, 140; Samuel Parker, *A discourse of ecclesiastical politie* (London, 1670), 14, 74, 151, 168, 263.

[6] 'Clearly Christian' in the sense that they were scriptural, Trinitarian Protestants. While Presbyterians, Independents, and Particular Baptists were largely, although not entirely, orthodox Calvinists, and shared a belief that the doctrines of the established church were unacceptable, there were countless points upon which they did not agree - including who exactly could also be deemed truly 'godly'. Nevertheless, the 'nonconforming godly' can be used to capture this, what Michael Winship has termed, 'medley of interrelated, if sometimes violently disputatious Restoration voices, all presupposing a common, historically rooted theopolitical identity for the 'godly', while coming to no resolution about what that theopolitical identity was or should be, and all still locked, by choice or otherwise, in stressful, historicised relationships among themselves and with the unsettled Church of England'. While Winship and Wallace propose the use of 'puritans' for this group, I argue that this misleadingly signals a stronger continuity with pre-civil war 'puritans' than existed. The majority of the 'nonconforming godly' were of a different generation to their puritan forefathers, and held some significantly different views, both theological and practical. For instance, 'puritans' insisted they would abide by the decisions of the established church if ordered to stop preaching, while many nonconforming godly refused to adhere to the rules of their ejection. With this in mind, Gary S. De Krey proposes another option for categorising this post-Restoration group: 'Reformed Protestants' (as opposed to 'Anglicans' and 'Sectarians'). Surely all Protestants were 'reformed', however - and, what is more, the nonconforming godly were not only 'reformed' but 'reform*ing*'. The active nature of their identity is captured by the term used here, given that these godly individuals were not merely nonconformist, but consciously and consistently nonconform*ing*. See Michael Winship, 'Defining puritanism in Restoration England: Richard Baxter and others respond to *A friendly debate*', *HJ* 54, 3 (2011): 689-715; Gary S. De Krey, *London and the Restoration, 1659-1683* (Cambridge, 2005), 5, 92, 125-34; Dewey D. Wallace Jr., *Shapers of English Calvinism, 1660-1714: Variety, persistence, and transformation* (Oxford, 2011), 19-20.

in tension, of the individuals it describes. Some, for example, still desired a national church after the Restoration, while others had become intent on achieving separatism. Alternative terms are too limited; 'Calvinistic nonconformists', for example, would not allow for those individuals who moved away from some aspects of orthodox Calvinism in the second half of the century, while 'puritans' would suggest a misleading continuity with the 'hotter sort' of Protestants of the pre-civil war period.[7]

On a theoretical level, speaking of Presbyterians, Independents, and Particular Baptists as one group could be seen as problematic, given the divergencies that existed in their doctrines and views on church governance. When we turn to their lived experience, however, it becomes apparent that they shared a common identity as the 'nonconforming godly', whether they wished to or not.[8] Indeed, the decision to focus the study on this subsection of 'the godly party' was informed by the unique relationship Presbyterians, Independents, and Particular Baptists shared with the condition of melancholy as a result of their theopolitical position. For these groups, a convergence occurred at the Restoration between their new, vulnerable position outside of the established church; the accusations of melancholy that had been aimed at so-called 'puritans' since the sixteenth century; and the anti-enthusiasm discourse that had increased during the religious freedom of the 1640s and 50s. In short, given the nonconforming godly's identity as dissenters, their conformist detractors tended to merge them with more sectarian groups, accusing all nonconformists of being religious 'enthusiasts' influenced by melancholic vapours. Regardless of the vast theological differences between many nonconformists, they found themselves treated legally and socially as a homogenous group - and, as a result, the

---

[7] For 'hotter sort' of Protestant, see Patrick Collinson, *The Elizabethan puritan movement* (London, 1967), 27. On the inappropriateness of a conformist-nonconformist binary, see John Spurr, *The Restoration Church of England, 1660-1689* (New Haven, 1991), 314. On the fluidity and difficulties of defining religious identity at the Restoration, see Jonathan Scott, 'Radicalism and Restoration: The shape of the Stuart experience', *HJ* 31 (1998): 453-67; Geoffrey F. Nuttall, 'Historical introduction', in *The Holy Spirit in puritan faith and experience* (Chicago, 1992), 8-15. On the debates surrounding use of the term 'puritan' earlier in the century, see Peter Lake, 'Introduction: puritanism, Arminianism and Nicholas Tyacke', in *Religious politics in post-Reformation England*, ed. Kenneth Fincham and Peter Lake (Woodbridge, 2006), 2, 6.

[8] Turning to lived experience rather than belief when defining Protestants has been employed by Peter Lake, who has argued that puritanism should be defined in terms of its spiritual dynamic rather than any formal doctrinal consensus. Alexandra Walsham has also taken a step in this direction by criticising historians' anachronistic propensity to prioritise belief over practice, and calling for Protestantism to be analysed 'as a living and breathing tissue'. See Peter Lake, *Moderate puritans and the Elizabethan Church* (Cambridge, 1982), 282-5; Alexandra Walsham, *Charitable hatred: tolerance and intolerance in England, 1500-1700* (Manchester, 2006), 516.

lived experience of moderate dissenters came closer to that of radical sectarians, especially during the early 1660s and mid-1680s when persecution was intensified.[9]

Anti-enthusiasm discourse had been underway since much earlier in the century, but was furthered by the publication of Meric Casaubon's *A treatise concerning enthusiasme* (1655), and Henry More's *Enthusiasmus triumphatus* (1656) during the interregnum, both of which described the belief and practices of religious enthusiasts as being the result of melancholic vapours, rising to the brain and, through interference with the animal spirits, causing delusions.[10] This rhetoric, which tended to tar nonconformists of all shades with the same brush, encouraged its audience to judge so-called 'enthusiasts' as pitifully deluded, and to dismiss their visions, prophecies or other religious experiences as false. While More and Casaubon were largely aiming their words at radical sectarians, some conformists at the Restoration adopted this anti-enthusiasm rhetoric to attack both radical dissenters and the nonconforming godly. For instance, the conformist, Arminian ministers Simon Patrick and Samuel Parker homogenised all nonconformists in their criticisms of feeling-based religious practice. Patrick's polemical and popular *A friendly debate betwixt two neighbours, the one a conformist, the other a non-conformist* (1668), presented nonconformists as a homogenous group, all driven by 'Senses and Imagination' rather

---

[9] Given the failure of the commonwealth, a sense of defeat was felt by many of the godly at the Restoration. But, for those outside the church, this defeat was experienced in a very real way. Unlike their Calvinist conformist counterparts, the nonconforming godly faced legal and social persecution which merged them with other dissenters. Regardless of the beliefs they shared with some of those in the established church, Black Bartholomew's Day (1662), the Clarendon Code (1661-5), and other legislation such as the Test Act (1673) affected nonconformists' everyday lives, firmly distinguishing them from conformists. In addition, nonconformists were excluded from Oxford and Cambridge, the only institutions allowed to train clergy, given the return of ecclesiastical control to education. As Hill has stated, 'to be a dissenter was to be socially inferior'. Even after the Declaration of Indulgence (1687) and the Toleration Act (1689), which allowed them to worship freely, nonconformists continued to experience a number of social and political restrictions, not to mention ongoing prejudice and harassment. See Christopher Hill, *Some intellectual consequences of the English Revolution* (London, 1980), 55; idem, *The experience of defeat: Milton and some contemporaries* (London, 1984); John Coffey, *Persecution and toleration in Protestant England, 1558-1689* (Harlow, 2000), 166-218; Gerald Cragg, *Puritanism in the period of the Great Persecution, 1660-1688* (Cambridge, 1957).

[10] For anti-enthusiasm towards 'puritans' earlier in the century, see James I and VI, *Basilikon doron* (Edinburgh, 1603), sigs. A3r-v, A5r, 41-2; Robert Burton, *The anatomy of melancholy* (Oxford, 1624), esp. partition III. For anti-enthusiasm discourse during the interregnum, see Meric Casaubon, *A treatise concerning enthusiasme* (London, 1655); Henry More, *Enthusiasmus triumphatus* (London, 1656). For secondary scholarship on this topic, which has also placed focus on the influence of Casaubon and More, see John F. Sena, 'Melancholic madness and the puritans', *The Harvard Theological Review* 66, 3 (1973): 293-309; Michael Heyd, 'Medical discourse in religious controversy: The case of the critique of "enthusiasm" on the eve of the Enlightenment', *Science in Context* 8, 1 (1995): 133-57; idem, *'Be sober and reasonable': The critique of enthusiasm in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries* (New York, 1995); Angus Gowland, *The worlds of Renaissance melancholy: Robert Burton in context* (Cambridge, 2006), 139-204.

than 'Reason and Judgement'.[11] He did not view the risings and fallings of their spiritual state to be meaningful or, more precisely, truly caused by God withdrawing himself in response to sin. 'For I observe well', he wrote, 'people fall into these melancholick & despairing Fits: & are recovered again into greater Chearfulness and Assurance, without any reason at all; but only by a fanciful application of some Scripture or other, which belongs not at all to their condition: and yet casts them down, or raises them up'.[12] Similarly, Samuel Parker in his *A discourse of ecclesiastical politie* (1670) homogeneously labelled nonconformists as 'Melancholy Religionists' and 'brain-sick people', who practiced a 'godly madness'. 'There is nothing so malepart [malapert] as a Splenetick Religion', he concluded.[13]

On one level, the tensions between the nonconforming godly and their conformist detractors, such as Patrick and Parker, stemmed from opposing theological views. English Calvinism, which the majority of the nonconforming godly continued to adhere to, had undergone a resurgence at the beginning of the period under study due to the religious freedom made possible by the civil wars and, during the interregnum, reached a new height as the dominant theology of the Westminster Assembly.[14] Arminianism, on the other hand, which had gained momentum after the accession of Charles in 1625 and the rise of Laudianism, experienced a reduction in influence during the 1640s and 50s, before regaining a foothold in the established church at the Restoration.[15] As the words of Patrick and Parker suggest, melancholy played an important role in the disputes between the followers of these two theological systems, as

---

[11] Simon Patrick, *A friendly debate* (London, 1668), 15. *A friendly debate* went through 8 editions in a year and a longer version was published in 1669. See idem, *A continuation of the friendly debate* (London, 1669); *ODNB*, s.v. 'Patrick, Simon'; Winship, 'Defining puritanism', 698. It should be noted that Arminians, like nonconformists, were similarly homogenised by their opponents. See William L. Lamont, *Richard Baxter and the millennium: Protestant imperialism and the English Revolution* (London, 1979), 130-1.

[12] Patrick, *Friendly debate*, 48.

[13] Parker, *A discourse*, 149, 322.

[14] Westminster Assembly, *The humble advice of the Assembly of Divines, now by authority of parliament sitting at Westminster, concerning a confession of faith* (London, 1647); David Cressy and Lori Anne Ferrell, *Religion and society in early modern England: A sourcebook* (New York, 1996), 10; Christopher Durston, 'Puritan rule and the failure of cultural revolution, 1645-1660', in *The culture of English puritanism, 1560-1700*, ed. Christopher Durston and Jacqueline Eales (New York, 1996), 210-233.

[15] Nicholas Tyacke, 'Religious controversy', in *The history of the University of Oxford IV: The seventeenth-century Oxford* (Oxford, 1997), 617; idem, *Anti-Calvinists: The rise of English Arminianism, c. 1590-1640* (Oxford, 1987); Christopher Durston and Jacqueline Eales, 'Introduction: The puritan ethos, 1560-1700', in Durston and Eales, *The culture of English puritanism*, 5-6; Spurr, *The Restoration*, 281. It should be emphasised that not all conformists were Arminian and, as indicated above, not all nonconforming godly were Calvinist. On the continuation of Reformed theology in the Restoration church, see Stephen Hampton, *Anti-Arminians: the Anglican reformed tradition from Charles II to George I* (Oxford, 2008), 1-38.

Arminians had long accused Calvinist 'puritans' of cultivating a toxic, dejection-inducing form of piety.[16] Whilst all Protestants shared a desire to rebut the accusations of 'carnal people' that religious life was characterised by sadness, less orthodox Calvinists and Arminians, especially from the 1630s onwards, portrayed strict Calvinists as both inciting and suffering from melancholy.[17] Believing that one's eternal salvation was earned through the performance of moral and religious duties, Arminians held that Calvinism's predestinarian soteriology, in contrast, led converts down a slippery slope of uncertainty towards despair, melancholy, or even madness.[18] Emphasising that some individuals, in the process of searching for signs of grace as evidence of their election, became unnecessarily convinced of their reprobation, Arminians instead made moral performance a condition of justification, rather than faith alone. They eschewed Calvinists' over-emphasis on the cultivation of feeling as evidence of grace, asserting that the godly's experiences of rapture, or suffering from the withdrawal of the spirit, were merely the fruits of a melancholic body.[19]

Many of the nonconforming godly, unsurprisingly, disagreed with this interpretation of their beliefs and practices. That is not to say, however, that their responses were uniform. Some ejected ministers, such as the Presbyterians Giles Firmin and Richard Baxter, agreed that harsh Calvinist teachings were causing melancholic anxiety within their flocks - and if the nonconforming godly's writings are an accurate indicator, the condition does appear to have been particularly common within their

---

[16] See n. 10 above. See also, for example, Paul Baynes, *The trial of a Christian estate* (London, 1618), 15, 17, cited in Elizabeth Hunter, 'Melancholy and the doctrine of reprobation in English puritan culture, 1550-1640', (DPhil diss., University of Oxford, 2012), 266. See also Hunter's further discussion of these criticisms, 265-70.

[17] For 'carnal people', see Samuel Cradock, *Knowledge & practice* (London, 1659), sig. A8v. For other examples of Protestants lamenting the view that religion causes melancholy, see Parker, *A discourse*, xxviii; Hickman, *The believers duty*, 73. On the criticism of Calvinists as melancholic, see Jeremy Schmidt, *Melancholy and the care of the soul: religion, moral philosophy and madness in early modern England* (Aldershot, 2007), 83-5.

[18] It was of course not only Arminians who criticised the teaching of predestination. Decades earlier, for example, Elizabeth I stated that predestination was 'a matter tender and dangerous to weak ignorant minds', while James I forbade ministers below bishop or dean to preach predestinarian theology. See Peter White, 'The rise of Arminianism reconsidered', *Past & Present* 101 (1983): 37; idem, *Predestination, policy and polemic: conflict and consensus in the English Church from the Reformation to the Civil War* (Cambridge, 1992), 210-11.

[19] See for example Joseph Glanvill, *Essays on several important subjects* (London, 1676), 19; idem, *Philosophia pia* (London, 1671), 224. See also Schmidt, *Melancholy*, 85-102; Christopher Haigh, 'The Church of England, the nonconformists and reason: another Restoration controversy', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 69, 3 (2018): 533-4. As this summary of the antagonisms between Arminians and Calvinists indicates, key aspects of English Calvinism for the purposes of this study are predestination, the process of conversion, the role of the Holy Spirit and, in particular, assurance, sanctified affliction, and providence. On the variations and importance of these beliefs in this period, both in and outside the established Church, see Wallace, *Shapers*, esp. chs. 4, 5, 6.

communities.[20] While Baxter modified doctrine in response to this high frequency, Firmin pushed for an alteration to religious duties.[21] Other ministers, meanwhile, refused to blame orthodox soteriology for significant rates of distress, and continued to treat cases of melancholy using the methods of pastoral divinity inherited from earlier Calvinist divines.[22] The deeply subjective experience of melancholy, however, cannot be understood purely through the intellectual debates of ministers. As a result, this thesis examines how, and if, these varying views of nonconforming clergymen affected the experience of melancholy amongst their followers.

Here we must turn to our second key definition; what, exactly, was meant by 'melancholy'? Much like the definitional issues surrounding 'godly' and 'nonconformist', the meaning of 'melancholy' depended on perspective and context.[23] According to humoralism, an individual's temperament was determined by which of the four humours (blood, yellow bile, black bile/melancholy, or phlegm) was predominant in the body. If melancholy dominated, a 'natural melancholy' was produced, resulting in a tendency for sadness and contemplativeness. An 'unnatural melancholy', on the other hand, arose from an excess of black bile in the spleen becoming hot, burning, and releasing gaseous vapours. Rising to the brain, these vapours would muddle the mind's senses, causing delusions. Protestants believed that the devil took advantage of this bodily imbalance to terrorise the soul, filling the sufferer's thoughts with false fears or atheistical ideas. During the period under study, however, some changes occurred in understandings of this condition's aetiology; rather than stemming from burning in the lower abdomen, the

---

[20] Peter Elmer has recently commented that there was a 'veritable epidemic' of melancholy amongst nonconformists after the Restoration, providing an extensive list of examples. This study's research affirms his assertion. See Peter Elmer, *Witchcraft, witch-hunting, and politics in early modern England* (Oxford, 2016), 208, n. 101-4. It should also be noted that nonconformists themselves commented upon a high frequency of melancholy amongst their community at the time. The Presbyterian minister Oliver Heywood, for example, wrote in 1684 (a year of heightened persecution of dissenters): 'I observe this year theres severall persons sadly melancholy, distracted', while a seemingly nonconformist physician, David Irish, specialised in melancholic cases given its prevalence in his circles at the end of the century. Oliver Heywood, *The Rev. Oliver Heywood, B.A., 1630-1702; his autobiography, diaries, anecdote and event books,* ed. Joseph Horsfall Turner, vol. 2 (Brighouse, 1882), 211; David Irish, *Levamen infirmi* (London, 1700), 38-54. On perceptions of the increased prevalence of melancholy in early modern English society more generally, see Angus Gowland, 'The problem of early modern melancholy', *Past & Present* 191 (2006): 77-120.

[21] Richard Baxter, *Gods goodness vindicated* (London, 1671) and Giles Firmin, *Real Christian* (London, 1670), cited in John Stachniewski, *The persecutory imagination: English puritanism and the literature of religious despair* (Oxford, 1991), 55-60.

[22] Rogers, *A discourse*; Samuel Annesley, *A continuation of morning-exercise questions and cases of conscience* (London, 1683).

[23] On the protean nature of 'melancholy' and approaching it as an assemblage, see Drew Daniel, *The melancholy assemblage: affect and epistemology in the English Renaissance* (New York, 2013), 1-33.

disease of melancholy became increasingly associated with the light, ethereal 'animal spirits' of the mind (which facilitated communication between the mind and the senses). Rather than affecting the animal spirits, melancholy came to be theorised as originating in their malfunction. For some sectors of society, moreover, the condition was a fashionable ailment, associated with sensitivity and intellect. Social status, gender and religious identity affected an individual's ability to navigate between these different forms of melancholy. At the same time, beyond health, the term could also be used more loosely, to refer to a passing mood or as an adjective to describe a sad event.[24] Given this myriad of meanings, it is not surprising that a godly physician commented in 1700 that the term possessed 'a diversity of significations'.[25]

Returning to the nonconforming godly, it can be seen that melancholy intersected with their lives on multiple levels. Their beliefs and practices led them to identify and respond to melancholy in certain ways; accusations of melancholy were used by their opposition to discredit them; and, as a group, they appear to have suffered from the condition at particularly high rates. This thesis tackles these intersections by deliberately focusing on the period in which they emerged and developed, 1640-1700, and spanning the social, religious, political, and intellectual changes of the civil wars, interregnum, Restoration, and Glorious Revolution.

Historiography: from 'secularisation' to subtleties

A number of studies have investigated the relationship between Protestantism and what we term 'emotion' in recent decades. In the earliest works, a particular focus was placed upon the sadness and dejection of so-called 'puritans', and efforts were made to explain their propensity for such states.[26] More recently, a handful of scholars have attempted to present a more rounded picture of reformed Protestants, focusing instead upon the happiness and satisfaction they derived from aspects of religious life, such as the concept

---

[24] Sena, 'Melancholic madness', 296; Erin Sullivan, *Beyond melancholy: sadness and selfhood in Renaissance England* (Oxford, 2016), 92-125; Schmidt, *Melancholy*, 39-43; Clark Lawlor, 'Fashionable melancholy', in *Melancholy experience in the long eighteenth century*, ed. Allan Ingram et al (London, 2011), 27-40.

[25] Irish, *Levamen*, 38.

[26] Stachniewski, *Persecutory imagination*; Charles Lloyd Cohen, *God's caress: the psychology of puritan religious experience* (Oxford, 1986).

of assurance.[27] This thesis, admittedly, returns to the gloomier side of reformed Protestant feeling - but with good reason, as a number of problems remain unresolved in previous studies. The multivalent and contested nature of both 'melancholy' and 'nonconformism', for instance, has not been sufficiently acknowledged in the existing scholarship, while the periodisation of these studies has tended to either focus on the first forty years of the seventeenth century or begin at 1660, rather than cutting across the significant shifts of the latter half of the century.[28] Most problematically, in those studies which have examined the post-Restoration period, 'nonconformists' have often been treated as a uniform, unchanging block, set against their 'conformist' opposition. The majority of scholarship, meanwhile, has focussed upon the views of 'conformists', giving only a nod to nonconformists, and treated both groups in a similarly homogenous manner.

The well-known work of John F. Sena and Michael MacDonald, for example, which has largely acted as the cornerstone for subsequent studies in this area, contended that 'Anglicans', in reaction to the outburst of religious freedom during the civil wars and interregnum, increasingly associated 'puritans' with melancholy-induced enthusiasm.[29] According to this narrative, Anglicans alone now deemed extreme manifestations of sorrow for sin or an afflicted conscience as the product of mere bodily disfunction and, as a result, began to reject religious forms of therapy for these conditions. By the end of the century, MacDonald concludes, both the understanding and treatment of what

---

[27] Alec Ryrie, *Being Protestant in Reformation Britain* (Oxford, 2013), esp. 27-48, 77-95; S. Bryn Roberts, *Puritanism and the pursuit of happiness: the ministry and theology of Ralph Venning, 1621-1674* (Woodbridge, 2015), esp. 79-101; Kate Narveson, 'Resting assured in puritan piety: the lay experience', in *Puritanism and emotion in the early modern world*, ed. Alec Ryrie and Tom Schwanda (Basingstoke, 2016), 166-92.

[28] Many studies of melancholy have focused on the first forty years of the seventeenth century. These include Hunter, 'Melancholy'; Mary Ann Lund, *Melancholy, medicine and religion in early modern England: reading* The anatomy of melancholy (Cambridge, 2010); Gowland, *The worlds*; Mary Morrissey, 'Narrative authority in spiritual life-writing: the example of Dionys Fitzherbert (fl 1608-1641)', *The Seventeenth Century* 15, 1 (2000): 1-15; Sullivan, *Beyond melancholy*; Lawrence Babb, *The Elizabethan malady: a study of melancholia in English literature from 1580 to 1642* (East Lansing, 1951). On the tendency of scholarship on melancholy and madness to 'spend their time on one side or the other of 1660', see Erin Sullivan, 'Book review: Melancholy and the care of the soul', *History of the Human Sciences* 22, 1 (2009): 145.

[29] Sena, 'Melancholic madness', 293-309; Michael MacDonald, *Mystical bedlam: madness, anxiety, and healing in seventeenth-century England* (Cambridge, 1981), esp. 217-30.

'Anglicans' deemed melancholy were 'secularised'. He concluded that 'nonconformists', on the other hand, largely continued to practice spiritual therapies.[30]

MacDonald's use of the concept of 'secularisation' is of course problematic in and of itself, as it evokes the compromised notion of inexorable 'progress', while also encouraging us to skip over nuances and complexities given its all-encompassing nature.[31] MacDonald and Sena's categorisation of 'conformists' and 'nonconformists', which aids the 'secularisation' narrative, is also misleading. By presenting 'conformists' in stark opposition to 'nonconformists', and aligning these groups with the so-called 'scientific revolution' and orthodox religion respectively, historians are more easily able to create a narrative of reason triumphing over faith.[32] By taking a more fine-grained approach to confessional identities, however, it becomes evident that reason and faith, medicine and religion, were not in conflict, but rather operated in a much more complex relationship. Indeed, and as this thesis will demonstrate, it seems that an increase in bodily interpretations of sorrow for sin and despair has been placed under the paradigm of 'secularisation' in the case of the history of melancholy when, in fact, these experiences, even when understood as occurring due to the body's workings, could retain much spiritual meaning.

To step away from the history of melancholy and madness for a moment, it should be noted that adherence to the idea of 'secularisation' has not only occurred within this specific area of scholarship, but has been a concern within the study of religion, science and medicine in the early modern period more broadly.[33] In previous decades, much

---

[30] MacDonald, *Mystical bedlam*, 225-7. On the reduction of spiritual interpretations of madness amongst the elite and/or Anglicans, see also Carol Thomas Neely, *Distracted subjects: madness and gender in Shakespeare and early modern culture* (Ithaca, 2004), 67, 70; Roy Porter, *Mind-forg'd manacles: A history of madness in England from the Restoration to the Regency* (London, 1987), 61, 66; Michel Foucault, *Madness and civilisation: A history of insanity in the age of reason*, tr. Richard Howard (London, 1989); David Lederer, *Madness, religion and the state in early modern Europe: a Bavarian beacon* (Cambridge, 2006), 19-20, 203. On the continuation of religious interpretations of madness amongst some sectors of early modern society, see for example David Lederer, *Madness*, 10, 21; David Harley, 'Mental illness, magical medicine, and the devil in northern England, 1650-1700', in *The medical revolution of the seventeenth century*, ed. Roger French and Andrew Wear (Cambridge, 1989), 114-44.

[31] On complicating 'secularisation', see Charles Taylor, *A secular age* (Cambridge, 2007); J.C.D Clark, 'Secularization and modernization: the failure of a "grand narrative"', *HJ* 55, 1 (2012): 161-94; Jonathan Barry, 'Piety and the patient: medicine and religion in eighteenth century Bristol', in *Patients and practitioners: lay perceptions of medicine in pre-industrial society*, ed. Roy Porter (Cambridge, 1985), 145-76.

[32] On the historiographical issues surrounding the 'scientific revolution', see Margaret J. Osler, 'The canonical imperative: rethinking the Scientific Revolution', in *Rethinking the Scientific Revolution*, ed. Margaret J. Osler (Cambridge, 2009), 3-22; Steven Shapin, *The Scientific Revolution* (Chicago, 1996), 1-2.

[33] See Alexandra Walsham's historiographical review, 'The Reformation and "the disenchantment of the world" reassessed', *HJ* 51, 2 (2008): 497-528.

scholarship created a false dichotomy between religion and medicine, despite the extent to which these fields were deeply and irretrievably interrelated in the minds of contemporaries.[34] Medicine was often defined narrowly as an elite form of knowledge, conflated unhelpfully with changes in scientific belief, and presented as having overpowered the influence of religion through a process problematically termed 'medicalisation'.[35] Perhaps unintentionally, historians of religion also tended to brush over the medical aspects of their topics, and vice versa. In the subfield of the history of melancholy, for example, the condition has often been treated mainly as a medical phenomenon, despite the fact that most contemporary works discussing the condition were written from a religious perspective.[36] The two areas have been fruitfully brought together more recently, however, and the methods used by scholars to achieve this have been adopted in the present study. Propelled by a growing awareness that interest in natural philosophy in the seventeenth century was both inspired and influenced by religion, a number of scholars have acknowledged and examined the inseparability of medicine and religion in early modern thought and practice.[37] These studies have tended to draw upon similar methods, particularly in their use of aspects of microhistory and archival material. Through case studies and a multi-generic approach to sources, historians such as Lauren Kassell, Ludmilla Jordanova and Erin Sullivan have situated early modern individuals within their social and intellectual communities, thereby showing the extent to which their scientific, medical, and religious concerns cannot be

---

[34] A false dichotomy between religion and medicine can be found in Michael MacDonald and Terrence Murphy, *Sleepless souls: suicide in early modern England* (Oxford, 1990). For criticism of this dichotomy, see R. A. Houston, *Punishing the dead? Suicide, lordship and community in Britain, 1500-1830* (Oxford, 2010).

[35] For criticism of the use of grand narratives in the history of medicine, see for example, Peter Elmer, 'Medicine, religion and the puritan revolution', in French and Wear, *The medical revolution*, 11; Andrew Wear, 'Puritan perceptions of illness in seventeenth-century England', in Porter, *Patients and practitioners*, 56, 61. On the need to examine early modern medicine from a wider perspective through the application of social history methods, see Roy Porter and Andrew Wear, 'Introduction', in *Problems and methods in the history of medicine*, ed. Porter and Wear (London, 1987), 1-4; R. A. Houston, 'A latent historiography? The case of psychiatry in Britain, 1500-1820', *HJ* 57, 1 (2014): 291; J. P. Goubert, 'Twenty years on: problems of historical methodology in the history of health', in Porter and Wear, *Problems and methods*, 45-7. On the need to analyse medical knowledge as a social construct, see M. J. Healy, 'Fictions of disease: representations of bodily disorder in early modern writings' (PhD diss., University of London, 1995), 14; Ludmilla Jordanova, 'The social construction of medical knowledge', *Social History of Medicine* 8, 3 (1995): 363-6.

[36] See also Sullivan, 'Melancholy', 146.

[37] For early examples of this trend, see Andrew Wear, 'Religious beliefs and medicine in early modern England', in *The task of healing, medicine and gender in England and the Netherlands, 1450-1800*, eds. H. Marland and M. Pelling (Rotterdam, 1996), 161-2; Ole Peter Grell and Andrew Cunningham, 'Introduction', in *Religio medici: medicine and religion in seventeenth-century England*, eds. Grell and Cunningham (Aldershot, 1996), 1-11; W. J. Sheils, ed., *The church and healing* (Cambridge, 1982).

treated in isolation.[38] In adopting these methods, this thesis explores the interconnections rather than binaries of religion and health, applying them to a subfield of history in which they have thus far been neglected.

Jeremy Schmidt's *Melancholy and the care of the soul*, for example, which is the work most closely related to this thesis, successfully brings religion and medicine together, but approaches the topic through an intellectual lens, disregarding the significance of everyday practice.[39] Also drawing upon the problematic concept of 'secularisation', Schmidt complicates MacDonald's well-established narrative outlined above by breaking down the conformist versus nonconformist divide, arguing that increased 'secularism' did not necessarily diminish the use of spiritual treatments of melancholy, or madness more generally, by the end of the seventeenth century. Instead, he asserts that 'in the second half of the seventeenth century a revival of interest in the idea of melancholy as a spiritual medium [occurred]', among both conformist and nonconformist writers, as they refashioned ideas from earlier in the century to their contemporary needs. At the same time, through his use of the Presbyterian minister Richard Baxter's works, Schmidt also demonstrates that some nonconformists denied the spiritual importance of melancholy just as much as their conformist counterparts.[40] This thesis supports Schmidt's overall stance, showing that spiritual interpretations of melancholy were still important to many believers at the end of the century.

There is room to expand and question Schmidt's findings, however, through the alternative approaches just mentioned. As Erin Sullivan notes in her review of Schmidt's study, 'more attention to narrative voice and to the experiences that lay behind the text[s

---

[38] Lauren Kassell, *Medicine and magic in Elizabethan London: Simon Forman; astrologer, alchemist, and physician* (Oxford, 2005); idem, 'Magic, alchemy and the medical economy in early modern England: The case of Robert Fludd's magnetical medicine', in *Medicine and the market in England and its colonies, c. 1450 - c. 1850*, ed. Mark S. R. Jenner and Patrick Wallis (Basingstoke, 2007), 88-107; idem, 'How to read Simon Forman's casebooks: medicine, astrology, and gender in Elizabethan London', *Social History of Medicine* 12, 1 (1999): 3-18; Ludmilla Jordanova, 'Richard Mead's communities of belief in eighteenth-century London', in *Christianity and community in the West*, ed. Simon Ditchfield (Aldershot, 2001), 241-59; Sullivan, *Beyond melancholy*, 46-9.

[39] Other works that have studied melancholy through an intellectual or literary lens include Raymond Klibansky, Erwin Panofsky, and Fritz Saxl, *Saturn and melancholy: studies in the history of natural philosophy, religion and art* (London, 1964); Stanley W. Jackson, *Melancholia and depression: from Hippocratic times to modern times* (New Haven, 1986); Bridget Gellert Lyons, *Voices of melancholy: studies in literary treatments of melancholy in Renaissance England* (New York, 1971); Carol Falvo Heffernan, *The melancholy muse: Chaucer, Shakespeare, and early medicine* (Pittsburgh, 1995); Douglas Trevor, *The poetics of melancholy in early modern England* (Cambridge, 2004); Lesel Dawson, *Lovesickness and gender in early modern English literature* (Oxford, 2008); Gowland, *The worlds*; Lund, *Melancholy*; Matthew Bell, *Melancholia: the western malady* (Cambridge, 2014); Stephanie Shirilan, *Robert Burton and the transformative powers of melancholy* (Farnham, 2015).

[40] Schmidt, *Melancholy*, 134, 105-14.

discussing melancholy] might help historians to identify and understand better the different strands that constitute the intellectual fabric of a particular historical moment'.[41] In other words, these texts cannot be made sense of until 'the practical and intellectual processes within which [they were] … inscribed' are considered.[42] Schmidt himself, while focusing heavily on the male, ministerial voices of published texts, admits that: 'to examine only pastoral texts on melancholy would give a rather skewed perspective on the issue' of whether or not the treatment of melancholy was 'secularised' in the late seventeenth century, and that 'situating these texts in the context of their reception and use would help provide a richer picture of the treatment of melancholy in the "long" eighteenth century'. He does not carry this out, however, stating that: 'unfortunately, Anglican works on religious melancholy have left very little historical trace beyond their publication, and, to an extent, the same is true of Dissenting practical works.'[43] As this thesis shows, Schmidt's statement is misleading; many unpublished sources exist, including letters, diaries, and commonplace books, that reveal the ways in which lay nonconformists engaged with and responded to pastoral advice.

By examining more sources such as these, we are able to consider a wider variety of confessional voices. Indeed, while Schmidt uses only the published views of two Presbyterian ministers (along with a brief discussion of the Presbyterian Hannah Allen), in order to describe the 'nonconformist' standpoint, there were of course many other voices active within this complicated, fragmented social group. As historians such as Phyllis Mack, Crawford Gribben, and Alexandra Walsham have asserted, the reception of religious ideas amongst laypeople, and the ways belief played out in practice, have been less often considered by scholars, despite these aspects' importance to understanding the richness and complexity of early modern religion.[44] The same can be said of medical and health-related beliefs, as well as attitudes towards melancholy more specifically.[45] The

---

[41] Sullivan, 'Melancholy', 148.

[42] Kassell, 'How to read Simon Forman's casebooks', 4.

[43] Schmidt, *Melancholy*, 130.

[44] Phyllis Mack has criticised historians' narrow focus on Methodist leaders and their theology. Mack instead examines the 'autonomy and agency' of ordinary Methodists, reframing them more accurately as 'thinkers[,] … actors, …[and] participants in … cultural discourse'. See *Heart religion in the British Enlightenment: gender and emotion in early Methodism* (Cambridge, 2008), 5-9. See also Crawford Gribben, 'Lay conversion and Calvinist doctrine during the English Commonwealth', in *The rise of the laity in evangelical Protestantism*, ed. Deryck W. Lovegrove (London, 2002), 36-7; Kenneth Fincham and Nicholas Tyacke, *Altars restored: the changing face of English religious worship, 1547 - c.1700* (Oxford, 2007), 3; Peter Lake, *The Antichrist's lewd hat: Protestants, papists and players in post-Reformation England* (New Haven, 2002), esp. introduction, ch.5.

[45] Roy Porter, 'The patient's view: doing medical history from below', *Theory and Society* 14 (1985): 175-98.

limitations of making generalisations from sparse sources without a view to the interaction between prescription and practice is demonstrated by the significant differences in conclusions found in Katharine Hodgkin's monograph, *Madness in seventeenth-century autobiography,* as compared to Schmidt. Both published in 2007, these studies focus upon two to three sources to explore 'nonconformist' experiences of 'mental illness', and yet come to significantly different conclusions. While both agree that madness was not entirely 'secularised' until much later than previous historians have asserted, Hodgkin and Schmidt construct opposing narratives for the acceptability of melancholy amongst nonconformists in the second half of the seventeenth century. Hodgkin, who focuses on three published autobiographies, sees bodily explanations for religious experience, including melancholy, as becoming less stigmatised from the 1650s onwards, while Schmidt finds the opposite; in his view, melancholy, and the strong spiritual affections associated with it in the spiritual life, are criticised more frequently by nonconformist writers after the Restoration.[46] While avoiding the risk of overestimating sources' representativeness, this study attempts to probe both Schmidt and Hodgkin's conclusions, assessing which - if any - can be corroborated with wider evidence.

Other smaller studies have also engaged with the issue of melancholy amongst nonconformists, but somewhat anachronistically. For example, in discussing the published exemplary spiritual writings of the Baptist Deborah Huish (1628-1662) and the Independent Anne Venn (bap. 1627 - d. 1654), Rachel Adcock describes these women as suffering from '"Religious" melancholy', drawing parallels between their conditions and the description provided of this 'specific branch of the disease' in Robert Burton's *The anatomy of melancholy* (1621). 'Both women, who came from similarly prosperous families and who were unmarried', Adcock writes, 'experienced deep, debilitating melancholy'. 'It should be noted,' she continued (falling prey to gender stereotypes), 'that women of the

---

[46] Schmidt examines two published works of Presbyterian ministers, Richard Baxter and Timothy Rogers, along with a brief discussion of the published narratives of the earlier 'puritan' Joan Drake and the Presbyterian Hannah Allen; Hodgkin analyses one unpublished and two published autobiographies by the 'puritan' Dionys Fitzherbert, Presbyterian Hannah Allen, and Presbyterian George Trosse. Katharine Hodgkin, *Madness in seventeenth century autobiography* (Basingstoke, 2007), ch. 4, esp. 72, 78; Schmidt, *Melancholy*, ch. 5, esp. 115-6. See also Hodgkin's slight widening of this source base (incorporating further discussion of two female melancholics: Elizabeth Isham and Joan Drake) in the later article, 'Scurvy vapours and the devil's claw: religion and the body in seventeenth-century women's melancholy', *Studies in the Literary Imagination* 44, 2 (2011): 1-21. A similarly small source base can be found in David Walker's recent article, which focuses on two ministers: Richard Baxter and John Bunyan. Angus Gowland has questioned the importance of sources such as casebooks altogether. See David Walker, 'Piety and the politics of anxiety in nonconformist writing of the later Stuart period', in Ryrie and Schwanda, *Puritanism and emotion*, 152-4; Gowland, 'The problem', 81.

gentry were more likely to be solitary and idle, the two most dangerous occupations for those prone to melancholy, according to Robert Burton'. In the texts themselves, however, which were primarily authored by Huish and Venn but prefaced and published by male relatives and divines, 'melancholy' was never mentioned.[47] These women may have described symptoms identical to those explained in Burton's well-known text, such as fear of having committed the sin against the Holy Ghost, a conviction of not being one of the elect, and suicidal tendencies, but - in their eyes - this did not make them melancholic, or requiring that label in their writings. Rather, Huish, Venn, and the authors of their prefaces used a variety of other phrases to describe their troubled spiritual state, such as: 'deep despair', 'sorrow', 'terror of soul', 'a troubled spirit', 'sadness', 'being condemned in my own conscience', and attacked by the devil, 'the great adversary'.[48] Given these writers' avoidance of the term melancholy, it is perhaps not useful for it to be applied to them retrospectively.[49] As a result, this study avoids anachronistic labelling of melancholics. Rather, the individuals under discussion are dealt with on their own terms: Did they accept or reject a diagnosis of melancholy and, if so, how did they go about this?

Another form of presentism that has characterised the study of religion, melancholy, and madness in the early modern period is a tendency to separate the physical from what we term the 'psychological'. As Jan Goldstein has lamented, the history of psychiatry remains 'hostage to the mind-body problem, buffeted back and forth between psychological and physical definition of its object and its techniques', despite the fact that early modern people themselves made no such distinction.[50] Scholars Dean Ebner and John Stachniewski, for instance, have described 'puritan' conversion as a 'psychological methodology' and 'a succession … of mental states', regardless of the level of distortion of early modern thinking that this representation entails.[51] Indeed, the

---

[47] Rachel Adcock, '"Like to an anatomy before us": Deborah Huish's spiritual experiences and the attempt to establish the fifth monarchy', *The Seventeenth Century* 26, 1 (2011): 46, 64-5. Hodgkin also slips into using the label 'melancholy' anachronistically to describe words and behaviours that would not have been deemed as such by those undertaking them. See *Madness*, 72-3.

[48] William Allen, *The captive taken from the strong or, A true relation of the gratious release of Mistrisse Deborah Huish* (London, 1658), 1, 11; Anne Venn, *A wise virgins lamp burning* (London, 1658), 1, 4, 9, 255.

[49] For further discussion of the issues of 'presentism', or anachronistically diagnosing and applying modern psychiatry to historical examples, see Thomas Dixon, *From passions to emotions: the creation of a secular psychological category* (Cambridge, 2003), 6-12.

[50] Jan Goldstein, 'Psychiatry', in *Companion encyclopaedia of the history of medicine*, vol. 2, ed. William Bynum and Roy Porter (London, 1993), 1368.

[51] Dean Ebner, *Autobiography in seventeenth-century England: theology and self* (Mouton, 1971), 31; Stachniewski, *Persecutory imagination*, 357.

religious practice of reformed Protestants as a whole has been conceptualised by historians as a 'mental' process, a written process, and a process confirmed by the actions of a group; but not sufficiently as a bodily process that, in line with contemporary understandings, made no distinction between the 'psychological' and physical.[52] This thesis, on the other hand, contends that the body and its well-being, along with its relationship to the heart and soul, were fundamental to the nonconforming godly's religious experiences, as well as their sense of identity as one of the saved. In turn, when considering the role of melancholy in the lives of the nonconforming godly, close attention is paid to the interaction of moral, spiritual, and bodily factors in seventeenth-century experiences of this condition and its treatment. As a result, the study joins others in responding to Ken Jackson and Arthur Marotti's call for scholars of religion to 'incorporate the imagination and the physical in cultural-historical analyses', while choosing to avoid the prevailing, anachronistic habit found in their study and others to use terms such as 'psychological interiority', 'psychological inwardness', 'deep psychological and emotional' experiences, and so on.[53] While these phrases can be constructive when defined clearly in terms of early modern understandings, their usefulness to the current study is outweighed by the unintended presentism they invite.

Webs of association, experience, and expression

As this discussion of the historiography reveals, it is through fresh approaches adopted from more recent studies in the history of religion and medicine that this thesis expands upon the existing scholarship. To recap, the thesis maintains that the significance of melancholy cannot be understood through ideas alone, and therefore turns away from the largely intellectualised, top-down nature of previous work. Moreover, the focus is placed

---

[52] On the entwinement of the physical and 'psychological' in this period, see David Hillman, 'Visceral knowledge: Shakespeare, skepticism, and the interior of the early modern body', in *The body in parts: fantasies of corporeality in early modern Europe*, ed. David Hillman and Carla Mazzio (New York, 1997), 82-3; Michael C. Schoenfeldt, *Bodies and selves in early modern England: physiology and inwardness in Spenser, Shakespeare, Herbert, and Milton* (Cambridge, 1999), 3; Gail Kern Paster, *Humoring the body: emotions and the Shakespearean stage* (Chicago, 2004), 18; Ulinka Rublack, 'Fluxes: The early modern body and the emotions', *History Workshop Journal* 53, 1 (2002): 1-16. On the role of the body and health in religious experience, see Helen Smith, 'Metaphor, cure, and conversion in early modern England' *Renaissance Quarterly* 67, 2 (2014): 473-502; Sullivan, *Beyond melancholy*, 38-44; Rachel Adcock, Sara Read, and Anna Ziomek, eds., *Flesh and spirit: an anthology of seventeenth-century women's writing* (Manchester, 2016), 1-28.

[53] Ken Jackson and A. F. Marotti, 'The turn to religion in early modern English studies', *Criticism* 46 (2004): 169; Kevin Sharpe, *Remapping early modern England: The culture of seventeenth-century politics* (Cambridge, 2000), 389-90; Adcock et al., *Flesh and spirit*, 3. For the quotations, see Hillman, 'Visceral knowledge', 83; Schoenfeldt, *Bodies and selves*, 2; Jackson and Marotti, 'The turn', 169.

upon the viewpoint of sufferers themselves, rather than those who wished to advise them, and anachronistic interpretations are avoided. These approaches are achieved through a multi-generic method that employs both printed and archival material written by females as well as males. Indeed, rather than taking published texts as the only accurate indicators of contemporary attitudes towards melancholy, the research presented here also utilises many unpublished sources that reveal how lay nonconformists of both genders engaged with and responded to pastoral advice, including diaries, letters, notebooks, confessions of faith, and so on. Often within the bounds of generic conventions, these sources tend to reveal what pastoral texts the author was reading, which sermons they were attending, and who they were writing to with melancholic concerns. By tracking these contextual sources, webs of association have been constructed around the manuscripts used. These webs, which can be viewed in the Appendix, show what sources an individual engaged with, and how. While appendices have only been included for the more complex case studies of Chapters Four and Five, the same methodology (of constructing webs of association around a central source) has been applied throughout the thesis, especially in Chapter Three. While it is impossible for the webs to capture the full extent of an individuals' knowledge network (given the limitations of the information available), this methodology nevertheless takes us a step closer to understanding how ideas and practices were transmitted and inflected within seventeenth-century society.[54]

Indeed, the webs of association constructed here provide valuable evidence of how attitudes towards melancholy were exchanged, processed, applied and, in turn, changed. By comparing an individual's expression of melancholy in personal writings (such as diaries, letters, and accounts of religious experience) with the ways in which the condition was discussed in the other sources they engaged with (such as books and sermons), the complex relationship between ideology and lived experience has been probed.[55] In doing so, the thesis shows that everyday experiences of melancholy could differ significantly from their descriptions in published works, and that sufferers themselves played an

---

[54] On the importance of asking these questions in historical practice, see Ludmilla Jordanova, *History in practice*, 2nd ed. (London, 2006), esp. Ch. 5.

[55] This approach draws loosely upon the linguistic turn, network theory, the history of the book, and intertextuality. See, for example, James Tully, ed., *Meaning and context: Quentin Skinner and his critics* (Princeton, 1988), esp. 29-78; Nigel Smith, 'Non-conformist voices and books', in *The Cambridge history of the book in Britain, 1557-1695*, vol. 4, ed. John Barnard and D. F. McKenzie (Cambridge, 2008), 410-30; Graham Allen, *Intertextuality* (London, 2011); Mary Orr, *Intertextuality: debates and contexts* (Cambridge, 2003).

integral role in the formation of the nonconforming godly's understandings of this condition.

This is not to say that investigating the interplay between ideology and everyday experience is by any means straightforward. Although some historians employ the term 'experience' to refer to events in the past without any clarification of its intended meaning, it is important to emphasise the extent to which this concept is far from self-explanatory.[56] Indeed, for many scholars - particularly philosophers, sociologists, and cultural historians - the usefulness of 'experience' as a category of analysis has been much debated.[57] Fittingly enough, the complexities of the term, and our problematic tendency to take its value for granted, stem from the very period under consideration here. As a result, in teasing out a definition of 'experience' for current purposes, we shed light on both the study's methodology and some of the processes embedded in seventeenth-century religious culture. The concept of experience was emerging in the early modern period as a highly-valued form of evidence in the cross-pollinating realms of law, religion, and science. Alongside other concepts such as sense, testimony, and witnessing, experience provided a form of observable knowledge that fed a growing need for tangible, indisputable truths.[58] Experience, in particular, was taken up by reformed Protestants in order to convey the legitimacy of their chosen form of spirituality, and from the mid-seventeenth century onwards became especially significant to nonconformist groups.[59] For them, experience was the feeling of grace being applied to them by God and, as Raymond

---

[56] Scholars such as Owen Watkins, Miri Rubin, Ira Katznelson, Phyllis Mack, and Alexandra Walsham, to name but a few, have employed the category of 'experience' without clear definition. See Owen C. Watkins, *The puritan experience* (London, 1972); Miri Rubin and Ira Katznelson, 'Introduction', in *Religious conversion: history, experience and meaning*, ed. Rubin and Katznelson (Farnham, 2014), 1-30; Mack, *Heart religion*, 12, 27; Alexandra Walsham, 'The happiness of suffering: adversity, providence, and agency in early modern England', in *Suffering and happiness in England, 1550-1850: narratives and representations*, ed. Michael Braddick and Joanna Innes (Oxford, 2017), 46.

[57] Dominick LaCapra, *History in transit: experience, identity, critical theory* (Ithaca, 2004), 4; Joan W. Scott, 'The evidence of experience', *Critical Inquiry* 17, 4 (1991): 773-97.

[58] Steven Shapin, *A social history of truth: civility and science in seventeenth-century England* (Chicago, 1994); Barbara Shapiro, 'Testimony in seventeenth-century English natural philosophy: legal origins and early development', *Studies in History and Philosophy of Science* 33 (2002): 243-63; Malcolm Gaskill, 'Witchcraft and evidence in early modern England', *Past & Present* 198 (2008): 57-8, 65; Rose-Mary Sargent, 'Scientific experiment and legal expertise: The way of experience in seventeenth-century England', *Studies in History and Philosophy of Science* 20, 1 (1989): 19-45; Peter Dear, *Discipline and experience: the mathematical way in the Scientific Revolution* (Chicago, 1995), 15-21.

[59] Kathleen Lynch, *Protestant autobiography in the seventeenth-century anglophone world* (Oxford, 2012), 84-8, 173-5. On the importance of the immediacy of experience in religion more broadly, see Michael C. Bagger, *Religious experience, justification, and history* (Cambridge, 1999), 1-57.

Williams has stated (albeit in reference to the Methodists of the following century), was 'a notion of subjective witness' that provided 'the most authentic kind of truths'.[60]

It was the raw and direct nature of spiritual experiences, then, that gave them such value in the minds of the seventeenth-century godly. In the present study, on the other hand, their value stems from elsewhere. Beyond the acknowledgement that the individuals under examination believed God to imbue them with grace in a very real way, experience in this immediate, raw sense - or what Raymond Williams has referred to as 'experience present' - is not of particular importance.[61] This is because, as Ryrie has commented, we reach 'the edge of where history can take us' if we try to get at the religious experience itself.[62] Simply recounting the experiences of those under investigation, then, is not the aim of this thesis; rather, it works towards uncovering the ways in which experiences of melancholy were socially learned, identified, shared, constructed, and negotiated in relation to both prevailing ideologies and the communities of belief an individual existed within.[63] The influence of conventions, performativity, and hindsight are considered. At the same time, an overly constructivist viewpoint is avoided; individuals' experiences are not deemed mere discursive effect, nor the result of solely external events.[64] On the contrary, this study shows that the ways in which individuals of both genders chose to identify, share, and negotiate their experiences of religion and melancholy reveal a significant degree of agency.

But how did an individual identify, share, and negotiate their experiences? It is here that it becomes necessary to step away from the concept in isolation, and instead appreciate its inseparability from another: that of expression. The inseparability of the two concepts does not only stem from our current purposes as historians, as the expression of religious experience was also of vital importance to the reformed Protestants under

---

[60] Raymond Williams, *Keywords: A vocabulary of culture and society* (London, 1983), 128. On the earlier origin of an 'experiential, emotional form of Protestantism', see Ryrie, *Being Protestant*, 41.

[61] Williams, *Keywords*, 126.

[62] Ryrie, *Being Protestant*, 42.

[63] On the relationship between experience and community, and historical experiences as 'nodal points of meaning', see Michael Pickering's discussion of Wilhelm Dilthey's approach in Michael Pickering, *History, experience, and cultural studies* (London, 1997), 91-2, 125-6. On the importance of the interaction between experience, language, and other signifying practices, see LaCapra, *History in transit*, 4.

[64] For criticism of denying people in the past agency, see Mack, *Heart religion*, 7; Kathleen Canning, 'Feminist history after the linguistic turn: historicizing discourse and experience', *Signs* 19, 2 (1994): 368-404. On the need to take the attempts of our historical subjects 'to describe reality seriously', including 'their sense of contact with God', see Ryrie, *Being Protestant*, 13-4. On a post-structuralist middle-ground approach to 'experience', see Tony Bennett, Lawrence Gross, and Meaghan Morris, eds., *New keywords: a revised vocabulary of culture and society* (Malden, 2005), 187.

investigation. Indeed, to return again to the discussion of Raymond Williams, experience was 'a notion of subjective witness *offered to be shared*'.[65] These last four words are crucial: although believers themselves often described their spiritual experiences as 'unspeakable' or inexpressible, they did - nevertheless - persistently endeavour to communicate them in words.[66] This transmission, and the responses it received from both themselves and a wider audience, was not a separate act from the experience itself - but a crucial part of it. For example, by communicating their spiritual experiences in diaries, letters, books, and spoken word, believers transformed an illusory, inwardly felt phenomenon into substantial outward evidence of their salvation. Moreover, by describing their experiences of melancholy, an individual could diagnose themselves as a melancholic, infuse their suffering with meaning, or - on the contrary - blame the condition for an inability to conduct religious duties. Their writings, as a result, were not merely static end-products of experience, but cogs in a process undertaken by the author as they attempted to understand the role of melancholy in their religious lives. Thus, while some scholars have polarised experience and expression; ideology and practice, this thesis embraces and investigates their interpenetrative nature. In doing so, scholarship that has emphasised the importance of writing to reformed Protestants as an act, rather than a form, is drawn upon, as well as broader studies of how language is interpreted and affects society.[67]

In order to test the assertion that experiences of melancholy and their significance to an individual's godliness were both socially embedded and worked out through written communication, it is necessary that the study adopt a multi-generic, case study-based approach. This is because the intricacies of such processes can only be teased out by constructing webs of association around primary sources, as outlined above, and using close textual analysis. What is more, the attention to detail that case studies invite allows the study to avoid flattening and decontextualising experiences of melancholy in terms of dates, sources, geography, and the religious viewpoint of authors.[68]

---

[65] Williams, *Keywords*, 128.

[66] On Protestants' tendency to describe their religious experiences as 'unspeakable', see Ryrie, *Being Protestant*, 44.

[67] Lynch, *Protestant autobiography*, 13; Andrew Cambers, 'Reading, the godly, and self-writing in England, circa 1580-1720', *Journal of British Studies* 46 (2007): 796-825; Ryrie, *Being Protestant*, 298-315; Neil Keeble, *The literary culture of nonconformity in later seventeenth-century England* (Leicester, 1987); Phil Withington, *Society in early modern England: The vernacular origins of some powerful ideas* (Cambridge, 2010).

[68] For an instance of this problematic decontextualisation, see Gowland, 'The problem', 77-120.

Sources and structure

The key criterion for selecting sources for this study was that they were authored by nonconformists. As such, a large number of primary documents under analysis are held by the library of Protestant dissent, Dr Williams's. Other key archival sources were found at the British Library, while the Wellcome Library and regional records offices were also consulted, providing more contextual information. As the research progressed and it was realised that attempting to cover all nonconformist groups was neither feasible or useful, the criterion was narrowed to Presbyterians, Independents, and Particular Baptists. When searching catalogues and examining sources authored by the nonconforming godly, the term 'melancholy' was looked for and, perhaps indicative of its prevalence, was frequently found. Sources that did not mention melancholy were also considered, however, in order to understand the ways in which other seemingly similar states (such as sorrow for sin, despair, sadness, and so on) were distinguished from the condition of melancholy.

When selecting sources for the first three chapters, texts which explore ideas of the soul/body relationship and heart were looked for, including those that do not mention melancholy. In the final two chapters, sources that explicitly deal with melancholy were sought. Of these, those writings which explicitly reveal the ideas the author was engaging with were given preference, for example via references to sermon attendance, books, letters, or meetings with divines. As described in the previous section, these references have then been used to build webs of association around the chosen source. This approach has often resulted in comparisons between published and unpublished sources.

It should also be noted that the sources examined as case studies have been chosen in order to provide a spread over the chosen period (1640-1700), both male and female voices, different confessional identities, and laypersons as well as ministers. Unfortunately a range in social status was much more difficult to achieve, given the nature of the extant evidence, much of which comes from well-educated and, in some cases, very wealthy individuals. Moreover, there is a dominance of Presbyterian voices.[69] With these issues in mind, how the evidence used has survived or been later edited is also considered. In addition to social status, other factors affected the survival of personal

[69] As well as being a result of the extant evidence, this dominance is also indicative of the fact that Presbyterians far outnumbered both Independents and Particular Baptists in this period (as far as estimated figures can gauge). See Richard Greaves, '"To be found faithful": the nonconformist tradition in England, 1660-1700', *Bunyan Studies* 4 (1991): 37.

sources, including the desire to portray family, friends, ancestors, or opponents in a favourable or unfavourable light. This, of course, is true of all historical sources but, as some of the case studies in Chapters Three, Four, and Five show, is of particular significance when dealing with potentially contentious accounts of inner turmoil and distress.

In examining the use of health and the passions in godly writing, Chapter One considers the discourses from which attitudes towards melancholy stemmed. Demonstrating that an embodied form of piety persisted throughout the period, it is argued that the godly's use of physical language in religious writing operated on multiple levels, not only the metaphorical, and was often intended to be understood literally through belief in providence, mortal corruption, and God's role as the great physician. Building on these points, it is shown that the ideals of moderation and reason, as well as the value of experience and spiritual affections, played important roles in the cultivation of an embodied form of godly identity. Chapter Two takes this stance further by analysing the role of the heart in the religious experiences of reformed Protestants, contending that the organ was understood to physiologically react to duties and, ultimately, indicate the state of an individual's soul. Turning to the issue of melancholy, it is demonstrated that the language of the heart was employed to assert or deny the spiritual significance of this condition. Analysing the language used in a series of published conversion narratives and spiritual biographies, Chapter Three similarly argues that careful articulations of the soul-body relationship were pivotal to expressions, or denials, of melancholy amongst the nonconforming godly. A focus upon the soul allowed Independents and Particular Baptists to deny accusations of melancholy during the tense years that followed the Restoration, whilst articulations of causality (soul first, body second) were used by Presbyterians later in the century to imbue their narratives of melancholic struggle with greater spiritual significance. It is asserted that while the nonconforming godly's willingness to incorporate melancholy into exemplary religious narratives appears to increase in the final two decades of the century, this shift does not indicate a move towards secularisation nor an unconditional acceptance of the condition's spiritual worth. Rather, representations of melancholy were carefully wrought through a careful use language in order to imbue them with spiritual value. Chapters Four and Five draw upon the manuscript sources, chronologically ordered, of six individuals in whose lives the issue of melancholy surfaced in order to test and enrich the texture of this proposed narrative.

In doing so, it is shown that a largely negative interpretation of melancholy as an impediment to spiritual life was expressed in diaries and letters of the 1650-70s, while a tendency to represent bouts of this condition as valuable evidence of God's providence and sufferers' godliness can be found in personal writings of the 1680s and 90s.

As the quotations from Hickman and Rogers at the opening of this Introduction indicated, a shift occurred across the latter half of the seventeenth century amongst the nonconforming godly towards a greater willingness to positively incorporate melancholy into accounts of spiritual experience. While other scholars have suggested alternative changes, pointing to a gradual de-spiritualisation and heightened criticism of melancholy, these chapters argue that this condition, in practice, was carefully absorbed into existing frameworks of spiritual language and thinking by the nonconforming godly and, in turn, used to express their politico-religious identity.

Chapter One

The language of embodiment

Gathering biographical notes on his grandfather's descendants in 1675, the ejected minister Oliver Heywood speculated whether he had more in common with the ancient Lancashire family than a surname. Having entertained the possibility of being a direct descendent, noting that his father was called 'cousin' by the wealthy and famously godly Robert Heywood of Heywood Hall, he rapidly changed his tune, stating: 'but kinship grows out in processe of time and tis not much materially what family we are of.' What was instead materially important, he explained, was 'that we be of the household of faith and have god for our father, Christ for our elder brother and the spirit of grace running in our best veines'.[1] Indeed, in Heywood's eyes, the most significant aspect of the biographies that followed was not the shared ancestry of their protagonists, but the religious experiences that they described and the claim to eternal salvation that these presented. His reference to veins in asserting this belief captured both the deeply embodied nature of seventeenth-century religious experience, as well as the ways in which the language of embodiment could be used to construct confessional identity.

This chapter explores these issues, examining the medical and corporeal language found in reformed religious writing, particularly that of the nonconforming godly. Drawing on recent scholarship in the area of embodiment in the seventeenth century, references to bodily organs, functions, and sensations in religious writings are analysed not as mere 'metaphorical referents', but as indicators of early modern mentalities.[2] In doing so, a better understanding is gained of the relationships that existed in Independents', Presbyterians' and Particular Baptists' minds between bodies, health and religion, thereby providing the groundwork for examining experiences of melancholy in subsequent chapters. Evidence of an affective, embodied form of religious experience is found, particularly amongst the nonconforming godly, despite some historians' enduring assertion that reformed Protestants were skeptical of the belief that holiness and religious

[1] 'Heywood papers, vol. 1', Add MS 45963, f. 2r, BL.

[2] Hillman, 'Visceral knowledge', 82-3. See also n. 52 in the Introduction.

practice could manifest in the human body.[3] The chapter's emphasis on the importance of the body to reformed Protestants' religious lives adds to the recent arguments of scholars such as Charles Parker and Julie Crawford, while also demonstrating a stronger continuity in these embodied ways of thinking than is usually acknowledged.[4] Rather than being wary of corporeality in religious experience, it is shown that - through continued belief in providence, original sin, and God's role as the ultimate physician - reformed Protestants understood the body's health and regulation to indicate an individual's godliness, or lack thereof, through to the end of the century. Moreover, the lively, tireless religious practice that the nonconforming godly advocated was persistently understood and described through humoral language. Turning more specifically to the control of the body, the second half of the chapter demonstrates that various religious groups, from Restoration conformists to mid-century radicals, competed over the concepts of moderation, reason, experience, and the suppression of worldly passion. Each group presented themselves as exemplars of these ideals, while describing their opponents in terms of their opposites; immoderate, unreasoned, carnal, and lacking in true, authoritative communion with God. As such, the language of embodiment was vital to expressing, shaping, and criticising confessional identity throughout the period.

The use of medical metaphor in religion

In the minds of seventeenth-century people, the two 'fields' of religion and medicine were not separate entities but interdependent and overlapping sets of ideas and practices, which constantly interacted on both a theoretical and experiential basis. On a theoretical level, the process of regeneration was often explained by Protestant ministers through the prism of illness and recovery. Clergymen took this approach from scripture, which 'abounds with Tropes and Figures of all sorts … for our apprehension sake', as Thomas

---

[3] Examples of studies that have presented reformed Protestants as separating the corporeal from the spiritual include Lyndal Roper, *Oedipus and the devil: witchcraft, sexuality, and religion in early modern Europe* (London, 1994); Mary Fissell, *Vernacular bodies: the politics of reproduction in early modern England* (Oxford, 2004). For an overview of this enduring assertion in previous scholarship, see Charles H. Parker, 'Diseased bodies, defiled souls: corporality and religious difference in the Reformation', *Renaissance Quarterly* 67, 4 (2014): 1266-7. Sullivan also makes reference to this misleading trend in *Beyond melancholy,* 128.

[4] See Julie Crawford, *Marvelous Protestantism: monstrous births in post-Reformation England* (Baltimore: 2005); Parker, 'Diseased bodies', esp. 1291 for his assertion of a shift occurring in the late 1600s and 1700s towards 'a mechanistic conception of the natural world and a rigid division of knowledge between material and spiritual spheres'; Erin Lambert, *Singing the Resurrection: body, community, and belief in Reformation Europe* (Oxford: 2018); Sullivan, *Beyond melancholy*; Olivia Weisser, *Ill composed: sickness, gender, and belief in early modern England* (New Haven, 2015).

Hall explained in *Rhetorica sacra* in 1654.[5] Following Calvin's example, their metaphors were not in the vein of elaborate Renaissance rhetoric but instead drew upon topics that would be purposely familiar to their audience, including physic and health.[6] These medically-inspired figures of speech were used to aid comprehension, as well as assert the importance of spiritual duties in relation to worldly ones. The 'patriotic puritan minister', Robert Bolton (1572–1631), for example, compared bodily health to spiritual health in his account of *The last conflicts and death of Mr. Thomas Peacock* (published posthumously in 1646) in order to chide his readers for their tendency to focus only on the former.[7] He stated: 'It is a wonder of the world, how we carefully seek physick, use dyet, by any means to avoid a bodily pang, and how careles we are of the unsupportable fits of the souls mortall sicknes.'[8] Ministers continued to find medical comparisons useful at the end of the century: in 1699, the Independent minister James Barry used the example of childbirth to warn any readers with tender consciences that they should not necessarily expect to experience the same process of regeneration that he had described in the bulk of his text. He invited his reader to consider the similarities between 'Natural Birth' and 'Spiritual Birth', writing: 'Some Women go through (abundantly) more, and sharper Pains, and Throws in Travel [i.e. travail, or labour], than others meet with. … So in Conversion, some Souls pass through greater Horror and Bondage (in the Consciences) than others do.'[9]

Readers and sermon attendees were encouraged to take heed of analogies such as these, with Job Everardt in his *Epitome of stenographie* (1658) recommending that a note be made of each sermon's use of 'Interpretation, Proof, Example, Instance, Reason, Use, Motive, Metaphor, Collusion, Similitude, [and] Comparison'.[10] Moreover, readers of spiritual texts were encouraged to think in terms of analogy themselves. In 1654 Thomas Hall wrote in *A synopsis of the most materiall tropes and figures contained in the scared scriptures* that 'by the knowing of … [these tropes and figures], we may of our selves observe many

---

[5] Thomas Hall, 'Rhetorica sacra, or a synopsis of the most materiall tropes and figures contained in the sacred scriptures', in *Vindiciaae literarum* (London, 1654), 149, 170. On nonconformists' use of metaphor, see Keeble, *The literary culture*, 249-55.

[6] David N. Harley, 'Medical metaphors in English moral theology, 1560-1660', *The Journal of the History of Medicine and Allied Sciences* 48 (1993): 399.

[7] *ODNB*, s.v. 'Bolton, Robert'.

[8] Robert Bolton, *The last conflicts and death of Mr. Thomas Peacock* (London, 1646), 11.

[9] James Barry, *A reviving cordial for a sin-sick despairing soul* (London, 1699), 129-31.

[10] Job Everardt quoted in Foster Watson, *The English grammar schools to 1660: their curriculum and practice* (Cambridge, 1908), 67.

more like unto them'.[11] Despite the sole focus of some historians on prescriptive texts such as Hall's, and their assertions that it is 'extremely difficult' to ascertain beyond tentative deduction that 'laypeople read bodies as perceptively as their leaders intended', the frequent presence of medical metaphors and similes in lay writings shows that at least some of the godly followed this advice, consciously or otherwise.[12] The famously devout noblewoman Mary Rich of Essex (1624-1678, Appendix 1b), for instance, dedicated an entire notebook to similitudes that inspired spiritual meditations. Rich, who attended public services yet supported and engaged with ejected ministers including John Warren, Richard Baxter, and John Lavender, made many analogies inspired by health and the body (Figure 1.1). She was most likely inspired by the trends of her ministers' rhetoric as well as the rich knowledge she possessed herself in the field of physic.[13] On one page, for example, Rich wrote 'upon wounds that have been stanch'd, and yet of a sudden bleading again', likening these to the experience of grief, which can return after long periods of apparent recovery with 'a sudden … eruption of passion'.[14]

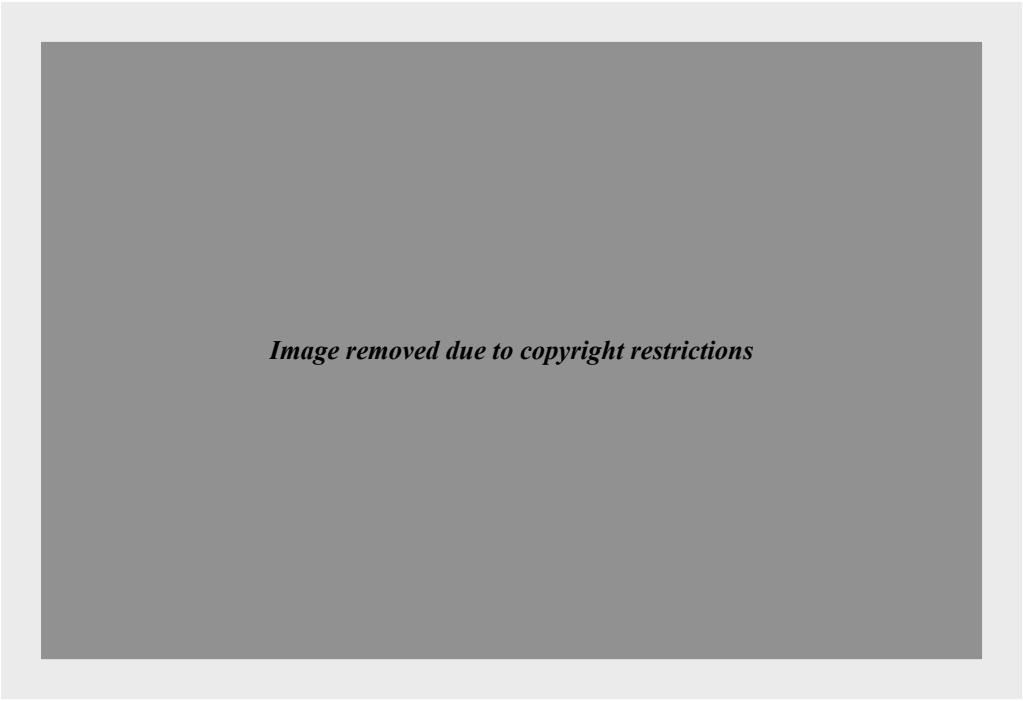

Figure 1.1: '"Ocasionale Meditationes" of Lady Warwick, 1663-1677', ff. 3r-4r, Add MS 27356, BL.

[11] Hall, 'Rhetorica sacra', 147.

[12] Parker, 'Diseased bodies', 1291-2.

[13] Anthony Walker, *Eureka eureka, the virtuous woman found her loss bewailed* (London, 1678), 95-7; 'Diary of Mary Rich, July 1666 - March 1669', Add MS 27351, ff. 123r-126r, 181r, 179v, 296v, BL; 'Diary of Mary Rich, March 1672 - March 1674', Add MS 27353, ff. 27r-49r, 59r-102r, BL; '"Some Specialties in the life of M. Warwicke", autobiography', Add MS 27357, f. 30v, BL. On Rich's abilities as a lay healer, see Sophie Mann, '"A double care": prayer as therapy in early modern England', *Social History of Medicine* (forthcoming, 2018): 16-7.

[14] '"Collections out of my Lady Warwick's Papers", selected from her diaries, meditations, etc., by the Rev. Thomas Woodroffe', Add MS 27358, f. 168r, BL.

The providential nature of illness

The suitability of describing personal experiences such as grief and conversion through medical concepts was not simply due to their similarities, but also the literal entwinement of an individual's health and godliness. As many historians have discussed, illness was viewed as a providential sign from God in this period, particularly amongst the godly.[15] As a result, Presbyterians, Independents, and Particular Baptists focused not on the worldly treatment of illness in their personal writings, but their spiritual meaning and, indeed, spiritual treatment. For instance, Owen Stockton (1630-1680), an ejected Presbyterian minister who preached in Suffolk and Essex, experienced a strong sense of sin when smallpox broke out in his family in 1665. Within the paradigm of providence, it was natural for Stockton to assume that the outbreak was a punishment from God for his sins, and that God's 'intention was to glorify himselfe by all afflictions that he layd upon his people'.[16] He pushed himself to uphold his faith in the face of the affliction, writing that 'I submitted & resigned up my selfe to god, to do with me & mine what he pleased'. To aid this effort of faithful resignation, he noted down scriptural examples that he found helpful when 'in danger of contagious diseases'. As was the case when he discussed the deaths of his children from various other illnesses, he gave no mention of how his family dealt with the outbreak of smallpox in regards to physic or the consultation of medical practitioners, only his spiritual reaction to it.[17] The second volume of an unpublished treatise, which he wrote sometime after 1671, took the same approach, including a section entitled 'How to glorifie God in sickness, & after our recovery out of sickness'. Stockton informed his reader that they 'must own Gods hand in every sickness' and 'should consider for which sin God sends sickness'. Perhaps sensing the tendency of others to adopt less providential interpretations of illness, he asserted: 'Say not I caught such a disease of such a man, or such a disease bred in me of it self, or the exercise heat or coldness or maiflowers of the season hath such a distemper upon me, but look beyond all

---

[15] David Harley, 'The theology of affliction and the experience of sickness in the godly family, 1650-1714: The Henrys and the Newcomes', in Grell and Cunningham, *Religio medici*, 273-92; Wear, 'Puritan perceptions of illness', 70-8; Keith Thomas, *Religion and the decline of magic* (Harmondsworth, 1973), 90-132; Alan Macfarlane, *The family life of Ralph Josselin* (Cambridge, 1970), 163-82.

[16] Owen Stockton, 'Observations and experiences', MS 24.7, f. 6, DWL. Other scholars have also described providence as a paradigm, or world view. See, for example, 'the Christian paradigm of an omnipotent providence' in Alexandra Walsham, *Providence in early modern England* (Oxford, 1999), 73.

[17] MS 24.7, f. 6, DWL.

instruments …, & ey[e], & acknowledge the hand of God in every sickness & disease that comes at any time upon you' or any members of your family.[18]

'Mans inbred malady': original sin and mortal corruption

It was not only the sins committed during an individual's life, however, that were believed to bring disruption to their health. The Fall of man was understood by all Protestants to be a constant source of pollution from within the body itself, causing distempers including melancholy.[19] As the conformist, Calvinist, and arguably anti-'puritan', Robert Burton had stated in his hugely popular *The anatomy of melancholy,* first published in 1621: 'The impulsive cause of these miseries in man, … the cause of death and diseases, of all temporall and eternall punishments, was the sinne of our first parent *Adam*.'[20] During the Interregnum, a minister in Cheshire, George Burches (d. 1658), continued to assert this belief in his text *Mans inbred malady, or The doctrine of original sin maintained.* While many other similar texts edged around the relationship between physical and spiritual health, Burches tackled the issue head on: explaining that 'the corruption of sin in man is most damnable, as being a general disturbance of the whole course of nature, a pestilent infection universally diffused over all the faculties both of Soul and body'.[21] At the beginning of the next century, the same beliefs continued. The Presbyterian minister Benjamin Grosvenor, for example, blamed original sin for causing illness and death in 1713. He first expressed awe for the body's design in a funeral sermon, before reflecting '*upon … the necessary Repairs and Maintenance it* [now] *requires*'. 'Since Sin came into the World', he stated, the body

> is become very crazy, tottering and frail, the Inhabitant has much ado sometimes to keep it up, and is forc'd to lay out much upon it to keep it in constant repair and tenantable. It must be propt up by Food, … fenced with Rayment from the

[18] Owen Stockton, 'Treatise on glorifying God', MS 24.11, vol. 2, f. 4, DWL.

[19] Porter, *Mind-forg'd manacles*, 63.

[20] Robert Burton, *The anatomy of melancholy* (Oxford, 1621), I, 2-5. For debate on Burton's religious beliefs and attitude towards 'puritans', see Nicholas Tyacke, 'Science and religion at Oxford before the Civil War', in *Puritans and revolutionaries: essays in seventeenth-century history presented to Christopher Hill*, ed. Donald Pennington and Keith Thomas (Oxford, 1978), 76; Gowland, *The worlds*, 190, 173; Mary Ann Lund, 'Reading and the cure of despair in *The anatomy of melancholy*', *Studies in Philology* 105, 4 (2008): 541; Schmidt, *Melancholy*, 51, 54.

[21] George Burches, *Mans inbred malady, or The doctrine of original sin maintained* (London, 1655), 40.

> Injuries of the Weather, … fortified with Cordials; kept clean by Physick … and yet after all, there is no keeping it standing above a small Number of Years.[22]

Original sin, in other words, was held to be the cause of all the body's failings and, ultimately, its death.

Most discussion amongst the nonconforming godly of the relationship between original sin, spiritual distemper, and physical health was more vague than that of Burches and Grosvenor, but the basic understanding remained the same: sufficient sorrow for man's innate corruption was necessary for successful conversion, yet man's innate corruption affected the body and soul in a literal sense, inhibiting this process. Calls for self-examination functioned as reminders to know, and repent for, this innate sinfulness existing within oneself. The London Independent minister John Collins (d. 1687), for instance, stated before his newly gathered church in 1669 that his conversion had been instigated when instructed by a minister to look not just to his recent sins, but also the 'fountaine of corruption within [himself] which would be allwayes rising up & increasing if not mortified & subdued by the power of the spirit'.[23]

Around the same time, the Presbyterian minister Owen Stockton also wrote about his battles with the internal corruption of original sin. He noted on July 31st, 1665: 'I saw the plaug of my heart breaking out, I argued against my corruption yet it overcame me & had me captive.' Likely drawing inspiration from both Biblical plagues and the epidemic overtaking the city of London at the time, Stockton often used this term to refer to his internal weaknesses. He encouraged others to do the same, writing a treatise titled 'On knowing the plague of one's own heart'. Given he also authored an extensive practical treatise 'concerning the pestilence', dedicated to the people of Colchester, including advice on what 'means' could be used to 'be preserved' from the disease, it would seem that Stockton's choice of words when discussing original sin was not merely offhand, or uninformed. Rather, the use of 'plague' to describe his inner failings was an accurate label for what he and his fellow Presbyterians viewed as the 'pestilent infection' of original sin.[24]

It was in times of spiritual strife that the nonconforming godly's deeply embodied understanding of original sin became most apparent. The desperate words of a young

---

[22] Benjamin Grosvenor, *The dissolution of the earthly house of this tabernacle* (London, 1713), 8.

[23] John Collins, 'Relation of the worke of God upon his soule', November 17 1669, MS II.b.6, f. 9, CL.

[24] MS 24.7, f. 6, DWL; Owen Stockton, 'On the plague', MS 24.9, ff. 4-36, DWL.

Thomas Goodwin (1600–1680), the Independent minister, recorded secretly by his roommate while at university, revealed the extent to which his community internalised the concept of this 'plague' cast upon them by Adam's Fall. In the throes of conversion and self-examination, he lamented all the sins he had added to 'Original Sin', asking himself: 'surely its impossible the little circumference of this my skin should hold so much corruption, without bursting, my swollen sins do surely reach as far in circumference, as do the heavens, & yet my ❤ [heart] remains unbroken, for al this great corruption, filth & matter, my ❤ has not one throb.'[25] The letters and meditations of the Presbyterian Henry Dorney (1613-1682), who was born in Gloucester but spent much of his life in London, also revealed an embodied understanding of original sin - yet with a greater sense of hope than the despairing Goodwin. He believed, in line with texts such as Burches', that God's grace would cure him of this 'plague'. One of his meditations, on 'entring into Covenant with God', published posthumously in 1684, declared that 'though I am very black, and very polluted, through my natural pollution and daily infirmity; yet, through the savour of thy [Christ's] Ointments … let me now be a sweet savour in thy Nostrils, and pleasant in thy sight'.[26]

'Never expect Medicine elsewhere': God as physician

As Dorney's reference to ointments suggest, the concomitant belief to that of original sin was the long Christian tradition, used in Matthew's gospel and later by Augustine, of Christ as physician. This concept had developed further within Reformed religion, given the belief that illness was one of God's providential methods for chastising and guiding the godly; but it also held a more literal meaning.[27] In terms of spiritual affliction, for example, the Presbyterian and later conforming Francis Roberts preached in 1646 that God 'himselfe undertakes it to be the peculiar Physitian to heale, binde up, revive, and comfort poore broken hearts and bleeding soules'.[28] Dorney, a layman, used the same language as Roberts some thirty years later, instructing himself and others to 'hasten to

---

[25] Daybook of Henry Sampson, September 1694 entry, in 'Ralph Thoresby transcripts', Add MS 4460, ff. 43r-45v, BL.

[26] Henry Dorney, *Divine contemplations, and spiritual breathings* (London, 1684), 134.

[27] Harley, 'Medical metaphors', 399-400.

[28] Francis Roberts, *A broken spirit, God's sacrifices* (London, 1647), 11.

our Physician, to be bound up, and healed: And not suffer our Wounds to wrankle and fester, for want of coming to him for Pardon and Cleansing'.[29]

The concept of God as physician was immensely popular and easily slipped from one pen or mouth to the next. Mary Rich, for example, attended a sermon that discussed God as spiritual physician before then writing in her diary: 'I did with many teares and much earnestness beg of God to be my spirituall phesition, and did with much sorrow confes my soule distempers and beg him to cure me of them all.'[30] The persistence of the idea of God as physician was partly due to its usefulness in comprehending, and explaining, why the godly must go through affliction. The concept presented God's methods as corrosive, yet effective, ointments and purges. Dorney, for example, likened God's guiding 'Rod' to the 'Probe' of the wound-healing surgeon, stating that if He '*aims and designs our Good*' He '*will thrust his Probe into that part most festered, and search it to the Quick; and cause the Corrasive he applies, fully to cleanse the Wound, before he lays on the healing Plaister*'. Dorney viewed God as deploying, as other medical practitioners did, various methods to cure his followers, stating that 'to purge and cure them, He uses sometimes one means, and sometimes another'.[31]

While phrases such as this served as metaphor on one level, God's role as physician did not only function in an analogous sense. In the same way that original sin was understood to affect the body, God's power to heal was believed to work in a very real, physical way. What is more, it was not just spiritual affliction that God was understood to heal, but also more mundane distempers of the body. In his 'Discourse of Union with Christ', Dorney also wrote, for example, that 'the Prince of Life, to whom a renewed person is united, has cast out the *Prince* of this World, and tempers his *poysonous Temptations* into a *phisical Potion*, curbing noxious humours in order to health, *Joh.* 12. 31 working the Soul to more Humility, Faith, Prayer and patient Recumbency on God, and Contentment in him, 2 *Cor.* 12. 7, 8, 9, 10'.[32] With these words, Dorney injected lessons from scripture (e.g. John 12:31, 'Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince

---

[29] Dorney, *Divine contemplations*, 56. For other instances of God being described as the 'great physician' throughout the period, see for example, David Dickson, *Therapeutica sacra* (Edinburgh, 1664), 259; James Birdwood, *Hearts-ease in heart-trouble* (London, 1690), title page, 101; Irish, *Levamen infirmi*, 127.

