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Sacrifice and Emotional Communities in Early Modern Literature

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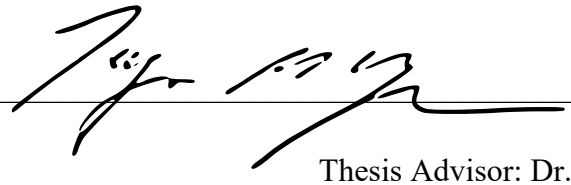

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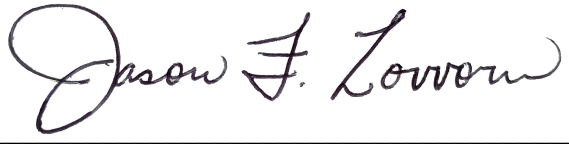

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Introduction

Historical Context

The early modern period in England was a time of intense political, religious, and cultural upheaval. Between the Protestant Reformation and urbanization, England experienced significant ideological changes as well as the growing pains of overpopulation and plague in its major cities. The literature of the time illustrates the emotional complexity that many of the authors and citizens experienced firsthand as a result of the tumult in England. This thesis focuses specifically on the period during the reigns of Queen Elizabeth I and James I, using the works of Sir Philip Sidney and John Donne as structural buoys for the paper, and a mid-section focused on Shakespeare in order to identify three examples of literary sacrifice that comment on and critique the writers' own experiences with the social, political, and religious landscape of early modern England. The theme of sacrifice became a vehicle for the early modern writers' nuanced critiques of their own historical contexts. At the very heart of sacrifice is surrender: the authors were being asked to give something up in order to maintain harmony within their own communities and their literature comments on these sacrifices.

Between 1591 and 1633, England went through a series of political changes that were deeply intertwined with the religious frenzy of the Protestant Reformation. The Reformation started in England during the reign of King Henry VIII, who made a drastic decision for England in 1534 when he persuaded Parliament to pass the "Act of Supremacy," declaring him "supreme head" of the Church of England—a decision that ultimately separated the Church of England, a Protestant institution, from the Church of Rome, a Catholic institution (Damrosch, "John Donne" 625). England's separation from the Roman Church and Parliament's decision to link the monarch with the Protestant Church of England posed a threat to anyone who wished to continue

practicing Catholicism. Because of the connection between the Crown and the institutionalized religion, citizens were expected to remain loyal to both the Crown *and* the Protestant church. By determining the monarch's office as "sacred," English citizens therefore became morally and emotionally bound to the Crown (630). The Act of Supremacy required English subjects to take an oath of loyalty to the King, recognizing him as the head of the Church of England, and to practice the now-institutionalized religion of English Protestant Christianity (625). Failure to do so brought consequences. The word "recusant" underwent a semantic change in the mid-1500s as a result, meaning "a Roman Catholic, who refuses to attend the services of the Church of England" ("recusant" OED). Citizens were expected to voice their loyalty to the King and, by association, to the Protestant Church.

For those whose religious ties were outside the bounds of Protestantism, the new religious situation in England became an oppressive reality that affected the literary world. Monasteries closed and later reopened as theaters—an exciting reality for drama, which was emerging as a new and booming literary art form in the 1580s (Damrosch, "John Donne" 625-27; "Blackfriars Theatre"). Catholics were "barely tolerated" in England—a reality made evident by the execution of satirist Sir Thomas More in 1535 for his refusal to take the Oath of Allegiance to King Henry VIII (Damrosch, "John Donne" 714). Queen Elizabeth I made her own political and religious mark on the English people by leading a military campaign against Ireland, which had remained stubbornly Catholic (636). Her charge against Ireland resulted in "famine, massacres, and the forced relocation of people" (636). In addition to her political and religious campaigns, Elizabeth encouraged the poets and playwrights of her court to treat her as a love object; indeed, she was suspected as having one of her "young male favorites," Robert Devereux, executed after he rebelled against her in 1601 (634-35). Elizabeth's successor, King James I,

enacted his own mandates. His ascension to the throne created feelings of uncertainty for the English people, since he came from England's long-time enemy, Scotland (637). Furthermore, James held his own particular and extreme ideologies that influenced his rule. James believed in the monarch's "absolute rule" as the "lex loquens," or "living spirit of the law" (637-38). His beliefs essentially absolved him from responsibility to the law, which scared the English citizens who had, since the signing of the Magna Carta in 1215, experienced more limited monarchical. James commanded his own "Oath of Allegiance" which bound the subject to the monarch politically, religiously, and emotionally, and only served to further the citizens' mistrust of the monarchy.

The literature of the time is both product of and commentary on these events; as Damrosch states, "the work of…Sidney, Shakespeare…and Donne was all the product of turbulent times" (635). Death from plague, war, and execution was a harsh reality. Death tolls in England rose as the oppressive government-mandated religious control over English subjects became unbearable. It should not surprise us, then, that the theme of sacrifice became increasingly popular amongst writers of the period, and yet, this thematic pattern has not paid all that much attention. This thesis intends to show that the theme of sacrifice appears across multiple genres, working from Christ's sacrifice as a model, and that the early modern writers meditated on the limitations and possibilities of sacrifice to establish emotional norms that might unite—or destabilize—a community.

Theories of Emotions

Barbara Rosenwein's theory of "emotional communities" and William Reddy's concept of "emotional regimes" provide a framework for interpreting how the early modern writers

adhered to "emotional norms" or rebelled against them, often in their depictions of sacrifice. In her lecture during the Humanitas conference at Oxford University, Rosenwein called for a new study of emotions that considers the impact of culture on emotions, arguing that "in today's scientific world, psychologists, neuropsychologists, generally consider that human emotions are universal and hardwired" ("How Can There Be a History of Emotions?" 06:48). She challenges those who have claimed that the human mind has been fixed and unchanged since the Stone Age. Rosenwein draws upon theories of cognition, which state that the mind is affected by socialization, in order to propose the existence of "emotional communities" (8:34). In an interview with Jan Plamper, she defines her term, "emotional communities," as:

> Precisely the same as social communities—families, neighborhoods, parliaments, guilds, monasteries, parish church memberships—but the researcher looking at them seeks above all to uncover systems of feeling: what these communities (and the individuals within them) define and assess as valuable or harmful to them; the evaluations that they make about others' emotions; the nature of the affective bonds between people that they recognize; and the modes of emotional expression that they expect, encourage, tolerate, and deplore…I have summarized the idea as "social groups that adhere to the same valuations of emotions and how they should be expressed," and, in another context, as "groups of people animated by common or similar interests, values, and emotional styles and valuations." (qtd. in Plamper 252-53)

Rosenwein's concept of emotional communities proposes the existence of "emotional norms" or expressions of emotion that are valued and normalized by a given community. An emotional community, according to Rosenwein, is dependent on emotional norms. Emotional norms are the feelings and expression of those feelings that the group has agreed upon as "normal" and vital for

the community to function properly. And those norms are not always *bad.* Often, emotional norms provide a sense of stability and certainty amidst an ever-changing world because they offer a roadmap for society: *when x happens, then y is felt or shown*. Emotional norms are a way for a culture to predict or manage big emotions.

Rosenwein's work helps us understand an individual's ability to be socially and emotionally attached to his or her specific community, which is unique to the time period, location, and culture. Furthermore, Rosenwein clarifies that multiple emotional communities may coexist in the same culture. For example, a community centered on courtly romance may be united around the shared value of love in relation to sacrifice, while another emotional community may find value in the grief of sacrifice. Rosenwein's emotional communities therefore provide an excellent framework by which to study the theme of sacrifice in early modern literature because it makes way for examining the different emotional communities that approached sacrifice from slightly differing emotional angles.

Reddy agrees with Rosenwein that "emotions are of the highest political significance" because they are "central to the life of individuals" and "open to deep social influence," but he argues that these emotional norms can be weaponized as tools of control for a political regime (*Navigation of Feeling* 124). Reddy brings our attention to the oppressive and emotionally distressing side of Rosenwein's notion of emotional communities by explaining the ways an emotional community may act oppressively as an "emotional regime." In his words, an emotional regime is "the set of normative emotions and the official rituals, practices, and emotives that express and inculcate them; a necessary underpinning of any stable political regime" (129). In this way, Reddy suggests that emotional communities are deeply ingrained in their political contexts. Those political regimes that pose the strictest emotional norms are termed

"emotional regimes" because they impose high levels of emotional suffering on their members. Emotional suffering occurs, according to Reddy, when an individual's goals and the emotional regime's goals conflict with one another (129). For example, he states that both "political torture and unrequited love are examples of emotional suffering" because the goal of the individual is in direct opposition to the goal of the regime (129).

Reddy argues that emotional regimes attempt to control subjects using "emotives," which he defines as: "A type of speech act different from both performative and constative utterances, which both describes (like constative utterances) and changes (like performative) the world, because emotional expression has an exploratory and a self-altering effect on the activated thought material of emotion" (*Navigation of Feeling* 128). Reddy differentiates his concept of emotives from J.L. Austin's understanding of "constative" and "performative" speech acts. According to Austin, constative statements simply describe a situation and can be reduced to true or false statements. For example, "That cup is blue" describes the color of the cup and can be determined to be true or false. A performative utterance has the power to make a change to the world. For example, saying "I do" at a wedding is performative since the words themselves, when spoken, bind the marriage contract. For Reddy, emotives may appear to be like constatives or performatives; however, they are a separate kind of speech act that states an emotion and, in its utterance, have power to affect the emotional state of the speaker ("Against Constructionism" 343). For example, in uttering "I am angry" out loud, the speaker may realize that is not at all how they feel, or, on the contrary, the speaker's emotions may intensify as they speak the words "I am angry." In either case, the emotive has "done something" to the speaker's emotional state. Therefore, emotives can influence the speaker, even as they are striving to "explore" and

communicate their present state. As Reddy puts it, "in formulating emotives, speakers are trying to communicate with themselves as much as with others" (332).

It is not difficult to see how emotives, as statements of emotions that do things to the internal world of the speaker, could have a significant impact on a community dominated by an emotional regime, whose goal is to control the individuals of that community. The emotional regime that understands the power that emotives can wield over the speaker may normalize certain emotives (both spoken and gestural) for the benefit of the emotional regime. To enforce those emotives, the regime will often pose serious threats to those who fail or refuse to uphold the dictated emotives. One of the most classic examples of an emotional regime's use of emotives is the Nazi salute, made mandatory for German citizens by Hitler in the 1920s. The Nazi salute included both a gestural emotive—raising and stiffening of the right arm—and a spoken emotive, "Heil Hitler," which signaled the speaker's obedience to the regime's leader, Adolf Hitler. Hitler's dictatorship required that every citizen participate in the emotive and enforced the requirement by imposing consequences on those who rebelled, by "persecution or exile" (Kershaw 99). As we will see in Chapter 2, Shakespeare's Rome similarly acts as an emotional regime that normalized certain emotives for the common people and the aristocrats; when a member of his society refuses to uphold the emotives, they are consequentially exiled. Reddy's notion of emotional regimes and the use of emotives is therefore helpful in understanding the ways an individual may be bound to their emotional community.

Despite its prevalence in early modern literature, sacrifice as a governing literary theme throughout the period has been largely ignored by critics. This oversight may in part be because, as Julia Meszaros and Johannes Zachhuber have argued, modernization has to some extent involved a process of moving *away* from sacrifice as an organizing metaphor for the community:

"while early Protestants argued that the death of Christ was the last sacrifice and that Christianity, therefore, had to be a non-sacrificial religion, eighteenth-century intellectuals rejected it as cruel and barbaric, as well as incompatible with the true nature of religion" (Meszaros 1). This apparent growing distaste was, they note, tempered by a desire to hold onto the metaphoric past, which meant that modernizing attitudes towards sacrifice were deeply ambivalent, which was underlined by the fact that sacrifice itself may not always achieve its ends. As Meszaros and Zachhuber point out, in early Greek sources, "'good' sacrifice...serves to integrate the individual into society whereas 'bad' sacrifice unsettles that balance" (Meszaros 6). In early modern literature, then, sacrifice is depicted with ambivalence and with varying results: both communal unity and distintegration. Rosenwein and Reddy both help to examine these varying outcomes. The act of sacrifice, in its perfect form, should establish a positive, supportive emotional community, but oftentimes it fails to do so because an emotional regime would compete, complicating the individual's sacrificial efforts. For this reason, both the concept of emotional communities and emotional regimes will be paramount to my discussion of sacrifice in early modern literature.

