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How Freud Explains the Tudors: Psychological Motivations and Historical Understanding of Tutor England's Religious Schism

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**HOW FREUD EXPLAINS THE TUDORS: PSYCHOLOGICAL MOTIVATIONS
AND HISTORICAL UNDERSTANDING OF TUDOR ENGLAND'S RELIGIOUS
SCHISM**

**A thesis submitted to
Regis College
The Honors Program
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for Graduating with Honors**

by

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Preface and Acknowledgements

I consider myself no scholar, not yet at least. What I am is the product of teachers who refused to give up. I entered college a wee little freshman more infatuated with college life as a whole than I was with my classes and the chance to learn. This does not mean I spent all my days socializing, far from it. What it means is that I was invested in the full college experience, class, nightlife, clubs, campus activities, and finally receiving a very small piece of the pie was academics. I knew I was passionate about literature and I knew that I loved to write, yet it was not until time was running out that I decided to fully invest myself into this more scholarly sphere. I began senior year ready to deliver in an academic sense; this thesis is the culmination of my first step on this long and hermetic road through academia.

My thesis fuses several scholastic and intellectual interests that have been a part of me for many years now. History, religion, and literature are all fields I contemplated studying seriously. Furthermore, examining the motivations and reasons behind actions – a more psychological slant – has been an angle that has accompanied my fixation with these three fields. In Tudor England, I found the glorious intersection of these four paths, and I think what captivated me more than anything about this thesis, was the way in which they all worked together to create an overarching paradigm for a whole era.

In the end, despite my own Tudor fanaticism, I would not be here without my professors, peers, and my family. I owe an indelible thanks to the professors who have unflaggingly pushed me over the course of four years. I owe a great deal of thanks to

professors like Dr. Lara Narcisi who was invested enough in my education to pull me into her office and say “Really Tim? I know you can do better than this. Now go and write it again.” Thanks to Dr. Daniel Clayton, my reader, for giving me the encouragement and positive feedback I needed when I all I could hear was “REVISE!” I owe a special thanks to Dr. Daryl Palmer, my advisor, for pushing me in every class I had with him over the course of four years and, more importantly, for holding me to a standard writing this thesis that I did not even think I could meet. Finally, I am indebted to Dr. Thomas Bowie, the director of the Honors program, for being so much more than a professor. Regis University would simply not be the same without him.

My acknowledgements would not be complete without mentioning two other groups: I would not be who I am without the friends that have surrounded me over these past four years. I’ve never met a group of peers who were as invested in forcing me to think critically and to engage the world than the individuals I’ve met in my undergraduate courses.

And finally, I simply would not be here if it were not for my family – my brother and sister, and especially my parents. The only reason I could have made it this far is for their loving support and their rigid, honest appraisal of my actions and work since I was a child. I am forever indebted to them. I do not know if they will ever understand my respect and appreciation for the depth of the love and wisdom they’ve shown me, even in my most obstinate and difficult moments.

Thank you all for reading. Hopefully the literature will speak to you as it has spoken to me.

Introduction

In a sense, the Tudor dynasty began on August 22nd, 1485 in the midst of Bosworth Field as Henry Tudor, soon to be known as Henry VII, seized the crown of the fallen Richard III. His dynasty took its unique and defining characteristic bridging the House of York and Lancaster in January of 1486 as he married Elizabeth of York. A new era began steeped in blood, the divisive blood of a battlefield victory and the marital blood of two political families coming together as one. The sexuality and violence, represented by a battlefield encounter and a political marriage, which characterized this era were present at its inception; furthermore this was a time period embedded with religious sentiment so severe that it is nearly foreign to modern readers. From the beginning, there was a distinct and un-reconcilable opposition of violence, sex, and religion. These precepts would continue to define the period as years passed and the dynasty changed hands from Henry VII to Queen Elizabeth.

I became interested in this topic during the fall of 2008 when, as prompted by Dr. Daryl Palmer, I looked for a literary evolution evident from the time of Henry VIII to Queen Elizabeth. I began my search with *Doctor Faustus*. I was intrigued by the atheism portrayed in it, especially in light of the fact that this was a time period characterized by religious fervor. I began searching for intimations of atheism in the early works of Tudor England – in the works of Sir Walter Raleigh, Philip Sidney, and John Skelton, and found none. I began again, this time asking, “did the reformation and the Anglican split from the Catholic Church somehow establish atheistic roots?” Again, I

found nothing that immediately answered my question, but what I did find was a plethora of sexual insinuations in a period saturated with religious rhetoric. Not only was sexuality a part of the literature, but in many places, it was literally juxtaposed with religious diction in works such as Skelton's *Philip Sparrow*. As I began writing, I looked for a historical foundation and immediately thought of Henry VIII, Anne Boleyn, and the English Reformation. Quickly everything began to fall into place; I found myself in the midst of a work analyzing the social-literary intersections of Tudor England through the lens of Freudian psychology on sexuality and theories of religion. But first, it's necessary to have a skeletal understanding of the period in order to have a framework for the psychological analysis.

Though he was the father of the Tudor dynasty, Henry VII's rule over England is not defining in terms of how modern society views sixteenth-century England. His era had war, dissent, royalties' heavy hand in politics and economics and the scheming and plotting nobles trying to fight back, it had the burning of heretics and the theological bombast, but it lacked the religious schism and erotic intrigue that became obvious under the reign on Henry VIII. As a result, I wish to gloss over him and move onto Henry VIII, the centerpiece of this essay.

Henry VIII's road to the throne began in 1502 with the death of his elder brother, Arthur. At this point, Henry was a young man entrusted to the poet-tutor John Skelton and the women of the court for a scholarly and religious education. In 1509 when his Father died, Henry was just a young man, a teenager, young enough that court officials and diplomats attempted to hide his father's death from him and manipulate the throne as

their own (Brigden 34-37). Soon after his father's death though, word came around to him. Scheming counselors Edmund Dudley and Sir Richard Empson were condemned to the Tower (104), and with the help of a Papal edict he married his brother's widow, Catherine of Aragorn. With violent premonitions and religious maneuvering, the new King's character slowly began to take shape.

For the body of this thesis, there are essentially two starting points.

Chronologically, the material begins with John Skelton. His work is laced with the pious rhetoric of the era, yet many pieces were loaded with sexual innuendo. The work of his that we will look at, *Philip Sparrow*, was most likely written under Henry VII. His place in the court and the literary world – in addition to the sexual-religious manipulation present in his work – makes him a valid character to analyze. In terms of courtly significance, he serves as a bridge between father and son, Henry VII and Henry VIII. The poet that was appointed to Henry VII's court was the same scholar who tutored young Henry VIII. The same mind that produced thousands of lines of poetry distilled stories and lessons into the forming mind of Tudor England's most famous king. Furthermore, as Stanley Fish argues, Skelton is essentially the first poet of the English Renaissance (Fish 249). Skelton's work bridges medieval poetics to the English Renaissance. He is both known for his stylistic evolutions and, more notably, the way in which his poetry reflected the era. This is especially pertinent in his later work, which is laden political and social commentary, with responses to courtly choices and behavior of prominent individuals, critiques of hypocrisy, and scathing renditions of officials such as Cardinal Wolsey. In other words, Skelton's later poetry is tied to real events and locked

within history, making demarcating literature that we can use to make poetic divides for our clean cut anthologies. Hence, we call Skelton the first poet of the English Renaissance. Moreover (and more important given our purposes) the psychosexual notions, which I will soon discuss in regards to Henry VIII, can be seen in the work of John Skelton. As we later take a look at Skelton I wish to focus on these poetic overtones.

Yet, from a theoretical perspective there is no better starting place for this thesis than Henry VIII. His role in displaying the psychology that ruled Tudor England, then altering the psyche of the whole country, is essential to understanding the period. He did not create the psychology of the period, but the particular events within the period – which are of course created by the psychology of the period – and the way they developed was hinged upon him. His actions – which were rooted in religious, sexual transgression – would forever mold England. These precepts would still have existed without Henry VIII, but the way in which he acted upon them was so ostentatious that one cannot ignore them. Moreover, the repercussions that can be seen in Queen Elizabeth's hereditary baggage and later schismatic works such as Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus* make it absolutely essential to study Henry VIII's paradigmatic role within the period.

Chapter one shall deal with the psychology necessary to understand our psychosexual study of Tudor England. Additionally, chapter one describes the religious intensity of England, thereby giving the psychosexual notions significance in light of their influence upon the English Reformation and Henry's self-centered actions. Chapter

two will provide a more thorough discussion of Henry himself, his significance in the psychosexual and religious intersections of Tudor England, his subversive actions with Anne Boleyn, and a discussion of the timeless nature of this concept as shown by a backwards look at the life and work of John Skelton. Chapter three will put our understanding of Freudian psychology back in conversation with the Historical Henry VIII in order to show the evolutionary impact of his schismatic actions on Tudor England. My analysis shall then turn to Christopher Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus* as a literary case study to see the psychosocial transformation resulting from Tudor England's religious split and the drama surrounding it.

