

# Professor William B. Hunter, Bishop Burgess, and John Milton

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Ever since Milton was accepted in his own century as one of the greatest of English poets, there have been people who would feel more comfortable if—notwithstanding his contemporary reputation—Milton could be shown to be an orthodox Christian. The task has become more difficult, and a solution more anxiously desired, since publication of the very heretical *De Doctrina Christiana* in 1825.<sup>1</sup> Should it be ignored, or can it somehow be explained away? Professor Hunter has long asserted Milton's orthodoxy. Now he has discovered a new ally—Bishop Burgess.<sup>2</sup>

Like everybody else, I imagine, I was totally ignorant of this “distinguished intellectual and religious leader whose opinions it is wrong to ignore.” I turned eagerly to the *Dictionary of National Biography* for enlightenment. Lives in the *DNB* vary from excellent to poor according to the contributor; so it was reassuring to find Burgess's entry over the initials T.F.T. In my young days T.F. Tout was the model of scholarly accuracy, a man of immense erudition, a generous critic but severe when he thought severity was called for. Tout's account of Burgess (1756-1837) is mostly favorable: his industry in the diocese of Salisbury “was quite remarkable at that time.” He wrote an antislavery pamphlet and more than a hundred other works. He was the first president of the Royal Society of Literature. Only on one point, the bishop's views on the *DDC*, is Tout critical. Here his generosity gives way to irony. When Burgess “had some cherished principle or opinion to defend . . . he threw

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away discretion and impartiality." Burgess, Tout implies, was in his dotage when he published *Milton Not the Author of the Lately Discovered Work "De Doctrina Christiana": Three Discourses Delivered at the Anniversary Meetings of the Royal Society of Literature in the Years 1826, 1827, and 1828* (1829). Burgess "exhausted the patience" even of his own Society. Tout may be a safer critic here than Professor Hunter, since he had no "cherished principle or opinion to defend."

In 1815 Burgess had defended the orthodox doctrine of the Trinity. Even more important, he was a passionate opponent of Catholic Emancipation: part of his case against Milton's authorship of the *DDC* was that it was insufficiently anti-Catholic. This was not a charge brought against Milton by many nineteenth-century critics. On the contrary, in the changed historical circumstances, Milton's refusal to grant toleration to Roman Catholics was embarrassing. Here Burgess was no impartial scholar but a partisan defending a losing cause.

The *DDC* does not attack the papal Antichrist as frequently and as fiercely as the good bishop would have wished. Indeed the word "Antichrist" occurs only once directly and once indirectly in the treatise (pp. 604, 798). Why? Milton is writing for convinced opponents of popery. But the word Antichrist had been overused as a term of abuse during the English Revolution. First Antichrist was the Pope; then he was the Anglican bishops, and the king who protected them. Royalists during the civil war were denounced as "the Antichristian army." Oliver Cromwell became Antichrist; Gerrard Winstanley applied the term to all landowners and gentry. It had lost any precise meaning. And its use was associated with millenarians like those Fifth Monarchists who rose in bloody but hopeless revolt in 1657 and 1661. The words "Antichrist" and "Antichristian," wrote Henry More in 1664, have been so fouled by "the rude ignorant vulgar" that they have become "unfit to pass the lips of any civil person."<sup>3</sup> In the *DDC* Milton accepted that reformed religion was "adequately fortified against the Papists" (p. 120), and directed his appeal to all rational protestants, including Anglicans. To labor the equation of the Pope with Antichrist would only alienate moderate men.

Bishop Burgess was not one to appreciate literary tact. His anti-Catholicism was pure *odium theologicum*. In his day there was no Catholic threat to England's national independence such as Milton and other Protestants had feared from the church which he described as "a Roman principality," "a priestly despotism under the cloak of religion," which "extirpates all religions and civil supremacies."<sup>4</sup> Burgess wrote as a partisan in the full fury of the

campaign against Catholic Emancipation, which he would have regarded as the emancipation of Antichrist. So he thought the *DDC* halfhearted in its anti-Catholicism. In fact he could have found plenty of anti-Catholicism in the treatise if he had read it more carefully—attacks on Catholic sacramental doctrines and the mass, on works of supererogation, on papal flagellators, and on the Pope's claim to be head of the church. The *DDC* identified Catholicism with idolatry (pp. 37, 39-40, 43, 48, 51-53, 56, 69-70, 117, 120, 203, 423-24, 451-52, 536, 541, 553-68, 584-85, 611-13, 642-43, 670, and 693-95). Many of these passages are late additions to the *DDC*, testifying to "a continued and increasing anti-Catholicism."<sup>5</sup>

Hunter takes another point from Burgess, probably unwisely. "Our recent translation" of the Bible cited in the *DDC* (6:242) could, Burgess thought, refer only to "the Arian version of the New Testament by Felbinger, published at Amsterdam" in 1660—thus suggesting a Dutch author for the *DDC* (*SEL* 33, p. 196). Burgess dismissed the more obvious Polyglot Bible of 1657 produced by Brian Walton. Walton, as it happens, was well known to Milton. He had been curate at All Hallows, Bread Street, Milton's parish, in 1623-1626. They remained on friendly terms, and Milton may have used his influence with the government to obtain authorization for Walton to import 7000 reams of paper duty-free. The poet is much more likely to have thought of the Polyglot Bible as "our recent translation" than an Arian *New Testament* published in Amsterdam of which there is no reason to suppose he had ever heard.<sup>6</sup>

The bishop, we must recall, had to deal with the text of the *DDC* immediately after it had been published; he cannot be blamed for failing to notice the many parallels between it and Milton's published works. But thanks to the labors of Maurice Kelley, Barbara Lewalski, Anthony Low, Mary Ann Radzinowicz, and many others, and publication of the Yale edition of Milton's prose, scholars now have less excuse. They need only a little empathy with Milton the subversive. Professor Hunter suggested that John Carey deliberately translated the Latin text into words which Milton had used elsewhere, in order to stress resemblances. This is not a generous suggestion, nor a very plausible one: most of us know from experience that if we repeat a thought which we have already expressed in print, the same or similar words are likely to occur to us.

Burgess's thesis on the *DDC* was well publicized. He was a man of some standing in his profession, but—as Tout indicated—after three attempts he totally failed to convince his scholarly

contemporaries. His views were "dismissed by everyone concerned with the authenticity of the ascription to Milton," as Hunter himself admits (*SEL* 33, p. 191). Later scholars were no more appreciative. "Masson and Parker fail even to mention Burgess" (*SEL* 33, p. 205). Tout brushed aside Burgess's thesis as the maunderings of a senile scholar whose pet theories had been upset by publication of the *DDC*. "The absence of copies [of Burgess's *Three Discourses* from any library] needs to be accounted for," writes Hunter. "Arguments from silence" (to which Hunter often resorts) "are inconclusive but can be suggestive" (*SEL* 32, p. 131). I fear that Tout has explained this silence.

Yet there must have been many among Burgess's contemporaries who would have been delighted, for their own ideological reasons, to welcome an effective demonstration of Burgess's case. The fact that they (and their successors) allowed his arguments to fall into oblivion suggests that they concluded that it would be more effective to pretend the *DDC* did not exist than that it was not Milton's work. Those who wish to claim the poet for "orthodoxy" will no doubt continue trying to explain away the by now well-established congruence between the *DDC* and Milton's other writings. But Milton's authorship cannot be disproved by reviving arguments about handwriting on the title-page or the unreliability of Daniel Skinner, well known to Masson and Parker. The overwhelming case for Milton's authorship can be challenged only by confuting the arguments of Kelley, Lewalski, Low, and Radzinowicz.

## II

If not Milton, who did write the *DDC*? In his "Addenda" Professor Hunter—abandoning his first guess of John Goodwin—has plumped for the bishop's theory that it was an unknown Dutchman, since many of the sources used in the *DDC* derive from the continent. But since the treatise's declared objective was to reunite European protestants around a more radical theology, the emphasis on Swiss, French, and Dutch treatises was to be expected. Where else but in The Netherlands was the free-ranging anti-Trinitarianism which Milton favored published? Hardly in Geneva; French liberal Calvinists published in The Netherlands. Nor in England.

Professor Hunter must find a Dutchman (or other European protestant) who had the vast biblical learning, the knowledge of Hebrew, the leisure, and the dedicated industry to write such a vast treatise, apparently without anyone knowing anything about

it. He was on such intimate terms with Milton that he entrusted him with his dangerous "dearest and best possession," but he has left no trace in Milton's correspondence or in the recollections of his friends. Hunter's second guess was Isaac Vossius, who was in London after the Restoration, when "direct association with Milton became distinctly possible, though no early biographer mentions it" (*SEL* 33, p. 200). Since Vossius was a protégé of Charles II and frequented his court, the biographers' silence is easily explained. Nor is it likely that the man who the king said would believe anything so long as it was not in the Bible would have devoted years of labor to a treatise based on 8000 biblical prooftexts (6:106). Hunter's latest desperate guess is John Buxtorf (1599-1664), professor of Hebrew at Basel University (*SEL* 33, p. 203). Hunter offers no evidence of any link between Buxtorf and Milton—another significant silence—and the date of Buxtorf's death is inconvenient.