[30] Add MS. 27351, f. 305r, BL. This also occurred on other occasions in her diary. See, for example, 'Diary of Mary Rich, August 1676 - November 1677', Add MS 27355, f. 65v, BL.

[31] Dorney, *Divine contemplations*, 38, 247. For other instances of illness being described as God's guiding 'rod', see for example Philip Henry, *Diaries and letters of Philip Henry, A.D. 1631-1696*, ed. Matthew Henry Lee (London, 1882), 41, 96. Henry, like others, referred to a variety of afflictions as God's rod (144, 281, 339).

[32] Ibid., 159.

of this world be cast out') with a strikingly physical, humoral interpretation of events. In doing so, he showed his belief that God afflicts the godly in order to bring them to greater faith, and that this intervention by God occurs on a physical level. The body was purged and tempered in order to bring it into a healthy state, thereby allowing the soul to function as it should. After all, as explained in Burches' words discussed above, 'the disposition and perfection of the Soules working, dependeth principally upon the bodies temperature'.[33]

The lines between physical, mental, and spiritual experience were blurred by an elasticity of language at this time, and here Dorney has shown how his, what we would call, mental state (i.e. contentment), spiritual state (shifting from the temptations of the devil to faith), and physical state (his body's humours) were codependent, all at the hands of God, the physician.[34] While Dorney died in 1682, his belief that one's spiritual state was made manifest through the body was continued by other nonconforming godly individuals at the end of the century. Henry Sampson (*c.*1629–1700), an Independent ejected minister and historian of dissent, for example, recorded in a credulous tone an anecdote that described the physical deformation of a man as a result of his sins. He wrote:

> he was a great debauchè with wine & women, swearing, cursing &c before, and so he was afterwards, and was wont to say, he would repent but his sins were so great, he thought God would not forgive him, When he came to dy, it was not without horror, that that tongue that had blasphemed God['s] holy name, swelled, looked black & hung out of his mouth.[35]

Similarly, in 1702, an Independent woman only identifiable as 'Oliver Cromwell's cousin' by her eighteenth-century copyist (Appendix 1d), credited God with her recovery from illness, writing that 'the Lord was pleased to carry me through a grevious Fitt of the Stone; he being the great Phesitian of Soule & Body, did stand by me in the needfull time'.[36]

---

[33] Burches, *Mans inbred malady*, 44. For other discussions of the soul's reliance on the body, see for example 'Sermons of William Benn, 1661-2, recorded by Richard Alleine', Eng MS 960, ff. 102v-137v, JRL; Thomas White, *A treatise of the power of godlinesse* (London, 1658), 11-2. For an explanation of humoralism from the patient's perspective in this period, see Weisser, *Ill composed*, 19-32.

[34] On the elasticity of religious and health-related language at this time, see Sullivan, *Beyond melancholy*, 41.

[35] Add MS 4460, ff. 68v-69r, BL.

[36] 'Oliver Cromwell's cousin's diary', in William Cole, *Athenae Cantabrigienses*, vol. 3, Add MS 5858, f. 220v, BL.

The idea of God as physician functioned, then, in a very physical sense: curing the godly of bodily illnesses, and disfiguring the bodies of sinners. The way in which God was believed to bring about these bodily changes altered, however, between different communities and individuals. In terms of curing the godly of their bodily distempers, in some cases it was claimed to be achieved without any worldly physic whatsoever, while in others it was believed that the two combined, under God's eye, to achieve the outcome of cure. As will be shown in subsequent chapters, these differences were particularly significant in cases of melancholy. The latter view can be found right across the period, with numerous narratives recording the means of physic being made effective through God's grace.

A popular miracle-like story, 'A True and faithfull Relation of One Samuell Wallass', spread by both word of mouth and written sources from the late 1650s into the eighteenth century, will be used to elucidate this standpoint. While it may be surprising that a narrative that smacks of miraculous occurrences was popular with the vehemently anti-papist godly, Mary Franklin (Appendix 1e), the wife of ejected Presbyterian minister Robert Franklin, included this narrative at the back of a notebook.[37] The title Franklin provided for the narrative explained that Wallis 'was restored to his perfect health after 13 years sickness of a consumption', having 'lay bedrid' for four years, and that 'upon his cure he recovered his former health & strength; whereby he was enabled to follow his trade being a shoomaker Living at Stampford in Linconshire', and make 'this following Account: with much Affection & sensible of Divine Mercy and Goodness unto him upon Aprill the 7th in the year 1659'.[38] In addition to Franklin's notebook, the account was also repeated in an antiquarian history of the area in 1727 (which included four versions of the story), the Presbyterian minister Samuel Clarke's *Examples* of 1671 (under the section: 'Examples of Angels Imployments'), and Mr Aubrey's *Miscellanies* of 1696, who had procured it from the mouth of Elias Ashmole, the astrologer and antiquary.[39] All these versions differed slightly from Franklin's, suggesting the largely oral nature of its communication, as well as its popularity amongst both conforming and nonconforming Protestants.

---

[37] On miracles in Protestant England and their similarity to 'special providences', see Walsham, *Providence*, 229-32.

[38] 'Notebook of Mary Franklin', MS I.h.37, ff. c-h, CL.

[39] Francis Peck, *Academia tertia Anglicana; or the antiquarian annals of Stanford* (London, 1727), 13-6; Samuel Clarke, *A mirrour or looking-glass both for saints and sinners held forth in some thousands of examples*, vol. 2 (London, 1671), 18-20; John Aubrey, *Miscellanies upon the following subjects* (London, 1696), 69.

For the Presbyterians Franklin and Clarke it seems that Wallis' narrative was popular due to the ultimate curing power of God that it represented. In the account, a mysterious old man (interpreted as an angel in some versions, including Clarke's) knocks at the sick man's door and, after having asked for and received some small beer, provides Wallis with instructions on how to recover.[40] Six times, and in Clarke's version seven, the old man repeats his instruction: 'I pray thee remember my words, & observe to doe them; but however thou dost, above all things fear God, & serve him.' Wallis was told to put two red sage leaves and one leaf of bloodwort from the garden into his beer and drink it for twelve days, as well as afterwards 'change the air, for thy health sake' by going 'three or four miles off'. The old man instructs him not to have his blood let, deeming it unnecessary, and promising that his method will make Wallis' 'blood … as good as ever it was in all thy life'.[41]

These instructions follow humoral medicine and the use of the non-naturals - using an intake (the drink, presumably a purge) and fresh air. But what was fundamental to the entire process, made abundantly clear by the repetitive nature of the old man's words of 'however thou dost, above all things fear God, & serve him' - was that the cure was made possible by God's will. The old man stressed, in various re-workings of the same phrase, that 'thou shalt see, through God's great goodness & mercy unto thee, before these 12 days be past, thy disease to be cured and thy body altered', while further references to God's will peppered the account.[42] The superiority of God over worldly physicians was emphasised, especially in one version of the narrative in which Wallis explained to his visitor that he previously had not been able to afford doctors' prescriptions; the old man replied: 'Why then, … God hath sent you a phyisitian. I therefore, in the first place, advise you to serve God.'[43]

Mary Franklin, who had copied the account into her notebook, extended the beliefs shown in the narrative to her own life. For example, when her daughter Betty suddenly became ill, she wrote in her spiritual diary: 'she was very ill a fortnight of a

---

[40] Also in Clarke's version, Wallis is recorded as reading a book before the old man arrives: 'Abrahams suits for sodom.' This could refer to Robert Milles, *Abrahams sute for Sodome a sermon preached at Pauls Crosse* (London, 1612), which includes the fitting line: 'Like our Romish Priests, which ease a man of his money, but never heale his sin, or helpe his soule. … It is any good man mooved in pittie and piety at a sinners wretched estate, who powreth in the oile of commiseration, and wine of righteousness, and useth all meanes possible to reclaime him, and cure his infirmities' (41).

[41] Clarke, *Examples*, 18.

[42] Ibid. For example, Wallis states that the 'Lord God did enable me' to pour the cup of beer for his guest despite his debilitating illness. See Peck, *Academia*, 16.

[43] Peck, *Academia*, 13.

violent fever, of which it pleased to the Lord to recover her.' This view, that the Lord cured Betty of her fever, was one necessary outcome of an overall outlook that required the godly's total reliance on God. Writing more broadly about her spiritual growth, Franklin chided herself: 'I have been apt to grow conceited of my own strength and to think I have attained to it by my own pains and industry,' but that fortunately 'the lord hath been pleased to withdraw, these comforts for a time, to let me see where my strength lay, and that without him I could do nothing'. From this standpoint, which held that one could not achieve anything without the will of God, it followed that human effort alone could not cure illness.[44]

According to Franklin's version of events, this belief in the ultimate - and thereby curative - power of God, was also passed onto her four and a half year old daughter, Mary, who suffered a horrific burn from boiling milk. Despite her neck's skin being mortified through to the windpipe, 'in all the time of her illness … she never expressed any desire to live, but said at first that God would not make her well, but she must die [and go] in the pit hole'. The child's prediction came to pass, with her dying nine days after the accident. Although she had a surgeon attending to her burns, who favourably commented that 'he had never drest [the wounds of] a patienter creature', Mary remained convinced that his efforts would be of no use. Like her mother, Mary believed that the only force capable of bringing about a recovery was not her own resilience or the surgeon's skill, but God's will.[45] Faced with the deaths of Mary and her other young children, Franklin copied some of Henry Dorney's posthumously published letters of consolation into another of her notebooks. These letters, as well as Dorney's meditations, espoused the same belief: the godly should only look to God for recovery from affliction. One should 'never expect Medicine elsewhere', as 'God only… recovers this loss again, restores health to the heart, and makes the Soul say, *I was dead, but am alive*'.[46] As Dorney's words suggest, and as will be discussed further in Chapter Three, there was a constant intermingling of the body's health with that of the soul.

The ideas expressed in the popular account of Samuel Wallis were also present in the attitudes of Mary Rich, who similarly mixed physic with faith. On one occasion, for example, she requested her husband be let blood before praying for his rest. As was the

---

[44] T. G. Grippen, ed., 'Experiences of Mary Franklin', *Transactions of the Congregational Historical Society* 2 (1905): 392, 388; MS I.h.33, CL. She cites John 15:5.

[45] Ibid., 392.

[46] MS I.h.37, ff. 24-39, CL; Dorney, *Divine contemplations*, 314.

case in Wallis' narrative, Rich emphasised, despite utilising a mixture of physic and religion, that God was the best physician of all, and no doctor could bring about a cure unless He willed it. For that reason, Rich thanked God for protecting her family from the pestilence and other illnesses, and - after seeing doctors unable to ease the pain of the young Duke of Kendall's convulsion fit - commented in her meditations: 'it made me think thay ware all but phesitians of noe valew, and that thay must all answere unles th[e] Lord helpe thee, how can I helpe thee.'[47]

These cases, including Wallis, Franklin, Dorney, and Rich, presented God as the driving force behind cures of bodily illnesses and, in cases of recovery, His means to have been physic. Other examples can be found, however, which erase the need for physic; God's grace cured alone, and quickly. The Baptist Anna Trapnel (*fl.* 1642–1660), who was also a Fifth Monarchist millenarian and self-styled prophet, highlighted the spiritual authenticity of her experiences by emphasising the irrelevance of physicians to her difficulties in her book: *A legacy for saints; being several experiences of the dealings of God with Anna Trapnel, in, and after her conversion*. Midway through her narrative of conversion, backsliding, and ultimate spiritual triumph, Trapnel declared that God had cured her of a terrible illness overnight, without any obvious physical means whatsoever. Her friends, who had expected her to die, encouraged her to settle her affairs, but she refused - convinced of God's promise, based on Hosea 6, that she heard spoken to her: 'I will recover thee … it is for my glory thy recovery.' Before the fulfilment of this promise, when Trapnel had particularly difficult moments in her illness (such as when she seemed to be taking her last breath), she found that 'at that instant God told me my breath should be given me, and the vitals of my spirits restored that were sinking'. Although her friends encouraged her to describe her symptoms more clearly, she only wished to speak of spiritual matters. Most tellingly, she recorded that: 'they wished me to take the advice of the Physician, [but] I told them I had not faith to make use of him, and whatever is not of faith is sin.'[48]

A Mr Simpson came to interrogate Trapnel about her state, in order to ascertain whether she was simply 'deluded' in her belief of how 'greatly God had appeared' to her. He encouraged her to seek God's assistance in recovery via physic and rest, rather than waiting on His direct intervention, stating she 'might make use of the means, and partake

---

[47] Add MS 27351, f. 9r, 88r, BL.

[48] Anna Trapnel, *A legacy for saints; being several experiences of the dealings of God with Anna Trapnel* (London, 1654), 27-30.

of the creatures, and to look up to God to give me sleep'. His 'Exhortations and Examinations' only strengthened her convictions, however, as she claimed: 'God came in with a mighty strength [during the questioning], telling me that I was not deluded, but [that] he would raise me without means by his mighty power, as he did *Lazarus* out of the grave.' Empowered by this reassurance, she informed Simpson that her use of the means at her 'first sickening' had proved ineffective; they had done her 'no good', only made her feel 'worse' and 'more tortured'. 'Because God came not in the means', she explained, 'it took no Effect' and, for that reason, she would continue without them. Trapnel's stance was proven right when, some weeks after the onset of her illness, she recounted her sudden recovery. To the awe of those around her, she 'was raised' as God 'poured a mighty spirit of prayer upon' her, heating her breath. 'Plead[ing] with God in believing, for the accomplishment of his promise, … no sooner did God say arise, walk, but … [she] was lifted up by the power of the most high God' from her bed. Brought up to standing, she called for her clothes, as 'all pain was ceased' and the fever lifted. Given she was able to walk around the room without fainting or assistance, as well as eat again, she 'continued up till midnight, praising God with the Saints'.[49]

This sudden cure from physical illness, without any use of 'means', sat neatly alongside the other experiences Trapnel recounted in her narrative. In all situations, whether she was undergoing illness, sorrow for sin, or assaults from the devil, her recovery was brought about by God directly. Indeed, throughout the text, which is infused with physical and medical language, Trapnel teased her reader with the idea that others viewed her as requiring the assistance of a medical practitioner. When she explained her process of conversion, for example, and the period in which she suffered from doubts of salvation, she recounted that her countenance would be so 'gastly' that visitors to her house 'were affrighted to see me, asking me what I ailed, which I could hardly tell them, I was so filled … with terrors of the Law [scripture]'. Her mother, seeing her distraction and lack of eating, 'would say to me, if thou dost fast so day after day, and run thus up and down, the devill will take advantage against thee' - revealing the idea, common until the end of the century amongst many groups including the nonconforming godly, that the devil would use bodily weakness to lead believers astray. Nevertheless, Trapnel did not follow her friends' or mother's advice, and refused to take any worldly means to recover her deteriorating physical state. Instead, she relied upon God to remove 'distemper from

[49] Ibid., 32-3, 41.

soul and body', presenting Him as her sole physician, and thereby infused all her experiences with intensely spiritual significance. As a helpless receiver of God's grace, which in this case took the form of a bodily cure, Trapnel exemplified the passivity that was required of Christians, particularly Calvinists.[50]

It does seem that the motivation behind emphasising a lack of earthly means in narratives of recovery was to provide the author with greater spiritual authority. For Wallis, Franklin, Dorney, and Rich, discussed above, their use of the means within the paradigm of providence did not reduce the spiritual significance of their experiences; these occurrences were still seen as worthy of retelling, both verbally and in written form, and signs of God's grace upon them. Why, then, might Trapnel believe she needed to remove the intermediary of means? Her precarious position as a Baptist, Fifth Monarchist and female prophet during the tumultuous interregnum years was likely a factor, as she had greater need to prove her authority. But while this stance may seem to be the habit of only some more radical Baptists of the relatively liberated midcentury, similar descriptions of healing can be seen again later in the century in more personal, unpublished forms of text, written by other nonconformists of both Independent and Presbyterian persuasions. These writers, who will be examined in Chapter Five, were not in the process of self-styling themselves as prophets, nor were they always writing immediately for a wider audience. While these accounts may lack some of the grandeur of Trapnel's dramatic prose, their key aspect remains the same; that is, that their subjects' recovery was brought about directly, and quickly, by God.

'A way of spiritual Quickning and Reviving': a 'lively' religious practice

Having explored the strands of thought that informed the nonconforming godly's experiences of poor health, we will now turn to the role of the body and its affections in their religious lives more generally. As Alec Ryrie has asserted, seventeenth-century Protestants aimed to be in a constant state of spiritual action and stimulation; their piety was characterised by a 'restless, unquiet dynamism'. Reaching a state of 'security', as they termed it, was to be feared rather than hoped for, as this was - most likely - a deceptive,

---

[50] Ibid., 4, 23. Another example of a sudden cure in a Baptist narrative can be found in Katherine Sutton, *A Christian womans experiences of the glorious working of Gods free grace* (Rotterdam, 1663), 4-5, 10. For a similar example in unpublished writings, see 'E[lizabeth] R[hodes] on her religious experiences, 1681', Stowe MS 746, f. 50, BL. On the ways in which sudden recoveries from illness displayed the self-abasement and passivity required of Calvinists, see Morrissey, 'Narrative authority', 7-8. On passivity in Christianity more generally, see Hodgkin, *Madness*, 91.

false form of 'assurance'.[51] Instead, their aim after conversion, in which they had gained 'assurance' through grace, was to be constantly working towards a closer communion with God. It was accepted and expected that this lifelong spiritual journey would include difficult setbacks, viewed as guiding 'providences', as well as 'dullness', due to the inherent imperfections of human nature discussed earlier. The state termed 'dullness' involved a feeling of unresponsiveness to religious duties and a lack of desire to carry them out, often leaving the sufferer frustrated and distressed at their own lack of spiritual feeling. Many Protestants of the time complained frequently of experiencing this 'dullness', 'deadness', or 'coldness' and looked for ways to break out of it.[52]

As the parliamentarian and Presbyterianism-endorsing minister William Gouge (1575–1653) had explained earlier in the century, 'there is in us a naturall proanenesse to waxe cold and faint in prayers … to waxe dull in this heavenly exercise'.[53] Mary Rich, who married Gouge's patron's second son, certainly suffered from this widespread problem, often bemoaning her inability to stir herself into a lively state, commenting frustratedly of being 'dead' in her duties and suffering from a 'dull and careless lazy frame of heart'.[54] Dullness and deadness were often tied to the sin of sloth. Dorney, for example, wrote that no room should be left 'for sloth, or sleepness of heart, lest the Locks of Communion with God's influential Presence should be cut, and Strength be gone'.[55] As his words show, it was believed that without the constant action of daily practices, believers would instinctively fall into a slothful state. The mid-century Baptist Deborah Huish demonstrated how this belief could be readily applied to personal experience, writing that she went to 'hear at a Meeting in *Sydbury*' where 'The Subject spoken of at that time was sloth; which having been so much my souls disease, I was very sorely reproved by it, especially afterward, when I seriously Meditated upon it'.[56]

To avoid slothful dullness, constant action was needed. Countless sources refer to 'stirring' piety, while the now well-known Presbyterian diarist Nehemiah Wallington (1598–1658) took the need for action so far as to call for 'violence in prayer and violence

---

[51] Ryrie, *Being Protestant*, 68, 23.

[52] Ryrie provides numerous examples of individuals suffering from dullness, from 'across the Christian spectrum'. These include, but are not limited to, the diaries of Margaret Hoby, John Winthrop, Richard Baxter, Nehemiah Wallington, Thomas Bentley, and William Cowper. See ibid., 20-5.

[53] William Gouge, *The whole-armor of God* (London, 1619), 475.

[54] Add MS 27353, f. 6v, BL. See also, for example, 'Diary of Mary Rich, Nov 1669-Mar 1672', Add MS 27352, ff. 34r-v, BL.

[55] Dorney, *Divine contemplations*, 86-7.

[56] Allen, *The captive*, 24.

in hearing'. This 'violence' corresponded to Protestants' need to be in perpetual combat, in order to prove their status as the elect, a struggling minority.[57] John Spencer (d.1680) of the Presbyterian stronghold Sion College, in *A store-house of similes* (1658), stated that 'Action, [is] the very life of the Soul'; 'whilst we keep *going* and *running* in the wayes of Gods Commandements, we keep *clear* and *free* from the *Worlds pollutions*'.[58] Mary Rich showed dedication to this constant 'running', committing herself to a strict routine of godly duties daily. She aimed to reach a quickened state: for her heart to be moved and its desires go 'out much after god'. In doing so, Rich strove to fulfil the expectations placed upon her by scripture, the sermons she heard, and the texts she read. On the 24th July 1668, she noted that when dressed, she read in 'docter Jacombes booke of personal and domestike dedication to God' and 'fo[u]nd whilst I was readeing it, that God was pleased exsidingly to carry out my deasires to God that I might live as a persone wholly devoted' to Him. 'This', she concluded, 'I did beg as I re[a]d with very many teares'.[59] Her behaviour, in that instance and more widely, was in line with what Thomas Jacombe (1623/4–1687), the ejected Presbyterian minister, had called for in his writings. He emphatically instructed his readers: 'therefore *first* commit your selves to God by *fervent* prayer, and then lie down to take your rest. I put in, *Fervent prayer.* for this indeed is the *only prayer;* God will not be put off with *dull, dead, sleepy devotions*.'[60] As his words show, fervour was deemed vital and captured by the idea of action.

As these references to physical actions (such as sleeping or running) suggest, the body played an important role in the states of lively or dull spirituality, both in terms of physiological responses and explanatory frameworks. The focus placed on constant maintenance, in order to avoid slipping into an unwanted state, was shared by humoralism. On an everyday basis an individual's actions, such as the food they ate, the amount they exercised, or the air they breathed, impacted on their humoral balance. In the same way, the godly's vigorous approach to day-to-day religious practices, including meditation, reading of scripture, and prayer, were vital for maintaining the right 'frame of

---

[57] Nehemiah Wallington cited in Ryrie, *Being Protestant*, 24. On 'stirring' piety and the need for ongoing combat, see ibid., 68, 243, 417-9.

[58] John Spencer, *Kaina kai palaia: things new and old, or, A store-house of similies, sentences, allegories, apophthegms, adagies, apologues, divine, morall, politicall* (London, 1658), 349.

[59] Add MS 27351, f. 214r-v, BL. See also Mary Rich, *Memoir of Lady Warwick: also her diary, from AD 1666 to 1672* (London, 1847), 162. On the physiology of reading in this period, see Helen Smith, '"More swete vnto the eare / than holsome for ye mynde": embodying early modern women's reading', *Huntington Library Quarterly* 73, 3 (2010): 413-32.

[60] Thomas Jacombe, *Hooinh egzainiomnh, or, A treatise of holy dedication both personal and domestick* (London, 1668), 99-100.

heart'. Moreover, the states of 'dullness' or a 'quickened' frame were not simply words but deeply felt; they involved both spiritual and physical signs and stimuli. Humoral qualities were tied to and used to describe the state of dullness, along with its opposite, which was to feel in rapturous communion with God.[61] Dullness was described by Dorney, for example, as being cold and dry, which were the qualities of the melancholy humour, black bile; while spiritual rapture was described as being warm and moist, which were the qualities of blood. This made sense within the Galenic understanding that heat stimulated action, while cold impaired it. As such, Dorney referred to periods of spiritual difficulty as 'cold fits' seizing upon him, and believed that if the godly could 'be more exercised in this view and blessed prospect [that Jesus has redeemed all their sins and infirmities], it would make our dry and dead limbs recover heat and life'. On the other hand, he described spiritual fulfilment as being 'light and warmth'.[62] In the 1650s, Anna Trapnel also connected heat with spiritual raptures. When describing her out-of-body experience mentioned earlier, she wrote: 'these discoveries were as coals of fire within me, which could not be kept in, and these pourings forth of love had in them such a heat that it melted my frozen spirits, which caused my eyes to drop tears.'[63]

While all Protestants shared the application of humoral ideas to spiritual practice, this rhetoric could be employed to disparage opponents and self-identify as the truly godly. Jacombe, for instance, used the concept of 'spiritual heat' to criticise the Church's hierarchy:

> He was, whilst a *Monk,* very *fervent;* when an *Abbot,* then but *hot;* when a *Bishop,* then but *lukewarm;* when an *Archbishop,* then he was *key-cold.* That effect, which *preferment* had upon *this person,* the *neglect* of *secret* and *Family-prayer,* hath upon *Christians;* it makes them by little and little to *cool* in their spiritual heat, and in time, to come *to just nothing.*[64]

Later, in 1684, the author of the biographical introduction to Dorney's writings similarly drew upon humoral ideas to criticise less godly, hypocritical people. The author reported that Dorney 'much disliked the Conversation of those who were addicted to needless Debates; or such who manage Disputes about Religious Affairs, from Pride and Self-

---

[61] Ryrie, *Being Protestant,* 20-1.

[62] Dorney, *Divine contemplations,* 188, 93, 286, 215.

[63] Trapnel, *A legacy*, 26.

[64] Jacombe, *Hooinh egzainiomnh*, 96-7.

Interest, with Passion and Strife of Words' because he found these 'to be extreamly pernicious' insomuch that 'the Heats of such Disputes cool the inward Affections of the Soul to spiritual things, and all the Warmth of the heart turns into the Vapour and Air of empty Notion'.[65] Here the writer drew upon the Galenic understanding of how the body functioned, in which the body's temperature, fluids, and vapours interacted to result in one's overall condition.[66] His criticism of the 'Air and empty Notion' of these less godly types is reinforced, moreover, by its connection to vapours, as these were understood in humoral medicine to rise to the brain and impair judgement. The term 'pernicious' also alluded to bodily workings given that, at this time, it was used to refer to a disease that was 'extremely severe or harmful'.[67]

The nonconforming godly also employed the humoral framework when asserting the importance of their more experiential, or what they would term 'experimental', spirituality. They viewed conformist high-church religion as 'formal', given its reliance on rote learning and the book of common prayer, whereas theirs was felt, and hence true.[68] This distinction often featured in conversion narratives, as nonconforming godly writers described the ineffectual, pointless, 'formal', 'legal' religion of their youth.[69] Oliver Cromwell's cousin, for example, noted when discussing her childhood that 'I continued without any sense of God, not withstanding my strickt Education, & my Aunts good Exampel, & daily Admonition to me'; the key word here being 'sense'.[70] Similarly, Mary Franklin noted that she had seen by 'sad experience that many that have had good education' have nevertheless 'come short of saving grace' and she therefore did not 'rest upon' her theological learning. As a result of this view, she felt it necessary to explain that not only had she received an education in the catechisms and holy scriptures from her parents from a young age, but that more importantly: 'The lord was pleased early to spake kindly to my soul, and did draw me with the cords of his love, when I could hardly

---

[65] Dorney, *Divine contemplations*, 46-7.

[66] Weisser, *Ill composed*, 19.

[67] *OED*, s.v. 'pernicious'. For discussion of early modern understandings of vapours, see for example Koen Vermeir, 'The "physical prophet" and the powers of the imagination. Part I: a case-study on prophecy, vapours and the imagination (1685-1710)', *Studies in History and Philosophy of Biological and Biomedical Sciences* 35 (2004): 570-7.

[68] Richard Greaves, *John Bunyan and English nonconformity* (London, 1992), 25.

[69] See for instance Trapnel, *A legacy*, 2, 34, 39; Jane Turner, *Choice experiences of the kind dealings of God* (London, 1653), 55, 64.

[70] Add MS 5858, f.213v, BL.

express or tell the meaning of it.' Franklin believed God's consolations, which 'are not small' are 'better felt than expressed'.[71]

'Vertue consists in medio': moderation and balance

Also in line with humoral thinking, the nonconforming godly advocated moderation.[72] This may seem surprising given the reputation nonconformists of all kinds had of being too extreme and inherently humorally imbalanced by their opponents, as outlined in the Introduction. In reality, however, the language employed by the nonconforming godly to describe the relationship between their health and religious experiences was often the same as that adopted by those within the established Church, of various theological and political stances. Calvinist bishops such as Joseph Hall (1574–1656) and Edward Reynolds (1599–1676), for instance, declared that 'There is nothing … in the world more wholsome, or more necessary for us to learne, then this gracious lesson of moderation', given it is

> the center, wherein all both divine, and morall philosophy meet; the rule of life, the governesse of manners, the silken string that runs through the pearl chain of all vertues, the very Ecliptick line, under which reason and religion moves without any deviation.

Hall, who fittingly also pushed for an 'ideal mean' in the established Church, asserted that moderation of the person should be achieved through palate, 'usages of the body', passions, and in dealing with our Christian adversaries. At the same time, he reminded his reader that moderation did not mean lukewarmness - instead, 'Lukewarmnesse [is] to be avoided in Religion' and rather 'Zeale [is] required in the matters of God, but to be tempered with discretion and charity'.[73] The same views were espoused by Presbyterian ministers. Burches, for example, called for *medio,* stating that: 'vertue consists in *medio,* as it is in the mean between them', while the Presbyterian minister Thomas Dugard (*bap.* 1608, *d.* 1683) praised the 'excellent temper' of Adam before the Fall, in which 'one

---

[71] 'Mary Franklin, her experience', MS I.h.33, f. 1, CL. See also Trapnel, *A legacy*, 19, 20.

[72] The ideal of moderation was, of course, also scriptural. See Philippians 4:5, 'Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand'.

[73] Joseph Hall, *Christian moderation in two books* (London, 1640), 5-6, sig. A5v; idem, 'Via media, the way of peace', in *The shaking of the olive-tree. The remaining works of that incomparable prelate Joseph Hall* (London, 1660), 353-88; *ODNB*, s.v. 'Hall, Joseph'. See also Edward Reynolds, *A sermon preached before the peers in the Abby Church at Westminster* (London, 1666), 1, 12-3. Edwards had been a leading Presbyterian during the interregnum but later conformed. See *ODNB*, s.v. 'Hall, Joseph' and 'Reynolds, Edward'.

qualitie had not anie destructive predominancie over another'.[74] The outward result of such inward '*medio*' was a 'mellow peaceable spirit', and numerous examples can be found of the nonconforming godly praising such a temper as a sign of the 'confirmed Christian'.[75] It was not only in published sermons and works of pastoral divinity that moderation was called for, however; personal writings reveal the application of this ideal to everyday life. For example, the ejected minister Oliver Heywood's father, Richard Heywood (1595/6–1677), a yeoman, gave his son a set of handwritten instructions when he left for Cambridge. The sixth instruction was to 'keep a mean neither be too solitary lest you be melancholy, nor too much desire company, lest you be drawn aside'. Heywood took these instructions seriously, repeating them in both his account of the Heywood family and his autobiography.[76]

A dedication to moderation being shared by a range of both nonconformists and conformists is not surprising given the ubiquitousness of this ideal, as well as the fact that lines cannot be neatly drawn between those godly who chose to conform and those who did not. As was asserted in the Introduction, high-church conformists' criticisms of their dissenting opponents tended to tar all nonconformists with the same brush, while the social, legal, and political ramifications of refusing to conform resulted in the lived experience of Presbyterians, Independents, Particular Baptists, and even more radical groups to be similar. When we turn from lived experience to belief, however, we see that a great deal of common ground existed. Many individuals slipped between 'party' identities, traversing the divide between conformism and nonconformism, and mixed with individuals of various religio-political stances - resulting in ideas being shared and discussed.[77] Similarities in foundational beliefs are particularly evident when one considers the views of those ministers who attended grammar schools and university, as the ideals of the classical scholars, which so strongly emphasised the importance of moderation, would have been instilled in them all, irrespective of their future decisions concerning conformity with the established church. Nevertheless, despite these shared foundations, we see in practice that collective beliefs could be used as both polemic

---

[74] Burches, *Mans inbred*, 50; Thomas Dugard, *Death and the grave* (London, 1649), 11. Dugard conformed in 1662. See *ODNB*, s.v. 'Dugard, Thomas'.

[75] Richard Baxter, *Directions for weak distempered Christians* (London, 1669), 102. See also Dorney, *Divine contemplations*, 28-9, 38; Charles Morton, *The spirit of man* (Boston, 1692), 73.

[76] Oliver Heywood, *The Rev. Oliver Heywood, B.A., 1630-1702; his autobiography, diaries, anecdote and event books*, ed. Joseph Horsfall, vol. 1 (Brighouse, 1882), 83, 160.

[77] On the 'unstable and amorphous nature of religious affiliation' in early modern England, see Walsham, *Charitable hatred*, 20-1.

weaponry and as tools for self-definition.[78] In the same way that the nonconforming godly applied shared understandings of humoralism to their descriptions of true 'experimental' religion, this group also used the common ideal of moderation to distinguish themselves from other religious groups.

In doing so, writers merged the ideal of moderation with other streams of rhetoric, particularly the concepts of reason and experience, to construct a language that instilled authority and authenticity into accounts of spirituality. This process can be understood through Janet Soskice's argument that a community's descriptive vocabulary is 'embedded in particular traditions of investigation and conviction', in which 'there is agreement on matters such as what constitutes evidence'.[79] Godly communities' descriptive vocabulary often highlighted that spiritual experience had been guided by reason, and undergone by individuals who displayed moderation. These linked concepts constituted evidence of 'truly' felt religious experience, especially amongst post-Restoration Presbyterians, but also amongst earlier, more separatist groups, including the Digger Gerrard Winstanley (*bap.* 1609, *d.* 1676). In 1650, Winstanley vindicated the authority of his own religious practice in comparison to that of the Ranters by stating: 'as moderation in any action brings peace, so excesse brings diseases and death. Therefore the unrationall ranting practise, is not the life of rightnesse, nor peace.' He, like Baxter and many others, argued that the senses must be trumped by reason (reason in his view being the spirit of God in all creatures) and that only then could distemper be avoided, the senses kept from running into excess, and 'quiet rest and peace' achieved.[80] Some decades later, the Presbyterian layman Henry Dorney was praised for possessing these qualities and abilities. He was described by his text's preface as showing a 'quick Fancy and Invention', 'ripe Wit', and 'profound Judgment'. 'His natural Temper', the reader is told, 'was Grave, Amiable, Affable: [as] he had Sweetness mixt with Gravity, and

---

[78] The ideal of moderation was used to criticise nonconformists, as discussed in the Introduction. See for example the anti-Calvinist Thomas Glanvill, *The vanity of dogmatizing* (London, 1661), 61, 99, 112, 221. On the use of the ideal of moderation as a political tool, see Ethan H. Shagan, *The rule of moderation: violence, religion and the politics of restraint in early modern England* (Cambridge, 2011), 3, 8-15; Kinda Skea, 'The ecclesiastical identities of puritan and nonconformist clergy, 1640-1672' (PhD diss., University of Leicester, 2015), 16-57.

[79] Janet Martin Soskice, *Metaphor and religious language* (Oxford, 1987), 149. See also Lynch, *Protestant autobiography*, 84-8.

[80] Gerrard Winstanley, *Fire in the bush: the spirit burning, not consuming, but purging mankinde* (London, 1650), sig. C2r. See also the claims of Baptist preacher and ranter Abiezer Coppe, who was famous for his apparent extremes, in *A remonstrance of the sincere and zealous protestation* (London, 1651), 1; and the later work of a dissenting mystic and physician, John Pordage, *Theologia mystica* (London, 1683), 13. See also *ODNB*, s.v. 'Winstanley, Gerrard', 'Coppe, Abiezer', and 'Pordage, John'.

Chearfulness mixt with Seriousness'. The counterbalancing continued, with the author stating: 'He had an undaunted Courage, tempered with Meekness; … [h]e was plain-hearted, kind, sociable' but 'not at all Loquacious, or given to much Talk' and although 'courteous towards all … used Flattery to none'. This resulted in 'The excellent Moderation and Temperance of his Spirit' and this 'Temperance [being] … interwoven in the Contexture of his whole Walk and Converse'. In this way, Dorney's temperament was defined by opposing elements that resulted in a placid equilibrium. The description of his character, by its own admission, was included in order that 'what is said [in the text] may be more convincing' and 'the efficacy of his *Meditations* … [be] most sensibly exemplified'.[81] Similar assertions were made by the Baptist congregation of Anna Trapnel when wishing to assure readers of the usefulness of her narrative. Softened according to the expectations of her gender, however, Trapnel was recorded as being 'sweet, meek, sober, [and possessing an] exemplary temper'.[82]

As will be seen in subsequent chapters, the rhetoric of moderation, reason, and experience was crucial to descriptions of melancholy within spiritual contexts. Given the inherent imbalance and lack of moderation that the term signified, it was necessary for writers to assure readers of a melancholic's other, more reliable qualities. This can be demonstrated through the example of Timothy Rogers, a Presbyterian minister who underwent a severe bout of melancholy between 1682 and 1684. Once recovered, he preached from his pulpit on the issue of 'sickness & recovery', and wrote a discourse 'concerning trouble of mind and the disease of melancholly'.[83] In doing so, Rogers hoped to both assert the spiritual significance of his past turmoil and assist other similarly afflicted believers.[84] It is the republication of his writings, however, that is most telling for current purposes. In 1697, William Turner (1652/3–1701), in his well-known work *A Compleat history of the most remarkable providences,* insisted on the authority of Rogers' advice regarding melancholy by asserting that he was 'a very ingenious Gentleman of great Learning, Candor and Moderation'. Making his point firmer, Turner continued:

---

[81] Dorney, *Divine contemplations*, 5. For Dorney praising the use of reason in religious experience, see 73, 217-8.

[82] Trapnel, *A legacy*, sig. A3v.

[83] *ODNB*, s.v. 'Rogers, Timothy'; Timothy Rogers, *Practical discourses on sickness & recovery in several sermons* (London, 1691); idem, *A discourse.*

[84] See also Schmidt, *Melancholy*, 118-28.

> I shall next proceed to give an Account of his *Trouble of Mind,* as I find it in his Treatise upon that Subject: In which he displays in *Experimental Judgment,* a Moderate Temper, and a Spirit repleat with all the *Charms of Mildness and Pity,* of which his own Sufferings have rendred him very sensible.

Thus, Turner transformed a potentially problematic imbalance of melancholy into evidence of its opposites: moderation, reason, and experience.[85]

'Master of his own ... Affections': the control of passions in religious experience

As the godly's emphasis on moderation suggests, it was believed that the passions must be regulated. Being one of the six non-naturals, controlled passions were necessary to achieve a balanced humoral constitution: any excess of passion would unsettle the humors and push them into imbalance, and vice versa. The *Confession of faith* of 1649 enforced such regulation, stating that the duties of the sixth commandment (thou shalt not kill) were to undertake 'all carefull studies and lawfull endeavours to preserve the life of our selves and others; by resisting all thoughts, and purposes, subduing all passions, & avoyding all occasions, temptations, and practises, which tend to the unjust taking away the life of any'. Believers were instructed that they must achieve this 'by just defence thereof against violence, patient bearing of the hand of God, quietnes of minde; chearfulnesse of spirit, a sober use of meat, drink, physick, sleep, labor, & recreations'.[86] In godly literature, the same belief was shown in, for example, *Paradise lost*, in which Milton described Eve's 'distemperd, discontented thoughts' brought on by 'Th' animal Spirits that from pure blood arise'.[87] Similarly, in practical theology, Richard Baxter discussed the passion of anger in his *Christian directory* of 1673, stating: '*Observe ... what an enemy it* [anger] *is to the body it self:* It inflameth the blood, and stirreth up diseases, and breedeth such a bitter displeasedness in the mind, as tends to consume the strength of nature, and hath cast many into Acute, and many into Chronical sicknesses, which have proved their death.' To avoid such 'diseases', numerous texts authored by the godly asserted, like Baxter, that 'in man all *Passions* should be obedient to *Reason:* It is the *misery* of *madness,* and the *crime* of

---

[85] William Turner, *A compleat history of the most remarkable providences* (London, 1697), 22. Turner, a conformist, was educated by (and lifelong friend to) the Presbyterian nonconformist Philip Henry, and was the tutor to Henry's children.

[86] Westminster Assembly of Divines, *The confession of faith and catechisms* (London, 1649), 119.

[87] John Milton, *Paradise lost a poem written in ten books* (London, 1667), 4.806-8.

drunkenness to be the suppressing and dethroning of our *Reason*'.[88] Within this framework, it follows that Dorney, who was described as possessing a moderate, temperate spirit, was also declared to be the 'Master of his own Passions and Affections'. To be a 'Master' in this sense required a disregard for worldly concerns, so that the heart would be 'neither over-charged with the Cares and Incumbrances of this present Life, nor ensnared by its Blandishments, Sensitive Delights, and Pleasures; or in any thing that might run into excess'. In doing so, Dorney was 'seldom, if ever, seen discomposed with Passion of any sort' and possessed 'a sedate serene Mind'.[89]

As the mention of 'Cares and Incumbrances of this present Life' in Dorney's text suggest, a distinction was made between worldly and spiritual passions. John Hieron (1608-1682), an ejected minister and resident of Derbyshire, expressed the same view in his letters of consolation, which were published posthumously in 1691. In 1680, Hieron had written to a friend whose wife had lost two babies giving birth. He enjoined them:

> I would not have you or your Wife give way to excessive sorrow in this case; but follow the Counsel of the Word (which ought to be the Rule of our Passions, as well as our Actions); *Let your moderation be known to all men. Phil. 4. 6. And they that weep* (for outward Crosses) *be, as though they wept not. 1 Cor.* 7. 30.[90]

Hieron wished the receivers of his advice to 'sorrow after a Godly sort, with Godly sorrow, [as that] *which worketh Repentance to Salvation* [is] *not to be relented off; but the sorrow of the world worketh death. 2 Cor.* 7. 10'. To 'mourn aright', one must 'look up to God, and see his [work] … in this stroke'. As Hieron's words demonstrate, there were right and wrong ways to experience sorrow; one worldly, one godly.[91] He appears to have carried this attitude across to his own life, as the author of the preface to his collected writings, Robert Porter (1623/4–1690), who was also an ejected minister from the Nottingham region, wrote that despite the difficulties Hieron faced in ejection, such as being deprived of his living, he continued to preach 'the Gospel as he had opportunity' and also magnanimously

---

[88] Richard Baxter, 'Directions for the government of the passions', in *A Christian directory* (London, 1673), 341. See also John Flavel, *A token for mourners* (London, 1674), 15-6; Zachary Bogan, *Meditations of the mirth of a Christian life* (Oxford, 1653), 155-6; Baxter, *Directions for weak*, 88.

[89] Dorney, *Divine contemplations*, 42, 3.

[90] Robert Porter, *The life of Mr. John Hieron* (London, 1691), 67.

[91] Ibid., 62. For reflections on the sinfulness of worldly passion in conversion narratives, see Henry Walker, *Spirituall experiences, of sundry beleevers* (London, 1653), 112-3, 374-5. For an example of the categorising of spiritual and worldly passion, see the diary of Isaac Archer in Matthew Storey and David Dymond, eds., *Two East Anglian diaries 1641-1729: Isaac Archer and William Coe* (Woodbridge, 1994), 59.

attended public worship: 'He made his Moderation known; his Sufferings did not exasperate him.'[92]

Many of the nonconforming godly, like Hieron, can be identified regulating sinful passion in their lives, and using that ability to shape their godly identity. Eleanor Stockton, the wife of the Presbyterian minister Owen Stockton, for example, noted that she took comfort in reading a work by Flavel discussed earlier, and applied this to her own life. She lost at least five children, whose illnesses much 'affected' her, and when her husband also died, she took some comfort in the words of ministers she spoke with and 'especially that small peec of Mr Flavels entitled a token for mourners'. She recorded in the margin the pages of this 'small peec', which informed mourners that it was pointless to wonder if a death could have been avoided, as the end point of their loved ones' life had been appointed at the beginning of time. This was of comfort to Stockton who had been worried that the differing opinions of her husband's physicians had resulted in ineffective treatment. However, while Flavel's advice provided Stockton with 'some sattisfaction in that particular at the present', she expected that the same upsetting thoughts would creep back. She lamented:

> I find it doeth and will returne upon me againe and many more things doe greatly trouble me even every thing where in [I] came short of my duty towards him, and that I made no better improvement of so great a mercy enjoyed so long which I can never enough lament.

Stockton's words revealed the great difficulties that could be experienced in attempting to keep the affections of mourning under control.[93]

Nonconforming godly identity was not only shaped through the regulation of one's own passions, however, but also the judgment of others' failure to do so. The wife of a Presbyterian minister, Mary Franklin, for instance, recorded God having cured her of worldly sadness through a providential sermon topic, while noting the unrestrained passions of her enemies. In the 1680s, her family experienced violent harassment at the hands of informers in London who, being paid to enforce persecutory laws, repeatedly

---

[92] Porter, *The life*, 26.

[93] 'Occasional reflections of Mrs [Elianor] Stockton', MS 24.8, ff. 9, 17, DWL. For further examples of individuals recording the regulation of their passions, or lamenting the lack thereof, see Mary Rich in Add MS 27351, ff. 266r, 182r-v, BL; Add MS 27352, f. 124r-v, BL; Oliver Cromwell's cousin in Add MS 5858, f. 216v, BL.

confiscated their goods, arrested her husband, and tore down their meeting house.[94] Franklin emphasised the anger and rage of the men who came to confiscate her family's possessions, noting that their anger only increased when she refused to buy back her goods from them. At the same time, she emphasised her contrastingly calm state in the face of such unfair treatment, writing that she was unaffected by these worldly losses and in fact took consolation from them. She believed that the level to which she was unaffected by these crosses, on this occasion and others, was demonstrated by the fact that her pregnancies were not negatively impacted by the 'fright' of them.[95] Thus, in her daily life and personal writings, Franklin reflected the teachings of Richard Alleine, an ejected Presbyterian minister, whom she quoted in her record of experiences. Despite being refused a licence, Alleine published his highly popular *Vindiciae pietatis* in 1665, and the quotation Franklin copied from it read:

> Patience, is a submitting, sedate, and calm frame of spirit, whereby a Christian, from Gospel grounds, is born up under all his Troubles, and born through all his Duties.

An ungodly, impatient man, on the other hand:

> is besides himself *as a Man:* Impatience turns Reason out of doors; and for the Affections, they are all in an uproar, and will know no command or government.

Through her behaviour in the face of adversity, Franklin was adhering to Alleine's words that a godly man's patience '*bears through its Duties:* The passion of a patient person doth not hinder his action' and, in doing so, demonstrated the superiority, or at least goodness, of her Presbyterianism. After all, the title of Alleine's text read: 'a vindication of godliness.' Even when confronted by the Great Persecution, the godly [wo]man 'holds his course, keeps on his way, whatever load he hath in his back'.[96]

This steadfast resilience corresponded with the concept of 'contentment'. Entire books were written on the topic, such as *The rare jewel of Christian contentment* by the

---

[94] On the persecution of nonconformists in this period, see Coffey, *Persecution*, ch. 7.

[95] Grippen, ed., 'Experiences of Mary Franklin', 399; MS I.h.33, CL.

[96] These lines can be found in two of Richard Alleine's works, *The godly mans portion* (London, 1662), 94-5; idem, *Vindiciae pietatis* (London, 1665), 94-5. For the quotation in Franklin's experience, see Grippen, ed., 'Experiences of Mary Franklin', 400; MS I.h.33, CL.

Independent minister Jeremiah Burroughs (*bap.* 1601?, *d.* 1646). As these texts instructed, the aim of the godly was to eschew sinful discontent, no matter what afflictions came their way, through the grace of God.[97] Discontent was deemed a worldly, slippery slope that would lead only to melancholy and the sinful questioning of God's providence. Indeed, the word 'content' did not only refer to 'satisfaction, pleasure; a contented condition' at this time, but also 'acceptance of conditions or circumstances, acquiescence'.[98]

A state closely associated with contentment was 'cheerfulness' and, as the final three chapters will demonstrate, was frequently employed by the godly to offset the aspersions that melancholia could cast on an individual's reputation. Mary Rich, in her 'Rules for holy living', instructed the reader: 'be as chearful as you can, and to that purpose I would recommend to you that gaity of goodness, that will make you most pleasing to your self and others.'[99] As her words suggest, 'chearful' was used to describe a contented Christian, as well as a state of 'happiness' more generally.[100] Rich explained that many of the unconverted had a distorted understanding of what constituted happiness. Once they converted, however, and turned to reliance on God, she believed that they would understand the meaning of 'true' (i.e. godly) happiness, joy, and merriment.[101] In regards to her own feelings, she was pleased when she found herself in a contented frame, writing in her diary: 'I reatired and red prayde over both the sermones I fo[u]nd all that day my heart much warmed and refreashte and I was inabled with much chearefullnes to serve God all that day.'[102] Owen Stockton, who was Presbyterian like the ministers Rich mixed with, dedicated a chapter in his treatise on glorifying God to 'Wherein lyeth the nature of contentment'. He explained that contentment consisted of 'silencing & suppresseing all riseings of heart, all murmurings, frettings, & disquietness of spirit under cross providences', gave reasons why this must be done, and advice on how to do it. His overall message was that the godly must 'Understand this that a man['s]

---

[97] Jeremiah Burroughs, *The rare jewel of Christian contentment* (London, 1648), 4.

[98] Burroughes, *The rare jewel*, 9, 109; Richard Younge, *The prevention of poverty, together with the cure of melancholy, alias discontent* (London, 1655), 2, 52; *OED*, s.v. 'content'.

[99] Rich's letter to Lord Berkeley in Walker, *Eureka*, 133.

[100] Bogan, *Meditations*, 149-50. See also discussion of Ralph Venning, *Orthodox paradoxes* (London, 1654), in Roberts, *Puritanism and the pursuit of happiness*, 88, 93.

[101] Rich's 'Pious reflections' in Walker, *Eureka*, 211.

[102] Add MS 27351, f. 76r, BL.

happiness doth not ly in his condition, in one or another condition, but in his enjoyment of God'.[103]

'Exceeding pathos': the right kind of extreme

The godly, then, aimed to keep their tempers moderate; worldly passions in restraint; and to face all afflictions with a cheerful contentment. Moreover, they employed these abilities to demonstrate their godliness to both themselves and others. At first glance, this approach to life could appear passionless. When we turn to spiritual affections, however, it becomes clear that this was far from the case. As was indicated above, the godly distinguished worldly from spiritual passions, and deemed the former sinful. The latter, on the other hand, was to be both cultivated and praised.[104] In particular, the godly coveted an 'awakened frame' in which they could experience a sufficiently strong sorrow for sin, preferably with tears.[105] After all, the word 'passion' at the start of the century had been mostly used to refer to the Passion of Christ, and therefore had strongly positive religious overtones in many contexts.[106] For this reason, expressions of strong spiritual passion could be deemed evidence of salvation. 'That I sometimes weepe for joy', for instance, was deemed a sign of saving grace by one of the converts included in *Spirituall experiences* by the Independent Henry Walker. Another convert stated: 'sometimes I have wept, and at other times I have been troubled that I could not weep', demonstrating the extent to which the godly yearned for spiritual passions.[107]

While it was clear that inward affections and their outward results (such as tears) needed to be experienced to the right degree, and directed towards the right spiritual object, this was not always straightforward in practice.[108] It could be difficult, for instance, to distinguish worldly discontent from sufficient 'trembling' in response to God inflicting instructive providences on one's outward estate. As such, the godly pursued a constant

---

[103] 'Owen Stockton's treatise on glorifying God', MS 24.10, f. 313, DWL. More radical groups in the mid-century also expressed similar views on discontent. See for example, Winstanley, *Fire in the bush*, sig. C2r; idem, *The breaking of the day of God* (London, 1649), 99, 110; Abiezer Coppe, *A character of a true Christian* (London, 1680), 1.

[104] That is not to say that *all* religious passions were deemed positive, however. See, for example, Baxter's criticism of 'Religious passions, discontents, contentious disputations, … [and] contentious zeal' in *Directions for weak*, 149. For Baxter praising passions in religious experience, see *Poetical fragments* (London, 1681), sigs. A3v-A4r.

[105] See Mary Rich, for example, Add MS 27351, f. 77r, BL; Add MS 27352, f. 282v, BL.

[106] Sullivan, *Beyond melancholy*, 139.

[107] Walker, *Spirituall experiences*, 296, 333, see also 287, 398.

[108] Ryrie, *Being Protestant*, 191.

balancing act between feeling enough and yet not feeling *too much*, as it remained necessary for believers to have 'an awakened and tender sense of the Lords afflicting hand upon them'. While 'it is no virtue to bear what we do not feel', Flavel instructed, it remains to be 'a most unbecoming temper, not to tremble when God is smiting'.[109]

The Presbyterian minister John Howe described the frustrations that could arise from failing to attain the right 'temper of Spirit' and 'fresh ebullitions of joy' in religious practice. He lamented in 1668: 'How hath my soul been somtimes ravisht with the very thoughts of such a temper of Spirit, as hath appeared amiable in my eye, but I could not attain? and what a torture again hath it been that I could not?'[110] Mary Rich, who read Howe, was not daunted, however, and certainly made a concerted, daily effort to reach a sufficiently awakened frame in which she could experience weeping or a 'ravished' joy. Moreover, she endeavoured to channel all her passions towards spiritual means, beseeching God to 'turn all my sorrow into sorrow for sin, and all my joys into the joys of the Holy Ghost', rather than shedding tears in a 'disturbing fit of melancholy and discontent … by reason of my worldly crosses'. She desired all of her happiness to come solely from God - and reminded herself of the fact on the anniversary of her son's death, praying that God would bring her more happiness than ten sons could. In making these prayers, she identified the sources of her affections, and also categorised them.[111]

The distinctions Rich made in her mind between worldly and spiritual feeling was further demonstrated when, in her diary, she praised herself for having a spring of godly sorrow that was *like,* but *not*, the grief of someone who had lost a first born. Indeed, she firmly wanted her 'affections wrought upon' - but for the right reasons, such as at a sermon, and wrote of 'the divine gusto that is in prayer', which she found refreshing. Somewhat confusingly for those not trained in her way of thinking, it was in fact an hour of weeping in prayer and meditation that brought her refreshment, cheerfulness, and assurance. The '6th sign' of her 'Signs of Grace' read:

> I have many times, as pious Hannah did, come to prayer with a mournful and sad spirit, and have been tormented with many doubts and fears, yet when I have poured forth my soul before the Lord, and cryed and wept bitterly, and made my

---

[109] Flavel, *A token*, 16. See also Hall, *Christian moderation*, 124-6.

[110] John Howe, *The blessednesse of the righteous* (London, 1668), 155.

[111] Add MS 27358, ff. 17r, 140r, BL.

> petitions known unto him, who only was able to grant them, I have come away with a cheerful countenance.[112]

Likewise, Rich also expected spiritual joy to be 'exceeding'. She was pleased to write in her diary, for instance, that the 'Lord, did make me find an unexpressable joy, and did exsite in me very lively'. On another occasion, when meditating on heaven, she wrote that

> God in love … did mightily ravish my heart with desires to enter into this joy, my soul was exceedingly carried out in love to christs person, and with desires to be with him, and I came away much refreshed, and my heart exceedingly cheered, after I was drest I went into my closset, read, and then praid and there too the desires of my heart went out exceedingly after God, I blest God heartily for his mercies.

In this sentence we see the word 'exceedingly' repeated three times, revealing the extent to which extreme passions, if placed in the right direction, were more than acceptable to the godly.[113] The daybook of Henry Sampson, mentioned above, also employed the term 'exceeding' to describe praiseworthy spiritual feeling. He had felt compelled to record Goodwin's laments, discussed earlier in relation to original sin, because: 'tho they [the speaker] be equally unknown to me, … I accounted the thing worthy of my transcribing because of the exceeding great pathos of it.'[114]

As Rich and Sampson's comments demonstrate, extreme sorrow and joy in spiritual duties was to be celebrated. This was because, as Dorney explained, 'every dry groan and watery tear is put into the bottle, and winds up, through the ascending virtue of the mediation of Him who is one with the Father, to the throne of acceptance'.[115] In other words, expressions of spiritual sorrow, or joy, were signs of salvation and true conversion. As Bogan explained, it was logical that an individual would be 'exceeding merry' when finding assurance of salvation, given that their 'condition before [conversion] was so exceeding sad'.[116] As such, demonstrations of these states could be used to assert one's spiritual authority. The Baptist John Vernon, for instance, in his introduction to

---

[112] Add MS 27351, f. 75r, BL; Add MS 27352, f. 282v, BL; Add MS 27358, f. 67r, 2r, BL.

[113] Add 27353, f. 14v, BL; Add MS 27351, f. 11v, BL. Mary Franklin's notebook and 'experiences' demonstrate a similar categorising of feeling, particularly her distinction between worldly and spiritual sorrow. See, for example, MS I.h.33, f. 19, CL.

[114] Add MS 4460, f. 45v, BL.

[115] Dorney, *Divine contemplations*, 260.

[116] Bogan, *Meditations*, 92.

Deborah Huish's experiences, called on his readers: 'let us be as Doves of the Valley, every one mourning over his Iniquities, … *Psal. 126. 5,6. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing pretious seed, shall doubtlesse return again with rejoycing, bringing his sheaves with him*.' He used his congregations' sorrow to separate them from the rest of society, writing: 'Let my soul and yours be imbarked with those that weep this day before the Lord, chusing affliction with his people, rather than with those who rejoyce now, and are not sensible *of the afflictions of Joseph*.'[117]

The godly were not, then, calling for a passionless apathy or stoicism. Indeed, ministers were careful to show that members of their flock were *not* stoical. The funeral sermon for the godly gentlewoman Joan Drake, for example, emphasised that those cured of fear of death and terror were not being stoic, but were calmed by faith. The minister wrote: 'Shee was not freed from them [her fears of death] out of a Stoycall Appethy, or want of naturall affection and passion, but out of a spirituall and faithfull application of Christ to herselfe upon good grounds.'[118] Thus, the categorisations continued; even a lack of feeling could be spiritual or natural. Similarly, Alleine, who we saw earlier called for patience, also made it clear that a sedate spirit was not due to apathy of any kind: 'Christian Patience stands not in a bare forced quiet, in a biting in, or keeping down, … or in a sullen silence or stupidity; but in the maintaining such a tranquillity of spirit, under all we suffer, as that we can still, both enjoy and serve the Lord.' What is more, Alleine asserted, this 'tranquillity' was not made possible through 'naturall hardiness apathy' or 'the spirit of a man', but 'everlasting Gospel'.[119] It is evident that Franklin, who read Alleine, applied this belief to her own life, as she was careful to show that she was patient in the face of adversity, but that she also experienced 'raptures of joy' from meditating on God, and other strong affections in spiritual reflections.[120]

While all Protestants agreed that spiritual affections could safely be expressed in a more extreme way than worldly passions, divergence between groups perhaps emerges when the level of 'excess' perceived as permissible is considered, especially after the civil war and into the Restoration. The Calvinist bishop Joseph Hall, for instance, expressed firm support for spiritual sorrow in 1640, but also made sure to include the additional note that: 'Experience makes this so true, that we may well conclude, that even the best

---

[117] Allen, *The captive*, sigs. b3r-v.

[118] Daniel Featly, *Threnoikos, the house of mourning* (London, 1640), 45.

[119] Alleine, *The godly*, 95-6.

[120] MS I.h.33, f. 2, CL.

spirituall sorrow must be moderated, the worst shunned; every sorrow for sinne is not good.' What is more, as we have seen in the Introduction, the Arminian conformists Simon Patrick and Samuel Parker indiscriminately labelled all nonconformists in the 1660s as being excessively passionate in their religious practices.[121] These views contrast strongly with that of the Presbyterian minister, Timothy Rogers, who stated some decades later:

> When we are intent upon the Creature, we may be guilty of an excess of Admiration, which by immoderate fixing of the animal Spirits in the Brain, may hinder their usual Influx into other parts of the Body, and be very hurtful to the Health. (*Natural History of the Passions*, p. 90) But when God is our Object, and Things Divine raise this Motion in our Souls, there is no danger of Excess.

In doing so, Rogers merged an adoption of more recent understandings of the passions working through the animal spirits (referencing Walter Charleton's *Natural history of the passions*, 1674) with the views of earlier 'puritan' divines of the first half of the century.[122] William Fenner (*c.*1600–*c.*1640), for instance, had stated that 'if the will or these Affections be fixed on their proper object, there is no danger in the excesse'.[123] Laypersons, too, revealed a desire for 'excesse' later in the century: Mary Rich and Mary Franklin declared that they could never sorrow enough for their sins, and wished that they could bring themselves to feel the full weight of mankind's inescapable corruptness.[124]

In response to others' lack of appreciation for extremes in spiritual feeling, a derisive tone often crept into the godly's writings when defending their practices. Simon Ford, for instance, lamented in *The spirit of bondage and adoption* (1655) that

> Men too often look upon troubles of spirit as bare effects of a *melancholy distemper,* more proper for the *Physician* to deal withal then the *Divine,* and are too apt to impute that to the *infirmity of body* which is indeed the immediate hand of *God* upon the *soul.* Ignorant people, because they are unacquainted with the dealings

---

[121] Patrick, *Friendly debate*, 15; Parker, *A discourse*, 149, 322.

[122] Rogers, *Practical discourses*, 168; Walter Charleton, *Natural history of the passions* (London, 1674). See also Schmidt, *Melancholy*, 126, who explains that Charleton's treatise was a popularisation of Descartes' and Thomas Willis' works on the passions.

[123] William Fenner, *A treatise of the affections* (London, 1650), sig. A3v; *ODNB*, s.v. 'Fenner, William'. On Fenner and those with similar views in the first half of the century, see Ryrie, *Being Protestant*, 19.

[124] See for example, Add MS 27351, f. 305r, BL; 'Diary of Mary Rich, Mar 1675-Aug 1676', Add MS 27354, f. 95r, BL; Add MS 27358, f. 4r, BL; Grippen, ed., 'Experiences of Mary Franklin', 397-8; MS I.h.33, CL.

> of God in this kind, often blaspheme the work of the Spirit of Grace, and call it downright *madness,* and reproach such *preachers* as God makes use of to wound the conscience, as those that *make men mad*.[125]

As Ford's words suggest, the godly's stance on the role of affections in their spiritual experiences could lay them open to attack, as their opponents dismissed the work of God on their soul as mere bodily disfunction. These accusations, and the role of the soul-body dynamic in rebuffing them, will be explored further in Chapter Three.

Conclusion

This chapter has demonstrated that the body played a vital role in the religious experiences and self-identification of the nonconforming godly, through an examination of the medical and corporeal language utilised in their writings, both published and otherwise. From illness to recovery, the body's health was understood by ministers and laypeople alike to reveal the effects of mortal corruption, providence, and God's abilities as the great physician. A 'lively' form of religious practice was expected of the godly, and this was understood within the paradigm of humoralism and the non-naturals throughout the century. While overarching these assumptions was the ideal of moderation, or balance, in both bodily health and religious practice, the nonconforming godly simultaneously celebrated and fostered extreme spiritual pathos, despite this being criticised by their Anglican, high-church opponents after the Restoration. Indeed, while godly conformists, Presbyterians, Independents, Baptists, and even more radical groups shared a common language of what constituted the ideal Christian: moderate, balanced, reasoned, and informed of their salvation through their own experience, they did not agree on what constituted these characteristics in practice. Consequently, as various groups laid claim to these ideals, confessional difference and identity were partly expressed through bodily workings and their description.

As the proceeding chapters will demonstrate, the beliefs explored here, surrounding the relationship between the body, health, and godliness, formed the foundation of Presbyterians', Independents', and Particular Baptists' responses to melancholy. The condition could, for instance, inhibit an individual's ability to moderate their passions or perform their 'lively' religious duties, while a recovery administered

---

[125] A writer of 'puritan' works, Simon Ford conformed at the Restoration. See *ODNB*, s.v. 'Ford, Simon'.

directly by God had the potential to endow a case of melancholy with greater spiritual significance. Having outlined the broader framework of beliefs regarding the body's interaction with spirituality from which understandings of melancholy stemmed, the following chapter will focus on a key aspect of the physical-spiritual relationship: namely, the heart, and the ways in which this organ-cum-concept was used to describe the symptoms, difficulties, and, in some cases, value of melancholy.

Chapter Two

The heart

In 1646, Edmund Gregory published *An historical anatomy of Christian melancholy* and, some pages in, included an epigraph, revealing three of his overriding concerns: the self, the heart, and the value of 'experience' (Figure 2.1). Consisting of a simple illustration followed by fourteen lines of text, the epigraph presented the reader with an instruction from heaven: 'Know thy Self' ('γνῶθι σεαυτόν'). Gregory combined these words with a verse from Jeremiah ('the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?'), followed by a line in Greek which read: 'the knower of hearts.' In doing so, Gregory reminded the reader that it was only God who could truly see into a person's innermost self. The verse that followed, which added that God will provide his elect with new, clean hearts, created the page's overall effect of informing the reader that, while it may be impossible for them to know the inner workings of their own hearts entirely, they must still endeavour to know them as best they can, in order to determine whether or not they have been given a new heart by God - in other words, if they have been chosen for salvation.[1]

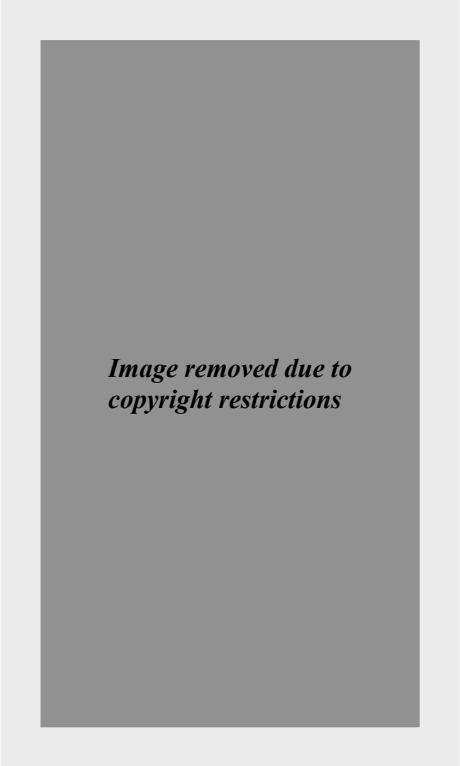

Figure 2.1: Edmund Gregory, *An historical anatomy of Christian melancholy* (London, 1646), sig. A8r.

[1] Edmund Gregory, *An historical anatomy of Christian melancholy* (London, 1646), sig. A8r.

The book aided the reader in discerning this information, by guiding them through a series of 'divers particulars' of Gregory's own 'Experience' that reflected the internal, spiritual journey of one of the elect. As its title suggested, this guidance was aimed at a specific type of godly person: the melancholic. By showing that 'the way of the Lord may be thus trackt out in the soul of man', even in the deepest lows of the melancholic's imagination, Gregory aimed to discourage those Christians with similar dispositions to himself from concluding that they were damned. The journey he recounted began with the realisation of God's 'infinite greatnesse', which struck fear into the individual, and cast them down, before leading them to humility, an admiring love, boldness in trusting God, patience, and finally hope in heaven. By examining their own heart's 'Experience', the reader was invited to follow along the same journey and thereby determine the eternal state of their soul, ultimately finding contentment in hope. As was first made clear by the epigraph reading 'γνῶθι σεαυτόν', the heart represented the self in Gregory's text, and acted as a measure of the individual's stage in their spiritual journey, yet was described with physical specificity: it could 'quicken', 'bleed', 'swell', obey God with all its 'veins', be 'drooping with grief' or 'broken in pieces'.[2]

As these phrases suggest, descriptions of the heart in religious texts such as Gregory's possessed a physicality that, as argued in Chapter One, fostered an embodied approach to religious experience. Like the descriptions of innate corruption, recovery from sickness, and 'lively' religious duties that were previously discussed, the language of the heart indicated a belief that physical and spiritual health were intrinsically entwined. The heart, however, was particularly important in understanding and articulating this entwinement given its heightened ability to be both bodily and spiritual at once. The warmed, swelling heart had a physical reality, but was much more than the corrupted flesh of the body; it was also the seat of the soul and, as Gregory's epigraph indicated, the site of one's spiritual 'Experience' and, ultimately, conversion.

This chapter, then, will begin by asserting that reformed Protestants' engagement with their hearts, as described in Gregory's text and numerous others, was conducted in a very literal sense. Expanding on the recent work of Erin Sullivan and Olivia Weisser, it is demonstrated that the heart was understood to function physiologically in religious experience and, as a result, the language of the heart was not merely metaphorical and reveals much more than simply the longstanding importance of the heart in scripture and

[2] Ibid., sigs. A3v-A4r, 4, 5, 22, 107, 84.

Christian thought more generally.[3] In line with Chapter One's assertion that the body played a role in the formation and expression of confessional identity, it is then argued that the nonconforming godly used constant references to the heart to self-identify as God's 'saints'. By describing their heart's reactions in spiritual experiences using particular language, they reinforced their sense of being truly 'inward'-looking members of the elect and, in doing so, were aided in their difficult search for intangible assurance. Building on from these assertions, the chapter concludes by exploring how the godly used the language of the heart in experiences of melancholy. It is contended that the heart, being in tune with both an individual's spiritual and bodily state, was central to the expression and understanding of cases of melancholy amongst the nonconforming godly. What is more, the way the heart was described in these accounts depended on the writer's stance on the spiritual significance of this condition. Before these lines of argument can be explored, however, we must first outline the meanings of 'heart' in this period.

The heart in seventeenth-century culture

Examining the use of the heart by one section of society is not simple, given the overwhelming ubiquitousness of the concept of 'heart' in England in the early modern period as a whole.[4] The concept was used in a myriad of senses, being used to refer to, for example, the crux of a matter, as well as the organ.[5] It could be found in a plethora of forms; as a written, spoken or sung word, depicted visually, or as the body part itself, dissected and examined. It appeared in an array of written sources, from plays to parliamentary records, while its shape could also be found widely: on cheap pamphlets' frontispieces, advertisements, pieces of jewellery, or the base of a tobacco pipe. On the one hand, the heart was upheld positively in medical and theological texts as the foundation of life and source of true religion. In literary sources this connection to truth continued, with secrets being kept in the heart, and the bonds between people forming and residing there. On the other, in a more negative light, it was 'deceitful above all

---

[3] Sullivan, *Beyond melancholy*, ch.4, esp. 148-9; Weisser, *Ill composed*, 85-6.

[4] On the role of the heart in Protestant spiritual experience, see John Spurr, *English puritanism 1603-1689* (London, 1998), 5-6; Adcock, 'Deborah Huish's spiritual experiences', 58; Gribben, 'Lay conversion', 38. On the heart in early modern medical, religious, political, and literary discourses, see Robert Erickson, *The language of the heart, 1600-1750* (Philadelphia, 1997); William Slights, *The heart in the age of Shakespeare* (Cambridge, 2008); Fay Bound Alberti, *Matters of the heart: history, medicine, and emotion* (Oxford, 2010); Jonathan Sawday, *The body emblazoned: dissection and the human body in Renaissance culture* (London, 1995), 30, 34, 125, 233-4.

[5] *OED*, s.v. 'heart'.

things' according to the Bible, susceptible to the temptations of the devil, and could mislead its owner.[6] At the same time, learned texts informed readers that the soul and its faculties, including reason, were located in the heart, as well as an individual's passions. The organ was believed to heat and distribute spirits throughout the body, and, for those up to date with medicine's newest findings, circulate blood, as had been argued by William Harvey in his *De motu cordis* of 1628, the first English translation appearing in 1653.[7] Amongst Catholics, the cult of the sacred heart and its vivid iconography were gaining popularity as a manifestation of anti-reformation feeling, while, for Protestants, the heart was 'reformed' and held up as the symbol of the all-important individual's relationship with God. Many of these understandings of the heart had been carried over from the ancients or the middle ages into the Renaissance, while evolving scriptural meanings of the heart were also significant.[8]

Given these multiple versions of the heart, early modern people, including the nonconforming godly, simultaneously drew upon, both consciously and subconsciously, intertwined anatomical, philosophical, literary, and religious understandings of this concept. Although they varied in some ways, and were often in tension, these strands of thought revolved around a central idea: the heart was fundamental to life. This idea was captured neatly by Zachary Bogan, a classical and biblical scholar at Corpus Christi College, Oxford, who had been tutored by the 'puritan' Ralph Button. He stated in 1653 that the heart 'is the principle of life, both for naturall and spirituall actions'.[9]

For devout Protestants such as the ones I am examining in this chapter, it was the Bible that was the crucible and battleground for how the heart was understood.[10] In scripture, the term 'heart' was used to refer to the centre of things, and reference to the heart as a specific physical organ was rare. The heart was the innermost aspect of a person, and their governing centre.[11] In both the Old and New Testaments, the Hebrew and Greek words for 'heart' were used in the physical sense - describing it as being made

---

[6] Jeremiah 17:9, 'The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?'

[7] William Harvey, *The anatomical exercises* (London, 1653).

[8] Slights, *The heart*, 3-4, 12.

[9] Bogan, *Meditations*, 65. See also Proverbs 4.23, 'Keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life'.

[10] On Bible reading in this period, see Andrew Cambers, *Godly reading: print, manuscript and puritanism in England, 1580-1720* (Cambridge, 2011), 16-20.

[11] J. D. Douglas, ed., 'Heart' in *New Bible dictionary* (Leicester, 1982), 465.

of 'flesh' - but also to denote inner life, emotional states, intellectual activities, and volition or purpose.[12] The Hebrew word, 'lebab' (also 'lawbab' and 'leb') denotes this entire range of meanings, while the Greek 'kardia' refers more specifically to the physical organ. Nevertheless, 'kardia' was used in the New Testament in the same way that 'lebab' had been used in the Old Testament and, as a result, was given a wider range of meaning than it normally had in other works of Greek literature.[13] In some cases, other Hebrew and Greek words were also translated as 'heart', again revealing the ways in which 'heart' represented the entire person: mind, body, and soul. For example, the Greek 'psuche', which can be translated as 'soul' or 'life', was translated as 'heart' in Ephesians 6:6 and Colossians 3:23 in the Geneva Bible and King James Version.[14]

The Bible did not just provide definition, however, but also instructed action. For example, in Mark we are told that Jesus stated the first commandment to be: 'thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength.'[15] The hearts of the godly did not always manage to follow this commandment, however, and this shortcoming is also found in scripture.[16] As explained in Samuel, God is not deceived by outward appearance, as man is, and can see these shortcomings, because he instead 'looketh on the heart'.[17] For that reason, seventeenth-century texts can be found to refer to God as the 'searcher of hearts' and, less often, the 'knower of hearts', as was seen in the epigraph of Gregory's text at the start of this chapter.[18]

Biblical understandings of the heart, then, were multivalent, and provided early modern Protestants with a variety of ways to both interpret and write about their spiritual experiences. A particularly crucial scriptural injunction for Protestants, however, was the necessity for the godly to be provided with a new heart by God. The need for this provision was realised in the Old Testament (Je. 24:7; Ezk. 11:19), which stated that the

---

[12] H. Wheeler Robinson, *The Christian doctrine of Man* (Edinburgh, 1913), 106; Charles Ryder Smith, *The Bible doctrine of Man* (London, 1951), 151. See also 2 Corinthians 3:3; Mark 3:5, 2:6, 8; Luke 24:32.

[13] Gerald Cowen, 'Heart', in *Holman Bible dictionary*, ed. Trent C. Butler (Nashville, 1991), 719-20.

[14] W. E. Vine, *Vine's expository dictionary of Old Testament words* (Zeeland, 2015), 176-8.

[15] Mark 12:29-30.

[16] Genesis 6:5; Jeremiah 17:9.

[17] 1 Samuel 16:7. See also Psalm 139:23, 'Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts'.

[18] Gregory's phrasing would have also been inspired by Acts 1:24; Luke 16:15; Romans 8:27.

aim of all sinners should be a 'new heart', that is 'clean', on which God's law has been written, and was then fulfilled in the New Testament (Eph. 3:17), which reads: 'Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith.'[19] This is the process that the nonconforming godly, and indeed many other Protestants, were aspiring to in their conversion, in which they would be assured of their salvation as one of the elect.[20]

Despite the Bible's permeating influence, not all characteristics of the heart found in scripture made their way into common usage. For example, while the terms 'hard' and 'stony' were most commonly adopted by seventeenth-century Protestants, scripture also spoke of the 'fat' or 'uncircumcised' heart failing to submit to God.[21] It seems to be rare for writers to have employed these characteristics. As discussed in the previous chapter, the preference for these terms amongst Protestants seems to have grown out of their similarities with humoral theory. A hard and stony heart being undesirable also made sense within a framework in which a cold and dry heart was a result of humoral imbalance and caused distemper.[22] This correlation points to a wider relationship that existed between the language of the heart and the body's role in spiritual experience throughout the seventeenth century, in which, for example, the process of renewing and softening the heart during conversion was understood in a more literal sense than has been previously acknowledged.

The physical role of the heart in spiritual experience

The godly's physiological understanding of the heart, which was infused with Galenic beliefs, had also stemmed from the Bible, in which God's spirit was breathed into the heart as *pneuma,* or breath. The ejected Presbyterian minister Thomas Watson invoked this belief in *Heaven taken by storm* in 1669, when he wrote 'that there is a numen or deity ingraven in mans heart'.[23] The heart was also tied to man's original sin and, as discussed

---

[19] Douglas, *New Bible dictionary*, 465. For 'new heart' see Ezekiel 18:31; 'clean', Psalms 51:10; 'written', Jeremiah 31:33. See also Proverbs 4:23, 'Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life'; Proverbs 23:26, 'My son, give me thine heart, and let thine eyes observe my ways'.

[20] See for example Matthew 5:8; Ephesians 3:17-19. On conversion occurring 'in the hearts, tongues, ears, and minds of a living community', see Cohen, *God's caress*, 19. See also Donatella Pallotti, '"Out of their owne mouths"? Conversion narratives and English radical religious practice in the seventeenth century', *Journal of Early Modern Studies* 1, 1 (2012): 74, 77-8.

[21] Isaiah 6:10; Ezekiel 44:7.

[22] Ryrie, *Being Protestant,* 20-1.

[23] Thomas Watson, *Heaven taken by storm* (London, 1669), 24.

in the previous chapter, the repercussions of the Fall were understood in a fundamentally physiological way by seventeenth-century people, as it pervaded their bodies as a distemper that required constant curbing. As a result, original sin was sometimes described as a plague of the heart. While discussing how his reader might discern whether or not they had a '*saving interst in Christ*', Owen Stockton wrote in 1682 that those who 'have Crucified the flesh with the lusts and affections, have gotten the knowledge of their sins, they know the plague of their hearts'. He asked his audience: 'Dost thou feel the plague of thy heart, and groan under the corruption of thy nature, and find a great want of the Sanctifying grace of God?'[24] Thus, the concept of original sin was embodied by the plagued heart and, consequently, a godly individual was identifiably elect through an awareness of their heart's disease of innate sinfulness. Being given a new heart by God, moreover, was understood as the cure to this disease. While the Fall had infused human hearts with a hardness towards spiritual duties, the heart - which was often described as 'deceitful', 'treacherous' or 'formal, cold, and wandring' in its unregenerate state - would be softened by God's grace in the process of conversion.[25] As a result, the heart acted as a vital intermediary between the sinful, polluted fallen man and the elect soul's regeneration.[26] This initial change was not the endpoint, however, as the heart's softness needed to be constantly refreshed through regular spiritual practices, including prayer, meditation, and reading of scripture.

Like the diseased nature of the heart itself, the organ's softening and hardening were understood to occur in a literal way. As Olivia Weisser and Sophie Mann have shown, seventeenth-century medical writers, and people more widely, largely continued to think in terms of a humoral model and the heart was understood by them to respond directly and physically to devotional duties. The passions, or affections, were understood to operate as a product of the movement of vital spirits, which resided in the blood, through the body.[27] As was discussed in Chapter One, the godly were instructed to experience certain passions in their spiritual lives, and to shun any affections that stemmed from worldly things. The 'content of mind' that devotional activities were

---

[24] Owen Stockton, *The best interest, or, A treatise of a saving interest in Christ* (London, 1682), 86. See also Rogers, *A discourse*, 1.

[25] Dorney, *Divine contemplations,* 279, 205.

[26] Ryrie, *Being Protestant,* 20. See Ezekiel 36:26, 'I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you' and 11:19, 'I will give them an undivided heart and put a new spirit in them; I will remove from them their heart of stone and give them a heart of flesh'.

[27] Weisser, *Ill composed*, 85-6; Mann, 'A double care', 5-8, 11-3.

expected to bring about achieved an 'open', 'warm', and 'melted' heart literally through its dilation and that of the arteries, as they distributed the vital blood and spirits through the body.[28] Hence, when the ejected Presbyterian minister Oliver Heywood (*bap.* 1630, *d.* 1702) made a list in his personal papers of 'special seasons wherein my heart was abundantly melted and inlarged' and the Presbyterian layman Henry Dorney (1613-1682) instructed a friend to 'open all your heart to' God, they would have understood these acts to have occurred on multiple levels, including the physical.[29] Zachary Bogan explained this process of the heart's enlargement and opening clearly. In his *Meditations of the mirth of a Christian life* of 1653, he encouraged his reader to be '*cheerefull,* and *merry*' in God's service because

> it awakens, and calls up the *Spirits* in the heart: which when it hath opened, and enlarged, it sends them out to the members too, to supply them with vigour, and strength. *Heaviness,* and *sorrow,* [on the other hand] when thou art doing any thing, will make thee first, *Heavy,* and *dull,* and *lazy*.[30]

Indeed, a 'dull' or unresponsive reaction to religious duties was physiologically experienced as a cold, hard and dry heart. For that reason, Dorney wrote to his brother, BD, in 1655 that he feared 'I may mourn out all my moisture' and that, as a result, 'my hard heart [may not] come fully away to him'.[31]

By experiencing an open, warmed, or even ravished heart, rather than dullness, the godly could be sure that they were experiencing true spiritual affections. As William Fenner's *A treatise of the affections* (1642) asserted, '*The affections of the heart,* these are the affections the Lord doth call for', rather than the 'certain animal and analogical affections that are in the sense', such as 'grief for torment', 'fear to touch a serpent or a toad' or 'delight in meats that are pleasant'. Referring simultaneously to the views of '*Austin*, … *Galen*, and *Scotus*' and, above all, scripture, Fenner insisted that 'the affections' of being 'joyful with a good conscience in Christ' or 'afraid to sin against God … are motions in the heart'. Explaining his standpoint further, he wrote: 'God hath given affections to the

---

[28] Jane Sharp, *The midwives book* (London, 1671), 179, cited in Mann, 'A double care', 11.

[29] Heywood, *The Rev. Oliver Heywood*, vol. 1, 209; Dorney, *Divine contemplations*, 306.