Chapter One: Psychological Background and Religious Fervor

It is now appropriate to ask, “why is it even relevant to use literature to understand the psychology of an era?” Benjamin Beit-Hallahmi can answer this question for us. He claims, “The psychological processes involved in religious activities can be found in other activities...Through looking at the psychology of art, we may gain useful insights into the psychology of religion,” (237). Beit-Hallahmi’s claim is a complex, nuanced statement regarding the cerebral and social similarities between art and religion. A surface reading of his statement proves a valuable starting point; he maintains that in some way, art informs us about religion. From cave drawings to Handel’s *Messiah*, religious notions have always been expressed in artistic mediums. Not only are these mediums a physical representation of religion and myth, they bring new insight to how we view a particular story. Jesus’ death on the cross is much more dramatic if we have followed him through twelve artistically carved Stations of the Cross. Well-etched tears on Christ’s face with vivid whip lacerations on his back can manifest emotional sentiment that lies within us.

So what does Beit-Hallahmi’s claim mean for the Tudor period? If we take Beit-Hallahmi seriously, then we can use art – in our case literature – as a medium to understand the religious-cultural intersections within the era. These intersections can help us understand the formative psychology that created Tudor England. Additionally, if we are looking to understand psychology – particularly the psychology of an era so influenced by sexuality and religion – it is fitting to consult with psychologist Sigmund

Freud. Freud wrote prolifically on many different topics, but three in particular happen to be germane to our topic: instinct and urges, religion, and sexuality. In *Civilization and Its Discontents*, Freud writes that “Just as satisfaction of instinct spells happiness for us, so severe suffering is caused us if the external world lets us starve, if it refuses to sate our needs...” (56). Freud, by mere juxtaposition of “sate our needs” with “satisfaction of instinct” implies that there is some necessity for the human body to fulfill its seemingly natural impulse. In vague terms, this could be seen as any impulse, any urge. If one feels compelled to buy a car, a TV, eat a huge meal, whatever desire burns within, then, as a human, one should fulfill this instinct. Doing so will create happiness. Withholding the satisfaction of this need will cause suffering and pain.

Speaking more directly of urges and impulses, Freud later says, “The feeling of happiness derived from the satisfaction of a wild instinctual impulse untamed by the ego is incomparably more intense than that derived from sating an instinct that has been tamed” (57). Though Freud does not directly use the word passion when speaking of our instinct and compulsions I wish to put it in his mouth. I feel that it is a fitting word based on his description of these impulses as “wild” and “instinctual,” as well as his emphasis that the satisfaction of “untamed impulses” will cause innumerable more intense pleasure than the satisfaction of a tamed urge.

Passion, according to the OED, contains a wide gambit of denotations ranging from “the sufferings of Jesus on the last day of his life” to “love” to “sexual desires or impulses.” Though passion is my word and not Freud’s, I feel that it is very applicable. And It is interesting that in this discussion on fulfillment, reprieve, and satisfaction we

find definitions that range from the religious, to anguish, to the emotional, to the sexual. Shortly thereafter, Freud clarifies his discussion of the execution of these “wild instinctual impulses” and argues that among them sexuality takes primogeniture: “I am, of course, speaking of the way of life which makes love the centre of everything...one of the forms in which love manifests itself—sexual love—has given us our most intense experience of an overwhelming sensation of pleasure...” (61). In Freud’s eyes, love – particularly sexual love – takes place in the vanguard of our urges, impulses, and instincts. One could argue against this. Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs would place food, water, shelter, and safety on the same plane of necessity as sex. Yet from the modern day to Tudor England it is undeniable that sex and love maintain a place at the forefront of our minds. Freud’s words are especially applicable when one stops and looks at Henry VIII. From the motivational instinct guiding his actions to the paradigmatic construct molding his responses to his sexual frustration, sexuality was present. To understand the effect and consequence of this “frustration” – of what can occur when our desires are thwarted as Henry’s initially were by the Catholic Church – it can be helpful to study Freud’s *Moses and Monotheism*:

This satisfaction of the instinct is felt as pleasure by the Ego, just as not satisfying this instinct would undoubtedly become a source of discomfort. Now, it may happen that the Ego eschews satisfaction of the instinct because of external obstacles...Such a refraining from satisfaction, an “instinctual renunciation” because of external obstacles...is never pleasurable. (*Moses and Monotheism* 148)

Freud points out how the ego at times turns away satisfaction because of a personal choice; for example, the ego realizes that a satisfaction of desire may have potentially dangerous repercussions. In the case of Henry VIII, we see his desires thwarted by social circumstances rather than a personal choice. Looking at the historical actions of Henry, we see both the sexual motivation in his actions and the dramatic responses when his urges are frustrated. Despite his own personal faith and the religious atmosphere, Henry was willing to bend theology for his desire, and when the Catholic Church rejected his request for a marriage annulment, the response was dramatic. It is important to note though, that this willingness to alter religion was not unique to Henry.

Tudor England was a religious nation, but this does not mean that every individual was pious, God fearing, and faithful. What it means is that religion formed the way in which they perceived the world around them. Most people did pray regularly, but much of it was mere rhetoric, only done for display. Their public behaviors and their private thoughts were often vastly different; nonetheless, they based their decisions upon religious constructs. Due to their libido, individuals bent religion to maintain a degree of theological legitimacy. Welcome to Tudor England.

Religion: From Theoretical to Historical

Under the reign of Henry VIII, the wrong religious beliefs, ranging from being on the wrong side of the Protestant-Catholic divide, to more schismatic tendencies such as witchcraft and atheism, could get an individual imprisoned, tortured, or burned at the stake. This ever-present presupposition of piousness influenced everything from personal morality to national war. Henry went to war with Louis XII because of his “rebellion against papal authority” (Brigden 105). Political decisions were based on religious precepts. The likes of Thomas More rejoiced when Henry VIII became king, calling him a perfect prince: “...he was well versed in theology and pious...his chivalry seemed to make him the ideal Christian knight...” (Brigden 103). Yet more noticeable than all this is the way in which faith was an indelible part of thought: religion was not just a popular practice; it was a way of life for Tudor England.

The symbolic echoes of Catholicism were ever-present in England. From politics in London to one’s daily life, religion was there. Just as Thomas More rejoiced when Henry ascended the throne, everything from government to everyday behavior was tinged with a sense of faith. More is a perfect example of this devotional integration. Sidney Lee’s biography of him points out that during the proposition and debate regarding his appointment as the speaker of the House of Commons, knelt upon his knees like a parishioner in church. Only when the debate was finished would he make any response and stand up. Cardinal Wolsey – who led the debate in favor of More – supposedly told him, ““Would God you had been at Rome when I make you speaker!”” (Lee 880).

Wolsey's comment implies an ingrained connection between More's political appointment and the Roman Catholic Church. For More and Wolsey, the appointment of a man as reverential as More was not just an honor for him and a service to the English government, it was an honor for the Roman Catholic Church as well. In Wolsey's eyes, More's religious devotion only made him all the more politically eligible. This was not an era with a supposed division of church and state. The two were inexorably linked; religion was ingrained in the people's consciousness and defined how they processed the world.

Thomas More's personal life was as laced with saintly dedication as was his public. More wore the invisible cassock of a pious layman – ““a sharp shirt of hair next his skin...”” (877) as well as practiced the archaic Catholic tradition of corporal mortification. For some, like Thomas More, religious fervor was candid and unquestionably formative. Yet there was another side to the religious air of Tudor England. Some, such as Henry VIII, used it as mere rhetoric. Regardless of the sincerity this religious atmosphere controlled the Tudor period and the Literature that spun out of it.

While many people were fervent to an extreme degree like More was, many more treated faith as social decorum and necessary rhetoric. A look at John Skelton, the poet laureate of Cambridge and Oxford, and much loved figure in the Tudor court, shows this very Tudor ability to simultaneously take religion seriously while maintaining a flexible attitude regarding its specific practices. In reality, they based their decisions off their personal will and shaped religion around their desires in order to fall into the vigorously

theological framework of the period. Skelton comprehended the importance of fustian; he had a deep understanding of the importance of putting up fronts and how it was a quintessential aspect of the sixteenth-century England. For him, there was no moral or theological rupture when Catholic tenets to make room for his special circumstances.

Though he critiqued the Catholic Church for its corruption and hypocrisy, Skelton himself entirely disregarded their teachings when they inconvenienced him. Lee points out the explicit role of religion in his life discussing his “admittance to holy orders” (328) in a local abbey. His experiences here may have given him the inspiration for and knowledge to write his poem “Philip Sparrow.” Yet, despite his religious appointment, Skelton was personally involved in a sexual controversy:

Many stories were current of the irregularity of Skelton’s life...he was called to account by Richard Nix, the bishop of Norwich, for living at Diss in concubinage with a woman by whom he had many children. It was said that when his parishioners complained to the bishop that he was father of a boy recently born in his house, he confessed the fact in he pulpit next Sunday, and, exhibiting the naked child to the congregation, asked them what fault they had to find with the infant, who, he declared, was ‘as fair as is the best of all yours.’ The charge was brought, he complained, through the hostility of the Dominicans... (328)

The passage from Lee’s work is riddled with examples of doctrinal mutability in sixteenth-century England. His description of Skelton’s life as “irregular” speaks of the inconsistencies between the way he lived his private life and the doctrine he publicly

adhered to. Lee describes Skelton bringing the boy to the alter un-adorned, in the sacred nothingness that God brings us into the world in. Skelton's actions show that despite explicit Church doctrine prohibiting sex outside of marriage, Skelton followed his own will by having children. Furthermore, he saw no sin, no evil, in fact, nothing but purity in his child. Lee points out Skelton and all Tudor England's enduring unconscious actions to ignore published religious doctrine and create exceptions to the rules given their unique circumstances.

