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Sidney L. Sondergard

Rediscovering William Lauder's Poetic Advocacy of the Poor

Fitzedward Hall, writing in 1864, declares that "So completely was his fame as an author obscured," Scots poet William Lauder (c. 1520-1573) nearly disappeared from literary history: "it was not until 1827—when the Rev. Peter Hall, in the *Crypt*, reprinted his *Compendious Tractate*,—that such a person was known to have existed."¹ To account both for a dearth of critical interest in Lauder's surviving poetry of social and political criticism, and for his extant works' artistic significance, it may be useful to think of Lauder's poems (in the 1864/1870 editions, most recently reprinted in 1969) as products of "the critical

¹*Ane Compendious and Breve Tractate concernyng the Office and Dewtie of Kyngis, Spirituall Pastoris, and Temporall Jugis* (1556), ed. Fitzedward Hall, EETS, Original Series, 3 (1864), viii. All references will be to this edition. References to all other Lauder works will be to *The Minor Poems of William Lauder*, ed. F. J. Furnivall, EETS, Original Series, 41 (1870). Line numbers will be included in parentheses following all excerpts. There is no denying that Lauder's poetry retains its identity as a product of the Scottish Reformation's turbulent times. Furnivall argued, for example, that the poet's *Office and Dewtie of Kyngis* was composed specifically to advise Mary of Guise, named Regent in 1554, and her circle of counselors (p. ix). Writing over a century later, Graham Holderness asserts that all cultural texts are "inseparable from the conditions of their production and reception in history; and as involved necessarily in the making of cultural meanings which are always, finally, political meanings," (*The Shakespeare Myth* [New York, 1988], p. ix). This very simultaneity, however, was precisely situated through the agency of historical parallels first addressed by Furnivall in the 1870 edition (pp. viii-xxxi), the first instance of the critical industry reading and encoding Lauder exclusively as a political writer.

industry," a modification of what Theodor W. Adorno calls "the culture industry," where "industry" denotes the intellectual and historical "standardization" of cultural products, serving "to reinforce ideology."² Poetry and polemic become synonymous under this process, and Lauder's work becomes labeled and limited as verse created in the service of the Scottish Reformation. As Michèle Barrett has argued in attempting to move beyond the question of use-values in conceptualizing Marxist perspectives on aesthetics,

in a large number of instances the ranking of the works depends upon criteria that are not *aesthetic* (a work is stoical, uplifting, cathartic, illuminating, or whatever). What is often *not shown* is how and why the particular formal properties of the work (situated in an understanding of the different dimensions of particular art forms) can account for the value assigned.³

With evaluative emphasis placed on the cultural product's original socio-political function or context, rather than on the aesthetics of the product itself, the critical industry produces a way of reading the artistic product (here, as pro-reform propaganda) as well as the (critically-configured) product itself.⁴ And by failing to question the presentation and value of Lauder's work as artist rather than solely as activist, modern readers have passively read him into literary obscurity. *The Dictionary of National Biography*, as one of the few reference sources commenting on William Lauder, actively perpetuates this view with its assessment that "Lauder's published verse is more interesting from a philological than from a literary point of view."

The radical reputations of Lauder's printers, Robert Lekpreveck and John Scot, also may have contributed to the conflation of the poet with his politics. Adorno makes the observation that the practical operation of the culture industry includes "distribution and mechanical reproduction, and therefore always remains external to the object" (14). While the means of (re)production and the

²Theodor W. Adorno, "The Culture Industry Reconsidered," trans. Anson G. Rabinbach, *New German Critique*, 6 (1975), p. 14.

³Michèle Barrett, "The Place of Aesthetics in Marxist Criticism," *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture*, ed. Cary Nelson and Lawrence Grossberg (Chicago, 1988), p. 698.

⁴Axel Honneth, *The Critique of Power: Reflective Stages in a Critical Social Theory*, trans. Kenneth Bayes (Cambridge, 1991), notes that in Max Horkheimer's essay, "Traditional and Critical Theory," "social struggle is the conflictual counterpart to cultural action" (p. 28). Studies in cultural materialism attempt to bridge this conflictual gap, for "Culture is not simply a reflection of the economic and political system, nor can it be independent of it. Cultural materialism therefore studies the implication of literary texts in history" (Jonathan Dollimore and Alan Sinfield, eds., *Political Shakespeare: New Essays in Cultural Materialism* [Manchester, 1985], p. viii)—and that "implication" includes the reconstruction and reception of texts by modern readers as well as by historical contemporaries.

object being (re)produced are discrete operations, however, their close causal relationship suggests that once one is associated with a specific code, the other will be considered at least casually (if not causally) related to the same code.