[30] Bogan, *Meditations*, 304-5. See similar expressions in the separatist John Archer's heretical treatise, *Comfort for beleevers about their sinnes & troubles* (London, 1645), 6; William Perkins, *The first part of the cases of conscience* (Cambridge, 1604), 55.

[31] Dorney, *Divine contemplations*, 248.

heart, as weight to the stone, and hunger to the stomack; so God I say hath given affections to the heart, that it may seek out its good with a force.'[32] Similarly, in 1686, the Presbyterian minister William Bagshawe (1628–1702) described in a sermon how Paul 'not onely saw a sufficiency in the death of Christ, But felt an efficiency & efficacy from it'. Holding Paul up as the exemplary model, Bagshawe instructed his listeners that in order to be sure of their 'evidences and experiences' of God's love, they must not only see, but *feel* it. He stated: 'certainly when the love doth reach the heart it will raise & overpower it.'[33]

Worldly affections, on the other hand, were also understood to be felt in the heart - but could be both remedied by and redirected towards the spiritual. Eleanor Stockton, for instance, felt that her heart might 'faile' her after her sister-in-law's child died from an illness while in her care, so 'cried to the lord that he wold direct' her 'to som word which might releve & support ...[her] in this condition'.[34] Similarly, Oliver Heywood viewed the worldly passions of his heart as being susceptible to redirection towards spiritual ends. Recording an example of when 'waking motions of my hart [were] heaven wards', he wrote: 'once when I was in love with a godly yong woman upon whom my hart was too eagerly set, it cost me many a bitter pang w[hi]ch I desired to improve for higher ends and more spiritual designes, and I am answered much to the better in that kind.'[35]

But it was not only in discussions of the heart's ties to original sin and its role as controller of affections that the physiological understanding of this organ in spiritual experience was revealed; it was also, more simply, through the way the heart was described as functioning alongside other body parts. The Independent Henry Burton (1578-1648), for example, drew upon the relationship between the heart and mouth to criticise set prayers. He asserted that 'true, fervent, effectuall prayer is that which is the hearts expression by the Spirit of God' or, in other words, 'that prayer which is first in the heart, before it come to the mouth, and is dictated by Gods spirit, before it be uttered with the lippes'. Burton continued by informing his reader that a 'read prayer', on the other hand,

---

[32] Fenner, *A treatise*, 5.

[33] 'Sermons, treatises, journal by Rev. William Bagshawe', BAG/25/7/1-3, f. 2, JRL.

[34] MS 24.8, f. 9, DWL.

[35] Heywood, *The Rev. Oliver Heywood*, vol. 1, 209.

'is in the mouth before it can come unto the heart, which in prayer is a speaking unadvisedly with the lips, before the heart hath first digested and suggested the matter'.[36] Similarly, Daniel Agas, the Presbyterian student of Zachary Bogan and inheritor of his library, positioned the heart's function alongside that of the brain. In the preface to Bogan's *A help to prayer* (1660), he instructed his reader to 'leisurely, seriously, and affectionately' observe 'every mercy... [that] come[s] swimming' to them 'in the streaming heart bloud of thy Beloved ... so as to have not only thy braine take in the literal sense of these, or such like wordes, but thy heart also enflamed with their spirituall meaning'.[37]

In 1667, Heywood also brought the spiritual function of the heart into the realm of other tangible body parts by describing it as operating in tandem with them. In a collection of his sermons given in Yorkshire, *Heart-treasure, or, An essay tending to fil and furnish the head and heart of every Christian*, Heywood associated parts of the body with specific religious duties (Figure 2.2).

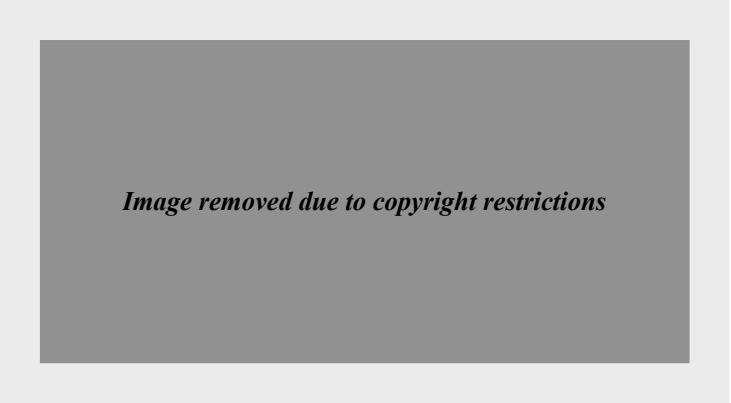

Figure 2.2: Oliver Heywood, *Heart-treasure* (London: A. Ibbitson, 1667), 24.

Below the diagram, Heywood described the 'warming Notions and elevating Motions' the heart would experience through the practice of meditation. Further elucidating the physiological nature of the heart's meditations, he asserted that this duty 'is a kinde of deliberate Extasie; The harmonious melody of the souls faculties [which resided in the heart] within it self by a mutual and musical consort; it is the souls self-conference heard only by it self: It is a fetching up meat formerly taken down, and diffusing it into the several Veins and Arteries of the soul'.[38]

---

[36] Henry Burton, *Christ on his throne* (London, 1640), 30-1.

[37] Daniel Agas, 'The epistle to the reader', in Zachary Bogan, *A help to prayer* (Oxford, 1660), sig. A11r.

[38] Oliver Heywood, *Heart-treasure* (London, 1667), 24.

Eighteen years later, Henry Dorney's writings also highlighted the heart's physiological role in the duty of meditation. Describing processes of visual sensation and cogitation, he wrote that spiritual thoughts are 'made *visible* to the *eye,* and *receivable* by the *ear, retainable* by the *memory,* and *meditable by the heart,* in the use of the Scriptures' and that, more specifically, 'the eye affects the heart, and nourisheth spiritual Enflamedness towards' God. These beliefs led him to write the instruction: 'Get Christ in your eye, and that will affect your heart' in one of his many letters to friends.[39] In a sermon around 1686, the ejected minister William Bagshawe also identified the heart as operating in the thought processes of religious experience. He asked his listeners, 'Hath not God endowed you with faculties capable of meditating on this subject: Is not this the honour & advancement of reasonable creatures, that they can call things to mind & lay them to heart & to shew themselves men[?]'.[40] At the end of century, the congregational minister Thomas Bradbury also described the heart functioning alongside other parts of the body in spiritual experience, writing in his autobiographical memoranda that, in the past, 'an indifferent & lukewarm frame of spirit [had] gradually seized him', but he 'continued this way as a crafty means to bribe a clamorous conscience; til another conviction opened my mouth & taught my tongue to fetch expressions from my heart, which I found to be the most naturall vent of my troubled mind'.[41] At the same time, the Presbyterian Elias Pledger (Appendix 1c) similarly recorded the 'usefulness of each part' of the body at the back of his spiritual diary, first including the 'heart', before following with the 'brains, ears, ey[e], [and] fingers'.[42]

These examples, from Burton, Bogan, Heywood, Dorney, Bagshawe, Bradbury, and Pledger all share a belief that the heart was vital, in a very physical way, to their religious practice. Through descriptions of the heart acting in relation to other bodily organs, their words revealed a physiological understanding of the heart in spiritual experience, as well as a heart-focused way of thinking. While Slights has used the term 'cardio-centric' to describe the importance of the heart in people's minds at this time, this somewhat misleadingly presents the heart as having been the most important element.[43]

---

[39] Dorney, *Divine contemplations*, 73, 280.

[40] BAG/25/7/1-3, f. 3, JRL.

[41] 'Correspondence of divines', Add MS 4275, ff. 87r-v, BL.

[42] 'Diary of Elias Pledger', MS 28.4, f. 2r, DWL.

[43] Slights, *The heart*, ch. 5.

While the heart was certainly vital to religious practice, given all duties - including prayer, observation of mercies, and meditation - relied upon its ability to process, mediate, and respond to God's grace, it was not paramount. Rather, through its interaction with other body parts, the heart was able to reveal the state of an individual's most important component: the soul.

Admittedly, given the heart acted as mediator between spiritual and corporeal signs in this way, it possessed a unique nature as compared to the other, purely tangible body parts, such as the lips and brain, it was understood to operate alongside. In other words, acting as the intermediary between an individual's physical and spiritual self, the heart possessed additional significance that other parts of the body did not. This unique nature was not clearly defined in people's minds, however, but functioned in a fuzzy, changeable way. In 1682, for example, Heywood recorded in his personal record of 'Objects and Observations' under the heading 'Suitable punishment' that an ungodly man in his neighbourhood, Mr H Kellet, of whom there was 'more than ordinary grounds of suspicion…of antecedent filthines … cut off his own members, cast them into the fire, left incredible quantities of blood, [and] went away in the night'. Traceable by 'drops' and 'in some places cakes of blood', he was stopped, brought to a surgeon, and recorded to have said that 'he could not be saved except [if] he dismembered himself, and goe a pilgrimage to Jerusalem'. Heywood, reflecting on the event and Kellet's swift return to ungodly behaviour, wrote that - although an apt punishment for the man - the ordeal was unsuccessful as 'sin lyes too deep in the heart to be cast away with bodily members'; 'sinners will sin still: body-circumcision reacheth not the heart'.[44] Thus, Heywood revealed how the heart was able to operate as both bodily organ and untouchable symbol of man's innate wickedness at once.

Operating in both a physical and spiritual sense, the heart acted as a measure of an individual's aptitude for godliness according to the current condition of their bodily health. The diary of Mary Rich, for example, revealed that she did not believe her heart, as a measure of godliness, to act solely in a spiritual sense. It did, on many occasions, simply represent sinfulness and innate wickedness in her contemplations; on other occasions, however, it also revealed the condition of her body and, in turn, how that condition would affect her ability to successfully carry out religious duties. In this way, the heart was in tune with both her spiritual and bodily well-being. For instance, on a

[44] Heywood, *The Rev. Oliver Heywood*, vol. 4, 38-40.

number of occasions Rich connected a 'dull', 'dead' or 'untoward' heart in religious duties to suffering from an illness. In December of 1670, she recorded her heart being in a 'strange dull frame' due to a 'cold … lying much in … [her] head'. After suffering in this way for a number of days, she suffered a 'broken' heart at the thought of 'how much … [she] was discomposed for any thing by onely a violent cold'. Similarly, on another occasion, she recorded that 'in the morneing when drest, [I] red and prayed, but my heart was but dull and untoward in duty, I not being yet well in my health'. As will be seen in the final section of the chapter, this understanding of the heart as indicative of both physical health and spiritual capacity was significant in discussions of the religious significance of melancholy. We will first turn, however, to the heart's role in forming and expressing godly identity.[45]

Self-identifying as the godly

The heart, being both physically and symbolically vital to an individual's spirituality as we have seen, was understood by reformed Protestants to hold an individual's true self. When the Independent minister John Rogers declared in 1653 that 'Parish-Church Members are ful of whoredoms, uncleaness, idolatry, superstitions, and adulteries in their hearts: They love the Whore in their hearts', he was declaring that conformists' true selves were sinful.[46] His words capture the distinction made in the godly's minds between external appearances and inner self, and how these could, but did not necessarily, correspond: 'Their Whoredomes are in their faces, and their adulteries in their breasts, in their face, that is their externall worship and ordinances…; And in their breasts, that is in their hearts.'[47] Rogers drew upon the strength of the idea of the heart as the true essence of an individual to make his point that conformists were, inside and out, sinful.

Simultaneously, this same idea was used to assert that oneself was, inside and out, godly. Speaking, writing, and thinking about the heart in relation to their spiritual experience helped various nonconformists to self-identify as the elect, as well as their own confessional identity, be that Independent, Presbyterian, Baptist, or another group. As Rogers' references to what lay in individuals' breasts suggest, the heart represented and made possible the *inward* nature of what the nonconforming godly believed to be true,

---

[45] Add MS 27351, ff. 34r, 78v, BL; Add MS 27352, ff. 282v, 287r, BL.

[46] John Rogers, *Ohel or beth-shemesh* (London, 1653), 550.

[47] Ibid.

'experimental' religion, as opposed to what they saw as the external, 'formal' religion of high-church conformists. Mary Rich, for example, stated in her autobiography that she believed that she had been 'Ignorant' of 'the inward and spirituall part' of 'Godlynes' when she was younger, but that, upon conversion, she had turned to this more 'inward' practice.[48] This shift was, in her eyes, a sign of both her election and the legitimacy of her spiritual experiences, as was revealed in a document written not long after her conversion. Detailing her 'signs of grace', she described how reading the Bible 'does so work *inwardly* upon me as I know not how to express: which is a sure sign to me that it is the word of God'.[49]

The concept of the new, cleansed heart that believers would receive from God in conversion was central to these 'inward' practices, and was therefore an unfailingly consistent feature of conversion narratives. In describing the transformation of their heart to others, they turned this inward experience outward, signifying their godliness to not only themselves but those around them. The congregational minister, John Collins, for example, declared to his new flock in London in 1669 that, given 'it is the dutty of all Christians to give an account of the hope that is in them, … [I will] acquaint you with what I know of the workings of his spirit in my heart'.[50] In 1673, Elizabeth Rokeby similarly explained in her account of 'experience' why she had 'hope & comfort that it [her heart] is one of the harts of the new covenant'.[51] In these narratives, the heart captures the action of conversion, but also the regenerated convert as a whole. The Independent minister Samuel Petto's collection of conversion narratives from 1653 went so far as to use the word 'heart' in the same way that 'soul' is sometimes used, to refer to an individual, writing: '*Roses from Sharon. Or Sweet Experiences Gathered up by some precious hearts, whilst they followed on to know the Lord.*'[52]

In Presbyterians', Independents', and Particular Baptists' process of identifying as one of the godly, more was required than simply an account of the 'new heart' of conversion, however. Diaries such as that of Mary Rich reveal that confidence in the

---

[48] Add MS 27357, f. 23r, BL.

[49] Add MS 27358, f. 1, BL. On the significance of inwardness, see Erica Longfellow, 'Inwardness and English Bible translations', in *The Oxford handbook of the Bible in early modern England, c.1530-1700*, ed. Kevin Killeen, Helen Smith, and Rachel White (Oxford, 2015), 626-39.

[50] MS II.b.6, f. 9, CL.

[51] 'Elizabeth Rokeby's account of experience, 1673', Stowe MS 745, f. 82, BL.

[52] Samuel Petto, *The voice of the Spirit* (London, 1654), title page.

initial change of heart in conversion was not absolute, and required repeated verification. On one occasion, for instance, she double-checked what the required 'markes' of conversion were in a text by the well-known Presbyterian minister Richard Baxter, and was comforted to discover that her 'heart did answer to those markes'.[53] Oliver Cromwell's cousin also revealed a constant need for God's grace to soften the heart, declaring in her diary some time after her initial conversion: 'Oh, that God would give me a Hartt to improve my Life, & my al for his Glory!' At a later date she again 'beg[ed for] a Hart sanctified [so] that with boath Soule & Body I may obey the Lord more & more'.[54]

Indeed, beyond conversion, reflection on one's eternal condition needed to occur on a day-to-day, internalised level through constant observation of the heart's state or 'frame'. This requirement was communicated through sermons, spiritual biographies, and congregations' practice of sharing spiritual experiences with one another, all of which frequently and consistently referred to the 'frame' of an individual's heart as indication of their godliness.[55] The term 'frame' was being used in the sense of 'a mental or emotional disposition or state (more explicitly, *frame of spirit, soul*, etc.)'. As the OED explains, it was later used chiefly as '*frame of mind*' but, at this time, in which 'heart', 'soul', and 'mind' often acted as blurred synonyms of one another, the 'frame' of the heart indicated one's 'temporary state of mind or feeling' and could be used to gauge one's readiness for religious duties.[56] The published and unpublished writings of the minister Owen Stockton reveal the interplay of written instruction to reflect on one's heart and the daily practice of this act. In his *Scriptural catechism* of 1672, Stockton invoked Psalm 4.4 to instruct his reader: 'commune with your own heart upon your bed, and be still', as well as Luke 21.34: 'Take heed to your selves, lest at any time your hearts be over charged with surfeiting and drunkenness.' Similarly in his *Treatise of family instruction* of the same year, he told masters of households to enquire of their children and servants 'what frame of heart they have; whether they have hard or soft, earthly or spiritual, ignorant or understanding hearts'. This was because, as he made clear in his funeral sermon for Ellen Asty in 1681, 'we know that we have the Spirit of Christ… If we have an obediential frame

---

[53] Add MS 27351, f. 87v, BL.

[54] Add MS 5858, f. 220r, BL.

[55] See for example Philip Henry's sermons as recorded by his daughter, Sarah, on John 14:27 and Proverbs 19:21, in 'Sermons of Philip Henry, 1680-1', Eng MS 1415, JRL. In terms of published texts, see for example John Batchiler, *The virgins pattern* (London, 1661), sig. A4r; John Bunyan, *A book for boys and girls* (London, 1686), esp. 4, 15, 55.

[56] *OED*, s.v. 'frame'.

of heart' and, while 'the Children of God are liable to variety of changes in their Spiritual state, and in the frame of their hearts, … when ever their hearts are out of frame, they are unquiet and troubled, and can't be at rest till they get into a good frame again'. Following his own instructions, Stockton described the daily, ever-changing frame of his heart in his unpublished 'Observations and Experiences'. On the 8th of April 1665, for example, he wrote: 'I began the day with the Ld, my heart was in a good frame in the former part of the day', while on April 16, a 'Lords day', he commented that he was 'under a great sence of the sinfulness of my heart'.[57]

Rich, too, referred to her heart's 'frame' in her daily accounts, and whether or not it could be 'stirred up' to sufficient responsiveness. When her heart was in a 'good frame', it was 'warmed', 'refreashte', 'melted', and 'softened' by duties, all of which were experienced physically, as outlined above. It 'breathed', 'panted' [i.e. caused her chest to heave] or was 'carried out after God' in prayer, while another sign of positive levels of responsiveness was for her heart to be 'broken' by a sermon, or 'moved' by it.[58] An especially affecting sermon would break her heart to such a degree that she was 'inabled … with many teares to bemone' her sins. In other words, her soul sent her body's natural heat to the centre of her body, where it pressed upon and dried the heart, bringing on the passion of sadness, and tears. Occasionally, in particularly moving meditations on Christ's sufferings, her heart would begin 'to burne with flames of love', in which case she would have understood her heart to warm, dilate, and thereby send spirits throughout her body, creating joy. In the same way, Rich's heart also acted as a measure of her godliness through what it obediently did not respond to. For instance, when she went to London or paid her respects at court, she found comfort in noting: 'I never found my heart taken with any worldly pomp or vanity I had seen there.' Similarly, her heart would not respond to, what she termed, a 'very dull sermon'. If the preacher's words were not sufficiently 'awakening', her heart would not 'be afected with it', even if she 'indevered it should'. In these cases Rich was pleased that these experiences had not induced an enlarged heart through the creation of positive passions inside her, but had instead remained unaffected.[59]

---

[57] Owen Stockton, *A scriptural catechism useful for all sorts of persons* (London, 1672), 75, 86; idem, *A treatise of family instruction* (London, 1672), 156-7; idem, *Consolation in life and death* (London, 1681), 83, 108; MS 24.7, f. 2, DWL.

[58] *OED*, s.v. 'pant'; Add MS 27351, ff. 76r, 263r, 80r, BL; Add 27354, f. 5v, BL; Add MS 27358, f. 8, BL.

[59] Add MS 27351, f. 76r, BL.

Rich and Stockton were not describing their hearts with unusual language, but were engaging with a way of talking about this organ that was shaped by godly predecessors, as well as contemporary usage amongst their pious peers. Both would have come into contact with these trends of language through, for example, works of practical divinity and discourse with divines. Moreover, various title pages, frontispieces, and also a popular emblem book, *The school of the heart,* published in 1664 and 1675, included renderings of the heart that displayed in visual terms the images Rich, Stockton, and their peers created when describing their hearts using words. One book Rich described reading, Richard Baxter's *The saints rest,* included an illustrated frontispiece and, like many other popular works of practical divinity of the time, included a heart (Figure 2.3).

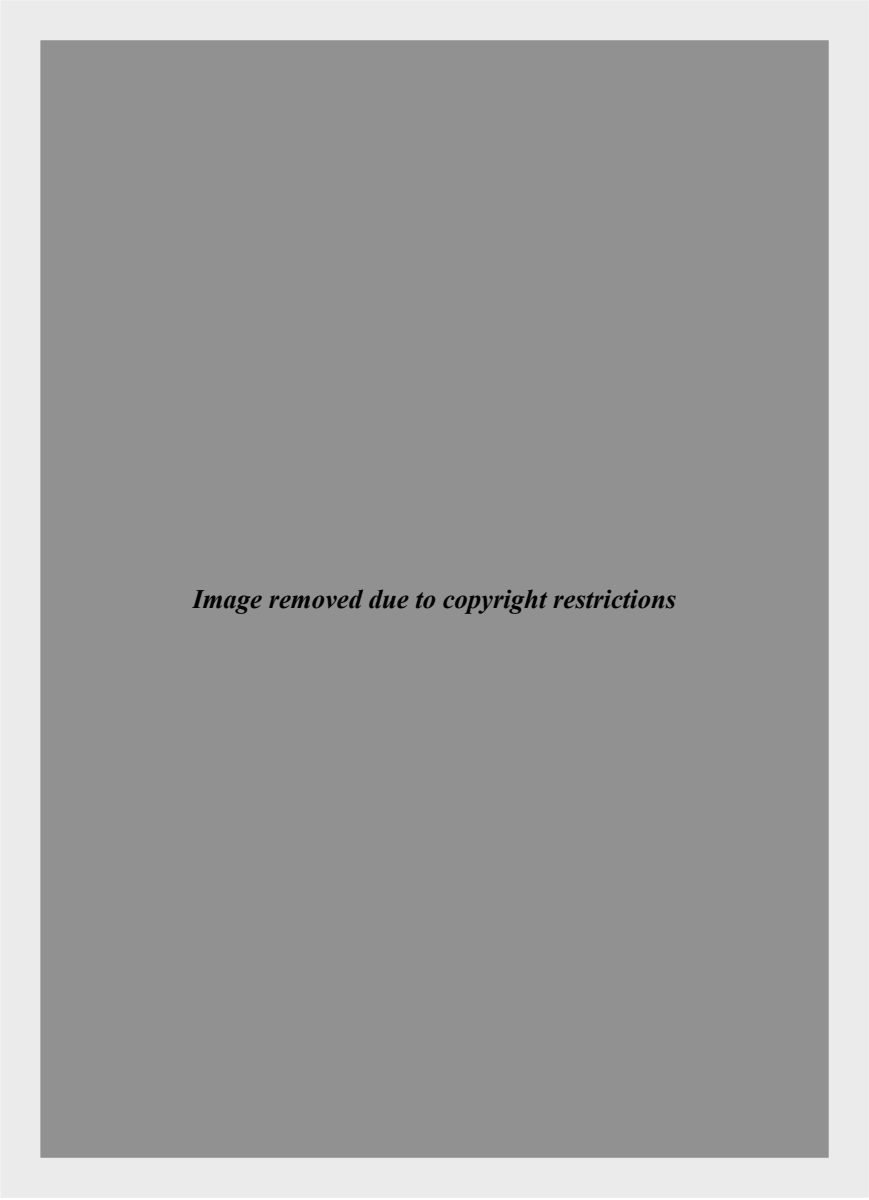

Figure 2.3: Richard Baxter, *The saints rest* (London: Thomas Underhill, 1658), frontispiece.

Reflecting on reading this text, Rich wrote: 'whilest I was reading of the joy of God [in *The saints rest*], [God] was pleased much to ravish my heart with thinking of it'. On the frontispiece, a heart rests between the words 'per' and 'christum', whilst smoke billows from its top towards the title. This depiction of smoke was a common way of illustrating a warmed heart and in this case suggested, by its placement, that it was 'through Christ' that the heart could achieve this 'ravished' state. Rich's descriptions of her heart, and devotional behaviour more generally, certainly indicated an absorption of this teaching.[60]

The readings and writings of Owen Stockton's wife, Eleanor, also reveal the ways in which depictions of the heart interacted in spiritual discourse and, in doing so, provided a language to express one's godliness. In her 'occasional reflections' Stockton described the 'terms' upon which 'God received us in to favour', opening with the assertion that the godly are not received by God 'on the terms of [being] perfect, unsinning, but [being] sincere & [giving] hearty obedience' to Him. This 'hearty obedience' was understood by Stockton as the act of giving over one's heart to God, and not letting 'some inferiour good have more of our heart then he hath'.[61] She had drawn this idea from her reading of Henry Hickman's (d. 1692) *The believers duty towards the Spirit, and the Spirits office towards believers,* which she cited in the margin. Hickman, a Presbyterian and religious controversialist, whose text was first published in 1665 and republished in 1700, comforted his readers by informing them that the godly should refrain from viewing themselves 'not in Covenant' with God simply due to mere 'sins of forgetfulness, inconsideration, passion', and the like. Rather, they should keep their assurance of salvation as long as they have given their heart to God. This same concept had been highlighted by the Independent minister Henry Walker a decade before Hickman, and four decades before Stockton, who listed 'God hath the chief seat in my heart' in his published account of conversion as one of the evidences of his regeneration, or 'fruits' of his 'faith'.[62] Thus, in drawing upon the concept of the heart and its priorities to identify herself as being in God's 'favour', Stockton continued a longstanding trope of godly discourse.

---

[60] Christopher Harvey, *The school of the heart* (London, 1675); Richard Baxter, *The saints everlasting rest* (London, 1658). That said, Rich did not mention engaging with emblem books and the majority of the books she did identify by name do not appear to be illustrated. It is therefore difficult to assess the importance of visual representations of the heart in her case.

[61] MS 24.8, f. 22, DWL.

[62] Hickman, *The believers duty*, 186.

As these examples show, the nonconforming godly's sense of identity was shaped on a daily basis through their heart's reactions to spiritual duties, both passive (such as sermon attendance) and active (such as prayer), as well as worldly activities, enabling them to sense that their heart had been given over entirely to God. The ways in which they described these reactions of the heart, moreover, can be seen to have shared a common language that was shaped through interaction with verbal, written, and visual sources. The construction of a sense of godly identity, however, did not happen purely on an internal level, through the tracking of the heart's responses in minds and on the pages of diaries. This process was also carried out in a more external sense through the comparison of one's heart with that of others, in order to distinguish who was and who was not the fellow elect. Godliness was first assessed in this process through consideration of whether or not the heart had been prioritised over other parts of the body, especially the head. For example, the Independent Walker wrote in *Tragemata, sweet-meats* (1654) that 'some have God in their heads, that have the Devil writing his Laws in their hearts; but Gods Covenanted Servants, though the Devil may buz about their heads, yet God writes his Laws in their hearts'. As discussed earlier in the chapter, this type of phrasing, which compared the role of different body parts in spiritual experience, was not merely convenient or metaphorical. Indeed, Walker's publications in particular reveal an overt interest in how the body functioned, and preoccupation with the role of the heart in spiritual experience, as well as an awareness of how the actions of the body could be used to label some as godly, and some as not.[63]

This was evident in the title of one of his small books, from 1644: *Ecce homo, the little Parliament unbowelled with, the substance, quality, and disposition of the outward members, and inward faculties, vertues, and properties: the glory of the good ones, and sad condition of rotten back-sliders*. This text, which was republished in 1648, was printed in London by Jane Coe, a publisher of cheap print, and was 'to be sould at her house' in Cripplegate, an area known for its nonconformist leanings and high concentration of printers and booksellers. Pieces printed by Coe and her partners were supportive of mainstream parliamentarianism, from both Presbyterian and Independent authors, and were often inflammatory against members of the court and Arminians, whom they viewed as 'papists'. Walker's *Ecce homo,* which aimed to distinguish the 'good ones' from the 'rotten

[63] Henry Walker, *Tragemata, sweet-meats* (London, 1654), 124.

backsliders' appears to have been part of this factionalism. Coe introduced illustrations to her publications in the 1650s, which helped to maintain the public profile of her press, and *Ecce homo* was no exception.[64] As a result, the frontispiece of Walker's text used not only its lengthy title but also a woodcut to illustrate how 'the glory of the good ones' could be distinguished from their bad counterparts (Figure 2.4).[65]

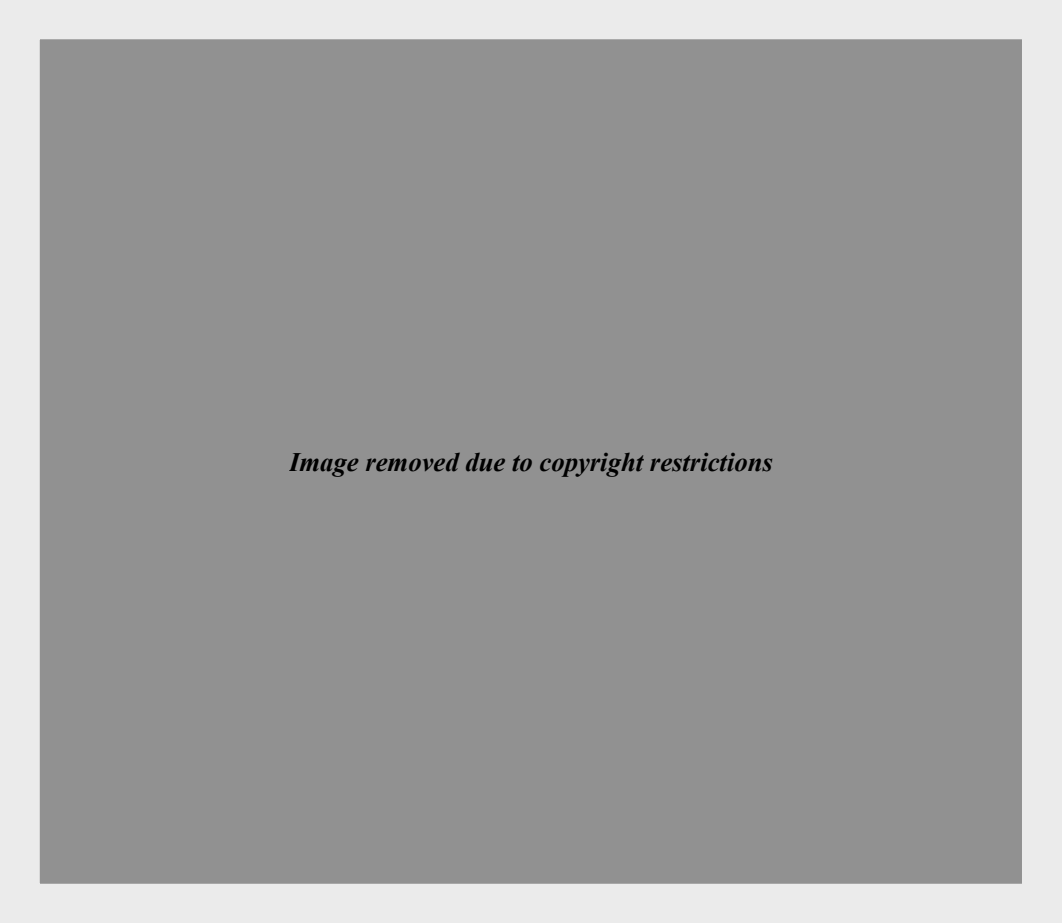

Figure 2.4: Henry Walker, *Ecce homo, the little Parliament unbowelled* (London: Jane Coe, 1644), frontispiece, title page.

It was, as the illustration of a man opening his chest indicated, an individual's heart that revealed this distinction; 'Look not without on Votes [of 'the Little Parliament', i.e. man] alone / But see whats hid in Flesh and Bone', the caption stated. Suggestive of Walker's own preoccupation with the heart's role in spiritual experience, as well as perhaps the known popularity of the heart symbol with Coe's audience, the woodcut

[64] For details on Coe's life and business, see Sarah Barber, 'Curiosity and reality: the context and interpretation of a seventeenth-century image', *History Workshop Journal* 70 (2010): 21-2, 26-7.

[65] Henry Walker, *Ecce homo, the little Parliament unbowelled* (London, 1644), frontispiece, title page.

pointed to a very real, individualised heart, rather than an abstract concept. In the text itself, Walker discussed a heart that interacted with the body's soul and imagination; he informed his reader how 'To know what the soule is, whence it comes, when and how it enters into the body', as well as its 'essence, power, sense, vitalls, passions, and faculties'. Drawing upon authorities of Galenic and Hippocratic medicine who had written in the vernacular, and citing them in the margins, Walker provided his reader with a cheap and elementary introduction to the body, or as he called it 'the little Parliament', and its workings. In Walker's eyes, to know the body and soul's roles was to be closer to knowing God. As he stated in the text's dedication to William Lenthall, he was motivated to write the book by his 'knowing how ignorant many are, not only of God, but themselves too' and his belief that these people 'may be bettered (if God please to give a blessing to this my labour) by the use hereof'. Walker hoped that 'all who use it, may savingly know God, and themselves', thereby revealing his belief that godliness was tied with the physiological and, through the frontispiece's imagery, that this knowledge of the self, simultaneously physical and spiritual, was embodied in the heart.[66] The same notion was revealed in the epigraph to Edmund Gregory's book *An anatomy of Christian melancholy*, discussed in the opening of this chapter, through its tying of the need to 'know thyself' to 'heart-knowledge'.[67]

Walker and Gregory were not the only godly individuals drawing upon the workings of the body, heart, and soul to define the godly, and make sense of spiritual experience. The well-known Independent Baptist and loyal Calvinist John Bunyan (*bap.* 1628, *d.* 1688) asserted a firm distinction between the godly and the ungodly by comparing the broken, soft heart of the former with the hard heart of the latter in *The acceptable sacrifice, or, The excellency of a broken heart*, first published in 1689 and subsequently in 1691 and 1698. 'Broken', in this sense, drew upon Psalm 51:17, to refer to a heart humbled by true repentance: 'reduced to obedience or discipline, tamed, trained'.[68] Bunyan described the ungodly's behaviour as cowardly, stating he had

---

[66] The short thirty-page text also described to its reader 'the vertues and faculties of the body and minde, with the relations of the flesh and spirit each to other', as well as such things as 'What the resurrection is'. See ibid., sigs. A3r-A4v.

[67] Gregory, *An historical anatomy*, sig. A8r. See also a similar text of the 1650s, Richard Younge, *An experimental index of the heart* (London, 1655), title page; as well as continuity of these ideas in a late-century published text, Morton, *The spirit of man*.

[68] *OED*, s.v 'broken'. Psalm 51:17, 'The sacrifices of God *are* a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise'.

'observed, that some men are as [a]fraid of a Broken Heart, ... *as the Dog is of the Whip*' and criticised their inability to expose themselves to 'such Books, ... such Sermons, ... such Preachers, or ... such talk, as tends to make a man sensible of, and to Break his Heart, and to make him Contrite for his Sins'. Rather than working towards a broken heart, the ungodly instead '*heap to themselves such Teachers,* get such Books, Love such Company, and delight in such Discourse, as rather tends to harden, then soften'. Bunyan ridiculed their, in his view, erroneous belief that 'such Preachers, such Books, such Discourses, tend to make one *Melancholy* or *Mad*' and that the godly are unable to 'take pleasure in our Selves, in our Concerns, in our Lives'.[69]

Indeed, by highlighting the ungodly's lack of a suitably broken heart, Bunyan flipped the common trope of the 'mad Puritaine' on its head. He stated that 'he that wild, as to God, is mad', and 'not capable, before he is tamed, of minding his own Eternal good as he should'. Bunyan supported this assertion by listing 'tokens of one *Wild* or *Mad*' found 'in a Carnal Man', such as their shared inability to heed wise counsel and tendency to busy themselves with things that ultimately 'amount to nothing'. Contemplating the ungodly's focus on worldly business and pointless finery, or 'frantick Motions' as Bunyan termed them, he lamented 'the Madness that possesses the Heart and Mind of Carnal Men'. In his view, the method to 'tame' the carnal man, moreover, was to bring 'down their Heart' through the same treatment given to the insane. They 'must be taken ... separated from men', he wrote, 'laid in Chains, in Darkness, Afflictions and Irons: They must be blooded, half starved, whipped, purged, and be dealt with, as mad People are dealt with'. In doing so, Bunyan believed 'God *Tames* the *Wild,* and brings *Mad* Prodigals to themselves, and so to him for Mercy'. Bunyan's message, then, was that his reader must not be 'afraid of a *Broken Heart*' as 'the Heart Rightly Broken at the sence of, and made Truly Contrite for Transgression, *is a certain fore-runner of Salvation*'. In other words, the broken heart, given what it represented, was the sanest option.[70] More than a decade earlier, the ejected Presbyterian minister Thomas Doolittle, had made a similar argument to Bunyan. In his text, however, lay a stronger, contrasting emphasis on the 'rationality' that the godly displayed in their pursuit for a broken heart, rather than the ungodly's madness.[71]

---

[69] John Bunyan, *The acceptable sacrifice, or, The excellency of a broken heart* (London, 1689), 1, 207-10.

[70] Ibid.

[71] Thomas Doolittle, *Captives bound in chains made free by Christ* (London, 1674), 19, 39, 41, 42, 169.

With the elect and damned defined by their rationality or madness, brokenness or hardness, the godly community came to be described in terms of 'heart-fellowship'. The godly's shared characteristic of a new, softened heart was an avenue to describe their connection with one another. In the preface to Bunyan's *The acceptable sacrifice*, the Independent minister George Cokayn (*bap.* 1620, *d.* 1691), a self-described 'Lover and Honourer of all Saints', informed the reader that the text 'was Transcribed out of the Author's heart, into the Book' and that, in turn, it 'may be Transcribed out of the Book, into the hearts of all who shall Peruse it'.[72] In the same way that an individual's spiritual thoughts and prayers needed to pass through their heart, the words of authors were transmitted from their heart to that of their godly readers via their books. Fifty years earlier, the introduction of Henry Walker's collection of conversion narratives had made a similar statement, informing the reader 'that which cometh from one spirituall heart, reacheth another spirituall heart' through the sharing of published spiritual experiences.[73] Henry Dorney also viewed the communication between the godly in this way, describing interactions between them as an intermingling of hearts, thereby conveying both their shared experience and characteristics. He commented that, when discussing worldly concerns, '*our hearts can easily mix, and run one into another*'.[74] For this reason, Elias Pledger, for example, wrote to ministers to share the state of his heart in the hope that, through this information, they would be able to assess the success, or failure, of his conversion.[75]

In this way, the language of the heart acted on an interpersonal level, bolstering both an individual's conviction of being saved and the community's shared identity as the elect. At the same time, the language of the heart itself was shaped through these social processes. As was indicated in the previous section in regards to the interaction of verbal, written, and visual sources, a vocabulary was developed within godly communities, and more specifically within individual congregations, of phrases and terms that lent accounts of spiritual experience credence. When accounts of spiritual experience were transmitted, in their eyes, from one heart to another through publications, conversations, and letters, heart-focused ways of talking were both encouraged and validated.

---

[72] Bunyan, *The acceptable sacrifice*, sigs. A2r-A13v.

[73] Walker, *Spirituall experiences*, 218-29.

[74] Dorney, *Divine contemplations*, 43.

[75] MS 28.4, f. 8r, DWL.

That is not to say, however, that variations did not also exist. While there was an overarching adherence to a language of the heart amongst all godly individuals, male and female converts wrote of their hearts differently. Female narrators were more likely to write of their hearts being warmed and softened, which, as Weisser has argued, was a result of the view that their ideally more passive and docile nature was more suited to the 'warm, broken frame required to receive God's grace'.[76] While Weisser's sources and focus did not allow her to explore how male converts wrote about their hearts in comparison, Walker's collection of conversion narratives, *Spirituall experiences,* provides some indication. In these Independent congregations, which were largely composed of parliamentarian army men and their wives, male converts were reluctant to describe themselves in the submissive form of soft and broken. Nevertheless, they still spoke in a heart-orientated way, focusing instead on God having provided them with a new heart and employing battle-inspired language to describe this act. For example, M.H. recounted that 'it pleased the Lord to convince me … that in hearing the word preached, those that would be Soldiers in Christs school, must not be daunted for every foyl; and *If I did look for salvation by Jesus Christ, I must manfully fight under the Banner of Christ, and so to hold out to the end, if I would be saved*'. He continued that, through this consideration: 'God was pleased to put courage into my heart, [and] to hold on in the wayes of God.' M.H concluded his narrative by stating that God had 'direct[ed]' his heart 'to resolve to break through all opposition and difficulties to be joyned with this company'. Instead of receiving a softened heart, M.H had been given a heart filled with bravery convinced of its need to join the congregation, an appropriate gift given the uncertain times of the Interregnum and recent warfare.[77]

Alongside gendered differences, variations in the use of heart language can also be identified between confessional identities, social groups, and genres. The wealthy and titled Mary Rich, for example, mentioned her heart's frame daily in her diary, while only referring to it infrequently in her autobiography. The two texts were of quite different natures, given the latter also described her life before conversion at great length, including the frivolities of her youth, as well as her later years. Even when describing her conversion during the civil war years in her autobiography, Rich did not describe a change of heart or refer to any sensations it experienced. While she would have written both her diary and

---

[76] Weisser, *Ill composed*, 71.

[77] Walker, *Spirituall experiences*, 217-29.

autobiography in the knowledge that they would be most likely read by others in the future, it was the latter that was solely intended for this purpose. Her diary and meditations, on the other hand, were primarily used as tools in her own devotions, as she often read them in her prayer closet to encourage further inward reflection, passions conducive to spiritual duties, and remembrances of God's providences.[78] The differences between her references to the heart in her diary and autobiography are in line with her focus on an inward form of spirituality that did not call for outward manifestations to a wider audience.

Other religious autobiographies and conversion narratives produced in the 1650s through to 1700, however, and particularly those produced by Independents and more sectarian groups, refer to the heart just as frequently as Rich did in her diaries. In Henry Walker's collection of narratives, for example, the daily comments diarists made about the ever-changing aptitude of their heart for spiritual duties were listed as an 'Evidence' of election. The convert E.C. justified her membership to the church by stating: 'My affections are great to the Ordinances, and my heart longeth after them; and when at any time I come with a cold heart to duties, … my heart is frequently warmed, and inlarged in those duties.'[79] Thus, through the verbal and then printed sharing of spiritual experiences, perceived changes to the heart expanded from private observation to shared evidence. It is possible that the difference between Rich's and Walker's approaches to dissemination was a result of gathered churches' need to prove their conversion and election to their readership, and therefore 'turn their very heart outward' to their audience. While Rich and those divines around her were relatively confident in her eternal salvation, and therefore did not need to emphasise the changes which had occurred in her heart through conversion, other writers in more precarious positions - such as those who had entered into the membership of a gathered church - needed to prove, through their words, that a new heart had been provided to them by God.

The search for assurance

For all groups and individuals, however, persistent references to the heart in spiritual writings and discussion can be seen as a way of finding, for both their own personal comfort and public assertion, assurance of salvation. As Peter Lake has shown, assurance

---

[78] Add MS 27357, BL; cf. Add MS 27351-5, BL.

[79] Walker, *Spirituall experiences*, 289.

was viewed by Calvinist Protestants as vitally separate from, and rather a fruit of, faith - and the godly were obliged to seek assurance through zeal.[80] Assurance was understood to 'ariseth from peace of conscience and joy in the hope of heaven, both which follow faith in Christ or our being justified by faith in Christ'.[81] These states, of peacefulness, joy, and faith, were all understood to occur as sensations, with physical reactions from the heart, and other parts of the body. The nonconforming godly's examination of the reactions of their hearts to devotional activities can be seen as a method of measuring that 'peace of conscience and joy in the hope of heaven' which they knew they should - at least some of the time - feel. As Sullivan has also asserted, 'godly Protestants used the image of the heart to help communicate feelings of, and thus knowledge of, authentically saving faith and election to heaven.'[82]

The ability of the heart to cultivate a sense of assurance went beyond reflection upon the experiences it produced. As Bogan had stated, the heart was the 'principle of *life,* both for naturall and spirituall actions'.[83] It was the ability of the heart to simultaneously penetrate the realm of the physical and that of abstract beliefs that instilled this organ, and symbol, with evidence of salvation.[84] Capturing both tangible and intangible meaning at once, the heart was both a name for a system of tensions and a conceptualisation of the process of resolving those tensions. The lives of the godly were pitted with tensions that required resolution in the journey towards assurance of salvation: elect versus damned, internal versus external, carnal versus spiritual, 'creature' self versus regenerated self, true experience versus false. By capturing and reflecting upon the ever-changing 'state' or 'frame' of their heart in static moments, they were locating themselves day-by-day in relation to these multiple, overlapping dichotomies. The sources under examination here were part of this process: written and spoken manifestations of individuals' ongoing reflections and heart-focused self-assessments. This way of thinking was captured in the conversion narrative of the congregationalist John Collins, who spoke of 'thoughtfullness of heart' to his new flock in 1669. He informed them that, sometime ago, he went through a period of 'horror & anguish of soule', experiencing 'violent …

---

[80] Peter Lake, *The boxmaker's revenge: 'orthodoxy', 'heterodoxy' and the politics of the parish in early Stuart London* (Manchester, 2009), 190-5.

[81] William Chibald, *A trial of faith by the touchstone of the gospel* (1622), cited in ibid., 193.

[82] Sullivan, *Beyond melancholy*, 149, 146-62.

[83] Bogan, *Meditations*, 65.

[84] See also Sullivan, *Beyond melancholy*, 149.

impressions' and fearing that 'the Devill was ready to fetch' him away. While these 'violent impressions' passed, the process continued unresolved as 'tho God was pleased gratiously to remove' them, he was still 'under grate thoughtfullnes of heart & solicitude' concerning the condition of his 'souls welfare'.[85] This 'thoughtfullness' was the godly's constant attempt to resolve the many tensions that surrounded their sense of self, and was undertaken in this organ due to the heart's multifaceted nature, ability to contain both the tangible and intangible, and, above all, capacity to align individual identity with collective 'godliness'. Abstract knowledge of salvation could be planted in the material self through the heart and, given the existence of a heart in every individual, could be uniformly replicated throughout a community.

That is not to say, however, that this process was either simple or always successful. If you expected to *feel* assurance within, what happened if you did not? As Lady Elizabeth Brooke (1602-1683) stated: 'It is the spiritual part of Religion that is hard, the outward part is easie.'[86] Indeed, while the heart could act as a functional tool towards assurance of salvation, it could equally function as a sign of your damnation. Those unsure of their election were recorded as lamenting: 'I fear the kingdom of grace is not yet come into my heart … I fear the plough of the law hath not yet gone deep enough, therefore I have not grace'. These words were published by the Presbyterian minister Thomas Watson who, revealing his strongly pastoral bent, dedicated much of his work to consoling those who were unconvinced of their salvation in his *Body of practical divinity* of 1692.[87] Individuals experiencing anxieties such as these could not identify the warmed, enlarged heart that, as we have seen, signified 'evidence' of election in the eyes of godly communities. This lack of spiritual responsiveness, as Watson and many other ministers reassured their readers, was not necessarily a sign of damnation. Rather, in some cases, melancholy could temporarily dull the heart's ability to respond to religious duties and, moreover, exacerbate one's fears of not being saved. It is to this relationship, between the heart and melancholy, that we will now turn. Having established that the heart was understood to function physiologically in religious experience and that this allowed both the cultivation

---

[85] MS II.b.6, f. 12, CL.

[86] Lady Elizabeth Brooke, 'An appendix, containing some considerable observations, experiences, and rules for practice: found written with her Ladiship's own hand', in Nathaniel Parkhurst, *The faithful and diligent Christian* (London, 1684), 114.

[87] Thomas Watson, *A body of practical divinity* (London, 1692), 466.

of godly identity and a tangible sense of assurance, we will now consider how melancholy affected the heart.

The heart and melancholy

Melancholy, like the concept of the heart, was multifaceted. In the same way that 'heart' could refer to the organ, an individual's inner self, or the crux of a matter, 'melancholy' could be black bile, a distemper, a passing mood, a state of sadness, sweetly sentimental reflection, a genius' introspection, or a word to describe a sad state of affairs. Given the heart's ability to simultaneously control an individual's passions and embody their innate sinfulness and redemption, its ties to melancholy were multiple and interwoven. Being an excess of black bile in the body, the distemper of melancholy interacted with the heart physically. Being a providential affliction, as well as an opportunity to deeply sorrow for sin, melancholy joined with the heart in indicating an individual's spiritual condition.

The expectation of these interactions in the minds of the godly would have first stemmed from their existence in scripture with, for example, Ecclesiastes 2:23 stating that 'all his days *are* sorrows, and his travail grief; yea, his heart taketh not rest in the night'. They would have also stemmed from the linkage of the heart and melancholy in medical receipts, offering 'to comforte … the hearte and to swaye against fearefull and terrible imaginationes, and to expell Melancholy', as well as medical practitioners' belief that a 'deep impression of melancholy' caused 'heat and deep trembling of the heart'.[88] Understandings of this distemper and its ties to the heart did not only come from receipts and the advice of physicians, however, with sermons and religious treatises also providing audiences with evidence of their entwinement. Edmund Gregory's *An anatomy of Christian melancholy*, for example, as was seen at the beginning of the chapter, presented the cure of this condition as the attempt to attain 'heart-knowledge' and, ultimately, God's grace in providing the godly with a new heart. Without this cure, Gregory held that the sufferer would be led to sin, given that when the Devil 'gets possession specially in a more Melancholy heart; … [he] makes his workes few above ground' and 'hath many secret passages and Maeanders under', which are only able to be 'fully search[ed] and tracke[d] out' by God.[89] Drawing less on theology and more on Galen, the Independent minister Henry Walker meanwhile informed his readers in *Ecce Homo* that 'melancholy sadnesse …

---

[88] 'XVII century, Edward Poeton', Sloane MS 1965, f. 26r, BL.

[89] Gregory, *An historical anatomy*, sig. A8r, 119, 38-9.

ariseth' from the animal spirits 'constrain[ing] and binde[ing] the arteries, and heart'.[90] A decade previously, a funeral sermon discussing the fear of death by John Preston was published, informing readers that 'some men by constitution are more melancholy, and are naturally of a more fearefull temper, indeed distemper' than others and, in regards to these cases, explained that if 'the braine is distempered, the heart is distempered. [If] the braine apprehends things, and lookes upon them through a false glasse, through a deluded fancie, and so makes a false report to the heart, [it] presenteth things more terrible then they are'. This led the melancholic to be overly fearful, as 'the heart' distempered' by melancholy, 'as that humour prevaileth more strongly in the body', is ill affected, by the misreport that is brought to it by the understanding'.[91] Through these explanations, Preston, Gregory and Walker drew upon both theological and medical teachings to discuss pastoral issues and, in doing so, revealed an understanding that the heart was directly affected by melancholy, most often with negative consequences.

An undated letter from the seventeenth-century used similarly heart-based explanations for the damaging impact of melancholy on a sufferer's spiritual life. A minister, only identified as 'MN', described in detail to his friend Thomas Blomfield that melancholy and an unresponsiveness to religious duties were expected to occur together, and involve the heart. Diagnosing Blomfield, MN wrote: 'your griefe at present is Melancholy, … [which] is when the spleen is swelled and tainted with black choler, whereby the heart is oppressed, and fumes and vapours do ascend into the head.' Explaining what steps must be taken to overcome his melancholy, MN instructed Blomfield to 'endeavour to be cheerfull and merry; & give not way to anger and discontent; for then sadnesse will settle in your heart, sowre all the humours of the body, & corrupt the animal spirits, and the whole masse of the blood with melancholy'. Throughout the letter he mentioned numerous symptoms, which included a 'great griefe of heart' and a 'great sadnesse of heart', and asserted that: 'by sorrow of the heart the spirit is broken; and … a broken spirit drieth up the bones, so that sadnesse is the ruine both of body and mind.' For this reason, he instructed Blomfield to remember: 'I must take so much care of the preservation of both, of which I am accountable to God, as to banish from my breast with my utmost industry that fretting Consumption.' The heart, and the breast within which it resided, became the battleground for overcoming the sin of

---

[90] Walker, *Ecce homo*, 17.

[91] Featly, *Threnoikos*, 61-2.

melancholic passion. Nevertheless, while MN strongly encouraged Blomfield to fight off this passion, he was also sure to note: 'But, the chiefe Remedy against all kind of fears is to lift up our hearts to God, who sends afflictions and deliverances; who brings down, and brings up again, who gives strength according to the burden which he layes upon us, and multiplies his Comforts with afflictions.' As can be found in numerous other communications of this type, the cure for the affliction of melancholy would ultimately come from God, and the transmission of His grace to the godly's heart.[92]

As the words of MN, Preston, and others show, the infliction of melancholy upon the heart was understood to cause such spiritually problematic experiences as a disproportionate fear of death and unnecessarily 'great sadnesse'. Indeed, James Birdwood noted in his book *Hearts-ease* of 1690 that 'when God's People are in Affliction of ["Heart-Trouble and Despondency"], most times that black Cloud of *Melancholy* also surrounds them, and Darkness makes Men fearful and dejected'.[93] In other words, the troubles of a well-meaning convert were often mixed up with melancholy. How, then, could these misguided passions of the heart be distinguished from necessary, indeed obligatory, feelings of sorrow for sin which, as we have seen, were also experienced in the heart through brokenness and softening? As the following examples will demonstrate, the language of the heart could be used to make this distinction. Ministers and laypersons alike were able to sort through and discriminate between the dejection brought on by melancholy's darkness and appropriate fear of God's judgement by writing about their hearts in certain ways.

The Baptist John Bunyan, for instance, insisted on the discrete natures of a spiritually 'broken heart' and melancholy. In *The acceptable sacrifice* he argued that the experience of a broken heart was vital to a godly, contrite spirit, but was not the result of melancholy or madness. As was discussed earlier in the chapter, Bunyan criticised those who were afraid of a broken heart, going so far as to label them as mad for ignoring the need to face up to their sins. He asserted that the 'carnal man's' belief that discourses aimed at spiritually breaking the heart made people 'Melancholy or Mad' were wilfully wrong and, in doing so, Bunyan separated the intense anguish of the broken heart from what the less godly had interpreted this state to be: melancholy.[94] The Presbyterian

---

[92] 'Letter on melancholy, addressed to Thomas Blomfield and signed M. N', in 'Antiquarian miscellanies of the 17th century', Add MSS 35333, f. 3, BL.

[93] Birdwood, *Hearts-ease*, 29.

[94] Bunyan, *The acceptable sacrifice*, sigs. A2r-A13v.

layman Dorney also drew a line between the 'sullen heart' of melancholy and a broken heart, aligning the former with worldly troubles and the latter with much greater spiritual significance. In a letter of consolation, Dorney informed his sister that, given their deceased father and sibling were now with God, she should rejoice, and find comfort in the knowledge that she would see them again in due course. With these considerations in mind, he instructed her to 'not study to be more sour and melancholy; but how to be more holy, self-denying, and cheerful'. In order to remind her of the difference between the heart's mere melancholic sadness brought on by worldly losses and the true sorrow that could be inflicted by God, Dorney wrote: 'My sullen heart is never broken till almighty convincement from God break my heart to powder; till that time I play with melancholy, under a kind of vexing delight.'[95] Dorney and Bunyan, then, emphasised an important distinction between a spiritually broken heart and worldly 'heart-melancholy', while other godly writers, such as MN and Preston, also viewed a heart distempered by melancholy as both spiritually debilitating and damaging.[96] Mary Rich's diaries reveal the application of these teachings to everyday practice given that, for her, episodes of melancholy induced a dullness that blocked her heart's ability to be 'carried out' to God in religious duties. When labouring under this distemper, her heart was not in a suitable 'frame' and therefore unable to be sufficiently moved.[97]

Some individuals, however, recorded their hearts as being positively affected by melancholy, and did not make such firm distinctions between a spiritually broken heart and a heart affected by this condition. For the Independent Oliver Cromwell's cousin, writing later in the century, experiencing melancholy had an ultimately enlivening affect on her heart. In line with the prescriptive texts she read, Cromwell's cousin connected an afflicted 'hert' with the 'Sinn of Discontent', such as when she mourned excessively for the death of her father. This discontent, in turn, brought on melancholy; but when suddenly cured of this condition through God's grace, her heart was lifted up to such a 'Frame' as she 'never felt before, nor since, as if it were in the Seats of Heaven'. For Cromwell's cousin, then, her melancholy was brought on by providence in rebuke of her discontent, and ended with an extraordinary frame of heart. Rather than being dulled by this experience, her heart instead experienced fear before being lifted into an

---

[95] Dorney, *Divine contemplations*, 244, 270.

[96] Ibid., 270.

[97] Add MS 27351-5, BL.

unprecedented state. Thus, her innately corrupted heart was ultimately positively affected by melancholy, and the distemper itself, although unpleasant, had spiritual significance in her eyes.[98]

The Presbyterian minister Timothy Rogers, who was discussed briefly in the previous chapter, also viewed the relationship between melancholy and the heart in a more positive light. In explaining his melancholic troubles to his congregation in the 1680s, he referred to the heart frequently; in his view, it was not impeded by melancholy - rather, like Cromwell's cousin, his heart was spiritually enhanced by the condition. Melancholy was a providential experience in Rogers' eyes, and spiritually advantageous through the ultimate frame of heart it induced. Under the distemper of melancholy, his heart experienced the same sensations described in numerous other medical and religious texts: it 'faints' and was 'sunk'. But for Rogers, unlike Dorney, Bunyan, and other ministers such as Richard Baxter, these sensations were not distinct from the experience of a spiritually broken heart. In his view, they were one and the same. Moreover, melancholics' nature made them more susceptible to the laudable state of spiritual sorrow, given their softer hearts - not dullness. Rogers explained that melancholic Christians cried more often because 'by the inlightning of the Spirit a more tender heart than others [they] have; a more distinct view of the odiousness and malignity, of the poisonous nature, and dangerous qualities of Sin'.[99]

Rogers admitted that the fearful thoughts stirred up by an enhanced awareness of sin could often have a contracting effect on the heart, but that these fears 'are seated in the highest Region of the Soul, in the Understanding and the Will, and upon that account are more truly Spiritual, and more abiding', than mere 'sensible Consolation' which is 'in the inferior nature … [and] may be occasioned by the Temper of the Body, by the Harmony of the Passions, or the agreeable Dispositions of the Natural Spirits'. Given the higher nature of 'those other less pleasant' fears, the impact they could have on the heart should be weathered by the godly. Fear 'does naturally contract and dull the heart' making its 'motions … weak and languid', while 'despairing thoughts and apprehensions about our Everlasting State, dry up our moisture, and by cutting off our hopes, make every thing that was pleasant to us, to wither away'. While 'some great Saints' have managed to avoid this, having 'glowed in their hearts with a quicker Flame to God, when

---

[98] Add MS 5858, BL.

[99] Rogers, *A discourse*, 339, 375.

all has been cold and storm round about them', this was a rare ability. The majority, instructed Rogers, must bravely push through the coldness of heart and continue to pray 'tho it be with heaviness, tho it be mingled with many a bitter sigh', for which they will be commended by God.[100]

In addition to connecting these dulling fears to the 'highest Region of the Soul', Rogers fused the negative effects that a sorrowful heart had on the body to scripture and, thereby, spiritual significance. The symptoms others had associated with the impeding distemper of melancholy, such as appearing pale and feeling sluggish, Rogers linked to the sorrow of heart experienced by biblical figures. David and Job's anguish was the melancholic Christian's anguish, and they experienced the same 'arrows of the Almighty'. 'Sorrow of heart', Rogers explained, 'contracts the natural spirits, makes all their motions slow and feeble; and the poor afflicted body does usually decline and wast[e] away'. It causes 'an ingrateful languor of the soul', and 'darkneth the spirits, obscures the judgment, blinds the memory, as to all pleasant things, and beclouds the lucid part of the mind'. These effects of sorrow Rogers matched with scriptural examples, citing, for example, '*Prov.* 17.22 *A merry heart doth good, like a Medicine; but a broken spirit drieth the bones*' and '*My moisture is turned into the drought of Summer...* Job 16.16'.[101]

Rogers further infused the affliction of melancholy with spiritual value by asserting that the sorrow of heart experienced by godly sufferers was not able to be cured through a cordial, or even persistent prayer. Instead, only God could directly, through no encouragement of actions by the individual, lift their sorrow. As Cromwell's cousin had experienced, the onset of joy after such a trial resulted in an overwhelmingly open frame of heart. This was in line with Rogers' explanation, which stated: '*This joy has a pleasant influence on the Body, and revives* [it]'; the 'reviving sense of God's favour, does so fill our hearts, that we cannot, without dishonour to him, and prejudice to our selves, conceal, or stifle it'. Rogers was adamant that both this sorrow and joy were not the result of an individual's natural temper. He anticipated that some readers would view themselves as immune to this deep sorrow, viewing his text's advice as 'the meer product of a *melancholly temper* that always presages the worst, that is always frighting it self and others with black and formidable Idea's'. These disparaging readers, he expected, would feel themselves in 'no way inclinable to that distemper', and so 'need not fear any such perplexing thoughts'.

---

[100] Ibid., 87-9.

[101] Ibid., 374.

Rogers rebutted this stance outright, stating clearly that 'no briskness of temper, no sanguine couragious hopes, no jollities, nor diversions, can fence you from the wrath of God'. A sorrowful heart, in his view, was entwined with the experience of melancholy, and directly administered by God. Given the obligatory nature of the sorrow for sin that melancholy made possible, moreover, his illness was a valuable experience.[102]

As Cromwell's cousin and Rogers' accounts show, for some nonconformists, of both Presbyterian and Independent identities, the distemper of melancholy could function productively within religious experience and, although unpleasant, was believed to ultimately enhance their spiritual journey, as it affected their hearts and made their sorrow for sin stronger. Moreover, they believed that melancholic sorrow for sin was not the result of an individual's constitution, but was both inflicted and cured by God regardless of their natural temper through providence. For others, such as Rich, Preston, and Dorney, melancholy was a frustrating bodily illness brought on by worldly concerns and natural temperament that hardened their hearts and made them less able to carry out spiritual duties. In their view, 'heart-melancholy' was a worldly, damaging experience, distinct from a spiritually broken heart. Despite their differences, however, both groups used the language of the heart to express their views. Given the heart's important physiological role in religious experience that was established earlier in the chapter, by describing the sensations and frame of their heart in response to melancholy, the godly were able to infuse the condition with spiritual significance, or not.

Conclusion

By comparing various writers and genres, this chapter has argued that the godly's descriptions of hearts, which drew upon multiple discourses including the scriptural, spiritual, and medical, were not merely symbolic or metaphorical, but referred to their understanding that this organ behaved in a physical way in their spiritual journey. It was felt, quite literally, to capture their spiritual-cum-physical self, and could therefore be used as a measure of one's godliness and, in a more immediate way, one's aptitude for religious duties. A shared language of the heart, which was both visceral and steeped in spiritual significance, was developed by the godly through the sharing of verbal, written, and visual sources. Nonconformists of Presbyterian, Independent and Particular Baptist stances used this language to assert their identity, create community, and provide themselves with

[102] Rogers, *A discourse*, 170.

tangible, communicable evidence of assurance of salvation. Given its importance to spiritual life, the language of the heart was also used to describe the effect of melancholy on religious experiences, and by analysing these descriptions, we are able to discern writers' attitudes towards this condition. For some, melancholy's damaging effects on spiritual experience could be identified by its ability to dull the heart and cause misplaced, immoderate passions with in it. For others, an onset of the condition could result in a greater ability to sorrow for sin and, ultimately, a spiritually productive frame of heart. The former group understood a firm distinction to exist between a heart broken by God and a heart troubled with melancholy, while the latter blurred the two experiences. The next chapter will turn to the soul and body: two further aspects of the spiritual-physical relationship that, like the heart, were used to explain and evaluate the presence of melancholy in religious experiences.

Chapter Three

The soul and body

In March and April, 1681, an unknown writer composed funeral elegies and anagram-based poems for Sir Godfrey Rodes of Houghton, his wife, Lady Mary Rodes, and their chapel's preacher, an ejected minister named Jeremiah Milner (Figure 3.1).[1] One of the pieces, entitled 'A spiritual Conflict, in which the Spiritual mind obtains the Victory over the soul', addressed 'to the vertuous & truly pious Lady Mary Rodes', was split into three sections: 'carnal mind' on the left, 'spiritual mind' on the right, and, beneath these, a single column consisting of a soliloquy from the perspective of the victor. Each of the minds' six stanzas were inspired by anagrams of the dedicatee's name, including 'am sore dry', 'ye so marr'd', and 'merry? O sad'.[2]

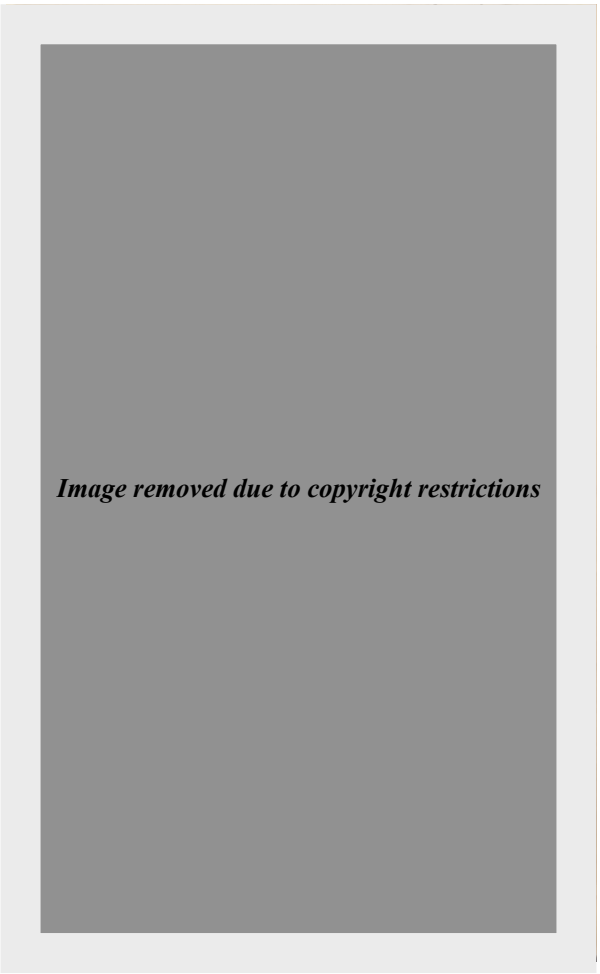

Figure 3.1: 'A spiritual conflict', in 'Ralph Thoresby transcripts', Add MS 4460, ff. 80v-84v, BL.

[1] In the early eighteenth century, the Presbyterian-raised Ralph Thoresby copied these poems into his antiquarian writings. Add MS 4460, ff. 80v-84v, BL.

[2] Ibid., ff. 80v-81r.

Throughout the stanzas, the carnal mind, who 'highly prise[s] the world', attempts to lure the soul away from its 'dreams' of 'God & Christ', deeming these 'barren theams', and instead wishing to 'hear & see & tast[e] the things below'. Dismissing thoughts 'of sin, … death & judgement', it declares: 'lets be cheery, banish this sadness', and, rallying forces, turns to the 'lust of ey[e], & pride of life' to 'joyn with flesh to bring the spirit low'. The spiritual mind, on the other hand, focuses on being 'marryed' to the 'father, son, & spirit' and, in opposition to the relief of worldly joys, holds that 'one dram' of 'Gods love', 'with a good drop of Christ his blood', is the 'rar' dose' that 'doth all fainting stop'. Adding that 'me thinks I cannot live til' though art dead', the spiritual mind gains the upper hand, mocking the carnal's merriness and preferring 'sadness' over vain 'sport[ing] with sin'. Having triumphed, the spiritual mind begins a soliloquy, encouraging the soul to give itself entirely to God, and longing for the moment in which it will be able to do so.[3]

Thus, the wants of the body were placed in direct opposition to an individual's spiritual needs. Rather than working in unison to achieve a godly ideal, the author conveyed the widely held view that, given the soul and body were at such odds with one another, 'contest', 'strife' and 'abundant … discord' would plague the 'mind' of every individual until death: 'that day when strife shal cease / and we remain in perfect peace.' This emphasis on the soul and body being 'elements that jarr', allowed individuals to express the difficulties they encountered in conducting a godly life: their soul acted as the voice of spiritual longing, and their body as the cause of all setbacks.[4] As was discussed in Chapter One, the body was understood to be corrupted by original sin and was, therefore, a perpetual source of sin. The soul, on the other hand, was often understood to be the reluctant prisoner of this corrupted flesh and bone.[5] Although other, less dichotomous approaches to the soul-body relationship existed at this time, it was this view that often shaped discussions of melancholy, despair, and sorrow for sin, as it allowed their

---

[3] Ibid.

[4] Ibid. For a similar use of the soul-body relationship in unpublished, circulated religious poetry, see 'A dialogue betwixt the soul, and the body', February 11th 1649, in Charles Hutton's transcription of 'Lady Mary Carey's meditations and poetry', Rawlinson MS D.1308, ff. 1r-117v, Bodleian Library, University of Oxford, transcribed in Adcock et al., *Flesh and spirit*, 45-51. These poems belonged to a genre of soul-body dialogues that dated back to the medieval period. See Rosalie Osmond, *Mutual accusation: seventeenth-century body and soul dialogues in their literary and theological context* (Toronto, 1990), 55, 83.

[5] Margaret Ezell, 'Body and soul', in *The Oxford handbook of early modern English literature and religion*, ed. Andrew Hiscock and Helen Wilcox (Oxford, 2017), 606.

categorisation.[6] Melancholy, in its humoral definition, was a product of the body, while sorrow for sin and despair were the fruits of a distressed soul. In line with Galenic tradition, moreover, the body and soul were widely understood throughout the century to exist within an interdependent relationship: if 'the Body be out of frame or tune, the Soul cannot be well at ease'.[7] As a result of these beliefs, melancholy could be blamed, along with various other corruptions of the body, for impinging upon the soul's godly efforts, while sorrow for sin could be seen to occur separately from the body, within the conscience, indicating a soul on the path to salvation. Given these distinctions, the soul, body, and their interactions were common reference points for religious writers throughout the seventeenth century and were employed, similarly to the language of the heart explored in the previous chapter, to assert the spiritual value, or lack thereof, of experiences of melancholy.

While Chapters One and Two emphasised a continuity in foundational understandings of the role of the body, and particularly the heart, in religious experience, this chapter finds some change in the views of the nonconforming godly. Through the textual analysis of published conversion narratives and spiritual (auto)biographies, it is argued that a focus upon the soul enabled Independents and Particular Baptists to deny accusations of melancholy during the tense years that followed the Restoration, whilst articulations of causality (soul first, body second) were used by Presbyterians later in the century to instil their narratives of melancholic struggle with greater spiritual significance.

In doing so, this chapter commences the thesis' attempt to assess the narratives provided by Hodgkin and Schmidt. As outlined in the Introduction, Hodgkin sees bodily explanations for religious experience, including melancholy, as having become less stigmatised from the 1650s onwards, while Schmidt finds the opposite; in his view, melancholy, and the strong spiritual affections associated with it in the spiritual life, were criticised more frequently by nonconformist writers after the Restoration. The following

---

[6] Less dichotomous approaches could be found in the works of Aristotle, Aquinas, and contemporary theologians, such as John Flavel, who viewed the soul-body dynamic as a natural, co-dependent union. An oppositional view of the soul-body relationship was more in line with sources such as Plato, Descartes, and the soul-body dialogue genre. Discussion of the matter varies in scripture (e.g. Romans 7:24-5; Galatians 5:16-7; 1 Peter 2:11; 2 Corinthians 5:1-5; John 3:6) and was, of course, open to interpretation. See Ezell, 'Body and soul', 598-612; John Sutton, 'Soul and body', in *The Oxford handbook of British philosophy in the seventeenth century*, ed. Peter R. Anstey (Oxford, 2013), 285-307; John Flavel, *Pneumatologia, a treatise of the soul of man* (London, 1685), 7, 139, 141; John Henry, 'The matter of souls: medical theory and theology in seventeenth-century England', in *The medical revolution of the seventeenth century,* ed. Roger French and Andrew Wear (Cambridge, 1989), 87-113.

[7] Hannah Allen, *A narrative of God's gracious dealings with that choice Christian Mrs. Hannah Allen* (London, 1683), i. See also Adcock et al., *Flesh and spirit*, 236; Hodgkin, *Madness*, 74.

case studies draw upon a wider range of cases to reveal that, throughout the period, not all nonconformists criticised melancholy or eschewed strong spiritual affections. In fact, there appears to have been an increase in the willingness of nonconforming godly writers to include melancholy in narratives of religious experience. At the same time, however, the stigma of melancholy certainly remained and, as this chapter demonstrates, the soul-body relationship was crucial to writers' attempts to deny or acceptably express the involvement of this condition.

Deborah Huish: 'torments of my soul'

In 1654, a young woman, Deborah Huish, of Sidbury, East Devon, accompanied her two sisters and their husbands to Ireland. Her brothers-in-law were Baptist, Cromwellian army officers, who travelled around the country whilst their wives stayed in Dublin.[8] Soon after their arrival, Deborah contracted and survived smallpox, while one of her sisters died. This traumatic, near-death episode appears to have exacerbated her preexisting anxieties that she was not one of God's elect and, as evidence of her reprobation, had committed the sin against the Holy Ghost. Despite the efforts of her Baptist community and minister Thomas Patient, her condition worsened: she ate very little, becoming extremely frail, and was suicidal. Once she had returned to her parents' home, she participated more willingly in religious duties and gradually became convinced that she was in fact one of God's elect. Her recovery only became decisively complete, however, when she accepted the lawfulness of adult baptism, practiced by the neighbouring Loughwood Church where her brothers-in-law, William Allen and John Vernon, were elders. Having decided upon its lawfulness through her own investigation of scripture, she delivered her conversion narrative before the congregation, was accepted and baptised. She, and her congregation, interpreted the extended suffering she had endured as a victorious battle against the temptations of the Devil.[9] Desiring to provide a hopeful example to others experiencing spiritual turmoil, as well as unite Baptist congregations and defend their practices, the elders of the congregation published Huish's conversion narrative in 1658.[10] A leading publisher of radical religious works, Livewell Chapman, published the text in London as *The captive taken from the strong or, A true relation of the gratious release of Mistrisse Deborah Huish (by the*

---

[8] Rachel Adcock, *Baptist women's writings in revolutionary culture, 1640-1680* (Abingdon, 2016), 167.

[9] Allen, *The captive*, 3-4, 8-12, 18-23, 70-1, sigs. b7v-b8v.

[10] On the propagandistic nature of the publication, see Catharine Gray, *Women writers and public debate in 17th-century Britain* (Basingstoke, 2007), 101.

arm of the Almighty) from under the power of the Tempter, by whose firy conflicts she had been sorely vexed for about fourteen years.[11] Given the expectation that women should refrain from vocalising or disseminating their own views, Huish's narrative was introduced by the words of men: two prefaces by her brothers-in-law, followed by an endorsement by the congregation's elders.[12]

In her study of the text, Rachel Adcock asserts that 'as well as being vulnerable to spiritual corruption, Huish experienced intense anxiety, or "melancholy", which physicians recognised as a bodily illness characterised by an imbalance of humours'. The term 'melancholy' is not used in the text, however. While Adcock claims that 'throughout the narrative the cycle continues: Huish's humoral corruptions both aggravate, and are aggravated by, her belief in her own sinful estate, and the Devil's own "blacke fumes"', this is not specified in the text. While Adcock took 'blacke fumes' (somewhat misleadingly) from Burton's *Anatomy of melancholy*, the term 'melancholy' was avoided in Huish's narrative, as were 'humour', 'fumes', or any language that would have suggested a physiological origin for her experiences.[13] Rather, the focus throughout both the prefaces and narrative was upon the attacks the devil directed at her soul: instead of imbalanced humours, the authors wrote of her 'sinking', 'despairing', 'buffet[ed]', 'poor', 'discouraged' soul. Huish and the elders defined her experiences as her 'souls disease', 'soul-dismaying distresse', and 'soul-work', rather than a bodily illness.[14]

That is not to say, however, that the body was ignored; in fact a heavy focus was placed upon her outward suffering. The reader was told that she could not speak, that her frame was so thin as to be 'like to an anatomy [skeleton]', and that she was desirous to harm her physical self.[15] While Adcock erroneously labelled Huish's experiences as religious melancholy, another line of her argument provides a more accurate reading. Huish's 'physical appearance', she states, was 'used as an outward manifestation of her inward spiritual afflictions'. As was the case in other sectarian and Baptist writings,

---

[11] *ODNB*, s.v. 'Chapman, Livewell'.

[12] Allen, *The captive*, sigs. A2r-b8v. On the complexities of female authorship at this time, see Gray, *Women writers*, 26-30.

[13] Adcock, 'Deborah Huish's spiritual experiences', 59-60. For 'blacke fumes', see Robert Burton, *The anatomy of melancholy* (Oxford, 1638), III, 712.

[14] Allen, *The captive*, sigs. a7r, b4v, A4r, 24, sigs. A2r, b6v. The prefatory material also referred to 'sorrow of this soul' (sig. a7r) and 'soul destroying nature of sin' (sig. b5v), while Huish used the phrases 'torments of my soul' (6), 'free grace to my soul' (70), and 'my soul was much took up with thoughts about my sad estate' (21).

[15] Ibid., sigs. a3r-v, 9.

spiritual and bodily pain were presented as 'inextricably intertwined' in Huish's narrative. Moreover, by providing details on the severity of her bodily ailments, her ultimate recovery through baptism was given maximum force; it made 'her recovery more remarkable', while also proving 'to her readers that God can visit the sickest, or the most spiritually bereft'.[16] In this way, God endorsed Baptist practices through His decision to heal Huish.

What is vital, however, is the text's depiction of causality. Rather than adopting the explanation that the devil would take advantage of the body's melancholy humour to lead victims astray, there was no suggestion that Huish's bodily afflictions caused her spiritual woes. Instead, it was suggested that the 'sorrow of this soul' caused her body to fail. This ordering was accentuated by likening her case to scriptural examples of suffering that had spiritual origins. Her loss of weight, for example, was expressed through the words of David, who had been cast down by God: 'my bones cleave to my skin', while the congregation, shocked by her physical condition and inability to speak, were likened to 'Friends of *Job*, [who] came at first to mourn, and comfort her'. The primary cause of Huish's suffering was also asserted through the text's description of recovery. The second introduction, by John Vernon, drew upon the common concept of God as physician in order to refute the existence of a physical cause, commenting 'how foolish many Physicians and our false refuges have proved'. Huish's bodily ailments, in other words, are presented as symptoms rather than causes of spiritual suffering in the text. Her soul, buffeted by the devil, was the source of her suffering, and God 'onely hath the healing Medicines'.[17]

What is more, her turmoil was not depicted as unwanted or unnecessary, as the misplaced fears of a melancholic distemper could be, but was upheld by her congregation as an exemplary, productive case of spiritual sorrow. John Vernon, for example, encouraged readers to take inspiration from Huish's suffering. 'Let us be as Doves of the Valley', he wrote, 'every one mourning over his Iniquities, which is the most hopeful path of refreshment from his presence'. In his view, Huish's case was evidence that God 'will certainly relieve, and that right soon, those that truely sowe in teares; for according to his faithful word, *Psal. 126. 5,6. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing pretious seed, shall*

---

[16] Adcock, 'Deborah Huish's spiritual experiences', 47.

[17] Allen, *The captive*, sigs. a7r, a3r-v, b3r, a5v. John Vernon quoted Psalm 102:4-5 in full when likening Huish's affliction to that of David, making the sequence of spiritual to bodily suffering clear: 'my heart is smitten and withered like grasse, so that I forget to eat my bread: by reason of the voice of my groaning, my bones cleave to my skin' (sig. a3r).

doubtlesse return again with rejoycing, bringing his sheaves with him'. Rather than being an excessive passion stemming from worldly concerns, or an exaggerated fear caused by melancholic distemper, Vernon was keen to show that Huish's sorrow had stemmed from an afflicted soul. 'Let my soul and yours be imbarked with those that weep', he continued, 'this day before the Lord, chusing affliction with his people, rather than with those who rejoyce now'.[18]

Both Huish and her congregation, then, steered her narrative away from putative physiological origins and the term 'melancholy', instead focusing upon the 'soul-work' of her experiences. One motivation for this may have been to preempt criticism. Concerns over reputation are indeed evident in the text: Vernon, for example, chastised himself for having only been anxious, during Huish's struggles, that she would commit suicide whilst in his care. Rather than praying for her in hope of a recovery, he could only concern himself with 'get[ting] her safe again delivered into her dear Parents hands, that my face might not be covered with shame, according to my fear of her untimely end, at such distance from them'.[19] Given the text's aims of vindicating Baptist practices, the authors would not have benefited from identifying a physiological origin for Huish's affliction at this time. Baptists, commonly linked to the infamous Anabaptists of Münster by their opponents, were accused of heresy, rebellion, sexual misconduct and madness, while Baptist women were especially accused of sinful, lascivious behaviour.[20] Thus, admitting to melancholy, with its ties to madness and secret sin, would not have been an effective tactic for the Loughwood congregation to employ, especially in such a time of strain for those sectarians who did not support Cromwell. Indeed, Allen and Vernon were already being tracked by John Thurloe's spies due to their criticism of Cromwell and involvement with Fifth Monarchists.[21]

Perhaps for these reasons, Baptists - not only within the bounds of Huish's text - appear to have been reluctant to locate their spiritual experiences as originating in the body. The same avoidance of melancholy can be found in another of Vernon's publications, written eight years later. Again celebrating the exemplary experiences of

---

[18] Allen, *The captive*, sigs. b3r-v.

[19] Ibid., sig. a4v.

[20] Anne Dunan-Page, *Grace overwhelming: John Bunyan,* The pilgrim's progress *and the extremes of the Baptist mind* (Bern, 2006), 79-92; Adcock, *Baptist women's writings*, 29-68. See, for instance, Daniel Featley, *The dippers dipt* (London, 1645), 108, 200, 209; Thomas Edwards, *The first and second part of Gangraena* (London, 1646), 3, 58, 121.

