CORA Cork Open Research Archive
Cartlann Taighde Oscailte Chorcaí

Title	John Traske, Puritan Judaizing and the ethic of singularity
Authors	Cottrell-Boyce, Aidan
Publication date	2018
Original Citation	Cottrell-Boyce, A. (2018) 'John Traske, Puritan Judaizing and the ethic of singularity', Journal of the Irish Society for the Academic Study of Religions, 6, pp. 1-37.
Type of publication	Article (peer-reviewed)
Link to publisher's version	https://jisasr.org/archive/volume-6-2018/
Rights	© ISASR 2018. - https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/
Download date	2026-11-08 14:01:26
Item downloaded from	https://hdl.handle.net/10468/12047



UCC
University College Cork, Ireland
Coláiste na hOllscoile Corcaigh

© ISASR 2018

Aidan COTTRELL-BOYCE

John Traske, Puritan Judaizing and the Ethic of Singularity

In 1619, John Traske was tried before the Star Chamber, charged with being 'a disturber of the peace of the Church,' an 'insolent detractor of the ecclesiastical government' and with 'having ambitions to become the father of a Jewish faction'. Traske was perhaps the most eye-catching of the seventeenth century Judaizing Puritans, not least because he managed to assimilate apparently legalistic attitudes towards the Law of Moses and a notably anti-legal soteriology. He taught that there was no way to know who was of the elect by their deeds, whilst at the same time encouraging his followers to observe the Saturday Sabbath and to abstain from eating pork. Typically, scholars have depicted the Traskite phenomenon as an efflorescence of Puritan precisianism or primitivism or Biblicism. However, an examination of Traske's writing suggests that his thought does not fit easily into any of these boxes. In this paper I contend that Traske's Judaizing tendencies should be read in light of another Puritan fixation: 'singularity'. Traske believed that God was with 'the people of least esteem'. By demonstrably exhibiting his association with the almost universally maligned trope of 'Jewism', Traske effected the association of himself with the 'people of least esteem'. Like John Traske, many of the Godly saw great soteriological significance in the condition of suffering and marginalization. This tendency, the desire for what the Godly called 'singularity', provides a crucial piece of the jigsaw, when it comes to understanding why so many Puritans adopted Jewish rituals in the seventeenth century.

Keywords: Traske, Puritanism, Judaizing, Sabbatarianism, Judaism.

Aidan COTRELL-BOYCE is a PhD student at the Divinity Faculty of the University of Cambridge. His research, which concerns the emergence of Judaizing in the English Puritan milieu, is supervised by Dr Justin Meggitt and Dr Daniel H. Weiss.

Introduction

On the 14th of September 1618, John Chamberlain wrote to his brother-in-law Dudley Carleton, reporting that

> there is one Trask or Thrask who was first a Puritan and now is become a Jewish Christian, observing the Sabbath on Saturday and abstaining from swine's flesh.

Chamberlain was struck by the large numbers of followers that Traske had managed to attract in a relatively short time (NA, SP 14/96, f. 34-35). Amongst this number only a few names survive. A young lawyer named John Pecke (NLS, MS Adv. 33.1.6, vol. 20, f. 60). A tailor named Hamlet Jackson and his associate Christopher Sands (Pagitt, 1662, 180). A school-teacher named Dorothy Coome whom Traske would marry (Pagitt, 1662, 209). A Sussex landowner named Return Hebdon (Hebdon, 1646, a2r; Pagitt, 1662, 192). The vacillating figure of Mary Chester, who converted to and from Traskism more than once (Pagitt, 1662, 194; NA, SP 16/261, f. 307).

Traske had been on trial before the Star Chamber three months before Chamberlain wrote to Carleton, charged with 'haveing a fantasticall opynion of himselfe, with ambicion to bee the Father of a Jewish faccion (Greene, 1916, 8).' Traske's trial threw a spotlight on a congregation of English Protestants who had begun to adopt Jewish ceremonies – including the observation of the Saturday Sabbath, dietary laws and even Passover seders – such that Lancelot Andrewes was prepared to label them as Jews. 'It is a good work to make a Jew a Christian,' Andrewes proclaimed 'but to make Christian men Jews, hath ever been holden a foul act (Andrewes, 1854, 84).' Traske was tortured and imprisoned. A record of his ordeal in the Fleet prison was left by one Alexander Harris, the warden (Harris, 1879, 48).' His forehead was branded with the letter J (Greene, 1916, 11). He was imprisoned for a year before recanting (Traske, 1636, ¶1r-A3v). His followers – including his wife Dorothy – were also imprisoned and at least two of them remained in prison until their deaths (Pagitt, 1662, 196-197). Some others, including Jackson and Sands fled to Amsterdam, where they sought out a *mohel* in order to be circumcised (Pagitt, 1662, 191; Sprunger, 1994, 71). Mary Chester told her story to the anonymous 'T.S.' who offered an account of the whole story of the Traskites to be reproduced in Ephraim Pagitt's *Heresiography*.

Typically, the story of the Traskites - and of the Judaizing tendency within Stuart Puritanism more generally - has been explained in the context of a Puritan drift towards Biblicism, towards a Judeo-centric millenarianism, or towards a typological understanding of the polity of Israel. All three of these approaches pre-suppose that the Traskites were

© ISASR 2018

'philo-semites,' whose admiration for the Jews and for the Biblical polity of Israel led them towards a desire to imitate Jewish ceremonies. This mimetic philosemitism narrative, has some significant shortcomings however, not least in its obfuscation of the complex and usually very negative appraisal of Jewish *ceremonies* within English – indeed European – Protestant culture. Those who admired 'Israel' were often deeply antipathetic to Jews. Indeed Barten Holyday was able – in 1644 – to pray that 'our Israel not become Jewish (Holyday, 1661, 128).' Those who sympathised with Jews, meanwhile, were often antipathetic to Jewish ceremonial practises. I want to argue, with this in mind, that Judaizers, like John Traske, understood the pejorative meaning of Jewish ceremonies and adopted them *because* of their negative connotations, rather than despite them. As such, they sought to create a kind of 'resistance' out of the discursive materials proffered by a culture of anti-Judaism.

Ethical Singularity and Judaizing

In the nineteenth century, Puritanism was portrayed, by Whig historians, as a political movement, the vanguard of a proto-democratic tendency which helped to sweep away the corruptions of late-medieval Catholicism before helping to remove the despotism of Charles I (Macaulay, 1967 [1848]). In the twentieth century, Marxist historians saw the Godly as a vanguard of a bourgeois rebellion against feudal, socio-economic structures (Hill, 1965). With the rise of revisionism, Puritanism was dislocated from some of these meta-narratives and became more closely associated, by scholars, with religion. Puritans, they claimed, were a 'hotter sort': 'proper Protestants,' of an intensely Calvinist streak, in a society which was otherwise broadly lukewarm when it came to reform. The Civil War, in this narrative, was not the first revolution, but rather the 'last war of religion (Morrill, 1984, 157).' Aspects of this approach, too, have been criticised latterly. Tyacke's account of the 'Calvinist consensus,' demonstrates that Puritans did not dissent significantly in matters of doctrine from most of their peers. Indeed, all of the English ecclesiastical establishment were Calvinists until the crisis of Laudianism in the 1620s (Tyacke, 1990). In part because of the struggle to pin down what Puritan *is*, a number of scholars have - over the past four hundred years - sought to retire the term altogether (Widdowes, 1630, a3r; Davis, 1986, 17; Ryrie, 2013). Nonetheless, it is clear that at the *time* most Englishmen and women knew what Puritans were. Puritans recognized Puritans and Puritans were recognized by *non*-Puritans even when they were perfect strangers to each other (Wallington, 2007, 169). For this reason, several scholars - most notably Patrick Collinson, Peter Lake and David Como - have sought to define Puritanism as a culture, or an

identity, rather than a 'shopping list' of doctrinal or political positions (Collinson, 1989; Lake, 2006; Como, 2004). This identity was shaped, during the early seventeenth century, by on-going dialogues between the Godly and their 'ungodly' interlocutors. The latter were able to define pejorative or stereotypical spaces which the former could occupy. This process was facilitated by a desire, amongst many of the Godly, to 'cultivate crises,' antagonisms or even enmities amongst their peers, thereby to occupy the conceptual space of the poor, persecuted remnant (Walsham, 2017, 56). Many Godly practises of this period served as iterations of an 'ethic of social separation,' presenting 'divisive identifications,' by which the Godly could be marked off from a majority that they presumed to be reprobate (Milton, 2007, 70; Webster, 2008, 48-66; Spraggon, 2000, 18). Stereotype and stereoptyped, therefore, were not easily disentangled from one another (Hughes, 2004, 10). Meanwhile, any number of practices – from sermon-gadding, Sabbatarianism, singing, iconoclasm, closet-prayer, and even microcosmic, dramaturgical behaviours like the turning up of an eye – could serve as Godly identity markers (Earle, 1628, h6r; Collinson, 1989; Webster, 2003, 74; Thurloe, 1742, volume 5, 371).

For those of the Godly that did consider outsiderliness, social separation, and – in the parlance of the day – 'singularity' to be a designation of Godliness, a repository of cultural, discursive material could be found in the topos of 'the Jew.' Through a series of complex interactions between Jews and Christians throughout the ancient, medieval and early-modern eras, Jewish ceremonies had been designated as a marker of otherness (Ruether, 1985; Heng, 2007; Stacey, 2000; Bale, 1999; Skinner, 2003). Some have gone as far as to contend that the otherness of 'the Jew' and Judaism was an essential cultural component in the process of English, national identity formation (Shapiro, 1995). Certainly, the association of an opponent with 'Jews' or 'Judaism' served as a rhetorical device in both Catholic-Protestant and intra-Protestant debates (Glaser, 2009). Some have made the case, in recent decades, that this period was marked by a rise in *philo*-semitic rather than *anti*-Judaic sentiment in England (Katz, 1982; Popkin, 1994). However, as Adam Sutcliffe, Andrew Crome and others have noted, even this 'philosemitic tendency' invariably went hand in hand with other impulses: the 'fetishization' of 'Jews' and the accentuation of a desire for conversion – and thus the abandonment of those ceremonies that Traske revived (Sutcliffe, 2011, 1-4; Crome, 2015, 299).

Building on this understanding of the Puritan 'character,' I contend that Judaizing, amongst the Godly, formed part of a process of Godly identity formation. By adopting the garb of an 'irreducibly other,' group, these individuals associated themselves with a topos which resonated with ideas of sanctity and outsiderliness. Rather than seeing Judaizing as a kind of legalism, it may be useful to consider it as a form of 'resistance' by which Godly groups in this period sought to reinforce the entitativity of their own,

© ISASR 2018

minority, social-identity. Before investigating the interaction between Traskism, Judaism and 'singularity' however, we shall briefly survey the existing narratives that have been used to explain Traskism and Judaizing more broadly.

Conventional Accounts

David S. Katz describes Traske as the prototypical Saturday Sabbatarian. Bryan Ball, however, has taken issue with this assessment, suggesting that this is an imprecise description. Traske appears to have gone further than other Sabbatarians and moreover 'Traskism' is listed as a separate heresy from 'Sabbatarianism' in Pagitt's *Heresiography* (Ball, 1994, 48; Pagitt, 1662, a3r). Judaizing, therefore, should be considered as a tendency in itself, quite separate (though closely interacting with) Sabbatarianism.

Some scholars have sought to draw a connection between renewed awareness of Jews in English culture and the movement towards 'Traskite' forms of Puritanism. Bernard Glassman has claimed that renewed 'contact between Christians and Jews,' and the sympathy this contact elicited, created a desire – in those like Traske – to become more like Jews, and so to adopt some of their ritual practices. Keith Sprunger has drawn a connection between Traskism and the meetings of Jews and Christians in Amsterdam. Traskism, according to Sprunger 'was an unintended consequence' of these interactions (Sprunger, 1994, 70-74).

