EARLY MODERN LITERARY STUDIES

A Reexamination of the Spelling Revisions in the *Paradise Lost* Book I Manuscript

Cameron Hunt McNabb
Southeastern University
chmcnabb@seu.edu

Curran McQuade

With Milton studies' increasing interest in material culture, it is not surprising that attention has recently been devoted to Milton's manuscripts, such as in Thomas Fulton's *Historical Milton: Manuscript, Print, and Political Culture in Revolutionary England*, John Creaser's 'Editing Lycidas: The Authority of Minutiae', and William Poole's 'The Genres of Milton's Commonplace Book'.[1] Such studies *ipso facto* also investigate Milton's composition and revision practices. All of the works above, though, focus heavily on the Trinity Manuscript and Milton's Commonplace Book, both of which date early in his career, and they often treat the poet's composition and revision practices within those witnesses as relevant only in the service of editorial decisions for constructing received texts and not necessarily valuable in and of themselves. One of Milton's manuscripts has been largely overlooked in these studies – the extant copy of Book I of *Paradise Lost* – and we contend that it provides strong evidence, as of yet underanalyzed, of Milton's later composition and revision practices, in particular regarding Milton's spelling. Our analysis suggests that etymology may have played a more significant role in Milton's spelling than has been previously acknowledged and

We extend our deepest thanks to Dr. William Hackett, Provost of Southeastern University, for his funding and support of this research.

[1] See Thomas Fulton, *Historical Milton: Manuscript, Print, and Political Culture in Revolutionary England* (Amherst, MS: University of Massachusetts Press, 2010); John Creaser, 'Editing *Lycidas*: The Authority of Minutiae', *Milton Quarterly* 44. 2 (2010),73-121; and William Poole, 'The Genres of Milton's Commonplace Book', *The Oxford Handbook of Milton*, ed. by Nicholas McDowell and Nigel Smith (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), pp. 367-81.

that such practices speak to larger trends in early modern English, beyond the scope of Milton's most famous poem.

Besides the usually cursory, but useful, observation of Milton's revision of *Paradise Lost* from a ten- to twelve-book structure between the first and second editions, most discussions of Milton's composition and revision practices for the poem repeat the oft-told anecdotes his former pupils Edward Phillips (also his nephew) and Thomas Ellwood have left behind: that Milton would dictate in parcels that Phillips would then transcribe and give 'correction as to the orthography and pointing';[2] that he composed the poem primarily during the winter because 'his vein never happily flowed but from the autumnal equinoctial to the vernal, and that whatever he attempted [otherwise] was never to his satisfaction, though he courted his fancy never so much, so that in all the years he was about the poem, he may be said to have spent but half his time therein';[3] and that Ellwood joked, 'Thou hast said much here of *Paradise lost*, but what hast thou to say of *Paradise found*?'[4] These anecdotes are fruitful in providing small windows into Milton's composition practices for the poem, or at least how those practices were remembered and retold by his close companions, but they do little to speak to larger patterns in Milton's composition or the possible motivations for those patterns.

Moreover, modern scholarship on the manuscript and the revision record it holds is relatively limited and extremely dated. The earliest example is James Holly Hanford's brief article 'The Manuscript of *Paradise Lost*', published in 1928, followed by Helen Darbishire's more substantial book *The Manuscript of Milton's 'Paradise Lost', Book I* in 1931. Darbishire's seminal work remains the most extensive analysis to date.[5] Miltonic spelling guru John T. Shawcross extensively examines the spelling patterns

[2] Quoted in John Milton, *Paradise Lost* ed. by David Scott Kastan (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 2005), p. 421.

[3] Ibid.

[4] Quoted in Barbara K. Lewalski, *The Life of John Milton: A Critical Biography* (Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley and Sons, 2001), p. 444.

[5] See James Holly Hanford, 'The Manuscript of *Paradise Lost*', *Modern Philology* 25. 3 (1928), 313-17 and Helen Darbishire, *The Manuscript of 'Paradise Lost', Book I* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1931). Darbishire undertakes reproducing in facsimile and transcribing the manuscript as well as cataloguing and interpreting not only the revisions within the manuscript itself but also the discrepancies between the manuscript and the first edition. She also expands Hanford's discussion of the manuscript's provenance by including a letter from Jacob Tonson, who succeeded Simmons in publishing *Paradise Lost*, to (supposedly) Jacob Tonson, his own nephew and successor. This letter provides an eighteenth-century comparison between the extant manuscript and previously published volumes. Darbishire also provides a detailed description of the manuscript, framed by her understanding of the manuscript as a printer's copy, including cognate manuscripts with similar markings.

found within the corpus of manuscripts in Milton's hand; and, in his chapter 'Orthography and the Text of *Paradise Lost*', he extends this analysis to the Book I manuscript.[6] Mindele Treip's exhaustive *Milton's Punctuation and Changing English Usage 1582-1676* focuses on Milton's punctuation revisions but does briefly address the spelling revisions in the Book I manuscript in the conclusion.[7] More recent discussions of the manuscript are extremely limited in scope, leaving a significant gap in the scholarship. Our study begins the work of filling that gap.

Although Shawcross reminds us that 'the intricacies of spelling can not be unraveled in a short paper, and lists of spellings can be very dull',[8] this article, lists of spellings and all, argues that there are still a few intricacies in Milton's spelling that can be unraveled. In his aptly titled article 'What We Can Learn from Milton's Spelling', Shawcross contends that a thorough study of Milton's early spelling practices (in the Trinity Manuscript and the Commonplace Book) offers insight into the prosody and meter of verse, his pronunciation, his use of scribes during the composition and publication processes, and a way to date manuscript materials. Subsequent scholars have applied Shawcross's analyses in just these ways, and Shawcross has been the primary advocate for what Treip calls a 'broad chronological evolution toward a simplified, pronunciational spelling' in Milton's work.[9] Current scholarship leaves Shawcross's argument for pronunciation-based spelling largely unchallenged and even relies on it for evaluating Milton's revision practices later in life. However, regarding later manuscripts not written in Milton's hand, like the Book I manuscript, Shawcross calls for closer examination, as 'procedures of writing after his blindness and the employment of specific amanuenses may prove different from what we have considered them to be'.[10] Our analysis of the Book I manuscript does find evidence that supports Shawcross's pronunciational spelling, but it also posits an additional conclusion regarding the role of etymology in Milton's revisions. We contend that this additional consideration was not solely due to the employment of amanuenses but that the intervening decades between Milton's early manuscript witnesses and the Book I manuscript yielded a reconsideration of his spelling practices as well.