Sacrificial Types

Sacrifice emerged in early modern literature as the authors processed their own sacrificial experiences in England. Though the authors write out of the same political and emotional contexts, their fixations around the individual's sacrifice are each unique and can be categorized into three major types. First, there is the emotional sacrifice between the lover and beloved in the Petrarchan sonnets—I propose to call this type "the lover's sacrifice." A second type of sacrifice takes particular interest in the relationship of the body politic. Often, these types of sacrifice

were meted out through drama and literature in the context of war, and so I have called this type "the soldier's sacrifice." A third type of sacrifice emerged in the religious community, especially in the metaphysical poetry that fixated on the soul's response to the Christological sacrifice, and so I have termed it "the soul's sacrifice." Each of these types of sacrificial depictions are grounded in either emotional norms or emotives that were established by certain emotional communities or emotional regimes, both of which were processing and managing their responses to an ever-changing England. Each of these three types of sacrifice will be the focal point for the three respective chapters of this thesis.

The Lover's Sacrifice

The lover's sacrifice offers the perspective of one sacrificing themselves on the altar of unrequited or unattainable love in hopes that the sacrifice will seal the connection between lover and beloved. An emotional community between lover and beloved is formed around the lover's sacrifice wherein love and grief are juxtaposed, creating a paradox that the poet explores as the nucleus of the lover-beloved connection. The lover's sacrificial community finds its roots in the late medieval tradition of Petrarchism. The Petrarchan sonnet tradition was perfected by the work of Italian poet, Francesco Petrarca. Petrarca himself coined many of the conceits that became typical of the sonnet sequence, such as the articulation of "love in terms of its pleasurable pains" ("Petrarch"). The Petrarchan sonnet tradition therefore acts as an emotional community, uniting poets around the paradox of pain and love. An emotional norm forms in the Petrarchan tradition as the lover (or poet) is expected to express the agony of his feelings through flowery verses written to his beloved. The early modern period in England saw a resurgence of this late-

medieval tradition, and Sir Philip Sidney is famous for having used the tradition in a unique way to express his poet-patron relationship to Queen Elizabeth I.

Sidney brought the Petrarchan sonnet tradition back into vogue in the 1590s, maintaining the shared emotional values of the tradition in a unique context by fixating on the lover's intimate disclosure of his sacrificed heart and the failures of the tradition to adequately express his true feelings. The lover's sacrifice becomes a point of tension for Sidney's speaker in *Astrophil and Stella*, because even as the speaker goes through pains to express his love, the pressure of the tradition's emotional norms weighs on him, and he constantly doubts if his verses are truly enough to express how he feels to "Stella." For example, in sonnet 1 of *Astrophil and Stella,* Sir Philip Sidney writes,

> Loving in truth, and fain in verse my love to show,
> That she, dear she, might take some pleasure of my pain,
> Pleasure might cause her read, reading might make her know,
> Knowledge might pity win, and pity grace obtain. (lines 1-4)

Sidney's speaker longs to receive "grace" from his beloved, and since the emotional norms of the lover's emotional community promise that written verse is the correct way to "obtain grace," he sets out to adhere to those norms: "in verse my love to show." The lover, pained by the reality of unrequited love, is burdened by his feelings. He tells her of his troubles in hopes that she might, at the very least, have "pity" on him. The speaker, Astrophil, seems to understand that he cannot make his beloved reciprocate his feelings, but he can do as the Petrarchan lovers do and sacrifice his heart in an emotionally raw excavation of feeling and hope that his beloved might see the intensity of his emotion and take "pleasure" in his pain. The lover's sacrifice is therefore the emotional sacrifice of the lover's heart, and it hinges upon the emotional community of the

Petrarchan sonnet tradition for its understanding of the emotional norms that frame the lover's pleas for pity. This emotional community values sorrow for its ability to incite pleasure in the beloved other, as well as the strange, paradoxical belief that the lover can experience pleasure himself in the suffering because it keeps him connected to his unattainable beloved. As we will see in Chapter 1, Sidney's theme of sacrifice in *Astrophil and Stella,* as well as his own struggles with the emotional norms of the Elizabethan court system, make his sonnet sequence the perfect context to see the lover's sacrificial emotional community manifest.

The Soldier's Sacrifice

A second thematic type of sacrifice that appears in the early modern period is the soldier's sacrifice. The soldier's sacrifice describes those examples of war or intense political conflict amongst citizens or nations in literature. The soldier sacrifices himself for the sake of peace for his people. The soldier's emotional community is rooted in the political body, and these literary depictions of sacrifice often examine the tensions between lower and upper classes within the political society. Because of its political underpinnings, the soldier's sacrifice becomes an excellent vantage point by which we see the workings of an emotional regime.

Shakespeare's nuanced depiction of the soldier's sacrifice showcases what happens when an emotional regime gets in the way of what should be a harmonious emotional community. Shakespeare's *Coriolanus* introduces a society torn apart by internal and external conflict. The community itself is at odds: the common people and the ruling class buckle under the pressure of the emotional regime and the emotives imposed upon them. The soldier's sacrifice is only successful if it is known and acknowledged by the people, and for that to happen, the sacrifice must be visible and public so that the people can emotionally respond to it with gratitude.

Shakespeare's Rome believed the soldier's wounds were "noble" and that society should be grateful for them. The soldier—Caius Martius—must present his wounds in an emotive ceremonial display for the people, and the people must respond to his display by speaking their gratitude for the soldier's wounds—also an emotive response. For Shakespeare's Rome, this exchange is a necessary component of the soldier's sacrifice as it determines the success of that sacrifice to unite the body politic. The problem for Shakespeare's Rome is that Martius pridefully refuses to display his wounds, and the citizens resist expressing their gratitude due to Martius's pride, therefore causing the sacrifice to fail as a tool for unification. The Third Citizen explains how nuanced the ceremonial exchange of emotives is to the soldier's sacrifice, saying,

> For, if
> he show[s] us his wounds and tell[s] us his deeds, *we*
> are to put our tongues into those wounds and
> *speak for them*. So, if he tell[s] us his noble deeds, *we*
> must also tell him our noble acceptance of them.
> *Ingratitude is monstrous*, and for the multitude to
> be ungrateful were to make a monster of the multitude,
> of the which, we being members, should
> bring ourselves to be monstrous members. (Shakespeare 2.3.4-13, *emphasis added*)

The emotional regime of Shakespeare's Rome has normalized the citizens' praise of the soldier's wounds and put those emotives into place to complete the sacrifice of the soldier in uniting the political community. This expectation of gratitude is what the Third Citizen means he says, "we are to put our tongues into those wounds and speak for them." Tongues make way for voices, and the common people are expected to speak for the soldier's sacrifice, deeming it worthy and

thus uniting the people around his sacrifice. What differentiates these emotives from emotional norms is the existence of consequences. Any citizen who fails to carry out the regime's expectations for gratitude by speaking for the soldier's wounds is to be considered a "monster," ultimately resulting in exile from the community; monsters in literature are often caricatures for the outcast, the "othered" in any given society. Therefore, consequences make the emotional regime an oppressive environment for the characters of *Coriolanus.* Shakespeare's Third Citizen speaks to the emotional regime's oppressive rule over the members of that political community by comparing those rebels to "monsters."

As we will see in Chapter 2, Shakespeare's *Coriolanus* tragically displays the reality of a society whose hope is in the sacrifice of a man whose ego gets in the way of his adherence to the regime, resulting in his decision to choose betrayal over loyalty, arrogance over honor. Caius Martius' pride bars him from baring his wounds to the people—the gestural emotive that makes way for the people's spoken emotives. The play ends tragically, with Coriolanus dead because of his stubborn pride. Shakespeare's depiction of the soldier's sacrifice puts the emotional regime and its imposed emotives on display and the characters' own struggle against those show us the oppressive weight and emotional suffering that is part and parcel of the community ruled by an emotional regime.

The Soul's Sacrifice

A third type of sacrifice—the soul's sacrifice—emerges in early modern literature. The soul's sacrifice refers to any sacrifice that is either written about or inspired by the Christological sacrifice, or the biblical example of Jesus Christ's death on the cross that restored peace to the world. Poetry that meditates on this sort of transcendental and philosophical subject matter has

become known as “metaphysical poetry” and was especially common in the early modern period. Richard Crashaw and John Donne were both metaphysical poets in the early modern period who wrote about sacrifice. For example, Crashaw celebrates the bliss of martyrdom in his poem “The Flaming Heart,” while Donne similarly expresses his desire to be pierced and “battered” in his *Holy Sonnets*. The soul’s sacrifice in literature is, once again, not entirely new to the early modern period, but draws from the Medieval religious mystics, such as Julian of Norwich, whose contemplation of Christ’s death on the cross inspired a desire for pain and suffering so that she might achieve greater intimacy with him.

For the early modern period specifically, there were two emotional communities in the Christian church that made the soul’s sacrifice an interesting and urgent topic in literature, especially in poetry. The Roman Catholic Church, which had been the dominant religious emotional community in England had been replaced by the Church of England, of which the monarch was head. The fact that the English monarchy was head of the Church of England quickly took a religious emotional community and turned it into an emotional regime. Many poets fixated on the paradox of Christ’s death for what it could accomplish for the individual’s spirit and, by extension, the community at large. The example of Christ’s sacrifice became a model by which John Donne fashioned his own in his *Holy Sonnets.* By looking closely at Christ’s death on the cross, Donne suggests that the soul can transcend the sins of the world and enter into an intimate relationship with God that establishes a new emotional community, apart from man’s “laws” and “statutes” and the theological arguments between England’s two church factions. In sonnet 12, Donne writes,

> Father, part of his double interest
> Unto thy kingdom, thy Son gives to me,

His jointure in the knotty Trinity,
He keeps, and gives me his death's conquest.
The Lamb, whose death, with life the world hath blest,
Was from the world's beginning slain, and he
Hath made two wills, which with the legacy
Of his and thy kingdom, do thy sons invest.
Yet such are those laws, that men argue yet
Whether a man those statutes can fulfill;
None doth, but all-healing grace and Spirit,
Revive again what law and letter kill.
Thy Law's abridgement, and thy last command
Is all but love; oh let that last will stand! (lines 1-14)

The benefit, for Donne's speaker, of the Christological sacrifice is that it established an emotional community outside of the political and religious turmoil of England. The soul, "blest" by the sacrifice of Christ, is given a place in the "knotty trinity," which is the intensely intimate relationship between God the Father, the Son (Christ) and the Holy Spirit. In this new emotional community, the soul can be at rest because "love" is the "abridgement" to the "law"; in this community, there is no debate over who "fulfill[s]" the "statutes," because it is agreed upon that "none" can. Therefore, Donne's speaker revels in the freedom of an ideal emotional community that overrides the emotional norms and emotives that plagued Donne's own communities in early modern England.

As we will see in Chapter 3, John Donne's *Holy Sonnets* reveal the tensions between the religious, emotional communities available to him and the emotional regime of the English

monarchy. In his sonnet sequence, Donne extrapolates the doctrines of both of his religious, emotional communities and ultimately creates his own—a highly spiritual emotional community between the soul and God that blends the traditions of the Roman Catholic Church and the Protestant Church of England.

Chapter 1: The Lover's Sacrifice

Sir Philip Sidney's *Astrophil and Stella* and the Court-Poet Emotional Community

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Sidney was boldly outspoken in both his politics and his poetry, sometimes to the point of coming off a bit spiteful towards those outside of his own emotional community. As David Damrosch writes, "Sidney espoused a politics that challenged authority" ("Sir Philip Sidney" 998). It is not hard to see why Damrosch makes such a claim. Sidney was highly opinionated, especially in the political landscape of his sixteenth-century England. Sidney and his father, Henry Sidney, advocated for a land tax to be imposed upon the Anglo-Irish nobility for their "unreasonable and arrogant pretensions" (998). Such a remark, which punishes an entire group of people merely for their attitude, suggests that Sidney's emotions could not be put aside, even in governmental affairs. His political and diplomatic opinions were also inextricably tied up in his prose and poetry. His final paragraph in *The Apology for Poetry* is a biting and brutal curse upon the "earth-creeping mind" who "cannot lift itself up to look to the sky of poetry" (1032). The curse states: "On behalf of all poets, that while you live, you live in love, and never get favor for lacking skill of a sonnet; and, when you die, your memory die from the earth for want of an epitaph" (1032). Sidney, in this final curse, comments on the Petrarchan sonnet tradition, which was an emotional community for the lover. The Petrarchan sonnet tradition established an emotional norm for the lover: the right response to "love" was to write poetry, especially sonnets. The ultimate curse for the Petrarchan lover, therefore, would be to "lack skill of a sonnet." Sidney, perhaps without realizing it, ends his *Apology* by adhering to the emotional norms of Petrarchism and cursing those who fail to uphold the emotional norms of the lover's emotional community.

