De Quincey and the Christian Experience: The Feeling of Struggle, Depravity, and Doubt

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A thesis submitted to the Graduate Program in English Language and Literature in conformity with the requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Queen's University

Kingston, Ontario, Canada

December, 2018

Abstract

The essayist Thomas De Quincey (1785-1859) produced texts that span the literary periods the Romantic and Victorian and a major shift in the Church of England: he was an Evangelically educated youth and an emerging author when Evangelicalism was a sect, the 1790s-1830s, the Romantic period; and he was an established author when moderate Evangelicalism was the dominant force, the mid-1830s-1850s, the Victorian period. This dissertation argues that Romantic Evangelicalism and the belief in the divine component of the self, which would become central to Victorian Evangelicalism, shape De Quincey's interpretation of the Christian experience. Like Romantic Evangelicalism, he situates depravity as the essential consideration; he extends the divine to humans, like Victorian Evangelicalism; and he identifies the struggle between the depraved and the divine components of the self as a defining characteristic of the Christian experience, establishing a duality that emphasises depravity in a way that approaches Romantic Evangelicalism. The body chapters contend that if De Quincey employs a version of Romantic Evangelicalism's interpretation of the Christian experience—experience as the feeling of struggle, depravity, and doubt—key texts will be marked by the absence of the divine component and the positive experience of God's love, and they will contain doubt about the self, other humans, and a loving God. These key texts include the texts on Christianity (1839-1846); the texts on the literature of power, "Letters to a Young Man Whose Education has been Neglected" (1823) and "The Works of Alexander Pope" (1848); the famous autobiographical texts, *Confessions of an English-Opium Eater*, "Suspiria De Profundis," and "The English Mail-Coach"; the ground-breaking texts on Samuel Taylor Coleridge (1834-1835); and the texts "Joan of Arc" (1847) and "The Nautico-Military Nun of

Spain" (1847), which he ranked highly among all his texts. The body chapters also consider the role of addiction in shaping De Quincey's interpretation of the Christian experience. The second chapter addresses Evangelical education, the third the literature of power, the fourth the civil war of the self, the fifth doubt in a loving God, and the sixth despair at and hope in Providence.

Acknowledgements

I want to thank my supervisory committee: my supervisor Dr. Robert Morrison and my second reader Dr. John Pierce. I have greatly benefited from your guidance and insight.

I want to thank The Wordsworth Trust and The British Library for access to their collections.

I want to thank my family for all their support: my parents Doug and Charlene and my sisters Hayley and Erin; and my grandparents, Lloyd and Margaret Cater and Anne and Ron MacDonald.

I want to thank my friends in Kingston and St. Catharines.

Special thanks to Claire Forrest.

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De Quincey and the Christian Experience

Introduction

The essayist Thomas De Quincey (1785-1859)—best known for *Confessions of an English Opium-Eater* (1821, 1856)—produced texts that span the literary periods the Romantic and Victorian and a major shift in the Church of England: he was an Evangelically educated youth and an emerging author when Evangelicalism was a sect, the 1790s-1830s, the Romantic period; and he was an established author when moderate Evangelicalism was the dominant force, the mid-1830s-1850s, the Victorian period. This chapter previews the argument of the dissertation: Romantic Evangelicalism and the belief in the divine component of the self, which would become central to Victorian Evangelicalism, shape De Quincey's interpretation of the Christian experience. Like Romantic Evangelicalism, he situates depravity as the essential consideration; he extends the divine to humans, like Victorian Evangelicalism; and he identifies the struggle between the depraved and the divine components of the self as a defining characteristic of the Christian experience, establishing a duality that emphasises depravity in a way that approaches Romantic Evangelicalism. (Where detailing De Quincey's position on depravity, this dissertation uses both depravity and the depraved component.) The body chapters contend that if De Quincey employs a version of Romantic Evangelicalism's interpretation of the Christian experience—experience as the feeling of struggle, depravity, and doubt—key texts will be marked by the absence of the divine component and the positive experience of God's love, and they will contain doubt about the self, other humans, and a loving God. This chapter has two sections. The first section situates De Quincey in Romantic and Evangelical critical texts and

considers Evangelical and De Quincey texts; the second section details the ways that Romantic and Victorian Evangelicalism fit into De Quincey's interpretation of the Christian experience.

1. Romanticism and Evangelicalism

This section addresses Romantic and Evangelical critical texts and Evangelical and De Quincey texts. Foundational Romantic critics have identified the influence of Christian feeling on Romanticism, and recent critics have aligned Romanticism with modern feeling. Through an analysis of Evangelical critical texts, this dissertation reveals why this *modern* Romantic feeling is exemplified in texts linked to Romantic Evangelicalism. This dark and pessimistic form of Protestantism was influenced by Puritanism and Methodism, committed to the Church of England, and epitomised in the Clapham Sect; and it pressed individuals to interpret the Christian experience as the feeling of struggle, depravity, and doubt. This dissertation uses key Evangelical texts to illustrate these characteristics, and it employs De Quincey's texts to demonstrate that he understood Romantic Evangelicalism in these terms, and that he was aware of the shift in Evangelicalism, from Romantic to Victorian.

1.1 Romanticism

Foundational Romantic critics have identified the influence of Christianity on Romanticism primarily through the shared emphasis on feeling and hope. De Quincey challenges these critical texts. Arthur O. Lovejoy posits that Romanticism was "an art inspired by or expressive of some idea or some ethical temper supposed to be essential in Christianity," and that it was marked by "instability," due to "infinite objectives," and "ethical dualism," the human "constitution [as] two natures … at war" (245-47). M. H. Abrams states that a key aspect of

"Protestant" Romanticism—"its feeling and imagining" (11)—was "the assimilation and reinterpretation of religious ideas" (13), and that authors "set out … to reconstitute the grounds of hope and to announce the certainty … of a rebirth in which a renewed mankind will inhabit a renovated earth where he will find himself thoroughly at home" (12). Abrams explicitly notes the Christian feeling and the trajectory of hope implicit in Lovejoy's definition, with its "infinite objectives" implying salvation and "ethical dualism" a positive resolution to the "war." This dissertation argues that De Quincey complicates these foundational positions by transforming Romantic Evangelicalism into an interpretation of the Christian experience that approaches modern feeling, and that is more profoundly concerned with doubt than "hope."

Recent critics Ian Baucom, Kevis Goodman, and Mary Favret have aligned Romantic feeling with modern feeling. This dissertation recognises that they have not addressed the striking case that this modern Romantic feeling is found in texts associated with Romantic Evangelicalism. Baucom traces modern feeling to the Romantic period and the violence of capitalism. An 1806 speech in Parliament by William Wilberforce (1759-1833) serves as an important example of this "melancholy romanticism" (Baucom 218). Wilberforce explicates "the story of the *Zong* massacre [where 133 slaves were thrown overboard], a story in which his audience could see the real horror of the trade and the enslaved objects of that trade as they actually exist and actually suffer" (Baucom 219). Goodman and Favret situate the poet William Cowper (1731-1800) as an exemplar and focus on Book Four of *The Task* (1785), "The Winter Evening," where Cowper allows feeling to take shape in the fire, resulting in visions of burning cities and fears of Britain enduring punishment because of actions in North American and India. Goodman holds that modern feeling is shaped by global news media, and she connects it to the Romantic period and newspapers, arguing that Cowper illustrates the "complex" engagement

with “the sense of the historical present that is fostered by a nascent news culture” (99-100). Favret posits that global war shapes modern feeling: she maintains that the “affective reservoir” of “wartime” causes an “unsettling sense of chronology” that “challeng[es] the ‘settlements’ of history”—“the sense … that current wars call up old conflicts, that old conflicts have not fully passed away” (33-34)—and to support the argument about Cowper and war, she cites De Quincey’s “The English Mail-Coach” (1849) (61). These critics argue that Romantic feeling established a new connection based on a shared precariousness, an “unknown territory” of “risk,” “failure and falling,” and the “unknowable and unsettling” (Favret 232): whether sitting in Parliament, a British cottage, and a mail-coach, or dying at sea and suffering across the world due to British Imperialism, humans share a similar position and feeling. These critics should note, though, that in the case of Wilberforce, Cowper, and De Quincey, it is Romantic Evangelical feeling that resembles modern feeling. Cowper is an important example because, as an Evangelical who suffered multiple collapses and suicide attempts (Baird), his engagement with Evangelicalism provided no sense of stability and was essentially devoid of a loving God.

In identifying the absence of stability in Cowper’s texts, this dissertation notes that the above critics have returned to a primary Romantic critic who connects that absence to Romantic Evangelicalism: the author Leigh Hunt (1784-1859) positions Evangelicalism as pushing Cowper to despair and madness. In *An Attempt to Shew the Folly and Danger of Methodism* (1809), Hunt addresses Evangelicals because he defines Methodists as “not only the immediate followers of Whitfield and Wesley, but all that enthusiastic multitude who … call themselves the *Godly* … the innumerable divisions of these sects, who all claim the miracles of the Apostolic age, [and] the immediate interference of the Deity” (2). He states that the “God of Methodism, who is as rank a false deity as any MARS or MOLOCH, is a being of decidedly bad passions; he is a mere

despot with a very ill choice of favourites, condemning the vast majority of his creatures to eternal misery" (vii). Hunt applies the "misery" not only to the afterlife, but also to life, as he contends that the feeling associated with Evangelicalism, the "restlessness," has "notoriously filled our hospitals with insanity," and that he "knew a lady … who was driven by Methodism to entertain the most horrible anticipations with regard to the friends who differed from her, and the struggles with these opinions at last drove her mad, as she now is irrecoverably" (xii). Hunt asks: "What need I say of the hypochandrias, the consuming fevers, the suicides that follow the burning progress of Methodism? What need I say of Cowper, around whose gentle heart, under pretence of cauterizing its wounds, Methodism bound a cord of fire?" (xii). He posits that Evangelicalism allows two outcomes: madness or suicide. This dissertation explains Hunt's conclusion with Evangelicalism's interpretation of the Christian experience: Cowper interprets the Christian experience as struggle, depravity, and God's negative intervention, resulting in the absence of the positive experience of God's love, and the presence of a God who seems "as rank a false deity as any MARS or MOLOCH," which, in turn, pushes him towards doubt in himself, other humans, and a loving God, culminating in despair and madness.

1.2 Romantic Evangelicalism

Critics have detailed the history of Romantic Evangelicalism: it was shaped by Puritanism and Methodism, found within the Church of England, and exemplified in the Clapham Sect. This dissertation stresses the darkness and pessimism of this form of Protestantism. Ian Bradley states that the "origins of Evangelicalism lay in the religious revival which occurred in Great Britain in the middle of the eighteenth century": this revival shared important connections to "the traditions of seventeenth-century Puritanism in Britain" (16), and

it had John Wesley and George Whitefield as key divines (15). John Wesley (1703-1791) was a "Church of England clergyman and a founder of Methodism": though he would officially maintain a connection to the Church of England, it was a strained one (Rack), and after his death, Methodism would separate from the Church of England (Bradley 16). George Whitefield (1714-1770) was another founding Methodist and more antagonistic towards the Church of England (Schlenther). D. W. Bebbington posits that Evangelicalism was linked to "the Reformation in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries" and the revival of the "1730s" (1). Boyd Hilton identifies "Puritan" as an appropriate descriptor and the key phase as "the third and fourth generations of the revival begun by Wesley": "the world of the Clapham Sect—of William Wilberforce … John Venn … Isaac Milner … [and] Hannah More" (7). Doreen Rosman selects the same period: "The age in question is the forty years between the death of Wesley and the death of Wilberforce … 1790-1833" (9). G. M. Ditchfield addresses Methodists and Evangelicals, and he states that "the climactic years of the Evangelical Revival … ended by the 1830s" (114).

De Quincey provides a similar history of Evangelicalism. In the 1856 *Confessions*, he states that "Richard Baxter—who battled often with self-created storms from the first dawn of the Parliamentary War in 1642"—was, "As a pulpit orator," "the Whitfield of the seventeenth century—the *Leuconomos* of Cowper" (2: 115-16). Richard Baxter (1615-1691) was a minister who served with the Puritan Army (Keeble), and Whitefield, as noted above, was a Calvinistic Methodist, a founder of Methodism (Schlenther). De Quincey's understanding of the closeness between Methodism and Evangelicalism is demonstrated by his allusion to Cowper's approval of Whitefield: the Greek "*leuko*-, 'white,' and *nomos*, 'place of pasture,'" or Whitefield (Baird and Ryskamp, Commentary 531).[1] De Quincey traces a history of Protestantism from the Civil War to 1800: Puritanism, Methodism and Evangelicalism. Similarly, in "Sketches of Life and

Manners" (Dec. 1840), he states that "Never … had there been … so large a reformation as in the Church of England, during the last forty years" (11: 263). He situates the reformation as emerging from the "collateral Church of Methodists, hardly a Dissenting Church, raised up by John Wesley," and which had "begun to react upon the Metropolitan Church, out of whose bosom it had been projected" (11: 263). From Methodism, he makes a direct connection to Evangelicalism by stating that the "growing galvanism" of the reformation was shaped by specific Evangelicals associated with the Clapham Sect: "Dean Milner," "Mr Wilberforce," and "Mrs Hannah More" (11: 263). Like Puritanism and Methodism, Evangelicalism developed a dark and pessimistic feeling through its interpretation of the Christian experience. This dissertation identifies the similarities between critical Evangelical texts and De Quincey so as to situate De Quincey as being shaped by the Evangelical feeling of struggle, depravity, and doubt.

Critics have noted that Evangelicalism associated feeling with Christianity; and this dissertation focuses on the specific feeling of struggle, depravity, and doubt. Elisabeth Jay labels Evangelicalism "the religion of the heart" (40), and Hilton posits that "Feeling" was essential to Evangelicalism "because religion was assumed to be natural or inductive" (19). As Hilton recognises, though, that feeling was understood in precise terms: a "sense of anxiety, precariousness, and doubt" (19). Similarly, Bebbington links "agony [and] guilt" to the "deep emotion" of Evangelicalism (5), and Bradley identifies the presence of an "intensely emotional" "anxiety and fear" (15, 22). Building off Hilton's claim, this dissertation presents the "sense of anxiety, precariousness, and doubt" as the feeling of struggle, depravity, and doubt, and it demonstrates why the Evangelical interpretation of the Christian experience led to that feeling.

This dissertation posits that to appreciate why Evangelicalism pressed individuals to interpret the Christian experience as the feeling of struggle, depravity and doubt, Evangelicalism

should be understood as emphasising depravity: first, Evangelicals addressed absolute depravity and the powerlessness of humans to counter depravity, and second, they addressed the power of God to counter depravity through the definitive action, Christ's sacrifice for depravity, the Atonement. Like moderate factions of the Church of England, Evangelicals held, as the foundation of Christianity, that "There is but one living and true God … of infinite power, wisdom, and goodness" (*Short Scriptural Explication* 1). As with Puritans and Methodists and other Protestants influenced by Calvinism, though, Evangelicals stressed depravity, so they first addressed depravity and then God. John Calvin (1509-1564) charted the movement in *Institute of the Christian Religion* (1536): "a sense of our ignorance, vanity, poverty, infirmity, depravity, and corruption leads us to perceive and acknowledge that in the Lord alone are to be found true wisdom, solid strength, perfect goodness, and unspotted righteousness" (3-4). Jay contends that the "concept of Original Sin, or for the Calvinist, the conviction of Total Depravity, was the linchpin of the Evangelical creed" (54). Rosman indicates that "Few evangelicals were prepared to presuppose even the slightest continuation of prelapsarian goodness" (48). Walter Houghton terms depravity "the old theology, especially in its popular Puritan form," and he includes powerlessness: "human nature [was] innately corrupt and powerless to attain salvation except by an act of divine grace" (51). Ditchfield makes a similar point: "evangelicals emphasized human depravity and helplessness without God's mercy" (32). To a greater degree than Calvin, even, Evangelicals focused on depravity, so they addressed God through the power to counter depravity, as exemplified in the Atonement. Bebbington states that depravity was essential to "the earlier phase of Evangelical history": "ruin" (depravity) and "redemption" (the Atonement) (3). Bradley lists "total depravity" and the Atonement: "the individual must achieve regeneration of his soul by utterly repenting of his sins and fully accepting Christ's death as an atonement for

them" (20-21). Hilton terms the "first half of the nineteenth century an 'Age of Atonement'" (3), and he states that redemption was "provided by Christ's Atonement on the Cross, which purchased ransom for the sins of all mankind" (8). Ditchfield posits that "the doctrine of the atonement" was "Central to evangelical teaching," as "the sacrificial death of Christ on the cross was the means by which human sins could be forgiven and man reconciled with God" (28).

This dissertation recognises that Evangelicalism reduced the emphasis on depravity to a singular interpretation of the Christian experience, and that it resulted in the feeling of struggle, depravity, and doubt. Evangelicals held that humans could not counter depravity without God, that God required humans to struggle against depravity, and that God intervened in that struggle. The singularity of the interpretation was that the high Evangelical standard caused individuals to interpret experience as, primarily, failure: thus, individuals interpreted experience as depravity and God's negative intervention, where God afflicted humans with psychological and physical suffering to ensure that they continued to struggle against depravity. Bradley summarises "the dominant emotions which shaped the lives and determined the characteristics of Evangelical Christians" (22): "a dread of the terrible power and presence of a Wrathful God; a perpetual sense of accountability for every lapse from the highest standards of Christian behaviour; and an ever-present consciousness of the fall from a state of grace which could so easily occur if [they] failed" (22). Bradley notes the standard ("the highest standards"), depravity (as depravity causes a "sense of accountability"), and God's negative intervention ("the terrible power … of a Wrathful God"). Rosman, too, finds that Evangelicals developed a system of "religious terrorism" through the "nightmarish fear" of the "departure from the evangelical norm" (101, 99). Bradley adds struggle and failure to his summary: Evangelical "diaries" "contained detailed accounts" of "daily thoughts and actions"—"the most introspective feature of a highly

introspective religion"—and led to "agonizing sessions of self-examination and soul-searching" where individuals "probed into the innermost recesses" of their "minds and indulged in an orgy of self-criticism" (23). Similarly, Houghton includes in the "Puritan theology" the "conception of a jealous God of wrath" (51) and "the psychological burden [it] often imposed" (62): "Conscientious souls who tried to achieve a life of absolute purity and self-denial might experience an almost daily sense of failure, distressing in itself and frightening in its implications," and they "were dismayed to find quite different ideals glaringly apparent in the world around them" (62). Evangelicals struggled to meet an impossibly high standard—a "life of absolute purity and self-denial": they associated depravity with not only violations of the Ten Commandments, but also minor transgressions, such as moments of selfishness and small doubts in God, the Bible, and the church, and they positioned them all as leading to suffering in life and damnation in Hell at death. The standard lead to a constant "sense of failure"; and for them, with that failure, experience became struggle, depravity, and the negative intervention of "a jealous God of wrath," resulting in the absence of the positive experience of God's love. Evangelicals did not understand worldly experience as meeting the Christian standard, so they theorised the disconnection through struggle, depravity, and God's negative intervention: this interpretation of the Christian experience led to doubt in the self, other humans, and a loving God.

De Quincey was aware of the feeling of struggle, depravity, and doubt implicit in the Evangelical interpretation of the Christian experience. In "Sketches of Life and Manners," he defines the feeling associated with Evangelicalism as "the open profession of a deeper, more fervid, and apostolical spirit in religious opinions and religious practices" (11: 263); and in "Dr Parr and His Contemporaries" (1831), he offers the following:

> [Isaac Milner was] one of those zealous Christians who are usually denominated *evangelical* … Dean Milner assigned a peculiar emphasis, and a more significant interpretation, to those doctrines of original sin, the terms upon which redemption is offered—regeneration, sanctification, &c., which have the appearance of being the *characteristic* and peculiar parts in the Christian economy. Whether otherwise wrong or right in these views, it strikes us poor lay critics … that those who adopt them, have, at all events … title to be considered less worldly, and more spiritual-minded, than the mass of mankind; and such a frame of mind is at least an argument of fitness for religious contemplations, in so far as temper is concerned, be the doctrinal (or merely intellectual) errors what they may. Consequently … humbly sensible as we are of our deficiencies in this great science of Christian philosophy, we could never at any time join in the unthinking ridicule which is scattered by the brilliant and dull upon these peculiarities. (8: 15)

He identifies "the peculiar emphasis, and a more significant interpretation, to those doctrines of original sin" (depravity) and "the terms upon which redemption is offered" (the Atonement) as "the *characteristic* and peculiar parts in the Christian economy" and "Christian philosophy." He addresses explicitly the emphasis on depravity, and thus implicitly the interpretation of the Christian experience, and he refrains from "ridicule" of "these peculiarities": indeed, he was influenced by "these peculiarities." This dissertation considers these critical texts on Romantic Evangelicalism so as to contextualise the feeling of struggle, depravity, and doubt, and to set up the exploration of Evangelical texts and De Quincey's texts.

1.4 Evangelical Texts

Important Evangelicals for De Quincey illustrate why his texts contain the feeling of struggle, depravity, and doubt: William Wilberforce, Hannah More (1745-1833), Henry Venn (1725-1797), Joseph Milner (1745-1797) and Isaac Milner (1750-1820), Francis Randolph (1752-1831), and John Foster (1770-1843). These Evangelicals explicate feeling, and they reveal their singular interpretation of the Christian experience, where struggle, depravity, and God's negative intervention contribute to doubt in the self, other humans, and a loving God.

The Clapham Sect stated its theology in two major texts: Wilberforce's *Practical View of the Prevailing Religious System* (1797) and More's *Strictures on Female Education* (1799). Anne Stott posits that *Practical View* was "one of the most significant events in the history of the Clapham sect, and the book was soon established as the classic text of Evangelical Anglican theology" (204); and of *Strictures*, Stott notes that by "October 1799, seven months after its publication, it had gone into a sixth edition and it continued to be widely discussed and praised" (225), and that it was "mainly controversial for the explicit espousal of Evangelical theology in its final chapters," especially "the doctrine of human corruption" (226). The De Quinceys lived in Bath 1796-1800, a key location for the Clapham Sect, and De Quincey's mother Elizabeth was strengthening her commitment to Evangelicalism through More. As De Quincey notes, "My mother's views were precisely those of her friend Mrs Hannah More, of Wilberforce … 'the Clapham saints'" (19: 273). De Quincey details his familiarity with More in three texts: "Notes from the Pocket-Book of a Late Opium-Eater" (1824), "Mrs Hannah More" (1833), and "Sketches of Life and Manners" (Dec. 1840). He was also familiar with Wilberforce. In the 1821 *Confessions*, he anonymously lists him as an opium-eater (2: 11); and in the 1856 text, he identifies "the eloquent and benevolent William Wilberforce" as an "opium-eater[]" (2: 96).

Wilberforce explicates feeling to reveal the Christian experience. He states that feeling is essential to Christianity: "You should endeavour not only to convince the understanding, but also to affect the heart; and for this end, you must secure the reinforcement of the passions" (61). Depravity shapes this feeling: humans are "tainted with sin, not slightly and superficially, but radically and to the very core" (20-21). As exemplified in the Atonement, the power of God to counter depravity also shapes this feeling: "these awful denunciations of the future punishment of sin … might be remitted through the mere mercy of our Almighty Governor" (177-78). Therefore, the powerlessness of humans and the power of God to counter depravity mark the Christian experience. Wilberforce states that we "are always to bear in mind, that we are unable of ourselves to will or to do it rightly; but we are plainly admonished to 'work out our own salvation with fear and trembling'" (35).[2] He contends that humans cannot counter depravity without God—we are "unable … to will or do it rightly"; that God requires humans to struggle against depravity—we must "'work out our own salvation'"; and that God stages negative intervention to push individuals into continued struggle—we are "plainly admonished." Wilberforce indicates, then, that absence characterises the struggle. If individuals "'work out … salvation with fear and trembling'"—phrasing that anticipates the existential crisis of faith in Soren Kierkegaard's *Fear and Trembling* (1843)—they experience, primarily, struggle, depravity, and God's negative intervention: the absence of the positive experience of God's love.

In *Strictures* and *Practical Piety* (1811), More employs feeling to reveal the Christian experience. *Practical Piety* depicts Christianity as feeling: "*The religion of the Heart.—There* it subsists as the fountain of spiritual life ... *there* is the vital principle which animates the whole being of a Christian" (16). *Strictures* explicates that feeling, "the humbling doctrine of the corruption of human nature, which has followed from the corruption of our first parents, makes

way for the bright display of redeeming love … that animating doctrine, the offer of *divine assistance*" (252-53). More addresses depravity, "the corruption of human nature," and the Atonement, "the offer of *divine assistance*." The powerlessness of humans and the power of God to counter depravity shape the Christian experience. She states that "We are perpetually reminded of our utter inability to help ourselves" and "taught that, while we are to ascribe with humble gratitude every good thought, word, and work, to the influence of the Holy Spirit, we are not to look on such influences as superseding our own exertions" (286-87). More contends that "every good" derives from "the influence of the Holy Spirit"; that God requires humans to struggle against depravity, as "we are not to look on such influences as superseding our own exertions"; and that the characteristic experience remains struggle without the positive experience of God's love ("every good"), as we are "*perpetually* reminded of our utter inability to help ourselves," and, in turn, depravity and God's negative intervention [emphasis added].

Henry Venn was a Church of England clergyman, and in 1754, he became curate of Clapham (Cowie). Venn's *The Complete Duty of Man* (1763) "set out the moral duties required by the evangelical approach" (Cowie). Jay terms it an important text (13), and its influence was reflected in its popularity: "Twenty editions" were "sold by the early years of the next century" (Cowie). It was an essential text for the Clapham Sect. Henry Venn's son John Venn (1759-1813) was also a Church of England clergyman, serving as "rector of Clapham from 1792 until his death," and "it was during his incumbency that the influential Clapham Sect developed, and its members followed him as their pastor and spiritual guide" (Cowie). De Quincey knew this text: his mother Elizabeth purchased it for him in March 1799 (Japp, *Life and Writings* 37).

Venn addresses feeling and the Christian experience.[3] He states that "It is the peculiar glory of the gospel grace, to humble every believer in the dust, and to fill him with the most

dreadful apprehensions of sin, in order to raise him from his dead state, and to establish him in obedience from love to God" (xi). He alludes to a specific or "peculiar" feeling with the phrases "humble[d] … in the dust" and "fill[ed] with the most dreadful apprehensions." He situates within that feeling depravity—"It is acknowledged, it is strenuously maintained, that the heart of man is exceedingly depraved, and our affections corrupted to the very root" (xi)—and the Atonement—"the superabundant love of God" is "manifested in the plan of redemption" (xi). Venn reduces the emphasis on depravity to the Christian experience, or what he terms "the peculiar glory of the gospel grace." He contends that "in order to [be] raise[d]," "every believer" must be "humble[d] … in the dust" and "fill[ed] … with the most dreadful apprehensions of sin." Humans struggle against depravity, enduring "the most dreadful apprehensions," and since humans are powerless, success depends on God, as "perfect holiness will never have a place in the heart of man, but under a sense of redeeming grace" (xi). That "redeeming grace," though, is elusive, as Venn describes experience perpetually marked by struggle and absence: for *all* transgressions, individuals are "humble[d]" and "fill[ed] … with the most dreadful apprehensions of sin," resulting in the absence of the positive experience of God's love.

Joseph Milner was a Church of England clergyman (Hindmarsh), and Isaac Milner was the Dean of Carlisle (Knox). Joseph's *Gibbon's Account of Christianity Considered* (1781) supports the positions in the influential text *History of the Church of Christ* (1794-1809), which Joseph began and Isaac completed. De Quincey was familiar with the Milners. In addition to Venn's text, his mother Elizabeth purchased *Church of Christ* for him in March 1799 (Japp, *Life and Writings* 37). In the 1821 and 1856 *Confessions*, De Quincey lists Isaac as an opium-eater (2: 11, 96); and in "Dr Parr," he uses him as an exemplar of Evangelical theology.

The Milners' texts are structured on feeling that reveals the Christian experience. In *Gibbon's Account*, Joseph stresses feeling: "Christianity is from heaven, and is not understood, exercised, and practiced, but by a *spiritual* understanding, far superior to that which is merely *rational*" (259).[4] He situates that feeling as holding the "one grand truth of all revelation" (95). He identifies first depravity: "*Original sin.* The state of sin, the death of the soul, with all its dreadful appendages and fruits, in which the human race are involved by nature" (95). He addresses second the power of God to counter depravity: "Full salvation from this state by Jesus Christ, and the recovery of the saved soul to a state of everlasting life, and all this a free gift of God" (95). In *Church of Christ*, the Milners reduce the emphasis on depravity to the Christian experience. They posit that "sincere conflict against the sin of our nature … is peculiarly Christian" (332-33); and they define the experience in precise terms: "To know our own depravity and helplessness, and, by faith in Christ, to know 'experimentally' the suitable and the efficacious cure, is doubtless the genuine secret of true piety" (3). The term "experimentally" refers to feeling linked to experience: humans need to be "made sensible of their dependent condition," powerlessness, and "led, experimentally, to an habitual sense of their real state" (624). The Milners contend that experience reveals "depravity and helplessness" and the power of God to counter depravity, "the suitable and efficacious cure"; nevertheless, they indicate that the typical experience, the "habitual sense," is the "real state": depravity. Individuals consistently experience struggle, depravity and, in turn, God's negative intervention.

Francis Randolph was a Church of England clergyman. He served as the "proprietor of Laura Chapel" in Bath, "chaplain to the duke of York and spiritual adviser to the … duchess of Devonshire" (Stott 248). He preached in Bath late November to Christmas, 1799, as recorded in

Sermons Preached at Laura-Chapel, Bath, During the Season of Advent (1800). Hannah More and the De Quinceys likely attended some of Randolph's 1799 sermons.[5]

Randolph explicates feeling to reveal the Christian experience. He connects Moses' preaching and God's negative intervention to the present. He posits that the objective of Biblical law is "to excite in the people awful sentiments of the power and majesty of the Lawgiver" in conjunction with "the corruption of theirs; to discover every man's heart to himself, and convince him of that corruption; to display the guilt and consequence of sin; to awaken in the soul a fear of God, and of judgment to come; and to guide them by these means to repentance, and faith in the great Redeemer" (101). He refers to feeling with the terms "sentiments," "every man's heart," and "the soul." He locates within that feeling depravity—"corruption," "the guilt and consequence of sin"—and the power of God to counter depravity—"the power and majesty," "the purity, truth, and justice"—as exemplified in the Atonement: "repentance and faith in the great Redeemer." The emphasis on depravity shapes the Christian experience. He posits that humans are powerless, as the "doctrines of Christianity … the whole of them[,] depend upon man's lost and helpless condition" (205), that God requires struggle, and that God pushes humans to struggle through negative intervention: "awful sentiments" of "fear" and "judgement" "guide" humans to "repentance." He connects the past and present to show that the result has not changed: individuals continue to experience struggle, depravity, and God's negative intervention.

John Foster was a Baptist minister, essayist, and divine for Evangelicals (Lindop, "Pursuing the Throne of God" 103). His key text was *Essays in a Series of Letters to a Friend* (1805). De Quincey addresses *Essays* in "Notes on Gilfillan's *Gallery of Literary Portraits*" (1845), stating that he read it in 1805 (15: 268), and in "Presence of Mind: A Fragment" (1850).

Foster develops from feeling the Christian experience. He states that feeling is essential to Christianity: the "passions" should "not [be] wasted"; they are a "sacred fire" (99). The "sacred fire" provides awareness of depravity, "the grand fact of the depravity of the human heart" (210), and the power of God to counter depravity, "the absolute supremacy of God" (238), as shown in the Atonement, "the assurance of the pardon of sin through Jesus Christ" (385). The emphasis on depravity marks the Christian experience. Foster posits that though "God employs you in that in which he also is employed," you must "remember that while the employment is yours, the success is altogether his; and that your diligence therefore, and not the effect which it produces, will be the test of your character" (237). Since humans cannot counter depravity, success is not the measure; God requires "diligence" and "labours"—struggle—against depravity. Foster reserves "success" for God, and he paraphrases God: "Go to your labours: every sincere effort will infallibly be one step more in your own progress to a perfect state …when *I* see it necessary for … a God to interpose … I will come" (237). By stressing God's sovereignty—"when *I* see it necessary"—Foster indicates that humans would like greater "success," and that they experience, primarily, failure: depravity and God's negative intervention. This dissertation summarises these Evangelicals to provide context for why De Quincey's interpretation of the Christian experience is marked by the feeling of struggle, depravity, and doubt.

1.5 Romantic and Victorian Evangelicalism

Critics have determined that the major shift in Evangelicalism started in the 1830s and ended in the 1850s: Romantic Evangelicalism emphasised depravity, and Victorian Evangelicalism emphasised the divine in humans. This dissertation recognises that De Quincey reveals the complexities of the shift for individuals who experienced Romantic Evangelicalism.

The shift may be summarised through two points. One, it was generational. Rosman selects the 1830s because of the death of a group of Evangelicals, the Clapham Sect: "there was widespread recognition both within and without evangelical circles that the movement was changing and that a generation was passing" (35-36). Bebbington situates the shift in "the years around 1830" and cites the end of the same group (75). Two, the passing of that generation occurred in conjunction with the rise of Evangelicals in the established church. Hilton posits that as Evangelicals "began to dominate appointments to high office in the Church of England," there was a corresponding decline in "the old eschatology based on sin, trial, and judgment" and "revivalist fervour" (274). Hilton states that "Gone is the earlier obsession with sinfulness, Christ being regarded now as a noble exemplar rather than primarily a saviour" (299), and that "a theological transformation" was effected "whereby a worldly Christian compassion, inspired by the life of Jesus, had alleviated such stark evangelical doctrines as those of eternal and vicarious punishment" (5). Further, he posits that by 1850 "the Incarnation actually began to displace the Atonement as the centrepiece of Anglican theology, the Word was attached more and more to the life of Jesus on earth," rather than to the Atonement (299), and that by 1870 "it was commonplace for Anglicans to assert that move from atonement to incarnation" (Hilton 5). With the shift, the focus was now on the divine in humans as revealed in the Incarnation: Christ is a "noble exemplar" who "inspire[s]" "Christian compassion," so humans cannot be absolutely depraved and must share the divine. Bebbington, too, notes the shift by concluding that the "'high Victorian values,' the social norms of the years immediately following the middle of the nineteenth century," were "primarily the fruit of [early] Evangelical religion" (105). Romantic Evangelicalism shifted to Victorian Evangelicalism. De Quincey provides insight into the complexities of the shift.

De Quincey partly addresses this shift in Evangelicalism, but he does not address the shift in theology. In *Autobiographic Sketches* (1854), he states that in 1800-1801, when his mother was moving from Bath, the key requirement was "a Church of England parish clergyman, who was to be strictly orthodox, faithful to the articles of our English Church, yet to these articles as interpreted by Evangelical divinity" (19: 273). He contends that the requirement "merits recording, as an exposition of the broad religious difference between the England of that day and of this. At present, no difficulty would be found as to this … requisition," as "'Evangelical' clergymen are now sown broadcast; at that period, there were not on an average above six or eight in each of the fifty-two counties" (19: 273). He only notes one aspect of the shift from 1801 to 1854 because he does not mention the shift in theology. Similarly, in "Sketches of Life and Manners" (Dec. 1840), he links Evangelicalism to Methodism, the Church of England, and the Clapham Sect, but he conflates Romantic and Victorian Evangelicalism. He states that "Never … had there been … so large a reformation as in the Church of England, during the last forty years" (11: 263), and that it has allowed "that same Church in our days, when standing on the brink, apparently, of great trials, and summoned to put forth peculiar vigilance of watch and ward … to face great and trying storms," "generated by the French Revolution and the vast changes in its train," by bringing it "into a frame and composition" that is "nearer than at any other stage of its history to the condition of a primitive and truly pastoral church" (11: 263). Romantic Evangelicalism completes the project that Methodism began, with the result that the Church of England survives "great trials." He presents, though, Romantic Evangelicalism as the current church; the idealised "primitive and truly pastoral church" is unchanged in forty years.

This dissertation proposes that De Quincey did not address the shift in theology because his interpretation of the Christian experience did not shift: it was shaped by Romantic

Evangelicalism and the belief in the divine component of the self, which would become established as a key part of Victorian Evangelicalism. As Houghton indicates, many individuals who were raised through Romantic Evangelicalism never escaped the "Puritan theology" and "the psychological burden it … imposed" (62). He illustrates the point with the novelist George Eliot (1819-1880). She was educated as an Evangelical and began to have doubts in the 1840s; nevertheless, she was still marked by her education in 1866: "imagine … the experience of a mind morbidly desponding, of a consciousness tending more and more to consist in memories of error and imperfection rather than in a strengthening sense of achievement" (Eliot 440). Without using the explicit religious term depravity, she reveals that she is still affected by the feeling of depravity, struggle, and doubt. This dissertation contends that De Quincey was similarly marked, and the next section addresses De Quincey's interpretation of the Christian experience.

2. De Quincey's Interpretation of the Christian Experience

This section demonstrates that Romantic Evangelicalism and the belief in the divine component of the self, that central aspect that would be prized by Victorian Evangelicalism, shape De Quincey's interpretation of the Christian experience. In "Christianity, as an Organ of Political Movement" (1846), De Quincey explicates feeling in terms close to Victorian Evangelicalism. He identifies God and the human relation to God as the essential considerations: he includes depravity but reduces its role by focusing on the Incarnation as revealing the divine component in humans. He presents, then, as a defining characteristic of the Christian experience, the struggle between the divine and the depraved components of the self. However, in manuscripts, De Quincey describes Christianity in terms closer to Romantic Evangelicalism: he situates depravity as the essential consideration, so he identifies the struggle between the

depraved and the divine components of the self as a defining characteristic of the Christian experience, shifting the emphasis to depravity. This dissertation argues that manuscripts reflect De Quincey's interpretation of the Christian experience in key texts, and that De Quincey was marked by Romantic Evangelicalism's feeling of struggle, depravity, and doubt.

2.1 The Critical Texts

Critics have recognised that De Quincey's texts on religion are under-addressed, and that they reveal a complex position shaped by Romantic Evangelicalism. Josephine McDonagh finds that the "works on theology … remain the most neglected" (186); and Frederick Burwick states that "there has been no sustained study of De Quincey's religious thought" ("Coleridge and De Quincey on Miracles" 193). Critics, though, have provided some analysis of religion. David Masson terms De Quincey's religious position "the nature of an inherited sentiment, independent of reasoning, and which he would not let reasoning disturb" and "what many theologians would now call a narrow and old fashioned kind": "Christianity is with him the single divine revelation in the world, and he thinks and speaks of the Pagan religions, in the style of the old fashioned theology, as simply false religions, horrid religions, inventions of the spirit of evil" (174). By characterising De Quincey's position as "narrow and old fashioned" in 1882, Masson alludes to Romantic Evangelicalism, but he also questions the adherence to that position: "How is this [stance on Paganism] to be reconciled with his wide range of historical sympathy, and especially with his admiration of the achievements of the Greek intellect and the grandeur of the Roman character?" (Masson 174-75). Though not addressing Evangelical theology (which would explain the absence of the positive experience of God's love), Hillis Miller notes an extreme religious position by including De Quincey in a group of five important nineteenth-century

authors who approached but did not commit to atheism: "God exists, but he is out of reach," "and can only be experienced negatively, as a terrifying absence" (1, 2). Grevel Lindop offers a focused though brief exploration by addressing De Quincey's Evangelical education, rejection of aspects of that education, and Evangelical themes in his texts ("Pursuing the Throne of God"). Daniel Sanjiv Roberts provides a recent assessment: "De Quincey's … literary career and theorizing are all deeply influenced by his own Evangelical upbringing, indicating thereby a far more complicated relationship between his version of literary ideology and the Evangelical ethos which he is presumed to have overcome" ("Hannah More, Thomas De Quincey, and the Literature of Power").[6] Romantic Evangelicalism influenced his interpretation of the Christian experience.

Critics have identified depravity in De Quincey's texts; but this dissertation addresses an omission: De Quincey included and then excised a position on depravity similar to Romantic Evangelicalism. John E. Jordan offers the first and most incisive statement on depravity (192-98), stating that De Quincey adopted "one of the four recognised Christian elements, ethical dualism, translated it into Christian terms as a sense of sin, and made it central and radical"; and he explains the possible reasoning: "awareness of sin helps us to know ourselves; hope of infinite salvation gives us courage to express the truth we see within" (197).[7] Lindop contextualises the emphasis on sin by identifying "human depravity" as a "distinguishing doctrine[]" of Evangelicalism and locating it the 1849 text "The Mail-Coach" ("Pursuing the Throne of God" 98, 108): "the secret frailty of human nature … its deep-seated Pariah falsehood to itself … its abysmal treachery" (16: 432). De Quincey, though, had an issue articulating "the secret frailty": he excises a large section of "The Mail-Coach" in *Selections Grave and Gay* (1854):

> But the dream-horror which I speak of is far more frightful. The dreamer finds housed within himself—occupying, as it were, some separate chamber in his brain—holding, perhaps from that station a secret and detestable commerce with his own heart—some horrid alien nature … But how, if the alien nature contradicts his own, fights with it, perplexes it, and confounds it? How, again, if not one alien nature, but two, but three, but four, but five, are introduced within what once he thought the inviolable sanctuary of himself? (16: 422)

He concludes the section in *SGG* differently: "one fair female hand, with the fore-finger pointing, in sweet, sorrowful admonition, upwards to heaven, where is sculptured the eternal writing which proclaims the frailty of earth and her children" (16: 421, 734). He retains depravity—"the frailty of earth and her children"—but he excises the extreme position, the "five" "horrid alien nature[s]" holding "a secret and detestable commerce with his own heart." This dissertation contends in the following chapters that De Quincey tended to use depravity to reveal the divine component in humans rather than Jordan's "infinite salvation" of God, that he wanted to situate depravity as the essential component and still reserve an important role for the divine, and that, at times, as in the excised section above, he shifted to a position that too closely resembled Evangelicalism, where depravity negated the importance of the divine component.

As it contains the first definitive collection of published texts and manuscripts on Christianity, *The Works of Thomas De Quincey* (2000-2003) is an essential resource: it shows that De Quincey consistently maintains human duality, but that in a key published text, "Christianity," he stresses the divine, and in manuscripts, he emphasises the depraved component. In the Introduction to "Fragments on Christianity," Burwick et al. state that "Of all the topics dealt with in De Quincey's surviving undated manuscript fragments, none looms larger

than religion," and that the fragments "indicate that … De Quincey intended to write a full-scale work on Christianity, and even drafted parts of it" (410), with "the most probable period for the composition" of the full-scale work "between 1839, when De Quincey offered to write a paper on the early Christians … and 1846," with the publication of "Christianity" (410-11). The dates 1839-1846 match the shift in Evangelicalism, from Romantic to Victorian. "Christianity" and manuscripts on Christianity reveal that De Quincey followed and did not follow the shift, suggesting that he had difficulty aligning his interpretation with Victorian Evangelicalism. With Burwick et al. listing 1839-1846 as the potential culmination of his efforts, this dissertation uses "Christianity" and manuscripts to preview his interpretation of the Christian experience.

2.2 "Christianity"

In "Christianity," like Romantic Evangelicalism, De Quincey explicates feeling to reveal the Christian experience; but unlike Romantic Evangelicalism, which emphasises depravity, he shifts the focus to the divine (God and Christ and the divine component in humans). He states that feeling shapes Christianity: "Yet to *know* is not always to *feel* … Not the understanding is sufficient upon such ground, but that which the Scriptures in their profound philosophy entitle the 'understanding heart'" (15: 361). De Quincey refers to feeling and the Christian experience through the "understanding heart,"[8] and he posits that it makes humans aware of "the *Idea of God*" (15: 361). He locates the "prodigious change effected in the theatre of the human spirit" at the moment "when … man in one hour mounted to a justice that knew no shadow of change … to a love which was inexhaustible … to a holiness that could not be fathomed," and to "a power … lying underneath creation" (15: 361). Within these claims of "power" and "love …

inexhaustible" is the power of God to counter depravity as exemplified in the Atonement; but De Quincey leaves implicit the Atonement, reducing the emphasis on depravity.

Again, in contrast to Romantic Evangelicalism, De Quincey addresses the human relation to God, and refuses to limit the divine to God. He states that "as to the idea of man's relation to God, this, were it capable of disjunction, would be even more of a revolutionary idea than the idea of God" (15: 362). Extending his emphasis on the divine, he states that "the very central principle of [the Christian's] religion is, that God for a great purpose assumed his own human nature: a mode of incarnation which could not be conceivable, unless through some divine principle common to the two natures, and forming the *nexus* between them" (15: 363). Rather than the Atonement, De Quincey focuses on the Incarnation, so as to position the divine component in humans as an essential aspect of Christianity, similar to Victorian Evangelicalism.

De Quincey understands his position on the divine component as in opposition to Romantic Evangelicalism, as indicated by "Notes on Gilfillan's *Gallery*," where he addresses John Foster, and in "Mrs Hannah More." He disagrees with the "polemic attitude" of Foster in regards to "human nature": he sees "the clay of the composite statute, but not its gold" (15: 269). In "Hannah More," he states that she "delighted" to address depravity—"degradation and corruption" (9: 346)—and that she could not admit "the golden keys" of poetry (9: 346). Like Foster, More cannot accept the "gold." He frames his criticism as a question of history: without clay and gold intermixed, how is human "restoration …the subject of a mysterious scheme in the councils of Heaven" (9: 346)? He makes a similar point about "human restoration" in "Christianity": "God for a great purpose assumed his own human nature" (15: 363). De Quincey opposes absolute depravity and maintains that humans possess "gold" and "great purpose."