---

[6] See John T. Shawcross, 'Orthography and the Text of *Paradise Lost*' in *Language and Style in Milton*, ed. by Ronald David Emma and John T. Shawcross (New York: Frederick Ungar Publishing Co, 1967), pp. 120-53.

[7] See Mindele Treip, *Milton's Punctuation and Changing English Usage 1582-1676* (London, Methuen, 1970)

[8] John T. Shawcross, 'What We Can Learn from Milton's Spelling?', *Huntington Library Quarterly* 26.4 (1963), 351-61 (p. 351).

[9] Treip, p. 123.

[10] Shawcross, 'What We Can Learn', 361.

As John Creaser notes, 'When...a finely wrought literary text survives in multiple versions, then even the tiniest details...may have far-reaching import',[11] and Triep agrees that 'Even a rapid reading of Book I, with attention to spellings and to spelling corrections in the Manuscript and 1667 texts, will convey some useful impressions'.[12] We argue that the revision patterns found in the Book I manuscript – some tiny and some more sizable – not only affirm those previously discerned by Darbishire, Shawcross, and others, particularly in the area of phonetic spelling, but they also reveal one aspect of Milton's spelling that has thus far been largely ignored. Amid the fast-paced and precarious development of early modern English, Milton's spelling revisions also demonstrate attention to etymology, as might be expected from a man of so many tongues, but which has thus far been overlooked in the scholarship. Thus, rather than treat the spelling choices in the Book I manuscript as a means of dating or as witnesses towards a received text of *Paradise Lost*, we explore its orthography as one author's engagement with the evolution of English spelling. The dominant revision patterns in the Book I manuscript document this engagement through two main spelling trends – one based on aural quality, which has been well-documented within the current literature, and another based on etymology, which has thus far been underanalyzed.

I. The Manuscript

The Book I manuscript, currently held in the Morgan Library and Museum, is made up of nineteen loosely-bound leaves, seventeen containing Book I of *Paradise Lost* plus a front and back cover sheet. The verso of the first folio holds the licensor's Imprimatur, which was likely, as Hanford and Darbishire suspect, the main motive behind the preservation of the manuscript.[13]

The publishing contract for *Paradise Lost*, between Milton and his printer Samuel Simmons, is dated April 27, 1667,[14] setting a *terminus post quem* for the date of publication of the first edition and a *terminus ante quem* for the manuscript. Darbishire narrows the window of the completion of the manuscript to the summer of 1665, relying

[11] Creaser, 73.

[12] Treip, p. 121.

[13] There was an early licensing quibble over the anti-monarchical sentiments in I.596-9: 'As when the sun new ris'n / Looks through the horizontal misty air / Shorn of his beames; or from behind the moon / In 'dimme eclipse disastrous twilight sheds / On half the nations, and with fear of change / Perplexes Monarchs'.

[14] Helen Darbishire, *The Manuscript of* Paradise Lost, *Book* I (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1931), x.

upon a reference by Milton's former pupil Thomas Ellwood, who says he was given a copy of the poem during his August visit to the poet in Chalfont. The two-year delay in publication was likely due to the great plague and great fire of 1665 and 1666 respectively.[15]

Hanford appears to be the first to provide an account of the manuscript's provenance and question an earlier assertion that the manuscript was not a printer's copy but rather a separate transcript produced for licensing purposes.[16] He argues instead that '[r]e-examination of the manuscript itself shows conclusively that it is indeed a part of the copy prepared by amanuenses at Milton's direction for the press and that it was actually used in setting Book I of the 1667 text'.[17] He bases this assertion on traces of signature marks and line numbers that correspond to those found in the first printing (these begin at line 495), suggesting the printer was setting the printed text from the extant manuscript. He also dismisses many of the disparities between the manuscript and the first edition, in particular the loss of many terminal 'e's: 'the elimination of large numbers of final e's, are for the most part such as a printer would naturally make in the interests of economy in composition, or they represent simply his judgment of style as opposed to the author's'.[18] Hanford's argument for its highly probable status as the printer's copy remains unchallenged, and Darbishire not only accepts the assertion but further supports it with a letter from one of the poem's eighteenth-century printers, Jacob Tonson, that observes, 'it is plain that the first edition was printed from this very copy'.[19]

By Darbishire's count, the manuscript contains hands from five different amanuenses: an original scribe and four that appear in revisions only.[20] Hanford identifies the main scribe's hand in two entries in the Commonplace Book, and Darbishire attributes some of the manuscript's spelling quirks to him, who, according to her somewhat humorous reading, acted 'under a general sanction from Milton, who must have been well aware of his scribe's incurable habits'.[21] She also speculates, based on certain sight errors, that

[15] John T. Shawcross, *With Mortal Voice* (Lexington, KY: University Press of Kentucky, 1982), p. 174.

[16] Samuel Leigh Sotheby makes this argument in his 1861 *Ramblings in the Elucidation of the Autograph of Milton*.

[17] Hanford, 314.

[18] Ibid., 315.

[19] Darbishire, p. xvi.

[20] Shawcross numbers it at the main scribe plus 'some corrections by Phillips and at least two other people' ('Orthography', 122).

[21] Darbishire, p. xxvi.

the scribe was transcribing from a written text rather than dictation,[22] which seems probable given not only the nature but also the relative infrequency of errors that are corrected in the original scribe's hand. Darbishire also notes that though the hand of the scribe appears briefly in two entries in Milton's Commonplace Book, it is absent from Milton's manuscripts. She also speculates that one of the revising hands is Edward Phillips by comparing his known hand in Bodl. MS Aubrey 8 and Aubrey's marginal note of 'Edward Phillips his cheif Amaneunsis'.[23] Phillips himself supports this assertion when he describes, in his biography of Milton, that 'I had the perusal of it [*Paradise Lost*] from the very beginning, for some years, as I went from time to time to visit him, in a parcel of ten, twenty, or thirty verses at a time, which being written by whatever hand came next, might possibly want correction as to the orthography and pointing'.[24]

In Juliet Lucy's 'Composition and Practice', she observes that the numerous hands of the manuscript, necessitated by the poet's blindness, point to a larger pattern of collaboration regarding Milton's composition and revision practices.[25] She calls 'his compositions... predominantly social or interactive acts', dispelling some of the Romantic lone genius ethos that accumulated around the poet.[26] Her analysis also challenges Darbishire's optimistic assertion regarding the manuscript that 'behind the greater number of the corrections – I will not say all – there is a single mind at work, and that that mind is Milton's'.[27] Particular attention has been given to Phillips' roles from 'correction as to the orthography' of the manuscript to emendations in the early printed editions,[28] and Shawcross finds such collaboration problematic for determining which revisions in the manuscript are 'Miltonic'. Based on incongruities within the manuscript and across the first two editions of *Paradise Lost*, he contends that '[b]oth Phillips' corrections and lack of corrections where needed... indicate his inadequacy as a reproducer of a text which would agree with Milton's spelling' and that he was 'far from fastidious in his correction of the manuscript'.[29]

[22] Ibid., p. xviii.