Edinburgh printer Robert Lekprevick (fl. 1561-1581) received authorization from the Scottish parliament to publish the Confession of Faith in 1561. This "principal printer of the reformed party in Scotland" (DNB) also received a special license to print an edition of the Geneva Bible, though the work was never completed. He printed two works for Lauder: *Ane prettie Mirrour Or Conference, betuix the faithfull Protestant and the Dissemblit false Hypocreit* (c. 1568), and *Ane Godlie Tractate or Mirrour* (c. 1570), which includes *The Lamentatioun of the Pure* and is dated 1 February 1568. Lekprevick was forced to flee to Stirling in 1571 when soldiers were sent by the Earl of Morton to search his house for copies of George Buchanan's *Chaemeleon*, and he was subsequently arrested for having participated in the defamation of Mary Queen of Scots relating to Lord Darnley's 1567 murder. Upon his release, Lekprevick was "forbidden to print without a license" on 16 July 1574 (DNB). John Scot (or Scott; fl. 1550) led a similarly politicized career. Dickson and Edmond tentatively identify him as the printer for Lauder's *Ane Compendious and Breue Tractate concernyng the Office and Dewtie of Kyngis, Spirituall Pastoris, and Temporall Iugis* (1556).⁵ His Edinburgh office was raided in 1562 as he was printing Linlithgow Catholic schoolmaster Ninian Winzet's *Last Blast of the Trumpet*; copies were confiscated, and Scot was imprisoned. To silence him further, Scot's impounded printing materials were distributed to rival printer Thomas Bassandyne. Nevertheless, he is believed in 1568 to have printed Lauder's *Ane trew & breue Sentenciis Discriptioun of ye nature of Scotland*, and a short poem, *Ane gude Exempill be the Butterflie instructing Men to hait all Harlottrie*, as well as an edition of Sir David Lindsay's works. In all, twelve books have been certainly identified as printed by Scot, but numerous others have undoubtedly been lost because their "ephemeral nature and strong controversial tendency favoured their destruction" (DNB). The political taint of this "strong controversial tendency" on the part of both printers seems to have permeated the reception of Lauder's texts, though ironically Lauder suffered none of the contemporary censure experienced by his printers and was named minister (c. 1563-4) of the united parishes of Forgandenny, Forteviot, and Muckarsie by the presbytery of Perth.

We can even account for a perceived absence of Lauder's persona from his own works,⁶ as he invokes the *vox populi* of mid-sixteenth-century Scotland,

⁵See Robert Dickson and John Philip Edmond, *Annals of Scottish Printing from the Introduction of the Art in 1507 to the Beginning of the Seventeenth Century* (Cambridge, 1890), pp. 166, 268-9.

⁶Lauder as poet makes choices germane both to his function as polemicist and as artist; his presence as polemicist may seem more immediately discernible in his lyrics than that as artist

expressing proletarian outrage at elitist excesses and popular deprivations while admonishing political and spiritual leaders to protect the interests of the poor. Clearly Lauder adopts this choral voice also to generate a popular authority, connoted by the sheer numbers of the oppressed and dissatisfied, for himself as speaker. Yet the message overwhelms the messenger and the content obscures the form. Though Lauder artistically encodes his strings of signifiers in verse, they are read as prosaic political signifieds and the consequence of his emotional populism as a rhetorical strategy is largely to submerge altogether his individual authorship, beyond the occasional assertion of first-person pronouns and a pervasive sense of agitated concern. Lauder's poet predecessors and contemporaries mediated this loss of voice, while promoting the interests of the impoverished, through a variety of strategies. An advocacy of the poor is implied in the late medieval *Taill of Rauf Coilyear*, for example, though the presence of King Charlemagne in disguise ensures reader interest throughout. By stanza fifty-nine, after two-thirds of the poem has been introduced, the generous collier, Rafe, has proven himself so meritorious that the king "Befoir many worthie he dubbit him knicht,"⁷ arguing that class can be transcended through merit. Edinburgh burgess James Foullis, an advocate at the court of James V, points in his *Calamitose pestis Elega deploratio* (c. 1511) to abuse of the poor as one of the causes of the plagues tormenting Edinburgh; yet his neo-Latin poetry lacks the vernacular impact of Lauder's work.⁸ Robert Henryson warns that "Grit abundance and blind prosperitie / Oftymes makis ane evill conclusioun" and attaches greatest value and reward to "Blyithnes in hart, with small possessioun," yet this moral and many like it are couched in animal fables or other allegorical structures.⁹ Lauder's subjective voice as poet can be recovered, however, by examining the artistry he employs in the construction and

because the poetry is viewed solely as the vehicle for the dialectic. The illusion of representing the popular voice or some sense of verisimilitude in depicting it contributes to the accessibility—at least for the modern reader—of any work of literature; and the view that realism in art requires a reflection of existing social conflicts is a fundamental tenet of traditional Marxist aesthetics.