[21] Adcock, 'Deborah Huish's spiritual experiences', 52, n. 39.

another individual, Vernon wrote and self-published a biography of his son, Caleb, who had died aged twelve in 1665.[22] Despite having become a physician (presumably in response to the restrictions placed on dissenting ministers since 1662), Vernon had been unable to cure Caleb of a severe consumption that, after three years of declining health, had caused his sudden and traumatic death by choking.[23] Vernon, in recounting Caleb's life and patience in the face of increasing pain, upheld his son as 'a little Legacy of Grace from God', presenting his illnesses as stimuli for his spiritual growth. Most significantly for this discussion, Vernon was insistent that Caleb had not succumbed to the bodily weakness of melancholy, stating on two occasions that his son 'would not own to be melancholy'. Faced with his own mortality and that of others, Caleb had come to meditate increasingly on his eternal salvation. Although his demeanour became more 'serious' as a result of these considerations, 'he would not endure to hear it called Melancholy'. Even when he had taken on a 'seeming reserved and drooping posture' whilst bedridden, 'he would not own to be melancholy, but [only undergoing] solemn meditation about his eternal estate, with hope and some joy (yet mixed at first with more fears and doubtings)'. Later in the narrative, when he had been confined to his bed for some weeks, Caleb felt himself 'inclining to melancholy' and so quickly fought back, requesting his father bring him '*a young Lamb, Pigeon, Rabbit or any thing*' to 'stand on the bed by him, to prevent Melancholly thoughts'. These examples throughout the text suggest that both Caleb and his father were keen to present his anguish as solely caused by spiritual concerns. It appears they believed any suggestion of melancholy as a factor in his increasing seriousness would have tainted his 'Little Legacy'.[24]

Looking beyond the Loughwood congregation, the same reluctance to describe spiritual suffering as originating in the body, particularly in the form of melancholy, can be found amongst other Baptists. Five years after the publication of Huish's narrative, another Particular Baptist, Katherine Sutton, wrote of her spiritual afflictions in similar

---

[22] John Vernon, *The compleat scholler; or, A relation of the life, and latter-end especially, of Caleb Vernon* (London, 1666). This text has been used by Hannah Newton and Patricia Crawford, albeit very briefly. See Hannah Newton, 'The sick child in early modern England, 1580–1720', *Endeavour* 38, 2 (2014): 125-8; idem, '"Very sore nights and days": The child's experience of illness in early modern England, c.1580–1720', *Medical History* 55, 2 (2011): 168, 171, 174, 179-80; Patricia Crawford, '"The sucking child": Adult attitudes to child care in the first year of life in seventeenth-century England', *Continuity and Change* 1, 1 (1986): 36.

[23] The text does not provide any details on how Vernon came to take up 'his practice in Physick' after the Restoration. It can be gathered, however, that he possessed a store of 'Medicine for his Apothecary' at home, and practiced successfully at Epsam and Ewel. Indeed, his services were popular enough in the latter village to incite the 'malitious' actions of an envious 'Chyrurgion' who aimed to 'impair his Practice'. See Vernon, *The compleat scholler*, 10-2.

[24] Ibid., sig. A2r, 21, 23-4, 64-5.

terms. Sutton, who had fled to Holland at the Restoration, wrote of being 'very sadly afflicted in spirit', as she had been left in a 'deserted condition' by God. 'I found [this state] to be very sad', she wrote, 'and I was very much perplexed in my spirit'.[25] Later, the well-known Baptist John Bunyan was similarly consistent in his refusal to give spiritual suffering bodily origins. As Dunan-Page has argued, 'help with bodily malfunction is precisely what Bunyan refuses at the beginning of *The pilgrim's progress* [in 1678], where Christian's "distemper" is supposed to be understood in spiritual terms by enlightened readers and in 'carnal' terms by graceless reprobates'.[26] Much like the Loughwood congregation, but in more exaggerated terms, Bunyan described his protagonist, Christian, as suffering from symptoms that could be readily recognised as melancholy, yet refused to make this diagnosis himself.[27] Huish, her congregation's elders, and Bunyan alike trod close to what could appear to be bodily distemper in order to more powerfully refute that interpretation. As Vernon wrote in his introduction to Huish's narrative, it was the sorrow of their souls that distinguished them from the ungodly, those who 'are not sensible *of the afflictions of Joseph*; but make merry with the nakednesse of *No*[*ah*]'.[28]

An anonymous gentlewoman: 'the highest pitch of holy rhetorick'

It was not only Baptists who eschewed bodily interpretations of spiritual suffering in the tense years of the 1650s and 60s, however. A similar case can be found in an Independent text, *Conversion exemplified*, which was published for the first time in 1663, again in 1669, and was still being sold by a well-known seller of nonconformist books, Elizabeth Calvert, in 1674.[29] This publication mostly consisted of the dictated words of an anonymous 'gracious gentlewoman', who had recently recounted her life from her deathbed and requested her husband have her text published for the 'common benefit, but especially … her near Relations in the flesh'. As the narrative reveals, her family had been Royalists during the recent wars, supported '*Episcopacy*', and strongly disapproved of her religious views. They had concluded that her shift to nonconformism had been caused by 'melancholy fits' and '*Phrenzy*'. As a result, she presented her narrative as an attempt to

---

[25] Sutton, *A Christian womans*, 6, 23.

[26] Dunan-Page, *Grace overwhelming*, 161.

[27] John Bunyan, *The pilgrim's progress* (London, 1678), 1-5. See also idem, *Come & welcome to Jesus Christ* (London, 1678), 186-7.

[28] The text reads 'Nosh', but it is assumed that this is a misprint of 'Noah' (Genesis 9:20-2). Allen, *The captive*, sig. b3v.

[29] Adcock et al., *Flesh and spirit*, 174-6; *ODNB*, s.v. 'Calvert, Elizabeth'.

convince them of the ungodliness of their ways and refute their accusations of 'Phanat[ic]ism'.[30] This was necessary not only in response to their previous criticisms, but also in expectation of any further accusations, given deathbed scenes were often used by critics to spread rumours of individuals experiencing apostasy in their last moments.[31] The defensive nature of her writing makes the case very similar to an account composed earlier in the century by another gentlewoman: Dionys Fitzherbert (c. 1580 - d. 1641). Recounting a personal crisis that occurred around 1607, Fitzherbert insisted that her experiences had been a trial of faith in the form of an 'Afflicted Conscience', rather than 'melancholy or I know not what turning of the brain' as her family had concluded.[32]

Presumably due to the criticism of the Restoration and praise for Oliver Cromwell expressed in *Conversion exemplified*, the authors' identities remained anonymous and the printer's name was withheld. As had been the case for Huish, it was deemed necessary for the gentlewoman's words to be prefaced by a male: in this case, her husband. In the narrative itself, the gentlewoman described her spiritual growth and how this fitted around various events in her life, beginning with her initial awakening as a child. Driven by her desire to live a more godly life, she prayed that she would be removed from her 'exceedingly sinful, and prophane' household and, in response, her parents sent her to London in the early 1650s. She joined Cromwell's court, where she first became Presbyterian before marrying her husband and shifting to his Independent persuasion. In 1658 she contracted a 'violent cold', after which she did not enjoy another 'healthy day' for the rest of her life. 'Distempers … increased upon… [her], with very troublesome Effects and Symptoms', until she died in 1663.[33]

From the beginning of the text it is clear that the gentlewoman and her husband wished to place her experiences firmly within a spiritual framework; the title, after all, was 'conversion exemplified'.[34] As a result, like other spiritual autobiographies, the main focus of the narrative was not the life events recounted above, but her religious experiences. The reader is told the gentlewoman experienced five years of difficult confusion in the initial

---

[30] Anon., *Conversion exemplified in the instance of a gracious gentlewoman now in glory* (London, 1669), title page, 55, 9, 59.

[31] Ralph Houlbrooke, 'The puritan death-bed, c.1560-c.1660', in *The culture of English puritanism, 1560-1700*, ed. Christopher Durston and Jacqueline Eales (London, 1996), 127.

[32] Dionys Fitzherbert, MS Sion arc: L40.2/E47, f. 7r, Lambeth Palace Library, cited in Hodgkin, *Madness*, 67. See also Morrissey, 'Narrative authority', 1-17; Katharine Hodgkin, *Women, madness and sin in early modern England: The autobiographical writings of Dionys Fitzherbert* (Farnham, 2010), 34.

[33] Anon., *Conversion exemplified*, 13, 52-4, title page, sigs. A2r-B2v, 5-6, 26-7, 55, 48.

[34] Adcock et al. also make this point. See *Flesh and spirit*, 177.

stage of her conversion, followed by further anxieties during her time in London; all of which, including her long illness, were presented as the necessary, sanctified afflictions of the godly.[35]

Her relatives did not support this interpretation. When describing the initial stages of her conversion, in which she began to feel the weight of sin, the gentlewoman asserted that she had been 'very careful to hide it from' her family given 'they counted wounds of conscience for sin, melancholy fits'.[36] She quickly, and implicitly, contradicted their stance by asserting the ineffectiveness of the usual remedies for melancholy in her case, stating that attempting to turn 'aside' her 'black thoughts' through 'mirth' and 'diversion in merry company' was unsuccessful. Instead, these methods only 'encreased the disease, for it multiplied sin in me, and God thereupon multiplied my sorrows'. With these words she not only countered their diagnosis, but asserted her own: the 'sickness' she suffered was not melancholy, but a soul 'touch'd with the sence of sin'.[37] Throughout the remainder of the narrative she continued to assert that the cause of her troubles was sin, rather than any bodily distemper. She stated, for example, that God 'discovered to me, that if I would ever be at peace I must get my sin pardoned, in regard that it was most evident that all my anguish and torment proceeded from the guilt of unpardoned sin'.[38]

It was not only melancholy that the gentlewoman had to deny, however, but also an extension of this distemper: frenzy. In describing her relatives' reaction to her anguish further, she added that 'if the wound were deeper [than "melancholy fits"] and more smarting than ordinary, then they esteemed them maddish…, and that it befel them for being guilty of some foul secret sin'.[39] This view employed the long-held belief, which had gained more momentum since earlier in the century, that God would use madness to punish the worst sinners, as he had done to king Nebuchadnezzar in the Book of Daniel.[40] As the co-editors Adcock, Read, and Ziomek have argued in their analysis of this text, 'when the gentlewoman styles herself as the prophet Daniel advising

---

[35] Anon., *Conversion exemplified*, 17, 24, 28, 48-9.

[36] Ibid., 8-9. During the initial stages of her conversion, the gentlewoman's family also accused her of becoming 'bookish' and of being a hypocrite: '*A young Saint would be an old Devil*' (26). Like melancholy, these were common accusations levelled at the godly, as subsequent cases will also demonstrate.

[37] Ibid., 9, sig. A6v, 15. Sin was often referred to as the 'sickness of the Soul' at this time. See, for example, the work of ejected ministers Richard Baxter, *A saint or a brute* (London, 1662), 308; Thomas Doolittle, *Man ashiv le-Yahoweh* (London, 1666), 143; William Benn, *Soul-prosperity in several sermons* (London, 1683), 153.

[38] Ibid., 9.

[39] Ibid.

[40] On the growing tendency to view mental torment as a form of divine retribution, see Walsham, *Providence*, 89-90; MacDonald, *Mystical bedlam*, 174.

Nebuchadnezzar, addressing her relatives, she is deliberately reversing the claims they had made against her' by disassociating herself from the biblical king.[41]

Later in the narrative accusations of madness were raised again, as the gentlewoman addressed a number of questions to her family, and any 'unregenerate unacquaintance' who may be reading. 'Judge, I pray you', she wrote:

> in your most retired thoughts; for I appeal to your Consciences from your wild discourses; wherein out of your natural enmity to Conversion, you call it *Phrenzy*, and to a holy conversation, which gaines no better title from you than *Phanatism*, or (which is worse) *Sedition* and *Rebellion*.[42]

Frenzy, at this time, was 'understood to involve a degree of pathological disturbance far superior to [i.e. more intense than] that of melancholy', as Anne Dunan-Page has explained, and was treated as an 'inflammation of the brain, causing a high temperature'. It was associated with 'excessive movement', as opposed to melancholy's typical sluggishness, and was often conflated with madness in common parlance, despite their technical differences in learned writings.[43]

The gentlewoman's relatives' belief that her experiences were mere '*Phrenzy*' was representative of the shift in attitudes that occurred after the civil wars towards fervent religion. As described in the Introduction, intense expressions of spiritual suffering became less acceptable outside of godly circles as the religio-political landscape shifted at the Restoration. Rather than being upheld as signs of conversion, the torment of sorrow for sin or despair came to be viewed as symptoms of melancholy or madness, especially by Arminian conformists.[44] The assumption that women were more susceptible to the body's weaknesses than men in this period would have made the process of rebuffing the claims of the anonymous gentlewoman's family all the more difficult.[45] Adcock, Read and Ziomek argue that the gentlewoman's husband attempted to counter accusations of frenzy by invoking 'earlier Renaissance ideas that saw burning enthusiasm as divinely inspired, rather than as a humoral illness', with his assertion that the gentlewoman's '*Love to Christ and his Members burnt so hot in her (in this frigid age wherein all seek their own) as it drank up her*

---

[41] Adcock et al., *Flesh and spirit*, 177.

[42] Anon., *Conversion exemplified*, 58-9.

[43] Dunan-Page, *Grace overwhelming*, 168-9, n. 66.

[44] On these shifts, see also Michael MacDonald, 'Insanity and the realities of history in early modern England', *Psychological Medicine* 11 (1981): 18-9.

[45] Fissell, *Vernacular bodies*, 122.

radical moisture in a degree to the shortening of her life'. According to these scholars' interpretation, the gentlewoman's husband understood her symptoms 'as religious "enthusiasm", also caused by a heating of the humours', rather than the heat of frenzy.[46]

It is unclear if this was the case, however, given he does not refer to the heating of the humours, but the burning of her 'Love to Christ', and while this could have heated her humours incidentally, there is no further indication that he aimed to represent his wife as experiencing enthusiasm. He does not, for example, describe her as possessing the joyful raptures or ability to prophesy that would normally be associated with this condition.[47] Moreover, while Adcock, Read and Ziomek draw upon Henry More's *Enthusiasmus triumphatus* to explain contemporary understandings of enthusiasm as a medical condition ('melancholy while it is cold, causes sadness and despondency of mind, but once heated, [causes] Ecstasies and Raptures with triumphant joy'), it was views such as More's that would make the husband's choice of words so striking if they did in fact intend to describe enthusiasm. More was not condoning such 'Ecstasies and Raptures', but mocking 'this Enthusiastical affection of … *Joy* and Triumph of Spirit, that Enthusiasts are several times actuated withall to their own great admiration'.[48] What is more, the description provided by the gentlewoman's husband did not align with 'earlier Renaissance' understandings of divine enthusiasm, which in fact approached the condition with ambivalence, nor the divine raptures outlined by Ficino, Aristotle, and Plato.[49]

Rather than referring to the heating of black bile to reach divine enthusiasm, then, it seems that the gentlewoman's husband aimed to highlight both the depth of his wife's love and, by comparison, the 'frigid[ity]' of his contemporaries. Stating that he 'never knew' anyone to possess such a 'reality and ardency of love', he concluded that it

---

[46] Adcock et al., *Flesh and spirit*, 177; Anon., *Conversion exemplified*, sig. A3r.

[47] The gentlewoman expresses joy, but in a way that was typical of the conversion narrative genre. See anon., *Conversion exemplified*, 24-5; Bruce Hindmarsh, *The evangelical conversion narrative: spiritual autobiography in early modern England* (Oxford, 2005), 48.

[48] Adcock et al., *Flesh and spirit*, 177; More, *Enthusiasmus*, 24.

[49] On the ambivalence towards divine frenzy in earlier Renaissance discourse, see Heyd, '*Be sober and reasonable*', 57-8. On classical understandings, see Noel L. Brann, *The debate over the origin of genius during the Italian Renaissance: The theories of supernatural frenzy and natural melancholy* (Leiden, 2002), 3, 74-8, 82-94; Angus Gowland, 'The ethics of Renaissance Melancholy', *Intellectual History Review* 18, 1 (2008): 107-8. In brief, for Ficino and Aristotle, black bile needed to reach a mean temperature between hot and cold before great feats could be achieved (thus, the radical moisture would not burn out, as the anonymous gentlewoman's husband had described). Moreover, for Aristotle, 'genial melancholy' did not have divine associations, while Plato's 'divine frenzy' was caused by external rather than internal workings.

was 'prodigious to this luke-warm age to lose such a pattern in the prime of her dayes'.[50] When referring to his wife's burning love drinking up her body's radical moisture, he was evoking scriptural examples, rather than the idea of divine frenzy. Psalm 32:4, for example, demonstrated that exceeding passions could dry the body, while Calvin's commentaries stated in relation to Psalm 22:16 that by 'unmeasurable mourning, not only the powers of life are wythered, but allmost all moysture is dryed up'.[51] Ardent love, in particular, was believed to dry the body and was, logically, connected to heat.[52] In the godly imagination, these associations included the spiritual variety of love possessed by the anonymous gentlewoman.[53]

It also seems more likely that the husband wished to describe his wife's burning 'Love to Christ', rather than the enthusiasm of heated black bile, when the views of their surrounding community are considered. These Independents clearly delineated melancholy from sorrow for sin, and had a preoccupation with affliction. Two Independent ministers were mentioned in *Conversion exemplified*: Joseph Caryl and John Rowe, both of whom had been ejected in 1662. The gentlewoman had encountered them when they preached at Westminster and Caryl, according to the preface, visited her on her deathbed.[54] At this time, between 1643 and 1666, Caryl published twelve volumes of his *Exposition with practical observations upon the ... book of Job*, one of the Bible's most afflicted figures.[55] In 1656 he also wrote the preface for and licensed Elizabeth Major's *Honey on the rod: or a comfortable contemplation for one in affliction,* which, like the anonymous gentlewoman, interpreted afflictions, including illness and disability, as signs of God's love. Both these works captured Caryl's assertion that '*the School of the Cross, is the School of Light; or, that the Lord gives instruction with correction*'.[56]

Nevertheless, despite melancholy being a form of bodily illness and therefore potentially open to sanctification, neither text used the term and, as we have seen, the

---

[50] Anon., *Conversion exemplified*, sigs. A3r-v.

[51] Psalm 32:4 reads: 'For day and night thy hand was heavy upon me: my moisture is turned into the drought of summer.' For the commentary of Psalm 22:16, see Jean Calvin, *The Psalmes of David and others, with M. John Calvins commentaries* (London, 1571), 81.

[52] Paster, *Humoring the body*, 161. See, for example, Burton, *The anatomy of melancholy*, III, 512.

[53] See, for example, John Bunyan, *Grace abounding to the chief of sinners* (London, 1666), 30-1, 50.

[54] Anon., *Conversion exemplified*, sig. A4v, 50; *ODNB* s.v. 'Caryl, Joseph' and 'Rowe, John'.

[55] The first and last of the volumes were Joseph Caryl, *An exposition with practical observations upon the three first chapters of the book of Job* (London, 1643); idem, *An exposition with practical observations continued upon the thirty-eighth, thirty-ninth, fortieth, forty-first, and forty-second (being the five last) chapters of the Book of Job* (London, 1666).

[56] Elizabeth Major, *Honey on the rod* (London, 1656), sigs. A1r-A2r.

gentlewoman was intent on rebutting accusations of this distemper. The aversion of both authors to the concept of melancholy was in line with the works of their minister Joseph Caryl. In his *Exposition with practicall observations*, which had originally been delivered as lectures, he insisted that Job did not suffer from melancholy, but sorrow for sin and afflictions from God. Caryl ordered his audience to take initiative when facing troubles. '*A man in affliction may help on his comforts or his sorrows*', he asserted; one must state '*I will comfort my self, I will leave off my heavinesse*'. Those who fail to do so simply

> adde to their afflictions, and are active to aggravate and encrease them: ... they joyn with Satan their enemy, and by the black melancholy vapours of their own hearts, stifle the consolations that are administred them by faithfull friends.

In Caryl's view, melancholy was significantly separate from sorrow for sin. Informing his reader that 'Melancholly is commonly called, *The devils bath*', he stated that the devil 'takes delight to wash in the streams of our unnecessary tears'. 'Sorrow for sinne,' on the other hand, 'puts the devil to the greatest sorrow'. The latter was 'Godly grief' with no suggestion of despondency or sinking under the weight of troubles, whilst melancholy was a 'worldly', 'unlawfull', 'forbidden sorrow', infused with weakness, self-indulgence, and a giving-way to affliction.[57]

By considering the views of Caryl, it becomes clearer why the anonymous gentlewoman and her husband would have been so intent on distancing her experiences from the concept of melancholy. But while it is important to highlight the unlikelihood of the husband having described a form of divine enthusiasm caused by heated black bile, his reference to her radical moisture was only one line of many. Beyond this single sentence, the husband, as well as the gentlewoman herself, steered clear of references to the body. Indeed, their primary method of countering her relatives' accusations of bodily distemper, and bringing her experiences closer to those scriptural examples of affliction described by Caryl, was to focus upon her soul. This was achieved by framing her experiences as 'conversion exemplified'; an emphasis on her sorrow for sin; and, running throughout the narrative, frequent references to her soul. After all, as Caryl had emphasised, 'the soule of man is not any temperament of the body'. In the text's closing pages, the gentlewoman was unequivocal in condemning those who did not see her

---

[57] Joseph Caryl, *An exposition with practicall observations continued upon the eighth, ninth and tenth chapters of the book of Job* (London, 1647), 351.

experiences as 'the work of God, bringing home a lost creature, and leading a blind sinner in the streight way to Life'. Those who did not, she asserted, were simply blinded by the 'Original sin [that] hath dreadfully defaced the Principles of Truth'. Her husband, in a similar vein, shared her narrative in hope '*that God would bring every lost Soul into the saving sence of its lostness: and that these darts might fall into your Consciences, and remain in the wound till they be drawn out by the hand of the Spirit, and healed by the Blood of the Cross'*. As the gentlewoman's narrative insisted, it was her 'troubled soul' and its conscience that 'Satan … bespread … with plenty of fiery Darts', not the body and its humours.[58]

In being afflicted in soul, the gentlewoman had experienced deep sorrow for sin and employed generic language to assert this. She wrote of her 'deep humiliation', 'bitter mourning' and of being 'for some years tossed in this Sea', with 'no calm, nor any bottom to cast anchor in; having the knowledge of sin, but not of grace'. She was, at some points, even 'at the brink of utter despaire'. Throughout the text, this suffering is discussed in relation to her soul: she was 'a poor soul … grasping for life', her 'soul was … greatly melted with love to Christ' and she found 'Soul-comfort' in a vision (of sorts), in which she drank Christ's blood. In this way, the gentlewoman was separating herself from the unregenerate by focusing on the sensitivity of her soul, as Huish, Vernon, and others had. Her suffering was a sign of her godliness; as her husband stated, she had 'sown in tears' her seeds for salvation and, in death, was enjoying their 'harvest'.[59]

Returning again to Caryl's commentaries, it appears that expressing spiritual sorrow through generic soul-based language in this way was respected within the anonymous couple's Independent community. In his *Exposition*, Caryl had highlighted that Job made 'report of his sorrowes in highest straines of holy Rhetorick' when rejecting another translator's intimation that the biblical figure had suffered from 'darke and melancholly thoughts'. In Caryl's view, Job was 'a Conquerer' over his 'sorrowes', and his 'holy Rhetorick' proved this. The anonymous gentlewoman's choice of language, then, served the same purpose. In the same way that Job had 'strained himselfe to the highest pitch of holy rhetorick, to make his unkinde Freinds sensible of' the 'manner of his afflictions', the anonymous gentlewoman's words placed focus on her afflicted soul and, thereby, refuted her family's accusations of melancholy.[60]

---

[58] Anon., *Conversion exemplified*, 60, sigs. A8v-B1r, 8.

[59] Ibid., 13, 10, 19, sig. A2r.

[60] Joseph Caryl, *An exposition with practicall observations continued upon the fifteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth chapters of the book of Job* (London, 1650), 512-3, 313.

While Huish, the anonymous gentlewoman, and those introducing their texts insisted on locating the origin of their afflictions in their souls in order to deflect accusations of melancholy, others incorporated this condition into their accounts of conversion and spiritual affliction, believing that the presence of bodily explanations did not detract from the spiritual significance of their turmoil. While Hodgkin has suggested that this view emerges more strongly in the mid-century, possibly as a result of a shift towards the acceptability of melancholy in religious experience, it in fact appears to have been, in some ways, a continuation of earlier thinking. The writers demonstrating this stance were continuing in the vein of 'puritan' divines active at the start of the century, such as Richard Greenham, William Perkins, Thomas Goodwin and Robert Bolton, who had asserted that melancholy, sorrow for sin, and an afflicted conscience could and often did mix.[61] Melancholy had long been considered 'the devil's bath' by these divines and, as we have just seen, the Presbyterian minister Caryl continued this idea in the 1660s. While the involvement of the devil did not make melancholy acceptable in the eyes of Caryl and many earlier 'puritan' ministers, as it still pointed to worldliness and weakness in the face of affliction that required the response of theological reprimands, some other godly individuals were more accepting, or even approbatory, of melancholy.[62] In these cases, which seem to have become particularly prominent in the latter decades of the century, less culpability was placed on sufferers, and it was held that the cause of their distemper could exist, at least partially, outside of the worldly realm.

The following case studies demonstrate the latter approach and, unlike Huish and the anonymous gentlewoman, were authored by individuals of either pre-Restoration godly, Presbyterian, or post-Restoration conformist godly stances. As this difference in confessional identity indicates, it can be speculated that more vulnerable groups, such as Baptists, were more likely to reject the label of melancholy, particularly in periods of heightened persecution. At the same time, the apparent increase in inclusions of melancholy in published spiritual narratives, particularly from the 1680s onwards, lends credence to Hodgkin's suggestion that religious melancholy became less stigmatised by the end of the century, while also shedding some doubt on Schmidt's assertion that criticism of the condition grew amongst the nonconforming godly from the Restoration onwards.

---

[61] Hodgkin, *Madness*, 72. See, for example, Thomas Goodwin, *A childe of light walking in darknesse* (London, 1636), 60, 110. For the views of 'puritans' such as Goodwin on this matter, see Schmidt, *Melancholy*, 51-2.

[62] On earlier divines' view that religious melancholy required 'the cleansing purgative of the Law', see Schmidt, *Melancholy*, 61-2, in comparison to Timothy Rogers' approach later in the century, see 118-128.

That is not to say, however, that criticisms were not circulating or that the inclusion of melancholy in accounts of religious experience signalled an unrestricted acceptance of its spiritual significance. Rather, descriptions of this condition within religious contexts were carefully wrought and reveal an awareness of the potential criticisms they faced. As had been the case in narratives that wished to deny melancholy's presence, moreover, the soul-body relationship was vital to the process of imbuing this condition with spiritual value and acceptability.

Joan Drake: 'The pain of the body is but the body of pain'

The case of Joan Drake, whose decade of turmoil was recounted by the pseudonymous 'Hart On-Hi' in 1647 and anonymously in 1654, illustrates this careful negotiation between body and soul, cause and cure.[63] Drake, the wife of a Surrey gentleman, became convinced that she was a reprobate around 1615 and, at the request of her family, was visited by a number of well-known ministers.[64] In addition to her belief that she was hopelessly damned, she gave 'strange desperate speeches', showed 'unruly carriage', refused to eat, threatened suicide, and refused to carry out religious duties. The ministers, particularly the well-known John Dod, consistently employed theological arguments in an attempt to convince her that she was wrong in her convictions. Fasts were also kept by the household in the ministers' attempts to remedy her. Seemingly exhausted from many years of erratic behaviour, she eventually died in 1625, but not before experiencing raptures on her deathbed in which she became assured of her salvation. Given this last-minute assurance, her ten years of turmoil were able to be framed as a successful conversion narrative and upheld as a comforting example 'of Gods great goodnesse and infinite mercies even to the most hard-hearted and miserable that may be'.[65]

---

[63] Hart On-Hi, *Trodden down strength by the God of strength, or Mrs Drake revived* (London, 1647); Anon., *The firebrand taken out of the fire, or, The wonderfull history, case, and cure of Mistress Drake* (London, 1654). Scholars have disagreed on the identity of the author(s) of these texts. George Hunstan Williams has presented the most convincing argument, asserting that the author of *Trodden down strength* was Jasper Hartwell, an apprentice at the Middle Temple, who was a friend of Joan Drake, possibly a cousin. Other scholars have simply relied on the claims of later eighteenth-century editions that the author was John Hart, D.D, while also assuming that both publications were authored by the same individual. Given the uncertainty surrounding this matter, the original pseudonym and anonymity have been maintained here. See George Hunston Williams, 'Called by thy name, leave us not: The case of Mrs Joan Drake, a formative episode in the pastoral career of Thomas Hooker in England', *Harvard Library Bulletin* 16 (1968): 282. For the unquestioned use of John Hart, see for example Hodgkin, *Madness*, 70-1.

[64] Hart On-Hi, *Trodden*, 1, 13. The ministers included John Dod (17), James Ussher (68), John Forbes (70), Thomas Hooker (117), and John Preston (160).

[65] Ibid., 14-5, 30-1, 27-8, 147-8, 163, 2-3.

What separates Drake's narrative from those of Huish and the anonymous gentlewoman, is the ease with which the author acknowledges the role of the body's melancholic humour in her experiences. She became 'accidentally melancholy' in disposition, we are told, due to a series of unfortunate events: she was married 'against her will' to a man 'whom at first shee could not affect', before 'being much wronged by her Midwiffe' and undergoing a botched childbirth. As a result,

> shee was ever after troubled with fumes and scurvie vapors mounting up unto her head, which bred in her for the most part a continuall head-ach, like unto a megrum, together with somewhat like unto a fire continually burning at her stomack... which drew her towards a more constant constitution of sadnesse and distemper.[66]

Hart On-Hi viewed this 'fire of discontent ... full of sad thoughts in her; which bred and encreased all the time she lay in of her daughter' as the impetus to her religious despair: 'thus shortly after it fell out', he wrote, 'That ...[during the night, she] fell out into terrible shricks & out-cryes, to this purpose, that *shee was undone, undone, shee was damned, and a cast away*'. In his view, the devil took 'advantage of her melancholy temper, [and] wrought her much woe thereby, making her thus over-charge and accuse her selfe'.[67]

Although her body's distemper was consistently presented as an obstacle to her recovery throughout the narrative, Hart On-Hi insists that the use of physic was ineffective in remedying her condition. Moreover, the assistance of physicians is not mentioned until her final illness. Rather, spiritual methods of pastoral consolation were used. While the ministers who came to assist her asserted that 'the indisposition and melancholy temper of her body was such as hindered much the[ir] works', they did not suggest removing that hindrance through physic, but instead persisted with their theological arguments. Any action on her body itself appears to have been accidental. Hart On-Hi, for example, described how her eating oranges, with the intention of having 'made her selfe away', in fact 'proved excellent medicines unto her, purging away abundance of black ugly filthy matter, which made her to look much better'.[68]

As Hodgkin has argued, the presence of melancholy 'in no way detracts [for the narrator] from the reality of Mrs Drake's spiritual affliction...; the entire struggle is in the

---

[66] Ibid., 7, 9, 10-1.

[67] Ibid., 11-2, 66-7.

[68] Ibid., 11, 160, 65, 30-1.

hands of God, who may choose to work through the humours as well as through the spirit'. The medical aspect of her affliction is 'of secondary interest' to Hart On-Hi and 'the narrative simply sidesteps the issues of priority and causality that had so preoccupied Fitzherbert, to balance between medical and theological explanations'.[69] While this is certainly the case, one can still identify a firm insistence that Drake's soul was the primary factor in her experiences. When describing Drake's relapse into 'an extreame fainting and weaknesse of spirits' after raptures of assurance on her deathbed, Hart On-Hi asserted that the efforts of two physicians to make her rest were 'all in vaine, *No physick could cure her but heavenly physick'*. Instead, a 'private fast' kept for her by her attending ministers was successful: 'she fell asleep, rested soundly some five or six houres together, and then waked in a very milde gentle temper.'[70] Thus, while her body was acknowledged as one cause of her despair, worldly physic was proven useless and, ultimately, bodily workings were denied the role of cure.

Moreover, Drake had not fully recovered from her bodily ailments at the time of her death.[71] During her relapse into 'extreame fainting', the narrator suggested that she fell again into spiritual doubts, writing that 'shee bewrayed some weaknesse in her expressions, not being as formerly so lively and substantiall'. Nevertheless, we are told 'shee revives againe, maintaines her grounds, former joyes and feeling; from thence untill her death', and that the reappearance of spiritual doubts was only the result of the 'over-wearying' of her 'spirits', rather than a return to soul-affliction at the hands of the devil. Thus, while her body and its spirits succumbed to death, her soul's turmoil was fully cured, convinced as she was that 'now all is well'.[72]

In other words, while her melancholic distemper was included in the text as a stimulus for despair, the narrator made it clear that her recovery did not depend on the body's return to health. Hart On-Hi wished to present Drake's life as the victory of the soul, not of the body, and his chosen epigraph on the title page made this clear: 'Psal. 66. 16. Come and heare, all yee that feare God; and I will declare what he hath done for my soule', while the text's concluding sentence mirrored this stance: 'Judg. 5.21. O my Soule! thou hast trodden down strength.'[73] The second edition's preface took this focus further,

---

[69] Hodgkin, *Madness*, 72.

[70] Hart On-Hi, *Trodden*, 159-60.

[71] Schmidt also makes this point, albeit for different purposes. See *Melancholy*, 71-2.

[72] Hart On-Hi, *Trodden*, 159, 168, 160-1, 147.

[73] Ibid., title page, 193.

referring solely to Drake's '*wounded Soul*' at the hand of Satan, and excluding any mention of her bodily troubles. 'The tempests of a troubled mind', it opened, 'procee[d] from an apprehension of Gods wrath and indignation for Sin, and the turning away of his face in displeasure'. 'The pain of the body is but the *body* of pain', the author confirmed, 'but the grief of the spirit, is the *Spirit* of grief'. This shift of focus could suggest that whoever reissued Drake's case, seven years after the first edition, wished to reduce the significance of the body's involvement in the narrative.[74]

This editorial change, in addition to the careful manoeuvring of Drake's suffering discussed above, could indicate - like the cases of Huish and the anonymous gentlewoman - that godly writers were wary of placing too much emphasis on bodily explanations for spiritual affliction in the tense mid-century and Restoration. The following texts, on the other hand, the first of which was published in 1683, indicate a possible increase in the willingness of writers to involve melancholy in their spiritual narratives towards the end of the century. Compared to Hart-On-Hi's account, the experience of melancholy is given a more central position in the following narratives and, in some cases, is transformed into evidence of godly virtue. Nevertheless, it appears that the spiritual significance of melancholy was by no means considered inherent and, as indicated earlier, the need for careful framing of the condition through the soul-body relationship continued.

Hannah Allen: 'The blood and humours are the Souls Organs'

In 1683, the Presbyterian Hannah Allen's *A narrative of God's gracious dealings* (1683) openly described the role of melancholy as 'the devil's bath' in a case of religious despair. The text, written by Allen and introduced by an anonymous 'Soul-friend and Servant for Jesus sake', recounted a fifteen-year-long case of religious melancholy, from which Allen had recovered sixteen years previously.[75] As the title page stated, she recounted 'the great advantages the devil made of her deep melancholy, and the triumphant victories, rich and sovereign graces, God gave her over all his stratagems and devices'. While Hodgkin has suggested that Allen was more comfortable than previous writers in admitting the involvement of melancholy in her case, more tensions remained in her expression of melancholy than has been previously acknowledged.[76] Although Allen may not have

---

[74] Anon., *The firebrand*, sigs. A2r, A1r-v.

[75] Allen, *A narrative*, xi; Adcock et al., *Flesh and spirit*, 236-8.

[76] Allen, *A narrative*, title page; Hodgkin, *Madness*, 74.

rejected the diagnosis of melancholy as firmly as Fitzherbert, Huish, and the anonymous gentlewoman, she did express her melancholy in particular ways, focusing upon the changes wrought upon her soul, in order to assure its acceptability. What is more, the anonymous author of her preface trod even more carefully, making sure to identify the cause of her turmoil as first spiritual, then bodily.

According to Allen, she was 'privately conflicted' with 'dreadful Temptations' of spiritual doubts from her 'Child-hood' and, whilst her initial troubles were allayed through the reading of 'one of blessed Mr. *Bolton*'s Books', she fell into deeper turmoil during her first marriage.[77] 'Occasioned by the oft absence of … [her] dear and affectionate Husband', a merchant, her natural inclination to melancholy increased, 'wherein the Devil had the more advantage' in exercising her with a 'variety of Temptations'. When her husband died at sea eight years into their marriage, her troubles increased again as she fell 'into deep Melancholy'. Allen understood her melancholy to be the entry point by which the devil tormented her most effectively, writing that 'no sooner did this black humour begin to darken my Soul, but the Devil set on with his former Temptations'. In her attempts to combat the devil's attacks, she 'repeat[ed] several promises suitable to … [her] condition, and read over … [her] former experiences … and obligations that … [she] had laid upon my self'. These efforts were not successful, however, and she felt that God had withdrawn 'his comforting and quickening Presence' from her, even during prayer. Other methods, including 'Physick and Journeys to several Friends for Diversion', also failed to bring her back into a state of hope and faith.[78]

Even when moved to the minister Mr Shorthose's house for care and counsel, Allen continued to believe she was a 'hypocrite'. Falling more and more deeply into despair, Allen began to imagine claps of thunder above her bed, voices in the yard to be 'Devils in the likeness of Men', and that she would die any moment. Given both her 'inward and outward distempers … [had grown] to such a height', her family sent her to stay with her brother in London, believing that 'the best means both for Soul and Body' would be found there. Allen 'took much Physick of one Mr. *Cocket* a Chymist' and her brother also took her 'to Doctor *Pridgeon*', but her condition continued unchanged, if not worsened; she persisted in believing that she was '*the Monster of the Creation*', and her fears

---

[77] Adcock et al. suggest that the book could have been authored by Robert (1572-1631) or Samuel (1605/6-1654) Bolton, who were both clergymen and authors of spiritual works. See *Flesh and spirit*, 241.

[78] Allen, *A narrative*, 7-10.

of death shifted to suicide attempts.[79] Moved to the house of a kinswoman and her husband, spiritual methods were also attempted; 'a Minister ...[came to] discourse with her' and found 'her in a more dejected state than any he ever saw'. Like the earlier attempts of Mr Shorthose, the minister's 'conferences' with her had 'little visible good effect', even when she was moved to his house for a week. The family also attempted to enlist Richard Baxter's assistance, whose advice Allen expressed eagerness for, but did not succeed. Other methods also proved ineffective: she ignored letters of comfort from friends and, when let blood by a 'Surgeon', only took the opportunity to run upstairs, lock herself in her room, and reopen the wound in an attempt to 'bleed to death'.[80]

Faced with such persistent disturbance, and her 'Sickness ... encreasing' yet again, Allen's family returned her to Derbyshire. Her aunt, with whom she resided, encouraged Allen to accept she was melancholy, that her 'Opinion' was merely 'fallacy and delusion', and to 'seek God in the use of means'. Rebutting her aunt's advice repeatedly and insolently, Allen ate very little and became 'exceeding Lean'. Eventually, she recommenced conversations with the local minister and his wife, which, unlike previously, began to have some effect. Moving to their house for the summer, she made a gradual recovery. 'It pleased God by Mr. *Shorthose's* means', she wrote, 'to do me much good both in Soul and Body; he had some skill in Physick himself, and also consulted with Physicians about me'. She took 'a course of Physick most part of the Summer' and, as a result, began to 'leave' off her 'dreadful expressions concerning' her 'condition', recommenced religious duties with the family - first at home and then, 'at last' at 'publick Ordinance' - and 'to walk with them to visit Friends'. She was, she concluded, 'much alter'd for the better'. Improving further over the following year and a half, in Spring 'it pleased God to provide' her with a 'very suitable Match' and, in her married state, found herself in a state of full recovery.[81]

This lengthy account of Allen's narrative is necessary in order to display the particularly varied approach her family took in dealing with her years of turmoil. Moreover, it reveals the ways in which Allen, and those around her, believed her despairing condition to be deeply embedded in her struggles with melancholy. Rather than being an exacerbating factor of her condition, as it was for Drake, or excluded from the narrative entirely, as it was by Huish and the anonymous gentlewoman, Allen's

---

[79] Ibid., 10-1, 22-6, 29, 31-3, 59.

[80] Ibid., 37, 55, 59, 44.

[81] Ibid., 57, 62, 64, 69-71.

melancholy was at the centre of her narrative. Concluding the account, Allen wrote: 'As my Melancholy came by degrees, so it wore off by degrees, and as my dark Melancholy bodily distempers abated, so did my spiritual Maladies also, and God convinced me by degrees; that all this was from Satan, his delusions and temptations, working in those dark and black humors, and not from my self.' With these words, Allen revealed a belief that the cure of her melancholy was vital to her recovery from 'spiritual Maladies', given it was through this humour that the devil tormented her so effectively. In addition, she believed that her melancholy distanced her blasphemous behaviour from her 'self', given it had 'all' been 'from Satan'. These views appeared to have been shared by the friends and family who surrounded her during her troubles; while they provided her with a combination of spiritual and bodily treatments, they placed particular emphasis on her need to recover bodily before any progress could be made spiritually. As her aunt patiently encouraged her: '*Cousin, would you but believe you were melancholy it might be a great means to bring you out of this Condition.*'[82]

While this was the impression provided by Allen's words in the narrative itself, the preface presented an altered interpretation. Rather than focusing on her bodily distemper and recovery through physic, the prefatory writer emphasised that God had 'exercised' Allen 'with manifold Trials' that were, like the sufferings of the anonymous gentlewoman above, sanctified afflictions and, therefore, further evidence of her eternal salvation. Placing Allen's case into a wider context of exemplary suffering, the author stated: 'Infinite Wisdom hath seen it fitting to keep his Saints from Hell for ever, by crafting them as it were into Hell for a time. It being too much for the choicest Saints to have two Heavens, one in Earth, and another in Glory.'[83] As was indicated by the preface's opening lines, the soul-body relationship was crucial to this interpretation:

> THE Soul of Man hath a singular affection for its own Body, rejoycing in its Prosperity, and sympathizing with it in all its Maladies, Miseries, and Necessities. Hence if the Body be out of frame and tune, the Soul cannot be well at ease. As the most skilful Musician cannot make any pleasing melody upon an unstringed or broken Instrument. The blood and humours are the Souls Organs, by which it doth exert its actions. If these be well temper'd and kept in a balance, Ordinarily there is an inward calm serenity upon the Spirit. Ordinarily I say: For in some cases the most chearful Temper may be broken down and overwhelmed either by

[82] Ibid., 72, 60.

[83] Ibid., 74, ii-iii.

> the immediate impressions of God's wrath upon the Soul, or the letting loose of those Bandogs of Hell to affright and terrifie it.[84]

In addition to expressing a standard, and persistent, Galenic belief regarding soul-body interaction, these lines asserted the causality in Allen's case. Rather than being caused by humoral imbalance, Allen's turmoil was brought on by 'impressions of God's wrath upon the Soul'. Her humours were, in fact, 'well temper'd' at this initial stage.[85] Immediately afterward, the author likened Allen's experience to examples of affliction found in 'the Scriptures, or the Records of the Church in its several Ages' noting that cases such as this would be 'no strange News to any one … that hath been conversant with the most humble, serious and mortified Christians'. In doing so, the author lent Allen's case spiritual significance, while also furthering their stance on the causality of her suffering: '*Job*', we are told, 'suffered … immediately too from God' and 'Father Abraham' had 'the poysoned Arrows of the Almighty … shot into his very Soul, the venom whereof drank up his spirits, and made him choose Strangling rather than Life.'[86] Body followed soul for both Allen and these exemplary cases of spiritual affliction.

The author expanded his point by asserting that all humans are vulnerable to this form of affliction. Any blame that could be placed on Allen and her humoral complexion was removed, as the author emphasised all individuals' helplessness in the face of God working on the conscience:

> If God revoke his own gifts, hide his face, let loose the Tempter, awaken that sleeping Fury in thy bosom, let down but the smallest drop of his Wrath into thy Conscience, thy foundations will be shaken, and the mountain of thy peace will be hurled into a gulf of dismal sorrows.

These words placed focus upon the soul and its conscience, rather than the body. Instead of avoiding certain foods or taking fresh air, the only course of action an individual could take in attempting to avoid such 'dismal sorrows' was to shun sin. 'The smallest leak in the Ship, not seen, will sink it', he wrote, 'and as multitudes have been killed with Swords and Canons, so others … [are killed] with what the injudicious Worldling calls a Peccadillo, lurking in the Soul'.[87]

---

[84] Ibid., ii.

[85] Adcock et al., *Flesh and spirit*, 26-8, 236-7.

[86] The examples given are David, Heman, Hezekiah, Job, and Abraham. See Allen, *A narrative*, iii-iv.

[87] Ibid., vi-viii.

Thus, while Allen was more comfortable than previous writers such as Fitzherbert in admitting the involvement of melancholy in her case, it should also be highlighted that the author of her text's preface did not mention melancholy; he instead framed her sorrow as occurring in the soul as a result of God's wrath acting upon the conscience. The text as a whole, then, cannot be viewed as straightforward evidence of a shift towards an increased acceptance of melancholy in religious experience amongst 'nonconformists', as Hodgkin suggests.[88] Rather, the text reveals significant, ongoing tensions between what was undoubtedly a case of melancholy and attempts to infuse that experience with spiritual significance. The preface's author attempted to resolve these tensions through a mindful use of language, describing Allen's anguish as having originated in the soul and, only after, affecting the body. A possible cause for needing such careful navigation was hinted at by the author himself, who pointed to the accusations faced by the godly when expressing sorrow as intense as Allen's. They 'are reputed the Worlds Monsters, and the Drunkards Song', he wrote, merely for 'keep[ing] the Testimony of Jesus, and walk[ing] Evenly in his ways in the midst of thorns and precipices'. Despite the author's assertion that Allen's ability to endure her sorrow and share it with others for their benefit was evidence of 'the Faith and Patience of Saints', he decided to write the preface anonymously. Faced with accusations of being 'the Worlds Monsters', perhaps the tensions presented by Allen's case, centred around melancholy as it was, were too risky to link one's name to.[89]

It was not just the preface, however, that revealed these tensions: Allen herself also appeared to be aware of the potentially problematic nature of her turmoil. While she made it clear that melancholic distemper was a vital element, and was not as clearcut as the preface author in her identification of cause and effect, Allen also focused upon the soul and set aside the body in many sections of the narrative.[90] She framed her struggle as 'a woful confusion and combating in my Soul' and her recovery as 'God's great Goodness to her in manifesting himself to her Soul'. The scriptural verses with which she chose to close her narrative also furthered a soul-focused view. Rather than emphasising the bodily recovery she had described above, the quotations highlighted the patience of Job, the

---

[88] Hodgkin, *Madness*, 74.

[89] Allen, *A narrative*, x.

[90] Allen, perhaps problematically, did not follow the same body-follows-soul causality as the preface in her narrative. Her melancholy 'darken[ed]' her 'Soul' and, once this had occurred, 'the Devil set on with his former Temptations'. See ibid., 8.

godly's ability to overcome through God's strength, and the promises of divine assistance in all afflictions.[91] It seems misleading, then, to suggest, as Hodgkin has, that 'the understanding of melancholy that emerges from her account and that was evidently part of the general knowledge of her social and religious circle has much in common with … [Richard Baxter's] description'.[92] Baxter, who asserted that suffering from melancholy was not an accurate indicator of an individual's state of grace and should be primarily dealt with using physic, would have surely condemned such a spiritual representation of a case of melancholic distemper.[93] While Allen's use of physic may have gained Baxter's approval, her and the preface's push to present the experience as spiritual affliction would have most likely incited his criticism. Neither an attempt to 'treat melancholy with resolute secularism' nor to 'dethrone it from its special status' are apparent in Allen's publication.[94]

Rather, Allen placed her experience of melancholy within the religious frameworks of providence and sanctified affliction. She believed that God had brought her turmoil about, 'in much mercy and faithfulness to my Soul' and that 'though for the present it was a bitter Cup, it was but what the only wise God saw I had need of'.[95] Earlier in the narrative, Allen's aunt had asserted that her troubles were the sanctified afflictions of the godly, but Allen, in her melancholic confusion, had rejected this argument, holding that she only suffered '*unsanctified Afflictions*' which, according to '*Mr.* Calamy … *par-boyle the Soul for hell*'. Allen had drawn this phrase from the clergyman and ejected minister Edmund Calamy's funeral sermon for Elizabeth Moore, *The godly mans ark*, first published in 1657.[96] Moore, who had died from breast cancer in great pain, was commended by Calamy for her patience and ability to see her afflictions as sanctified trials. He asserted that those who think 'that they which have the stone and gout in extreamity, that have cancers in their faces, and breasts, are greater sinners than others' were wrong; 'I tell you, nay, … [it is those who] live wickedly, and meet with no affliction. These have the *black brand* of reprobation upon them'. A great sinner might be justly

---

[91] Ibid., 16, 40, 74-9. Allen included Isaiah 43:1,2; James 5:11; and 1 John 4:4.

[92] Hodgkin, *Madness*, 78.

[93] See, for example, Baxter, *A Christian directory*, 312-9. Baxter's stance on melancholy will be discussed further in Chapter Four.

[94] Hodgkin, *Madness*, 79.

[95] She based this assertion upon scripture: '1 Pet. i. 6. Tho' now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold Temptations.' See Allen, *A narrative*, 72-3.

[96] Edmund Calamy, *The godly mans ark* (London, 1657), 25; Adcock et al., *Flesh and spirit*, 239.

taken by 'some great and sudden judgement', but 'when I see a godly woman afflicted', he wrote, 'this is not so much for her sin, as for her tryal; this is not to *hurt her,* but to *teach* her to know God, and to know her self, to break her heart for Sin, and from sin, to make the world bitter, and Christ sweet'. 'Gods people' are to 'Expect / Prepare / [and] Improve / for Afflictions', he asserted (Figure 3.2).

Figure 3.2: Edmund Calamy, *The godly mans ark* (London: Jo. Hancock, 1657), 32.

Moore, too, viewed her cancer in this way, as revealed by her 'Evidences for Heaven: Collected by her self in the time of health' which Calamy included in his publication of the sermon: 'I much more desire the *sanctification* of it ['my *Affliction*'], than the *removal.* I earnestly labour to learn all those *lessons* which God *teacheth* mee by *affliction. …* Afflictions are an evidence of *Sonship*.'

While Adcock, Read and Ziomek have stated that 'Moore evidently suffered under the burden of sin, very much like Allen' and that she 'report[ed] similar temptations to submit to Satan's machinations', there was in fact a significant difference between the trials of Moore and those of Allen, and the latter perhaps sensed this when telling her aunt that she only suffered the unsanctified afflictions of the damned.[97] Moore's doubts of salvation were placed within a more standard sequence of conversion. Even when overwhelmed by fears, she did not abandon her religious duties and, in her final affliction before death, she did not experience any doubts. While her affliction was a cancer of the body, her response lay in the soul.[98]

For Allen, on the other hand, her sanctified affliction was her melancholy and, given its symptoms, this caused some problems. Calamy, in his discussions of affliction,

---

[97] Adcock et al., *Flesh and spirit*, 239.

[98] Calamy, *The godly*, 225-8.

explained that those suffering from the distorted perspective of '*melancholique-phancy*' are unable to find comfort in God's promises or see that their afflictions are sanctified. He asserted that 'a childe of God … *under … extream melancholy* … is many times like a man in the dark. … [H]ee looks upon all the promises *with a black pair of spectacles,* and wants light to see his interest in them'. In other words, what Allen was attempting to present as her sanctified affliction was the very thing that had stopped her from being able to see that her affliction was sanctified. Only once she was cured of her melancholy was she able to understand that she was a child of God and that, therefore, her suffering had been a godly trial. This form of recovery did not allow the ideal sequence of events to take place; rather than enduring her sanctified affliction with patience and faith, it was necessary for Allen to first cure her body. As Calamy's chosen epigraph for his five sermons showed ('PSAL. 119. 92. Unless thy Law had been my delights, I should then have perished in mine affliction'), God's scriptures should be the primary cure for those afflicted and, as Moore's death demonstrated, the godly's bodily recovery was neither necessary or relevant. The Word 'will comfort us *at such a time,* when no outward thing can comfort us', Calamy wrote. 'When gold and silver, Father and Mother, friends, and Physitians are miserable comforters, then will one *promise* out of the Word fill us full of joy unspeakable, and glorious'. Given her melancholic delusions, however, hope in God's promises did not allow Allen to endure her affliction. Reading over past evidences of salvation also failed to bring her comfort as Calamy asserted they should. As a result, and as she openly asserted, it was physic curing her melancholic delusions that was the primary cause of Allen's recovery from affliction.[99]

It appears, then, that Allen and the author of her preface were not certain how best to deal with the issue of melancholy, or how to convincingly place this distemper within a spiritual narrative. The latter avoided mentioning bodily illness altogether, while Allen shifted between explanations. Another voice in the narrative presented a different interpretation. When describing Allen's reunion, after her recovery, with a London minister who had assisted her, the narrative voice changes; it is no longer Allen writing but another anonymous author, possibly the same writer as the preface. This voice informed the reader that 'from his [the London minister's] Observation of the ground of her Trouble, he advises all Christians to mortifie inordinate Affection to lawful things.

---

[99] Calamy, *The godly*, 187, 209, 1, 97-8, 103-4, 182-3, 210-1; Allen, *A narrative*, 8-9.

Col. 3.5'.[100] Thus, in his view, the root cause of Allen's turmoil had been excessive love of worldly things, especially her husband, whose absence and death had instigated her first bouts of melancholy.[101] Blame is shifted onto Allen and her sin of creature love, thereby providing her turmoil with a distinct spiritual cause.

An uncertainty existed, then, about the best way to deal with melancholy if one wished to place it into a spiritual framework, and authors employed varying methods to do so. The author of Joan Drake's narrative, as we have seen, was not concerned with her bodily recovery, only that of the soul; her suffering was placed within the steps of conversion and culminated in assurance on her deathbed. Allen's case, on the other hand, demonstrated a firmly bodily, physic-based solution and, in placing her melancholy at the centre of both her turmoil and recovery, possibly displayed an increased willingness to include melancholy in spiritual narratives. The ultimate success, however, of the text's authors attempts to imbue her experience of melancholy with spiritual significance in the eyes of contemporary readers is not clear. Indeed, unlike Calamy's funeral sermon for Moore which was reprinted a number of times up until the 1690s, there is no record of Allen's work being reprinted, and any contemporary engagement with the text has not been detected.[102] With this in mind, perhaps the prominence of Allen's narrative in the existing scholarship is misleading.[103] Whatever the case, while Allen's narrative can be used to tentatively support Hodgkin's suggestion that the acceptability of melancholy had increased amongst 'nonconformists' by the 1680s, it has been demonstrated that there are a number of aspects of the text that reveal this acceptance was by no means straightforward.[104]

George Trosse: 'Delusions, Distractions and Blasphemies'

While also pointing to a greater willingness to include bodily explanations for spiritual distress in exemplary narratives later in the century, the case of the ejected minister

---

[100] Allen, *A narrative*, 40. Colossians 3:5 reads: 'Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry.'

[101] See also Schmidt, *Melancholy*, 114; Hodgkin, *Madness*, 184-5.

[102] At one point in the narrative, Allen addresses her writing to a 'ladyship', suggesting that she may have recorded her experiences for a specific individual. See Allen, *A narrative*, 35.

[103] Given the insights the text appears to provide into experiences of madness and melancholy at this time, numerous historians have discussed Allen's narrative. For example, in addition to Hodgkin, Schmidt, Adcock et al. above, see also Allan Ingram, ed., *Patterns of madness in the eighteenth century: a reader* (Liverpool, 1998), 29-35; Stachniewski, *The persecutory imagination*, 44; Lynch, *Protestant autobiography*, 86, 272.

[104] Hodgkin, *Madness*, 74.

George Trosse revealed similar tensions.[105] Like Allen, Trosse was a Presbyterian who had experienced a period of intense turmoil and, in hindsight, wished to recast the event into a narrative of spiritual progress. As requested in Trosse's will, *The life of the Reverend Mr Geo Trosse*, with an introduction by his assistant Joseph Hallet, was published in 1714. The account had been completed some years previously, in 1693, and began with his birth in 1631.[106] In 1715, the Presbyterian minister Isaac Gilling published an abridged version, which reduced the description of Trosse's sinful youth and instead emphasised his time as a minister.[107] All three authors, Hallett, Gilling, and Trosse himself, revealed a desire to place Trosse's bodily experience of madness within a sequence of spiritual growth and, like Allen and the author of her preface, faced some difficulties in achieving this. As was the case in the above examples, distinctions made between body and soul were used to navigate these difficulties.

Trosse's narrative recounted his time as a dissolute apprentice in France, London, and Portugal, before he returned to England in 1649. There he continued his sinful ways, squandering money and showing an active hatred for 'puritans', until he fell into madness. Unable to deal with the severity of his disorder, his friends forcibly sent him to a physician in Glastonbury for treatment, where he made two recoveries and two relapses, before finally recovering permanently around the age of 25.[108] Likely due to the more frenzied nature of his symptoms, Trosse did not use the term 'melancholy' to describe his condition, instead using a variety of other phrases, such as: 'sinking despair', '*Horrour* and *Madness*', 'greatly troubl'd in Mind, terrified in Conscience' and 'under turbulent Hurries'.[109] Despite the intensity of his turmoil, Trosse confidently concluded that: 'there was a period put to my rebellious and ungodly courses' when describing his eventual recovery. The narrative then described his matriculation at Oxford in 1658, where he continued his new godly life, and his departure without a degree at the Restoration, as the university no longer suited his nonconformist 'principles, persuasion and inclinations'. Ordained as a Presbyterian minister in 1666, the remainder of the account described his

---

[105] Ibid., 79-80. On Trosse's narrative and his understanding of madness as spiritually significant, see also Roy Porter, *A social history of madness: stories of the insane* (London, 1999), 90-3.

[106] George Trosse, *The life of the Reverend Mr. Geo. Trosse*, ed. Joseph Hallett, 1st ed. (Exon, 1714), 1, sig. a2r.

[107] George Trosse, *The life of the Reverend Mr. George Trosse*, ed. Isaac Gilling, 2nd ed. (London, 1715), preface; *ODNB*, s.v. 'Gilling, Isaac'.

[108] Trosse, *The life*, 1st ed., 1-77.

[109] Ibid., 49, 75-6.

life as a minister up until 1689.[110] Compared to the seventy-seven pages used to describe his sinful youth and madness, Trosse filled only twenty-six pages with his account of life after recovery.

Focusing on his period of '*Delusions, Distractions* and *Blasphemies*', Trosse framed his turmoil, in part, as an affliction of the soul. Summarising his experience of and recovery from madness, Trosse declared: 'GOD was pleas'd, by the Terrours of my Conscience, by my dreadful Convictions, by the Streamings, as it were, of the *Lake of Fire and Brimstone* thro' my Soul, to drive me from *Sin* and *Hell*'. In the same way as the preface of Allen's text, Trosse presented his experience as an afflicted conscience. Through a growing awareness of his own sinfulness, Trosse's soul was recovered to God. Although he does not explicitly specify the sequence of events, it is implied that his other symptoms, such as 'Visions' of 'a disturb'd Brain, influenced by a *deceitful* and *lying Devil*', were the fruits of this afflicted conscience. Once again, bodily disorder was presented as following a troubled soul. In addition to giving primacy to the soul, the overall framework of Trosse's narrative imbued the bodily symptoms of a 'distracted Brain' with spiritual significance. As the above quotation indicated, Trosse viewed his madness as a trial sent by God in order to draw him away from sin and towards the life of the regenerate. His experience was framed as 'a Return to GOD thro' CHRIST', as the preface phrased it, brought on by sin, characterised by common tropes such as a fear of having committed the sin against the Holy Ghost, and ultimately cured spiritually.[111]

Indeed, it was the cure of Trosse's madness that revealed most clearly his desire to reduce the significance of the body in his narrative, and emphasise the role of his soul. He acknowledged that there were both spiritual and physical aspects to his cure, but stressed that these both stemmed from God's grace. It was, for example, 'thro' the *Goodness of God*, and by His *Blessing* upon *Physick*, a *low Diet*, and *hard Keeping*, [that] I began to be somewhat *quiet* and *compos'd* in my *Spirits*'. Likewise, having returned to his sins for a time, it was God who, by sending Trosse back into madness, did not permit him to 'fall so fouly' as before. Thus, both Trosse's recovery through physic, as well as his returns to madness, were directly in the hands of God.

Moreover, Trosse was firm in asserting that his recovery was procured by more than physic alone. Rather, his spiritual growth was presented as the most important

---

[110] Ibid., 77, 87, 90-103.

[111] Ibid., 63, 77, 62, 61, sig. a2v.

factor. 'The Gentlewoman of the House' in Glastonbury where he was kept, a Mrs. Gollop, encouraged him to take up religious duties as a means of overcoming his affliction. She prayed for Trosse's recovery and provided spiritual consolation, giving him letters with scriptural comforts for dejected souls in the margin, attempting to convince him that his spiritual worries were misplaced, and sending for a minister to do the same. It was these actions, in Trosse's view, that had the greatest impact on his recovery. He wrote 'if any one was more *eminently Instrumental* in my *Conversion* than another, *She* was the Person' and, in a letter to his mother in 1658, that 'I am perswaded, under God, she has been the prime Instrument both of the Health of my Body, and the Salvation of my Soul'.[112]

Trosse's prioritisation of spiritual over bodily factors was made particularly clear in his descriptions of recovery and relapse. In Trosse's view, he returned to his sinful ways after recovering his sanity for the first time because he had only experienced a bodily, and therefore superficial, cure. Without 'the efficacious Operation of the *Holy Spirit*' searching his heart for 'Evidences of *Grace*', he reasoned, he could only remain '*vain* and *carnal*'. It was necessary, therefore, for him to be punished with madness again and await the onset of conversion before he could be permanently cured. Indeed, with a jab to conformism, Trosse added that 'some *external Reformation*, and a *Pharisaical Religion'* was not sufficient to bring about an enduring recovery. In a state of mere '*external Reformation*', his 'Heart was but as a *Room swept* and *garnish'd* by some Convictions and Horrours of Mind, and some *faint* Resolutions'. Only when 'fortify'd' against 'the *Unclean Spirit*' by '*special Grace*, or *Indwelling* of the *Spirit of GOD*' could Trosse's recovery from madness be lasting.[113]

Only conversion through the Holy Spirit, then, could permanently cure Trosse. Later in the narrative, he pushed this point further by highlighting the seemingly illogical nature of his changes in health. When studying at university, he managed to retain 'a Soundnesse to … [his] Mind' that had eluded him in preceding years. This, he expressed, was an 'astonishing Kindness' of God, given that the 'sedentary and unactive Life' of the student was more likely, according to contemporary belief, to cause melancholy and madness than the active lifestyle he had led prior to his episodes of 'outragious Madness'.[114] By bringing the reader's attention to how his madness had not come about by expected causes, Trosse presented his experience as more than mere bodily

---

[112] Ibid., 63, 75, 58, 62, 59; Trosse, *The life*, 2nd ed., 16.

[113] Trosse, *The life*, 1st ed., 74.

[114] Ibid., 80.

malfunction and thereby infused it with deeper spiritual significance. What is more, by aligning his periods of madness with his disdain for religion and his recovery with a shift to nonconformist godliness, Trosse promoted Presbyterianism.

Joseph Hallet, Trosse's assistant and author of the introduction to his *Life*, also emphasised the spiritual rather than bodily aspects of the narrative. In the same way that the author of Allen's preface emphasised the similarities between her turmoil and that of biblical figures, while ignoring its more bodily aspects, Hallett focused upon '*the most racking Tortures* [that] *wounded his* [Trosse's] *Soul*' and included a long list of similar cases of spiritual affliction. His accounts of these other 'Returned Sinners' (ranging from the classic exemplary convert, St Austin, to another minister, John Rogers of Dedham) did not include any reference to bodily experiences, only spiritual turmoil overcome suddenly and directly through God's grace, often through scripture.[115] Rather than referring to bodily dysfunction, Hallet described these other men's '*Anguish of Spirit*', '*Spiritual Miserie*', and '*Terrours of Conscience*'. Moreover, in the same vein as the author of Allen's preface, Hallet asserted that Trosse's soul had been afflicted first, then the body: '*The most racking Tortures wounded his Soul*', he wrote, *'did cut him to the very Heart, and drove him into a* wild Distraction'. Drawing upon a commonly used trope of conversion narratives, Hallet referred to Solomon's question 'A wounded Spirit who can bear?' and referred to '*the most racking Gripes of* Conscience', '*the most bitter Remorses of Mind'*. Indeed, Hallet was so emphatic that Trosse's turmoil was not primarily bodily that he insisted it '*incomparably exceed*[ed] *all the most exquisite Pains which at any time afflict the Body*' given it was, in contrast, a soul 'overwhelm'd *with* Anxiety unallay'd'.[116]

Both Trosse and Hallett, then, gave the soul primacy in their accounts of the former's turmoil. Like other prefatory writers discussed in this chapter, however, Hallett's focus upon the soul was even firmer than that of his subject and appears to have stemmed from an uncertainty on how to acceptably place melancholy or madness in a spiritual narrative. Hallett's uneasiness with the intensity of Trosse's madness can be sensed in his assertions that the latter's '*severe* Expressions' in describing his distracted unregenerated self, were entirely in line with '*what the* Primitive Saints *have done before him, when they have spoken of themselves*'. He was careful to inform the reader that '*such Language as this from the*

---

[115] Ibid., sigs. a2v, a3v-a7v. Hallett includes St Austin, Thomas Bilney, William Perkins, Beza, Junius, Robert Bolton, and John Rogers of Dedham. He drew many of these cases from 'Fuller's *Lives*', i.e. Thomas Fuller, *Abel redevivus* (London, 1651).

[116] Trosse, *The life*, 1st ed., sigs. a7r-v, a3r.

Pens of Men who were so conspicuous for Holiness, is an Evidence of the Depth of their Humility, *and their affecting Apprehension of* Sin'.[117] Although we cannot be certain that Hallett was motivated by an uneasiness with the nature of Trosse's suffering, the second edition of Trosse's life, published just one year later, appears to corroborate this speculation. This version, compiled by Isaac Gilling, shortened the sections that described Trosse's struggles with madness. Well acquainted with Trosse's life and papers, Gilling produced an abridgement of the original narrative and added 'a further account of his life and death', 'a collection out of his sermons', and some of his letters. Throughout, the focus was shifted onto Trosse's life post-conversion, or, in other words, post-madness. The aim of the text, as was stated in the 'recommendatory preface by the Reverend Dr Calamy, Mr Tong, and Mr Evans', was to provide the readers with more details on 'the Fruits of the Grace of God, in a Life spun out to so great a length of Service … to the purposes of Religion'.[118] Thus, all voices across the two editions worked together to present, with varying degrees of insistence, Trosse's experience of madness as primarily spiritual. This was achieved through a focus upon the soul rather than the body or, if possible, by removing focus from his madness altogether, and instead emphasising the godliness of his later life.

Elizabeth Walker: 'Bodily-Infirmities' as 'Souls Dis-advantages'

The voices present in the biography of Elizabeth Walker took a similar approach. While demonstrating an openness, like Allen and Trosse, about the involvement of melancholy in spiritual affliction, the narration of Walker's life was careful to emphasise the spiritual nature of her suffering. After her death in 1690, her husband, the minister Anthony Walker (bap. 1622), edited and published her autobiographical papers as *The holy life of Mrs. Elizabeth Walker.*[119] Anthony, ordained in 1644, became the domestic chaplain to 'the principal patron of East Anglian puritanism, Robert Rich, earl of Warwick, at Lees, Essex' around 1647. As a result, he was a good friend and spiritual confidante to the earl's daughter-in-law Mary Rich, whose diaries will be analysed further in the following chapter. Three years after his appointment, Walker married Elizabeth Sadler and was given the living of nearby Fyfield, Essex, held by the Rich family. After the Restoration he

[117] Ibid., sig. a8v.

[118] Trosse, *The life*, 2nd ed., preface.

[119] Anthony Walker, *The holy life of Mrs. Elizabeth Walker* (London, 1690).

conformed, retaining his position as rector until his death in 1692. Anthony's marriage to Elizabeth appears to have been a happy one, in spite of her persistent ill health and the deaths of their eleven children.[120] He was evidently in awe of Elizabeth's faith and patience in the face of troubles, and wished to share her experiences with wider readers in 1690. His audience apparently appreciated this effort, as the text appears to have been popular enough to be reissued in 1694. A telling addition, 'the vertuous wife', was made to the start of the title.[121]

The work aimed to give 'a modest and short account' of Elizabeth's 'exemplary piety and charity'. It was 'published for the glory of God, … [to] provok[e] others to the like graces and vertues', and incorporated 'some useful papers and letters writ by her on several occasions'. As a result, both Elizabeth's and Anthony's voices are present in the text. Her various writings (ranging from a list of her children's births to evidences of salvation) feature throughout, usually surrounded by Anthony's comments, reflections, and additions. Broken into twenty-five sections, two of these explore her times of 'temptation' in which she suffered under satan's 'assaults'. As had been the case with Joan Drake, Hannah Allen, and George Trosse, the Walkers believed that the devil took advantage of bodily weakness in order to attack an individual's spiritual wellbeing. Unlike the prefaces of Allen and Trosse's works, whose authors downplayed the bodily origins of their assaults, the Walkers openly described Elizabeth's troubles as beginning with 'Indispositions of Mind by Sorrow, or of Body by Sickness'.[122] These indispositions included three bouts of melancholy, which were described in such a way that the condition hovered between the categories of sorrow of mind and sickness of body. Rather than using the identification of origin (soul) and effect (body) to make the involvement of melancholy acceptable in a religious framework, the Walkers emphasised that solely spiritual, rather than bodily, treatments had been used to bring Elizabeth comfort.

Her first experience of melancholy occurred sometime in the late 1640s, when she had recently returned to her parents' house after the civil wars. 'When I had been at home about half a Year', she wrote, 'I grew Melancholy, occasioned by some discontent, which God was pleased to cure with a smart Corrosive, through suffering Satan to take advantage of that humour'. Satan sent 'blasphemous suggestion[s]' and 'evil Motions' into her mind and, under her 'dark and cloudy fancy … had temptations that there was no

---

[120] *ODNB*, s.v. 'Walker, Anthony'.

[121] Anthony Walker, *The vertuous wife: or, The holy life of Mrs. Elizab[e]th Walker* (London, 1694), title page.

[122] Ibid., title page, sig. A7r.

God'. She found some comfort by contemplating the wonder of His creations, as she admired a 'Calcedon Iris' that her father kept, along with many other flowerpots, in his shop (Figure 3.3).[123]

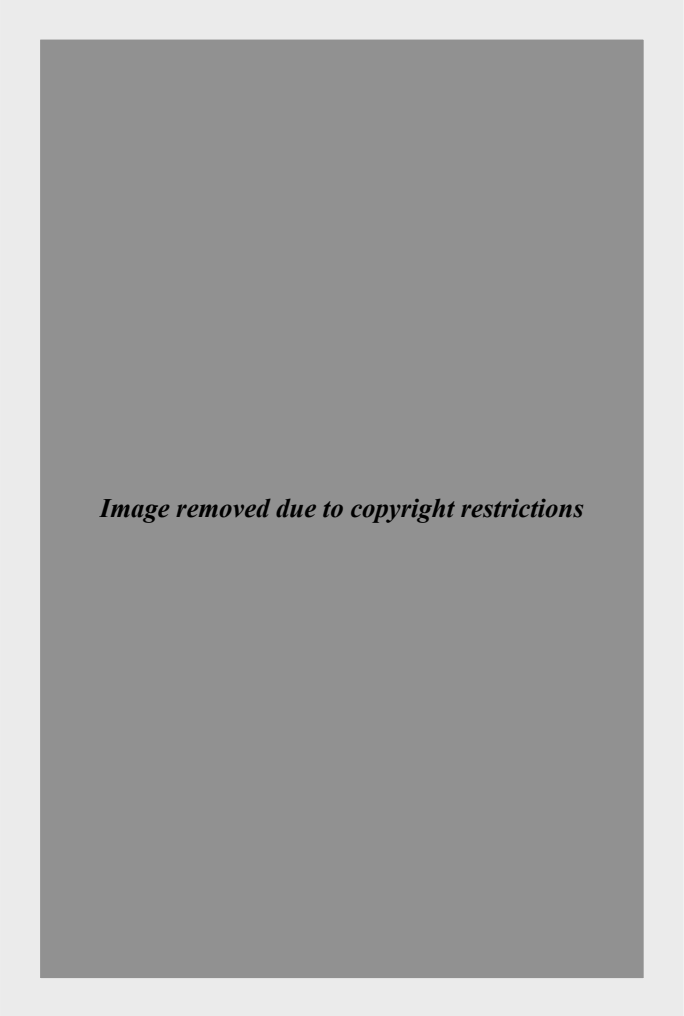

Figure 3.3: 'Chalcedonian iris', in William Curtis, *The Botanical Magazine*, vol. 3 (London: Stephen Couchman, 1789), plate 91.

This solace was short-lived, however, and she sought further assistance from her parish's minister, Mr Watson. His efforts to comfort her did not help; her 'burthen' only 'grew more heavy'. Instead, she was brought some 'refreshment' through learning that her troubles were not 'singular' given that her Aunt Quiney, who had taken notice of her 'dejected spirit', had also been 'troubled with Temptations' in her younger years. Her father also observed that she 'was not well' but, unlike her aunt, 'not fully understanding' what his daughter 'ailed, sent for a Physician'. This troubled Walker, and upon the physician's diagnosis that her 'Distemper' was 'most Dejectedness and Melancholly', she

[123] Ibid., 18-21.

'took the freedom to tell him': 'I thought I did not need a Physician.' He, who had already included pious discourse in his consultation, 'did not take ill' at her request to 'forbear coming' to see her, and 'with good counsel' left.[124]

As this encounter made clear, it was not physic or physicians that Walker wished to be treated by; instead, she found comfort in particular verses of scripture and wished to be sent to a home in the country of 'some private good Family'. Her parents quickly obliged, and she spent half a year at the Essex home of the minister John Beadle, the father-in-law of Mr Watson. There, the 'fatherly Care, and Counsel, and Prayers of that good Man, with the great love of his Wife ...and the manifestations of the respects and care of their Children and Servants', allowed Walker to slowly gather 'satisfaction and comfort'. In addition to the support of a godly community, she also highlighted the positive effect that carrying out religious duties, such as reading and secret prayer, had on her symptoms of habitual weeping, inability to sleep and lack of appetite. By the time she returned home, she was 'enjoying more calm of Spirit', which she credited to God, and her 'troubles' continued to wear off 'gradually'. Nevertheless, her recovery was never complete, as she experienced numerous relapses throughout her life. She did not quibble at this, however, noting that 'if the Lord will give to me, his unworthy Creature, in pence and half pence, what ["Grace and Comfort"] in bigger summs he sees fit to bestow on others, that my dependence may be continually on him, I desire to be thankfull'.[125]

While Elizabeth made it clear that the devil had taken advantage of her melancholy humour to bring about a period of turmoil in her youth, Anthony, in introducing and commenting on this section of the narrative, set her body's humoral balance aside. Instead, he emphasised the experience of her soul. Placing the account under the title, 'How she was first awakened to a deep sense of Religion by Temptation', Anthony introduced his wife's experience as God suffering 'her weary Soul to be dug deep and long, with sore and great Temptations'. Indeed, in his reading, her turmoil had been most importantly an affliction of the soul:

> She was long buffeted with horrid satanical Suggestions, and blasphemous Temptations; which not only made her *go mourning all the day long,* but many Months and Years; and not only those fiery and envenomed Darts drank up her

[124] Ibid.

[125] Ibid., 21-4.

> Spirits, but brought her Life to the gates of the Grave, and her distressed Soul to the gates of Hell.

Rather than an imbalanced humour to be cured by a physician, here her turmoil was the '*mourning*' of Psalm 38:6. Anthony acknowledged the role of the body, describing his wife's troubles as caused by the devil '*blow*[ing] her mind, especially if there were any sore place found to light on, any small remisness, or bodily infirmity, which abated her vigour to resist or keep him off' but, like Elizabeth, believed her recovery to be 'rendred' by 'our gracious God of his infinite Goodness' bringing comfort to her soul.[126]

Elizabeth and Anthony's descriptions of her later relapses also emphasised the devil's exploitation of bodily weakness and, at the same time, the soul-based nature of her recoveries. Anthony titled the section which recounted Elizabeth's relapses as 'Renewed Assaults of her Enemy by Temptation', and categorised these assaults by their two usual causes, or what he termed 'Seasons': 'Indispositions of Mind by Sorrow, or of Body by Sickness.' In both scenarios, the devil was described by Elizabeth as taking advantage of her 'melancholy Disposition', exacerbated by such events as the death of her 'dearly beloved Child', a difficult birth, or a 'long Sickness'.[127]

Elizabeth understood her body, whether through sickness or its day-to-day existence, as posing a constant risk to her soul. Her body was the source of her 'Corruptions' and 'Putrifying Soars' which she wished God to 'give a mortal stab to'. Bodily flaws allowed the 'Enemy [to] break in like a Flood', leading her to 'Astonishments, and Confusions of Soul'. As her body weakened, she felt that her soul's vulnerability increased, and for that reason feared becoming elderly: 'forsake me not in the time of my older Age, when Strength faileth', she wrote, 'suffer not the defects of my Body to become the Sin of my Soul.' This belief that the body was the soul's weakness permeated her thinking; she even justified her 'Spare and Lean' frame, 'fearing to be Fat', by 'saying, She hated to be clogged with a *foggy bulk* of Flesh, and [wished to be] of a *vivacious sprightly Soul*'.[128]

Although Elizabeth's body was understood to be the origin of her soul's troubles, the Walkers also touched on the issue of cause and effect. Anthony noted that she 'would often Pray that her Bodily-Infirmities might not be her Souls Dis-advantages; and say,

---

[126] Ibid., 17, 26.

[127] Ibid., sig. A7r, 63.

[128] Ibid., 120-1, 208-9. For discussion of the 'early modern correlation of excessive flesh with sin', see Naomi Baker, *Plain ugly: the unattractive body in early modern culture* (Manchester, 2010), 119-122.

That though they were not her Sins, they were the Effects of them'. These words indicate that Elizabeth understood a linear chain to occur from sin, to bodily infirmity, to attacks on the soul. Indeed, she appears to have understood the cause of her troubles to be her own sins, as she would ask 'the good Lord' to 'cast out' of her soul 'whatever may offend and provoke him to so severe a Scourge'.[129] Throughout the rest of the text, however, Elizabeth did not identify this chain so firmly and, when describing her bouts of melancholy, did not express a belief that her sins had been the root cause of this condition.

As we have seen in her descriptions of melancholy, Elizabeth rejected the assistance of a physician and Anthony focused upon his wife's soul receiving comfort. Thus, while Elizabeth and her husband were open about the bodily origins of her soul's struggles, they emphasised that her recoveries were procured solely through spiritual means. Anthony described Elizabeth's methods of dealing with the devil's assaults as 'Her Methods of Resisting' and listed these as '1. Conference with Experienced Christians. / 2. Reading suitable Books. / [and] 3. Entring her solemn protest against them under her hand, in appeal to God'. The latter consisted of composing, and presumably later reading in times of need, a passage titled 'In time of Temptation'.[130]

As these various 'Methods' revealed, Elizabeth aimed her efforts at caring for the soul, rather than attempting to solve the infirmities of her body. Although they may have been made possible by bodily weaknesses, her struggles were understood as a battle against her soul that needed to be fought in that territory alone: 'I beseech thee put on me that whole and compleat Armour', she wrote, 'that I may be able to resist my strong Enemies, which war against my Soul, and fight against thee'. This battle could only be won through divine grace; as both Elizabeth and her husband stated, God 'who hast shewed me great and sore troubles wilt revive me again'. Neither she herself, nor any mortals around her, were capable of reviving her in the same way, given such 'Creature[s]' had only an '*utter Insufficiency* … either to be in its *self* your *Happiness,* or the *means* of curing this your *Misery,* and making you *happy* again in God'.[131]

As had been the case in all the examples above, from Deborah Huish to George Trosse, Walker's suffering was presented as a form of sanctified affliction and her experiences of melancholy were incorporated into the wider array of troubles God sends

---

[129] Ibid., 122, 116.

[130] Ibid., sig. A7r, 119, 122.

[131] Ibid., 120, 21, 229. See also Anthony's similar words, 118.

his believers for their improvement. In her case, however, the rendering of her struggles as sanctified afflictions was particularly pronounced and used more overtly to emphasise the exemplary nature of her godliness. As Elizabeth wrote in 1683 in 'Another Consolatory Letter, written to a good Christian Friend under Trouble', to be afflicted was '*God's discriminating Character of Adoption*, and *Sonship*', as '*Affliction's* his preparatory work upon his People, to fit them for a better Estate'.[132] Anthony also emphasised the godly nature of affliction, going so far as to compare Elizabeth's sufferings with that of Christ. When commenting on her first experience of melancholy, he wrote: 'Tis recorded of our Lord, that when he was Baptized, He was driven of the Spirit into the Wilderness to be tempted of the Devil, and [was]... forty days tempted of him.' He also justified the ongoing, recurring nature of Elizabeth's bouts of melancholy and temptation through this comparison, highlighting that 'when the Devil had ended all the temptations, he departed' from Jesus only 'for a season'. This temporariness, Anthony asserted, 'clearly intimates his returning to renew his Assaults', and persistent temptations were therefore a 'Divine Pattern' in his view. As a result, Elizabeth's lack of respite between assaults was not seen as a negative experience, but as further evidence of her being an exemplary Christian. Her life had been 'a continual Warfare, in which she fought the good Fight of Faith' thanks to God's 'Strength who taught her *Hands to War,* and *Fingers to Fight,* and *covered her Head in the Day of Battel*'.[133] Her body had been her source of weakness in this battle, but it was her soul that overcame.

Thus, in Elizabeth's case, we see further evidence of a greater willingness to incorporate melancholy into accounts of spiritual turmoil in the final decades of the century - but also a tendency to invest approbation in her response to the condition. Elizabeth's confessional stance and the authorship of the text provide some explanation for this commendatory tendency: her position as the wife of a conforming minister made her religious position less vulnerable to discrediting accusations of melancholy (as compared to Huish and the anonymous gentlewoman, for example), while her husband's role as narrator naturally encouraged a laudatory tone. The next, and final, case study, however, reveals the same tendencies to include and commend individuals' responses to melancholy at the end of the century - but by the hand of a nonconformist author.