[23] Ibid., xxi.

[24] Kastan, p. 421.

[25] Juliet Lucy, 'Composition and Process', in *Milton in Context,* ed. by Stephen B. Dobranski (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010), pp. 15-25 (p. 16).

[26] Ibid., p. 15.

[27] Darbishire, p. xxii.

[28] Kastan, p. 421.

[29] Shawcross, 'Orthography and the Text of *Paradise Lost*', pp. 122-3.

The patterns of revision in the Book I manuscript are intrinsically linked to Milton's composition practices and the extent of his own role in revising the text for publication. Given that many hands played a part in producing, revising, and publishing the text, it is not surprising that the manuscript contains inconsistencies that can be difficult to conclusively interpret. Regarding some of the more striking incongruities, Hanford speculates, 'What treachery of printer Simmons or what incapacitating personal or domestic circumstances lie behind these facts we can only guess'.[30] Darbishire does guess at such circumstances, contending,

> This [asserting Milton's authorial control over the majority of the manuscript's revisions] is not to assume that every letter and comma in the manuscript has the poet's authority behind it. I cannot believe that Milton had every word in the text spelt out to him. If he had, there would be fewer discrepancies left in it than there are. I imagine that he got his amanuensis or friendly corrector to read aloud the poem to him, stopped him whenever a doubtful word occurred, and dictated the spelling that he wished: and that he did the same with the punctuation.[31]

Such a practice seems plausible, given the evidence – Darbishire's 'discrepancies' – in the manuscript. Some spellings are corrected once but not throughout, such as 'soil' which is revised from 'soyle' in line 242 but remains 'soyle' in lines 562 and 691. Moreover, some show no clear preference, such as 'Almightie' and 'Almighty', which occur interchangeably. In her discussion of Milton's preterite spellings, Darbishire blames the inconsistencies on his 'amanuenses and printers [who] found these exacting distinctions [of preterite forms] difficult to carry through'.[32] Milton's ability to enact wholesale spelling revisions was clearly limited by whoever was reading and dictating the text to him, accounting for the presence of both specific patterns as well as incongruities within those patterns in the manuscript.[33]

Hanford's, Darbishire's, and Lucy's work demonstrate the complex and inherently speculative nature of analyses such as our own. However, while the conclusions we

[30] Hanford, 316.

[31] Darbishire, p. xxii.

[32] Ibid., p. xxxii.

[33] However, Milton was also capable of giving sustained attention to such a project, such as the anecdote Lewalski notes in her biography: once, in replying to a letter, Milton was forced to use an amanuensis who did not know Latin. Milton says at the end of the letter, 'If you should find here anything badly written or not punctuated, blame it on the boy who wrote this down while utterly ignorant of Latin, for I was forced while dictating--and not without some difficulty--to completely spell out every single letter' (p. 450).

draw admit some degree of conjecture, they are grounded in an extremely close reading of the witness itself as well as relevant contextual data in order to suggest a plausible motivation for the patterns of revision discerned. Even with the degree of collaboration and incongruity seen in the Book I manuscript, Treip suggests that 'the spelling forms in the Manuscript are more characteristic of Milton's practice' and 'the corrections, taken in themselves, are more consistently Miltonic in the Manuscript'.[34] Thus, while Lucy, Shawcross, and Creaser remind us that the manuscript is a product of many minds, not just one, and that each mind's contribution may not be reliable or easily discernible, the manuscript can still be identified as a relatively authoritative printer's copy and patterns of revision, however 'blurred',[35] are observable within it. Patterns that occur more frequently and across many hands are more likely to be 'Miltonic', and these are the ones we explore in this below. While we may admit that there is more than a 'single mind at work' in the manuscript's record, the text itself, and the revision history left behind, still provides substantial evidence for modern scholars to interpret. The manuscript witness demonstrates revision patterns based on pronunciation and on etymology, and both of these connect to broader, contemporaneous concerns within the development of early modern English orthography.

II. Early Modern Orthography

Because the spelling conventions and practices of the seventeenth century were by no means standardized, even though printing was certainly moving the language towards that direction, the chaotic and haphazard connection between early modern spelling and pronunciation led to the advent of English dictionaries and grammars as well as the emergence of several attempts at spelling reform. Texts such as John Hart's *An Orthographie* (1569), Richard Mulcaster's *The First Part of the Elementarie* (1582), Alexander Gil's *Logonomia Anglica* (1619), Simon Daines' *Orthoepia Anglicana* (1640), and *Gazophyacium Anglicanum* (1689) enjoyed widespread popularity.

Early modern spelling reform usually focused on two areas of concern, which corresponded to two main areas of rapid change within the period: first, pronunciation; and second, etymology. The connection between pronunciation and spelling was strong in Old English, where letters could only represent one sound, or at most two, such as hard or soft 'g'. In Middle English, too, despite wildly variant orthography, spelling was closely linked with pronunciation, and letters still only represented one or possibly two

[34] Treip, p. 121.
[35] Ibid.

sounds. Moreover, in both Old and Middle English, no letters were silent. But, by the seventeenth century, English had evolved in ways that created significant distance between words' spellings and their pronunciations. The complex system of case endings present in Old English had been reduced but not completely discarded in Middle English, and vestiges of these endings remained in early modern spellings, usually in the form of a terminal 'e'. Moreover, the Great Vowel Shift continued to slide long vowels across the board, which dragged and pulled other sounds along with it and further altered words' pronunciations. Lastly, early modern English was undergoing self-definition, as it tried to demarcate 'native' and 'foreign' vocabulary, and the lexicon attempted to absorb the heavy influx of Latin and Greek loanwords into the Germanic and French core vocabulary, creating mismatched and varied pronunciations. These pressures on the language converged in the period to produce two (often-conflicting) concerns – pronunciation and etymology – for a reformed spelling system to accommodate. The patterns of revision discerned in the Book I manuscript engage, to varying degrees, with these concerns. Thus, it is crucial to situate the manuscript not only within Milton's own linguistic framework but also within the orthographical conventions of the day in order to best interpret these patterns.