⁷*Longer Scottish Poems, Volume One: 1375-1650*, ed. Priscilla Bawcutt and Felicity Riddy (Edinburgh, 1987), p. 125.

⁸For a discussion of theme in Foullis's courtly poetry, see Louise Olga Fradenburg, *City, Marriage, Tournament: Arts of Rule in Late Medieval Scotland* (Madison, 1991), pp. 47-64.

⁹"The Taill of the Uponlandis Mous and the Burges Mous," in Robert Henryson, *Poems*, ed. Charles Elliott (Oxford, 1963), p. 12. "The Bludy Serk" (pp. 115-8) is similarly recoded by its "Moralitas" from a romance narrative to a religious allegory. Cf. the personification of the people championed by Lauder in Sir David Lindsay's figures Ihone the comoun Weill, from *The Dreame of Schir David Lyndesay* and *Ane Satyre of the Thrie Estaitis*, and Ihone Upeland from *The Complaynt of Schir David Lyndesay*.

manipulation of economic metaphors throughout his lyrics. The intent of this study, then, is not to deny the socio-political ramifications of Lauder's poetic theses, but rather to balance this perspective with equal attention to his aesthetics, to the craft which shapes his poetic treatises.

Lauder's unique talent as both poet and polemicist is his ability to translate social and political dilemmas figuratively into economic problems of interest and significance to all people, to construct rhetorical stratagems that seem initially to operate on the universal level but ultimately force the reader to reflect upon personal practices out of a sense of self-interest, if not of altruism. The political-economic leveling advocated on behalf of the poor in *Ane Compendious and Breue Tractate concernyng the Office and Dewtie of Kyngis, Spirituall Pastoris, and Temporall Iugis* (1556)—published, curiously, during a rather lucrative period of creative activity characterized by the dramatic entertainments (now lost) he wrote for the marriage of Lady Barbara Hamilton to the fourth Earl of Huntly in 1548; for the entertainment of the queen dowager, Mary of Guise, in 1554; and for a celebration of Mary Queen of Scot's marriage to the Dauphin in 1558 (for which he received £11 5s., £42 plus "16 crownis of the Sun and ane half,"¹⁰ and £10 respectively)—suggests both Lauder's ideological sympathy with the looming Scottish Reformation and his sense of how best to achieve harmony between state structures and the Scottish people, most explicitly on behalf of the impoverished. Lauder cites the essential equity of Christ's sacrifice as the archetype for his pleas on behalf of the poor:

For Christe did suffer wyllinglie
To saif Man Vniuersallie,
And sched, also quha vnderstude,
Als gret abundance of his blude
For the pure sely nakit thyng
As he sched for the Potent kyng (ll. 67-72)

All human beings inherit both the debt incurred, and the benefit acceded, by the death of Jesus Christ. This is the egalitarian umbrella cited in the Edinburgh Covenant (signed 13 July 1559) and its united opposition to Catholicism:

as we be sones of ane Father, parttakeris of ane Spirite, and heris of ane kingdome, swa sall we maist hartlie, faythfullie and trewlie concur togiddir, nocht onlie in the materis of religioun, bot sall lykewise, at our utter poweris to the waring of our labouris, substance and lyves, assit, defend, and maynteyne every ane ane uthir, against quhatsumever that troubles, persewis or invades us. . . .¹¹

¹⁰Hall, p. vi.

¹¹James King Hewison, *The Covenanters: A History of the Church in Scotland from the Reformation to the Revolution*, 2 vols. (Glasgow, 1913), I, 24.

Lauder notes this common aspiration, but moves directly from there to an explicit advocacy of the poor: "kyngs suld heir the pure mans crye, / And helpe thame, rather, in distres, / Nor thame that hes the gret ryches" (ll. 24-6). Significantly, this advocacy is predicated in the first half of the poem on the human essence shared regardless of class status, as in the rhetorical question, "Quhat sis thir kings more than the pure, / Except thair office & thair cure?" (ll. 61-2).

To ensure that the "kyng" invests sufficiently in the welfare of the governed, Lauder produces an equation through which the differences existing between governor and governed are represented as inversely proportional to the governor's own interests. Under the heading "the discription of the difference betuix the kyng and his vassall, in the syght of God," the poet explains that a king's suffering in hell is greater than that of the monarch's subjects,

Because the kyng had in his handis
The rewle of hunders and thousandis,
Quhome that he sufferit, in his dayis,
To tyne and perysche mony wayis;
And the vile Catyue, naikit and pure,
Had of hym-self bot onely cure. (ll. 93-8)

The mismanagement of the monarch who allowed the "hunders and thousandis" of poor subjects to "tyne and perysche" is unforgivable here—not for its own sake, but because of the class-bound rule that while the impoverished individual has the responsibility of "hym-self," the king is entrusted with the care of many.