If someone else wrote the *DDC*, how did the manuscript come into Milton's possession? Did the author keep a copy? Why did it not survive? How did the manuscript come to be copied by Milton's amanuenses, who were amending it while it was in Milton's possession—emendations which relate significantly to *Samson Agonistes*? Was the Dutchman's copy being amended to keep pace with these alterations? Why did the Dutchman make no effort to reclaim his "dearest and best possession" after Milton's death? If he had a copy of his own why did he not publish it in The Netherlands? The questions are endless.

The unknown author should be fairly easy to identify. He had published treatises on divorce. Milton has a very idiosyncratic definition of "fornication" as grounds for divorce: "any notable disobedience or intolerable carriage in a wife" (*Tetrachordon*, *Yale Prose*, 2:672). Selden, whom Milton regarded as an authority on such matters (*Commonplace Book*, *Yale Prose*, 1:403; *Doctrine and Discipline*, *Yale Prose*, 2:350), "still more fully explained this point" in his *Uxor Hebraica*, two years later than Milton (*Second Defence*, *Yale Prose*, 4:625). The author of the *DDC* also saw "fornication" as a reason for divorce, and also had an unusual definition of the word: "continual headstrong behavior," "the lack of some quality which might reasonably be required in a wife" (*Yale Prose*, 6:378). He too attributed his view to Selden's *Uxor Hebraica* (*Yale Prose*, 6:378). Interesting coincidences.

The author of the *DDC* shares Milton's tastes in Greek literature, quoting Homer to illustrate predestination (*Yale Prose*, 6:202), exactly as Milton does in *The Doctrine and Discipline* (*Yale Prose*, 2:294). He quotes Greek drama less frequently than the poet, but

when he does he chooses favorites of Milton's. (Three plays of Euripides are cited in the *DDC*. There are nineteen references to him in the whole of Milton's oeuvre, excluding the *DDC*, as against five to Aeschylus.) The *DDC* quotes the Scottish theologian John Cameron, whom Milton cites five times in *Tetrachordon* (*DDC*, *Yale Prose* 6:534). Like Milton, the author of the *DDC* approves of civil marriage (*Yale Prose*, 6:561; *Colasterion*, 2:750; *Hirelings*, 7:297-300). Both held the rather unusual view that congregations should assess their pastors (*Of True Religion*, *Yale Prose*, 8:435; 6:600).

But many problems remain. For instance, the reference to "our countryman, Ames" in the *DDC* (6:706). Hunter endorses Bishop Burgess's brash statement that "Ames had no significant English connections."<sup>7</sup> But this will not do. Ames was born into an old Norfolk family in 1576 and established his reputation as an English scholar. He was a Fellow of Christ's College, Cambridge, until he was "by the Urgency of the Master . . . driven both from the College and University."<sup>8</sup> Ames became City Lecturer at Colchester, but the bishop forbade him to preach. So Ames joined the brain drain to The Netherlands, where he became chaplain to the English Governor of Brill, until pressure from the home government got him dismissed. Ames became Professor of Theology at Franeker University, and in 1626 its Rector. In the late 1620s he thought of emigrating to New England, and the Governor of Bermuda tried to lure him thither. Ultimately Hugh Peter persuaded Ames to become pastor to the English émigré congregation in Rotterdam. He died there in 1633. Only a very ill-informed Dutchman could claim him as "our countryman."

But Ames was much more than a countryman for Milton. A fellow of Milton's college, he failed to become its Master because he held the wrong theological views—which Milton would no doubt have thought the right ones. Otherwise Ames might have been Master when Milton was an undergraduate. Ames must have been a legendary figure for Milton, who was proud to hail him as "our countryman."<sup>9</sup>

Here we may consider Hunter's claim that Milton wrote "from the perspective of the Church of England" (*SEL* 33, p. 195). I find this surprising. Even Burgess recognized that Milton departed from "our English theologians" (pp. 6, 12). Whether or not the "fatal and perfidious bark" in *Lycidas* was the Anglican church, the ensuing attack on "such as for their bellies sake / Creep and intrude and climb into the fold" must refer to the clergy of that Church. Writing under censorship, Milton could hardly have expressed himself more clearly. The tracts in which Milton demolished episcopacy in the early 1640s are remarkable for their

sustained venom. Anyone who has tried to persuade himself that Milton wrote "from the perspective of the Church" whose prelates had "church-outed" him should reread *Of Reformation*, *Of Prelatical Episcopacy*, *Animadversions*, and *Reason of Church-Government*. Prelates were responsible for the censorship (*Animadversions*, *Yale Prose*, 1:667-76; *Areopagitica*, *Yale Prose*, 2:539-42). The "inquisitorial and tyrannical duncery" of "this impertinent yoke of prelacy" was "a schism itself from the most reformed and most flourishing churches abroad," and "a sore scandal to them" (*Reason of Church-Government*, *Yale Prose*, 1:820-23; Book 2, chapter ii passim; and p. 791; *Of Reformation*, *Yale Prose*, 1:526). England's "pretended episcopacy cannot be deduced from the apostolical times" (*Of Prelatical Episcopacy*, *Yale Prose*, 1:647-52). It alienates us from "all Protestant princes and commonwealths," and should be abolished so that we may "come from schism to unity with our neighbour reformed sister churches" (*Of Reformation*, *Yale Prose*, 1:541-51, 556-617; *Animadversions*, 1:726-28, *Reason of Church-Government*, 1:825-61; *Defence*, 4:498-99).<sup>10</sup> Church endowments are a bribe to God for absolution from murder, adultery, and other crimes (*Hirelings*, *Yale Prose*, 1:307). Prelacy indeed is more Antichristian than Antichrist himself; and Milton predicted that bishops would be "thrown down eternally into the darkest and deepest gulf of hell" (*Of Reformation*, *Yale Prose*, 1:616-17)—a violence of expression present nowhere else in his writings. Milton favored election of ministers by the congregation (*Of Reformation*, *Yale Prose*, 1:541-49 and passim; *DDC*, *Yale Prose*, 6:594-805); the Anglican Church did not. Milton rejected the ceremonies of "church-masquers" (*Yale Prose*, 1:526, 547-48, 589-90, 600, 828, 840, and 931-35).<sup>11</sup> England alone of protestant countries has no divorce for adultery or desertion.

Milton also insisted that of "jurisdictive power in the Church there ought to be none at all," particularly objecting to "the bar of a proud judicial court where fees and clamours keep shop and drive a trade, where bribery and corruption solicits" (*Yale Prose*, 1:831-38, 849). In the *Second Defence of the People of England* he urged Oliver Cromwell to "remove all power from the church," but warned that "power will never be absent so long as money, . . . extorted by force even from those who are unwilling, remains the price of preaching the Gospel" (*Yale Prose*, 4:678). Milton believed that abolition of tithes was necessary to religious liberty (*Yale Prose*, 7:275-76). In 1652 in his Sonnet to Cromwell he had begged him to "Help us to save free Conscience from the paw / Of hireling wolves, whose gospel is their maw"; and in another Sonnet he praised Vane because he knew "Both spiritual power

and civil, what each means, / What severs each." All this contradicts Burgess's extraordinary claim (which Hunter endorses) that "litigation for tithes was emphatically not an English practice," and so "no English writer would think to attack it" as the author of the *DDC* does. Argal (the grave-digger's Latin seems appropriate)—argal Milton cannot have written *Of Reformation* with its reference to "the ignoble Hucksterage of piddling Tithes" (*Yale Prose*, 1:613), nor *Reason of Church-Government* (*Yale Prose*, 1:848-49), still less *Hirelings* (edited by Hunter as Milton's work) which speaks of tithes as "wrung out of men's purses to maintain a disapproved ministry against their conscience" (echoing the *Second Defence* quoted above), "by law to be recovered," "by worldly force and constraint." Hireling tithe-gatherers eat "the bread of violence and exaction," in "a kingdom of force and rapine" (*Yale Prose*, 7:281, 292, 297, and 309-13). Milton and the author of the *DDC* agreed that enforced payment of tithes was as bad as anything in Islam (*Yale Prose*, 7:318; 6:598).

How does Hunter explain such phrases if ministers never "went to court over the issue" (*SEL* 33, p. 198)? When the author of the *DDC* denounces clerical litigants for tithes as "wolves" (*Yale Prose*, 6:598), he is reverting to the language of *Lycidas* and the sonnet to Cromwell. There is much confirmatory evidence from seventeenth-century sources for legal compulsion to pay tithes—including Leveler pamphlets, Quaker accounts of their sufferings, and Anthony Pearson's classic *The Great Case of Tithes* of 1657.

The *DDC*'s "the church has no need of a liturgy" (*Yale Prose*, 6:670) picks up earlier remarks by Milton. The Anglican liturgy is "the Skeleton of a Mass-Book" (*Of Reformation*, *Yale Prose*, 1:597; cf. 1:522). Antichrist's liturgy, "conceived and infantied by an idolatrous Mother" (*An Apology*, *Yale Prose*, 1:940; cf. *Animadversions*, *Yale Prose*, 1:662, 677-95), was "a perpetual cause of disunion," which "hinders piety rather than sets it forward." It is "a provocation to God" (*An Apology*, *Yale Prose*, 1:937-43; cf. *Animadversions*, 1:684-85). The undesirability of set forms is confirmed by *Paradise Lost* 5.144-49. "Neither can any true Christian find a reason why a liturgy should be at all admitted," Milton summed up in *Eikonoklastes* (*Yale Prose*, 3:503-505; "constancy in the cuckoo," pp. 551-53).