Darbishire points specifically to Daines' *Orthoepia Anglicana* and Gil's *Logonomia Anglica* as crucial for understanding Milton's system of spelling, as Daines' text was published roughly fifteen years prior to the drafting of the extant Book I manuscript, and Gil was Milton's tutor at St. Paul's. These two texts voice differing methods to reforming early modern English orthography. Daines takes a descriptive approach and his primary concern is spelling's ability to indicate accurate pronunciation; Gil is more prescriptive and argues for a complete overhaul of the sounds assigned to the Early Modern English alphabet in order to better systematize spelling and pronunciation. Both, also, briefly discuss how 'foreign' words' origins influence their recommended spellings.

Daines opens his 'To the Reader' with a conventional lament of the 'strange neglect of our English Nation...in their daily endeavors for the perfection of their Tongue or Language' and envisions his work as a way to 'reduce this confused manner of practice to some regular form'.[36] He addresses both orthography and orthoepy in his *Orthoepia Anglicana*, noting the two are 'necessarily so concomitant',[37] and thus he focuses most on spelling's relationship with pronunciation. Darbishire points to Daines' directives as context for the number of terminal 'e's added into the manuscript. Daines instructs, 'E

[36] Simon Daines, *Orthoepia Anglicana* (London, 1640), p. 1.

[37] Ibid, p. 69.

in the end of any English word is never, or very rarely, pronounced'[38] and '*e* never is or ought to be inserted but for some use: Now because *e* finall in our Tongue is of so little effect or estimation'.[39] The uses Daines lists include 'as a generall rule, that E in the end of a word or syllable, thus following a single Consonant, after a Vowell in the same syllable, is never pronounced, but only serves to make the precedent Vowell long; as in Babe, glebe, bribe, robe'[40] and 'for a difference in the pronunciation of *G*, as in *rang*, of ring; and *range* or stray'.[41] Both of these types of terminal 'e' revisions occur in the Book I manuscript (see Table 1 below). Daines does, though, note that in a few instances, terminal 'e' is 'indifferent'.[42] His own spelling preferences indicate a relatively heavy use of terminal 'e's, such as 'joine' (11), 'soone' (12), and 'sweare' (14). While Darbishire looks to Daines for his observations on terminal 'e's, she overlooks his instructions on 'i' or 'y' preference, by far the most common revision found in the Book I manuscript (see Table 3 below). Daines provides this general observation:

> Y... hath in a manner the same force with the Vowell *I*, and in the end of a word may indifferently be written in lieu of an *I*, or rather *Ie*... as in *merry*, or *merrie*; *mercie*, or *mercy*, and the like: and is most generally used in Monosyllables, or words of one syllable, where it sounds *I* long, as in *my*, *thy*, *by*, *why*, which are alwayes written with an *Y*; the rest be indifferent, as *ty*, or *tie*... But in the beginning or middle of a word it is seldome, and that less properly, inserted as a Vowell.[43]

While Daines gestures toward the letters as interchangeable in some instances, he does provide patterns of disparate use, notably when the letter occurs initially or medially. The 'y' to 'i' revisions in the Book I manuscript all occur medially, following Daines' suggestion, and they appear in every hand of the manuscript. Although Treip speculates that 'Milton might either have approved of or been indifferent to the bulk of these later modernizations',[44] the frequency of the revision and its appearance across all hands suggests that it might be more 'Miltonic' than scribal.

[38] Ibid, p. 23.
[39] Ibid, pp. 24-25.
[40] Ibid, p. 21.
[41] Ibid, p. 62.
[42] Ibid, pp. 26, 31, 32.
[43] Ibid, p. 7.
[44] Treip, p. 128.

Darbishire spends more time discussing Gil's influence on Milton, remarking, 'I have little doubt that Alexander Gill, High Master of St. Paul's in Milton's schooldays, first interested his remarkable pupil in English orthography'.[45] Gil's *Logonomia* was published in 1619, and Lewalski notes that Milton entered St. Paul's grammar school sometime between 1615 and 1620, with the latter date being more likely.[46] Gil, high master there during Milton's adolescence, was a respected scholar and theologian, and he 'was also an avid proponent of English spelling reform and the preservation of native Anglo-Saxon elements in the English language'.[47] Lewalski speculates on the tutor's influence over Milton, noting that in *Logonomia*, Gil uses rhetorical examples from the English canon, perhaps 'suggest[ing] that Gil may have encouraged that early love of English and of the English poets that Milton attests to'.[48] Milton's time at St. Paul's also provided him with a close friendship with Gil's son, Alexander Gil, Jr., which kept the poet connected to the family. In his section on spelling, Gil follows Daines' lament and observes that 'since we write one way and pronounce another, no one in sound mind can defend our writing' and thus 'there is ample cause to rectify our chaotic spelling'.[49] Gil argues that spelling must be intentional and purposeful in conveying meaning, not an arbitrary amalgam of signs and sounds (as he felt early modern English was). Unlike Daines, though, he finds that 'nothing more ridiculous can be devised than the mute vowel... in dame and meate, for the shortness and length should be determined in itself, and not in other ways' because 'letters are devised to distinguish the distinct parts of a word and its slightest change'.[50] Darbishire observes a similar impulse in some of Milton's spelling: 'In all his printed works such spellings as *prelat*, *femal*, *facil*, *apostat*, *covnant*, *prisner*, bear witness to his general intention to spell according to the sound and dispense with idle letters'.[51] However, as noted above, Milton does not dispense with all 'mute vowels', as Gil advises, but rather follows Daines' observations instead by adding terminal 'e's to some spellings. Gil also disagrees with Daines' reading of 'i' and 'y' as of 'the same force',[52] asserting instead that 'if an unbiased judge of sounds should consider carefully our use of ['w' and 'y'], he will find them to be consonants'.[53] Gil's own spelling choices within the text support 'i' over 'y' preferences: he spells 'time' (229), 'hail' (186), 'soil' (220), 'voice' (234), 'pain' (208), 'joint' (194), 'avoid'

[45] Darbishire, p. xxxiii.

[46] Lewalski, p. 6.

[47] Ibid.

[48] Ibid.

[49] Gil, p. 94.

[50] Ibid, p. 95.