Still, De Quincey cannot avoid positioning depravity as a key consideration in "Christianity." Though he contends that "the very central principle" of Christianity is the divine component in humans (15: 363), he, in fact, addresses depravity first. He states that the enmity of the Christian God is "an enmity founded on something in man *subsequent* to his creation, and having a ransom annexed to it" (15: 362-63). He addresses depravity, "something in man *subsequent* to his creation," and Christ's sacrifice for depravity, the Atonement, "a ransom annexed to it": "The action of obtaining or paying for redemption; (hence) deliverance from damnation; redemption. Esp. with reference to the Passion of Christ" ("Ransom"). He posits that depravity is an important aspect of Christianity and the relation between humans and God.

In "Christianity," then, De Quincey identifies, as a defining characteristic of the Christian experience, the struggle with the infinite: the divine and depraved components of the self. He addresses the divine: "God … assumed his own human nature: a mode of incarnation which could not be conceivable, unless through some divine principle common to the two natures, and forming the *nexus* between them" (15: 363). The "*nexus*" creates a struggle characterised by the infinite. The Christian is aware of the infinite associated with the divine component, "a holiness that could not be fathomed" (15: 361); but the Christian is also aware of the inability to maintain that "divine principle": "the infinity by which man may descend below his own capacities of grandeur" (15: 354). That the "infinit[e]" descent refers to depravity is supported by manuscripts. This dissertation uses "Christianity" to contextualise De Quincey's interpretation of the Christian experience in manuscripts, where he emphasises the depraved rather than the divine.

2.3 Manuscripts

In contrast to "Christianity," in manuscripts, as with Romantic Evangelicalism, De Quincey situates depravity as the essential consideration: it reveals the infinite. "On the mysterious idea of Sin"—included in "Fragments on Christianity" (1839-1846)—offers this:

> [Sin] is that secret word … which having once been laid in the great theory of God as a germinal principle … has since blossomed into a vast growth of sublime ideas known only to those nations who have lived under the moulding of Scriptural Truth and comprehending *all* functions of the Infinite operatively familiar to man. Yes: I affirm that there is no form through which the Infinite reveals itself in a sense comprehensible by man and adequate to man; positively none that there is no sublime agency which *compresses* the human mind from infancy so as to mingle with the moments of its growth, positively none but has been in its whole origin—in every part—and exclusively developed out of that tremendous mystery which lurks under the name of sin. (20: 420-21)

"Christianity" begins with "the *Idea of God*" (15: 361), and emphasises the divine and the infinite; "idea of Sin" begins with "sin," and emphasises depravity and the "Infinite": "there is no form through which the Infinite reveals itself … positively none but has been in its whole origin—in every part—and exclusively developed out of that tremendous mystery which lurks under the name of sin." The manuscript "Sin" repeats the emphasis on depravity: "Sin … Any Pariah degrad[ation]. nay even elev[en]. Of which the origin the commencement of the web—thread—pattern—&c lay out of sight and mysteriously in an under world" (20: 348). He identifies depravity as "the origin" and "the commencement" of "Any Pariah degrad[ation]," and

it exists "out of sight and mysteriously in an under world," echoing the terms in "idea of Sin"—"that tremendous mystery." De Quincey situates depravity as the essential consideration.

Similarly, in the manuscript grouped within "Fragments on Christianity," "If I have shewn that quickening spirit," De Quincey situates depravity in a central role in a planned text that would have represented the culmination of his intellectual efforts:

> If I have detected that secret word which God subtly introduced into this world, kept in a state of incub[ation] for 2 millennia, then with the force and visible agency of a volcanic explosion forced into infinite disruption caused to kindle into a general fire—that word by which sadness is spread over the face of things but also infinite grandeur—then may I rightly lay this as one ch[apter] of my *Emend*[*ation*] *of H*[*uman*] *K*[*nowledge*]. (20: 443)

Burwick et al. cite this section and note that it seems "to identify the project as a version of that 'single work' to which, in *Confessions of an English Opium-Eater*, De Quincey claimed to have dedicated his life at some point before 1819, and 'to which [De Quincey] had presumed to give the title of an unfinished work of Spinosa's, viz. *De emendation humani intellectûs*'" (Introduction to "Fragments on Christianity" 410).[9] This dissertation extends the observation that Christianity was an important part of the text: he provides depravity with the central role in the chapter. As based on the above manuscripts, depravity would be "that word by which [infinite] sadness is spread over the face of things"; and in turn, depravity would be that which reveals the divine component: "also infinite grandeur."

In manuscripts, De Quincey identifies the struggle between the depraved and the divine components of the self as a defining characteristic of the Christian experience, a duality that, though sharing similarities to Victorian Evangelicalism, establishes an emphasis on depravity

that approaches Romantic Evangelicalism. In "Exhibit[ion] of a Roman Dial[ouge] on Sin"—from "Fragments on Christianity"—he offers this dramatization: "What! Says the ignorant or unreflect[ing] modern [Christian.] Do you mean to tell me" that a Roman "w[ould] not be startled at hear[ing] of a Saviour" (20: 419)? De Quincey provides the Roman response: "Saviour! What do you mean—saviour f[rom] what?" (20: 419). The Christian attempts to explain "the hist[ory] of the Fall. But the whole w[ill] be self-baffled and construed awry—f[rom] want of Sin as the Antith[esis] to Holiness" (20: 419), with sin defined as "a disease" that "affects the brain[] and the heart" (20: 420). In "Dispersion of the Jews and Josephus's Enmity to Christianity" (1857-1858),[10] De Quincey terms "the structure, in which everywhere Christianity will strike root" as "those two inconceivable ideas, for natural man—sin and its antagonist holiness" (21: 107). In another manuscript included in "Fragments on Christianity," "My mother's fancy," De Quincey not only extends depravity to Christ but also emphasises depravity:

> even the son of God, once incarnated, was not exempted f[rom] any evil of flesh … was not, we may be sure, exempted from any one fleshly desire with regard to sex, or enemies, or companions … [Christ also had] that divine principle, which also *is in man,* yes in every man the foulest and basest—has light which the darkness comprehended not, and which in some is early [e]xtinguished but in *all* fights fitfully with the winds and storms of this human atmosphere. (20: 418)

De Quincey maintains that the struggle between the depraved and divine components is a defining characteristic of the Christian experience: "Sin as the Antith[esis] to Holiness" and the "two inconceivable ideas" for humans, "Sin and its antagonist holiness." And even where he situates first the "divine principle" in the struggle against the depraved, "the winds and storms of this human atmosphere," he emphasises depravity: the divine is "early [e]xtinguished" in "some"

individuals; and in "*all*" individuals, the divine cannot establish control over the depraved component, as it "fights fitfully." This dissertation contends that the emphasis on depravity resembles Romantic Evangelicalism, and that it contributes to De Quincey's interpretation of the Christian experience as the feeling of struggle, depravity, and doubt.

Though Victorian Evangelicalism provides important historical context, this dissertation exclusively addresses Romantic Evangelicalism throughout the body chapters. There are two main reasons, and they will be supported by the arguments in the individual chapters. One, De Quincey never significantly changed his interpretation of the Christian experience, from the 1821 *Confessions* to the 1849 "Mail-Coach," so it was primarily shaped by Romantic Evangelicalism. Though De Quincey included the divine component of the self, the incorporation of the depraved and the divine components or "ethical dualism" was "one of the four recognised Christian elements" (Jordan 197), long predating Victorian Evangelicalism, and it is more accurately positioned as a reaction against Romantic Evangelicalism. Indeed, in his most important texts, De Quincey never established an emphasis on the divine component that matched Victorian Evangelicalism. Two, due to spatial constraints, this dissertation needs to focus on a specific form of Evangelicalism, and with De Quincey's texts more closely aligned with Romantic Evangelicalism, greater insight is provided through an analysis of Romantic Evangelical texts than Victorian Evangelical texts. Throughout the rest of the dissertation, therefore, Evangelicals and Evangelicalism will refer to Romantic Evangelicals and Evangelicalism.

Conclusion

In "Suspiria De Profundis" (1845), De Quincey offers "thanks to Providence" for four "separate blessings" of his "early situation," with the fourth that he and his sisters "were dutiful

children of a pure, holy, and magnificent church": the Church of England (15: 137). This dissertation addresses the complexities of that "blessing[]." De Quincey's mother educated him through Romantic Evangelicalism; and since he applies the "blessing[]" of the church to his whole life, he refers to both Romantic and Victorian Evangelicalism: by "birth and breeding" and "the deliberate adoption of [his] judgment," he is "an affectionate son of [the Church of England], in respect to her doctrines, her rites, [and] her discipline" (11: 262). Indeed, he seems to recognise that he engages with religion in an unconventional way in "Suspiria," as his "path" exists on an "interspace": "I … do not much intermeddle with religion, properly so called. My path lies on the interspace between religion and philosophy, that connects them both" (15: 162). This chapter previews the argument of the dissertation. Romantic Evangelicalism and the belief in the divine component of the self, which would become central to Victorian Evangelicalism, shape De Quincey's interpretation of the Christian experience and mark his most important texts: the texts on Christianity (1839-1846); the texts on the literature of power, "Letters to a Young Man Whose Education has been Neglected" (1823) and "The Works of Alexander Pope" (1848); the famous autobiographical texts, *Confessions*, "Suspiria," and "The Mail-Coach"; the ground-breaking texts on Samuel Taylor Coleridge (1834-1835); and the historical-fictional texts "Joan of Arc" (1847) and "The Nautico-Military Nun of Spain" (1847), which he ranked highly among all his texts. In the body chapters, this dissertation will also consider the essential role of addiction in shaping De Quincey's interpretation of the Christian experience. The second chapter addresses Evangelical education, the third the literature of power, the fourth the civil war of the self, the fifth doubt in a loving God, and the sixth despair at and hope in Providence.

Notes

[1] Lindop has the allusion "Leuconomos" as "untraced" (Explanatory Notes to *Confessions* 343).

[2] Wilberforce cites Philippians 2.12 (*Authorized King James Version*): "work out your own salvation with fear and trembling."

[3] All quotations refer to Venn's *Duty of Man* unless otherwise indicated.

[4] Milner cites Colossians 1.9: "For this cause we also, since the day we heard *it*, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding."

[5] While in Bath, the De Quinceys lived at Number 11, North Parade, less than one mile from Chapel Hill. De Quincey's mother Elizabeth seems to have been familiar with Randolph. In an 1820 letter, Hannah More offers her condolences to Elizabeth on the death of her daughter Mary, due to complications relating to childbirth, and she mentions Randolph. More states that she will miss Elizabeth "at the Bible meeting on Thursday next," and that "We shall be deplorably off in the way of speechifying" with "Dr. Randolph in Germany" (Japp, *Memorials* 2: 87). Elizabeth was familiar enough with Randolph for More to include him in a letter commenting on Mary's death. De Quincey also likely attended some sermons: he began Winkfield School in June 1799, and would have returned to Bath for holiday, during which time Randolph delivered these sermons.

[6] Please see also Roberts' *Revisionary Gleam*: De Quincey's texts demonstrate a "more ambivalent attitude to Evangelicalism than" has been so far offered, "one of mere acceptance / rejection" (102).

[7] All quotations refer to Jordan's *Thomas De Quincey Literary Critic* unless otherwise indicated.

[8] In Explanatory Notes to "Christianity," Burwick cites 1 Kings 3.9; Job 38.36; Psalms 49.3; Proverbs 2.2 (694). 1 Kings 3.9: "Give therefore thy servant an understanding heart to judge thy people."

[9] Burwick et al. cite De Quincey's *Confessions* (2: 63).

[10] The text is a transcript of an un-located manuscript; the rough date is 1857-1858 (Lindop, Introduction to "Dispersion of the Jews and Josephus's Enmity to Christianity" 106).

Chapter Two

De Quincey's Evangelical Education and the Conscience

Introduction

This chapter details how the Evangelical educational programme pressed individuals to interpret the Christian experience as the feeling of struggle, depravity, and doubt; and it contends that the programme affected De Quincey. This chapter has three sections. The first section posits that De Quincey respected aspects of his mother Elizabeth's Evangelicalism, and that he was exposed to Evangelicalism from an early age. The second section notes that De Quincey's Evangelical education was the most sustained in 1796-1800, and it argues that 1799 was the key year. The third section demonstrates that the conscience was a major way that Evangelicals pressed individuals to interpret the Christian experience as the feeling of struggle, depravity, and doubt. Evangelicals used the conscience to depict God's negative intervention, where God caused suffering, specifically with the emotions of guilt and fear, to push humans into continued struggle against depravity. Evangelicals attempted to ensure that the conscience constantly affected individuals by interpreting any position other than absolute adherence to and confidence in meeting the Evangelical standard as depravity. With the standard set impossibly high, Evangelicals associated depravity not only with violations of the Ten Commandments, but also minor transgressions, such as moments of selfish idleness and small doubts in God, the Bible, and church, and they positioned them all as leading to suffering in life and eternal damnation in Hell at death. Essentially, Evangelicals did not understand worldly experience as meeting the high Christian standard. Individuals, then, understood experience as struggle, depravity, and God's negative intervention, which led to the absence of the positive experience of God's love,

and to doubt in the self, other humans, and a loving God. De Quincey employed the conscience to address his struggle to meet a Christian standard and his engagement with the depraved component of the self. In the 1856 *Confessions of an English Opium-Eater*, he uses the conscience to connect the culmination of his youthful rebellion—abandoning Manchester Grammar School in 1802—and addiction: in other terms, in a revised text on addiction, he presents experience after the school as struggle, depravity, and God's negative intervention, which translates to the absence of the divine component of the self and the positive experience of God's love, and to doubt that the divine recovers from the decision to abandon the school; and that doubt is contextualised by his subsequent forty-three years of addiction (1813-1856).[1]

1. Elizabeth as Intellectual and De Quincey's Early Evangelical Education

This section revisits two under-addressed facets of De Quincey's Evangelical education. One, De Quincey valued the intellect of his mother Elizabeth Quincey (1756-1845), and he did not separate her intellect from her religious position, so he would have respected aspects of her Evangelicalism. Two, the library of De Quincey's father Thomas Quincey (1753-1793) and De Quincey's texts on Elizabeth's engagement with religion suggest an early Evangelical influence.

1.1 Elizabeth as Intellectual

De Quincey rejected and accepted aspects of his mother and her Evangelicalism: though critics have addressed the rejection, this dissertation recognises that De Quincey's acceptance requires further attention. Alexander Japp depicts the rejection in absolute terms. He states that though "It is a commonplace to descant on the mothers of great or famous men as having inevitably supplied something of the character, or genius, or energy by which they came to

render themselves distinguished," for De Quincey, "this was hardly the case," and he "seemed … to draw little from his mother" (Japp, *Memorials* 1: 6-7). Grevel Lindop notes that the rejection was not absolute. He posits that the "earnest self-examination and apocalyptic fervor" that characterise De Quincey's texts are misunderstood because they have not been "related" to Evangelical "intellectual traditions" (Lindop, "Pursuing the Throne of God" 97). Daniel Sanjiv Roberts identifies the critical narrative against Elizabeth and Evangelicalism: "De Quincey's rebellious adolescence … and his later descriptions of these events have been interpreted largely as a rejection of [his] mother's Evangelical attitudes," and "Evangelicalism takes the blame for an imputed narrowness of sensibility and theological rigidity which the young De Quincey was always already beyond" ("Hannah More, Thomas De Quincey, and the Literature of Power"). De Quincey did not reject all aspects of her Evangelicalism. Robert Morrison states that from Elizabeth's "Evangelicalism," De Quincey "took a belief in the educative power of suffering, a commitment to anxious self-scrutiny, and a fascination with sin and guilt" (*The English Opium-Eater* 36). Extending Morrison's position, this dissertation shows that De Quincey linked Elizabeth's intellect with religion, which offers context for why he would be influenced by aspects of her Evangelicalism.

The manuscript "My Mother" has had a major role in minimising Elizabeth's intellectual influence on De Quincey. "My Mother" was first published by Japp in *Memorials* (1: 9-11), and it has been reproduced in significant critical assessments that limit the influence of Elizabeth to her lack of affection.[2] De Quincey states that his mother "delighted not in infancy, nor infancy in her," and that she was "distinguished by lady-like tranquillity and even by repose, but also in freezing excess. Austere she was in a degree which fitted her for the lady president of rebellious nunneries" (20: 352). What she lacked was "expansive love" (20: 352). This dissertation

contends that since De Quincey bases his critique on emotional distance, the manuscript should not be used to preclude the possibility that she had a strong intellectual influence on him.

De Quincey's daughter Florence Baird Smith (1827-1904) supports the position that her father was influenced by Elizabeth's intellect, by suggesting that the key issue in the relationship was Elizabeth's Evangelical circle. Florence states that "the trait in his mother's character which came between her and her children" was "not a Roman firmness, but such a diffidence of her own powers as led her too much to the bringing in of outside authority and advice" (Japp, *Memorials* 1: 13). She concludes that a mother, "if she wishes to give [her children] the best chance of true, loving, and natural relations with her," should "let no outsider come between" them (Japp, *Memorials* 1: 13). The allusion to Elizabeth's "Roman firmness" seems to be based on De Quincey's "Travelling in England Thirty Years Ago" (Dec. 1834), where he states this: "my mother's counsels, if deep, were not long; she, who had always something of a Roman firmness, shed more milk of roses, I believe, upon my cheeks than tears" (10: 101). Florence not only questions the importance of emotional distance, but also supports the position that De Quincey would have been shaped by Elizabeth's interpretation of Evangelicalism.

Indeed, Edward William Grinfield (1785-1864), a biblical scholar who attended Winkfield School with De Quincey in 1799-1800 (now Wingfield, in Wiltshire) (Pearce) notes that De Quincey linked Elizabeth's intellect to religion. In 1859-1860, he wrote to De Quincey's daughter Margaret Craig (1818-1871), stating that he remembered Elizabeth "coming to Winkfield—a very clever lady, and intimate with Hannah More": "I recollect that your father said his mother was as clever as Hannah" (Japp, *Life and Writings* 43). Grinfield aligns intellect with religion: Elizabeth is "as clever as Hannah" More, the Evangelical. Like Florence, Grinfield depicts De Quincey as in a situation to be influenced by Elizabeth's Evangelicalism.

In *Confessions*, both 1821 and 1856 texts, De Quincey states that he values his mother's intellect, and he connects intellect and religion. In 1821, he claims that though she is not "a *literary* woman," she is "an *intellectual* woman," and that "if ever her letters should be collected and published, they would … exhibit as much strong and masculine sense, delivered in as pure 'mother English,' racy and fresh with idiomatic graces, as any in our language" (2: 33). Still, with these letters having been published, as noted above, most critics have not used them to support an interpretation of Elizabeth as "an intellectual woman," but as an individual whose intellect was limited by religion. This was not De Quincey's position. Citing Elizabeth's near-death experience, he states that both Elizabeth's and his interpretation support a religious truth proposed by Samuel Taylor Coleridge (1772-1834), "that the dread book of account, which the Scriptures speak of, is, in fact, the mind itself of each individual" (2: 67). Lindop notes that for Coleridge and De Quincey, the "Scriptural 'dread book of account' … is probably a reminiscence of Revelation" (Explanatory Notes to *Confessions* 337-38): "and another book was opened, which is *the book* of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works" (*Authorized King James Version*, Rev. 20.12). According to De Quincey, Elizabeth theorises the experience at a similar level as himself and Coleridge. In 1856, De Quincey pushes further by attaching a note to the near-death experience. He "may describe" the "heroine of this remarkable case" as having "a masculine understanding," and as one who "reverenced truth not less than did the Evangelists": she was not "a dealer in exaggerations," "a credulous enthusiast," "or a careless wielder of language" (2: 257). In 1856, intellect, "a masculine understanding," merges with religion, "the Evangelists." De Quincey's description of his mother, with its praise of intellect and religion, remains similar from 1821 to

1856. This dissertation reviews Florence's and Grinfield's statements and De Quincey's description to show why De Quincey was influenced by aspects of Elizabeth's Evangelicalism.

1.2 De Quincey's Early Evangelical Education

Elizabeth's Evangelicalism would have affected De Quincey from a very early date. Elizabeth's conversion date is unknown, but Lindop suggests that both she and her husband Thomas Quincey were "moving towards Evangelical views at an early date" ("Pursuing the Throne of God" 98). As of 1801, De Quincey could describe his mother as an Evangelical (Lindop 98; De Quincey 19: 272), and in 1796, Elizabeth had established Evangelical connections in Bath (Lindop 98). This dissertation adds that an Evangelical influence may be located earlier, through Quincey's library and Elizabeth's tendency towards serious religion.

The library contained Methodist and Evangelical texts. The manuscript "Catalogue," included in De Quincey's 1803 *Diary*, details the collection of Quincey, who died in 1793. Symonds notes that "the modest-seeming library was to lay the foundation for a number of subsequent lines of reading for De Quincey," and that "Many of the titles listed in the Greenhay library catalogue appear in the sale catalogue of De Quincey's own library" (Introduction to "Appendix to the Diary" 58). Quincey had "Smyth Edward's Sermons" (1: 65), likely Edward Smyth's *Twelve Sermons on the Most Important Subjects* (1778). Smyth was a controversial Methodist preacher associated with a founder of Methodism, John Wesley (Hill). Quincey had two educational texts by Sarah Trimmer, a "devout evangelical Anglican" (Schnorrenberg): *An Easy Introduction to the Knowledge of Nature, and Reading the Holy Scriptures* (1780) and *Sacred History* (1782-1785) (1: 65). He had the Evangelical poet William Cowper's *Poems*, "2 Vols" (1787) (1: 61).[3] He had Robert Blair's *The Grave* (1743) (1: 60). Blair was not an

Evangelical, but his text was influenced by the "Calvinist cultural climate in Scotland," which resembled the "evangelical revival in Britain in the 1740s" (Carruthers). He had Hannah More's *Search After Happiness* (1774) (1: 67), which was published before her gradual conversion to Evangelicalism, 1780-1789 (Stott 79-102), but after her spiritual awakening, which she credited to the Evangelical James Stonehouse, with whom she had become acquainted around 1765 (Stott 79). The library indicates that De Quincey's Evangelical education began at an early date.

De Quincey's texts suggest that he encountered Evangelicalism from the age of two. In *Autobiographic Sketches* (1854), he states that Mrs. Schreiber was "amongst my mother's earliest friends," and that he became aware of her around the age of two, or in 1786-1787 (19: 239). Though Mrs. Schreiber's religious views are unknown at this point, De Quincey confirms that at this time she valued in Elizabeth "ascetic devotion" (19: 239). Elizabeth and Mrs. Schreiber more than likely shared an interest in Evangelicalism at this period. Certainly by 1800, when Elizabeth moved in with Mrs. Schreiber, they shared religious views, as Elizabeth was actively involved in Evangelicalism, converting Lady Carbery around 1800 (Morrison, *The English Opium-Eater* 45). In "Secret Societies," (1847), De Quincey states that at the age of seven, he was introduced to Augustin Barruel's *Memoirs, Illustrating the History of Jacobism* (1794) by a "stern" and "austere" lady, both "in the character of her understanding and morals" (16: 148). Anne Stott notes that this text was popular with Evangelicals (230); and in "My Mother," De Quincey uses "Austere" and "austerity" to describe Elizabeth (20: 352, 353). In the 1856 *Confessions*, he states that in 1794-1795, his tenth year, he feared his church to be linked to the Puritans, "the horrid eikonoclasts of 1645" (2: 115). The concern indicates that he was aware how critics of Evangelicalism historically framed their criticism. Even though Evangelicals like Elizabeth were committed to the Church of England, critics exploited Evangelical calls for

reform (for a more fervent religious experience), suggesting that Evangelicals were like the Puritans of the English Civil War.[4] De Quincey situates himself within such a context: he is against the "horrid eikonoclasts of 1645" but critical of the Church of England, in regards to the lack of religious fervour in its ministers (2: 115). His description is reflective of Evangelicalism within the Church of England. This dissertation contends that De Quincey's Evangelical education began at an earlier date than recognised, and the next sections demonstrate how that education pressed him to interpret the Christian experience as the feeling of struggle, depravity, and doubt.

2. De Quincey's Evangelical Education (1796-1800): Depravity, Death, and Rebellion

This section notes that De Quincey's Evangelical education was the most sustained during 1796-1800, and it argues that 1799 was the key year, as shown through a text that he received in 1799: Henry Venn's *Duty of Man.* One, Venn uses feeling connected with death to address depravity, and De Quincey links death to depravity. Two, Venn maintains that parents should emphasise depravity in explicit terms when the youth is fourteen and prepare for rebellion; in 1799, at the age of fourteen, De Quincey, through rebellion, experiments with the Evangelical position on depravity, which, in turn, suggests that Elizabeth was emphasising depravity, and that De Quincey was developing his own position on depravity.

2.1 1796-1799

Critics have recognised the singularity of the Evangelical educational programme, and this dissertation considers a major way that the programme addressed depravity: death. Commenting on depravity, Elisabeth Jay states that there was "a fundamental conflict between

Evangelical dogma and Romantic philosophy," and that the "idea of the human pilgrimage from the Innocence of childhood to the Experience of adult life … was totally incompatible with the Evangelical's vision of the child" (55). Doreen Rosman adds that "Children were expected to respond to the gospel in essentially the same way as adults" (98). Lindop indicates that Evangelicals used death to instruct youths, and he identifies, as a key example for De Quincey, his sister Elizabeth's death ("Pursuing the Throne of God" 107), citing Rosman's claim that "Death beds had an almost sacramental function in evangelical experience" and were "regarded as the supreme moment to witness the truth of the Christian gospel" (Rosman 103). Lindop and Rosman note the importance of death, but they do not consider an Evangelical text in detail. This dissertation uses Venn's text to show how Evangelicals used feeling to address depravity, and to explain De Quincey's position on his sister's death and his mother's near-death experience.

The key years for De Quincey's Evangelical education were 1796-1800. The De Quinceys were in Bath, a major location for Evangelicals, and his mother was strengthening her religious position through her friend Hannah More and the Clapham Sect. The most important year was 1799. In March, Elizabeth purchased for De Quincey various Evangelical texts (Japp, *Life and Writings* 37): Samuel Ogden's *Sermons* (1788)[5]; Joseph and Isaac Milner's *Church of Christ*; and Venn's *Duty of Man*. In addition, as will be detailed in the next section, De Quincey likely heard sermons preached by Francis Randolph in Bath, November to December 1799.

Venn was a Church of England clergyman, and in 1754, he became curate of Clapham (Cowie). In 1763, Venn published *Duty of Man*. Receiving the text in March 1799, De Quincey would likely have had the fifth edition, published in Bath, 1798. This was an important edition. With Venn dying on 24 June 1797 at Clapham, Elizabeth's decision to purchase the text suggests an effort to use the death to integrate herself into the Clapham Sect, as the text likely held value

at the time, with the son of Henry Venn, John Venn, serving as "rector of Clapham from 1792 until his death," and "during his incumbency … the influential Clapham Sect developed, and its members followed him as their pastor and spiritual guide" (Cowie). Though Elizabeth was in Bath and not Clapham, she could have discussed the text at Bible meetings in Bath with More and other visiting Evangelicals (Japp, *Memorials* 2: 87). Elizabeth's engagement with Venn's text appears to have been significant, as Venn's text parallels several of De Quincey's experiences with his mother that affected him: death and the near-death experience.

Venn divides the programme into two parts: for the pre-fourteen youth, feeling associated with depravity should be addressed in general terms; post-fourteen, that feeling should be emphasised as depravity in explicit terms. Venn posits that "outward things and particular providences will give life to religious instruction" (241). Venn uses feeling, "sensible changes," to "make *the creation a school of instruction*" because youths require "a body and substance to the truth, which otherwise is too abstracted for their clear apprehension" (243). The method applies to "all the particular branches of divine knowledge, in which children should be established," but especially to depravity (241). Summarising the shift in the programme, he posits that "After this period," "the age of twelve or fourteen," "their faculties are strong enough to receive those important doctrines, which before they were scarcely able to understand" (244). Venn focuses on depravity because, by fourteen, he states that feeling will have provided "various striking proofs to convince them, that they are creatures *corrupted in their nature*, disaffected to the government and will of the glorious God, and full of vile propensities" (245). Before considering the post-fourteen youth, this dissertation details how Venn uses feeling connected with death to address depravity in general terms for the pre-fourteen youth.

In “Suspiria,” De Quincey positions the formative death, Elizabeth’s death, as addressing depravity. Venn states that “It is of great benefit early to teach your children also that *life and death*, as well as sickness and pain, are at the supreme disposal of God” (243). To maximise the emotional effect, he suggests that parents use “the bed of a brother, a sister, or a play-fellow, who is sick and in pain,” one who is “languishing, crying out through strong pain” (243). Specifically, Venn contends that the “proper season to rivet this instruction” to youths is the moment of death, when “the awful report is brought to their ears” (243). Parents should use “sensible proofs”—“the sorrows, sighs, and tears”—to show that “it is God that taketh away our breath in infancy, youth, or riper years, just as he sees fit” (243). In the Preface, Venn foregrounds the connection between death and depravity by citing Rom. 6.23[6]: “The fact then is certain: *The wages of sin is death*, and always will be so while God continues the same” (vi). According to Evangelicals, death did not exist before the Fall, so death was the definitive example of the human condition post-Fall: depravity. Evangelicals, then, wanted individuals to associate death with the results of depravity: suffering in life and potential damnation in Hell at death. In “Suspiria,” detailing Elizabeth’s death, De Quincey states that he remembers exactly “when a nurse … launched God’s thunderbolt at [his] heart in the assurance that [his] sister must die” (15: 141). The death pushes him into a vision where he “seemed to pursue the throne of God; but *that* also ran before [him] and fled away continually,” as “some Sarsar wind of death, seemed to repel [him]” (15: 144). He connects the death to depravity, as God uses death, which is inextricably linked to depravity that distanced humans from God at the Fall, to separate him from that “throne.” Indeed, in the manuscript from “Fragments on Christianity,” “On the mysterious idea of Sin,” De Quincey states that the dreams of “every Christian child” are “invested by an atmosphere of sublimity” linked to “the obscure idea of Sin” (20: 422). This

"obscure idea of Sin" is similar to Venn's addressing depravity in general terms for the pre-fourteen youth. Though De Quincey's mother would be late starting Venn's programme, she appears to have used it to encourage De Quincey to recall the feeling connected with his sister's 1792 death, and to apply that feeling to depravity. That Elizabeth was using Venn's text in this way is further suggested by De Quincey's description of her near-death experience.

De Quincey details his mother's near-death experience in the 1821 and 1856 *Confessions* and the 1845 "Suspiria," and Venn uses the near-death experience to address depravity for the pre-fourteen youth. Venn instructs parents that if they "have been recovered from the borders of the grave, and brought again with joy to see [their] offspring," they should "impress [youths] with the truth, that God is the Lord of life and death" (244). This dissertation posits that as per the analysis of the Rom. 6.23 citation in the Preface, wherever Venn considers death, he also addresses depravity, so the example implies that the "recovered" parents should use the near-death experience to address depravity. As noted, in the 1821 *Confessions*, De Quincey compares the near-death experience to Revelation. He states that Elizabeth, "being on the very verge of death," "saw in a moment her whole life, in its minutest incidents, arrayed before her simultaneously as in a mirror" (2: 67). From that experience, he infers that "the dread book of account, which the Scriptures speak of, is, in fact, the mind itself of each individual" (2: 67). He makes the religious register stronger in later texts. In "Suspiria," the experience offers proof of the "organizing principles which fuse into harmony" an individual's history in the "heaven-created palimpsest"; and he now admits to an Evangelical perspective, as he states that he bases the story on his mother, who is "religious to asceticism" (15: 175). He also previews his religious text "The Daughter of Lebanon," which is structured on the Evangelist St. Luke and which would be published in the 1856 *Confessions*: the light that enveloped his mother was perhaps the

same that "wrapt the destined apostle on his road to Damascus" (15: 176). In the 1856 *Confessions*, terming Elizabeth's experience "the solemn apocalypse of the entire past life," he contends that it should be credited, for she "reverenced truth not less than did the Evangelists; and led a life of saintly devotion" (2: 257): she "looked down as far within the *crater* of death—that awful volcano—as any human being ever *can* have done that has lived to draw back and to report her experience" (2: 257). From an Evangelical perspective, death would be associated with "dread" and termed an "awful" "*crater*" and "volcano" because it strongly addressed depravity. Again, in other terms, death recalls the human condition after the Fall, a condition marked by depravity, where humans are destined to suffer in life and potentially in Hell at death.

De Quincey seems to have first heard Elizabeth's account in 1799, so it was likely inspired by Venn's text. In a note to the 1856 *Confessions*, he states that "Forty-five years had intervened between the first and the last time of her telling [him] this anecdote" (2: 257). The last time that she could have told the story was 1845, the year of her death; and if this was the last time, the first time would be 1799-1800. De Quincey would have been fourteen to sixteen. Because Elizabeth's Evangelicalism strengthened in Bath and due to a detail in De Quincey's account in *Confessions*, the first recitation seems to be 1799. In the same note where he states that forty-five years separate the first and last telling, he posits that Elizabeth "led a life of saintly devotion, such as might have glorified '*Hilarion or Paul*'" (2: 257). The italicised material is from *Orlando Furioso*.[7] De Quincey encountered this text in 1799, which suggests that when he was writing the note, he was thinking about that year. Elizabeth seems to have last told the story through letter or someone who was in contact with De Quincey shortly before her death.[8]

The positive description of Elizabeth in the 1856 *Confessions* that contains the allusion to *Orlando Furioso* recalls a period of closeness between De Quincey and Elizabeth in early 1799

where she read to him John Hoole's translation of *Orlando Furioso* (1783). This period was the same one where he received the various Evangelical texts, among which was Venn's. De Quincey was recovering from an accident suffered at Bath Grammar School. He states that "During a long illness which succeeded, my mother, amongst other books past all counting, read to me, in Hoole's translation, the whole of the 'Orlando Furioso'; meaning by *the whole* the entire twenty-four books into which Hoole had condensed the original forty-six of Ariosto" (19: 95). He attributed special importance to this experience. In the manuscript "Catalogue," the only two texts recorded by him are translations by John Hoole (Symonds, Introduction to "Appendix to the Diary" 58), one of which is "Hoole's Translation of Ariosto's 'Orlando Furioso'" (1: 61). In addition, he revisited the experience several times in his texts: one, in "Sketches of Life and Manners" (Feb. 1834) (10: 17), and two, when he revised the account in *Autobiographic Sketches* (1853), adding the clause explaining "*the whole*." In 1853 he was thinking about his experience in 1799, and the allusion in the 1856 *Confessions* suggests that he was thinking about it again. The near-death account likely dates from 1799, matching Venn's programme. This dissertation posits that with Elizabeth likely discussing Venn's text with De Quincey, it shapes two key passages in "Suspiria" and *Confessions,* so that they contain a position on depravity influenced by Evangelicalism: his sister's death and his mother's near-death experience.

2.2 1799-1800

Venn's text offers context for De Quincey's rebellion. De Quincey received the text at fourteen, turning fifteen in August 1799. Venn, as noted above, suggested a shift at fourteen, and if Elizabeth followed Venn, she would be emphasising depravity in explicit terms in 1799. Venn recognised that the shift could encourage rebellion, but he offered limited advice to parents. He

cautions that while you are "unanswerably proving" the youth's "innate corruption, it is however your duty to do it with tender expressions of love, lest by seeming to upbraid, pride and prejudice should be excited" (245). Venn was correct: it was a post-fourteen De Quincey who began a rebellion that culminated in abandoning Manchester Grammar School in 1802. The balance of depravity and love accounts for some experiences with his mother. De Quincey identifies depravity in the manuscript "My Mother": "we children held it a point of official duty to believe ourselves the very scamps and refuse of the universe" (20: 353). He also notes the attempt to balance depravity and love. In the 1856 *Confessions,* he states that after he abandoned the school, Elizabeth, "once having expressed her sorrowful condemnation of [his] act, [and] having made it impossible for [him] to misunderstand her views," was "ready to extend … (as regarded all practical matters) her wonted kindness; but not that sort of kindness which could make [him] forget that [he] stood under the deepest shadows of her displeasure" (2: 171). Her actions reflect Venn's proposal of "unanswerably proving" a child's "innate corruption" with "tender expressions of love." Elizabeth ensures that he cannot "misunderstand her views," that he exists in "the deepest shadows of her displeasure"; but, at the same time, she extends to him "kindness" in "all practical matters." Whatever the balance that she tries to strike, the result is an uncomfortable one, as he is unable "for a moment" to be at "ease" on "any and every subject" (2: 171). Before addressing 1802, though, this dissertation details the 1799-1800 rebellion.

This dissertation considers two under-explored 1799 letters and the 1800 name change, and it contends that they indicate that Elizabeth was emphasising depravity, as per Venn's programme, and that De Quincey, through rebellion, demonstrates his willingness to experiment with the Evangelical position on depravity, which, in turn, suggests that he was developing his own position on depravity. De Quincey is fourteen and writing to his older sister Mary. In the

first letter, writing from Bath Grammar School on 11 June under the assumed name Tabitha, De Quincey lists examples of disrespect: "My mother (I meant to write it with a great M) has been here about a fort night.—Remember when you write to me Child (which you *mustn't* do before the Holidays) never to write the day of the month in figures, but at full length in whatd'ya'callums—for it's very disrespectful to … your Superiors" ("MS 2002.44.2"). He closes the letter with prayer and idleness: "Pray! pray! pray! pray! pray! pray! Oh! oh! oh! how idle I am!" ("MS 2002.44.2").[9] He addresses disrespect, prayer, and idleness with humour. Evangelicals, though, would contend that these examples represent depravity: all disrespect "to your Superiors" is depravity; any instance of "idle[ness]" is depravity; and because humans are powerless to counter depravity without God, the individual must seek God's assistance: "pray!" In a 12 March letter, again writing from Winkfield School under the name Tabitha, De Quincey indirectly refers to depravity. He states that "My mother wishes to know whether … the *little Innocents* are coming to Bath" ("MS 2002.44.3").[10] Evangelicals would maintain that all humans are absolutely depraved, and De Quincey links that position to Elizabeth by attributing to her the question about the "*little innocents*," a phrase that she would never use. De Quincey did not accept the Evangelical position on depravity, but through his assumed name and rebellion, he was experimenting with that position and developing his own position on depravity, which he would articulate as human duality: the depraved and divine components of the self.

Elizabeth changed her surname from De Quincey back to Quincey in 1800, depravity influenced her decision, and De Quincey did not follow her. Morrison states that Elizabeth's initial change to "De Quincey" occurred in Bath, and that "one of the main reasons she had chosen the city was the many opportunities it provided for her and her children to move in more refined social circles," with the "genteel prefix 'De' … an attempt to smooth their way" (28).

Lindop indicates that "De Quincey" first appears in a 9 April 1799 letter from De Quincey's brother, Richard (*The English Opium-Eater* 29): "R. de Quincey" (Japp, *Memorials* 1: 18). By early 1800, though, Elizabeth had dropped the "De." Morrison notes that the change was due to Evangelical friends, and he cites Florence (*The English Opium-Eater* 36). Addressing the influence of Elizabeth's circle, Florence contends that Mrs. Pratt "had not a little to do with the arbitrary dropping and taking up of the 'de' in the name," and that "She it was who urged on [her] grandmother that the use of the 'de' was a worldly vanity which she ought to lay aside" (Japp, *Life and Writings* 60-61). Evangelicals would hold that "worldly vanity" is a manifestation of depravity, so by choosing to not follow Elizabeth, De Quincey, again, experiments with depravity. This dissertation contends that Elizabeth was emphasising depravity when De Quincey was fourteen, and that though De Quincey would not associate the name change and similar matters with his position on depravity, he would frame a major aspect of this period of rebellion as depravity in the 1856 *Confessions*: the abandonment of Manchester Grammar School. The next section continues the exploration of the educational programme and De Quincey's position on depravity through the conscience.

3. The Evangelical Conscience and the Conscience in De Quincey's Texts

This section demonstrates that the conscience pressed individuals to interpret the Christian experience as the feeling of struggle, depravity, and doubt. One, Evangelicals used the conscience to depict God's negative intervention: to push humans into continued struggle against depravity, God caused suffering with the emotions of guilt and fear. Two, Evangelicals interpreted any position other than absolute adherence to and confidence in meeting the Evangelical standard as depravity, so the conscience constantly affected individuals, and

experience became struggle, depravity, and God's negative intervention, and that led to the absence of the positive experience of God's love, and to doubt in the self, other humans, and a loving God. De Quincey employed the conscience to address his struggle to meet a Christian standard and his engagement with the depraved component of the self. In the 1856 *Confessions*, the conscience links the culmination of his youthful rebellion—abandoning Manchester Grammar School in 1802—and addiction: he presents experience after the school—experience significantly marked by addiction (1813-1856)—as struggle, depravity, and God's negative intervention, which translates to the absence of the divine component of the self and the positive experience of God's love, and to doubt that the divine recovers from that 1802 decision.

3.1 The Evangelical Conscience

The conscience powerfully shaped the Christian experience, but critics have not applied it to De Quincey's texts. Summarising Venn's *Duty of Man*,[11] Boyd Hilton states that the "organ of redemption is the individual conscience, and the means are provided by Christ's Atonement on the Cross" (8). The term "organ of redemption" signals an awareness of the need for the Atonement, or an awareness of depravity. Walter E. Houghton states that with "the standard of Christian virtue … placed so high and the range and gravity of sin so great," the "'Puritan' conscience" ensured that "the Christian life became in literal fact a life of constant struggle" (233). Houghton identifies the high standard ("the standard of Christian virtue … and gravity of sin"), the Evangelical or "Puritan" conscience, and the struggle ("constant struggle"). This dissertation details how important Evangelicals for De Quincey used the conscience to push individuals into constant struggle against depravity, and it considers De Quincey's texts.

Evangelicals used the conscience to depict God's negative intervention: the conscience elicited the emotions of guilt and fear, and it pushed humans into continued struggle against depravity. In *Practical View*, William Wilberforce offers this definition: "the power of the conscience, that faithful monitor within the breast, to enforce the conclusions of reason, and direct and regulate the passions of the soul" (21). If the conscience supports the doctrines, it causes guilt and fear, as Wilberforce identifies the primary "use of" the "Doctrines" as "enforcing guilt of sin, and dread of punishment" (297). The individual feels guilt at depravity ("sin") and fears God's punishment of depravity ("dread of punishment"). In *An Essay on Human Liberty* (1824), Isaac Milner identifies the conscience as an "internal monitor" that controls the individual through guilt: "What … no guilt!—The internal monitor steps in at the crisis" (128). In *Strictures*, More uses the conscience to distinguish between superficial and serious Christianity, stating that individuals employ "temporary piety" to escape "the troublesome soreness of a tender conscience" (231), and that the approach represents "the delusions of a worldly piety," to "consider Christianity … as imposing a set of hardships, which *must* be occasionally encountered" (231). More wants "hardships" to be constantly "encountered" and the "tender conscience" always marked by "troublesome soreness." In *Essays*, John Foster states that the conscience controls thought and action. He posits that "Each mind has an interior apartment of its own, into which none but itself and the Divinity can enter … Here in solitary state sits Conscience, surrounded by her own thunders" (80); and when the "thunders" sound, they shape thought and action: "if conscience, that great troubler of the human breast, loudly declares against a man's wishes or projects, it will be a fatal enemy to decision" (134). Wilberforce aligns the conscience with depravity, guilt, and fear; Milner links it to guilt. More and Foster connect it to the regulation of thought and action; and as seen in More's

depiction, where the conscience is always marked by "troublesome soreness," Evangelicals want the conscience to affect individuals at all times. According to these Evangelicals, God enacts negative intervention through the conscience, causing guilt and fear that push individuals into continued struggle against depravity. This dissertation employs Venn's and Randolph's texts as exemplars of the Evangelical conscience, and it demonstrates that the conscience pressed individuals to interpret the Christian experience as the feeling of struggle, depravity, and doubt.

As with the above Evangelicals, though Venn ultimately wants individuals to struggle against depravity, he uses the conscience to establish struggle with the Evangelical standard *as* depravity. Referring to pre-fourteen youths, he posits that "the law of conscience is principally formed by the manners and sentiments of those with whom we are educated, and with whom we converse" (57). To develop "the law of the conscience," parents need to establish the Evangelical standard, and Venn presents struggle with that standard as depravity: "when you were first awakened to a sense of your sin, your conscience was full of fears and alarms, and you had no comfortable communion with God" (98). Venn aligns "sense of … sin" with the struggle to meet the standard: "fears and alarms, and no comfortable communion with God." Venn then shifts to post-fourteen youths. Since the "faculties are now strong enough to receive" the "important doctrines," he instructs parents to show youths "the scripture character of fallen man; produce that awful passage, *Yea also the heart of the sons of men is full of evil, and madness is in their heart while they live*" (245).[12] He cites Ecclesiastes 9.3, and he focuses on struggle: "*madness is in their heart*." To support his claim about "scripture character," he employs the conscience. Venn encourages parents to "appeal to [youths'] consciences, whether they do not find contrary tempers still rising and getting the mastery within, though they dare not suffer them to break out" (245). He equates "*madness is in their heart*" with "contrary tempers still rising and getting

mastery within" (245), establishing struggle with the standard as depravity. This dissertation offers, then, that Venn uses feeling connected with death to address depravity for the pre-fourteen youth, as noted in Section Two, because that feeling is marked by "contrary tempers." In "Suspiria," De Quincey describes the feeling at his sister's death as "chaos," "anarchy and confusion," so according to Venn, that feeling is depravity, as it does not translate into "comfortable communion with God." Regardless of De Quincey's interpretation of that feeling, it would be used by Venn and De Quincey's mother to address depravity.