There are some shortcomings to this analysis however. Firstly, the Traskites themselves were *already* Judaizing, before Hamlet Jackson and Christopher Sands travelled to Amsterdam. Indeed, their Judaizing tendency was the impetus for their visit. Secondly, the records that we have of Protestants seeking out the company of Jews in order to interact with them, invariably led to interactions of mutual antagonism. Those who chose to engage Jews in dialogue, invariably became frustrated by the perceived truculence of the latter when it came to abandoning Jewish ceremonies (Paget, 1618, 26; Fox, 1674, 73; Lightfoot, 1662, b1v).

There is an important distinction to be made here between admiration of – or sympathy for – Jews and admiration for Jewish ceremonies. Godly philo-semites like Henry Jessey, John Dury, John Selden and William Gouge certainly admired Jews, befriended Menasseh ben Israel and agitated for readmission (Popkin, 1994; Katz, 1982, 216-220). Katz identifies the genealogy of Traskism with renewed academic interest in the Hebrew tongue. He writes that 'when Hebrew became a subject of study in the universities, and the focus of attention among philosophers, it was clear that the discussion would soon turn to the Jews themselves (Katz, 1994, 112).' As Protestant Hebraists rediscovered Jewish works of philosophy and

jurisprudence, they developed a 'very positive' impression of 'the Jews.' This positivity filtered through society, preparing the conditions for the readmission of the Jews in the 1650s. It also helped form the basis of John Traske's ideology (Katz, 1994, 112). But whilst these figures admired *Jews*, they were nonetheless cautious about the contagion of *Judaism*. Apparently enlightened figures like Dury and the late seventeenth century bishop of Lincoln Thomas Barlow, urged greater interaction with Jews, whilst at the same time cautioning the ghettoisation and marginalisation of Jews (Dury, 1652, c2r; Barlow, 1692, 67-72). This is explained by the fact that a significant motivation for the readmission debate was the desire to facilitate the conversion of Jews, by washing away the 'leprosie' of Judaism (Collier, 1656, 12). As Sutcliffe has shown, 'philo-semitism' and conversionism went hand-in-hand during this period (Sutcliffe, 2011, 1-4). For these reasons, philo-semitism cannot be identified with the emergence of the Judaizing tendency. Philo-semites were primarily concerned with the retreat of Jewish ceremonies, not their advance.

Indeed, the most progressive 'philo-semites' of this period, looked forward to the abolition of Jewish ceremonies – vestiges of superstition, associated with Catholicism – the better to facilitate greater interaction between Jews and Christians (Selden, 1696, 166; Dury, 1652, c2r-c3r). Philo-semitic Hebraists of the period preferred the chimerical figure of 'Caraism' – a kind of enlightened, de-ceremonialised, de-sacerdotalised, 'rational reformed' Protestant ideal of Judaism – over the problematic (so-called) 'Pharaism' of Rabbinic tradition (Popkin, 1992, 365; Marana, 1692, vol. 5, 104). Moreover, as Katchen has claimed, those scholars who *did* seek to interact with Jewish learning were often the *most* 'on their guard' against the charge of Judaizing. Perhaps for this reason, we find that individuals like John Selden and William Gouge were amongst those most critical of those that they perceived to be Judaizers. Gouge went so far as to suggest that Judaizing would impede the process of conversion (Gouge, 1645, 22-24; Dury, 1652, c2r-c3r).

Raphael Patai associated Traskism with Biblical literalism or 'over-enthusiasm.' He wrote that Traske was 'impressed by the laws and the warnings contained in [the Bible] (Patai, 1989, 81).' Glassman calls Traske 'a very zealous Puritan,' whilst Philips attributes Traske's Judaizing to his 'extreme Puritanism (Glassman, 1975, 78; Philips, 1939, 65).' Parker's suggestion that Traske's thought 'stemmed from a fixation on Levitical laws,' is somewhat causally redundant (Parker, 2002, 162). Bryan Ball acknowledges that Traske's actions were *perceived* as 'savouring too strongly of anarchy and sedition.' But he stops short of drawing a connection between the seditious quality of Judaizing and its potential attraction (on that basis) for Traskites. Ball argues instead that Traske's activities were an indication of his 'legalism (Ball, 1981, 139; Ball, 1994, 53).' Offering 'Biblicism' as an holistic explanation for Judaizing ceremonialism

© ISASR 2018

is somewhat problematic. As scholars have demonstrated in recent years, the notion that Puritans were 'literalist' in the contemporary understanding of that word is somewhat misleading. The Godly may have described their approach as 'literall' but this term in the seventeenth century designated the Bible's primacy, more than its insularity. The latter is a creature of the Revival rather than the Reformation (Killeen, 2009, 66-67). Indeed, the predominant way of reading scripture during this period was the *analogia fidei*. Stemming from the Augustinian approach to scripture, but – in the seventeenth century context – informed by Ramist logical methodology, this attitude allowed the Godly to form compendia of scriptural sources that spoke to overarching themes, 'general rules,' and 'abridgements' (McKim, 1987; Perkins, 1607, 32; Cartwright, 1573, 27). Texts which did not correspond to these themes could be abandoned. The epistemic fragility of such an approach was characterised by Stanley Fish: 'Whenever you find something that doesn't say what it is supposed to say,' he wrote, '[you can] decide that it doesn't mean what it says and then make it say what it's supposed to say (Fish, 1972, 22).'

In fact, the claim that there was 'but one literall meaning' coupled with the assertion that the Word was to be read pneumatologically, and as such was hidden from those who were not of the elect, led to a fracturing of meaning and the development of more and more private readings of the text Como has identified this dynamic with the fissiparous nature of Protestantism as a whole (Como, 2004, 439-440).

The Bible was central to the development of the Judaizing tendency. But the fact that the Traskites took things from the Biblical texts that their peers, predecessors and descendants (even the *most* scripturalist) did *not* demands closer inspection. Godly readers were – to use De Certeau's terms – 'travellers, poachers and nomads' who proved the truth of the preachers words by identifying his citations in the Bible. Only in this, more limited, sense was the Puritan experience of the scriptures unmediated (De Certeau, 1984, 175). *How* did the Traskites read these texts in ways that were different to previous generations, and *why* did they approach these texts in these ways?

In the case of the Traskites, the Biblicist explanation is especially problematic. Some Traskite ceremonial practices appear to have originated in immediate rather than mediate revelation (Pagitt, 1662, 190). Meanwhile, Traske and Jackson were seen by their peers as prophetic figures, with the ability to interpret the Law autonomously. 'The light of the Law was more fully revealed to him,' Jackson believed 'than to any since the apostles (Pagitt, 1662, 191).' Traske, in this respect, played a role not dissimilar to

that of H.N. to the Familist community.[1] He believed that God's will was revealed to him, not via the scripture solely, but also via dreams (Harris, 1879, 49). Nor did Traske's peers see him as a stringent observer of deontological, ceremonial law. On the contrary, he was described as a restless innovator, prone to 'dangerous novelty and notable giddiness,' to 'coyne at his pleasure weekly doctrines; defending them with such peremptory pride of judgment, as if he had receaved cleare and certaine revelations therof (Falconer, 1618, 18).' Traske himself contended that faithfulness to the Word was, itself, insufficient evidence of Godliness (Traske, 1615b, 9). Biblicism was a component of Traskism. But it cannot be identified as the *explanatory endpoint* of Traskism.

Mark Robert Bell pursues the claim that the imminence of the apocalypse induced further association with Biblical Israel and that this association led to mimicry of Jewish ritual practice (Bell, 1994, 214). Around the time of the flourishing of Traske's movement, a drift towards a more Judeo-centric understanding of certain apocalyptic texts – Ezekiel 37, Romans 11, Revelation 7 – had led to a renewed and popular focus on the eschatological role of the Jews.

Bell, in this analysis, echoes the earliest critics of Traskism who drew a connection between Judaizing and more treasonous elements of Henry Finch's Judeo-centric eschatology. Judeo-centric eschatology certainly cannot be discounted from the analysis of Traskism. It was a new and rapidly disseminated tradition during precisely this period. Nonetheless, there are scant references to Judeo-centric eschatological themes in Traske's writing. Moreover, admiration for the Jews in the eschatological setting cannot easily be linked with the revival of Jewish ceremonies. Indeed, Andrew Crome has called this link 'impossible,' on the basis of the 'firm divisions' between Christianity and Judaism implicit in the Judeo-centric eschatological mode. Far from perforating the boundaries between Jews and Christians, the eschatological innovations of Brightman and Finch and others actually served to *shore up* the distinctiveness of the Jews, maintaining that the Jews would *remain* a distinctive polity beyond the eschatological event of their conversion (Crome, 2010, 734-736). Whilst non-Judeo-centrists like John Weemes saw the singularity of the Jews – a people 'separate and set apart' – as a temporary and lamentable condition, Brightman saw it as a 'thing truly wonderfull marvellous.' Moreover, one of Brightman's central concerns was the eschatological *abolition* of Jewish ceremonies (Brightman, 1644, 1060). There is no intuitive leap, in short, that can be made from Judeo-centric apocalypticism to Judaizing ceremonialism.

[1] An English Familist defended the precedence given to H.N's writings in 1570 by arguing that the *Evangelium Regni* was not superior to the Gospels, but rather that it was functionally the same revelation, 'concordable, and uniforme testimonye' with the Gospels [Wilkinson, 1579, B1r.]

© ISASR 2018

Traskism, in short, cannot be described as a steroidinal form of Judeo-centric millenarianism, or philo-semitism. It certainly cannot be described – as Phillips and Patai appear to – as a kind of super-legalism. This latter claim is especially problematic when we consider the profoundly *anti*-legal tone of some of John Traske and Returne Hebdon's writings.

The Antinomian Dilemma

None of these accounts offer an adequate explanation of the complex combination of ceremonialism and anti-legalism in Traske's thought. This element is certainly lacking from Ball's description of Traske as a 'legalist,' or Philips appraisal of Traskism as 'extreme Puritanism.' Where scholars *have* referred to Traske's anti-legalism, many have – at best – relied upon a false chronology, hypothesising a '180 degree turn in Traske's thought' around the year 1618. At worst, scholars have used the *apparent* contradictions in Traske's thought as evidence that he was 'a drifter of no fixed intellectual abode (Como, 1999, 64).'

In this respect, the recent scholarship of David Como has been corrective. Como sees elements of antinomianism in Traskite literature from before, during and after the scandal of 1618. He claims that Traske's later writings were influenced by the 'imputative antinomianism' of John Eaton: 'the father of seventeenth-century English antinomianism (Como, 2004, 40).' But even in his earliest writings Traske appears to occasionally 'veer off into antinomian excess (Como, 2004, 164).' Como suggests that this earlier iteration of Traskite antinomianism was influenced by Familist thought. The thesis that Traske personally embodied the 'antinomian backlash' to precisianist pietism does not fit with the chronology. Rather than seeing Traske's antinomianism as representing a reaction against a previously avowed precisianist strain, Como uses Traske's career as a template for the claim that Puritanism was neither 'radical nor inherently conservative (Como, 1999, 81).' Como is clear that there is no necessary discontinuity between these two elements – antilegal and ceremonial – in Traske's thought. The Traskite belief that 'freedom from the law meant obedience to the law,' for Como, 'explains why Traske's early theology accomodated both antinomian and legalistic elements (Como, 2004, 166).' The Traskites had attained a degree of perfection of which legal ceremonies were only the symptom. 'Perfect obedience to the Mosaic Law,' denoted 'heavenly perfection in this life (Como, 2004, 164).' In other words, Traskism represented the apogee of the Heidelbergean, reflexive ethic.