[51] Darbishire, p. xxx.

[52] Daines, *Orthoepia Anglicana*, 7.

[53] Gil, p. 97.

(158), and ‘giant’ (184), and the Book I manuscript follows these spellings by revising an original ‘y’ to an ‘i’ in each of those cases (see Table 3 below). Collectively, Daines’ and Gil’s texts show that there was much concern but little agreement over acceptable standards in early modern orthography.

III. The Manuscript Revisions

The highly collaborative nature of the Book I manuscript and the revision process that it underwent admit a degree of inconclusivity, as discussed above, in particular because some revisions could be motivated by a scribe’s preference or the result of basic scribal error;[54] however, some general patterns do emerge when the revisions of the manuscript are examined collectively. These patterns are stronger when they occur repeatedly and across multiple hands, suggesting such revisions are more likely from Milton than scribal error or his amanuenses’ proclivities. Moreover, while Shawcross initially excludes the Book I manuscript from his extensive analysis of Milton’s spelling because it is not in Milton’s hand, the manuscript has some authority because it shows a striking number of Milton’s characteristic spellings, despite being written in the hand of an amanuensis. For instance, in the opening fifty lines alone, ‘tast’ (2), ‘woe’ (3), ‘rime’ (16), ‘cheifly’ (17), ‘armes’ (49), ‘thir’ (31),[55] ‘deceav’d’ (35), and ‘bottomles’ (47) all appear, each of which Shawcross or Creaser have identified as a Miltonic spelling.[56] One of Milton’s signature preferences, spelling with ‘-ei’ rather than ‘-ie’, appears consistently in the manuscript, with, by Shawcross’s count, sixty-five instances of ‘-ei’ and only three of ‘-ie’.[57] Lastly, while we cannot rule out Daines’ observation that some spellings may be used ‘indifferently’[58] and Shawcross’s own claim that ‘no spelling system appears’,[59] the methodical attention, across multiple hands, to spelling details points to such revisions being motivated by more than indifference.[60]

[54] We have excluded revisions made by the hand of the original scribe because they are most likely the result of sight errors and do not likely indicate a revision suggested by Milton himself.

[55] To further confirm Milton’s unique spelling, ‘ther’ has twice been corrected to ‘thir’ in the manuscript (614, 616).

[56] See Shawcross’s ‘What We Can Learn’, ‘One Aspect’, and ‘Orthography’, and Creaser for these and other Miltonic spellings.

[57] Shawcross, ‘Orthography and the Text of *Paradise Lost*’, 140.

[58] Daines, p. 7.

[59] Shawcross, ‘What We Can Learn’, 361.

[60] A last possible motivation could be publisher’s preference; however, the great number of spelling disparities between the manuscript and the first edition (see Hanford and Darbishire) indicate the publisher had no issue revising Milton’s spellings to his tastes before going to press. Moreover, the

Darbishire and Shawcross discuss some of these patterns in depth, some only cursorily, and some not at all. We have documented the patterns we discerned in the manuscript below, dividing these findings into three categories: aural-based, etymologically-based, and miscellaneous.

Aural-Based Revisions

Darbishire contends that, overwhelmingly, Milton's 'first aim was to spell according to the sound',[61] and the patterns she discerns in the spelling revisions support her emphasis on aural quality. Shawcross's impressive survey of Milton's spelling observes a similar impulse, toward simplicity and phoneticism. Treip also supports this claim, noting that 'Milton had formulated... many distinctive, often prosodically or phonetically significant spellings'.[62]

Darbishire spends much time on the use of terminal 'e's in the manuscript and notes that '[Milton] uses final *-e* to indicate that the preceding vowel is long, and omits it when the preceding vowel is short',[63] as Daines instructs. As evidence of this pattern, she cites the revised 'rinde' (206), 'change' (598), 'revenge' (604), as well as analogue spellings in 'wilde' and 'kinde' within the manuscript. Shawcross finds that Milton's use of terminal 'e' changes over time, suggesting that 'between July 1641 and January 1642 Milton had apparently become almost consistent in his spelling practice of omitting idle "e".'[64] Given this assumption, he argues that the 108 uses of terminal 'e' in the Book I manuscript are not Miltonic. However, the manuscript evidences a small number of instances where a terminal 'e' has been added, suggesting attention to this aspect of orthography. The four revisions follow Daines' instructions about a terminal 'e' shifting a preceding 'g' to soft rather than hard (in 'change' and 'revenge') or to indicate a long preceding vowel ('rinde' and possibly 'eye'). Table 1 contains each occurrence of the revision pattern:[65]

---

discrepancies in spelling (such as some remaining 'y'-spellings where 'i'-spellings are preferred) more likely point to Milton's limited ability to revise than a publisher's wholesale revision process.

[61] Darbishire, p. xxix.

[62] Treip, p. 121.

[63] Darbishire, p. xxx.

[64] John T. Shawcross, 'One Aspect of Milton's Spelling: Idle Final "E"', *PMLA* 78.5 (1963), 501-10 (p. 505).

[65] All of the revisions above were made by the hand that Darbishire identifies as Edward Phillips. She cites that he 'always uses the Greek form of *e*' (p. xx), which appears in each of the revisions. Although

Table 1

Location	Original Spelling	Corrected Spelling	Other Occurrences
6r.206	rind	rinde	None
11r.456	ey	eye[66]	eyes (56) eys (193) eye (568, 604)
14r.598	chang	change	chang'd (84, 97, 253) change (96, 244, 313, 625)
14v.604	reveng	revenge	revenge (35, 107)

These four revisions indicate some attention to pronunciation but do not constitute a major pattern of revision, particularly given that they all occur in the same hand. Three other aural-based patterns of both spelling and revision, though, are stronger.

One consistent pattern of spelling occurs in the differentiation between the preterite forms 'ed' and ''d', as both Darbishire and Shawcross have noted. Throughout the text, ''d' elides with the preceding syllable, while 'ed' is monosyllabic. Darbishire observes, 'when *e* is required to indicate a metrical syllable he spells *-ed*... when *e* is required to indicate, not a metrical syllable, but the length of the preceding vowel, or the soft pronunciation of *g* or *c*, he omits *e* and indicates its omission by an apostrophe'.[67] Shawcross agrees and expands his analysis to account for nuances in root words.[68] As evidence of these patterns, 'flam'd' (62) is read as monosyllabic, and 'involv'd' (236) and 'amaz'd' (281) are disyllabic. In contrast, 'rallied' (269) and 'wounded' (452) take two syllables and 'astounded' (281), 'corrupted' (368), and 'dilated' (429) are read as three. A revision within the manuscript provides further evidence of this pattern. Line

---

Shawcross finds Phillips 'inadequa[te]' and 'far from fastidious' ('Orthography', 122, 123), he does admit that, based on some Miltonic spellings in the author's former student Cyriack Skinner, some spelling choices might reflect 'a scribe (or student) who had learned and sometimes used some of Milton's practices', ('What We Can Learn', 354). Phillips certainly made some revisions that do reflect Miltonic spelling, as will be discussed below.