---

[132] Ibid., 246. See also a similar statement in another letter by Elizabeth, 241.

[133] Ibid., 25, 115, 123.

Like Walker, Edmund Calamy employed the soul-body dynamic to highlight the exemplary nature of ejected ministers' responses to melancholy in his biographies of dissenting clergymen. Originally the lengthy ninth chapter in his *Abridgement of Mr Baxter's history* (1702), Calamy's biographies proved popular and were extended. By 1713 the *Account of the ministers* section of the *Abridgement* reached 850 pages and was spread across two volumes. In 1727 the biographies were published in their own right, as *A continuation of the account,* and had been lengthened by Calamy a further 1000 pages.[134] A Presbyterian minister himself, Calamy's biographies and other writings defended the moderate dissenting cause.[135] In this chapter's preceding case studies, a tendency to employ the soul-body dynamic in order to place melancholy acceptably within a spiritual narrative has been identified. Calamy's many biographies corroborate the existence of this tendency, as those accounts that included ministers' struggles with melancholy shifted blame onto the body in such a way that left the soul untainted and, thereby, displayed his subjects in a more positive light.

While many of the publications discussed in this chapter aimed, at least in part, to justify nonconformism, this was a more pronounced motivation in Calamy's work. Compared to the publications above, which presented experiences of melancholy within extended descriptions of a single figure, usually in the genres of conversion narrative or trial of faith, Calamy composed brief biographies of countless moderate Independent and Presbyterian ministers. Rather than presenting in-depth evidence of his subjects' spiritual exemplariness, Calamy captured individuals in a nutshell; conveying their character, achievements, and the key events of their lives. As the following examples show, this succinctness brought the usefulness of the soul-body dynamic to the fore, allowing Calamy to quickly demonstrate the acceptability of his subjects' struggles with melancholy. Moreover, given that Calamy drew upon others' work in order to compile his countless biographies (including the writings of historian Henry Sampson, funeral sermons, and information provided by local correspondents), the *Account* presents a patchwork of various Presbyterian and Independent voices - all of whom, by and large, shared the

---

[134] Edmund Calamy, *An abridgement of Mr Baxter's history of his life and times* (London, 1702); idem, *An abridgement of Mr. Baxter's history of his life and times*, 2nd ed. (London, 1713); idem, *A continuation of the account of the ministers, lecturers, masters and fellows of colleges, and schoolmasters, who were ejected and silenced after the Restoration in 1660* (London, 1727).

[135] *ODNB*, s.v. 'Calamy, Edmund (1671-1732)'.

tendency identified in this chapter's previous cases to draw upon soul-body ideas to describe and justify ministers' experiences of melancholy.

Overall, the various lives detailed in the *Account* reveal a common attitude towards melancholy. In the numerous entries that mention the condition, there is a sense that melancholy is being excused, that these ministers' reputations are being salvaged from the possible taint of an ailment that ran the risk of rendering them 'useless'. As can be detected in Calamy's entries, a minister's usefulness depended upon his ability to carry out his duties - such as giving sermons, providing pastoral advice, and displaying moderate nonconformism in a favourable light to the wider community. If debilitated by melancholy, ministers were not able to lead their flock by performing these tasks. Voices of both non-sufferers and sufferers themselves can be found in Calamy's accounts revealing a disapproval of this melancholy-induced uselessness.[136]

Calamy tended to compliment his subjects before noting that they were 'but melancholy', the use of the adverb acknowledging the inherently problematic nature of the condition or temperament.[137] A Mr Alexander Green, for example, was 'an Holy but Melancholy Person'.[138] The latter two words pointed to a natural tendency towards melancholy and this, in particular, required counteraction on the part of Calamy.[139] There had long been greater culpability in being 'naturally melancholy'. As Angus Gowland has explained in his study of the ethics of Renaissance melancholy, 'the distinction between complexion and disease [of melancholy] - in most of its species - is of limited importance', except in the area of moral culpability; 'temperamental melancholics are potentially blameworthy and have the duty to moderate themselves according to reason'.[140] By perpetuating humoral ideas in his descriptions of ministers' characters,

---

[136] Melancholy's tendency to reduce a minister's usefulness can also be identified in Oliver Heywood's diaries. See, for example, his discussion of a Mr Cudworth in Heywood, *The Rev. Oliver Heywood*, vol. 4, 13.

[137] Similar language was used by Oliver Heywood when describing godly melancholics. See, for example, Heywood, *The Rev. Oliver Heywood*, vol. 1, 99.

[138] Calamy, *An abridgement*, 2nd ed., vol. 2, 85. The use of 'but' or 'yet' to discuss melancholy was also used in the entries for William Green (86), John Sams (303), Edward Alexander (383), Thomas Crees (599), Ambrose Moston (714), Christopher Marshal (801), Mr Robinson (834), and William Carslake (248). In Calamy, *A Continuation*, the phrase was also used in the entries for Richard Dyer (107), William Disney (127), Jonathan Tuckney (127-8), Tobias Bouchier (216), Thomas Crane (421), Nathaniel Mitchel (622), Timothy Dod (640-1), Walter Hornby (646-7), and Thomas Wilsley (773).

[139] For examples of Calamy describing individuals as naturally melancholy, see the following entries in *An abridgement*, 2nd ed., vol. 2: James Nalton (2-3), George Porter (71), William Green (86), Edward Alexander (383), and Thomas Crees (600). In Calamy, *A continuation*, see Mr Ford (235), Christopher Jelinger (279), Thomas Crane (421), Nathaniel Mitchel (622), Timothy Dod (640-1), Walter Hornby (646-7), and Tobias Ellis (1004).

[140] Gowland, 'The ethics', 103-4.

Calamy's accounts engaged with the same framework of accountability. In an effort to reduce the blameworthiness of his subjects, Calamy often offset admissions to melancholic temperaments by stating that the individual was otherwise cheerful and content when not labouring under the weight of their body's natural constitution.[141] This cheerfulness fulfilled the expectation placed on ministers to rally against their melancholic complexion, while also countering critics' claims that the nonconforming godly's way of life caused melancholy. By presenting nonconformist ministers as battling against their *natural* temper, Calamy was able to reject the idea that sombre religious practices had caused melancholy by wreaking havoc on an otherwise innately balanced body.

To be a melancholic minister, then, was not ideal and, for that reason, required some careful framing. If we examine the nature of this framing in Calamy's accounts, it becomes evident that he attempted to shift blame away from the ministers themselves for their experiences of melancholy, and that the soul-body dynamic was vital in articulating this. He presented cases of melancholy as being caused by the body's weakness, as well as those external forces that preyed on this weakness, including the devil and enemies of nonconformism. At the same time, he highlighted sufferers' strident efforts to battle against the condition and the ultimate victory of their souls in transcending it. Calamy was particularly careful to emphasise that melancholic ministers were free of their malady, and of a sound mind, on their deathbed.

In order to make these distinctions, Calamy clearly demarcated the responsibility held by the body and soul (or mind) in creating, and being affected by, experiences of melancholy. Samuel Tapper, for example, was described as succumbing to melancholy in the latter part of his life due to bodily infirmities while, in the case of Christopher Marshal, Calamy wrote that he was 'of a serious Spirit, but inclin'd to Melancholy. … He had a sound Mind, but a crazy Body, which at last grew untenantable to his precious Soul, which broke loose, and expired in February 1673'.[142] Calamy similarly separated the mind and body in the case of Nathaniel Mitchel, asserting that: 'After his continuing some

---

[141] For examples of Calamy highlighting the cheerfulness of melancholic ministers, see *An abridgement*, 2nd ed., vol. 2: George Porter (71), John Sacheverell (597-9), Sam Bryan (743), and Mr Evans (745). In Calamy, *A continuation*, see Samuel Tapper (220), Timothy Dod (640-1), Walter Hornby (646-7). For Calamy highlighting cheerfulness of nonconformist ministers generally, see for example *An abridgement*, 2nd ed., vol. 2: John Bingham (188), Simeon Ash (2), and in *A continuation,* James Stephenson (762). 'Cheerful' and 'happy' were used at strikingly greater frequencies than terms such as 'sad', 'despair', or 'trouble of mind' in Calamy's biographies.

[142] Calamy, *A continuation,* 220; idem, *An abridgement*, 2nd ed., vol. 2, 801.

Years in this deep Affliction [of suicidal melancholy], it pleas'd God considerably to rebuke the Tempter, so that tho' he had a remaining bodily Disorder, yet his Mind was much more free from these impetuous Assaults.'[143]

Calamy had largely lifted these words from John Collinges' funeral sermon for Mitchel, his brother-in-law, *An account of the crown of righteousness*, which had been published in 1684. The use of the soul-body dynamic was stronger in the original version, with the same line closing: 'if at all any thing of them [the temptations and assaults] returned at any time, … they were not a continual dropping upon his Soul.' Indeed, the body was blamed entirely for Mitchel's troubles throughout the sermon, and in such a way that allowed for some positivity:

> if we consider what a man of griefs and sorrows he was in his latter time, what an ill habit of body he had contracted, what a variety of diseases he was incumbred with, and how improbable it was that by the use of any art, his body should be recovered to a state of comfort to himself, or usefulness to others. We have great cause to rejoice in hope.

It was this overcoming of the body, Collinges believed, that earned Mitchel the '*Crown of Righteousness*' used in the title.[144]

God's grace was clearly identified as making Mitchel's ability to overcome possible, yet Collinges also commended the minister's own input. So much so, in fact, that the epigraph of the sermon was:

> 2 Timothy 4.7, 8. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a Crown of Righteousness, which the Righteous Judge shall give unto me in that day and not unto me only, but to all those also who love his appearance.

The idea of 'fighting the good fight' was used thirty-nine times throughout the funeral sermon. Collinges was keen to emphasise that Mitchel fought against the flesh, that 'he walked in, and out … dying daily to the contentments of this life, … bringing his body under, and keeping it in subjection', and that his battle 'with the Grand Adversary' in struggling against melancholy was 'the most perspicuous' example of this.[145]

---

[143] Calamy, *A continuation*, 622.

[144] John Collinges, *Thirteen sermons upon several useful subjects* (London, 1684), 41, 43.

[145] Ibid., 1, 38-9.

Collinges explained that Mitchel's melancholy appeared to have been originally instigated by the death of his 'only Son, a Child in which he much delighted' in 1673. As had been the case for Elizabeth Walker, only religious methods (particularly theological reasoning) were employed in bringing Mitchel comfort, and these efforts were presented as one side of a spiritual warfare; God 'blessed' their 'indeavours ... as to drive the *Enemy* from one *Post* to another' and their 'discourses, [which attempted] to revive *his faith* in such *Revelations of Holy Writ, ...* should countermine his adversary, whose design was to blow up his Soul'. The body was the battleground upon which a fight for Mitchel's soul occurred and, as Collinges emphasised, the soul was certainly saved. He concluded that Mitchel:

> *fought the good fight,* and indeed in this [regard, of battling with melancholy]...was more a Conquerour then I ever knew any who was so long ingaged in it, and at last died the ordinary death of men, quietly in his Bed, surrendring his Soul into the hands of him that gave it.[146]

Other melancholic ministers whose lives were recorded in Calamy revealed a similar stance.[147] Christopher Jelinger, for example, whom Calamy states 'seems to have been of a melancholy Disposition', reminded his readers in his work *The excellency of Christ, or, The rose of Sharon shewing the art of taking Christ as the onely soveraign medicine of a sin-sick soul* (1647) that Christ was the cure for all troubles of the mind. 'When you are troubled with *Melancholy,* and *distrustfull thoughts*', he wrote, 'go to Christ in that case also'. He likened the reason for this to the effectiveness of other treatments, explaining that 'for as Roses have a facultie, as they write to expell melancholy, so hath Christ a most singular facultie to cast out and dispell all those pensive and perplexed conceits, which do so torture many of his beleeving members'.[148] Jelinger may have been writing some fifty years before Calamy published his lives but, as the case of Mitchel revealed, faith in the

---

[146] Ibid., 39-41.

[147] While most cases of melancholy in Calamy's biographies appear to have been resolved through spiritual means, two examples can be found which mention other methods: Tobias Ellis, copied by Calamy from Richard Baxter, was recorded as being 'sav'd better than physick, from a melancholy inclination' by lifestyle choices. Similarly, John Bartlett was told by physicians to stop studying anatomy after it made him melancholic. See Calamy, *A continuation*, 1004, 238-9.

[148] Ibid., 279; Christopher Jelinger, *The excellency of Christ* (London, 1647), 200-1. When mentioning the use of roses, Jelinger cited 'Thomas Hill in his Art of Gard, p. 88' and a latin text from Bernard. This referred to Thomas Hill, *The arte of gardening* (London, 1608), 88: 'and the Roses doe comfort the heart, and rejoyce the blood and the rosed hony dooth both comfort and expell the melancholly and flegmatike matter: and given in that water, in which Fennel seedes is sodden, doth purge the better, if the same shall be mixed with a little salt.'

effectiveness of spiritual treatments for melancholy continued in the 1680s, and was repeated without comment by Calamy into the eighteenth century. Their focus upon the soul helps to explain this loyalty to spiritual methods. A funeral sermon from 1663 written by Thomas Horton for James Nalton, another minister included in Calamy's biographies, makes this clear. Discussing the duty of ministers to comfort others under affliction through the use of the Word, Horton stated: 'Where (I say) it pleaseth God to bless and sanctifie the Word, it is effectual for the quieting of the mind, for pacifying of the conscience, and setling of the troubled soul.'[149]

Calamy's entry for Nalton revealed that he suffered from 'violent Fits of Melancholy once in ... a few Years'. His 'Natural Temper', we are told, had an 'influence on his Soul' and, given this 'Seriousness express'd itself by Tears', he was known as the 'weeping prophet'. Although he managed to battle against his fits of melancholy for much of his life, Calamy recorded that Nalton

> had been but a little while recover'd [from a fit] when the *Bartholomew* Act came out, which cast him out with his Brethren: And his Heart being troubled with the sad Estate of the Church, the Multitude of silenc'd Ministers and his own Unserviceableness, his Melancholy return'd, and he consum'd to Death.

Thus, rather than his own weakness, the external force of persecution was blamed as causing his last, fatal episode.[150]

Even a shift of culpability such as this was not sufficient to allow Horton, during the tense years of the early Restoration, to mention Nalton's melancholy in his funeral sermon, however. As was the case in the narratives of Huish and the anonymous gentlewoman, acknowledging the presence of melancholy was too risky for Nalton's reputation in this period of heightened vulnerability for nonconformists. As a result, Horton, unlike Calamy, only acknowledged Nalton's struggles by highlighting that 'he was very compassionate to wounded spirits, he himself having been much afflicted'. Choosing the term 'wounded spirit', rather than melancholic fits, Horton also framed Nalton's tears very favourably: he was 'a man of a very yeilding and melting frame of spirit', he wrote, 'soon dissolved into tears' which were 'very real, and hearty, drawn from the fullness of his Spirit'. As Calamy had, Horton presented Nalton's actions as responses to the fate of

---

[149] Thomas Horton, *Rich treasure in earthen vessels* (London, 1663), 11.

[150] Calamy, *An abridgement*, 2nd ed., vol. 2, 2-3.

the dissenting cause, noting that his tears were 'sutable to the age we live in, being full of sin and calamity'. Moreover, while Horton did not mention melancholy in his sermon, he did, in his choice of epigraph, point to the vulnerabilities that the body had laid his brother-in-law open to.[151] By highlighting the 'earthen' nature of all humans' 'vessels', Horton's epigraph allowed him to state that 'Ministers … have many weaknesses, they are men subject to the like passions as others'. In implicitly defending Nalton's troubles he continued at length, stating, for example, that:

> 'Tis true the Ministers of Christ have greater advantages then others, in regard of their education, knowledge, gifts, and imployments, … yet through the remainders of the flesh in them, they have many infirmities: so Satan watches them more then others, lays more snares for them in regard of their parts and imployments; so that they are more subject to his temptations then others.[152]

Although not venturing to employ the term 'melancholy', Horton employed the soul-body dynamic, in the same way as other authors discussed throughout this chapter, to explain and justify his relative's struggles.

Conclusion

By examining the cases of Deborah Huish, the anonymous gentlewoman, Joan Drake, Hannah Allen, George Trosse, Elizabeth Walker, and Calamy's biographies, it has been shown that the soul-body relationship was pivotal to the nonconforming godly's expressions, or denials, of melancholy. By shifting focus onto their souls and firmly away from their bodies, it was possible for Huish, the anonymous gentlewoman, and especially their prefatory writers to defend their reputations from the accusations of melancholy aimed at Baptists and Independents during the late Interregnum and Restoration. Later in the century, however, from the 1680s onwards, there appears to have been an increase in the openness by which writers included melancholy in spiritual narratives. This assertion corroborates the suggestions made by Hodgkin in her discussions of Drake, Allen, and Trosse, while also broadening the range of evidence to support her view. At the same time, however, it has been demonstrated that, even when melancholy appears to have been more openly admitted to later in the century, the soul continued to be a focal

---

[151] Horton, *Rich treasure*, 17, 1. The epigraph was: '2 Cor. 4.7. But we have this Treasure in Earthen Vessels, that the excellency of the Power may be of God, and not of us.'

[152] Ibid., 5.

point in order to increase the appropriateness of this distemper's presence in a spiritual narrative. Indeed, while a greater criticism of religious melancholy in line with Schmidt's assertions has not been identified, close examination of authors' language reveals that melancholy continued to require careful positioning within religious frameworks. For some writers, including Allen and Trosse, the tensions surrounding melancholy's role in their narratives were alleviated through the identification of cause and effect (the soul was affected first by God's wrath, and the body's melancholic distemper followed). For Drake and Walker, on the other hand, the tensions surrounding melancholy's presence were softened through discussion of treatment (physic and physicians were eschewed, while religious means were deemed effective). Some authors, such as Trosse, combined these two approaches. What is more, it was the preface writers surrounding sufferers that were most strident in presenting a soul-orientated account of melancholy, further suggesting that an unease persisted within the nonconforming godly community about incorporating this condition into spiritual narratives. As this focus upon the soul would suggest, moreover, acceptance of bodily explanations for spiritual affliction did not point to a growing attempt to 'treat melancholy with resolute secularism, and to dethrone it from its special status', as Hodgkin has suggested, nor a clear feminisation of the condition as it came to be a seen as a sign of passionate excess or mental weakness, as Schmidt and Hodgkin have indicated respectively.[153] Rather, the cases examined here suggest that melancholy, as a sanctified affliction, came to be infused with a heightened degree of spiritual value when sufferers, whether male or female, were shown to have faced the condition with faith and forbearance. While these arguments hold for published works, we are limiting our understanding of the role of melancholy in religious experience in this period if we do not also consider unpublished writings, as was asserted in the Introduction. The following two chapters, then, will turn to the manuscript writings of six nonconforming godly individuals in order to assess and flesh out the narrative advanced here.

[153] Hodgkin, *Madness*, 79; Hodgkin, 'Scurvy vapours', 17; Schmidt, *Melancholy*, 114-7.

Chapter Four

Melancholy amongst the godly, 1650s-1670s

In 1653, An Collins wrote in her collection of *Divine songs and meditacions*:

> When scorched with distracting care,
> My minde findes out a shade
> Which fruitlesse Trees, false fear, dispair
> And melancoly made,
> Where neither bird did sing
> Nor fragrant flowers spring,
> Nor any plant of use.[1]

In these lines, Collins, a little-known figure whose writings revealed reformed beliefs of both Calvinist and more unorthodox leanings, placed the famously protean condition of melancholy alongside false fear and despair, depicting the combination of these states as 'fruitlesse', or unproductive.[2] The view that the distemper, passing mood, or temperament of melancholy was often of no 'use' is similarly voiced in the first three cases examined here. In turning from the published spiritual narratives discussed in the previous chapter to diaries and letters largely of the 1650s, we see that the nonconforming godly's urge to either reject melancholy, in the vein of the anonymous gentlewoman, or reframe it as a sanctified affliction of conversion, in the style of Joan Drake's biographer, is reduced. Instead, in these more personal writings, melancholy was most commonly painted as a problem or obstacle to quotidian spiritual duties. There was no consensus, however, on the usefulness of this problem: could melancholy be a spiritually productive experience, or was it simply an impediment to religious life as Collins suggested? Chapters Four and Five will answer this question and, in doing so, test and augment the narrative proposed in the previous chapter. By expanding the evidence base to both unpublished and published genres; considering contemporaneous and retrospective accounts; and building webs of association around each case, the ways in which individuals and their surrounding communities identified, experienced and dealt with melancholy will be explored, and a more complex picture rendered of its relationship to religious life.

---

[1] An Collins, *Divine songs and meditacions* (London, 1653), 28.

[2] *ODNB*, s.v. 'Collins, An'.

Richard Baxter, Katherine Gell, and Francis Fullwood: 'a diseased disability', 1655-59

Many historians have written about Baxter's well-known commitment to pastoral divinity.[3] Rather than examining Baxter's views solely in his many published texts, this investigation will look primarily at his correspondence of consolation, from earlier in his ministry. Moreover, instead of focussing on Baxter's perspective, as scholars such as Keith Condie, Alison Searle, and William Lamont have, this examination will turn to the viewpoint of those he was consoling.[4] This approach will reveal the ways in which Baxter's interactions with melancholics informed the development of his attitudes towards this condition, as well as the difficulties of Calvinist theology, before he shared the culmination of these attitudes in 1682 in the sermon *The cure of melancholy.*[5] Above all, this approach will provide a better understanding of the ways in which experiences of melancholy were shaped and negotiated by sufferers themselves, rather than only those providing them with advice.

The active involvement of these individuals in what could be termed their 'diagnosis' first became evident in their seeking out of the minister. Many believers wrote to Baxter seeking advice: some were friends or acquaintances, while others were strangers introducing themselves to the well-known minister for the first time.[6] In order to understand these letters, and what they can reveal about melancholy, it is first necessary to consider the genre within which they were written. Social and cultural historians of medicine have highlighted the degree to which scholars cannot take letters discussing health at face value, but rather must consider generic conventions, the functions of

---

[3] Neil H. Keeble, *Richard Baxter: puritan man of letters* (Oxford, 1982), ch.2; J. William Black, *Reformation pastors: Richard Baxter and the ideal of the Reformed pastor* (Bletchley, 2004), passim; Tim Cooper, *John Owen, Richard Baxter and the formation of nonconformity* (London, 2011), 131-2, 173-4; Lamont, *Richard Baxter*, 33-7; Schmidt, *Melancholy*, 103-128; Hodgkin, *Madness*, 75-78.

[4] Alison Searle, '"My souls anatomiste": Richard Baxter, Katherine Gell and letters of the heart', *Early Modern Literary Studies* 12, 2 (2006): 7.1-26; Keith Condie, 'Some further correspondence between Richard Baxter and Katherine Gell', *HJ* 53, 1 (2010): 165-176; Lamont, *Richard Baxter*, 34-6, 116, 138-9, 183, 296.

[5] Richard Baxter, 'The cure of melancholy and overmuch-sorrow by faith and physick', in *A continuation of morning-exercise questions and cases of conscience*, ed. Samuel Annesley (London, 1683), 263-304. For discussion of changes to Baxter's theological beliefs in response to dealing with melancholics, see Stachniewski, *Persecutory imagination*, 56-57. For a more detailed discussion of Baxter's theological views, see Lamont, *Richard Baxter*, 125-42, 149-51.

[6] Many examples of individuals seeking advice can be found in Baxter's correspondence. See, for example, the letters described in N. H. Keeble and Geoffrey F. Nuttall, eds., *Calendar of the correspondence of Richard Baxter, vol. 1: 1638-1660* (Oxford, 1991), 187, 74-5, 84, 404; idem, eds., *Calendar of the correspondence of Richard Baxter, vol. 2: 1660-1696* (Oxford, 1991), 54-5, 80, 96-7, 135.

correspondence, material circumstances, and the authors' presentation of themselves.[7] By bearing these aspects in mind, an analysis of the exchanges between Baxter, Katherine Gell and Francis Fullwood reveals the influence of his pastoral publications on individuals' attitudes towards their spiritual and bodily health, the significance of gender in understandings of melancholy, and the importance of exchange, especially in the form of written correspondence, in building attitudes towards this illness.

Katherine Gell: 'deserted in point of Livelynes'

In his *Treatise of conversion* of 1657, Baxter wrote that 'it was the plain and pressing downright Preacher, that onely seemed to me to be in good sadness, and to make somewhat of it, and to speak with life, and light, and weight'.[8] His letters to troubled believers were in line with this belief, presenting his reader with straightforward advice, in the same style as his plain preaching. One recipient was the gentlewoman Katherine Gell (*bap.* 1624, *d.* 1671, Appendix 1a), who wrote to Baxter as a stranger in July 1655, aware of 'the great care' he 'shewed to poore soules'.[9] She was the daughter of a wealthy administrator and politician, John Packer, who was known to be godly and supported the parliament in the first civil war. She entered into another godly family through marriage to the son of the parliament's commander in Derbyshire, and future second baronet, Sir John Gell. Her husband, to whom she first revealed her spiritual troubles, was - at least in the eyes of others - 'the most rigid Presbyterian in the county', a religious, wise, and worthy gentleman.[10] After the Restoration, the Gells were patrons of ejected ministers, and Katherine was praised as a godly exemplar by the Presbyterian minister William Bagshaw, who commended her attentiveness to the spiritual welfare of her servants and personal piety.[11] While this praise provided Gell with an impeccable reputation, her letters with Baxter reveal a more troubled interior.

The ways in which Gell described her persistent anxieties revealed the extent to which her environment - especially her spiritual reading - had shaped her way of thinking

---

[7] Jane Couchman and Ann Crabb, 'Introduction', in *Women's letters across Europe, 1400-1700: form and persuasion*, eds. Couchman and Crabb (Farnham, 2005), 5-6; Willemijn Ruberg, 'The letter as medicine: studying health and illness in Dutch daily correspondence, 1770–1850', *Social History of Medicine* 23, 3 (2010): 498-9.

[8] Richard Baxter, *A treatise of conversion* (London, 1657), sig. A3r.

[9] Gell to Baxter, July 1655, MS 59.v.216, DWL.

[10] *ODNB*, s.v. 'Gell, Katherine'.

[11] William Bagshaw, *De spiritualibus pecci* (London, 1702), 58-9, cited in *ODNB*, s.v. 'Gell, Katherine'.

about, and categorising, various experiences. She introduced herself to Baxter, for example, by describing the religious education of her childhood and, in due course, conversion. This narrative revealed the influence of spiritual lives, a genre whose texts consistently opened in this way, excluding other personal, more worldly life events.[12] Also in line with this genre, Gell pinpointed a moment of conversion (stating that a sermon by Stephen Marshall set the spirit at work within her) and used particular phrases: for example, she referred to her old self as having been only 'formall' in religious practice, a word which had negativity assigned to it by reformed Protestants given their preference for an inward liveliness in their faith, as explained in Chapter One. While she viewed her conversion as positive, as it had led her to 'a better way' than mere 'formall[ity]' in religion, she also recounted to Baxter that the experience of being awakened 'produced many sad brambles in my soule & raised many thoughts within which I concealed 2 yeares'. As was the case for a number of other converts, Gell had found that the theology she had come to adopt was a double-edged sword, providing her with both cause for endless fear and hope. Her words to Baxter, describing these 'sad brambles' and 'many thoughts', revealed a hidden battle between expectation and self-perceived failure that continued inside Gell for years to come, as she struggled to believe that she lived piously enough, or that she truly received God's grace.[13]

To cope with these struggles, she read pastoral works, and wrote to ministers she respected, including Baxter. This was a long, ongoing process, punctuated with lengthy periods of contemplation, and an explanation of the series of events that led her to writing to Baxter reveals the extent to which her spiritual wellbeing oscillated. After the appearance of the first 'sad brambles' in her soul, for instance, she read much 'that supported' her, but kept her troubles secret for two years. Upon hearing a sermon by Baxter, she was encouraged to share her troubled state with her husband, but it was another two years before she wrote to the minister Stephen Marshall for further advice. Although she had received 'much comfort' from him, as well as her husband, Gell had since read Baxter's *A saint's everlasting rest*, published five years earlier, 'wherein' he 'earnestly presse[d]' the need to foster the spiritual development of one's household, and she felt that she had failed in this, citing her 'neglect & unaptnes to it'. Gell had

---

[12] Hodgkin, *Madness*, 25.

[13] MS 59.v.216, DWL. For the nonconforming godly criticising merely 'formal' religion, see, for example, Joseph Alleine, *The way to true happiness* (London, 1678), 12, 84, 95; Richard Baxter, *Directions and perswasions to a sound conversion* (London, 1658), sig. A4v, 200-1; Rogers, *Ohel or beth-shemesh*, 3, 18.

combined this perceived failing with another assertion of Baxter's (regarding 'the constant omission of a known duty') to conclude that, given this 'neglect & unaptnes', she was 'not in a state of grace'.[14]

In writing to Baxter, she hoped to gain reassurance from him regarding this point. Gell was not merely subservient or passive in her tone, however. She informed Baxter that reading his words, and her subsequent sense of gracelessness, had 'cost' her 'much sorrow', and enquired into the soundness of the instruction he had given. Although she had discussed the matter with her 'owne minister & another in this county from whome I have received much satisfaction', she wished to receive Baxter's own view, given that only he could 'best tell how far' he 'extend[ed] that exhortation'.[15] Thus, we see that an open dialogue existed between those who engaged with Baxter's publications and the minister himself.

Indeed, in order to comfort Gell, who had experienced 'inward troubles' for twelve years at this point, Baxter wrote letters that tempered the views he had previously published, and most likely drew on his experience of consoling Gell, and others, to formulate his later works. As was revealed by Keith Condie in 2010, upon the discovery of three letters from Baxter to Gell previously thought to have been lost, Baxter's instructions changed over the course of his correspondence with her: shifting from a focus on performing religious duties and brushing off wayward affections, to a more lenient, less demanding tone.[16] Baxter's advice in these three letters, and Condie's reading of them, further support Alison Searle's argument that through letter writing, Baxter showed a 'sensitivity to the subtle nuances that distinguish each individual human situation', and was able to provide a personally tailored form of advice that he could not give in his comprehensive published texts.[17] What is particularly telling for this argument is the degree to which Baxter's shift in tone involved physical, indeed medical, understandings of religious anxiety, and Gell's reluctance to be brought around to this way of viewing her spiritual troubles. What is more, by considering Gell's perspective more closely, and comparing her exchange to other correspondence of Baxter's, it

---

[14] MS 59.v.216, DWL. Hannah Allen, discussed in Chapter Three, also found aspects of *A saint's everlasting rest* troubling during a period of despair. See Allen, *A narrative*, 48-9.

[15] MS 59.v.216, DWL.

[16] Condie, 'Some further correspondence', 165-6 and 175.

[17] Searle, 'My souls anatomiste', 7.24.

becomes evident that a significant degree of negotiation between sufferers and advisor occurred in the identification and treatment of melancholy.

Baxter's first two letters to Gell instruct her, albeit in a reassuring way, to persist with religious duties and shake off her overly scrupulous worries. His words may have exacerbated Gell's spiritual troubles, however, as his instructions contained the same kind of inconsistencies that had prompted her concerns when reading his pastoral works. Baxter instructed Gell not to 'grudge at' God if he gave her no more grace, but in the same letter also informed her that 'you may not soe far be content with small grace as not to desire and labor after more'.[18] This contradiction was similar to others Gell would have come across in Baxter's writings. In *The saints everlasting rest,* for instance, whose instructions had 'cost' Gell 'much sorrow', Baxter had outlined the importance of sensibility in religious life.[19] He asserted that 'As there must be Conviction, so also Sensibility: God works on the Heart, as well as the Head'. The hypocrite will only experience 'but small sensibility', while the truly converted will undergo 'another kinde of Sensibility', which is 'Christs own differencing Mark'.[20] Reading these words, one can see why Gell would have been disturbed by her own lack of affection-driven reactions to spiritual duties. In other publications, however - that would have perhaps been better suited to Gell - Baxter had placed less weight on the significance of and need for sensibility. In *The right method for a settled peace of conscience* from 1653, which Baxter later pointed Gell to, he stated that while 'Lethargick dullness' was 'the deserved fruit of sin' like 'all other Diseases[,] … he that should charge it immediatly on his soul, should wrong himself, and he that would attempt the Cure must do it on the Body'.[21]

However Gell interpreted Baxter's initially contradictory instructions, she remained unconvinced in her responses throughout 1655 and 1656, and repeated the same concerns of being inept at some spiritual obligations and dull in prayer.[22] Faced with Gell's inability to accept his advice that ineptness and dullness were both necessary setbacks of all godly persons' burdensome bodies, and not indicative of any lack of grace, Baxter began to worry that she was melancholic. In her stubborn responses, he had

---

[18] Baxter to Gell, 28 July 1655, D3287/47/7, 155-65, DRO; Baxter to Gell, 4 September 1655, D3287/47/7, 166-75, DRO, cited in Condie, 'Some further correspondence', 172.

[19] MS 59.v.216, DWL.

[20] Richard Baxter, *The saints everlasting rest* (London, 1650), 147.

[21] Richard Baxter, *The right method* (London, 1653), 10-1. It was this book that Baxter most likely enclosed with his first reply to Gell. See Keeble and Nuttall, *Calendar*, vol. 1, 190.

[22] Gell to Baxter, 29 August 1655, MS 59.v.215, DWL. Gell's third and fourth letters to Baxter are not extant, but from Baxter's surviving replies it can be gathered that her struggles continued.

identified the 'chronical and obstinate' nature of melancholy that he had discussed in his *Saints everlasting rest*. In one section of this text, he had made his approach to melancholics who viewed themselves as being spiritually troubled clear: 'without the Physician, the labours of the Divine are usually in vain', because, even if a minister manages to 'make them confess that they have some Grace, … as soon as they are gone home, and look again upon their souls through this perturbing humour, all …[the ministers'] convincing Arguments are forgotten'.[23] As a result, the excess of the melancholic humour needed to be cured before any other progress could be made.

Taking Gell's melancholic humour and gender into consideration, Baxter's letters from June 1656 onwards shifted to a more diagnostic tone, and asserted that Gell should not be overly introspective. He made his reasoning explicit, explaining 'that the very heads of some weake p[er]sons, especially women & melancholy people cannot beare such deepe app[re]hensions & sensibility as they desire'. This was because 'the braine of weake p[er]sons is like a Lutestringe which will cracke if it be raised too high, & stretcht a whit beyonde its strength', and one must be wary of them 'entertaininge deeper thoughts & more workinge affectinge app[re]hensions of heavenly thinges then their very braine …[is] able to endure'.[24] This view was in line with what he had already asserted in *A saints rest*, in which he stated, when giving directions on how to carry out self-examination, that 'you should specially take such a Time when you are most fit for the work: when you are not secure and stupid on one hand; nor yet under deep desertions or Melancholly on the other hand: for else you will be unfit Judges of your own states'. In his view, self-examination should be 'convinced by Scripture and Reason', and done 'groundedly and deliberately … according to thy Conscience', not passed 'rashly; nor with self-flattery, nor from Melancholly terrors and fears'.[25] As a result, women and melancholics, being too passionate and weak, should not overly engage in self-examination or solitary meditation.

Gell, who had previously asked Baxter to forgive her writing style 'by considering its a womans', correspondingly accepted Baxter's gendered attitude towards her spiritual capabilities.[26] Finally, in April 1657, Gell showed that she had understood his advice of

---

[23] Baxter, *The saints*, 414-5.

[24] Baxter to Gell, 7 June 1656, MS 59.v.217, DWL.

[25] Baxter, *The saints*, 430-1. Baxter continued to assert that both the cause and cure for melancholy lay in the use of reason in later published works. See, for example, Baxter, *Gods goodness*, 9, 17-9; Baxter, 'The cure of melancholy', 266, 269, 274, esp. 291-2. For further discussion of the importance of reason to Baxter's stance on melancholy, see Lamont, *Richard Baxter*, 296; Walker, 'Piety and the politics of anxiety', 152-4.

[26] MS 59.v.216, DWL.

the previous year that 'even Grace itselfe doth usually worke accordinge to this way of nature', and that the mere 'motion of the Affections or passions about holy thinges' should not be used as a measure of grace.[27] She shifted her writing to be in line with Baxter's view on the body's ability to inhibit spiritual experience, writing that she was 'very fully satisfied' of his stance on 'affections' and 'convinced that the body is a great helpe or hinderance'. Describing herself in the same terms he had used, Gell accepted Baxter's view that she was melancholy, writing: 'For my melan[choly] temper its more constant than ever.... I would very feigne be rid of my melan[choly] its a great burthen to me & noe delight.' Agreeing that it was stopping her from achieving her spiritual aims, Gell added that it is 'noe helpe in religion or any holy duty', and - in line with what Baxter had advised - was 'a great cause of my want of sensibillity'.[28]

Gell believed that the presence of this humour was a recent development, however, as 'I thinke its not my naturall temper which was from a child serious & akind of even quiet contented frame'. Now, on the other hand, she seemed to align her tendencies with well-known characteristics of the solitary, musing melancholic - describing how, although she remained busy with household duties out of necessity and conscience, 'it would suit better with my nature to set & read all day... many a time I goe about my house & amongst my serv[ants] when I had rather locke my selfe up in a roome alone amongst my books'.[29] In this way, Gell's exchanges with Baxter can be seen to have actively shaped her understanding of herself, as she renegotiated her characteristics to fit within preconceived notions of what it was to be 'melancholic'.

At the same time, although Gell largely showed acceptance of Baxter's interpretation of her situation, she also posed opposition. Perhaps in response to Baxter's recent instruction to not carry out 'secrett meditation', given her melancholy, Gell again highlighted the demands placed upon her by Baxter's *Saints rest*, stating that 'I never knew it [meditation] my duty till I read your [*Saints*] *Rest* & then setting on it found it very hard'.[30] The difficulties in pursuing a pious life can be sensed here, as we see Gell struggling between having read an instruction in pastoral texts (i.e. to meditate) and subsequent advice to the contrary. Being simultaneously dedicated to educating herself on

---

[27] MS 59.v.217, DWL. Baxter made similar assertions in his correspondence with the Baptist preacher Thomas Lambe. See Baxter to Lambe, 29 September 1658, in *Reliquiae Baxterianae* (London, 1696), app. iii, 61-3, cited in Keeble and Nuttall, *Calendar*, vol. 1, 323-4.

[28] Gell to Baxter, 29 April 1657, MS 59.v.3, DWL.

[29] Ibid.

[30] Baxter to Gell, 26 November 1656, MS 59.iv.142, DWL; MS 59.v.3, DWL.

spiritual duties and unfailingly anxious was a problematic combination for Gell. Her struggle between contradictory instructions, and independence of thought, can be sensed in another point she raised with Baxter, in which she rejected his suggested treatment for melancholy. In order to curb 'that unhappy distemp[er]', Baxter had instructed her to 'Be much busye in your necessary imployments in the world, & much in cheerfull company, & give not way to solitarines or musinge' - a standard remedy for melancholics.[31] Given her knowledge of and commitment to the need to dedicate time to spiritual matters, however, she found this suggestion to be ineffective, and indeed exacerbate her troubles. She told Baxter that, when following his advice, 'I find that busines & company take up my thoughts to[o] much from better matters that I cannot suddainly compose them & bring them into order agayne'. Although she found 'that imployment doth much prevent melan[choly]' it also 'keepes out other good thoughts too & puts my ♥ [heart] much out of frame for secret duties', thus continuing the vicious cycle of dullness and anxiety.[32]

In addition to highlighting Baxter's inconsistencies and negotiating his suggested treatment, Gell also decided when she was cured - and when she was not. By November of the same year, 1657, Gell reported that she was now 'much recovered of that melan[choly] distemper that I used to compl[ain] of', as a result of reading 'Mr. [William] Gurnalls *Ch[risti]an Ar[mour*]'.[33] This practical text, which proved to be very popular, was first published in 1655, and later followed by second and third parts in 1658 and 1662. Unlike Baxter's repeated advice to Gell, *Christian armour* did not deal with spiritual troubles as being caused by bodily distemper. Rather, Gurnall took an individual's spiritual troubles at face value, and provided his reader with methods to combat them.[34] In this way, Gell believed she 'recovered of that melancholy distemper' through spiritual comfort, rather than the methods Baxter advised, such as diet and diversions.[35]

In December, Baxter was pleased with Gell's apparent recovery, but wary of the humour returning and concerned by her admission that she too feared the dark like

---

[31] MS 59.iv.142, DWL.

[32] MS 59.v.3, DWL. She also uses the symbol of a heart in Gell to Baxter, 10 November 1657, MS 59.v.28, DWL.

[33] MS 59.v.28, DWL.

[34] William Gurnall, *The Christian in compleat armour* (London, 1655). The work consists of a series of sermons on Ephesians 6:10-20, and was described, in its full title, as 'a magazin open'd: from whence the Christian is furnished with spiritual armes for the battel [against the devil], help't on with his armour, and taught the use of his weapon, together with the happy issue of the whole warre'.

[35] Although Gurnall did not attribute spiritual troubles to physical distemper, he did, otherwise, provide similar advice to Baxter regarding 'the nature of duties and graces', and Baxter himself recommended the work in his *Christian directory*. See Gurnall, *The Christian*, 124; Baxter, *Christian directory*, 60.

Baxter's younger self. He advised her: 'I would have you record your p[re]sent mercyes, lest any change should come that might cause the feelings of them to abate… ffor your feares which you complaine of in the darke, they are meerly the effect of that distemp[er] conjunct with your naturall imbecility.'[36] The following August, Gell wrote again with similar troubles to previous letters: she was having difficulty in praying, and felt that she was making a 'pittyfull businesse' of it. Although she had previously accepted his diagnosis of melancholy, she now begged him to not dismiss her most recent spiritual troubles as the mere result of this distemper. She insisted: 'its reall the th[ings] in it are too true & doe much p[er]plex my sp[iri]t & discourage me', revealing a sense that to deem her troubles melancholic, Baxter was denying their very real impact on her spiritual wellbeing - and that this denial was no longer proving helpful for her.[37]

She had more positive news as well, however, informing Baxter that she found his gift of George Herbert's poetry, *The temple,* very useful, as she was 'much affected in the reading' of it, 'especially at that place let me not love the[e] if I love thee not'.[38] As Barbara Harman has argued in her analysis of this poem, the attempts of the speaker to 'have plans, to determine who he is, to define the terms of existence' are countered by God. Instead, the speaker's ultimate task is 'to overcome knowing', a concept that may have come as a relief to Gell.[39] Armed with the assertion that attempting to interpret one's own experiences was futile, Gell could relinquish her anxious need to understand why she was dull in duties. Thus, while she was now refusing to accept Baxter's view that her spiritual troubles stemmed from distemper, she was able to find comfort elsewhere, in Herbert's poetry, as she had previously with Gurnall's writing. By December, however, Gell was accepting of Baxter's interpretation once more. His most recent letter had given further physiological explanations for spiritual dullness, and provided her with a diet to avoid it. Gell's tone now held a touch of resignation, as she wrote: 'tho' I am much after the old sort … now I am willing to beleeve that much of my dullness & distractedness proceeds from a bodily indisposition that cannot yet be removed.'[40]

---

[36] Baxter to Gell, 15 December 1657, MS 59.iv.183, DWL.

[37] Gell to Baxter, 25 August 1658, MS 59.v.5, DWL.

[38] Ibid; George Herbert, 'Affliction (I)', in *The Temple* (Cambridge: Thom. Buck, 1633), 38-40; Searle, 'My Souls Anatomiste', 7.21.

[39] Barbara Leah Harman, 'George Herbert's "Affliction (I)": the limits of representation', *English Literary History* 44, 2 (1977): 273, 279.

[40] Gell to Baxter, 27 December 1658, MS 59.iv.208, DWL.

While Condie and Searle have been more positive in their view of Gell's final outlook, her last letter does not appear to be that of an entirely reassured believer. She was grateful for Baxter's firm words: 'thanke you for your chiding' - but she does not guarantee that his view has cured her. Instead, she writes: 'I wish it would mend me.'[41] Searle asserts that 'she has managed to internalise Baxter's pastoral counsel concerning the physical basis of melancholy and to gain comfort from it', but the extent to which Gell has actually done this (and is not merely being politely grateful to the well-known and influential minister) is uncertain.[42] What is more, beyond the knowledge of her husband and maidservant, Gell's letters were secret, and she did not always sign them - seemingly out of fear of being recognised by a reader other than her addressee.[43] This need for secrecy suggests that Gell was desirous that her spiritual troubles be hidden from her wider community's view, and perhaps her reputation as an exemplar of piety was of some importance to her. As such, it is also possible that she was more inclined to seem, at least partially, satisfied with Baxter's physical interpretation of her self-identified lack of grace, in order to retain her image of godliness. Whatever the case may be, Gell's acceptance was only partial, and she remained bewailing her 'dullness & distractedness'.[44]

Francis Fullwood and his 'melancholy neighbour'

In late December, 1658, the rector of West Alvington in Devon, Francis Fullwood (d. 1693), wrote to Baxter, motivated by 'the importunity of a Melancholy Neighbour'. He believed that there was little need to describe the situation in detail, as the 'Neighbour conceives you have described his very case in the eighth page of your Cases of Conscience'.[45] By this, Fullwood was referring to Baxter's *The right method for a settled peace of conscience, and spiritual comfort*, which had been published five years earlier. In the section Fullwood was referring to, Baxter had discussed how the reader might 'Discover

---

[41] Ibid.

[42] Searle, 'My souls anatomiste', 7.23.

[43] In her first letter to Baxter, Gell added as a postscript: 'Non hath seen this neither doth any know of my writing but my husband & the bearer. Therefore I desire concealment', and her third and fourth extant letters were unsigned. She ended the third letter by writing: 'I seldome set my name to l[ette]res where my hand is knowne & I suppose you can tell who this comes from.' See MSS 59.v.216, v.3, v.28, DWL.

[44] MS 59.iv.208, DWL.

[45] Fullwood to Baxter, 5 December 1659, MS 59.iii.167, DWL. Having briefly raised the issue of his melancholy neighbour, Fullwood entered into theological debate. While the disagreements between the two men appear to have been friendly and full of flattery at this stage, their opposing views were expressed more vehemently in print in later decades. Fullwood had quickly conformed in 1660. See Fullwood's *Toleration not to be abused* (London, 1672); Baxter's response, *Sacriligious desertion* (London, 1672); and further discussion of their debate in *ODNB*, s.v. 'Fullwood, Francis'.

well how much of ...[their] trouble is from Melancholy, or from outward Crosses, and apply the Remedy accordingly'. Baxter had wished to deal with this issue early in the text, so that he could then dismiss nonspiritual causes and move onto applying 'the rest of these Directions only to those Troubles that are raised from sins and wants in Grace'.[46] Thus, the text immediately confronted the problem placed in the path of all troubled believers: how could one distinguish between spiritual, physical, and worldly trouble? As was evident in Katherine Gell's case, being convinced of a physical interpretation of spiritual troubles was not necessarily straightforward. Similarly to Gell, in the case of Fullwood and his neighbour, Baxter's published words on this matter were not sufficient: they desired his direct assistance in making this distinction. While Fullwood and other friends had seemingly decided that the neighbour was 'Melancholly', they nevertheless wished to elicit 'one word or two of Advice' from Baxter 'either as a Divine or physition', which Fullwood expected that the neighbour would receive 'with many thanks, &, ... with very much Faith'.[47] As their request reveals, although texts such as *The right method* encouraged believers to 'discover well' the cause of their troubles, the line between spiritual and physical problems was not clear: even when dealing with melancholy, the most valuable advice was believed by some to come from a minister, rather than a physician, and that advice - medical or otherwise - would be taken with 'Faith'.

Not all of the symptoms described by Fullwood match with those listed by Baxter as being associated with melancholy in his *The right method,* and perhaps this is why the neighbour wished for confirmation of his self-diagnosis. While 'confusion in his apprehension' and 'very sad thoughts sometimes' are in line with Baxter's writing, and were indeed widely accepted as symptoms of melancholy, other details included by Fullwood were less usual. He wrote that the neighbour 'is about 30 years of age, of a very strong complexion[,] ... complaines of heats about the Region of his heart', and 'is worst at the spring' or when 'abroad' from his home.[48] On the 6th January 1659, Baxter replied, fulfilling the request for advice, and - despite some reservations given his inability to consult the man directly - agreed that the neighbour, based on Fullwood's description, was indeed 'but melancholy'. As a result, he provided a detailed receipt for an '(easy)

---

[46] Baxter, *Right method*, 7-17.

[47] MS 59.iii.167, DWL. Fullwood was not the only minister to request advice from Baxter on melancholic cases within their local communities. See, for example, Bartlett to Baxter, 21 October 1653, MS 59.iii.163, DWL.

[48] MS 59.iii.167, DWL.

physick' that he believed was 'like[ly] to cure him (as it hath done very many)' through purging. It included a drink infused with senna, cinnamon, and liquorice, along with a broth containing balm, borage, fennel, and succory roots, and were to be taken at particular times of day for two or three days in a row, once per week. Baxter proceeded to divide melancholy into three levels of severity: 'ordinary', 'stronger', and the 'deepest melancholy', and used these distinctions to inform Fullwood of whether the neighbour should expect the cure to take effect in five, seven, or twelve weeks.[49]

In his published work, Baxter had used this same three-tier categorisation of melancholy to predict whether or not the sufferer's spiritual life would also be affected. He wrote that, if the melancholy 'go any thing farre', the sufferer will be 'almost alwayes assaulted with Temptations to Blasphemy, to doubt whether there be a God, or a Christ, or the Scriptures be true; or whether there be a Heaven or a Hell: and oft tempted to speak some blasphemous words against God'. If the melancholy was even stronger, then the sufferer would be 'next to the loss of the use of reason, if it be not prevented'. Thus, Baxter saw the physical ailment of melancholy as bringing on spiritually debilitating symptoms. It was not only these symptoms that brought the spiritual and physical into communication in Baxter's writings, however, but also the overarching importance of providence. The presence of melancholy should still bring on some level of self-judgement, he explained, given that it is, like all other diseases, 'the fruits of sin'.[50]

In the minister Fullwood's letter, however, there is no mention of how the neighbour's melancholy was affecting his spiritual life. Although he perhaps hinted at the possibility by requesting advice from Baxter 'either as a Divine or physition', Fullwood made no other reference to spiritual health, and Baxter certainly took on the role of physician in his reply. While in his published work he reminded readers that 'only constant importunate Prayer, is a fit and special means for the Curing of all', in his letter to Fullwood, Baxter did not mention prayer, or any other spiritual matters. Indeed, Baxter revealed in his letter to Fullwood his belief that when the cause of troubles are bodily, no other form of cure than physic will do. As he had written in *The right method,* 'you may as well expect that a good Sermon or comfortable words should cure the falling Sickness, or Palsie, or a broken head, as to be a sufficient Cure to your Melancholy fears'.[51] In this letter, Baxter revealed that, given the primacy of the physic cure, spiritual matters could be

[49] Baxter to Fullwood, 6 January 1658/9, MS 59.ii.260, DWL; Baxter, *Right method*, 8-9.

[50] Baxter, *Right method*, 8-10.

[51] Ibid., 9.

reasonably excluded from his instructions in a brief exchange. This contradicts David Harley's claim that Baxter, although firm that religious melancholy was a physical disorder, first prescribed prayer and bible-based religion to melancholics, and only 'advocated physic as a last resort', believing it could cast out a stubborn devil.[52] By comparing Baxter's published works with his letters, we see that the minister's advice could vary depending on such factors as the identity and state of his reader. Rather than possessing a single clear stance on how melancholy should be dealt with, Baxter adapted his advice depending on context.

Fullwood's reply, some eleven months later, reveals the ongoing desire of the neighbour to receive Baxter's advice. Like Gell, the neighbour hoped to solicit, and negotiate, a particular form of aid from Baxter. Fullwood 'heartily' thanked Baxter for his 'advice to' his 'melancholly neighbour', who was, we are told, 'very sencible of' the 'great kindnes in it'. The neighbour carried out the 'method' sent and although finding 'some good' while undergoing 'the course', found that 'when his physick is ended his disease grows againe'. As a result, he wished Fullwood to 'acquaint' Baxter with further symptoms experienced, including 'fearfullnes, … trembling of his flesh sometimes, the continuall sadnes & heavines of his heart, the dulnes of his apprehension, & a great deal more to this purpose; which I beleev you understand better than himselfe'. Fullwood felt it necessary to also include that 'he is of a robust body, good complection in the face, … [and] will sometimes be merry as others, but his head seems to grow round, & his forehead to stand out a little'. The outcome the neighbour was hoping for was a receipt for a 'cordiall to comfort & lighten his heart' from Baxter, and Fullwood added that 'he resolvs perfectly to follow any further direction you will send him, or if you desire it he will wait upon you in person'.[53] Baxter's response to this letter, if there was one, is not extant. Fullwood's words, which again do not mention the impact of the illness on the neighbour's spiritual life, reveal the ongoing physical interpretation of the symptoms, but that - despite this - they continued to desire the advice of Baxter, a minister, and would even go to the effort of seeing him in person if possible.

The importance of Baxter's opinion, then, was clearly of great significance to both Gell and Fullwood's neighbour. In his view, often so-called cases of conscience were in fact merely melancholy, a distemper of the body, and should be cured primarily, or even

---

[52] Harley, 'Mental illness', 119.

[53] MS 59.iii.167, DWL.

solely, by physic. In this way, a diagnosis of melancholy could aid spiritual troubles, as it provided a nonspiritual reason for dullness. That said, this was not necessarily a particularly effective solution, as individuals such as Gell continued to be troubled by their anxieties despite reassurance of their bodily causes. Above all, examination of these cases has demonstrated that Baxter's instructions were not one-sided; rather than taking his opinion at face value, Gell and Fullwood negotiated with this famed minister. As Gell and Fullwood's neighbour's concerns revealed, pastoral works including Baxter's provided a labyrinthine array of sometimes conflicting instructions. As such, ministers in Baxter's position attempted to point confused members of their flock towards the advice best suited to them - which, in his view, should take into account their physical constitution. While Baxter highlighted melancholy's ties to sin and the devil, for example, in his attempts to convince a theological opponent that he suffered from the condition, he focused only upon comforting nonspiritual explanations in his correspondence with the anxious, and unthreatening, Gell.[54] What is more, Baxter's stance shifted in response to his engagement with figures such as these, as he came to realise that greater care needed to be taken in guiding anxious converts past potential pitfalls; he wrote to Gell: 'I hope you have awakened me to a more accurate watch.'[55]

Mary Rich: a 'great and disturbing fit of melancholy', 1663-78

In the life of Mary Rich, we see the attitude towards melancholy and grace that Baxter was attempting to inculcate in Gell carried out (Appendix 1b). Rich was born in 1624 at Youghal, Ireland, to an Irish landowner and politician, Richard Boyle, the Earl of Cork, and his wife Catherine (née Fenton), who died in 1629. Raised mostly by tenants of her father's, Sir Randall and Lady Cleyton, she was educated in English, French, catechism, and the Bible. This allowed her, later in life, to produce a number of personal writings, including a diary, autobiography, and meditations (Figure 4.1). According to these texts, she led a worldly and vain youth, rejecting multiple offers of marriage before rebelliously choosing the second son of the earl of Warwick, Charles Rich, as her husband in 1641.

---

[54] Thomas Lambe was a congregationalist turned Baptist whom Baxter attempted, successfully, to turn away from 'Anabaptistry and Separation'. See Baxter, *Reliquiae Baxterianae*, app. iii, 61-3; app. ii, 180-1, cited in Keeble and Nuttall, *Calendar*, vol. 1, 323-4.

[55] D3287/47/7, 31 July 1658, 252-6, DRO cited in Condie, 'Some further correspondence', 174.

She married into a prominent parliamentarian family, who had been tied to puritan interests since the 1620s.[56]

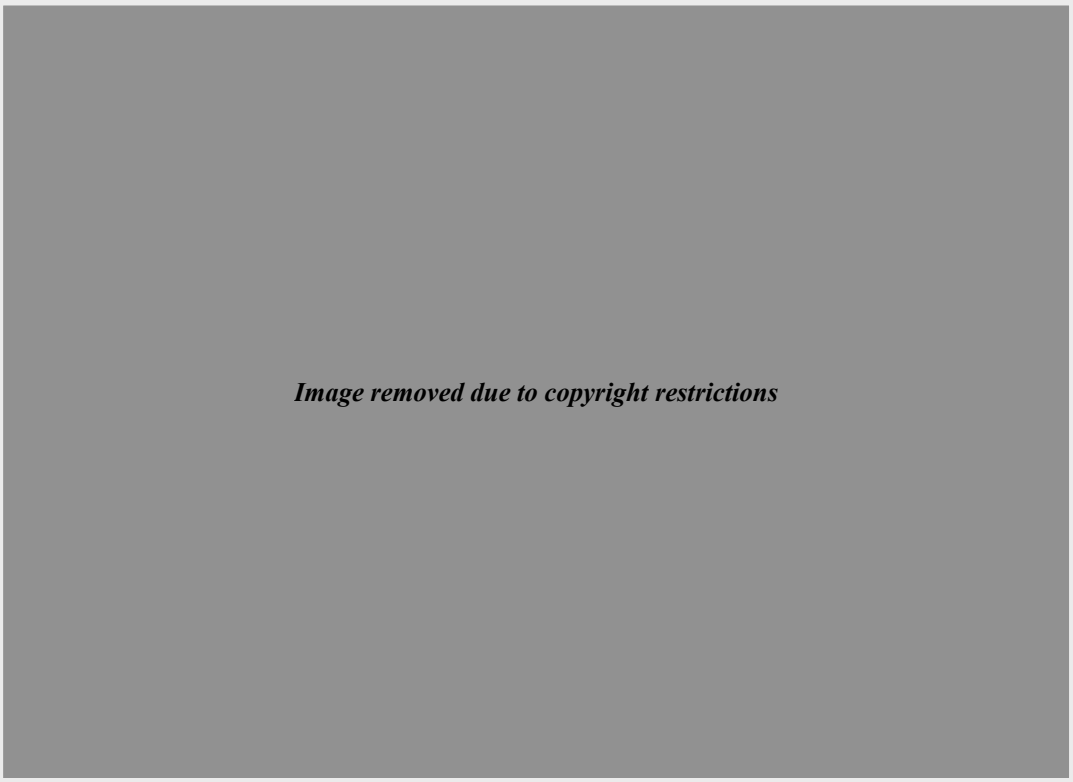

Figure 4.1: 'Diary of Mary Rich, March 1672 - March 1674', Add MS 27353, ff. 6v-7r, BL.

Nevertheless, according to her autobiography, Mary Rich was originally 'stedfastly sett against being a Puritan' and continued to live vainly after her marriage. Following the death of her one 'yeare and a quarter old' daughter and the subsequent illness of her only other child in 1647, however, she underwent a change, guided by her father-in-law's household chaplain, Dr Anthony Walker. In the fulfilled hope that her son would be restored to health as a result, she vowed to become a 'new Creature' and began to conduct a very strict, devotional routine. Between 1657 and 1659, Charles Rich's nephew, father and elder brother died unexpectedly, leaving him as the Earl of Warwick, and Mary as the countess. The increased exposure to worldliness that this brought concerned Rich and, in 1664, her only son died from smallpox despite her hope that devout piety would avoid this. In the face of these challenges, she continued her pious way of life and it was her daily, devotional routine which she recorded in her diaries between 1666 and 1677.[57] The

[56] *ODNB*, s.v. 'Rich, Mary'; Barbara Donagan, 'The clerical patronage of Robert Rich, Second Earl of Warwick, 1619-1642', *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 120, 5 (1976): 388.

[57] Add MS 27357, ff. 18v-24v, BL. See also *ODNB*, s.v. 'Rich, Mary'.

text's elements included blessing God as soon as she woke, retiring to read the Bible after getting dressed, retreating to her 'wilderness' to pray and meditate in solitude, discourse with local and visiting divines, listening to her servant's prayers, fast days, two sermons on Sundays, and committing herself to God in prayer before bed. As Anthony Walker's eulogy later indicated, Rich's life followed a 'most Illustrious Pattern of Sincere Piety'. Aspects of her relatively busy social life also appear in the diaries, but are usually presented as unwanted infringements on her otherwise godly life. Her family duties are also recorded, especially the care of her husband through his illnesses until his death in 1673.[58]

As was the case with Gell, Rich's spiritual and health problems were not mentioned in her funeral sermon, or a funeral elegy by an anonymous author. In these, her troubles with the spleen and melancholy were ignored, and the focus instead placed upon the help she provided others with poor health:

> The Sick She visited; in their condition,
> Was Alm'ner, Surgeon, and Physician.
> Her Closet-Cordials, Purse, and tender Heart,
> Were opened to give ease to any Smart,
> Of such as were afflicted, and in grief,
> Her care was quick to contribute Relief.

Similarly, her frequent frustrations with dullness in spiritual duties were not alluded to. Instead, it was shared that 'She fasted, Wept, prai'd on her bended Knee, / And so prepared for Eternity'.[59] Even if these texts had admitted to Rich's frequent experiences of melancholy and subsequent dullness, however, their words would not have necessarily been negative. This is because, as was mentioned above, Rich successfully practised the advice ministers such as Baxter gave to those they deemed melancholics, like Gell. Yet, despite their alternative views, Gell and Rich were immersed in related Presbyterian communities, and read similar pastoral works, including Baxter's *The saints rest.* By comparing these two gentlewomen's reactions to this text, and their attitudes to spiritual dullness and melancholy, the extent to which one pastoral work could be interpreted differently by separate individuals is revealed. While, as we have seen, Gell reported to

---

[58] Add MS 27351-5, passim, BL; Walker, *Eureka*, title page.

[59] Anon., *A funeral elegy upon the much lamented death of ... Mary, Dowager Countess of Warwick* (London, 1678), broadside.

Baxter that *The saints rest* brought her much 'trouble' and 'sorrow', leading her to conclude that her dullness indicated she was not one of the saved, the same text provided Rich with satisfaction and comfort. She wrote: 'and whilest I was reading [*The saints rest*], of the joys of God, [He] was pleased much to ravish my heart with thinking of it.' On another occasion, when reading the section 'wherein he [Baxter] reproved the unwillingness of saints to die', she recorded having 'large meditations of death' and praying to God that he would make her 'onely patient of life, but desirous of death'.[60] Thus, the text was both instructional and reassuring to Rich. It would seem that beyond these sections, she also adopted - or was already in line with - Baxter's advice on melancholy given in this book, in which he identified 'Prevalency of Melancholy in the body' as one of the 'Further causes of [misplaced] want of Assurance among the most of the godly themselves'. Melancholy was, according to Baxter, 'another ordinary Nurse of Doubtings and Discomfort, … whereby the brain is continually troubled and darkened, the Fancy hindered, … Reason perverted by the distempering of its instruments, and the Soul is still clad in mourning weeds'.[61] As will be shown, the ways in which Rich described and dealt with melancholy were in line with Baxter's view, as she accepted that she should not allow this bodily imbalance to delude her into doubting her godliness.

That said, it is difficult to make a direct comparison between Gell and Rich's attitudes towards melancholy, and their reaction to texts such as a *The saints rest*, given the very different natures of the two genres they were writing in. While Gell was writing private, indeed secret, letters to Baxter that she would not always sign for fear of being identified, Rich was composing a spiritual diary which she would have expected others may read after her death. Indeed, Rich herself enjoyed reading circulated lives of exemplary figures, such as her deceased friend 'pious m^{is} Smith'.[62] In the case of Rich, however, circulation did not happen immediately. It was not until Rich's papers reached their fourth owner, some twenty years after her death, that they began to be prepared for sharing with the public.[63] During her lifetime, it seems that the foremost audience for Rich's writings was herself, as she often read her diary and meditations in her prayer closet to encourage further inward reflection and remembrances of God's providences.[64]

---

[60] Add MS 27358, f. 14, BL.

[61] Baxter, *The saints*, sigs. b3r-v, 414.

[62] Add MS 27352, f. 212r, BL.

[63] Charlotte Fell-Smith, *Mary Rich, Countess of Warwick* (London, 1901), 172-3.

[64] See, for example, Add MS 27358, f. 8, BL; Add MS 27351, ff. 45r, 118r, 133r, BL; Add MS 27352, f. 82v, BL.

It is likely that Rich was inspired to begin a spiritual diary by the minister John Beadle, who had preached at Leighs on the duty of keeping a record of one's 'owne Actions & Wayes' in 1644.[65] In 1656 the sermon was dedicated to Rich's parents-in-law and printed as *The journal or diary of a thankful Christian*. Rich's diary followed the model expounded by Beadle and, given he still lived in her local area in 1666, she met with him occasionally for 'holy conference'.[66] Despite the genre-bound and formulaic nature of Rich's diary, her descriptions of bouts of melancholy remain useful.

Although episodes of illness feature quite prominently in her papers, they have not been examined in detail by other scholars. Instead, they have been mentioned briefly in a paragraph or two. More widely, the writings of Mary Rich have been included in various studies concerning religion, health, and life writing in seventeenth-century England. These include, for example, Dean Ebner's study of theology and self in seventeenth-century autobiography and Kate Narveson's exploration of gender and self-definition in relation to religious lay writing of the same period.[67] The works of Olivia Weisser and Sophie Mann are more significant for this study, as they examine Rich's writings in regards to the relationship between religion and health. Mann has examined Rich's role as a medical practitioner and use of prayer as cure, while Weisser has looked at the relationship between grief, spoken words, and illness causation in her diaries.[68] This analysis takes Weisser's comments further, examining Rich's expressions of melancholy more closely by understanding them within their web of association.

Indeed, this study's methodology is particularly suitable for the case of Rich, for whom spiritual texts were of great importance and, given the extent of her writings, can often be identified. She read, or was read to, several times a day: her diary is strewn with references to reading a 'good book' as part of her daily spiritual duties, as well as in any

---

[65] The Earl of Warwick's steward, Arthur Wilson, quoted in Francis Peck, *Desiderata curiosa*, vol. II, book XII, part 6, 21, cited in Sara Heller Mendelson, *The mental world of Stuart women: three studies* (Brighton, 1987), 93.

[66] John Beadle, *The journall or diary of a thoughtfull Christian* (London, 1656). On Rich's relationship to this text and Beadle, see Mendelson, *The mental world*, 93-4, n. 90. It is likely that Rich was also inspired by Isaac Ambrose's guide to diary writing, *Prima, media & ultima* (London, 1650). See Avra Kauffman, 'Women's diaries of late Stuart England' in *Recording and reordering: Essays on the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century diary and journal*, ed. Dan Doll and Jessica Munns (Lewisburg, 2006), 68.

[67] Ebner, *Autobiography*, 142-3; Kate Narveson, *Bible readers and lay writers in early modern England: gender and self-definition in an emergent writing culture* (Farnham, 2012), passim; Ramona Wray, '[Re]Constructing the past: The diametric lives of Mary Rich', in *Betraying our selves: forms of self-representation in early modern English texts*, ed. Henk Dragsta, Sheila Ottway and Helen Wilcox (Basingstoke, 2000), 148-65.

[68] Mann, 'A double care', 14-5, 18; Weisser, *Ill composed*, 87, 90-1, 98, 109.

spare moments - such as in the coach journey between Leighs and London.[69] While the works she read informed her own theology, meditations, turns of phrase, and so on, she also used them to encourage others to lead a more godly life. Anthony Walker observed that she 'scattered good Books in all the common Rooms and places of attendance, that those who waited might not lose their time, but well employ it'.[70] Rich also drew upon her dedicated reading of practical divinity when providing direct spiritual guidance to others. In her 'Rules for holy living', written at the request of George, Earl of Berkeley, she cited many authors, including George Herbert, and was undoubtedly inspired by many more.[71]

When we turn to her experiences of melancholy, the extent to which she had internalised the views she read, but also adapted them, becomes clear. According to her autobiography, Rich's first experience of this condition occurred early on in her marriage. After having smallpox in 1648, and falling in love with her future husband while convalescing, Rich experienced another serious illness which caused her 'head' to be 'highly disordered to a deagree that som times ...[she] knew noe body, and wold talke Idely and exstravagently'. Her doctor, named 'Wrighte', who had 'neaver knowne' a case like hers 'in all his great and long Practise', informed her that her 'Illness was ... ocasioned by fumes of the spleene, which had such strange efectes' upon her as to make her speak incoherently, 'Laugh' and 'Cry for nothing', and her head 'shake as If I had, had the Pallsy'. Despite the extremity of the illness, she 'after a long time' was 'Cure[d] ... perfectly' by God's mercy, through 'his blesing upon Docter Wri[g]hte[']s meanes'.[72] Rich had been diagnosed with unnatural melancholy, in which it was believed an excess of black bile in the spleen became hot and began to burn, releasing gaseous vapours. As was outlined in the Introduction, these vapours, rising to the brain, would muddle the mind's senses, causing delusions, even hallucinations, and the 'strange effects' she described. Rich appeared to accept her doctor's diagnosis, as she used his terminology later in life in her diary, describing bouts of 'spleene'. Although her usage of the terms 'spleene' and 'mallencoly' often seems interchangeable, and were frequently joined by headaches, it would appear that she did make some distinction between them, as on one occasion she

---

[69] Rich quoted in Fell-Smith, *Mary Rich*, 170.

[70] Walker, *Eureka*, 85.

[71] Originally composed as a letter, and later published (alongside her 'Occasional meditations' and 'Pious reflections upon several scriptures') as an annex to her funeral sermon. See Walker, *Eureka*, 125-41, 145-83, 187-213, respectively.

[72] Add MS 27357, ff. 26v-27v, BL.

scribbled 'malencally' and replaced it with 'spleene'.[73] The latter, it would seem, was more extreme than the former in her eyes, and would involve - as it had in her younger years - a severe loss of control over her passions; 'Cry[ing] for nothing'. Both conditions would leave her 'indisposed' for spiritual duties, hence their relevance to her diary, but melancholy appears to have been a less embedded condition, and could pass within a day, or the following day.[74] Moreover, while the spleen was always simply 'the spleene', her melancholy - or indeed melancholies - appear more varied. She described various kinds: including 'unusual', 'disturbing', 'oppressing', 'great', and 'very great' melancholies.[75] In the face of these troubles, Rich often endeavoured to continue her religious duties: sometimes with success, at others not. The extent to which Rich experienced spleen or melancholy has not been acknowledged by other scholars; she noted twenty-three occurrences of spleen or melancholy throughout the years 1667-1673, with only one episode being recorded after between the years 1673-1677.[76]

The primary cause: 'I did bemone the corruption of my passions'

The appearance of these episodes followed a pattern, frequently occurring after an outburst of passion: most often the result of an argument with her irascible, gout-suffering husband, but also grief, or an unidentified cause. The increased frequency of episodes in 1673, the year that her husband's condition deteriorated most rapidly before his death on the 24th of August, reveals the extent to which his illness influenced Mary's own health. On these occasions, it appears to have been a combination of her husband's violent outbursts along with the upsetting nature of his serious disability that resulted in her bouts of melancholy. In July 1667, for example, she had been confined to his sickroom for a number of days before experiencing 'a violent fitt of the spleene and mother togeather', which caused her to have a 'great fitt' of sighing and weeping.[77] These

---

[73] Add MS 27353, f. 160v, BL. See also Mendelson, *The mental world*, 207, n. 127.

[74] For 'indisposed' due to spleen, see Add MS 27351, f. 68v, BL.

[75] Add MS 27358, f. 138v, 140r, BL; Add MS 27353, ff. 114v; 116r, BL; Add MS 27351, ff. 140v, 182v, BL. Rich also experienced related conditions, such as 'trouble of mind', being 'out of humour', and a 'passionate, discontented humour'. See Add 27353, f. 50r, BL; Add MS 27351, f. 266r, BL.

[76] There are at least 24 mentions of spleen, melancholy, and 'mother' in Rich's diaries, and it is likely there are more. Other scholars have only mentioned some of these, with Mendelson listing the most, at 12. For those located by Mendelson, see entries 18 July 1667, 4 January 1668, 20 February 1668, 25 January 1670, 19 September 1672, 10 October 1672, 14 April 1673, 18 April 1673, 9 July 1673, 30 July 1673, 18 August 1673, cited in Mendelson, *The mental world*, 207, n. 127. For further instances, see for example Add MS 27353, ff. 3r, 7v, BL; Add MS 27358, ff. 138v, 140r, BL; n. 77-8 above.

[77] Add MS 27351, f. 104v, BL.

were some of the expected symptoms of 'Mother' in this period, which was a disease believed to be caused by a wandering womb, or the noxious fumes emanating from it, interfering with the proper function of the brain.[78] Later that year, on the 26th of November, it was instead an argument with her husband that was the cause. Charles Rich, whom she obediently referred to as 'my Lord' throughout the diaries, 'fell … into great passion' with her, which 'tro[u]bled' her 'so much that … [she] fell into a dispute with him, wherein …. [she] was very pationately afected, and wepte much, and spake unadvisedly with … [her] lipes, telling him that … [she] was with his unkindnes to … [her] so much tro[u]bled … that … [she] was weary of … [her] Life'. Although she prayed that evening for God's pardon for 'shed[d]ing so many teares for any thing but …[her] sinnes', she 'fo[u]nde a very great malencaoly indisposition upon …[herself the next day], not haveing recovered the disorder of the day before'. Rich recorded similar experiences in April 1668, April 1669, January 1673, and in the days leading up to her husband's death, on which occasions her melancholy was provoked by either his anger or the distress of seeing him in pain.[79]

It was not only her womb or her relationship with her husband, however, that could bring her passions into disorder. She also recorded episodes in which chiding those in her care 'too passionately' left her 'troubled'. Having identified this flaw within herself, she would endeavour to curb it: praying to God to let her 'rebuke without passion' when confronted with 'disorders' in her household. On some occasions she found that she was able to do so 'without transporting passion', while on others she did not. In either case, however, these incidents do not appear to have been disruptive enough to bring on a bout of melancholy, as those arguments with her husband did. Instead, they caused her to be 'much out of humor', or in a 'passionate, discontented humour' which - like melancholy and the spleen - would impinge upon her ability to perform religious duties, leaving her 'not with so much composednes[s] as usuall', but did not, it would seem, warrant their label.[80] The grief caused by the deaths of family and friends, however, appears to have been sufficiently disruptive to bring on this distemper. In March 1672, for instance, Rich woke to find herself 'very melancoly for the loss of' her niece and, as a result, 'was dull,

---

[78] Lauren Kassell, 'Medical understandings of the body, c. 1500-1750', in *Sex and the body: 1500 to the present*, ed. Sarah Toulalan and Kate Fisher (London, 2013), 67.

[79] Add MS 27351, f. 140v, f. 182r-v, f. 302r-v, BL; Add MS 27353 f. 116r, BL.

[80] Add MS 27351, f. 267r, BL.

and discomposed'.[81] Understandably, the disturbing death of her husband, brought on by the obstruction of phlegm and violent fits, caused grief strong enough to cause melancholy and spleen. On the 16th August, 1673, seeing her husband 'vent much passion' on his sickbed, Rich became 'exsidingly oprest with malencoly'. Two days later, this had developed further, with her waking 'very ill, with a high disturbing fitt of the spleene'. Rich herself was explicit about the cause, stating: 'the frite I was in when I saw my poore husband so ill haveing very much disordered me ever sense [since] that time.' After his death, reflecting upon the day of his funeral, Rich wrote:

> in the morneing, [I] found my selfe in an exstraordinary man[n]er grieved and oprest with malencolly, this being the day my deare husbandes body was to be buried at Felsted. I wept exsiedingly, and fo[u]nd it very hard to beare up this day being often pationately affected to think he was gone to his cold bed of dust.[82]

Rich also tied these bouts to the influence of other worldly affairs: in March 1673, 'having something that troubled' her, she 'found an unusual melancholy upon' her, and 'did find a sudden eruption of … passions' make her 'weep much'. Similarly, later in the same month, Rich stated: 'I found this day great and disturbing fit of melancholy and discontent upon me by reason of my worldly crosses which dispirited me, and made me shed many tears.' As a result of this disturbing fit, she wrote: 'O Lord, humble me for this more, and make me spend my tears for my sins, and I beseech thee turn all my sorrow into sorrow for sin, and all my joys into the joys of the Holy Ghost.'[83] Indeed, melancholy was itself tied to worldliness. In one of the godly books Rich read most often, *Crucifying of the world*, Richard Baxter had asserted that melancholy men were thus because they were 'weary' of their 'lives', and 'of the vexatious miseries of the world'. 'A worldly mind and a melancholly are some kin', Baxter wrote, 'the daily work of both is self-vexation, and they are wilfully set upon the stabbing and destroying of themselves'.[84]

Thus, Rich understood her bouts of melancholy and spleen to be caused by her passions being disordered, as a result of troubled interactions with others, grief, and worldly crosses. This view was in line with those expressed in the pastoral texts she read, in which it was argued that the passions should not take precedence over reason in

---

[81] Add MS 27353, f. 3r, BL.

[82] Add MS 27353, ff. 207v-209r, 221r, BL.

[83] Add MS 27358, f. 138v, 140r, BL.

[84] Richard Baxter, *The crucifying of the world by the cross of Christ* (London, 1658), 159-60, 204, 212, 219.

spiritual duties, and the humours kept under control. Baxter, again in *Crucifying of the world*, took issue with the passions, stating that 'our main dispute is with *Will* and *Passion*, which have no ears, nor eyes, nor brains, though *sense* enough. Their deceiving baits first catch the sensual part, and so come to bribe the Intellect and the will; and their strongest root is still in the bruitish part where it begun, which will hear no reason'.[85] Another of her favourite books, Daniel Dyke's *Mystery of self-deceiving*, which was originally published in 1614 but reprinted many times subsequently, explained the problematic nature of passions in similar terms: 'Surely our affections wil plead mightily, and deale craftily, raising up fogges, and mistes before our eyes, and setting false colours upon things to deceive us.'[86] In Dyke's words, the passions and the effects of the spleen or melancholy become interchangeable, with both causing deluding fogs and mists. The passions, like the humours, needed to be kept under control, as George Herbert (another favourite of Rich's) also made clear. His poetry, which Rich read and quoted to others, stated that 'Lose not thy self, nor give thy humours way: / God gave them to thee under lock and key'. In a poem titled 'Miserie' he wrote: man's 'knowledge winks, and lets his humours reigne; / They make his life a constant blot, / And all the bloud of God to run in vain'.[87]

Rich had wholeheartedly adopted this negative attitude towards passions. Her meditations and prayers included such notions as 'I did bemone the corruption of my passions, with an unusuall flood of teares, ... I found my soule follow hard after God for pardon, and for power against my pationes [passions] for the time to come'.[88] She often begged God to pardon her passions, and thanked him when she was able to control them. After an occasion in which she managed to hold her tongue during a dispute with her husband, she prayed thankfully: 'Lord inable me to be allwayes thus victorious by thy assistance over my passions.'[89] As Baxter, Dyke, and Herbert made clear, it was the obstruction to reason that made passions so problematic, and Rich internalised this notion as well. These writers, and others, placed the body's passions and humours in opposition to reason, which was to be the driving force behind one's religious life. In accordance with this stance, Rich was very disturbed by the prospect of losing her reason. On a Sunday in the early 1670s, Rich was confronted with a distressing sight at church.

---

[85] Ibid., 89.

[86] Daniel Dyke, *Mystery of self-deceiving* (London, 1614), 283.

[87] Herbert, *The temple*, 5, 94.

[88] Add MS 27352, f. 127v, BL.

[89] Add MS 27353, f. 32r, BL.

Her 'servant the usher of the hall' was 'suddenly taken with som distemper in his head that made him loose the use of his reason, and fall in to some fitt that made him for som time lye as if he had been dead'. Although he was 'brought out of his fitt againe … by God's blessing upon some reamedies' - he was not also brought 'to the use of his reason'. Rich wrote: 'this sight did much worke upon me to consider how soon I might loose the use of my reason', the thought of which later allowed her to meditate upon the day's sermons and pray 'in a very awakened frame, being much moved' by what she had seen that day.[90] The deep importance she attached to reason was also made evident in the period leading up to her husband's death, in which he too lost this vital faculty. In fact, it was this loss that caused Rich's melancholy and spleen during these days, as she was 'very much disordered' at the sight of it, and prayed for God 'to restore him to the use of his reason that he might not dye senseles[s]' and unprepared 'for death'.[91]

The effects: 'dull and untoward'

As mentioned above, Rich felt that her bouts of melancholy and spleen caused her to be less responsive in her religious duties, and it was for this reason that she took issue with these conditions. However, unlike Gell, Rich did not appear to be distressed by her dullness, and, furthermore, seemed to decide independently that it was caused by her melancholy, rather than a lack of grace. Thus, Rich's writings reveal an individual viewing their dullness in the way that Baxter prescribed to Gell. That is not to say, however, that Rich was entirely convinced of her salvation. She, too, had experienced doubt in the same way others had. In November 1666, for instance, she was motivated by doubt to 'in the morneing' get the minister John Lavender 'to informe me upon showing him som evidences I had wrote out [long before, when she was at Beddington] wither thay was such as did acompeny salvation, and wither I might entertain comfortable hopes of my future state upon them'.[92] Despite these common apprehensions, however, Rich did not appear to be concerned that her tendency towards melancholy could be indicative of her lacking God's grace.

The acceptability of dullness was expressed by the ejected minister Abraham Caley in his *A glimpse of eternity*, which Rich often read, 'much afected' her, and sometimes even

---

[90] Ibid., f. 56v. Note that 'by God's blessing' is inserted above the line mentioning 'reamedies', as if a corrective afterthought.

[91] Add MS 27353, ff. 207r-209r, BL.