Sidney himself, the upstanding courtier that he was—albeit with strong opinions, became known for his revival of the sonnet sequence. At the time Sidney wrote *Astrophil and Stella,* English literature housed no other sonnet sequences (Duncan-Jones, "Introduction" xvii). Following his death in 1586, Sidney's *Astrophil and Stella* (published posthumously in 1591) went on to inspire a decade of English sonnets and earn the poet a place of popularity as a writer that, some argue, rivaled Shakespeare (Klein 18; Ringler xv). His funeral was well attended and his memory praised; however, many scholars speculate that Queen Elizabeth was not quite as fond of Sidney, evidenced by the fact that she neither "finance[d] [n]or attended his funeral" (Klein 15). Sidney was a courtier and served as the Queen's cupbearer and, as such, he was given responsibilities in the court, though not necessarily to the degree of importance or influence that he would have liked (Ringler xxiv-xxvi).

Despite Sidney's popularity after his death, during his lifetime he often fell in and out of favor with the English court—and most especially with Elizabeth I. Sidney took liberties with his courtly duties, often using them as opportunities to express his own political agenda (Ringler xxiv-xxvi). After being promoted by the Queen as ambassador to the German Emperor, Sidney embarked on a trip to the Continent wherein he may have been a little too "enthusiastic" with his political conversations, and upon his return, she "dispatched" diplomat Daniel Rogers, the "veteran negotiator," to clean up his mess (Ringler xxv-xxvi). Sidney's relationship with Queen Elizabeth was perhaps forever impaired when he took it upon himself to write a letter to Her Majesty in an attempt to dissuade her from marrying Francois, Duke of Alençon. In his infamous letter to the Queen, he states that his only ambition in writing is "the true vowed *sacrifice* of *unfeigned love*" (Sidney, "A Letter to Q. Elizabeth" 89, emphasis added). It is reasonable to assume that Sidney, as an aristocratic member of Elizabethan society, would have been well-

versed in the expectations imposed upon someone of his socio-political position. Sidney tended to speak his mind, despite what was deemed appropriate according to his place in court. In the poetic tradition, just as in the court system, there are things that can be said and things that cannot be said—what Barbara Rosenwein calls "socially determined" emotional norms (15). Sidney knew that speaking boldly against the Queen's decision to marry the Duke of Alençon was a risk. Otherwise, he would not have taken care to cushion his lengthy letter with praises and repeated statements of his own "servitude" and "sacrifice" to her majesty ("A Letter to Q. Elizabeth" 89). In his letter, Sidney "lays [him]self at [the Queen's] feet," therefore suggesting his belief that, at best, an intimate relationship, and, at worst, a sort of nearness could be established between he and the Queen through his emotional sacrifice (89). Sidney's own sacrifice to the Queen allowed him to feel closer and more intimately connected to her. Queen Elizabeth, however, did not appreciate Sidney's audacity. In fact, she was so enraged by his indiscretion that she banished him from court affairs and sent him to the country for a time (Damrosch, "Sir Philip Sidney" 998). It seemed Sidney's efforts at creating intimacy between him and the Queen drove them further apart.

In her introduction to the text, Katherine Duncan-Jones argues that *Astrophil and Stella* is marked by a continual "emotional impasse" for the speaker, Astrophil. I agree with Duncan-Jones' claim and would further argue that there is a subtle yet palpable connection between Sidney's life and his art: the "emotional impasse" of Astrophil seems to trickle down from his creator, Sidney, and his own strained relationship between his thoughts and feelings and the expectations imposed upon him from the court system. It is as though, in writing the sonnets, Sidney himself attempts to break through the "iron doors" of the English court's censorship to

authentically express his emotions, and Astrophil is the manifestation of Sidney's own inner turmoil (sonnet 108, line 11).

Sidney's struggle to stay within the confines of his position in Elizabeth's court provides an operative background to the struggles in his sonnets, including a main character who speaks his mind too freely and who, like Sidney, experienced sacrifice as sometimes the primary means of showing his devotion to a distant or tyrannical beloved who only sometimes returned his affection. Sidney tended to speak his mind despite what was considered acceptable for his position in society, and in *Astrophil and Stella,* his speaker, Astrophil, seems to follow suit. Sidney's sonnet sequence hinges on multiple emotional paradoxes, such as "Paine doth learne delight"—a style originally inspired by the late-medieval Italian poet, Petrarca (sonnet 48, line 3). Petrarchism has traditionally been known to wrestle with ideas of sacrifice and love, and Sidney's revival of the sonnet sequence incorporates the same themes, maintaining an emotional community in which the poet could wrestle with his own failures in a court system that determined the fame and fortune of poets in sixteenth-century England. Sidney uses the Petrarchan tradition in *Astrophil and Stella* to comment on the emotional norms established by the Elizabethan court system.

While some scholars have acknowledged the "emotional depth" of his sonnet sequence, few have discussed Sidney's interactions with emotional norms in *Astrophil and Stella* (Greenblatt 492). As scholar Arthur Marotti alludes in his essay entitled "Elizabethan Sonnet Sequences and the Social Order," Sidney's use of the Petrarchan sonnet sequence transformed the tradition of "amorous" love poetry to a metaphorically pointed reflection on the poet's own state—both emotional and socio-political, often inextricably intertwined (397). Sidney's *Astrophil and Stella* reveals several sociopolitical norms (or what Marotti terms "cultural codes")

that Elizabethan society dictated, betraying his frustrations with the systems in place—the systems that kept *him* in his place and, at times, removed from the Elizabethan court. Marotti's research brings attention to the power of sociopolitical norms set in place by Queen Elizabeth's regime. However, there is a similar but different "cultural code" at play in Sidney's poetry: *emotional* norms established by *emotional* communities. Many sonnets in Sidney's sequence deal with the emotional responses that were established and preferred by the emotional community of Petrarchan poetry. These emotional norms exist in both Sidney's real life experiences and in the world of his poetry. In his sonnet sequence *Astrophil and Stella,* Sidney's theme of sacrifice replicates his own internal struggle with his emotions and the dominant emotional norms of the court system, ultimately revealing a complicated relationship with Petrarchism and the Elizabeth court.

Astrophil and Stella holds many opposite emotions in tension as a way of meting out the favored emotions and emotional norms of the lover's sacrificial community. Paradoxes of emotion are plentiful in Sidney's sonnets. He speaks of "pleasure" as he speaks of "pain," (sonnet 1, line 2). He "calls it praise" to "suffer" (sonnet 2, line 11). As Stephen Greenblatt notes in his introduction to the sonnet sequence, the Petrarchan "tradition undertook to produce an anatomy of love, displaying its shifting and often contradictory states: hope and despair, tenderness and bitterness, exultation and modesty" (492). Therefore, Sidney upholds the same emotional tradition of Petrarchism, paradoxically holding hope and despair by way of the lover's sacrifice. While it is true that the sequence ends unresolved, the emotional complexity of Sidney's *Astrophil and Stella* unearths the melancholic depths of the lover's heart and presents his pain as proof of his love to his beloved, maintaining the emotional landscape that was characteristic of the Petrarchan sonnet tradition. Petrarchism scaffolds the lover's poetry, by

providing a structure for him to properly wrestle with unrequited love. Since the Petrarchan sonnet form is so meticulously structured, both metrically and rhythmically, it provides a balanced and symmetrical framework for the audience to lean on while the content itself holds emotions and ideas in paradoxical tension. The fourteen-line sonnet is split into octave (eight lines) and sestet (six lines), with a "syntactic and ideational stop" or turn at the end of the eighth line (Stageberg 132). Norman Stageberg attributes the Petrarchan tradition's lasting impact across seven centuries to the "aesthetic pleasure" of its form and sound (132). Typically, the Petrarchan sonnet deals with the frustrations of love between the lover and his beloved in the simultaneously safe and tormenting context of the lover's own psyche or solitude. This aspect of "introspection" is characteristic of Petrarch's sonnets, and traceable in Sidney's *Astrophil and Stella* as the speaker converses—even argues—with himself; Stella is rarely present in the sequence (Scaglione 559). Therefore, the major emotional foundation for Petrarchan sonnets is the frustration of feeling deeply in a world where speech cannot adequately represent those feelings. For Sidney especially, the framework of the Petrarchan sonnet provides the perfect emotional landscape for him (and his speaker, Astrophil) to wrestle with the frustrations of unrequited or unattainable love, a reality that inspires both "glory" and "shame" (sonnet 19, line 3). Astrophil's emotional sacrifice to his beloved is characteristic of other Petrarchan lovers whose struggle with the pains of love drove them to write their feelings in poetry. Sidney seems to be in unison with his speaker in working out his own frustrations with his community through poetry.

Petrarchism traditionally used elaborate conceits and paradoxes centered around sacrifice to prove the depth of the lover's commitment to his beloved, but Sidney's speaker claims to rebel against this emotional norm in favor of a simpler, more authentic declaration of love. Sonnet 1 in

the sequence, referenced in the introduction of this thesis, sets the scene for Sidney to wrestle with Petrarchan traditions. In the opening line, Astrophil claims that his ultimate goal is to prove his love, and so he chooses "in verse [his] love to show." The stage is therefore set for Astrophil: the emotional norm established by the Petrarchan sonnet style is the belief that verse (poetry) is the best way to express feelings of love. Over the course of the poem, Astrophil "stud[ies]" love poetry and flips through "others' leaves," looking for inspiration to mirror the tradition (lines 5-7). A few lines later, Sidney peels back another layer to the emotional norm of Petrarchan poetry—it is not merely the writing of poetry that is the lover's appropriate response to his feelings, but rather poetry explicates the lover's pain, suffered in devotion to his beloved. Astrophil seeks to "paint the blackest face of woe" because he is aware that Petrarchism's normative emotional response to unattainable love is a sacrificed heart (line 5). However, the problem in the sonnet is that Astrophil is at a loss for words and "others' feet still seemed but strangers in [his] way" (line 11). Sidney's wordplay here offers a double meaning: poetic "feet" and the metaphoric "feet" that represent the poets, like Petrarca, whose poetry established domineering emotional norms. According to Astrophil, there seems to be an inauthenticity in mirroring the same rhythm and language of other poets; they are "strangers," thus suggesting that the emotions they describe are unknown to him (line 11). In the final couplet, Astrophil claims that the solution to his writer's block is to disregard what other poets have written about love, and to, instead, speak what is uniquely true of his own heart. This solution suggests a rebellion against the emotional response of amorous verse and a subsequent adherence to the emotional norms of Petrarchism, wherein the poet writes simply—from "thy heart" (line 14). But Sidney writes all of this while *maintaining* the emotional norms of the Petrarchan sonnet: elaborate metaphors that balance pain and love. Thus, the reader is met with two opposing statements:

what Astrophil is claiming (that elaborate love-verse is futile and insincere), versus what Sidney is showing his audience, through the poetry itself (that writing a detailed explication of his feelings through poetry is the only salve for the sacrificed lover).

This dichotomy between Astrophil the speaker and Sidney the author occurs again in sonnet 6. Sidney opens the sonnet by examining the kind of conceits that were characteristic of traditional Petrarchan sonnets, such as "living deaths, dear wounds, fair storms, and freezing fires" (line 4). Petrarch coined many of these phrases, and so by Sidney's time the shock of their originality would have been long gone and a slew of other poets would have borrowed the same metaphors (Greenblatt 491). Astrophil goes through a detailed investigation of the various traditions of sonneteers, ultimately discounting their methods: the intricate wordplays, the over-the-top romance stories with "bulls and swans, powdered with golden rain," and even the "humbler wit" that is really "hiding royal blood full oft in rural vein" (lines 3-4, 6-8). All of these poetic styles wave the red flag of forgery to Astrophil. He returns to critique Petrarchism in lines 9-11 with very clear emotives: "tears pour out ink" and "pain his pen doth move." These two phrases clarify the emotional response that Petrarchism expected of the lover: to sacrifice himself on the altar of love, as well as the motivational force that is connected between pain and writing. For the lover, "pain" is the reason for writing—it "move[s]" the "pen" (line 11). In this way, writing becomes a way for the poet to embody his sacrifice. Even the whiteness of the paper resembles the "pale despair" (line 11). Ultimately, all of the sonnet traditions are useless to Astrophil, though, who claims in the final couplet that the entire "map of my state I display, / When trembling voice brings forth that I do Stella love" (lines 13-14). Astrophil rebels against the emotional norm that says showing authentic devotion and love requires displaying the depths of feelings in grandiose measure, through a detailed description of self-sacrifice. Rather, he

claims that the simple "trembling" words of love should suffice to communicate the depth of his feelings. Sidney seems to be commenting on the difference between speaking and writing in expressions of love. The former, according to Astrophil, is authentic, whereas carefully crafted poetry feels forced. However, this is only sonnet six out of a sequence of one hundred and eight—Sidney exhausts himself to continue writing when Astrophil claims to have said all that needs to be said. Therefore, it seems that, even as the speaker claims to be rebelling against the emotional norm of being "moved" by "pain" to write in conventional Petrarchan terms, the continuation of the sonnet sequence betrays his adherence to the same emotional norms and negates his claim that he says it all when Astrophil says, "that Stella I do love" (line 14).

