

Notes

Introduction

1. 'But if I were bringing a case against God [Christina Rossetti] is one of the first witnesses I should call ... First she starved herself of love, which meant also life; then of poetry in deference to what she thought religion demanded'. *Virginia Woolf Diaries*, vol. 1 1915–19, ed. A. O. Bell (London: Hogarth Press, 1977), p. 178.
2. Virginia Woolf, *The Common Reader, Second Series* (London: Hogarth Press, 1932), p. 242.
3. Germaine Greer, *Slip-Shod Sibyls: Recognition, Rejection, and the Woman Poet* (London: Viking, 1995), p. 359.
4. Betty S. Flowers, introduction to *The Complete Poems*, ed. R. W. Crump (London: Penguin, 2001), xlvii.
5. WMR identifies 'one serious flaw' in his sister's 'admirable character — she was by far over-scrupulous' (*Memoir* lxviii).
6. WMR, preface to *New Poems by Christina Rossetti, Hitherto Unpublished or Uncollected* (London: Macmillan 1900), p. xii.
7. Lynda Palazzo, *Christina Rossetti's Feminist Theology* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2002), p. 23.
8. Colleen Hobbs, 'A View from "The Lowest Place": Christina Rossetti's Devotional Prose', *Victorian Poetry* 32 (autumn-winter 1994) 409.
9. Robert M. Kachur, 'Repositioning the Female Christian Reader: Christina Rossetti as Tractarian Hermeneut in *The Face of the Deep*', *Victorian Poetry* 35, no. 2 (summer 1997) 1.
10. Stuart Curran, 'The Lyric Voice of Christina Rossetti', *Victorian Poetry* 9 (autumn 1971) 298.
11. *The Penguin Book of Victorian Verse*, ed. Daniel Karlin (London: Penguin, 1998). This evaluation is clear from the table of contents, and has been confirmed to me by the editor.
12. Gosse, Edmund. 'Christina Rossetti', *The Century Magazine* 46 (June 1893) 216.
13. Mary F. Sandars, introduction to *The Life of Christina Rossetti* (London: Hutchinson, 1930), p. 15.

14. Jerome McGann, 'The Religious Poetry of Christina Rossetti', *The Beauty of Inflections: Literary Investigations In Historical Method and Theory* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1985) p. 210.
15. Linda E. Marshall, 'Mysteries Beyond Angels in Christina Rossetti's *From House to Home*' in *Women's Poetry, Late Romantic to Late Victorian*, eds. Isobel Armstrong and Virginia Blain (London: Macmillan, 1999), p. 313.
16. Mary Arseneau, introduction to *Recovering Christina Rossetti: Female Community and Incarnational Poetics* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2004), p. 3.
17. Christina Rossetti, *Maude: Prose and Verse*, edited with an introduction by R. W. Crump, including a 'Prefatory Note' by William Michael Rossetti (Hamden, Archon Books, 1976), p. 31.
18. *VDP*, 203.

1 'Real Things Unseen': The tractarian influence

1. Jerome J. McGann, introduction to *ACR*, p. 8.
2. F. M. L. Thompson, *The Rise of Respectable Society: A Social History of Victorian Britain, 1830–1900* (London: Fontana Press, 1988), pp. 251, 252.
3. Tom Paulin, 'The cadence in the song: George Herbert and the greatness of Christina Rossetti', *Times Literary Supplement*, (January 18, 2002) 3.
4. Lynda Palazzo, *Christina Rossetti's Feminist Theology* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2002), p. 2.
5. Mary Arseneau, introduction to *Recovering Christina Rossetti: Female Community and Incarnational Poetics* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2004), p. 2.
6. See Diane D'Amico's article, 'Christina Rossetti's Christian Year: Comfort for "the weary heart"', *The Victorian Newsletter*, 71–2 (fall 1987) 36–42.
7. John Keble, 'Mysticism as applied to the Works of Nature, and generally to the external World', *Tracts for the Times* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1877), vol. 6, p. 143. Quoted in *VDP*, p. 54.
8. John Henry Newman, *Apologia pro Vita Sua* (London: Penguin, 1994), p. 37.
9. Herbert Sussman, *Fact Into Figure: Typology in Carlyle, Ruskin, and the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood*, (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1979), p. 9.
10. This belief relates to the Old Testament God who appeared often as a cloud or a voice, but never took corporeal form.
11. Isaac Williams, *Selections from the Writings of Isaac Williams* (London: Rivingtons, 1890), pp. 217–18.
12. The phrase, 'consider the lilies' is found in both Matthew 6:28 and Luke 12:27.
13. The word 'single', in a biblical context, means 'sound, healthy, free of defect', *The Combined Bible Dictionary and Concordance* (London: Marshall Pickering, 1990), p. 392
14. The lily occurs often in the Song of Solomon, a book read typically as 'the narrative of Solomon's love which prefigures the love of Christ for the Church'. *The Combined Bible Dictionary and Concordance*, p. 398.
15. 'Spin' here refers to drawing out and twisting into thread. *The Combined Bible Dictionary and Concordance*, p. 401.
16. 'And upon the top of the pillars was lily work'; 'the brim thereof was wrought like the brim of a cup, with flowers of lilies', 1 Kings 7:22, 26.