[66] Shawcross believes that 'eye' became a preferred spelling for Milton ('Orthography', 141).

[67] Darbishire, *The Manuscript of* Paradise Lost, *Book I*, xxxi.

[68] Shawcross, 'Orthography and the Text of *Paradise Lost*', 133.

41 originally read ‘If he opposed; and with ambitious aime’, which scans as eleven syllables, but ‘opposed’ was revised to ‘oppos’d’ to maintain the iambic pentameter.[69]

A similar pattern emerges in the use of ‘th’’ as a substitute for ‘the’ for metrical reasons. Darbishire notes, ‘*The* before a vowel has been corrected to *th’*, to denote metrical elision’.[70] Every instance of ‘th’’ occurs before a word beginning with a vowel and elides with the first syllable of the following word. Thus, ‘th’’ isn’t monosyllabic but rather attaches itself to proceeding word. In contrast, ‘the’ is always monosyllabic and receives its own syllable within each line. This pattern is confirmed in three revisions of ‘the’ to ‘th’’ (49, 81, 406), the first two of which contain a scratched through ‘e’ and the third is struck through in the hand of an amanuensis. For example, line 406 appears to have originally read, ‘Next Chemos, the obscene dread of Moabs sons’, which contains eleven syllables. A revision is made, changing ‘the’ to ‘th’’, which then elides with ‘obscene’ and allows the line to scan.

A third pattern of spelling appears in the distinct uses of the contracted ‘heav’n’ or ‘heavn’, as opposed to ‘heaven’. Although Shawcross quips that scholars ‘should no longer worry that both *heavn* and *heav’n* represent one metrical beat’,[71] the pattern bears repeating here as part of the larger context of aural-based revisions. Darbishire notes, ‘Throughout the first book the word *Heaven* is invariably printed *heav’n* where it is a monosyllable and *heaven* where it is a disyllable’.[72] Although she overstates the case with the assertion this pattern is ‘invariabl[e]’, as some lines do not conform to this pattern, the framework is strongly consistent.[73] For example, ‘Sing heavn’ly Muse, that on the secret top’ (6); ‘Had cast him out from heav’n; with all his host’ (37); ‘In dubious battell on the plain’s of Heav’n’ (74); and ‘Hath lost us Heavn, and all this mighty host’ (136) all scan with ‘heav’n’ as one syllable. Conversely, ‘Of Heavens azure; and the torrid clime’ (297); ‘And powers that earst in Heaven sat on thrones’ (360); and ‘Thir glory withered. As when Heavens fire’ (612) all scan with ‘Heaven’ as two syllables. The manuscript’s revisions further support this framework in three revisions of the word (104, 136, 612) across at least two hands. For instance, line 104 originally read, ‘In dubious battell on the plain’s of Heavn’. First, the original scribe inserted an ‘e’ in ‘Heaven’, presumably working off of his copy text, giving the line eleven syllables

[69] Andre Verbart notes that only 119 lines in the poem are hypermetric; seventy of them appear in Books IX and X. Andre Verbart, ‘Measure and Hypermetricality in *Paradise Lost, English Studies* 80, no. 5 (1999), 428.

[70] Darbishire, p. xxxi.

[71] Shawcross, ‘Orthography and the Text of *Paradise Lost*’, 149.

[72] Darbishire, p. xxxi.

[73] For instance, line 131 – ’Fearless; endanger’d Heavens perpetuall King’ – contains a feminine ending.

instead of ten. Then another hand struck through the inserted ‘e’ and replaced it with an apostrophe, restoring the line’s original pentameter. The revisions of line 136 are similar. The third instance of a ‘Heaven’ revision comes at line 612 and inserts rather than omits the ‘e’. The line originally read ‘Thir glory witherd. As when Heavns fire’, but the ‘e’ inserted into ‘Heaven’ makes the line scan correctly.[74]

The revisions discussed above certainly demonstrate attention to aural quality as a motivation for spelling, as advised by contemporaries Daines and Gil and analyzed by Darbishire and Shawcross. However, collectively, these aural-based spelling revisions only constitute roughly one-sixth of those found in the manuscript and do not produce any real significant attention to the larger patterns of development within early modern English. Far more frequent are revisions that we have placed under etymologically-motivated, a category largely undertreated by Darbishire and Shawcross.

Etymologically-Based Revisions

Darbishire’s focus on the aural nature of Milton’s revisions leads her to conclude that ‘It will be seen that Milton has avoided the so-called etymological spellings (the etymology was often false) foisted on our language in the sixteenth century with such misguided fervor by the classicists’.[75] However, she does allow for some etymologically-based revisions, particularly in the case of ‘unusual words of classical or Hebrew origin’, and she reservedly acknowledges, ‘although no pedant in his English spelling, [Milton] naturally chose the form that is nearest to the Latin or other original, where it conformed to the English pronunciation’.[76] Shawcross, too, in his extensive work on Milton’s spelling almost entirely ignores the role etymology might have played, with only two mentions of provenance in passing.[77] Treip also ignores etymological concerns, remarking off-hand that some revisions may be ‘significant in some other way, for instance in showing semantic derivations, grammatical distinctions, etc.’,[78] and even suggests that ‘Milton’s spelling often seems more fully representational

[74] A revision from ‘withrid’ to ‘witherd’ also occurs in this line. See Table 4 below.

[75] Darbishire, p. xxix.

[76] Ibid, p. xxxiii.

[77] Shawcross speculates that three words’ French origin might account for their ‘-ie’ rather than Milton’s preferred ‘-ei’ spellings in the Book I manuscript; see Shawcross, ‘Orthography and the Text of *Paradise Lost*’, 140. He also observes that in the manuscripts in Milton’s own hand, Milton used the ligatures æ and œ and ‘in all instances, these are etymologically correct’; see Shawcross, ‘Orthography and the Text of *Paradise Lost*’, 145.