For Skelton, despite his place in the Abbey and his position preaching at the pulpit, having an illegitimate child was okay. By claiming "...the infant...was, 'as fair as the is the best of all yours,'" he displays that in his opinion, the boy was no different than the children of his parishioners. His willingness to doctor rules – such as Catholic directives against clerical marriage – in his personal life is echoed by the religious distortion and sexual themes his poem *Philip Sparrow*. Furthermore, his statement that the charges were produced because of Dominican hostility simply reaffirms this Tudor notion that religion was a sanctified vehicle to establish one's own will. If Skelton's assertion was true, then the Dominicans used religion to attack and reduce Skelton in an authorized manor, a religious manipulation that at its core is not very different from Skelton's. If Skelton's assertion was false, he too was massaging faith, using theological tensions to excuse accusations, asserting that the Dominicans were full of nothing but slander and their claims came out of clerical rivalries.

Henrician England

Susan Brigden hints at this unique religious sensibility from a historical perspective when she professes, "...England was a Catholic country, but not a papalist one..." (108). For Tudor sentiment as a whole, this line is very telling. The Pope was the head of Roman Catholic Church. He created the dictates and defined the dogma, yet in England, Catholicism was a stamp, a signifier that meant next to nothing. It was a mold to follow while maintaining the image of sanctity all the while surreptitiously bending the rules to fit one's own desire. This was the attitude that Henry VIII brought into as he bent Catholicism time and time again, marrying Catherine of Aragon with the help of a questionable papal absolution, then later seeking to coerce some sort of sanctioned divorce as his lust for Anne Boleyn became his new obsession.

In 1509, Rome received Henry's appeal to allow his marriage to Catherine, and despite its violation of religious doctrine, they condoned the matrimony. As time passed, Henry's mind changed and promptly he needed the marriage sanctioned as illegitimate (113); he needed past exceptions unwritten to warrant his first marriage as illegitimate, that way he could move forward with a divorce from Catherine and follow the new path established by his changing desires. Henry showed the English tendency to treat religious labels, at this time Catholicism, as nothing more than that, a label. By name the English were Catholic, but the specificities of what that meant were of little concern. Religion shaped their lives but was ultimately subject to their will. When Henry became king, he saw marriage to Catherine not just as his will, but necessary. He needed an heir.

His sister-in-law had been widowed; marrying her kept business in the family and maintained ties to Spain. Now that she had failed to provide an heir, the theological crisis returned but with a different premise. Henry already had a solution in mind: the marriage to Anne. Religiously, there were roadblocks. His initial reliance on the church to marry Catherine would make debunking that decree all the more difficult, and within this difficulty lied the initial steps to his schism with Rome. Yet his titillation was strong enough to push through the obstacles, to ignore the Catholic doctrinal resistance, and walk down the transgressive path.

A look into the private correspondence and devotional materials of Henry VIII can help us understand both his personal psychology during this situation, as well as the significance of the personal-religious-sexual intersection within Tudor England's psyche. Kathleen Ashley discusses the Book of Hours, one of Tudor England's primary devotional tools, as more than a religious icon, but rather "a site of family record keeping" (145). She discusses how families – typically nobles, families with some expendable income – would use the books as a manuscript for births, deaths, baptism, and other significant familial occurrences. Yet this was not the only use for the book. Books of Hours also had social applications, recording current social and political events events. I believe that this aspect of the Book of Hours can prove helpful later as we look at Henry VIII's use of devotional material. Ashley primarily discusses the Book of Hours as being a record-keeping tool, but she also mentions its social applications studying a Book of Hours that engages the time period through its owners' additions:

Other entries connect family concerns with broader historical and meteorological events, another common pattern in these *livres de raison*. For example, several blank pages at the beginning of the Book of Hours (fols. 1r-6r) were filled with a history of the politico-religious conflicts...in the 1580s and 1590s. (156)

In other words, a Book of Hours can be seen as a static resource displaying a dynamic dialogue with the historical times it was situated within. The Book of Hours was a concrete object that in its original shape did not change. The illuminated text and printed script did not alter, but through its additions the books would evolve in a fashion to reflect the changing historical times. Some truly may have evolved solely as a progression of lineage, but there were many in which the authors did record the historical-political situation giving us insight into their times.

The multitude of historical Books of Hours with personal contributions that Ashley sites proves that personal intrusions into devotional materials were not uncommon. Roger Wieck takes this notion to a more emphatic level: "Pride of ownership is visually reflected in many Books of Hours. Owners often had their coats-of-arms included in their books' illustrations," (Wieck 34). The fact that coats-of-arms were added to a Book of Hours shows the personal attachment owners had; additionally, the fact that they had to be painted in, the fact that families would part with the object for an extended amount of time and pay to have an artist illuminate the object shows the *intentionality* that went into making these objects personal. It was not as easy as printing

a clip-art file of one's computer and attaching a last name to it. To personalize these books took effort, furthering the personal investment in them.

Whatever we make of the social applications, one can safely assert that this unique use of the Book of Hours further proves the embedded spiritual values of Tudor England. Families used these objects as sixteenth century scrapbooks. In the modern day, we may take a secular leather-bound journal and insert pictures from the photo album, clippings from newspapers, grades and pieces of writing to record a familial moment, early England clearly used a very different medium in the sixteenth century. Rather than creating an amalgam of images from various parts of life in a blank book, this period juxtaposed important personal events – birth, death, and marriage – as well as social records along side religious iconography. As stated earlier, whether spiritual fidelity occurred or not, Tudor England processed the world with a religious lens.

Ashley's article, though it touches on *some* social applications, focuses on the familial relevance of Books of Hours. So, if a Book of Hours was typically used for genealogical purposes, what can be made of Henry's use of such devotional materials? I believe that Wieck can answer this question for us. Wieck studies the Book of Hours from a much more social angle than Ashley. Discussing this aspect of their historicity, he states,

It would be remarkable...if such wide-ranging changes in European society did not reverberate in one of the most distinctive religious and artistic artifacts of that era: the Book of Hours...these books speak volumes to the social historian about the society in which they were

created, both directly—in their depictions of people and activities—and more obliquely—in their clues that their *contents*...provide about the attitudes and mentality of the period. (Wieck 33, ital added)

Wieck reiterates Ashley's point that Books of Hours also had a social application back up the social angle that Ashley discusses. He goes further that Ashley in asserting this idea; from his perspective, a Book of Hours always reflects the historic atmosphere. Current events affect both the printing and production as well as how an audience responds. These responses can be seen through individuals' personal additions to the text. Wieck points out that we can learn from the "clues that their contents provide" (33). It is this idea that I am particularly interested in.

The way in which viewers and readers alter the contents of devotional material through authorial intrusions will naturally reflect the "mentality of the period" (33); their responses are inevitably molded by the historical atmosphere or are a response to the period's social reality. Now, fascinatingly enough, when we look at the prayer books of Henry and Anne we see both a personal recording – like the books of lay men and women as Ashley discussed – as well as a political summary of the time. But, it is important to note that in the examples from Henry and Anne that we will analyze, they were not recording the social-political mood of the era. They were creating it.

By looking at a couple of examples from illuminated texts, we can trace the evolution of Henry's feelings and use it as a schematic to understand the shifts in Tudor England. The first example is not from a Book of Hours; it is from a music book, but meaning is still valid:

In her [Anne's] music book, sent to please her, there was an illustration of a falcon pecking at a pomegranate. The falcon was Anne's badge; the pomegranate of Granada, Catherine's. The pomegranate was itself the symbol of fecundity... (Brigden 111)

As this excerpt shows, messages of all types, from social to personal were conveyed through art. In this case, the future of England was being told through sketched additions. Boleyn, cut throat, was symbolized falcon. This falcon pecked away at the pomegranate, explicitly representing Catherine. Even before the discussion of divorce, Henry was already planning his next move in the court of love – the removal of Catherine of Aragon by Anne Boleyn.

As Henry began courting Anne Boleyn, he portrayed his situation with religious angst: "His desperate need to secure the succession and his consequent desire to rid himself of a Queen who could bear him no living sons, became inescapably a theological problem" (Brigden 113). He was married to a woman who had borne him no sons, and desired a woman who he was not married to. Now, as discussed earlier, some of the reverential framework that contained the period was a legitimately ingrained aspect of the Tudor psyche, but as exposed by the study of differences between Thomas More and John Skelton, some of the specific uses of language and action were mere bombast. Henry saw his situation through a religious lens because it was the only way he knew how to view the world, yet the way in which he paralleled religious symbolism to his situation was rhetorical manipulations. Henry understood how to use the iconography of

the times and the theological notions to legitimate his position. Brigden describes this situation with detail:

By Easter 1527 the King was imploring Anne to become his mistress...In an illuminated book of hours Henry scrawled, below an image of Christ as

Man of Sorrows:

I am yours

Henry R forever,

And Anne replied:

By daily proof you shall me find

To be to you both loving and kind.