17. 'I counsel thee to keep the king's commandment, and that in regard of the oath of God', Ecclesiastes 8:2.
18. Isaac Williams, *Sermons on the Characters of the Old Testament* (London: Rivingtons, 1860), p. 214.
19. 'lo, I have given thee a wise and an understanding heart; so that there was none like thee before thee, neither after thee shall any arise like unto thee', 1 Kings 3:12.
20. 'And I have also given thee that which thou hast not asked, both riches and honour', 1 Kings 3:13.
21. Their connection is reinforced with the placement of the poem, which appeared originally within the text of *The Face of the Deep*. The poem follows a prose passage exhorting mankind to be alert and watchful for Christ's return so that 'he shall abide in eternal fellowship with Christ' (FD 391). That "'Consider the Lilies of the Field'" follows this sentence is typologically significant, because the poem explicitly links the prose idea of fellowship with Christ to Solomon.
22. Isaac Williams, *Thoughts on the Study of the Holy Gospels* (London: Rivingtons, 1876), p. 6.

2 'Decayed Branches from a Strong Stem': Rossetti's Keatsian heritage

1. G. B. Tennyson notes that the Tractarian response to nature was different from Wordsworth's, because 'It is not enough to be responsive to nature's beauties as things in themselves, or even as vague pointers to a higher power'. The Tractarian view of nature relied upon a specifically 'Christian understanding of nature as an analogue of God and a Christian understanding of sin as an impediment to seeing God clearly through nature'. *VDP*, 98.
2. It was Polidori's father, Gaetano, who privately printed his granddaughter Rossetti's first volume of poetry, *Verses* (1847).
3. William Michael's assertion is very dubious here, as Wordsworth's influence was inescapable in this period.
4. Mackenzie Bell, *Christina Rossetti: A Biographical and Critical Study* (London: Hurst and Blackett Limited, 1898), p. 13.
5. For a discussion of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood's role in the artistic and commercial rehabilitation of Keats in nineteenth-century art, see Sarah Wooton's essay, 'Ghastly Visualities: Keats and Victorian Art,' in *The Influence and Anxiety of the British Romantics*, ed. Sharon Ruston (Lewiston: Edwin Mellen Press, 1999), pp. 159–80.
6. George H. Ford, *Keats and the Victorians: A Study of his Influence and Rise to Fame, 1821–1895*. (London: Archdon Books, 1962), p. 107–8. Christina Rossetti is only mentioned once in this book.
7. It was a view shared by Oscar Wilde who wrote of Keats as the 'the forerunner of the Pre-Raphaelite school'. Quotation taken from Susan J. Wolfson, 'Feminizing Keats', *Critical Essays on John Keats*, ed. Hermione De Almeida (Mass: W. W. Norton and Co., 1990), p. 336.
8. Introduction to *Keats: The Critical Heritage*, ed. G. M. Matthews (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1971), p. 31.