Hunter echoes Burgess in saying that "Milton disagreed with the Church of England not on its doctrines but on its form of government" (*SEL* 33, p. 192); but not much is left of that Church when one rejects episcopacy, ecclesiastical jurisdiction and censorship, tithes and the liturgy. The Thirty-nine Articles remain, whose absence from the *DDC* Hunter uses, remarkably, as an



argument *against* Milton's authorship (*SEL* 33, p. 205, n. 14). Milton quoted the Thirty-nine Articles only in *Of True Religion*, where he is trying to appeal to English Protestants. The Articles, indeed, themselves a compromise document, say nothing about marriage, divorce, or mortalism, and refer only indirectly to bishops. But they specifically defend the Trinity, for Milton's opposition to which there is evidence from outside the *DDC*. His tongue was well in his cheek in 1673. Hunter's wish to depict Milton as "closer to the great traditions of Christianity, no longer associated with a merely eccentric fringe"<sup>12</sup> (p. 166), may I fear contain an element of eccentric wishful thinking.

Enough, I think.

Before we start looking for a Dutch author, let us consider how many direct or indirect references to England and English affairs there are in the *DDC*. First, and decisive in itself, is page 599: litigation about tithes "does not go on in any reformed church except ours." Could that have been written by a Dutchman? Milton in *Hirelings* had already said "Our English divines, and they only of all protestants" claim tithes as legally due to them (*Yale Prose*, 7:281). "When anyone of ours [i.e., our divines] hath attempted in Latin to maintain this argument of tithes . . . they forbear not to oppose him, as in a doctrine not fit to pass unopposed under the gospel" (*Yale Prose*, 7:289; cf. 7:297).<sup>13</sup>

Why should the unknown Dutchman repeatedly discuss the permissibility of running away or compromising when confronted with political danger, and of lying and deceiving on behalf of God's cause? (*DDC*, *Yale Prose*, 7:605, 762-65, and 801). If Milton is the author there is no problem in these instances; if not, here are more remarkable coincidences for Hunter to explain away. Attacking idol-worship is common protestant form; but the *DDC* asks specifically whether "someone who professes the true religion" may "take part in idol-worship if and when the performance of some civil duty makes it necessary?" (p. 694). The question assumes the existence of compulsory church attendance—revived in post-restoration England. It is also very relevant to *Samson Agonistes*.

Other suggestive parallels appear. The *DDC*'s "vindication of God's justice" and of divine Providence (p. 397) recalls not only the opening of *Paradise Lost*, but also the consternation of all those who had regarded themselves as God's servants in the English Revolution. Texts recalling *The Tenure of Kings and Magistrates* are cited to justify the election of kings (*Yale Prose*, 7:795-96). The *DDC*'s lengthy discussion of Sabbath observance (pp. 504, 704-15) suggests England rather than The Netherlands, and appears to echo *Hirelings* (*Yale Prose*, 7:709; cf. 3:295). Saturday Sabbatarianism

(*DDC*, *Yale Prose*, 6:709-711) relates even more narrowly to English experience. The same is true of civil marriage, introduced by the Barebones Parliament in 1653 (pp. 561, 573; *Hirelings*, *Yale Prose*, 7:298-300). Adam as a representative person (*DDC*, *Yale Prose*, 6:384) is typical of English covenant theology. Discussion of public and private fasting (pp. 678-80) probably relates to controversies caused by the regular monthly fasts ordered by the Long Parliament. Reference to the calling of the Jews (pp. 617-18) recalls discussions arising from Manasseh ben Israel's attempt in the 1650s to obtain permission for Jews to return to England. Concern with Islam (p. 598 etc.) picks up English discussions following the translation of the Koran in 1649; Francis Osborn, Henry Stubbe, John Bunyan, and many others participated in them. Discussion of astrology ("there is some astrology which is neither useless nor unlawful"—p. 696) recalls the popularity of astrology in England in the 1650s and 1660s. It was a Dutchman who said "You are great astrologers in England now."<sup>14</sup> There are possible references to Ranters in the *DDC* (pp. 144, 151, and 166) and to other extremists from whom Milton differentiated himself (pp. 541, 700; cf. *Of True Religion*, *Yale Prose*, 8:423-26). "The Samaritans believed Christ first for the woman's word," wrote Milton in *A Treatise of Civil Power* (*Yale Prose*, 7:248); "The Samaritans believed in Christ first of all because of the words of the woman," echoed the author of the *DDC* (*Yale Prose*, 6:590). Both may derive from Wollebius.

### III

Various passages in Milton's writings indicate that he had had in mind something like the *DDC* for many years. I have suggested elsewhere that the poet's close study of the Bible in connection with his divorce pamphlets may have given him the idea of converting his theological index into a full-dress treatise.<sup>15</sup>

(a) The last words of Milton's *Defence of the People of England* (1651) are (for the sake of) "men of every land, and, particularly, all Christian men, . . . I am at this time hoping and planning still greater things, if these be possible for me, as with God's help they will" (*Yale Prose*, 4:537). The opening sentence of the *DDC* is addressed to "All the Churches of Christ and to All in any part of the world who profess the Christian Faith." It is the only "still greater" Latin work which Milton wrote.

(b) The concluding sentence of *A Treatise of Civil Power* (February 1659), after attacking control of religion by the magistrate, said "Of these things perhaps more some other time." Hunter's note to *Yale Prose*, 7:271, rightly refers this to the *DDC*, Book 1, chap. xxvii.

(c) In *Hirelings* (May 1659) Milton wrote "somewhere or other, I trust, may be found some wholesome body of divinity, as they call it, without school terms and metaphysical notions, which have obscured rather than explained our religion." Hunter's note to *Yale Prose*, 7:304, refers plausibly to the *DDC*; cf. especially p. 580.

(d) *Of True Religion* (1673) deals with the "groundless fear" that discussion of Scripture "would unsettle the weaker sort." "At least," Milton urges, "let them have leave to write in Latin, which the common people understand not; that what they hold may be discussed among the learned only": and he quoted his *Logic*. The note to *Yale Prose*, 8:437, rightly suggests that hope for toleration of Protestant dissenters in that year of relative freedom might lead Milton to envisage the possibility of publishing the *DDC* (in Latin).

#### IV

Professor Hunter inexplicably overlooks the political situation in England after the restoration of monarchy and episcopacy. In May 1659 Milton had looked back wistfully on "this liberty of writing which I have used these 18 years on all occasions to assert the just rights and freedoms both of church and state" (*Hirelings*, *Yale Prose*, 7:275). He continued to use this liberty, attacking monarchy in general and Charles Stuart in particular in *The Ready and Easy Way to Establish a Free Commonwealth*, a week or two before the king returned to England.

The Restoration shattered the hopes of a better society for which Milton had labored for the best twenty years of his life. He came close to sharing the fate of many of his friends and colleagues—hanging, disemboweling, and quartering. Henceforth he had to be extremely cautious in anything that he published. The facile syllogism, "Milton could have written an Arian poem in *Paradise Lost*: he did not; therefore we can ignore the evidence for anti-Trinitarianism in the *DDC*,"<sup>16</sup> forgets that if he had published such a poem he would have been risking his liberty, possibly his life. Martin A. Larson's calculation that under the 1648 Blasphemy Ordinance the author of the *DDC* would have been liable to seven capital charges and eleven involving life imprisonment may have exaggerated statistically;<sup>17</sup> but there can be no doubt that anti-Trinitarianism was savagely punished even before 1660. In 1648 the Westminster Assembly of Divines recommended that the anti-Trinitarian John Bidle should be put to death. Under the Commonwealth Bidle was imprisoned, banished, and sentenced to life imprisonment. After the Restoration he was jailed again, and died in prison. Hobbes thought the post-Restoration bishops would

like to burn him; a man was hanged for denying the Trinity as late as 1699. Newton and Locke kept their doubts about the Trinity to themselves. Milton had reason for caution.

Yet he had to publish *Paradise Lost*, which he knew was a great poem, and which he believed contained important lessons for his audience, fit though few.<sup>18</sup> Publishing under censorship, and himself a marked man, Milton naturally did not emphasize his heresies: as Hunter says, *Paradise Lost* “*can* be read as orthodox.”<sup>19</sup> But other careful readers as well as the theologically trained Defoe spotted anti-Trinitarianism in the epic. It seems amusing to us that the censor raised difficulties about Milton’s reference to an eclipse which “with fear of change perplexes monarchs” (*PL*, 1.597-99). But a perceived threat to monarchy was exactly the point at which a censor would be most alert.<sup>20</sup> Always Milton had to try to anticipate and circumvent his likely objections.

Professor Radzinowicz, who appreciates Milton’s difficulties in the 1660s, quotes Samson, who admitted that he served the Philistines

by labour  
Honest and lawful to deserve my food  
Of those who have me in their civil power.

(lines 1365-67)

He too was an alien in his own country.<sup>21</sup> This consideration may cast light on the bewildering number of Milton’s amanuenses. Who would take on such a dangerous job? Only someone devoted either to Milton’s person or his politics, or someone badly in need of money. The story of Milton’s forcing his daughters to read to him in unknown languages may refer to occasions when no amanuensis was available and Milton needed to check a reference.