The feeling of struggle and depravity was not confined to youth; it shaped the Christian experience, and it led to doubt. Venn depicts any position other than absolute adherence to and confidence in meeting the standard as depravity. He declares "Consider the *corruption of your nature*, and the many sins you have actually committed"; by "commun[ing] with your own heart," "you will immediately find your inclinations strongly bent to many things, which your conscience tells you, ought not to be done," and "you will observe a miserable confusion and inconsistency in your thoughts, a perverseness in your will, and prevailing sensuality in your affections" (166). He frames the explicit failure to meet the standard as depravity: "the many sins you have actually committed" and "your inclinations bent to many things, which your conscience tells you, ought not to be done"; and he frames any position that questions aspects of the standard or is unsure about meeting the standard as depravity, as he translates "confusion and inconsistency in your thoughts" into "perverseness in your will" and "*corruption of your nature*." The *impossible* demand of total adherence and confidence ensures that the Christian experience is characterised by struggle and depravity, which leads to doubt in the self and other humans.

The doubt extended to a loving God. Venn links the conscience to God's negative intervention: the conscience elicits guilt and fear, and it pushes humans into continued struggle

against depravity. Venn states that "An enlightened conscience, like a vigilant centinel, will sound an alarm in every hour of danger" (9). Depravity causes the conscience to "sound [the] alarm," as "the conscience of a sinner is alarmed with a sense of his dreadful guilt and danger" (149), and due to guilt and fear, the "sinner" is pushed into continued struggle. Indeed, guilt and fear have a major role in the text. Venn holds that "the guilt of sin" has been "the same in all ages of the world" (vii); and he devotes an entire section to fear: the "first disposition" "*towards the ever-blessed God,* of which the habitual exercise is to be found in the heart of every real Christian," is "*fear*"; the Christian "s*anctifies the Lord God in his heart,* and regards *as his fear and his dread*" God (169). Experience has always been struggle and depravity, where God's negative intervention, through the emotions of guilt and fear, replaces the positive experience of God's love. Again, the constancy of struggle and depravity would lead to doubt in the self and other humans, but the negative intervention would for some individuals extend to doubt in God: is this the God of love as claimed in the Bible? One example is the novelist George Eliot who was addressed in the Introduction to this dissertation; Eliot rejected the Evangelicalism of her youth, and she converted to agnosticism (Houghton 62).

Francis Randolph preached in Bath, late November to Christmas 1799, as recorded in *Sermons*.[13] This dissertation identifies Randolph as an important but unaddressed divine because Hannah More and the De Quinceys likely heard his 1799 sermons. More attended Laura Chapel when in Bath (Stott 248). In 1790, More spent her first winter in Bath, at her sisters' house, Great Pulteney Street (Stott 129), and she was still spending her winters in Bath in 1799.[14] While in Bath, the De Quinceys lived at Number 11, North Parade (Morrison, *The English Opium-Eater* 27), less than one mile from Chapel Hill. Elizabeth Quincey knew Randolph. In an 1820 letter, More offers her condolences to Elizabeth, on the death of her daughter Mary,[15] due to

complications relating to childbirth, and she mentions Randolph. More will miss Elizabeth "at the Bible meeting on Thursday next," and she adds that "We shall be deplorably off in the way of speechifying" with "Dr. Randolph in Germany" (Japp, *Memorials* 2: 87). Elizabeth was familiar enough with Randolph for More to include him in a letter commenting on Mary's death. De Quincey likely attended some sermons. He began Winkfield School in June 1799, and would have returned to Bath for holiday.

In "Sermon IV," Randolph depicts God's negative intervention as guilt at depravity and fear of God's punishment of depravity, and he connects the Old Testament to the present. He states that Moses' followers, "with all their errors and corruptions" and "the degrading and abominable rites of the deities which they left behind them in Egypt, and which were afterwards transplanted to the altars of Greece and Rome," should be "compared with that of the greatest and the wisest nations in political estimation" (99). The comparison justifies the similarities between the Old Testament and the present. He holds that the "truth of the Law … and the terror of its publication, go together … to discover every man's heart to himself, and convince him of that corruption; to display the guilt and consequent punishment of sin; to awaken in the soul a fear of God" (101). The "truth of the Law" reveals depravity, so the individual feels "guilt" at "sin" and "fear of God." As with Venn, Randolph frames the Christian experience as struggle and depravity, and he replaces the positive experience of God's love with God's negative intervention, which leads to doubt in the self, other humans, and a loving God.

Randolph similarly presents the conscience. In the above sermon, he states that "*The fear of the Lord* was to prove to them *the fountain of life*. A sense of guilt implies a dread of punishment, and thus fear is justly called the beginning of religious wisdom" (101-102). He maintains that the Evangelical programme must establish, simultaneously, a "sense of guilt" and

a “dread of punishment”: the “sense of guilt” is awareness of depravity, and “the dread of punishment” is fear of God’s punishment of depravity. In an earlier sermon, he depicts the conscience in similar terms, stating that “the wavering Christian of the present day,” with only “some slight misgivings of conscience,” will not be able to “shake all apprehension of the dreadful consequences, should the [Biblical] prophec[ies] prove true” (64-65). If in the previous sermon “dread of punishment” and “sense of guilt” are to be experienced at the same time, by using the term “dreadful” in this sermon, Randolph links the conscience to both guilt and fear.

Elizabeth Quincey almost certainly understood the conscience in these terms. In an 1802 letter to De Quincey, she presents the conscience in an Evangelical register, implicitly addressing guilt and fear. The letter concerns the death of her friend, Mrs. Schreiber (Morrison, *The English Opium-Eater* 18). Elizabeth states that “Lord C[arbery]—poor fellow! who has not much credit in the world—not only writes, but I believe has acted towards Mrs. Schreiber with most disinterested tenderness, and has laid up nothing to disturb his conscience through her long illness as far as she was concerned” (Japp, *Memorials* 1: 69). Lord Carbery has performed to the Evangelical standard and “has laid up nothing to disturb his conscience”: he would feel neither guilt nor fear. Elizabeth reveals how she would expect De Quincey’s conscience to operate: when he did not meet the Evangelical standard, he would feel guilt and fear; his conscience would be disturbed.

Evangelicals would have used guilt and fear to stress De Quincey’s responsibility as a youth to be obedient to his mother. Venn states that the “crime of disobedience to parents is marked as the just object of the curse and judgments of God” (250-51), and he cites Deuteronomy 21.20-21: “This our son is stubborn and rebellious, he will not obey our voice; he is a glutton and a drunkard. And all the men of his city shall stone him with stones, that he die:

so shalt thou put evil away from among you; and all Israel shall hear, and fear." Venn links the stoning to "the curse and judgments of God," and the desired results are "fear" and guilt: "What strong conceptions of the great guilt of disobedience to parents, must this ordinance raise in the minds of all who regard the word of God?" (252). Venn's phrasing foreshadows a connection for De Quincey: youthful rebellion and later addiction. Venn's son is "a drunkard"; what about a rebellious son who *becomes* a specialised drunkard, an opium-drinker, a consumer of laudanum?

Even late in her life, Elizabeth still used guilt and fear in her appeals to De Quincey. In a letter dated 30 July 1835, she addresses a "very painful subject[]": she knows that he is "still an Opium-Eater, and this dreadful Drug, as it is its nature to ruin the unhappy recipient, thus acts on you, destroying alike both the will and the power to discharge all bounded duties" (Japp, *Memorials* 2: 173). She invokes guilt by terming opium a "very painful" subject and by referring to unfulfilled but "bounded duties"; and she invokes fear by predicting "ruin" for "the unhappy recipient," from the drug and, ultimately, God. She does not mention the conscience, but the term "dreadful," as in Randolph's *Sermons*, likely implies both guilt and fear. This dissertation contends that though most parents would use guilt and fear to address a child who is an addict, an Evangelical would be using the terms in a specific way, to refer to depravity.

Florence noted that her father associated fear and guilt with the struggle to meet familial responsibilities, and that he used opium to both heighten and temper the emotions. "It was an accepted fact among us that he was able when saturated with opium to persuade himself and delighted to persuade himself (the excitement of terror was a real delight to him) that he was dogged by dark and mysterious foes," and that "this persuasion gave a sanction to his conscience for getting away from … home" so that he could work (Eaton 374). According to Florence, though needing to work, De Quincey still feels negatively about leaving his family, as he gives

"a sanction to his conscience" while using opium. De Quincey, then, uses opium to both heighten ("excitement") and temper the fear and guilt linked to work, as any heightened feeling is simultaneously depressed by the opiate, and he would have been further conflicted because he was not only working but also spending the money from work on his addiction rather than solely on his family. If De Quincey developed his understanding of the conscience from his Evangelical education, the explicit "terror" and implicit guilt in Florence's description are connected to his understanding of depravity. This dissertation employs Evangelical texts to demonstrate how Evangelicals used the conscience to press individuals to interpret the Christian experience as the feeling of struggle, depravity, and doubt, and, as suggested by Florence's recollection, to contend that De Quincey was influenced by this aspect of his Evangelical education. The next section considers De Quincey's use of the conscience to address his struggle to meet a Christian standard and his engagement with the depraved component of the self, especially in the 1856 *Confessions*.

3.2 The Conscience in De Quincey's Texts

Though not holding the Evangelical position on depravity, De Quincey associates the conscience with the struggle to meet a Christian standard. In "Alexander Pope," he distinguishes the "Christian lady": Paganism cannot "cite from the depths of a human spirit any such fearful shadow as Christian faith evokes from an afflicted conscience" (16: 357). In a manuscript from "Fragments on Christianity," "The conscience of a Pagan," he states that the Pagan had "a conscience pointing to detection: it pointed only to the needs of society, and caused fear, shame, anxiety, only on the principals of sympathy" (20: 415-16), with the fundamental difference that depravity shapes that feeling in the Christian, as he clarifies in "The Sphinx's Riddle (1850): "the ancients (meaning the Greeks and Romans before the time of Christianity) had no idea, not by

the faintest vestige, of what in the scriptural system is called *sin*" (17: 15-16). In a manuscript in *Brevia*, he posits that the "sense of conscience strictly is not touched under any preceding system of religion," for "It is the daughter of Christianity," and that "the voice of God is the conscience" (21: 129). Like Evangelicals, he identifies the conscience as Christian, and he associates it with feeling marked by "anxiety" (struggle), "shame" (guilt), and "fear" (or "the fearful shadow" of "Christian faith"); and because the "voice of God is the conscience," he indicates that God's negative intervention consists of guilt and fear, and that such emotions push humans to struggle.

De Quincey extends the conscience to his struggle to meet a Christian standard and God's negative intervention. In a manuscript related to "Suspiria"—classed under "Notes and drafts for 'The Afflictions of Childhood'"—he posits that "God spake of the Solitude of a single nature … none knows the secrets of a man's mind but his God, his conscience and his friends" (15: 557). In "Suspiria," he identifies the case "where the affliction, seemingly hushing itself to sleep, suddenly soars upwards again upon combining with *another* mode of sorrow; viz. anxiety without definite limits, and the trouble of a reproaching conscience" (15: 162). The conscience affects him through feeling marked by struggle, "anxiety without definite limits"; and as per manuscript evidence, that anxiety should be understood as including guilt and fear, as he associates the conscience with "fear, shame, [and] anxiety" (20: 415-16). Also in "Suspiria," after leaving his sister's corpse, though not mentioning the conscience, he refers to feeling connected with it: he "slunk like a guilty thing with stealthy steps from the room" and had "tainted with fear" his "farewell sacred to love" (15: 145). In these texts, the conscience pushes him into continued struggle: it causes "the affliction, seemingly hushing itself to sleep," to "suddenly soar[] upwards again" in the form of "anxiety without definite limits," and the guilt and fear linked to Elizabeth's death push him to struggle further with that death. This dissertation

maintains that these texts are shaped by Evangelicalism because Evangelicals stressed guilt and fear in relation to depravity, and they addressed depravity with death (as noted in Section Two).

Like Evangelicals, De Quincey frames God's negative intervention through the conscience as punishment; but unlike Evangelicals, he presents humans as having a choice, due to his position on depravity, where humans possess the depraved and divine components of the self. In "The Nautico-Military Nun of Spain" (1847), he compares the protagonist Kate to the mariner in Coleridge's "The Ancyent Marinere" (1798). Kate kills her brother, and the "punishment" (16: 117) "of Kate is exactly that of Coleridge's '*Ancient Mariner*'": she is "alone with" an "afflicted conscience" and "God" (16: 116). He depicts negative intervention through the conscience as punishment, as Kate is punished by "God" and her "afflicted conscience," echoing the phrasing in manuscript: "the voice of God is the conscience" (21: 129); and her punishment is the result of choice, matching his position on depravity: Kate decides to kill.

A significant instance of the conscience is the 1856 *Confessions*. De Quincey applies an 1800 experience in the Whispering Gallery at St. Paul's Cathedral to the 1802 abandonment of Manchester Grammar School. He uses the Whispering Gallery as an analogue for the conscience. The depiction of the abandonment supports the contention that his Evangelical education 1796-1800 had a major influence on him, as the period of closest engagement between Elizabeth and De Quincey prior to Manchester Grammar School was at Bath, 1796-1800. After his first year at Winkfield, De Quincey would spend the summer of 1800 with his friend Lord Westport traveling in Ireland; he returned in September (Morrison, *The English Opium-Eater* 37). The next school that he attended was Manchester Grammar School in November 1800. He would stay with Elizabeth at Everton during the summer of 1801 and debate with her between 1800 and 1802 about school, both in person and through letter, and he left the school in July 1802 (Morrison,

The English Opium-Eater 50, 63). The period of closest engagement before he abandoned the school remains 1796-1800, and it would have influenced his understanding of his definitive act of youthful rebellion and later addiction.

15 July 1800: De Quincey and Westport arrive in London and visit St. Paul's Cathedral, the Whispering Gallery (Morrison, *The English Opium-Eater* 38). The Whispering Gallery, thirty meters above the cathedral floor, received its name "because a whisper from one side of the gallery can be heard from the other side" ("St. Paul's Cathedral"). De Quincey exaggerates the phenomenon. Lindop states that "a whisper uttered at any point is carried round the outer wall at almost its original volume, but is not amplified" (Explanatory Notes to *Confessions* 351). Morrison provides the reason: De Quincey was not interested in "physical fact" but "imaginative truth," and "Westport's whisper became a powerful metaphor of quiet circumstances surging into dangerous tumult" (*The English Opium-Eater* 38). This dissertation adds that the metaphor is of rebellion rising into the feeling of struggle, depravity, and doubt (and the associated emotions of guilt and fear).

De Quincey inserts the Whispering Gallery experience into a visionary episode before he leaves Manchester Grammar School. He is afflicted by his conscience. He remembers that Lord Westport spoke "in the softest of whispers a solemn but not acceptable truth," and that it reached him, "after running along the walls of the gallery," "as a deafening menace in tempestuous uproars" (2: 156). In the moments before leaving the school, De Quincey states that he "dreamed ominously with open eyes" that "once again that London menace broke angrily upon [him]" (2: 156). The voice, "too late for warning," admonishes him: "Thou wilt not say that what thou doest is altogether approved in thy secret heart. Even now thy conscience speaks against it in sullen whispers; but at the other end of thy long life-gallery that same conscience will speak to thee in

volleying thunders" (2: 156). He employs an Evangelical register, consulting his "secret heart" and "conscience," and he depicts himself as experiencing an escalating feeling of struggle: in 1802 the conscience speaks in "sullen whispers"; in 1856, it speaks in "volleying thunders."

The manuscript "Lady Carbery's Visit to Manchester Grammar School; An 'evil choice'" addresses the conscience, the abandonment of the school, and depravity. Roberts notes that the manuscript is probably linked to the manuscript "My Mother" (Introduction "Lady Carbery's Visit" 430); and this dissertation posits that the connection serves as another indicator that De Quincey's Evangelical education shaped his understanding of the conscience. De Quincey questions why he made the decision to abandon the school: "I had but 18 months to serve. Oh wherefore could I not have been wiser? … Whisper of … monitorial wisdom, that even then wert sighing over the evil choice which I made, wherefore was it that to thee I should so obstinately have been deaf?" (19: 431). He seems to term the conscience "monitorial wisdom," recalling Milner, who calls the conscience the "internal monitor" (*Essay on Human Liberty* 128). The "monitorial wisdom" makes him aware of depravity in explicit terms, as the decision is an "evil choice"; and he distinguishes his position from Evangelicals by framing depravity as a choice, implying that the possibility of an alternate choice exists, where he could engage with the divine component of the self.

In the 1856 *Confessions,* linking rebellion and addiction, De Quincey presents his decision to abandon Manchester Grammar School as destining him to the feeling of struggle, depravity, and doubt. After leaving the school, he wants to let his sister Mary know about his plans, so he visits his mother's new residence, the Priory, and is discovered. He structures the discussions on the conscience, which suggest that Elizabeth uses the term. Elizabeth reminds him about the example that he is setting for his brothers, and he describes his reaction: "My

conscience smote me at these words: I felt something like an electric shock" (2: 168-69). The "shock" returns him to the Whispering Gallery: "Here now … rang like a solemn knell, reverberating from the sounding-board within my awakened conscience, one of those many self-reproaches so dimly masked, but not circumstantially prefigured, by the secret thought under the dome of St. Paul's about its dread Whispering Gallery" (2: 169). That he frames the Whispering Gallery around struggle and depravity is suggested by his description of the conscience and resulting feeling. Venn desires to establish as a constant "the lashes of an awakened conscience" (151), and De Quincey is tormented by his "awakened conscience," experiencing guilt ("self-reproaches") and fear ("dread"). Importantly, he contends, in this, a revision of an autobiography of addiction, that his life has been affected by the decision. He states "that in some mysterious way the sense and the consequences of this error would magnify themselves at every stage of life, in proportion as they were viewed retrospectively from greater and greater distances" (2: 171). He identifies feeling connected with struggle and depravity and guilt and fear, and he strengthens it, extending it to his entire life—one shaped profoundly by addiction: "the sense and the consequences of this error … magnify themselves at every stage of life." This dissertation contends that if the decision condemns him to that feeling, he presents experience after the school as, primarily, struggle, depravity, and God's negative intervention, which translates to the absence of the divine component of the self and the positive experience of God's love, and to doubt that the divine recovers from the decision; and that doubt is contextualised by his subsequent addiction. Though he dates his addiction to 1813, in this revision of *Confessions*, he still depicts forty-three years of addiction as shaped by the decision to abandon Manchester Grammar School. More generally, this dissertation shows that like Evangelicals, De Quincey used the conscience to present the Christian experience as the feeling of struggle, depravity, and

doubt in important manuscripts and texts, such as the manuscripts from "Fragments on Christianity" and the texts "Alexander Pope," "Suspiria," "The Military Nun," and *Confessions*.

Conclusion

In "The Works of Alexander Pope" (1848), De Quincey states that the individual "owes to the impassioned books which he has read, many a thousand more of emotions than he can consciously trace back to them. Dim by their originations, these emotions yet arise in him, and mould him through life like the forgotten incidents of childhood" (16: 339). Though he did not term Evangelical texts "impassioned," they affected him, providing him with "emotions" that "mould[ed] him through life, like the forgotten incidents of childhood." This dissertation maintains that De Quincey's Evangelical education warrants renewed examination. One, the examination provides a more accurate assessment of his relationship with his mother. Two, it demonstrates that Evangelicalism affected him from an early date, and that the pivotal years were 1796-1800, especially 1799. Three, it shows that the conscience is a significant way to illustrate how he was shaped throughout his life by his education. Specifically, Evangelicalism pressed him to interpret the Christian experience as the feeling of struggle, depravity, and doubt.

Notes

[1] In *Confessions,* De Quincey states that his addiction began in 1813: "from this date, the reader is to consider me as a regular and confirmed opium-eater" (2: 55).

[2] Jordan foregrounds the "austerity of Mrs. De Quincey" (*De Quincey to Wordsworth* 5). Though Lindop recognises the presence of Evangelicalism in De Quincey's texts, he undermines the seriousness of De Quincey's intellectual engagement with Elizabeth by establishing the lack of affection as the main factor in the relationship: De Quincey "did not naturally feel much love for his mother, and in adult life was well aware that there had been an emotional gap in his childhood experience" (*The Opium-Eater* 7). Similarly, John Barrell focuses on De Quincey's "alienat[ion]" from "the affections of his mother" (57).

[3] *Poems by William Cowper in Two Volumes*: the third edition was published 1787. Cowper dated his religious conversion from 1764 (Baird).

[4] As will be addressed in greater detail in Chapter Three, Evangelicals had to defend against charges of religious extremism that connected them to the Puritans of the Civil War. Jon Mee states that "If through Methodism and the Evangelical movements … affect [or feeling] came to play an increasing role in eighteenth-century religion, that role was carefully envigilated to make sure that it did not degenerate into [the] enthusiasm" of the Civil War (Mee 13). As Mee notes, though, "despite the fact that both kept within the bounds of the Church of England, [the Methodist founder John] Wesley and even [Hannah] More were accused of enthusiasm at different times" (16). Critics blurred the distinctions between Evangelicalism and the religious extremism of the Civil War.

[5] This is the date of the fourth edition.

[6] Romans 6.23: "For the wages of sin *is* death."

[7] Lindop suggests that these lines are from Sir John Harrington's translation of *Orlando Furioso* (Explanatory Notes to *Confessions* 362). De Quincey could be recalling Harrinton's translation, but he does not mention it, and the 1799 context favours Hoole's translation: "And now such looks of deep devotion wore, / Not holy Paul, or blest Hilario more!" (Ariosto 8.309-10).

[8] Morrison states that when De Quincey heard of Elizabeth's death in early 1846, he had not seen her in fourteen years (*The English Opium-Eater* 344): their last meeting would have been approximately 1832. If 1832 was the year of the last recitation, the story would have been first told in 1787. De Quincey would have been two or three. The date seems early. Indeed, Morrison notes that they communicated after 1832 through letter (344). This dissertation, then, suggests that she last told the story to him shortly before her death, either through letter or someone in contact with him.

[9] Japp records the first quotation, but not the second (*Life and Writings* 41). The italicised text is underlined in the letters.

[10] This quotation is published in Japp's *Life and Writings* (37).

[11] Venn uses the conscience throughout *Duty of Man*: the term is mentioned on fifty-one separate pages. Venn provides a source (128): "I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost" (Rom. 9.1).

[12] Ecclesiastes 9.3: "yea, also the heart of the sons of men is full of evil, and madness *is* in their heart while they live, and after that *they* go to the dead."

[13] Laura Chapel opened in 1796, and could hold 1000 (Norgate). Advent begins on the Sunday closest to 30 November and lasts until Christmas ("Advent").

[14] The Mores would sell the house in February 1804 and move permanently to Barley Wood (Stott 258).

[15] Mary De Quincey (1784-1820) married Reverend Philp Serle in 1819 (Japp, *Memorials* 2: 84).

Chapter Three

De Quincey's Literature of Power: The Struggle against Depravity

Introduction

The concept of the literature of power is one of De Quincey's major contributions to literary theory,[1] and he developed his position on depravity through it. This chapter extends De Quincey's interpretation of the Christian experience—experience as the feeling of struggle, depravity, and doubt—to the literature of power. This chapter has four sections. The first section notes that in "On Christianity, as an Organ of Political Movement" (1846), De Quincey separates Paganism and Christianity through the struggle against depravity, and that he questions that separation by including an extreme position on depravity where the Christian descends into Paganism.[2] The other sections show that in manuscripts, texts on the literature of power, and autobiographical texts, he challenges "Christianity" by emphasising depravity rather than the divine component of the self—establishing a duality that addresses depravity in a way that approaches Evangelicalism—and that he develops that extreme position on depravity. Specifically, in "Suspiria De Profundis" (1845), due to a feeling that he associates with both his sister Elizabeth's early death and his own later addiction, he explores a position more extreme than Evangelicalism, where the Christian Pariah, in a desperate struggle against depravity, descends into Pagan depravity. The descent raises doubts about the transformative abilities of Christianity and the strength of the divine in De Quincey and other humans.

1. Pagan and Christian; Evangelicals and De Quincey in "Christianity"

This section addresses how key Evangelicals and De Quincey separated Paganism and Christianity. Evangelicals explicated feeling to reveal the struggle against depravity as a key component of the Christian experience: the Pagan was not aware of depravity; and the Pagan was not aware of the power of God to counter depravity, which was exemplified in the Atonement, Christ's sacrifice for depravity; therefore, the Pagan could not struggle against depravity, and was marked by a stronger manifestation of depravity. In "Christianity," with his explication of feeling and the Christian experience, De Quincey separates Paganism and Christianity through the struggle against depravity, but he also questions that separation by including a section that contains an extreme position on depravity that allows what Evangelicals would not: the individual, aware of and engaged with Christianity, can descend into Pagan depravity.

1.1 Evangelicals

Evangelicals separated definitively the Pagan and Christian. In *Strictures,* Hannah More states that Christianity acts "upon the heart and life, so that the *duties* of Christianity may be seen to grow out of its *doctrines*: by which it will appear that Christian virtue differs *essentially* from Pagan: it is of a quite different kind: the plant itself is different, it comes from a different root, and grows in a different soil" (252). In *Essays,* John Foster identifies the "principles" as the key; he cannot convert Pagan "principles" to Christian "principles," so he cannot "convert[]" the "illustrious heathen" "into a christian character" (364). In *Sermons,* Francis Randolph traces "the tenets and precepts of pagan philosophy"—"the wandering footsteps of idolatry"—"to the very point of departure from the true faith" and "Christianity as it is—the triumph of grace over sin and death" (6). "[*D*]*octrines*," "principles," and "tenets" separate Pagans and Christians.

Specifically, by explicating feeling to reveal the struggle against depravity as an essential component of the Christian experience, Evangelicals aligned Paganism with a stronger manifestation of depravity. In *Duty of Man*, John Venn states that God must "change [the Christian's] prosperity into trouble … [and] joy into heaviness" and "scourge him with pain, or by fearful apprehensions of impending punishment must awaken the sleeper into sensibility" (42). Venn identifies Christian feeling as struggle—"trouble," "heaviness," "pain," and "fearful apprehensions"—and the absence of that struggle separates Paganism and Christianity: "Deal not so madly any longer as to prefer … a state of pagan ignorance and estrangement from God" (359). Pagans exist in a state of "ignorance and estrangement from God," so they cannot know depravity and the power of God to counter depravity; therefore, they cannot struggle against depravity. In *Gibbon's Account*, Joseph Milner stresses feeling: "Christianity is from heaven, and is not understood, exercised, and practiced, but by a *spiritual* understanding, far superior to that which is merely *rational*" (259). With that feeling as a foundation, in *Church of Christ*, Joseph and Isaac Milner are able to claim that "Christianity found mankind in a universal state of sin and misery" (1), that "sincere conflict against the sin of our nature … is peculiarly Christian" (332-33), and that "For humility, the basis of a Christian's virtue, the pagan has not even a name in his language. The glory of God is the end of virtue in the system of one,—his own glory is the end of virtue in the system of the other" (170). The term "humility" reflects the important role of depravity: Christians are aware of depravity and know that they require the Atonement; and through the Atonement, they know the power of God to counter depravity, or the "glory of God." Without that awareness, humans cannot struggle against depravity—"sincere conflict against the sin of our nature"—so Paganism becomes shaped by a stronger form of depravity: "universal … sin and misery." In *Practical View*, William Wilberforce starts with Christian feeling: "You

should endeavour not only to convince the understanding, but also to affect the heart … you must secure the reinforcement of the passions" (61). That feeling allows him to condemn Pagans: "Behold their sottish idolatries, their absurd superstitions, their want of natural affection, their brutal excesses, their unfeeling oppression, their savage cruelty!" (22). Paganism is marked by the absence of struggle and a stronger manifestation of depravity: the "excesses" of depravity.

An 1802 letter from Elizabeth Quincey to De Quincey while he was at Manchester Grammar School offers insight into his later explication of feeling, the Christian experience, and Paganism. She instructs De Quincey, "Ask God humbly to enlighten your understanding to receive the truths of His Word," and "read history; it will show you the corruption of human nature and the overruling power and providence of God" (Japp, *Memorials* 1: 75). From feeling, an "enlighten[ed]" "understanding," she holds that he will realise "the corruption of human nature," or depravity, and "the overruling power and providence of God," which would include the Atonement. To support her claim, she directs his attention to "history": and if she follows the above Evangelicals, she would contend that Christianity is distinguished from Paganism because Pagans could not struggle against depravity, and that Paganism was marked by a stronger manifestation of depravity.[3] In "Christianity," De Quincey uses similar phrasing to Elizabeth: he explicates feeling to reveal the Christian experience, so as to separate that experience from Paganism, and like an "enlighten[ed]" "understanding," he uses the "understanding heart" (15: 361). This dissertation reviews these Evangelicals to contextualise De Quincey's separation of Paganism and Christianity and his position on depravity that questions that separation.

1.2 “Christianity”

The Introduction to this dissertation argues that “Christianity” is a necessary text to understand De Quincey’s interpretation of the Christian experience. In “Christianity,” he starts with feeling, and he addresses God and the human relation to God as revealed in the Incarnation, so he presents, as a defining characteristic of the Christian experience, the struggle between the divine and the depraved components of the self. However, manuscripts, texts on the literature of power, and autobiographical texts more accurately reflect his interpretation. Specifically, this chapter demonstrates that in these texts, De Quincey challenges “Christianity”: he starts with feeling, and he addresses depravity and the human relation to God as revealed in the Atonement, so he presents the struggle between the depraved and divine components of the self as a defining characteristic of the Christian experience, establishing a duality that emphasises depravity in a way that approaches Evangelicalism. (Where detailing De Quincey’s position on depravity, this dissertation uses interchangeably both depravity and the depraved component.) In addition, in “Christianity,” like Evangelicals, he separates Paganism and Christianity through the struggle against depravity, but unlike Evangelicals, he also questions that separation by including an extreme position on depravity where he allows the Christian to descend into Pagan depravity. This chapter shows that in manuscripts, texts on the literature of power, and autobiographical texts, De Quincey further develops that extreme position on depravity.

Though Frederick Burwick has identified a connection between “Christianity” and key texts on Paganism, this dissertation notes that “Christianity” includes an extreme position on depravity. Burwick states that in “Christianity,” De Quincey “further elaborates the contrasts between ‘Paganism and Christianity’ that he had earlier addressed in ‘The Pagan Oracles’” (1842) and manuscripts “Pagan Mythology” and “On Pagan Sacrifices” (Introduction to

"Christianity" 344). Since "Christianity" is the culmination of his efforts on addressing Paganism and Christianity, the text serves as an important example of De Quincey's extreme position.

Like Evangelicals, in "Christianity," to separate Paganism and Christianity, he explicates feeling to reveal the struggle against depravity as a key characteristic of the Christian experience. Stressing the "act of Confession" (15: 351), he states that "it is scarcely necessary to say that this was wanting [in Pagan religion]," as "penitential feelings were unknown amongst the ancients, and had no name" (15: 351-52). He holds that "Confession" and "penitential feelings" are unique to Christianity, and that they are linked to depravity. The awareness of depravity is essential, as suggested by the similar terms in "The Sphinx's Riddle" (1850). He states "that the ancients (meaning the Greeks and Romans before the time of Christianity) had no idea, not by the faintest vestige, of what in the scriptural system is called *sin*" (17: 15-16). Pagans have "no idea" of "*sin*," so they cannot struggle against depravity through "Confession" or "penitential feelings."

In "Christianity," like Evangelicals, he depicts Paganism as marked by a stronger manifestation of depravity. He states that human "delusions" created the Pagan gods, "the very falsest of ideals," and that the Pagan religion is a "shocking monument … of the infinity by which man may descend below his own capacities of grandeur" (15: 354). Paganism exemplifies depravity unchecked, as it is a "shocking monument"; and he indicates that he often considers Paganism in this way, by stating that "When a man pauses for the purpose of attentively reviewing the Pantheon of Greece and Rome, what strikes him at the first with most depth of impression and with most horror is, the *wickedness* of this Pantheon … The odour of corruption" (15: 357). De Quincey includes himself in the example, "attentively reviewing the Pantheon," for, as he reiterates throughout "Christianity" and related texts, recalling Evangelical terms for depravity, he is consistently struck by Paganism's "horror," "*wickedness*," and "corruption."

In "Christianity," though De Quincey separates Paganism and Christianity through the struggle against depravity, he questions that separation by including an extreme position where Pagan depravity threatens the Christian. He states that when the present contemplator of Paganism "descends to … those twelve gods of the supreme house … secret horror comes over him at the thought that demons, reflecting the worst aspects of brutal races, ever *could* have levied worship from his own" (15: 357). Though "It is true [these demons] do no longer [receive worship] as regards *our* planet," he warns that "what *has* been apparently *may* be," and that the contemplator "trembles in thinking that abominations, whose smoke ascended through so many ages to the *supreme* heavens, may, or might, so far as human resistance is concerned, again become the law" (15: 357). The past is not the most disturbing: the present is generally secured—"*our* planet" is safe—but there is no guarantee: "what *has* been apparently *may* be." The key factor is "human resistance." Unlike Evangelicals, he holds, then, that the Christian's "resistance" might be significantly reduced, to the extent that the individual, aware of and engaged with Christianity, descends into Pagan depravity. This dissertation provides insight into De Quincey's separation of Paganism and Christianity and the extreme position on depravity that questions that separation. The next sections show that the extreme position is influenced by Evangelicalism, and that Elizabeth's death and his addiction push him to develop that position.

2. The Literature of Power and Depravity

This section addresses the concept of the literature of power and its challenging of "Christianity." De Quincey provides two major texts on the concept, and he connects it to Christianity.[4] The first text is "Letters to a Young Man Whose Education has been Neglected" (1823): he illustrates the concept with John Milton's *Paradise Lost* (1667), and he indicates that

the concept is linked to the difference between Paganism and Christianity. The second text is "The Works of Alexander Pope" (1848): he returns to *Paradise Lost* and key ideas in "Letters," and he employs terms to describe the literature of power first used in "Christianity": feeling, oars, and sails. In "Letters" and "Alexander Pope," in contrast to "Christianity," he explicates feeling to emphasise depravity, so he holds as a defining characteristic in his interpretation of the Christian experience, the struggle between the depraved and divine components. The literature of power, then, is marked by an emphasis on depravity that approaches Evangelicalism.

2.1 "Letters"

Critics have not significantly connected depravity to the literature of power. In "Letters," De Quincey attributes the concept of the literature of power to the poet William Wordsworth (1770-1850): "I must acknowledge my obligation to many years' conversation with Mr. Wordsworth" (3: 70). The statement, however, simplifies the matter.[5] Daniel Sanjiv Roberts states that "Evangelical thinking may be seen to operate within the spiritualized and aesthetic sphere to which literary power is arrogated by De Quincey," and that in one respect, De Quincey's "view of poetry…was not far from the Evangelical notion of human nature as being corrupt" ("Hannah More, Thomas De Quincey, and the Literature of Power"). Though noting depravity, Roberts confines depravity to this single observation, and he does not illustrate how depravity functions in the literature of power: one reason that Roberts misses depravity is that he does not address key sections that made *Paradise Lost*, as Doreen Rosman notes (178), an important text for Evangelicals. Another reason that the concept has not been linked to depravity is that the emphasis changes and depravity might appear to be an essential aspect of only the later explication. Jonathan Bate notes the change from the 1823 to the 1848 explication, stating

that in 1848 De Quincey "shifts the ground of the discussion of power from the affective to the ethical" (149). This dissertation shows that depravity was always a key consideration, and that by incorporating an emphasis on depravity, De Quincey's concept of the literature of power is, in a way, more indebted to Evangelicalism than Wordsworth.

In "Letters," De Quincey connects the literature of power to feeling and depravity. He states that "All, that is literature, seeks to communicate power" (3: 71). He situates power second to feeling, though, as the communication of power depends on feeling: power is the experience of "feel[ing] vividly; and with a vital consciousness, emotions which ordinary life rarely or never supplies occasions for exciting" (3: 71). Though he does not identify the specifics associated with that feeling, he offers strong suggestions with his examples. He explicates feeling in an Evangelical register: like Evangelicals, feeling reveals, primarily, depravity, as seen in the key example that employs Milton, Wordsworth, and Romans 6.23 (*Authorized King James Version*):

> But, if Milton has been able to *inform* this empty theatre—peopling it with Titanic shadows, forms that sat at the eldest counsels of the infant world, chaos and original night,—
>
> —Ghostly shapes,
>
> To meet at noontide, Fear and trembling Hope,
>
> —Death the Skeleton,
>
> And Time the Shadow—
>
> so that, from being a thing to inscribe with diagrams, it has become under his hands a vital agent of the human mind; I presume that I may justly express the tendency of the Paradise Lost, by saying that it communicates power. (3: 71)

Paradise Lost communicates power, and De Quincey selects a specific point in the text: the "forms that sat at the eldest counsels of the infant world, chaos and original night." He may refer to Book 2, where the gates of hell are opened and Satan travels over Chaos; however, because he combines Milton's text with Wordsworth's "Yew Trees," he seems to refer specifically to Book 10, where the Fall occurs in Eden, and Sin and Death sense it and build a bridge over Chaos, creating "a passage broad, / Smooth, easy, inoffensive down to hell" (Milton 10.304-5). That this is the section that De Quincey alludes to is indicated by his combining Milton's Chaos with Wordsworth's "Death the Skeleton" (27). In *Paradise Lost*, Sin is the primary figure, to whom Death becomes attached, and Sin and Death are inextricably linked to the Fall. Sin states this:

> Methinks I feel new strength within me rise,
> Wings growing, and dominion given me large
> Beyond this deep; whatever draws me on,
> Or sympathy, or some connatural force
> Powerful at greatest distance to unite
> With secret amity things of like kind
> By secret conveyance. Thou my shade
> Inseparable must with me along:
> For Death from Sin no power can separate. (Milton 10.243-51)

Sin and Death are "Inseparable," so the allusion to Wordsworth's "Death" implies Milton's Sin. Both Milton and De Quincey likely engage with Romans 6.23: "For the wages of sin *is* death."[6] In this, his first major description of the literature of power, feeling reveals, primarily, depravity. The emphasis on depravity (rather than the divine in "Christianity") resembles Evangelicalism.

With the term infinite, the manuscript "On the mysterious idea of Sin," from "Fragments on Christianity," strengthens the connections among feeling, the literature of power, and depravity. In "Letters," De Quincey asks: "when I am thus suddenly startled into a feeling of the infinity of the world within me, is this power?" (3: 71). In "Sin," he links "*all* functions of the Infinite" to depravity: "there is no form through which the Infinite reveals itself in a sense comprehensible by man and adequate to man … but has been in its whole origin—in every part—and exclusively developed out of that tremendous mystery which lurks under the name of sin" (20: 421-22). "Letters" connects the literature of power to the "feeling of infinity of the world within"; and "Sin" reveals the infinite through depravity. Still, for De Quincey, the power of depravity relies on the awareness of its opposite: the divine component.

As argued in the Introduction to this dissertation, in the manuscript from "Fragments on Christianity," "If I have shewn that quickening spirit," De Quincey planned to move from depravity to the divine in a text that would have been the culmination of his intellectual efforts:[7]

> If I have detected that secret word which God subtly introduced into this world, kept in a state of incub[ation] for 2 millennia, then with the force and visible agency of a volcanic explosion forced into infinite disruption caused to kindle into a general fire—that word by which sadness is spread over the face of things but also infinite grandeur—then may I rightly lay this as one ch[apter] of my *Emend*[*ation*] *of H*[*uman*] *K*[*nowledge*]. (20: 443)

Depravity is "that word by which [infinite] sadness is spread over the face of things"; and in turn, depravity is "the word" that reveals the divine component: "also infinite grandeur." Unlike Evangelicals, he includes the divine component, but in a similar way as Evangelicals, he emphasises depravity, as seen through his use of the Atonement to address the divine component.

In “Letters,” De Quincey considers the human relation to God through the Atonement. As shown in the Introduction to this dissertation, Evangelicals emphasised depravity by addressing the divine (God and Christ) through the Atonement, as the Atonement stressed Christ’s sacrifice for depravity. Like Evangelicals, then, De Quincey emphasises depravity even where he addresses the divine. De Quincey argues that the criticism of Milton by August Wilhelm von Schlegel (1767-1845) is incomplete, as presented in *Lectures on Dramatic Art and Literature* (1809-1811) (“August Wilhelm von Schlegel”), where Schlegel recognises depravity and misses the Atonement. He paraphrases Schlegel: “Milton … did not consider that the Fall of Man was but an inchoate action, but a part of a system, of which the Restoration of Man is another and equally essential part” (3: 68). De Quincey counters that “Milton *did* consider this; and has provided for it by a magnificent expedient which a man who had read the Paradise Lost would have been likely to remember—viz. by the Vision combined with the Narrative of the Archangel, in which his final restoration is made know to Adam” (3: 68). He likely refers to the Archangel’s narrative in Books 11 and 12, where Michael reveals the future to Adam. In particular, Book 12 addresses the Atonement: Christ’s “ransom” (Milton 12.424) will “bruise the head of Satan, crush his strength / Defeating Sin and Death, his two main arms” (12.430-32). He attributes significance to the Atonement, stating that it ensures that *Paradise Lost* “closed with that *repose* necessary as the final impression of any great work of art” (3: 68). De Quincey identifies the power of *Paradise Lost* as being connected to depravity and Christ’s sacrifice for depravity; in other terms, he reveals a strong Evangelical influence on the concept of the literature of power.

De Quincey privileges the power of Christianity in “Letters.” He states that “the Antique or pagan literature is a polar antagonist to the modern or Christian literature,” and that the “difference of the Antique from the Christian literature … is not like that between English and

Spanish literature—species and species—but as between genus and genus" (3: 73). He, in turn, separates the power: "The advantages therefore are—1. the *power,* which it offers generally as a literature; 2. the new phasis under which it presents the human mind; the antique being the other hemisphere, as it were, which, with our own, or Christian hemisphere, composes the entire sphere of human intellectual energy" (3: 73). His division of literature matches his division of Paganism and Christianity. The emphasis on Christian literature—Milton and Wordsworth—suggests that greater power is in the "Christian hemisphere," and the "new phasis under which [Christianity] presents the human mind" anticipates the later definition in "Christianity," where the "mysteries of Christianity" reveal God and the human relation to God (15: 364). In "Letters," though, since he addresses depravity and the Atonement, he suggests that the "new phasis" is characterised by depravity, rather than the divine component as in "Christianity." This dissertation contends that "Letters" shows that the literature of power is marked by an emphasis on depravity approaching Evangelicalism, and that "Alexander Pope" is similar.

2.2 "Alexander Pope" and "Christianity"

In "Alexander Pope," De Quincey returns to *Paradise Lost*. Though he does not address the passages on depravity and the Atonement, as in "Letters," he still links power to Christian feeling. He states that "What you owe to Milton … is *power*, that is, exercise and expansion of your own latent capacity of sympathy with the infinite, where every pulse and each separate influx is a step upwards—a step ascending as upon a Jacob's ladder from earth to mysterious altitudes above the earth" (16: 337). De Quincey alludes to Jacob's ladder, signaling a Christian register,[8] and he implicitly associates that feeling with depravity and the divine component by

employing together the terms "*power*" and the "infinite." He addresses more generally *Paradise Lost* in 1848 because a significant portion of "Alexander Pope" deals with depravity.

Both "Christianity" and "Alexander Pope" characterise Christianity and the literature of power in similar terms: De Quincey begins with feeling and frames the effect of feeling as movement, and the similarities indicate that the literature of power engages with depravity and the divine component. In "Christianity," he states that "to *know* is not always to *feel*," and that he requires "that which the Scriptures in their profound philosophy entitle the 'understanding heart'" (15: 361). He also uses the term "understanding heart" to describe the literature of power in "Alexander Pope": this literature "is concerned with what is highest in man … the Scriptures speak not of the understanding, but of '*the understanding heart*,'—making the heart, *i.e.*, the great *intuitive* (or non-discursive) organ, to be the interchangeable formula for man in his highest state of capacity for the infinite" (16: 337).[9] De Quincey connects feeling to the individual's "highest state of capacity for the infinite," and in the key texts and manuscripts already reviewed in Section Two, depravity and the divine reveal the infinite. Indeed, depravity and the divine are central to Christianity and the literature of power: they act as the oars and sails. In "Christianity," he contends that in contrast "to the old pagan nations," "the mysteries of Christianity"—"presenting God under a new form and aspect, presenting man under a new relation to God"—"furnished the oars and sails, the moving forces, for the advance of this revolution" (15: 363). The depraved and divine components "present[] man under a new relation to God," and these "mysteries" act as "the oars and sails, the moving forces." The passage contextualises the one in "Alexander Pope" where he states that the "function" of the literature of power is "to *move*," that it is "an oar or sail," and that it "speaks … to the higher understanding or reason, but always *through* affections of pleasure and sympathy" (16: 336). To move, then, the literature of power

engages with depravity and the divine. In this section of "Alexander Pope," though he appears to maintain an emphasis on the divine, in a similar way as "Christianity," the next section demonstrates that with his explication of feeling and the involute, he develops from feeling an emphasis on depravity, so he identifies the struggle between the depraved and divine components as a defining characteristic in his interpretation of the Christian experience, in contrast to "Christianity." This dissertation maintains that "Letters" and "Alexander Pope" show that the literature of power is influenced by Evangelicalism; and the next section further considers the emphasis on depravity in the literature of power through De Quincey's concept of the involute.

3. The Involute and Depravity

This section posits that the involute is a key part of the literature of power, as it addresses the struggle between the depraved and divine components. One, in "Style" (1840-1841), De Quincey defines his project as explicating feeling in the involute, and in "Alexander Pope," he situates depravity as primary and the divine as secondary. Two, the first involute in "Suspiria" is the Atonement, and it makes him aware of the depraved and divine. Three, in "Alexander Pope," he frames Pope's "Eloisa to Abelard" (1717) in a similar way to the key involute in "Suspiria," Elizabeth's death, as they both reveal the Christian Pariah's desperate struggle against depravity. The involute challenges "Christianity" as it contains an emphasis on depravity similar to Evangelicalism: depravity is primary in the explication of feeling, and in the involute of Elizabeth's death, the depraved overwhelms the divine, revealing De Quincey to be a Pariah.