With evident promise, she wrote this under a picture of Archangel Gabriel announcing to the Virgin that she would bear a son. (112)

It is impossible to ignore the significance of Henry and Anne's coy words to each other in the Book of Hours. Henry seems to be associating himself in some way with Christ, particularly with Christ as the Man of Sorrows – an image of the post crucifixion Christ adorned with a crown of thorns and bleeding from gaping wounds on his side. He represents the Lamb of God, paying for the sins of all mankind, sins he did not commit. Henry appears to be suggesting that he, like Christ, is in pain and suffering; somehow his relationship with Anne is inciting this. His love for her and his distress due to his unsuccessful, heirless marriage is creating gaping emotional wounds within him. His association with the Man of Sorrows implies that he feels he is paying for the sins of another in his unsuccessful relationship, and that somehow Catherine's inability to bear a

son is due to her sin, not his. The most logical conclusion from a perspective of divine guidance would be that this is some kind of punishment due to the fact that Catherine was previously married to Henry's brother. Henry withholds from acknowledging this. Anne replies, savvy to his insinuations, making the promise to peck the pomegranate clean and devour its fertile symbolism; she symbolically implies her willingness to bear Henry a son. Her response was written under an image of Gabriel, evidencing that both individuals felt – or at least put up the appearance – that they were being divinely guided. As we will soon see, this blatant adulteration of Catholic doctrine is precisely what the speaker, Jane Scrope, in *Philip Sparrow* does.

The speaker, Henry, and Anne all ignored the published divine rights and instead redefined religion based on their personal feelings, claiming it as beatific guidance, in order to justify their own desires. Once Henry began down this path he would falter but he would not veer; his fate was set. This was not the first time Henry had acted in such a fashion. His marriage to Catherine came out of a similar situation where he had pressed upon the pliable aspects of religion to fit his personal needs. With Catherine, he did this by entreating the Catholic Church to amend a situation they had once before amended for him: “His desperate need to secure the succession and his consequent desire to rid himself of a queen who could bear him no living sons, became inescapably a theological problem...What was needed was for one pope to overrule what another had allowed,” (113). The same psychological roots drove both situations. Henry acted with an impudent willingness to project his will over a sanctioned institution in order to reshape already written theology and thus achieve his wishes.

Due to Henry's schismatic actions, the religious psychology of Tudor England was about to change. James W. Jones reviews Freud's theories regarding religion and analyzes one of his definitions of religion which is particularly insightful regarding Henry's actions: "...he [Freud] diagnosed religion as an 'obsessional neurosis,' an attempt to ward off guilt by repetition," (1). Guilt is often derived from religious laws, but one could remove this problem by bending the religious laws to favor their own will. Then, by repetition of this new doctrine, one can come to believe their actions are acceptable. Freud claims this phenomenon began "...when the sons of the first tribe arose and killed their patriarch and then, out of guilt, idealized the dead father and enshrined him as their god..." (2). In this case, by writing seditious lines to Anne Boleyn, Henry laid the ground work to kill the Catholic Church, and rather than immortalize the dead father Henry would abjure Catholicism and project himself as the head of a new church. Kirk Bingaman highlights Freud's claim that "...the familiar biblical tenet, 'God created man in His own image,' should be reversed: 'Man created God in his,'" (27). The pope had failed Henry in terms of providing an annulment for his marriage to Catherine; as a result, Henry created the Church of England. He had quite literally created God – or at least God's dictates – in his own likeness and image as Freud claimed man has done for ages. By repeating doctrine he had divinely created as the new head, Henry could eliminate his guilt, or at least attempt to do so. Psychologically speaking, Henry was not just appeasing his guilt through repetition, he was projecting his will on a divine institution, creating a religion that fulfilled his desires.

Chapter Two: Literature as a Medium for Sexual and Religious Transgression

In this chapter, we shall begin to look at this specific spin on sexuality and religion that we have begun to label as uniquely Tudor through sixteenth-century literature. We have already looked at England's willingness to mold theological symbols and doctrine as a result of carnal motivations through a historical lens, but by analyzing this psychosexual theme through literature I believe we can gain new insight. Because literature is time marked and fastened down by a specific publication year, we can use it to demarcate a period. We can study John Skelton's *Philip Sparrow* in light of the fact that it reflects England as Henry just a boy, and similarly, we can evaluate Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus* knowing that it reflects England under Queen Elizabeth. What I wish to do by probing these two works is not only further delve into the psychology of England and the religious-sexual interplay locked within it, but also to use these two time separated works to study the evolution in the Tudor psycho and analyze the role Henry VIII had in this.

Like the biographies in chapter one, Skelton's poem, *Philip Sparrow*, displays the omni-presence of religion in English life. Furthermore, as we discuss the mentality of *Sparrow*'s narrator, Jane Scrope, we will gain access to another bit of information regarding Tudor mentality: faith was ultimately a personal thing. Wieck and his work with Books of Hours can again be insightful concerning this point. Discussing their perspicacity into the personal spirituality of early England, he contends that

...Books of Hours...reflect some significant developments in European society. As artifacts of a devotion based upon reading by the laity, they betoken a movement...towards a mode of religious experience that expressed itself, at least in part, in the personal, private actions and internalized mentality of all believers. (Wieck 38)

Wieck draws out the fact that artistic infringements upon religious works point to an increasingly private conception of faith. As I study Wieck's claim, my mind immediately jumps to Henry and Anne's written exchange in their Book of Hours. Their own intrusion into this illuminated text shows that Tudor England had a religion, or religious expressionism that was manifested individually, or as Wieck puts it, in "private actions and internalized mentality" (38); in other words people asserted their beliefs in their own way and in their own realm. Though the nation had to adhere to an overarching theological construct, in their own world, in their families Book of Hours, they could manipulate faith to fit their needs. I wish to qualify Wieck's claim though. He asserts that this practice was the result of a "movement," that England slowly ebbed in this direction. I disagree with this; by looking backwards at *Philip Sparrow*, I believe that religion was always locked within the "internalized mentality" (38) of English citizens. Although, it is important to note that Henry's actions and the religious schism dramatically altered the psychology of the country. This again is where we can use literature to understand the psychology of a culture, as we later look at Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus* written during the reign of Queen Elizabeth.

The idea we are discussing – the relationship between historicity and literary works – has already been asserted psychologically. Stanly Fish can bring this conversation keenly into focus regarding Skelton. A Skelton scholar, Fish not only has the ability to discuss historical and literary crossroads, but can also bring a voice saturated with knowledge of Skelton’s life and work into the conversation. He concisely describes the layering of Skelton’s personal motive and historical reflection in his work: “...at the center of a Skelton poem is the psychological (spiritual) history of its protagonist,” (Fish 240). Fish curiously uses the word “protagonist” implying that it is the history of the *speaker* that a poem discusses, whereas if we take Freud and Beit-Hallahmi’s work seriously it is the *writer’s* history that a poem truly speaks to. Nonetheless, Fish implicitly asserts the unconscious Tudor association of psychology and faith by his juxtaposition of “psychological” and “spiritual” within his discourse. He later adds a point about the social contingency of the literary reflection – and therefore “psychological (spiritual) history” of a speaker (or author) – saying, “...the strength of his [Skelton’s] poetry lies in the way questions are framed in the context of a specific historical moment through the filter of an acute and involved mind” (258). In other words, according to Fish, a piece of literature both displays the inward psychology (and therefore spirituality) of a narrator as well as reflects the society in which it was produced. In *Philip Sparrow*, Skelton’s voice is essentially the voice of the poet, one of the two speakers in the poem; thus, when we read the poem Skelton’s theological background lies at the center of everything spoken by our poet-speaker. Furthermore, as Fish points out, equally embedded in the speaker’s voice is a reflection of “a specific

historical moment” (258) or, in other words, a reflection of the social situation surrounding the author as he wrote.

Yet, as I have alluded to, there is an aspect of the psychology the Tudor’s acted on that was *timeless*. In other words, though Tudor England had its own nuances – many of which Henry VIII’s behavior was responsible for – many of the actions we’ve looked at were motivated by urges that have forever influenced the Ego. To understand the relationship between these two elements – the time-locked and the timeless influence – and their joint role in governing Tudor England, it is helpful to refer back to DiCenso. While thus far, we have mostly worked to unpack the psychological paradigms of Tudor England, DiCenso, coming from the perspective of timeless psychological theory, can help us understand these constructs as eternally binding. It is valuable to understand how these notions are ageless and present from Skelton to Marlowe, from before Henry VIII through Elizabeth, and to place the ageless notions in conversation with the historically influenced alterations in England’s psychology and behavior. Referring to the social-personal connection in mental processes, DiCenso claims, “Individual psychological development was increasingly understood as inseparable from interpersonal and cultural existence...” (DiCenso 21). DiCenso reflects upon Freudian psychology retrospectively. With this more perennial viewpoint, DiCenso establishes a psychological theory that straddles the divisions created by historical moments, allowing us to apply a psychological template stretching from Skelton to Marlow. And yet, he too attests to the connection between individual psychology and “cultural existence.” He validates Beit-Hallami’s claim that art can be used to understand religion; as a medium created by a

socially conditional entity, an artist, it will inevitably illuminate the religion of the day. As a result, our ageless mental template is altered as the historical and cultural atmosphere changes. He displays how the individual psychology of the artist is linked to societal events. In other words, the way in which Skelton and Marlowe see the world and produce their literature is based upon what is occurring around them. Both works somehow reflect this Tudor tradition of sexually motivated religious manipulation, but Henry's religiously divisive actions permanently affected the consciousness of all English subjects, and accordingly we can see a traceable literary evolution from Skelton to Marlowe.