In 1659-1660 Milton published *A Treatise of Civil Power, Hirelings*, and *The Ready and Easy Way*, in an attempt to reunite supporters of the Good Old Cause. He failed. In 1673, when the government for its own reasons had shifted its balance away from bishops and the Royalist gentry to an alliance with Protestant dissenters, *Of True Religion, Heresy, Schism, and Toleration* (1673) aimed at uniting enemies of Catholicism by minimizing the seriousness of theological questions which divided them. For this purpose “dieser sehr schlau Politicus,” as Milton was called by a man who knew him well, had reason to introduce deliberate ambiguities, hurrying over matters which separated Arians and Socinians from those who regarded themselves as orthodox Protestants.<sup>22</sup>

In the *DDC*, as Lewalski rightly emphasizes,<sup>23</sup> Milton’s hope was to reunite European Protestantism against Catholicism. Hence the

difficulty which scholars have found in defining the precise nature of Milton's anti-Trinitarianism. He was never guilty of writing abstract scholarly treatises for their own sake. Nor was he inclined to line up under someone else's banner. He was a *Miltonist* anti-Trinitarian. Once we take into account the world in which Milton had to live and write, there are very strong reasons for anonymity and for delaying publication if it was he who composed the *DDC*.

Apart for 1659-1660 and the brief flurry in 1673, from around 1655 till his death in 1674 Milton took virtually no part in public life. He concentrated on his three last great poems and on the *DDC*. The careful wording of the Anonymous Biographer, "finished after the Restoration," leaves open the possibility that other treatises—for instance the *Logic* and the *History of Britain*—may also have been recast then for publication.<sup>24</sup>

Maurice Kelley demonstrated the close parallels between *The Art of Logic* and the *DDC*. Milton is unusual among theologians in attempting to apply principles of logic to the mysteries of the Trinity. So, as it happens, is the author of the *DDC* (Part 1, chaps. v, vii-viii). Also to be found in the *Logic* are rejection of transubstantiation, defense of polygamy, the conditionality of divine decrees, creation *ex nihilo*, the eternity of matter, and refusal of toleration to papists. The *Logic* was published in 1672, when the press was relatively free. Milton may have intended it to prepare his public for the heretical *DDC*.

The *History of Britain* (believed to have been written ca. 1648-1649) had been published in 1670. It starts by "imploring divine assistance, that it may redound to his glory and to good of the British nation" (*Yale Prose*, 5:4). This is almost echoed in the *DDC*: "Now, relying on God's help, let us come to grips with the subject itself" (p. 204). I do not think any others of Milton's works have a similar exordium. In the *History* Milton mentions "the liberty, not unnatural, for one man to have many wives" which "other nations used" (*Yale Prose*, 5:103).<sup>25</sup> Children pay for "the sins of their fathers" in the *History* as in the *DDC* (*Yale Prose*, 5:403; *DDC*, pp. 385-87). The clergy in Anglo-Saxon England were "pastors in name but indeed wolves" (5:175)—as they had been in *Lycidas*, in the sonnet to Cromwell, as they were to be in *Hirelings*, in *PL* 12.507-10, and in the *DDC* (p. 598).

## V

Hunter rightly says that the writings of Barbara Lewalski, Mary Ann Radzinowicz, and myself would be quite different but for Kelley's work (*SEL* 32, p. 129). Yet he himself writes almost as if *This Great Argument* had never been written. The Yale edition of

the *DDC* gives, on a rough count, some 428 instances of parallels or analogies between *Paradise Lost* and the *DDC*. Volume 8 of the *Yale Prose* reprints the arguments at the head of each book of *Paradise Lost*. In nineteen pages there are thirty-five references to parallels with the *DDC*.

Some of these deal with the fundamentals of Milton's theology, starting from the creation of the world, of man and the Fall (*GA*, pp. 126-28, 143-55). "The basic determinant of setting and temporal order" in *Paradise Lost*, Kelley tells us, "is to be found in the views stated in the systematic theology. In both works, hell is located beyond the limits of the visible universe; and the creation and apostasy of the evil angels, for whom hell was created, took place before the formation of the world. . . . Much of Book VII is a rapid blank verse summary of the doctrines enumerated in Book I of the *De Doctrina*" (*GA*, pp. 192-99). Adam and Eve—like the rebel angels—were free to stand or to fall (*DDC*, *Yale Prose*, 6:160-67, 351-52, and 384). Their temptation was a "good temptation," sent to strengthen and purify, in the sense of *DDC*, page 338. The process of redemption is the same in both works (and in *Samson Agonistes*)—calling, regeneration, repentance, faith, and justification (*GA*, pp. 157-70). We know good only by knowing evil, as in *Areopagitica* (*GA*, pp. 51, 141). The "one just man" of *Paradise Lost* 11.818 echoes *DDC* pages 483 and 493. Justifying the ways of God to men, the theme of *Paradise Lost*, runs through the whole of the *DDC*.

Minor points noted by Kelley include the Archangel Michael as leader of the angels, Satan's names, his despair, and even his wandering over the earth (*GA*, pp. 138-89). He needed divine permission to leave hell (*DDC*, pp. 347-50; *PL* 1.493-96). That the name of Joshua corresponded to Jesus is noted in both; each led the children of Israel through the wilderness to the land of Canaan. The *DDC*'s heresies are present in *Paradise Lost*, though expressed with an ambiguity too skillful to be accidental. Anti-Trinitarianism, for instance.<sup>26</sup> "Of all creation first / Begotten Son"—and many other references to the Son as a "creature." (First of created things)—*DDC*, p. 206). In Book 10 of *Paradise Lost* the picture of ultimate glorification and the renovation of all things versifies *DDC*, page 632. For the role of the Son see *DDC*, pages 434-35, and Kelley, pages 34-52, and chapter 4 passim, especially pages 84-106. Kelley is especially good on the parallel use of proof-texts in the two works.

Polygamy too: "Hail wedded love . . . / By saints and patriarchs used" (*PL* 4.750-62; *DDC*, pp. 356-58). Milton would have enjoyed mocking critics who think these lines refer to monogamous

wedlock, without asking themselves why the patriarchs are dragged in—as they always were in the frequent seventeenth-century discussions of polygamy (cf. *DDC*, Book 1, chap. x). Milton's defense of polygamy was notorious even in his lifetime.<sup>27</sup> Mortalism, the doctrine that the soul dies with the body, also had to be expressed cautiously. But it too is in *Paradise Lost* as well as in the *DDC* (*GA*, pp. 32, 154-55). Milton's materialism derives from creation *ex deo*; matter is good and can never be destroyed (*GA*, pp. 122, 125). Since all matter derives from God, the differences between angels and men, soul and body, spirit and matter, are of degree, not of kind. Angels eat and digest food, as Milton goes out of his way to tell us in *Paradise Lost* (5.434). Heaven may be more like earth than we think (5.576).

Marriage is an affair of mutual love and help, though the husband has the greater authority (*DDC*, pp. 355-56). Since the Fall divorce is permissible where love does not exist, or has ceased to exist (*DDC*, pp. 369-81; *PL* 12.596-605). Marriage is a civil contract, not a religious ceremony (*DDC*, pp. 561, 573). Once we have the clue, it is clear that Milton in describing the union of Adam and Eve before the Fall makes exactly this point: "other rites / Observing none" (4.736-37). The inferiority of women in principle, I regret to say, is stressed in both works. "This . . . is the opinion of God" (*DDC*, p. 782).

Milton's views on predestination and free will, on reprobation, on God's foreknowledge of what men freely decide, are alike in both works (*GA*, pp. 15-19, 73-83). That God's decrees are contingent is repeatedly emphasized in both (*DDC*, Book 1, chap. iii, pp. 163-65, 173, 177-78, 236, 343-44, 506, *PL* 3.95-134, 4.66-67, 5.501, 535-38, 6.911-12, 9.151-52). Only the elect are predestinated. But Christ died not for the elect alone, but for all mankind. The spirit of God is given to all men/all believers (*GA*, pp. 42-43, 83). God permits evil, though good can come out of evil as light out of darkness. Milton was not altogether happy with the phrase "original sin" (*DDC*, pp. 389-90). Nevertheless he used it at least once in *Paradise Lost* (9.1003-1004), and the concept is omnipresent. Hell is an internal state (*DDC*, pp. 628-30), vividly expressed in Satan's "Myself am hell" (*PL* 4.75). Signs of the coming end of the world are similar in the *DDC* (pp. 615-17) and *Paradise Lost* (12.535-42). With the Last Judgment in *DDC*, pages 621-22, compare *Paradise Lost* 3.323-31; 10.55-62; and 12.458-65, 545-61. Both look forward to the ultimate period when "regal sceptre then no more shall need, / God shall be all in all" (3.339-41; *DDC*, pp. 437, 626-27).

For Milton, Christian liberty extends to political liberty (*DDC*, pp. 537-38). Abdiel's patience under suffering and refusal to

surrender to superior force make him the personification of zeal as defined in the *DDC* (Book 2, chaps. i and vi), linking him with Samson and of course with Milton himself. Bad kings proliferate in *Paradise Lost*, together with the immorality of royal courts (1.490-502, 3.190-92; *DDC*, pp. 796-97). Kings should be elected (*DDC*, p. 796)—not a Dutch problem, we may note. Denunciation of “lewd hirelings” in *Paradise Lost* 4.193 recalls *DDC* 1, chap. xxxi, as well as *Lycidas* and *Hirelings*. Advice repeated in *Paradise Lost* and the *DDC* includes the desirability of showing respect for superiors (*DDC*, p. 758; *PL* 2.477-79, 3.349-52, 5.289, 358-60, and 6.746). The devils observe due subordination. “Elegance” is described as a virtue in both works. The Bible should be available for all to read. “Be wisely ignorant,” says the *DDC* (p. 424); “be lowly wise,” says *Paradise Lost* 8.173. Private prayers may be silent. Any place or posture is suitable for prayer (*DDC*, 670-73; cf. *PL* 5.144-49, 6.832-34). The virtue of temperance is recommended by Michael in *Paradise Lost* 11.530-34 and in the *DDC*, Book 2, chap. ix. *Paradise Lost* 3.648-55 is “little more than a mosaic of the proof-texts of a single paragraph of the *DDC*” (*Yale Prose*, 6:346; *GA*, p. 198).