Lauder is quick to observe in *Ane trew & breue Sentenciis Discriptioun of ye nature of Scotland Twiching the Interteinment of virtewus men That laketh Ryches* that even in post-Reformation Scotland, "And thow Layk substance of thy awin, and geir, / Thow will by Lytill regardit in this Land" (ll. 7-8)—cautionary advice as applicable to a monarch as to one of the commons. The capricious disproportion between personal value and personal wealth makes it possible for the least worthy to become the most powerful:

Bot thocht thow be ane Ideote, or ane fule,
Ane maykles monstour, withoutin wit or lair,
Ane Blunt bubo, that neuer had bene at scule,
And sik as Is of euerye virtew bair,
3it haue thow gudis and geir, I the declair,—
Thought thow be weked, I put the out of dout,—
And thocht thow war to sathane, Sone & air,
3it for thy bagis thow sall be takin owt. (ll. 9-16)

Lauder multiplies the pejorative signifiers here to construct a collective image of egregious ignorance. Yet these signifiers with their negative denotations have been recoded, by social convention, as connotatively positive if the igno-

rant individual in question has "gudis and geir." The poet's point is made more emphatic with the assertion that even Satan's "Sone & air" would be accepted if his money-bags were sufficiently full. Value is strictly construed as market-value, so "Neathir virtew nor wit, in to this weked land / Doith proffeit thame that hes nocht gudis in hand" (ll. 25-6).

Lauder maintains the crusading advocacy of the poor he began in *Ane Compendious and Breue Tractate*, though as the signified of "poor" he substitutes "virtuous" for "impoverished" or "worthless," creating thereby something of value, a commodity, from a socio-political liability. This semantic gambit allows the poet to draw attention to the ramifications of continuing to undervalue the virtuous poor:

Allace! heir is ane Cairfull Miserie!
 That virtewis men but geir ar of no pryce,
 And Beasts, for bags, ar in Authoritytie!
 I think this change is wonderus strange & nyce!
 The caus heirof Is onlie Couattyse,
 That blinds so man that he can no wayis se
 To cheryse virtew, And ay chaistyce vice:
 Allace! heir is ane cairfull misere! (ll. 17-24)

The choral lament repeated in lines 17 and 24 indicates that the problem perceived in the poem is not innocuous or isolated, but one that requires attention as "ane cairfull miserie." Men identified as "virtewis" paradoxically can be construed as "of no pryce," while "Beasts" merit high value and "Authoritytie." To mark the seriousness of the issue, Lauder employs contemporary idiom into which sarcasm has already been coded: the inversion through which worth no longer creates value, but rather is determined by it, characterizes a practice "strange & nyce." The emphasis on "geir" as the measure of an individual's "pryce" is shown rhetorically not only to devalue "virtew" but implicitly to value "vice," with "Couattyse" as its only rationale. The problem is indeed an economic one, though Lauder's semiotic manipulations shift the consideration of the poor away from the question of cost and toward the question of investment.¹²

In an attempt to retain the poor's religious faith, and to locate a metaphorical structure that will communicate to the more economically autonomous as well, Lauder proposes an economic exchange in *Ane Godlie Tractate or Mirrour*. *Quhairintill may be easilie perceauit quho Thay be that ar Engraftit in*

¹²For an overview of the quite different strategies employed by Lauder's contemporaries (like Sir David Lindsay) to address social issues in their works, see Roger Mason, "Covenant and Commonweal: The Language of Politics in Reformation Scotland," in *Church, Politics, and Society: Scotland 1408-1929*, ed. Norman MacDougall (Edinburgh, 1983), pp. 97-126.

to Christ that can only result in gain for any individual transacting the exchange. The relationship among Christ, church, and believer is expressed in explicitly economic terms:

The Fructe, the proffeit, and the commoditie
In to this gratius and Godlie Unitie
Betuix Christ Iesus and his Kirk most trew,
Lo, Christ he dois heir furthirmore ensew.

And for to draw thame till ane constancie,
He schewis thame the grit Utilitie
That followis thame that in him dois abyde.
In to few wourds he dois the same discyde:
Christ sayis thir wourds, "gyf 3e will byde in me,
"Thairthrow 3e sall obtene grit proffittis thre." (ll. 221-24; 227-32)

Belief in Christ proves a "grit Utilitie," which is contracted to return "grit proffittis thre" for the believer's commitment to "Christ Iesus and his Kirk." These three profits—derived from New Testament scripture (primarily from the gospel of John) and forming sections of the poem called "commodities"—are "Ask Quhat 3e Will, It Sall Be Geuin Vnto 3ow," "Heirin is my Father Glorifyit, that 3e bring furth mekill fruct," and "And Be Maid My Discyplis."¹³ The greater the investment, the greater the rewards guaranteed through the three spiritual commodities. What, then, of the ultimate investment of one's life? Lauder praises those who have patiently suffered "Most cruell death, and mycht haue had thair lyues, / With 3eirlie rentis to thame, thair barnis & wyues" (ll. 678-9). Martyrdom is the most extreme example of investing one's life, though Lauder clarifies that a believer's death is the final price for all who "sall haue pairt with Christ in Heuinnis glore." This, however, is the only reasonable capital to offer in exchange for the anticipated gain: "So this last proffitt the rest dois fer transcend, / That is Eternall, and neuer sall haue end" (ll. 690-91).