As such, Como does not differentiate between ceremonialism and other forms of biblicism or obedience. Perfection went hand-in-hand, for the

Traskites, with ceremonialism. But for Como, ceremonialism still represented – in some sense – a form of pietism: a 'typically Puritan attitude… pushed to perfectionist extremes,' a form of 'moralism,' and 'extreme Puritanism (Como, 2004, 161).' Como's claim, that Traske's followers were primitivists who were enjoined 'to perfectly obey the Law of God,' occludes the *intrinsic* values of the ceremonies that Traske enjoined upon his followers. For almost all of Traske's contemporaries, his ceremonialism would have been perceived as an act of *dis*obedience. Those ardent 'precisianists' who agitated for the renovation of the judicial laws, would have been *most* averse to the renovation of ceremonial laws. The distinction between 'dead' judicials and 'deadly' ceremonials – first articulated by Aquinas, resonated in the work of Calvin, but also in more concertedly legalist writers like Henry Barrow (Aquinas, ST, 2.1, Question 104, Article 3; Calvin, ICR, Book 2, Chapter 7, Section 17; Barrow, 1590, 77). Renovating Jewish ceremonies, Samuel Mather wrote, was to 'dig *Moses* out of his Grave, and to deny Jesus Christ (Mather, 1683, 350).'

Moreover, the Traskites themselves *understood* and even *declared* that their observation of the Law constituted a privileging of one Biblical injunction *over* another. Hamlet Jackson claimed that he *preferred* to be obedient to the Torah than to the New Testament (Pagitt, 1662, 191). They did not, therefore consider ceremonialism to be an assertion of 'perfect obedience.' And, whilst his analysis draws closer to the claim that Traske's primary concern was the social reification of a Godly remnant, with impermeable boundaries between the visible elect and the visible reprobate, Como does not pursue the many and complex ways in which *both* anti-legalism *and* Judaizing ceremonialism conformed to this same function. As Cefalu shows, a persistent theme of antinomian religiosity during this period was the Johanine imagery of light and dark, the separation of the holy and the profane (Cefalu, 2017, 225). Ceremonialism is, according to a conventional reading of Traskism, a surprising appendage, one Como himself confesses to finding 'most curious (Como, 2004, 157).' Como reaches the unhappy conclusion that Traske's attachment to ceremonies as a designation of perfection was simply a 'distinctively godly misunderstanding' of Familism (Como, 2004, 171).

Nicholas McDowell has pointed out that the Traskite controversy coincided with the identification of Puritans with Jews in popular culture. He argues that this coincidence offers an insight into the strategy employed by the state in trying John Traske before the Star Chamber. This unusual decision, McDowell argues, suggests that the state was eager to draw connections between Puritanism, Judaism and sedition in the popular imagination, in the context of a confrontation between the Godly and the authorities precipitated by the Book of Sports controversy (Tait, 1917). The Traskite scandal, therefore, was a piece of political theatre, a 'public spectacle of state discipline (McDowell, 2005, 349).' Whereas Como reads

© ISASR 2018

the 'threat posed by Traskism' as being Traske's own 'hubristic rhetoric and posturing,' for McDowell the threat was more closely associated with the Judaizing elements of the Traskite message (McDowell, 2005, 354). Certainly Francis Bacon's appraisal of the movement closely juxtaposed 'danger' with 'Judaizing (Bacon, 1872, vol. 13, 315).' Meanwhile, the prejudices and anxieties that informed the public response to the Traskites were being played out at the Hope Theatre, only three miles from the Palace of Westminster. Ben Johnson's *Bartholomew Fair*, which featured the archetypal Judaizing stage-Puritan in the character 'Zeal-of-the-Land Busy,' was drawing crowds (Collinson, 1995). McDowell suggests that the hysteria which surrounded the Traskite phenomenon was a bi-product of a broader anxiety relating to the association of Judaism and Puritanism: 'the Jewish bogeyman behind the mask of Puritan sedition (McDowell, 2005, 363).'

McDowell's insights are valuable and highlight an aspect of Traskism that Ball gestures towards but does not fully explain (Ball, 1981, 139). Absent from McDowell's analysis, though, is the claim that the same tensions which informed the reception of the Traskite phenomenon, should also be factored into our interpretation of the Traskite phenomenon *itself*. Traske and his followers, in exhibiting Judaizing behaviours, were as participant in the process of negotiation between conformity and dissent, separation and resistance, as those who drew attention to them. Lake's appraisal of the stigmatisation of Judaizing Puritans by Ben Jonson highlights the complex interplay between the formation of anti-Puritan stereotypes and the formation of the very Puritan identity that the stereotypes were intended to satirise (Lake, 2001, 47). Jonson himself was aware of the ways in which the image that the ungodly had of the Godly served to inform the image that the Godly had of themselves. When Zeal-of-the-Land Busy speaks to the audience, he does not only speak of what he intends to do, but of what he intends for others to *think* about what he is doing (Jonson, 2000, Act 1, Scene 6, Line 95). This is also implicit in Traske's work and in his behaviour. Pagitt, reflecting on the Traskites expressed amazement at the apparent desire of Traske's devotees to 'excommunicate themselves.' The Traskites 'wilfully separate and condemn themselves,' he wrote, 'yea, how fearless they are (Pagitt, 1662, 179).'

This essay concerns an additional, underlying theme in Traske's writing and behaviour – one that correlates with the Familist influences that Como identifies – the theme of separation. Ball refers to the 'division of men' as 'a key element in [Traske's] work (Ball, 1994, 52).' This concern was as central to the thought of the originators and advocates of Jewish ceremonies within the Jewish sphere as it was the the originators and advocates of Jewish ceremonies within the Traskite sphere.

The Ethic of Singularity

Traske and his followers believed that humanity was strictly, clearly and irreducibly divided into elect and reprobate. In line with the experimental predestinarians of the period, they believed that this binate distinction was mirrored in human society (Bentham, 1636, 6). Return Hebdon, a later incarcerated member of Traske's community, had a vision of the division of humanity 'into two sorts, the one terrene, humain, and… the other coelestical, divine, and baptised under the annointing and authority of the only true God (Hebdon, 1646, 60).' Many, perhaps the majority, of the Puritans of this period, held views that were comparable to this. The divisions that existed within the Calvinist consensus were not founded on differences of soteriological doctrine: they were founded on differences of opinion about what to *do* with this information. For some, membership of the Church-by-law-established, itself provided adequate assurance that one would be numbered amongst the 'baptised.' For others (the 'Whitgiftian fatalists'), the question of salvation was cloaked in mystery to the extent that it resisted any scrutiny (Lake, 1988, 128, 244). For others still, assurance could be found in the establishment of separated, exclusively Godly, communities of faith (Browne, 1582).

The Traskite reception of predestinarian thought was problematised somewhat by their profound ecclesiological scepticism. Like Perkins before and Stephen Denison after, Traske stressed the distinction between those who 'haue the forme, and those as haue also the power of godlinesse (Traske, 1623, a2v; Denison, 1619, 67).' As such, he refused to acknowledge that any Church of man's design could hope to establish truly Godly concert. Any such endeavour, whether it be undertaken by the architects of an Erastian, national church or of a wee, free, separatist congregation, was nothing more than hubris. This ecclesiological scepticism was informed, at least in part, by Traske's antipathy to precisianist Puritan clergy. In *A Pearle for a Prince*, Traske expressed a derision of Puritan ministers that was typical of early Stuart antinomian writing. They were hypocrites, he wrote: 'reformers of others and most irreformed themselves (Traske, 1615b, 6).' As Como writes, Traske was clearly disaffected both 'with the Church of England and with the puritan wing of the Church (Como, 2004, 159).'

This led Traske towards a soteriology that was– at least in part – informed by anti-legalist traditions. Knowledge of one's election could not be obtained from membership of any church – established or separated. Rather: 'the only way to know that wee are in Christ is by the knowledge that yourselves are in Christ (Traske, 1615a, 41).' In the condition of justifying faith, in fact, the Godly were not only assured of their own salvation. True believers, Traske claimed, were free from the guilt of sin and shared in the 'mind of Christ (Traske, 1616, 69-70).' As such, Traske's

© ISASR 2018

soteriology presented the Godly as irreducibly, unconditionally and mysteriously perfected.

Secondly, Traske firmly asserted that the concept of the Kingdom of God referred – not to an eschatological or spiritual condition, but rather to the lived experience of the Godly in their condition as the assured and sanctified elect. He unpacked this claim in his third publication, *Heaven's Joy*. For Traske, the concept of the Kingdom of God referred not to a heavenly, spiritual afterlife, nor to an eschatological future, but rather to the lived experience of the Godly in the condition of justifying faith (Traske, 1615a, 6-10).

Thirdly, Traske developed a particularly innovative interpretation of the meaning of 'repentance.' For Traske the condition of repentance was not abstract. It referred to a transitional period between the condition of unregeneracy and the condition of faith. The Traskites observation of 'repentance' involved a number of flagellatory ordeals which were noted by their contemporaries. His followers were adjured to wear sackcloth, to fast, to renounce sexual activity (Pagitt, 1662, 184). T.S. describes how the followers of John Traske 'pulled downe their bodies,' hoping thus to 'get into the third estate of justified saints.' Traske told his followers that the painful task of repentance was akin to 'the travel of a woman,' or 'the taking out of the heart from within the body (Pagitt, 1662, 184).' Traske himself acknowledged the struggle that repentance represented. Nonetheless, the attainment of assurance it offered was worth the ordeal. 'What if it fill your hearts with sorrow, your head with care, your eyes with teares, your chambers with complaints,' he promised, 'you shall finde a recompence even here: yea, and a full reward hereafter (Traske, 1616, 158).' This provides a striking example of the 'unacknowledged league' between the practices of Puritan divinity – based on the Heidelbergean 'reflex' – and the Pelagian 'tenor,' which they disparaged in others (Cefalu, 2004, 30-31; Bozeman, 2004, 4). The period of 'repentance' Traske prescribed, of course, did not hold a promise of grace as a *reward.* Nonetheless, the Godly professor who experienced the hardships it denoted could, reflexively, discover in his or her own experiences evidence and assurance of salvation, and – ultimately – 'unspeakable comfort (Traske, 1616, 75; Walsham, 2017, 56).'

The epistemological vacuum, that arose from their avowed belief in the unknowability of divine fiat, appears to have aroused feelings of profound unhappiness and anxiety in Traske and his followers, just as it would his contemporaries Nehemiah Wallington, Joan Barrington and Dionys Fitzherbert (Seaver, 1985, 16-19; Hodgkin, 2010, 17-19; Mack, 1992, 90-106; Willen, 1995, 19-41). Many of Traske's followers avowed feelings of uncertainty and anxiety about the future of their immortal souls. One of Traske's followers, Mary Chester, would describe her own anxiety: 'having

many things that did trouble my Mind, insomuch as I was never at any Quiet Day or Night, and at last affrighted and greviously tormented.' Chester proclaimed, meanwhile, that she 'desire[d] nothing more, nor so much, as the assurance of acceptation with God (Pagitt, 1662, 194).' As Willen has shown, 'assurance' could most commonly be found in the acceptance of one's Godly peers. The Godly sought out the spiritual reciprocity of small, embattled, remnant communities. Their behaviours and the beliefs served to facilitate the emergence of these communities.

Unspeakable Comfort Amongst the Saints in Light

The writings John Traske produced in the years leading up to his arrest in 1618 emphasised the association of assurance and 'Christian society.' It was Christian society, after all, that brought with it the 'Peace' of assurance following the agony of unregeneracy and repentance (Traske, 1616, 11). He produced a text entitled *Heaven's Joy*, which described the blissful assurance he attained from the synergetic relationship he shared with his Godly peers. The saints, like Aquila and Priscilla, 'watch over one another, *exhorting one another, and prouoking to love, and to good works* (Traske, 1616, 79).' They are 'one another's keepers.' These texts come close to the Familist mode of expression.[2] Traske spoke of the 'unspeakable comfort' he experienced 'amongst the saints in light (Traske, 1616, 75).' This phrase exhibits both Traske's identification of assurance with Godly singularity, but also the ineffable, 'unspeakable,' irreducible nature of the experience of justification.