[92] Add MS 27351, f. 35v, BL.

made her weep.[93] The author may have also expressed his view verbally to Rich, as he was often a guest at Leighs and was one of the few ministers she conducted private devotions with in her prayer closet.[94] Caley explained that the godly would be overly joyed at times, but also dulled for periods. He employed scriptural examples to assert this, for example: '*Bernard* on a time found himself such indisposed, yet having striven with himself, and been with God in prayer, evidently found the visitations of God, but this lasted but a while, therefore he said of it, *Oh blessed hour, but oh short stay; Oh that it had lasted longer.*' Caley reassured the reader that these periods of dullness, although inevitable on earth, would not last forever: 'these sad *erruptions* which the best Saints are subject to here, they shall be wholly *free from* when they are made partakers of that *eternal hapiness* in Heaven.'[95] Rich repeated this sentiment herself in her journal, describing how she longed for her time 'in Heaven [where] I should be free from all my troubles'.[96] Caley also offered his readers solutions for their dullness, which Rich may have taken on board, instructing them to remember that their eternity was at stake when 'formality, indifferency, deadness, sleepiness creeps upon us'.[97]

Evidently, while writers stated that dullness was an inevitable part of spiritual life, given the innately corrupted nature of the human body, readers were also reminded that they could not simply accept this indifferent state. As Caley's words showed, they needed to rally against it as best they could, and their eternal salvation was at stake on this point. Dullness could be, as Gell had feared, the sign of the damned. Other pastoral works Rich read stated similar views: Jacombe, for example, wrote that fervency and 'inward pantings' were of the upmost importance, while the poems of Herbert illustrated that the godly should have 'grones', 'sighs', and 'tears'.[98] Jacombe instructed: '*first* commit your selves to God by *fervent* prayer,... I put in, *Fervent prayer.* for this indeed is the *only prayer;* God will not be put off with *dull, dead, sleepy devotions,* he will have you *pray in prayer:* you do *nothing,* if you do not pray with *holy fervour:* As *neglects* of Prayer are very evil, so *negligences* in prayer are very evil also.'[99] Allestree, another author Rich referred to, wrote firmly against

---

[93] Add MS 27351, f. 284v, BL. For another instance of her reading Caley, see for example, Add MS 27358, f. 15r, BL. On her most frequently read authors, see Fell-Smith, *Mary Rich*, 170.

[94] Add MS 27358, f. 3v, BL. For more discussion of Rich's relationship with Caley, see Fell-Smith, *Mary Rich*, 202.

[95] Abraham Caley, *A glimpse of eternity* (London, 1683), 62-3.

[96] Add MS 27358, f. 138v, BL.

[97] Caley, *A glimpse*, 149.

[98] Jacombe, *Hooinh*, 113-4; Herbert, *The temple*, 142.

[99] Jacombe, *Hooinh*, 99-100.

'the *stupid* and meerly vegetable state of total incogitancy', declaring that '*Christianity* is not a dull unactive, but stirring busie State'.[100] No wonder, then, that Rich and others were so disturbed by their dullness. With these views in mind, Rich persevered through her bouts of melancholy-caused dullness in an attempt to find some fervour and, through this perseverance, she was comforted with the knowledge that her dullness was not a sign of a lack of grace. As Baxter and others' had asserted, as long as the desire for and dedication to achieving further grace was present, then a temporary impediment to grace was not problematic.

More widely, Rich's attitude towards her melancholy may have lain with the influence of her household chaplain, Anthony Walker, for whom this distemper and exemplary piety were not mutually exclusive. This was made clear in the biography he wrote of his wife after her death, in which he openly included the sections of her papers that discussed her struggles with melancholy, as discussed in Chapter Three. Of course, overarching these explanations for Rich not being disturbed by her melancholy and its subsequent dullness was the concept of free grace. This concept, which she gratefully mentioned on multiple occasions in her diaries, allowed her to see that she could still be saved even if corrupted with the burden of the body and, in her case, its melancholy.[101]

Divergence from Baxter's teachings

While it is not clear whether Rich took physic specifically for her melancholy or spleen, she certainly viewed these conditions as illnesses, describing them with the terms 'fitt' and 'Illnes' herself.[102] That said, she did not only attempt physical cures for her melancholy, but also spiritual. It is at this point that she diverged from the instructions of Baxter, who was clear that physic to cure the body, combined with prayer, was the first priority for melancholics. Rich, on some occasions, turned first to spiritual solutions. In April 1668, for example, Rich 'fo[u]nd still upon … [her] a very great malencolly', but was able to overcome this by meditating upon 'pious hanna [Hannah] that was so troubled that she could not eate, and yet after she had prayed she went away and her countenance was noe more sad'. This consideration made Rich recall her 'o[w]ne former experiences of Godes

---

[100] Richard Allestree, *The causes of the decay of Christian piety* (London, 1667), 50, 262.

[101] See for example, Add MS 27353, f. 13v, BL; Rich, *Memoir*, 61, 206, esp. 98.

[102] Occasionally she took purges or undefined 'physicke' which seem to have aligned with a bout of melancholy, but the relationship is not clear. See for example Add MS 27351, f. 186r, BL; Add MS 27353, f. 8v, BL.

comforting' her by prayer, and enabling her 'to goe away as chearefull from prayer as' Hannah had done. Accordingly, she then

> went to pray and I was inabled by God to poure out my Soule in prayer, and to weepe bitarly, and to lay before him all my tro[u]ble as to a compationate friend, I did then with great earnestness beg him to compose my mind and to make me content with my condition, and to give me patience and I did earnestly beg the light of his countenance upon me that I might have his smiles to carry me above the worldes frownes. I fo[u]nd, blessed be God, a great deale of ease after I had thus wrestled with God.[103]

The fact that she was able to recover her spiritual affections through prayer, like Hannah, was significant enough to Rich for her to include it as a sign of her grace, which she wrote in 1648 after her conversion. The sixth sign, as discussed previously in Chapter One, read:

> I have many times, as pious Hannah did, come to prayer with a mournful and sad spirit, and have been tormented with many doubts and fears, yet when I have poured forth my soul before the Lord, and cryed and wept bitterly, and made my petitions known unto him, who only was able to grant them, I have come away with a cheerful countenance.[104]

This was not in accordance with the assertions of Baxter, who informed his readers that spiritual affections should not be used as a measure or evidence of grace.[105]

Similarly, in January 1673, Rich found upon herself 'a great and a very o[p]pres[s]ing burthen of malencaolly', when she 'reatired to meditate', brought on by the 'grief' that her 'husb[and's] unkindnes 4 or 5 dayes agoe had given' her. Again, rather than turning to physic, her solution was to 'take more than ord[i]nary paines with … [her] own heart in selfe exsamination to find out wherefore God was pleased to contend with' her in this way. Through meditating on particular lines of scripture she deemed appropriate, Rich 'did exstreamely justifye Godes prosideinges with' her, and acknowledged that '[H]e was most ri[gh]teous in punishing me for my overloveing a Creature'. Thus, she interpreted her melancholy as the result of her arguments with her

---

[103] Add MS 27351, 182v-183r, BL.

[104] Add MS 27358, f. 2r, BL.

[105] For example, Richard Baxter, *Richard Baxter's Catholick theologie* (London, 1675), 31-5, 87-91. See also n. 27 above.

husband, that had been caused by her having too much creaturely love for him, rather than a higher love for God. As a result, she viewed begging God that '[H]e wo[u]ld now be all in all unto me' to be the most appropriate solution to her 'burthen of malencaolly' on this occasion.[106] Three months later, Rich 'found an unusual melancholy' upon her after dinner, caused by 'something that troubled' her, which caused her to 'weep much' in a 'sudden eruption' of passions. In order to deal with this, she 'cried to God to quiet my mind [, and] he was pleas'd in some measure to do it, by this consideration, that in Heaven I should be free from all my troubles, and should never weep more, and that sorrowing and sighing should flee away'. In doing so, Rich revealed that she again viewed direct petition of God's assistance to be the most suitable cure for her melancholy.[107] In this approach to coping with the onset of melancholy, Rich fell out of line with the instructions of Baxter, but in line with other ministers. The conformist Jeremy Taylor who had been accused of crypto-popery, for example, as well as other Presbyterians, such as Timothy Rogers some decades later, called for spiritual cures for melancholy. In *The rule and exercises of holy living,* which Rich recorded reading, Taylor included a prayer 'for all estates of Men and Women in the Christian Church', asking God to give 'to melancholy and disconsolate persons', and 'all that are afflicted with evil and unclean spirits[,] … a light from heaven, great grace and proportionable comforts, and timely deliverance'. Rather than physic, the solution to their melancholy was being given 'patience and resignation', in order for 'their sorrows [to] be changed into grace and comfort'.[108]

Moreover, while Baxter asserted that melancholy was a 'diseased disability', Rich's melancholy, and the surrounding circumstances that caused it, were not always presented as spiritually debilitating.[109] The illness of her husband, although it could be problematic as it brought on melancholy-causing passions and stoked her creature love, could also heighten her spiritual experiences. In April 1669, for example, Rich recorded that 'as soen as upe, I retired into the Willdernes[s], … [and was] being very malencolly because my Lord had one of the saddest nightes of paine that I remember him ever to have had'.

---

[106] Add MS 27353, f. 116r-117r, BL. The verses she meditated upon were Ecclesiastes 7:14, Job 5:6, and Micah 6:9. She provided their first words: 'in the day of adversity I was to Consider', 'affliction did not rise out of the dust, nor trouble spring out of the gro[u]nd', and 'beare the rod and him who had apoynted it' (f. 116r).

[107] Add MS 27358, f. 138v, BL. Likewise, during her husband's illness, she viewed her prayers for the recovery of his reason to be directly responsible for him 'at last' coming again 'to himself pretty well'. See Add MS 27353, f. 207r-v, BL.

[108] Jeremy Taylor, *The rule and exercises of holy living* (London, 1650), 401.

[109] Baxter, *A Christian directory*, 311.

Rather than being dulled, however, she was 'much affected to consider his misary and danger', and 'it pleased God in a much more then ord[i]nary ma[n]ner to affecte my heart with his sad condition and to make me poure out my Soule before [H]im to spare his life and to give him true repentance'.[110]

After her husband's death, Rich continued in some ways to act in contrast to the instructions set out in pastoral works. As we have seen, a common assertion running throughout this type of text was that a connection existed between excessive worldliness and melancholy - yet, when Rich became more worldly, as a result of the duties placed upon her as a widow and executor of her husband's will, she became less melancholic. Between the years 1673 and 1678, as she arranged the marriages of her nieces and resolved her husband's complex business affairs, her complaints of having 'not so lively afectiones' in duties continued, but this dullness was no longer blamed on melancholy.[111] Thus, while she often blamed melancholy for dulling her religious experience before her husband's death, it was in fact during this period, of her most fervent and committed piety, that her melancholy occurred. It seems, then, that the demands placed on her by her children's deaths and, later, her husband's illness, spurred her into conversion and an intensified piety, but also resulted in more frequent bouts of melancholy. Once these demands were taken away, both her spirituality and melancholy lessened, suggesting that these two phenomena were potentially connected.

Rich, however, did not point to this connection herself in her diary, and argued against it in her other writings. In her 'Rules for holy living', Rich asserted that 'however the Devil and wicked men may perswade you, That Religion will make you melancholy; yet I can assert from my own experience, that nothing can give you that comfort, serenity and composedness of mind, as a well and orderly led life'. She instructed her original reader, the Earl of Berkeley, to 'set some time apart for reading good Books and Meditation; do not fear that a little time alone should make you melancholy'.[112] Showing an awareness of the link made between piety and melancholy by some groups in her society, Rich was concerned to instead build a positive, calm, and composed reputation

---

[110] Add MS 27351, ff. 302r-v, BL. Rich used the phrase 'retir[ing] into the Wilderness' countless times throughout the diary to describe her practice of meditating each morning in a secluded 'wooded dell' within the grounds of Leighs. See Fell-Smith, *Mary Rich*, 107. Although 'the Wilderness' was used by the family as a whole to accurately describe this woodland, surely the term's allusion to Christ in the wilderness was not lost on Rich (Matthew 4:1-11, Luke 4:1-13).

[111] Add MS 27354, f. 94v, BL. See also, for example, Rich transcribed in Fell-Smith, *Mary Rich*, 319.

[112] Walker, *Eureka*, 134-5.

for the godly. This desire echoed Baxter's correspondence with Gell, Fullwood, and others. He, too, was concerned with eradicating the connection made between the godly and melancholy, instructing, for example, a newly appointed minister, Abraham Pinchbecke, in 1654 to 'Remember also to regard the health of your body; for you will find great use of it for a vigorous serving of God'. Having provided some brief advice on diet and exercise, Baxter enjoined Pinchbecke to

> not weaken or damp your spirits by too much sadnes & melancholy. live so cheerfully among your neighbours that they may not be tempted by you to thinke of Gods service as greivious & destructive to their peace & honest mirth but rather let them see in you that godlines is the joyfullest course of life.[113]

Jacombe, in his *Hooinh egzainiomnh*, which Rich also read, revealed a similar opposition to the link made by some between religious duties and melancholy, labelling it a 'cursed spirit' to 'snubbe and curb ... [secret duties], and frown upon them; and tell them, *they are idle*, or *Hypocritical*, and they will turn [one] *melancholy*'.[114]

In combatting this connection, figures such as Rich and Gell, like the young minister Pinchbecke, were of use. As was mentioned, both Rich and Gell became known as exemplars of piety; as wealthy and prominent figures in their local communities, their example of religiosity could encourage others towards a more godly life. Baxter made this clear in the preface to his *Crucifying of the world*, one of Rich's most-read books, which he dedicated 'to the Nobilty and Gentry, and all that have the Riches of this world'. 'You are', Baxter declared, 'Pillars in the Commonwealth, and the stakes [that] bear up the rest of the hedge. ... You are the Copies that the rest write after, and they are more prone to copy out your vices than your graces'. Gell and Rich were among those who were 'the Stewards of God who are entrusted with His talents for the use of many' and, therefore, had to present a devout, composed face to the world.[115] The cases Rich read most often in Foxe's *Book of martyrs* suggest that she herself found the example of godly nobility encouraging, as she referred to reading of studious bishops of gentlemanly families, Cranmer, Latimer, and Ridley.[116] Encouraged by Baxter and her own convictions, Rich was aiding in cultivating a positive reputation for the godly, and discouraging the

---

[113] Baxter to Abraham Pinchbecke, 5 July 1654, MS 59.iv.168, DWL.

[114] Jacombe, *Hooinh*, 184.

[115] Baxter, *The crucifying*, sigs. a1r-v.

[116] See for example, Add MS 27358, f. 8r, BL; Add MS 27351, ff. 44r., 47r, BL.

connection made between piety and melancholy by those less concerned with leading a strictly religious life.

Rich, then, separated her melancholy from her spiritual troubles; she was aware that her dullness in religious duties stemmed from this distemper, rather than a lack of God's grace. She viewed her body and its tendency to melancholy, rather than her soul, as the occasional obstacle between herself and a fervent practice of duties. Moreover, she was aware how her experiences of melancholy functioned in relation to the reputation of the godly and was firm in her belief that this condition was caused by worldly problems in combination with man's innately corrupt nature, not her spiritual lifestyle. That said, she did not always adhere to these views. Rather, on some occasions, she dealt with her melancholy through spiritual means, and could also find the experience of melancholy spiritually productive at times. It is possible that this slippage between different solutions to melancholy, and alternative understandings of its spiritual use, was partially caused by the malleability of the term. As was seen in the Introduction, 'melancholy' had a 'diversity of significations', and Rich, like other writers, did not necessarily intend the same sense each time she employed the term. Rich's melancholies varied; they could be 'unusual', 'oppressing' and so on, varying in kind and degree. As such, it follows that the cure of these melancholies, as well as their impact on her spiritual life, could also vary. The significance of the malleability of 'melancholy' is made particularly evident by the next case, in which the term is used to signify a positive, and less bodily, condition.

Sir Francis Russell: ''tis not my infermity but my choyse', 1654-59

Russell was the second Baronet of Chippenham, Cambridgeshire, and active from 1616 until his death on April 30th, 1664. At Chippenham, on December 19th, 1631, he married Catherine, daughter and sole heir of John Wheatley, esquire, and Elizabeth Smallpage, with whom he had seven daughters and seven sons. One of these children, Elizabeth, married Henry, the second son of Oliver Cromwell in 1653; and it is Russell's surviving letters with this son-in-law, which are punctuated equally with lamentation and humour, that provide an insight into his stance on melancholy or, what he termed, 'my deare friend and best companion'.[117] As this phrasing suggests, Russell welcomed his melancholy, viewing it as endowing him with love, wisdom, and an increased holiness.

[117] Mark Noble, *Memoirs of several persons and families, who, by females are allied to, or descended from, the Protectorate-house of Cromwell*, vol. 2 (Birmingham, 1784), 387, 392; 'Letters to Henry Cromwell (I), 1654-1656/7', Lansdowne MS 821, f. 14, BL.

Russell's discussion of melancholy has not been examined by other historians, and his letters more generally have been largely overlooked.[118] Moreover, a detailed biography of Russell has not been compiled. Mark Noble's 'memoirs' of the families connected to the 'Protectorate-House of Cromwell' from 1784, however, provide an outline of his career within a larger history of the Russell family 'who were allied to the protectorate house of Cromwell by frequent inter-marriages'. Noble recorded that Francis Russell's father, William, was the first baronet, given this title for his 'many services as treasurer of the navy', and died in 1654. William Russell was not involved in the civil wars, and lived in relative obscurity during this time - perhaps due to his gout which had been worsening since the 1630s.[119] His son, Francis, however, supported the parliamentarian cause. According to Noble, in 1640, Francis was returned a member for the county of Cambridge in the Long Parliament 'and was as warm a friend to their interest as he was a steady enemy to King Charles I'. As a result of this 'activity in the services' of the Long Parliament, Francis 'was by them appointed, August 20, 1642, deputy-lieutenant of the county of Cambridge'. Upon the breaking out of civil war, the parliament 'gave him a colonel's commission', and appointed 'him governor of the isle of Ely, governor of the city of Lichfield'. Later, he was also given 'the government of the isles of Jersey and Guernsey'. During the years of the Commonwealth, Russell was 'entrusted with many employments' by the Lord Protector, his relative and friend, 'and was returned a member of parlement for the county of Cambridge in 1654 and 1656', before being placed into Cromwell's 'house of Lords'. He, like his son-in-law, Henry, survived the Restoration, and was buried at his beloved Chippenham in 1664.[120]

While this successful career within Cromwell's inner circle would seem to reveal a passion for politics, Russell's letters to his son-in-law suggest otherwise. By the time he wrote this correspondence, Russell shows himself to have been a man tired of the political world. Indeed, many of the letters were taken up with complaints of the intrigues of

---

[118] The correspondence between Russell and Henry Cromwell has been used by C. H Firth, 'Cromwell and the Crown', *The English Historical Review* 18, 69 (1903): 52–80; Patrick Little, 'Uncovering a protectoral stud: horses and horse-breeding at the court of Oliver Cromwell, 1653-8', *Historical Research* 82, 216 (2009): 252-67.

[119] Noble, *Memoirs*, 382. More detailed information on Sir William can be found in Alan Davidson and Andrew Thrush, 'Russell, Sir William (c.1575-1654), of Tower Street, London, Deptford, Kent and Chippenham, Cambs.', The History of Parliament, last modified 2010, http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1604-1629/member/russell-sir-william-1575-1654. Unfortunately the 1640-1660 section of this project, which will include Francis Russell, has not yet been completed.

[120] Noble, *Memoirs*, 387-92.

parliament, and his wishes to retire to the country. This study examines nineteen letters from Russell to Henry Cromwell, running from May 13th, 1656 until April 29th, 1659, written from Whitehall in London, or his country estate.[121] The tone of these letters is that of a friend but also superior and adviser, as Russell provides Henry with endless pieces of advice drawn from his 'experyence'. The responses from Henry are not extant - but were perhaps infrequent if Russell's quibbles about a lack of letters from his son-in-law were accurate. Their context was the politically tense years of the Protectorate and its demise, including such events, alluded to in Russell's correspondence, as Cromwell being offered the crown by Parliament in 1657, Cromwell's death in 1658, the short-lived succession of his son, Richard, and the latter's resignation in May 1659.

Russell was at this time a member of parliament for Cambridge, before being made a member of Oliver Cromwell's version of the House of Lords, the Other House, from 1658. His words to Henry, unsurprisingly, point to tense and factious times in parliament; for instance, Russell found himself viewed as 'a kind of courtyer and Cavileere' by the Major Generals after 'appearing lately against' them, and calling 'for a change of the Government'. His letters also suggest that, during the time after Cromwell's death on the 3rd of September 1658, he was particularly focused on attempting to convince others with more influence to bring his son-in-law back to England from Ireland, although without any success.[122] Henry was indeed in Ireland throughout this period, in effect acting as the chief administrator from September 1655, under the recommendation of the protectoral council, until June 1659. Given that in 1655 the commission of the previous lord deputy of Ireland, Charles Fleetwood, would not end for another two years, the installation of Henry in Ireland was viewed by many as an ousting. In reality, Oliver Cromwell left the ultimate decision-making power in the hands of Fleetwood until the end of his commission, despite his departure from Ireland in September 1655, and thereby hampered the ability of Henry to make any real changes of his own design.[123]

---

[121] Lansdowne MS 821, ff. 14, 130, 173, 194, 220, BL; 'Letters to Henry Cromwell (II), 1656/7-1657', Lansdowne MS 822, ff. 35, 57, 75, 83, 96, 104, 132, 234, BL; 'Letters to Henry Cromwell (III), 1657-1659', Lansdowne MS 823, ff. 98, 122, 138, 153, 159, 307, BL. The Huntingdonshire Archives holds two further letters from Russell to Cromwell, from 14 August 1655 and 29 September 1657. No replies from Henry to Russell have been located in public archives. Henry's first name is used throughout in order to avoid confusion with his father.

[122] Lansdowne MS 822, f. 234, BL; Lansdowne MS 823, ff. 98, 122, BL.

[123] *ODNB*, s.v. 'Cromwell, Henry'.

It was from within discussions of these various political tussles that expressions of Russell's melancholy unfurled. Compared to the previous cases in this chapter, Russell did not discuss the workings or symptoms of his melancholy at great length. Instead, he was discussing a different, less bodily form of melancholy - one which informed his identity and worldview more than his daily health. As such, his efforts at self-fashioning are almost palpable throughout the letters. Far from being a limitation, the degree to which Russell was engaging in self-fashioning in these egodocuments provides evidence of a very different relationship to melancholy that could exist amongst the godly. While Baxter instructed Gell and Fullwood's neighbour to rid themselves of this 'diseased disability', and Rich blamed her dullness on bouts of spleen, Russell presented his melancholy as both the cause and fruits of his godly identity. What is more, while the gaps in Russell's extant correspondence present obstacles in piecing together his relationship with this condition, they also reveal that his letters potentially had a wider audience than Henry. Russell, who was aware that some 'thoughts … are not fit for paper', worried that occasionally his letters never reached their destination due to the political information they contained, while many of Henry's letters from other sources were written in cipher.[124] Given Russell continued writing to Henry without a cipher, it can be presumed that he was comfortable with his self-fashioning as a melancholic recluse to be known more widely.

'Temper and complection'

For Russell, his positive, self-defining understanding of melancholy operated within a world view that positioned wisdom against foolishness, treachery against friendship, and worldly matters against the spiritual. In navigating this perspective, he thought heavily in terms of complexion, temper, and humours - often paying attention to the emotional reactions of those around him, and using these to measure political situations. Indeed, the passions and humoral tendencies of his colleagues are woven into his reportage of the Protectorate's goings-on. Russell reported, for example, that having discoursed with Cromwell about some 'great busyness', the Lord Protector was 'very chearefull, and his troubled thoughts seeme[d] to be over'. Similarly, informing Henry that Sir John Reynolds was being pressured to 'goe with new raised men into France', he observed that

[124] Lansdowne MS 823, f. 159, BL. For coded letters from other correspondents, see for example Lansdowne MS 821, ff. 155, 164, BL.

Reynolds was 'at present in some kind of trouble of mind'. Rather than discussing the details of these matters, Russell tended to immediately turn to how they affected the mood or state of mind of those involved; the 'mixed reactions in the faces of everyone else'.[125]

It appears that these observations were not added for mere interest. Rather, Russell deemed an individual's 'frame and temper' to be a significant factor to consider in political decision making. In August 1656, when comforting Henry that Cromwell had given his future thorough consideration, he wrote: 'I can assure you that he [Cromwell] loves you, and knoweth your frame and temper exceeding well, he is a wise good man and of great experyence.' Two years later, with Cromwell dead and the future of the commonwealth uncertain, Russell stated that he was 'at a stand what counsell to give[,] … not being able to judge of your present frame and temper of spirit'.[126]

Accordingly, Russell also paid attention to his own temperament, and used this to understand his outlook on the events taking place around him. In May 1657, he mused: 'if I doe understand at all my owne temper and complection, I am as much flegmatick as sanguine, and I find it a hard match betweene them.' Connecting the sanguine humour with foolishness, he went on to joke: 'when I writ unto your lordship I had pretty good reason to be sanguine, for the little secretary [John Thurloe] was so, and he twas that infected so many of us, but I hope I have pretty well recovered…, although it hath allmost killed divers others.'[127] Indeed, it was not the sanguine humour that Russell usually identified with, but melancholy - which he seemed to view as his natural complexion.

'My melancholy'

Seemingly being a 'natural' form of melancholy, Russell was laying claim to the more benign form of this condition, in which too much black bile existed within the body's system from birth. This lay in opposition to 'unnatural' melancholy, which involved an excess of black bile in the spleen becoming hot and releasing gaseous vapours, as was seen in the diagnosis of Mary Rich. Although Galenic treatises distinguished between these 'natural' and 'burnt' types of melancholy, it was to the writings of neo-platonic philosopher Marsilio Ficino in the fifteenth century that Russell owed his more positive

---

[125] Lansdowne MS 822, ff. 57, 35, BL.

[126] Lansdowne MS 821, f. 220, BL; Lansdowne MS 823, f. 159, BL.

[127] Lansdowne MS 822, f. 75, BL.

interpretation of 'natural' melancholy. Ficino, and many others after him, referred to this strain as 'genial melancholy' and tied it to genius. In order to explain the superior intellect and achievements of the likes of Plato and Socrates, Ficino asserted that the right combination of natural melancholy with blood and yellow bile would invest the body with a lucent, hot spirit that lifted the intellect up to 'the loftiest truths' as it continually sought 'the fundamental natures of all things'.[128]

Russell may or may not have been aware of the details of Ficino's theory, however. In the seventeenth century, the various kinds of melancholy were - to borrow Laurence Babb's phrasing - 'hopelessly intertangled' in thought and literature.[129] Thus, humoral understandings of melancholy as causing unpleasant bodily dysfunction often merged with the more positive identity of the sensitive, scholarly melancholic. The entanglement of these understandings, although largely absent from the previous cases, is shown in Russell's writings, as he fights against negative interpretations of his condition. It was not only medical discourses of melancholy that were competing for recognition in seventeenth-century culture; theological and philosophical discourses provided additional interpretations, which Russell also tapped into. As we have seen, some godly individuals clearly delineated melancholy from spiritual sorrow, tying it instead to bodily dysfunction, worldliness, and sin. As is revealed in the letters of Russell, however, this was not the case for all godly parliamentarians at this time. Rather, in these circles, multiple interpretations of melancholy were available.[130]

This multiplicity was evident, first and most simply, in Russell's choice of words. He employed the term 'melancholy' in a variety of ways, referring to 'my melancholy', 'that which the world call melancholy', and as an adjective (for example, 'a large melancholy letter'). In Russell's eyes, 'my melancholy' was a positive, 'sweet' form that he 'love[d]', while 'that which the world call melancholy' was a negative type, that others believed made him antisocial, unloving, and was his 'enemy'. So, while he stated that others were 'wrong' to 'call it melancholy', he, too, labelled his state as 'melancholy'.[131] Indeed, what is most striking is the way in which Russell did not reject the label of

---

[128] Marsilio Ficino, *De vita libri tres* (1482-9) translated and quoted in Babb, *The Elizabethan malady*, 60-1. See also Sullivan, *Beyond melancholy*, 93-4.

[129] Babb, *The Elizabethan malady*, 66.

[130] They were indeed the same circles, with Henry Cromwell's sister, Frances, first marrying Mary Rich's husband's elder brother, Robert Rich, before becoming the wife of Russell's eldest son, Sir John Russell. See Noble, *Memoirs*, 393.

[131] Lansdowne MS 821, ff. 14, 130, 173, BL.

melancholy out of hand, but instead reappropriated it for himself, injecting the term with a different meaning to those around him.

Russell presented his melancholy as a logical response to a tiring world, rather than as unwanted or unnatural. There was no suggestion of other debilitating physical ailments accompanying the condition, such as headaches or pains, and, in particular, there were no vapours rising to his head and causing delusion. Rather, he believed that his melancholy was a virtuous response to his situation, indicative of his ability to see his environment for what it was: a treacherous, troubled world of betrayal and foolishness. The specific reasoning for his melancholy shifted slightly between letters, but consistently revolved around the perfidious world of politics. In June 1656, Russell wrote that:

> I am I must confesse often that which the world call melancholy, yet I think not without some reason considering all things, for I meet with those things which sometimes try me, …God hath appointed me for those tryalls, which to lay upon some others, were to[o] heavey a burden. but I cannot complaine that either his love my owne faith and patience (through his mercy) faile me, and so I am made capable to bare the unkindness of men, from whom I could not expect them.[132]

Thus, his melancholy was presented as the result of his trials at the hands of men, but not evidence of his lack of faith or love of God. As such, his melancholy became a mark of his resolution, and his separation from - and disdain for - 'the world'. Throughout his letters he complained of various aspects of his life at parliament: being commanded to London by Cromwell but then 'keept here in ignorance', there being 'jealousys on all sides' with 'no man know[ing] well each other', and being subjected to 'not onely scratches but wounds'.[133] He made his opinion of the parliament clear, writing in August 1656 that for 'a long time they have bin as a kind of dead rotten peece of governement to me, in short I neither can love or like them, as the condition of these nations stand'. By responding to such worldly trials with melancholy, Russell suggested that he was above his fellow politicians' 'want of love, iniquity and great jealousys'. What is more, he suggested that his reaction was not isolated, but defined a group: 'the melancholy', who believed 'the issue [of such flaws] is like to prove dangerous'. 'The melancholy', he wrote, 'are of my opinion'.[134] Lord Lambert, perhaps, was counted by Russell as one of this group. After

---

[132] Ibid., f. 173.

[133] Ibid., ff. 173, 194; Lansdowne MS 822, f. 234, BL; Lansdowne MS 823, f. 138, BL.

[134] Lansdowne MS 821, ff. 220, 173, BL.

Lambert had given a blunt and honest speech to parliament in 1657, not long before his personal and political estrangement from Cromwell, Russell observed that he 'lookes but sadly, he puts me in mind of a saying of old Solomons, that there is an appointed time for all things under the sun, to hate as well as to love, to be sad as well as merry'. With their political world in the state it was, it was the 'appointed time' to react with sadness, for those judicious enough.[135] Thus, Russell used his melancholy as a tool to critique the society and government that surrounded him.

Indeed, Russell associated this melancholy with other-worldly wisdom. By the end of this series of letters, Russell asserted that his melancholy had been a forewarning of the downfall to come, and lamented that others had not listened to his view earlier. During the unravelling of the Cromwells' power in April 1659, he wrote: 'if at any time I have bin melancholy or thoughtfull, I had a deeper reason and ground for it than was understood, it may be I saw further into the millstone with one eye than all your friends did with both theyres, but you know what became of him that by wisedome did save the citty, was not he dispiseed because poore.'[136] He was referring to, and slightly altering, Ecclesiastes 9:15.[137] His advice in the rest of the letter fitted with Ecclesiastes 2:16, 'For there is no remembrance of the wise more than of the fool for ever; seeing that which now is in the days to come shall all be forgotten. And how dieth the wise man? as the fool'. In this vein, Russell counselled Henry on the importance of other-worldly wisdom: 'my lord let nothing of this world trouble you, the glory of it is but like the flower of the grasse, the kingdome of heaven within us, is that which a wise good man onely aymes at.' To drive home his point, he reminded Henry that his deceased father's 'honor and greatnes in this world is allmost forgotten, [and] by that you may see what earthly crownes are'. He concluded: 'covet onely that wisedome which is from above and remember allways that the wisedome of this and for this world is but fooleishnes.'[138] In line with contemporary discourse about the dangers of worldliness, Russell often referred to inward (spiritual) versus outward (worldly) concerns - and tied 'happyness' to 'true inward peace'. 'He who

---

[135] Lansdowne MS 822, f. 132, BL. Russell was referring to Ecclesiastes 3:8, 'A time to love, and a time to hate; a time of war, and a time of peace'.

[136] Lansdowne MS 823, f. 307, BL. Russell presumably means 'dispiseed' in the sense 'to set at nought, disregard'. See *OED*, s.v. 'despise'.

[137] This verse reads: 'Now there was found in it a poor wise man, and he by his wisdom delivered the city; yet no man remembered that same poor man.'

[138] Lansdowne MS 823, f. 307, BL. Russell had given similar advice on other occasions. See for example, Lansdowne MS 823, f. 98, BL: 'let nothing of this world ly to[o] heavey upon your mind and spirit.'

is inwardly truely great', he maintained, 'cares not for shaddows, which are onely the cheifest happness of all weake men and minds'.[139]

Given his melancholy was caused by a revulsion to 'this world', it pushed him into retreat. A persistent theme throughout his letters was his desire to leave the city and parliament, and spend his time only at his country estate, Chippenham. In May 1656, he lamented: 'I am so tyred with the formality and hippocresy of this age that I know not well what to doe, and were it not for my wife and childrens sakes I should most certainely goe hide myselfe.' Having acknowledged Henry's own 'tryalls and trouble', he wrote: 'my lord when you are weary of this world doe but send to me, and wee will turne Monks together; for I professe I doe long for nothing more than a retirement, the very thought of such a kind of life puts of[f] all my melancholy.'[140] Adding that 'Sr John Reynolds will have us company I suppose for he talks to me of such a kind of thing', he pointed to the group he would write of subsequently: 'the melancholy.' On later occasions, such as in June, he made similar utterances: 'I am so wounded for the present in my mind and spirit, that to hide my selfe by retirement is most propper for me and pleases me best.'[141]

As his strikingly unreformed reference to monks suggests, Russell tied his melancholy, and the desire for a hermit's life that it encouraged, to an increased spirituality. In defending his melancholy to Henry, he emphasised this connection, asserting that: 'in it the lord hath appeared unto me who loves best to teach in private.' Thus, the melancholic's tendency to seek out solitariness was presented as an advantage to spiritual practice, rather than an impediment, as it opened up more opportunities for communion with God. Russell juxtaposed melancholy with 'mirth and jollity', insisting that he was 'sure tis far better than' them, and in doing so integrated melancholy into the state that was usually held in opposition to worldly happiness: sorrow for sin. The right kind of happiness, according to Russell, was to be 'very soberly cheerefull'; he noted Cromwell had been in this state in June 1657, it being 'a temper that I like very well'.[142] These words, which distinguished between emotional states with a careful choice of language, echoed those of other reformed Protestants who, as discussed in Chapter One,

---

[139] Lansdowne MS 822, ff. 132, 75, BL.

[140] Lansdowne MS 821, f. 130, BL. On the trope of religious retreat in women's writings of the period, see Hodgkin, *Women*, 10.

[141] Lansdowne MS 821, ff. 130, 173, BL. For other instances of Russell expressing his desire to retreat to the country, which increase as political turmoil intensifies, see Lansdowne MS 822, f. 104, BL; Lansdowne MS 823, ff. 122, 138, 153, 159, BL.

[142] Lansdowne MS 821, f. 14, BL; Lansdowne MS 822, f. 104, BL.

upheld spiritual cheerfulness as a vital practice while also delineating it from worldly joy.[143] Indeed, while Russell's offhand reference to monks may suggest otherwise, his language throughout his letters was reminiscent of the pastoral advice of reformed ministers, referring to providence, loving God with 'your whole hart', 'magnifie[ing] his name in all your actions', and so on.[144]

Although it is not entirely clear whether it was in response to his piety, or some other behaviour, Russell believed that he was viewed as a 'heretick' by those around him. He bemoaned that 'we poore hereticks … must suffer [the 'crosse'] like rogues', and are 'persecuted, … accounted mad at the best'. Evidently aware of the accusations of madness circulating, he concluded 'that we have a devill is our ordenary accusation' - alluding to the contemporary discourse of possession, and the devil taking advantage of the body's weaknesses. He did not appear to identify as either 'Cavilere' or 'Roundhead of any sect', both of whom he believed 'but revile us'. It is therefore unclear who 'we poore hereticks' were - but it can be guessed that it was those parliamentarians, like himself, Reynolds, and Lambert, who were now disillusioned with, and in Russell's case, melancholic about, the protectorate.[145]

Russell responded to these accusations of heresy and the devil's influence differently to the individuals discussed in the previous sections. Russell believed his melancholy disposed him to love and wisdom, not madness, delusion, dullness, or fear. He wrote to Henry: 'my melancholy I hope my lord hath no effects of neglect in it, … I hope you shall never have the least reason to blame it or me for its sake, when I know it counsells and teaches me both to love and honor you.' Love was of upmost importance to Russell, who told Henry that his son-in-law's love for him and his family 'hath a great satisfaction in it to my spirit', it being 'so noble a principele', even if it may seem 'a fooleish thing to the wise and politick'. Drawing the concept of love into his worldly-spiritual dualism, he asserted in 1656 that love will be more useful 'in the end'; those who disregard it now 'will know its want' then, 'and the curse of being without it'. Reaffirming his point in closing, Russell instructed Henry to 'above all things … nourish love', as it will 'stand you insteed when every thing else shall faile, tis the life of God, and the best wisedome of men'. Indeed, love and wisdom were a supreme pairing in Russell's eyes, especially in such troubled times. He added as a postscript in 1659: 'Love and wisedome

---

[143] See, for example, Add MS 27354, f. 95r, BL; Baxter, *Saints everlasting rest*, 315.

[144] Lansdowne MS 822, ff. 35, 83, BL; Lansdowne MS 823, f. 307, BL.

[145] Lansdowne MS 821, ff. 130, 173, 194, BL.

are stronger than any weapons of war and yet will doe greater things than we think of' (Figure 4.2).[146]

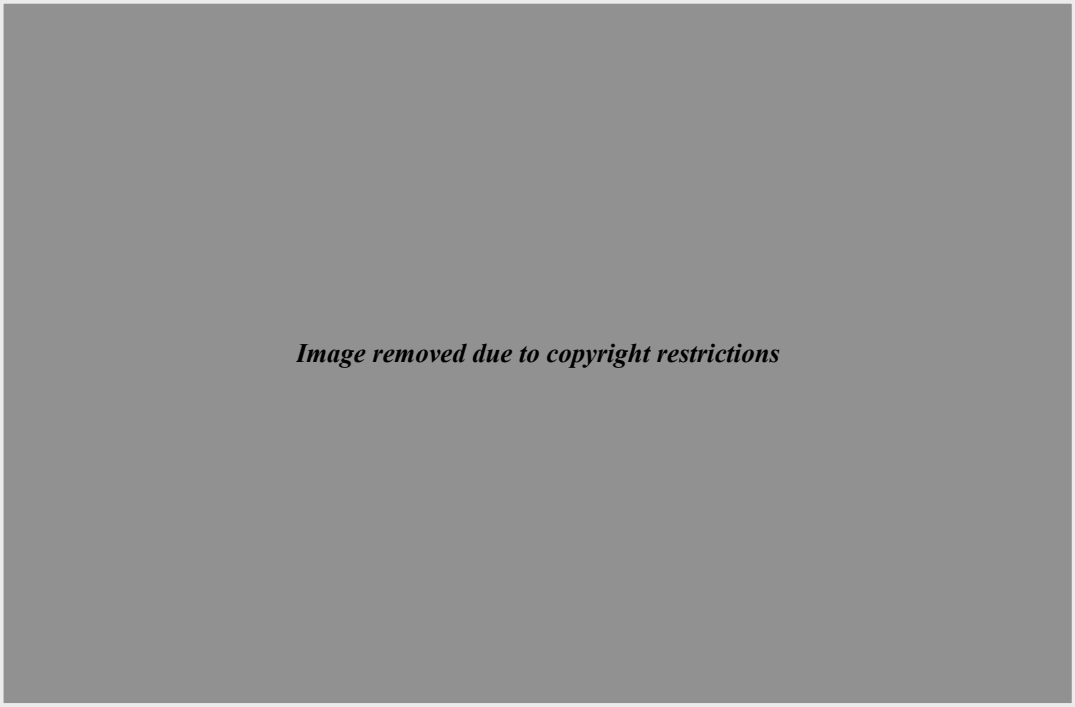

Figure 4.2: Francis Russell to Henry Cromwell, April 29th 1659, Lansdowne MS 823, f. 307, BL.

'Hail divinest Melancholy': similarities to Milton's 'Il Penseroso'

Russell's expression, and justification, of melancholy has strong parallels with a poem by Milton, possibly written in 1633, and published in 1645: 'Il Penseroso.' The poem was written alongside 'L'Allegro', as part of a pair, in order to present melancholy in both a positive and negative light. 'L'Allegro', rejected melancholy, opening with: 'Hence loathed Melancholy, / Of Cerberus, and blackest Midnight born', while 'Il Penseroso' relished the condition: 'hail thou goddess, sage and holy, / Hail divinest Melancholy.' It has been suggested that Milton was inspired by Robert Burton's opening poem in *The anatomy of melancholy,* in which the various, conflicting interpretations of the condition were also explored. Some scholars have argued that Milton had a preference for the latter poem's stance, while others have asserted that he, like Burton, simply wished to demonstrate the 'multiple faces of melancholy', and was possibly encouraging a middle ground.[147] Whatever the case, the two poems reveal diametrically opposed views of the condition.

---

[146] Lansdowne MS 821, ff. 14, 173 BL; Lansdowne MS 823, f. 307, BL.

[147] Sullivan, *Beyond melancholy*, 122; Lawrence Babb, 'The background of "Il Penseroso"', *Studies in Philology* 37, 2 (1940): 272-3; Trevor, *The poetics*, 159.

While 'L'Allegro', set within bucolic scenery, presented melancholy as inhibiting the wholesome happiness of community activities, 'Il Penseroso' embraced it as the key to scholarly bliss and achievement. For the former, the 'heart-easing Mirth', 'Jest', 'Jollity', and 'wreathed smiles' of theatre, dancing, and music are the ultimate aim, with 'uncouth' melancholy's 'horrid shapes and shrieks' their enemy. 'Il Penseroso', on the other hand, opened with 'Hence vain deluding Joys', and immediately denounced the other poem's lighthearted pastimes as the 'Folly' of 'some idle brain'. Once satisfied in insulting mirth, the poem launched into ardent praise of melancholy, presenting the condition as a 'goddess', saintly and holy, associated with 'Wisdom': a 'pensive nun, devout and pure / Sober, stedfast, and demure'.[148]

Thus, the similarities to Russell's representation of melancholy a decade later is immediately evident. For Milton and Russell alike, melancholy was not a state to be avoided, but an intellectually and spiritually productive condition to foster. The reclusive life at Chippenham that Russell presented in his letters combined the various melancholic figures, always alone, of 'Il Penseroso': the devout nun, staring musingly at the sky or downwards 'with a sad leaden' expression; a walker wandering 'on the dry smooth-shaven green, To behold the wand'ring Moon'; the fireside sitter observing 'glowing embers' 'Far from all resort of mirth'; a lonely scholar 'in some high lonely tow'r' with their lamp burning 'at midnight hour'; and the church goer, 'Dissolv[ed]...into extasies' by the 'high embowed roof', 'dimm religious light' of 'storied windows', and choral music. The poem's final ten lines in particular foreshow the desires found in Russell's letters to escape the worldly bustle of political life in London, describing a 'peaceful hermitage', a 'hairy gown and mossy cell, Where I may sit and rightly spell / Of every star that Heav'n doth shew, / And every herb that sips the dew; / Till old experience do attain / To something like prophetic strain'.[149]

Russell's constant flow of advice to the younger Henry, peppered with statements such as 'Experto crede Francisco [Trust in the expert, Francis]', echoed Milton's focus upon the melancholic's 'old experience' and wisdom.[150] Moreover, 'Il Penseroso' as a whole was imbued with the same religious overtones that ran throughout Russell's correspondence, referring to, for example, 'holy passion', a 'rapt soul', and 'the studious cloister's pale'. Through such associations to intellect and spirituality, the melancholy of

---

[148] John Milton, *Poems of Mr. John Milton* (London, 1645), 30-6, 37-44.

[149] Ibid., 38-40, 43-4.

[150] Lansdowne MS 823, f. 138, BL; Milton, *Poems*, 44.

this poem and Russell's letters transcended the uncomfortable, bodily symptoms associated with the condition.[151] Rather than describing a bodily distemper, both writers instilled melancholy itself with human qualities; it was a 'nun', for Milton, and a 'deare friend and best companion', for Russell. Perhaps most significantly, both Milton and Russell asserted control over their experience of melancholy, presenting themselves as both creator and director of their condition. 'Il Penseroso' ended with its protagonist asserting that: 'These pleasures, Melancholy, give, / And I with thee will *choose* to live', just as Russell insisted that "tis not my infermity but my *choyse*'.[152]

The publisher of 'Il Penseroso', Humphrey Moseley, also published Edmund Gregory's *The anatomy of Christian melancholy* (1646) which, as has been discussed in previous chapters, had 'puritan' leanings. The inclusion of texts such as Milton's and Gregory's in the catalogue of this printer is somewhat surprising; Moseley, who had an astute understanding of the needs of his readership, fed a desire for Caroline era-inspired literature and provided a platform for royalist sympathisers to disseminate their views. He aimed to cultivate an appearance of 'Civility and Understanding' as opposed to the so-called 'cultural degeneration' of parliament-led England.[153] 'Puritan' poetry and prose, then, existed alongside Royalist texts on the shelves of London's most prolific seller of plays at the time. Indeed, Moseley's catalogues show that he consistently sold a number of religious texts, and these ranged from High Church tomes to what would have been considered 'puritan' stances.[154] Although their religious and political views differed, a number of Moseley's publications instead shared an interest in cultivating an image of 'Civility and Understanding', which included the fostering of a scholarly, philosophical, and, at least in the case of the godly Milton and Gregory, holy melancholy. It seems that Moseley, the astute businessman, identified a crossover in interests amongst his customers, or 'knowing Gentlemen', as he called them.[155] Russell, given his letters' similarities to Milton's poem, appears to have been of this 'knowing Gentlemen' ilk. His

---

[151] Milton, *Poems*, 38, 43. On the non-Galenic nature of 'Il Penseroso', see Trevor, *The Poetics*, 159; Babb, 'The background', 270.

[152] Milton, *Poems*, 38, 44; Lansdowne MS 821, f. 14, BL. Italics my own in both quotations.

[153] *ODNB*, s.v. 'Moseley, Humphrey'. See also Lois Potter, *Secret rites and secret writing: Royalist literature, 1641–1660* (Cambridge, 1989), 20.

[154] For example, authors stocked by Moseley included Edmund Reeve (an Arminian who wrote anti-puritan texts) and Nicholas Darton (who inveighed against Calvinists), along with Richard Sibbes and Josias Shute (who pushed for further Church reform and were labelled 'puritans' by their contemporaries). See *ODNB*, s.v 'Reeve, Edmund', 'Darton, Nicholas', 'Sibbes, Richard', 'Shute, Josias'.

[155] *ODNB*, s.v. 'Moseley, Humphrey'.

correspondence, viewed alongside works such as Milton's and Gregory's, suggests that the parliamentarian godly also participated in an intellectual form of melancholy, and, in particular, focused upon its holy, spiritually-productive aspects.

Conclusion

In examining the diaries and letters of Richard Baxter, Katherine Gell, Francis Fullwood, Mary Rich, and Francis Russell, this chapter has explored how the godly's understandings of melancholy may have been formed. Through the construction of webs of association, it has been shown that these individuals engaged with a variety of pastoral texts, as well as sermons, letters, and conversations, in the process of interpreting their condition. These case studies have demonstrated that the godly engaged in a complex relationship with the concept of melancholy, in which the context and framing of the condition was vital. As was similarly asserted in Chapters Two and Three, choice of language and the process of recording experiences played an integral role in the formation of individuals' understandings of melancholy, as well as their attempts to assert its spiritual significance or lack thereof. In the above cases, Baxter encouraged Gell to adopt medical rather than spiritual language to describe her state and thereby remove the religious significance of her troubles, while Russell tapped into the poetic expressions of Milton to imbue his melancholy with spiritual value. As was the case with the language of the heart and use of the soul-body dynamic, these vocabularies were fostered through reading, writing, and discussion with other members of their godly communities, while recording descriptions of their states helped to cement these interpretations in their minds, and those of others. Gender and social position, moreover, have been shown to be significant factors in an individual's ability to effectively tap into certain languages and interpretations of melancholy, reinforcing previous scholarship. Gentlewomen, such as Gell and Rich, were most likely to be associated with melancholy, albeit of the dysfunctional bodily kind, while elite men, like Russell, had easier access to a poetic, less physical form of the condition. As these distinctions suggest, the chapter has gone beyond considering one form of melancholy and, in doing so, has demonstrated that multiple versions of this condition were open to godly individuals. It was not only the vaporous, delusional strain of 'the devil's bath', which they have been so often associated with by opponents and historians alike, that they engaged with.

Overall, however, the above cases suggest that melancholy, in the form of bodily illness, was often viewed by the godly as an impediment to spiritual practice and therefore an unwanted obstacle to be overcome; a 'distracting', 'fruitlesse' condition causing 'false fear' and 'dispair', as described by Collins. Indeed, while the number of cases examined cannot be treated as an exhaustive survey of the godly's experiences of melancholy in this period, they do reveal a largely negative attitude towards this condition in the 1650s and, in Mary Rich's case, the 1670s. This supports the findings of Chapter Three, in which it was shown that melancholy's involvement in spiritual experience was approached with particular caution by the godly in the 1650s and 1660s, and that the need to carefully frame this condition in order to make its presence acceptable in a religious framework persisted until the end of the century. Moreover, all cases revealed an awareness of the risk of being negatively labelled mad or melancholic by their opponents, and this can be seen to have shaped their interaction with the condition. While Russell endeavoured to convince Henry that his melancholy was not 'his enemy' but beneficial, Baxter and Rich encouraged those around them to prove associations between a spiritually dutiful life and melancholy to be false. Refusing to blame the godly life as a source of melancholy, these godly individuals instead attempted to present an image of holy cheerfulness to those around them.

At the same time, by turning to personal writings such as diaries and letters, a greater complexity has been shown to exist in this narrative. While the previous chapter's sources, like those utilised by Schmidt and Hodgkin, presented edited, prefaced, and retrospective representations of experiences of melancholy, the writings examined here have provided insight into more immediate interpretations and, as a result, a higher degree of ambivalence has become apparent. Rich, for example, often found her melancholy to be debilitating but, in some circumstances, was able to transform it into a spiritually productive experience. Gell, on the other hand, switched between interpretations of her troubles; she sometimes viewed melancholy as a comforting explanation for her dullness, while on other occasions felt this label to frustratingly deny the true nature of her turmoil. What is more, in examining the views of sufferers themselves, rather than their instructors, it has been shown that a degree of agency was available in the process of framing melancholy; Gell and Fullwood's neighbour negotiated their diagnoses with Baxter, Rich used the condition as an explanatory tool for dullness in duties, and Russell cultivated a holy, enlightened identity through melancholic

expressions. Turning to the last three decades of the century, the next chapter will add further layers of complexity to our understanding of melancholy's role in godly religious experience, while also continuing to probe the narrative proposed thus far.

Chapter Five

Melancholy amongst the nonconforming godly, 1670s-1700

By examining the diaries, letters, accounts, and notebooks of two Presbyterians and one Independent, this chapter continues the exploration of multiple forms of melancholy in nonconformist religious writings, identifying discussions of the condition as a passing mood, a bodily illness, and an erroneous label. Despite these definitional variations, individuals' attempts to form and express godly identity is found in all representations of the condition across the three studies. This tendency is especially shown to be the case in retrospective accounts of melancholy as an illness of the body or, in line with shifts in medical beliefs, the mind. As was found in the published narratives of Hannah Allen and George Trosse, and particularly Elizabeth Walker and Calamy's biographies, melancholy is largely presented as a sanctified affliction of the godly in the following manuscript writings. Indeed, the same willingness identified in Chapter Three to incorporate melancholy into accounts of spiritual experience towards the end of the century is detected, as well as the concomitant moves to imbue experiences of this condition with spiritual value through emphasis of the patience, forbearance and, in some cases, divine cure of sufferers. At the same time, the importance of carefully framing bouts of melancholy through the use of particular language can also be seen to have persisted in the sources examined here, although in a slightly less heavy-handed manner than that found amongst preface authors in Chapter Three.

Elias Pledger: 'melancholy thoughts concerning my state in the world', c.1680s-1712/3

At the age of eighteen, an apothecary's apprentice named Elias Pledger began to keep a spiritual diary. Inspired by published spiritual lives, he began with a summary of his life's events thus far, stating in the third person that: 'Elias Pledger was born in that fatal year of 1665 in the month of July in the parish of little Baddow in the County of Essex.' Following the conventions of this genre, he continued with a short description of his upbringing, and - perhaps now conscious of his awkward use of pronouns - swapped to the first person: '~~He~~ I was born of godly parents; my father being a minister of the presbiterian perswasion, I had the happy advantage of a Religious Education.' By recounting his schooling and the first years of his apprenticeship, Pledger brought the

narrative to the present-day, before continuing the text as a diary until he completed his indenture in 1689 at the age of twenty-four, and adding further entries roughly annually until his late fifties.[1]

In writing this document, it appears that Pledger was influenced by spiritual lives and, in particular, *A spiritual legacy ... the holy life and happy death of Mr. John Draper,* which was compiled by the independent minister, Christopher Ness (1621-1705), and published in 1684.[2] This book, according to Pledger, directly inspired him to start the diary, and a number of parallels can be found in the two writers' lives, writing styles, and religious outlooks.[3] While both authors mention melancholy, their discussions of this concept are not entirely parallel and this investigation will probe their similarities and differences. Although Pledger's diary has been used by some historians, particularly those studying autobiography, the relationship between his and Draper's perspectives has not been examined, and their accounts of melancholy have not been discussed.[4] Compared to the examples examined in the previous chapter, Pledger and Draper's comments on melancholy are not extensive, and their narratives do not revolve around their sufferings from this condition. Rather than being a drawback, however, it is the offhand, brief manner in which these two Presbyterians discuss the concept of melancholy that is of significance for the chapter's argument.

'Now I began to look more after my thoughts'

Pledger revealed in the opening summary of his life that he was orphaned at the age of eleven, his mother having died from 'a very great sickness' soon after he was born, and his father, a minister, dying 'suddainly on a Sabbath day night' in 1676. It seems that the latter death particularly affected him, as he included an account of the event on the inside cover of the diary, as well as in the narrative itself. With his parents deceased, Pledger continued at Epsom school under the guardianship of two 'mothers in law' before

---

[1] MS 28.4, ff. 2r, 1r-186v, DWL. On the significance of Pledger's use of pronouns, see Michael Mascuch, *The origins of the individualist self: autobiography and self-identity in England* (Cambridge, 1997), 99.

[2] Christopher Ness, *A spiritual legacy* (London, 1684). Later, Pledger also read Thomas Wadsworth, *Wadsworth's remains* (London, 1680), which he described as 'Mr Wadsworth life'. See MS 28.4, f. 11v, DWL.

[3] MS 28.4, f. 8r, DWL.

[4] For mentions of Pledger in other studies, see for example, Mascuch, *The origins*, 97-9, 130; Cynthia Griffin Wolff, 'Literary reflections of the puritan character', *Journal of the History of Ideas* 29, 1 (1968): 22-3; Greaves, 'To be found faithful', 51, 53-4; Stephen Collins, 'British stepfamily relationships, 1500-1800', *Journal of Family History* 16, 4 (1991): 342. Weisser discusses Pledger's melancholy, but only in two lines. See Weisser, *Ill composed*, 169.

commencing his apprenticeship. Again in line with the generic conventions of spiritual lives, he recounted the 'great many' sins he committed whilst in a 'natural state', confessing that he skipped school, 'frame[d] lyes' to tell his master, broke the sabbath, indulged in pleasure, and, as an apprentice, abandoned his shop in order to attend Bartholomew Fair. Despite these sinful ways, a tendency towards godliness gradually grew within Pledger, encouraged by a variety of influences, including the guidance of 'a very Godly Master' at Epsom who led an 'exemplary life', a group of youths who prayed together in the fields, sermons at his school, and the behaviour of his second master, an apothecary.[5]

Although he made resolutions to improve 'the Evil' of his 'wayes', he broke these several times, and only began to enter into his lengthy conversion process with intent in 1683. He considered his many failings, such as omitting the duty of prayer, and 'began to look more after ...[his] thoughts'. From this more self-critical stance, he became 'much troubled because ... [his thoughts] were no more spirituall and heavenly', and began to question his election, fearing that he could not be saved given his 'wickedness'. 'In this straight', he recorded that he 'sent a letter' to his old master at Epsom, Francis Youell, asking for his assistance. Youell, being the 'Godly Master' who had ignited some sparks of godliness in Pledger some years previously, responded with positive reassurances, informing him that God was 'taking the same method with...[him], which he useth towards those whome he intendeth to take into his favour'. The reason Pledger was experiencing such fearful thoughts of his wickedness, he explained, was because 'the first work of his spirit' was to 'Convince of sin both original and actuall'. Youell closed the letter by advising that there were 'many books that with gods blessing may be of great use[,] ... 'particularly Mr Allens book about conversion'.[6]

Taking this guidance on board, Pledger read 'John Drapers life' which, he wrote, 'did much affect [me] and made me set about writing this account of gods various movements to me, and my carriage to him'.[7] The book, *A spiritual legacy being a pattern of piety for all young persons practice in a faithful relation of the holy life and happy death of Mr. John Draper,* was - according to its full title - compiled from Draper's own 'manuscripts containing his experiences, exercises, self examinations and evidences for heaven; together

---

[5] MS 28.4, ff. 1r, 2r-v, 4v, 5r, DWL.

[6] Ibid., ff. 5r-6v. The book Youell recommended could be William Allen, *A discourse of the nature, ends, and difference of the two covenants* (London, 1673); Joseph Alleine, *An alarme to unconverted sinners* (London, 1672).

[7] MS 28.4, f. 8r, DWL.

with his funeral sermons' by the independent minister, Christopher Ness (Figure 5.1).[8] Many of Draper's numerous letters were also included, and Pledger likewise began to engage in a number of spiritual correspondences. Initially, in addition to writing to his old school master, he wrote twice to 'Mr Rand minister at little Baddow' for advice. Pledger gave his recipients 'an account of the reasons' why he thought his conversion to be 'saving', and hoped for reassurance that his 'convictions' had 'ended in a true conversion'.[9]

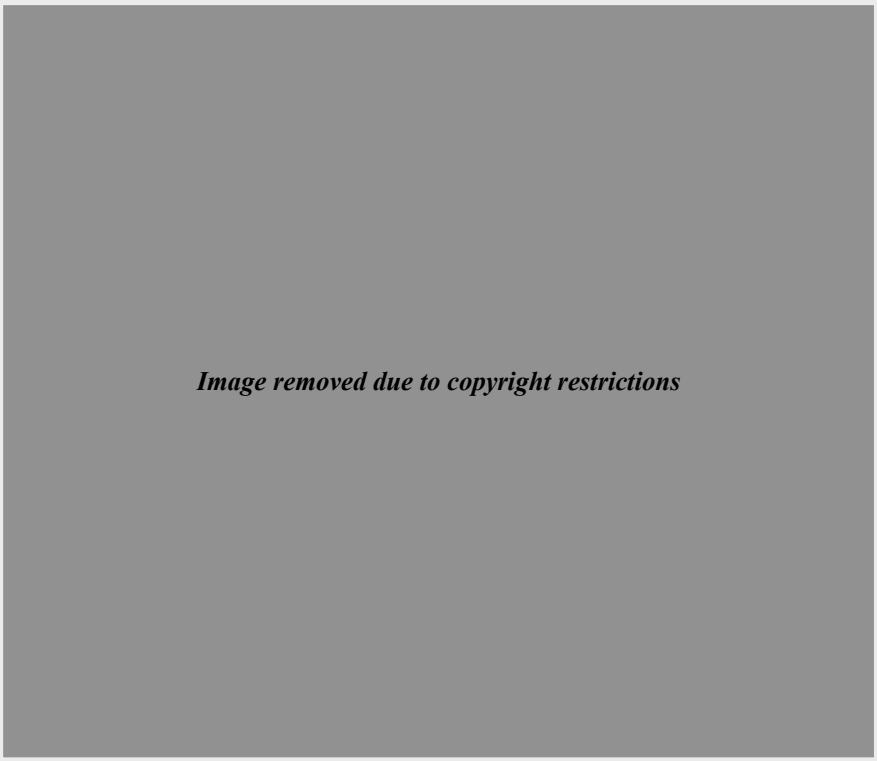

Figure 5.1: Christopher Ness, *A spiritual legacy being a pattern of piety* (London, 1684), title page, sig. A3r.

His inclusion of these and subsequent letters in his diary, sometimes as full transcriptions, echoed the format of Ness's presentation of Draper, as well as other published lives he engaged with or were circulating at the time.[10] In many ways it appears that Pledger - subconsciously or otherwise - was compiling a spiritual life of his own.[11] The degree to which Pledger was constructing a godly image of himself was suggested by his

[8] Ness, *A spiritual legacy*, title page; *ODNB*, s.v. 'Ness, Christopher'.

[9] MS 28.4, ff. 6v, 8r, DWL.

[10] Wadsworth, *Wadsworth's remains*, 50-7; Theophilus Gale, *The life and death of Mr John Rowe* (London, 1673), 27, 61, 95-6.

[11] Mascuch also makes this point, albeit in reference to the similarities between Pledger's diary and the published lives of ministers in general. See Mascuch, *The origins*, 98.

occasional crossing out of words or lines, and was made particularly evident by his removal of an entire section, June 1688 - May 1689, which he replaced with a single sheet stating only the date he was made free from his apprenticeship.[12] In terms of content, the aspects of his life that he deemed necessary to include (for instance, the influence of his master at school and a minister who preached there often) can be found, expressed in very similar language, in Draper's writings.

'A pattern of piety for all young persons': the Life of John Draper

According to his diary, Pledger read John Draper's life in September 1683. The only extant version, however, was printed in 1684.[13] Possibly an earlier edition was printed or Pledger, writing retrospectively, muddled his dates. There were many similarities between Draper and Pledger: both went to Epsom school in the 1670s, became apprentices, and underwent spiritual conversion during their indenture. While Draper's conversion commenced early in his apprenticeship, however, Pledger's was slightly more delayed. Draper converted in 1678 and died from an unspecified illness in 1683, leaving behind a number of manuscripts, which included accounts of spiritual experiences, correspondence, and 'soul-searching evidences ... he had for Heaven'. A staunch Calvinist, Ness edited and shared parts of these documents with a wider readership in the hope of convincing youth, through this 'mirror of piety', to live a godly life. His epistle was dedicated to 'young men', and was followed by 'directions'. He ordered readers, for example, to 'make Religion *your business,* not a *By-business;* let it be your *Alpha* and your *Omega, that* must be in the *Beginning* and in the *Ending,* yea and in the *Middle* also of all your Actings'.[14]

Reading this book, Pledger would have been presented with a figure to both admire and emulate. Draper was portrayed impressively, with Ness stating: 'I am utterly ashamed to behold my self (now an old Minister of Forty Years standing in the Ministry) so far out stripped by so Young a Man (not attaining the third part of my age) and so private a Christian as an Apprentice.' Pledger, by commencing his diary and increasing religious duties, appears to have adopted what Ness encouraged his readers to imitate from Draper's example of 'unparallel'd piety'.[15] An apprentice himself, Pledger perhaps

[12] MS 28.4, f. 10r, DWL. See also Mascuch, *The origins*, 98.

[13] MS 28.4, f. 8r, DWL.

[14] Ness, *A spiritual legacy*, 165, 190, title page, sigs. A3r, A4r.

[15] Ibid., 179-80, 174.

aimed to attain the same level of piety as Draper, whose religious practice provided him with a level of authority otherwise unavailable to someone of his standing. In addition to being lauded posthumously, Draper had engaged in discussion with ministers via letters and sent spiritual advice to friends - a practice which Pledger then also took up.[16]

When describing the very early stages of his conversion, Draper referred to melancholy. He wrote: 'About the year 1671, having read *Jehosephats* life [1 Kings 22; 2 Chronicles 20], I was a little startled, and grew melancholick.' Although the significance of his growing 'melancholick' having read Jehoshaphat's life is not initially clear, it becomes more apparent as his narrative goes on, as he describes it fading and reemerging. Presumably inspired by God's response to Jehoshaphat's prayers to be saved from the Moabite alliance, he added: 'that was the first time I had a mind to pray.' Although he initially only managed to pray using 'a form in a spelling book', he later learned from 'a good master' at Epsom how to 'pray without' one, and 'began to be willing to hear the Word'. Despite this progress, he required engagement with another spiritual text to push him further: it was not until he read John Bunyan's *Pilgrim's progress* (1678) that he truly took 'minde' of what he 'heard'. It appears that Draper believed melancholy made this progress possible, as he asserted that Bunyan's work 'made me again grow melancholick (the former being worn off)'.[17] Bunyan's popular and dramatic narrative, which demonstrated the new acceptance of despair as a standard aspect of the conversion process, certainly would have encouraged Draper to experience strong affections in realising his sinfulness. At the same time, however, Bunyan's writing would not have led Draper to identify these feelings as 'melancholick' given the well-known Baptist pointedly avoided this term, as discussed in Chapter Three.[18]

Rather, Draper was engaging with a form of melancholy that encouraged a level of seriousness and sobriety. In his view, this form was a helpful, even necessary, step in his spiritual growth, that could spur on progress by being ignited and reignited through engagement with religious texts. He noted that he had initially struggled to pray 'with seriousness', and his references to melancholy operated as a sign of his growing sobriety as a godly Christian. Draper mentioned that his second bout of melancholia occurred 'to the observation of others', as if to verify his statement's veracity, while also revealing an

---

[16] Pledger included several spiritual letters in his diary. See for example, MS 28.4, ff. 12v-15r, 60v-62v, DWL. See also Wolff, 'Literary reflections', 23.

[17] Ness, *A spiritual legacy*, 114-5.

[18] Dunan-Page, *Grace overwhelming*, 149.

interplay between the need for an inner process of conversion and an outward show of change, in this case to a more serious disposition.[19]

That said, there was more to his melancholy than an appearance of seriousness: it was also implicitly tied to a growing anxiety over his sins as a convert. Following *Pilgrims progress,* the reader is told that 'the good providence of God brought to my hands Mr. *Baxters call to the unconverted,* which (through grace,) shewed me the necessity of my conversion'. The initial stages of his spiritual growth read like a bibliography, with Draper then noting that it was not until he 'met with Mr. *Hookers Soul preparation for Christ*' that he was 'convinced … to advise with some Godly minister' about his sins. As the narrative of his conversion continued, melancholy was not mentioned again. He experienced the usual setbacks of converts (in his case caused by the distraction and 'weariness' of his apprenticeship's 'worldly work'), but he did not respond to these difficulties with melancholy. Other language is instead used to express troubled periods, such as 'sadness and darkness' or the common complaints of dullness and distraction.[20] As a result, the concept featured in the narrative only as a productive and temporary reaction to the initial challenge of conversion, rather than a chronic bodily illness, or a sign of gracelessness. Ness, editing and compiling Draper's manuscripts, did not feel compelled to remove the young man's use of the term, suggesting that this form of melancholy was also acceptable to him.

This acceptability appears to have been limited to this particular form of melancholy, as further into Draper's writings it is suggested that a more bodily manifestation would not have been welcome. In a list of 'profitable rules' that he wrote 'in his pocket book' in order to, according to Ness, better 'bind his Soul and Slippery heart to God … in observing this new ingagement', Draper included what appears to be a preventative cure for melancholy. The rules, which he numbered, were gathered from a variety of sources, including Richard Alleine's *Alarm to unconverted sinners,* and consisted of instructive reminders. The second rule, for instance, was taken from Alleine and stated: 'I must look upon my sin of *Passion* as a feaver in my mind, of *Lust,* as fire in my bones, of *Pride* as a fatal tympany in my Soul, of covetousness as an insatiable and unsufferable thirst, and the sin of *Envy* or *Malice* as rank poyson in the heart.'[21] Between rules such as this, encouraging believers to be fervent in prayer and 'be thinking oft of

[19] Ness, *A spiritual legacy*, 114-5.

[20] Ibid., 115, 117-8.

[21] Ibid., 119-20; cf. Alleine, *Alarm*, 68.

Death, Judgment, Hell and Heaven', were instructions to care for the body, presumably in order to be fit for serving God. As was outlined in Chapter One, the moderation of one's health and passions was considered an important aspect of religious practice by reformed Protestants, and Draper's rules reflected this: the thirteenth rule he decided to include instructed that 'Occasions of being too long alone, are to be avoided, so as Strong Drink, and too full a Dyet'.[22] In keeping with the non-naturals, these actions were common precautions for avoiding an imbalance of the melancholic humour. As Robert Burton had asserted in *The anatomy of melancholy,* strong drink is 'hurtfull in this case, to such as are… inclined to head melancholy', overeating 'ingender[s] crudity and doe[s] much harme', and solitude exacerbates a melancholic's symptoms.[23] Through his inclusion of this rule, it appears that Draper wished to avoid slipping into a melancholic distemper, and viewed this avoidance as a godly act.

Pledger's melancholy: 'distrustful worldly thoughts'

While Pledger adopted Draper's practice of diary keeping, focus on the sacrament, and - like so many other Protestants - concerns over dullness, he did not describe himself as reacting with melancholy in the early stages of his conversion. Instead he wrote of being troubled by 'wandring lustful proud thoughts', 'distrustful sick thoughts', and being in 'a straight'. Rather than making him 'grow melancholick', spiritual books 'affected' him. Later in his life, however, Pledger did record experiencing melancholy, albeit a different form: that which Draper's thirteenth rule would have helped avoid. On the 31st of August, 1690, he had 'a great disturbance upon …[his] spirit', and for that reason was concerned that he 'should not have … received the sacrament' that day. This disturbance was stemming, he believed, from having 'been of late much discomforted with melancholy' which, in an attempt to remedy, he had gone 'to Islington wel[,] … but found little comfort by it'. The melancholy, he wrote, was caused by 'want of trade' in his business, which 'much discomfort[ed]' him and made him 'frequently distrust the providence of god'. As had been the case for Mary Rich, Katherine Gell, and others, subsequent pages reveal that his melancholic state caused spiritual dullness, as he now found himself 'lukewarm at sacraments' and 'very remis in the performance of my duty'.[24]

---

[22] Ness, *A spiritual legacy*, 121.

[23] Burton, *The anatomy of melancholy*, II, 309.

[24] MS 28.4, ff. 5v, 10r, 6r, 45v, 48v, DWL.

In line with 'Mr Wadsworth['s] Life', whose descriptions of the 'dealings of god with his Soul' had 'much affected' Pledger some years previously, he appears to have placed great importance on experiencing strong reactions to religious duties. Pledger yearned for the 'meltings' of spirit that Wadsworth had regularly received and, as a result, the dullness caused by melancholy was troubling to him.[25]

Although Pledger and Draper's melancholies occurred at separate stages in their spiritual lives and were of different forms, the former's understanding of his illness shared the latter's stance towards worldliness. In the same vein as many other Protestants, Draper presented worldly tasks as inhibiting spiritual progression throughout his writings, describing 'the hurries of the World in our way of trading' and how they made him become 'negligent of my close walking with God'. 'Being dull and sleepy through weariness with worldly work at night', he regretted that he 'neglected Dayly, Self-examination, or did it only to halfe part', at which point his 'old corruptions got [a]head again'. He experienced 'sadness and darkness … when the things of the world, … had been the substance of …[his] thoughts and discourse', lamenting that his 'silly Soul' would 'heed a perishing dying world before Heaven'. To Ness's admiration, Draper was so against the distractions of the world that he, according to his sister, 'expressed his fear of setting up for himself [in business] often, observing how many were Zealous while *Apprentices,* yet declined when became *Masters*'.[26]

Pledger was not saved from worldly business by dying young like Draper, but did vehemently view worldliness as problematic throughout his life, and the link he made between earthly concerns and melancholy was testament to this. Similarly to Mary Rich, discussed in the previous chapter, Pledger believed that his melancholy stemmed from the sinful act of 'murmuring' against God's providences, and resulted in him being discomposed for religious duties. By 'murmuring', Pledger referred to complaints over his worldly situation - such as the failings of his business - which revealed a lack of trust in God's providence. Draper had also chastised himself for 'murmuring in some measure', considering this to be one of his 'manifold sins', and blaming it for 'wandrings' in duties.[27] Unsurprisingly, given the distressing nature of financial trouble, many other sources in this period also recorded business failure causing bouts of melancholy or other

---

[25] Ibid., f. 11v; Wadsworth, *Wadsworth's remains*, 15, 23, 48, 77.

[26] Ness, *A spiritual legacy*, 101, 117, 118, 166.

[27] MS 28.4, ff. 45v, 78r, DWL; Ness, *A spiritual legacy*, 109.

bodily illness.[28] For many of these other individuals, however, their distress began and ended with their melancholy: their finances were in peril, therefore they became melancholic. But for Pledger, and other particularly devout Protestants, their distress was twofold - stemming not only from their business trouble, but also from the fact that such a worldly consideration would cause them upset in the first place. Indeed, Pledger's own father had preached on the risks that worldly business placed on the Christian's inward state. Thus, Pledger suffered 'melancholy', but also experienced 'a great disturbance upon …[his] spirit'.[29]

This interpretation of melancholy's causes and consequences informed Pledger's attempts to cure the condition. Given that he believed his melancholy was caused by 'murmuring' over worldly concerns, his best solution was to readjust his attitude towards these. By remembering that earthly troubles were of no importance, he could solve both his melancholy and sinful discontent. As a result, Pledger's proposed remedy, in addition to taking the unhelpful waters, was to 'pray frequently against it [his melancholy]'. He urged God to not forsake him, but continue to do 'great things' for him 'in the world' as He had previously, and let 'mercy follow' him all his days. He was also careful to add, however, that he would accept a more difficult course 'if thou [God] shouldst think fit to deny me these outward good things', and extolled 'what a mercy' it is 'that thy children have so many promises in thy word' to act 'as so many cordials to support …[their] spirits' in their 'most languishing state'. The ultimate consolation for all troubles, whether caused by 'temporal or spiritual concerns', was that 'all things shall work together for good'. Although this method of prayer aided Pledger 'at present' to feel 'a little composed', he soon sensed himself returning to his 'former dejected melancholy & murmuring'.[30] Indeed, whether writing these words of spiritual consolation to himself eased his melancholy is not clear. Nevertheless, he presented them as the appropriate solution.

A 'poor dejected melancholy Christian'

After recounting these troubles with melancholy, Pledger then deemed it fitting to copy out a letter he had previously 'sent to a dejected melancholy Christian', perhaps in a

---

[28] Weisser, *Ill composed*, 169.

[29] MS 28.4, f. 45v, DWL; Elias Pledger (the older), 'Of the cause of inward trouble', in Samuel Annesley, *The morning-exercise at Cripple-gate, or, Several cases of conscience practically resolved by sundry ministers* (London, 1677), 306-7.

[30] MS 28.4, ff. 45v-46r, DWL.

further attempt to console himself, or to exhibit his own pastoral efforts to any potential readers. The latter motivation is possibly more likely, as this behaviour would have been in line with the teachings of Pledger's father, whose published sermon on 'the Cause of Inward Trouble' called for the godly community to assist one another in times of anguish.[31] Moreover, the letter, addressed to an 'unknown friend', dealt with a different type of, or at least view on, melancholy to the one Pledger had just described in his diary. While Pledger's entries reveal an individual who self-identified as melancholic, and was already convinced that his symptoms were the result of this condition and not damnation, 'the unknown friend' appears to have been experiencing the same spiritual anxiety that Katherine Gell had some three decades earlier. Pledger's letter was similar to those Baxter had sent to Gell in that it was aiming to readjust the 'unknown friend's' perspective on their suffering. Rather than viewing their spiritual concerns as a sign of God's displeasure, Pledger encouraged the reader to view them as positive evidence of their godliness. He argued that those who complain of spiritual troubles are in fact likely to be saved, as their complaints merely reveal the commendable attention they were paying to their spiritual state. In hell, he asserted, those who complain are of course damned, but 'in the world' desperate cases are most likely to be found in those who do not complain about, or discuss, their religion at all. Pledger supported his view further by suggesting that any sense of lacking grace now was only proof of having enjoyed it previously, and therefore further evidence of being saved. He wrote: 'complaints are an evident demonstration of the former experience of the sweetness & excellency of the thing you so much complain for, for people doe not use to complain for the los[s] of that which they never had.'[32]

Again echoing Baxter, Pledger argued that, foremost, the unknown friend's 'false apprehension … seems to be much augmented by the distemper of the body', and this needed to be remedied first. He believed that a distempered body clouded judgement and, therefore, 'dispair[ed] of making …[the recipient] believe otherwise til that be somewhat removed by the use of some proper means'.[33] By 'means', Pledger presumably referred to physic - although he did not provide any specific recommendations or recipes as Baxter sometimes did. This is particularly striking given Pledger's trade as an apothecary. Although struggling at times, his business was a success for the most part, and it can be presumed that he possessed a rich understanding of various medicines, or even

[31] Pledger, 'Of the cause', 294.

[32] MS 28.4, ff. 46r-47v, DWL.

[33] Ibid.

physic more generally.[34] Instead, with the primary, bodily cause simply identified, Pledger then moved onto spiritual arguments which he believed may ease 'the unknown friend's' condition. For example, he wrote 'for your further comfort that many of gods dearest children have been in a like condition', and even 'Gods onely begotten son … complained that god had forsaken him'. Making his point more explicit, Pledger asserted: 'God seldom takes so much paines with reprobates[;] they seldom dispaire til they come to hell.'[35]

Closing the letter, Pledger comforted his reader by assuring them that downcast periods such as this should not be resented, as they would only allow better appreciation of happier times. As he poetically phrased it: 'they generally prize the light of gods countenance most, who have it sometimes clouded, tho it be never totally eclipsed.' Moreover, by having their circumstances sometimes darkened, they would be enabled to look forward to heaven more fervently, given that 'if it were not so here we should not so eagerly long for our dissolution & departure hence, … [to where] the light of gods countenance is always in its meridian brightnes'. In the same mode as many other writers of the time, including Mary Rich and Henry Dorney, Pledger ended his letter by referring to the time ahead where the saved will no longer have to experience the sadness they endure on earth. Although the godly could hope for a 'little glimpse of it' when in their 'imperfect state', their 'compleat happyness' would only reach its 'completest manifestation … which our capacityes can bare …[when] we are glorifyed'. 'Enlarged' in this way, he believed that 'then all tears shal be wiped away from our eys & we shal neither hear nor make any mor complaints for ever'.[36] Pledger viewed melancholy, then, as one of many possible earthly sorrows that the godly would be freed from in the afterlife.

Elias Pledger viewed his melancholy as bodily, caused by his 'murmuring' at worldly troubles of business, and as causing discomposed thoughts. It was not a spiritually productive experience for him, as it simply blocked his ability to conduct religious duties

---

[34] In 1695, Pledger's estate was valued at £600. See London Record Society, *London inhabitants within the walls, 1695* (London, 1966), British History Online, last modified 2017, http://www.british-history.ac.uk/london-record-soc/vol2; 'Will of Elias Pledger, apothecary of London, 1716', PROB 11/552/213, ff. 140r-v, TNA. See also James Amelang, *The flight of Icarus: artisan autobiography in early modern Europe* (Stanford, 1998), 329-30. On the knowledge and practices of apothecaries, see Margaret Pelling, *The common lot: sickness, medical occupations and the urban poor in early modern England* (London, 1998), 208, 236, 242-3. On the apothecary business, see Patrick Wallis, 'Consumption, retailing, and medicine in early modern London', *The Economic History Review* 61, 1 (2008): 26-53.

[35] MS 28.4, ff. 46r-47v, DWL.

[36] Ibid., f. 47v.

in a sufficiently awakened frame. Despite his melancholy's bodily nature and his occupation as an apothecary, however, he did not find comfort in physic. Rather, he sought comfort in readjusting his attitude towards the condition's cause: worldly troubles. As he wrote, he wished to live 'more by faith, and less by sence'.[37] As his letter to an unknown friend revealed, Pledger believed that melancholy could cause distorted understandings of one's spiritual state - although he does not appear to have experienced this himself. Although it is understandable to speculate, as Olivia Weisser has, that 'perhaps his [Pledger's] religious doubts contributed as much as his anxiety about work to his melancholic state', this is not entirely useful.[38] What is significant is that, in Pledger's own view, his melancholy was caused by worldly troubles, and - as his letter reveals - was able to separate melancholy from spiritual anxiety. The formation of this standpoint, it seems, was strongly influenced by correspondence with school masters and ministers, as well as godly reading. Published spiritual biographies can be seen to have influenced the way he interpreted his own life, as well as the way in which he chose to represent it. Indeed, the very act of representing his life through his diary was vital to this process of interpretation.

Oliver Cromwell's cousin: 'a deep & grevous mallancoly', 1680s-1690s

The same can be said of a spiritual diary, begun in the late 1680s, that opened with the line: 'What follows I intend for the Help of my Memore, concerning the Worke of God on my Soule, which I desire thankfully to comemorate'. Written by a woman now only identifiable as 'Oliver Cromwell's cousin' (Appendix 1d) the record can be seen as her attempts to identify and interpret the spiritual meaning of life's events. The antiquarian and minister, William Cole, who transcribed her words from the original manuscript in 1782, believed that her name had been erased 'to save the Honour of her Family', also noting that the first and final pages of the diary had faded (Figure 5.2). In Cole's view, 'the lady seems to have been a fanatic of the times, probably a worthy woman, but led astray by the Cant of her Directors'. Cole was fiercely disdainful of her beliefs, revealing a continuation of the seventeenth-century anti-enthusiasm discourse outlined in the Introduction. He described her diary as 'fanatical & enthusiastic', and added in his postscript that he only transcribed her words in order to show that 'an Independent or

[37] Ibid., f. 78r.

[38] Weisser, *Ill composed*, 169.