With the poor identified as a commodity and their protection urged as a vital political investment, Lauder can turn to the issue of management and mismanagement under the guise of investment counseling, rather than resorting solely to the minister's more conventional, purely moral appeal. Lauder doesn't shrink from shaming those who ignore "3our pure and nedye brethren" (asserting "I der be bauld" with his condemnations [ll. 457, 459]), but moves

¹³These spiritual commodities are in turn also discussed metaphorically in economic terms; for example:

First, in this Spirituall Unioun we haue
Quhat richtius thing of Christ that we sal craue.
Quhat better thing can man seik for his hyre,
Nor get all thing he lustlie will desyre? (ll. 257-60)

quickly to the question of economic management at the social level. He chides the mercilessness of the economically enabled who fail to help their less fortunate comrades, but identifies the central problem as the unwillingness of those in power to loan goods and grains to the poor. For where "Thair is no credeit," then "for Necessitie, / The Pure Broder, for Hunger he man die" (ll. 480-81).¹⁴ To complement his economic argument, Lauder employs his ministerial position as censurer of cruel deeds and rhetorically transforms inaction on the part of those who control the distribution of food supplies into willful cruelty: though "3e sla nocht pure men with 3our knyues, / 3it with 3our dearth 3e tak from thame the lyues! / Quhat differs dearth frome creuell briganrye, / Quhen that 3e mak the Pure for hunger dye?" (ll. 470-73). The central problem is one of mismanagement of what has been entrusted to some by God to share with others, most particularly with those in greatest need. God sends the "Uictall of the ground" in order "that 3e sould thair of gude Stewarts be, / Helpand the Pure in thair necessite" (ll. 482, 484-5). In the role of stewards, then, those in power must consider the welfare of the poor as well as their own, and to encourage an altruistic resolution on their part, Lauder proposes their options in terms of investment and return:

Wo be till him that hurdis vp his Corne,
 Syne kepis it vp to dearth, fra morne to morne!
 Bot Gods blissing sall lycht vpon his head,
 That latis it furth, that pure men may get bread.
 Bot as 3e cloise 3our Girnallis frome the puris,
 Quhilkis now thairby grit miserie induris,
 So God sall cloise on 3ow, for 3our grit Sin,
 His Heauenlie Porte, quhen 3e wald faine cum in. (ll. 486-93)

Records of the significant shortage of grains in 1567-1568, due to the combination of a near-drought summer and a very harsh winter that severely inhibited yields,¹⁵ verify that Lauder is exercising no poetic license when describing the seriousness of the problem. After creating a parallel between human generosity with food and God's consequent blessing on those who are so, however, the poet does manipulate images in a memorable simile: those who close the doors of their granaries to the poor will likewise find the door to heaven closed to

¹⁴Cf. the same argument in *The Lamentatioun of the Pure. Twiching the miserabill estait of this present world* (1568):

Credit and frist is quyte away,
 No thing is lent bot for Usure;
 For euerie penny thay wyll haue tway:
 How lang, Lord, wyll this world indure? (ll. 49-52)

¹⁵See Furnivall, pp. x-xi.

them when they most need it open. The failure to invest in the poor, then, once again is presented as the most egregious kind of mismanagement, for it ultimately marks a failure to invest in one's own future well-being.

Lauder turns to address landowners in particular, reconfiguring the poor as workers (the "pure Plewmen & labouraris of 3our lands" [l. 528]) in order to press his mismanagement arguments on both economic and moral grounds. He finds managerial exploitation of the poor who are competing for jobs unconscionable, and attacks the practice of replacing needy workers with workers who produce more, "Howbeit the first haue Barnis aucht or nyne" (l. 532): "Quhen tha haue nocht to fill 3our gredie hands, / Quhair 3e can spye ane man to geue 3ow mair, / 3e schute thame furth" (ll. 529-31). Even the workers who initially prove superior producers are treated exploitively, for "Within few 3eris 3e herye him also, / Syne puts him furth; to beggin most he go" (ll. 534-5). The profits for the landowners pursuing such employment patterns are undeniable, for "3e haue, be fer, moir land and rent / Nor euer had 3our Fatheris 3ow before" (ll. 539-40), yet this growth simply whets their appetite for more and Lauder reveals that profit motive has been replaced by sheer avarice. As an example, the traditional practice of "householding," of creating a community of workers both to exhibit the success of the landowner and to provide work for those in the community needing it, has been discontinued, despite the immediate loss of prestige for the landowner: "3our housis halding is down, & laid on syde: / Quhair hunders wount 3our faders to conuoye, / Now will 3e ryde with ane man and ane boye" (ll. 543-5). Of course, the contemporary economic conditions were the primary determinant for the practice's decline.¹⁶ But Lauder's argument is that the landowner is a patron as much as an employer, and is responsible for stabilizing the local economy by expanding the financial base available to the community out of a sense of mutual benefit, rather than shrinking it for the purpose of amassing greater personal gain (or even of protecting personal assets). In an effort to reverse this, Lauder connects the breach of moral and social ethics by landowners in a cause-and-effect relationship with the contrary weather conditions that have resulted in decreased crop production for everyone:

Grit meruell is, of 3ow that gettis this muk,
Bot 3e sould haue abundance with gude luk.
And 3it we se thair dois nothing succaid,
Bot barrane ground, with mony frutles weid,
Moir emptye now of warldlis gear and gude
Now wes 3our Faders, that fand rycht mony fude,
Quhilks had nocht half sa mekill for to spend,
3it had grit ryches, and honour to thair end.
And 3e ar nedye, thriftles, and threid-bair!

¹⁶See Furnivall, pp. xxv-xxvi.

Of wrangus gude, no better man can fair. (ll. 550-59)

The avaricious landowner is justly doomed to failure because his wealth results not from honest profits, but from "wrangus gude"—ill-gotten gain. Depicting a Midas-like paradox, Lauder observes that while his landowner contemporaries are wealthier than their predecessors, their farmland has become "barrane ground" with "mony frutles weid" as chief produce, and the result is to lack the "honour" of earlier generations and hence to find themselves "nedye, thriftles, and threid-bair." The poet returns to his theme of investing in the poor, and delivers his pronouncement of the consequences of investing only in self. Not only are the "grit profitis thre" forfeited, but disproportionate losses follow what appears initially as gain—and to demonstrate that this is punishment from God, not coincidental misfortune, Lauder expands his arguments into the realm of cultural history.

Toward gathering rhetorical momentum behind the cautionary advice in *Ane Godlie Tractate or Mirroure*, Lauder presents negative exempla, primarily from biblical passages, to illustrate the results of indifference to class status as displayed through God's punishment of the famous. He announces the pain of "Hellis fyre" as the certain reward for all transgressors, "As Nero sufferit for his tirrannye, / And Pharao for his grit Ydolatrie, / And as the gluttoun quho refusit Lazarus, / With mony mo nor heir I may discus" (ll. 115-8). While the poet makes the credible claim that the range of available examples exceeds his space to describe them, he also wastes no opportunity to build additional persuasion on this foundation of notable violators of God's laws. In "Reification and the Consciousness of the Proletariat," George Lukács suggests that tragic literature is effective when the reader feels

that the great changes in society are being revealed here with a sensuous, practical vividness. This enables their contours to be drawn clearly whereas it is subjectively and objectively impossible to grasp their essence, to understand their origins and their place in the whole process.¹⁷

That is, popular recognition of the cited biblical examples makes his entire argument more immediately accessible to his readers, allowing his artistic focus to shift from exposition to explication, to telling readers what the cited characters mean, rather than simply describing them.

Lauder warns that the famous rarely suffer alone: Lucifer's daily torment in hell is shared "With mony thousandis of his oppynnioun," and Pharaoh, who in Exodus 14:28 is drowned in a display of God's power through Moses, dies "with all his Horsis and crewell Companye" (ll. 436, 439). He cites Sennach-

¹⁷George Lukács, *History and Class Consciousness: Studies in Marxist Dialectics*, trans. Rodney Livingstone (Cambridge, 1971), p. 176.

erib as being "put to flycht," but readers familiar with the account of Hezekiah's deliverance in II Kings 19 know that this is another example of followers suffering for the leader's sins, as "the Angel of the Lord went out and smote in the campe of [the King of] Asshúr an hundreth foure score and fyue thousand: so when they rose early in the morning, they were all dead corpses" (II Kings 19:35, Geneva Bible); in this case, the leader even departs unharmed. Nebuchadnezzar for his pride is "transformit in ane beist" until he humbly concedes himself "to be ane mortall wicht," and treacherous Aman, who nearly sends Esther's innocent uncle Mordecai to the gallows, "Him self wes hangit, withoutin moir remead" (II. 444, 446, 451). The example of Achan—who confesses to having stolen forbidden property including "a goodly Babylonish garment, & two hundreth shekels of siluer, and a wedge of gold of fyftie shekels weight" (Joshua 7:21, Geneva Bible)—gives pertinent support to Lauder's deterrent aims, as Achan is stoned to death despite his late admission of guilt. This allows Lauder to raise the doubt, "Gyf ze haue done with siclyke gudis mell, / I can nocht say; Iudge that amangs 3our sell" (II. 570-1). Ahab and Jezebel are made "both most miserable to de / For thair foule Murthour and Cupeditie"; Saul "lost his Kingdome throw his gredines"; and while Nabal is temporarily saved from death by his wife, Abigail, in 1 Samuel 25,