Traske believed that those who had experienced sanctification were not only newly aware of their own election, but were also made aware of the 'warrant' of their peers (Dent, 1607, 239). 'Get assurance that thou art thyself in Christ,' he wrote, 'and when this is done, I doubt not to say thou shalt know others also (Traske, 1615a, 41).' In this form, Traske's claim was not dissimilar to the antinomian views of later figures. John Saltmarsh, for example, claimed that 'spiritual men are revealed to each other, and have as ful assurance of each other in Spirit and in Truth as *men* know *men* by the *voice, features, complexions, statures* of the outward man (Saltmarsh, 1647, 142).' Falconer noted that Traske had 'become famous abroad' for being able, 'by physiognomy, to make certain guesses whether particular persons shall be damned or saved (Falconer, 1618, 7).' This is corroborated by Kellet, who wrote that the Traskites 'bragged they would know the saved from the damned by their looks (Kellet, 1641, 74).' William Sclater, writing in the midst of the Traskite scandal in 1618, also attested to this trope in Traske's teaching and derided him for it (Sclater, 1619, 17). The association of the Traskites with this heterodox opinion persevered for several decades. In

[2] An earlier Familist text, translated by Christopher Vitell, encouraged its readers to 'daylie exhort one-another to the same Concorde and Peace and like-wise suffer or forbeare one-another in the Love.' [Elidad, 1574, a8r].

© ISASR 2018

1658, four decades having passed since Traske's trial, Richard Baxter rebuked his congregation for being judgemental, using Traske as an exemplar. 'Are you able to search and know the heart?' he asked. 'Can you discern sincerity by an infallible judgment? I know none but Mr. *Trask* that pretended to it (Baxter, 1658, 36).'

The saints, Traske assured his readers, shared in a familiarity with countless other of the Godly, 'though we never saw them face to face (Traske, 1616, 72).' But at the same time, he claimed there was special, 'excellent benefit' to be attained in physical communion with other members of the Godly 'face to face (Traske, 1616, 73).' Traske, in short, presented himself as a 'saint-seeing, saint-making, saint (Sclater, 1619, 31).'

The profound assurance that came with strong bonds of solidarity, and the inscrutability of this mutually-authenticating claim of election provided the basis for the Traskite mode of divinity. In an immediate sense, it affected their decision to establish a community of goods. Traskites practised a form of communism which found biblical precedent in Acts 4 (Pagitt, 1662, 185). They were much derided for it by their peers including William Sclater (Sclater, 1619, 31). In the writing of Return Hebdon, the close association of Christian communism and assurance is clearly drawn. 'If any have the good of this world,' he wrote, they 'communicate in love to him that hath need.' Pointing to the precedent of Ananias, described in Acts 5, Hebdon suggested that those who reneged on the contract of common goods would risk providential death, 'at the hand of the invisible God (Hebdon, 1646, 32).'

Traske acknowledged the psychological utility of these practices, emphasising the value of establishing immutable bonds of Godly society for the purpose of facilitating assurance. Only this, it appears, could offer the Godly dependable resource in the task of seeking out the warrant of their own salvation. All identities depend, for their salience, on the coherence of the group members and on their collective difference from the 'out-group (Tajfel, 1970; Tajfel, 1978; Tajfel, 1982).' Inviting the obloquy of the mob, therefore, attained a spiritual and soteriological significance for figures like Traske and Hebdon.

The Generall Separation

Traske was equally critical of Separatism, as of Anglicanism. Neither, he argued, could offer a vision of a true Church. The Church was 'not *bounded* within any *Nation,* or *limitted* unto any *one People* or *Kingdom.* So that no man can say it is in this *Company,* and *no where*

else (Traske, 1615a, 28).' The true Church was unveiled, not by the machinations of man, but by revelation alone. Nonetheless, in the early stages of his career, Traske sought to establish a community that was clearly distinctive from the wider, wicked world. If they were not to separate, they would seek to ensure that others separated *from* them. This was not untypical of Puritans of this period. As Lake, Walsham and Collinson have all pointed out, those who 'separated within' the Church were called upon to create cultural rather than physical barriers between themselves and their peers (Collinson, 1989, 32). For many, this involved the development of 'divisive identifications': practices that actively accentuated the distinctiveness of the Godly from their pew-mates (Webster, 2008, 48-66).

Whilst Traske emphasised the continuity and solidarity shared by the Godly, he also placed significant emphasis on the auto-differentiation of the Godly from the wicked world. Traske saw the task of the Godly minister as separating the wheat from the chaff, facilitating 'the generall separation between Pagans and Christians… betweene Idolaters and true worshippers (Traske, 1623, a2v).' This ethos informed his claims about the value of a period of 'repentance (Traske, 1616, 54-55; Traske, 1615a, 15).' Traske referred to the image of the 'off-scouring' of the world, described in 1 Corinthians (Traske, 1616, 136). Returne Hebdon, meanwhile, wrote of the 'great opposition of Christians (Hebdon, 1646, 60).' Like Denison, Traske stressed the urgency of discerning the difference between the professor who is merely 'outwardly reformed' and he who is truly justified. Traske characterises the former as the moderate: one who, professing his own fidelity, 'censures all that are not so forward, of Profanenesse, and all that are more forward, of singularitie (Denison, 1619, 67; Traske, 1615b, 10).' Clearly, Traske envisioned himself as a member of the latter category, as one besmirched by hypocritical Puritans as 'singular.' He would later identify the 'desire of singularitie' as a pitfall of Godly piety (Traske, 1620, 36).

Traske's promise that the Godly 'had all the saints in the world as their friends,' was intended to counterpoise the fact that the Godly could expect to be 'friendless (Traske, 1615b, 33).' That the Godly 'live but where they have little fellowship' was offset by the fact that 'they enjoy the helpe of the effectual fervent prayers of all the saints (Traske, 1616, 73).' The condition of the Godly professors, as described by Traske, was one of marginalisation, suffering and abuse at the hands of the wicked world. The ungodly 'oppresse them, draw them before judgement seates, mock them, rent their garments from them, withdraw from them all succor and do scarce account them worthy of the licking of their dogges (Traske, 1616, 107).' Return Hebdon, meanwhile, described himself as a second Antipas (Pagitt, 1662, 190; Revelation 2:13). Like many such groups, the Traskites looked forward to an apocalyptic future in which the justice of God's creation would be unveiled, wherein 'the saints will judge the world,' rather

© ISASR 2018

than the other way around (Traske, 1615b, 37). For now, though, they would be counted amongst those of least esteem.

The People of Least Esteeme

From the earliest stages of his ministry, Traske criticised those who sought to marginalize the weak and the poor. In *A Pearle for a Prince* he lamented the tendency amongst magistrates to 'favour some for their riches, oppressing others that are but of mean estate.' In this practice, Traske wrote, they 'differ from God, and do manifestly discouer themselues not yet to be his.' Traske railed against those ministers of the word who 'scorne the weake, and despise the poore (Traske, 1615b, 5).' Moreover, Traske attached a particular spiritual value to the condition of poverty. 'The people of least esteeme were Christ's chief followers,' he notes (Traske, 1615b, 6). Later in the century, with the rise of the Levellers, the Diggers and other groups, egalitarianism became more central to the culture of Puritanism (Foxley, 2015, 2, 13, 94). In 1615, however, Traske's position was more unusual. Calvin saw the structure of society, with its systemic, economic inequalities as providential and heuristic, offering the scope for the wealthy to perform acts of charity. He wrote that poverty itself could be formative of faith. Many scholars have pointed to the, foreseen or unforeseen, sociological consequences of Calvinist predestinarianism, where it served to legitimize and even ordain social and economic disparities (Zafirovski, 2007, 55-66). English Reformed Protestantism was no different. Robert Crowley's verse articulated this worldview:

> Fyrste walke in thy vocation
> And do not seke thy lotte to change;
> For through wicked ambition
> Many mens fortune hath ben straynge (Crowley, 1549, a2r).

Traske's belief that the poor had a particularly privileged relationship with God, therefore, constituted a rebuttal of contemporary, widely assented norms.

In a similar way, Traske vehemently asserted the privilege of revealed wisdom above learnedness. This tendency would become a central theme of later 'radical Puritan' literature – particularly within the Quaker milieu (Gardiner, 1886, 189-192). Isaac Pennington would boast that his young Quaker converts were 'young country lads, of no deep understanding… very fit to be despised (Penington, 1664, 3).' William Dell believed universities to be the thrones of the Beast (Dell, 1660, 43). Traske agreed. 'The ground wher Faith is sowen,' he wrote, 'is an humbled soule,

a wounded spirit or rent heart.' Those who were chosen were not typically 'glorious' but rather ones who had 'feared and trembled and felt their soule sick with sinne (Traske, 1615b, 10).' Meanwhile, Traske was scornful of those who believed that having 'a little swimming knowledge in the brain' was sufficient evidence of their spiritual superiority (Traske, 1615b, 15). He dismissed the arguments of his critics as the product of 'carnal reason,' which itself 'cannot reach the truth (Traske, 1615b, 18).' 'Leane not over much to thine own judgement,' he cautioned. The mind of the believer should be like an adder, not deaf to the charmer, but ready to surrender autonomy to the divine will (Traske, 1620, 36). True 'wisdom' Traske claimed 'God hath revealed to us by his Spirit (Traske, 1616, 70).' Such wisdom 'eye hath not seen, nor eare heard (Traske, 1616, 5).'

In Hebdon's work this inversion of worldly values was rehearsed. 'He which is most poore and humble in the flesh,' Hebdon wrote, 'is endued with most authority in the spirit of holinesse (Hebdon, 1646, 21).' Hebdon also saw the castigations endured by the Traskites as evidence of the formation of the Godly in the hands of the almighty. He described the hardships he had endured as like the beatings endured by a student at the hands of a schoolmaster:

> The Child is the Christian. The book is to learn Christ. the rod are men in authority, the Schoolmaster is the Law, or the heavenly Father (Hebdon, 1646, 20).

If hardship was evidence of Godliness, then it was tacitly incumbent upon the Godly to seek out hardships.

Cultivated Crises

Traskites exhibited their distinctiveness to – and from – their peers by avowing views that critically inverted cultural norms. The actions of Traskites, moreover, 'demonstrated a refusal to accept the ideas, actions or positions' of the majority (Walraven and Abbink, 2003, 8). Traskites consciously represented Traskism as antithetical to both the Church of England and mainline Puritanism. The same attitude informed a variety of behaviours that led to the anathematisation of the Traskites by their peers. In performing these actions, Traskites were able 'cultivate crises,' to identify themselves as members of a persecuted, Godly remnant, whilst at the same time avoiding the hubris Traske had identified at the heart of the Separatist movement (Walsham, 2017, 56; Collinson, 1989, 124).

The dereliction of courtesy represented one such effort at auto-anathematisation. In the mid-sixteenth century, refusal to remove one's hat was identified as a mode of religious deviance (Baumann, 1983, 43). In the seventeenth century, the Quakers popularised the practice of 'plain speech,'

© ISASR 2018

the refusal to use 'honorific and deferential' modes of speech (Baumann, 1983, 47). As Baumann has explained, the use of plain speech by Quakers was seen as a way of 'taking up the cross.' By employing 'rhetorical impoliteness,' the Friends risked 'violence, marginalisation, and hostility.' But Baumann, Walsham and others recognise that this could be seen as a virtue for the Godly rather than simply an unfortunate bi-product, having a 'strongly reinforcing effect on individual faith and group solidarity (Baumann, 1983, 51-52; Walsham, 2006, 144; Davies, 2000, 49).'