On the first page of the *DDC* its author proclaims that for 1300 years before the Reformation there had been universal apostasy. This was a very radical idea shared by men like William Walwyn, William Erbery, John Saltmarch, Sir Henry Vane, Roger Williams, John Reeve (founder of the Muggletonians), William Sedgwick, Henry Stubbe, Isaac Penington and other early Quakers, and some Ranters.<sup>28</sup> In *Of Reformation* (1641) Milton dates the apostasy from Constantine (*Yale Prose*, 1.551-60, 576-79); later he suggested that “apostasy crept in by degrees” from apostolical times (*Of Prelatical Episcopacy*, *Yale Prose*, 1:647-52; *Reason of Church-Government* [1642], *Yale Prose*, 1:827; cf. *PL* 12.507-40). Subsequent references to the apostasy varied between these dates (*Tetrachordon* [1643], *Yale Prose*, 2:700-701; *Eikonoklastes* [1649], *Yale Prose*, 3.514-15; *Hirelings* [1659], *Yale Prose*, 7:290-93). The *DDC*’s date, from the end of the second century A.D., splits the difference. Whatever the date the idea was constant.

## VI

Barbara Lewalski and the Yale editors noted many parallels between the *DDC* and *Paradise Regained*. Among the most important is covert anti-Trinitarianism (*MBE*, pp. 134-39, 143-48, 150-55, 157-63; *DDC*, pp. 414-52). The humanity of the Son of God is stressed throughout *Paradise Regained*, as is the concept that “all men are sons of God” (*MBE*, pp. 133-39). The Son’s



humanity regained lost Paradise. The Son is described as a prophet, defined in the *DDC* as “anyone endowed with exceptional piety and wisdom for the purpose of teaching” (p. 572; cf. *MBE*, p. 185). Moses, Joshua (= Jesus), and Job are all forerunners of Christ (*MBE*, pp. 168-72, 205, 212-13; cf. *DDC*, p. 740 with *PR* 3.92-95).

Milton’s materialism originates in a “refusal to distinguish fundamentally between angels and men, matter and spirit.” It is “a foundation stone of Milton’s thought and perhaps his most significant and daring departure from orthodoxy” (*MBE*, p. 140). The *DDC*’s distinction between two stages of Christ’s kingdom, of which the second will be the millennium, is crucial to *Paradise Regained*. Christ’s kingdom is not to be gained by force, though the ultimate object is “to crush his enemies” (*DDC*, pp. 435-37, 762). Bad kings are repeatedly denounced. Milton’s favorite concepts of avarice and ambition, temperance and magnanimity, are in *Paradise Regained*. So is his idea of liberty as something negative, passivity (*MBE*, p. 162). The Son of God’s words in *Paradise Regained* 2.473-77,

to guide nations in the way of truth  
By saving doctrine . . .  
Is yet more kingly, this attracts the soul,  
Governs the inner man, the nobler part,

are almost a versification of *DDC*, page 12, as the editor points out. The *DDC* says “Obedience to God’s commandments makes nations prosperous, . . . fortunate, wealthy and victorious, and lords over other nations” (p. 804). The Son of God agrees:

What makes a nation happy, and keeps it so,  
What ruins kingdoms, and lays cities flat,  
These only with our law best form a king.

(*PR* 4.362-64)

In *Paradise Regained* 1.210-13 the Son of God exemplifies the *right* of individuals to speak in church (cf. *DDC*, p. 608).

Nowhere else but in the *DDC* (pp. 544-52), I think, does Milton insist that the only proper baptism of adults is in running water, though the “profluent stream” of *Paradise Lost* 12.442-45 (echoing the *DDC*, pp. 544-52) hints at it pretty clearly. But in *Paradise Regained* Milton uses similar phrases, going out of his way to describe the immersion of the Son of God by John the Baptist. It is another instance of Milton’s necessary caution that the description is first attributed to Satan (*PR* 1.72-81, 273-80).<sup>29</sup> When

Hunter says flatly that "nowhere in the canonical works does Milton support adult against infant baptism" (*SEL*, 33, p. 205), contrasting the *DDC* (pp. 544-52), his statement, strictly interpreted, is defensible. But it takes no account of *Hirelings*, which *assumes* that adult baptism is the norm ("Either they [ministers] themselves call men to baptism, or men of themselves come," *Yale Prose*, 7:248). Elsewhere there is much mention of adult baptism, with no suggestion of disapproval (*Of Reformation*, *Yale Prose*, 1:555-56; *The Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce*, *Yale Prose*, 2:231-22, 302; *History of Britain*, *Yale Prose*, 5 passim; *History of Moscovia*, *Yale Prose*, 8:512, 514; *PL* 12.439-45). I find only one mention of infant baptism—perhaps a significant silence—and this is in *Of True Religion*, where Milton is consistently ambiguous about unorthodox beliefs which he shares. "The Arian and Socinian are charged to dispute against the Trinity: they affirm to believe . . . according to Scripture." "The Anabaptist is accused of denying infants their right to baptism; again they say, they deny nothing but what the Scripture denies them" (*Yale Prose*, 8:424). Milton was being careful not to align himself openly with the much maligned Arians and Anabaptists whose views he shared.

Anthony Low in *The Blaze of Noon* provides "evidence of close compatibility between *Samson Agonistes*" and the *DDC*.<sup>30</sup> The temptations which Samson had to face and overcome, from Manoa, Dalila, and Harapha, were "good temptations," leading to true repentance (unlike Dalila's), following the *DDC*'s pattern. Reprobation is rescinded by true repentance. Samson's "sense of heaven's desertion" echoes *DDC*, pp. 631-32. Samson was saved by faith in God alone. His revenge on the Philistine aristocracy and priests was not personal but directed against God's enemies, whom it is a religious duty to crush (Low, pp. 187-88, 192-93, and 224). He was acting "not as a private person, but as a magistrate and deputy of God" (Low, pp. 198-99, 204).

Milton's mortalism is implicit in *Samson Agonistes*. "The play, in its imagery and the very texture of its language, posits an indissoluble connection between soul and body—just as in *Paradise Lost*" (Low, p. 225, cf. *DDC*, pp. 318, 400). As in *Paradise Regained*, the *negative* aspect of Samson's liberty is stressed (Low, 71, 86, 89). The *DDC*'s insistence that "we are undoubtedly to speak the truth, but . . . not to an enemy, . . . not to an oppressor" (*DDC*, pp. 762-65), justifies Samson's deception of the Philistine authorities (Low, pp. 75-76). "Those who persevere, not those who are elect, are said to attain salvation" (*DDC*, p. 529) fits *Samson Agonistes* perfectly, and solves the artificial problem of whether Samson was

a saint or a damned soul.<sup>31</sup> Samson is given the "decent Christian burial" on which the *DDC* insists (pp. 744-45; Low, pp. 131-32).

Professor Radzinowicz published *Toward Samson Agonistes: The Growth of Milton's Mind* four years after Low's *The Blaze of Noon*. She too recognizes the close relationship between the poem and the *DDC*. "Many of the most crucial concerns of the drama—vengeance and anger, chastisement and repentance, atheism and idolatry, good conscience and sincerity, liberty of interpretation and the primacy of Scripture—are subjects which post-Restoration amanuenses revised" in the *DDC*, and so were nearly contemporaneous with the composition of *Samson Agonistes*.<sup>32</sup> Professor Radzinowicz is especially perceptive on anti-Trinitarianism in *Samson Agonistes* as well as in *Paradise Lost* and *Paradise Regained* (pp. 315-39).

"Revisions [to the *DDC*] demonstrate Milton's constancy after the Restoration to the very lines of argument to which he had pointed in the political tracts advocating the Good Old Cause" (Radzinowicz, p. 159). Late revisions include the abrogation of the Mosaic law for Christians. Samson comes to his fullest sense of personal identity when he speaks from awareness of "my self? my conscience and internal peace." He now "enjoys Christian liberty," and decides to go to the pagan temple (Radzinowicz, pp. 156-57). Many revisions in the *DDC* show Milton conscious of the "need to affirm the virtue of independent action upon the basis of personal conviction," whether in the case of Samson or that of Milton's contemporaries (Radzinowicz, pp. 158-59).

*Samson Agonistes* recognizes that God's justice is on trial: it has been called in question by the Restoration when, in Major-General Fleetwood's words, "God had spit in the face" of those who believed themselves to be his faithful servants. "Patience," said the *DDC*, "is the virtue which shows when we peacefully accept God's promises, supported by confidence in the divine providence, power and goodness; also when we bear any evils that we have to bear calmly, as things which our supreme Father has sent for our good. . . . Opposed to this is impatience towards God, a sin which even the saints are sometimes tempted to commit" (p. 662; cf. p. 424; Radzinowicz, pp. 236-37). Samson's grinding at the mill with slaves picks up a metaphor familiar in Milton's writings; cf. "the slavish pounding-mill of an unhappy marriage" (*DDC*, p. 379) with *The Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce* (*Yale Prose*, 2:258).