3.1 “Style,” “Alexander Pope,” and Christian Feeling

De Quincey describes his, the “impassioned” author’s, project as the explication of the involute (20: 16). In the “Preface” to *Selections Grave and Gay* (1853), he terms *Confessions of an English Opium-Eater* (1821, 1856) and “Suspiria” “impassioned prose” (20: 16), and in “Suspiria” he introduces the involute, terming it an “important truth” (15: 142). He states “that far more of our deepest thoughts and feelings pass to us through perplexed combinations of *concrete* objects, pass to us as *involutes* (if I may coin that word) in compound experiences incapable of being disentangled, than ever reach us *directly*, and in their own abstract shapes” (15: 142). In “Style,” he identifies the problem for authors engaged with “subjective exercises of the mind” like “meditative poetry” (essentially other terms for De Quincey’s own “impassioned prose”): “the problem before the writer is—to project his own inner mind; to bring out consciously what yet lurks by involution in many unanalysed feelings; in short, to pass through a prism, and radiate into distinct elements, what previously had been even to himself but dim and confused ideas, intermixed with each other” (12: 71). Robert Morrison notes the discrepancy between the definition of the involute in “Suspiria,” specifically the claim that the involute cannot be “disentangled,” and the claim in “Style,” that authors must “bring out consciously what yet lurks by involution”: Morrison identifies one instance where the involute is “partially or perhaps even fully” disentangled, Elizabeth’s death in “Suspiria” (Introduction to Confessions of an English Opium-Eater *and Other Writings* xxvii-xxviii). This dissertation offers the following explanation for the discrepancy: even where De Quincey disentangles an involute, such as Elizabeth’s death, tension remains because he explores feeling associated with his interpretation of the Christian experience, where the individual struggles with the depraved and divine components (a duality that emphasises depravity in a way that approaches Evangelicalism).

In “Alexander Pope,” De Quincey addresses feeling in detail, establishing connections among feeling, judgement, and the depraved and divine components. He begins with feeling and judgement: “the absolutely infinite influxes of feeling or combinations of feeling that vary the thoughts of man” are “the life of man as it is appreciable by heavenly eyes” (16: 354). These “heavenly eyes” judge feeling, and they read depravity first and the divine second: they read the potential that the individual has to push beyond depravity, to a certain extent, through the divine. He states that feeling and thought can never be brought “into conformity with the opening to truth that a faith like the Christian’s faith suggests,” as they offer “some sorrowful shadow of pollution” to the “heavenly tribunal” (16: 354), and he links depravity to feeling, specifically, as thoughts are polluted by “human passions”: “the numerous and evanescent elements that enter (half-observed or not observed at all) into our thoughts, [which] cannot *but* be tainted” (16: 355). Still, there is potential: “it is the *key* in which the thoughts move,” or “the governing—the predominant element it is which gives the character and tendency to the thought” (16: 355). He derives the potential to push beyond depravity from his position that the individual possesses the depraved and divine components. This dissertation contends that in these explications of feeling, De Quincey changes the emphasis from “Christianity,” with the depraved primary and the divine secondary, illustrating an emphasis on depravity that resembles Evangelicalism.

3.2 “Suspiria” and the Atonement

In “Suspiria,” De Quincey identifies Elizabeth’s death as the definitive involute—“so affecting and revolutionary” that it “will survive for [him] in the hour of death”—and he indicates that the involute is marked by struggle, or “antagonism” (15: 142). He states that “in the original *Opium Confessions* [he] endeavoured to explain the reason why death … is more

profoundly affecting in summer than in other parts of the year" (15: 142). The reason has to do with "antagonism" (15: 142). He posits that "the antagonism between the tropical redundancy of life in summer and the dark sterilities of the grave" brings "the other into stronger relief. But in [his] case there was even a subtler reason why the summer had this intense power of vivifying the spectacle or the thoughts of death" (15: 142). Elizabeth's death is "affecting and revolutionary" because it is linked to two "subtler" antagonisms: the death makes De Quincey aware of the depraved and divine components, and his desperate struggle against depravity.

To contextualise Elizabeth's death, De Quincey begins with an earlier involute, a childhood experience with the Bible, and he addresses the Atonement. He states that a young nurse would read to him and his sisters an illustrated Bible, and that "the fitful gloom and sudden lambencies of the room by fire-light suited … the divine revelations of power and mysterious beauty" (15: 143). A key phrase is "the divine revelations of power," as it signals engagement with the literature of power. Specifically, he engages with the Atonement, as he identifies what strikes them "Above all, [was] the story of a just man,—man and yet *not* man, real above all things and yet shadowy above all things, who had suffered the passion of death in Palestine" (15: 143). By alluding to "the passion," De Quincey invokes Christ's sacrifice ("Passion").[10] The Atonement "slept upon" De Quincey's "mind[] like early dawn upon the waters" (15: 143).

The Atonement makes De Quincey aware of the antagonism between the depraved and the divine. He becomes aware of the reason for Christ's sacrifice, and he employs the Pagan and Christian dichotomy: Delphi and Jerusalem. As per his argument in "Christianity," there was an awareness that occurred in Jerusalem that could not occur in Delphi: "Jerusalem was the *omphalos* [the navel] of mortality" (15: 143). Through the Atonement, he and his sisters understood "that mortality had been trampled under foot" (15: 143), and that it was needed for a

reason: “for that very reason there it was that mortality had opened its very gloomiest crater” (15: 143). In other terms, he addresses the divine as revealed through the Atonement: “the human had risen on wings from the grave” (15: 143); and he indicates that the Atonement reveals the depraved, the “very gloomiest crater”: “the divine had been swallowed up by the abyss” (15: 143). In “Sketches of Life and Manners,” “Oxford” (Aug. 1835), he elaborates on the antagonism. He is interested in “the idea of holiness and the antithetic idea of sin, as a violation of this awful and unimaginable sanctity” (10: 155).[11] The key dynamic is the “antithetic,” similar to the antagonistic. In “Suspiria,” like Evangelicals, he emphasises depravity even where he addresses the divine, as the Atonement stresses Christ’s sacrifice for depravity, so this dissertation maintains that with the involute of the Atonement, in contrast to “Christianity,” he presents human duality as the depraved and divine components. This awareness of “Scriptural events” (15: 143) is one of the “subtler reason[s] why the summer has the power of vivifying the spectacle or the thoughts of death” (15: 142). Still, De Quincey provides a subtler reason, further demonstrating that the concept of the literature of power, the involute, and “Suspiria” are marked by an emphasis on depravity that approaches Evangelicalism.

3.3 “Alexander Pope,” “Suspiria,” and the Christian Pariah

De Quincey is interested in the Pariah’s desperate struggle against depravity. Before addressing Elizabeth’s death, this dissertation previews that struggle in “Alexander Pope” where De Quincey comments on Pope’s “Eloisa to Abelard.” Pope adapts the historical account of Peter Abelard (1079-1142), a French theologian, who became involved with his student Heloise: their marriage was discovered, Abelard was castrated, and both turned to separate convents (Rogers 620). Pope bases his text on Eloisa’s discovery of Abelard’s letters after years of

separation: she struggles with her love for Abelard and her religious vows. De Quincey, though, understands Eloisa's struggle as exemplary of what this dissertation terms the Christian Pariah. David Masson states that Pariah was "one of the most indispensable words in [De Quincey's] vocabulary, and the corresponding notion one of his forms of thought," that he associated the Pariah with "the miserable and dismal on all sides of him"—"the slave, the pauper, the lazar, the criminal, the street outcast, and the maniac"—and that this "incessant wandering of his thoughts" should be understood as 'Christian'" (146-47). This dissertation focuses Masson's observations, adopts De Quincey's term, and applies it to his descriptions of the Christian in a desperate struggle against depravity.[12] Indeed, introducing Eloisa, De Quincey identifies the Pariah in all but name: "some people read the great lessons of spiritual ethics more pathetically in those that have transgressed them than in those that have been faithful to the end—read them in the Magdalen that fades away in penitential tears rather than in the virgin martyr triumphant on the scaffold" (16: 356). De Quincey addresses the conflict within Eloisa, "the dread powers let loose upon her tempestuous soul" (16: 356), and her desperate struggle. This dissertation, then, terms Eloisa and her various incarnations, the Christian Pariah.

De Quincey focuses on a specific passage in "Eloisa to Abelard." Eloisa situates herself against the Roman Vestal Virgins, "six priestesses … who tended the state cult of Vesta, the goddess of the hearth" ("Vestal Virgins"). Eloisa compares herself to the Vestal who has not erred. She states "How happy is the blameless vestal's lot" (Pope 207), with the "Eternal sunshine of the spotless mind" (209). Eloisa's experience is different: "Far other dreams my erring soul employ, / Far other raptures, of unholy joy" (223-24). Especially during the night, Eloisa struggles with her love for Abelard, where "Provoking daemons all restraint remove"

(230), “conscience sleeps” (225), and the divine is distanced. The Vestal, because she has not loved, is not tormented. Pope depicts Eloisa’s struggle in this way.

De Quincey alters the terms of the struggle: even if facing the same circumstances as Eloisa, the Vestal cannot experience what Eloisa experiences, due to Paganism.[13] Christianity shapes Eloisa’s struggle as a Pariah. De Quincey asks: “Wherefore and with what should she fight? She fought by turns against herself and against God, against her human nature and against her spiritual yearnings” (16: 357). De Quincey next dramatizes the struggle. He states that first Eloisa is presented with a vision of the divine component: “an immeasurable heaven that seems to touch her eyes: so near is she to its love” (16: 357). The depraved component, though, causes her to fall to Abelard, “the glory of his race,” and for that fall, “The heavens recede, and diminish to a starry point twinkling in an unfathomable abyss; they are all but lost for *her*” (16: 357). The result of the struggle is “grief”: “‘What is it,’ the Roman Vestal would have said, ‘that this Christian lady is afraid of?’ … Vestal! it is not fear, but grief” (16: 357). According to De Quincey, Eloisa senses the desperation of her struggle, and he returns to the term mentioned earlier in “Alexander Pope,” “heavenly tribunal”: he states that Eloisa “trembles as a guilty creature before a tribunal unveiled within the secrecy of her own nature,” and that “there was no such trembling in the heathen worlds, for there was no such secret tribunal,” as Pagans cannot experience the “fearful shadow as Christian faith evokes from an afflicted conscience” (16: 357). He presents this moment as revealing to Eloisa her desperate struggle against depravity. In this section of “Alexander Pope,” then, he first addresses Eloisa’s struggle as the depraved against the divine (“human nature” and “spiritual yearnings”), and where he dramatizes it, though he positions the divine first, he emphasises the depraved, to the extent that the divine is sensed only as “a starry point twinkling in an unfathomable abyss,” and this positioning is why the “heavenly

tribunal" mentioned earlier in "Alexander Pope" reads in feeling, primarily, depravity (rather than the divine), because of its strength. This dissertation contends that Eloisa mirrors the "revolutionary" involute in "Suspiria" (15: 142): the experience at Elizabeth's death-bed.

De Quincey describes an experience like Eloisa's where the divine component recedes: through death he becomes aware of his desperate struggle against depravity and status as a Pariah. Seemingly engaging with Romans 6.23—"For the wages of sin *is* death"—he reverses the action of the Edenic world of *Paradise Lost*, where depravity precedes death, and he adapts the action to the post-Edenic world, where death makes him aware of depravity. He describes the dream on Elizabeth's death-bed: "A vault seemed to open … a shaft which ran up for ever," and he "ran up the shaft for ever" (15: 144). Like Eloisa, he experiences the divine, as he "seemed to pursue the throne of God" (15: 144), and he has the divine recede: "*that* [the throne of God] also ran before us and fled away continually" (15: 144). The interconnection between death and depravity provides one reason why De Quincey exists "like a guilty thing with stealthy steps from the room" (15: 145) and identifies with "Ahasuerus, everlasting Jew": "thou when first flying through the gates of Jerusalem, and vainly yearning to leave the pursuing curse behind thee, couldst not more certainly have read thy doom of sorrow in the misgivings of thy troubled brain than I when passing for ever from my sister's room" (15: 145). Another more significant reason why he associates this death—"some Sarsar wind of death" (15: 144)—with depravity is because the death makes him aware of the extent of his depravity, and as the next section demonstrates, he links that depravity to the significant sorrow, anger, and resentment that he associates with Elizabeth's death. With death and depravity inseparable, he selects the formative death in his life to reveal his status as a Pariah, a Christian in a desperate struggle against depravity. The strength of depravity challenges "Christianity" and resembles Evangelicalism.

As concerns this involute, De Quincey incorporates the divine component in a more significant way in reflection. He describes the death-dream as "rich" "in truth for after years," and one "whose meanings in after years, when slowly [he] deciphered, suddenly there flashed upon [him] a new light" (15: 144). Though he does not state the "deciphered" "meanings," he concludes the section with a shift from death to the divine: he moves "from a blank negation to a secret hieroglyphic from God" (15: 151). Since De Quincey links the involute and the literature of power to human duality and starts with depravity, the other "meanings" would include the divine. The movement is similar in that manuscript from "Fragments on Christianity," "On the mysterious idea of Sin": beginning with a dream that introduces depravity, he moves to an adult's interpretation of that dream. He states that the dreams of "every Christian child" are "invested by an atmosphere of sublimity unknown to the greatest of Pagan philosophers" (20: 422). First, there is depravity, and second, there are other "eman[ations]: "those eman[ations] of the Infinite that do not settle upon the mind until mature years, are all projections—derivations or counterpositions—from the obscure idea of Sin" (20: 422). In "Suspiria," though Elizabeth's death first makes him powerfully aware of depravity, and then in "mature years" the divine component, De Quincey still remains in a desperate struggle: a Pariah. This dissertation maintains that De Quincey's status as a Pariah illustrates an emphasis on depravity that is similar to Evangelicalism—focusing Masson's general point about the Pariah being associated with Christianity—and the next section shows that De Quincey's status as a Pariah pushes him to explore the extreme position on depravity, where the Christian descends into Pagan depravity.

4. The Brocken Spectre / the Dark Interpreter and the Pariah's Descent into Pagan Depravity

This section explores an involute associated with the Pariah: the Brocken spectre / Dark Interpreter. The spectre represents a figure that exists inside and outside De Quincey's opium dreams: the Interpreter, "a reflex of my inner nature" (15: 184). This "inner nature" allows him to explore depravity that he associates with his feeling about Elizabeth's death and his addiction (as the "inner nature" is found in opium dreams in 1845, the dreams of addiction). In the manuscript "The Dark Interpreter," he presents the Interpreter as a depraved "inner nature" that encourages murder, and in the published "The Apparition of the Brocken," he uses Paganism and storms to represent that depravity. Without "The Dark Interpreter," he leaves the strength of the depravity represented by Paganism implicit rather than explicit. This dissertation contends that he employs only Paganism and storms because murder makes explicit the depravity that he associates with the spectre / Interpreter, and that he is reluctant to make explicit that depravity because he is describing his "inner nature." In contrast to "Christianity," as a Pariah, De Quincey emphasises, in his struggle, depravity rather than the divine component, and he develops his extreme position on depravity (allowing what Evangelicals would not): the Christian descends into Pagan depravity, raising doubts about Christianity and the divine component of the self.

4.1 "The Apparition of the Brocken": the Spectre / Interpreter and Paganism

De Quincey develops the spectre / Interpreter from a secondary text. Though the text has been identified by Burwick, this dissertation addresses the implications for De Quincey's position on depravity.[14] In the "The Apparition of the Brocken," De Quincey states that Sir David Brewster's *Letters on Natural Magic* (1832) is "the best scientific comment" on the spectre (15: 182).[15] The highest of the Hartz Mountains, long linked to Paganism, the Brocken is

known for a unique phenomenon: rare atmospheric conditions cause the sun to cast the individual's shadow onto the sky, clouds, or mist; the shadow is gigantic, shifting, and it tends to disappear and reappear. Brewster introduces the Brocken spectre by providing the geographic and historic context, and he mentions Paganism. The Brocken, "in the kingdom of Hanover," has two distinctive features connected to its history: "These names [the Sorcerer's Altar and the Sorcerer's Flower] are supposed to have originated in the rites of the great Idol Cortho, whom the Saxons worshipped in secret on the summit of the Brocken, when Christianity was extending her benignant sway over the subjacent mountains" (128). After making this point, Brewster distances Paganism: though he "can scarcely doubt that the spectre … must have been observed from the earliest times," he admits that "it is nowhere mentioned that this phenomenon was in any way associated with the objects of their idolatrous worship" (128-29). He offers a connection between the spectre and Paganism, but focuses on modern accounts and scientific explanation.

This dissertation recognises that De Quincey's account stresses Paganism and Christianity and the continued effects of Paganism in the present. Like Brewster, De Quincey begins by situating the Brocken geographically: "Ascend with me on this dazzling Whitsunday the Brocken of North Germany" (15: 182). Unlike Brewster, his account focuses on religion. "Whitsunday" is the Sunday that falls on the fiftieth day after Easter; and in England, it became linked to baptism, with the white clothes of the baptised providing the name White Sunday, later shortened to Whitsunday ("Pentecost"). De Quincey engages with the baptism tradition. He states that "this altar [the Sorcerer's Altar], which once reeked with bloody rites to Cortho, has long been rebaptized into [God's] holy service" (15: 184). The location is important because it historically situates the Brocken, in regards to Christianity. He elaborates in "Christianity," stating that the spread of Christianity was not uniform (recalling Brewster's claim): "The forests

of Germany … sheltered through ages in the north and east vast tribes of idolaters," and while some were converted by Charlemagne in the eighth and ninth centuries, "others … resum[ed] a fierce countenance of heathenism for the martial zeal of crusading knights in the thirteenth and fourteenth" centuries (15: 124). Similarly, in "The Apparition of the Brocken," he fears "that as [the Brocken spectre] lived so many ages with foul Pagan sorcerers, and witnessed so many centuries of dark idolatries, his heart may have been corrupted" (15: 183). The major differences between Brewster and De Quincey are these: De Quincey situates Whitsunday on the Brocken, a mountain associated with Paganism, he maintains a severe position on Paganism—as indicated by the terms "foul Pagan sorcerers," "dark idolatries," and "corrupted"—and he stresses uncertainty about the present: "What we fear" is that "even now his faith may be wavering or impure" (15: 183). He extends the spectre and Paganism into the present. This dissertation posits that he makes this extension to address depravity and his "inner nature" (15: 184).

4.2 "The Dark Interpreter": Paganism, Murder, and Depravity

De Quincey employs another text. In "The Dark Interpreter," Thomas Simmons's 1807 account of murder illustrates the Interpreter. This dissertation contends that "The Dark Interpreter" contextualises "The Apparition of the Brocken": the suspicion of Paganism in the Brocken spectre is analogous to the suspicion of a strong form of depravity in the Christian (and as suggested in this section, this depravity raises doubts about Christianity, unlike Evangelicals). Burwick notes that in manuscript "The Dark Interpreter" is "listed as preceding the 'Apparition of the Brocken," that "Without this narrative, the analogy that De Quincey developed between the Brocken Spectre and the Dark Interpreter" is "not fully accessible," and that "part of the reason for the omission was De Quincey's intent to further elaborate the story" (Introduction to

"The Dark Interpreter" 568). This dissertation offers another reason for the omission: "The Dark Interpreter" makes explicit the strength of depravity that De Quincey associates with Paganism.

"The Dark Interpreter" begins with an allusion to *Confessions*, where De Quincey identifies the Interpreter as Pagan. He states that "Perhaps you are aware of that power in the eye of many children by which in darkness they project a vast theatre of phantasmagorical figures" (15: 568). He details his experience: "I myself, at the date of my last confessions, had seen in this way more processions—generally solemn, mournful, belonging to eternity, but also at times glad, triumphal pomps, that seemed to enter the gates of Time—than all the religions of paganism, fierce or gay, ever witnessed" (15: 568-69). He characterises his "processions" as being greater "than all the religions of paganism," and with consideration of his previous statements on Paganism, the comparison should be understood as addressing depravity.

De Quincey uses murder to elaborate on the Interpreter. This dissertation posits that by connecting the Interpreter to a seemingly demonic figure that encourages murder, but which turns out to be something in humans, he associates the Interpreter with a strong form of depravity. He presents the case: "Thirty years ago, it may be, a man called Symons committed several murders in a sudden epilepsy of planet-struck fury" (15: 569). He states that Simmons was a servant, that he was rejected by one of the "mistresses," and that "Under this affront he brooded night and day … [until] one day he suddenly descended amongst the women of the family like an Avatar of vengeance" (15: 569). Morrison identifies the murderer as Thomas Simmons, and he confirms that Simmons did make the claim about a mysterious presence ("Murder in *Suspiria*" 260). This dissertation notes, though, that Simmons' account differs fundamentally from De Quincey's. According to *The Times*, Simmons "heard something, as it were, flutter behind him, and follow him in his pursuit; and when he overtook [Elizabeth Harris],

he felt himself unable to strike as he intended, and the knife fell from his hand" ("Murders At Hoddesdon").[16] Simmons' figure prevents a murder, but in De Quincey's account, the Interpreter encourages all the murders. De Quincey states that "as he rushed on in his hellish career," Simmons "perceived distinctly a dark figure on his right hand, keeping pace with himself" (15: 569). Though "the superstitious, of course supposed that some fiend had revealed himself," he argues that "a fiend would be a poor, trivial *bagatelle* compared to the shadowy projections, *umbras* and *penumbras*," of "the unsearchable depths of man's nature" (15: 569). De Quincey's account provides insight into the strength of depravity that he associates with the Interpreter; and without the Interpreter's connection to murder, the depravity represented by the Interpreter in the "The Apparition of the Brocken" is not as explicit. This dissertation holds that this text illustrates his position on depravity that pushes beyond Evangelicalism, where the Christian descends into Paganism, questioning the efficacy of Christianity and the divine component, that murder makes explicit the depravity that he associates with the spectre / Interpreter, and that he is reluctant to make explicit that depravity because he is describing, ultimately, the "depths of" his "nature."

4.3 "The Apparition of the Brocken": the Pariah's Descent into Pagan Depravity

With "The Dark Interpreter" considered—the Pagan processions and Simmons' murders—this dissertation contends that the tests that De Quincey forces on the spectre in "The Apparition of the Brocken" should be understood as illustrating his extreme position on depravity, where the Christian Pariah's desperate struggle descends into Pagan depravity. Though De Quincey has the spectre generally pass the tests—the Pariah's "inner nature" generally passes the tests (15: 184)—he senses Paganism at moments, and he associates these moments with the disruption of the spectre by atmospheric conditions, specifically storms: he

ends the section by applying these conditions to feeling that he associates with Elizabeth's death and his opium dreams, where the Interpreter mixes with "alien natures" (15: 185). De Quincey, then, links his extreme position on depravity with Elizabeth and his addiction.

De Quincey performs three tests on the spectre to explore depravity. He wants to find out if the spectre's "heart may have been corrupted" and if "his faith may be wavering or impure" (15: 183). The first test is this: "Make the sign of the cross, and observe whether he repeats it, (as, on Whitsunday he surely ought to do.) Look! he *does* repeat it; but the driving showers perplex the images, and that, perhaps, it is which gives him the air of one who acts reluctantly or evasively" (15: 183). The spectre repeats the cross, but there is suspicion—"the air of one who acts reluctantly or evasively"—and these suspicions, that "his heart may have been corrupted" and "his faith may be wavering or impure," are associated with "the driving showers."

The second test is more complex, and it involves baptism. De Quincey asks a two-fold question: one, how can the spectre, so long associated with Paganism, be changed by Christianity; and two, how can the individual's "inner nature" that allowed for Pagan depravity be changed by the advent of Christianity or by the individual's baptism (15: 184)? Holding "the sorcerer's flower" on "the sorcerer's altar," he commands this recitation:

> Father, which art in heaven—this lovely anemone, that once glorified the worship of fear, has travelled back into thy fold; this altar, which once reeked with bloody rites to Cortho, has long been rebaptized into thy holy service. The darkness is gone … I thy servant, with this dark phantom, whom, for one hour on this thy festival of Pentecost, I make *my* servant, render thee united worship in this thy recovered temple. (15: 184)

With the spectre analogous to the Interpreter, he attempts to force himself, "thy servant," and that which is darkest within him, the Interpreter, into "united worship." Such control over the Interpreter seems unlikely, for, though the spectre repeats the actions, De Quincey suspects that there is coercion, and that "perhaps on this high festival of the Christian Church, he may be overruled by supernatural influence into confession of his homage" (15: 184). He cannot trust the spectre / Interpreter in this setting, so he engages with "an earthly passion" (15: 184).

The "earthly passion" allows for both the depraved and divine components; and it is De Quincey's "earthly passion" that challenges "Christianity," where he emphasises the divine rather than the depraved, and the "earthly passion" contributes to De Quincey's questioning the separation between Paganism and Christianity: his, a Pariah's, desperate struggle devolves into Pagan depravity, illustrative of his extreme position on depravity. He remembers Elizabeth's death, and the spectre / Interpreter follows, "as if he also had a human heart, and that *he* also, in childhood, having suffered an affliction which was ineffable, wished by these mute symbols to breath a sign towards heaven in memory of that affliction" (15: 184). Though the repetition of the "sign towards heaven" is hopeful, he shifts to Paganism. He refers to depravity through Germanic Paganism and the distorting showers: he states that his "heart was deeper than the Danube," a river which passes through Germany, and he connects depravity to feeling that he associates with Elizabeth's death, for when recalling her death, he states that "shadows wheel round upon … [him] … at intervals, like these April showers" (15: 184). In the manuscript grouped within "Fragments on Christianity," "My mother's fancy," he employs similar storm imagery to address depravity and Christ and his emphasis on depravity:

> even the son of God, once incarnated, was not exempted f[rom] any evil of flesh … was not, we may be sure, exempted from any one fleshly desire with regard to

> sex, or enemies, or companions … [Christ also had] that divine principle, which also *is in man,* yes in every man the foulest and basest—has light which the darkness comprehended not, and which in some is early [e]xtinguished but in *all* fights fitfully with the winds and storms of this human atmosphere. (20: 418)

Engaging with his position on human duality, De Quincey states that the "divine principle" fights with the depraved, "the winds and storms of this human atmosphere." In "The Apparition of the Brocken," by linking the "showers" to Elizabeth's death, he supports Morrison's point that the Interpreter "emerged" from "deep feelings of 'grief,' 'fear,' and 'vindictive wrath'" ("Murder in *Suspiria* 260). Specifically, with the "earthly passion," De Quincey addresses the Pariah's desperate struggle, and he descends into Pagan depravity, or in the terms of the manuscript, he has the divine, almost "[e]xtinguished," "fight[] fitfully with the winds and storms."

De Quincey ends "The Apparition of the Brocken" with a depiction of his extreme position on depravity, where the Christian descends into Pagan depravity, as may be inferred by the phrase "alien natures" (15: 185); and with that phrase, he reveals his reluctance to illustrate explicitly the Christian's descent into that depravity. He explains that the Interpreter is "originally a mere reflex of [his] nature," but "as the apparition of the Brocken sometimes is disturbed by storms or by driving showers … in like manner the Interpreter sometimes swerves out of [his] orbit, and mixes a little with alien natures" (15: 184-85). The phrase "alien natures" recalls the excised passage in "The English Mail-Coach" (1849) that contains a position on depravity that raises serious doubts about the efficacy of Christianity and the divine component (and De Quincey conceived of "The Mail-Coach" as part of "Suspiria" [20: 34]):

> But the dream-horror which I speak of is far more frightful. The dreamer finds housed within himself—occupying, as it were, some separate chamber in his

> brain—holding, perhaps from that station a secret and detestable commerce with his own heart—some horrid alien nature … How, again, if not one alien nature, but two, but three, but four, but five, are introduced within what once he thought the inviolable sanctuary of himself? (16: 423)

In both the "Apparition of the Brocken" and "The Mail-Coach," he addresses depravity; but in the former he is not as explicit: "mixes a little with alien natures" is less explicit than "a secret and detestable commerce with his own heart" and "five" "horrid alien nature[s]." Indeed, he had difficulty with the phrasing in "The Mail-Coach," as he replaced the passage with "the frailty of earth and her children" in the revised version of "The Mail-Coach" in *Selections Grave and Gay* (1854) (16: 421, 734). His reluctance to explore this depravity may be explained through horror at his "inner nature" (15: 184). Referring to the excised passage in "The Mail-Coach," De Quincey states that "This [dream] horror has always been secretly felt by man; it was felt even under pagan forms of religion, which offered a very feeble, and also a very limited gamut for giving expression to the human capacities of sublimity or of horror" (16: 422). He contends that the Christian recognises the "horror" of depravity, and, by extension, that the Christian recognises the greater "horror" linked to the descent into Pagan depravity, despite being aware of and engaged with Christianity and the divine component of the self. "The Mail-Coach," then, reveals De Quincey's reluctance to make explicit the "horror" of that descent, especially as it applies to his "inner nature" in the "Apparition of the Brocken."

Ultimately, in "The Apparition of the Brocken," De Quincey ensures that the involute of the spectre / Interpreter engages with an important aspect of the literature of power: the Pariah's desperate struggle against depravity. De Quincey presents the struggle thus: "Hailstone choruses besides, and storms, enter my dreams. Hailstones and fire that run along the ground, sleet and

blinding hurricanes, revelations of glory insufferable pursued by volleying darkness" (15: 185). De Quincey experiences two components in these opium dreams: he experiences the depraved—"Hailstones and fire" and "sleet and blinding hurricanes" and "volleying darkness"—and the divine—"revelations of glory insufferable." This dissertation recognises that though De Quincey includes the divine in this exploration of the feeling that he associates with Elizabeth's death and his addiction, he begins and concludes with depravity and emphasises it throughout, in contrast to "Christianity," to the extent that he establishes a position on depravity more extreme than Evangelicalism, where Christianity and the divine component of the self cannot save the Pariah.

Conclusion

This dissertation demonstrates that in manuscript, texts on the literature of power, and autobiographical texts, De Quincey challenges "Christianity" and develops the extreme position on depravity previewed in "Christianity." Rather than focusing on the divine component, he challenges that focus by establishing a duality that emphasises depravity in a way that approaches Evangelicalism, and due to feeling associated with Elizabeth's death and his own addiction, he develops his position on depravity that is more extreme than Evangelicalism, where the Christian Pariah descends into Paganism. The descent raises doubts about the transformative abilities of Christianity and the strength of the divine in De Quincey and other humans.

Notes

[1] Robert Morrison summarises the importance of the concept and the critical response in Introduction to "Alexander Pope" (332-34).

[2] This dissertation follows Evangelicals and De Quincey and uses Pagan and Paganism to refer to beliefs and religions that pre-dated Christianity, such as Greek, Roman, and Germanic Paganism, rather than beliefs and religions contemporary with Evangelicals and De Quincey.

[3] In a later letter, Elizabeth again connects understanding to feeling: "I am equally sure [my advice or 'expressions'] arise from the best exercise of my understanding, in a humble dependence on Divine direction, which has long ago brought me to know that the human mind is as much in ruins as its will" (Japp, *Memorials* 1: 85). "[U]nderstanding" combined with "Divine direction" is similar to "spiritual understanding," and it results in an Evangelical emphasis on depravity: the "mind" and "will" are in "ruins."

[4] De Quincey first mentions the concept of the literature of power in the manuscript "Anna Louise, Remodelled in English Hexameters, from the German of John Henry Voss" (1822-1823). He also mentions it in "The Life and Adventures of Oliver Goldsmith" (1848).

[5] Even this claim about conversation is complex. Morrison identifies various textual moments in Wordsworth where De Quincey would have encountered the distinction (Introduction to "Alexander Pope" 333).

[6] De Quincey would have likely encountered this passage in an Evangelical context, and Venn's *Duty of Man* emphasises this passage, by quoting it in the Preface: "The fact then is certain: *The wages of sin is death*, and always will be so while God continues the same" (vi). Please see Chapter One for a more sustained discussion of depravity and death.

[7] Citing *Confessions* (1821) (2: 63), Burwick et al. note that it seems "to identify the project" as a text that "De Quincey claimed to have dedicated his life at some point before 1819" (Introduction to "Fragments on Christianity" 410).

[8] Morrison identifies the allusion (Explanatory Notes to "Alexander Pope" 600): Genesis 28.12.

[9] Morrison identifies the allusion (Explanatory Notes to "Alexander Pope" 600): "the understanding heart" is found in 1 Kings 3.9-12.

[10] "The sufferings of Jesus in the last days of his life" ("Passion").

[11] Jordan recognises that this passage is important for understanding De Quincey's position on sin, but he does not address the role of antagonism (193).

[12] This dissertation notes that more recent critics have confirmed De Quincey's identification with and interest in the Pariah. Morrison links De Quincey's "deep sense of loss and alienation" to the figure of the "pariah" (Morrison, *The English Opium-Eater* 74). Masson serves as an important critic, though, because he stresses the Pariah's strong Christian connotations. For example, Lindop links depravity to a passage in "The Mail-Coach" (108) where De Quincey refers to his "Pariah heart" (16: 448), but Lindop does not address the Pariah as a Christian term ("Pursuing the Throne of God").

[13] Jordan identifies this passage: "De Quincey is carried away by the story of the conscience-laden nun, and weaves her conflict into a typical Christian-pagan comparison by pointing out how inexplicable her struggle would be to a Vestal Virgin" (163). This dissertation pushes beyond Jordan by connecting this passage to the literature of power and the involute and

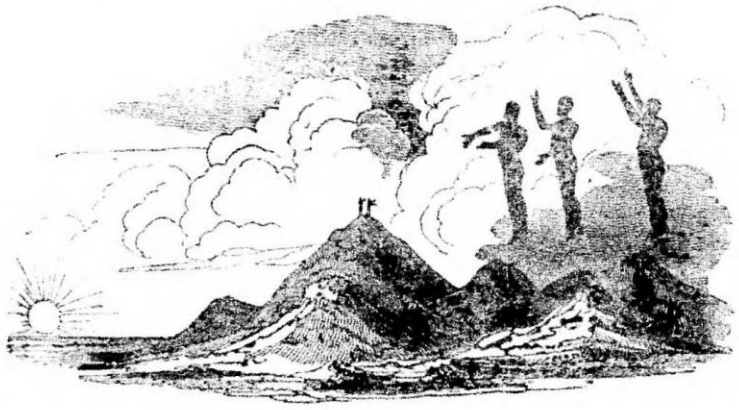
explicitly framing the Christian Pariah's struggle as between the depraved and divine components.

[14] Burwick notes that Brewster's "account mentions the Sorcerer's Flower, the Sorcerer's Altar, and 'the great idol Cortho,'" but he does not consider the implications for De Quincey's position on depravity (Explanatory Notes to "Suspiria" 663).

[15] Brewster's *Letters on Natural Magic*. Fig. 1. is an illustration from the section on which De Quincey would have based his account (Brewster 130). The difference between Brewster and De Quincey is clear: in Brewster's diagram, there is no indication of Paganism and the spectre is simply the individual's shadow; De Quincey adds the religious context.

time, however, two colossal figures were formed over the above eminence, and after bending their bodies and imitating the gestures of the two spectators, they disappeared. Retaining their position, and keeping their eyes still fixed upon the same spot, the two gigantic spectres again stood before them, *and were joined by a third*. Every movement that they made was imitated by the three figures, but the effect varied in its intensity, being sometimes weak and faint, and at other times strong and well defined.

Fig. 30.



In the year 1798 M. Jordan saw the same phenomenon at sunrise, and under similar circumstances, but with less distinctness, and without any duplication of the figures.*

Phenomena perfectly analogous to the preceding, though seen under less imposing circumstances,

* See J. F. Gmelin's *Gottingischen Journal der Wissenchaften*, Vol. i. part iii. 1798.

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Fig. 1. “Two colossal figures.”

[16] Morrison cites *The Times*' account, and he notes that "De Quincey does not have all the facts of the case straight" ("Murder in *Suspiria*" 260): De Quincey's transformation of Simmons' description of the figure is a key example. Morrison includes the two accounts, so he implicitly addresses the transformation, but this dissertation makes explicit the transformation.

Chapter Four

De Quincey's *Confessions*, the English Civil War, and the Civil War of the Self

Introduction

In terms of length, the Civil War nightmare is a small part of *Confessions of an English Opium-Eater* (1821, 1856), but De Quincey incorporates allusions and references to the English Civil War (1642-1651) throughout the text, and critics have not offered a sustained exploration of the conflict.[1] To address this omission, this chapter frames De Quincey's interpretation of the Christian experience—experience as the feeling of struggle, depravity, and doubt—as the feeling of the civil war of the self. This chapter has three sections. The first section provides the relevant context for the Civil War. Critics of Evangelicalism compared Evangelicals to the Puritans of the Civil War, so as to address the social-political threat of religious extremism, specifically enthusiasm and premillennialism, the belief in imminent apocalypse. De Quincey was aware of this discourse, and his Evangelical youth pushed him to struggle with his connection to the Puritans of the Civil War, as his mother's Evangelicalism developed from Puritanism but was committed to the Church of England (so he had links to both sides, not only the Puritans, but also the Royalists associated with the Church of England). The second section addresses *Confessions* through a twofold argument. First, De Quincey uses the Civil War to explore the civil war of the self: he indicates that the object of *Confessions* is to showcase the power of opium in amplifying the feeling of civil war in the self, and that the feeling of civil war contributes to intellectual and moral development. Second, the Civil War serves as a strong analogue for the civil war of the self because he struggles with Puritan history and theology as interpreted by Evangelicalism (with opium and addiction pushing him towards positions associated with Puritan extremism,

such as enthusiasm and premillennialism). De Quincey blends secular and religious confession: he is marked by the feeling of civil war in his pre-opium youth, and in his initial experience with opium and later addiction, opium amplifies that feeling to the extent that he achieves his object, to illustrate the power of opium on the self in "impassioned prose" (20: 16). As per the argument in Chapter Two, if he addresses power in "impassioned prose," he deals with the literature of power, so the feeling of civil war includes depravity. The third section, then, addresses the depraved component of the self, addiction, and apocalypse. From the Puritans, Evangelicals developed the term "chambers of imagery" to address depravity (*Authorized King James Version*, Ezek. 8.12), and Edward Irving (1792-1834) used the term in London in 1823 to suggest imminent apocalypse. De Quincey uses the term to incorporate premillennialism into the concluding section of "The Pains of Opium," and he combines depravity, addiction, the precedent for imminent apocalypse (the Civil War), and 1821 London. De Quincey shows that he engages with a London audience fascinated with apocalypse, and that he positions himself as experiencing the imminent end to addiction, a major aspect of his struggle against the depraved component of the self. Still, De Quincey died an addict, and the premillennialism remained the same from 1821 to 1856, so he was deceiving himself about the end of his addiction for thirty-five years, and doubt in the divine component of the self is implicit in that deception: indeed, only death brought the apocalypse of addiction and the end to the civil war of the self.

1. The Civil War and Evangelicalism

This section considers the Civil War and Evangelicalism. Critics compared Evangelicals to Puritans; through the comparison, critics addressed the social-political threat of religious extremism: enthusiasm and premillennialism. Evangelicals within the Church of England

struggled with their connection to the Civil War, as they developed their theology from Puritans, distanced themselves from religious extremism both past and present, and were committed to the Church of England, which was associated with the Royalists in the Civil War. In "Falsification of English History" (1824), De Quincey indicates that religious extremism connects the Puritans of the Civil War and contemporary Britain. "Falsification" shows that De Quincey was in a position to incorporate the discourse on religious extremism into *Confessions*, and that due to his Evangelical youth he would have struggled with his connection to the Puritans of the Civil War.

1.1 Enthusiasm and Premillennialism

Jon Mee, J. G. A. Pocock, and Timothy Clark demonstrate that critics compared Evangelicals to the Puritans of the Civil War, and that they focused on the social-political threat of religious extremism, specifically enthusiasm and premillennialism. The term enthusiasm—"Fancied inspiration" and "Ill-regulated or misdirected religious emotion, extravagance of religious speculation" ("Enthusiasm")—was linked to the Civil War. Mee posits that "The 1640s and 1650s were widely regarded as a period when enthusiasm had taken possession of the body politic" (26), and that "enthusiasm was associated in Britain with 'the fury of the millennial sects'" (Pocock 10 qtd. in Mee 26). Pocock states that the "millennial sects" were aligned with "the regicide itself, which could not have been accomplished without those who were willing to wait upon the Lord and obey his voice when he told them that all covenants were dissolved and all earthly power overturned" (10-11). Clark adds that "for a century and a half after the civil wars" the regicide was "at the heart of the controversy about the nature of 'enthusiasm'" (*Theory of Inspiration* 63). Critics, then, were commenting on the social-political threat of extremism when addressing enthusiasm and premillennialism. Evangelicals were aware of this discourse.

Mee states that "If through Methodism and the Evangelical movements … affect [or feeling] came to play an increasing role in eighteenth-century religion, that role was carefully envigilated to make sure that it did not degenerate into enthusiasm" (13), and that "despite the fact that both kept within the bounds of the Church of England, [the Methodist John] Wesley and even [the Evangelical Hannah] More were accused of enthusiasm at different times" (16). This dissertation adds that a reason why critics linked Evangelicals to Puritans was due to Evangelical sects outside the Church of England, whose premillennialism was prefigured by the Puritans. Like Evangelicals in the Church of England, De Quincey would have to struggle with his connections to the Puritans of the Civil War, in part, due to Evangelicals outside the Church of England.

Postmillennialist Evangelicals within the Church of England held that Christ's return was not imminent, and premillennialist Evangelicals outside the Church of England maintained that Christ's return was imminent. D. W. Bebbington defines the respective positions on apocalypse: "The second advent, far from being deferred to the distant future beyond the triumph of Christ's earthly church, was to be expected imminently. This form of prophetic interpretation is usually called premillennialism (since Christ is to come *before* the millennium) to distinguish it from the postmillennial view (according to which Christ is to be expected *after* the millennium)" (81).[2] Boyd Hilton develops the distinction, associating postmillennialism with Evangelicalism within the Church of England: he states that "moderates regarded pain as part of God's joyous plan for the moral redemption of mankind, while pre-millenarian extremists saw it as a sign that the thousand-year reign of felicity could not be long delayed," and that "both were trying … to reconcile the evil and suffering, which after 1789 were felt to dominate the world, with the continuing existence of a powerful and loving God" (17). Bebbington's and Hilton's explications indicate that pre and postmillennialists engaged with contemporary events, interpreting them

according to their respective positions on the imminence of the apocalypse. Though Hilton maintains distinctions between Evangelicals within and outside the Church of England, this dissertation notes that Mee, Pocock, and Clark indicate that critics did not make strong distinctions between sects, so the increase of premillennial Evangelicals outside the Church of England, who had a more direct link to the premillennialism of the Civil War, was still associated with postmillennial Evangelicals within the Church of England, who would, in turn, be forced to examine and articulate their connection to the Civil War. Section Two argues that De Quincey experiences a similar struggle, with opium pushing him towards Puritan extremes.

The French Revolution (1789) and the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars (1792-1815) influenced Evangelical premillennialism. Doreen Rosman states that during these conflicts "Apocalyptic studies were of perennial interest … in circles far wider than purely evangelical, as men attempted with fearful fascination to deduce the cosmic significance of the cataclysmic events in France, and of the subsequent dominance of Napoleon," and "Britain's stance against this embodiment of evil" (23). Bebbington states that the "seminal influence" of Evangelical premillennialism was James Hatley Frere's *A Combined View of the Prophecies of Daniel, Esdras, and St. John* (1815), and that "Frere enjoyed the prestige of predicting, shortly before Waterloo, the downfall of Napoleon" (83). Addressing the premillennialism that developed from these conflicts, Bebbington lists the preacher Edward Irving as the exemplary figure because the "belief that Christ would come again in person was an innovation in the Evangelical world of the 1820s" (81, 83), and Irving achieved great if brief fame in London, 1822-1825.

The 1820s were a major period for premillennialism due to starkly different interpretations of Britain's position after the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars. Elisabeth Jay suggests that the "increased interest in eschatological studies manifested in the 1820s" was

linked to “England’s rapid economic growth and increasing power,” and that “these combined factors led to a conviction that England might become God’s instrument for gathering in the nations to the establishment of His Kingdom upon earth” (88). Conversely, Rosman provides a darker interpretation of the 1820s, stating that the “pessimism of this period like the euphoria of earlier decades was reflected in apocalyptic studies,” and that these studies were characterised by “a less optimistic eschatology which maintained that the last days would be marked not by evangelistic success but by the decline of the church; the millennial period of Christian victory, far from heralding the second coming … would only be inaugurated when the Lord returned” (25). Jay and Rosman offer two interpretative positions on the apocalypse: premillennialism was encouraged either by a significantly positive or negative historical context; regardless of the interpretations, the 1820s saw a rise in the belief that Christ’s return was imminent. This dissertation recognises that premillennialism during and after the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars provided greater urgency to discussions about religious extremism, shaping both Evangelical texts and De Quincey’s texts, especially the 1821 *Confessions*.

1.2 Evangelical Texts

This dissertation uses key Evangelicals for De Quincey to illustrate the complex connection that Evangelicals within the Church of England shared with the Civil War. One, they struggled with their connection to the Civil War because they were shaped by Puritan theology, were against Puritan extremism, and were committed to the national church, which was associated with the Royalists during the Civil War. Two, they recognised that Evangelicals outside the Church of England adopted premillennialism, resembling more closely the Puritans,

and that critics tended to not differentiate between Evangelical sects, so that critics often associated all Evangelicals with the religious extremism of the Civil War.