After having banished the emotional norms of traditional love poetry that say that the correct response to love is grandiosity of verse and elaborate Petrarchan metaphors, sonnet 15 makes a motion in favor of something a little more authentic. This sonnet points the finger at those imitators of Petrarch who, "with new-borne sighs and denisen'd wit," borrow the same methods as "flower[s]" to garnish their "poesie," and challenges their lack of authenticity and originality (lines 8, 4). Sidney writes,

> You that do search for every purling spring
> Which from the ribs of old Parnassus flower,
> And every flower, not sweet perhaps, which grows
> Near thereabouts, into your poesie wring;
> Ye that do dictionaries method bring
> Into your rimes, running in rattling rowes;
> You that poor Petrarchs long deceased woes
> With new-borne sighs and denisen'd wit do sing;

You take wrong ways; those far-fet helps be such

As do bewray a want of inward touch, (lines 1-10)

In this sonnet, Sidney establishes a new emotional norm. He claims that the tradition is the "wrong way" because it leaves the beloved "want[ing]" (lines 9-10). The final line reveals the connection between authenticity and emotion that Astrophil is trying to communicate. The issue with Petrarchism, as he sees it, is that, for all its "feeling," it betrays ("bewrays") a desire for *true* emotion ("inward touch"). The verses are "running in rattling rowes," overflowing with fancy words and allusions to classical poetry, therefore suggesting that the poets who engage in the Petrarchan tradition are more concerned with the *sound* of their poetry than its emotional authenticity. Mount Parnassus was traditionally thought of as a source of inspiration, as it was home to the Muses and was therefore regarded as the sacred place where poetry, music, and learning spring forth. Since poetry is an art and, by definition, crafted, Astrophil claims that it is not a true representation of the lover's raw feeling. Yet again, the irony lies in the fact that for all that the speaker Astrophil *claims* is for naught, Sidney continues writing—in the Petrarchan sonnet style. So the establishment of a new emotional norm that does away with the long-winded, "far-fet" poems of traditional love poetry feels like a false pretense. Thus Sidney critiques Petrarchism for its superfluity while positing another solution for the lover: sacrifice.

Sidney "paint[s his] hell" against the backdrop of Petrarchan emotional norms, ultimately claiming that the lover's pain becomes *sacred*—or made holy—once he views his love as a sacrifice which unites the lover with his beloved (sonnet 2, line 14). As a sacrificial offering, the lover's pain is memorialized and, by nature, agrees with the Petrarchan norms that value sacrifice in love. Sidney's agreement with Petrarchism's value of sacrifice is evident in sonnet 100 as

Astrophil rebels against the "flowery" verses of other poets, preferring "in sorrow [to] live" (line 14). In sonnet 2 of *Astrophil and Stella* he writes,

> Love gave the wound, which while I breathe will bleed.
>
> …
>
> Now even that footstep of lost liberty
>
> Is gone, and now like slave-born Muscovite,
>
> I call it praise to suffer tyranny;
>
> …
>
> While with a feeling skill I paint my hell. (lines 2, 9-11, 14)

Astrophil has a complex relationship with his plight: he "call[s] it praise to suffer," insinuating that he feels a sense of joy in his suffering. He enjoys the pain because it reminds him of his beloved. He also equates his sacrificed heart to being a "slave-born Muscovite," which, at the time Sidney was writing, would have been an obvious term for a "contented slave," suggesting that Astrophil both chose his sacrifice and is content to suffer (Greenblatt 492). Sidney suggests, then, that sacrificing one's heart in love enables the lover to feel the weight of his feelings and therefore express his feelings from true experience, rather than a superficial concoction of rhymes. For Astrophil, closeness is achieved through the community of grief and pain that shared sacrifice enables. Since he "bleed[s]" as often as he "breathe[s]," it seems unlikely that Astrophil could escape his "hell" even if he wanted to; and Astrophil does not want to escape his hell, because the sacrifice-offering is the only thing that preserves a connection between him and Stella.

In sonnet 93, the reader is met with Sidney's modus operandi in *Astrophil and Stella*: *sacrifice*, not poetry, as a means to express feelings of love authentically and, in so doing, create and preserve an emotional community between the lover and beloved. Sidney writes,

> O fate, O fault, O curse, child of my bliss,
>
> What sobs can give words grace my grief to show?
>
> What ink is black enough to paint my woe? (lines 1-3)

The lover's only chance at maintaining a connection to his beloved is through his sacrifice, but Astrophil is concerned that his "woe" might not be authentic enough to capture the attention and affection of Stella. Petrarchan tradition has tasked the lover with specific emotional norms for showing an authentic display of love; however, Astrophil notes that those norms are too ambiguous and provide no scale by which to measure the success of his efforts. The norms are introduced at the very beginning of the sequence, when Astrophil says, "I sought fit words to paint the blackest face of woe" (sonnet 1, line 5). This line suggests that the lover's feelings must be "paint[ed]" or shown at their most extreme. It's not "black" but "black*est*." For the Petrarchan lover, poetry is the method by which he cuts open his heart to reveal the depths of his anguish in unrequited love. Astrophil searches for those "fit words" which will do justice to his woe and communicate his feelings clearly and honestly to Stella. In sonnet 93, Astrophil returns to the Petrarchan requirements as if to lament the futility of his efforts, saying, "What ink is black enough to paint my woe?" (line 3). Astrophil appears to be frustrated by his inability to measure his poetry's success in obtaining the affections of Stella, and so his modus operandi is frustrated.

Astrophil's frustrated efforts to uphold the ambiguous emotional norms of Petrarchism and authentically display his love for Stella are also, paradoxically, the basis by which his emotional community with Stella is founded. In sonnet 93, as the problem of his unrequited love

metastasizes, Astrophil recognizes that his inability to authentically display his woe causes pain for his beloved. He says, "Through me, wretch me, e'en Stella vexed is" because of his "foul stumbling" and "wit confused with too much care" (lines 4-7). Stella is confused by Astrophil's graceless attempts to tell her how he feels. At first, Astrophil seems saddened by the fact that he has caused confusion for Stella. The paradoxical reality, however, is that this poetic strategy creates a shared pain for the lover's emotional community: if both the lover and the beloved are in pain, at least they have a common foundation. Astrophil seems to be somewhat comforted by the reality that his beloved joins him in his woe. He says,

> Only with paines my paines thus eased be,
>
> That all thy hurts in my hearts wracke I read;
>
> I cry thy sighs, my deere, thy tears I bleed (sonnet 93, lines 12-14).

Sidney takes the Petrarchan emotional norm a few steps further. First, the lover's pain is "only with paines eased"—the only salve for his suffering is to express the pain of his own sacrifice. In other words, only the pain of writing can ease the pain of his unrequited love. Secondly, Astrophil suffers both the pain of his unrequited love *and* the pain of his beloved, therefore solidifying an emotional community between the lover and beloved, which is founded upon a shared sacrifice and not the emotional norms of a poetic tradition.

This sacrificial connection between the two returns in sonnet 100, when Astrophil claims that Stella's tears are "No teares, but rain from beauties skies" and her sighs are "honied" (line 1, 5). Stella's expression of grief and pain has the power to "refresh the hell where [Astrophil's] soule fries," therefore suggesting that in observance of Stella's grief, Astrophil feels the most connected to her, likely because her pain mirrors his own. He regards her sadness and pain with "no sorrow…but joy," reinforcing the belief that sacrifice builds community (line 12). The

ultimate benefit of the lover's sacrifice is the emotional community that it establishes (or maintains), and for Sidney's Astrophil, the value of his sacrifice is found in the preservation of his community with Stella. Therefore, the emotional norms established by Petrarch are reinforced and exaggerated in *Astrophil and Stella* in a satirical manner, ultimately overturning Petrarchism to prove that *sacrifice* is the act that creates and maintains an emotional community—not adherence to emotional norms.

The discrepancy between what Astrophil *says* and what Sidney *does* in his sonnet sequence reveals the emotional struggle that Astrophil and even Sidney himself wrestled with: whether to uphold or rebel against the emotional norms set in place by Petrarch's tradition, which also mirrors the sociopolitical norms that Sidney was held to in Queen Elizabeth's court. Astrophil gets a chance to work out his frustrations in the lover-beloved pursuit, laying bare his feelings without limitations in a way that Sidney himself never truly had the chance to do with Elizabeth. Each time Sidney attempted to be honest about his thoughts or feelings with Elizabeth—whether political or personal—he was shut down and even banished from court for upsetting the norms of Elizabeth's court system. As Sidney writes in his "Defence of Poesy," fiction (which at the time was referred to as "poetry"), was useful as an art form that "teaches and delights" the reader by "imitate[ing]" reality (217, lines 220-22). Sidney's *Astrophil and Stella* acts as an imitation of Sidney's own reality, and therefore is evidence of his belief that poetry (fiction) can draw from the struggles of everyday life to teach the reader some truth about their reality. As a courtier living in Elizabethan society, Sidney understood the strict regulations of the court system and the emotional norms that acted as boundary lines for the court poet; it is no understatement to say that Sidney had a complicated relationship with Elizabeth for his inability to stay within those boundary lines. Perhaps for Sidney, writing *Astrophil and Stella*

provided an outlet by which he could process and overcome the pain of constantly feeling like an outsider in Elizabeth's court, and a way for him to maintain a semblance of his emotional community, both with the Queen herself and within the court system.

Sidney's view of sacrifice as the unifying agent between lover and beloved therefore claims that something must be sacrificed or surrendered in order to maintain a lasting relationship between lover and beloved. The lover, according to Sidney, must lay himself down to attain his beloved. He must give up any selfish efforts for "Fame," through carefully crafted verse, as the Petrachan tradition requires, and instead revel in love's "burn" (sonnet 15, line 13; sonnet 25, line 14). Petrarchan tradition, which sought "Fame" through ingenious conceits and "skill," does not require the lover to necessarily mean what they say, but rather to use flowery verses to entertain their reader (sonnet 15, lines 1-14). But for Sidney, the lover's emotional community is established through an honest and authentic sacrifice—a shared pain between the lover and beloved—and not by the manufactured replications of Petrarchan tradition. For Sidney, sacrifice alone is the foundation of the lover's emotional community and the only unifying agent between lover and beloved.

Chapter 2: The Soldier's Sacrifice
Shakespeare's *Coriolanus* and the Emotional Regime

The last of Shakespeare's political tragedies, *Coriolanus,* is especially fascinated with the emotional dynamics between the patricians and the plebeians—the highest and lowest members of Ancient Roman society—and the emotional sacrifices each makes on behalf of the community at large. These sacrifices revolve around a ritual display of the wounds of the returning victorious soldier. For Coriolanus, who is also in line to be elected a Consul of Rome, the ceremony is expected of him prior to his election. It is not enough for Shakespeare's soldier, the proud Caius Martius, to sacrifice himself in battle on behalf of the people. He must present himself before his people, strip himself down, dress himself in the customary robe, and show his wounds to each of the plebeians, individually, in a ceremonial display of humility while the plebeians are expected to look upon each wound and praise them, using their voices to speak gratitude over his wounds (2.2.155-166). Emotional expectations are therefore imposed on each party by Roman custom. Shakespeare's depiction of sacrifice, the, is about the body politic's collective sacrifice, which is grounded in emotives required by the emotional regime of Shakespeare's Rome. The emotional regime in *Coriolanus* requires an emotive exchange between the soldier (who, in this case, happens to be a patrician) and the plebeians. As Reddy argues, "Any enduring political regime must establish as an essential element a normative order for emotions, an 'emotional regime'" (*Navigation of Feeling* 124). In the strictest of emotional regimes, Reddy argues that "emotives are modeled through ceremony or official art forms" and "they achieve their stability by inducing goal conflict and inflicting intense emotional suffering on those who do not respond well to the normative emotions" (125-26). When the soldier and the plebeians play their part in the emotive

exchange, the Roman emotional regime succeeds in uniting the body politic around the soldier's sacrifice and therefore maintains their control over the people of Rome by emotional manipulation. The problem in *Coriolanus* is that the plebeians cannot speak gratitude over Martius's wounds because Martius, at least initially, pridefully refuses to engage in the ceremonial display of his scars. When he finally does, the plebeians' hesitation to praise their sacrificial figure means that the soldier's sacrifice ultimately fails to unite the political body. Therefore, another figure steps in to clean up Martius' mess: his mother, Volumnia. Though Martius fails to unite the body politic, his mother, Volumnia succeeds, becoming the model for Shakespeare's emotional regime. She reveals the necessity of each party's participation in the emotional regime's emotives and, by contrast, exposes Martius as a failed sacrifice. In this juxtaposition of Volumnia and Martius, as well as the dialogue between the disparate classes of Shakespeare's Rome, *Coriolanus* criticizes the use of a political regime's ceremonial emotives in uniting the body politic around the soldier's sacrifice.