The contingency of divine justice is made clear at the end of *Samson Agonistes*. Samson's destruction of the Philistines gave his people the opportunity to win freedom, "let but them / Find courage to lay hold on this occasion" (lines 1715-16).<sup>33</sup> As Milton

knew, they did not win their freedom then. But the memory of Samson, and the retelling of his story, could still lead others to be their own deliverers. "Conformity not with the written but with the unwritten law, . . . the law of the spirit, . . . must be considered as the form of good works" (*DDC*, pp. 192-99, 532, and 639-40). Hence the importance of "rousing motions" such as those which Samson obeyed. His decision, on second thoughts, to go to Dagon's temple witnesses to Christian liberty as opposed to literal acceptance of the Mosaic law. As in *Paradise Lost*, good is always contingent: virtue is shown *in action* (Radzinowicz, pp. 153-58, 186, and 349).

More than a century ago that great scholar David Masson, without benefit of Kelley and his successors, described the *DDC* as "an indispensable commentary to some obscure parts" of *Paradise Lost*: "The Miltonic philosophy . . . is here exhibited coolly and connectedly."<sup>34</sup> The case for Milton's authorship of the *DDC* is established by this close congruence between it and works published over Milton's name in his lifetime. Even if—*per impossibile*—the *DDC* was removed from the canon, Milton would not be left any "closer to the great tradition of Christianity." Evidence for his major heresies would remain in other works—anti-Trinitarianism, mortalism, materialism, polygamy, divorce, adult baptism in running water. The *DDC* did not *reveal* Milton's unorthodoxy; it opened our eyes to heresies ambiguously presented in works published under censorship.<sup>35</sup>

## VII

Finally, a word about Hunter's dismissal of the *DDC* as "one of the dullest religious tracts to be found anywhere."<sup>36</sup> He must, fortunately for him, have read very few seventeenth-century theological treatises. Many readers today do find seventeenth-century theology tedious, since it has lost its urgent political relevance. But how many other theological treatises are relieved with flashes of Miltonic eloquence, worthy of *Areopagitica*? I have given many examples of Milton's trenchant one-liners. Here are one or two more. His opening statement, "It is disgraceful and disgusting that the Christian religion should be supported by violence," sets the tone (p. 123); we may compare his proof of the existence of God: "it is intolerable and incredible that evil should be stronger than good, and should prove the true supreme power: therefore God exists" (p. 131). He illustrates the contingent nature of God's decrees by quoting Exodus 3:8,17: "I have come down from that place to liberate them . . . and to lead them out into a

good land"; and concludes drily "in fact they perished in the desert" (p. 155).

He delights in writing irreverently on subjects which his opponents took more seriously than he did: "Turning the Lord's supper into a cannibal feast" (p. 554). Zanchius expounds the Incarnation "as confidently as if he had been present in Mary's womb and witnessed the mystery himself" (p. 422). "I am not one of those who consider the decalogue a faultless moral code"; it can "contain nothing relevant to gospel worship" (p. 711). "God either is or is not really like he says he is. If he really is like this, why should we think otherwise? If he is not really like this, on what authority do we contradict God?" (p. 136). "The pre-eminent and supreme authority . . . is the authority of the Spirit, which is internal and the individual possession of each man" (p. 587). "One man, and he with motives of gain, should not be stuck up in a pulpit and have the sole right of addressing the congregation" (p. 608). "Strictly speaking, no work or thing is obscene" (p. 770).

He can startle us with paradox and irony. "The practice of the saints interprets the commandments" (p. 368). "There is some hatred . . . which is a religious duty, as when we hate the enemies of God or of the church" (p. 793). "The laity, as priests call them" (p. 571). He enjoys controversy. "It is amazing what nauseating subtlety, not to say trickery, some people have employed in their attempts to evade the plain meaning of these Scripture texts [about the Trinity]. . . . They have followed every red herring they could find. . . . To save their paradox from utter collapse they have availed themselves of the specious assistance of certain strange terms and sophistries borrowed from the stupidity of the schools" (p. 218). "There are some people . . . who . . . do not hesitate to assert that God is, in himself, the cause and author of sin. . . . If I should attempt to refute them, it would be like a long argument to prove that God is not the devil" (p. 166). "Attention to the requirements of charity is given precedence over any [Biblical] written law" (p. 532). "Anyone with any sense interprets the precepts of Christ in the sermon on the mount not in a literal way but in a way that is in keeping with the spirit of charity" (p. 553). "It is not the universities . . . but God who gives us pastors and teachers" (pp. 571-72).<sup>37</sup> His verbal wit anticipates Marx: "Christ . . . redeemed us . . . from the works of the law, or from the whole law of works" (p. 531).<sup>38</sup> I can only conclude by quoting Barbara Lewalski, in a different context: "As I encounter this persona, with or without name and initial, and date attached, I can only call him—John Milton" ("Forum," p. 153).<sup>39</sup>

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup>All references to Milton's prose are modernized and are to the *Complete Prose Works of John Milton*, ed. Don Wolfe et al., 8 vols. (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1953-82), henceforth *Yale Prose*. Subsequent references will generally appear parenthetically in the text. *DDC* appears in vol. 6.

<sup>2</sup>This article responds to two separate earlier *SEL* articles by William B. Hunter: "The Provenance of the *Christian Doctrine*," *SEL* 32, 1 (Winter 1992): 129-42; and "The Provenance of the *Christian Doctrine*: Addenda from the Bishop of Salisbury," *SEL* 33, 1 (Winter 1993): 191-207.

<sup>3</sup>Henry More, *A Modest Enquiry into the Mystery of Iniquity*, Sig. A 3<sup>v</sup>, pp. 185-87. I owe this reference to the kindness of Dr. W.R. Owens of the Open University.

<sup>4</sup>*Yale Prose*, 4:321-22 (*First Defence*) and 2:565 (*Areopagitica*); 7:254.

<sup>5</sup>Maurice Kelley, *This Great Argument: A Study of Milton's "De Doctrina Christiana" as a Gloss upon "Paradise Lost"* (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1941), p. 70; henceforth *GA*. Subsequent references will be given parenthetically in the text.

<sup>6</sup>J.M. French, *Life Records of John Milton*, 5 vols. (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers Univ. Press, 1949-58), 4:14-15, 3:231-32, 335; cf. W. Arthur Turner, "Milton's Aid to the *Polyglot Bible*," *MLN* 44, 5 (May 1949): 345.

<sup>7</sup>*SEL* 33, p. 197. We begin to see why the bishop was not appreciated as a Milton scholar.

<sup>8</sup>Thomas Goodwin, quoted by William Haller, *The Rise of Puritanism* (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1938), p. 75.

<sup>9</sup>Milton's image of the "wayfaring" or "warfaring Christian" in *Areopagitica* may derive from Ames's *An Analytical Exposition of Both Epistles of the Apostle Peter* (1641; Latin original 1635) (Keith L. Sprunger, *The Learned Doctor William Ames* [Urbana and Chicago: Univ. of Illinois Press, 1972], p. 147). Ames's works were printed in England only after censorship collapsed in 1640 (p. 259).

<sup>10</sup>Milton was not original here. Martin Marprelate had pointed out in 1588 that the Swiss, Scottish, French, Bohemian, and Dutch churches, among others, regarded episcopal authority as Antichristian (Marprelate, *Oh Read Over D. John Bridges [An Epitome]*, p. 6).

<sup>11</sup>In an interesting article T.C. Miller has argued, on the basis of Michael's speech in *Paradise Lost* 12.505-51, that Milton came to believe that all earthly churches compromise or pervert the truth. This, Miller suggests, is confirmed by the *DDC*, *Yale Prose*, 6:589-90 ("Milton's Religion of the Spirit and 'the state of the Church' in Book XII of *Paradise Lost*," *Restoration: Studies in English Literary Culture, 1660-1700* 13, 1 [Spring 1989]: 7-16). Milton appears to have joined no church.

<sup>12</sup>William B. Hunter, "Forum: Milton's *Christian Doctrine*," *SEL* 32, 1 (Winter 1992): 163-66, 166.

<sup>13</sup>This is one of the parallels with the *DDC* to which Hunter did not draw attention when editing *Hirelings*.

<sup>14</sup>*Mercurius Politicus*, 33, 16-23 January 1651, p. 545.

<sup>15</sup>Christopher Hill, *Milton and the English Revolution* (London: Faber, 1977), pp. 125, 133. Cf. *DDC*, *Yale Prose*, 1:533-34, and references there cited.

<sup>16</sup>Cf. A.G. Dobbins, *Milton and the Book of Revelation* (University: University of Alabama Press, 1975), p. 133. Cf. Hunter: publishing the *DDC* would have been "an easy feat before the Restoration" (*SEL* 32, p. 130). So would suicide.

<sup>17</sup>Martin A. Larson, "Milton's Essential Relationship to Puritanism and Stoicism," *PQ*, 6, 2 (April 1927): 201-20, 208.

<sup>18</sup>John T. Shawcross, "Forum: Milton's *Christian Doctrine*," *SEL* 32, 1 (Winter 1992): 155-62; 156 and 159.