It appears that Traske was a fore-runner of this tendency. Around 1615, he began a one-sided correspondence with King James I. The letters touched on matters of doctrine: Traske urged the King to be more forthright in his condemnation of 'Rome and the Iesuites.' By his own account, Traske referred to the King as 'thou' (Traske, 1636, a7r). William Pecke, a young lawyer who acted as emissary to Whitehall for Traske, recalled Traske's attitude on the subject. Pecke had complained that

> The author dealeth with the Kinge in so familiar a manner, using the words Thee and Thy. He [Traske] said he would alter them but thereupon sat in a muse a pretty while, and in the end answered, surely I will not alter them, claiming that the Kinge would take no offence at it, because it was the manner of speech which was used to God himself (NLS, MS Adv. 33.1.6, vol. 20, f. 60).

Apparently, the King was infuriated by Traske's 'presumptuousness (Greene, 1916, 11).' Nonetheless, the practice was maintained. Later, T.S. noted in a marginal comment that Dorothy Traske 'ever in discoursing used thee and thou as Quakers do (Pagitt, 1662, 196).' Perhaps the most notable aspect of Pecke's report is the fact that Traske *considered* his behaviour and, moreover, that he actively considered the way in which his behaviour would be apprehended by his interlocutor (in this instance the King).

The mode of worship most associated with the Traskites – by their peers – was also exclusionary. They appear to have refused rote recitation in favour of extemporary, charismatic prayer. Traske himself was said to have prayed 'not by the book' but rather 'as he thought fit (CUL, EDR, B/2/35 3r).' The exclusionary nature of this practice, forming a barrier to participation to those who are not immediately inspired, was recognised by Traske's own auditors. One claimed that 'what prayers he used we cannot learn (CUL, EDR, B/2/35 76v).'

In London, the Traskites would develop yet more demonstratively anti-social modes of worship. T.S. describes how Traske was wont to preach 'in the field and in the city,' at such a pitch that 'he would pierce the heavens (Pagitt, 1662, 184).' Fuller described the 'loudness of [Traske's] stentorian voice (Fuller, 1655, book 17, 76).' John Falconer writes that the followers of Traske, too, were in the habit of praying with 'roaringes, and such loud out-

cries (Falconer, 1618, 7).' Even from his prison cell, Traske continued to disturb the neighbours. He 'did read allowed' and 'preached in his chamber to be heard of prisoners (Harris, 1879, 48).' David Como asserts that these activities 'created a heightened, almost electric, sense of God among them (Como, 2004, 148).' It seems likely that for a minority who were anyway sure of the reprobate state of the common majority, the condemnation and disapproval of one's neighbours *would* offer a 'heightened sense of God among them (Spraggon, 2000, 18; Como, 2004, 148).' Loudness of prayer was often described as a facet of anti-Christian or deviant worship. Later in the century, Richard Baxter would caution his Godly peers against the tendency to 'bawling fervency which the hearers may discern to be but histrionical and affected (Baxter, 1673, 208).' It was a rod that was variously used to beat Catholics and Jews in polemical writing of this period (Fox, 1674, 63; Naogeorg, 1570, b2r; Evelyn, 1995, 52; Lightfoot, 1662 b1r). Conforming to this mode of worship, therefore, provided the Traskites with a divisive form of identification.

At times, the desire to situate themselves beyond the Pale of a reprobate world encouraged the Godly to embrace, imagine, invite or precipitate the conditions for hardship. As Walsham writes, suffering 'helped to bring the regenerate to an awareness that they numbered among the tiny remnant (Walsham, 2017, 54; Collinson, 1991, 56).' In the interests of 'cultivating crisis' the Godly were prone to 'penitential sorrow and symbolic suffering (Walsham, 2017, 59).' The Traskites were perhaps unsurpassed in this. They 'ate and drank' whilst weeping and 'trembling (Pagitt, 1662, 185).' Sclater described the 'sighes, grones, strong cryes and teares,' that accompanied Traskite divinity (Sclater, 1619, 29). The period of 'repentance' Traske prescribed for his followers constituted an eye-catching example of constructive providentialism: submitting oneself to suffering, on the basis that the saints are known to be victims of suffering. The 'travel' they experienced was commensurate to the benediction they would enjoy (Pagitt, 1662, 184). This tendency dogged the story of the Traskites until the very end of their story. Traske himself was tortured in painful and humiliating ways, described in the record of the trial:

> And then the said Traske to bee whipped from the prison of the Fleete to the Pallace of Westminster with a paper on his head inscribed with theise wordes, For writinge presumptuous lettres to the Kinge, wherein hee much slandered his Maiesty, And for slanderinge the proceedinges of the lord Bishopps of the high Commission, And for maintayneinge Jewish opynions, And then to bee sett on the Pillory and to haue one of his eares nayled to the Pillory, and after hee hath stood there some convenient tyme, to bee burnte in the forehead with the lettre J in token that hee broached Jewish opynions, And alsoe that the said Traske shall alsoe bee whipped from the Fleete into Cheepeside with the like paper on his

© ISASR 2018

> head and bee sett in the Pillory and haue his other Eare nayled thereunto (Greene, 1916, 11).

Traske found the experience of imprisonment extremely difficult. On first arriving he wrote two letters, one to the King and a second to the Lord Chancellor. He begged and threatened his warden to deliver the letters. The Warden went to the court to deliver the message to the King and the Lord Chancellor. When he arrived at court, he was angrily reprimanded by the Archbishop of Canterbury for allowing Traske access to writing materials (Harris, 1879, 48). Harris describes the arduous process of searching Traske's room in order to find his writing materials. It appears that Traske had bribed, or convinced, his jailer to warn him of any approaching room-searches. When this corruption was discovered, the Warden went to search Traske's room personally finding a journal in which was written Traske's 'dreams and interpretations, his repasts, fastings, disputes, converting of fellow prisoners (Harris, 1879, 48).'

Privation of freedom was only one part of the ordeal experienced by prisoners in the Fleet, where conditions were so 'frightful,' that the prisoners revolted in July 1619 (Harris, 1879, 48; Lake, 2002, 189-190). The prison was located downwind from the Fleet Ditch, which was an open sewer. Francis Bacon wrote that 'the most pernicious infection next to the plague is the smell of the jail; when prisoners have been long and close and nastily kept in (Bacon, 1627, 246).' The worst conditions were apparently in the 'Boulton's Ward,' where prisoners were left to starve (NA, SP 14/110, f. 2).

Despite their treatment, the Traskite prisoners remained remarkably resilient. Return Hebdon withstood the privations of prison until his death. Dorothy Traske committed herself to a lifestyle of ascetic self-abnegation. T.S's letter relates that, when she was in prison, she refused to eat anything other than bread and water (Pagitt, 1662, 210). There was a degree of choice in the matter of this suffering. Traske secured his release by confessing and renouncing his previous convictions. This makes Hebdon and Dorothy Traske's stoicism all the more remarkable. According to the letter from T.S. relating her death, she would not 'petition (neither suffer others) for her liberty (Pagitt, 1662, 212).' Indeed, Dorothy Traske was *allowed* to leave the prison, and yet she chose not to. Her reason for this was that she 'conceived yt God (who knowes what is best for her) hath caused Authority to put her in this place.' It was with consternation that her peers noted that she not only *separated* herself, but rather *excommunicated* herself, seeking, in her activities and in her beliefs, to passively differentiate herself from the majority. When she died, she asked to be buried in a field, rather than in a churchyard (Pagitt, 1662, 197, 213). In being buried beyond the boundaries of communal burial land, she accepted the condition of the heretic. But she also shared in the condition of Protestant virtuosi like John Clarke, John

Awcocke, James Trevisam, George King, Thomas Leys and John Wade (Foxe, 1583, 830, 1561, 1665, 1689). Indeed, she also shared in the condition of Sarah (Genesis 23).

Traske and his followers' attempts to situate themselves at odds with the wider community were successful. In fact Sclater considered 'oddnesse' to be Traske's principle concern (Sclater, 1619, 31). Their 'disquieting' antics led to irritation and hostility from their neighbours (Falconer, 1618, 7; Pagitt, 1662, 184). Yet more concerning, for his peers, was Traske's active sectarianism. Within a short period of his having arrived in London, Traske had cultivated a reputation as a schismatic. T.S. asserts that Traske's reputation, in this early period, was for 'making divisions in the Church about *London* (Norris, 1638, 7).' Like Robert Bolton, Traske would later recount that the fomentation of division between the elect and the ungodly was his *intention* (Bolton, 1631, 370; Traske, 1620, a2v).

Ben Jonson's *Bartholomew Fair* premiered at the Hope Theatre on Bankside on the 31st October 1614. Traske may have critiqued the kind of precisianism that Jonson was satirising, but underneath their doctrinal differences, Traske and Busy had more in common than Judaizing. Both were concerned with exhibiting the distinctiveness of themselves from their peers, of the 'darlings' from the 'dross.' Both were concerned, in this vein, to antagonise and precipitate the antagonism of their peers. Both were aware of the sanctifying, obloquial gaze of the reprobate other (Lake and Stephens, 2015, 123). For early modern English Protestants, the image of the divisive, extremist, interloping alien instantly called to mind the topos of the Jew (Prynne, 1656, 79). Johnson explored this complex cultural interaction in his drama. Traske explored this interaction in his own devotional life.

'Obstinate as Jews'

Describing the condition of the imprisoned Traskites in Edward Kellet remarked that

> They all were as obstinate as the Iewes, laughing at imprisonment, and punishment (Kellet, 1641, 74).

In this brief comment, the Traskite identity was entangled with the concept of 'the Jew.' For Kellet, however, this was not solely a matter of doctrine or ritual practice. Rather, the Traskites had become 'Jewish' in *character*. For Thomas Coryat, writing a few years earlier, being 'like a Jew' implied being seditious, alien and mad (Coryat, 1611, 232). It did not *just* imply being ceremonialist or legalist. The Traskites were 'like Jews,' because they refused to recognise or to be corralled by authority. By 'laughing at imprisonment,' the Traskites were associated with the 'extremism' of the

© ISASR 2018

Jews, prepared to sacrifice their own comfort or even their own lives for the sake of a misguided and carnal religious dogma. In this sense, the mockery of the Traskites echoed the mockery of the Jew of Tewkesbury, who was reputed to have died after falling into a privy for fear of asking for breaking the Sabbath (Stubbes, 1583, m8v). 'Judaism' was communicated by the Traskites and understood by Kellet as a mark of eccentricity and extremism, of difference, of separation, of resistance.

Return Hebdon's references to the Jews offer an insight into the *meaning* of Jewishness and Judaism for the Traskites. Hebdon avowed a preferential option for the afflicted. 'Over the poore afflicted people,' he wrote, 'is the protection of the most high.' For Hebdon, the Jews were the group that best conform to this model. 'The Jews,' he wrote, were 'the people who are hated and afflicted of all other people… for their creator (Hebdon, 1646, 80).' It was this model of the Jews that informed the adoption of 'Judaizing' practices in Traskite writing. The Jews, in short, were 'the people of least esteem.'

Traskite Judaizing can be traced back to several years before Kellet made his assessment. We have evidence of Traske's more unorthodox notions about the comparative validity of Christian and Jewish rituals from the very first records of his arrival in London. T.S. notes that Traske taught 'observation of the Lords day, after a Iudaicall manner, neither to kindle fires nor to dresse meates (Norris, 1638, 7).' Meanwhile, John Falconer described Traske as a 'Puritan minister who is lately growne half a Jew (Falconer, 1618, 1).' Falconer mentions that Traske held 'singular opinions concerning the old Sabbath (Falconer, 1618, 1, 26, 33, 42-43).' The word 'singularity' represented disparagement for the Catholic Falconer, but praise for Traske.

The Light of the Sabbath

When Christopher Sands and Hamlet Jackson met with representatives of the Jewish community in Amsterdam in 1620, they found that some were disconcerted by the Traskite innovations. 'They told them that the Sabbath was only given to the Israelites and not by nations,' recounts T.S., 'and that it was a sign betwixt God and the children of Israel (Pagitt, 1662, 180).'