9. J. B. Bullen, *The Pre-Raphaelite Body: Fear and Desire in Painting, Poetry, and Criticism* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998), p. 7.
10. Ruskin's pamphlet, *Pre-Raphaelitism*, is in *The Complete Works of John Ruskin*, ed. E. T. Cook and Alexander Wedderburn, vol. 13 (London: George Allen, 1904), p. 358.
11. Jerome Bump, 'Christina Rossetti and the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood', in *ACR*, p. 339.
12. John Ruskin to Dante Gabriel Rossetti, 24 January, 1861, *Letters of Dante Gabriel Rossetti*, ed. Oswald Doughty and John Robert Wahl, vol. 2 (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1965), p. 391.
13. James W. Hood, introduction to *Divining Desire: Tennyson and the Poetics of Transcendence* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2000), p. 8.
14. William Michael's notes on 'Repining' tellingly specify that the original title of the poem was 'An Argument', and that it was 'very considerably longer' in manuscript form (*The Poetical Works*, p. 460).
15. Barbara Fass, 'Christina Rossetti and St. Agnes' Eve', *Victorian Poetry* (spring, 1976) 33.
16. Lynda Palazzo, *Christina Rossetti's Feminist Theology*, p. 4.
17. Thomas Parnell, 'The Hermit', *Collected Poems of Thomas Parnell*, ed. Claude Rawson and F. P. Lock (Delaware: University of Delaware Press, 1989), l. 23.
18. For more on DGR and Keats, see Chapter 3 of Sarah Wooton, *Consuming Keats: Nineteenth-Century Representations in Art and Literature* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2006), pp 78–106.
19. Keats differentiates his own poetic talent from Byron's in his letter to George and Georgiana Keats of 20 September 1819: 'You speak of Lord Byron and me — There is a great difference between us. He describes what he sees — I describe what I imagine — Mine is the hardest task' (*JK Letters*, vol. 2: 200).
20. Hönnighausen, Gisela, 'Emblematic Tendencies in the Works of Christina Rossetti', *Victorian Poetry* 10 (1972) 4.
21. The manuscript poem contains two additional stanzas about a young girl who, though she appeared healthy, has died. (manuscript notes, *Complete Poems*, 242).
22. Antony H. Harrison, *Christina Rossetti In Context* (Brighton: The Harvester Press, 1988), p. 9.
23. D'Amico, *CR* 32.
24. 'For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away', 1 Peter 1:24.
25. See Ruth 4: 13–22.
26. Keats famously coined the term 'Negative Capability' to define a quality present in 'a man of achievement, especially in literature', and as a state in which 'a man is capable of being in uncertainties, mysteries, doubts, without any irritable reaching after fact and reason' (To George and Thomas Keats, 27 (?) December 1817. *JK Letters*, vol. 1: 193).
27. DGR, sonnet 4 'On Keats' from 'Five English Poets', *Dante Gabriel Rossetti: Collected Writings* (London: J.M. Dent, 1999), p. 425.
28. Susan J. Wolfson, "Feminizing Keats," *Critical Essays on John Keats*, p. 321.
29. Susan J. Wolfson, "Keats and Gender Criticism," *The Persistence of Poetry: Bicentennial Essays on Keats*. eds. Robert M. Ryan and Ronald A. Sharp (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1998), p. 89.

30. Susan J. Wolfson, "Keats Enters History: Autopsy, *Adonais*, and the Fame of Keats", *Keats and History*, ed. Nicholas Roe (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), p. 31.
31. Elizabeth Barrett Browning to Mary Russell Mitford, 26 October 1841, quoted in Susan J. Wolfson, 'Keats Enters History: Autopsy, *Adonais* and the Fame of Keats', p. 19.
32. P. B. Shelley, Preface to 'Adonais', *Shelley's Poetry and Prose*, ed. Donald R. Heiman and Sharon B. Powers (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 1977), p. 391.
33. 'And that which fell among thorns are they, which, when they have heard, go forth, and are choked with cares and riches and pleasures of this life, and bring no fruit to perfection' (Luke 8:14).
34. Rossetti's use of the word 'goodly' suggests a further Keatsian link. His sonnet, 'On First Looking Into Chapman's Homer' begins, 'Much have I travel'd in the realms of gold, / And many goodly states and kingdoms seen' (*KCP*, ll. 1–2, 34). Keats's awareness of his own literary inheritance is shown in his appreciation of Homer, and of Chapman's translation which '[speaks] out loud and bold' (line 8).
35. Sarah Wootton, *Consuming Keats*, p. 27.
36. Catherine Musello Cantalupo, 'The Devotional Poet and the Rejection of Romantic Nature' in *ACR*, p. 285.
37. 'Three Stages' 1 was written on 14 February 1848. 'Three Stages' 2 was written on 18 April 1849. 'Three Stages' 3 was written on 25 July 1854. They were first published together in *Verses* (1896).
38. 'And now Lord, what wait I for? my hope is in thee' (Psalms 39:7). 'I wait for the Lord, my soul doth wait, and in his word do I hope' (Psalms 130:5).
39. In *New Poems* (1896), this line reads, 'Till my heart dreamed, and maybe wandered too', as it does in the original 1854 manuscript. Crump, *Complete Poems*, 'Textual Notes', vol. 3: 451, note 22.