Few records exist noting Shakespeare's personal life and experiences in Elizabethan England (Mowat xxvii-xxxvi). However, we do know Shakespeare wrote about sacrifice in an age of immense cultural, social, and political change in England. One reason for such little factual evidence about one of England's greatest playwrights is due in part to the fire of London, which burnt up many existing records. Another reason is because Shakespeare was of humble means—born in the market town of Stratford-on-Avon (Greenblatt 535). While Shakespeare's father was successful in agriculture and local governmental affairs, his success was still reduced to a small town, and records in Stratford did not exist as plentifully as they did in the bustling city of London (535). Moreover, the religious tensions brought on by England's turn from Catholicism to the Protestant Church of England made it difficult for those who practiced

Catholicism to remain part of the economic and social construct of society. Shakespeare's father, though successful early on, eventually suffered "financial and social reverses, possibly as a result of adherence to the Catholic faith" (535). Despite the fact that little is known about Shakespeare and his engagement with Elizabethan society, it is clear that his plays comment on many of the social and political changes of his own time.

Shakespeare's England was growing both physically and intellectually, which had a direct impact on the content and writing of *Coriolanus*. Rapid growth in London brought with it plague, dissension amongst classes and struggles for power. As Barbara Mowat writes in her introduction to the play, "London was a Mecca for the wealthy and the aristocratic, and for those who sought advancement at court, or power in government or finance or trade" (xxxiv). While the English aristocrats were moving to London to flourish in court, the lower classes were "troubled by overcrowding, by poverty, [and] by recurring epidemics of the plague" (xxxiv). Additionally, the economic success for playwrights and poets depended on "aristocratic patronage," thus further deepening the rivalries between the classes as the lower depended upon the higher for inclusion in their economic and social community (Greenblatt 539). In other words, the common people in England depended on the aristocratic classes to function in Elizabethan society, and this was true for artists like Shakespeare as well. As Greenblatt writes, "aristocratic patronage, with the money, protection, and prestige it alone could provide, was probably a professional writer's most important asset" (539). The physical growth in England and the world also inspired intellectual growth. Many classic Greek and Roman texts were rediscovered and began to circulate in England which directly impacted Shakespeare's writing (Mowatt xxxiii). Indeed, *Coriolanus* was inspired by Plutarch's text, *The Life of Caius Martius Coriolanus*, which came back into vogue in the early modern period after Sir Thomas North

translated it into English in 1579. Shakespeare puts his own spin on *The Life of Caius Martius Coriolanus* in his version, likely drawing inspiration from the sociopolitical situation of his own rapidly changing England.

Throughout the play, Shakespeare seems to comment on his own disparate class-system in England, as the characters are wrought with anxiety over the emotional regime of Shakespeare's patriarchal Rome, which has imposed specific emotives to be executed by both the common people ("plebeians") and the ruling class ("patricians") in response to the soldier's sacrifice. The psychological unrest that the plebeians and Caius Martius experience around those emotives drive most of the action of the play. By imposing emotives on the community, the political emotional regime of Shakespeare's Rome wields a power over its subjects, controlling them at the whims of the ruling class. As tension builds between the patricians and the plebeians, both parties contemplate the meaning behind emotional expression and its connection to the soldier's sacrifice. A sacrifice cannot be successful unless the people express it emotionally. The plebeians and Martius wrestle with the emotional norms that dictate both how they are to feel about the soldier's sacrifice, and how they are to express those feelings. The overarching question for the characters is what role authenticity plays in their emotional responses to the soldier's sacrifice. In the political emotional community of Shakespeare's Rome, emotional expressions do not have to be backed up by authentic feelings to make the soldier's sacrifice a successful unifying act—a realization that proves unsettling to both the plebeians and Martius. Throughout the play, Both parties resolve to disengage or rebel against the emotives imposed upon them, preferring the consequential banishment and chaos to the facade of unity based on insincere emotional expression. Martius fails to understand how the ruling class uses emotives to control the common people. His mother, however, has mastered the art of using emotives to get

what she wants and keep her family in positions of control. By juxtaposing Martius' and Volumnia's engagement with the emotives of the Roman emotional regime, Shakespeare critiques the emotional regime's manipulative efforts to control the people around a phony mirage for peace that costs the people their individuality, ultimately claiming that the body politic must sacrifice themselves to whatever the ruling class has decided to be the "greater good" of the community.

The plebeians voices are the voice of the body politic and the emotives imposed upon them by the emotional regime of Rome are of utmost importance in uniting the body around the soldier's sacrifice. In comparing Rome to a body, the Second Citizen exclaims, "the arm [is] our soldier…the tongue [is] our [Rome's] trumpeter" (Shakespeare 1.1.120). In other words, the soldier acts on behalf of the community as the "arm" of Rome, and the plebeians voices speak for the soldier's actions, as "the trumpeter" of Rome which announces the feelings of the collective society. For Shakespeare's political community, the soldier's customary display of wounds is meant to evoke resounding praises from the plebeians, as their tongues speak gratitude for the soldier's valor. Shakespeare's imagery throughout *Coriolanus* emphasizes the importance of the plebeians voices. As discussed in the introduction of this thesis, the Third Citizen says, "For if he show us his wounds and tell us his deeds, *we / Are to put our tongues into those wounds and speak for them*" (2.3.5-8, emphasis added). The visual that Shakespeare creates for his audience is a mouth: the wounds of the soldier are the lips, and the voices of the people are the tongue, which work together to speak on behalf of the entire community, revealing their "gratitude" for the soldier's sacrifice and claiming peace for the community at large. The emotional regime has constructed this emotive exchange between the plebeians and the soldier to maintain the political community's internal peace. The custom keeps the community intact.

When one or both parties decide to rebel against these norms, the sacrifice is not complete and therefore fails; the soldier's wounds, without the plebeians tongues, are nothing more than useless scar tissue. The plebeians' voices are therefore of utmost importance to Martius, whose sacrifice for his country is only memorialized as a unifying act *if* the people say that they are grateful for it.

Thus, Martius' pride becomes his own downfall when he disregards the plebeians voices and rebels against the emotives imposed upon him by the emotional regime in refusing to show the people his wounds. He tells his mother, Volumnia, "I would rather be their servant in my way / than sway with them in theirs" (2.1.221-222). He has no interest in the emotional regime or its constructs. He pridefully declares that he wishes to remove himself from the pressure of the emotional regime. *If I am going to rule, it will be on my terms.* Yet, even so, he needs their voices to be elected Consul. Martius is responsible for initiating the ceremonial exchange of emotives because the plebeians tongues cannot be "put into the wounds" of the soldier unless the soldier first humbles himself to show his wounds (2.3.7-8). He continuously treats the plebeians with disdain and uses his voice to mock theirs. The very first line that Shakespeare gives Martius in the play conveys his hatred for the people:

> What's the matter, you dissentious rogues,
> That, rubbing the poor itch of your opinion,
> Make yourselves scabs? (1.1.174-176).

The tone of his speech reveals that he neither cares for the people, nor honors their voices. He calls them "dissentious rogues," in other words: "discordant," "dishonest," "scoundrels" ("dissentious"; "rogue"). By calling the plebeians discordant, Martius blames them for their

community's disintegration. In this way, Caius Martius' disdain operates to set himself above the plebeians and therefore removes himself from their community.

Martius continues name-calling in an effort to further distance himself from them by exposing their weaknesses and, by default, puffing up his own inflated self-image. He says,

> What would you have, you curs,
> That like nor peace nor war? The one affrights you;
> The other makes you proud. He that trusts to you,
> Where he should find you lions, finds you hares;
> Where foxes, geese…
> He that depends
> upon your favors swims with fins of lead. (1.1.179-183; 190-191)

Martius states his reason for hating the people: they are scaredy-cats who stir the pot and run from battle. Instead of being brave (like a lion), they are cowardly (like hares); they lack the tact of the fox and instead embody stupidity (like geese). As he expresses disdain for the plebeians, he simultaneously inflates himself, believing that pointing out the flaws of the people illuminates his own worth.

Martius also believes that he deserves the consulship because of his bloodthirst for Rome's enemies and courage in battle, which he regards as "worthier" than the people (3.1.155). For Martius, words are not as important as action—especially actions fueled by the "chieftest virtue" of the emotional regime of Rome, which is "valor" (2.2.99-100). Martius mistakenly assumes that if valor ranks highest among the Roman virtues, it must likewise override the ceremonial exchange of emotives between the soldier and the plebeians. The two, however, must work in tandem. Martius, blinded by his own ego, cannot see this connection, and so he

disregards the people's voices, claiming they are not "worthy" to speak for his wounds. He says, "I'll give my reasons more worthier than their voices" (3.1.155-156). His entitlement to the consulship is due to the fact that he places his own sacrifice above the people and thus confesses that his sacrificial efforts were never for the community, but for his own fame.

Even when the patricians and his mother Volumnia finally convince Coriolanus to appear before the plebians, Coriolanus refuses to perform the ceremony completely, appearing before the plebians fully clothed and pridefully mocking them without showing them his wounds. He misunderstands the fact that, it is not simply enough to perform the custom—he must fully *embody* the emotional display of the custom in a way that is believable. Martius, instead, betrays his true feelings. He mocks the customary display of wounds, saying,

> What must I say?
> "I pray, sir?"—plague upon't! I cannot bring
> My tongue to such a pace. "Look, sir, my wounds!
> I got them in my country's service when
> some certain of your brethren roared and ran
> from the noise of our own drums." (2.3.54-58)

Martius's mockery of the plebeians reiterates his pride and disdain for the people. They are not disillusioned by his wearing the gown and repeatedly saying "worthy voices!" because he is very obviously making a mockery of the people's voices (2.3.149). As Menenius puts it, "[Martius'] heart's his mouth" (3.1.328-329). Menenius means that Martius cannot help but speak his feelings; his words have no filter. Mowat connects Menenius' words back to the proverbial expression: "The heart of fools is in their mouth: but the mouth of the wise is in their heart"

(Mowat 146n2). Even when Martius partially upholds the custom of the regime—doing so in "show"—his emotional posture nullifies it.

Martius's pride, self-proclaimed prestige, and utter contempt for the people make him impossible to respect, and therefore they use their voices to banish him from Rome, exiling Martius from the emotional community. The plebeians are initially disoriented by the disparity between Martius' courageous acts and his prideful refusal to show his wounds, and so they wrestle with their response, ultimately choosing to resist expressing gratitude for his wounds. The imposed expectations weigh heavy on the plebeians, as they know that they are required to speak for Martius' wounds. The First Citizen states the emotional regime's expectation for the plebeians when he says, "Once, if he do require our voices, we ought not to deny him" (Shakespeare 2.3.1-2). The First Citizen clarifies for the rest of the plebeians that they are required to speak, should Martius play his part. However, since Martius has refused to uphold his end of the bargain, the plebeians have no wounds to praise. This is especially confusing for the people, who recognize that Martius's acts of courage in battle *do* make him the worthiest among all men to be Consul of Rome (2.3.39-41). His pride, however, negates his acts of valor. Shakespeare suggests, then, that one's posture is just as important as their actions, especially when the person in question is a member of the ruling class whose position depends on the votes of the common people. As the plebeians wrestle with the disparity of Martius' character, they are left with two alternatives. First, they could speak gratitude for Martius's wounds with the hope that genuine feelings of gratitude would follow their words, harkening back to Reddy's claim that emotives can be "instruments for directly changing, building, hiding, intensifying emotions" (Reddy, "Against Constructionism" 331). The second option would be for them to refuse to speak at all, withholding their voices, rebelling against the emotional regime, and thus becoming

"monstrous members" of society (Shakespeare 2.3.13). Shakespeare comments here on the unspoken emotional contract that binds the common people to the emotional regime. The plebeians know that while they may *physically* have the "power" within themselves to remain silent, they do not truly have the power to do so because their reputation is dependent upon their adherence to the emotional regime's norms (2.3.8). The state of their reputation in society depends upon their obedience to the regime. Therefore, the consequence for the plebeians, should they rebel against the emotional regime, is to become known as "monstrous members" and therefore on the fringe of society. Shakespeare, in this speech, presents one of the emotional regime's emotional norms: "ingratitude is monstrous" (line 10). This is the rule that the plebeians must abide by to continue living peacefully in their society.