Falconer identified Traske's observation of the 'old Sabbath' as a form of resistance, an action that denoted 'singularity' and 'separation' (Falconer, 1618, 26, 33, 42-43). Observation of the seventh-day was probably without precedent at this point, although in the coming decades a Seventh-

Day Baptist congregation would emerge under the stewardship of Peter Chamberlen. Even Seventh-Day Baptists, however, venerated the Seventh-Day as 'the Lord's day (Stennet, 1666, 28).' The claim was often made that 'there [could] be no Sabbath without Christ (Anon, 1650, 103-104).' Levitical, legal observation of the Sabbath, as practised by Traske and his followers, was at odds with the wider principle of Puritan Sabbatarianism as Pagitt and latterly Bryan Ball both noted (Ball, 1994, 48, Pagitt, 1662, a3r). One fellow traveller complained that Judaizing brought disrepute upon the Sabbatarian project since 'to introduce some of the Mosaical ceremonies,' would 'occasion slanders upon others (Bampfield, 1692, 3).'

Both Katz and Nicholas McDowell have drawn a connection between the Book of Sports controversy, which erupted in the years before Traske's arrest, and the Traskite scandal itself. Katz suggests that Traske accrued a degree of infamy, largely on the coat-tails of the controversy (Katz, 1988, 12). McDowell, too, focuses on the response to Traske's thought, rather than the substance of Traskism. He implies that Traske was a scape-goat, a living *reductio ad absurdum*, hauled before the courts as a piece of political theatre designed to chasten the 'hotter' Puritans who were 'tending to Judaism (McDowell, 2005, 348-363).' Sabbatarianism was certainly a point of contention between the King and his Puritan subjects. But Traske, *too*, was aware of this controversy and was aware of the very live stigma attached to the idea of Judaizing at that point.

From the bibliocentric analysis of Phillips or Glassman or Ball, one might expect Traske's move towards Seventh-Day Sabbatarianism to have been catalyzed by zealous attention to the *mediate* revelation of scripture. Quite the opposite is true. Traske appears to have been drawn to the practice of Seventh-Day Sabbatarianism as an *innovation*. According to T.S., Hamlet Jackson had a vision:

> Travelling the country on a Saturday, he saw a shining light about him, which struck him with amazement… And thereupon he concluded that the light of the Law was more fully discovered to him, than to any since the Apostles. And it was thought, that the two witnesses which he interpreted to be the Law and the Prophets, yea in a manner the whole letter of the Scriptures lying dead, from the Apostles daies to our times, were now revived and stood up on their feet (Pagitt, 1662, 190).

This claim would later be corroborated, in part by Traske himself (NA, SP 16/73, f. 96).

Kenneth Parker observes that Jackson's revelation appears to be an inversion of Paul's Damascene *metanoia* (Parker, 1988, 161). T.S. would later assert that Hamlet Jackson prayed for the bars of his cell, in the New Prison in Maiden Lane, to give way. Again, this begs comparison with St. Paul and the account of his manumission in Acts 16 (Pagitt, 1662, 197). The Traskites

represented, in the popular imagination, a tergiversation, a reversal of the Christian supersession which extended more broadly than a simple matter of doctrine. Sabbatarianism was, during this period, seen as a designation of sedition. Peter Heylyn saw the practise of Sabbatarianism as far more than simply a matter of doctrinal difference. He suggested that it was evidence of 'the declining period of the church (Heylyn, 1780, 129).' The Sabbath was disturbing, uncanny. In the words of Thomas Fuller, the Godly were 'conjuring up the ghosts of long dead Judaisme,' which were 'walking, frighting people with their terrible apparitions (Fuller, 1655, 81).' At least for one contemporary, Judaizing was the stuff of nightmares (Josselin, 1976, 337).

The Sabbath had become the battlefield in the struggle between the Godly and conformists (Tait, 1917). Prophecy – and the destabilizing effect that prophetic claims had on the epistemic structures of conformist ecclesiology – was also seen as a threat. The combination of these two tendencies in the figure of Traskite Sabbatarianism, therefore, functioned as a mark of the dissenting nature of Traskism. This is nowhere more evident than in the clear comparison made by Ephraim Pagitt between the Hamlet Jackson – as a visionary – and William Hacket who, twenty-five years previously had imagined the Queen's death (Pagitt, 1662, 190). This, in one sense, should not be surprising. The *function* of the Sabbath, in its inception and in the various ways it had been used throughout the history of the Jewish-Christian tradition, had always been to mark off the separateness and dissent of a Godly minority (Amit, 2000, 239). It served this function in the seventeenth century as it had in two thousand years before.

The Difference of Meates

From the earliest days of his time in London, Traske preached doctrines that went further than Sabbath observation. As such, Pagitt considered Traskism and Saturday Sabbatarianism to be discrete phenomena (Pagitt, 1662, a3r). T.S. notes that Mary Chester was rescued from Traskite folly by William Gouge (Norris, 1638, 7). Gouge wrote a number of sermons on the phenomenon of 'Jewish-Christians,' which he defined as:

> Those that say that… what fish, fowl and beast were once forbidden, are still unlawfull to be eaten (Gouge, 1645, 23).

It is quite possible, given T.S's allusion to Gouge in the context of Traske, that Gouge had Traskism in mind here. 'Judaizing' in the matter of diet became a component of Traskite practice as early as 1615. Falconer in his *Briefe Refutation of John Traskes judaical and novel fancyes*, claimed that Traske held 'the Mosaical difference of meates… as morall Lawes unrepealed by

Christ.' Falconer, mentions that 'many men and women' had subscribed to Traske's conclusions (Falconer, 1618, 3). This claim is supported later by Edward Kellet, who lamented 'dangerously many fell into Iudaisme, and turned Traskites (Kellet, 1641, 74).' Chamberlain expressed equal concern in his letter to Dudley the following year. Kellet noted that the Traskites 'would bury in the Dunghill, chines of porke or puddings, or any swines flesh, which their neighboures courteously bestowed upon them (Kellet, 1641, 74).' The refusal of the Traskites to consume pork had become the focus of a ritual humiliation at the hands of their neighbours.

When he was awaiting trial, Traske's dietary opinions again served as the focus for stigmatisation:

> hee was not restreyned from any meates untill November last, and then hee was only allowed the Flesh meates in his opynion supposed to bee forbidden (Greene, 1916, 8).

Before the Star Chamber he was accused of a number of charges, including:

> (teaching) that the lawe of Moses concerneinge the differences of meates forbidden the eateinge of Hogges flesh, Conies, etc (Greene, 1916, 8).

Harris confirmed that during the period of his residence within the Fleet, Traske conformed to the Levitical dietary restrictions. Harris was at pains to stress that, under his administration, Traske's dietary needs were catered for:

> The Warden delivered that money to him which was Thraske's keeper to provide weekes dyett for Thraske, when he refused the Warden's meat, because porke, connyes, ducks and such like are uncleane meates (as he held opinion) were dressed with it… the warden with all affableness found dyett and lodging to Thraske (Harris, 1879, 50).

For Return Hebdon, as for Traske, the Law was fundamentally bankrupt, rendered arcane by the triumph of the atonement. Obedience to the law held no salvific power. Indeed, Hebdon wrote, teaching moral law to a member of the reprobate 'can no more helpe a man to go the way of immortality, then a natural blind man can direct a man (Hebdon, 1646, 61).' However, the Law did have *instrumental* if not *intrinsic* virtue. Hebdon describes the Law using much the same language that Traske would later use to describe preaching: the Law served to *separate* the Godly from the unregenerate. Hebdon acknowledged that the epistle to the Galatians appeared to undermine the morality of circumcision, yet also noted that the

© ISASR 2018

text does not *ban* the practice. Hebdon concluded that the salience of the Law lay not in its observation but rather in the *motivation* for its observation. Should a man be obliged to seek circumcision, then the action is morally bankrupt. Equally, however, any man who *refuses* circumcision, for fear of the morality of the world, and 'makes circumcision in the liberty of the Gospel to be a sin,' is equally guilty of 'denying the liberty wherein Christ hath made them free (Hebdon, 1646, 47-48).'

The Laws themselves served only as indicators of man's election or reprobation. And the sign of reprobation is *obedience* to the laws and mores of the world 'From the opposition of the authority of men and against the authority of God in Christ,' he wrote 'we may see the bondage under men by the Law, and the liberty of the Law in Christ (Hebdon, 1646, 47).'

Hebdon avowed the value of the observation of Levitical dietary restrictions. Those who were 'inforced to eat swine's flesh,' he writes, 'justifie themselves in defiance of God.' Such people were 'in bondage after the worldly elements of the heathen (Hebdon, 1646, 40).' This is broadly in the vein of the anti-Precisianist backlash and the general complaint against 'formalism.' Being enjoined by any person to do any act rendered that act ethically vacuous. The other side of the coin, which Hebdon saw, was that the adoption of practices which *repudiated* heteronomy exhibited Godliness. The fear of men and the fear of God *was* 'the separation' according to Hebdon's thinking. The 'enmity' of the world (while painful), as such facilitated the 'perfect separation in the Word (Hebdon, 1646, 79-88).

The act of refusing to consume unlawful meats, was understood by the neighbours of the Traskites and by the authorities as a mark of resistance, such that the Traskites were forced to touch and eat forbidden meats as a form of humiliation. But the act of separating meats was an affirmation of the *intrinsic* good of separation. For Douglas, the very inception of the dietary restrictions of Leviticus were a symbolic designation of the importance of 'wholeness.' Ambiguous, anomalous creatures like pigs represented a symbolic aberration of these categories of wholeness (Douglas, 1966, 30-32). Certainly, the initial concern for maintaining separation of foods emerged from a period when 'ethnic markers' were becoming more central to Israelite religion. Food, during this period, became an 'expression of social bonds and boundaries' The midrashic reading of Leviticus 18 included the claim that the non-consumption of pork was *specifically* a practice which the gentiles objected to. Philo wrote that the function of Moses selection of forbidden meats was to prevent slavishness to the senses amongst the Israelites. As such, he banned the most delicious meats. Whilst the pleasures of the flesh were sufficient for the gentiles, the pleasures of the spirit were stored up for Israel (Termini, 2009, 120). The non-consumption of pork remained a forum for the reification, stigmatisation, and humiliation of Jews down the centuries

and right up to the period of Traske's flourishing (Kraemer, 2007, 30-33; J.J, 1655, 87; Thorowgood, 1652, 7). This was what Robert Davenport *meant* when he said that a Puritan was 'one that would eat no pork (Davenport, 1639, 48).' It was not – solely – a description of doctrine. It was a description of an identity of outsiderliness. It was also what Return Hebdon and Dorothy Traske and John Traske meant by *not eating* pork. In both an intrinsic and a circumstantial sense, the refusal by the Traskites to eat pork constituted a marker of separation.

The Festivall Observances of Azimes

Traske and his followers also observed rites associated with the festival of Passover. John Falconer noted that Traske required his followers to celebrate Easter on the '14th of Marche moone (Falconer, 1618, 57).' The celebration of Easter on the fourteenth day of the 'March-moone' (or Nisan) was a practice shared by several groups throughout Christian history, most obviously the Ebionites (Luomanen, 2012, 17-45). Indeed, the Quartodeciman controversy which engaged the church in the third Century, was characterised by anti-Judaic rhetoric. Emperor Constantine, denouncing the practice, deemed it an 'unworthy thing that in the celebration of this most holy feast we should follow the practice of the Jews,' and urged Christians to 'have nothing in common with the mob of Jews (Eusebius, 1999, 178).' Traske would have been familiar with the anti-Judaic tenor of the Quartodeciman controversy. The history of the controversy was frequently mobilised in anti-Judaic homiletics of the period. Lancelot Andrewes (who would later speak against Traskism in the Star Chamber) raised the spectre of Quartodecimanism in a sermon preached on Easter Sunday 1618 (Andrewes, 1618, 25, 37). The arch-heretic Edward Wightman, the last person to be burned at the stake in England, was sentenced to death in April 1612 charged with a range of heresies including Ebionism (NA, SP 14/68, f. 136). In his denunciation of the Traskites, T.S. made several pointed references to the Ebionite heresy (Pagitt, 1662, 190). As such, the Traskite adoption of this practice can be understood as a resistant mode of Judaizing on two levels. Firstly, it courted anti-Judaic criticism from Traske's peers. Secondly it aligned the Traskites with a movement which had, historically, been maligned and accused of Judaizing.