<sup>19</sup>Hunter, "Forum," p. 132; my emphasis.

<sup>20</sup>*Yale Prose*, 1:585. For the political importance of astrology in these years see Michael McKeon's excellent book, *Politics and Poetry in Restoration England* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard Univ. Press, 1975).

<sup>21</sup>Mary Ann Radzinowicz, *Toward "Samson Agonistes": The Growth of Milton's Mind* (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1978), pp. 159, 169-70.

<sup>22</sup>H.L. Bentheim, *Engländischer Kirch und Schulen-Staat* (Lüneburg, 1694), p. 58. Bentheim is quoting Theodore Haak.

<sup>23</sup>Barbara K. Lewalski, "Forum: Milton's *Christian Doctrine*," *SEL* 32, 1 (Winter 1992): 143-54, 144.

<sup>24</sup>Lewalski, "Forum," pp. 147-48.

<sup>25</sup>Cf. Commonplace Book, *Yale Prose* 1:411-13 on Anglo-Saxon polygamy, and *DDC*, pp. 356-81. See also Leo Miller, *John Milton among the Polygamophiles* (New York: Loewenthal Press, 1974), pp. 3-12, 40, 118-20, and 325-27.

<sup>26</sup>I agree strongly with Professor Lewalski that "Milton cannot be classified in terms of any of the common christological positions" (*Milton's Brief Epic* [Providence, RI: Brown Univ. Press; London: Methuen, 1966], p. 157. Subsequent references will be to *MBE* and will appear in the text). Why indeed should he be except to suit academic convenience?

<sup>27</sup>Miller, Appendix II, "Milton's Reputation as a Polygamophile, 1644-1717." Hunter notes triumphantly that polygamy finds no place in *Paradise Lost* 11 and 12, but does not mention Book 4 (*SEL* 32, p. 192).

<sup>28</sup>I discuss the apostasy more fully in my *The Experience of Defeat: Milton and Some Contemporaries* (New York: Viking, 1984), pp. 297-304.

<sup>29</sup>"Profluent stream" is also an instance of Milton's English appearing Latinate because it is a translation from the Latin of the *DDC*. Cf. "through all numbers absolute though one" (*GA*, p. 197).

<sup>30</sup>Anthony Low, *The Blaze of Noon: A Reading of "Samson Agonistes"* (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1974), p. 119. Subsequent references to Low will appear in the text.

<sup>31</sup>Joseph Wittreich's *Interpreting "Samson Agonistes"* (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1986) attempts to make out a case for the latter fate.

<sup>32</sup>Radzinowicz, p. 401, quoting George N. Muldrow, *Milton and the Drama of the Soul: The Theme of Restoration of Men in Milton's Later Poetry* (The Hague: Mouton, 1970), pp. 254-62. Subsequent references to Radzinowicz will appear in the text.

<sup>33</sup>This repeats *DDC*, p. 508.

<sup>34</sup>David Masson, *The Life of John Milton and the History of his Time*, 7 vols. (1859-94), 6:817-40. It is to Masson's research that we owe most of our knowledge of Daniel Skinner (6:790-808).

<sup>35</sup>When Professor Hunter edited *Of Civil Power* for volume 7 of Milton's *Complete Prose Works* in 1980 he noted eleven parallels with the *DDC*. In editing *Hirelings* for the same volume he spotted only two parallels (notes 48 and 71). No doubt he thought that the thesis of the tract recurs so frequently in the *DDC* (esp. Book 1, chap. xxxi) that the parallels were not worth noting. But he might have picked up several others—Melchizedec and tithes (*Yale Prose*, 7:284-87, 300; *DDC*, 6:517); Milton's dislike of margins overloaded with notes (7:293-94; *DDC*, 6:122, etc.); his approval of civil marriage (7:297-300; *DDC*,

p. 561); and repetition of this favorite phrase "avarice and ambition" (7:318; *DDC*, p. 598).

<sup>36</sup>Hunter, "Forum," p. 166.

<sup>37</sup>Cf. William Dell, *Several Sermons and Discourses* (1709): "Anti-christ . . . chose his ministers only out of the universities" (p. 246).

<sup>38</sup>The trick is common in Milton's other works: "Lust is the friendship of ignorance, or rather the ignorance of friendship" (*Prologues*, *Yale Prose*, 1:295); "Circumstances which are Judaical rather than judicial" (*Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce*, *Yale Prose*, 2:332); "To suppress the suppressors" (*Areopagitica*, *Yale Prose*, 2:568); "Defending the defenders" (*Second Defence*, *Yale Prose*, 4:534); "Still watching to oppress Israel's oppressors" (*SA*, lines 232-33). Cf. Marx's "to expropriate the expropriators."

<sup>39</sup>I am much indebted to Barbara Lewalski and Maurice Kelley for generous help and advice in writing this article.



## APPENDIX

The following is a brief and schematic list of parallels between the *DDC* and Milton's other works. I have mostly omitted *PL*, *PR*, *SA*, and *The Art of Logic*, since these have been amply covered by Kelley, Lewalski, Low, and Radzinowicz.

## 1. Commonplace Book.

It is lawful to use classical authorities. *Yale Prose*, 1:376-77; cf. 6:387.

Lying is in some circumstances permissible. 1:384-86, cf. 6:762-65.

Polygamy. 1:397, 400-405, 411-13; cf. 6, Book 1, chap. viii, 335-81, 651, and *PL* 4:750-62.

Divorce. 1:406-410, 414; *Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce*, 2, passim; *Tetrachordon*, 2, passim; *Judgment of Martin Bucer*, 2:432; cf. 6:371-81, 651.

Against indiscriminate charity. 1:417-18; *Of Reformation*, 1:589-91; cf. 6:746, 790.

Usury. 1:418-19; *Doctrine and Discipline*, 2:289, 320, 322; *Tetrachordon*, 2:656, 661; cf. 6:651, 775-78.

Kings are not the Lord's Anointed. 1:474; *Eikonoklastes*, 3:586-87; *Defence*, 4:403, 499; *Brief Notes on a Sermon*, 7:475-76; cf. 6:797-98.

Compulsion not to be used in religion. 1:476-77; *Reason of Church-Government*, 1:332-33; *Treatise of Civil Power*, 7:245-46; cf. 6:123, 436, 536-41, 566, 584, 589-90, 612-13, 797-99.

2. *Of Reformation*.

There should be freedom to "sift and winnow" any Christian doctrine. 1:519; cf. 6:122.

Popery is idolatry. 1:520-23, 590, 602. Idolatry a ground for divorce comparable with adultery (*Doctrine and Discipline*, 2, chaps. viii-ix; cf. 6:386, 690-96).

Against liturgies. 1:522; *Animadversions*, 1:662, 677-93; *An Apology*, 1:937-39; *Eikonoklastes*, 3:503-505, 551-553; cf. 6:670, and *PL*, 4:144-52.

"The irresistible might of weakness." 1:525; *Reason of Church-Government*, 1:825-33; *An Apology*, 1:951; *Defence*, 4:338; cf. 6:436 and *PL* 12:566-69.

Against ceremonies. 1:526-27, 547-48, 589-90, 600; *Reason of Church-Government*, 1:828, 840-44; *An Apology*, 1:931-35; cf. 6, Book 2, chap. iv.

Disinterested search for truth. 1:535; cf. 6:121.

Egypt as a place of bondage. 1:545, 793; *Defence*, 4:353, 532; *A Letter to a Friend*, 7:325; cf. 6:706-707, 711.

Sons of God. 1:547; *Reason of Church-Government*, 1:837, 842; cf. 6:178, 197, 206-13, 495-97, 511-13, 547.

No distinction clergy/laity. 1:547-48, 824-45; *Hirelings*, 7:320; cf. 6:558 (priesthood of head of household), 570-73, 594.

Christians took over pagan rites. 1:556, 688-89; cf. 6:667.

Against the Fathers, Councils, antiquity and scholasticism. 1:565-70, 602-603, 624-52; *Of Prelatical Episcopacy*, 1:624-52; cf. 6:127, 177, 180, 827.

"Shortly-expected King" 1:616; *Animadversions*, 1:706-707; cf. 6:615, 623-27, though here the imminence of Christ's kingdom is less confidently asserted.

3. *Of Prelatical Episcopacy*.

All-sufficiency of the Bible. 1:624-25; *Reason of Church-Government*, 1:746-49,

826-30; cf. 6:125 and *passim*.

Against human traditions. 1:626, 650-52; *Of True Religion*, 8:421; cf. 6:576-91, and *PL*, 12:511-12.

Avarice and Ambition. 1:646; *Eikonoklastes*, 3:542; *Second Defence*, 4:680; *Character of the Long Parliament*, 5:443; *Ready and Easy Way*, 7:422; cf. *Of Reformation*, 1:613, 6:598 and *PL*, 12:511.

Bishops = Presbyters. 1:647-52; cf. 6:593.

#### 4. *Animadversions*.

Ministers should have a trade, 1:676-77; *Hirelings*, 7:306; cf. 6:599-603.

Against tautological prayers. 1:682; cf. 6:672.

God not the author of laws destructive of human society. 1:699; *Doctrine and Discipline*, 2:342; *Tetrachordon*, 2:588, 604-605, 623-24, 638-39; *Colasterion*, 2:750; cf. 6:379-80.

For Scripture against authority. 1:699-700; cf. 6:591.