Religion in Skelton's *Philip Sparrow* serves as a mechanism to facilitate the speaker's reflections on the death of her sparrow – a metaphorical mechanism to embody her lover. I am hardly the first to address the nature of religion and sexuality in *Philip Sparrow*; scholars Stanley Fish, Susan Schibanoff, and Celia Daileander have all thoroughly studied this topic. I hope to use the subtle differences in our explanations to produce new insight. My analysis of *Philip Sparrow* does not use the poem as an enclosed work, but rather as a time-capsule to give insight to and help explain the overarching psychology of Tudor England.

The atmosphere of the poem is set through its profusion of Biblical references – “*Pla ce bo...Di le xi...*” (1, 3) – and lines from prayers, “*Pater noster qui...Ave Mari...*” (13, 14). Bible verses and Catholic prayers aside, the entire poem is tinged by a sense of religion: the speaker, Jane Scrope, is a nun in a convent (9). It is impossible to ignore this as one proceeds through the poem. Latin lines from prayers and verses are

repeatedly inserted so as to remind readers that the setting is inarguably religious. The subject of the poem – and Skelton’s metaphorical vehicle – is mourning, specifically the narrator’s mourning of her pet sparrow, Phillip. The grieving of even insignificant beings is a natural occurrence, yet the narrator of this poem goes rather far, spending over one hundred lines bereaving the loss of Philip and wishing that he may return. The poem turns in line 108 changing the emphasis and pushing on in a direction that is uniquely Tudor.

The poem’s motif shifts as the narrator equates her sorrow to that of Andromach’s:

Like Andromach, Hector’s wife,
Was weary of her life
When she had lost her joy,
Noble Hector of Troy; (108-111)

The parallel to “Andromach,” or Andromache creates an oddly romantic tone. She associates her feeling at loosing a pet to Andromache’s when she lost her husband, the honorable hero of Troy. It could be written off as over-done hyperbole if the poem did not become explicitly sexual in the next stanza:

And many times and oft
Between my breastes soft
It would lie and rest:
.....
And prettily he would pant...

.....

And take me by the lip...

.....

And on me it would leap

When I was asleep

.....

And for to take him in

Upon my naked skin. (124-126, 132, 140, 161-2, 166-7)

Naturally, I single out the most provocative lines of the poem to exaggerate the sexual tone, but it is impossible for these lines to not pop out; the setting is a convent and the speaker suggests intimacy that nuns, by virtue of their vows, should be unfamiliar with. Skelton's decision to use "breastes" rather than bosom or another less erotic word choice signifies the transition into a more transgressive theme. Here, *Sparrow* fully undertakes its metaphorical significance by centering on sexuality and its situational acceptability within the speaker's circumstances.

To further the explicit sexuality of the poem and the contravening nature of her actions, she claims, "it would lie and rest...and on me it would leap," (126, 161). Skelton's use of pronoun "it" leaves room for varying degrees of interpretation. One could read *Sparrow* as a poem about a woman lying with her pet, who, perchance, would at times peck her lip and land upon an open patch of skin. But the evidence is certainly there to interpret Philip as a man with whom she would lie. In my opinion – though Fish may disagree with me – this is the reading Skelton is guiding us towards, even going so

far as to imply sexual activity between the two. His use of the pronoun has to refer to something other than Philip for there is no syntactical reason for the speaker to use both “it” and “him” to refer to Philip. If we look at the line “it would leap” (161) it is not hard to see this as the action of a penis becoming erect. This shortly followed by the line, “And for to take him in” (166) Skelton uses synecdoche to imply sexual intercourse, using “him” to represent the actual action of fornication, and enjambes the line with “upon my naked skin” to symbolize the seamless, fluid action of the man and woman’s intercourse.

The immediate juxtaposition of “Upon my naked skin” with “God wot, we thought no sin;” (168) displays the speaker’s conscious choice to place her own thoughts over the Catholic dogma that had she had been indoctrinated with for years. She reinforces this belief a few lines later saying, “In him it was no vice.” (174). Both these lines are end-stopped, signifying that the speaker ended her thoughts there. To her, the discernment of this issue is done and over with. She reasoned out her own theology to elevate carnal holy ground over religious teachings. Yet this issue is not and could not be over and done with. The molding of doctrinal teachings for the assertion of individual desires was an intrinsic part of the Tudor consciousness. The interplay between sexuality, personal motive, and religious alterations was part of the period’s psychology. This psychology didn’t just permeate actions in Tudor society; it created them.

My analysis of this section evinces where Fish and I disagree in our reading of this poem. Fish argues that *Sparrow* is a comparative study of innocence and experience. He theorizes that Skelton, a master of rhetoric, used varying devices and opposing diction

in the poem's different sections creating contrast in the portions spoken through Jane's voice and the poet's voice. In this way he elicits dissimilar reactions from the opposing readers' passages to create contrary levels of "ingenuousness" as he puts it. In his eyes, Jane – despite the potential innuendo of her words – responds to the death of Philip with a "child's reaction" (217). It is "...immediate, straightforward, passionate, innocent;" whereas the poet is "...also immediate...but hardly innocent" (217). Fish is correct when saying, "At the moment of Skelton's entrance into his poem there is a marked change," (229).¹ It is undeniable that the poem evidently shifts as the poet becomes the speaker, yet I disagree with his reading that innuendo is apparent as never before. The sexual word play was always there.

I would like to now refer back to the concept that a speaker's history and the psychology of the times are inseparable from literature. These guiding principles are impossible to dash from writers' consciousness as they produce their work. In other words, *Sparrow* cannot simply be broken down into sections spoken by Scrope and by "the poet." This is far too clean of a dichotomy to be truly depictive of art. The whole work is muddled by the hand of the writer who is molded by epoch he resides within. Poems can be broken down into various sections, but these sections will still depict the social atmosphere and the psychology of the time.

Furthermore, Fish himself states that "Although the first eight hundred and thirty-three lines are supposedly spoken by Jane Scrope, Skelton admits at 834, that it is he who

¹ Fish argues that, "At the moment of Skelton's entrance into his poem there is a marked change. My pen is 'ebybde / With Aureat droppes", he announces at 872, as innuendo and artificiality replace the ingenuousness of the first section" (229).

has written them ‘under an imaginary (or feigned) likeness’” (220). Therefore, even if we get this voice of “innocence” through Jane, the words she speaks are still inked by Skelton’s pen, and as a result they are ultimately determined by his consciousness, by his mental, spiritual, and experiential history. Consequently, when we read the “innocent” reaction of Jane to Philip’s death, when we read her “straightforward and passionate” response that is unaware of her own innuendo, we are still hearing the voice of the subversive clergy member, Skelton, who had a wife/concubine and brought his naked child to the pulpit. This is not to say that Fish’s reading of the poem is wrong; I am merely stating that we cannot accept the voice of pure innocence through Jane Scrope, for her own actions are determined by the religious dissent and sexual undertones of Tudor England.

Taking another angle, Susan Schibanoff points out the textual manipulation at work in the poem. She steps back and critically looks at both the poem and analyses of it; she thus establishes a new argument looking at the poem as a whole, arguing that when these critics only look at sections of the work, they do Skelton and his poetry a disservice. She accuses Fish of this saying, “...he [Fish] ignores or not-reads certain cues in *Phyllyp Sparowe* and responds to those that allow him to rewrite the poem as a ‘comparative study of innocence and experience,’” (836). Schibanoff focuses on Fish’s dichotomous “rewrite” of *Sparrow* revolving around “innocence and experience” (836) and claims that if he, or any reader looks at a poem with the wish to rewrite it, they are deliberately marring the integrity of the text and imposing their own meaning upon it. To Schibanoff, this attitude is an injustice to Skelton’s work. She uses her critique of fish as a

springboard to dive into her comprehensive reading of the poem, a reading that essentially claims that *Philip Sparrow* is about what Fish himself does while reading Skelton's poem – readers selectively rewriting a work as they go through it. In the poem, both Jane and Skelton redefine literary and religious texts in order to produce a meaning they desire (833). Schibanoff specifically points out how this process works saying,

...Jane's attention moves back and forth between the liturgical text she hears or reads and her own situation or context, between the placebo, or office of the dead, and the death of her pet sparrow...Having appropriated the text of the psalm to her personal situation, Jane next moves on quickly to rewrite it in her own—and Phyllyp's—image. (833)

She later goes on to show how Skelton himself practices the same type of distortions and manipulations pointing out how in certain lines he changes the gender of certain Latin words from the vulgate in order to apply to Jane. Here, her reading lines up with Fish's focused analysis of rhetoric. 'Dominus' or Lord, becomes 'Domina,' Lady, for example (840). Schibanoff's argument that *Phillip Sparrow* is a poem about reading as rewriting only further reinforces the notion that manipulation was a paradigmatic force in Tudor England. It occurred on a literary level in *Sparrow* through this "rewriting" (833) as Schibanoff calls it. And within this literary manipulation we also witness a theological manipulation as words from the vulgate are twisted both in gender to apply to Scrope and in meaning to inform Scrope about Philip rather than God.