3it God maid Naball schortlie for to de,
And him bereft frome all his wardlie wrak,
For ony fence the churlysche Carll could mak.
As sall all wrachit Churlis layf thair geir,
And vtheris thair of sall make mirrye cheir,
That nocht pertenit to thame be kin nor blude! (II. 583-8)

Nabal has no "[de]fence" for his actions and inevitably must die; but the poet makes clear that his punishment extends beyond death to the irony of having others "mak mirrye cheir" with the "wardlie wrak" he would not share with David and his servants. Lauder is judicious in his selection of examples: they involve followers as well as leaders, they detail (often in rather visceral terms) the punishments awaiting those who disobey God, and their familiarity cuts across class lines, as they represent names and narrative images available in popular sources from sermons to commentaries. The unbeliever is guaranteed an eventual sentence neither "retreattabill" or "debaittabill," that "sparis King nor Empriour, / Duke, Erll, Lord, nor pussant Conquoyr; / It nowthair sparis mychtie men nor pure, / That of the wound of God doith take no cure" (II. 41-6).

After advising kings on the subject of the poor in *Ane Compendious and Breue Tractate*, Lauder turns his attention to those individuals explicitly empowered to ensure justice by assigning penalties for disobedience, the civil

judges.¹⁸ The "Vngodlie Iugis," he declares, "Wyll tak bot lytill thocht or cure / But reuth for to oppresse the pure." The "Iust Iugis" act, on the other hand, "with humyll hertis, / To heir the playnt of boith the partis" (*ll.* 411, 413-14, 421-22). Representing the central issue once again as one's disposition towards the poor, Lauder reveals that the "Vngodlie Iugis" are those motivated by greed rather than the protection of the innocent:

For gredie Iugis, I 3ow assure,
Doith sell the causis of the pure.
Geue thare be sic, I knaw of nane:
Thay knaw, thare-selfis, that buddis hes tane,
To hurte the pure, syne latt passe fre
The ryche. O Lord, to this haue Ee;
And help the pure that ar in stres,
Opprest, and hereit mercyles. (*ll.* 463-70)

Lauder's role as advocate extends here into the seemingly hypothetical, as he claims personally to know of no judges who accept "buddis," or bribes, to release wealthy lawbreakers and to replace them with innocent poor. Yet he applies his personal authority at the same time to insist that such travesties of the legal system do occur ("I 3ow assure"). This allows him to introduce the issue without documentation; no names are named to make his point, for his aim is not to bring down public censure on certain individuals, but to focus public sympathy on the plight of the poor "In stres, / Opprest, and hereit mercyles," and to generate public outrage against those who exploit their vulnerability. Lauder encodes a particular power in this outrage by locating it in the popular voice, again acting himself as an extension of that voice. He warns that the sheer weight of public condemnation will eventually level the class differences between oppressed and oppressor: "The Maledictione of the pure / Sall on 3ow and 3our seid Indure, / Vntyll that 3e be rutit oute" (*ll.* 479-81). Once again Lauder argues that to protect the interests of the poor is to protect one's own interests as well.

The final component of Lauder's poetic campaign in advocacy of the poor is his explication of dangers lurking under the guise of the church. Although the Regent Moray's first Parliament, in 1567, ratified the 1560 abolition of papal jurisdiction and legally established the reformed church,¹⁹ Lauder was a suf-

¹⁸Lawyers also become targets of Lauder's admonitions; the poet confides that he is essentially distrustful of legal advocacy "Because it smellis, vnfen3eitlie, / To verray percialytie" (*ll.* 431-32).

¹⁹See Hewison, *The Covenanters*, p. 69; Gordon Donaldson, *Scottish Church History* (Edinburgh, 1985), p. 68.

ficiently canny minister to recognize that this would not end the Roman church's influence in Scotland. Gordon Donaldson argues that it is erroneous to think that "even when it is recorded of a priest that he accepted office in the reformed church, that he had necessarily undergone a profound change in his convictions."²⁰ *Ane Godlie Tractate or Mirrour* condemns priests as hypocritical "God-makairs" who through transubstantiation create God "In to thair Messe, and Eate him carnallie" (l. 312), and designates this practice as the locus of an entire range of malfeasance: "And thocht sum schaffling wald haue ilk nycht in cure / Ane Concubine, ane Harlote, or ane Hure, / With gaping, lowking, with mony mek and nod, / Upon the morne he wald haue maid 3ow God!" (ll. 322-5). Lauder empowers the oppressed in *The Lamentatioun of the Poor* to overcome this influence, however, as he promises "The reuth that Papistis hes, I saye, / On thame that beggis frome dure to dure, / Sall ws accuse on Domesdaye" (ll. 29-31).