3 'Great Love and Long Study': Dante, Petrarch, and *Monna Innominata*

1. A notable exception is William Whitla's detailed structural critique, 'Questioning the Convention: Christina Rossetti's Sonnet Sequence "*Monna Innominata*"' in *ACR*, pp. 82–131.
2. CGR to The Firm, 24 November 1886. *The Rossetti Macmillan Letters*, ed. Lona Mosk Packer (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1963), p. 154. Packer notes that in this letter Rossetti crossed out 'the reader' and replaced it with 'the editor'. See note 3, p. 154 in this edition of the letters.
3. For more on this subject, see Marguerite Mills Chiarenza, *The Divine Comedy: Tracing God's Art* (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1989), p. 11.
4. *Dante: The Critical Heritage 1314(?)–1870*, ed. Michael Caesar (London: Routledge, 1989), p. 66.
5. Thomas Carlyle, Lecture 3: 'The Hero As Poet', 12 May 1840, *On Heroes, Hero-Worship, and the Heroic In History: Six Lectures*, reported with emendations and additions (London: James Fraser, 1841), p. 149.
6. John Keats to George and Thomas Keats, 21 December 1817, *JK Letters*, vol 1, 192.

7. S. T. Coleridge, 'Lecture on Dante', *Coleridge's Miscellaneous Criticism*, ed. Thomas Middleton Raysor (London: Constable and Co., Ltd., 1936), p. 152.
8. Steve Ellis, *Dante and English Poetry: Shelley to T. S. Eliot* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), p. 107.
9. John Keats to George and Georgiana Keats, 16 April 1819, *JK Letters*, vol. 2: 91. The text of the verse lines cited below is from this letter; Keats originally drafted the poem on the fly-leaf of his copy of Cary's *Dante* (1814); see *KCP* pp. 245–6.
10. DGR, 'Dante At Verona', *Dante Gabriel Rossetti: Collected Writings*, ed. Jan Marsh. (London: J. M. Dent, 1999), ll. 415–20.
11. CGR, "Dante: The Poet Illustrated Out of the Poem", *The Century Illustrated Monthly Magazine* 27, (February 1884) 572.
12. For a recent discussion of the importance of Dante to the Rossetti family, see Chapter 6 of Mary Arseneau, *Recovering Rossetti*, pp. 163–90.
13. The source of these quotations is *Inferno*, 1: 83.
14. John Keats to Benjamin Bailey, 22 November 1817, *JK Letters*, vol. 1: 184.
15. 'The Imagination may be compared to Adam's dream — he awoke and found it truth', John Keats to Benjamin Bailey, 22 November 1817, *JK Letters*, vol. 1: 185.
16. CGR, "Dante, An English Classic", *Churchman's Shilling Magazine and Family Treasury* 2, (1867) 200.
17. *VDP* 80.
18. Rossetti had been a friend of Hueffer's wife Cathy (daughter of Ford Madox Brown) since childhood. Her sister Lucy married William Michael. Jan Marsh's biography identifies Hueffer's book as a source for *Monna Innominata*.
19. Francis Hueffer, *The Troubadours* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1878), p. 272.
20. Lord Byron, 'Don Juan', (1821) *The Complete Poetical Works*, ed. Jerome J. McGann, vol. 5 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986), canto 3:8.
21. Charles Cayley, *Dante's Divine Comedy*, 3 vols. (London: Longman, Brown, Green and Longmans, 1853). All quotations from the *Divine Comedy* in this discussion are taken from Charles Cayley's translation. Having begun studying Italian under Gabriele Rossetti in 1847, Cayley became Christina Rossetti's close personal friend, though she rejected his proposal of marriage. She became his literary executor after his death. She admired his translation of Dante privately, and promoted it publicly in her article 'Dante, An English Classic', and annotated Cayley's Dante volumes for a second edition (never published). She also uses his translation in her devotional prose work, *Time Flies*. The Italian quotations themselves are taken from the text of Rossetti's *Monna Innominata*. For a fascinating study of Rossetti's relationship with Cayley, see Kamilla Denman and Sarah Smith, "Christina Rossetti's Copy of C. B. Cayley's *Divine Comedy*", *Victorian Poetry* (vol. 32 1994) 315–36.
22. The Petrarchan epigraphs in Italian are taken from the text of Rossetti's *Monna Innominata*. All English translations of Petrarch's *Canzoniere* are taken from Charles Cayley's translation, *The Sonnets and Stanzas of Petrarch* (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1879). Cayley's translation includes new titles for some of Petrarch's poems. These titles are reproduced in my