Leigh Hunt serves as an exemplar of a critic of Evangelicalism. In the 1809 text *Danger of Methodism*, Hunt declares that his goal is not to convert "a single enthusiast," as "books" are not written "for the use of madmen" (iii). With "enthusiast," he alludes to the Civil War; indeed, he identifies "Puritan-Methodists" as the predecessors of his focus, "not only the immediate followers of WHITEFIELD and WESLEY," or Methodists, "but all [Evangelicals,] that enthusiastic multitude who … call themselves the *Godly* … the innumerable divisions of these sects" (2). He states that "The God of Methodism … is a mere despot," and that "A religion, like Methodism, is not fit for a free nation" (vi). As a critic, Hunt links Evangelicalism to the Civil War ("Puritan-Methodists"), conflates various sects, and frames the threat as social-political, with the charge of enthusiasm and its premillennialist implications.

Evangelicals within the Church of England responded to critics like Hunt: though they identified with the Puritans, they separated themselves from enthusiasm and premillennialism, both past and present, in Puritans and Evangelicals outside the Church of England. In the 1805 text *Essays*, John Foster alludes to critics of Evangelicalism, stating that the term "*Puritan* was … first applied in contempt to a class of men, of whom the world was not worthy" and that the "vain and malignant spirit which had descried the elevated piety of the Puritans, sought about … for some form in which it might again come forth to hiss at zealous christianity, and … fell on the term *Methodist*" (170-71). In the 1800 text *Sermons,* Francis Randolph applies the anachronistic term "enthusiast" to Jesus, so as to demonstrate the misuse of the term: "and *Jesus Christ* … has been … ridiculed as an enthusiast" (13). In the 1820 text *Sermons,* Isaac Milner responds to charges of enthusiasm: the "honest zeal of the wisest and most judicious servants of

God has frequently been deemed enthusiastic, and supposed to border even on madness itself" (*Sermons* 2: 2). In *Duty of Man,* the prayer "*For the Influence of the Spirit*," John Venn separates divine inspiration from enthusiasm. He petitions God: "we beg of thee to give us a sound mind and a right judgment in all things, that we may never cause thy influence to be blasphemed through our sinful folly and enthusiasm. May we seek and expect thy aid in those ways, and by those means alone, which are thine own appointment" (15). By using the term "enthusiasm," these Evangelicals show that they have to defend against the charge of extremism that is more closely associated with premillennialist Puritans and Evangelicals. These Evangelicals address their connection to the Puritans, and De Quincey would be pushed into a similar situation.

Indeed, William Wilberforce and Hannah More identify with Puritans and disassociate from enthusiasm and premillennialism, both in Puritans and Evangelicals outside the Church of England. In *Practical View,* Wilberforce states that "the writings of the Puritans are … a mine of wealth" (228), and he highlights the minister Richard Baxter (1615-1691), who, as noted in the Introduction to this dissertation, served with the Puritan army (Keeble), terming him "among the brightest ornaments of the church of England" (227). In such Puritan texts, "the peculiar doctrines of Christianity were every where visible, and on the deep and solid basis of these doctrinal truths were laid the foundations of a superstructure of morals proportionably broad and exalted" (228). Simultaneously, Wilberforce notes that "During that period ['the civil wars'], however, the peculiar doctrines of Christianity were grievously abused by many of the sectaries, who were foremost in the commotions of those unhappy days" (228). In *Practical Piety*, More states that "internal religion" "has been carried to a blameable excess by the pious error of holy men" and "by the less innocent fanatic, and abused to the most pernicious purposes" (16-17), providing "to the enemies of internal religion, arguments or rather invectives, against the sound

and sober exercises of genuine piety," and that these "enemies" "seize every occasion to represent it as if it were criminal, as the foe of morality; ridiculous as the infallible test of an unsound mind; mischievous, as hostile to active virtue, and destructive as the bane of public utility" (17). To counter these "enemies," she concludes with the following: "But if these charges be really well founded, then were the brightest luminaries of the Christian church," such as "Baxter," "frantic enthusiasts, enemies to virtue, and subverters of the public weal" (17)? Aware that critics connected Evangelicals to the Civil War, enthusiasm, and premillennialism, More uses Baxter (like Wilberforce) to refute the claim that Evangelicals are "frantic enthusiasts, enemies to virtue, and subverters of the public weal."[3] Further, More's statements against religious extremism are representative of a twofold defence: "the less innocent fanatic" who "abuse[s]" "internal religion" for "the most pernicious purposes" refers to both the past and present, to both Puritan extremists and Evangelicals outside the Church of England.

In *Sermons*, Isaac Milner addresses Evangelicalism within and outside the Church of England and Puritanism of the Civil War. He separates Puritans and Evangelicals within the Church of England, stating that "the interruption, "the most lamentable," of "national prosperity took place during the civil wars of Charles I., and the succeeding usurpation of Cromwell," and that "the fanaticism and hypocrisy of sectarian republicans and levelers were … fatal to the health and vigour of a truly Evangelical Establishment" (1: 11). By offering such an explication, he acknowledges that critics have connected Puritan "fanaticism" with what he considers the "truly Evangelical Establishment": Evangelicalism within the Church of England. The defence also implies that other Evangelicals have made claims to that "Establishment": he likely alludes to Evangelicals outside the Church of England, whose premillennialism would link them to the "fanatic[al]" Puritans. Indeed, he is addressing the social-political threat of extremism because he

contends that "In no period of our history were there made greater pretences to love of liberty and to purity of religious faith and practice, or fewer efforts in a rational and consistent way to advance and confirm the Protestant interest" than through "the fury of the Rebellion" and "the dying Sovereign" (12), and as shown by Mee, Pocock, and Clark, critics associated the regicide with enthusiasm and premillennialism. This dissertation suggests that due to Evangelicals outside the Church of England, the above Evangelicals were forced to articulate their connection to both sides of the Civil War, especially their separation from Puritan extremism. Because of his Evangelical youth within the Church of England, De Quincey was in a similar position.

1.3 De Quincey's "Falsification"

De Quincey's 1824 "Falsification" addresses the Civil War and contemporary Britain; it shows that he would be in a position to incorporate the discourse on religious extremism into the 1821 *Confessions*, and that due to his Evangelical youth he would have struggled with his connection to the Puritans of the Civil War. He states that critics link Puritans to the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars and its aftermath: "modern writers [have] written … of the political struggles in the 17th century," "assert[ing] that all the atrocities of the French revolution had their direct parallelisms in acts done or countenanced by the virtuous and august Senate of England in 1640!" (3: 193). The reason is that "they fancy that they can detect the *incunabula* of the revolutionary spirit" (3: 193). He disagrees: "Strange distortion of the understanding which can" connect "two great historical events" that "stand off from each other in most irreconcilable enmity" (3: 194). He states that critics revive the Puritans to address social-political threats, and though the example of the French Revolution suggests a secular threat, De Quincey also indicates that critics associate the Civil War with a contemporary religious threat.

De Quincey addresses religious extremism. He states that the "established church," "which to the religious zealotry of those times … was the object of especial attack," is prejudiced against the Puritans (197), and that the church holds the "Puritans" responsible for "a serious wound to the manners of the nation" (199). He contends that the "unamiable side of the patriotic character in the seventeenth century was unquestionably its religious bigotry; which, however, had its ground in a real fervour or religious feeling and a real strength of religious principle" (3: 198). He acknowledges the positives—the "real fervour or religious feeling"—and establishes distance from that problematic aspect of Puritanism: "their bigotry is not to be denied; it was often offensive from its excess; and ludicrous in its direction" (3: 198). Like Evangelicals within the Church of England, he appreciates the fervour of the Puritans, which forces him to distinguish between fervour and extremism, with its implied charges of enthusiasm and premillennialism; and like these Evangelicals, he not only brings up this discourse because of the past but also the present: he recognises that the Church of England is reviving the Puritans to address current religious "wound[s]." As noted throughout this section, though such "wound[s]" were primarily associated with Evangelicals outside the church, the "wound[s]" forced Evangelicals in the church to examine their links to the Puritans of the Civil War.

De Quincey's Evangelical youth would have pushed him to struggle with his connection to the Puritans. He states his position in absolute terms: "I am myself, and always have been, a member of the Church of England" (3: 190). The claim, though, is not straightforward: his mother was an Evangelical within the Church of England, and these Evangelicals had links to both sides of the Civil War, especially the Puritans. This section on Puritans, then, is revealing:

> and for my part I heartily join in the sentiment of Charles II.—applying it as he did … that their religion 'was not a religion for gentlemen': indeed, all

> sectarianism, but especially that which has a modern origin—arising and growing up within our own memories, unsupported by a grand traditional history of persecutions—conflicts—and martyrdoms, lurking … in blind alleys, holes, corners, and tabernacles, must appear spurious and mean in the eyes of him who has been bred up in the grand classic forms of the Church of England. (3: 198-99)

He equates the Puritans with the "modern origin"; and he identifies with that "origin" because, as he shows in "Falsification," he does not find the Puritans "spurious and mean." As this dissertation argues, he was not "bred up in the grand classic forms of the Church of England": he was educated by an Evangelical. De Quincey knew the discourse on religious extremism, and he is positioned to struggle with his connection to the Puritans of the Civil War; the next section shows that he applies that struggle to the civil war of the self in the 1821 *Confessions*.

2. *Confessions* and the Feeling of Civil War: Youth, Opium Highs, and Addiction

This section addresses *Confessions* with a twofold argument. First, through the Civil War, De Quincey explores the civil war of the self: he indicates that the object of *Confessions* is to showcase the power of opium in amplifying the feeling of civil war in the self, and that the feeling of civil war contributes to intellectual and moral development. Second, because he struggles with Puritan history and theology as interpreted by Evangelicalism, the Civil War serves as a strong analogue for the civil war of the self. Indeed, opium and addiction push him to struggle with positions associated with Puritan extremism, such as enthusiasm and premillennialism. De Quincey presents himself as marked by the feeling of civil war in his pre-opium youth; and in his initial highs and subsequent addiction, he has opium amplify that feeling, with the result that he achieves his object, to illustrate the power of opium on the self in

"impassioned prose" (20: 16). De Quincey combines secular and religious confession, addressing the feeling of civil war in youth, opium highs, and addiction.

2.1 The Feeling of Civil War

In 1821, De Quincey offers a provocative link between the Civil War and *Confessions*. He states that he "made [himself] minutely and critically familiar with one period of English history, viz. the period of the Parliamentary War, having been attracted by the moral grandeur of some who figured in that day, and by the many interesting memoirs which survive those unquiet times" (2: 67-68).[4] He offers the following description of *Confessions*: he has lived "the life of a philosopher," and has "struggled against this fascinating enthralment [of addiction] with a religious zeal" (2: 10). As will be addressed at the end of this subsection, unlike a philosopher who struggles with "religious zeal" in the Civil War, he struggles with "religious zeal" against addiction. Employing De Quincey's terms, if De Quincey uses the Civil War to explore the civil war of the self, a life marked by "unquiet times," he would be able to create an "interesting memoir" with "moral grandeur." Indeed, "unquiet times" align with the object of *Confessions*.

De Quincey identifies the power of opium on the self as the object of *Confessions*. In 1821, he states that "The interest of the judicious reader will … attach itself … to the fascinating power" of opium, and that "Not the opium-eater, but the opium, is the true hero of the tale; and the legitimate centre on which the interest revolves. The object was to display the marvelous agency of opium, whether for pleasure or for pain: if that is done, the action of the piece has closed" (2: 74). In 1856, he posits that "Very many people have thoroughly misconstrued [the] object [of *Confessions*]; and therefore [he] beg[s] to say here, in closing [his] Original Preface … that what [he] contemplated in these Confessions was to emblazon the power of opium … over

the grander and more shadowy world of [his] dreams" (2: 99). Robert Morrison notes that in 1856, by cutting lines about opium as "the true hero," De Quincey shifts the focus "to reveal the powers, not of opium, but of the Opium-Eater," and that he situates himself as the hero of his confession (Introduction to *Confessions* xxiii). This dissertation frames the shift in the following way: the object in *Confessions* was always "to emblazon" the power of opium in amplifying the feeling of civil war in De Quincey, whether in the positive initial highs ("pleasure") or the darker period of addiction ("pain"), but in 1856, he stresses the shift from opium to himself so as to offer a stronger rationalisation of the civil war for the self that has continued throughout his life.

This dissertation maintains that De Quincey positions his "impassioned prose" as engaging with the amplified feeling of civil war (20: 16). In "Suspiria De Profundis" (1845), he states that the "*law*" of *Confessions* is that "[his] early adventures … led to opium … and opium … led to the dreams," so that "in the synthetic order of presenting the facts, what stood last in the succession of development, stood first in the order of [his] purposes," and that the "power" of opium is "exalting the colours of dream-scenery," "deepening its shadows" and "strengthening the sense of its fearful *realities*" (15: 131). If he was marked by the feeling of civil war in his pre-opium youth, his initial experience with opium and later addiction stand to amplify—"exalt[]," "deepen[]," and "strengthen[]"—that feeling. Before addressing his youth and initial experience, though, this dissertation considers opium nightmare during addiction, or "what stood last in the succession." He characterises opium nightmare as "moral and spiritual terrors" (2: 71) where "the feeling of perplexities moral or intellectual … brought confusion to the reason, or anguish and remorse to the conscience" (2: 50). He describes similarly the Civil War. He is "attracted by the moral grandeur" of the Civil War, and that "grandeur" is found in scenes where "the wives and daughters," "who met in peace" and "were allied by marriage or by blood," "after

a certain day in August, 1642, never smiled upon each other again, nor met but in the field of battle" (2: 68). This nightmare of the Civil War is influenced by Evangelicalism because, as suggested in Section One, like Evangelicals, De Quincey struggles with his connection to Puritan extremism, and as will be addressed in Section Three, he structures this nightmare on premillennialism. The essential point, though, is that he links the "moral grandeur" of the Civil War to the same "feeling" as opium nightmare, as he focuses on a scenario where the "wives and daughters" would have historically experienced "perplexities moral and spiritual," "confusion," and "anguish," which is the "feeling" that he associates with opium nightmare. This dissertation holds, then, that "the feeling of perplexities moral and spiritual," "moral and spiritual terrors," "confusion," and "anguish" describe the feeling of the civil war of the self, and that the depiction of such feeling aligns with the object of *Confessions*, which is to illustrate "the fascinating power" and "the marvelous agency of opium" (2: 75), or "the power of opium—over the grander and more shadowy world of [his] dreams" (2: 99). From the amplified feeling of civil war, he creates "impassioned prose": the "attempt[] to clothe in words the visionary scenes derived from the world of dreams" (20: 16), as he states in *Selections Grave and Gay* (1853).

In the 1856 text, a note to the significantly altered "Original Preface" offers insight into De Quincey's rationale for framing his life as marked by the feeling of civil war (in both 1821 and 1856), as the feeling of civil war contributes to intellectual and moral development:

> We do injustice daily to our own age; which, by many a sign, palpable and secret, I feel to be more emphatically, than any since the period of Elizabeth and Charles I., an intellectual, a moving, and a self-conflicting age: and inevitably, where the intellect has been preternaturally awakened, the moral sensibility must soon be commensurately stirred. The very distinctions, psychologic or metaphysical, by

> which, as its hinges and articulations, our modern thinking moves, proclaim the subtler character of the questions which now occupy our thoughts. (2: 96)

De Quincey's "feel[ing]" is that in "a self-conflicting age," "where the intellect has been preternaturally awakened, the moral sensibility must soon be commensurately stirred"; the phrasing is similar to the power associated with opium nightmare, with its "feeling of perplexities moral or intellectual, that brought confusion to the reason, or anguish and remorse to the conscience" (2: 50). This note explains his position on the "moral grandeur" of the Civil War in 1821 (2: 68), as the conflict would have developed the "intellect" and the "moral sensibility," in the terms of the 1856 text. And if opium amplifies the feeling of "a self-conflicting" life, opium would contribute further to intellectual and moral development. Though De Quincey states that addiction has a paralysing effect in "The Pains of Opium," this dissertation recognises that he also frames opium and addiction as productive, especially in the 1856 text, as a way to rationalise the civil war of the self that has been without end. Indeed, "Suspiria," another later text, is devoted to a similar rationalisation: God "works by grief" and "raises oftentimes from human intellects glorious vintages that could not else have been," and suffering is needed "for God's mightiest instrument … the mysterious children of the earth" (15: 187).

In 1856, De Quincey positions the Civil War, as a religious conflict, in a similar way as *Confessions*. He states that the Civil War produced "philosophic" and "impassioned" texts:

> the seventeenth, and specially that part of it concerned in this case—viz., the latter seventy years (A.D. 1628-1700)—produced the highest efforts of eloquence (philosophic, but at the same time … impassioned …) which our literature possesses … Sir Thomas Browne, Jeremy Taylor, Milton … form a *pleiad,* a constellation of … golden stars, such as no literature can match in their own class.

> From these … writers … I would undertake to build up an entire body of philosophy upon the supreme interests of humanity. (2: 134)

Specifically, he posits that this period, which includes the Civil War, contributed to philosophy through religion. He adds in a note to "body of philosophy" that "the main bulk of English philosophy has always hidden itself in the English divinity"[5]: "all conceivable problems of philosophy can reproduce themselves under a theological mask," and "many English books … presumably mere professional pleadings of Protestant polemics … are in fact mines inexhaustible of eloquence and philosophic speculation" (2: 135). Because De Quincey focuses on religious texts and includes Browne and Milton (and as shown in the next subsection, he addresses them in the context of the Civil War), this dissertation applies his description of the period to the Civil War, even though he includes years that predate and extend beyond the Civil War. For example, *Paradise Lost* is a religious text deeply shaped by Milton's experiences before and after the Civil War and published in 1667. De Quincey's characterisation of the Civil War may be applied to his depiction of *Confessions*. He is "a philosopher" who has struggled religiously against addiction, "has struggled against this fascinating enthralment with a religious zeal" (2: 10), to the extent that he achieves his "object" (2: 74), to illustrate in "impassioned prose" the power of opium on the self (20: 16). If he is a philosopher and *Confessions* is "impassioned prose," the Civil War serves as a model: as a religious conflict, it produced "philosophic … and impassioned" texts. Still, it is only a model, as De Quincey blends secular and religious confession, addressing the feeling of civil war in youth, opium highs, and addiction, so that he produces "modes of impassioned prose ranging under no precedents that [he] is aware of in any literature" (20: 16). He uses opium to push beyond the "philosophic" and

"impassioned" texts of the Civil War. This dissertation shows why the Civil War serves as a strong analogue for the civil war of the self: he struggles with Puritan history and theology.

2.2 Pre-Opium Youth

In the 1856 text, De Quincey expands on the Civil War, and the expansion indicates that in the 1821 text, he used the conflict to depict his pre-opium youth as marked by the feeling of civil war, and that he was aware of the connection between the Civil War and Evangelicalism. Addressing his Evangelical church in 1794-1795,[6] he states that "nearing … [his] … tenth year," he "remember[s] a little incident, which exposed broadly the conflict of feelings inherited by the Church of England from the Puritans of the seventeenth century" (2: 114-15). As he waited "in the vestry" for the bishop, "there arose a deep buzz of anxiety, which soon ripened into an articulate expression of fear, that the bishop would think himself bound, like the horrid eikonoclasts of 1645, to issue his decree of the utter *averruncation* to the simple decoration overhead" (2: 115). By linking the bishop to the "horrid eikonoclasts of 1645," he acknowledges the connection between Puritans and Evangelicals within the Church of England. Like Evangelicals, he separates himself from Puritan extremism ("horrid eikonoclasts") and criticises the lack of religious fervour in the Church of England (2: 115), offering, as a contrast, the same Puritan that Wilberforce and More cite: "Richard Baxter—who battled often with self-created storms from the first dawn of the Parliamentary War in 1642"—was "As a pulpit orator … the Whitfield of the seventeenth century—the *Leuconomos* of Cowper" (2: 115-16). He details a tradition of Protestantism, from Puritanism (Baxter) to Methodism (Whitefield) and Evangelicalism (Cowper), tracing the connection between the Civil War and Evangelicalism. By

detailing this tradition, he positions the Civil War as an analogue for the civil war of the self, as he "inherit[s]" "the conflict of feelings" from "the Puritans of the seventeenth century."

De Quincey valued highly John Milton (1608-1674) and *Paradise Lost*. This dissertation recognises that from his earliest encounter in 1799 he was aware of Milton's singular depiction of Providence, one influenced by the Civil War. Daniel Sanjiv Roberts explains De Quincey's early knowledge of the text by noting that Milton was an Evangelical favourite ("Hannah More, Thomas De Quincey, and the Literature of Power"). John Stachniewski offers a reason: *Paradise Lost* "belongs to the puritan tradition" and "shapes a fragile independence from it" (332). *Paradise Lost* develops from and expands on Puritanism, which is similar to the Evangelical project, and if Evangelicals were careful to distinguish their religious position from Puritan extremes, De Quincey's first encounter with *Paradise Lost* through the 1732 edition edited by Richard Bentley (1662-1742) is contextualised. Bentley infamously corrected what he perceived as errors in the text, and one error had to do with the depiction of Providence. Since 1799 was a period of intense religious education for De Quincey, where he received numerous Evangelical texts (as shown in Chapter One), his mother Elizabeth's influence likely contributed to him receiving Bentley's edition. In "Sketches of Life and Manners" (Feb. 1834), De Quincey states that "At this time also I first read the Paradise Lost … the edition of Bentley," the "pseudo-restorator of the text" (10: 17). De Quincey was aware of what Bentley would have considered controversial in *Paradise Lost*.

Paradise Lost had a vexed connection to the Civil War: Milton sided with the Puritans, but their victory proved limited with the Restoration, so the question became, how does Providence operate? Milton addresses a version of Providence that seems to have abandoned his cause: he "had aspired in the opening invocation of the poem 'to justify the ways of God to

men,' and the collapse of the godly republic had certainly left God's ways in need of justification" (Campbell). Bentley had reason to question Milton: Bentley's grandfather was a Royalist Captain and died in captivity (Quehen). Instead of Milton's "and Providence thir guide: / They hand in hand with wand'ring steps and slow, / Through *Eden* took thir solitary way" (*Paradise Lost* 12.647-49), Bentley offers "THEN *hand in hand with* SOCIAL *steps their way* / *Through* Eden *took*, WITH HEAV'NLY COMFORT CHEER'D" (*Milton's Paradise Lost* 399). Bentley's rationale is this: "Why then … dismiss our first Parents in Anguish, and the Reader in Melancholy? And how can the Expression be justified, *with wand'ring Steps and slow*? Why *wand'ring*? Erratic Steps? Very improper: when in the Line before, they were *guided by Providence*" (*Milton's Paradise Lost* 399). For Bentley, if Providence is applied to the Civil War, the Puritans lost power, and God's will is clear: Providence does not wander in confusion.

De Quincey cites Milton's version of Providence, and he applies it to his abandonment of Manchester Grammar School in 1802. In 1821, he states that he "set off on foot, 'with Providence [his] guide'" (2: 17);[7] and in 1856, he frames the overall abandonment as resembling the Civil War, indicating that he was aware of invoking Milton in the context of the Civil War. One, the night before leaving, he states that he read about twilight "in a great English divine of 1630 (namely, Isaac Ambrose)" (2: 154). Grevel Lindop indicates that Isaac Ambrose (1604-1662) "was a contemplative Puritan minister" (Explanatory Notes to *Confessions* 351).[8] Two, De Quincey adds that when he was about to abandon the school, he received a letter not meant for him but a "*Monsieur de Quincy, Chester*" (2: 148). He states that the "iteration of the *Monsieur*" is "not at all a modern fashion" (2: 148), and he illustrates the point with an allusion to the Countess of Derby's use of the term: "This was in 1644, the year of Marston Moor, and the penultimate year of the Parliamentary War" (2: 148). Lindop notes that the Countess defended

against Parliamentary troops in 1643, and that Prince Rupert, to whom De Quincey refers, was Charles I's General of cavalry during Marston Moor, a major Royalist defeat (Explanatory Notes to *Confessions* 350). He contextualises his abandonment of the school with the Civil War.

De Quincey alludes to the religious tension of the Civil War through Welsh Methodism. In the 1821 text, he is brief: after leaving the school, he wanders through Wales, and he is allowed to stay at a house with the children, a "family of young people," because the parents are at an "annual meeting of Methodists" (2: 21). In the 1856 text, he expands the section. After being offended by the local bishop, he does not confront him because it would cause "mortification," "which the Methodists (by this time swarming in Carnarvonshire) would exultingly have diffused" (2: 178). He then details an incident at an inn near Dolgellau. He states that he heard "the very sweetest of female voices perhaps that ever [he] heard … She was a stranger; a visiter from some distance; and … a Methodist. What she sang, or at least sang last, were the beautiful verses of Shirley ending—'Only the actions of the just / Smell sweet, and blossom in the dust'" (2: 184). Lindop notes that he cites James Shirley's *The Contention of Ajax and Ulysses* (1659) (Explanatory Notes to *Confessions* 356). De Quincey makes a striking connection. Shirley (1596-1666) fought for the Royalists in the Civil War (Clark "Shirley"), so he has a Methodist, a descendent of the Puritans, singing a song by a Royalist. De Quincey not only links the Civil War to the discord between Methodism, which to critics like Hunt was simply an Evangelical sect, and the Church of England, but also to the civil war of the self, as he contextualises his abandonment in 1802 with various allusions and references to the Civil War. This dissertation notes that with his youth marked by the feeling of civil war, De Quincey sets himself in a position for opium to amplify that feeling: specifically, it pushes him to struggle with positions associated with Puritan extremism, such as enthusiasm and premillennialism.

2.3 The Highs of Opium and the Lows of Addiction

In "The Pleasure of Opium," De Quincey addresses the highs of opium through Sir Henry Vane (1613-1662), a religious radical and Puritan leader during the Civil War (Mayers). Immediately after the apostrophe to opium—"Oh! just, subtle, and mighty opium! … thou hast the keys of Paradise" (2: 51)—he cites Vane: "I shall be charged with mysticism … &c. but *that* shall not alarm me. Sir. H. Vane, the younger, was one of our wisest men: and let my readers see if he, in his philosophical works, be half as unmystical as I am" (2: 51).[9] One text that fits the category "mysticism" is *Sr. Henry Vane: his Speech in the House of Commons, at a Committee for the Bill against Episcopall-government* (1641), with its "apocalyptic vision" on the eve of the Civil War (Mayers). De Quincey indicates that like Vane, he can inhabit the two positions of "mysticism" and "unmystical" philosophy; unlike Vane, though, in *Confessions*, he blends secular and religious themes, contextualising the highs of opium with a radical Puritan. This dissertation contends that De Quincey's reference to Vane's more extreme religious positions indicates that he is framing opium as forcing him to struggle with aspects of Puritan extremism.

De Quincey cites Sir Thomas Browne (1605-1682) and *Religio Medici* (1642, 1643), demonstrating that he was familiar with an unauthorised version of the text that has Browne using premillennialist imagery. Before citing Browne, De Quincey states that he "give[s] this account at the risk of being pronounced a crazy enthusiast or visionary" (2: 47). Again, with "enthusiast" connected to the extremism of Puritans and Evangelicals, De Quincey's use of the term shows that he expected his audience to be familiar with the relevant discourse, and that he positions opium as pushing him towards engaging with religious extremism.

De Quincey describes the highs of music-on-opium through Browne's *Religio Medici*. He states that he "do[es] not recollect more than one thing said adequately on the subject of music in

all literature: it is a passage in the *Religio Medici* of Sir T. Brown" (2: 48), and he offers the following: "I have not the book at this moment to consult: but I think the passage begins—'And even that tavern music, which makes one man merry, another mad, in me strikes a deep fit of devotion,' &c." (2: 48). He is referring to this passage in *Religio Medici*: "It is a Hieroglyphicall and shadowed lesson of the whole world … In briefe it is a sensible fit of that Harmony, which intellectually sounds in the eares of God: it unties the ligaments of my frame, takes me to pieces, dilates me out of myself, and by degrees, mee thinks, resolves me into Heaven" (Browne 84). Daniel O'Quinn identifies this section in Browne's text, and he states that the "final sentence of this passage regarding the dismantling of the subject and its subsequent re-assemblage in heaven is crucial" because *Confessions* is similar. De Quincey notes that "it is sufficient to say, that a chorus, &c. of elaborate harmony, displayed before [him], as in a piece of arras work, the whole of [his] past life … no longer painful to dwell upon: but the detail of its incidences removed, or blended in some hazy abstraction; and its passions exalted, spiritualized, and sublimed" (2: 48). De Quincey addresses the opium high with an apocalyptic description where the self is dissolved and reunited. The section that he cites, though, is found only in the unauthorised version of 1642: Browne deleted the passage in the authorised version of 1643 (Keynes 3-4). A reason for the deletion, as Stephen Greenblatt and Ramie Targoff indicate, is that the escalation of tensions in the Civil War forced Browne to "clarify his moderate adherence to Anglican orthodoxy and reduce his vulnerability to attacks from ideological extremists" (xvi). The removal of the dissolution in Heaven fits that editorial practice. De Quincey knew the unauthorised version, and adapting its premillennialist imagery, he addresses the highs of opium. Though he employs premillennialist imagery in a positive way at this stage, he more substantially engages with a darker version of premillennialism at the end of *Confessions*, as shown in the next section.

The lows of addiction are found in "The Pains of Opium": the battles of addiction resemble Royalist defeats and indecisive battles of the Civil War, and Milton's wandering Providence closes the text. In the Civil War nightmare, De Quincey lists the following battles: "Marston Moor," "Newbury," and "Naseby" (2: 68). They are either Royalist defeats or indecisive battles: Marston Moor (1644) was the first major defeat for the Royalists; Newbury saw two indecisive battles (1643; 1644); and Naseby was a major defeat for the Royalists (1645) (Lindop, Explanatory Notes to *Confessions* 338). He situates himself within the Civil War, and by not identifying with a specific side, he identifies simultaneously with victory, defeat, and stalemate, and a similar ambiguity is found in the present: the "ladies [of the Civil War] ... looked as lovely as the court of George IV" (2: 68). These battles of the Civil War resemble the civil war of the self, the battles of addiction, as indicated by the vision occurring in opium nightmare. Further, to conclude the text, he cites the section of *Paradise Lost* that contains the version of Providence derived from the aftermath of the Civil War: "Providence their guide" (12.647).[10] Specifically, he cites "the tremendous lines of Milton" that precede the description of Providence (2: 76): "With dreadful faces throng'd and fiery arms" (*Paradise Lost* 12.644). He first cites this section when he leaves Manchester Grammar School, and with this second citation, he addresses the lows of addiction, supporting one of the key arguments of this chapter, that opium amplifies the feeling of civil war that was first established in his pre-opium youth.

Throughout *Confessions*, De Quincey employs historical analogues to reflect the struggle in the self; and this dissertation posits that the Civil War serves as a special analogue because he associates the feeling of civil war with an essential aspect of Puritan theology as interpreted by Evangelicalism: depravity. He compares his youth to the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars:

> Oh, wherefore, then was it—through what inexplicable growth of evil in myself or in others—that now in the summer of 1802, when peace was brooding over all the land, peace succeeding to a bloody seven years' war, but peace which already gave signs of breaking into a far bloodier war, some dark sympathising movement within my own heart, as if echoing and repeating in mimicry the political menaces of the earth, swept with storm-clouds across that otherwise serene and radiant dawn which should have heralded my approaching entrance into life. (2: 138)

He experiences a "dark sympathising movement … echoing and repeating in mimicry the political menaces of the earth"; and he alludes to a concept approaching depravity with the phrase "inexplicable growth of evil." Indeed, this dissertation contends that, as per the argument in Chapter Two, with *Confessions* addressing the power of opium in "impassioned prose," (20: 16), he engages with the concept of the literature of power, so the feeling of civil war includes the struggle against the depraved component of the self. The next section considers addiction as pushing him to engage with depravity and an aspect of Puritan extremism: premillennialism.

3. "The Chambers of Imagery": Depravity, Addiction, and Apocalypse

This section addresses depravity, addiction, and apocalypse in the 1821 *Confessions*. In *Perfection Proclaimed*, Nigel Smith states that the Puritans used "biblical episodes and events," "simplified" them, and applied them "to the internal state of the individual" (230). The tradition may be extended to Evangelicalism with the term, "the chambers of imagery" (Ezek. 8.12). The postmillennialist More illustrates depravity with the term, and the premillennialist Irving uses the term to suggest imminent apocalypse. De Quincey uses the term to add premillennialism to the concluding section "The Pains of Opium": he combines the struggle against the depraved

component of the self, addiction, the precedent for imminent apocalypse (the Civil War), and apocalypse in 1821, indicating that he engages with a London audience fascinated with apocalypse, and that he frames himself as experiencing the imminent end to his addiction.

3.1 Evangelicalism and *Confessions*

The Book of Ezekiel provides the term "the chambers of imagery" (8.12). Set in Babylon, the text concerns the betrayal of the "Judean-Babylonian covenant" in 592 BCE (Galambush 534). The prophet was exiled to Babylon "after Nebuchadrezzar's 597 BCE capture of Jerusalem" (534). Nebuchadrezzar installed Zedekiah as ruler of Israel, but Zedekiah was not loyal, and he established relations with the Egyptian Pharaoh Psmmeticus II, who not only "toured Palestine in a show of military power, clearly violating the Judean-Babylonian covenant," but also "stationed Egyptian priests in the land of Israel, thus compounding Judah's treaty violation with ritual abomination" (534). In the Book of Ezekiel, the prophet is transported in a vision to Jerusalem, where he explores the temple and its idolatrous Egyptian imagery.

The temple reflects both a specific historical event and the depravity of the self. The text begins with the divine visitation: "the hand of the Lord God fell there upon me" (Ezek. 8.1). God transports Ezekiel to the temple, commanding him to move inwards: "Then said he unto me, Son of man, dig now in the wall: and when I had digged in the wall, behold a door" (8.8). God tells him to "Go in, and behold the wicked abominations that they do here" (8.9): and Ezekiel "behold[s] every form of creeping things, and abominable beasts, and all the idols of the house of Israel, pourtrayed upon the wall round about" (8.10). God then asks "Son of man, hast thou seen what the ancients of the house of Israel do in the dark, every man in the chambers of his

imagery? for they say, The LORD seeth us not; the LORD hath forsaken the earth" (8.12). Evangelicals used the text to stress depravity: "every man in the chambers of his imagery."

More's explication of the Book of Ezekiel addresses introspection, the self, and depravity. *Practical Piety*, the chapter "Self-Examination," describes introspection:

> The faithful searcher into his own heart, that 'chamber of Imagery,' feels himself in the situation of the Prophet [Ezekiel], who being conducted in vision from one idol to another, the spirit, at sight of each, repeatedly exclaims, 'here is another abomination!' The prophet being commanded to dig deeper, the further he penetrated the more evils he found, while the spirit continued to cry out, 'I will shew thee yet more abominations.' (279)

Introspection reveals that the self is a "chamber of Imagery," an "awful world within" (280): the interior is "awful" in the expansiveness of its "abominations," or depravity. As a postmillennialist, More uses the Book of Ezekiel to illustrate depravity. In contrast, the premillennialist Irving employs the text to address depravity *and* imminent apocalypse.

Irving achieved fame in London, 1822-1825. "The rich and the cultivated, cabinet ministers, and peers … flocked to [his] services," and he "became a regular visitor to Samuel Taylor Coleridge" (Brown). During this period, he published *For the Oracles of God, Four Orations, and the Judgement to Come* (1823), "a plea for a heart-felt religion that quickly went through three editions" (Brown). Though Irving was a premillennialist and would estrange himself from the Church of England by the 1830s, during the period in London, he was not inimical to Evangelicals within the Church of England, as demonstrated by the attendance of a key figure of the Clapham Sect at one of his services: Wilberforce (De Quincey 11: 251).

De Quincey knew Irving. In "Sketches of Life and Manners (Oct. 1840), he states that after meeting at a London dinner party in 1823, he and Irving walked "three miles or more" and "had a good deal of conversation" (11: 249). He contends that Irving "was, unquestionably, by many degrees, the greatest orator of our times" (11: 249). Indeed, De Quincey was cognisant of Irving's reputation—"that unequalled splendour of appearance with which he convulsed all London at his first *debût*" (11: 249)—specifically the crush to attend his services: "Stories of carriage panels beaten in, chapel windows beaten out, as entrances for ladies of rank and distinguished senators" (11: 250). De Quincey was familiar with Irving in London, so he would have been aware of the premillennialism that contributed to his popularity.

Irving uses the Book of Ezekiel to address depravity and apocalypse. He states that "it seemeth to [him] a thing impossible, that to any creature under the sun aught should happen of which God is unconscious," for "It were a limitation of his divinity to think so": "There were in that case, dark chambers into which we could retire out of his sight, regions of experience where we might dwell out of his control" (308). Like the Book of Ezekiel, Irving alludes to those who seek to hide from God in "dark chambers," where they "might dwell out of his control." Depravity, though, cannot be concealed, and as a premillennialist, Irving uses depravity to reveal imminent apocalypse: "Oh! in this crisis of the world, when thrones are shaken, and nations are arising to the work of terrible revenge, and all things are unsettled, oh! thou Almighty Ruler of the destinies of men, make the voice of truth to be heard by the raging people" (538). He frames the 1820s as signaling the apocalypse, where God will "make the voice of truth to be heard."

This dissertation suggests that *Confessions* engaged with a London audience fascinated with apocalypse (and as shown in Section One, the 1820s was a period marked by premillennialism). Like Irving's sermons, *Confessions* caused a sensation: first published in

London Magazine (September and October 1821), it went on to be published in a single volume in October 1822, a second edition in January 1823, a third in June 1823, and a fourth in 1826 (Lindop, Introduction to *Confessions* 7). Unlike Irving, De Quincey invokes the Civil War as the historical precedent for the premillennialism of 1821, and he incorporates addiction.

De Quincey demonstrates an Evangelical understanding of the Book of Ezekiel. In the manuscript "*Idolatry*," included in "Fragments on Christianity," he states that "The true evil is not—to kindle the idea of Apollo by an image or likeness—but to worship Apollo" (20: 434). Though he frames the evil of idolatry with the Book of Isaiah and the Book of Jeremiah, the verso finds him commenting on the Book of Ezekiel, "the Pharaoh" and Egypt (20: 434), and he makes a similar point: though the text deals with a historical event, the importance is in the spiritual connotation. He indicates, then, that he was familiar with the Evangelical interpretation of the Book of Ezekiel with its emphasis on "evil": the depravity of the self.

In "The Pains of Opium," De Quincey addresses introspection, struggle, the depraved component of the self, and addiction. Almost in response to More's call for self-examination, he stresses that he has struggled with "feelings deeper than [he] can analyze" (2: 70); and like More's self-examiner, he is left "loathing" and feeling "hatred" at what he finds inside (2: 71). De Quincey employs the Book of Ezekiel, specifically its Egyptian and chamber imagery:

> I ran into pagodas: and was fixed, for centuries, at the summit, or in secret rooms; I was the idol; I was the priest; I was worshipped; I was sacrificed … I came suddenly upon Isis and Osiris: I had done a deed, they said, which the ibis and the crocodile trembled at. I was buried, for a thousand years, in stone coffins, with mummies and sphynxes, in narrow chambers at the heart of eternal pyramids. I

> was kissed, with cancerous kisses, by crocodiles; and laid, confounded with all unutterable slimy things, amongst reeds and Niltonic mud. (2: 71)

Ezekiel witnesses "creeping things, and abominable beasts" and "wicked abominations," and he moves inward though holes and doors into "chambers of imagery" (8.10-12). De Quincey is "laid, confounded with all unutterable slimy things, amongst reeds and Niltonic mud," and he finds himself placed in "secret rooms" and "buried" in "narrow chambers at the heart of eternal pyramids." De Quincey uses similar imagery as the Book of Ezekiel, and he employs chambers and the heart like Evangelicals. Indeed, he concludes that these "dreams" "always filled [him] with such amazement at the monstrous scenery, that horror seemed absorbed, for a while, in sheer astonishment. Sooner or later came a reflux of feeling that swallowed up the astonishment, and left [him] … in hatred and abomination of what [he] saw" (2: 71). More states that "a faithful searcher into his own heart" will understand depravity (279), and De Quincey, after examining his nightmares, is "astonished" and filled with "hatred and abomination" at this understanding of the self. De Quincey adapts an Evangelical description of depravity to detail the feeling that he associates with addiction, so he engages with Puritan theology as interpreted by Evangelicalism, and he blends religious and secular confession.

De Quincey further indicates that opium nightmare addresses the struggle against the depraved component of the self. The apocalypse nightmare contains paralysis by the "oppression of inexpiable guilt" (2: 74), and that "guilt" is linked to depravity because he qualifies the "guilt" with an allusion to Milton's personification of sin in *Paradise Lost* (10.602): he hears "a sigh, such as the caves of hell sighed when the incestuous mother uttered the abhorred name of death" (2: 74). The Easter Sunday dream provides a vision of the divine component of the self, but like Evangelicals, De Quincey emphasises depravity even where he addresses the divine, as the

Atonement stresses Christ's sacrifice for depravity. With death and depravity inextricably linked (as noted above), he begins with the "grave of a child," shifts to the Atonement—"the first fruits of resurrection"—and concludes with the spiritualised Ann of Oxford Street: "Her face was the same as when I saw it last, and yet again how different! … the tears were now wiped away; she seemed more beautiful than she was at the time … Her looks were tranquil, but with unusual solemnity of expression" (2: 72-3). In addition, he ends *Confessions* with the result of sin, expulsion from Eden, through Milton: his "sleep is still tumultuous, and, like the gates of Paradise to our first parents when looking back from afar … 'With dreadful faces throng'd and fiery arms'" (2: 76).[11] This dissertation shows that De Quincey blends secular and religious confession by exploring depravity and the self through addiction, and that he frames the end of his addiction as imminent, as suggested by the premillennialism in "The Pains of Opium."

3.2 Apocalypse: the Civil War and 1821

De Quincey addresses imminent apocalypse in 1821 and the historical precedent for premillennialism, the Civil War. He states that the apocalypse "dream commenced with a music which now [he] often heard in dreams—a music of preparation and of awakening suspense: a music like the opening of the Coronation Anthem, and which, like *that*, gave the feeling of a vast march—of infinite cavalcades filing off—and the tread of innumerable armies" (2: 73). Morrison states that the apocalypse nightmare is linked to the Coronation of George IV: "De Quincey's reference to the celebrated anthem is a highly topical one, as the Coronation of George IV took place on 19 July 1821, when De Quincey himself was in London, and only eight weeks before he delivered the dream finale to his editors" ("Dating the Dream Finale" 242). This dissertation contends that with the apocalypse nightmare connected to 1821, the Coronation should also be

understood as influencing the Civil War nightmare, as De Quincey compares the court of the "unhappy times of Charles I" to the "court of George IV" (2: 68). The composition date of these nightmares, then, positions De Quincey close to Irving and premillennialist London.

The content of the Civil War nightmare resembles the apocalypse nightmare; and the conflation of 1642-1651 with 1821 invokes the historical precedent for premillennialism, the Civil War, and it addresses imminent apocalypse in the present, as concerns London and addiction. The Civil War nightmare is characterised by female separation: "These are the wives and the daughters who met in peace … and yet, after a certain day in August 1642, never smiled upon each other again … The ladies danced, and looked as lovely as the court of George IV" (2: 68). De Quincey demonstrates his familiarity with the religious extremism of the Civil War throughout *Confessions*, so with the apocalypse nightmare framed in a similar way as the Civil War nightmare, he shows that he continues to incorporate that extremism, in this case, premillennialism. The apocalypse nightmare contains similar content—female separation—but in this instance, that separation is caused by the far greater conflict:

> Then came sudden alarms … trepidations of innumerable fugitives, I knew not whether from the good cause or the bad: darkness and lights: tempest and human faces; and at last, with the sense that all was lost, female forms, and the features that were worth all the world to me, and but a moment allowed,—and clasped hands, and heart-breaking partings, and then—everlasting farewells! and with a sigh, such as the caves of hell sighed when the incestuous mother uttered the abhorred name of death, the sound was reverberated—everlasting farewells! and again, and yet again reverberated—everlasting farewells! (2: 74)

He uses the Civil War to set-up an apocalyptic vision that engages with the contemporary situation, London and addiction. Irving's *Oracles* suggests that he invokes premillennialism. Irving states that due to depravity, "there will be episodes of melting tenderness at this final parting of men! and eternal farewells! but, ah! the word farewell hath forgotten its meaning, and wishes of welfare now are vain" (351). Since De Quincey employs Milton's personification of sin in this nightmare, he also associates depravity with these "everlasting farewells." Further, De Quincey's "farewells" are similar to Irving's "eternal farewells," as he and Irving situate the apocalypse in the present through family partings: De Quincey has female forms and "heart-breaking partings," and Irving has "episodes of melting tenderness." Like Irving, De Quincey engages with a London audience fascinated with apocalypse, but unlike Irving, he focuses on addiction. Specifically, he anticipates the resolution of his addiction, as at the end, he depicts his addiction as resolved: "I triumphed" (2: 75). This dissertation contends that because De Quincey was lying about his success and did not alter the premillennialism from 1821 to 1856, he was deceiving himself about the reality of his addiction for thirty-five years. Doubt in the divine component of the self is implicit in that prolonged deception.

Conclusion

This dissertation proposes that De Quincey uses the Civil War to address the civil war of the self: he holds that an aspect of the object of *Confessions* is to showcase the power of opium in amplifying the feeling of civil war in the self, and that the feeling of civil war contributes to intellectual and moral development. He blends secular and religious confession by exploring the feeling of civil war in his pre-opium youth, opium highs, and addiction (with opium and addiction pushing him to struggle with positions associated with Puritan extremism). The feeling

of civil war includes depravity, as “The Pains of Opium” explores depravity associated with addiction, and it contains doubt, as the premillennialism remains unchanged from 1821 to 1856: De Quincey was waiting for the end of his addiction for thirty-five years, and doubt in the divine component of the self is implicit in that wait. In the end, he would need to wait until 8 December 1859, his death, for the apocalypse of his addiction and the end to the civil war of the self.