Though she does not explicitly discuss manipulation in her work, Celia Daileader discusses ideas with similar roots in her analysis of *Philip Sparrow*, which may, in truth

be the closest to my own. She draws attention to the collapse of binaries within the poem; the girth of her argument can be summed up in her thesis, in which she asks “...how are we to reconcile the religious and the erotic elements of the poem?” (391) Then beginning to outline her answers, responds by pointing out the numerous dichotomies at work:

...The tension between...the apparently dichotomous first and second halves of the poem...the Catullan, phallic connotation of the “wanton” sparrow versus the biblical connotation of the sparrow whose fall is marked by God; Jane’s apparent innocence versus her sensual delight at Phyllyp’s provocative flutterings (and her perhaps naïve references to sex). (391)

Her depiction of the poem is accurate. In her own words, the poem, the sparrow, all the images, do not represent an either or. They are both. They are all of the above (391-2). Furthermore, this same view on binaries applies to Tudor England. The nation was not sexual or religious; it was both.

To turn this discussion back to Henry, he too acted upon the sexual-religious binary. He allowed his sexuality to guide him religiously and as a result tore the country away from the Catholic Church; as a result, he permanently altered the way people would think in England. Though the underlying psychology was always there, he acted it out in a vulgar fashion. He disrupted the status quo as well as set a precedent for schismatic thought. The combination of this resulted in an increase and an evolution in religious dissent and moral

manipulation. No longer was there a permanent and unchanging entity in England guiding the country religiously. Doctrine changed based on the mood of the ruler. Henry would move from a liberal religious dissenter, to a ruler seeking to curb the dissent. Psychological chaos erupted and would only continue as the kingdom changed hands from Henry to Queen Mary to Queen Elizabeth, strapping England to a theological pendulum. This fluctuation created an atmosphere where questioning the divine was inevitable, and Henry's example of asserting one's own beliefs – specifically in a self-serving fashion – would be continued through the rest of the Tudor period.

Chapter Three: Doctor Faustus – Reverberations of Psychological Distress

Christopher Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus* embodies this evolution. It served as a focal point for all demurring beliefs, thoughts, and actions as the Tudor period moved into the Elizabethan age. John Faustus, the main character serves as the vehicle to convey these revolutionary ideas. He too eschews the religious doctrine of the time, taking up his own religious perversion, but where Henry recreated the faith, Faustus threw it away, producing his own damnation.

Towards the beginning of the play, Faustus delivers a speech on the depressing nature of mankind and sin:

If we say that we have no sin

We deceive ourselves...

Why, then, belike we must sin and so consequently die.

.....

...Divinity, adieu!

These metaphysics of magicians

And necromantic books are heavenly; (I.1.44-5, 47-9)

Faustus struggles with the issues of grace and the Christian inclination to believe in fate as a pre-determined manuscript conducting our lives. Catholicism emphasized grace as a sacrament received through confession. With sacraments stripped down in the Anglican Church, this issue became more disturbing to the religious psyche of Tudor England. Confessions were now between an individual and God; there was no longer the clean-cut

forgiveness of sins provided by a priest in the Catholic sacrament of Reconciliation. Faustus' struggle portrays the anxiety caused by this issue. If he lacks the gift of grace, then he was damned. Faustus clearly knows this – “Why, then, belike we must sin and so consequently die.” The syntactical disagreement in this sentence draws attention to Faustus' trouble with this issue. He begins as if asking an open-ended question, why must we be fated to sin and die? Yet, it is not a question. Faustus does not know the answer and the answer does not matter. To him, this question is really a statement. The interrogative format was purely rhetorical. We all sin and therefore die. Faustus knows personally he too would follow this pattern. He would sin, and inevitably continue to do so until the day of his death. The result, of course, would be damnation. His actions would be infinitesimal. His view is fatalistic. He lacks confidence in the gift of grace – a sin in and of itself: it shows a lack of faith – and rather than struggling with the issue, he simply throws it away, saying, “Divinity, adieu!” He proceeds to take up necromancy and replaces Christ with Lucifer. In his intemperate eyes, Lucifer's power shows immediate results, whereas to leave his fate in Christ's hands requires a lifetime of anxiety unresolved until judgment day. Faustus takes Henry VIII's actions a step farther. Rather than creating a new religion to remove his guilt, he completely represses his guilt by embracing a wanton life gluttoned by the powers of Satan.

A brief survey of some Faustian literary criticism shows the embedded historicity of Faustus' actions and Marlowe's writing. By looking at two authors arguing seemingly contrary angles on the issue we can learn much regarding the influence of the turbulent religious times upon *Doctor Faustus*. Angus Fletcher writes about the Anglican

influence in Marlowe's life and thus forth in the plot and portrayal of *Faustus*. William Hamlin appears to come from a totally different pole; he casts *Faustus* in light of *doubt* and *skepticism* as brought to us by Stanley Cavell's theories on the two subjects in Shakespeare, arguing that despite Cavell's brilliance, *Faustus* is a much more fitting work to study doubt than any of Shakespeare's plays. Both critics have valid points, for in reality the historical influence of Lutheranism due to the religious schism is undeniable; additionally, the presence of doubt because of the psychological disruption as a result of the Anglican split, the remarkable violence in England because of religion, and Henry's theological dissent is absolutely definite. As a result, the archival foci of *Doctor Faustus* – and therefore psychological base – must lie somewhere between the two.

Fletcher discusses the evident Lutheran impact referring to Marlowe's own study of divinity at Cambridge (Fletcher 189) and the literary reflection of that in *Faustus*' own study of divinity at "Wurttemberg" (Marlowe prologue 13, 1.1.37) – most likely a falsification of the actual Wittenberg. Fletcher summarizes much of Luther's own writings, focusing on the works in which Luther questions his own faith, probes his own fear of death, and even disputes the existence of God. Connecting themes from the play to Luther's personal writings, Fletcher claims, "*Faustus* thus emerges as a Lutheran work, not because it espouses any particular piece of Protestant dogma, but because it adopts the reformer's skepticism about the possibility of containing philosophical speculation about the afterlife..." (188).² Essentially, Fletcher argues that in spite of the

² Fletcher backs up this assertion probing Luther's theology, arguing "If such a view seems utterly out of place in Christian theology, it was Luther's dominant teaching. For Luther, the confrontation with mortality was a fundamental source of religious

fact that *Faustus* is a glaringly atheistic work, the embedded influence of Lutheranism – backed up by Marlowe’s own personal history and studies – is overwhelming. The religious binary Faustus finds himself in was somewhat of a dark, cynical twist on the intense theological odyssey Luther spent his life locked within. For despite atheistic themes, the context of *Faustus* makes it difficult to argue that Faustus has no belief in God. His persistent cries to heaven, especially at the end (5.2.113), portray some perverse belief in the divine; additionally, if Faustus believes in Satan, he necessarily must believe in God. The play is characterized by a dichotomous sense of celestial powers – good and evil forces working in a twisted sense of equity.

Though Fletcher’s work comes from a seemingly contrary perspective, his emphasis on Faustus’ spiritual vacillation echoes Hamlin’s discussion of Faustus’ skepticism as well as excerpts from Michael Neill’s *Anxieties of Ending*. Neill similarly picks up on the concept of Faustus’ fear of death, yet does so without utilizing the religious currents present at Marlowe’s time. He focuses purely on the diction of the play, and forges the complicated argument that Faustus’ anxiety is caused by the

experience...Luther’s anxieties about death formed the basis for his entire theology” (193). Fletcher pushes on this theological query pointing out the dogmatic binary it created within Luther, stating “Rational doubt of faith was a necessary precursor of salvation...” (196) yet this “rational doubt” pushed him to “...a despairing rejection of the divine which bordered on atheism...” (196) creating an inexplicable yet present binary where Luther’s doubt both established his faith as well as nearly destroyed it at times.

antithetical balance of the fear of an end in which there is no end.³ This perplexing dread is in reality a slight variation of that discussed by Fletcher. Neill's portrayal of the disquietude of termination speaks to the notion of a Manichean God, a fearful God capable of terror that will be addressed later in the chapter. Fletcher argues that Faustus simply had a fear of mortality; Luther also implicitly addressed this apprehension in his unabashed approach to his uncertainty of God, the afterlife, and his own human condition. Again, while this perspective seems to be quite different from Hamlin's discussion of skepticism, this aspect of Luther's doubt serves as a perfect entry point into the Faustian-Cavellian intersection.

Hamlin utilizes Cavell's work with skepticism as a methodology to explore the Faustian sense, or lack thereof, of religion. Though Cavell works mostly with Shakespeare, Hamlin sees the applications Cavell's discussion of doubt has for Marlowe's *Faustus*. Explaining Cavell's idea of doubt, Hamlin claims, "...skepticism for Cavell is not merely doubt, but doubt coupled with denial and disappointment—a supposition of the worst" (Hamlin 261). In my opinion, a close study of *Faustus* shows this assessment to be true. As stated earlier, it is not that Faustus *doesn't* believe in God. It is a dissatisfaction that propels the play. His progressive appraisal of knowledge (A-text 1.1.5-48) puts ecclesiology at the top then concludes with a disposal of it stating "Divinity, adieu!" (1.1.48), throwing away what he has just rated as the highest of pursuits. This creates an unquestionable sentiment of dissatisfaction, returning to

³ "...the anxiety of ending becomes proportionately more intense; but here it is compounded by a gathering horror of no-end. What results is a frenzied climax in which longing for closure and dread of the end are almost evenly poised" (Neill 332-3).