It could be claimed that this attempt to reinvigorate the Easter observation of the earliest Christians was a form of 'primitivism.' However, Traske appears to have developed even more concertedly Judaizing practices whilst in prison. Falconer, having interviewed a number of other prisoners in the Fleet in 1619, gathered that Traske 'hath added to his Easter the festiuall obseruance of Azimes.' Falconer wrote that Traske had been seen by other prisoners 'after the fourtenth of March moone, to eate

contrary to their custome at other times, withe unleavened loaves (Falconer, 1618, 17).' Falconer himself draws a clear distinction between primitivism – as exemplified by the celebration of Easter according to the Quartodeciman calculation – and avowed Judaizing as manifest in the celebration of Passover (Falconer, 1618, 18). Of course the question of whether Traske *did* celebrate the Passover in accordance with the stipulations of Exodus 12 is secondary to the fact that he behaved in a manner, which was *perceived to be* an observance of Passover and therefore was *perceived to be* Judaizing.

The celebration of Passover is a celebration of resistance. Israel, in the observation of Passover, enacts the distinction of herself from the Egyptian majority. This act of distinction is the prototypical act of Israel's self-definition, establishing the polity of Israel and differentiating Israel from Egypt. The penalty for failing to differentiate oneself in the Passover narrative is death, the death of the first born. Any Israelite who fails to comply with the injunction against the consumption of yeast at Passover will be cut-off from Israel (Exodus 12:15). The verb to 'cut off' (כרִית) recurs in a number of texts which describe the reification of the holy polity. In the act of circumcision, the foreskin is 'cut off' (כרִית). The covenant, itself, is 'cut' (אכרת).

The meaning of Passover as an act of resistance was particularly heightened in the context of Jacobean England. In 1600, William Cotton reported that a Passover had been celebrated in Exeter (Roberts, 1904, vol. 10, 450). The same William Cotton berated John Hazard, sixteen years later, for his association with John Traske ('City of Exeter,' 3 of 10, 95-96). Elsewhere, it was claimed that Francis Russell, the Earl of Bedford, was 'a puritan, and keeps his Passover every Easter (NA, SP 12/155, f. 42).' Undoubtedly, this use of the topos of Passover was an attempt to besmirch and marginalize the Puritan Russell.

The Traskite Epilogue

Hamlet Jackson evaded capture. He and Christopher Sands resurfaced in Amsterdam. According to T.S., both Sands and Jackson sought out the leaders of the Jewish community there with the intention of being converted to Judaism. When they were told that this would only be possible if they submitted to circumcision, Christopher Sands decided against it. He was willing, he said, to observe 'the seven ordinances,' and thereby to remain 'a Gentile saint.' Jackson on the other hand, agreed to undergo the procedure (Pagitt, 1662, 180). T.S. told Dorothy Traske that he knew many witnesses who could attest the veracity of this event. In 1632, Theophilus Brabourne's *Defence of that Most Ancient and Sacred Ordinance of God, the Sabbath Day* was published in Amsterdam at the behest of English-speaking 'Jewish-

Christians.' It is possible that Hamlet Jackson was involved in this enterprise (Brabourne, 1632).

From there, Christopher Sands moved to the North of Ireland. On October 15 1635, nearly two decades after the arrest of John Traske, he was brought before the Court of High Commission and his address was listed as Lyssen in County Tyrone. The proceedings detail that Sands 'had formerly in his answers disclaimed all judaical or heretical opinions, and that in regard of his necessary affairs in Ireland, he be respited till Easter term for his answers, or that they may be taken in Ireland by commission.' His case was referred to the Bishop of Ely, Francis White (NA, SP 16/324, f. 2; NA, SP 16/261, f. 267). Sands was charged before Bishop White with being a Jew and once more declared himself to be 'a National or a Gentile Saint,' that is, an observer of the 'Seven Noahide Precepts.' Mary Chester, having written to Christopher Sands pleading him to return to the fold of Christianity, herself relapsed into 'Judaisme,' sometime in 1636 (Pagitt, 1662, 194-195).

The word resistant itself is polyvalent. Traskite behaviours functioned to 'resist' the immersion of the Godly in the mass of the reprobate. Traskites *also* exhibited a significant degree of resistance – that is to say fortitude and resilience – to the intrigues of earthly power. Dorothy Traske refused to appeal against her conviction, seeing it as a providential sign. Return Hebdon wrote that, in the face of persecution, men of God 'doe not scare but are more bold and confident (Hebdon, 1646, 101).' For Edward Kellet, the Traskites were as 'obstinate as Jews (Kellet, 1641, 74).'

The fact of Traske's apostasy makes the resilience of the remaining Traskites even more intriguing. Traske provided the ideological architecture for the movement. In 1620, he published a text distancing himself from his own followers and from his previously held convictions. He described his previous thought as 'errors,' and committed to 'neuer separate what God hath ioyned, nor ioyne what he hath severed (Traske, 1620, 41).' Precisely the ethic that Traske had instilled in his followers – the anti-rational, singular ethic – provided the ideological apparatus for this resilience. A similar group apparatus was instilled in the Sabbateans a generation later. For Coome and Hebdon, the very irrationality of their convictions in the eyes of the wider society served to convince them of their rectitude. In fact, it emphasised the very special, singular nature of their revelatory knowledge.

Conclusion

The decision by Lord Chancellor Bacon to brand John Traske was not without legal precedent. Branding was in use as a punishment for thieves. It was also used to punish blasphemers – James Nayler would later be

© ISASR 2018

branded with the letter B on his forehead (Reay, 1984, 159). The nascent Puritan communities in the New World adopted this practice. In each case, whilst the immediate pain of the ordeal was punishment enough, the more profound punishment was the pariah-hood that branding brought with it. Thieves who were branded were known by their communities to be thieves. Adulterers – like Mary Batcheller – were known to be adulterers (McManus, 1993, 161). This aspect of the punishment was alluded to by Bacon in his judgement of Traske, with the witticism: 'he that was schismaticus may now be stigmaticus (Ussher, 1864, vol. 16, 359).' The irony of this should not be lost. The punishment allotted to Traske was that he be marked out as a pariah for the remainder of his days. The J, emblazoned on his forehead, designated him as 'Judaizer' and, therefore, 'outsider.' This brutal punishment, it seems, was the consummation of the Traskite desire for 'singularity.' He was not only a practitioner of certain practices, but rather 'a Judaizer,' a pariah, rejected by the world. With the branding of his forehead, his rejection by society became part of his identity, part of his physical being. For Traske, it was both stigma and stigmata.

By labelling the Traskites as Jews, their accusers were seeking to create a bogeyman. But as Peter Lake and Ann Hughes have demonstrated, stereotypes in early modern England were closely intertwined with their subjects (Hughes, 2010, 10-11; Lake and Stephens, 2015). This is because the Godly often sought out and occupied those spaces which were created by a majoritarian discourse, the more clearly to exhibit the distinctiveness of themselves and their fellow professors from the majority. The Godly, even at their most successful, required the obloquy of the mob as a source of confirmation that they were amongst that remnant of saints (Collinson, 1991). Davis' attempts to debunk all scholarship that drew upon polemical writing, on this score, is problematic (Davis, 1986). The way in which the Godly used and constructed identities, using 'a variety of discursive elements,' by 'reconstructing and redeploying… the very terms had been intended to marginalize and defame,' them makes the study of the interaction between stereotypes and stereotyped an essential part of the study of the Puritan phenomenon (Lake, 2006, 85-87).

Actions, no matter how small or large, radical or quotidian, can function as modes of resistance. James C. Scott led the way in demonstrating that seemingly non-violent acts can be used by agents for the purpose of disrupting convention and of exhibiting a refusal to accept hierarchical structures (Scott, 1990). Religious narratives – particularly millenarian narratives – can also serve as modes of resistance in reifying the distinction between a Godly in-group and the massed reprobate (Portier Young, 2011). My contention is that John Traske's Judaizing innovations should be understood as such: as acts of resistance by which he and his

followers *made* themselves different in order to avoid absorption into a population that they anyway assumed to be reprobate.

Como suggests that 'Traske and his associates… had little compunction about submitting to what they perceived as the winds of God's spirit, even when it led them directly away from the safe harbours of orthodoxy (Como, 2004, 149).' This – at very least – is true. The practices which the Traskites employed, most notably but not exclusively their Judaizing practices, set them at odds with their peers. But the practices they employed also functioned *intrinsically* as modes of separation. Sabbath observation, the separation of meats, the celebration of the Passover are all intrinsically associated with a concern for separation. It may seem incongruous that Traske, associated as he was with anti-legal forms of Protestant divinity and soteriology, would gravitate towards apparently ceremonial modes of worship. However, on closer inspection, we find that all aspects of Traske's divinity – the Johannine overtones of his writing, the Familist overtones of his soteriology, the Judaizing overtones of his ritual practice – speak to an underlying and abiding concern with separation and resistance. 'It is not the signe, but the thing signified,' wrote John Traske. 'Not the shew, but the substance (Traske, 1615b, 25).'

References

Anon. (1650). *The Moralitie of the Fourth Commandment*. London.

Amit, Y. (2000). *Hidden Polemics in the Biblical Narrative*. Leiden, Brill.

Andrewes, L. (1618). *A sermon preached before His Maiestie at Whitehall, on Easter day last. 1618. By the Bishop of Elie, His Maiesties almoner*. London.

Andrewes, L. A. (1854). A Speech Delivered in the Star Chamber Against the Judaical Opinions of M. Traske. In: *Two Answers to Cardinal Perron and Other Miscellaneous Works of Lancelot Andrewes*. Oxford, Parker. pp. 81-93.

Bacon, F. (1872). *The Works of Francis Bacon*. London, Longman.

Bale, A. (2006). *The Jew in the Medieval Book: English Antisemitisms 1350-1500*. Cambridge, CUP.

Ball, B. (1981). *The English Connection: The Puritan Roots of Seventh-Day Adventist Belief*. Cambridge, James Clarke.

-- (1994). *The Seventh-Day Men*. Cambridge, James Clarke.

Bampfield, T. (1692). *An enquiry whether the Lord Jesus Christ made the world*. London.

Barlow, T. (1692). *Several miscellaneous and weighty cases of conscience learnedly and judiciously resolved.* London.