Pastors not feeding sheep. 1:726; *Second Defence*, 4:650; *Hirelings*, 7:279-80; cf. 6:595-99 and *Lycidas*.

Mocking popish "Mother Church." 1:727-28; *An Apology*, 1:940-41; cf. 6:592.

#### 5. *Reason of Church-Government*.

Natural law engraved on hearts. 1:764; cf. 6:382.

Mosaic Law = beggarly rudiments. 1:765; *Hirelings*, 7:281-82; cf. 6:517-31.

God gave the Jews a king in wrath. 1:781; *Tenure of Kings and Magistrates*, 3:213-16, 234; *Defence*, 4:347, 377-78; cf. 6:677. Bad kings—6:796-97, *PL*, 1:490-502.

Acts 9, 13-15, and other texts to justify self-government of congregations. 1:789, 842-49; cf. 6:594, 603, 609, 797-98, 805.

Punishment. 1:835; cf. 6:396.

God hardening sinners' hearts. 1:836; cf. 6:198-99, 331, 336-37, and *PL*, 3:185-202.

Pious self-regard. 1:842; cf. 6:719-20.

Divine image in man. 1:842; *Tetrachordon*, 2:591; cf. 6:185-396.

#### 6. *An Apology for a Pamphlet*.

We should hate the enemies of the Church. 1:901; cf. 6:743, 762.

No word or thing is obscene. 1:901-904; *Defence of Himself*, 4:744-45, 771-72; cf. 6:770.

Dislike of marginal annotation. 1:822, 910, 921-22, 945; *Colasterion*, 2:724; *Hirelings*, 7:294; cf. 6:122.

Law as schoolmaster. 1:949-50; cf. 6:548.

#### 7. *Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce*.

Superstition of scarecrow sins: things indifferent. 2:221, 228, 342; *Areopagitica*, 2:563; *Tetrachordon*, 2:588, 613-14, 638-39; *Colasterion*, 2:750; cf. 6:525-41 and *PL*, 12:295-306.

Daily increase of truth. 2:224; *Areopagitica*, 2:554, 566; cf. 6:121-23, 585-89.

Appeal to learned, not simple and illiterate. 2:233; *Of True Religion*, 8:437; cf. *DDC* in Latin.

Deviate from the law for charity's sake. 2:236-38, 340; *Tetrachordon*, 2:637; cf. 6:640, 707-708.

Scripture and Reason, 2:242, 342; *Tenure*, 3:206; cf. 6:222, 239.

Grinding in the mill. 2:258; cf. 6:379 and *Samson Agonistes*.

Quoting Homer on predestination. 2:294; cf. 6:202.

Against transubstantiation and consubstantiation. 2:325; *Of True Religion*, 8:424; cf. 6:552-54.

Adultery—easily forgiven. 2:331-33; *Tetrachordon*, 2:591, 674; cf. 6:381.

#### 8. *Of Education.*

Fortitude and patience. 2:409; cf. 6:738-39.

#### 9. *Judgment of Martin Bucer.*

Sole authority of the Bible. 2:433; cf. 6:123-24.

#### 10. *Areopagitica.*

Censorship = popish. 2:493, 505-507, 537-40, 548-49, 569; *Of True Religion*, 8:434; cf. 6:577-78.

Know evil to know good. 2:514-15, 527, cf. 6:352-53 and *PL*, 4:220-22, 9:1070-80.

Fortunate Fall. 2:527-28. Cf. 6:394-98; Book 1, chap. xviii; and *PL* 12:473-76.

Heretic in the truth. 2:543; *Treatise of Civil Power*, 7:248; cf. 6:510-13.

For free discussion. 2:550; cf. 6:121-23 and *passim*.

Truth = discussion, though called sects. 2:550-56; cf. 6:123.

Believers = stones of the temple. 2:555-56; cf. 6:499-500.

Popery not to be tolerated. 2:565; *Of Civil Power*, 7:254-55; *Of True Religion*, 8:429-32; cf. 6:690-95.

#### 11. *Tetrachordon.*

Subordination of women. 2:589; *Second Defence* 4:625; cf. 6:609, 782.

Knowledge of Hebrew. 2:596-97, 671; cf. 6:182, 234-35, 251, 362-63, 671.

Naming animals in Paradise. 2:602; cf. 6:324 and *PL*, 8.

Marriage and the church's union with Christ. 2:606-607, 739; cf. 6:500.

What God did before the creation. 2:663; cf. 6:299.

Vertumnus as expert in shifts and evasions, 2:675; cf. 6:260.

#### 12. *Colasterion.*

Charity overrules law. 2:750; cf. 6:532.

Marriage = a civil affair. 2:750; *Hirelings*, 7:297-300; cf. 6:561.

#### 13. *Tenure of Kings and Magistrates.*

Kings = deputies and commissioners. 3:199, 213-16, 233-34; *Defence*, 4:347-48, 370-71, 403-408, 432-35, 466-67, etc. Cf. 6:795-96.

Resistance to the magistrate may be a duty. 3:199-200; cf. 6:800-801.

Quotes Euripides. 3:205; *Defence*, 4:440; cf. 6:407.

#### 14. *Eikonoklastes.*

Men of truest religion accounted sectaries. 3:348; *Areopagitica*, 2:566; cf. 6:123.

Actions more important than words. 3:360; cf. 6:622-23; *PL*, 12:581-82.

Against uxoriousness. 3:421, 538; *Second Defence*, 4:625; cf. 6:609, 782.

Immorality of royal courts. 3:569-70; cf. 6:796-97.

#### 15. *Defence of the People of England.*

Tyranny and superstition. 4:535; *Eikonoklastes*, 3:509; *Ready and Easy Way*, 7:421; cf. 6:118.

16. *Second Defence.*

Truth defended by reason as well as by arms. 4:553; cf. 6:122-23, 583-92.

Protestantism = orthodoxy. 4:619; cf. 6:574.

Selden and Divorce. 4:625; cf. 6:378.

17. *Treatise of Civil Power.*

For individual interpretation of Scripture. 7:241-44; cf. 6:120-21, 583-92.

Whatever churches and doctors say. 7:243, 248-49; cf. 6:592, 639-40, 711, and *passim*.

No church may impose its own interpretation of Scripture. 7:243-44; cf. 6:584, 590.

Discipline = voluntary by churches. 7:245; cf. 6:607-14.

Concept of blasphemy. 7:246-47; cf. 6:698-700.

Definition of heresy. 7:247-53; *Of True Religion*, 8:421-26; cf. *Areopagitica*, 2:543 and 6:123-24, 603-604, etc.

Samaritans believed Christ on the woman's word. 7:248; cf. 6:590.

Conscience against churches. 7:248; cf. 6, *passim*.

Against persecution, but no toleration for papists. 7:254-55; *Of Reformation*, 1:531; *Of True Religion*, 8:429-32; cf. 6:797-98.

Justification by faith, not works. 7:255-56; cf. 6:457-60, 539.

Against imposition of time or place on worshippers. 7:262-65; *Hirelings*, 7:295; cf. 6:708-15.

Magistrates to protect religion, not enforce it. 7:262-73; cf. 6:708-15, 797-98.

Church and excommunication. 7:268-70; cf. 6:611.

18. *Hirelings.*

Remuneration of ministers. 7:281-319; *Letter to a Friend*, 7:330; cf. 6:595-603.

Presbyters and deacons. 7:283; cf. 6:593.

Melchizedec and tithes. 7:284-87; cf. 6:517.

Laymen may be priests. 7:286, 298, 319-20; cf. 6:558, 570-73.

Each particular church absolute in itself. 7:292; cf. 6:602-603, 609.

Freed from Sabbath observance. 7:295; cf. 6:351-55, 704-15.

Adult baptism. 7:298; cf. 6:544-52.

Scripture to be available for all. 7:302-303; *Of True Religion*, 8:434-35; cf. 6:577-79, 600.

Against universities as sources of pastors. 7:315-17; cf. 6:572-73, 594.

Enforced tithe payments make Christianity no better than Mohammedanism. 7:318; cf. 6:598.

19. *Proposals of Certain Expedients.*

Just division of commons will make the nation rich and populous. 7:338-39; cf. 6:367: polygamy will prevent fields going to waste for want of labor.

20. *Of True Religion.*

Against Catholicism. 8:417, 421-24, 429, 434; cf. 6:577-84.

Word of God v. implicit faith. 8:419-21; *Of Civil Power*, 7:243; cf. 6:132.

For protestant unity and toleration. 8:424, 434-37; cf. 6:120-24.

God not responsible for sin. 8:424; cf. 6:153-202.

Arianism and Socinianism—Milton's ambiguity. 8:424-25; cf. 6:280.

Trinity not in the Bible—Milton's ambiguity. 8:424-25; cf. 6:214, 218, 278-79, 420.

Christ's satisfaction: free will v. free grace. 8:425; cf. 6:189-90, 444.

Idols are laymen's books. 8:433; cf. 6:693.

Congregation to examine teachers. 8:435; cf. 6:600.

Write in Latin for the learned only. 8:437; cf. *DDC* in Latin.

21. *Sonnets*.

15. Piedmont. Commanded to curse God's enemies. Cf. 6:675.

16. On his blindness. God does not need good works. Cf. 6:186-87, 645, and *PL*, 4:412-19.

17 (to Henry Laurence) and 18 (to Cyriack Skinner). Temperance versus luxury. Cf. 6:733.