[78] Treip, p. 122.

phonetically than his period's'.[79] We contend, however, that etymology played a significantly larger role in Milton's revision practices than either Darbishire or Shawcross admits.

Contemporary discussions of spelling also showed concern for etymology, such as Daines' *Orthoepia Anglicana*, Gil's *Logonomia Anglica*, and most importantly the etymological dictionary, *Gazophylacium Anglicanum*. The latter's title page advertises that it is 'Fitted to the Capacity of the English Reader, that may be curious to know the Original of his Mother-tongue'. Each of these texts attempt to reconcile the chaotic system of early modern orthography with some attention to etymological roots, demonstrating that not just pronunciation but etymology was a concern for spelling reformers, and possibly epic poets alike.

First, several revisions in the manuscript do not indicate a clarification or difference in pronunciation; thus, another motive for the revision, such as etymology, must be at play. The first set of these revisions that we have identified (see Table 2 below) occurs in twelve instances across three, possibly four, hands. Many of the revisions in this category can be traced to the hand Darbishire identifies as Edward Phillips, which is not surprising as Phillips, later author of the dictionary *The New World of English Words*, would have been attuned to the etymological basis for the revised spellings. His tell-tale Greek 'Ɛ' can be found in the revisions for 'ethereal', 'fiery', 'Cherube', 'wheeles', 'deities', and 'beyond'.

Table 2 below catalogues this first category of etymologically-based revisions with the manuscript's original and revised spellings along with each word's etymology. In cases where the word is included in the *Gazophylacium Anglicanum*, that dictionary confirms the listed etymology as well, refuting Darbishire's assertion that etymologies in Milton's period were often false.[80] The table also includes other occurrences of each word in Book I to indicate the breadth of the spelling preference.[81]

[79] Ibid, p. 123.

[80] Darbishire, p. xxix.

[81] Etymologies are taken from the *Oxford English Dictionary*.

Table 2

Location	Original Spelling	Corrected Spelling	Etymology	Other Occurrences
2v.45, 7v.285	etherial	ethereal[82]	L – aetherius, aethereus G – αἰθέριος	None
3r.52	roling	rowling[83]	OF – rëoller, roueler, rolle,	rowld (223) rowling (324, 671)
3r.52, 5v.173	firy	fiery	OE – fȳr Old Saxon – fiur	fiery (68, 184, 377)
5r.157	Cherub	Cherube[84]	OE – cherubin L – cherubim	Cherube (324) Cherub (534)
6v.234	entralls	entrails	OF – entraille, entrailles	None
7v.261	raign	reign[85]	OF – reigne L – regnum	raign (102, 124) reign (261, 262, 263, 497, 514, 543, 637)
8v.311	wheles	wheeles	OE – hweogol, hweowol, hwéol	wheels (786)
9v.373	dieties	deities	OF – dëité L – deitās	None
14r.587	byond	beyond	OE – begeondan	beyond (409, 542, 781)
17v.754	proclame	proclaime	OF – claime L – clāmāre	None
17v.755	Counsell	councell[86]	OF – cuncile L – concilium	None

Each of the revisions above do not alter the word's pronunciation or the line's metrical stress, suggesting that the revision was not aurally-based. Instead, each revision shows attention to the word's etymology as a motivating factor for a revised spelling.

[82] Darbishire specifically notes that the revision to 'Cherub' and 'ethereal' were likely etymologically motivated: Milton's 'scholarship made him exacting about the spelling of unusual words of classical or Hebrew origin; thus he is careful to correct *etherial* to *ethereal*, and writes *Cherube* for the Hebrew word pronounced *Kerob*' (p. xxxiii).

[83] Shawcross notes that Milton preferred 'rowl' and 'roul' to 'roll'; see 'Orthography and the Text of *Paradise Lost*', 139.

[84] See footnote 76 above.

[85] Shawcross notes Milton's early spelling of 'reigne' in the Trinity Manuscript; see 'One Aspect', 503.

[86] This particular revision indicates a differentiation from 'counsel', which occurs in lines 88, 168, 636, and 660, based on differing etymologies.

If Milton was revising due to etymology in the words above, an additional spelling pattern may be traced to a similar impulse. By far the most common correction found in the Book I manuscript is a revision of 'y' to 'i'. This occurs twenty-two times, in three or four hands, and is one example of Darbishire's 'systematic overhauling'.[87] Shawcross briefly addresses a similar pattern in Milton's later preference for 'said', 'paid', and 'laid', while 'sayd', 'payd', and 'layd' all appear in his earlier pamphlets,[88] but he finds that '[i]nternal *i* and *y* are sometimes interchangeable: *stile*, *rime*, and *silvan*. *Trial* and *tryal* are used indecisively in ms. [sic] and in print'.[89] He also observes that while Milton sometimes employed 'oy' and 'ay' forms, his preference was for 'oi' and 'ai', which Shawcross calls 'standard forms'.[90]

The revisions in the manuscript follow Daines' instruction that 'in the beginning or middle of a word ['y'] is seldome, and that less properly, inserted as a Vowell',[91] as every revised 'y' in the manuscript occurs medially. Daines also explicitly states there is no difference in the two letters' sound qualities, suggesting again that the motive for revision was not due to pronunciation. These revisions also follow Gil's distinction of 'i' as a vowel and 'y' as a consonant. However, while these contexts are crucial regarding what spellings are preferred for certain words, they do not speak to the motivations behind those preferences. We contend that one motivation behind the Book I manuscript's 'y' to 'i' revisions could be to preserve an etymological spelling.

Each of the words where 'y' has been revised to 'i' has origins in Old and Middle English, with the majority stemming from Anglo-Norman (AN). Four of the sixteen words that have a 'y' to 'i' spelling revision come from Old English (OE); however, two ('mightier' and 'business') are utilizing 'i's in a suffix and not within the root. Thus 'time' and 'hail' remain as the two words rooted in OE. The remaining twelve words with 'y' to 'i' spelling revisions come from French roots, whether through AN or Middle French (MF). As with 'mightier' and 'business', four words employ the 'i' as part of a suffix and not the root. These include 'rallied', 'armies', 'Orgies', and 'Idolatries'. Of the remaining revised words, every one of them hails an Old French (OF) or Anglo-French (AF) origin, which favors an 'i'-construction over a 'y'-construction.

[87] Darbishire, p. xxvi.

[88] Shawcross, 'Orthography and the Text of *Paradise Lost*', 134.

[89] Ibid, 138.

[90] Ibid, 140.

[91] Daines, p. 7.