However, *Coriolanus* also shows that emotives can be stated or gestured to without authenticity and still be successful for the political emotional regime—a truth that Volumnia, Martius 'mother, attempts to convey to her hard-headed son. Volumnia, a powerhouse of wit and wisdom throughout the play, understands both the constructs of the emotional regime and the power of emotives as a game of chess: one must be strategic. After Martius explodes in an emotional outburst, sabotaging his chances of consulship, Volumnia enters the scene to rebuke him. Martius, does not understand why his mother is not proud of him for "play[ing] the man that [he is]" (3.2.17-18). Would she have preferred him to be "false" to himself? To present himself as someone he is not? After all, he stayed true to his ideals and his feelings—shouldn't she be proud of his integrity? Volumnia's reply answers the question of how sincerity impacts the use of emotives in the political community:

> I would have had you put your power well on
>
> Before you had worn it out…

> You might have been enough the man you are
> With striving less to be so. Lesser had been
> The thwarting of your dispositions if
> You had not showed them how you were disposed
> Ere they lacked power to cross you. (3.2.20-21;23-27)

First, Volumnia reveals that there is a strategy to all of these customs. The customs protect the emotional regime's power over the community. Volumnia says she would have preferred Martius to gain the consulship before speaking his mind—in other words, *say or do whatever you need to do in order to be elected. Then you may be true to your feelings, because the people no longer have a say.* This is the mindset of the emotional regime: customs are meant to aid in the construct of political society, keeping the powerful in power. Martius made a mistake by showing his insincerity while the plebeians still had a say in his election. Furthermore, Volumnia clarifies the question of sincerity. It is not that Martius must feel humble when he displays his wounds and asks for the plebeians' votes. It is that he must *appear* humble. In this way, the strategy of emotives as a tool for control prioritizes appearance over sincerity, a stance that also might be described as deceit. Volumnia therefore reprimands Martius for his failure to polish his appearance and deceive the plebeians. Since he made abundantly clear how he felt towards the people—or, as Menenius put it, since Martius' "heart" was "in his mouth"—the people could see right through his poor attempt to garner their votes, deciding to exercise the power of their voices by removing him from their community.

Volumnia is the voice of the emotional regime in Rome, and as such, she proves that the regime's power over the people resides in her control over their emotions. Martius' failure to control his emotions reveals his emotional immaturity, or his inability to temper his emotions

with reason. Volumnia exposes his foolishness through the juxtaposition of her own emotional maturity, saying, "I have a heart as little apt as yours, but yet a brain that leads my use of anger to better vantage" (3.2.37-39). In other words, Volumnia confirms that she feels the same hatred for the people as Martius does but has learned to use that anger strategically to elevate herself in society. She herself has had to play the game, sticking to the script of the emotional regime to maintain peace within the community and also—perhaps mostly—to get what she wants. Menenius emphasizes Martius' need to show discretion when he pleads with Martius, saying, "Put not your worthy rage into your tongue!" (3.1.306). Martius' problem is that he cannot separate his feelings from his voice; in contrast, Volumnia's emotional discretion has kept her in good accord with the plebeians, as well as the patricians.

After his exile, Martius joins forces with Rome's enemy and his greatest foe, Aufidius of the Volscians. Because of his hatred for the plebeians in Rome, he is moved to vengeance—who better to unite with than the Romans' greatest enemy? Together, Aufidius and Martius lead a charge against Rome and plan to overflow the city. It is here that Volumnia steps in and redirects Martius' mind away from this course of action, using the manipulative power of emotives. The first thing she does when she approaches Martius is kneel before him. By kneeling and assuming a position of servitude, Volumnia engages an emotive gesture of humility, which is exactly the opposite of what Martius expects from her. She humbles herself, though he is unworthy of receiving such honor from the woman he disobeyed. He responds, saying, "What's this? / Your knees to me? To your corrected [chastised] son?" (5.3.65-66). The element of surprise works in Volumnia's favor to catch Martius off-guard. As an exile, he would expect someone from Rome to come into his presence angry, especially his mother, whose honor he disgraced when he was banished. In this way, she exercises the emotional maturity that Martius failed to do when he

refused to display his wounds to the people. And it works for her, revealing that the emotional regime is adept at perceiving the emotional corners into which they must drive their subjects to get their desired outcome. Volumnia knows that with a softened heart, Martius will be more apt to listen to her words.

Volumnia also knows that Martius believes himself to be the epitome of the Roman ideal, and so rebukes him, clarifying that his undying commitment to valor has actually been a rejection of the true Roman ideal: loyalty to the state. She tantalizes him, saying that if he does not listen to her and give up his revenge, his name will forever be marred:

> but this be certain,
> That, if thou conquer Rome, the benefit
> Which thou shalt thereby reap is such a name
> Whose repetition will be dogged with curses,
> Whose chronicle thus writ: "The man was noble,
> But with his last attempt he wiped it out,
> Destroyed his country, and his name remains
> To th 'ensuing age abhorred." (5.3.163-170)

Throughout the play, Martius has prided himself in his unrelenting dedication to the Roman ideal of "valor." Volumnia's message to him insinuates that his perceived moral fortitude has been misguided. *If you truly understood Roman ideals, you would see that loyalty to the state is greater than valor.* To hear that his own name would be slandered and "curse[d]" immediately pecks at his narcissistic self-righteousness, causing Martius to second-guess his decision to fight against Rome.

Volumnia's final persuasion clarifies the purpose of the emotional regime's commitment to the Roman customs, which, in Acts I-III seemed silly to Martius. She says,

> If I cannot persuade thee
> Rather to show a noble grace to both parts
> Than seek the end of one, thou shalt no sooner
> March to assault thy country than to tread—
> Trust to 't, thou shalt not—on thy mother's womb
> That brought thee to this world. (5.3.136-143)

In the same way that the plebeians did not show gratitude for Martius battle wounds, Volumnia reveals that Martius shows ungratefulness for her womb (uncannily similar to the word "wound"), which bore him into the world. This is the crux of Volumnia's petition to Martius. She turns his own pride and self-righteous against him, revealing that he himself has exhibited the same ingratitude that he found so disgusting in the plebeians. And so Shakespeare brings the play full circle, making an example out of Martius' denunciation of the emotional regime's customs.

As a tragedy, *Coriolanus* never promises a happy ending to its audience. By deferring hope throughout the play, Shakespeare speaks to the harsh realities of humanity. Martius learns his lesson, but it is too late. When it matters most, he is unable to understand that the Roman ideal of loyalty, and the customs that speak for the soldier's loyalty, are a protective construct for his community. It is not until he is faced with the fact that even his mother, who has been a pillar of strength, is adversely affected by his disobedience to the Roman customs that Martius finally understands. If he had only displayed his wounds to the people, then his mother would not be destitute, emaciated, and begging for his mercy. Shakespeare's tragic antihero, Caius Martius

Coriolanus, is the scapegoat who dies from his own prideful disdain for the inauthentic expression of humility that he does not truly feel, revealing the power that an emotional regime has over a political community's peace and unity. Just as Martius is the scapegoat, Volumnia is the hero of the play. Volumnia's gestures and emotives in Act V comment on the fact that *perceived* sincerity*,* or deceit, when expressing emotions, are a powerful tool for control in the political emotional community.

Shakespeare's emotional regime is oppressive in a way that the emotional community is not. The regime is deceitful—using emotional expression to achieve selfish ends for one group of people under the guise of the body politic's best interests. In *Coriolanus,* sacrifice is capitalized upon by the emotional regime to maintain control. Even as Volumnia's sacrifice is the "successful" sacrifice which brings unity to the people of Rome in *Coriolanus*, it also maintains the hierarchy of the disparate class system, thus keeping the plebeians bound, emotionally, to the patricians. Shakespeare therefore critiques the emotional regime and its use of emotives which were part and parcel of his own England, ruled by a monarch who imposed his own mandates and emotives to keep the people "united" around his own monarchical absolutism.

Chapter 3: The Soul's Sacrifice
John Donne's *Holy Sonnets* and a New Emotional Community

Samuel Johnson is known to have described John Donne's poetry as "heterogenous ideas…yoked by violence together" and there is no place, whether in Donne's prose or in poetry, where this rings more true than in the *Holy Sonnets* (Pinka). In his *Holy Sonnets*, Donne meditates on two sacrifices: Christ's physical sacrifice on the cross, and the individual soul's emotional sacrifice that occurs in the working-out of one's salvation. This emotional sacrifice is also known as the Roman Catholic doctrine of "penitence." Donne's formative years as a Roman Catholic ingrained in him the belief that to receive the sanctifying power of Christ's sacrifice, one must respond with verbal and gestural indications of a contrite heart. Throughout the sonnets, Donne commands his soul to "repent," "cry," "sigh," and "mourn" as if death were near and his life depended on it, because these sort of gestural emotives were characteristic of the Roman Catholic's doctrine of penitence (sonnet 2, line 9; sonnet 5, line 12; sonnet 4, line 9). As a converted Protestant, however, Donne also recognized that the state of man's heart is ultimately changed by God, not man, evidenced by his pleas for the "three-personed God" to "batter [his] heart" (sonnet 10, line 1). While the Roman Catholics relied on their own penitence and the priest's confirmation, the Protestants relied solely on their intimate union with God to restore the breach made by man's sin and Satan's grip on humanity. In the *Holy Sonnets,* Donne establishes a new emotional community for himself by blending theologies from the Roman

Catholic and Protestant traditions; the *Holy Sonnets* act as a poetical outlet where Donne laments the severed relationship between his soul and God and restores their relationship by mediating theologies from the two dominant religious, emotional communities of his time—Roman Catholicism's doctrine of penitence and the Protestant Church of England's intimacy between God and humans—in order to refine the Christian faith and thus develop a new emotional community for the early modern Christian.

Donne himself was caught between two religious emotional communities: the Roman Catholic tradition and the emerging Protestant Church of England. Born into a "recusant" Roman Catholic family during the reign of England's protestant Queen Elizabeth I, Donne was brought up in two traditions of Christianity, which sometimes agreed with one another in their foundational beliefs, while other times drastically and violently antagonistic in the nuanced expression and display of such beliefs ("recusant"). Both Roman Catholics and English Protestants believed in the sacrifice of Christ on the cross as the sacred act that united the human soul back to its creator, God. Both also agree that the soul plays a role in its own salvation (Peterson 506). The way these two emotional communities untangled the complexities of their salvation, however, was quite different and posed a problem for Donne.

Because Roman Catholicism predated the Church of England, many Protestant doctrines and practices found their roots in Catholicism, but the religious institutions had very different beliefs about how those doctrines and practices should be executed (Donne, "Preached at Saint Paul's Cross" 121-22). For example, the doctrine of penitence originated in the Catholic Church

as an institution where individuals were to show an "outward expression of repentance" ("penitence"). To show penitence, however, there must first exist a sense of "sorrow or affliction of mind" for the sin, which came to be known as "contrition" ("contrition"). While both Roman Catholics and the Church of England used the doctrine of penitence as a way of working out their salvation, Donne became frustrated by the Catholic's acceptance of penitence to include "attrition," and not just "contrition" (Donne, "Preached at Saint Paul's Cross" 122). The difference between attrition and contrition is that attrition is a feeling of sorrow for sin that causes the sinner to confess their sins in hopes of absolution from the reality of death; contrition, however, is an act of repentance, or a turning away from sin and towards God, out of love for God, rather than fear for the self. Attrition, according to Donne was a "slight inward sorrow" that could be exercised as "a sigh of the penitent," followed by "a word [from] the priest, [that] makes all clean" (122). Attrition was acted out by the verbal admittance of one's sin, specifically to a priest. Contrition, on the other hand, was an intense state of sorrow for the sin that moved the sinner to turn away from his or her sin and to cling to God. For the Protestant, sorrow was believed to be bestowed on the soul by God. Therefore, the soul's pardon was from God alone—no human had the power to pardon his own sins. Lastly, Donne also notes that while the motive for attrition for the Catholic was fear of death because of one's sins, the Protestant was moved to contrition out of "love" for God and a desire for "pureness" because of his or her love for God (121-23). The differences are therefore three-fold: different in the source of pardon, the intensity of the sorrow, and in the soul's motivation for sorrow.

In fact, many of the Roman-Catholic doctrines and sacraments, for Donne, took the power away from God and put it in the hands of the priest or the church institution. Donne was likewise bothered by the Roman Catholic's sacrament of communion. In one sermon preached at Paul's cross, Donne critiques those "Roman chemists" who believe they have the power within themselves to "transubstantiate bread into God" and therefore have the power to "change any foulness into cleanness" (121-22). In other words, Donne critiques the Roman Catholic's placement of the power to change hearts into the hands of man when he believes that power should be placed in the hands of God. Donne noted that another misplacement of power was also characteristic of the Roman Catholic sacrament of confession, which was meted out between the individual and the priest—again, leaving God, and his "grace," out of the equation (121-22). The Protestant Church of England, however, believed and held fast to an intimate relationship between the individual and God, and it was in this relationship that the soul's emotional sacrifice impacted his or her salvation. For the Protestant, contrition was bestowed by God, presented to God as the soul's confession of sins, and wiped clean by the grace of God. Clearly, then, the Roman Catholic emotional community and the Protestant Church of England's emotional community were at odds in their principles of salvation, and Donne argued for the marriage of the two by incorporating the doctrines and sacraments of Roman Catholic tradition in the context of the Protestant's intimate relationship with God.