Presbyterian can match' the extremity of a Catholic, such as 'St. Brigit, St. Catharine of Siena' or 'St. Teresa'. Interestingly, he also extended his disdain to some Anglicans, adding that 'BP. Patrick of Ely and Lady Gaudens Correspondence, in my … [other antiquarian transcriptions], is not much superior to this jargon', referring to the letters, written in the 1660s, of two conforming figures. His issue, then, appears to have been with these writers' particularly strong religious beliefs, rather than their loyalties to the Church.[39]

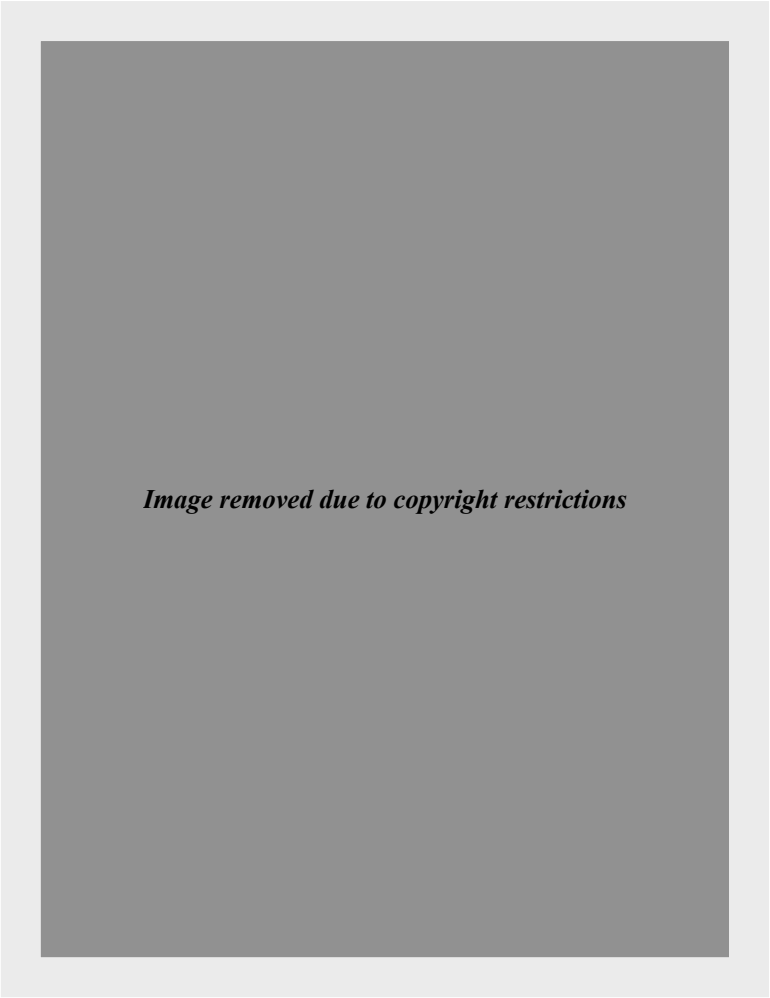

Figure 5.2: 'Oliver Cromwell's cousin's diary', in William Cole, *Athenae Cantabrigienses*, vol. 3, Add MS 5858, f. 221r, BL.

Cromwell's cousin began her account by stating that she was born in 1654 and raised by her grandmother, aunt, and, briefly, her father, before being placed into a boarding school in London around the age of twelve. As was customary in this type of text, she described the religious education she had received, referring to her parents as 'fearing' God and that they 'blest' her 'with a good Education'. Also in line with generic

[39] Add MS 5858, f. 213r-v, 221r, BL. For Cole's transcriptions of the correspondence between Simon Patrick and Lady Gauden, see *Athenae Cantabrigienses*, vol. 9, Add MS 5810, ff. 209r-221v, BL.

convention, she then described the key stages of her conversion, commencing with when and how she became aware of the existence of God. This occurred during family prayer, when she was surreptitiously opening nuts as the minister spoke. Although the minister could not identify which child was to blame for the noise, she came to realise that God would have known it was her. Through this realisation, she asserted, an intangible God became comprehensible to her. With this new awareness, Cromwell's cousin began to enjoy family prayer, and 'those sparkes that were kindled' were kept 'alive' when she moved to live with her father.[40]

As was to be expected, she experienced some challenges in turning away from the world. She was, for example, exposed to 'vanity & Formality' while at school and visiting relatives in the country. She managed to use these potentially corrupting experiences to her advantage, however, by pushing herself to resolve, 'with the Help of the Lord[,] to walke more closely with him'. All events in her life were explained explicitly through providence. God provided her with a husband, for instance, as well as three daughters and a son, the eldest and youngest of whom were still alive at the time she commenced the diary. Four years after her marriage, 'God tooke to himselfe' her 'deare Husband', and she understood this to be 'a sad but righteous stroake' afflicted upon her by God in order that she would commit the entirety of her love to Him. 'For whereas the creature [in the form of her husband] did deeply share with God' in her 'Affections' when she was married, she hoped that the 'sanctifyed Affliction' of her spouse's death would result in 'the Desire' of her 'Soule' being 'only comparatively towards him, & to the Remembrance of his name'.[41]

Once she had recounted the spiritually significant events of her life so far, the diary became a log of 'experiences' which she felt represented God's providences towards her. Initially they were told retrospectively, but from June 1690 appear to have been written more or less as they occurred. These providences included her children and herself recovering from illness, returning home safely from journeys, and being relieved from various unspecified 'trials'. While no further details of her life are recounted, she must have remarried at some point during this decade, as she mentioned a husband in 1699. The diary ended in 1702, presumably as a result of her death, as her last entries revealed that her health was declining rapidly due to 'the stone' and other distempers. In

---

[40] Add MS 5858, ff. 213v-214r, BL.

[41] Ibid., f. 214v.

addition to these records of 'experiences' and 'special Provedence[s]', the diary included a confession of faith and a lengthy quotation from 'Mr Charnocke in his Treatis of Divine Provedence', on the back page.[42]

As the inclusion of this quotation indicated, it was independent ministers, 'Ste: Marshall, Jer: burroughs & Ste. Charnock', who were her 'great Heroes in Divinity', as William Cole dismissively phrased it.[43] The influence of ministers such as these was certainly evident in her outlook - including, in some ways, her dealings with the concept of melancholy. Although the transcription of her diary is quite lengthy, the document has not been analysed closely by historians. Katharine Hodgkin has used Cromwell's cousin's discussion of her husband's death as an example of how firmly against 'creature love' late seventeenth-century Protestants could be, while Antonia Fraser, writing about women of the same period, drew upon the diarist's reaction to boarding school as an example of the deficiencies of these institutions at the time.[44] This study will examine the diary's two descriptions of periods of melancholy, and compare these to the views expressed by her 'great Heroes in Divinity'.

Two episodes of melancholy

When compiling her experiences in 1690, Cromwell's cousin wrote retrospectively of a period sometime before 1687 that she believed contained 'Another remarkabell Experence I have had of the Goodness of God to me', which she 'desire[d], as long as I live, to commemorate to his Prays'. 'Being under mallencoly before', she began, 'it was [this time] haithned by a dreadful Provdence I herd befell one knone to me'. Her acquaintance's 'dreadful Provdence' involved the appearance of the Devil 'ofring of violence to him, & bid[d]ing him prepare for Death & Judgementt'. 'This', she wrote, 'so wraught with my Mallencoly that wherever I went, methoughts I had the Representation of itt'. She 'endevored al that …[she] could to supress such mallencoly thoughts; but … could nott resist itt', especially during the nighttime in which she 'found it grow more on' her. She 'laboured against it with al' her 'might', when she 'lay downe to rest & endevored to committ' herself 'to God', but, despite her efforts, was overpowered. Noting that she did not know 'whether this were a temptation', she explained that, lying in bed,

---

[42] Ibid., ff. 214v-221r.

[43] Ibid., f. 221r.

[44] Hodgkin, *Madness*, 185; Antonia Fraser, *The weaker vessel: woman's lot in seventeenth-century England* (London, 1984), 326.

she came to be 'under such dredful Aprehensions' and felt that she was 'so holden down, as if tyed with a courd'.[45] After calling to God for help and praying, 'at last, this comfortabel Words were, as itt were, rung in' her 'Ears, as before'. The words heard were Isaiah 12:3: 'Therefore with Joy shal yea draw water out of the wells of salvation' and, upon their sounding, she was 'almost immediately … evedently released, & unbound, & …[with a] Hart in such a Frame as' she 'never felt before, nor since, as [if] it were in the Seats of Heaven'. After this ordeal, she had 'a more than ordinary comfortable night, & was the next morning in the same Frame', as well as 'the next Day'. The frame was so exceptional that 'never since [did she] in the least [have] any such Exercise,' and it 'continued not long', compelling her to write ardently: 'alas! … such was the Coruption of my Hart! such the Temptations & Delusions of a sinfull & vaine world!'[46]

Cromwell's cousin's second recorded experience of melancholy was made some years later in 1693. She was 'under a deep & grevous mallancoly … for almost a Fortnight', and believed its cause to be worldly troubles. In her view, 'the Lord seemed to be' placing 'a Sentence of Death upon some of [her]… most desirable mercies'. As had been the case for Pledger, these worldly afflictions made her sinfully doubt God's providence, and caused her to have a 'dead Frame of Harte'. Initially, in January, when she wrote that 'a darke Cloud is drawn over much of my worldly comforts', she was able to patiently 'waite for Manifestations of Grase in Deliverance from the several Trials I am now under'. Without any improvement in her situation, however, her worldly troubles became so overwhelming that they caused melancholy and led her into spiritual anguish. She wrote: 'I was contemplating on the vanaty of Provedences, & how thay … clash one against another, I was under the Temptation as to thinke, there was something to be sedd for that athiestical Principle of denying a Provedence, suposing, as they say, That it is below God to take notis of what befals us here.' She was torn between consideration of this 'athiestical Principle' and her hope that although 'vast is the Distance that is betwene Lord the Creator, & us his Creatures' he might still 'condescend to take notis of us'.[47]

She described this confusion as being 'tos[s]ed in my thoughts', and was brought out of this state by God, as 'it pleased the Lord to bring to my Remembrance a Text of

---

[45] Add MS 5858, f. 215r, BL. By 'Aprehensions', Cromwell's cousin referred to 'the action of laying hold of with the senses; conscious perception'. W. Austin, for example, had also used the term in this way in 1635, stating that: 'She [the Virgin] had a corporall, as well as a mental apprehension of the Messenger.' See *OED*, s.v. 'apprehension'.

[46] Add MS 5858, f. 215r, BL.

[47] Ibid., f. 217r.

Scripture which made me no more to doubt the Truth of a Provedence. It was the 66 of Isaiah, & the 2 verse'.[48] She copied this verse into her diary, concluding 'That the great God dus & wil humble himselfe to take notis of those that trewly feare him'. Thus, she was again cured of melancholy and confusion by God bringing to her mind an appropriate scriptural verse. She believed that this episode was 'a timely rebuke', caused by God as a punishment for her having had her heart 'in a very carnal Frame' and 'set up idols' in it. As had been her failing in other times, she had been loving 'the Creature', in others words her family, too strongly, and required 'Corrections' for this. His 'Corrections', in her view, were tailored to her own frame and abilities: 'the Lord, who knows my Frame, & whereof I am made, did lay on me no more then he has inabled me to bare.'[49]

Melancholic thoughts and other afflictions

As these two accounts show, both of Cromwell's cousin's bouts of melancholy lacked any description of symptoms beyond disordered thoughts, and she did not use the word 'distemper' to describe it. Rather, she was 'under' melancholy, referred to it as 'my' melancholy, and focused on the ways in which it affected her thoughts: 'tossing' them, leading her to consider atheistical ideas, and causing frightening convictions of being physically restrained. Moreover, while she described her periods of melancholy as being cured by God in the same way she recounted recovering from bodily illnesses, such as smallpox and 'Collicke', the latter did not involve the same degree of spiritual anguish. She viewed her recoveries from various illnesses as God's 'mersy', teaching her to be more reliant on Him, but did not describe these alongside an inner turmoil over spiritual concepts in the way her entries recounting the influence of melancholy did. Her melancholy, as opposed to the 'exquesitt Pain' of her other illnesses, caused confused thinking and fearful 'Representation[s]', while its cure also occurred in her thoughts - as both cases of melancholy and its associated turmoil were overcome by God bringing appropriate verses to her 'mind'.[50]

---

[48] Ibid. This verse reads: 'For all those things hath mine hand made, and all those things have been, saith the Lord: but to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word'.

[49] Ibid. On the belief that God afflicted the godly according to what they could bear, see Harley, 'The theology', 277. On the development of this belief in devotional works earlier in the century, see Adrian Chastain Weimer, 'Affliction and the stony heart in New England', in Ryrie and Schwanda, *Puritanism and emotion*, 125-9.

[50] Add MS 5858, ff. 215r-v, 214r, 217r, BL.

Rather than being a bodily illness, then, Cromwell's cousin's melancholy appears to have been an affliction solely of the thoughts and, moreover, her descriptions of this condition were more similar to those of spiritual turmoil. On other occasions, she wrote of 'being under great Sinkings of Spiritt for the Intrist of Christ in this I', or having such a 'strong … Power of unbeliefe in me, that I could not see through the present Cloude that then was'. She found herself 'being driven to extream straits, so that my Hart was nigh sinking', and, at another time, 'under great Trouble, so greatt, that it lay down with me, & rise up with me, from a darke Provedence'.[51] Despite the parallels these situations bore to her episodes of melancholy, she chose not to use this term when describing them. As such, melancholy existed as only one explanatory tool within an array of others. For example, some months after the second case of melancholy in 1693, she wrote that 'after 2 Dayes extraordinary conflict & strugil in my spirit, occasioned by a heavy & smart exersis, in Relation to a temporale concern, it pleased the Lord, in a great measure, to quiet my restles & disturbed mind', by the manner of having 'imprest on my mind the exampel of the Profit Daved, under presing afflictions'. Later, in 1700, she was again 'under great Disturbance of spirit' as a result of the 'outward Disapointment [of an] unexpected Provedence', and was 'ready to say within myselfe, my case is worse than any ones: so did unbelefe prevail!' God brought her out of this trial by bringing to mind, again, a comforting 'gratious word': this time, from 1 Corinthians 10:13, 'That no Temptation hath befallen me but such as was common in men; & that a way should be made for my soule to escape'. These scenarios had involved the same cause (worldly troubles), symptom (a 'disturbed mind'), and cure (scripture) as her episodes of melancholy. What appears to have separated these similar experiences, however, was the degree to which her thoughts were confused. Once her mind was so disturbed that her troubles went beyond such things as her 'He[a]rt [being] in so dead a Frame', and extended to the frightening sensation of being tied down, or considering atheistical ideas, her state then became definable, in her view, as having been caused by melancholy.[52]

This belief made sense, of course, within long-held understandings of melancholy as a 'disorder of perception', through its interaction with the imagination.[53] At the beginning of the century, the well-known Calvinist divine William Perkins had stated that melancholy was the '*Devills bait*' that causes 'strange … conceits and opinions' by

---

[51] Ibid., ff. 214v-215r, 216v.

[52] Ibid., ff. 217v, 220r, 216r.

[53] For melancholy as a 'disorder of perception', see Hodgkin, *Madness,* 62.

'send[ing] up [to the 'the braine and head] noysome fumes as cloudes or mists; which doe corrupt the imagination, and makes the instrument of reason unfit for understanding and sense'. If 'a Melancholike person … heare[s] or see[s] some fearfull thing,' he asserted, 'the strength of his imagination is such, that he will presently fasten the thing upon himselfe'.[54] Cromwell's cousin's diary shows a continuation of these ideas at the end of the century; her words revealed a belief that meditating on certain objects would activate the imagination, as well as the understanding that the devil took advantage of melancholy through temptation. At the same time, we also see an adherence to more contemporary ideas. Through her avoidance of the term 'humour' or any reference to the abdomen, Cromwell's cousin was perhaps engaging with a shift away from using a humoral basis for understanding melancholy that had been occurring amongst some thinkers, such as Thomas Willis, since the Restoration.[55]

As indicated in the Introduction, these beliefs regarding melancholic fancies have been traditionally aligned by historians not with Independents such as Cromwell's cousin, but with those who criticised all nonconformists homogeneously as fanatics. The Anglican high-church minister Henry Wharton is used by Michael Heyd, for example, to indicate the employment of contemporary medical theories in clerical arguments against enthusiasts. Wharton stated in a sermon in 1688 that Catholics, in 'employ[ing] all their Spirits in continuing their Ideas…, create a mighty Fermentation in the Blood, whence new Clouds and Vapours are transmitted into the Brain, and render the Imagination more intense and strong'. For Wharton and other Arminian conformists, this explanation provided evidence of the falsity of the Catholics' (and other non-Anglicans') views and experiences, by assigning their experiences as the result of mere bodily processes, rather than the functions of reason and understanding.[56]

For Cromwell's cousin, on the other hand, this circular relationship between her melancholy and the strange 'Representation[s]' of her mind by no means discredited the

---

[54] William Perkins, *The whole treatise of the cases of conscience* (Cambridge, 1606), 192, 195.

[55] On this shift, see Heyd, 'Medical discourse', 137-9; Dunan-Page, *Grace overwhelming*, 153-5. Timothy Rogers' writings also suggest that spiritual treatments for melancholy could be pursued alongside the use of more contemporary medical theories. See Rogers, *Practical discourses*, 147, discussed in Schmidt, *Melancholy*, 126, n. 91. On the links between Willis and High Church clergy, see Robert Martensen, 'The transformation of Eve: women's bodies, medicine and culture in early modern England', in *Sexual knowledge, sexual science*, ed. Roy Porter and Mikulas Teich (Cambridge, 1994), 120-2.

[56] Heyd, 'Medical discourse', 141. See also, for example, the writings of another critic of nonconformists, John Smith, *Select discourses* (London, 1660), 193, cited in Heyd, 'Medical discourse', 144. On nonconformists more radical than Cromwell's cousin adopting current medical theories to support their views, see Henry, 'The matter of souls', 89-90.

spiritual significance of her account. She even went so far as to emphasise that it occurred during the nighttime, which - given a long tradition of discrediting sectarians' religious experiences as mere dreams - was perhaps a surprising admission.[57] Indeed, it would appear that, for Cromwell's cousin, the way these 'dredful Aprehensions' came about was not the determiner of their significance. Regardless of their origins, her experiences of melancholy 'tossing' her thoughts remained events worthy of her spiritual diary and ongoing recollection.

Instructive providences

In her eyes, what made these ordeals 'remarkabell', as she termed them, was the providential framework she believed they functioned within. Like every other occurrence in her life, Cromwell's cousin understood these episodes of melancholy to have been both caused and resolved by God. Her ability to see His hand in all things permeated her world view, just as a quotation from Stephen Charnock's *A discourse of divine providence* (1680), which she copied into the back of her diary, infused all her entries. In transcribing the Independent minister's words, Cromwell's cousin combined two sections that were originally separate, and inserted an extra sentence in between, writing, from page fifteen:

> Is it not as easie with God to guide all these things by one single Act of his Wil, as for me by an Act of my Soul to do many Things, without a distinctt act of Cogitation or Consideration before?,

before inserting,

> Againe: Nothing is aucted in the world without God's Provedence,

and concluding with, from page twenty-one,

> for 'as there is nothing don in the world, but some creature or other knows it: he that aucts it, doth at least know itt. If then God did not know itt, the Creature, in that Perticular would be superior to God, & know something more then God knows. Can this be posable?'

[57] See, for example, Zachary Crofton's criticism of John Rogers' congregation's conversion narratives, in which he dismisses their visions as mere dreams: *Bethshemesh clouded* (London, 1653), 178-9.

Perhaps she had been motivated to transcribe these lines by reading Charnock's instruction further into the book to 'set a mark upon', the 'Particulars' you wish to make daily reference to, 'or write out such of them, as most especially concern your Case, and let not them be forgotten'.[58] Whatever her motivation, Cromwell's cousin was seemingly convinced by Charnock's assertions, her diary consisting of a series of expressions of gratitude for God's hand in various events in her life.

In being providential, she believed that all events had the potential to be spiritually instructive. Any difficulty, including her melancholy, was a 'Tryal' from which spiritual lessons should be learnt. Holding that God's 'Rood, as well as his stafe, ... both comfort', she believed her afflictions kept her in an awakened frame. As she articulated in her diary in 1693, shortly after describing her second case of melancholy: 'The us[u]all way & method of God's Dealing with me in his Provedence are, first to bring me lowe, before he raises up; & when he has brought me to leave from any Expectations from the Creture, & inabled me to looke alone to himselfe, & so put me to crying hard to him, then he has bene pleased never to faille giving Reliefe.'[59] In other words, she believed her episodes of melancholy, like other trials, were tools used by God to lead her away from loving earthly persons and objects, and to be wholly reliant on Him.

Caused by discontent

Cromwell's cousin identified discontent as a cause of her melancholy. She believed that her inability to have utter faith in God's providences, and thereby be troubled by worldly losses, instigated these episodes. The relationship between melancholy and discontent was developed by Jeremiah Burroughs (1600-1646), an Independent minister whose writings she referred to in her diary when dealing with a temporal loss. At the time her grandfather and 'deare & ever-honour'd Father' died 'within a weeke [of] one another', she was deeply grieved: 'it surprise[d] me with Astonishment, & excessive Griefe; it being that stroake I have often sinfully saide, I could not bare without the Loss of my Reason.' Missing her father, she found that she 'laboured under the Sinn of Discontent' and reacted to this by going often on her knees in prayer. In response, she believed, 'it pleased

[58] Add MS 5858, f. 221r, BL; Stephen Charnock, *A discourse of divine providence* (London, 1684), 15, 19, 21, 133.

[59] Add MS 5858, f. 217v, BL.

God to direct me to the reading of Mr. Burroghs upon Contentment; which was a meanes by the Blessing of God, to quiet my Hert, in this Dispose of his'.[60]

The text she was referring to was *The rare jewel of Christian contentment*, which was based on Philippians 4:11, and, as its title page explained, 'shewed ... What Contentment is, ... The Excellencies of it', and, its opposite, 'The Evil ... sin of Murmuring'. In order to display 'Christian quietnes', Burroughs explained, 'when afflictions come, be it what affliction it will be, ... you do not murmur, though you be sensible, ... make your moan, [and] ... desire to be delivered'. The quiet Christian does not 'repine, ... fret, nor vex', experiences no 'tumultuousnesse of spirit', 'unsettlednesse' in their 'spirits', or 'distracting fears' in their 'hearts'. They undergo 'no sinking discouragements, no base shiftings, no risings in rebellion any way against God'.[61] Having engaged with this book after her father's death, Cromwell's cousin found that she was 'well satisfied', her 'Hart quiet', and that she 'could performe [any] Duty more ernestedly in the name of the Lord Jesus'.[62] Presumably she had found the ability to be, as Burroughs instructed, content with all God's providences - even the most painful of bereavements - and to enjoy, as a result, a quiet spirit.

Burroughs' text also provided Cromwell's cousin with an explanatory framework for how her worldly afflictions came to develop into melancholy and, in turn, her questioning of God's providences. One 'opposite' to 'quietnesse of Spirit', Burroughs explained, was '*desperate risings of heart against God in a way of rebellion*'. These 'distempers' of the heart occurred 'not only to wicked men, but sometimes the very Saints of God... when an affliction lies long, and is very sore and heavy upon them indeed, and strikes them as it were in the master vein'. As we have seen, Cromwell's cousin felt for some months that the Lord had placed 'a Sentence of Death upon some of [her]... most desirable mercies' and, as Burroughs asserted, being afflicted so sorely and for an extended period of time, individuals like her would 'find ... in their hearts, a rising against God, their thoughts [would] begin to bubble, and their affections begin to stir in rising against God himself'. This was 'especially' the case when it occurred in individuals who 'such as together with their corruptions have much melancholy', as 'the Devil working both upon the corruptions of their hearts, and the melancholy distemper of their bodies' brings about these sinful 'risings'. Cromwell's cousin, who began her first description of

---

[60] Ibid., f. 214r.

[61] Burroughs, *The rare jewel*, title page, 9.

[62] Add MS 5858, f. 214r, BL.

melancholy with 'being under mallencoly before', presumably believed herself to be inclined to this distemper, and therefore susceptible to these 'risings' against God, as Burroughs described.[63]

Cromwell's cousin did not, however, entirely follow Burroughs' views. While Burroughs believed that melancholy, being a bodily distemper, required physic and could only come and leave the body 'by degrees', 'conscience of sin', required spiritual assistance and could be alleviated instantly. Given he desired his readers to embrace sorrow for sin as a vital duty, rather than dismiss it as mere bodily distemper, it was his aim to show that 'trouble of Conscience for sin, is another manner of business than melancholly', and he dedicated two chapters to this in his *Eighth book... being a treatise of the evil of evils, or the exceeding sinfulness of sin*.[64] Cromwell's cousin, on the other hand, who perhaps only read Burroughs work on contentment - or chose to ignore his other views concerning melancholy - understood the illness differently. For her, melancholy could be cured spiritually, despite its roots in the body, and instantly, by God bringing scriptures to her mind. In this way, Cromwell's cousin diverged not only from one of her 'heroes in divinity', but also other nonconforming ministers known for their discussions of melancholy, including Richard Baxter and Timothy Rogers. While Baxter, like Burroughs, pushed for the necessity of physic, and Rogers, in line with earlier divines, insisted that gradual, spiritual guidance was the only path for recovery; Cromwell's cousin described a sudden, instantly effective method of having scripture 'rung' in her ears.[65] Indeed, her account had more in common with immediate alleviations from another condition, religious despair, as described by the Baptist John Bunyan in *Grace abounding the chief of sinners* in 1666, and the godly's preoccupation with suddenness in conversion and spiritual experience more generally.[66]

Despite her transcriber's undoubtedly gendered comment that she was 'led astray by the cant of her directors', it would seem, then, that Cromwell's cousin exerted a degree of independence of thought when dealing with her melancholy. While her words

---

[63] Burroughs, *The rare jewel*, 9; Add MS 5858, ff. 217r, 215r, BL.

[64] Jeremiah Burroughs, *The eighth book of Mr Jeremiah Burroughs* (London, 1654), 385-424.

[65] Baxter, *The right method*, 8-9; idem., *Gods goodness*, 3-4; Rogers, *A discourse*, 3-4, 15-6. On Baxter's and Rogers' views on melancholy, see Schmidt, *Melancholy*, 103-28.

[66] Bunyan, *Grace abounding*, 25, 74-5. On the instant nature of Bunyan's relief, see Greaves, *John Bunyan*, 196; Stachniewski, *Persecutory imagination*, 135-7. For other cases of sudden conversion or comfort, see for example MS 24.8, fol. 12r, DWL; Walker, *Spirituall experiences*, 178; Hart On-Hi, *Trodden*, 46-51; Sutton, *A Christian*, 4-5, 10. On the godly's preoccupation with suddenness in religious experience more generally, see for example Daniel H. Strait, '"Sudden passing": Herbert's poetics of the moment', *George Herbert Journal* 38, 1 (2014): 54-65; Morrissey, 'Narrative authority', 7.

appeared to indicate an engagement with up-to-date theories of melancholy's aetiology, as well as Independents' ongoing, heavy focus on providence and demonology, she also displayed some more unusual views that did not align with godly ministers' writings on melancholy. When it came to the cure of her melancholic episodes and their overall spiritual significance, Cromwell's cousin showed a willingness to diverge from the beliefs expressed by the ministers she admired in published works, and an inclination to instead turn to other strands of thought in godly discourse, such as the power of scripture and the suddenness of God's presence. As the following case study will demonstrate, Independents such as Cromwell's cousin were not the only nonconformists emphasising aspects such as these in spiritual accounts of melancholy in the final decades of the century.

Mary Franklin: 'meeting with a melancholy humour', 1670s-1690s

Mary Smith married Robert Franklin, an ejected Presbyterian minister, in 1669, with whom she lived in Blue Anchor Lane, London, and had at least seven children.[67] She left behind a number of papers, including a notebook, account of spiritual experiences, and letters to her husband (Appendix 1e). Her funeral sermon, written by Benjamin Grosvenor, was published 'at the request of the relations' in 1713 and, given her writings 'breathe[d] so true a Spirit of Piety, Humility, and Grace', drew upon 'some Passages' found 'in her Papers'.[68] The letters were written to her husband during his imprisonment in 1670, the notebook contained transcripts of other nonconformists' letters, speeches, and stories, and the account, intended for the edification of her children, recorded the events of her spiritual life. A comparison of these four documents, of various genres, allows us to see the interplay that existed between the sources Franklin deemed worth recording, the way she chose to describe her own life to either herself, her husband, or her children, and - in turn - the way Grosvenor later chose to describe her life and character. In particular, this comparison allows four perspectives on melancholy - or, indeed, melancholies - to be considered. A sufferer of melancholy herself while lying in, Franklin copied two other writings that mentioned this condition into her notebook, while Grosvenor also incorporated Franklin's experience with melancholy into his funeral sermon.

---

[67] *ODNB*, s.v. 'Franklin, Robert'.

[68] Grosvenor, *The dissolution*, 28.

Despite having received increased interest in recent years at the Dr Williams's Library archive, Mary Franklin's manuscripts have not been used extensively by historians. Raymond Brown discusses Franklin's accounts of her husband's arrests and the confiscation of their goods in *Spirituality in adversity: English non-conformity in a period of repression*, while Alison Searle draws upon Franklin's writings in her contribution to *The Oxford handbook of early modern English literature and religion*. In the chapter 'Exiled at home', Searle argues that Franklin's writings demonstrated how she made sense of her nonconforming family's persecution at the hands of the state - her spiritual journal 'both enshrin[ing] and enact[ing] that interpretation'. She compares Franklin's journal to her letters, showing that the former 'documents a less spiritually acquiescent and more somatic literary examination of the stillbirth of her first child during Robert's imprisonment than that created and shared in her correspondence with him'.[69] Widening the scope by incorporating Franklin's notebook, this examination also takes a comparative approach to her writings, albeit with a focus on representations of melancholy rather than nonconformist persecution.[70] That is not to say, however, that these concepts were unrelated. As further discussion will reveal, they were tightly entwined: persecution being both a cause of melancholy, and motivation to discuss it.[71]

Franklin's life and writings

Franklin's notebook, possibly begun in the 1680s, includes a variety of transcripts. It opens with the final letters, speeches, and 'expressions' of some of those executed for the Monmouth Rebellion in 1685, followed by a narrative 'of the wonderfull Convertion of A Kentish Gentleman named Mr Studly', which recounts the spiritual growth of a young man against the desires of his vehemently ungodly family. Franklin then included 'some letter[s] taken out of Mr Henery Dorneys Book', which were presumably taken from *Divine contemplations, and spiritual breathings of Mr Henry Dorney* (1684). She tended to choose letters that focused on grief, perhaps as a means of coping with the deaths of at

---

[69] Raymond Brown, *Spirituality in adversity: English non-conformity in a period of repression* (Milton Keynes, 2012), 37-8, 68-9, 238-9; Alison Searle, 'Exiles at home', in *The Oxford handbook of early modern English literature and religion*, ed. Andrew Hiscock and Helen Wilcox (Oxford, 2017), 468-71, 478, 480.

[70] For wider discussion of the persecution experienced by nonconformists in this period, see Cragg, *Puritanism*, 31-65, 88-127; Coffey, *Persecution*,166-218; Walsham, *Charitable hatred*, 56-91. On the development of 'a psychological steeling' amongst nonconformists 'to withstand the rigours of state repression', see Greaves, *John Bunyan*, 179.

[71] David Walker also links persecution to nonconformists' 'psychological and even physical ill health'. See 'Piety and the politics of anxiety', 145.

least five of her children, as well as her brother. The notebook also included, on the back pages, 'A True and faithfull Relation of One Samuell Wallass, who was restored to his perfect health after 13 years sickness', which was discussed in Chapter One.[72]

In 1670, a year after their marriage, Mary's husband Robert Franklin was arrested for the first time, for preaching at Colnbrook, Buckinghamshire, and imprisoned in Aylesbury jail.[73] During his imprisonment, at which time she was pregnant and, subsequently, gave birth to a stillborn, the couple exchanged letters with frequency, revealing a both warm and spiritually-fulfilling relationship. Mary described her situation at home, provided Robert with various pieces of news from their community (ranging from marriages to received payments to the health of others), and asked him for spiritual guidance. His letters in return provided spiritual counsel, 'loveing' words, and brief messages to friends and family. As has been the case in other sources, reading and community are prominent in these letters. Mary Franklin described to her husband the assistance provided by helpful letters of spiritual guidance from relatives, and the comfort found in books given to her by friends.[74]

Franklin's account of her spiritual experiences, which extends over twenty-eight pages of a small volume, passed from her daughter to her granddaughter, Hannah Burton, in the eighteenth century. The narrative was not dated, but may have been written during the 1690s or after 1703, during her widowhood. 'The experence of my dear granmother Mary Francklin' (a title added by Burton) consisted of, according to the original author, 'Some grounds I have to hope that God hath began that good work in my soul'. As the manuscript's line of ownership suggests, the text was intended to be read by Franklin's children and, as with other writings of this type, commenced with a description of her religious education. She explained that she was instructed by her parents from a young age in the 'concerns of …[her] soul', but could not give an 'account' for the specific 'time' of her 'conversion'. Rather, 'The lord was pleased early to spake kindly' to her soul and did draw her 'with the cords of his love', over a more extended period. Franklin's account was discursive, relating both the events of her spiritual life and discussion of their significance, and drew heavily upon scriptural examples. When discussing the importance

---

[72] MS I.h.37, ff. 1-39, c-h, CL.

[73] *ODNB*, s.v. 'Franklin, Robert'.

[74] T. G. Grippen, ed., 'Prison correspondence of an ejected minister', *Transactions of the Congregational Historical Society* 1 (1904): 345-50; 'Autograph correspondence of Robert Franklin and Mary Franklin, 1670', MS I.i.25, CL.

of being brought to God at an early age, for example, she referred to Romans 8 and Matthew 11, and concluded that 'oh it is good to begin early, to serve god betimes in the dayes of our youth'. On another occasion she reflected on her tendency to 'grow conceited' with her 'own strength', thinking she had 'atained to it' by her 'own pains and industry' rather than by God's grace. At these times, 'the lord', in response, was 'pleased to withdraw, these comforts for a time', in order to, as she informed the reader, 'let me see where my strength lay, and that without him I could do nothing[,] John 15.5'.[75]

After these broader reflections, Franklin recounted more specific events from the 'former part of her life', including the great fire of London, which she viewed as a 'dreadfull judgement', and as instigating 'the most remarkable time of the work of gods grace' on her soul. The fire caused her family to move from inner to outer London, and thereby brought her to her future husband's ministry, in 'blew anchor ally in old street'. Her soul being 'for some considerable time carryed on with full sail towards God', she endeavoured to partake in all ordinances, including the sacrament, with her congregation. Recounting other favourable incidents from this period before her marriage, Franklin commented that 'former experiences have been a great comfort to me in the later part of my life'. Indeed, the narrative is split between before and after marriage, the former being characterised by grace and the latter by trials. As Franklin explained, during her 'married condition', she was 'exercise[d by the Lord] in another manner', which required the 'great graces of faith and patience, mortification and self-denial'.[76]

This section of the narrative, which is much longer and covers at least thirteen years, recounts her husband's four arrests, the harassment of their family by informers, and the confiscation of their goods on multiple occasions. It also describes other trials, including the deaths of her father and four of her children, as well as more positive examples of 'deliverance', such as a near-miss from a house fire. Woven into Franklin's account are her understandings of how her body responded, or did not, to the persecution of her husband and family. For example, when Robert Franklin was imprisoned for the first time, she was delivered of a stillborn which, she wrote: 'was Judged by most, to be occationed by my greif that I had upon me by reason of my husbands being so far from me, in my condition.' On another occasion, after a 'little season' of 'peace', she believed that the disruption caused by informers attempting to get

---

[75] MS I.h.33, ff. 1-3, CL. John 15:5 reads: 'I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.'

[76] Ibid., ff. 3-4; Grippen, ed., 'Experiences of Mary Franklin', 390-1.

into her house and confiscate their goods 'forced' her 'to 'wean' her child. The frightening disruption 'disturbed' her milk, and the end result did both her 'and the child hurt'.[77]

While on these occasions the trials of persecution did her body harm, Franklin found at other times that she was able to remain unaffected. She recalled these instances in the last section of her narrative, which she introduced with the words: 'I would call to mind the goodness of God in supporting me at this time, both in my soul and body.' She commenced, 'first with respect to my soul', before turning to 'my temporal [i.e. bodily] concerns'.[78] As has been seen in Chapter Three, the soul-body division was a common theme in spiritual discourse at this time, and it was particularly prominent in Franklin's manuscripts. In her letters, for example, she again assessed herself in terms of this division, stating: 'I wish I could say that my soul prospered and were in health as my body is.'[79] In discussing her soul in her account, she highlighted the 'many scriptures' God had brought to her mind during her troubles, 'which were as so many cordials' to her, 'greatly refresh[ing]' her 'spirits'. Bearing the well-known case of Francis Spira in mind, she blessed the Lord for allowing her to 'not consult with flesh and blood' in her ordeals, noting that the famous despairing Italian 'by that way was overcome'. In other words, unlike Spira, Franklin managed to avoid worrying about how she and her children would survive without their confiscated goods, and instead bore 'up cheerfully and comfortably' by 'looking to those things that are invisible'. Rather than concerning herself with the loss of tangible supplies, she considered herself 'honour[ed] to be one of those that should help to fill up the measure of Christ's sufferings' through persecution, and listed the scriptural 'promises' that had instead brought her comfort.[80]

Turning to the Lord's goodness to her in 'temporal concerns', Franklin then took up three times as many pages recounting such events as her son's recovery from weak health, her ability to not miscarry despite the disruptive arrest of her husband, and the 'miserabl[e]' death of a man who had torn down parts of their meeting house on the Sabbath. The final half of these 'temporal' recollections focused upon occasions when 'by reason of trouble' Franklin found her 'spirits' to be 'extremely burdened', 'discompose[d]',

---

[77] MS I.h.33, ff. 7-9, CL.

[78] Ibid., f. 19; Grippen, ed., 'Experiences of Mary Franklin', 397-8.

[79] Grippen, ed., 'Prison correspondence of an ejected minister', 347-8; Mary Franklin to Robert Franklin, July 6 1670, MS I.i.25, CL.

[80] Grippen, ed., 'Experiences of Mary Franklin', 397; MS I.h.33, CL.

or 'very low and sad'. She recounted four instances of this, three of which, she wrote: 'also caused great', or 'some', 'illness upon my body'.[81] It was within this last section of her narrative that Franklin described her experience of melancholy.

Spirits 'discomposed' by 'troubles' and 'a malincholy humor'

As these experiences suggest, Franklin was similar to Cromwell's cousin in that she believed temporal troubles influenced her spirits and, in doing so, made her more susceptible to bodily distemper. Her understanding of melancholy fitted into this framework, being an additional cause for 'burdened' spirits. Describing a series of events that occurred sometime between 1685 and 1687, Franklin explained how, once again, her husband had been arrested and imprisoned. This time, 'constables and several other officers' arrived at their new home in Goat Alley, 'further up Bunhill', and 'carried him immediately to New Prison, in order to his appearing at the sessions'. Having nothing to charge him with, however, the justices instead forced him to appear at every Sessions for a year, 'and find bail' each time. Despite his compliance with these orders, officials continued to regularly search their house for him, causing much disruption for the family. Franklin, who viewed this ongoing harassment as the aftermath of the recent Monmouth Rebellion, found meaning in these events by focusing upon examples of 'God's great goodness' to her. '[Al]though I was with [my tenth] child all this time, and had but a fortnight to go', she wrote, 'it pleased the Lord that I got no harm by the fright [as she had in the past], nor the child neither'. Rather, it was 'as large a child and as healthy' as she had ever had.[82]

Her second blessing during this period occurred after the birth. 'By reason of some privet troubles' she 'had, and in meeting with a malincholy humor' that she 'used to be troubled with' while lying in, her 'spirits' became 'extreamly burdened'. This 'did very much disorderd' her body, and 'hindred' her 'rest for several nights'. Hoping 'to have had some reliefe', Franklin 'endeavered to seek help by makeing …[her] complaint to a relation' but this method proved fruitless. It was 'all to no purpose', instead only 'aggravat[ing]' her 'trouble' further. As a result, she resolved: 'to go to the Lord, and cast my burden upon him who hath in his word given encouragement to his [people] so to

---

[81] Ibid., 398-401. Other presbyterians also recorded the deaths or illnesses of their persecutors as 'special providences'. See, for example, Henry, *Diaries and letters*, 159, 171; Heywood, *Autobiography*, vol. 3, 93-5, 99, 195, 211. See also Harley, 'Mental illness', 17.

[82] Grippen, ed., 'Experiences of Mary Franklin', 399; MS I.h.33, CL.

do.' Here she quoted Psalm 55:22, Proverbs 16:3, and Psalm 50:15 in full, and as they promised, this method proved successful: 'When the lord hath inabled me thus to do', Franklin wrote, 'in one nights time all my troubles was scat[t]er[e]d and gone, and I was greatly composed and quieted'.[83]

This 'very remarkable' turn of events, as Franklin referred to them, echoed Cromwell's cousin's recovery from melancholy and discomposed spirits. As was the case with Cromwell, Franklin's cure was almost instant, occurring overnight, and attributed to God's assistance through scripture. Human intervention was not sufficient and, as Franklin made clear, in fact worsened her state. Although she divided her troubles between soul and body, the solution was not: the cure for all was God. This belief infused every one of Franklin's papers. It was expressed in the narrative of Samuel Wallis' 'miraculous cure' that she copied into her notebook (as discussed in Chapter One), and the spiritual texts she referred to throughout her writings.[84] Some years earlier, for instance, when enduring her husband's first arrest in 1670, Franklin had been given Samuel Shaw's sermon, 'A wellcome to the plague', and found its 'councle' to be relevant to her ordeals.[85] Shaw's advice, which stemmed from his doctrine '*that it is the duty of Gods people to study a right behaviour towards him, and to converse with him aright in the way of his judgments, in the time of their afflictions'*, remained relevant to Franklin in these later, and all, troubles. As she had found herself while lying in, 'if we confer with men only for counsel, and repair to men only for comfort in a time of affliction, we shoot short of the mark'.[86] As fellow humans could not provide the assistance truly necessary, God used trials in order to encourage his followers to be more reliant on him. As Cromwell's cousin had also asserted, in 'having expectation from a creature', one will 'alwaise' meet with 'Disapointments'.[87]

The letters that Franklin chose from Henry Dorney's collection to copy into her notebook expressed the same view. One, addressed to his daughter in 1668, instructed her during a period of illness: 'he will not forsake your Soul in Adversity, but make your Bed

---

[83] MS I.h.33, ff. 24-5, CL. These verses read: 'Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and he shall sustain thee: he shall never suffer the righteous to be moved'; 'Commit thy works unto the Lord, and thy thoughts shall be established'; 'And call upon me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me', respectively.

[84] MS I.h.37, ff. c-h, CL.

[85] Grippen, ed., 'Prison correspondence of an ejected minister', 346-7; Mary Franklin to Robert Franklin, July 4 1670, MS I.i.25, CL.

[86] Samuel Shaw, *The voice of one crying in a wilderness* (London, 1666), 4, 40.

[87] Add MS 5858, ff. 218r-v, BL.

in your Sickness; … Be not dejected, but lift up your head and heart to your God and Saviour: Throw all your sins, and cares, and fears upon him.'[88] Franklin used similar language when describing her actions while lying in, stating that she 'cast' her 'burden upon him'.[89] In another of Dorney's letters that she copied, from 1677, he instructed his friend to 'read and meditate the Word, where provision of Support is made, to answer all Cases of distress'. It was necessary, he explained on another occasion, to use the 'true Gospel-Method': that is, to 'Let your Consideration feed on the quickning Truths of the Gospel; flying to, and relying on Christ, who is the Arm of the Lord; rejoycing in him who requires you to cast every depressing burthen from your self, upon him'. If that method is used, he confirmed: 'you shall not be disappointed.' These various expressions, that spread from Dorney's pen to that of Franklin, captured the overarching belief that 'There is no Safety but in God, no Refuge, Rest, or Peace but there'.[90]

Another text that Franklin engaged with, and referred to in the final section of her narrative, contended the same. When she had 'by reason of trouble' been 'very low and sad' for 'several days together', she recorded that 'the Lord was pleased to come in with comfort' by bringing three verses of scripture to her mind, as well as a 'passage' from 'a good book' that 'was very sweet' to her. Without naming the text, she quoted from this 'passage' extensively, weaving together lines from various pages of Richard Alleine's *The godly mans portion and sanctuary opened*. 'While a Christian hath a God to go to', she transcribed, 'his case can never be desperate; let him encourage himself in his God, and all will be well recovered'. This act, she believed, of 'encourag[ing]' oneself in God, constituted the vital quality of patience. She continued her transcription by adding, 'another note of patience', and describing, in Alleine's words, 'what it is: … a submitting, sedate, and calm frame of spirit, whereby a Christian from Gospel grounds is borne up under all his troubles, and borne through all his duties'. This, of course, had been what Franklin had just achieved: she had overcome her low spirits by turning to God and finding comfort in 'Gospel grounds'. As the words she then continued to copy out asserted, Franklin needed to be 'as much a Christian in a storm as in a calm' and see that God intended 'his good by all' events in her life. Indeed, her account of spiritual experiences as a whole reads as a direct response to Alleine's description of the patient

---

[88] MS I.h.37, ff. 24-39, CL.

[89] MS I.h.33, f. 25, CL.

[90] MS I.h.37, ff. 24-39, CL. For the published versions of these transcribed letters, see Dorney, *Divine contemplations*, 329, 358, 351, 228.

Christian, which she altered slightly in her own hand: 'He feels the hand of the lord, when the hand of the lord is upon him, he feels also the hand of the lord under him.'[91] God was both the cause of all troubles, as well as their solution. The overarching importance of patience to Franklin was illustrated by the way in which she chose to close her account, writing: 'That it is the duty of christians in the midst of their greatest troubles patiently to wait upon God, and to expect deliverance from him out of those troubles in his time.'[92]

In Franklin's mind, then, melancholy came under the category of 'troubles': it was a humour that, combined with other burdens, brought about discomposed spirits. Its solution was to cast oneself on God and find comfort in scriptural promises. As had been the case for Cromwell's cousin, scripture would come to Franklin's mind, by the hand of God, to ease her suffering. Whether ailing under a melancholic humour while lying in, grieving for her father's sudden death, or fretting over the providential cause of her daughter's burns, the Lord 'speak[ing] peace' to her 'soul' was her remedy. Like her husband's arrests, disappointments in friendships, or the deaths of her children, a melancholic humour, and the low moods that it caused, was an ordeal that needed to be faced with patience, by turning to God, and investing hope solely in Him. As Franklin noted, 'I have allway[s] found it good to take this course, to go to God in all my troubles'.[93]

'Destitute, disappointed, persecuted, melancholy, and dejected in Spirit'

Such commendable expressions of overcoming adversity did not go unnoticed. The Presbyterian minister, Benjamin Grosvenor, later incorporated many passages from Franklin's account into her funeral sermon, often quoting her words at great length. His sermon, which was both given and published in 1713, was based on 2 Corinthians 5:1: '*For we know, that if our Earthly House of this Tabernacle be dissolved, we have a Building of God, an House not made with Hands, eternal in the Heavens*' (Figure 5.3). In explaining his choice, Grosvenor wrote: 'Comparing the Occasion of these Words with what I find in the Papers left by our deceased Friend, I don't wonder they were so much upon her Mind, and so

---

[91] Grippen, ed., 'Experiences of Mary Franklin', 400; MS I.h.33, CL; Alleine, *The godly*, 14, 94, 95, 96, 97. In Alleine, the altered line reads: 'He feels *the Help of the Lord.* When the hand of the Lord is upon him, he feels also the hand of the Lord under him: *underneath the everlasting arms,* Deut. 32. 27' (97).

[92] Grippen, ed., 'Experiences of Mary Franklin', 401; MS I.h.33, CL. On nonconformists' belief that suffering must be faced with patience, see for example Greaves, *John Bunyan*, 179-80.

[93] MS I.h.33, f. 26, CL.

Frequently in her Mouth', presumably referring to the occasions in her account in which she stated that she was not afraid of dying. 'Her Tryals', he explained, 'were uncommon, [and so] her Comforts needed to have been so too'. Explicating this further, Grosvenor echoed the overarching message of Franklin's account that we have just discussed: 'The ordinary Christian, and the greatest Apostles, must use one and the same Cordial, under all the Troubles of Life.'[94]

Analysing the verse section by section, Grosvenor asserted that the godly must not

> grudge what the Body can do, nor fear what it can suffer, ... Because, *I know,* and am perswaded, that if this bodily Frame, which is but a Tabernacle set up for the transient Occasion of my sojourning here for a short time, should not only be afflicted, but even *dissolved*, and taken to Pieces by Death, whether violent or natural, I have a better *House*, to which my separate Soul can immediately betake it self, and in due time shall have a better Body, to which it shall be united.

This lesson, he believed, had been learnt and exemplified by Franklin, who 'look'd upon the Time of her Dissolution, as ... Finishing the Work which she had some Grounds to believe God had begun in her Soul'. Twenty-seven pages into his sermon, Grosvenor turned directly to Franklin and her account.[95]

Just as she had herself, Grosvenor viewed Franklin's life as having been marked by spiritual blessings before marriage, and a series of 'Troubles, Difficulty, and Trials' after. He emphasised the ordeals she underwent, 'the very Rehearsal' of which he expected to be 'painful to a tender Spirit', and condemned the suffering that her family's persecutors had caused. Writing some years after the Declaration of Indulgence, Grosvenor was able to describe the Franklins' persecution in scathing terms. It was an abhorrent 'Scandal', he believed, 'to see a poor Family not only frighted and alarmed, but the House plunder'd, the Goods seized, the Persons carry'd Prisoners, [merely] because they do not say the same Prayers, nor worship God just at the same Place'. Her trials, which he drew from her writings, were presented as 'Evidences of her Faith and Patience'. Grosvenor did not recount all of her afflictions, however, such as the death of her father or the accidental burns of her daughter - but focused on those inflicted as a result of persecution. He described the arrests of her husband, confiscation of their goods, and ruthless disruption to their lives at length - as well as the impact that these events had on her body. Indeed,

---

[94] Grosvenor, *The dissolution*, 3.

[95] Ibid., 4, 27.

the damage caused by persecution to her 'earthly tabernacle' was not only deemed worthy of inclusion but emphasis.[96]

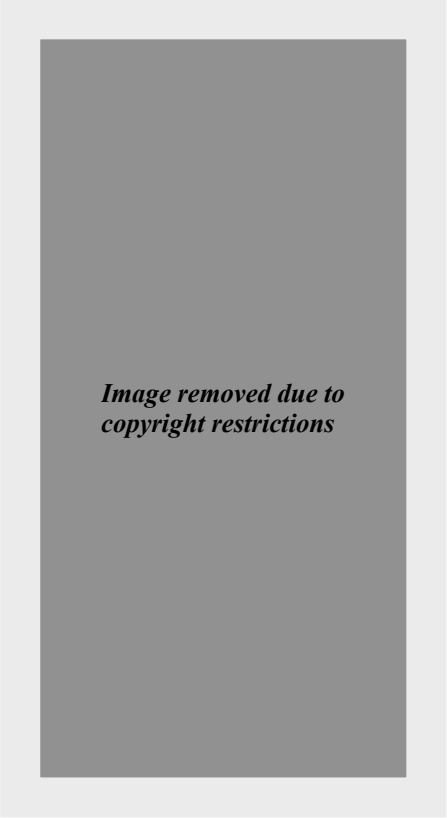

Figure 5.3: Benjamin Grosvenor, *The dissolution of the earthly house of this tabernacle* (London, 1713), title page.

Grosvenor described each of Franklin's periods of 'discompos'd' spirits brought on by 'Troubles', opening with - and giving most space to - her struggles with melancholy whilst lying in. Having repeated the account of her husband being forced to appear at every Sessions for a year, Grosvenor expanded upon the effects of such ordeals: 'These were teazing and vexatious things, enough to wear away the Spirits, and break the strongest Constitution.' Part justification of Franklin's sensitive nature, and part condemnation of those who maltreated her, he continued by explaining that 'she was [subjected to] most of this while breeding', and "twas so much the more grievous still, as her lying in generally gave some more Advantage to a distemper'd Melancholy, that prevail'd much upon those Occasions'. Thus, Grosvenor openly described Franklin's struggle, as she had described it herself - while glossing it with further emphasis on her victimhood. Echoing the commendatory writing of the preface authors discussed in Chapter Three, Grosvenor continued: 'She was in this Condition destitute, disappointed,

[96] Ibid., 30-6. On 'the tension between bodily weakness and spiritual strengths' in Christian tradition, see Fissell, *Vernacular bodies*, 116.

persecuted, melancholy, and dejected in Spirit, *without were Fightings, and within are Fears*; all which was design'd, I doubt not, by Providence, to leave us the Example of the following Resolution … [:] *to go to the Lord, and cast my Burden upon him.*'[97] Through Grosvenor's framing, Franklin's experience of melancholy acted not only as a significant event in her spiritual life, but as an edifying lesson for her entire community.

In Grosvenor's telling, Franklin's experiences of discomposed spirits were placed within a framework of martyr-like suffering. She may have weakened under the strain of events, but these were 'enough to … break [even] the strongest Constitution', and she responded in an exemplary manner: relying wholly on God and, thereby, having 'in one Night's time … all her 'Trouble … scatter'd and gone'.[98] In this way, Franklin's struggles with melancholy and low spirits were presented in a similar way to those of Edmund Calamy's accounts of ejected ministers, whose use of the soul-body relationship was discussed in Chapter Three. Rather than being a sign of their inadequacy in the face of troubles, melancholy could become the natural, sympathy-inducing reaction of the persecuted: evidence of their godly virtue, with any cure being an additional sign of God's favour. Just as the 'Iniquity of the Times, and his own comparative Uselesness, after … being silenc'd' pushed the minister Thomas Froysell into 'a fatal Melancholy,' and the 'Confinement' of jail caused the previously 'very chearful active Person', John Sacheverell, to 'contract such an Indisposition', that he became 'very Melancholy, and soon after ended his Days', Franklin's difficulties were tied to her persecution, not her flaws.[99] Moreover, both Grosvenor and Calamy were careful to emphasise that these sufferers' melancholies were not caused by disappointment in the loss of their worldly goods, but the horror of having to face such sinful, unjust times since the Restoration. Franklin's disregard for her family's material losses was highlighted for the same reasons Mr Evans, another of Calamy's ministers, had feared 'that the World would impute his Distemper to Bartholomew Day, and charge his Disorder [of "Melancholy" which had begun "at the time of King Charles his Restauration"] upon the loss of his Living'.[100] As Sharon Achinstein has argued, albeit by misleadingly applying 'melancholy' to sources that did

---

[97] Ibid., 35-6. Grosvenor's final quotation, in italics, is 2 Corinthians 7:5.

[98] Ibid.

[99] Calamy, *An abridgement*, 2nd ed., vol. 2, 562-3, 597-9. Other ministers presented as melancholy due to persecution include James Nalton, Edward Alexander, and Timothy Dod. See ibid., 2-3, 383; Calamy, *A continuation*, 640-1.

[100] Calamy, *An abridgement*, 2nd ed., vol. 2, 745.

not use the term themselves, 'in the Restoration, Dissenters championed the melancholy stereotype in order to reconstitute lost strength and to bear up for the future'.[101]

The similarities between Grosvenor's and Calamy's representations also extended to the latter's own account of Mary Franklin's husband, Robert, in his biographies. Calamy praised the minister as 'a great Sufferer for Nonconformity', before recounting his many arrests and imprisonments at Ailesbury, New Prison, and Newgate. He used Mary's wording in places, the information presumably having been gleaned from Grosvenor's funeral sermon, or perhaps her original papers. Having related the events that, in Mary's and Grosvenor's accounts, led to her troubles while lying in, Calamy wrote: 'and so was [Robert] perpetually almost harrassed, till the Time of King *James's* Liberty [1687].' As had been Grosvenor's focus in the funeral sermon, Calamy emphasised Robert's fortitude in the face of adversity, concluding the entry by stating that 'He was a plain serious Preacher, of great Gravity and Integrity: And was never known to baulk any Thing that he thought himself call'd to do or suffer'.[102]

Indeed, the key in describing both Franklin's and other nonconformists' struggles with melancholy during these unjust times was to categorise them alongside other troubles caused by persecution. It was not their choice to be dejected or distempered, and they were not committing discontent - a sin that, as we have seen in previous case studies, was strongly tied to the concept of melancholy in the minds of many of the nonconforming godly. Rather, they were admirably offsetting their tendency for melancholy by 'bear[ing] up cheerfully', as Franklin had worded it, and finding comfort in God's promises.[103] The focus shifted from blaming the sufferer and their dejection, to highlighting the external causes for melancholy and - if a cure occurred - their godly victory over the condition. As such, the context of a case of melancholy was vital. This is further illustrated by the ways in which Grosvenor wrote of melancholy in other writings, outside of the case of Franklin. More generally, without the context of a sufferer's persecution, he was damning of the condition, criticising those who gave into it in his popular work, *The mourner: or, The Afflicts relieved*, which, according to the *Protestant*

---

[101] Sharon Achinstein, *Literature and dissent in Milton's England* (Cambridge, 2003), 68. Achinstein examines the writings of John Reeve and Lucy Hutchinson, neither of whom use the term 'melancholy' to describe their sadness. In fact, Reeve rejects the concept: 'Better make Hymns than yield to Melancholy.' See John Reeve, *Spiritual hymns* (London, 1684), sig. A1r.

[102] Calamy, *A continuation*, 805-6.

[103] Franklin quoted in Grosvenor, *The dissolution*, 33.

Dissenter's Magazine, 'consoled many a mind under the deepest affliction'.[104] The text, which consisted of a series of questions and answers between mourner and counsellor, mocked those who complained when events did not turn out according to their desires, ignoring all their other blessings: 'God, and Providence, should take their Orders from you; and consult your Liking[?]', Grosvenor asked, explaining that 'He that has a Pillow to lay his Head upon, and yet … will need lay it upon a Stone; he that has many convenient Seats to sit upon, and nothing will serve him but a Bush of Thorns; surely they must be very much in love with Sorrow and Melancholy, who enjoy so many Blessings, and will yet slight all the pleasures of them, to pine away in the Company of their Wants'.[105] Placed within the context of unnecessary, ungrateful complaining, melancholy was stripped of any virtue; but when included in a narrative of the persecution endured by the nonconforming godly in the previous century, it was transformed into an obstacle to commendably overcome.

Other melancholies: the letters of Henry Dorney and the case of Mr Studly

We now turn to other discussions of melancholy also found in Mary Franklin's papers, which further highlight the importance of context to the interpretation of this kaleidoscopic concept. Similar views to those expressed by Grosvenor in the early eighteenth century, towards being 'in love with Sorrow and Melancholy', can be found in Franklin's notebook through her inclusion of the letters of Henry Dorney. Dorney, writing some decades earlier, wrote of melancholy not as a humour or trial, but as a self-imposed and exaggerated form of grief. In a letter from 1655, which Franklin copied into her notebook, Dorney instructed his grieving sister to overcome the loss of their sibling and father in quick succession by turning to God. In his words of comfort, which were previously discussed in Chapter Two, melancholy was presented as a choice. He asked, 'Is it good to be angry with the Lord?', and instructed 'do not study to be more sour and melancholy; but how to be more holy, self-denying, and chearful, on the account of a freely tendered Covenant'. As it continued to be for Pledger and Cromwell's cousin decades later, melancholy was tied to discontent in Dorney's mind, and a lack of faith in God's providences. Reacting to temporal losses with excessive grief, or questioning one's own salvation in response to them, was merely 'play[ing] with Melancholy, under a kind

---

[104] *Protestant Dissenter's Magazine* 4 (1797): 205, cited in *ODNB*, s.v. 'Grosvenor, Benjamin'.

[105] Benjamin Grosvenor, *The mourner: or, The Afflicts relieved* (London, 1731), 84-5.

of vexing delight'. Rather, these events should be viewed as a productive 'Visitation, … teach[ing] you some good Lesson' and bringing you 'over to a subjection to the good pleasure of God'. Melancholy was not the appropriate response, one must instead 'honour him, by saying and thinking all his ways are Mercy and Truth'.[106] The difference, then, between this and Franklin's stance was that, in Dorney's words, melancholy was discussed as a response to worldly troubles, while, in Franklin's account, melancholy was a worldly trouble itself. As such, her response to it could be admirable, putting into practice the instruction both she and Dorney espoused: bear up cheerfully in the face of temporal concerns, and turn only to God.

As another transcription in the same notebook of Franklin reveals, melancholy could also function as an erroneous label that, when highlighted, acted as a means of underlining others' ungodliness. As was seen in Chapters Three and Four, some of the godly were wary of the accusations of melancholy levelled at them by their opponents, and shifted their stance towards the condition as a result. The case of Mr Studly, however, which was copied into Franklin's notebook, used these accusations in a different way. The tale was a romanticised version of the traditional conversion narrative, describing 'the wonderfull Convertion of A Kentish Gentleman[,] … related by Mr Knight a Minister who was Intimately acquainted with him'.[107] The son of a wealthy lawyer, Mr Studly's conversion began on the streets of London after a drunken night out, when he fell through a cellar door. As he fell, he considered eternity, before 'lay[ing] there sometime in a drunken Drouze'. 'His body being heated with what he had dranck, & his Soul awakened to see sin, he thought he was actually in Hell', the fear of which set his conversion in motion. Soon after he returned to his home in Kent, much to his father's disapproval, Studly 'fell into Melanckolly, betook himself to reading the Bible & much prayer'. Described as 'a great enemy to the power of Religion, and an hater of those who were by the nick name of that age called Puritan', the father began to fear that his son 'would turn puritan, [and so] dealt roughly with him'. He attempted to thwart his godly practices by, for example, confiscating the candle by which he read his bible, and tried to cure his 'perceiv'd' melancholy by distracting him with various other activities. These methods, however, proved 'inefectuall' and so the father 'resolved to send him into

---

[106] MS I.h.37, f. 25, CL; Dorney, *Divine contemplations*, 244-5.

[107] This appears to have been a budding genre amongst the nonconforming godly in the second half of the seventeenth century, especially for youths. See, for example, the particular Baptist preacher, Benjamin Keach's *The glorious lover* (London, 1679). For discussion of Keach's popular text, see Achinstein, *Literature and dissent*, 196.

France, that by the aireness of the Contreys Conversations, his Melanckolly temper might be cured'. This, too, was unsuccessful, with Studly's godliness only shining through more strongly as a result - and so the narrative continued as a series of failed attempts constructed by the father to 'stifle any work of religion in his son'.[108]

Refusing to accept defeat, the father finally resolved to marry his son to a beautiful but sinful young woman from a 'profane' family. A ridiculous scenario ensued, in which all parties put on a show of godliness until the vows had been made and the wedding feast began - at which point, having just witnessed his new wife utter an oath at the table, the young Mr Studly raced off into the woods to weep and pray. Even this turn of events could not constrain his godliness, however, as God's providence informed him, through prayer, that he must now convert his new wife, or be 'undone'. Having explained his case to her on their wedding night, they knelt down and prayed, with 'such weeping & lamentations on both sides' that, when called down to supper, 'they had hardly eyes to see withall, so sweld [were they] with weeping'. Confronted with the weeping newlyweds, and the rapid foiling of his plans, the father was outraged, striking his hand on the table 'with indignation' and swearing 'bitterly'. Although he struck his son from his will, God's providence also overcame this, providing Studly and his wife with their rightful inheritance a few years later, presumably as reward for their ability to be 'cheerful' with or without material goods.[109]

Knight's narrative, then, used the father's accusations of melancholy as a means of highlighting his sinfulness.[110] As the author explained, Studly's father aimed to 'drive away malancholy, so he called his [son's] seriousness in religion', and, through this ignorant mislabelling, revealed his own lack of godliness.[111] By highlighting the ungodly's accusations of melancholy in this way, writers such as Knight were able to consolidate their sense of identity, positioning themselves in sharp contrast to those who could not comprehend their practice of expressing sorrow for sin, or their way of life more generally. In copying this narrative into her notebook, Franklin was inserting herself into this shared identity and cultivating it further; indeed, it was not insignificant that the transcript of this somewhat whimsical tale was placed alongside letters of the Monmouth

---

[108] MS I.h.37, ff. 15-23, CL.

[109] Ibid., ff. 19-23.

[110] For other examples of ungodly parents assuming that their convert child was melancholic in a biographical narrative, see 'The life of Christopher Love (1618–1651)', Sloane MS 3945, f. 80v, BL; and the discussion of the anonymous gentlewoman and Dionys Fitzherbert in Chapter 2 above.

[111] MS I.h.37, f. 18, CL.

rebels and pious writings of other Presbyterians. Moreover, Franklin was here engaging with a very different form of melancholy to that which she experienced while lying in. In this other context, as an incorrect label for what was in fact a convert's necessary and commendable sorrow for sin, the term 'melancholy', and its applications, became a tool for self-definition.

In her account of spiritual experiences, Mary Franklin described her melancholy as a humour that, when combined with other worldly burdens, caused discomposed spirits during her lying in. She believed that, as was the case for all troubles, its solution was to turn to God and patiently hope for comfort in his scriptures. In both her and Grosvenor's eyes, her experiences of discomposed spirits, low moods, and melancholy needed to be seen within an explanatory framework of persecution. Within this context, her ability to overcome these states became evidence of her patience as an exemplary Presbyterian, and wife of an ejected minister. This was not the only form of melancholy that existed within her papers and realm of thinking, however. Multiple melancholies, put to different uses, can be found throughout the pages of her notebook, diary, and letters.

Conclusion

Indeed, as the above case studies have made clear, there was no single meaning, or significance, to the word 'melancholy' in the writings of the nonconforming godly. These three cases alone have revealed a plethora of interpretations. Melancholy could encourage a spiritually-productive level of seriousness in a young convert, or it could thwart religious duties altogether. It could be a trial designed to encourage godly patience, or it could be a sinful response to troubles. In some cases, melancholy was deeply embedded in the body as a humour, while in other accounts - written at the same time - it existed as a more abstract influence on the mind, perhaps reflecting recent changes in understandings of the condition's aetiology. Moreover, 'melancholy' could be not melancholy at all, but a label wrongly assigned to godly behaviour by the ignorant. What joined almost all these versions of melancholy, however, was the godly's response to this condition. Pledger, Cromwell's cousin, and Franklin alike found comfort in their faith, particularly scripture, and viewed melancholy as a sanctified affliction. Human intervention, in both the form of physic and counsel, proved ineffectual for them - and they instead turned to God. Indeed, it was often understood, retrospectively, that the providence of experiencing melancholy had been designed with this outcome in mind. In the case of Mary Franklin,

moreover, like those of Calamy's dissenting ministers, the blame placed on sufferers' persecution for having caused melancholy endowed their experience with not only religious but political significance. Rather than being a source of criticism or increased secularism as suggested by Schmidt and Hodgkin respectively, it can be seen that melancholy was understood as a spiritually productive experience by these individuals and could be used, through identifications of cause, cure, and the sufferer's response, to exert and defend godly identity. What is more, the cases of Oliver Cromwell's cousin and Mary Franklin indicate that a place remained for the appreciation of intense female spirituality at the end of the century and, in the latter case, was even celebrated by male Presbyterian ministers such as Grosvenor. Indeed, by turning to the personal writings of these laypersons, it has become evident that the views of ministers on melancholy, such as those of Richard Baxter and Jeremiah Burroughs, were not absolute. Rather, both male and female individuals negotiated with the opinions expressed in published works and sermons, while also engaging with less orthodox sources of information (such as the fanciful conversion narrative of Mr Studly and the letters of unordained friends), in order to come to their own conclusions regarding the causes, cures, and significance of this protean condition.

Conclusion

I am very sensible how little others are concerned to be acquainted with God's particular Dealings towards so private, and obscure Persons

In 1694, Anthony Walker made this comment in justifying his decision to share portions of his wife's personal writings - which, as we have seen, contained occasions of melancholy amongst accounts of her 'exemplary piety'. Although Elizabeth Walker was only an 'obscure', '*plain, [and] private Woman*', he believed her pious accounts 'may be useful' to others.[1] The same remark could be made when considering the existing scholarship on melancholy amongst nonconformists in this period, which has not 'concerned' itself with being 'acquainted with' such individuals. Tending to instead turn to published works, particularly those of male ministers, and neglecting archival sources, scholars have presented a top-down, intellectualised interpretation of this protean condition. This study, on the other hand, has largely turned to the more 'private' writings of 'obscure' persons - in tandem with the published, prescriptive texts they engaged with - and, in doing so, has revealed that the experience of melancholy amongst this sector of seventeenth-century society was both more complex and representative of wider cultural processes than previously realised. Indeed, the 'usefulness' Walker hoped lay in his wife's words has extended well past his original intentions. The writings of the individuals examined here, such as those of Elizabeth Walker, have proven valuable to understanding not only the degree of agency that sufferers possessed in negotiating their relationship with melancholy, but also the ways in which their experiences of this condition shaped and bolstered the nonconforming godly's identity as a whole.

Elasticity and agency: the individual's experience of melancholy

By approaching the issue of melancholy through the texture of individual testimony, and locating these testimonies within wider webs of association, the ways in which this highly-charged condition played out in the lives of the nonconforming godly has been gleaned. The use of a diverse range of evidence has allowed multiple perspectives to be examined and compared, revealing how different viewpoints, such as those of ministers and laypeople, informed one another. It has been shown that the lived experience of melancholy did not always follow prescription, and that this condition could have a

[1] Walker, *The virtuous wife*, 92, 104, sig. A3r.

variety of implications for individuals' religious lives. For many, the term 'melancholy' signalled a bodily complaint, often tied to worldly troubles, that inhibited one's ability to sufficiently respond to religious duties. For others, the distemper was more extreme and resulted in highly disordered, even atheistical, thoughts. A degree of independence was exerted by both male and female sufferers in making these distinctions; diagnoses could be negotiated, treatments refused, and recovery self-identified.

While some individuals used physic as a remedy, many described a cure that was free of any human intervention, despite some ministers' insistence that melancholy must be treated through earthly means. Occasionally, sufferers eschewed any cure at all; connecting melancholy, in its 'natural' form or as a passing mood, to a predisposition for solitariness and self-examination that was useful to a budding convert or to a believer wishing to turn away from the world. Discussions of these more immediately positive versions of melancholy appear to have been less common, however, and, as far as the cases examined indicated, restricted to males.

Nevertheless, across the board, melancholy could be infused with more positive meaning through processes of interpretation and representation. Just as the condition's forms were diverse, so too was its potential for reframing. Indeed, the elasticity of the concept of melancholy allowed the nonconforming godly room to manoeuvre, and this manoeuvring occurred in a variety of forms. Even when inhibiting religious duties or causing unwarranted spiritual anguish, melancholy could still be held up as a sign of godliness if a sufferer was shown to have responded to the condition in suitable ways, or if the cause of the suffering could be located outside of the individual. Formed through reading, writing, and discussion within godly communities, certain types of language were employed to carry out this framing. A 'holy Rhetorick' existed that enabled the categorisation of experiences, as well as their infusion with spiritual significance.[2] As Chapters Two and Three demonstrated, the language of the heart and the soul-body dynamic were particularly important sources of rhetoric for sufferers of melancholy, and those around them. Descriptions of the heart enabled sufferers to make sense of the ways in which the condition affected both their spiritual and physical self at once, while a soul-first body-second aetiology allowed the godly to make melancholy acceptable within religious narratives. Chapters Four and Five demonstrated that other, less overtly pious, vocabularies were also available to the godly. Medical language, for instance, could be

[2] Caryl, *An exposition ... upon the fifteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth chapters*, 313.

employed to describe the condition in order to console an anxious convert, while a more poetic interpretation was also accessible to some.

Overarching these various forms of rhetoric was the Bible. The usefulness of the Word in expressing melancholy and moulding it into, or away from, spiritual frameworks was limitless: scripture provided exemplary models, justifications, explanations, and - most strikingly - treatments. Hearing the word of God or having verses brought to mind was credited with curing melancholy in many cases discussed throughout the preceding chapters, reinforcing the inherent authority and legitimacy that scripture possessed in Protestant minds.

Both published and unpublished material, whether intended for immediate circulation or not, revealed processes of identifying and framing melancholy such as these. This was because, like all other events in the godly's lives, the experience of this condition, in whatever form, required examination for signs of grace and sanctification (or lack thereof), both for the inward assurance of the individual and the outward demonstration of godliness to their surrounding community. Through the application of scripture, and the other forms of rhetoric mentioned above, the nonconforming godly transformed experiences 'lived-through' into experiences as 'products', to be looked back upon, and learned from, by both themselves and others.[3] Indeed, by writing experiences of melancholy down, usually alongside other instances of God's work in their lives, the godly found meaning in their suffering.

Affliction and identity: the community's experience of melancholy

It was not only the suffering induced by melancholy itself, however, that was infused with meaning by these writings, but also the persecution and disappointments endured by the nonconforming godly more generally. By describing their relationship to melancholy, individuals were able to simultaneously critique the state of English society and promote their own politico-religious standpoint. As was seen in the cases of Deborah Huish and Francis Russell, these frustrations began before the Restoration, as their disappointments in the parliamentarian commonwealth increased. Melancholy, whether embraced or rejected, allowed these individuals to draw attention to the ungodliness of their supposedly worldly, power-hungry opponents and highlight the superiority of their own beliefs and practices.

---

[3] Wilhelm Dilthey's terms, as discussed in Pickering, *History*, 95-105.

Faced with the Clarendon Code of the early 1660s, however, followed by the Conventicles Act of 1670 and the intense persecution of 1683 to 1686, any disappointment amongst dissenters turned into severe adversity. Excluded and harassed, fined and imprisoned, the nonconforming godly continued to employ the concept of melancholy to express their response. Confronted by oppression in the early 1660s, the Presbyterian minister Oliver Heywood described 'foggy vapours rising / from Englands crying crimson provocations / And heavens thicken[ed] with black clouds devising / to pour upon us doleful desolations'.[4] The language of melancholy was employed in instances such as this to express dissatisfaction, and indeed horror, with the 'spiritual famine' of the Restoration and persecution.[5] But the 'devil's bath' was also a very real and physical presence amongst the nonconforming godly in this period, as many individuals (particularly ejected ministers) fell victim to the distemper, or mood, of melancholy as they faced the reality of failing to achieve lasting reform.

While these experiences of melancholy were of course distressing for the sufferers, it also provided them, and those around them, with an opportunity to demonstrate their godliness in the face of adversity. Analyses of Calamy's biographies have revealed that ministers' episodes of melancholy were reworked after the Toleration Act into martyr-like accounts to commemorate suffering and bolster nonconformist identity. At the same time, melancholic individuals themselves, such as Mary Franklin, could interpret their experience of the distemper as a result of persecution, and their subsequent recovery as evidence of their righteousness. Moreover, the treatment of melancholy brought the godly together in support of the sufferer (via letters of consolation, discussion, and communal religious practices), which further strengthened their sense of shared identity.

It would be misleading, however, to claim that melancholy was solely a community-bolstering opportunity to demonstrate virtue. The ways in which the nonconforming godly experienced and discussed this condition were also strongly shaped by the accusations of fanaticism they faced. As was outlined in the Introduction, the indiscriminate labelling of dissenters by high-church Anglicans as enthusiasts, driven by melancholic vapours rather than reason, placed less radical nonconformists in a unique socio-political position after the Restoration. The individuals examined in Chapters Three, Four and Five revealed an awareness of these criticisms, and a variety of responses

---

[4] Heywood, *The Rev. Oliver Heywood*, vol. 1, 40.

[5] Add. MS 45963, f. 40v, BL.

to them. These included, for example, the promotion of a cheerful, composed reputation for the godly, and the mocking of those who deemed sorrow for sin to be the result of melancholy. Moreover, a sufferer was more likely to self-diagnose as melancholic if coming from a family that held similar religious views, while those who were vulnerable to relatives' criticisms tended not to identify as suffering from this condition, particularly during the immediate aftermath of the Restoration. A conscious response to accusations could also be sensed in spiritual narratives, especially their prefaces, as they displayed a determination to show the spiritual origin and significance of experiences of melancholy, especially in times of the highest persecution of dissent. The nonconforming godly, then, were by no means passive receivers of criticism, nor did they deny outright the existence of melancholy within their flocks. Rather, they absorbed their opponents' accusations, and the reality of melancholic suffering, before making the condition their own by incorporating it into existing spiritual frameworks and increasingly investing the condition with religious significance.

Sanctified affliction and providence

By examining these issues from a wider angle, we see that melancholy functioned within a worldview held by the nonconforming godly that made sense of all events in similar ways; namely, providence and sanctified affliction. Presbyterians, Independents, and Particular Baptists at the end of the period perpetuated beliefs espoused at the beginning of the century: 'that whatsoever is done directly, or indirectly, by means or immediately; all is done and governed (by his divine providence) for your good.'[6] Moreover, they upheld the belief that afflictions were sanctified punishment for their sins, purging their souls, and thereby providing them with further evidence of their salvation. For this reason, in the 1670s and 80s, Oliver Heywood used the same phrase, 'Lord sanctify it', after recording various incidents in his diary and event book: whether describing the recurrent melancholy of a godly neighbour or lamenting the sad sight of a young mother in her coffin, he wrote: 'Lord sanctify it for good.'[7] Indeed, the way in which melancholy was located within a worldview of providence right up until the turn of the century was highlighted by William Turner's lengthy publication from 1697, *A compleat history of the most remarkable providences*; as it not only included a number of the cases and voices

[6] Richard Greenham, *Short rules sent to a gentlewoman troubled in mind* (London, 1612), 1.

[7] Heywood, *The Rev. Oliver Heywood*, vol. 3, 137, 189, 192.

discussed in this study, including Mr Studly, Joan Drake, Timothy Rogers, and Richard Baxter, but also an entire chapter dedicated to the subject, titled '*CHAP. LXXXIX.* Satan Hurting, by Interposing with Melancholly Diseases'.[8] Although Hodgkin has suggested that 'for writers like Baxter and Rogers, the emphasis on the organic reality of the disease [of melancholy] pushes out its cosmic dimension, to the point where the agency of the devil may take a back seat', Turner's '*CHAP. LXXXIX.*' from 1697, along with the case studies examined in the preceding three chapters, suggest otherwise. Even when the 'organic reality' of an individual's anguish was revealed, diagnosis of melancholy accepted, or more contemporary medical theories applied, the experience continued to be understood as a tool of God's providence, and susceptible to the wiles of the devil.[9] Likewise, when earthly cures such as physic were employed, the emphasis remained upon God's grace blessing those means.

Reconciling narratives

By examining a wider range of cases, the divergent conclusions of previous studies can be reconciled, while also continuing the nuancing of MacDonald's blanket claim that nonconformists, as a whole, continued spiritual methods of healing 'mental illness'.[10] As we have seen, Hodgkin, in examining the accounts of Dionys Fitzherbert, Hannah Allen, and George Trosse, proposed that nonconformists became more comfortable in acknowledging the bodily explanation of melancholy for spiritual affliction as the century wore on, and that this was evidence of an increasingly secularised understanding of the condition even amongst this section of society. Schmidt, on the other hand, suggested that melancholy, or any state that pointed to an excess of passion over reason, was criticised more frequently by nonconformist writers after the Restoration, by examining the publications of Richard Baxter, Timothy Rogers and, more briefly, Hart-on-Hi and Hannah Allen.[11] By considering these various cases, as well as unpublished sources, and applying a different methodology, this thesis has found that aspects of both Hodgkin and Schmidt's views can be brought into harmony. While there does appear to have been an increase in the nonconforming godly's willingness to positively incorporate melancholy into accounts of spiritual experience later in the century, this did not signal an

---

[8] Turner, *A compleat history*, 135.

[9] For 'organic reality', see Hodgkin, *Madness*, 78.

[10] MacDonald, *Mystical bedlam*, 225-7.

[11] Hodgkin, *Madness*, ch. 4; Schmidt, *Melancholy*, ch. 5.

unconditional acceptance of the condition or a secularised interpretation of it. Rather, melancholy continued to be viewed as problematic, an enemy to reason, and both a desire and need to transform it into something acceptable, or even virtuous, remained.

Favoured by the 'Great Physician'

What is more, by turning to the perspective of lay people, it has become evident that the nonconforming godly placed a firm and continual emphasis on spiritual treatments. The cases examined suggest that, even when faced with advice to the contrary from their most trusted ministers, lay persons insisted that God was able to cure them from melancholy either instantaneously through scripture, or through a longer process of religious duties. Both awe and pride can be sensed in accounts of these recoveries, as well as a defiant exertion of nonconformist identity. Just as formalism and intolerance, in their eyes, had left their nation's Church unacceptable, an 'external Reformation' - to borrow George Trosse's phrase - was not sufficient to bring about a permanent recovery from melancholy. Rather, the favour of the Great Physician was required. Through these assertions made by the nonconforming godly, we see that seventeenth-century politico-religious tensions were not only matters that played out in parliament, courtrooms, and, meeting houses. As all five preceding chapters have demonstrated, the body itself, along with the soul and mind, was a nexus for the formation and expression of confessional identity and belief. Thus, religion and medicine remained intrinsically tied throughout this period not only due to the deep-seated nature of earlier beliefs and practices, but also through active defiance.

An entry in the diary of a Presbyterian minister can be used to demonstrate this. In May 1681, on the cusp of 'the Royalist Revenge', news of a 'seditious meeting' reached the local vicar of Burton, Mr Joseph Brigs. In an effort to recover a young woman from melancholy, two 'Nonconformists' had come to his town, 'gathered a great assembly[,] prayd and acted contrary to law'. Infuriated, Brigs lambasted his congregation after his sermon on the Lords day, for having 'flock[ed]' to such a meeting of the 'devil['s] … chappel'. He asked them mockingly, 'if they can work miracles why doe you not [always] bring your sick, lame and blind to them to be cured'? These words were recorded by Oliver Heywood, one of the two 'Nonconformists' in question, after he had heard reports of the vicar's outburst from his neighbours. Proudly stating the success, thanks to God, that his prayers and spiritual exhortation had shown in recovering the woman from her affliction, Heywood suggested others should 'pitty' the poor vicar, who merely 'rendred

himself ridiculous to all intelligent persons' by doubting the effectiveness of such curative methods. The views of Brigs, who had instead 'bade them get her merry company, [and] set her to work', drove Heywood to wearily conclude that 'alas', his conformist counterparts were but 'miserable comforters'.[12]

[12] Heywood, *The Rev. Oliver Heywood*, vol. 2, 280-1.