Barrow, H. (1590). *A Briefe Discoverie of A False Church.* London.
Baumann, R. (1983). *Let Your Words be Few: Symbolism of Speaking and Silence Among Seventeenth-century Quakers*. Cambridge, CUP.
Baxter, R. (1658). *Certain Disputations of Right to Sacraments*. London.
Bell, M. (1994). *Apocalypse How?: Baptist Movements During the English Revolution*. Macon, Mercer University Press.
Bolton, R. (1631). *Instructions for a Right Comforting Afflicted Consciences*. London.
Bozeman, D. (2004). *The Precisianist Strain*. Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina Press.
Brightman, T. (1644), *A Commentary on the Canticles.* London.
Cambridge University Library, Ely Diocesan Records, B/2/35 [first identified by Kenneth Parker].
Cefalu, P. (2004). *Moral Identity in Early Modern England*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.
-- (2017). *The Johannine Renaissance in Early Modern English Literature and Theology*. Oxford, Oxford University Press.
Collier, T. (1656). *A Brief Answer to Some of the Objections and Demurs Made Against the Coming in and Inhabiting of the Jews in this Common-wealth.* London.
Collinson, P. (1989). *The Puritan Character*. Los Angeles, University of California Press.
Collinson, P. 1991. The Cohabitation of the Faithful with the Unfaithful. In: Grell, O. ed. *From Persecution to Toleration*. Oxford, Oxford University Press. pp. 51-76.
-- (1995). Ben Jonson's *Bartholomew Fair*: The Theatre Constructs Puritanism. In: Smith, D. ed. *The Theatrical City*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press. pp. 157-169.
Como, D. (1999). The Kingdom of Christ, The Kingdom of England, the Kingdom of Traske. In: McClendon, and MacDonald, M. eds. *Protestant Identities*. Stanford, Stanford University Press. pp. 63-82.
Como, D. (2004). *Blown by the Spirit*. Stanford, Stanford University Press.
Coryat. T. (1611). *Coryat's Crudities*. London.
Crome, A. (2010). 'The Proper and Naturall Meaning of the Prophets': The Hermeneutic Roots of Judeo-centric Eschatology. *Renaissance Studies.* 24. pp. 725-741.
Davenport, R. (1639). *A new tricke to cheat the Divell*. London.
Davies, A. (2000). *Quakers in English Society*. Oxford, Oxford University Press.
Davis, J. (1986). *Fear, Myth and History*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.
De Certeau, M. (1984). *The Practice of Everyday Life*, trans. Steven Rendall. Los Angeles, University of California Press.

Dell, W. (1660). *The Triall of Spirits Both in Teachers and Hearers*. London.
Denison, S. (1619). *The New Creature*. London.
Dent, A. (1607). *The Plaine Mans Pathway to Heaven*. London.
Douglas, M. (1966). *Purity and Danger*. London, Routledge.
Dury, J. 1652. An Epistolicall Discourse. In: Thomas Thorowgood, *Digitus Dei: New Disoveryes with Such Arguments to Prove that the Jews Inhabite Now in America*. London. a1r-c4r.
Elidad. (1574). *A Good and Fruitful Exhortation*. London.
Eusebius. (1999). *Life of Constantine*, trans. Averil Cameron and Stuart G. Hall. Oxford, Clarendon.
Evelyn, J. (1995). *The Diary of John Evelyn*. Woodbrige, Boydell.
Falconer, J. (1618). *A Briefe Refutation of John Traske's Judaical and Novel Fancyes*. St. Omer.
Fox, G. (1674). *A Looking-Glass for the Jews*. London.
Foxe, J. (1583). *Actes and Monuments*. London.
Foxley, R. (2013). *The Levellers.* Manchester, Manchester University Press.
Fuller, T. (1655). *The Church-History of Britain; From the Birth of Jesus Christ, Until the Year MDCXLVIII*. London.
Gardiner, S. (1886). *Reports on Cases in the Courts of High Commission*. London.
Gouge, W. (1645). *The Progresse of Divine Providence*. London.
Greene, C. (1916). Trask in the Star-Chamber, 1619. *Transactions of the Baptist Historical Society.* 5. pp. 1-10.
Harris, A. (1879). *Œconomy of The Fleete*. London.
Hebdon, R. (1646). *A Guide for the Godly*. London.
Heng, G. 2007. Jews, Saracens, 'Black Men,' Tartars. England in a World of Racial Difference. In: Brown, P. ed. *A Companion to Medieval English Literature, c. 1350-1500*. London, Wiley, pp. 249-255.
Heylyn, P. (1636). *The Historie of the Sabbath*. London.
Hill, C. (1965). *Puritanism and Revolution: Studies in Interpretation of the English Revolution of the Seventeenth Century*. London. Secker and Warburg.
Historical Manuscripts Commission. 1916. The City of Exeter: Letters and other papers (3 of 10). In: *Report On the Records of the City of Exeter*. London, HMSO.
Hodgkin, K. (2010). *Women, Madness and Sin in Early Modern England*. Farnham, Ashgate.
Holyday, B. (1661). *Against Disloyalty Fower Sermons Preach'd in the Times of the Late Troubles*. London.
Hughes, A. (2004). *Gangraena and the Struggle for the English Revolution.* Oxford, Oxford University Press.
J.J. (1655). *The Ressurection of Dead Bones.* London.
Josselin, R. (1976). *The Diary of Ralph Josselin*. Oxford, Oxford University Press.

Katz, D. (1988). *Sabbath and Sectarianism in Seventeenth Century England*. Leiden, Brill.
Katz, D. (1994). *The Jews in the History of England.* Oxford, Clarendon.
Kellet, E. (1641). *Tricoenivm Christi: in nocte proditionis suae*. London.
Killeen, K. (2009). *Biblical Scholarship, Science and Politics in Early Modern England*. Farnham, Ashgate.
Kraemer, D. (2007). *Jewish Eating and Identity Through the Ages*. London, Routledge.
Lake, P. (2001). *The Boxmaker's Revenge*. Manchester, Manchester University Press.
-- (2002). *The Anti-Christ's Lewd Hat*. London, Yale University Press.
-- (2006). Anti-Puritanism: The Structure of a Prejudice. In: Kenneth Fincham (ed.) *Religious Politics in Post-reformation England.* Woodbridge, Boydell. pp. 80-97.
Lake, P and Isaac Stephens. (2015). *Scandal and Religious Identity in Early Stuart England*. Woodbridge, Boydell.
Lightfoot, J. 1662. Preface giving some Accompt of the Authours Life. In: Broughton, H. *The Works of the Great Albionean Divine Mr Hugh Broughton.* London. pp. a1v-d1v.
Luomanen, P. (2012). *Recovering Jewish-Christian Sects and Gospels*. Leiden, Brill.
Macaulay, T. (1967 [1848]). *History of England*. London, Heron.
Mack, P. (1992). *Visionary Women*. Los Angeles, University of California Press.
Mather, S. (1683). *The Figures or Types of the Old Testament*. Dublin.
McDowell, N. (2005). The Stigmatizing of Puritans as Jews in Jacobean England: Ben Jonson, Francis Bacon and the Book of Sports controversy. *Renaissance Studies.* 19. pp. 348-363.
McManus, E. (1993). *Law and Liberty in Early New England*. Amherst, University of Massachusetts Press.
Milton, A. (2007). Religion and Community in Pre-Civil War England. In: Tyacke, N. ed. *The English Revolution*. Manchester, Manchester University Press, pp. 62-81.
Morrill, J. (1984). The Religious Context of the English Civil War. *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society.* 34. pp. 155-178.
Naogeorg, T. (1570). *The Popish Kingdom*. London.
National Archives. State Papers Domestic James I. volume 96.
National Archives. State Papers Domestic Charles I. volume 261.
National Library of Scotland. The Examination of John Pecke. MS Adv. 33.1.6, vol. 20, f. 60.
Norris, E. (1638). *The New Gospel*. London.
Pagitt, E. (1662). *Heresiography, or, A description and history of the hereticks and sectaries sprang up in these latter times*. London.

Parker, K. (1988) *The English Sabbath*. Cambridge, CUP.
Patai, R. (1989) *The Myth of the Jewish Race.* Detroit, Wayne State University Press.
Penington, I. (1664). *Many Deep Considerations*. London.
Popkin, R. (1992). *The Third Force in Seventeenth Century Thought*. Leiden, Brill.
Portier-Young, A. (2011). *Apocalypse Against Empire*. Cambridge, Eerdmans.
Prynne, W. (1656). *A Short Demurrer to the Jews*. London.
Reay, B. 1984. Quakerism and Society. In: McGregor, J and *Reay, B.* eds. *Radical Religion*. Oxford, Oxford University Press, pp. 141-164.
Roberts, R. (1904). *Calendar of the Manuscripts of the Marquis of Salisbury*. London, HMSO. vol. 10.
Rubin, M. 2004. Identities. In: Horrox, R. ed. *A Social History of England 1200-1500.* Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, pp. 408-41.
Ruether, R. (1985). *Faith and Fratricide.* Oregon, Wipf.
Ryrie, A. (2013). *Being Protestant in Reformation Britain*. Oxford, Oxford University Press.
Saltmarsh, J. (1647). *Sparkles of Glory.* London.
Sclater, W. (1619). *An Exposition with Notes upon Thessalonians*. London.
Scott, J. (1990). *Domination and the Arts of Resistance*. New Haven, Yale University Press.
Seaver, P. (1985). *Wallington's World*. Stanford, Stanford University Press.
Skinner, Q. 2003. Seeing Things Their Way. In: Skinner, Q. *Visions of Politics: Regarding Method*. Cambridge, CUP, pp. 1–8.
Smith, R. (1983). Christian Judaizers in Early Stuart England. *Historical Magazine of the Protestant Episcopal Church.* 52 (2). pp. 125-133.
Spraggon, J. (2000). Puritan Iconoclasm in England 1640-1660. PhD Thesis, University of London.
Sprunger, K. (1994). *Trumpets from the Tower: English Puritan Printing in the Netherlands, 1600-1640*. Leiden, Brill.
Skinner, P. (2003). *The Jews in Medieval Britain: Historical, Literary and Archaeological Perspectives*. Woodbridge, Boydell.
Stacey, R. (001) Anti-Semitism and the Medieval English State. In: Maddicott, J. R. and Palliser, D.M. eds. *The Medieval State: Essays Presented to James Campbell*. London, Hambledon, pp. 163-177.
Stennett, E. (1666). *The Royal Law Contended For*. London.
Stubbes, P. (1583). *Anatomie of Abuses.* London.
Sutcliffe, A. 2011. Introduction. In: Sutcliffe, A. ed. *Philosemitism in History*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press. pp. 1-29.
Tait, J. (1917). The Declaration of Sports for Lancashire. *English Historical Review.* 32. pp. 561-568.
Tajfel, H. (1970). Experiments in intergroup discrimination. *Scientific American.* 223. pp. 96-102.
-- (1978). *Human Groups and Social Categories*. Cambridge, CUP.

-- (1982). Social psychology of intergroup relations. *Annual Review of Psychology*. 33. pp. 1-39.
Termini, C. 2009. *Philo's* Thought within the Context of Middle Judaism. In: Kamesar, A. ed. *The Cambridge Companion to Philo*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, pp. 95-123.
Thorowgood, T. (1652). *Digitus Dei*. London.
Thurloe, J. (1742). *A Collection of the State Papers of John Thurloe*. London, Davis.
Traske, J. (1615). *Christ's Kingdome Discovered*. London.
-- (1616). *Heauens ioy*. London.
-- (1615). *A Pearl for a Prince*. London.
-- (1620). *A Treatise on Libertie from Judaisme*. London.
-- (1623). *The Power of Preaching*. London.
-- (1636). *The True Gospel Vindicated*. London.
Tyacke, N. (1990). *Anti-Calvinists: the rise of English Arminianism.* Oxford, Oxford University Press.
Ussher, J. (1864). *The Whole Works of the Reverend James Ussher.* London.
Wallington, N. (2007). *The Notebooks of Nehemiah Wallington*. Aldershot, Ashgate.
van Walraven, K. 1978. Rethinking Resistance in African History: an Introduction. In: Abbink, J. ed. *Rethinking Resistance: Revolt and Violence in African History.* White Plains, M. E. Sharpe, pp. 1-40.
Walsham, A. (2006). *A Charitable Christian Hatred*. Manchester, MUP.
-- (2017). The Happiness of Suffering. In: Braddick M. ed. *Suffering and Happiness in England 1550-1850*. Oxford, Oxford University Press, pp. 45-65.
Webster, T. (2003). *Godly Clergy*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.
-- (2008). Early Stuart Puritanism. In: Coffey, J and Lim, P. eds. *The Cambridge Companion to Puritanism*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, pp. 48-66.
Widdowes, G. (1630). *The Schysmaticall Puritan*. London.
Willen, D. (1995). The Communion of the Saints. *Albion.* 27. pp. 19-41.
Zafirovski, M. (2007). *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Authoritarianism*. New York, Springer.