Table 3 below catalogues this second category of etymologically-motivated revision with the manuscript's original and revised spellings along with each word's etymology. When present, the *Gazophylacium Anglicanum* confirms the listed etymology as well. The table also includes other occurrences of each word in Book I to indicate the breadth of the spelling preference.

Table 3

Location	Original Spelling	Corrected Spelling	Etymology	Other Occurrences
3r.50 7r.253 17v.769	tyme	time	OE – tima	time (36, 166)
5v.171	hayle	haile	OE – haegel	haile (250)
7r.242	soyle	soile	OF – sueil, suil, souil AF – soil	soyle (562, 691)
7v.274 9r.337	voyce	voice	OF – voix, voiz, vois AF – voice, voisce, veiz, vice	voice (712)
9r.336	payns	pains	OF – peine, paine, paigne, poine	pain (55, 125, 558, 562, 608)
9r.337	obay[x]'ds	obai'ds	OF – obëir	disobedience (1)
9v.366	tryall	trial	AF – trial, triel	None
10v.426	joynt	joint	OF – joint, jointe, joincte ME – joinen	None
12r.505	avoyds	avoide	OF – esvudier AN – avoider	voyd (181)
13r.576 18r.778	gyant	giant	OF – jaiant, jëant, geiant, gëant OE – gigant, gigent	None

This preference for 'i' spellings can also be seen in other analog words – all of OF or AN origin – in the manuscript that are unrevised, such as 'regaine' (5), 'guile', (34), and 'ruine' (46).[92] Shawcross mentions Milton's preference for 'choise' over 'choyse',[93] another word of OF origin. These can be contrasted with words like 'Abysse' (21, 658),

[92] Some OF or AN words do employ a 'y' spelling in the manuscript and remain unrevised: 'joynd' (90, 755), voyd' (181), 'foyld' (273), 'toyle' (319, 698), 'loyns' (352), 'pay'd' (441), and 'boyleing' (706).

[93] Shawcross, 'Orthography and the Text of *Paradise Lost*', 141.

which ignores Daines' instructions on medial 'y's and instead preserves the 'y' from its Latin antecedent *abyssus*. The corrected 'eye' from 'ey' might also have an etymological motivation, from its origins in OE æge (see Table 1 above).

These examples constitute roughly half of the manuscript's spelling revisions, far more than those that are aurally-motivated, and they demonstrate clear attention to etymology as a basis for the spelling revisions, a motivation that is significantly overlooked by previous scholarship.

Miscellaneous

While the patterns and possible motivations for the revisions above admit some degree of speculation, those speculations are grounded in plausible concerns for Milton and the linguistic and historical contexts that surrounded him. Several words, however, that are revised in the manuscript appear to have no aural or etymological basis for the revision and other possible motivations are dubious at best. These fall under Darbishire's 'discrepancies' description. Hanford attributes such incongruities to 'treachery' and 'incapacitating personal or domestic circumstances',[94] while Darbishire more reservedly notes, 'we cannot rule out the possibility that one or other of these people [his amanuenses], with the manuscript in his hand, introduced an alteration where he thought it necessary, without Milton's authority'.[95] She also posits that 'Milton must have arrived at his system of spelling by gradual stages, and perhaps he never succeeded in using it quite consistently',[96] a suggestion Shawcross confirms in his close analysis of *Paradise Lost*, calling on future studies to be conducted 'unencumbered by the supposition that the minutiae of spelling are a necessary part of his technique as a metrical artist'.[97] Creaser actually calls this focus on minutiae 'more Miltonic than Milton himself'.[98] Treip, like Shawcross and Creaser, also embraces incongruities within the manuscript, noting that 'some vacillation is...entirely understandable, considering the chaos of English spelling then and the fact that it is at present still far from consistent logically'.[99] Thus, as expected, some spelling revisions within the manuscript, occurring across three or possibly four hands, do not fit neatly into a

[94] Hanford, 316.

[95] Darbishire, pp. xxii-iii.

[96] Ibid, p. xxxv.

[97] Shawcross, 'Orthography and the Text of *Paradise Lost*', 150.

[98] Creaser, 87.

[99] Treip, p. 123.

discernible pattern. We have placed these words into a miscellaneous category and have included these in Table 4 below out of thoroughness.

Table 4

Location	Original Spelling	Corrected Spelling	Other Occurrences
2v.24	higth	highth	high (30, 40, 92, 98, 132, 161, 212, 282, 304, 366, 463, 517, 528, 536, 552, 666, 667, 723, 733, 749, 756)
3r.54	wrath	Wrauth	wrauth (110, 220)
12r.493	smokt	smoak'd	smoak (237, 671)
14v.612	withrid	Witherd	None
14v.617	enclose	Inclose	None
15v.673	womb	Womb	None
17v.756	Capitoll	Capitall[100]	None

IV. Conclusion

The Book I manuscript provides one document's record of early modern revision practices and a glimpse into some of the larger, complex motivations of early modern spelling. Certainly the record is embedded within the larger printing and publishing trends of the period, a milieu in which Milton was particularly active, and it employs contemporaneous approaches to spelling reform based on both pronunciation and etymology. Lastly, the elements of inconsistency and error must also not be neglected in interpreting the surviving record.

Following Shawcross's lead, modern scholarship on Milton's spelling has drifted away from the search for what Creaser calls the 'conceived text' in its earliest, manuscript form, which comes dangerously close to authorial intention, and more towards social contract editions that document the nuances and complex processes of literary texts. In such a trend, spelling revisions, such as those documented in this article, would rank

[100] Darbishire attributes this revision not to Milton but to the ignorance of one of the manuscript's correctors: 'The original 'Capitoll' is etymologically correct, given its origins in the Capitoline hill at Rome... It is hard to believe that the change in the manuscript from *Capitoll* to *Capitall* was not made by some officious corrector. *Capitol* is unquestionably right' (p. xxv).

lower on Creaser's 'hierarchy of authority'.[101] However, the shift towards documenting process rather than product still treats matters like spelling as a means to an end and not an end in and of itself. Our analysis hopes to explore how the revisions in the Book I manuscript are situated within and speak to the orthographic and linguistic concerns of early modern English's evolution, regardless of the service these revisions might provide for editorial decisions. This line of inquiry opens up additional possibilities for investigation, such as further exploring Milton's relationship with the imperatives of early modern spelling reformers or revisiting other Miltonic manuscripts with an eye towards etymological considerations.

[101] Creaser, 82.