Further complicating Donne's two religious emotional communities was the emotional regime of the English monarchy, in which he lived and served. Leading up to his appointment as

the dean of St. Paul's Cathedral, the leading Protestant Church in London, Donne experienced the frustrating and tragic reality of an England dominated by a religious emotional regime. The English monarchy now required a sworn oath of allegiance to the crown, which was also head of the Church of England, a Protestant institution. Failure to do so would result in penalties, including fines or imprisonment. In 1609, James I of England issued an "Oath of Allegiance," demanding that all citizens "Truly and sincerely acknowledge, [and] testify" their allegiance to "Sovereign Lord King James" as the "lawful and rightful King" and denounce any "authorities of the Church or See of Rome" to "depose the King" ("The English Parliament"). The oath goes so far as to demand the speaker's emotional and spiritual allegiance: to "swear from [their] *heart* [to] bear faith and true allegiance to his Majesty…And [to] *believe* and in conscience [be] *resolved*, that neither the Pope nor any person whatsoever, hath power to absolve [them] of this oath" ("The English Parliament", emphasis added). Furthermore, the oath ends with an all-encompassing emotional and spiritual contract between the speaker and God: "And I doe make this recognition and acknowledgement *heartily*, *willingly*, and *truly*, upon the true faith of a Christian: So help me God" ("The English Parliament"). James I's oath is exactly what Reddy means by an "emotive" used by a state-sanctioned emotional regime to control and manipulate its subjects as a way to reinforce the regime's power. All of the "trulies," and "heartilies," and other emotionally-binding adverbs sprinkled amidst James I's Oath of Allegiance further unite the emotional regime of the English monarchy to the English subject who utters the oath. It becomes increasingly difficult for the individual subject to differentiate themselves from the

regime. The utterance insinuates an emotional vulnerability that can feel oppressive to the speaker, especially when the emotive is at odds with the speaker's own beliefs and feelings. According to this regime, any denial of allegiance to the Crown, which was at the time aligned with the Church of England, meant exile in some form or fashion. In the most extreme cases, to deny allegiance meant death. In issuing the oath, James I established an emotional regime that demanded an emotive—spoken allegiance—from his subjects and posed threats to those who failed to uphold the oath of the emotional regime. Donne knew this reality all too well because of his own experience and the experiences of many close family members who failed to speak the oath.

A similar oath—the Act of Supremacy—was the emotional regime in power during Donne's formative years and had a sufficient impact on Donne's own educational achievements as well as on the lives of many of his beloved family members. The Act of Supremacy, initiated in 1534, paved the way for James I's Oath of Allegiance. Donne, being born to a Roman Catholic family that believed the Pope to be head of the Church, was predisposed to refuse the Act of Supremacy—a decision that guaranteed consequences from the emotional regime (Pinka). Donne studied at both Oxford and Cambridge and yet, due to his Roman Catholic faith, could not swear the oath and therefore could not take degrees from either university ("John Donne"). The consequences of disobedience to the Act of Supremacy also had a tragic impact on his family. Donne lost his brother, Henry, who was imprisoned for housing a Catholic priest while in school; Henry eventually died in prison at the youthful age of 19, while the priest was drawn and

quartered (Damrosch, "John Donne" 1586). Other members of Donne's family also faced consequences for their faith amidst the emotional regime For example, Donne's Roman Catholic mother, a descendant of Sir Thomas More, exiled herself to Antwerp in search of religious toleration and remained a recusant for the entirety of her life (Damrosch 1586; Arshagouni 3). Similarly, one of Donne's uncles was imprisoned in the Tower of London for being a Jesuit priest (Damrosch 1586). Thus, from a very young age Donne was aware of the dangers of banishment and the reality of death that threatened anyone going against the grain of the English monarchy's emotional regime that, due to the Act of Supremacy, bound the political subject to Protestantism. This England, where the state-sanctioned conformity to religious beliefs by the required emotives—Act of Supremacy and Oath of Allegiance—and harsh consequences for failure to uphold the emotional norms of such a regime, is the backdrop against which Donne became a poet and a preacher.

Finding himself in the crossfires of two conflicting emotional communities and one emotional regime, Donne sought refuge in a third emotional community, one which he creates in his *Holy Sonnets*, which maintains the Catholic's doctrine of penitence but exercises it in the context of the Protestant's intimate relationship with God. Having been bred with the intensity of these two religious emotional communities, it is no surprise that Donne's poetry reflects on Christ's sacrifice and the soul's role in Christ's death. In his *Holy Sonnets,* Donne wrestles with mortality, faith, doubt, sacrifice, and repentance. Out of his two warring communities, Donne finds an emotional community for himself that combines the Catholic's doctrine of penitence in

its purest form, exercised in the Protestants' intimate relationship with God. Donne's own personal experience as a Roman Catholic-turned-Protestant provides an interesting context for the *Holy Sonnets,* which are characterized by an intense emotional connection to God that is at once made possible by Christ's sacrifice and in the same breath problematized by Donne's own "black soul" (sonnet 2, line 1).

Donne's *Holy Sonnets* describe an emotional community between God and the human soul that is plagued by paradox: their relationship is simultaneously a place of extreme joy, yet dependent upon grief—a source of love, yet riddled with violence. While Donne draws on the Petrarchan tradition in echoing the "pleasurable pains" of love, he translates that theme into a sacred context. Donne laments the severed relationship between man and God due to man's sin and Satan's grasp on his soul. The antidote for the soul's separation is to meditate on the death of Christ to evoke a sense of sorrow, or contrition. Christ's sacrifice is meant to produce in the soul an emotional sacrifice that, Donne argues, "seals [man's] pardon" and restores the broken community (sonnet 4, line 14). In this way, the soul's sacrifice responds to the physical sacrifice of Christ. Donne, in his exploration and mediation on the crucifixion, characterizes an emotional community between man and God that is grievous, spiritually violent, and emotionally intimate.

Just as the Catholic and Protestants believed in a state of sorrow as the first step in repentance, the *Holy Sonnets* propose mourning as the key component of the soul's emotional sacrifice that reunites the soul with its creator. Donne believes that he cannot physically do anything to unite himself with God, but he can *feel* his way back into God's embrace. His acute

sense of grief moves the soul from the "hell's wide mouth" back to God (sonnet 16, line 4). Grief and mourning become the favored emotions for the soul whose meditation on Christ's sacrifice is meant to draw the individual inward, to "suffer pain" of those sins that caused Christ to suffer death (sonnet 14; line 8). This rings true for the Catholic Donne's constant mourning in the *Holy Sonnets* as a response to his own sinfulness that both separated him from God and made it necessary for Christ to suffer a brutal death. His mourning also serves to win back the favor of God and wipe away the "memory" of his sins (sonnet 5, lines 10-12). In other words, the soul's posture of contrition is meant to seal the intimacy between soul and God.

Donne wrestles with the differences between an emotional community and an emotional regime as he establishes his new emotional community in his *Holy Sonnets*. Donne cannot fathom an emotional community that is absolved from transactional emotives. This transactional belief is evident in sonnet 2, when Donne addresses his soul, writing,

> O make thyself with holy mourning black,
>
> And red with blushing, as thou art with sin;
>
> Or wash thee in Christ's blood, which has this might
>
> That being red, it dyes red souls to white. (lines 1-4)

Donne begs his soul to make him "black" because that blackness will prove his "holy mourning." He likewise asks his soul to make him "red" because that redness will portray him to be embarrassed or ashamed of his sin. In this way, Donne comments on elements of the emotional regime of the English monarchy into his new emotional community. The emotional regime

dictated Donne's emotional, religious, and political loyalties to be tied to the Crown and was proven through outward signs (emotive gestures) and spoken words. The difference between the emotional regime of the English monarchy and Donne's new emotional community is that his use of emotives are not forced upon the individual by the regime's authority, but rather requested by the speaker (or gesturer) from God himself. Donne essentially asks himself to paint his own face black and red in order to make his repentance believable, likely because he had been conditioned by his own emotional regime and the traditions of the Roman Catholic Church to believe that "outward signs" or emotives were acceptable forms of loyalty (Donne, "Preached at Saint Paul's Cross" 122-23).

Donne's constant pleading for grief and mourning is also a sign of his state of urgency in wanting to repair the rift between himself and God. In sonnet 4, the final judgement day appears, and yet Donne's speaker begs God to "let them sleep, Lord, and me mourn a space" (line 9). Traditionally, sonnets present the problem in the octave and resolve that problem in the sestet. Sonnet 4 of the *Holy Sonnets*, however, does not use this formula. Instead, Donne opens in the octave with the jubilant celebration of the resurrection of God's people, whose bodies are being raised to heaven as God is about to enact His final judgment over humanity. The turn of the sonnet goes from joyful celebration to "despair" and the acute sense of urgency and desperation that the speaker feels, which leads him to request more time to "mourn" lest his "sins abound" (line 7, 9-11). Once again, Donne's speaker wrestles with his salvation and leans upon his emotive expressions of grief and a contrite heart to rescue him from damnation. The sonnet ends

with confirmation of the emotional community's condition of repentance as a means to complete the work of Christ's sacrifice.

Donne proposes that contrition satisfies the soul's need for repentance as the completing work of salvation. In sonnet 5, the speaker claims that his "tears" paired with Christ's "worthy blood" shed on the cross have the power to "make a heavenly Lethean flood" that "drowns" out the memory of his past "sins" (lines 10-12). The word "Lethean" refers to the river Lethe, which was one of the five Greek rivers of the underworld believed to cause "oblivion or forgetfulness of the past" ("Leathean" *OED*). Therefore, Donne makes the case that the soul's tears are a necessary component of God's pardoning grace and thus they have the power to cast forgetfulness like a spell over God's memory of his sin and redeem their broken relationship. To attain forgiveness from God, or the pardoning of humanity's sin, was one core value of both Roman Catholic and the Church of England.

Donne's relationship with God is not simply one of mourning, but also one of intense violence that moves the heart to repentance by force, a kind of request that the soul be forcibly coerced into alignment with a welcome emotional regime. Donne does not rely solely on his tears to negate his sin and restore relationship with his Creator, but rather seeks out Petrarchan pain reimagined as a kind of sacred purging of the soul. He requests to be violently "o'erthrow[n]" by God (sonnet 10, line 3). The speaker's request for violence is at once a desire to take the place of Christ on the cross and also a realization that he must be met with the same

sort of intensity with which he has sinned. Donne's speaker wonders if he can switch places with Christ, since he is the sinner and Christ the perfect one. He says,

> *Spit* in my face ye Jews, and *pierce* my side,
>
> *Buffet*, and *scoff*, *scourge*, and *crucify* me,
>
> For I have sinned, and sinned, and only he,
>
> Who could do no iniquity, hath died:
>
> But by my death cannot be satisfied
>
> My sins, which pass the Jews 'impiety:
>
> They killed once an inglorious man, but I
>
> Crucify him daily, being now glorified. (sonnet 7, lines 1-8, emphasis added)

The word choice in this passage is graphic, as the speaker begs to be "pierced" and "scourged" by the "jews" who crucified Jesus Christ. He justifies his reasoning for trading places, and it is a valid point: he himself has sinned and Christ was known to be "without sin" (2 Corinthians 5:10). However, as the turn in the second quatrain reveals, the reasons for the speaker's request to trade places also stand to make such a trade a failure in achieving salvation. The speaker's sin disqualifies him from the ability to "satisfy" the sins of humanity through death (lines 5-6). But he cannot give up the nagging sense that he deserves violence, a realization that causes Donne's speaker to consider another use for violence in his relationship with God.

The speaker, in realizing that he cannot take the place of Christ on the Cross, decides instead that his heart should be sacrificed. Nowhere is this emotional sacrifice more palpable than in *Holy Sonnet* number 10:

> Batter my heart, three-personed God; for, you
> As yet but knock, breathe, shine, and seek to mend;
> That I may rise, and stand, o'erthrow me, and bend
> Your force, to break, blow, burn and make me new,
> I, like an usurped town, to another due,
> Labor to admit you, but oh, to no end,
> Reason your viceroy in me, me should defend,
> But is captived, and proves weak or untrue,
> Yet dearly I love you, and would be loved fain,
> But am betrothed unto your enemy,
> Divorce me, untie, or break that knot again,
> Take me to you, imprison me, for I
> Except you enthrall me, never shall be free,
> Nor ever chaste, except you ravish me.