Notes

[1] Grevel Lindop documents the many references and allusions to the Civil War in his authoritative edition of *Confessions*, but establishing a larger argument is beyond the scope of his explanatory notes. Critics like Daniel O'Quinn and Joseph Nicholes explore specific examples. As addressed in Section Two, O'Quinn considers Sir Thomas Browne in the context of religious extremism. Nicholes briefly situates De Quincey's statements on the Civil War in the context of other British authors: De Quincey compares the French Revolution to the Civil War to demonstrate that in the eighteenth century the French had a similar revolution to the British in the seventeenth century (272). As this chapter demonstrates, though, the Civil War was part of a more complex discourse in Britain, and it has a more significant role in *Confessions*.

[2] Jay offers a similar definition: postmillennialists "believed that Christ would arrive in judgement at the conclusion of the thousand years," and premillennialists disagreed with "the idea of labouring patiently for the allotted period," as it "did not seem in keeping with those strange and troubled times. The premillennialists sought a more immediate divine sanction and believed that Christ would issue in the thousand years, Himself effecting the restoration of the Jews and the conversion of the heathen" (90).

[3] Mee identifies this section in *Practical Piety* as addressing enthusiasm (16): "frantic enthusiasts, enemies to virtue, and subverters of the public weal" (More 17). This dissertation stresses that More is defending against both premillennialist Puritans and Evangelicals.

[4] De Quincey uses the term "Parliamentary War" (2: 68). This dissertation suggests that De Quincey uses it rather than Civil War because he is referring, ultimately, to the civil war of the self, and the political term provides greater legitimacy to the division, chaos, and suffering that he was so familiar with, due to his Evangelical youth and later addiction, and that he likely struggled with rationalising to himself. Indeed, this subsection identifies other points where he attempts to offer a rationale for the civil war of the self, especially in the 1856 revised text.

[5] Lindop states that De Quincey presents a similar argument in other texts: "The point is made in the fifth instalment of *Letters to a Young Man Whose Education Has Been Neglected* (1823) and in the revised … text of 'Laxton' in *Autobiographic Sketches*" (1854) (Explanatory Notes to *Confessions* 348).

[6] Lindop provides the dating (Explanatory Notes to *Confessions* 342).

[7] Milton, *Paradise Lost* 12.647.

[8] Where Lindop has provided an adequate explanatory note on individuals and events associated with the Civil War, this dissertation cites Lindop.

[9] Lindop states that Vane was a "Puritan and Parliamentary leader in the English Civil War, [and] author of several mystical works probably influenced by the teachings of [Jakob] Boehme" (Explanatory Notes to *Confessions* 335)

[10] *Paradise Lost*: "and providence their guide: / They hand in hand with wandering steps and slow / Through Eden took their solitary way" (Milton 12.647-69).

[11] *Paradise Lost*: "With dreadful faces thronged and fiery arms" (Milton 12.644).

Chapter Five

De Quincey's "Jealous Angel": Suffering, Madness, and Doubt in a Loving God

Introduction

Evangelicals used sickness, specifically madness and delirium, to address doubt in God; and De Quincey innovated on that use of madness. This chapter demonstrates that De Quincey's interpretation of the Christian experience—experience as the feeling of struggle, depravity, and doubt—includes doubt in a *loving* God, a heretical position that challenges the foundation of the Church of England: "There is but one living and true God … of infinite power, wisdom, and goodness" (*A Short Scriptural Explication* 1).[1] This chapter has three sections. The first section shows that Evangelicals depicted suffering as God's negative intervention, and that they situated periods of severe suffering that caused doubt in God as madness and delirium, in order to present these periods as the action of a loving God—as madness that punished depravity and developed the Christian—and to privilege the position of the recovered Christian, where suffering, doubt, and God were understood.[2] Evangelicals, then, were not detailing actual madness, but employing madness to address the heretical position of doubt, whether that doubt was caused by ill-health, family deaths, or other factors, and to emphasise the Christian's development in faith in God. The other sections contend that in *Confessions of an English Opium-Eater* (1821, 1856) and "Suspiria De Profundis" (1845) and related texts, adapting Samuel Taylor Coleridge's spirit from "The Rhyme of the Ancyent Marinere" (1798) and terming it the "jealous angel" (16: 117), De Quincey uses delirious opium nightmare and delirium to depict suffering that he cannot understand as the action of a loving God, and by extension, to depict doubt in that God. Like Evangelicals, he holds that periods of severe suffering cause doubt, that they are madness, and

that they are punishment for depravity and the way to develop; unlike Evangelicals, he privileges the position of madness over that of the recovered Christian, revealing that he has difficulty reconciling suffering and doubt with a loving God. Though suffering, doubt, and God have always shaped Christian apologetics, Evangelicalism is distinguished by its depiction of doubt as madness and its emphasis on recovery; and these are the two aspects that De Quincey engages with. This dissertation considers Evangelicals' and De Quincey's admissions that their interpretations of the Christian experience contain doubt in a loving God; and it identifies De Quincey's innovation, where he addresses development in doubt instead of faith, and the role of addiction, as he first explores doubt in the nightmares of addiction in *Confessions*, and in "Suspiria," after thirty-two years of addiction, he extends doubt to general experience.

1. Evangelicals, Suffering, Doubt, and Madness

This section addresses the Evangelical use of madness. The religious connotations of delirium came from the English Civil War, where critics associated madness with the religious extremism of Protestant sects. Evangelicals, in turn, linked themselves to Puritan extremism because they incorporated madness into their interpretation of the Christian experience. Important Evangelicals for De Quincey framed periods of severe suffering that caused doubt in God as madness (Isaac Milner, William Wilberforce, Francis Randolph, and John Foster) and delirium (Hannah More and John Venn): they presented these periods as the action of a loving God, as madness that punished and developed, and they privileged the position of the recovered Christian, where suffering, doubt, and God were understood. Though the difficulties associated with understanding suffering, doubt, and God undermine the claim about substantial recovery from doubt, the rationale for the claim is clear: Evangelicals wanted to emphasise the Christian's

development in faith. This dissertation reviews these Evangelicals to contextualise Coleridge's and De Quincey's more nuanced explorations of doubt, where recovery from doubt is precarious.

The Civil War provides insight into the religious connotations of delirium and the Evangelical use of madness. Timothy Clark states that during the Civil War critics of Puritans associated sickness with "the activities of extreme Protestant sects" (63); and Jon Mee adds that enthusiasm—the state associated with the religious extremism of the Civil War addressed in Chapter Three—"was commonly thought of as either a species of mania or delirium" (29). The *Oxford English Dictionary* records that delirium consists of physical and psychological symptoms, as it is marked by "A disordered state of the mental faculties resulting from disturbance of the functions of the brain, and characterized by incoherent speech, hallucinations, restlessness, and frenzied or maniacal excitement," and that it possesses religious connotations, as it was understood as a "frenzied rapture" ("Delirium"). Indeed, the *OED* links delirium and enthusiasm by citing the philosopher and theologian Henry More (1614-1687): "those wild delirious Fanaticks in their false Enthusiasm" ("Delirious"). Delirium, then, developed connotations of religious madness from the Civil War. As concerns Evangelicals, Doreen Rosman identifies the use of sickness to support "the Christian gospel" (103), and Boyd Hilton summarises the Evangelical project: "to reconcile ... evil and suffering … with a powerful and loving God" (103). This dissertation acknowledges that the many ways that Evangelicals used sickness are beyond its scope, but it contends that though Evangelicals wanted to distance themselves from Puritan extremism (as shown in Chapter Three), one reason that critics associated them with that extremism was because they used sickness, specifically madness and delirium, "to reconcile … [periods of] suffering [and doubt] with a … loving God," and it proposes the following dynamic: by aligning temporary madness with doubt, Evangelicals

explored the heretical position of doubt and privileged recovery from doubt; and delirium was useful to Evangelicals because of its connotations of religious madness. The Evangelical use of delirium would prove attractive to De Quincey because he could employ delirium to address the periods of severe suffering associated with addiction and the resulting doubt in God.

The critic Leigh Hunt and the Evangelical Milner address madness. In *Danger of Methodism*, Hunt states that Evangelicals have "notoriously filled our hospitals with insanity," and that he "knew a lady … who was driven" to "mad[ness]." Hunt asks "What need I say of the hypochandrias, the consuming fevers, the suicides that follow the burning progress of Methodism?" (xii). In *Sermons*, defending against critics like Hunt, Milner notes that "The honest zeal of the wisest and most judicious servants of God has frequently been deemed enthusiastic, and supposed to border even on madness itself" (2: 2). Milner recognises that critics associate Evangelicals with "enthusias[m]" and "madness"; and he provides a reason why critics would make such claims. He holds that "every seeking penitent" must "bring the matters that relate to his own peace to a crisis. God will not bestow his blessings unless you prize them, and unless you wrestle with him to obtain them" (2: 292). He requires Christians to experience "crisis" and to "wrestle with" God to reach "peace." This dissertation contends that Evangelicals integrated "cris[e]s" of doubt into what Hunt terms "mad[ness],"and that due to his Evangelical youth, De Quincey would have been familiar with such depictions and rhetoric.

Wilberforce posits that periods of severe suffering cause doubt, that they resemble madness, and that, as the action of a loving God, they punish and develop Christians. He states that sometimes "grief and confusion" (207) cause Christians to be "disquieted with doubts" (183), and that "it even happens that they are driven to seek for refuge from their disquietude in the suggestions of infidelity" (195-96). Wilberforce holds that suffering, "grief and confusion,"

causes “doubts” and “infidelity,” and that “while this conflict has been going on, their walk is sad and comfortless, and their couch is nightly watered with tears” (196). Without God, Christians approach madness, walking in “comfortless” “confusion.” Though Wilberforce offers a muted description of madness, he serves as a foundation to explore stronger descriptions, by both other Evangelicals and De Quincey: indeed, Wilberforce was an opium-addict, and he would be familiar with the “comfortless” “confusion” or the suffering of addiction, so he provides context for De Quincey’s more extreme description in *Confessions*. Regardless of the strength of the description, Wilberforce contends that these periods are punishment for depravity and the way to develop: “all our troubles … do not happen to us by chance; that they are not even merely the punishment of sin; but that they are the dispensations of a kind Providence, and sent on messages of mercy” (206). God effects periods of suffering that cause doubt to punish depravity, “punishment of sin,” and to develop individuals, as Christians recover and understand these periods as the action of a loving God: “the dispensations of a kind Providence, and sent on messages of mercy.” De Quincey does not conclude *Confessions* with such a recovery.

Addressing similar suffering as Wilberforce, Randolph posits that doubt is a state of madness, and that suffering and doubt are the action of a loving God. He claims that “men plunge from doubts, which questioned the validity of God’s word, to the madness of impiety that denies his existence” (13), and he concludes that the “judgements … and the crimes and horrors which now desolate the earth, bring the most indisputable marks of the hand that directs the moral like the natural hurricane to its ordained purpose; of the hand of Him who … to punish and correct mankind, is now making an apostate world the engine of its own destruction” (13-14). Randolph presents doubt as “terror” and “madness,” and he contends that “crimes and horrors … desolate the earth,” so as to “punish and correct,” and by extension, that suffering and doubt are

the action of a loving God. In "Suspiria," the "Finale to Part I: Savanna-La-Mar," De Quincey states that God "works by earthquake" and "grief" and "raises … from human intellects glorious vintages" (15: 187). As shown in the next sections, De Quincey, too, contextualises suffering with punishment and development, but he focuses on madness and doubt more than Randolph.

Foster maintains that periods of suffering cause doubt, that they approach madness, and that a loving God uses these periods to develop the Christian. He offers the following:

> In the hours of pensive thought, the serious observer, unless he can fully resign the condition of man to the infinite wisdom and goodness of his Creator, will feel an emotion of horror, as if standing on the verge of a hideous gulf, into which almost all the possibilities, and speculations, and efforts, and hopes, relating to the best improvements of mankind, are brought down in a long abortive series by the torrent of ages, to be lost in final despair. (230)

He addresses suffering as he contends that the "condition of man" results in an "emotion of horror"; he depicts suffering as causing doubt because he details periods where the Christian cannot "resign the condition of man to the infinite wisdom and goodness of his Creator"; and during these periods, he has the Christian approach madness: "as if standing on the verge of a hideous gulf." Foster stresses, though, that the Christian recovers and understands these periods as "the infinite wisdom and goodness of his Creator": "As a believer in revelation, he is consoled … that this train of evils will be converted into good" and "the chaos of turbulent and malignant elements into a new moral world" (231). These periods of suffering that cause doubt—"this train of evils" and "the chaos of turbulent and malignant elements"—develop the Christian, as they "will be converted into good" and "a new moral world."

This dissertation shows that Wilberforce, Randolph, and Foster depict periods of severe suffering that cause doubt in God as madness, so as to privilege the position of the recovered Christian, where suffering, doubt, and God are understood. The claim about substantial recovery is challenged by the inherent difficulties associated with understanding suffering, doubt, and God (as Christian apologetics have constantly returned to these difficulties); but the claim itself is revealing, as it indicates that Evangelicals wanted to emphasise the Christian's development in faith. More and Venn use madness and recovery in a similar way, but they specify the madness as delirium, as they include the physical and psychological symptoms associated with delirium.

In *Practical Piety*, More explicates suffering as punishment and the way to develop: the action of a loving God. She states that "The reflecting Christian will consider the natural evil of sickness as the consequence and punishment of moral evil," and that "If man had not sinned, he would not have suffered" (279). She maintains that "it is a counterbalance to this trial to know that our merciful Father has no pleasure in the sufferings of his children; that he chastens them in love; that he never inflicts a stroke which he could safely spare; that he inflicts it to purify as well as to punish, to caution as to cure, to improve as well as to chastise" (279-80). More positions "suffer[ing]" as punishment for "sin[]" and the way to develop, as God "inflicts it to purify … and to improve." Suffering is the action of a loving God: he "chastens … in love." Though Evangelicals like More conclude with the broadly Christian statement on suffering and a loving God, this dissertation focuses on the singular use of madness (and doubt) before that conclusion.

More situates God as acting through delirium, and she acknowledges that periods of severe suffering cause doubt in a loving God. She states that a "well known sceptic … took measures … to guard against any intrusion in his last sickness, by which he might, even in the

event of delirium, betray any doubtful apprehension that there might be an hereafter … and thus exposing the state of his mind … which his heart whispered him might possibly happen" (245). More has God act through delirium, as the "skeptic['s]" "heart whispered" that "in his last sickness," which might become "delirium," he would "apprehen[d] that there" is "an hereafter" (245).[3] More elaborates on the visions of delirium with the "final period of the worldly man" (236): she states that "a clouded memory, a disjointed reason, a wounded spirit, undefined terrors, remembered sins, anticipated punishment, an angry God, an accusing conscience, altogether, intolerably augment the sufferings of a body which stands in little need of the insupportable burthen of a distracted mind to aggravate its torments" (237). More addresses delirium because she employs the physical and psychological symptoms—"the sufferings of the body" and "mind"—and she positions delirium as containing doubt in a loving God, as "an angry God" visits the sufferer. Still, according to More's overall position, if God acts in this way, the individual is not only "punish[ed]" but also developed, and the individual will recover—if only before or after death—and understand the "angry God" as loving. As shown in the next sections, De Quincey primarily addresses a version of this "angry God" in delirious opium nightmare.

In *Duty of Man*, Venn states that God employs sickness and madness to punish depravity and develop the Christian. He posits that "It is acknowledged, it is strenuously maintained, that the heart of man is exceedingly depraved, and our affections corrupted to the very root" (xi). As with other Evangelicals, by identifying depravity, he connects suffering not only to punishment but also to development, as "it is the peculiar glory of gospel grace, to humble every believer in the dust, and to fill him with the most dreadful apprehensions of sin, in order to raise him from his dead state, and to establish him in obedience from love to God" (xi). "[E]very believer" must be "humble[d]" "in the dust" "in order to [be] raise[d]," or to be developed. He provides

examples. Addressing sickness, he states "that it is God *who maketh sick and maketh well*: that it is owing to his sovereign infinitely wise appointment, that some are on a bed of languishing, crying out through strong pain" (243); and considering madness, he posits that "In one fatal hour … a violent fever, may disorder the structure of your brain, rifle all the cells of knowledge, and wipe away from your memory the very traces of all that has been committed to its keeping" (11). Venn associates sickness and madness with God, punishment, and development.

In *Mistakes in Religion Exposed* (1774), Venn uses the physical and psychological symptoms of delirium to depict periods of severe suffering that cause doubt in God. Venn states that "till God ceases to be holy, to be jealous, to love his people, and promote their interest, these things must be so. Otherwise, He would encourage them to despise his holy authority, and lightly regard committing what his soul abhorreth" (175). All emanating from a "jealous" God that "love[s] his people," the things that "must be so" are periods of severe suffering for "the rebellious," the depraved, complete with physical symptoms (the "hands which would now lay hold on the Covenant, shake and tremble") and psychological symptoms ("distressing doubts and fears ... strongly assail the mind") (174). Venn positions this suffering as causing doubt in God: the "divine presence withdraws, the love and glory of CHRIST become obscured" (174); and he indicates that doubt continues until recovery: "Prayer is without access to God, or any comfort, till brokenness of heart begins, and sincere lamentation for the offence, till the Lord has been often and earnestly besought to heal the backsliding, and restore comfort to the mourner" (174-75). Like More, Venn structures doubt on delirium, madness with religious connotations; and like the other Evangelicals, he presents suffering that causes doubt as the action of a loving God, as madness that punishes and develops, and he privileges recovery: due to God's "restor[ation]," the Christian understands suffering, doubt, and God, and finds "comfort." This dissertation

recognises that recovery from doubt is not as simplistic as these Evangelicals present, and the following sections consider more nuanced depictions of doubt. Section Two returns to Venn to contextualise De Quincey's explication of "The Ancyent Marinere."

Without making major claims about the use of delirium to explore doubt throughout the nineteenth century, this dissertation suggests that delirium retained its connotations of religious madness, and it previews De Quincey's use of delirium with Alfred Lord Tennyson (1809-1892). *In Memoriam* (1850) finds Tennyson asking if sorrow has caused the following:

> And made me that delirious man
>
> Whose fancy fuses old and new,
>
> And flashes into false and true,
>
> And mingles all without a plan. (16.17-20)

The lack of a "plan" in the minds of Tennyson and the delirious sufferer reflects a key theme, a world that seems "without a plan," or a world characterised by experience that is difficult to reconcile with a loving God, as Tennyson doubts because he was one "Who trusted God was love indeed / And love Creation's final law" (56.13-14). As T. S. Eliot states, *In Memoriam* "is not religious because of the quality of its faith, but because of the quality of its doubt. Its faith is a poor thing, but its doubt is a very intense experience" (177). Like De Quincey, Tennyson's text emphasises doubt rather than belief, as it is not confined by the rigidity of Evangelicalism, with its insistence on a substantial recovery from doubt. (Indeed, as this dissertation argues, De Quincey was influenced by but innovated on Evangelicalism.) In the terms of this chapter, for the majority of the text, Tennyson remains that "delirious" sufferer. The next section considers De Quincey's use of delirium to address his profound doubt in a loving God.

2. De Quincey and Delirium: “The Ancyent Marinere” and Texts Connected to “Suspiria”

To establish the foundation for the exploration of “Suspiria,” this section addresses De Quincey’s innovation on Evangelicalism in his explication of Coleridge’s “The Ancyent Marinere” in “The Nautico-Military Nun of Spain” (1847), applying it to texts connected to the “Sequel to the Confessions of an English Opium-Eater” (15: 126), “Suspiria”: *Confessions*, the manuscript “Cyrus of Elam,” and the end of “The English Mail-Coach,” “Dream-Fugue” (1849, 1854). Evangelicals used delirium to privilege substantial recovery from periods of severe suffering that caused doubt in a loving God, and to emphasise development in faith. “The Ancyent Marinere” provided De Quincey with an example of how to push beyond Evangelicalism, as it details madness and doubt, offers a precarious recovery from doubt, and explores doubt associated with addiction. De Quincey, in turn, presents an extreme version, as he excises that recovery: according to De Quincey, the mariner, pursued by the south spirit, the “jealous angel” (16: 117), is afflicted by delirium and experiences doubt, and even after delirium, he still cannot reconcile suffering and doubt with a loving God. The explication offers insight into the texts linked to “Suspiria.” In delirious opium nightmares, periods of severe suffering, De Quincey is pursued by an angel, and though he positions the nightmares as punishment and development, because he does not emphasise recovery and the understanding of suffering and doubt as the action of a loving God, he addresses his development not in faith but doubt.

2.1 “The Ancyent Marinere” and “The Military Nun”

Critics have identified doubt and allusions to “The Ancyent Marinere” in De Quincey’s texts, as well as doubt and addiction in Coleridge’s “The Ancyent Marinere.” Hillis Miller positions De Quincey as approaching but not committing to atheism: God seems absent, but he is

present—"God exists, but he is out of reach," "and can only be experienced negatively, as a terrifying absence" (1, 2)—and death will reveal God: "At the moment of death, we shall experience … our reconciliation with God" (79). V. A. De Luca recognises the presence of "The Ancyent Marinere": "the figures of Death and Life-in-Death … reappear incessantly in De Quincey's later works in various guises"; one example is "a mail-coach bearing down upon lovers in their frail gig" (5). This dissertation extends these observations: like Evangelicals, De Quincey uses delirium to depict doubt, the seeming absence of a loving God, but unlike Evangelicals, he emphasises doubt, to the extent that God is "out of reach" (demonstrating the strength of his doubt as compared to Evangelicals); and he associates delirium specifically with Coleridge's south-spirit: "the jealous angel." George Whalley offers a foundational interpretation of "The Ancyent Marinere" as addressing Coleridge's addiction (396), and he suggests that the autobiographical link between Coleridge and the poem was known to contemporaries (381-82), so this dissertation proposes that the poem should be understood as providing De Quincey with an exemplar of addressing not only doubt but also doubt related to the suffering of addiction.

Evangelicalism provides insight into De Quincey's attraction to and explication of "The Ancyent Marinere." In the 1803 *Diary*, De Quincey asks "What shall be [his] character? … shrouded in mystery—supernatural—like the 'ancient mariner'—*awfully* sublime?" (1: 26); and in "Samuel Taylor Coleridge" (Sept. 1834), he terms *Lyrical Ballads* (1798) and especially "The Ancyent Marinere" "the greatest event in the unfolding of [his] mind" (10: 287). As will be shown in this section, though Coleridge was not an Evangelical, he still engaged with the connotations of delirium as religious madness (like Tennyson with *In Memoriam*), so this dissertation posits that De Quincey was attracted to the poem because it offered him an example of how to adapt an Evangelical depiction of doubt and move beyond the rigidity of

Evangelicalism: Evangelicals present doubt as madness, and they stress a substantial recovery from doubt; Coleridge depicts doubt as madness, and he allows a precarious recovery from doubt; De Quincey frames doubt as madness, but he excises the recovery from doubt. Specifically, in "The Military Nun,"[4] De Quincey addresses doubt through the south spirit, stating that "The spirit who watches over the sanctities of love is a strong angel—is a jealous angel," and that it afflicts the mariner during delirium (16: 117).[5] The definitive exploration of sources for the spirit remains John Livingston Lowe's *The Road to Xanadu* (201-20), but the term "jealous angel" suggests an unrecognised source from the Old Testament: the Book of Zechariah. With De Quincey making major claims about Wordsworth's and Coleridge's influences on him and commenting so rarely on specific texts,[6] this under-addressed example is revealing, as it suggests that Coleridge's poem provided him with insight into how to innovate on Evangelicalism, so that he could establish a position that reflected his profound doubt in God.

De Quincey appears to derive the jealousy of the angel from the God of the Old Testament. This God is depicted in Exodus. God warns that other deities must not be worshipped and that the consequences will be severe: "Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the Lord thy God *am* a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children" (*Authorized King James Version*, Exod. 20.5). At the same time, though, God reveals his love "unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments" (Exod. 20.6). As noted, the jealous God who caused suffering because of love proved attractive to Evangelicals.

With the "jealous angel," De Quincey seems to indicate that the Book of Zechariah is a source for "The Ancyent Marinere." The text deals with depravity, punishment, and development, and these themes may be extended to Evangelicalism and "The Ancyent Marinere." The jealous God has a significant role in the Book of Zechariah: "Thus saith the Lord

of hosts; I am jealous for Jerusalem and for Zion with a great jealousy" (1.14). The Book of Zechariah "concerns the restoration of Jerusalem and its temple after the Exile" (Larkin 610), and the challenge of the restoration is that the exile has been self-inflicted. Henning Graf Reventlow summarises the text: the "message is one of imminent though not unconditional salvation. Its precondition is the removal of all previous guilt and the willingness to repent." The precondition, though, is not easily met, and Katrina J. A. Larkin notes that the "problem of how to break the hold of sin and be free from the endless repetition of sin, punishment, repentance, [and] restoration" is not answered (611). In Evangelical terms, the text addresses suffering and God's love, with the repetition framed as punishment for depravity and the way to develop; and the text may be extended not only to the mariner's punishment and development on and off the ship, but also to the suffering of addiction, specifically the endless repetition of addiction or use of the drug. De Quincey identifies a key figure and transfers God's jealousy to it: the south spirit.

Two major similarities exist between the Book of Zechariah and "The Ancyent Marinere": a spirit inhabits the south, and a transgressor is punished and testifies about his development. Zechariah describes the conversation with the angel thus: "And the angel answered and said unto me, These *are* the four spirits of the heavens, which go forth from standing before the Lord of all the earth … and the grisled go forth toward the south country" (6.5-6).[7] The adjective "grisled" suggests an "awe-inspiring" and "horrible" spirit ("Grisled"). As may be discerned from the mariner's experience after shooting the albatross, a similar spirit is found in "The Ancyent Marinere." This spirit pushes the ship forward while the mariner endures his punishment: "From the land of mist and snow / The spirit slid: and it was He / That made the Ship to go" (Coleridge 378-80). Zechariah does not focus on the "grisled" spirit, but he does describe God's action: "And he shall pass through the sea with affliction, and shall smite the

waves in the sea … And I will strengthen them in the LORD; and they shall walk up and down in his name, saith the LORD" (10.11-12). The mariner passes through a similar sea—"O Wedding-guest! this soul hath been / Alone on a wide wide sea" (16.1: 597-98)—and he is forced to testify about that experience: "The moment that his face I see / I know the man that must hear me; / To him my tale I teach" (Coleridge 588-90). The "tale" details punishment and development. Coleridge's spirit and description of the mariner's experience are similar to the south spirit and God's punishment and development of transgressors in the Book of Zechariah.

De Quincey expands on the allusion to the Book of Zechariah with delirium. In "Samuel Taylor Coleridge," he notes that delirium was a key concept in "The Ancyent Marinere": Wordsworth told him that "before meeting a fable in which to embody his ideas, [Coleridge] had meditated a poem on delirium, confounding its own dream scenery with external things, and connected with the imagery of high latitudes" (10: 291). Though not an Evangelical, Coleridge engages with delirium and its connotations of religious madness (like Tennyson); and due to his Evangelical education, De Quincey was likely attracted to this use of madness to depict doubt.

The explication of "The Ancyent Marinere" in "The Military Nun" occurs when the protagonist Kate mistakenly kills her brother. De Quincey states that the "condition of Kate is exactly that of Coleridge's 'Ancient Mariner'": she is alone "with her own afflicted conscience," with God "whispering to her" (16: 116). As with the mariner, God whispers to Kate through delirium: "She, like the mariner … very soon will be hunted into delirium; and from *that* … will be hunted into the trouble of a heart that cannot rest" (16: 117). The "heart that cannot rest" is synonymous with the "afflicted conscience," and the "afflicted conscience" resembles Venn's claim that the Christian has "condemnation fill[] the conscience," which leads to hands "shak[ing] and trembl[ing]" and "distressing doubts and fears" (*Mistakes in Religion* 182). De

Quincey positions the "afflicted conscience" as approaching madness, as both it and delirium are God's "whispering." Specifically, God whispers through delirium and the conscience with the south spirit: the angel "pursued the man … into delirium, and finally, (when recovered from disease) into an unsettled mind" (16: 117). The whisper exists in delirium and the continuation, the "afflicted conscience"; the whisper forces the mariner and Kate to experience doubt in God.

De Quincey bases his explication on a section in "The Ancyent Marinere" that resembles the way that Evangelicals depict periods of severe suffering that cause doubt as leading to recovery and development. (And, of course, the poem complicates the recovery.) Venn addresses suffering that causes doubt: the "divine presence withdraws" and "Prayer is without access to God, or any comfort" (*Mistakes in Religion* 174). The mariner's initial prayers are unanswered:

> I look'd to Heaven, and try'd to pray;
> But or ever a prayer had gusht
> A wicked whisper came, and made
> My heart as dry as dust. (244-47)

The "whisper" that De Quincey identifies is found when the mariner is without the "divine presence" (in Venn's terms), and that "whisper" of doubt turns the mariner's "heart" to "dust." According to Venn, God provides relief at "brokenness of heart," after "the Lord has been often and earnestly besought to … restore comfort," and the Christian exhibits "sincere lamentation for the offence" (174-75). Coleridge has the mariner reach this point: "A spring of love gusht from my heart / And I bless'd [the water snakes] unaware!" (284-85). The prayer now succeeds: "The self-same moment I could pray; / …The Albatross fell off, and sank / Like lead into the sea" (288-91). De Quincey, then, explores a section in "The Ancyent Marinere" that is similar to Evangelicalism: the section contains suffering that causes doubt—"Alone on a wide wide sea: /

So lonely 'twas, that God himself / Scarce seemed there to be" (598-600)—and it concludes with recovery and development, the understanding of suffering, doubt, and a loving God: "For the dear God, who loveth us, / He made and loveth all" (616-17). As noted previously, this dissertation recognises that Coleridge's precarious recovery stands in contrast to the substantial recovery of Evangelicalism, and that De Quincey innovates on "The Ancyent Marinere" because, in his explication, he does not conclude with even that precarious recovery.

De Quincey distinguishes his position from Evangelicals and Coleridge by extending the whisper of doubt beyond delirium. De Quincey makes this point by describing two insightful readers of the poem. The first reader "knows that the imagery" is of "delirium; really seen, but not seen as an external reality" and that "the delirium had vanished; but the visions that had haunted the delirium remained" (16: 116). The second reader states the following:

> Yes … [the visions] remained; naturally they did, being scorched by fever into his brain; but how did they happen to remain on his belief as gospel truths? The delirium had vanished: why had not the painted scenery of the delirium vanished, … Why was it that craziness settled upon this mariner's brain, driving him, as if he were a Cain, or another Wandering Jew … [and] wrenching him until he made rehearsal of his errors … ? That craziness … rose out of a deeper soil than any bodily affection. It had its roots in penitential sorrow. (16: 116)

De Quincey terms "the visions that … haunted the delirium" "gospel truths," so he identifies as one of these "truths" the whisper of doubt, and he situates that whisper in and beyond delirium: the mariner recalls endlessly "the pestilential fever" (16: 117); his condition remains "craziness" or madness. This dissertation recognises that the condition is in contrast to Coleridge's mariner who offers that in suffering that suggested a loving God's absence that God was present. The

most that De Quincey provides is that the mariner is marked by "penitential sorrow" (16: 116)—sorrow that approaches madness—sorrow that has not reconciled suffering and doubt with a loving God. This position is similar to De Quincey's position in "Suspiria." Though Coleridge engages with the connotations of delirium as religious madness, because he was not an Evangelical, his depiction of delirium and doubt are closer to De Quincey than Evangelicals (which, in turn, reveals the extent that De Quincey innovates on Evangelicalism to emphasise doubt). Further, De Quincey would have likely recognised that the doubt and precarious recovery from doubt in "The Ancyent Marinere" were shaped by Coleridge's addiction—with doubt and the unstable recovery linked to the constant use of the drug and resulting suffering—so the poem provided De Quincey with an example for his exploration of doubt in his autobiographical texts.

2.2 *Confessions* and "Cyrus"

This dissertation applies De Quincey's innovation on Evangelicalism and Coleridge's poem to texts connected to "Suspiria": *Confessions*, "Cyrus," and "Dream-Fugue." In delirious opium nightmares, periods of severe suffering, De Quincey is afflicted by an angel, and though he positions the nightmares as punishment for depravity and the way to develop, because he does not recover and understand suffering, doubt, and God, instead of experiencing an Evangelical development in faith, he is developed in doubt in a loving God. Further, since he addresses doubt in opium nightmares, the suffering of addiction shapes his exploration of doubt, in a similar way as Coleridge in "The Ancyent Marinere," with the difference that De Quincey is explicit about the role of addiction in causing his doubt in God.

In "Review of *Blackwood's*" (1827), De Quincey provides insight into his position on nightmares. He critiques the poem "The Devil's Dream on Mount Aksbeck" (1827) by Thomas

Aird (1802-1876) (Lee), arguing that Aird's terms are inexact: "it may suit the purposes of God indeed, which were 'to plague him with a dream,' that the Devil should dream of restoration, of forgiveness, and recovered innocence," but he finds that "this does not suit the Devil's nature: it is not a dream growing out of himself, but a phantasma of alien origin impressed upon him; and would be better entitled *The Devil's Delirium*" (5: 90). Though "it may suit the purposes of God indeed … 'to plague … with a dream,'" the correct term for "a phantasma of alien origin impressed," is "*Delirium*," a delirious dream. In the following texts connected to "Suspiria," delirious opium nightmare matches this category.

In *Confessions,* fever causes delirium, and opium causes a similar state, in the form of a nightmare; and in delirious opium nightmares, filled with sea imagery, De Quincey cannot understand suffering and God. In "The Pains of Opium," he states the following: while "looking over Piranesi's Antiquities of Rome, Mr. Coleridge … described to me a set of plates by that artist, called his *Dreams* … which record the scenery of his own visions during the delirium of a fever," and "With the same power of endless growth and self-reproduction did my architecture proceed in dreams" (2: 68).[8] He expands on architecture with the sea. From "architecture succeeded dreams of lakes" (2: 69) and "the sea," and the sea was "paved with innumerable faces, upturned to the heavens: faces, imploring, wrathful, despairing, surg[ing] upwards by thousands, by myriads, by generations, by centuries" (2: 70). Though he maintains that suffering exists under "the heavens," he cannot understand it as the action of a loving God, as his "agitation was infinite," and his "mind tossed—and surged with the ocean" (2: 70). De Quincey alters the Evangelical emphasis on development in faith, as he does not conclude *Confession* with an understanding of suffering, doubt, and a loving God, but a God of "still tumultuous" "sleep" and "the dread swell and agitation of the storm" (2: 76). He is still in the mariner's storm.

De Quincey addresses delirium, nightmare, an angel, punishment, and development in "Cyrus." The central allusion is God's destruction of Belshazzar, the King of Babylon, as detailed in Daniel 5 (Burwick et al., Introduction to "Cyrus" 333). De Quincey compares the destruction to delirium. Though un-datable, Burwick et al. suggest that "Cyrus" may date "in or before 1821," as the "imagery of 'fever' and 'delir[i]um,' the 'labyrinthine apartments,' 'spaces abysmal'… powerfully suggests 'The Pains of Opium' and the 'Piranesi' passage in particular" (333-34). This dissertation proposes that with the circa 1821 dating, "Cyrus" supports the reasons that delirious opium nightmare reveals suffering that cannot be understood as the action of a loving God in *Confessions*: punishment for depravity and the way to develop.

"Cyrus" and "The Pains of Opium" indicate that De Quincey is punished and developed through suffering that suggests a loving God's absence. As with "The Pains of Opium," "Cyrus" describes delirium with sea imagery: "From fever's vertical ardor," "delirium" "Shews through … it[s] chambers secret of / Blazing with cruel light … shews to the brain … deep deep awful abysses" (20: 336); and from these "abysses," "rose like phantoms, rose and sank as a sea-bird / Rises and sinks on the waves of a dim tumultuous ocean / Faces dabbled in blood … phantasmagoria scenic!" (20: 336). Like "The Ancyent Marinere,"[9] these texts, with their "delirium" and "tumultuous oceans," depict suffering that seems devoid of a loving God, and "Cyrus" suggests that they include an angel (though the angel is not explicit in "The Pains of Opium"). De Quincey states that "Fever[] … fierce" or "delirium fierce," "Whose truncheon this / Way or that bids," "Shews to its martyr" "a splendor of" "tumultuous anguish" or suffering, and he equates the "angel of dreams" with delirium, as the angel reveals this "anguish" to "the guilty" and "the sorrow-be-leaguered" (20: 337-38). "The Pains of Opium" explains such an angel by attributing the nightmares to punishment for depravity: as the previous chapters argue,

the "inexpiable guilt" in these nightmares refers to depravity (2: 74). These texts also address development, as the term "martyr" indicates that the individual endures "great suffering for a faith, belief, or cause" ("Martyr"). This dissertation posits that like the explication of "The Ancyent Marinere," with De Quincey aligning punishment and development with nightmares that do not include a loving God, he is punished and developed in doubt (and not developed in faith), and that these nightmares illustrate the essential role of addiction in shaping his exploration of doubt, as he decides to align doubt specifically with the suffering of addiction (and in a more explicit way than Coleridge ever did in "The Ancyent Marinere").

2.2 "The Mail-Coach": "Dream-Fugue"

Consisting of five parts, "Dream-Fugue" is the conclusion to "The Mail-Coach," a text initially designed for "Suspiria" (20: 34). In "Explanatory Notices" (1854), De Quincey summarises "Dream-Fugue." He states that an accident where a young woman was almost killed when his mail-coach collided with her gig caused the dream; and because he took opium before the accident, "The actual scene, as looked down upon from the box of the mail, was transformed into a dream … the scenical strife of action and passion, of anguish and fear … moving in ghostly silence" (20: 34). Though De Quincey had terrifying dreams before he took opium, such as the dreams about his sister Elizabeth's death, this dissertation focuses on De Quincey's linking addiction to doubt, and it maintains that "Dream-Fugue" is the culmination of the "jealous angel" operating in delirious opium nightmare, and that the text provides insight into the earlier depictions in *Confessions* and "Cyrus": for the majority of the text, the angel reveals suffering that suggests the absence of a loving God, as in *Confessions* and "Cyrus"; but at the end of the text, another angel reveals a loving God. In contrast to the 1821 texts, in "Dream-

Fugue," De Quincey concludes with a vision of God, and as the next section suggests, at the time of "Suspiria," with De Quincey characterising general experience as approaching delirium, he appears to have required more than in 1821 the tentative hope provided by that final vision.

De Quincey first alludes to "The Ancyent Marinere" in Part Two where he cannot understand suffering and a loving God. He states that "The sea was rocking, and shaken with gathering wrath … Down one of these, with the fiery pace of a quarrel from a cross-bow, ran a frigate right athwart our course … [The woman] was borne into desert spaces of the sea … she ran before the howling gale, chased by angry sea-birds and by maddening billows" (16: 444). "The Ancyent Marinere" imagery is explicit: they are on ships, and the collision is "a quarrel from a cross-bow," which recalls the mariner's killing of the albatross. De Quincey then offers the following: "There she stood … one hand clutched amongst the tackling—rising, sinking, fluttering, trembling, praying—there for leagues I saw her as she stood, raising at intervals one hand to the heavens" (16: 444). The woman holds out hope, as she "rais[es]" her "hand to the heavens," but De Quincey cannot understand her suffering as the action of a loving God, as he hears not a loving God's answer to her prayer but "a sound from afar of malicious laughter and mockery" (16: 444). This dissertation attributes this "sound from afar" to the "jealous angel."

In Part Three, De Quincey addresses despair, and he develops the "jealous angel." He states that the woman's "running was the running of panic, and often she looked back as to some dreadful enemy in the rear" (16: 444-45). Based on the previous imagery from "The Ancyent Marinere," the "dreadful enemy" is structured on the south spirit that follows the mariner, the "jealous angel." This "enemy" indicates the absence of a loving God: "I saw … this fair young head, as it was sinking down to darkness—saw this marble arm, as it rose above her head and her treacherous grave, tossing, faultering, rising, clutching as to some false deceiving hand stretched

out from the clouds—saw this marble arm uttering her dying hope, and then her dying despair" (16: 445). De Quincey identifies a "false deceiving hand stretched out from the clouds," and he links it to "dying hope" and "dying despair": this hand matches the earlier "malicious laughter and mockery" (16: 444). Though the entire nightmare is implicitly filled with doubt and despair, De Quincey explicitly addresses despair at this point in text: it is the darkest point.

In Part Four, he tempers the visions of the "jealous angel" with another angel who indicates the presence of a loving God. From "the fiery font" "the dreadful being" reappears (16: 447), but De Quincey sees another angel near the woman: "by her side was … her better angel, that hid his face with wings; that wept and pleaded for *her*; that prayed when *she* could *not*; that fought with heaven by tears for *her* deliverance; which also, as he raised his immortal countenance from his wings, I saw, by the glory in his eye, that he had won at last" (16: 447). The essential action is not saving the woman but providing De Quincey with a small indication of a loving God: this angel "fought with heaven," a heaven barely receptive to the pleas.

De Quincey, though, has not yet experienced God's love, and the "jealous angel" makes its final appearance in Part Five, before giving way to a precarious vision of a loving God. He begins with depravity and doubt: "Ah! Pariah heart within me … that, from six years old, didst never hear the promise of perfect love, without seeing aloft amongst the stars fingers as of a man's hand writing the secret legend—'*ashes to ashes, dust to dust!*'—wherefore shouldst *thou* not fear though all men should rejoice?" (16: 448). Addressing this passage, Lindop states that "the moment of apocalyptic triumph is impeded by" De Quincey's "*lack* of faith" ("Pursuing the Throne of God" 108). This dissertation adds that De Quincey aligns depravity—the "Pariah heart"—with doubt, and that with the alignment made, like Evangelicals, he presents this period of severe suffering that causes doubt as punishment for depravity and the way to develop. De

Quincey returns, specifically, to the "jealous angel": "ah! raving, as of torrents that opened on every side: trepidation, as of a female and infant steps that fled—ah! rushing, as of wings that chased!" (16: 449). This "fear" and "panic," though, is interrupted: "I heard a voice from heaven, which said—'Let there be no reflux of panic—let there be no more fear, and no more sudden death!'" (16: 449). De Quincey ends with the return of the better angel to fulfill the promise of the "voice from heaven," to "emblazon the endless resurrections of [God's] love!" (16: 449).

"Dream-Fugue" might appear to contain an Evangelical recovery from madness, but the repetition of the nightmare challenges any substantial recovery. Citing the "voice from heaven" (16: 449), Lindop states that it represents De Quincey's "sense of God's grace perceived through faith": the "spiritual and social alienation is healed" ("Pursuing the Throne of God" 108). This dissertation contends, though, that the repetition complicates the resolution to that "spiritual and social alienation." De Quincey has experienced a "thousand times … through storms; through desert seas; through the darkness of quicksands" the visions of the "jealous angel"; and with the same repetition, the vision of "the better angel": "only that at the last … the endless resurrections of [God's] love!" (16: 449). The strength of the absence of a loving God challenges the revelation at the end, "at the last," the God of "love." De Quincey experiences far more development in doubt in a loving God than development in faith in that God. As noted, though, unlike *Confessions* and "Cyrus," he includes a final vision of God. The next section positions "Suspiria" as offering a reason why: he required this final vision because doubt was no longer confined to opium nightmares but characterised general experience. Perhaps like Coleridge in "The Ancyent Marinere," at this point in his life, he needed a precarious vision of God's love.

3. "Suspiria": Suffering, Delirium, and Development in Doubt

This section focuses on "Suspiria." In 1844-1845, De Quincey's pervasive sense of suffering was at a high point. In the manuscripts "Letters on Literature" (1842-1845),[10] De Quincey states that he is working his way through suffering in his texts, and in the 1845 "Suspiria," perhaps the key text of his career, he offers insight into the content: De Quincey extends delirium beyond opium nightmare to general experience, and with general experience marked by delirium, his religious development is restricted to doubt in a loving God, in contrast to Evangelicalism. Indeed, if "Dream-Fugue" is an exemplar of the exploration of delirium at this period, he is limited to a *momentary* understanding of suffering, doubt, and God. Manuscripts from "Letters of the Daughters of Thomas De Quincey to Francis Jacox" (2010) confirm that he emphasises doubt in "Suspiria": the clergyman and author Francis Jacox (1825-1897) and the author Nathaniel Hawthorne (1804-1864) identify doubt as central to "Suspiria," and "Suspiria" shapes the doubt of De Quincey's daughters, Margaret and Elizabeth. In 1845, De Quincey had been an addict for thirty-two years, so his extension of delirium beyond nightmare was likely shaped by addiction. This dissertation recognises that Evangelicals used madness to address doubt in God, and that De Quincey innovated on that use of madness to emphasise doubt. Strikingly, then, with De Quincey's innovation on Evangelicalism shaped by drugs, his addiction becomes the key factor that allows his exploration of doubt to appeal to non-Evangelicals and non-addicts: Jacox and Hawthorne and Margaret and Elizabeth.

3.1 "Suspiria" and "Letters on Literature"

"Suspiria" was published in four parts in 1845 (Burwick, Introduction to "Suspiria" 126-29), and in 1844-1845, De Quincey's sense of suffering was strong. Morrison demonstrates that "Suspiria" is filled with family deaths ("The Deaths of Julius and Margaret De Quincey" 260-

62): De Quincey's sisters, Jane (1790) and Elizabeth (1792); his children, Julius (1832) and William (1834); and his wife, Margaret (1837). De Quincey was also enduring an agonising opium withdrawal in 1844 (Burwick, Introduction to "Coleridge and Opium-Eating" 102).