Though this vehement denunciation is conventionally Protestant, Lauder rather unconventionally extends it to encompass Protestant hypocrites as well. When he complains that "euerie fat Sow feidis ane vther, / And few has pitie on the Pure," he is careful not to set up straw man enemies: complicit in the oppression of the poor are "The men quhome God hes rychelie dotit," for they "Abhorris the emptye Creature" though they are "Cheiflie Protestante" (ll. 9-10, 13-5). In establishing this point, Lauder signals that the oppression he condemns cannot safely be dismissed as originating from the agency of some cultural "other." To ignore the poor is to connote a rejection of one's religious faith: "3it ar nocht thir Protestantes trew, / Bot Ipocretis, I am most sure, / That hes renuncit Christ Iesu" (ll. 17-9). Every sincere believer, then, is prompted by this rhetoric to identify with "Protestantes trew" by actively assisting the poor, sharing and redistributing the blessings which "God hes rychelie dotit."

Having blurred the distinction between the genuinely faithful and the hypocritical, Lauder once again polarizes the positions in *Ane prettie Mirrour Or Conference, betuix the faithfull Protestant and the Dissemblit false Hypocreit*. The sharp virtue/vice distinctions are encoded not simply to signify the difference in positions, but also to provoke particular action in response. Each quatrain opens with what the "godly" man must do in order to earn this designation and answers with what the "ungodly" man does to necessitate the response of the godly.

The godlie men with pietie ar opprest
To see thair brethren in necessitie:
The Hypocretis ar neuer at ease nor rest
But quhen the faithfull sustenis miserie. (ll. 25-8)

²⁰Donaldson, *Scottish Church History*, p. 87.

The Godlie men, tha do support the pure,
 And geuis thame glaidlie of thair geir and gude
 The Hypocreit is dois take more thocht and cure
 How tha may reauue from thame thair daylie fude. (ll. 45-8)

The Godlie men setts God before all things,
 Before thair lyues, thair guds, & geir, or lands:
 The Hypocreit is, before God puts thair kings,
 Dispyssing God, his lawis, and his commands. (ll. 85-8)

The sincere Protestant is not merely saddened or disapproving, but actually "opprest" by the fact of others' poverty—and the oppressor here is identified as a devil of flesh: the individual who pursues personal gain regardless of the cost to others, even to the point of denying the needy "thair daylie fude." This is the surest proof of hypocrisy, for in light of the biblical injunction of Mark 12:33, that "to loue his neighbour as him self, is more then all burnt offerings and sacrifices" (Geneva Bible), such an individual loves "thair lyues, thair guds, & geir, or lands" and even "thair kings" more than their fellow man—and hence more than God.

There is ample proof in the 1,552 lines of Lauder's extant verse that he is a poet—an artist consciously manipulating words for rhetorical effect—as much as a social activist, and that the two roles are not mutually exclusive in the context of his writing. Michèle Barrett supports such a view, observing that

Works of art and literature are still seen as the passive and innocent terrain on which ideological armies go about their usual battles. This is not wrong, but it is limited. Of course, works of art do encode ideological positions, but we do not exhaust their significance by decoding their ideological content; nor do we explain how the reception and consumption of works sharing comparable ideological ground may vary dramatically over a period of time.²¹

Each of Lauder's poetic creations could have been constructed as prose sermons; but poetry for him is both an ideological vehicle and a unique art of communication. And the critical industry alone cannot be blamed for overlooking his creative skills. Consider the Daniel Berrigan legacy of our own times: radical clergymen who are also poets tend to be remembered as radical clergymen. Lauder was much more of an ambassador and "insider" than Berrigan (note his apology to both Protestant and Catholic princes at the end of *Ane Compendious and Breue Tractate*), but both poets attract attention to the indifference of the propertied regarding the life of the poor. Berrigan's poem "And What Is Man" argues that no individual is created by God "like the rich / a fist of worms for a heart; / nor like the poor / consumed with making do, /

²¹Barrett, "The Place of Aesthetics in Marxist Criticism," p. 699.

rancor at dawn, futility at dusk,"²² but becomes such through the collective actions and choices of all people. These poets employ their art to attack those who have the power to alleviate suffering and choose not to exercise it, and in so doing offer no easy escape for the righteous or the well-intentioned.

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²²Daniel Berrigan, *False Gods, Real Men* (New York, 1969), p. 68.