There is a switch, from physical violence to an emotional, spiritual "batter[ing]" that Donne's speaker believes to be more powerful than the simple little "knock" that is described of Christ in the Bible. The speaker is referring to the verse in Revelation 3:20 that says, "Behold, I stand at

the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me" (*Authorized King James Bible*). Donne suggests another trade: gentleness for violence. It's as if Donne's speaker says to God, *Your gentle knock will not work because the devil has already seized my heart, and he definitely will not answer you.* Rather, he commands God to "break, blow, and burn" down his house. Indeed, Donne is making a statement about the difference between attrition and contrition here. Instead of the "slight inward sorrow" that attrition offers to the Catholic penitent, Donne's speaker wants his pain to mirror the emotional depth of the Protestant's understanding of contrition (Donne, "Preached at Saint Paul's Cross" 122). And why would Donne's speaker want to suffer such severe pain? The violence of contrition is not meant to annihilate him and damn him to hell, but rather to connect the speaker back to his life-source (God) by cleansing him of the squatter (Satan) who has overtaken his heart. The "break[ing]" serves to "make [him] new" because it cuts off Satan's connection to him and reconnects his soul with God (line 4).

Sonnet 10 describes the speaker's request for violence from God as a request for God to change his heart in order to reunite his soul with God. He says, "Except you enthrall me, never shall be free, / Nor ever chaste, except you ravish me" (lines 13-14). It seems oddly paradoxical that Donne would suggest the only way for his speaker to be "chaste" is if God "ravishes"—essentially, *rapes*—him. The imagery here, while jarring and seemingly sacrilegious, is an effort to once again reveal the intensity of the connection that Donne's speaker feels with his God. In the early modern period, the word "ravish" carried a double meaning. Aside from its obvious

denotation, the word "ravish" also meant "to be driven or carried away from a belief, state, etc." ("ravish"). The speaker's intimate connection to God is his only hope for salvation, and so he asks God to carry him away from his "betroth[al]" to Satan, God's "enemy" (sonnet 10, line 10). Just as the violence of God is meant to rid him of the devil, the intimacy of God is meant to fill him with such love and devotion that he seeks no other "idolatry" or "profane mistresses" (sonnet 9, lines 9-10). Note who is doing the work in the contrition of sonnet 10: God. Not the self and not a priest. The speaker puts the power for his soul's salvation into the hands of God by requesting a contrite heart from the one who created him.

Donne's new emotional community comments on the ways his own experience with the emotional regime of Jacobean England and the conflicting theologies of Catholicism and Protestantism influenced his poetry. Donne wrestles with his two religious emotional communities and the emotional regime of the English monarchy and establishes his own emotional refuge in the context of his poetry. He honors the Roman Catholic doctrine of penitence by incorporating forms of contrition in the *Holy Sonnets,* but he does so within the context of Protestantism's emotionally intimate relationship with God. Likewise, Donne, influenced by the emotional regime's use of emotives as proof of loyalty, asks for God to "make" him "red with blushing" and "black with holy mourning" because he believes that those outward expressions will prove his heart's contrition. And contrition, for Donne, was a state of the heart that resulted from God's intimate connection and not his own striving (sonnet 2, lines 11-13). The purpose of the contrite heart for Donne is rooted in his love for God and not in the

fear of damnation (sonnet 12, line 14). In this way, Donne's *Holy Sonnets* serves to separate the soul from both the Catholic and Protestant theologies and the emotional regime of Jacobean England in an effort to depict what Donne saw as Christianity's core beliefs about the soul's salvation. Therefore, Donne goes back to the foundation of the Christian's core value system—the sacrifice of Christ—to work out his new "core" faith, dependent on no other community or regime besides the emotional community between God and man (sonnet 9, line 3). The soul's sacrifice in Donne's *Holy Sonnets* establishes a nuanced emotional community between the individual and God that is intimate to the point of intense grief. Thus, Donne communicates the paradoxical cycle of the soul's emotional community: man's sin caused a break in his emotional community with God, which nailed Christ to the cross as the sacrifice that forever restored humanity's intimate connection to God, which made it possible for the soul to feel the weight of grief for his own sin that disconnected him from God. Donne communicates this paradoxical cycle through poetry, thus proposing that poetry provides a place of relief from the tension of that cycle—there is rest and comfort in, and *because of,* the soul's sacrifice.

Conclusion

Sacrifice in early modern literature, as we have seen, encompasses a variety of genres across both secular and sacred texts. The lover's sacrificed heart in Sidney's *Astrophil and Stella* attempts to establish and maintain an emotional community between the lover and his beloved. The soldier's sacrificed body, as evidenced by Shakespeare's *Coriolanus,* attempts to unite the body politic. Both texts are secular, meaning that their context and subject matter are non-religious and non-sacred. The soul's emotional sacrifice in Donne's *Holy Sonnets* is directed towards God and seeks to establish a new emotional community for the speaker that is solely between his own soul and God, therefore making it a sacred text. While all the texts have similar dealings with sacrifice as a tool for unification, there is a distinct difference between the secular and sacred texts. Sidney's Astrophil and Shakespeare's Martius and Volumnia strive to the point of torment to exercise the "right" emotional norms or emotives in order to obtain peace for their emotional communities. Donne's speaker in the *Holy Sonnets*, however, has a different experience. In the secular texts, the characters were seeking to establish peace through their own efforts—adhering to emotional norms and emotives—and looking to another human to confirm that their efforts were successful in bringing unity and peace. This is especially evident in Sidney's sonnets, as Astrophil pines for the affection of his beloved, which necessitates a response from Stella. For *Coriolanus*, the characters' own pride might temporarily mask it, but they, too, seek confirmation of their efforts from other humans: Martius needs the voices of the plebeians, and Volumnia needs her son to be Consul so that she can bask in the prestige of her social status and power over the plebeians. In both instances, the texts end unresolved. Astrophil is left pining, still. Martius dies. And Volumnia, although she achieves what she wants, returns to a Rome in shambles and without her pride and joy: her son, Martius. In these literary texts,

human-to-human sacrifice fails to permanently unite the community. For Donne's sacrifice in the *Holy Sonnets*, however, there resides an inner peace from the speaker that perhaps comes from the speaker's knowledge that God—a divine being—has already established peace for his soul. There need be no striving as there are no emotional norms to uphold nor emotives to obey. By the end of the *Holy Sonnets*, the speaker's soul is at rest. Sacred literary texts that deal with sacrifice look specifically to the Christological sacrifice for their model, and because the individual or community seeks peace from a divine being whose perfect sacrifice and perfect motives absolve him from the sins of a broken world, the soul's sacrifice succeeds in providing a clear picture of sacrifice.

In *Astrophil and Stella,* Sidney's speaker is desperate for the affection of his beloved and, true to Petrarchan tradition, believes that he can sacrifice his heart to her and receive her love, but personified "Despair" continuously derails him. Part of the intrigue of the lover's sacrifice is the push-pull that the lover experiences in his pursuit of his beloved. Astrophil might receive a twinkling eye from his beloved, but moments later she has shut him out again. There is never a perfect and lasting union between Astrophil and Stella, which is clear as the sonnet sequence ends with his hopes dashed, yet again. He writes, "But soon as thought of thee breeds my delight / And my young soul flutters to thee, his nest, / Most rude Despair, my daily unbidden guest / Clips straight my wings" (sonnet 108, lines 5-8). Sidney's torment is captured perfectly by this sonnet, as hope is immediately met with despair. Sidney paints a tragic reality for Astrophil who, like a bird who sees his "nest," or home with Stella, and yet cannot fly to it. His efforts are no match for "Despair," which Sidney personifies to emphasize humanity's connection with fate. The lover's sacrifice therefore fails to bring the resolution that the lover (and the reader) so

desperately pine for. Such is the plight of the lover's sacrifice, and the experience that Sidney himself had with his unattainable beloved, Queen Elizabeth.

Shakespeare's *Coriolanus* provides two characters—two opportunities—to see a secular sacrifice for one's country bring lasting peace to the Roman body politic, and both fail in their own ways. Both Martius and Volumnia believe that if they just had power over the people then their Rome would be at peace. Martius's failure is obvious, as he is exiled from the community for his not upholding the emotional norms of the body politic, and then later dies in the hands of Rome's enemy, Aufidius. Volumnia, similarly, though slyer than Martius, seeks help from other humans to wield her power over the people. Her first strategy is to have her son elected Consul over Rome. But, when Martius's pride and refusal to engage in the emotional norms of the body politic results in his exile from Rome, Volumnia's first efforts prove a failure. Her only hope at maintaining power is to convince her traitor son to give up his charge against Rome and to restore relations between Martius and Rome. This too fails, as Martius' surrender causes his enemy, Aufidius, to seek revenge, killing Martius. So Volumnia's emotional sacrifice leads to the physical sacrifice of her son. Though she returns to Rome and is praised for saving the country from Aufidius' wrath, the fact remains that Aufidius' wrath was satisfied at the expense of Volumnia's beloved son, Martius. *Coriolanus* ends tragically, with the façade of peace. That veil is thin, though, as the audience knows that Volumnia never had the best interests of Rome in mind, but rather her own greed for power. She cares less about Martius' life than she does about keeping him in power. Volumnia makes her greed for power clear early on when she says that if she had twelve sons she would wish "eleven die nobly for their country than one voluptuously surfeit out of action" (Shakespeare 1.3.22-25). In Shakespeare's secular play, the "gods" are far-off from the people. Martius' words represent his belief that the gods do not care about mortals.

He laments, “Behold, the heavens do ope, / The gods look down, and this unnatural scene / they laugh at” (5.3.206-208). Shakespeare comments on the fact that humanity, without help from the gods, is doomed. It is as if, in these words, Shakespeare clarifies for his audience that it would not have mattered what efforts Martius and Volumnia had or had not made; their outcome was sealed from the beginning. *Coriolanus*, another secular text, reiterates a pattern regarding sacrifice: that when sacrifice stays bound to the secular realm, it fails to achieve lasting peace and unity to the community.

The *Holy Sonnets* propose another pattern for sacrifice, suggesting that Christ’s sacrifice is the only successful sacrifice to unite its community. Donne lived in an England whose religious communities believed the human must do something to receive the pardoning grace of God. His two emotional communities, the Roman Catholic Church and the Protestant Church of England, both had doctrines in place where the individual could play a role in his salvation: through outward confession, communion, etc. However, Donne’s new emotional community—between the soul and God, *only*—proves that there are no mandates for the soul. He writes the ideal sacrifice, which is the Christological sacrifice. For Donne, the soul’s striving to “mourn” and “repent” and “paint [itself] black” are futile efforts. The only thing that the soul can truly rely on is the sacrifice of Christ on the cross, which seals the soul in an intimate union with God. The connection between the soul and God exists outside of humanity’s impure motives and emotional bargains, a notion that would have been especially freeing for someone in Donne’s time, where failures to adhere to the emotional norms and emotives of the regime threatened imprisonment or death.

The early modern authors notice a problem with their own worlds that they believe sacrifice could provide an answer to. Donne, working from the model of the Christological

sacrifice, establishes an ideal for the human soul. There is a clarity to the Christological sacrifice that the secular texts do not match. I believe one reason for that clarity is that Christ's sacrifice can be imagined as a "perfect" sacrifice, whereas human sacrifice cannot because humanity is enmeshed with sin. We can be certain that God's sacrifice through Christ is and will be complete because he is a divine, omnipotent being who—according to biblical scripture and the life of Christ—loves his creation to the point of death. 1 John 4:9-10 says, "This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins." Perfect love—meaning love that is absolved of sin—is the motivation for Christ's sacrifice. In contrast, Sidney and Shakespeare lament the futility of man's efforts to restore permanent peace and unity within their communities. Sidney's relationship to Queen Elizabeth I was complicated, and his sonnets mirror his frustrations. One of the main take-aways from reading *Astrophil and Stella* is the hopelessness of Astrophil's efforts: it does not matter what he does or does not do—the relationship with Stella seems to perpetually ebb and flow. Similarly, Shakespeare provides no emotional respite for his audience reading or watching *Coriolanus.* Just as Martius begins to understand the benefits of ceremonial emotives and the emotional norms of the body politic, it is too late, and Martius' cry to the gods, who he believes are "laughing" at him, communicates the despair of a world left in the hands of humanity. Sidney and Shakespeare's depictions provide a context of despair for the reader that is resolved by Donne's Christological sacrifice. In a warring world where humans sacrifice one another for their own political and emotional agendas, the Christological sacrifice asks nothing of humanity except to bask in the peace made possible by a God whose own sacrifice brought an end to humanity's need to sacrifice themselves on the altars of love, politics, or religion.

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