references. Where Cayley gives no title, I have reproduced the numbers he ascribes to each poem.

23. That Rossetti is aware of the problems of such an approach is revealed in her narrator's frustration at her inability to remember the event: 'If only I could recollect it, such / A day of days!'
24. Rossetti notes the relevance of this poetic invocation to contemporary poetry in her article on Dante: 'My first quotation (Paradise, canto I), consisting of an invocation of the Spirit of Poetry, befits both Dante and his translator [Cayley], while, as it were, striking one dominant note of our study ...' CGR, 'Dante. The Poet Illustrated Out of the Poem', *The Century*, 567.
25. In the *Book of Esther*, king Ahasueras is persuaded by his advisor Haman to carry out a slaughter of the Jews. One of his wives, Esther, also a Jew, risks death in violating the law and approaching the king to plead for her people. She gains the king's favor, and he stops the planned genocide, allowing the Jews to avenge themselves on their enemies.
26. The phrase is used in the same way in Genesis 10:18: 'And the Arvadite, and the Zemarite, and Hamathite: and afterward were the families of Canaanites spread abroad'; and Zechariah 2:6: 'flee from the land of the north, saith the Lord: for I have spread you abroad as the four winds of the heaven; saith the Lord' (Zechariah 2:6).
27. Matthew 10:16, 'Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves'.
28. Esther 8:3, 'And Esther spake yet again before the king, and fell down at his feet, and besought him with tears to put away the mischief of Haman the Agagite, and his device that he had devised against the Jews'.
29. Genesis 32:28, 'And he said, Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel: for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed'.
30. This passage is also a link to the Petrarchan quotation of sonnet 4: 'Take flight all thought and things that it contains / And therein love alone with you remains' (canzone 9, 44–5).
31. "No injury was done me," he replied, / "If One, that taketh whom he lists and when, / This passage to me often has denied. / His will becomes the righteous will of men", *Purgatorio* 2: 94–7.
32. This is perhaps Rossetti's response to sonnet 43, the most famous of the *Sonnets from the Portuguese*, 'How do I love thee? Let me count the ways' (Elizabeth Barrett Browning, *Selected Poems*, ed. Colin Graham [London: J. M. Dent, 1996], line 1, 231).

4 'A Courteous Tilt in the Strong-Minded Woman Lists': Rossetti, St. Paul, and women

1. This passage recalls the poet's younger self with its allusion to lines 115–16 of 'The Lowest Room': 'Why should not you, why should not I / Attain heroic strength?' (1: 200) The speaker of these lines is modeled on Rossetti's sister Maria, who is also the 'exemplary Christian' of this passage.
2. Gosse, Edmund, "Christina Rossetti", *The Century Magazine* 46 (June 1893) 214.