Hamlin's theory of "denial and *disappointment*." He emphasizes the "disappointment" aspect of the spiritual dilemma, though the two are inextricably linked in Faustus' struggle with a two-faced God. This is not an entirely novel concept. Critics before have discussed this notion in the play; however, it is my opinion this is one of the main sources of Faustus' transcendent angst and this angst is a reaction linked to the historical reality Marlowe himself was locked within.

Faustus' dissatisfaction with religion and hedonistic conversion was further due to the religious binary he found himself in. He was situated between a merciful God, a God who showed kindness to those seeking forgiveness, and a tempestuous God who wrought destruction and pain upon the damned. In Faustus' mind, there was no satisfactory balance between the two. Freud too spoke of the difficult religious dichotomy that Faustus dealt with:

'...It is from this, indeed, that the conception arises of a higher being who deals out punishment inexorably'...God is both the protector who rectifies the injustices and evils of the world and the wrathful overseer whose interdictions restrain drive activity. However, in each case it is most significant that religion is located within the complex interplay of *psychology and cultural formations*, (qtd. in DiCenso 33)

DiCenso takes Freud's interpretation and further extrapolates it, explaining the polarized nature of humanity's conception of God – God as redeemer and God as destroyer. The ending, particularly in the B-text, shows Marlowe addressing this complex nature of religion, God, mercy, and punishment. Through analyzing Faustus and the intersection of

these contrasting points, the nature of the connection between psychology, culture, and religion becomes clear, clear to the point that one sees these forces as inextricable from each other when studying the Tudor period.

Oftentimes it is solely act five, scene two of *Faustus* that is emphasized when studying the play's ending. While the power and drama of Faustus' last speech, and the impact of his end are essential to the play, scene one and the old man's closing words at the end of it are absolutely critical to understand the struggle Faustus had with this seemingly two-faced God. The old man enters, saying to Faustus, "Ah, Doctor Faustus, that I might prevail / To guide thy steps unto the way of life," (5.1.36-7). The old man signifies a manifestation of Faustus' conscience. He desires to "guide" Faustus' life, and thereby leading him back to heaven, just as our conscience, as taught by religion, does. Faustus, as well as the readers, know it is too late for this. He responds, "Damned art thou, Faustus, damned; despair and die!" (48). He shouts to himself, in an effort to repress the quiet voice of the old man, for Faustus has already convinced himself of his doom. Faustus barely hears him out. The old man watches as Faustus re-validates his deal with Lucifer as Helen sucks his soul out. The old man cries, "...As in this furnace God shall try my faith/...Ambitious fiends, see how the heavens smiles / At your repulse and laughs your state to scorn!" (116-17). His representation of Faustus' conscience implies that in the back of his mind, Faustus had this idea that heaven laughed at his "state of scorn." Whether or not Faustus realized this through the entire play, this notion is central to the religious questioning that was developing in Tudor England represented

by John Faustus in Marlowe's play. Critic Jonathan Dollimore draws out this conflict within *Faustus* in greater detail saying,

Once sin or evil is allowed to penetrate to the core of God's subject...the most fundamental contradiction in Christian theology is reactivated: evil is the essence of God's creation. This is of course only a more extreme instance of another familiar problem: how is evil possible in a world created by an omnipotent God? To put the blame on Adam only begs the further question: Why did God make Adam potentially evil? (Dollimore 331)

Dollimore points out many qualms with Christianity that are still valid today. If Faustus gives over his *whole* life to wanton behavior, then it really does become the essence, the constituent substance, the entirety of his being. Dollimore further probes the question pointing out that evil exists in a world created by an all-powerful God. Though Faustus does not voice these concerns at the opening of the play with his poignant line, "The reward of sin is death. That's hard." (1.1.40), his concerns lie implicit. Having studied at Wittenberg, his conception of the world would have been deeply rooted in Lutheranism and steeped in the difficult precepts of its doctrine. Cognizance of God's omnipotence, knowledge of sin and damnation, and the teaching that death is rewarded to sinners would have been ingrained in Faustus. Through his mere existence, Faustus understands the inevitability of sin, and with that comes a fear of God and doubts regarding his sanctity.

The ending of the B-text shows the struggle with this dualistic sense of theology incredibly well. As Faustus bemoans his fate, he accuses Mephistopheles of his damnation saying,

O thou bewitching fiend, 'twas thy temptation
Hath robbed me of eternal happiness. (5.2.90-1)

Mephistopheles responds,

“’Twas I that, when thou wert i’ the way to heaven,
Dammed up thy passage. When thou took’st the book
to view the Scriptures, then I turned the leaves
And led thine eye.” (5.2.93-96)

If God is all-powerful how could he allow this? Where was the good angel when Faustus was being bewitched? Where was the old man to act as his conscience? It seems as though God withdrew himself from the picture, allowing Faustus to damn himself, and did not return until his role as the “inexorable punisher” was needed. Faustus stresses this idea of God’s dual nature, God as good and evil, his last speech: “Yet will I call on him [Christ]. O, spare me, Lucifer.” (5.2.147). The syntactical confusion in this line is brilliant. Faustus asserts that he will call on Christ. Huge caesuras – the period after “him” and the commas after “O” and “spare me” – build intense suspense, drawing out dramatic affect. Finally as the tension reaches a peak, Faustus stops his line, ending what seems like a prayer, and instead invokes the name of Lucifer. The inversion is abrupt and bizarre on a first reading. It seems disconnected and schizophrenic. Rather than separated thoughts uttered by a man on his deathbed, Faustus claims that he has replaced

heaven with hell. Lucifer has become his Christ, arguing that there is some perverse relationship between the spheres of good and evil and a seemingly switch-able nature between God and Satan.

This notion is furthered with Faustus' last lines as the clock strikes twelve: "O, mercy, heaven! Look not so fierce on me!...O, Mephistopheles!" (182, 185). He again cries to heaven yet invokes the name Mephistopheles. The inversion is even more poignant here; Faustus asks heaven for a reprieve from its fierce damnation "look not so fierce on me" and cries to Mephistopheles in a last minute plea for mercy. Heaven is the chaotic force to be feared while Mephistopheles holds a slight glimmer of grace. Clearly, his cries to both heaven and hell fail. The devils carry him out. The next day, the scholars find his body "torn asunder" at the hands of demons working as fiendish messengers of a vengeful God.

Throughout Faustus' quarrel with good and evil, his unconscious sexual desire burns within him, acting as a psychological driving force and persuading him to choose evil over good. In terms of the number of lines, sexuality takes up little space in the play. Yet the impact it has on Faustus' fate is huge. As a theme, sexuality holds prominent positions in the play, bookending Faustus' deal with Lucifer, occupying space as he sells his soul, then again as his soul is finally claimed. After Faustus finishes the deed bestowing his soul to Lucifer's collection, his first demand is for a wife (2.1.136-7). Concupiscent satisfaction is the first thing Faustus desires. He calls himself a "wanton and lascivious" man (137), announcing that salacious desire rather than familial fulfillment motivates him. This desire is not satiated here, but it is striking that this

psychosexual impulse is paramount. Additionally, through the juxtaposition of religion and carnal enthusiasm readers see this interplay between religion and sexuality.

This interplay is heightened when Faustus loses his soul. The libidinous influence is undeniable; it is *the* driving force behind his final sale of his spirit. Faustus narrates his own loss saying, “Her lips suck forth my soul. See, where it flies!” (A-Text 5.1.93); he notes it without remorse. Yet moments before, he paused, actually considering repentance. The words of the old man were effective enough to produce a temporary internal conflict within Faustus: “Hell strives with grace for conquest in my breast.” (64). The diction of this line portrays the transparent tie of sexuality and religion; a *soul* flies forth as a result of a *kiss*. An old man speaking for Faustus’ conscience gives a divinely motivating lecture after watching this sybaritic interaction. Conversing with Lowell Gallagher sharpen our understanding of the psychology and motivation behind this scene and its tie to religious *doubt*.

Though most of Gallagher’s article is characterized by verbose pomposity, he produces some quality scholarship regarding the magnitude of Faustus’ “blood writing” within the play. Gallagher discusses the proximity of the second promise to “spill blood” and “rewrite the deed of [the] gift [of his soul to Lucifer]” (19) with the incident involving Helen and the Old man. It is worth noting the motivational juxtaposition of Faustus’ reaffirmation of his soul’s donation along with what Faustus requests in return:

The second appearance of Helen and the Old Man discloses the full measure of what Faustus does not see: the two figures’ proximity and resemblance...Instead, Faustus makes two requests: that Mephistopheles

torture the Old Man and conjure Helen to be Faustus' "paramour"

(F,12.74). In Faustus' fantasy, the paired promises of physical torment and erotic gratification make effective substitutes for the blood writing...

(Gallagher 19)

Gallagher points the relation between the Old Man and Helen pointing out a specific "proximity and resemblance." Utilizing the Freudian psychology at work within this thesis, the historical angle I take, and the reoccurring themes throughout the Tudor period, I believe this "proximity and resemblance" is a psychological tie between sexuality and violence, between lust and bloodshed. Gallagher speaks of this notion discussing how the *combined* effect of "physical torment and erotic gratification" are effective in distracting Faustus from the remembrance of the consequences of selling his soul, of reaffirming his promise to Lucifer. Furthermore, Gallagher's use of the word fantasy reasserts the concept that these instinctual thrust lie beyond reality and within the realm of Faustus' mind, his fantasy world.