Appendix

Key sources and their webs of association

Appendix 1a

Katherine Gell

Life

Katherine Gell [née Packer] (*bap.* 1624, *d.* 1671) was the daughter of John Packer, a wealthy administrator and politician, known for his godliness, who supported parliament in the first civil war. She married John Gell, the eldest son of a parliamentarian commander, Sir John Gell. He inherited the baronetcy in 1646 and, as a result, Gell resided at Hopton Hall, Derbyshire, for the remainder of her life. Their first child was baptised in 1645 and, in total, they had four sons and three daughters (one died in infancy). The Gells were known for their rigid Presbyterianism and, after the Restoration, were patrons of ejected ministers. Although they held conventicles in their home, they also attended Anglican services. Esteemed by her local godly community, Gell was upheld as a great 'promoter of God's Work in Derby-shire' (Bagshaw, 58).

See also

- *ODNB*, s.v. 'Gell, Katherine'.
- William Bagshaw, *De spiritualibus pecci* (London, 1702), 56-60.

Scholarship

- Alison Searle, '"My souls anatomiste": Richard Baxter, Katherine Gell and letters of the heart', *Early Modern Literary Studies* 12, 2 (2006): 7.1-26.
- Keith Condie, 'Some further correspondence between Richard Baxter and Katherine Gell', *The Historical Journal* 53, 1 (2010): 165-176.
- William L. Lamont, *Richard Baxter and the millennium: Protestant imperialism and the English Revolution* (London, 1979), 34-7, 138-9.

Source in focus

Correspondence between Katherine Gell and Richard Baxter

Six letters from Gell and eight replies from Baxter survive, composed between July 1655 and December 1658. These are split across DWL and the Derbyshire Record Office. Gell's third, fourth, and seventh replies are not extant, and it is unknown if Baxter responded to her final letter. The correspondence largely consists of Gell describing her spiritual concerns and Baxter attempting to remedy them. Other topics of conversation also appear briefly, however, including Baxter's engagement in controversial writing and the health of their family members. Summaries and some excerpts of eleven of the fourteen letters can be found in N. H. Keeble and Geoffrey F. Nuttall, eds., *Calendar of the correspondence of Richard Baxter, vol. 1: 1638-1660* (Oxford, 1991), 185-6, 190-1, 214-5, 231, 249-50, 254, 273, 280-1, 337-8, 338-40, 367-8.

Web of association

In her letters to Baxter, Gell mentioned:

Reading and/or owning

- Richard Baxter, *The saints everlasting rest* (London, 1650).
- ——, *Directions and perswasions to a sound conversion* (London, 1658).
- ——, *A treatise of conversion* (London, 1657).
- ——, *A call to the unconverted* (London, 1658).

- ——, *True Christianity* (London, 1655).
- ——, *A sermon of judgment* (London, 1655).
- ——, *Making light of Christ and salvation* (London, 1655).
- ——, *The crucifying of the world by the cross of Christ* (London, 1658).
- William Gurnall, *The Christian in compleat armour* (London, 1655).
- George Herbert, *The temple: sacred poems and private ejaculations* (Cambridge, 1633).
- Thomas White, *A treatise of the power of godlinesse* (London, 1658).

Attending sermons by
- Stephen Marshall (1594/5?-1655), godly minister.
- Richard Baxter (1615-1691), ejected minister and religious writer.
- Thomas Hill (c. 1628-1677), nonconformist minister.
- John Billingsly, vicar of Chesterfield from 1654 until his ejection in 1662.

Correspondence with
- Stephen Marshall (see above).
- John Billingsly (see above).

Spiritual conversation with
- Samuel Charles, chaplain in the Gell household and later vicar of Mickleover, Derbyshire, from 1657 until his ejection in 1662.
- Robert Porter (1623/4-1690), clergyman and ejected minister.
- Richard Baxter (see above).
- Benjamin Woodbridge (1622-1684), the rector of Newbury and later Charles II's chaplain-in-ordinary until silenced in 1662.

Carrying out religious duties with
- Lady Eleanor Archer. Nathaniel Ball, *Spiritual bondage and freedom* (London, 1683) was dedicated to Lady Archer.

In his letters to Gell, Baxter:
Referred to
The story of the devil appearing to John White (1606–43), Rector of Holy Trinity, Dorchester, as printed in Samuel Clarke, *Mirrour, or Looking-glasse both for saints and sinners*, 2nd ed. (London, 1654), 459–60.

Provided a list of all his works
Including both his practical and controversial texts (although he recommended that she refrain from reading the latter).

Appendix 1b

Mary Rich, Countess of Warwick

Life

Mary Rich [née Boyle] (1624-1678) was the daughter of an Irish landowner and politician, Richard Boyle, the Earl of Cork. Raised mostly by tenants of her father's, Sir Randall and Lady Cleyton, she was educated in English, French, catechism, and the Bible. In 1641 she married the second son of the earl of Warwick, Charles Rich, a prominent parliamentarian. They had two children, both of whom predeceased them. Their deaths instigated her transition to an intensely pious life.

See also

- *ODNB*, s.v. 'Rich, Mary'.
- Charlotte Fell Smith, *Mary Rich, Countess of Warwick (1635-1678): her family and friends* (London, 1901).

Scholarship

- Dean Ebner, *Autobiography in seventeenth-century England: theology and self* (Paris, 1971).
- Kate Narveson, *Bible readers and lay writers in early modern England: gender and self-definition in an emergent writing culture* (Farnham, 2012).
- Sara Heller-Mendelson, *The mental world of Stuart women: three studies* (Brighton, 1987).
- Olivia Weisser, *Ill composed: sickness, gender, and belief in early modern England* (New Haven, 2015).
- Sophie Mann, '"A double care": prayer as therapy in early modern England', *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* (forthcoming).

Sources in focus

Diaries, meditations, and autobiography

Of Mary Rich's autograph papers, a diary, autobiography, and collection of meditations survive. These include some notes and alterations throughout in the hand of Rev. Woodroffe, her family's chaplain. In addition, a collection of diary entries and meditations taken out of these papers by Woodroffe is also extant, Add MS 27358. All of these are held at the BL. The five volumes of diaries, Add MS 27351-27355, were written between 1666 and 1672, are octavo sized, and contain roughly 300 pages of script each. In total there are more than thirteen hundred pages. The meditations, Add MS 27356, were written between 1663 and 1677. The autobiography, Add MS 27357, was begun in 1672.

After her death, Rich's papers were committed to the care of Walker, who then passed them onto his daughter, Mrs Cox, whose husband later returned them to the Woodrooffe family, as they possessed closer ties to the writer than himself. This owner, the son of the Woodrooffe minister Rich knew, then prepared the papers for the public. As a result, the following transcriptions are available, but do not cover the entire range of the papers:

- Mary Rich, *Memoir of Lady Warwick: also her diary, from AD 1666 to 1672* (London, 1847).
- Charlotte Fell-Smith, *Mary Rich, Countess of Warwick* (London, 1901).

- Jennifer O. Venn, 'The autobiographies of Barbara Blaugdone, Elizabeth White, Mary Rich, and Mary Penington' (PhD diss., University of Western Ontario, 1998).

Web of association

In her diaries, Rich mentioned:

Reading published works

- Richard Allestree, *The causes of the decay of Christian piety* (London, 1667).
- Saint Augustine's *Confessions*; e.g. Saint Augustine, *Saint Augustines confessions translated and with some marginal notes illustrated, wherein divers antiquities are explained and the marginall notes of a former popish translation answered by William Wats* (London, 1650).
- Richard Baxter, *The crucifying of the world by the cross of Christ* (London, 1658).
- ——, *The saints everlasting rest* (London, 1650).
- Ralph Brownrig's published sermons; e.g. Ralph Brownrig, *Fourty sermons by the Right Reverend Father in God, Ralph Brownrig* (London, 1665).
- Abraham Caley, *A glimpse of eternity very useful to awaken sinners, and to comfort saints*, 3rd ed. (London, 1683).
- Samuel Clarke's *Lives*; e.g. Samuel Clarke, *The lives of two and twenty English divines eminent in their generations for learning, piety, and painfulnesse in the work of the ministry* (London, 1660).
- Daniel Dyke, *The mystery of self-deceiving, or, A discourse and discovery of the deceitfulnesse of mans heart* (London, 1642).
- John Foxe, *Book of martyrs* (London, 1596).
- Joseph Hall's published sermons; e.g. Joseph Hall, *The contemplations upon the history of the New Testament, now complete: together with divers treatises* (London, 1634).
- George Herbert, *The temple: sacred poems and private ejaculations* (Cambridge, 1633).
- John Howe, *The blessednesse of the righteous* (London, 1668).
- Thomas Jacombe, *Hooinh egzainiomnh, or, A treatise of holy dedication both personal and domestick* (London, 1668).
- James Janeway, *Invisibles, realities, demonstrated in the holy life and triumphant death of Mr John Janeway* (London, 1673).
- Samuel Rutherford's *Letters*; e.g. Samuel Rutherford, *Mr. Rutherfoord's letters the third edition now divided in three parts* (London, 1675).
- Edward Stillingfleet, *A sermon preached before the honourable House of Commons* (London, 1666).
- Jeremy Taylor, *The rule and exercises of holy living* (London, 1650).
- James Usher's published sermons; e.g. James Usher, *The dailie examination, and arraignment of sins gathered out of the most reverend the primate of Ireland's sermon at Lincolns Inn. Decemb. 3. 1648* (London, 1648).
- Seth Ward's published sermons; e.g. Seth Ward, *A sermon against the anti-scripturists also another concerning the sinfulness, danger, and remedies of infidelity, preached at White-Hall* (London, 1670).
- Histories, including French history.

Reading unpublished works

- Her own meditations, scripture reflections, and diaries.
- 'Life of pious Mrs. Smith', a friend's unpublished spiritual autobiography.

Attending sermons (both public and private) by

- Countless preachers, including her family's chaplains Thomas Woodroffe and Anthony Walker; the ejected ministers John Warren, John Argor, Thomas Clarke; the conforming ministers Samuel Ferris, Edward Stillingfleet, and Richard Kidder; and the headmaster of Felsted School, Christopher Glascock.

Spiritual conversation and/or carrying out religious duties with

- A number of ministers, usually only identified by their surname, including the ejected ministers John Warren, Richard Baxter, and Abraham Caley; the Rich family's chaplain, Anthony Walker; and the archbishop of Canterbury, Gilbert Sheldon.
- Family members, friends, and her servants, including her sister Katherine Jones (Lady Ranelagh), her brother, Robert Boyle, and her friend Mary Vere (Lady Vere).

Reacting to scriptural verses

- Such as Daniel 5:23, John 21:15-17, Luke 17:34, Isaiah 49:15, Psalm 119:57-64, 2 Chronicles 1:7, Matthew 25, Daniel 5:5-6, Amos 6:6, and 2 Peter 2:4. As she read the Bible daily, her recordings of responses to scripture were frequent.

Appendix 1c

Elias Pledger

Life

Elias Pledger was born in July, 1665, in the parish of little Baddow, Essex. His father was an ejected Presbyterian minister who provided him with a religious education, but at the age of eleven he was orphaned and sent to live with two 'mothers-in-law'. Subsequently, he attended Epsom school. He later became an apothecary's apprentice, and was indentured until 1689 when he gained his liberty at the age of twenty-four. He went on to become a successful apothecary and a godly, community-focused man, establishing a society for likeminded men. Pledger married Elizabeth and had at least seven children. He was widowed in c. 1709. Despite financial difficulties at times, his estate was worth £600 in 1695.

See also

- 'Will of Elias Pledger, apothecary of London, 1716', PROB 11/552/213, ff. 140r-v, TNA.
- London Record Society, *London inhabitants within the walls, 1695* (London, 1966), British History Online, last modified 2017, http://www.british-history.ac.uk/london-record-soc/vol2.

Scholarship includes

- Michael Mascuch, *The origins of the individualist self: autobiography and self-identity in England* (Cambridge, 1997), 97-9, 130.
- Richard L. Greaves, *John Bunyan and English nonconformity* (London, 1992).
- Cynthia Griffin Wolff, 'Literary reflections of the puritan character' *Journal of the History of Ideas* 29, 1 (1968): 13-32.
- Stephen Collins, 'British stepfamily relationships, 1500-1800', *Journal of Family History* 16, 4 (1991): 342.
- Kaspar von Greyerz, 'L'automation spirituelle en Angleterre (XVII siècle), *Histoire de l'education* 70 (1996): 49-63.
- Paul R. Backscheider, 'Personality and biblical allusion in Defoe's letters', *South Atlantic Review* 47, 1 (1982), 1-20.

Source in focus

Diary of Elias Pledger

Pledger started his spiritual diary, MS 28.4, when he was eighteen. He recounted his schooling and the first years of his apprenticeship, before bringing the narrative to the present day. Although he continued to write regularly until the end of his indenture, after this point he only added further entries roughly annually until his late fifties. The diary also includes transcriptions of letters he composed to friends (such as the minister Timothy Cruso) or received. Reflections on his spiritual state and providential occurrences are most frequent, but we also catch glimpses of family and godly community life. It is also interesting to note that, according to Kaspar von Greyerz, Pledger's diary is one of a rare few that refers to predestination explicitly in this period.

The diary is held by the Dr Williams's Library. According to their catalogue, it is 'a volume bound in parchment at some time inscribed on the spine "Elias Pledger's Diary &c, 1665-1725". 8vo. ff.1-186. The following are blank: 1a, 86-109, 111-171a, 186.' 'The last entry in Pledger's own hand seems to be that dated 15 February 1712/3. Some pious reflections, f. 110, dated 3 April 1725, appear to be in another hand. Between ff. 9 and 11 some some leaves have been cut out and f.10 is a substitute. There are also crossings out. Beginning at the other end are sermon or meditation notes "Concerning Self Deniall" and "The existence of a God."' The script is difficult.

Some short transcriptions are available in:

- Ralph Houlbrooke, ed., *English family life, 1576-1716: an anthology from diaries* (Oxford, 1988), 131-2, 196-7.

Web of association

In his diary, Pledger mentioned:

Writing / receiving spiritual letters

- To and from Francis Youell, 1683, his old master at Epsom, (who engaged in correspondence with Richard Baxter, and was a member of Henry Jessey's church), regarding Pledger's conversion.
- To Richard Rand, minister at little Baddow, regarding his conversion.
- To Timothy Cruso, minister at Poor Jewry Lane meeting, desiring communion with that congregation.
- To John Mason, rector of Water Stratford, on this 'The Midnight Cry', 1693/4.
- To an 'unknown friend', providing advice on spiritual concerns and melancholy.

Reading

- Christopher Ness, *A spiritual legacy being a pattern of piety for all young persons practice in a faithful relation of the holy life and happy death of Mr. John Draper* (London, 1684).
- Thomas Wadsworth, *Wadsworth's remains being a collection of some few meditations with respect to the Lords-Supper... with a preface containing several remarkables of his holy life and death from his own note-book* (London, 1680).
- William Allen, *A discourse of the nature, ends, and difference of the two covenants* (London, 1673), as recommended by Francis Youell.
- Joseph Alleine, *An alarme to unconverted sinners* (London, 1672).

Influences / Sermons

- Guidance of 'a very Godly Master' (Youell) at Epsom who led an 'exemplary life'.
- A group of youths who prayed together in the fields.
- Sermons at Epsom school.
- The behaviour of his second master, an apothecary.

Also note his father's sermon

- Elias Pledger (the older), 'Of the cause of inward trouble', in Samuel Annesley, *The morning-exercise at Cripple-gate, or, Several cases of conscience practically resolved by sundry ministers* (London, 1677), 294-318.

And the texts / scriptures John Draper is recorded as having read (in Ness, A spiritual legacy, *1684)*

- John Bunyan, *Pilgrim's progress from this world to that which is to come delivered under the similitude of a dream* (London, 1678).
- Richard Baxter, *A call to the unconverted to turn and live and accept of mercy while mercy may be had* (London, 1675).
- Thomas Hooker, *The soules preparation for Christ being a treatise of contrition* (London, 1638).
- Jehoshaphat's life, 1 Kings 22; 2 Chronicles 20.

Appendix 1d

Oliver Cromwell's cousin

Life

Known only from what remains of her diary, Oliver Cromwell's cousin was born in 1654 and raised by her grandmother, aunt, and, briefly, her father, before being placed into a boarding school in London around the age of twelve. Her parents were 'fearing' of God and 'blest' her 'with a good Education'. Her conversion occurred at a young age, commencing during family prayer and lead to a lifelong religiosity. She faced many 'providences' through life, both good and bad, which included marriage, the safe delivery of children, and, less happily, the early death of her husband after only four years' marriage. It seems that she remarried sometime in the 1690s.

Scholarship

- Katharine Hodgkin, *Madness in seventeenth-century autobiography* (Basingstoke, 2007), 185.
- Antonia Fraser, *The weaker vessel: woman's lot in seventeenth-century England* (London, 1984), 67.

Source in focus

Diary of Oliver Cromwell's cousin

The spiritual diary of a woman who was thought to have been a relative of Oliver Cromwell was transcribed by William Cole into the third volume of his antiquarian collection, 'Athenae Cantabrigienses'. This MS is held at the BL, under Add MS 5858. Oliver Cromwell's cousin's record of providential occurrences sits somewhat strangely amongst Cole's otherwise entertaining miscellanies, anecdotes, and sketches of his county. The diary runs f.213r-221r, with the author's original spelling retained. According to Cole, he received the MS from a Mrs Holgate, who had many documents relating to the Cromwell family in her possession. Having transcribed the diary, he returned the original to Holgate. Cole's script is straightforward to read.

Web of association

In her diary, Oliver Cromwell's cousin:

Reads and cites

- Stephen Charnock, *A discourse of divine providence* (London, 1684).
- Jeremiah Burroughs, *The rare jewel of Christian contentment* (London, 1648).

Records being cured from melancholy by

- Isaiah 66:2, 'For all those *things* hath mine hand made, and all those *things* have been, saith the LORD: but to this *man* will I look, even to *him that is* poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word'.
- 1 Corinthians 10:13, 'But we will not boast of things without *our* measure, but according to the measure of the rule which God hath distributed to us, a measure to reach even unto you'.

Appendix 1e

Mary Franklin

Life

Mary Franklin (née Smith, b. before 1666 - d. 1713) married Robert Franklin (1630-1703), an ejected Presbyterian minister, in 1669, with whom she lived in Blue Anchor Lane, London. As active nonconformists, her family endured persecution during the 1680s: her husband was imprisoned on multiple occasions for attending conventicles and preaching, their goods were confiscated, and their meeting house torn down. Franklin had at least seven children, five of whom predeceased her. Her husband died in 1703.

See also

- *ODNB*, s.v. 'Franklin, Robert'.
- Benjamin Grosvenor, *The dissolution of the earthly house of this tabernacle* (London, 1713).

Scholarship

- Alison Searle, 'Exiles at home', in *The Oxford handbook of early modern English literature and religion*, ed. Andrew Hiscock and Helen Wilcox (Oxford, 2017), 468-71, 478, 480.
- Raymond Brown, *Spirituality in adversity: English non-conformity in a period of repression* (Milton Keynes, 2012), 37-8, 68-9, 238-9.

Sources in focus

Spiritual autobiography, notebook, and letters of Mary Franklin

Mary Franklin's notebook (MS I.h.37), account of spiritual 'experience' (MS I.h.33), and two letters to her husband (MS I.i.25) are extant and are held by the Congregational Library. The notebook includes 'speeches made by William Jenkyn, Henry Cornish, Elizabeth Gaunt, Alice Lisle and Richard Nelthorpe, before they were executed for their complicity in Monmouth's rebellion; with copies of letters written by Henry Dorney, taken from his book; together with Anonymous, A copy of – Knight, "A Relation of the wonderful Conversion of ... Mr Studly", a copy of S.R., "To a Christian Brother"; and a copy of Anonymous, "A True and faithfull Relation of One Samuell Wallass ..."'. The notebook was possibly begun in the 1680s. Franklin's account of her spiritual experiences, which extends over twenty-eight pages of a small volume, passed from her daughter to her granddaughter, Hannah Burton, in the eighteenth century. The narrative was not dated, but it seems likely that it was written during the 1690s, or possibly after 1703 during her widowhood. Franklin's two letters to her husband were written in 1670 when he was imprisoned. Two of his replies are also extant (also MS I.i.25). Franklin's script is straightforward. Her 'experience' seems to have been circulated, as a transcription of them appears in a commonplace book also held at the DWL (MS II.e.46).

Transcriptions of the 'experience' (spelling and punctuation modernised) and letters (mostly unchanged) are available in:

- T. G. Grippen, ed., 'Experiences of Mary Franklin', *Transactions of the Congregational Historical Society* 2 (1905): 387-401.
- ——, 'Prison correspondence of an ejected minister', *Transactions of the Congregational Historical Society* 1 (1904): 345-50.

Web of association

In her writings, Franklin mentions:

Reading

- Samuel Shaw, *The voice of one crying in a wilderness* (London, 1666).

Quotes and alters

- Richard Alleine, *The godly mans portion and sanctuary opened, in two sermons, preached August 17. 1662* (London, 1662).

Transcribes

- Henry Dorney, *Divine contemplations, and spiritual breathings of Mr Henry Dorney* (London, 1684).
- Letters of Monmouth rebels.
- Knight's relation of the cure of Mr Studley, which may have been drawn from Samuel Clarke, *A mirrour or looking-glass both for saints and sinners held forth in some thousands of examples,* vol. 2 (London, 1671).

To alleviate melancholy, refers to

- Psalm 55:22, Proverbs 16:3, and Psalm 50:15.

Bibliography

Manuscript sources

British Library, London

Add MS 27351-27355. Diaries of Mary Rich, July 1666 – November 1677.
Add MS 27356. 'Ocasionale Meditationes' of Lady Warwick, 1663-1677.
Add MS 27357. 'Some Specialties in the life of M. Warwicke', autobiography.
Add MS 27358. 'Collections out of my Lady Warwick's Papers', by Rev. Tho. Woodroffe.
Add MS 35333. Antiquarian miscellanies of the 17th century.
Add MS 4275. Correspondence of divines.
Add MS 4460. Ralph Thoresby transcripts.
Add MS 45963. Heywood papers, volume 1.
Add MS 5810. William Cole, *Athenae Cantabrigienses*, volume 9.
Add MS 5858. William Cole, *Athenae Cantabrigienses*, volume 3.
Lansdowne MS 821. Letters to Henry Cromwell (I), 1654-1656/7.
Lansdowne MS 822. Letters to Henry Cromwell (II), 1656/7-1657.
Lansdowne MS 823. Letters to Henry Cromwell (III), 1657-1659.
Sloane MS 1965. XVII Century, Edward Poeton.
Sloane MS 3945. The life of Christopher Love (1618–1651).
Stowe MS 745. Elizabeth Rokeby's account of experience, 1673.
Stowe MS 746. Elizabeth Rhodes on her religious experiences, 1681.

Congregational Library, London

MS I.h.37. Notebook of Mary Franklin.
MS I.h.33. Mary Franklin, her experience.
MS I.i.25. Autograph correspondence of Robert Franklin and Mary Franklin, 1670.
MS II.b.6. John Collins' 'Relation of the worke of God upon his soule', 1669.

John Rylands Library, Manchester

BAG/25/7/1-3. Sermons, treatises, journal by Rev. William Bagshawe.
Eng MS 960. Sermons of William Benn, 1661-2.
Eng MS 1415. Sermons of Philip Henry, 1680-1.

The National Archives, Kew

PROB 11/552/213. Will of Elias Pledger, apothecary of London, 1716.

Dr Williams's Library, London

MS 24.7. Owen Stockton, 'Observations and experiences'.
MS 24.8. Occasional reflections of Mrs [Elianor] Stockton.
MS 24.9. Owen Stockton, 'On the plague'.
MS 24.10. Owen Stockton, 'Treatise on glorifying God', volume 1.
MS 24.11. Owen Stockton, 'Treatise on glorifying God', volume 2.
MS 28.4. Diary of Elias Pledger.
MS 59.i-vi. Richard Baxter manuscripts, letters, 6 vols.

Printed primary sources

Alleine, Joseph. *An alarme to unconverted sinners*. London: E.T., 1672.

Alleine, Richard. *The godly mans portion and sanctuary opened*. London: s.n., 1662.

——. *The way to true happiness in a serious treatise*. London: Nevil Simmons, 1678.

——. *Vindiciae pietatis: or, A vindication of godliness*. London: s.n., 1665.

Allen, Hannah. *A narrative of God's gracious dealings with that choice Christian Mrs. Hannah Allen*. London: John Wallis, 1683.

Allen, William. *The captive taken from the strong or, A true relation of the gratious release of Mistrisse Deborah Huish (by the arm of the Almighty) from under the power of the Tempter, by whose firy conflicts she had been sorely vexed for about fourteen years.* London: Livewel Chapman, 1658.

Allen, William (d.1686). *A discourse of the nature, ends, and difference of the two covenants evincing in special, that faith as justifying, is not opposed to works of evangelical obedience*. London: J. Darby, 1673.

Allestree, Richard. *The causes of the decay of Christian piety*. London: R. Norton, 1667.

Ambrose, Isaac. *Prima, media & ultima*. London: J. F., 1650.

Annesley, Samuel. *A continuation of morning-exercise questions and cases of conscience*. London: J. A., 1683.

Anon. *Conversion exemplified in the instance of a gracious gentlewoman now in glory*. London: s.n., 1669.

Anon. *The firebrand taken out of the fire, or, the wonderfull history, case, and cure of Mistress Drake*. London: T. Mathewes, 1654.

Anon. *A funeral elegy upon the much lamented death of the right honourable and eminently vertuous lady and exemplary pattern of piety, charity and humility, Mary, Dowager Countess of Warwick*. London: Tho. Parkhurst, 1678.

Archer, John. *Comfort for beleevers about sinnes & troubles*. London: Benjamin Allen, 1645.

Aubrey, John. *Miscellanies upon the following subjects*. London: E. Castle, 1696.

Bagshaw, William. *De spiritualibus pecci*. London: Nevill Simmons, 1702.

Barry, James. *A reviving cordial for a sin-sick despairing soul.* London: s.n., 1699.

Batchiler, John. *The virgins pattern: in the exemplary life, and lamented death of Mrs. Susanna Perwich*. London: Simon Dover, 1661.

Baxter, Richard. *A call to the unconverted to turn and live and accept of mercy while mercy may be had*. London: N. Simmons, 1675.

——. *A Christian directory*. London: Robert White, 1673.

——. *The crucifying of the world by the cross of Christ*. London: Joseph Cranford, 1658.

——. *The cure of church-divisions*. London: Nevil Symmons, 1670.

——. 'The cure of melancholy and overmuch-sorrow by faith and physick'. In *A continuation of morning-exercise questions and cases of conscience practically resolved by sundry ministers, in October 1682*, edited by Samuel Annesley, 263-304. London: J. A., 1683.

——. *Directions and perswasions to a sound conversion*. London: A. M., 1658.

——. *Directions for weak distempered Christians*. London: Nevil Simmons, 1669.

——. *God's goodness vindicated for the help of such (especially in melancholy) as are tempted to deny it*. London: N. Simmons 1671.

——. *Poetical fragments: heart-imployment with God and it self.* London: T. Snowden, 1681.

——. *Reliquiae Baxterianae, or, Mr. Richard Baxters narrative of the most memorable passages of his life and times*. London: T. Parkhurst, 1696.

——. *Richard Baxter's Catholick theologie: plain, pure, peaceable*. London: Robert White, 1675.

——. *The right method for a settled peace of conscience, and spiritual comfort in 32 directions*. London: T. Underhill, 1653.

——. *The saints everlasting rest*. London: Robert White, 1650.

——. *The saints everlasting rest*. London: Thomas Underhill. 1658.

——. *Sacriligious desertion*. London: s. n., 1672.

——. *A saint or a brute*. London: Robert White, 1662.

——. *A treatise of conversion*. London: Nevil Simmons, 1657.

Beadle, John. *The journall or diary of a thoughtfull Christian*. London: E. Cotes, 1656.

Benn, William. *Soul-prosperity in several sermons*. London: Awnsham Churchil, 1683.

Birdwood, James. *Hearts-ease in heart-trouble*. London: J. Robinson, 1690.

Bogan, Zachary. *Meditations of the mirth of a Christian life*. Oxford: H. Hall, 1653.

—. *A help to prayer*. Oxford: W.H., 1660.

Bolton, Robert. *The last conflicts and death of Mr. Thomas Peacock*. London: George Miller, 1646.

Brinsley, John. *The drinking of the bitter cup: or, The hardest lesson in Christ's school, learned and taught by himself, passive obedience*. London: E. C., 1660.

Bunyan, John. *The acceptable sacrifice, or, The excellency of a broken heart shewing the nature, signs and proper effects of a contrite spirit*. London: George Larkin, 1689.

—. *A book for boys and girls, or, Country rhimes for children by J.B.* London: N.P., 1686.

—. *Come & welcome to Jesus Christ*. London: B. Harris, 1678.

—. *Grace abounding to the chief of sinners*. London: George Larkin, 1666.

—. *The holy war, made by Christ upon the devil, for the regaining of Man*. London: Dorman Newman, 1684.

—. *The pilgrim's progress from this world to that which is to come delivered under the similitude of a dream*. London: Nath. Ponder, 1678.

Burches, George. *Mans inbred malady, or The doctrine of original sin maintained, as also the necessity of infants baptism*. London: W. Wilson, 1655.

Burton, Henry. *Christ on his throne*. London: Richard Hearne, 1640.

Burton, Robert. *The anatomy of melancholy.* Oxford: Henry Cripps, 1638.

—. *The anatomy of melancholy.* Oxford: J. Lichfield, 1621.

—. *The anatomy of melancholy.* Oxford: J. Lichfield, 1624.

Burroughs, Jeremiah. *The eighth book of Mr Jeremiah Burroughs*. London: Peter Cole, 1654.

—. *The rare jewel of Christian contentment*. London: Peter Cole, 1648.

Calamy, Edmund. *The godly mans ark or, City of refuge, in the day of his distresse*. London: Jo. Hancock, 1657.

—. *An abridgement of Mr Baxter's history of his life and times*. London: S. Bridge, 1702.

—. *An abridgement of Mr. Baxter's history of his life and times*. 2nd ed. London: J. Lawrence, 1713.

—. *A continuation of the account of the ministers, lecturers, masters and fellows of colleges, and schoolmasters, who were ejected and silenced after the Restoration in 1660*. London: R. Ford, 1727.

Caley, Abraham. *A glimpse of eternity*. London: Thomas Parkhurst, 1683.

Calvin, Jean. *The Psalmes of David and others, with M. John Calvins commentaries*. London: Thomas East, 1571.

Caryl, Joseph. *An exposition with practicall observations continued upon the eighth, ninth and tenth chapters of the book of Job*. London: A. Miller, 1647.

——. *An exposition with practicall observations continued upon the fifteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth chapters of the book of Job*. London: Matthew Simmons, 1650.

——. *An exposition with practical observations upon the three first chapters of the book of Job delivered in XXI lectures at Magnus neare the bridge, London*. London: G. Miller, 1643.

——. *An exposition with practical observations continued upon the thirty-eighth, thirty-ninth, fortieth, forty-first, and forty-second (being the five last) chapters of the Book of Job being the substance of fifty-two lectures or meditations*. London: M. and S. Simmons, 1666.

Casaubon, Meric. *A treatise concerning enthusiasme*. London: R. D, 1655.

Charleton, Walter. *Natural history of the passions*. London: T.N., 1674.

Charnock, Stephen. *A discourse of divine providence*. London: R. Roberts, 1684.

Clarke, Samuel. *A mirrour or looking-glass both for saints and sinners held forth in some thousands of examples*, volume 2. London: Tho. Milbourn, 1671.

Collinges, John. *Thirteen sermons upon several useful subjects two of them being funeral discourses, occasioned by the death of the Reverend Mr. Nathaniel Mitchel, minister of the Gospel*. London: T.S., 1684.

Collins, An. *Divine songs and meditacions*. London: R. Bishop, 1653.

Coppe, Abiezer. *A remonstrance of the sincere and zealous protestation*. London: James Cottrel, 1651.

——. *A Character of a true Christian*. London: T. D., 1680.

Cradock, Samuel. *Knowledge & practice*. London: J. Hayes, 1659.

Crofton, Zachary. *Bethshemesh clouded, or some animadversion on the rabbinical Talmud of Rabbi John Rogers of Thomas-Apostles*. London: A.M., 1653.

Dickson, David. *Therapeutica sacra*. Edinburgh: Evan Tyler, 1664.

Doolittle, Thomas. *Captives bound in chains made free by Christ their surety, or, The misery of graceless sinners and their recovery by Christ their savior*. London: A.H., 1674.

—. *Man ashiv le-Yahoweh*. London: R. I., 1666.

Dorney, Henry. *Divine contemplations, and spiritual breathings of Mr Henry Dorney*. London: James Rawlins, 1684.

Dugard, Thomas. *Death and the grave*. London: William Dugard, 1649.

Dyke, Daniel. *Mystery of self-deceiving*. London: Edward Griffin, 1614.

Edwards, Thomas. *The first and second part of Gangraena*. London: T. R., 1646.

Featley, Daniel. *The dippers dipt, or, the Anabaptists duck'd and plung'd*. London: Nicholas Bourne, 1645.

—. *Threnoikos, The house of mourning*. London: John Dawson, 1640.

Fenner, William. *A treatise of the affections, or, The souls pulse*. London: A.M., 1650.

Flavel, John. *A token for mourners*. London: Robert Boulter, 1674.

—. *Pneumatologia, a treatise of the soul of man*. London: Francis Tyton, 1685.

Ford, Simon. *The spirit of bondage and adoption*. London: T. Maxey, 1655.

Fuller, Thomas. *Abel redevivus, or, The dead yet speaking the lives and deaths of the moderne divines*. London: Tho. Brudenell, 1651.

Fullwood, Francis. *Toleration not to be abused*. London: John Martyn, 1672.

Gale, Theophilus. *The life and death of Mr John Rowe*. London: Francis Tyton, 1673.

Glanvill, Joseph. *Essays on several important subjects*. London: J.D., 1676.

—. *Philosophia pia*. London: J. Macock, 1671.

Glanvill, Thomas. *The Vanity of dogmatizing*. London: E.C, 1661.

Goodwin, Thomas. *A childe of light walking in darknesse*. London: M.F., 1636.

Gouge, William. *The whole-armor of God*. London: John Beale, 1619.

Greenham, Richard. *Short rules sent to a gentlewoman troubled in mind*. London: T. S, 1612.

Gregory, Edmund. *An historical anatomy of Christian melancholy, sympathetically set forth, in a threefold state of the soul.* London: Humphrey Moseley, 1646.

Grosvenor, Benjamin. *The dissolution of the earthly house of this tabernacle. Death under that notion consider'd, in a sermon occasion'd by the decease of Mrs. Mary Franklin, with some account of her life and death, now published at the request of the relations*. London: John Clark, 1713.

—. *The mourner: Or, the afflicts relieved*. London: Richard Hett, 1731.

Gurnall, William. *The Christian in compleat armour*. London: Ralph Smith, 1655.

Hall, Thomas. *Vindiciaae literarum*. London: W. H., 1654.

Hall, Joseph. *Christian moderation in two books*. London: Miles Flesher, 1640.

—. *The shaking of the olive-tree. The remaining works of that incomparable prelate Joseph Hall*. London: J. Cadwel, 1660.

Harvey, Christopher, *The school of the heart; or, The heart of it self gone away from God brought back again to him, and instructed by him. In 47 emblems*. London: L. Ll., 1675.

Harvey, William. *The anatomical exercises of Dr. William Harvey professor of physick, and physician to the Kings Majesty, concerning the motion of the heart and blood.* London: Francis Leach, 1653.

Henry, Philip. *Diaries and letters of Philip Henry, A.D. 1631-1696*, edited by Matthew Henry Lee. London: Kegan Paul, Trench & co., 1882.

Herbert, George. *The temple: sacred poems and private ejaculations.* Cambridge: Thom. Buck, 1633.

Heywood, Oliver. *A heart-treasure, or, An essay tending to fil[l] and furnish the head and heart of every Christian*. London: A. Ibbitson, 1667.

—. *The Rev. Oliver Heywood, B.A., 1630-1702; his autobiography, diaries, anecdote and event books*, edited by Joseph Horsfall, 4 volumes. Bingley: T. Harrison, 1882.

Hickman, Henry. *The believers duty towards the Spirit*. London: Sa. Gellibrand, 1665.

—. *A justification of the fathers and the schoolmen that they are not self condemned for denying the positivity of sin*. Oxford: A. Lichfield, 1659.

—. *Plus ultra*. London: s.n., 1661.

Hill, Thomas. *The arte of gardening wherunto is added much necessarie matter, with a number of secrets: and the phisicke helps belonging to each hearb, which are easily prepared*. London: Edward Allde, 1608.

Hooker, Thomas. *The soules preparation for Christ being a treatise of contrition*. London: A. Crooke, 1638.

Horton, Thomas. *Rich treasure in earthen vessels a sermon preached, Jan. 1, 1662/3, at the funeral of that reverend and faithful servant of Jesus Christ, Mr. James Nalton, late minister of God's word at St. Leonards Foster-lane*. London: s.n., 1663.

Howe, John. *The blessednesse of the righteous.* London: Sarah Griffin, 1668.

Irish, David. *Levamen infirmi: or, cordial counsel to the sick and diseased.* London: s.n., 1700.

Jackson, Charles, ed. *Yorkshire diaries and autobiographies in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries*. Durham: Andrews & co. for the Surtees Society, 1875.

Jacombe, Thomas. *Hooinh egzainiomnh, or, A treatise of holy dedication*. London: Ralph Smith, 1668.

James I and VI. *Basilikon doron*. Edinburgh: Robert Waldegrave, 1603.

Jelinger, Christopher. *The excellency of Christ, or, The rose of Sharon shewing the art of taking Christ as the onely soveraign medicine of a sin-sick soul*. London: F. Eglesfield, 1647.

Keach, Benjamin, *The glorious lover.* London: J. D, 1679.

Major, Elizabeth. *Honey on the rod: or a comfortable contemplation for one in affliction with sundry poems on several subjects*. London: Tho. Maxey, 1656.

Milles, Robert. *Abrahams sute for Sodome a sermon preached at Pauls Crosse the 25 of August, 1611*. London: William Hall, 1612.

Milton, John. *Paradise lost a poem written in ten books*. London: Peter Parker, 1667.

——. *Poems of Mr. John Milton*. London: Ruth Raworth, 1645.

More, Henry. *Enthusiasmus triumphatus, or, A discourse of the nature, causes, kinds, and cure, of enthusiasme*. London: J. Flesher, 1656.

Morton, Charles. *The spirit of man.* Boston: B. Harris, 1692.

Ness, Christopher. *A spiritual legacy being a pattern of piety for all young persons practice in a faithful relation of the holy life and happy death of Mr. John Draper*. London: H. Clark, 1684.

Noble, Mark. *Memoirs of several persons and families, who, by females are allied to, or descended from, the Protectorate-house of Cromwell; chiefly collected from original papers and records*, volume 2. Birmingham: Pearson and Rollason, 1784.

On-Hi, Hart. *Trodden down strength by the God of strength, or Mrs Drake revived*. London: R. Bishop, 1647.

Parker, Samuel. *A discourse of ecclesiastical politie*. London: John Martyn, 1670.

Parkhurst, Nathaniel. *The faithful and diligent Christian described and exemplified*. London: Samuel Sprint, 1684.

Patrick, Simon. *A friendly debate*. London: s.n., 1668.

—. *A continuation of the friendly debate*. London: R. Royston, 1669.

Peck, Francis. *Academia tertia Anglicana; or The antiquarian annals of Stanford*. London: s.n., 1727.

Perkins, William. *The first part of the cases of conscience*. Cambridge: John Legat, 1604.

—. *The whole treatise of the cases of conscience*. Cambridge: John Legat, 1606.

Petto, Samuel. *The voice of the Spirit. ... To which is added. Roses from Sharon or sweet experiences reached out by Christ to some of his beloved ones in this wildernes[s].* London: Livewell Chapman, 1654.

Pierce, Thomas. *An impartial inquiry into the nature of sin*. London: R.N., 1660.

Pledger, Elias (the older). 'Of the cause of inward trouble'. In *The morning-exercise at Cripple-gate, or, Several cases of conscience practically resolved by sundry ministers*, edited by Samuel Annesley, 294-318. London: A. Maxwell, 1677.

Pordage, John. *Theologia mystica*. London: s.n., 1683.

Porter, Robert. *The life of Mr. John Hieron*. London: Thomas Parkhurst, 1691.

Reeve, John. *Spiritual hymns upon Solomons song: or, Love in the right channel*. London: s.n., 1684.

Reynolds, Edward. *A sermon preached before the peers in the Abby Church at Westminster*. London: Tho. Ratcliffe, 1666.

Rich, Mary. *Memoir of Lady Warwick: also her diary, from AD 1666 to 1672*. London: Religious Tract Society, 1847.

Roberts, Francis. *A broken spirit, God's sacrifices*. London: George Calvert, 1647.

Rogers, John, *Ohel or beth-shemesh. A tabernacle for the sun, or, Irenicum evangelicum*. London: R. I. and G. and H. Eversden, 1653.

Rogers, Timothy. *A discourse concerning trouble of mind and the disease of melancholly*. London: Thomas Parkhurst, 1691.

—. *Practical discourses on sickness & recovery in several sermons*. London: Thomas Parkhurst, 1691.

Sharp, Jane. *The midwives book*. London: Simon Miller, 1671.

Shaw, Samuel. *The voice of one crying in a wilderness*. London: s.n., 1666.

Spencer, John. *Kaina kai palaia: things new and old, or, A store-house of similies, sentences, allegories, apophthegms, adagies, apologues, divine, morall, politicall*. London: W. Wilson, 1658.

Stockton, Owen. *The best interest, or, A treatise of a saving interest in Christ*. London: T. Parkhurst, 1682.

——. *Consolation in life and death.* London: J. R., 1681.

——. *A scriptural catechism useful for all sorts of persons*. London: H. Brome, 1672.

——. *A treatise of family instruction.* London: H. Brome, 1672.

Sutton, Katherine. *A Christian womans experiences of the glorious workings of gods free grace.* Rotterdam: Henry Goddaeus, 1663.

Taylor, Jeremy. *The rule and exercises of holy living*. London: R. Norton, 1650.

Trapnel, Anna. *A legacy for saints; being several experiences of the dealings of God with Anna Trapnel*. London: T. Brewster, 1654.

Trosse, George. *The life of the Reverend Mr. Geo. Trosse*, edited by Joseph Hallett. 1st ed. Exon: Jos. Bliss, 1714.

——. *The life of the Reverend Mr. George Trosse*, edited by Isaac Gilling. 2nd ed. London: John Clark, 1715.

Turner, Jane. *Choice experiences of the kind dealings of God before, in, and after conversion*. London: H. Hils, 1653.

Turner, William. *A compleat history of the most remarkable providences*. London: John Dunton, 1697.

Venn, Anne. *A wise virgins lamp burning [...] being the experiences of Mrs. Anne Venn*. London: E. P. Cole, 1658.

Vernon, John. *The compleat scholler; or, A relation of the life, and latter-end especially, of Caleb Vernon.* London: s.n., 1666.

Wadsworth, Thomas. *Wadsworth's remains being a collection of some few meditations with respect to the Lords-Supper... with a preface containing several remarkables of his holy life and death from his own note-book*. London: Tho. Parkhurst, 1680.

Walker, Anthony. *Eureka eureka, the virtuous woman found her loss bewailed.* London: Nathanael Ranew, 1678.

——. *The holy life of Mrs. Elizabeth Walker.* London: John Leake, 1690.

——. *The vertuous wife: or, The holy life of Mrs. Elizab[e]th Walker*. London: N.R, 1694.

Walker, Henry. *Ecce homo, the little Parliament unbowelled*. London: Jane Coe, 1644.

—. *Spirituall experiences, of sundry beleevers held forth by them at severall solemne meetings, and conferences to that end.* London: Robert Ibbitson, 1653.

—. *Tragemata, sweet-meats....great mystery of the new covenant*. London: R. Ibbitson, 1654.

Watson, Thomas. *A body of practical divinity*. London: Thomas Parkhurst, 1692.

—. *Heaven taken by storm; or, The holy violence a Christian is to put forth in the pursuit after glory*. London: R.W., 1669.

Westminster Assembly of Divines. *The humble advice of the Assembly of Divines, now by authority of parliament sitting at Westminster, concerning a confession of faith*. London: for the Company of Stationers, 1647.

—. *The confession of faith and catechisms*. London: Robert Bostock, 1649.

White, Thomas. *A treatise of the power of godlinesse*. London: R. I., 1658.

Winstanley, Gerrard. *Fire in the bush. The spirit burning, not consuming, but purging mankind*. London: Giles Calvert, 1650.

—. *The breaking of the day of God*. London: I. C., 1649.

Younge, Richard. *An experimental index of the heart*. London: James Crump, 1658.

—. *The prevention of poverty, together with the cure of melancholy, alias discontent.* London: R. & W. Leybourn, 1655.

Secondary sources

Achinstein, Sharon. *Literature and dissent in Milton's England*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003.

Adcock, Rachel. *Baptist women's writings in revolutionary culture, 1640-1680*. Abingdon: Routledge, 2016.

—. '"Like to an anatomy before us": Deborah Huish's spiritual experiences and the attempt to establish the Fifth Monarchy'. *The Seventeenth Century* 26, 1 (2011): 44-68.

—, Sara Read, Anna Ziomek, eds. *Flesh and spirit: an anthology of seventeenth-century women's writing*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2016.

Alberti, Fay Bound. *Matters of the heart: history, medicine, and emotion*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010.

Allen, Graham. *Intertextuality.* London: Routledge, 2011.

Amelang, James. *The flight of Icarus: artisan autobiography in early modern Europe*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998.

Babb, Lawrence. 'The background of "Il Penseroso"'. *Studies in Philology* 37, 2 (1940): 257-273.

——. *The Elizabethan malady: a study of melancholia in English literature from 1580 to 1642*. East Lansing: Michigan-State University Press, 1951.

Backscheider, Paul R. 'Personality and biblical allusion in Defoe's letters', *South Atlantic Review* 47, 1 (1982):1-20.

Bagger, Michael C. *Religious experience, justification, and history*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999.

Baker, Naomi. *Plain ugly: the unattractive body in early modern culture*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2010.

Barber, Sarah. 'Curiosity and reality: the context and interpretation of a seventeenth-century image'. *History Workshop Journal* 70 (2010): 21-46.

Barry, Jonathan. 'Piety and the patient: medicine and religion in eighteenth century Bristol'. In *Patients and practitioners: lay perceptions of medicine in pre-industrial society*, edited by Roy Porter, 145-176. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985.

Bell, Matthew. *Melancholia: the Western malady*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014.

Bennett, Tony, Lawrence Gross and Meaghan Morris, eds. *New keywords: a revised vocabulary of culture and society*. Malden: Blackwell, 2005.

Black, J. William. *Reformation pastors: Richard Baxter and the ideal of the reformed pastor.* Bletchley: Paternoster, 2004.

Brann, Noel L. *The debate over the origin of genius during the Italian Renaissance: the theories of supernatural frenzy and natural melancholy.* Leiden: Brill, 2002.

Brown, Raymond. *Spirituality in adversity: English non-conformity in a period of repression*. Milton Keynes: Paternoster, 2012.

Butler, Trent C, ed. *Holman Bible dictionary*. Nashville: Holman, 1991.

Cambers, Andrew. *Godly reading: print, manuscript and puritanism in England, 1580-1720*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011.

——. 'Reading, the godly, and self-writing in England, circa 1580-1720'. *Journal of British Studies* 46 (2007): 796-825.

Canning, Kathleen. 'Feminist history after the linguistic turn: historicizing discourse and experience'. *Signs* 19, 2 (1994): 368-404.

Clark, J. C. D. 'Secularization and modernization: the failure of a "grand narrative"'. *The Historical Journal* 55, 1 (2012): 161-194.

Coffey, John. *Persecution and toleration in Protestant England, 1558-1689*. Harlow: Longman, 2000.

Cohen, Charles Lloyd. *God's caress: the psychology of puritan religious experience*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986.

Collins, Stephen. 'British stepfamily relationships, 1500-1800'. *Journal of Family History* 16, 4 (1991): 331-44.

Collinson, Patrick. *The Elizabethan puritan movement*. London: Cape, 1967.

Condie, Keith. 'Some further correspondence between Richard Baxter and Katherine Gell'. *The Historical Journal* 53, 1 (2010): 165-176.

Cooper, Tim. *John Owen, Richard Baxter and the formation of nonconformity*. London: Taylor & Francis, 2011.

Couchman, Jane and Ann Crabb, eds. *Women's letters across Europe, 1400-1700: form and persuasion*. Farnham: Ashgate, 2005.

Cragg, Gerald R. *Puritanism in the period of the Great Persecution, 1660-1688*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1957.

Crawford, Julie. *Marvelous Protestantism: monstrous births in post-Reformation England*. Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 2005.

Crawford, Patricia. '"The sucking child": adult attitudes to child care in the first year of life in seventeenth-century England'. *Continuity and Change* 1, 1 (1986): 25-52.

Cressy, David and Lori Anne Ferrell. *Religion and society in early modern England: a sourcebook*. New York: Routledge, 1996.

Daniel, Drew. *The melancholy assemblage: affect and epistemology in the English Renaissance*. New York: Fordham University Press, 2013.

Dawson, Lesel. *Lovesickness and gender in early modern English literature*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008.

Dear, Peter. *Discipline and experience: the mathematical way in the Scientific Revolution*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995.

De Krey, Gary S. *London and the Restoration, 1659-1683*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005.

Dixon, Thomas. *From passions to emotions: the creation of a secular psychological category.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003.

Donagan, Barbara. 'The clerical patronage of Robert Rich, Second Earl of Warwick, 1619-1642'. *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 120, 5 (1976): 388-419.

Douglas, J. D., ed. *New Bible dictionary*. Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press, 1982.

Dunan-Page, Anne. *Grace overwhelming: John Bunyan,* The pilgrim's progress *and the extremes of the baptist mind.* Bern: Peter Lang, 2006.

Durston, Christopher and Jacqueline Eales, eds. *The culture of English puritanism, 1560-1700*. London: Palgrave, 1996.

Durston, Christopher. 'Puritan rule and the failure of cultural revolution, 1645-1660'. In *The culture of English puritanism, 1560-1700*, edited by Christopher Durston and Jacqueline Eales, 210-233. New York: Macmillan, 1996.

Ebner, Dean. *Autobiography in seventeenth-century england: theology and self.* The Hague: Mouton, 1971.

Elmer, Peter. *Witchcraft, witch-hunting, and politics in early modern England*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016.

——. 'Medicine, religion and the puritan revolution'. In *The medical revolution of the seventeenth century,* edited by Roger French and Andrew Wear, 10-45. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989.

Erickson, Robert. *The language of the heart, 1600-1750*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1997.

Ezell, Margaret. 'Body and soul'. In *The Oxford handbook of early modern English literature and religion*, edited by Andrew Hiscock and Helen Wilcox, 598-612. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017.

Fell-Smith, Charlotte. *Mary Rich, Countess of Warwick*. London: Longmans, 1901.

Fincham, Kenneth and Nicholas Tyacke. *Altars restored: the changing face of English religious worship, 1547 - c.1700*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007.

Firth, C. H. 'Cromwell and the Crown'. *The English Historical Review* 18, 69 (1903): 52-80.

Fissell, Mary. *Vernacular bodies: the politics of reproduction in early modern England*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004.

Foucault, Michel. *Madness and civilisation: a history of insanity in the age of reason,* translated by Richard Howard. New York: Vintage, 1965.

Fraser, Antonia. *The weaker vessel: woman's lot in seventeenth-century England*. London: Phoenix Press, 1984.

Gaskill, Malcolm. 'Witchcraft and evidence in early modern England'. *Past & Present* 198 (2008): 33-70.

Goldstein, Jan. 'Psychiatry'. In *Companion encyclopedia of the history of medicine*, volume 2, edited by William Bynum and Roy Porter, 1350-72. London: Routledge, 1993.

Gowland, Angus. 'The ethics of Renaissance melancholy'. *Intellectual History Review* 18, 1 (2008): 103-17.

——. 'The problem of early modern melancholy'. *Past & Present* 191 (2006): 77-120.

——. *The worlds of Renaissance melancholy: Robert Burton in context*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006.

Gray, Catharine. *Women writers and public debate in 17th-century Britain*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007.

Greaves, Richard. *John Bunyan and English nonconformity*. London: Hambledon Press, 1992.

——. '"To be found faithful": The nonconformist tradition in England, 1660-1700'. *Bunyan Studies* 4 (1991): 37-65.

Grell, Ole Peter and Andrew Cunningham. 'Introduction'. In *Religio medici: medicine and religion in seventeenth-century England*, edited by Ole Peter Grell and Andrew Cunningham, 1-11. Aldershot: Scolar Press, 1996.

Greyerz, Kaspar von. 'L'automation spirituelle en Angleterre (XVII siècle)'. *Histoire de l'education* 70 (1996): 49-63.

Gribben, Crawford. 'Lay conversion and Calvinist doctrine during the English Commonwealth'. In *The rise of the laity in evangelical Protestantism*, edited by Deryck W. Lovegrove, 36-46. London: Routledge, 2002.

Griffin Wolff, Cynthia. 'Literary reflections of the puritan character'. *Journal of the History of Ideas* 29, 1 (1968): 13-32.

Grippen, T. G., ed. 'Experiences of Mary Franklin'. *Transactions of the Congregational Historical Society* 2 (1905): 387-401.

——. 'Prison correspondence of an ejected minister'. *Transactions of the Congregational Historical Society* 1 (1904): 345-50.

Haigh, Christopher. 'The Church of England, the nonconformists and reason: another restoration controversy'. *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 69, 3 (2018): 531-56.

Hampton, Stephen. *Anti-Arminians: the Anglican reformed tradition from Charles II to George I*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008.

Harley, David N. 'Medical metaphors in English moral theology, 1560-1660'. *The Journal of the History of Medicine and Allied Sciences* 48 (1993): 396-435.

——. 'Mental illness, magical medicine, and the devil in northern England, 1650-1700'. In *The medical revolution of the seventeenth century*, edited by Roger French and Andrew Wear, 114-44. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989.

——. 'The theology of affliction and the experience of sickness in the godly family, 1650–1714: the Henrys and the Newcomes'. In *Religio medici: medicine and religion in seventeenth-century England*, edited by Ole Peter Grell and Andrew Cunningham, 273–92. Aldershot: Scolar Press, 1996.

Harman, Barbara Leah. 'George Herbert's "Affliction (I)": the limits of representation'. *English Literary History* 44, 2 (1977): 267-85.

Heffernan, Carol Falvo. *The melancholy muse: Chaucer, Shakespeare, and early medicine.* Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 1995.

Henry, John. 'The matter of souls: medical theory and theology in seventeenth-century England'. In *The Medical revolution of the seventeenth century,* edited by Roger French and Andrew Wear, 87-113. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989.

Heyd, Michael. *'Be sober and reasonable': the critique of enthusiasm in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries.* New York: E. J. Brill, 1995.

——. 'Medical discourse in religious controversy: the case of the critique of "enthusiasm" on the eve of the Enlightenment'. *Science in Context* 8, 1 (1995): 133-57.

Hill, Christopher. *Some intellectual consequences of the English Revolution*. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1980.

——. *The experience of defeat: Milton and some contemporaries*. London: Faber, 1984.

Hillman, David. 'Visceral knowledge: Shakespeare, skepticism, and the interior of the early modern body'. In *The body in parts: fantasies of corporeality in early modern Europe*, edited by David Hillman and Carla Mazzio, 81-106. London: Routledge, 1997.

Hindmarsh, Bruce. *The evangelical conversion narrative: spiritual autobiography in early modern England*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005.

Hodgkin, Katharine. *Madness in seventeenth-century autobiography.* Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007.

——. 'Scurvy vapours and the devil's claw: religion and the body in seventeenth-century women's melancholy'. *Studies in the Literary Imagination* 44, 2 (2011): 1-21.

—, ed. *Women, madness and sin in early modern England: the autobiographical writings of Dionys Fitzherbert*. Farnham: Ashgate, 2010.

Houlbrooke, Ralph. 'The puritan death-bed, c.1560-c.1660'. In *The culture of English puritanism, 1560-1700*, edited by Christopher Durston and Jacqueline Eales, 122-44. London: Palgrave, 1996.

Houston, R. A. 'A latent historiography? the case of psychiatry in Britain, 1500-1820'. *The Historical Journal* 57, 1 (2014): 289-310.

—. *Punishing the dead? Suicide, lordship and community in Britain, 1500-1830*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010.

Ingram, Allan, et al ed. *Melancholy experience in the long eighteenth century*. London: Palgrave, 2011.

—, ed. *Patterns of madness in the eighteenth century: a reader*. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1998.

Jackson, Ken and A. F. Marotti. 'The turn to religion in early modern English studies'. *Criticism* 46 (2004): 167-90.

Jackson, Stanley W. *Melancholia and depression: from Hippocratic times to modern times*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1986.

Johns, Adrian. 'The physiology of reading and the anatomy of enthusiasm'. In *Religio medici: medicine and religion in seventeenth-century England*, edited by Ole Peter Grell and Andrew Cunningham, 136-70. Aldershot: Scolar Press, 1996.

Jordanova, Ludmilla. *History in practice*, 2nd ed. London: Bloomsbury, 2006.

—. 'Richard Mead's communities of belief in eighteenth-century London'. In *Christianity and community in the West*, edited by Simon Ditchfield, 241-259. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2001.

—. 'The social construction of medical knowledge'. *Social History of Medicine* 8, 3 (1995): 361-81.

Kassell, Lauren. 'Magic, alchemy and the medical economy in early modern England: the case of Robert Fludd's magnetical medicine'. In *Medicine and the market in England and its colonies, c. 1450 - c. 1850*, edited by Mark S. R. Jenner and Patrick Wallis, 88-107. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007.

—. *Medicine and magic in Elizabethan London: Simon Forman; astrologer, alchemist, and physician*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005.

—. 'Medical understandings of the body, c. 1500-1750'. In *Sex and the body: 1500 to the present*, edited by Sarah Toulalan and Kate Fisher, 57-74. London: Routledge, 2013.

—. 'How to read Simon Forman's casebooks: medicine, astrology, and gender in Elizabethan London'. *Social History of Medicine* 12, 1 (1999): 3-18.

Kauffman, Avra. 'Women's diaries of late Stuart England'. In *Recording and reordering: essays on the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century diary and journal*, edited by Dan Doll and Jessica Munns, 65-101. Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 2006.

Keeble, Neil H. *The literary culture of nonconformity in later seventeenth-century England*. Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1987.

—. *Richard Baxter: puritan man of letters*. Oxford: Clarendon, 1982.

—, and Geoffrey F. Nuttall, eds. *Calendar of the correspondence of Richard Baxter*, 2 volumes. Oxford: Clarendon, 1991.

Klibansky, Raymond, Erwin Panofsky, and Fritz Saxl. *Saturn and melancholy: studies in the history of natural philosophy, religion and art.* London: Nelson, 1964.

LaCapra, Dominick. *History in transit: experience, identity, critical theory.* Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2004.

Lake, Peter. *The Antichrist's lewd hat: Protestants, papists and players in post-Reformation England*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002.

—. *The boxmaker's revenge: 'orthodoxy', 'heterodoxy' and the politics of the parish in early Stuart London*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2009.

—. 'Introduction: puritanism, Arminianism and Nicholas Tyacke'. In *Religious politics in post-Reformation England*, edited by Kenneth Fincham and Peter Lake, 1-15. Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2006.

—. *Moderate puritans and the Elizabethan Church*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982.

—. 'Predestinarian propositions'. *The Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 46 (1995): 110-123.

Lambert, Erin. *Singing the Resurrection: body, community, and belief in Reformation Europe*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018.

Lamont, William L. *Richard Baxter and the millennium: Protestant imperialism and the English Revolution*. London: Croom Helm, 1979.

Lederer, David. *Madness, religion and the state in early modern Europe: a Bavarian beacon*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006.

Little, Patrick. 'Uncovering a protectoral stud: horses and horse-breeding at the court of Oliver Cromwell, 1653-8'. *Historical Research* 82, 216 (2009): 252-67.

Longfellow, Erica. 'Inwardness and English Bible translations'. In *The Oxford handbook of the Bible in early modern England, c.1530-1700*, edited by Kevin Killeen, Helen Smith, and Rachel White, 626-39. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015.

Lund, Mary Ann. *Melancholy, medicine and religion in early modern England: reading* The anatomy of melancholy. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010.

——. 'Reading and the cure of despair in *The anatomy of melancholy*'. *Studies in Philology* 105, 4 (2008): 533-58.

Lynch, Kathleen. *Protestant autobiography in the seventeenth-century anglophone world.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012.

Lyons, Bridget Gellert. *Voices of melancholy: studies in literary treatments of melancholy in Renaissance England*. New York: Barnes and Noble, 1971.

MacDonald, Michael. 'Insanity and the realities of history in early modern England'. *Psychological Medicine* 11, 1 (1981): 11-25.

——. *Mystical bedlam: madness, anxiety, and healing in seventeenth-century England*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981.

——, and Terrence Murphy. *Sleepless souls: suicide in early modern England*. Oxford: Clarendon, 1990.

Macfarlane, Alan. *The family life of Ralph Josselin*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970.

Mack, Phyllis. *Heart religion in the British Enlightenment: gender and emotion in early Methodism*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008.

Mann, Sophie. '"A double care": prayer as therapy in early modern England'. *Social History of Medicine* (Forthcoming, 2018).

Martensen, Robert. 'The transformation of Eve: women's bodies, medicine and culture in early modern England'. In *Sexual knowledge, sexual science: the history of attitudes to sexuality,* edited by Roy Porter and Mikulás Teich, 107-33. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994.

Mascuch, Michael. *The origins of the individualist self: autobiography and self-identity in England*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 1997.

Mendelson, Sara Heller. *The mental world of Stuart women: three studies*. Brighton: Harvester, 1987.

Morrissey, Mary. 'Narrative authority in spiritual life-writing: the example of Dionys Fitzherbert (1608-1641)'. *The Seventeenth Century* 15, 1 (2000): 1-17.

Narveson, Kate. *Bible readers and lay writers in early modern England: gender and self-definition in an emergent writing culture.* Farnham: Ashgate, 2012.

——. 'Resting assured in puritan piety: The lay experience'. In *Puritanism and emotion in the early modern world*, edited by Alec Ryrie and Tom Schwanda, 166-192. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016.

Neely, Carol Thomas. *Distracted subjects: madness and gender in Shakespeare and early modern culture*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2004.

Newton, Hannah. 'The sick child in early modern England, 1580–1720'. *Endeavour* 38, 2 (2014): 122-9.

——. '"Very sore nights and days": the child's experience of illness in early modern England, c.1580–1720'. *Medical History* 55, 2 (2011): 153-82.

Nuttall, Geoffrey F. *The Holy Spirit in puritan faith and experience.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992.

Orr, Mary. *Intertextuality: debates and contexts.* Cambridge: Polity Press, 2003.

Osler, Margaret J. 'The canonical imperative: rethinking the Scientific Revolution'. In *Rethinking the Scientific Revolution*, edited by Margaret J. Osler, 3-22. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009.

Osmond, Rosalie. *Mutual accusation: seventeenth-century body and soul dialogues in their literary and theological context*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990.

Pallotti, Donatella. '"Out of their owne mouths"? Conversion narratives and English radical religious practice in the seventeenth century'. *Journal of Early Modern Studies* 1, 1 (2012): 73-95.

Parker, Charles H. 'Diseased bodies, defiled souls: corporality and religious difference in the Reformation'. *Renaissance Quarterly* 67, 4 (2014): 1265-97.

Paster, Gail Kern. *Humoring the body: emotions and the Shakespearean stage.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004.

Pelling, Margaret. *The common lot: sickness, medical occupations and the urban poor in early modern England*. London: Routledge, 1998.

Pickering, Michael. *History, experience, and cultural studies.* London: Macmillan. 1997.

Porter, Roy and Andrew Wear, eds. *Problems and methods in the history of medicine.* London: Croom Helm, 1987.

Porter, Roy. *Mind-forg'd manacles: a history of madness in England from the Restoration to the Regency*. London: Athlone, 1987.

—. 'The patient's view: doing medical history from below'. *Theory and Society* 14 (1985): 175-198.

—. *A social history of madness: stories of the insane.* London: Phoenix Giants, 1999.

Potter, Lois. *Secret rites and secret writing: Royalist literature, 1641–1660*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989.

Roberts, S. Bryn. *Puritanism and the pursuit of happiness: the ministry and theology of Ralph Venning, 1621–1674*. Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2015.

Robinson, H. Wheeler. *The Christian doctrine of Man*. Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1913.

Roper, Lyndal. *Oedipus and the devil: witchcraft, sexuality, and religion in early modern Europe*. London: Routledge, 1994.

Ruberg, Willemijn. 'The letter as medicine: studying health and illness in Dutch daily correspondence, 1770–1850'. *Social History of Medicine* 23, 3 (2010): 492-508.

Rublack, Ulinka. 'Fluxes: the early modern body and the emotions'. *History Workshop Journal* 53, 1 (2002): 1-16.

Rubin, Miri and Ira Katznelson. 'Introduction'. In *Religious conversion: History, experience and meaning*, edited by Rubin and Katznelson, 1-30. Farnham: Ashgate, 2014.

Ryrie, Alec. *Being Protestant in Reformation Britain*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013.

Sargent, Rose-Mary. 'Scientific experiment and legal expertise: the way of experience in seventeenth-century England'. *Studies in History and Philosophy of Science* 20, 1 (1989): 19-45.

Sawday, Jonathan. *The body emblazoned: dissection and the human body in Renaissance culture*. London: Routledge, 1995.

Schmidt, Jeremy. *Melancholy and the care of the soul: religion, moral philosophy and madness in early modern England*. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007.

Schoenfeldt, Michael C. *Bodies and selves in early modern England: physiology and inwardness in Spenser, Shakespeare, Herbert, and Milton*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999.

Scott, Joan W. 'The evidence of experience'. *Critical Inquiry* 17, 4 (1991): 773-97.

Scott, Jonathan. 'Radicalism and restoration: the shape of the Stuart experience'. *The Historical Journal* 31 (1998): 453-67.

Searle, Alison. 'Exiles at home'. In *The Oxford handbook of early modern English literature and religion*, edited by Andrew Hiscock and Helen Wilcox, 464-80. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017.

—. '"My souls anatomiste": Richard Baxter, Katherine Gell and letters of the heart'. *Early Modern Literary Studies* 12, 2 (2006): 7.1-26.

Sena, John F. 'Melancholic madness and the puritans'. *The Harvard Theological Review* 66, 3 (1973): 293-309.

Shagan, Ethan H. *The rule of moderation: violence, religion and the politics of restraint in early modern England*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011.

Shapin, Steven. *A social history of truth: civility and science in seventeenth-century England*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994.

—. *The Scientific Revolution*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996.

Shapiro, Barbara. 'Testimony in seventeenth-century English natural philosophy: legal origins and early development'. *Studies in History and Philosophy of Science* 33 (2002): 243-63.

Sharpe, Kevin. *Remapping early modern England: the culture of seventeenth-century politics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000.

Sheils, W. J., ed. *The Church and healing*. Cambridge: The Ecclesiastical History Society, 1982.

Shirilan, Stephanie. *Robert Burton and the transformative powers of melancholy*. Farnham: Ashgate, 2015.

Slights, William W. E. *The heart in the age of Shakespeare*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008.

Smith, Charles Ryder. *The Bible doctrine of Man*. London: Epworth Press, 1951.

Smith, Helen. 'Metaphor, cure, and conversion in early modern England'. *Renaissance Quarterly* 67, 2 (2014): 473-502.

—. '"More swete vnto the eare / than holsome for ye mynde": embodying early modern women's reading'. *Huntington Library Quarterly* 73, 3 (2010): 413-32.

Smith, Nigel. 'Non-conformist voices and books'. In *The Cambridge history of the book in Britain, 1557–1695*, volume 4, edited by John Barnard and D. F. McKenzie, 410-30. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008.

Soskice, Janet Martin. *Metaphor and religious language*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987.

Spurr, John. *English puritanism 1603-1689*. London: Macmillan, 1998.

—. *The Restoration Church of England, 1660–1689*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1991.

Stachniewski, John. *The persecutory imagination: English puritanism and the literature of religious despair.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991.

Storey, Matthew and David Dymond, eds. *Two East Anglian diaries 1641–1729: Isaac Archer and William Coe*. Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 1994.

Strait, Daniel H. '"Sudden passing": Herbert's poetics of the moment'. *George Herbert Journal* 38, 1 (2014): 54-65.

Sullivan, Erin. *Beyond melancholy: sadness and selfhood in Renaissance England.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016.

—. 'Book review: Melancholy and the care of the soul'. *History of the Human Sciences* 22, 1 (2009): 144-9.

Sutton, John. 'Soul and body'. In *The Oxford handbook of British philosophy in the seventeenth century*, edited by Peter R. Anstey, 285-307. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013.

Taylor, Charles. *A secular age.* Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2007.

Thomas, Keith. *Religion and the decline of magic: studies in popular beliefs in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century England*. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1973.

Trevor, Douglas. *The poetics of melancholy in early modern England*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004.

Tully, James ed. *Meaning and context: Quentin Skinner and his critics*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988.

Tyacke, Nicholas. *Anti-Calvinists: the rise of English Arminianism, c. 1590–1640*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987.

—, ed. *The history of the University of Oxford: seventeenth-century Oxford*, volume IV. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997.

—. 'Science and religion at Oxford before the Civil War'. In *Puritans and revolutionaries: essays in seventeenth-century history presented to Christopher Hill*, edited by Donald Pennington and Keith Thomas, 73-93. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1978.

Vermeir, Koen. 'The "physical prophet" and the powers of the imagination. Part I: a case-study on prophecy, vapours and the imagination (1685–1710)'. *Studies in History and Philosophy of Biological and Biomedical Sciences* 35 (2004): 561-91.

Vine, W. E. *Vine's expository dictionary of Old Testament words*. Zeeland: Reformed Church, 2015.

Walker, David. 'Piety and the politics of anxiety in nonconformist writing of the later Stuart period'. In *Puritanism and emotion in the early modern world*, edited by Alec Ryrie and Tom Schwanda, 144-65. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016.

Wallace, Dewey D. Jr. *Shapers of English Calvinism, 1660–1714: variety, persistence, and transformation.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011.

Wallis, Patrick. 'Consumption, retailing, and medicine in early modern London'. *The Economic History Review* 61, 1 (2008): 26-53.

Walsham, Alexandra. *Charitable hatred: tolerance and intolerance in England, 1500–1700.* Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2006.

——. 'The happiness of suffering: adversity, providence, and agency in early modern England'. In *Suffering and happiness in England, 1550–1850: narratives and representations*, edited by Michael Braddick and Joanna Innes, 45-64. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017.

——. *Providence in early modern England*. Oxford: Clarendon, 1999.

——. 'The Reformation and "the disenchantment of the world" reassessed'. *The Historical Journal* 51, 2 (2008): 497-528.

——. 'Review: "Altars restored: the changing face of English religious worship, 1547–c. 1700" by Kenneth Fincham, Nicholas Tyacke'. *The Historical Journal* 53, 3 (2010): 819-21.

Watkins, Owen C. *The puritan experience.* London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1972.

Watson, Foster. *The English grammar schools to 1660: their curriculum and practice.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1908.

Wear, Andrew. 'Puritan perceptions of illness in seventeenth-century England'. In *Patients and practitioners: lay perceptions of medicine in pre-industrial society*, edited by Roy Porter, 55-100. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985.

——. 'Religious beliefs and medicine in early modern England'. In *The task of healing, medicine and gender in England and the Netherlands, 1450–1800*, edited by H. Marland and M. Pelling, 145-69. Rotterdam: Erasmus, 1996.

Weimer, Adrian Chastain. 'Affliction and the stony heart in New England'. In *Puritanism and emotion in the early modern world,* edited by Alec Ryrie and Tom Schwanda, 121-43. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016.

Weisser, Olivia. *Ill composed: sickness, gender, and belief in early modern England*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2015.

White, Peter. 'The rise of Arminianism reconsidered'. *Past & Present* 101, 1 (1983): 31-54.

——. *Predestination, policy and polemic: conflict and consensus in the English Church from the Reformation to the Civil War*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992.

Williams, George Hunston. 'Called by thy name, leave us not: the case of Mrs Joan Drake, a formative episode in the pastoral career of Thomas Hooker in England'. *Harvard Library Bulletin* 16 (1968): 111–28, 278–300.

Williams, Raymond. *Keywords: a vocabulary of culture and society*. London: Fontana, 1983.

Winship, Michael. 'Defining puritanism in Restoration England: Richard Baxter and others respond to *A friendly debate*'. *The Historical Journal* 54, 3 (2011): 689-715.

Withington, Phil. *Society in early modern England: the vernacular origins of some powerful ideas*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010.

Wolff, Cynthia Griffin. 'Literary reflections of the puritan character'. *Journal of the History of Ideas* 29, 1 (1968): 13-32.

Wray, Ramona. '[Re]Constructing the past: the diametric lives of Mary Rich'. In *Betraying our selves: forms of self-representation in early modern English texts*, edited by Henk Dragsta, Sheila Ottway and Helen Wilcox, 148-65. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2000.

PhD dissertations

Healy, M. J. '*Fictions of disease: representations of bodily disorder in early modern writings*'. PhD diss., University of London, 1995.

Hunter, Elizabeth. '*Melancholy and the doctrine of reprobation in English puritan culture, 1550-1640*'. DPhil diss., University of Oxford, 2012.

Skea, Kinda. '*The ecclesiastical identities of puritan and nonconformist clergy, 1640-1672*'. PhD diss., University of Leicester, 2015.

Venn, Jennifer O. *'The autobiographies of Barbara Blaugdone, Elizabeth White, Mary Rich, and Mary Penington'*. PhD diss., University of Western Ontario, 1998.

Websites consulted

Bible Gateway: https://www.biblegateway.com

British History Online: http://www.british-history.ac.uk

Clergy of the Church of England Database: http://theclergydatabase.org.uk

Early English Books Online: http://eebo.chadwyck.com

Eighteenth Century Collections Online: http://find.galegroup.com.ezphost.dur.ac.uk/ecco

English Short Title Catalogue: http://estc.bl.uk

Oxford Dictionary of National Biography: http://www.oxforddnb.com

Oxford English Dictionary Online: http://www.oed.com

ODNB entries

Atherton, Ian. 'Reynolds, Edward (1599–1676), bishop of Norwich.' *Oxford dictionary of national biography.* Last modified 8 January 2009. http://www.oxforddnb.com.ezphost.dur.ac.uk/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-23408.

Bell, Maureen. 'Calvert, Elizabeth (d. 1675?), bookseller.' *Oxford dictionary of national biography.* Last modified 28 May 2015. http://www.oxforddnb.com.ezphost.dur.ac.uk/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-39670.

Bickley, A. C. 'Fenner, William (c. 1600–c. 1640), Church of England clergyman and writer on theology'. *Oxford dictionary of national biography.* Last modified 23 September 2004. http://www.oxforddnb.com.ezphost.dur.ac.uk/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-9291.

——. 'Chapman, Livewell (fl. 1643–1665), bookseller and Fifth Monarchist.' *Oxford dictionary of national biography.* Last modified 23 September 2004. http://www.oxforddnb.com.ezphost.dur.ac.uk/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-67700.

Burns, William E. 'Ness, Christopher (1621–1705), Independent minister.' *Oxford dictionary of national biography.* Last modified 3 January 2008. http://www.oxforddnb.com.ezphost.dur.ac.uk/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-19904.

Davis, J. C., and J. D. Alsop. 'Winstanley, Gerrard (bap. 1609, d. 1676), author and Digger.' *Oxford dictionary of national biography.* 25 September 2014. http://www.oxforddnb.com.ezphost.dur.ac.uk/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-29755.

Dever, Mark E. 'Sibbes [Sibs], Richard (1577?–1635), Church of England clergyman.' *Oxford dictionary of national biography.* Last modified 24 May 2007. http://www.oxforddnb.com.ezphost.dur.ac.uk/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-25498.

Gaunt, Peter. 'Cromwell, Henry (1628–1674), soldier, politician, and lord lieutenant of Ireland.' *Oxford dictionary of national biography.* Last modified 3 January 2008. http://

www.oxforddnb.com.ezphost.dur.ac.uk/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-6764.

Gilbert, C. D. 'Hall, Thomas (1610–1665), clergyman and ejected minister.' *Oxford dictionary of national biography*. Last modified 17 September 2015. http://www.oxforddnb.com.ezphost.dur.ac.uk/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-11990.

Goldie, Mark. 'Fullwood, Francis (d. 1693), Church of England clergyman'. *Oxford dictionary of national biography*. Last modified 06 January 2011. http://www.oxforddnb.com.ezphost.dur.ac.uk/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-67192.

Gordon, Alexander. 'Gilling, Isaac (bap. 1663, d. 1725), Presbyterian minister.' *Oxford dictionary of national biography*. Last modified 23 September 2004. http://www.oxforddnb.com.ezphost.dur.ac.uk/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-10748.

Gottlieb, Sidney. 'Collins, An (fl. 1653), poet.' *Oxford dictionary of national biography*. Last modified 23 September 2004. http://www.oxforddnb.com.ezphost.dur.ac.uk/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-45500.

Hessayon, Ariel. 'Coppe, Abiezer (1619–1672?), Baptist preacher and Ranter.' *Oxford dictionary of national biography*. Last modified 3 January 2008. http://www.oxforddnb.com.ezphost.dur.ac.uk/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-6275.

——. 'Pordage, John (bap. 1607, d. 1681), religious leader and physician.' *Oxford dictionary of national biography*. Last modified 3 January 2008. http://www.oxforddnb.com.ezphost.dur.ac.uk/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-22546.

Hughes, Ann. 'Dugard, Thomas (bap. 1608, d. 1683), Church of England clergyman and diarist.' *Oxford dictionary of national biography*. Last modified 3 January 2008. http://www.oxforddnb.com.ezphost.dur.ac.uk/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-66139.

Hunt, Arnold. 'Shute, Josias (bap. 1588, d. 1643), Church of England clergyman.' *Oxford dictionary of national biography*. Last modified 23 September 2004. http://www.oxforddnb.com.ezphost.dur.ac.uk/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-25485.

Lamont, William. 'Gell [née Packer], Katherine (bap. 1624, d. 1671), religious patron.' *Oxford dictionary of national biography*. Last modified 23 September 2004. http://www.oxforddnb.com.ezphost.dur.ac.uk/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-66997.

Larminie, Vivienne. 'Darton, Nicholas (1602/3–1649x52), Church of England clergyman.' *Oxford dictionary of national biography.* Last modified 3 January 2008. http://www.oxforddnb.com.ezphost.dur.ac.uk/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-7174.

Mendelson, Sara H. 'Rich [née Boyle], Mary, countess of Warwick (1624–1678), noblewoman.' *Oxford dictionary of national biography.* Last modified 23 September 2004. http://www.oxforddnb.com.ezphost.dur.ac.uk/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-23487.

Parkin, Jon. 'Patrick, Simon [Symon] (1626–1707), bishop of Ely.' *Oxford dictionary of national biography.* Last Modified 3 September 2008. http://www.oxforddnb.com.ezphost.dur.ac.uk/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-21568.

Ruston, Alan. 'Grosvenor [formerly Gravener], Benjamin (1676–1758), Presbyterian minister.' *Oxford dictionary of national biography.* Last modified 3 January 2008. http://www.oxforddnb.com.ezphost.dur.ac.uk/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-11666.

Seaver, P. S. 'Caryl, Joseph (1602–1673), clergyman and ejected minister.' *Oxford dictionary of national biography.* Last modified 3 January 2008. http://www.oxforddnb.com.ezphost.dur.ac.uk/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-4846.

Smith, Hannah. 'Walker, Anthony (bap. 1622, d. 1692), clergyman.' *Oxford dictionary of national biography.* Last modified 3 January 2008. http://www.oxforddnb.com.ezphost.dur.ac.uk/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-68212.

Vian, Alsager. 'Franklin, Robert (1630–1703), Presbyterian minister.' *Oxford dictionary of national biography.* Last modified 23 September 2004. http://www.oxforddnb.com.ezphost.dur.ac.uk/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-10091.

Wallace,, Dewey D. 'Morton, Charles (bap. 1627, d. 1698), nonconformist minister and tutor.' *Oxford dictionary of national biography.* Last modified 23 September 2004. http://www.oxforddnb.com.ezphost.dur.ac.uk/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-19360.

Wilcher, Robert. 'Moseley, Humphrey (b. in or before 1603, d. 1661), bookseller.' *Oxford dictionary of national biography.* Last modified 23 September 2004. http://www.oxforddnb.com.ezphost.dur.ac.uk/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-19390.

Wright, Stephen. 'Bolton, Robert (1572–1631), Church of England clergyman.' *Oxford dictionary of national biography.* Last modified 23 September 2004. http://www.oxforddnb.com.ezphost.dur.ac.uk/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-2806.

——. 'Hickman, Henry (bap. 1629, d. 1692), clergyman, ejected minister and religious controversialist.' *Oxford dictionary of national biography.* Last modified 3 January 2008. http://www.oxforddnb.com.ezphost.dur.ac.uk/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-13212.

——. 'Rogers, Timothy (1658–1728), Presbyterian minister.' *Oxford dictionary of national biography.* Last modified 23 September 2004. http://www.oxforddnb.com.ezphost.dur.ac.uk/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-24002.

Wykes, D. 'Calamy. Edmund (1671–1732), Presbyterian minister and historian.' *Oxford dictionary of national biography.* Last modified 23 September 2004. http://www.oxforddnb.com.ezphost.dur.ac.uk/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-4357.

Yorke, Peter David. 'Reeve [Rive], Edmund (d. 1660), linguistic scholar and Church of England clergyman.' *Oxford dictionary of national biography.* Last modified 23 September 2004. http://www.oxforddnb.com.ezphost.dur.ac.uk/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-23294.