3. Angela Leighton, *Victorian Women Poets: Writing Against the Heart* (London: Harvester, 1992), p. 135.
4. Introduction to D'Amico CR, p. 16.
5. John Milton, *Selected Prose*, ed. C. A. Patrides (Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1974), 213.
6. The imagery in this last paragraph of the mirage of an orchard concealing a 'barren desert' recalls another Miltonic passage, the devil's banquet in *Paradise Lost*, when the fruit turns to ashes in the mouths of Satan's followers. See book X, ll. 547–72.
7. See Diane D'Amico, 'Christina Rossetti's "Helpmeet"', *The Victorian Newsletter* (spring 1994) 25–8; and Chapter 5 of *Faith, Gender and Time*.
8. Sandra M Gilbert and Susan Gubar, *The Madwoman in the Attic* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979), p. 575.
9. This advice is repeated in Romans 12:16: 'Be not wise in your own conceits'.
10. Romans 11:17–21: 'And if some of the branches be broken off, and thou, being a wild olive tree, wert grafted in among them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive tree; / Boast not against the branches. But if thou boast, thou bearest not the root, but the root thee. / Thou wilt say then, The branches were broken off, that I might be grafted in. / Well; because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith. Be not highminded, but fear'.
11. Proverbs 26:5, 12, 16: 'Answer a fool according to his folly, lest he be wise in his own conceit'; 'Seest thou a man wise in his own conceit? there is more hope of a fool than of him'; 'The sluggard is wiser in his own conceit than seven men that can render a reason'.
12. The complete verse from Galatians reads, 'For it is written, Rejoice, thou barren that bearest not; break forth and cry, thou that travailest not: for the desolate hath many more children than she which hath an husband' (4:27).
13. Matthew 3:16: 'And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him'.
14. 1 John 4:8: 'He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love'.
15. Ephesians 3: 3–4, 9: 'How that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words, / Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ)'; 'And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ'.
16. Georgina Battiscombe, *Christina Rossetti: A Divided Life* (London: Constable, 1981), p. 183.
17. The biblical significance of weights and measures relates to Proverbs 20:10: 'Divers weights and divers measures, both of them are alike an abomination to the Lord' and 20:23: 'Divers weights are an abomination unto the Lord; and a false balance is not good'.
18. Exodus 20:17: 'Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbour's'.
19. Ephesians 5:31–32: 'For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church'.

20. Ephesians 5:33: 'Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband'.
21. I Peter 3:7: 'Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers not be hindered'.
22. Romans 15:1: 'We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves'.
23. Genesis 2:18: 'And the Lord God said, It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him'.
24. Diane D'Amico notes that the Anglican definition of the word 'helpmeet' is not limited to women within marriage, and also includes women who serve society and God. D'Amico concludes, therefore, that 'Rossetti is not celebrating human love and marriage, but rather the status women can achieve through love of Christ' (Diane D'Amico, 'Christina Rossetti's Helpmeet,' *The Victorian Newsletter* [spring 1994]: 27). However, Rossetti's theology is generally inclusive of various identities for women, and it is likely that this model of female service, while primarily aimed at pleasing God, also encompasses the earthly relationships between men and women.
25. Lynda Palazzo raises the possibility that Rossetti may have kept her distance from this group because she 'did not have the firm social or financial backing which many suffragists enjoyed. She had to court the goodwill of publishers and had to tread warily to avoid offending her brother William, on whose kindness she and her mother depended' (33).
26. Jan Marsh tells us that Rossetti's letter was in response to Webster's argument in her column in the 1878 *Examiner* that 'women householders bore an equal burden of taxation and had an equal right to representation. If the state allowed single and widowed women to live independently ... it must accept the notion of Eve without an Adam and grant her equal citizenship' (*LB* 465).
27. 'For tactical reasons the bill had drawbacks, not the least being that under its provisions married women such as Mrs. Webster herself would still be denied the vote. Some women therefore objected to the bill as seeming to cast a slur on wives and mothers ...' (*LB* 465).
28. Rossetti here refers to Chapter 7 of Plato's *Republic*, wherein it is proposed that women 'take part in warfare and whatever else guarding the community involves' (trans. Robin Waterfield, [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993], 169).
29. Cynthia Scheinberg, "'Measure to yourself a prophet's place": Biblical Heroines, Jewish Difference and Women's Poetry', in *Women's Poetry, Late Romantic to Late Victorian: Gender and Genre, 1830-1900*, eds. Isobel Armstrong and Virginia Blain (London: Macmillan, 1999), 265.
30. Ruth 1:16: 'for whither thou goest I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God'.
31. Rossetti rarely includes chapter and verse citation within her prose, and this specific reference here suggests that she wanted her readers to study this proverb in full.
32. For more on Rossetti and Esther, see the discussion of sonnet 8 of *Monna Innominata* in Chapter 3 of this book.