"Letters on Literature" and "Suspiria" provide insight into De Quincey's position on suffering at this period. In an 1845 letter to his friend Edmund Law Lushington (1811-1893), the classical scholar and husband of Cecilia Tennyson, the sister of Alfred Lord Tennyson (Bayne), De Quincey predicts that "the four parts … [of 'Suspiria'] will be gathered into a volume without delay, and introduced by a letter of some length to [his] three daughters" (Eaton 423). "Letters on Literature" was not published, but it is part of "the same thematic and aesthetic world" as "Suspiria" (Burwick et al., Introduction to "Letters on Literature" 265). "Letters on Literature" shows that he wants to think and write his way through his sense of suffering, and "Suspiria," the key text of not only this period but also his career, especially if seen as encompassing "The Mail-Coach," reveals that he presents general experience as delirium.

"Letters on Literature" frames De Quincey's project as thinking and writing his way through suffering, and if that project is applied to "Suspiria," the divergence from Evangelicalism is clarified: De Quincey does not commit to understanding suffering and a loving God. In "Letters on Literature," he states that he has "been able to instruct [his] surviving children in the knowledge *that* grief may be supported, and *how* it may be supported" (20: 270). He finds that "Energy of thought, and the determinate application of the mind to themes able to absorb [its] entire capacity of feeling … are equal to the task of suspending … turning aside, and charming into slumber the most heart-gnawing affliction" (20: 270). In "Suspiria," the "themes" that are "able to absorb" his "entire capacity of feeling" are under-developed by Evangelical standards. These standards contend that individuals "comprehend" "the *moral* perfections of

God," with the "first of these perfections" being "*his goodness*": his love (Venn 22). Consider the conclusion to Part One of "Suspiria." De Quincey states that the "future is the present of God; and to the future it is that he sacrifices the human present … Therefore it is that he works by grief" and "raises oftentimes from human intellects glorious vintages that could not else have been": grief is needed "for God's mightiest instrument … the mysterious children of the earth" (15: 187). Sufferers may never approach God's "future" understanding. That De Quincey has not reached such understanding is supported by his statement that he is still one of the "mysterious children." In "Suspiria," the "themes able to absorb" his "entire capacity of feeling" address his development without understanding suffering and a loving God.

Indeed, in a manuscript connected to the conclusion to Part One—"Finale to Part I"—De Quincey seems to reject Evangelical depictions of suffering and God. He will address the "dark uses" that "lie … in moral convulsions," such as "grief," but he will not consider "the uses hypocritically vaunted by theatrical resign[ation] which affronts the majesty of God, that ever and in all things loves truth" and prefers "sincerity that is erring to piety that cants" (15: 570). He states that "theatrical resign[ation]" is "self-delusion and rest[s] … on no basis of real grief," and that "Rebellion which is as the sin of witchcraft is more pardonable in [God's] sight than speechifying resign[ation], listening with complacency to its own self-conquests" (15: 570). He concludes that "God who sees thy efforts in secret will slowly strengthen those efforts and make that to be a real deed" (15: 570). Though not identifying Evangelicalism, by critiquing "theatrical resign[ation]," "piety that cants," and "self-conquests" of grief, De Quincey rejects what approaches an Evangelical emphasis on the recovered Christian who understands suffering and God. In contrast, he identifies with a "slow[] strengthen[ing]" of "efforts" at resignation, and he does not indicate that he has reached the point where resignation to suffering is "a real deed."

De Quincey establishes his position in precise terms at the start of "Suspiria." He posits that "in this year 1845," "the eye of the calmest observer is troubled; the brain is haunted as if by some jealousy of ghostly beings moving amongst us," and that this "storm of life," "this fierce condition of eternal hurry," seems to be an "evil" storm (15: 130). General experience is filled with suffering, and the "jealousy of ghostly beings," with their similarities to the "jealous angel," indicates that suffering suggests God's absence; indeed, "so chaotic a tumult" approaches the perspective of "lunacy" (15: 130). With this position, he experiences doubt. He contends, though, that he will shift from that position. He posits that individuals require "forces in the direction of religion or profound philosophy" to understand why suffering, though it appears to be caused by "powers from hell," is actually caused by "celestial" powers (15: 130). This dissertation contends that though he never finished "Suspiria," "Dream-Fugue" offers insight into the precariousness of his shift from doubt to belief: he has only a momentary understanding of suffering, doubt, and God, and after that momentary understanding, he returns the "chaotic tumult" and "lunacy."

The section "Levana and Our Ladies of Sorrow" supports such a structure. De Quincey starts with an explanation. He "want[s] a term expressing the mighty abstractions that incarnate themselves in all individual sufferings of man's heart; and [he] wish[es] to have these abstractions presented as impersonations," so he terms them "*Our Ladies of Sorrow*" (15: 179). He states that "Our Lady of Sighs" is "neither sweet nor subtle," and that those who know her—"the hopeless … the Pariah … all that are betrayed, and all that are rejected"—are "filled with perishing dreams, and with wrecks of forgotten delirium" (15: 180-81). This suffering implicates God. If "Our Lady of Sighs" is like the "jealous angel," her "Whisper" causes individuals to experience doubt in "delirium" and after, in the "wrecks of forgotten delirium" (15: 181). Since she visits the Pariah, she appears to preview the projected Part Three "*The Pariah Worlds*" (15:

181). That "*The Pariah Worlds*" would have explored doubt is suggested by De Quincey's proposal to push further. Part Four "*The Kingdom of Darkness*" is ruled by "Our Lady of Darkness": "the defier of God," "the mother of lunacies, and the suggestress of suicides" (15: 181). He describes her as "the defier of God" and "the mother of lunacies," seemingly addressing a very strong version of doubt, so the "whisper" associated with "Our Lady of Sighs" likely refers to another version of doubt. Indeed, in that manuscript connected to the conclusion to Part One of "Suspiria," where he condemns insincere conquests of grief, De Quincey posits that his emphasis differs from a position like Evangelicalism. He states that "You have heard reader in the Visions which describes Our Ladies of Sorrow … what sort of dark uses may lie concerted in moral convulsions; not the uses hypocritically vaunted by theatrical resign[ation] which affronts the majesty of God" (15: 570). This dissertation contends that as in his previous depictions of delirium, De Quincey presents doubt as one of the "dark uses" found in "moral convulsions," and that if "*The Pariah Worlds*" followed the structure of "Dream-Fugue," he would detail the seeming absence of a loving God and momentarily reveal the presence of that God at the end, and, in turn, he would be emphasising his development in doubt. In "Suspiria," then, he shows the extent that he innovates on the Evangelical use of madness to address doubt in God.

3.2 "Suspiria" and "Letters of the Daughters"

The British Library holds "Letters of the Daughters." There are 120 letters, and they date 1850-1896. The clergyman and author Jacox admired De Quincey, and he visited and became familiar with the De Quincey family, and the correspondence with Margaret Craig (1818-1871) and Florence Baird Smith (1827-1904) provides insight into "Suspiria." "Letters of the

Daughters" indicates that Jacox and Hawthorne understood doubt to be central to "Suspiria," and that the questioning and doubt of the daughters developed, in part, from "Suspiria."[11]

This dissertation divides Jacox's correspondence with Margaret into two phases. One, in 1852, Jacox expressed interest in the depiction of doubt in "Suspiria" and Hawthorne's *Mosses from an Old Manse* (1846). Margaret engaged with Jacox at this phase. Two, in 1853, Margaret saw that Jacox wanted to associate a stronger version of doubt with her father, and she established a definitive distinction between Jacox's and De Quincey's positions.

Jacox visited the De Quinceys, and Hawthorne was a major topic, as De Quincey appreciated Hawthorne's texts, and Hawthorne valued De Quincey's. Jacox first saw De Quincey 13 July 1852, and he stayed at Mavis Bush 22-27 July (Hogg 219, 230). At the end of the visit, he states that he saw in a store window "a copy of Hawthorne's 'Mosses,' about which [he] had been speaking to [De Quincey's] daughters," and that he bought it for De Quincey: "I went in to buy it … and it led [De Quincey] to talk of Hawthorne's genius … The last I saw of him, he had opened Hawthorne's book, and went along reading as he walked" (Hogg 234). James Hogg junior[12] adds that De Quincey "read the 'Scarlet Letter' and other works of Hawthorne with great access of admiration" (234). The feeling was mutual. Hawthorne valued De Quincey's texts—terming in 1854 De Quincey "a poor old man of genius, to whom the world is in arrears for half-a-century's revenue of fame!" (17: 198)—and he corresponded with De Quincey and his daughters (Morrison, *The English Opium-Eater* 375, 378). Hogg states of the correspondence with Hawthorne that "nothing gave De Quincey greater pleasure," that the "two famous men had much in common," and that "De Quincey, on countless occasions, expressed to [him] his high opinion of Hawthorne as an author, and the satisfaction he derived from the letters" (Hogg 198). "Suspiria" reveals a subject that Hawthorne valued: doubt.

Similarities exist between De Quincey's "Introductory Preface" to "Suspiria" and Hawthorne's introductory text in *Mosses*, "The Old Manse." De Quincey and Hawthorne admit doubt, in that 1845 and 1846 appear to indicate the absence of God, and they offer methods to find God: drugs and sleep. As noted, De Quincey posits that "the brain is haunted as if by some jealousy of ghostly beings moving amongst us," and that this "storm of life" seems to be an "evil" storm (15: 130). Though he states that the "storm of life" appears to originate in "powers from hell," he maintains that the "storm" only "seem[s]" to be from hell: the "storm" is "celestial" (15: 130). Hawthorne makes a similar claim in "The Old Manse": the "universe" (10: 30), he contends, is "distracted, through morbid activity, and, while preternaturally wide-awake, is nevertheless tormented by visions, that seem real to it now, but would assume their true aspect and character, were all things once set right" (10: 29). Both De Quincey and Hawthorne admit that the appearance of the mid-1840s is disconcerting. De Quincey presents an extreme vision, with God seemingly replaced by "evil" and "powers from hell," and though Hawthorne is not as explicit, leaving undefined the content of the tormenting "visions," the similarities between "Suspiria" and "The Old Manse" suggest that the "visions" likely approach De Quincey's. Both authors, though, offer methods to push beyond doubt. De Quincey states that dreaming is threatened by the "storm of life," but that dreaming will also counter that storm, with the aid of a supplement. The dreaming "faculty suffers from the decay of solitude," but "some merely physical agencies can and do assist it," "almost preternaturally": one agency is the "stimulant" opium (15: 131). Hawthorne rejects supplements, arguing that only "repose" and "sleep" will suffice, and that "Stimulants, the only mode of treatment hitherto attempted, cannot quell the disease; they do but heighten the delirium" (10: 30). De Quincey prescribes dreaming and opium to deal with the present that appears to indicate God's absence.[13] Hawthorne advocates sleep, and

strikingly, he uses the term "delirium," which links his text to the visions of "Suspiria," as it is a term that De Quincey does not use in the "Introductory Preface," but that this dissertation contends is implicit, as he mentions the "jealousy of ghostly beings" (15: 130), which is similar to the "jealous angel" and the associated delirium. For Hawthorne, then, as with Tennyson and Coleridge, delirium retained its connotations of religious madness.

Margaret was aware that Hawthorne and her father addressed doubt and that Jacox's interest in *Mosses* and "Suspiria" was linked to doubt. In the July 1852 letter, Margaret cites Hawthorne's section on doubt and sleep. Hawthorne begins the paragraph on the appearance of the present with this statement: "Were I to adopt a pet idea … and fondle it in my embraces to the exclusion of all others, it would be, that the great want which mankind labors under, at this present period, is—sleep!" (10: 29). Building off this statement, Margaret posits that though Hawthorne "always leaves [her] with a feeling of desperate melancholy and disappointment," she finds that "there is a world of observation and thought in his writings," and that the idea "'that the great event which mankind labors … at this present period is—sleep!' chimed in wonderfully with [the De Quinceys'] emotions, and would alone have exalted him to a high place in [their] estimation" (Craig). She identifies the connection between *Mosses* and "Suspiria" by aligning Hawthorne's statement on "sleep" with the "high place in [their] estimation"; and in linking "a feeling of desperate melancholy and disappointment" with that lack of "sleep," she indicates that she is referring to the doubt-filled appearance of the present as depicted in these texts. As concerns Jacox, since he and Margaret were carrying on a conversation, both during the visit, where he had "been speaking" about *Mosses* with the "daughters" (Hogg 234), and in the letters, he was likely aware of and interested in the two texts being connected by doubt.

Despite that awareness and interest, Margaret was not willing to engage more deeply with Jacox on doubt; and by rejecting Jacox, she offers insight into De Quincey's position on doubt. In the letter likely written in 1853, she terms Jacox an "Infidel and Heretic," and asks him the following: "did I not tell you *not* to raise the veil which hung over your religious *opinions*?" (Craig). She concedes that "in some a *living* doubt argues higher things than a 'dead certainty,'" but she clarifies her position: "I now … tell you that I don't agree with you." Margaret then offers a suggestive comment on her father. She does not want Jacox to think that her statements should be understood as "condemning Papa": "who I am sure is of *your* party in so far as he is of *none*."[14] Though she understands Jacox's position to resemble her father's, she ensures that Jacox cannot easily incorporate De Quincey's position: "he is of *none*." The letter demonstrates that Jacox had questions about Christianity that Margaret considered extreme, and that she was aware that Jacox wanted to associate that questioning and doubt with her father. In these letters, Jacox and Margaret illustrate the extent that De Quincey's innovation on the Evangelical use of madness emphasised doubt: Evangelicalism is so distanced from De Quincey's current religious position that Margaret associates her father's doubt with no identifiable religious "party."

Florence engaged more directly with Jacox, offering strong statements on doubt. Her doubts in God were linked to her suffering, other humans' suffering, and animals' suffering. A major period of suffering occurred in India. Florence was engaged to Colonel Richard Baird Smith (1818-1861) spring 1855, left for India November 1855, and married 10 January 1856 (in Calcutta) (Morrison, *The English Opium-Eater* 381, 383). As a civilian and a wife of a military engineer, she experienced the Indian Mutiny (9 May 1857-8 July 1859), now termed the First War of Independence, the famine of 1860-1861, and her husband's death. The 1865 and 1871

letters were composed not long after these events in India. In the letters, she describes doubt as a whisper and as madness, and her descriptions resemble "Suspiria," so she likely knew it.

In the 17 February 1865 letter, Florence expresses substantial and persistent doubt in God. She states that "doubts and fears" "crush the spirit" "because there seems nothing to hope for," and she desires that "He God" will "Deliver [her] from the … fear that [belief in God] is all a delusion" (Baird Smith). Though she states that she "can so entirely trust all to the God & Heaven who is to be found in the Bible," even with that trust, she is still troubled by doubt, and she is forced to ask, "whence comes this crisis of the human heart?" Her doubt is significant: "if there is no God … then all is in such an utter bewilderment," "a ceaseless shapeless contention of mind." And it is constant: she "cannot shake … off the dismal fear of there being nothing beyond this life, which is so beautiful with this hope, so terrible without it." Suffering caused her doubt.

The 17 February 1871 letter has Florence addressing suffering, sympathy, and God; and like "Suspiria," she presents doubt as a whisper and as madness: Florence was likely influenced by De Quincey's innovation on the Evangelical use of madness, an innovation profoundly shaped by his addiction. She states that she can identify with Jacox. She has "gone through a long share of suffering and ill health": "*you* will perhaps be able to believe too that I understand many of your feelings about the mystery & terror … *I know* that I understand them only too piteously" (Baird Smith). She links the "mystery and terror" to doubt in God, and she attempts to rationalise suffering through sympathy. She questions if "without pain," humans could sympathise "with and for others" and "upon all creatures": "do you think … that we would sacrifice this godlike sympathy which makes us one with each other for exemption from the pain which each has to bear?" She acknowledges her confusion and her dependency on this rationalisation: "My mind is so hazy and confused that I cannot tell whether these are only words

I am saying to myself with no meaning. But sometimes they seem to me to explain the reason … for there being so much awful suffering in this glorious world." She relies on shared pain, "godlike sympathy," to "explain the reason" for suffering. Still, sympathy cannot counter doubt:

> I don't think you will ever understand the oddities of my beliefs and hopes & fears unless I tell you frankly … that the trouble with the unseen adversary … for me is the unutterable terror that there may be no God. If He is I have no fear of His wisdom or His love. I can see glimmerings in all terrors & troubles to hold me up, excepting in this and this is simply too awful, it seems to me like the terrors of insanity … And I see no way out of such a difficulty as when I *think* about it I find it *far* … more difficult to *doubt* the being of God than to believe in it; so *that* it is simply a constant whispering … [a] terror which I can quell when I am tolerably well … But when I am ill which is the most part of my life, it simply destroys all the formulations of hope. And now you will understand how I can believe and hope all things … but for this one hideous fear [that there is no God].

Due to suffering, she is haunted by "the unseen adversary," who "constant[ly] whisper[s]," there is no God, and she is pushed into "the terrors of insanity." Though she states that at different periods she is able to counter doubt through sympathy, she admits that when her suffering is severe, "when [she is] ill," "which is most of [her] life," she cannot check her doubt and experiences despair: the "destr[uction] [of] all the formulations of hope." Florence had "Suspiria" as an example: the "chaotic" "tumult" of suffering approaches "lunacy" (15: 130), and like the "jealous angel," "Our Lady of Sighs" "whispers" to "hopeless" sufferers (15: 181). Florence uses similar terms: "the terrors of insanity" are caused by "the unseen adversary" who "constant[ly] whisper[s]" that there is no God. Evangelicals used madness to address doubt in

God; De Quincey innovated on that use of madness to emphasise doubt; and Florence's depiction of doubt resembles "Suspiria": Florence, then, appears to be shaped by De Quincey's innovation on Evangelicalism. This dissertation shows that, strikingly, since De Quincey's innovation on Evangelicalism was linked to drugs, addiction is a central factor that allowed De Quincey's exploration of doubt in "Suspiria" to appeal to individuals who were not provided with a similar Evangelical education and who were not addicts: indeed, Jacox and Hawthorne and Margaret and Florence engage with the doubt that is so central to "Suspiria."

Conclusion

Delirium is found in important De Quincey texts. Evangelicals used madness and delirium to depict periods of severe suffering that caused doubt in God: they presented these periods as the action of a loving God, and privileged the position of the recovered Christian; they addressed the Christian's development in faith. De Quincey adapted Coleridge's south spirit, termed it the "jealous angel," and used delirious opium nightmare and delirium to address suffering that he could not understand as the action of a loving God. Like Evangelicals, he held that periods of severe suffering caused doubt, that they were madness, and that they were both punishment for depravity and the way to develop; but unlike Evangelicals, he privileged madness over recovery, as he had difficulty reconciling suffering and doubt with a loving God. Both Evangelicals and De Quincey acknowledged that their interpretations of the Christian experience—experience as the feeling of struggle, depravity, and doubt—included doubt in a loving God. This dissertation recognises that De Quincey, though, addressed his development in doubt not faith, and that addiction had a major role, as he first explored doubt in the nightmares

of addiction in *Confessions*, and in "Suspiria" and related texts, he extended doubt to general experience: after thirty-two years, addiction had shaped all aspects of his experience.

Notes

[1] This dissertation stresses that not only is doubt in God a heretical position, but that doubt in a *loving* God is a heretical position.

[2] According to Evangelicals, humans were absolutely depraved, so God provided this recovery and development.

[3] This dissertation notes that though More is not addressing a heretical position in God's whisper revealing "a hereafter" (245), she is still relying on the religious connotations of delirium, and she is exploring a heretical position in more general terms: the skeptic's doubt.

[4] De Quincey writes to his daughter Florence: "And no friend thought it worth while to show you 'Spanish Nun's' passage across the Andes, or the 'Joan of Arc,' which, however, are now going to reappear, with a few words of preface telling the public what *I* think of them and what place *I* expect for them" (Japp, *Life and Writings* 350).

[5] With the term "jealous angel" used throughout the chapter, subsequent quotations will not include in-text citations.

[6] As for Coleridge, De Quincey addresses mainly their relationship and Coleridge's addiction to opium and plagiarism. Representative texts are the majority of the four parts of "Samuel Taylor Coleridge" (1834-1835) and "Coleridge and Opium-Eating" (1845). As for Wordsworth, two notable exceptions where De Quincey addresses specific texts are "Lake Reminiscences: William Wordsworth" (1839) and "On Wordsworth's Poetry" (1845).

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Fig. 2. Doré's "The Vision of the Four Chariots."

[8] Lindop identifies the *Dreams* as "Carceri d'Invenzione" (1754): "Imaginary Prisons" (Explanatory Notes to *Confessions* 338).

[9] Burwick et al. note that this manuscript is De Quincey's "most substantial known piece of original verse" ("Introduction to Cyrus" 333), and this dissertation suggests that since poetry is a departure for De Quincey, the form of the text offers another connection to "The Ancyent Marinere."

[10] Burwick et al. offer one probable period for the composition of "Letters on Literature": 1842-1845 (Introduction to "Letters on Literature" 265).

[11] The examination of "Letters" has only begun. Julian North's "De Quincey and the Inferiority of Women" is an isolated critical text that focuses on "Letters." North argues that the daughters were "more actively and combatively engaged with their father's work than has been previously recognised"—"cast[ing] new light on De Quincey himself"—and that they "anticipate[d] more recent thinking on [De Quincey's] representations of women" (328). North examines the daughters, their insight into De Quincey's texts, and women, and this dissertation addresses the daughters' insight into doubt and "Suspiria."

[12] James Hogg junior was the son of James Hogg, the publisher of *Hogg's Instructor* and *The Titan*, to which De Quincey contributed. Both Hoggs were instrumental in publishing De Quincey's collected works *Selections Grave and Gay* (1853-1860) (Morrison, *The English Opium-Eater* 2, 372, 395).

[13] De Quincey's claim that the supplement opium can reveal God should be considered in the context of texts like "Dream-Fugue": opium nightmare may reveal God at the end of the text, but that nightmare also emphasises doubt.

[14] Though the writing is difficult to transcribe with absolute certainty, the word is most likely "party."

Chapter Six

De Quincey's Version of Providence in "The English Mail-Coach"

Introduction

This chapter extends De Quincey's interpretation of the Christian experience—experience as the feeling of struggle, depravity, and doubt—to despair at and hope in "the protective care of God" ("Providence"). Addressing Jacques Derrida's "The Rhetoric of Drugs," Robert Morrison states that what "we hold against drug addicts … is that they cut themselves off … that they undermine community and the social bond, that they choose solitude and torpor over the very world which is the world of all of us" ("Addicts, Edicts, and Empty Infinities" 977). Morrison identifies the inaction of addiction, and Derrida suggests that despair contributes to addiction: "when the sky of transcendence comes to be emptied, and not just of Gods, but of any Other, a fatal rhetoric fills the void, and this is the fetishism of drug addiction. Not religion as the opiate of the people, but drugs as the religion of the atheist poets" (29). Morrison and Derrida identify what De Quincey knew: despair threatens to lead to drugs and inaction.

This chapter has three sections. The first section reviews the Evangelical version of Providence, and it addresses the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars (1792-1815) (hereafter the Napoleonic Wars). Evangelicals framed general experience as perpetual crisis in the form of God's negative intervention, and military crisis as God's negative and positive intervention (defeat and victory): they held that crisis provided individuals with renewed and stronger hope in God's "protective care," and that crisis pushed individuals into continued struggle. They knew, though, that this version of Providence threatened to generate not hope and action but despair and inaction, so in an attempt to counter the threats, they situated crisis in a progressivist

nationalistic chronology, appealing to both religion and patriotism, to show that crisis resulted in progress, and they allowed individuals to despair at human abilities but not Providence. De Quincey responded to this position: if individuals despair at Providence and human abilities cannot temper that despair, they might stop struggling. The second section considers De Quincey's version of Providence in texts related to "Suspiria De Profundis" (1845), especially "The English Mail-Coach" (1849, 1854). Knowing that Britain's status as an imperial power means that military crisis marks individuals' and the nation's experience, De Quincey states that crisis is God's intervention (and he emphasises negative intervention), that crisis leads to struggle, and that individuals despair at Providence in both defeat and victory. He balances despair with fragile hope through a chronology of the Napoleonic Wars, combining religion and patriotism in a more explicit way than Evangelicals, and he situates the main crisis of "The Mail-Coach," the collision, shortly after the Battle of Waterloo: he uses the Napoleonic Wars to show that crisis results in progress, and he uses the collision to address the period of temporary regression that shapes the present (1815-1840s). And by allowing individuals to despair at Providence, he shifts the focus away from despair at human abilities, which is important because, though he uses the chronology to supplement hope, he primarily bases fragile hope in Providence on the divine component of the self, as it reveals God's "great purpose" and the potential of positive human action (15: 363). The third section considers "The Mail-Coach." De Quincey illustrates how crisis causes despair (and leads to drugs), but he stresses that the British retain hope and act. Like Evangelicals, he contends that a version of Providence marked by crisis in the form of God's negative intervention provides hope; unlike Evangelicals, he incorporates religion and patriotism in a more explicit way, and he admits the fragility of hope, as he has it emerge from despair: despair reveals depravity and the divine component, and with renewed though

fragile hope in Providence, the British act. De Quincey frames himself as having special insight: by detailing his experience, he shows that even a British addict filled with despair and opium accesses that fragile hope "at the last" and acts (16: 449). He attempts to avoid Derrida's "fatal rhetoric" (29), and to balance crisis, despair, drugs, and inaction with hope and action.

1. The Evangelical Version of Providence: General Experience and the Napoleonic Wars

This section reviews the Evangelical version of Providence, and it addresses Evangelicals who supported a militant role for Britain during the Napoleonic Wars. Evangelicals positioned general experience as consisting of perpetual crisis in the form of God's negative intervention, and military crisis as God's negative and positive intervention (defeat and victory); and for both general experience and military action, they held that crisis provided renewed and stronger hope in God's "protective care" ("Providence"). This dissertation recognises that they were not confident in this version of Providence. They knew that it had the potential to generate despair and inaction rather than hope and action, so they attempted to counter the threats: they situated crisis in a nationalist chronology, which meant that they incorporated both religion and patriotism, and they allowed despair at human abilities but not Providence. With his stance on human duality, De Quincey identifies an issue: if individuals despair at Providence and human abilities cannot temper that despair, they might stop struggling. As an addict with an Evangelical education, De Quincey knew that a version of Providence marked by crisis threatened to cause despair, and that despair creates a void waiting to be filled with drugs and inaction.

Evangelicals connected individuals and the nation, and they maintained that God's negative intervention and awareness of depravity provided renewed and stronger hope in Providence. Duncan Forbes states that Evangelicalism "emphasizes the salvation of the

individual, and the historical outlook" (59), and that it was characterised by "the individual mind as the ultimate agent (under God's Providence)" (58). Similarly, Daniel Sanjiv Roberts notes that De Quincey's mother Elizabeth's Evangelicalism was structured on a "theological belief in redemption as a matter of free-will individualism" (*Revisionary Gleam* 104). Evangelicals, though, limited the individual's role in "salvation" and "redemption." As shown throughout this dissertation, Evangelicals held that humans could not counter depravity without God, that God required humans to struggle against depravity, and that God intervened in that struggle. Evangelicals limited "free-will" to the individual's decision to continue to struggle, and they positioned God as providing hope, sometimes through positive intervention, where God allowed humans to counter depravity, but mostly through negative intervention. Indeed, this dissertation has emphasised that the high Evangelical standard caused individuals to interpret general experience as, primarily, failure: therefore, individuals interpreted experience as crisis in the form of God's negative intervention, where God afflicted humans with psychological and physical suffering to ensure that they continued to struggle against depravity. John E. Jordan identifies hope as a defining trait in Christianity: "along with the Christian's awareness of sin there is an assurance of salvation," which provides "hope" (197). Jordan's characterisation resembles Evangelicalism because he moves from "sin" to hope in God's "salvation," and Evangelicals move from God's negative intervention and awareness of depravity to hope in God's "protective care" ("Providence"). Evangelicals had to maintain that their pessimistic interpretation of experience provided renewed and stronger hope in Providence, and the Napoleonic Wars added another reason for them to fear that individuals would stop struggling.

The Evangelical version of Providence meant that with Britain involved in military crisis throughout the Napoleonic Wars, despair at God's "protective care" was a serious threat

("Providence"). Consider that for significant periods of the conflict, crisis took the form of defeat, and Evangelicals positioned defeat as God's negative intervention, distancing the positive experience of God's love. Further, even where crisis took the form of victory, the positive experience of God's love was associated with significant loss, as victory was marked by the unprecedented casualties inherent in modern, industrialised conflict.[1] David A. Bell states that the Napoleonic Wars resulted in five million deaths across Europe (7), and that the majority of the conflict should be understood as prefiguring the devastating stalemate of the First World War (1914-1918) (313). Though focusing on the Evangelical positioning of defeat, this dissertation contends that whether in defeat or victory, the positive experience of God's love was compromised during the twenty-two years of war, and that the conflict threatened to cause individuals to despair at God's "protective care," and to stop struggling in support of Britain. Indeed, the following sections show that though De Quincey uses the Napoleonic Wars to maintain hope in Providence, he associates despair with both defeat and victory: in "The Mail-Coach," *nightmare* reveals that God's love is found in the British victory at Waterloo.

In *Sermons*, a text dated 1807, Isaac Milner positions crisis in the form of defeat as God's negative intervention, and as providing awareness of depravity. In 1807, France seemed unstoppable: one of France's greatest victories was at the Battle of Austerlitz (1805), and in 1806, France had destroyed the Prussian army at the Battle of Jena. Though Britain had scored naval victories at the Battle of the Nile (1798) and Trafalgar (1805), the military situation was desperate.[2] Milner contends that "It is a lamentable proof both of the depravity and the disingenuousness of our nature, that in general, unless God's heavy judgments be inflicted in some shape or other, neither wicked individuals nor wicked nations will learn righteousness" (1: 1). He sets the terms for his argument. The war is marked by crisis (taking the form of defeat),

which translates into God's negative intervention ("God's heavy judgments"), and which provides awareness of depravity ("wicked individuals and nations" receive "proof" of "depravity"). According to Milner, British defeats are examples of God pushing Britain into continued struggle against France, as the "French national assembly" is "inconsistent, profane, and impious," and "no Divine blessings" can "be expected" (1: 50), and Napoleon is "the cruel, hypocritical tyrant, who at present rules that unhappy country, and scourges so large a portion of Europe" (1: 51). Indeed, he states that "we *do* find, that when such special interferences of Providence take place as in Scripture language are called judgments, the inhabitants of the earth sometimes learn righteousness," and that "signal afflictions and chastisements effect that, both for individuals and nations, which the most bountiful displays of kindness and compassion had failed to produce" (1: 3). He cites the Bible: "frequently the scriptural expressions are such as to intimate that the trial of afflictions is an *essential* part of the discipline of the righteous": "'Many are the afflictions of the righteous'" and "'I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction'" (1: 3).[3] He concludes that "our best divines, in all ages, have judged it useful to display with copiousness and emphasis the advantages of the humbling and afflictive dispensations of Providence" (1: 7). For Milner, crisis, "signal afflictions and chastisements," pushes individuals and Britain into continued struggle.

Milner posits that God's negative intervention and awareness of depravity provide individuals with renewed and stronger hope in God's "protective care" ("Providence"), and he reveals progress (and, in turn, Providence) by situating crisis in a nationalist chronology. He states that "a gracious Providence" exists, and that "the history of this nation for many years past suggests abundant cause to its inhabitants to adore the wise Disposer of all events, and lift up their hearts to Him with grateful songs of praise and thanksgiving" (1: 9). Milner focuses on

crisis in British history: “its darker periods of plots, rebellions, civil wars, papal tyranny, and republican fury” indicate that the British are a “highly-favoured people” (1: 10-11). He situates crisis, both past (“rebellions, civil wars, papal tyranny, and republican fury”) and present (defeats in the Napoleonic Wars), in a nationalist chronology that combines religion and patriotism to show that crisis results in progress, and he allows a single response: “grateful songs of praise and thanksgiving.” Milner’s narrow response to crisis and use of the chronology indicate that he is aware that he is addressing a version of Providence that has the potential to provide renewed and stronger hope to some individuals, and to cause many others to despair. John Foster is similar.

In the 1805 *Essays*, the chapter “On Decision of Character,” Foster addresses crisis and Providence. He states that the “bold quality [decision of character],” the ability to react to crisis, is of “great importance,” and that “It is a poor and disgraceful thing, not to be able to reply, with some degree of certainty, to the simple questions, What will you be? What will you do?” (89):

> One single advantage possessed by a mind of this character is, that its passions are not wasted. The whole measure of passion of which any mind with important transactions before it, is capable, is not more than enough to supply interest and energy to its practical exertions; and therefore as little as possible of this sacred fire should be expended in a way that does not augment the force of action. (99)

The “single advantage” is that the “passions are not wasted”: they are a “sacred fire.” He frames this feeling and the crisis that elicits it as divine. In a similar way as Milner, then, crisis shares connections to individuals and Providence: “There is a feeling, as in respect of Fate, that the decrees of so inflexible a spirit *must* be right, or that, at least, they *will* be accomplished” (100). As an exemplar of this ability to react to crisis, Foster cites William Pitt, first earl of Chatham, (Pitt the elder), (1708-1778), and his refusal to offer France favourable terms in negotiations to

end the Seven Years' War (1756-1763) (Foster 141; Peters). The example supports the present through the past: a progressivist, nationalistic chronology. By fighting France in the past, Britain progressed, and 1805 finds Britain again at war with France: Britain must continue to struggle.

Like Milner, though, Foster employs this chronology that makes appeals to religion and patriotism because he addresses a version of Providence that has the potential to cause despair. Individuals are marked by "the grand fact of the depravity of the human heart" (210), and that "fact" shapes his positioning of crisis. Though "God employs" individuals "in that in which he also is employed," they must remember that "while the employment is [theirs], the success is altogether" God's (237). As concerns both general experience and this period of defeat, "success" is limited, so Foster interprets experience as primarily consisting of God's negative intervention, and as providing awareness of depravity. Though he contends that the dynamic leads to renewed and stronger hope, because he has to spend a chapter explaining how this pessimistic form of perpetual crisis leads to action, he knows that despair at God's "protective care" and inaction are also threats ("Providence"). This dissertation returns to Foster in Section Three, to show that unlike Evangelicals, De Quincey, at times, situates patriotism in a role that is equal to religion, and that he uses crisis and the divine component of the self to maintain fragile hope in Providence, and it applies Milner's explication of crisis to the Evangelicals below, to demonstrate that they were concerned about despair and inaction.

Though Hannah More, Francis Randolph, and William Wilberforce do not explicitly address the Napoleonic Wars, they consider experience during the conflict, and they acknowledge despair. In the 1811 *Practical Piety*, More states that "Among the charges which have been brought against serious piety, one is, that it teaches men to despair. The charge is just in one sense as to the fact, but false in the sense intended. It teaches us to despair indeed of

ourselves, while it inculcates that faith in a Redeemer, which is the true antidote to despair" (65). In the 1799 *Sermons*, Randolph states that "by exhibiting in his own person a proof of faith and patience under the severest trials and afflictions, [Jesus] might lend to his divine precepts the … human example" (122). In the 1797 *Practical View*, Wilberforce details individuals without God:

> All their endeavours are foiled, and they become more and more convinced of their own moral weakness, and of the strength of their indwelling corruption. Thus groaning under the enslaving power of sin, and experiencing the futility of the utmost efforts … for effecting their deliverance, they are tempted (sometimes, it is to be feared, they yield to the temptation) to give up all in despair. (195-96)

More addresses crisis, as crisis is the reason for "despair," and she wants to balance "despair … of ourselves" with the "antidote to despair": God. Referring to serious crises, "the severest trials and afflictions," Randolph states that Jesus allows the Christian to push through a feeling that approaches despair.[4] Wilberforce describes crisis ("foiled" "endeavours") and the reaction of individuals who do not have God: "to give up all in despair." Though these Evangelicals hold that they only allow despair at human abilities, this dissertation contends that since they primarily interpret general experience as consisting of God's negative intervention and as providing awareness of depravity—and that interpretation is even more pessimistic during this period of defeat—they address these examples because they recognise that despair also threatens to replace hope in God's "protective care" ("Providence"), resulting in inaction. This dissertation posits that the Evangelical version of Providence means that, essentially, even with belief in God, "All [individuals'] endeavours are foiled," and they "experienc[e] the futility of the utmost efforts," so that "they are tempted … to yield to the temptation … to give up all in despair."

Indeed, in an undated sermon, Milner acknowledges that perpetual crisis, whether confined to general experience or extended to military action, threatens to result in despair and inaction. He posits that "the glory of the Gospel" is that "it always forbids despair. Yet procrastination is the most dangerous thing that can be imagined; more dangerous, perhaps, than any temptation whatever: it has justly been called 'the thief of time,'"[5] and that "He who bids you ask and seek, who invites the weary and heavy laden, cannot possibly reject those who come to him in penitential prayer" (*Sermons* 2: 319). As with the above Evangelicals, though Milner claims that "the Gospel" "forbids despair," his defence against "despair" indicates that his concern is "despair": if this was not the case, why would he need to offer special counsel against despair? Milner is concerned because he associates "despair" with inaction: due to despair, individuals will procrastinate, will not act, and inaction "is the most dangerous thing that can be imagined." He attempts to ensure that individuals involved in perpetual crisis ("the weary and heavy laden") continue to struggle, and that they do not despair and respond to crisis with inaction.

Evangelicals concluded that the perpetual crisis of Providence revealed depravity and led to despair at human abilities, and De Quincey's position on depravity shaped his interpretation of crisis. The Introduction to this dissertation shows that De Quincey disagrees with the Evangelical position on depravity, in "Notes on Gilfillan's Gallery of Literary Portraits" (Nov. 1845)," where he addresses Foster, and in "Mrs Hannah More" (1833). De Quincey states that though Foster considers "human nature," he sees "the clay of the composite statute, but not its gold" (15: 269), and he claims that More "delighted" to address depravity—"degradation and corruption" (9: 346)—and that she could not admit "the gold[]" of humans (9: 346). He frames his criticism as a question of history: without the divine, how is human "restoration …the subject of a mysterious

scheme in the councils of Heaven" (9: 346)? He makes a similar point about "human restoration" in "On Christianity, as an Organ of Political Movement" (1846): a "very central principle of [the Christian's] religion is, that God for a great purpose assumed his own human nature: a mode of incarnation which could not be conceivable, unless through some divine principle common to the two natures, and forming the *nexus* between them" (15: 363). De Quincey bases hope in God's "protective care" ("Providence") on the divine component of the self, as it reveals God's "great purpose" and the potential of positive human action. Section Three shows that unlike Evangelicals, De Quincey situates crisis as revealing depravity *and* the divine component, shifting the focus away from despair at human abilities. De Quincey, then, responds to the issue associated with crisis revealing depravity and leading to despair at human abilities: if individuals despair at Providence and they cannot temper that despair with human abilities, the chances are greater that they will stop struggling. Evangelicals look to God; De Quincey looks to humans.

This dissertation contends that Evangelicals feared that their version of Providence threatened to cause despair and inaction, and in an attempt to encourage hope and action, they situated crisis in a nationalistic chronology, combining religion and patriotism, and they allowed despair at human abilities but not Providence. The next sections show that De Quincey addresses perpetual crisis, and that like Derrida, he recognises that despair threatens to create a void waiting to be filled with drugs and inaction. In "Dr Parr and his Contemporaries" (1831), De Quincey presents Milner as an exemplary Evangelical: "Milner assigned a peculiar emphasis, and a more significant interpretation, to those doctrines of original sin, the terms upon which redemption is offered … which have the appearance of being the *characteristic* and peculiar parts in the Christian economy" (8: 15); and in the 1856 *Confessions of an English Opium-Eater*, he states that as "an opium-eater," "Milner was understood to be a strenuous wrestler with the

physical necessity that coerced him into his habit" (2: 96). As an addict shaped by Evangelicalism, De Quincey knew that physical suffering, "peculiar [theological] emphasis," and addiction were connected: physical suffering complicates spiritual suffering—the Evangelical version of Providence—and the combination leads to an escape with opium. De Quincey innovates on the Evangelical version of Providence to address despair, drugs, and inaction.

2. De Quincey: Crisis and Britain as an Imperial Power

This section addresses texts related to "Suspiria," and it considers De Quincey's contextualisation of Britain as an imperial power after the Napoleonic Wars, where perpetual military crisis defines experience, causing individuals to despair at God's "protective care" (Providence). In the manuscript "Lessons on the French Revolution" (1845),[6] De Quincey positions crisis as, primarily, God's negative intervention, where crisis pushes individuals into continued struggle, and he situates crisis in a nationalistic chronology. He establishes distinctions, though, between historical periods, with the present part of a temporary regression (1815-1845) and the Napoleonic Wars one of more direct progress. This dissertation posits that a similar dynamic shapes "The Mail-Coach." De Quincey situates the narrative during and after the Napoleonic Wars, so he uses the Napoleonic Wars to illustrate why individuals should not only despair at but also maintain fragile hope in Providence, even though the present threatens individuals with "final despair" and "inertia" (15: 591), as he puts it in "Lessons." Like Evangelicals, he addresses a version of Providence marked primarily by crisis in the form of God's negative intervention, and he encourages hope and action with a nationalist chronology (so he combines religion and patriotism); unlike Evangelicals, he stresses patriotism to a greater

degree, and he maintains fragile hope, allowing individuals to experience a significant amount of despair at Providence, in both defeat and victory: individuals should despair, hope, and struggle.

2.1 "The Mail-Coach" and "Suspiria"

De Quincey conceived of "The Mail-Coach" as part of the 1845 "Suspiria" (20: 34), and in "Suspiria," he addresses perpetual military crisis. He acknowledges that "the eye of the calmest observer is troubled" through "fifty years of mighty revolutions amongst the kingdoms of the earth" and "powers from hell … coming round upon artillery and the forces of destruction" (15: 130). Consider the following conflicts after the Napoleonic Wars, from 1815 to 1854, when De Quincey revised "The Mail-Coach": the Anglo-Nepalese War (1813-1816); the Third Anglo-Maratha War (1817-1818); the First Ashanti War (1823-1831), the First Anglo-Burmese War (1824-1826) and the Second Anglo-Burmese War (1852-1853); the First Anglo-Afghan War (1839-1842); the First Opium War (1840-1842);[7] the Sikh Wars (1845-1846 and 1848-1849); and the Crimean War (1853-1856).[8] Non-military crises include the Chartist Petitions (1839, 1842, 1848); the Irish Famine (1845-1851); and the Revolutions in Europe (1848).[9] This dissertation proposes that as these are the military conflicts of an imperial power, De Quincey needs to present them as part of God's "protective care" of Britain ("Providence"), and that they push De Quincey to allow individuals to experience significant despair at Providence, as the conflicts not only bring defeats, but also victories without sustained peace—consider the many conflicts prefaced with "First"—and victories of extreme violence: consider a conflict shortly after 1854, the Indian Mutiny (9 May 1857-8 July 1859), now termed the First War of Independence, where both sides made few distinctions between military forces and civilian components, anticipating the conflicts of the twentieth century.[10] In "Suggestions upon

the Secret of the Mutiny" (1858), De Quincey predicts that "The prisoners will begin to accumulate by thousands; executions will proceed through week after week" (19: 182). If such conflicts reveal God's "protective care," De Quincey understandably incorporates despair.

"Lessons," the manuscript connected to "Suspiria," provides insight into De Quincey's positioning of the present and his use of the Napoleonic Wars to contextualise the present. He states that "this particular age in which we live might be stationary, or might even have gone back," but that it "is perfectly consistent with a general belief in the going forward of man," and to support this claim, he "wish[es] to compare the present" with "the age which terminated 30 years ago, roused—invigorated—searched as that age was through all its sensibilities by the electric shock of the French revolution"[11] (15: 599-600). De Quincey illustrates the overall trajectory of progress and the temporary regressions (see figure 3):

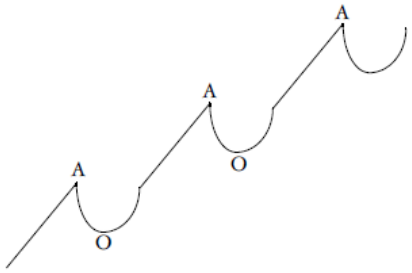

Fig. 3. "Progress is maintained" (15: 592).

He states that "at O, by comparison with the previous elevation at A, there is a repeated falling back; but still upon the whole … the constant report is—ascent" (15: 599). He positions the present as "stationary" or "falling back," and because the Napoleonic Wars serves as a contrast, he uses the conflict to reveal progress (and, in turn, God's "protective care" ["Providence"]), and to acknowledge that the period after Waterloo—which if the Napoleonic Wars is "the age which terminated 30 years ago" is dated 1815-1845—does not reveal progress as directly.

In “Lessons,” De Quincey concedes that the present is difficult to reconcile with Providence, and that the present threatens to cause “final despair” and “inertia” (15: 591):

> We know that God bring[s] … out of all darkness his own ineffable light; takes away all pretences f[rom] final despair. And a brash interpreter might upon that argument justify they counsel inertia for man. But how is this result brought about? By and thro’ those very human efforts which God has laid and pre-moulded in the very evils that prompt them. It brings order out of anarchy, ineffable counsels out of the vilest chaos. But it is his choice to do that through human agencies not slumbering, as if given for no end but roused and stimulated to action by such excitements as he has laid in the evils themselves. (15: 591)

De Quincey states that Providence exists (“God bring[s] … “order out of anarchy”), and that Providence is in perpetual crisis, as crisis, God’s intervention, pushes individuals into continued struggle (“through human agencies not slumbering … but roused and stimulated to action”). The strong terms suggest that he emphasises God’s negative intervention, and that he positions hope as far more fragile than Evangelicals, allowing individuals to experience a significant level of despair at Providence: “darkness,” anarchy,” “vilest chaos,” and “evils.” Though he contends that God “takes away all pretences f[rom] final despair,” with the present regressing, he is still concerned about “final despair,” as he admits that the present may “counsel inertia for man.” Like Evangelicals, De Quincey suggests that “final despair” and “inertia” are his concerns due to his addressing these specific threats: if they were not threats, why would he need to offer counter-counsel against “final despair” and the cessation of struggle, “inertia”?