As the scene progresses, Mephistopheles goads Faustus, attempting to pull him back to the pact, threatening him and calling him a "traitor" (66) because his words were slighted with remorse. He is wise to the legitimacy of Faustus' vacillation. Mephistopheles states, "His faith is great. I cannot touch his soul," (78) pointing out that Faustus' wavering is beyond what he can affect through temptation. But where Mephistopheles fails, Faustus' lust succeeds in redeeming his soul for the damned cause. Faustus himself poses this to Mephistopheles saying,

One thing, good servant, let me crave of thee,

To glut the longing of my heart's desire:
That I might have unto my paramour
That heavenly Helen...
Whose sweet embracings may extinguish clean
Those thoughts that do dissuade me from my vow, (81-86)

The fact that Faustus requests this without prompt displays how inherent Faustus' sex drive was to his character. It was a part of his being from the beginning to the end of the play. Faustus reiterates the sexual impulse we saw as he sold his soul to Lucifer. His language, "one thing...let me crave of thee," demonstrates the primacy of lust among Faustus' desire: of all things he could wish for here, he yearns for Helen. Furthermore, Faustus' sex drive is coming from his heart; it is his "heart's desire" to take Helen as an illicit lover. By claiming it as such, Faustus portrays how deeply lechery and evil have penetrated his being, truly becoming his "essence" and establishing themselves so thoroughly within him that heart and libido, love and lust, are undistinguishable.

Referring back to Hamlin can again aid in understanding this moment on the level of *personal* psychology: "Desire, in short, curtails doubt; the wavering that can lead to truth..." (267). By plunging into carnal delight, Faustus *attempts* to rid himself of doubt and anxiety. In reality, they are only mere distractions. As Hamlin correctly points out, this effort is futile. Rather than eliminating Faustus' doubts, they foster them, sending him further down the skeptical and heretical spiral.

Nonetheless, Faustus wishes to maintain this blissful, lustful ignorance and implies to Mephistopheles that by allowing him to indulge in this desire, he aids in

erasing any wishes to dissuade him of his vow to Lucifer (85-6) and to repent, returning to God. Mephistopheles quickly conjures Helen, allowing Faustus to seal his own fate. The two kiss (92) and Faustus knowingly trades his last chance to repent for the gratification of his licentious hunger.

With this in mind, I wish to reiterate the words of Freud stated earlier: "...in each case it is most significant that religion is located within the complex interplay of *psychology* and *cultural formations*," (qtd. in DiCenso 33). Through his sexual-religious transgression, Faustus displayed the pervading influence of the erotic in Tudor England. From Skelton's "Phillip Sparrow" to Henry VIII to Marlowe's *Faustus*, Tudor England was driven by the erotic. Their psychosexual urges created a certain doctrinal pliability allowing them to reshape religion as a result of self-motivated desires.

Equally important and equally related to the Tudor period is Faustus' struggle with a seemingly Manichean⁴ God. This struggle illuminates Freud's claim that religion and religious notions are formed out of the culture's influence on the psychological background of a period. Faustus lived in a changing England filled with conflict, violence, and strife between two faiths. The disorder surrounding this dichotomy was really a dramatic expression of religious insecurities; yet these religious insecurities were unavoidable. Ever since 1530 when Henry finalized his schism from Rome (Brigden 116-17), England had swung violently between Catholicism and Protestantism. This complicated heritage flowed from Henry's time into Queen Elizabeth's. As a result, a

⁴ For more on the description of Faustus' vision of a Manichean (dual-natured) God see Dollimore 324-5.

dualistic world would have been an inextricable part of the Tudor consciousness. What could be interpreted as ‘God’s’ constant dithering between the two faiths permanently disturbed countless citizens of England and permanently altered the way many – including the ranks of John Faustus – would look at God.

Elizabeth’s mere existence as a ruler spoke to this dual nature of Tudor society: “Elizabeth’s own history, her birth as the symbol of her father’s great refusal of papal power, her survival of Protestant plots for her and Catholic plots against her...led her away from Rome. Yet to lead her subjects with her was to risk papal anathema, rebellion at home, war in Ireland, even a French conquest,” (Brigden 215). Within Elizabeth was the psychosexual history, the religious dissent and the struggle with Rome, and the past full of senseless violence that she had inherited from her father. These familial shadows were specters she could not avoid. She was a reminder to England of the traumatic decades they had just lived through, of the theological variance they had just come through, and of the doctrinal insecurity that still permeated their lives. Additionally, the psychological drama she was heir to would continue to define England. Sexuality continued to pervade the court, whether it was through Edmund Spenser’s elevation of Queen Elizabeth’s chastity in *The Faery Queen* or the mysterious death of Amy Robsart, wife to her suspiciously close advisor, Lord Robert Dudley (225). There is no record of physical intimacy between the two, but the perceived sexual tension and courtly intrigue that surrounded their relation shows that sexuality was so thoroughly a part of Tudor consciousness that they looked for it everywhere. Additionally, this binary between

rumors of her impurity and tributes to her chastity demonstrates the repeating pattern for the Tudor world to be a divided world.

Through all this remains the strand of subconscious projection. The Elizabethan age inherited a Queen and a society that would continue to force their will upon religion, the world, and symbols in general, kneading them into a shape fitting for their needs. William Tate describes this behavior as he recants a visit from Princess Cecilia of Sweden to Queen Elizabeth. To honor the occasion, the Westminster School chose the play *Sapientia Solomonis* – a play about the life of Solomon – to be performed in front of the two (257). Tate explains the symbolism of this choice saying, “From Constantine to the Emperor Charles V, royal propaganda had developed the iconography of Solomon as a godly ruler, and the play clearly intends a Solomonic compliment to Elizabeth,” (257). Just as Henry had once linked himself to Christ as the Man of Sorrows, now the public eye was portraying Queen Elizabeth as the wise King Solomon.

Symbolic, religious distortion had become so inveterate in Tudor consciousness that society as a whole now practiced it publicly. Whereas once the commoner would only have dared to do so privately – as the narrator of *Phillip Sparrow* did – the gentry and peasants now had the intrepidity to do it in the public eye; nonetheless, it was only acceptable when done within what social constructs defined as admissible. In this case, equating Queen Elizabeth with Solomon, the divine, wise, and kingly ruler of the Old Testament, was a satisfactory figurative alteration; it projected the image she desired. The symbols within the play when applied to Elizabeth argued she had the sagacity of Solomon, a divine appointment just as he did, and perhaps most importantly, it depicted

her as having a certain masculine spirit, a necessary affirmation as a ruler in a world where women were seen as not fit to command.

As this thesis has proved, there is some inherent connection between art, psychology, religion, and society. The example of a play (art) about Solomon (religion) being put on for the Queen (society) shows the psychological interconnection at work with all three. As Beit-Hallahmi claims, looking at art and religion together is a mutually beneficial relationship; it helps us understand both. In his conclusion, he states, “...looking at religion as a form of art may be a considerable advance over previous attempts to develop a coherent psychology of religion,” (239). Yet, in this thesis, rather than looking at religion *as* a form of art, we have looked at religion *through* art, in order to understand it. Through his discourse Beit-Hallahmi hammers the similarities between the two: both are creative processes, “based on the human imagination,” both involve ritualistic processes, both are emotionally driven (238); the intrinsic psychological relations between the two make art – in our case, literature – a fitting medium to study theological and cultural movements. Later, Beit Hallahmi begins a discussion on the relationship between artist and audience then parallels and qualifies this relationships’ application to the connection between the creators and the followers of religion (239). He points out the problems there because of the distance between the two, yet in Tudor England we have a period where the live redefinition of art is captured by the sonic echoes resounding in sixteenth century literature. Beit-Hallahmi touches on this point, saying, “The artistic product creates in the individual member of the audience reverberations, which go deep into the unconscious,” (239). Beit-Hallahmi merely nods

to the fact that people respond in the same way to art and religion, then eschews diving into specific examples. In Tudor England, we have concrete instances where the reverberations of religious fabrication deeply lodged themselves within individual's unconscious mind.

As Skelton's works show, religion was already an intrinsic part of the Tudor consciousness. When we trace literature through a century, in this case the sixteenth century, we can mark its evolutions and the slight turns theology took as the era progressed. Religion and art do not only have fundamental similarities as Beit-Hallahmi argues; they explain each other. The unconscious insecurities felt by English citizens due to dogmatic distortion are sketched out in Tudor Literature. They are imprinted in *Doctor Faustus*, in his radical beliefs and his violent end. They are inherited by Queen Elizabeth and become a part her divine image that is projected, to the comparisons to the King Solomon or the Virgin Mary. The evolution of theological constructs and its reflection in literature and art was not uniquely Tudor. That is a timeless principle. What was uniquely Tudor was the complex relationship between the church and the state. The intense ramifications of dogmatic alterations do not appear in every era as they did in the Tudor period. Religious fervor combined with doctrinal manipulation, the willingness to mold an entire faith whether on the national level, or within the confines of one's heart, absolutely defined Tudor England. An intense religious consciousness was completely distinctive in everything they did, but it was qualified by the projection of personal desires upon a timeless institution – religion.

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