To council against “final despair” and “inertia” (15: 591), he reveals the existence of Providence with a nationalistic chronology of the Napoleonic Wars (see figure 4):

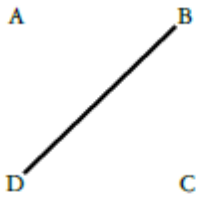

Fig. 4. “The Revolution” (15: 592).

De Quincey identifies the movement from A to B as the French, and from D to C as the British, and he situates “Providence” between the two extremes, “bring[ing] good out of all evil” (15: 594). Again, combining religion and patriotism, he positions the Napoleonic Wars as revealing Providence. This dissertation contends that in “Lessons” and “The Mail-Coach,” De Quincey is concerned that with Providence in perpetual crisis and the present regressing, individuals may experience “final despair” and “inertia” (15: 591), so he uses the Napoleonic Wars—a conflict that though it was filled with crisis in the form of both God’s negative and positive intervention (defeat and victory), it was also a conflict that more clearly showed progress than the present period of regression—to illustrate why individuals should despair at and maintain fragile hope in Providence (with acceptable despair positioned as not amounting to “final despair”).

This dissertation recognises that the struggle against despair and inaction exists for those who do not believe in God, but it focuses on De Quincey’s insistence that Christianity is an essential part of the argument against despair and inaction. Walter E. Houghton details the Victorian dread that the “decline of Christianity” and “collapse of faith” would lead to serious social-political issues (58), and he cites John Stuart Mill (1806-1873) and *Autobiography* (1873): “in this age” “real belief in any religious doctrine is feeble and precarious, but the opinion of its necessity for moral and social purposes almost universal” (Mill 46). Evangelicals held a dogmatic stance on the necessity of Christianity, but authors like Mill still retained an important

role for religion in their arguments, even if they suspected that "real belief" was "feeble and precarious." De Quincey's inclusion of Christianity in his arguments—as well as his sometimes providing equal roles for patriotism and religion—is contextualised by the Victorian tendency to situate Christianity as an essential factor while also recognising the need to supplement religion with secular issues, such as patriotism. Indeed, like Evangelicals, De Quincey combines religion and patriotism; unlike Evangelicals, he allows patriotism to take an equal role, at times.

De Quincey shaped "The Mail-Coach" so as to engage with a national remembrance of the Napoleonic Wars. On 1 June 1847, Queen Victoria authorized, for all surviving veterans of the Napoleonic Wars, the General Service Medal (1793-1814) (GSM) ("Supplement to *The London Gazette*"). The GSM recognised veterans who did not receive the Waterloo Medal (1815), which was only awarded to those at the Battle of Waterloo. De Quincey likely knew about the GSM. He began composition of "The Mail-Coach" around the time the GSM was first brought up in the House of Lords. Morrison dates manuscripts for "The Mail-Coach" 1844-1849 (Introduction to "The Mail-Coach" 402-03). During this period, the GSM had been raised in the House of Lords by the Duke of Richmond in 1845, 1847, and 1848 (Britain, "Lords Sitting 21 July 1845; 14 December 1847; 9 June 1848; 27 March 1848"). *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*—where De Quincey first published "The Mail-Coach" and with which De Quincey had a significant relationship—was also involved in the GSM discussion. In "The Fighting Eighty-Eighth" (1847), Frederick Hardman suggests that the Peninsular War veterans deserve a medal (459); and Thomas Boys, in "My Peninsular Medal" (1849)—found in the same issue as the second part of "The Mail-Coach," "The Vision of Sudden Death"—details a GSM's arrival. De Quincey's most suggestive reference to the GSM is found in "Sudden Death." Before addressing Waterloo, he explains the presence of Waterloo, seeming to acknowledge that

contemporary discussion did not include 1815. He maintains that since his mail-coach has carried through most of the text news of victory pre-1815, that allows for the inclusion of Waterloo in the conclusion, "Dream-Fugue," or how "the introduction of Waterloo" "arises naturally" "into the fourth variation of the Fugue" (16: 430). Waterloo needs explanation in 1849: for many in Britain, and for De Quincey in the majority of the text, the focus is on the Napoleonic Wars pre-1815, as per the GSM context.

De Quincey not only includes Waterloo but also the period after the Napoleonic Wars. He situates the collision in "The Mail-Coach" shortly after Waterloo. In the 1854 "Explanatory Notices," he places the accident in 1817 or earlier, and in the revised version of "The Mail-Coach," he indicates that the collision happened "in the second or third summer after Waterloo" (16: 741). Indeed, the after-effects of the Napoleonic Wars influence the collision, as the mail-coach is late because "there is a large extra accumulation of foreign mails this night, owing to irregularities caused by war" (16: 435), and the war mail prevents him from reaching the guard's horn to warn the domestic gig: "the foreign mails being piled upon the roof" (16: 439). Morrison states that De Quincey "incorporate[s] both the chaotic mood of wartime and the superficially serene but actually ominous atmosphere of the post-war period between Waterloo and Peterloo" (Introduction to "The Mail-Coach" 405). Adding to Morrison's observation, this dissertation proposes that De Quincey extends "The Mail-Coach" beyond the GSM (1793-1814) because he values Waterloo and the period after the Napoleonic Wars in his explication of Providence.

De Quincey uses the Napoleonic Wars and Waterloo to illustrate why individuals should both despair at and maintain fragile hope in Providence in the present. In "Joan of Arc" (1847), he positions Joan's historical period "as one section in a vast mysterious drama, unweaving through a century and back, and drawing continually to crisis after crisis" (16: 70). He posits that

Providence exists, as God is the author of the "vast mysterious drama," and that it is marked by crisis; and he focuses on a single crisis, "one section." "The Mail-Coach" is similar: he states that the imagery and themes result, "above all," from the mail-coach's "connexion with the national victories at an unexampled time of crisis" (16: 430). He depicts the Napoleonic Wars as another period of crisis, and because it is "unexampled," he positions it as an "unexampled" revelation of Providence for the present of 1849. In "On the Approaching Revolution in Great Britain, and Its Proximate Consequences" (1831), De Quincey states that "the troubled drama of the French Revolution was wound up by the solemn and unparalleled catastrophe of Waterloo," and he admits that "in rebuke of all our sagacity, we have travelled on from woe to woe, from one mystery of change to another; and in reality the colour of the times, and the aspect of the political heavens, since Waterloo, has been even more portentous than before" (8: 104). In phrasing similar to "Lessons," he admits that Providence is in perpetual crisis, as God pushes individuals into continued struggle with crisis: "Yet I repeat also that changes not less mighty, nor less rapid, have been unfolding in this Post-Waterloo period of time," and "In all this, no doubt, there is a fulfilment of the mysterious purposes of Providence," as "Providence acts by human means" (8: 105). If De Quincey follows Evangelicals, he positions Waterloo as crisis in the form of God's positive intervention, as it is a "solemn and unparalleled" *victory* (and as suggested earlier, since De Quincey is challenged by victory more than Evangelicals, he also describes it in dark terms, as a "catastrophe"). Regardless of De Quincey's ambivalence, he has God emerge from Waterloo in "The Mail-Coach," so Waterloo, as crisis in the form of God's positive intervention, reveals Providence, and it provides a reason for individuals to struggle in the present, even though in the present, crisis primarily takes the form of God's negative intervention: "we have travelled on from woe to woe." Again, certainly the reasons to struggle extend beyond direct links to religion

and patriotism—such as self-preservation and commitments to family and friends—but this dissertation identifies De Quincey's tendency to stress Christianity and Britain in his arguments against despair and inaction. Ultimately, to support the existence of Providence, De Quincey positions much of the action of "The Mail-Coach" during the Napoleonic Wars and "about [the time of] Waterloo" (16: 418)—"thunder and lightning … are not the same … which I seem to remember about the time of Waterloo" (16: 420)—and by situating the collision shortly after Waterloo, at the start of a period of temporary regression, he uses the Napoleonic Wars to illustrate why individuals should despair at and maintain fragile hope in Providence during a period of regression, one that stretches from 1815 to the present, according to "Lessons."

In "The Mail-Coach," De Quincey addresses crisis after the Napoleonic Wars, and he contextualises that crisis with the Napoleonic Wars, so as to incorporate despair at and fragile hope in Providence. In the "Explanatory Notices" to his collected works *Selections Grave and Gay* (1854), he describes the start of the process, the crisis, the vision of sudden death:

> [An] accident made me … the solitary witness to an appalling scene, which threatened instant death in a shape the most terrific to two young people, whom I had no means of assisting, except in so far as I was able to give them a most hurried warning of their danger; but even *that* not until they stood within the very shadow of the catastrophe …. Such was the scene, such in its outline, from which the whole of this paper radiates as a natural expansion. (20: 34)

The "whole" text develops from a single "scene": crisis in the form of God's negative intervention after the Napoleonic Wars. He describes a scene situated in the "very shadow of the catastrophe" of "death," and he incorporates implicitly despair, as it is an "appalling scene" where the only "means of assisting" is a "most hurried warning" that seems too late. He transfers

despair, panic, and fear to Providence in the dream of the collision, "Dream-Fugue," as he associates "dying despair" (16: 445) with "Pomps of life, that, from the burials of centuries, rose again to the voice of perfect joy": "could it be that *ye* that had wrapped me in the reflux of panic? What ailed me, that I should fear when the triumphs of earth were advancing?" (16: 448). Though "the burials of centuries" reveal that "the triumphs of earth were advancing," he despairs at the sacrifices associated with God's "protective care" ("Providence"). As in "Lessons," he counters "despair" with fragile hope, not by focusing on the present, but by returning to the Napoleonic Wars, specifically a key example of God's positive intervention, Waterloo: "rendering thanks to God in highest," who "hid his face through one generation behind thick clouds of War," and who was "ascending from Waterloo" (16: 449). Though he expresses ambivalence to the conflict with his description of the "thick clouds of War" (which supports the argument in this chapter that he frames it as marked by God's negative intervention), he still uses the great British victory in the Napoleonic Wars to see beyond those "clouds" and to maintain fragile hope that "at the last, with one motion of his victorious arm, [God] might record and emblazon the endless resurrections of his love" (16: 449). This dissertation shows that Evangelicals depicted Providence as marked by perpetual crisis in the form of God's negative intervention, and that they positioned this constant crisis as leading to renewed and stronger hope in Providence; indeed, they did not allow despair at Providence, only at human abilities. De Quincey allows despair at and fragile hope in Providence, shifting the focus away from despair at human abilities. The next section shows why that shift is important in "The Mail-Coach": he primarily bases that fragile hope in Providence on the divine component of the self.

3. “The Mail-Coach”: Crisis, Despair, Drugs, and Providence

This section details De Quincey’s version of Providence in “The Mail-Coach,” and “Presence of Mind: A Fragment” (1850) provides context. Adapting Foster’s *Essays*, De Quincey illustrates how the British both despair at and react positively to severe crisis—primarily in the form of God’s negative intervention—due to fragile hope in Providence based on the divine component of the self. In “The Mail-Coach,” specifically, like Alfred Lord Tennyson (1809-1892) in “The Lotus-Eaters” (1832, 1843), De Quincey includes the threat of drugs, as he details how his constitutional and drugged states push him towards inaction; but unlike Tennyson’s mariners, he does not term Providence hateful, and he does act. Employing the term *publication*,[12] De Quincey argues that for the British, military crisis leads to fragile hope (as that hope emerges from despair at Providence): crisis, whether defeat or victory, causes despair, and despair “publishes” depravity[13] (16: 433); awareness of depravity provides awareness of the divine component; and the divine component offers renewed hope in Providence, as it not only confirms that “God for a great purpose assumed his own human nature” (15: 363), but it also illustrates the potential of positive human action. Like Evangelicals, De Quincey reconciles perpetual crisis (mostly in the form of God’s negative intervention) with God’s “protective care” (“Providence); unlike Evangelicals, he has a greater role for patriotism, and he does not forbid despair at Providence, admitting the fragility of hope: despair reveals depravity and the divine component, and with renewed though fragile hope in Providence, the British act; and because De Quincey focuses on his experience, he shows that even a British addict filled with despair and opium accesses that fragile hope and acts “at the last” (16: 449). He attempts to avoid Derrida’s “fatal rhetoric” (29), and to balance crisis, despair, drugs, and inaction with hope and action.

3.1 “Presence of Mind”

De Quincey innovates on Evangelicalism. In “Presence of Mind,” he praises Foster’s *Essays*, the chapter “On Decision of Character.” Previously, in “Notes on Gilfillan’s Gallery of Literary Portraits,” he finds that it “places a very exaggerated valuation upon one quality of human temperament [decision of character, the ability to react to crisis], which is neither rare nor at all necessarily allied with the most elevated features of moral grandeur” (15: 270).[14] In “Presence of Mind,” though, returning to four aspects found in “Sudden Death,” he identifies a “peculiar grandeur” associated with the “quality” (17: 50). The connection to “Sudden Death” suggests that like Foster, De Quincey values the quality when addressing severe crisis in the form of God’s negative intervention, and with “The Mail-Coach” linked to “Suspiria,” that De Quincey positions the quality as needed in the present; so as with Foster, he combines religion and patriotism, but he is stronger with his incorporation of patriotism than Foster. The four aspects that connect “Presence of Mind” and “The Mail-Coach” are the British, crisis, hope, and Providence. De Quincey stresses that the British both despair at and react positively to this form of crisis, due to fragile Christian hope, and he situates crisis as essential to Providence.

As noted in Section One, Jordan identifies hope as a defining aspect of Christianity. Addressing the Pagan-Christian division employed by the Romantics, Jordan states that “along with the Christian’s awareness of sin there is an assurance of salvation. It is this ‘hope’ which is emphasized” by De Quincey (197). Again, Jordan’s statement resembles Evangelicalism because he structures strong hope on God, and Evangelicals entirely structure strong hope on God. De Quincey does not primarily base hope on God, and his hope is fragile, as it emerges from despair at Providence. In “Christianity,” he states that a “very central principle of [the Christian’s] religion is, that God for a great purpose assumed his own human nature: a mode of incarnation

which could not be conceivable, unless through some divine principle common to the two natures, and forming the *nexus* between them" (15: 363). He bases hope in God's "protective care" on the divine component ("Providence"), as it reveals God's "great purpose." In "Presence of Mind" and "Sudden Death," the Pagan-Christian division supports his argument for the British and action: one, he maintains that the Roman possesses the quality of action; and two, he argues that the British, inheriting the Roman quality, supplement Roman action with fragile Christian hope, and that the British both despair and react positively to severe crisis. De Quincey's focus on the British previews his stronger incorporation of patriotism to supplement that fragile hope.

De Quincey links the British, crisis in the form of God's negative intervention, and Providence. In "Presence of Mind," he conflates the Roman and Christian, or "the Anglo-Saxon … who inherit the Roman temperament" (17: 49), and he addresses the Anglo-Saxon's reaction to severe crisis: "To face a sudden danger by a corresponding weight of sudden counsel or sudden evasion—*that* was a privilege essentially lodged in the Roman mind," and Anglo-Saxons inherit that "privilege" (17: 50). In "Sudden Death," he begins with division, the "Roman and Christian," and he then conflates the Roman and Christian, as found in "one aspect of sudden death … where it surprises a man" (16: 431-32). In "The Mail-Coach," then, like "Presence of Mind," he positions the British, "Anglo-Saxon[s]," as reacting positively to severe crisis ("sudden death"), due to Roman action and Christian hope. This is a fragile hope, though.

In "Presence of Mind," to explain the "peculiar grandeur" of this conflation of the Roman and Christian, De Quincey cites Foster, "The late celebrated John Foster," specifically, his "essay on decision of character … where he rightly insists on desertion" (17: 50). Though addressing Foster, De Quincey expands on his own position: the British experience severe crisis,

and due to the divine component, they maintain fragile hope in Providence.[15] This dissertation reviews Foster's position on hope before addressing De Quincey's position.

Foster situates opposition—what this dissertation terms crisis—as God's negative intervention. He states that the strongest feelings are "anger, indignation, and resentment," that they cannot be caused by "friendly objects," and that the characteristic experience is encountering unfriendly objects: "frequent[]" "opposition" (148). He admits these points to show that God's negative intervention pushes individuals to act: these objects "continually strengthen the principle of re-action; they put the mind in the habitual array of defence and self-assertion, and often give it the aspect and the posture of a gladiator" (148). With individuals shaped by opposition, individuals experiencing the present of 1805 (the Napoleonic Wars) are precluded from the "irresolute mind": "An irresolute mind indeed might be quelled and subjugated by a formidable kind of opposition; but the strong wind which blows out a taper, augments a powerful fire, if there is fuel enough, to an indefinite intensity" (148). This dissertation again stresses Foster's singular position: though God's negative intervention consists of "opposition" and it pushes individuals to act, or it "augments a powerful fire … to an indefinite intensity," Foster reserves successful human action for God: "God employs" individuals "in that in which he also is employed," and individuals must remember that "while the employment is [theirs], the success is altogether" God's (237). At this period of defeat in the Napoleonic Wars, then, Foster limits God's "protective care" ("Providence") to crisis and "[un]success[ful]" human action.

The severity of God's negative intervention pushes Foster to address "desertion" (149). He states that "A kind, mutually reclining dependence, is certainly the happiest state of human beings; but this necessarily prevents the development of some great individual powers which would be forced into action by a state of desertion" (149). He mentions "the happiest state," but

because he focuses on the deserted state, where the "human" experience is being "thrown," by "cruelty, justice, or accident, from all social support and kindness" (149), he indicates that this state characterises the present. Still, he posits that the individual should maintain strong hope in God's "protective care" ("Providence"): as long as the individual has "any vigour of spirit," the individual will "act" with "a new resolution," as "the most absolute inflexibility is likely to characterise the resolution of an individual who is obliged to deliberate without consultation, and execute without assistance" (149-50). With the term "desertion," then, Foster addresses the severity of God's negative intervention, where individuals are forced to react to serious and sudden crisis—"thrown" "from all social support" "without consultation"—and without the positive experience of God's love—"without assistance." Foster argues, though, that desertion is part of God's "protective care," as he maintains that individuals develop the quality of action, and that God will eventually allow successful action. As suggested in Section One, this version of Providence threatens to result in despair and inaction rather than the strong hope and action that Foster claims; De Quincey innovates by attempting to counter the threats by allowing despair at Providence, admitting the fragility of hope, and by addressing the divine component.

This dissertation illustrates the key difference between Foster's and De Quincey's explication of God's negative intervention with "The Mail-Coach": De Quincey associates fragile hope in Providence with the divine component of the self. He states that "hope always exists," as "even then, amidst the raving of the seas and the frenzy of the danger, the man is able to confront his situation—is able to retire for a moment into solitude with God, and to seek all his counsel from *him*!" (16: 440-41). Instead of entirely depending on God for successful human action like Foster, De Quincey states that individuals "seek council from" God. If that "council" is applied to the texts considered in this chapter, he structures communication with God on the

divine "*nexus*" connecting humans and God (15: 363), and the divine component offers renewed hope in Providence, as it not only confirms that "God for a great purpose assumed his own human nature" (15: 363), but it also illustrates the potential of positive human action. With this fragile hope—as it is hope confined to a "moment" "amidst … the frenzy of the danger"—individuals act. As proposed in Section One, De Quincey's stance on human duality responds, in part, to the Evangelical concern that individuals will stop struggling due to the dark version of Providence—filled as it is with God's negative intervention and unsuccessful human action—so De Quincey attempts to ensure that when individuals despair at Providence, human abilities temper that despair and provide fragile hope, and that individuals continue to struggle.

Like Foster, De Quincey addresses severe crisis in the form of God's negative intervention; more than Foster, though, he incorporates patriotism to supplement fragile hope in Providence, as he stresses that crisis causes the *British* to both despair and to react positively. In "Presence of Mind," De Quincey states that "To find itself in solitude, and still more to find itself thrown upon the state of abandonment by sudden treachery, crushes the feeble mind, but rouses a terrific reaction of haughty self-assertion in that order of spirits"—the *British*—"which match[] and measure[] [themselves] against difficulty and danger" (17: 50). Starting with "solitude," he shifts to "sudden" crisis. The shift is similar to "Sudden Death," where he experiences "the usual silence and solitude … along the road" and a change (16: 437): "Suddenly from thoughts like these, I was awakened to a sullen sound, as of some motion on the distant road" (16: 438). Though De Quincey despairs—"I am miserably and shamefully deficient in that quality as regards action. The palsy of doubt and distraction hangs like some guilty weight of dark unfathomed remembrances upon my energies, when the signal is flying for *action*" (16: 438)—he acts, warning the gig. To return to "Lessons," only "a brash interpreter might" argue that

crisis "counsel[s]" "final despair" and "inertia" to the British (15: 591), even individuals "shamefully deficient" in the "quality" of action. De Quincey shows how the British both despair at and react positively to crisis, to council against "final despair" and "inertia."

In "The Antigone of Sophocles" (1846), De Quincey addresses Greek and English drama, and in a similar way as the Pagan-Christian division, he holds that the British both despair at and react to crisis due to fragile hope in Providence.[16] He states that the "catastrophes" are "different": "the Greek" is marked by "a breathless waiting for a doom that cannot be evaded; a waiting, as it were, for the last shock of an earthquake, or the inexorable rising of a deluge," and the English is "like a midnight of shipwreck, from which up to the last and till the final ruin comes, there still survives the sort of hope that clings to human energies" (15: 324). This dissertation posits that as in previous examples where De Quincey describes Providence as a drama, he uses drama to illustrate the historical action. Consider "The Mail-Coach" and "The Antigone." Crisis causes De Quincey to despair—the "palsy of doubt and distraction hangs like some guilty weight … upon my energies, when the signal is flying for *action*" (16: 438)—but because he is Christian and British, he has hope; though on "a midnight … [mail-coach] wreck," he will, "up to the last and till the final ruin comes," access that which "survives," "the sort of hope that clings to human energies" (15: 324): hope that is characterised by fragility as it "clings"; hope that is based on the divine component or grounded on "human energies"; and hope that is supplemented by patriotism, as De Quincey stresses the British, not all Christians.

Indeed, De Quincey focuses on British military crisis; so like Foster, he addresses crisis in the form of God's negative intervention, but unlike Foster, he incorporates patriotism in a more pronounced way to supplement fragile hope in Providence. "Presence of Mind" states this:

> A danger, offering itself unexpectedly in some momentary change of blind external agencies, assumes to the feelings the character of a perfidy accomplished by mysterious powers, and calls forth something of the same resentment, and in a gladiatorial intellect something of the same spontaneous resistance. A sword that breaks in the very crisis of a duel, a horse killed by a flash of lightning in the moment of collision with the enemy, a bridge carried away by an avalanche at the instant of a commencing retreat, affect the feelings like dramatic incidents emanating from a human will … And if it happens that these opposite effects show themselves in cases wearing a national importance, they raise what would else have been a mere casualty into the tragic or the epic grandeur of a fatality. The superb character, for instance, of Caesar's intellect throws a colossal shadow as of predestination over the most trivial incidents of his career. (17: 50)

If encountering "unexpectedly" or suddenly "danger," in a phrase that recalls Foster's "the posture of a gladiator" (148), individuals access "a gladiatorial intellect." These "dramatic incidents" concern military crisis: a breaking sword, a dying horse, and a collapsing bridge. This dissertation contends, then, that in "The Mail-Coach," with De Quincey's "feelings" "affect[ed]" by a "dramatic incident[]" of a military character—riding a mail-coach filled with war mail (crisis "wearing a national importance")—he positions the incident to transform into "the tragic or the epic grandeur of a fatality," into "fate or destiny" ("Fatality"), and to throw "a colossal shadow as of predestination," or to reveal Providence. By explicating crisis in "Dream-Fugue," he shows that the British (the "Anglo-Saxon" who inherit Roman action and possess fragile Christian hope [17: 49]) despair and react to military crisis, and that crisis is part of Providence.

3.2 “The Mail-Coach”

Tennyson contextualises De Quincey’s inclusion of the threat of drugs. “The Lotus-Eaters” addresses crisis, despair, drugs, and Providence.[17] Tennyson identifies a drug linked to poppies, likely modelled on opium, and it causes those involved in crisis to not act. He states that “And thro’ the moss the ivies creep, / And in the stream the long-leaved flowers weep, / And from the craggy ledge the poppy hangs in sleep” (1.54-56). The lines reflect the reason that individuals use the drug and the drug’s effect: for individuals who “weep,” or who are involved in crisis and experience despair, the poppy provides peace, or “sleep,” and it encourages them to reject action. After consuming the drug, the mariners describe the sky: “Hateful is the dark-blue sky, / Vaulted o’er the dark-blue sea” (4.84-85). It is “Hateful” because it represents Providence:

> Let us alone. What pleasure can we have
> To war with evil? Is there any peace
> In ever climbing up the climbing wave?
> All things have rest, and ripen toward the grave
> In silence; ripen, fall and cease:
> Give us long rest or death, dark death, or dreamful ease. (4.93-98)

Since the drug causes the mariners to value “pleasure,” “peace,” “long rest,” and “dreamful ease,” they hate that Providence requires them “To war with evil” and to “ever climb[] up the climbing wave.” Specifically, the drug makes them despair at constant military crisis, as the mariners protest that they must act in “wasted lands, / Blight and famine, plague and earthquake, roaring deeps and fiery sands, / Clanging fights, and flaming towns, and sinking ships, and praying hands” (8.159-61). Tennyson provides no indication that the crises that precede the final action, the “praying hands,” will stop: crisis will continue. This dissertation shows that in a

similar way as Tennyson, De Quincey addresses a version of Providence marked by perpetual military crisis and the resulting threats of despair, drugs, and inaction.

In "The Mail-Coach," De Quincey possesses special insight into these threats. Consider the collision in "Sudden Death": he is "miserably and shamefully deficient in that quality as regards action" (16: 438), and he consumes a "quantity of laudanum" (16: 434). He details, then, how his constitutional and drugged states affect him; but unlike the mariners, he does not term Providence hateful, and he does act. This rest of this section demonstrates that De Quincey situates crisis as an essential part of Providence, and that he shows how even the British addict reacts positively to crisis, so as to make it appear that all British individuals have the ability to react positively to crisis, even though the reality is more complex, as he admits in "Suspiria," where he describes "Our Lady of Darkness" as the "suggestress of suicides" (15: 181). In "The Mail-Coach," De Quincey focuses on the argument for action rather than more complex realities.

Before describing the collision, De Quincey establishes the importance of crisis in the form of God's negative intervention to Providence. He states "That dream, so familiar to childhood, of meeting a lion, and, from languishing prostration in hope and vital energy, that constant sequel of lying down before him, publishes the secret frailty of human nature—reveals its deep-seated Pariah falsehood to itself—records its abysmal treachery" (16: 433). Crisis, the "meeting," causes despair, the "languishing prostration in hope and vital energy," and that despair "publishes" depravity: "the secret frailty of human nature," "its deep-seated Pariah falsehood to itself," "its abysmal treachery." Though appearing to suggest that crisis causes inaction—"that constant sequel of lying down"—he states that it "repeats for every one of us, through every generation, the original temptation in Eden" in "infinite iteration" (16: 433). For Christians, the movement from crisis to despair and depravity results, ultimately, in fragile hope,

as individuals act after the initial "languishing prostration in hope," as "every generation" is illustrative of action and God's "protective care" ("Providence"). Indeed, De Quincey does not confine crisis to dreams, and though the dynamic is applicable to crisis throughout De Quincey's life—such as attempts to provide for his family through his writing—he focuses on severe crisis in "The Mail-Coach," and he fears despair and inaction, or "to fail in a case where Providence has suddenly thrown into [his] hands the final interests of another" (16: 432). Because he accesses fragile hope and acts in "The Mail-Coach," he engages with his project in "Lessons": individuals should not interpret such crisis as causing "final despair" and "counsel[ing] inertia" (15: 591). The dissertation applies this project to "The Mail-Coach," to show that De Quincey positions hope as profoundly fragile, as it leads to action "at the last" (16: 449). First, though, this section considers despair at and hope in Providence in the context of military crisis.

Military crisis in "The Mail-Coach" represents De Quincey's definitive combination of religion and patriotism, and it provides insight into the fragility of hope. De Quincey states that the mail-coach publishes through crisis, and though crisis is in the form of God's positive intervention (victory), he still experiences despair. He identifies the mail-coach as "the national organ for publishing" the battles of the Napoleonic Wars, and it publishes through a "heart-shaking" experience, as he clarifies in "Explanatory Notices": "The guard's horn … [was] glorified as the organ of publication for so many great national events" (20: 35). If this publication is similar to the publication in the dream—where the dream "publishes the secret frailty of human nature" (16: 433)—crisis causes despair, despair publishes depravity, and depravity results in fragile hope. Though "great national events," these battles caused despair, as the mail-coach published unprecedented incarnations of nationalistic violence, "distribut[ing] over the face of the land, like the opening of apocalyptic vials, the heart-shaking news of

Trafalgar, of Salamanca, of Vittoria, of Waterloo" (16: 409). As noted in Section One, Bell estimates that the Napoleonic Wars resulted in five million deaths (7). Waterloo, for example, resulted in the following casualties, killed and wounded: British (15,000); Prussian (7,000); French (23,000) (Corvisier). De Quincey's despair is connected to the sacrifices associated with Providence, and the phrase "heart-shaking" indicates a significant level of despair, and, in turn, the fragility of De Quincey's hope, as he develops the phrase from the poet William Cowper, that Evangelical addressed in the Introduction to this dissertation, who endured multiple collapses but continued to find some hope and struggle (Baird). In *The Task* (1785), Cowper asks,

> But oh th' important budget! usher'd in
> With such heart-shaking music, who can say
> What are its tidings? have our troops awak'd?
> Or do they still, as if with opium drugg'd,
> Snore to the murmurs of th' Atlantic wave?
> Is India free? and does she wear her plum'd
> And jewell'd turban with a smile of peace,
> Or do we grind her still? (4.23-30)

Cowper questions the British role in India: "do we grind her still?"; and invoking the oblivion of opium, he frames the soldiers as immobile, trapped in the protracted conflict of the American Revolutionary War. He stresses despair at nationalistic violence. De Quincey stresses both despair and fragile hope: by situating the crises of the Napoleonic Wars in a nationalistic chronology, from Trafalgar (1805) to Vittoria (1813) and Waterloo (1815), he demonstrates that crisis is aligned with progress. "The Mail-Coach" combines religion and patriotism to explicate that past "heart-shaking" crisis for Britain in 1849, so that the present is correctly interpreted—

despair at and hope in Providence—and with that fragile hope, De Quincey pushes for individuals to act in the present, in support of imperial Britain, its constant military crisis.

This dissertation contends that at the end of "The Mail-Coach," in "Dream Fugue," De Quincey provides the most detailed illustration of how military crisis leads to renewed though fragile hope in Providence. Addressing that night on the coach, he describes crisis, the moments prior to impact with the gig, and he has the "lion" from the "abysmal" dream return (16: 433). He states that "suddenly as from the chambers of the air opening in revelation,—suddenly as from the ground yawning at her feet, leaped upon [the woman], with the flashing of cataracts, Death the crownèd phantom, with all the equipage of his terrors, and the tiger roar of his voice" (16: 442). The similar terms "lion" and "tiger" and the development of the crisis in "Dream-Fugue" suggest a link to the dream that "publishes the secret frailty of human nature" (16: 433). In "Dream-Fugue," he details another crisis, the moments before God's ascension from Waterloo, and he has this reaction: "Pomps of life, that, from the burials of centuries, rose again to the voice of perfect joy, could it be that *ye* that had wrapped me in the reflux of panic? What ailed me, that I should fear when the triumphs of earth were advancing?" (16: 448). He attributes despair at God's "protective care" ("Providence"), with its infinite war, to depravity—"Ah! Pariah heart within me" (16: 448)—and he states that the dream repeats "A thousand times," following the same movement: "through storms; through desert seas; through the darkness of quicksands … through dream, and the dreadful resurrections that are in dreams—only that at the last … [God] might record and emblazon the endless resurrections of his love" (16: 449). He offers this explication: crisis (whether God's negative or positive intervention) causes despair, and despair "publishes" depravity (16: 433); awareness of depravity "record[s]" and "emblazon[s]" awareness of the divine—God and especially the "*nexus*" that connects God and

humans (15: 363)—and the divine component offers fragile hope in Providence, as it not only confirms that "God for a great purpose assumed his own human nature" (15: 363), but it also illustrates the potential of positive human action. With this hope, the British act. This dissertation shows that like Evangelicals, De Quincey addresses a version of Providence marked by crisis in the form of God's negative intervention; unlike Evangelicals, he does not forbid despair at Providence, as despair reveals depravity and the divine component, so that with renewed though fragile hope in Providence, the British act. As suggested throughout this chapter, the darkness of "The Mail-Coach"—"A thousand times" "through storms" and "dreadful resurrections"—is reflective of the fragility of De Quincey's hope, based as it is on both the perpetual crisis of imperial Britain, and his own experience as a British opium-eater: though De Quincey is filled with despair and drugs, he accesses that fragile hope "at the last" and he acts (16: 449).

Conclusion

Revisiting the excised section from "The Mail-Coach" that contains a position on depravity similar to Evangelicalism, this dissertation links the revision to the manuscript associated with "Suspiria," "Lessons," and "final despair" and "inertia" (15: 591):

> The dreamer finds housed within himself—occupying, as it were, some separate chamber in his brain—holding, perhaps from that station a secret and detestable commerce with his own heart—some horrid alien nature … How, again, if not one alien nature, but two, but three, but four, but five, are introduced within what once he thought the inviolable sanctuary of himself? (16: 422)

De Quincey concludes the 1854 version in *SGG* differently: "one fair female hand, with the fore-finger pointing, in sweet, sorrowful admonition, upwards to heaven, where is sculptured the

eternal writing which proclaims the frailty of earth and her children" (16: 421, 734). He retains depravity—"the frailty of earth and her children"—but he excises the strong position. This dissertation proposes that the strong position on depravity threatens his fragile hope in Providence—threatens to cause "final despair" and "inertia"—for two reasons: it questions the importance of the divine component, and by extension, his claim in "Christianity," that the divine component reveals God's "great purpose" (15: 363) and the potential of positive human action, and it undermines his twofold appeal to religion and patriotism. To recall Derrida's warning "when the sky of transcendence comes to be emptied, and not just of Gods, but of any Other, a fatal rhetoric fills the void, and this is the fetishism of drug addiction. Not religion as the opiate of the people, but drugs as the religion of the atheist poets" (29). De Quincey attempts to depict Britain as an imperial power, individuals and a nation involved in perpetual crisis, and to avoid the "fatal rhetoric," by balancing crisis, despair, drugs, and inaction with hope and action.

Notes

[1] For example, the victory at Waterloo resulted in 15,000 British casualties (Corvisier).

[2] David Gates provides an overview of this period of the conflict.

[3] "Many *are* the afflictions of the righteous; but the Lord delivereth him out of them all" (*Authorized King James Version*, Ps. 34.19). "Behold, I have refined thee, but not with silver; I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction" (Isa. 48.10).

[4] Henry Venn makes a similar statement in *Duty of Man* (1763): "Hath not thy kind providence put thy Gospel into my hands, to prevent my sinking into despair?" (52). This dissertation does not address Venn's text in this section because it was published before the Napoleonic Wars, but a similar argument could be made for Venn's text, as Britain was involved in a significant and protracted conflict: the Seven Years' War.

[5] "Procrastination is the thief of time" (Young, *Night Thoughts* 393).

[6] Frederick Burwick provides the 1845 dating of "Lessons" (Introduction to "Lessons").

[7] De Quincey lost his son Horace in this war (Morrison, *The English Opium-Eater* 326).

[8] The order of the conflicts corresponds with the following entries in the Works Cited: Turin; Yapp; Alexander and Smith; Charney; Neill; Madancy; Holmes; Bloy.

[9] The order of the non-military crises corresponds with the following entries in the Works Cited: "Chartism"; Cannon and Crowcroft; McPhee.

[10] Christopher Herbert details the extreme violence of this conflict.

[11] De Quincey identifies another period of ascent as post-1730, due to the "quickening impulse" of "Methodism," or the beginning of the Evangelical revival (15: 599). These manuscripts, then, offer insight into the link between De Quincey's project and Evangelicalism.

[12] Critics have recognised that publication is a key term in "The Mail-Coach," but the term has not been addressed in an Evangelical context (Andrew Franta's "Publication and Mediation in 'The English Mail-Coach'"; Anne Frey's "De Quincey's Imperial Systems"; and John Plotz's "*The Crowd: British Literature and Public Politics* [101-26]).

[13] As noted in the Introduction to this dissertation, Grevel Lindop locates depravity in "The Mail-Coach." Lindop focuses, though, on how De Quincey's awareness of depravity fits into a traditional Evangelical narrative, where his "spiritual and social alienation is healed" ("Pursuing the Throne of God" 108). As in the next note, this dissertation acknowledges Lindop's incisive but brief observations and develops them into a larger argument about De Quincey and Evangelicalism. Indeed, the repetition of crisis in "The Mail-Coach" raises questions about any straightforward "heal[ing]."

[14] Lindop offers a brief examination of Foster's *Essays*, the essay "On a Man's Writing Memoirs of Himself," as a potential influence on De Quincey's *Confessions* ("Pursuing the Throne of God" 102-04), and he identifies De Quincey's use of Cowper's term "heart-shaking" from *The Task* (4.24) in "The Mail-Coach" (104). This dissertation extends Lindop's initial observations, providing a sustained examination of Foster's "Decision of Character" and "The Mail-Coach," and linking Cowper's phrase "heart-shaking" to despair and Providence (in the last subsection).

[15] De Quincey was thinking about Foster's *Letters* during the composition of "Sudden Death." When first writing on Foster in 1845, he was also working on drafts of "The Mail-Coach" (Morrison, Introduction to "The Mail-Coach" 402). The earliest manuscript for "Sudden Death" "MS VSD A" is comprised of two fragments, "f. 103v" and "f. 116v": the first contains

notes relating to “Dream-Fugue,” and the second contains notes relating to Foster, for what would be developed into “Notes on Gilfillan’s” (Morrison, Introduction to “The Vision of Sudden Death MS VSD A” 453; Burwick, Introduction to “John Foster” 624).

[16] Throughout this text, De Quincey employs the Pagan-Christian division: “In [Greek] tragedy what uniformity of gloom; in the English what light alternating with depths of darkness” (15: 324). The English drama has “light” (the divine) and “depths of darkness” (depravity). Please see Chapter Two for De Quincey’s position on the Pagan-Christian division. Though De Quincey must have reacted to crisis in “The Mail-Coach” due to various reasons, such as fear, this dissertation focuses on his depiction of his reaction in terms of hope and Providence.

[17] Tennyson situates the poem in ancient Greece, but the parallels to Britain have been recognised by critics: for example, Francis O’Gorman suggests that “the political climate of 1830-32, and specifically the tumults of Parliament in the period leading to the Great Reform Act” shape the text (3). This dissertation, then, considers the text as addressing Christian Providence rather than Greek.

Chapter Seven Conclusion

De Quincey and the Christian Experience

Introduction

This dissertation argues that De Quincey innovates on Romantic Evangelicalism's interpretation of the Christian experience—experience as the feeling of struggle, depravity, and doubt—so that his most important texts are marked by the absence of the divine component and the positive experience of God's love, which, in turn, causes them to include doubt about the self, other humans, and a loving God. This conclusion reviews recent critics that have addressed De Quincey and Christianity, and it summarises the chapters, with special attention to the essential role of addiction in shaping De Quincey's interpretation of the Christian experience.

1. Criticism

This dissertation contributes to recent critics that have addressed De Quincey's position on Christianity. Grevel Lindop's *The Opium-Eater: A Life of Thomas De Quincey* (1981) provides context for that recent criticism. Lindop concludes with the following:

> De Quincey certainly found the effects of opium psychologically interesting … [and] he regarded them as glimpses of a hidden spiritual world. There are indications that from these elements he constructed a private mystery-religion of which only a few cryptic fragments are revealed in his writings. We know surprisingly little about his churchgoing habits … and his works discuss Christianity largely as an educative, ethical or political force … Most of his private mythology … was destined to remain secret. We may guess that it was as

> much pagan as Christian, and that opium became for him (as for many addicts) a kind of sacrament, but beyond that all is mysterious. (391-92)

Recent critics have developed this exploratory statement on De Quincey and Christianity. As editors of *The Works of Thomas De Quincey* (2000-2003), Burwick et al. have established the definitive collection of published texts and manuscripts on Christianity (and as the general editor, Lindop has of course added to his initial observations from his biography). With "Hannah More, Thomas De Quincey, and the Literature of Power" (2002), Daniel Sanjiv Roberts offers a provocative though brief re-evaluation: "De Quincey's … literary career and theorizing are all deeply influenced by his own Evangelical upbringing." Robert Morrison's authoritative biography *The English Opium-Eater: A Biography of Thomas De Quincey* (2009) provides new insight into De Quincey's engagement with his mother Elizabeth's Evangelicalism. These critics, then, articulate to a greater degree the specifics of De Quincey's position on Christianity. (Please see the Introduction to this dissertation for a more complete summary.) This dissertation addresses De Quincey's "private mystery-religion" in a more sustained way than has been offered, so as to identify where De Quincey approaches and innovates on Evangelicalism, and to show the essential role of addiction in shaping his interpretation of the Christian experience.

2. De Quincey's Interpretation of the Christian Experience and Addiction

Romantic Evangelicalism and the belief in the divine component of the self, which would become central to Victorian Evangelicalism, shaped De Quincey's interpretation of the Christian experience throughout his life. De Quincey situates depravity as the essential consideration (Romantic Evangelicalism); he extends the divine to humans (Victorian Evangelicalism); and identifies the struggle between the depraved and the divine components of the self as a defining

characteristic, establishing a duality that emphasises depravity in a similar way as Romantic Evangelicalism. De Quincey interprets the Christian experience as struggle, depravity, and God's negative intervention, so key texts are marked by both the absence of the divine component and the positive experience of God's love, and they contain doubt about the self, other humans, and a loving God. This section summarises the body chapters with attention to the role of addiction.

Chapter Two demonstrates that in the 1856 *Confessions of an English Opium-Eater,* De Quincey uses the conscience to connect the key act of his youthful rebellion—abandoning Manchester Grammar School in 1802—and addiction. He presents his life after the school as struggle, depravity, and God's negative intervention, which translates to the absence of the divine component of the self and the positive experience of God's love, and to doubt that the divine recovers from the decision to abandon the school. The doubt is contextualised by the defining factor of his life after the school: forty-three years of addiction (1813-1856).

Chapter Three shows that in manuscripts, texts on the literature of power, and autobiographical texts, De Quincey emphasises depravity rather than the divine component of the self, and that he develops a position on depravity more extreme than Evangelicalism. In "Suspiria De Profundis" (1845), addressing the feeling that he associates with addiction, he presents himself as a Pariah, a Christian in a desperate struggle against depravity, and he descends into Pagan depravity. The descent raises doubts about the transformative abilities of Christianity and the strength of the divine, not only in De Quincey, but also in other humans.

Chapter Four argues that in *Confessions* (1821, 1856), De Quincey uses the English Civil War to explore the civil war of the self. He blends secular and religious confession by addressing the feeling of civil war in his pre-opium youth, opium highs, and addiction (with opium and addiction pushing him to struggle with Puritan extremism). The feeling of civil war includes

depravity, as he details depravity linked to addiction, and it contains doubt, as the premillennialism of the conclusion remains unchanged from 1821 to 1856: premillennialism, the belief in imminent apocalypse, was associated with Puritan extremism, and De Quincey uses it to depict the end of his addiction as imminent, so he was deceiving himself about his addiction for thirty-five years. Doubt in the divine component of the self is implicit in that long deception.

Chapter Five demonstrates that De Quincey uses delirious opium nightmare and delirium to depict suffering that he cannot understand as the action of a loving God. Evangelicals framed periods of severe suffering that caused doubt in God as madness and delirium, in order to present these periods as the action of a loving God (as madness that punished depravity and developed the Christian), and to privilege the position of the recovered Christian, where suffering, doubt, and God were understood. Though the difficulties associated with understanding suffering, doubt, and God undermine the claim about substantial recovery from doubt, the rationale for the claim is clear: Evangelicals wanted to emphasise the Christian's development in faith. Like Evangelicals, De Quincey holds that periods of severe suffering cause doubt, that they are madness, and that they are punishment for depravity and the way to develop; unlike Evangelicals, he privileges the position of madness over that of the recovered Christian, revealing that he has difficulty reconciling suffering and doubt with a loving God. He addresses, then, his development in doubt rather than faith, and addiction has a major role, as he explores doubt in the nightmares of addiction, in *Confessions*, "Suspiria," and related texts.

Chapter Six extends De Quincey's interpretation of the Christian experience to despair at and hope in "the protective care of God" ("Providence"). De Quincey addresses Britain as a military power during and after the Napoleonic Wars in texts related to "Suspiria," especially "The English Mail-Coach" (1849, 1854). De Quincey admits that perpetual military crisis causes

despair, but he stresses that the British retain fragile hope and act. Like Evangelicals, he maintains that a version of Providence marked by perpetual crisis leads to hope and continued struggle; unlike Evangelicals, he provides a more significant role for patriotism, and he does not forbid despair at Providence, as hope emerges from despair: he contends that despair reveals depravity and the divine component of the self, and that the divine component provides renewed though fragile hope in Providence, so that the British act. Addiction provides De Quincey with special insight: he shows that even a British addict filled with despair and opium accesses that fragile hope and acts "at the last," as he puts it in "The Mail-Coach" (16: 449).

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