33. 1 Kings 3:9: 'Give therefore thy servant an understanding heart to judge thy people, that I may discern between good and bad'.
34. Hebrews 11:34: 'Quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of aliens'.
35. 1 Corinthians 1:25: 'Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men'.
36. Judges 9:53: 'And a certain woman cast a piece of millstone upon Abimelech's head, and all to brake his skull'.
37. Diane D'Amico writes that 'Rossetti's willingness to see the feminine in Christ sets her in opposition to the more popular "muscular Christianity" of her day, reminding us again that although conservative politically, Rossetti was often, for her time, radical in her religious thought' (*CR* 141).
38. Later Rossetti writes, 'We exercise by nature the instinct of inequality: by grace only can we acquire the intuition of equality' (*FD* 501).
39. Matthew 8:9: 'For I am a man under authority, having soldiers under me: and I say to this man, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it'.
40. Song of Solomon 5:1: 'I am come into my garden, my sister, my spouse'.
41. This portrayal of reciprocal love between Christ and women is not new to Rossetti's work. The conclusion of her 1857 poem, 'The Heart Knoweth Its Own Bitterness' looks forward to heaven as a place where 'There God shall join and no man part, / I full of Christ and Christ of me' (55–6, 3: 265).
42. Of 'The Heart Knoweth Its Own Bitterness', William Michael writes, 'Few things written by Christina contain more of her innermost self than this' (notes to *The Poetical Works*, 472).
43. The gender specificity of this poem is given a new twist in *Verses* where it is published under the title 'Vigil of St. Bartholomew'. This title, in effect, explicitly makes the poem relevant both to men and women, and further suggests that Bartholomew acted after the example of the wise virgins, emulating their feminine virtues of calm and patient vigilance.

5 Spiritual autobiography in *Time Flies: A Reading Diary*

1. Germaine Greer, *Slip-Shod Sibyls: Recognition, Rejection, and the Woman Poet* (London: Viking, 1995), p. 369.
2. Rev. H. W. Burrows, preface to Christina Rossetti, *Annus Domini: A Prayer for Each Day of the Year, Founded on a Text of Holy Scripture* (Oxford: James Parker, 1874).
3. Tony Castle, introduction to *The Prayers of Christina Rossetti* (London: Marshall Pickering, 1989) p. 8. Castle mentions *Annus Domini*, *Seek and Find*, and *Called to be Saints* as 'the best remembered' works, p. 10
4. Rebecca Crump, introduction to *The Complete Poems*, vol. 2: 14.
5. WMR, 'Prefatory Note' to *Maude: A Story For Girls* in Christina Rossetti, *Maude: Prose and Verse*, ed. with an introduction by R. W. Crump (Hamden: Archon Books, 1976) p. 80.
6. Rossetti wrote of her feelings on Sisterhoods to Caroline Gemmer, a fellow writer known under the pseudonym Gerda Fay, on 27 June 1884: '[I] went

thro' a sort of romantic impression on the subject like many young people. No, I feel no drawing in that direction: really, of the two, I might perhaps have less unadaptedness in some ways to the hermit life. But I suppose the niche really suited to me is the humble family nook I occupy; nor am I hankering after a loftier. Nor, I think, I may truly say, did I ever wish to devote myself at any period of my prolonged life. It was my dear sister who had the pious, devotional, absorbed temperament' (*Letters* 3: 196).

7. In her discussion of St. Hilary, who left to become a bishop, Rossetti's sympathies are with the wife, for whom she anticipates a divine reversal of fortune: 'Wherefore of her I am free to think as of one "unknown and yet well known:" on earth of less dignified name than her husband and daughter, in Paradise, it may well be of equal account. For many are they of whom the world is both "not worthy" and ignorant. Moreover it is written: "Many that are first shall be last; and the last shall be first"' (13 January, *TF* 12).
8. Preston was an American poet who had sent Rossetti a copy of her book of poetry, *Old Song and New* (1870).
9. In a previous letter on 14 June 1878, she had warned Cook of the seriousness of her beliefs: 'I never could be at my ease or happy in literary company with persons who look down upon what I look up to. I have not *played* at Xtianity, & therefore I cannot play at unbelief' (*Letters* 2: 167).
10. 1 Corinthians 12:26.
11. D'Amico, *CR*, p. 160.
12. Diane D'Amico, 'Christina Rossetti's *Christian Year*: Comfort for "the weary heart"', *The Victorian Newsletter* 72 (fall 1987) 41.
13. Rossetti here alludes to Ecclesiastes' idea that 'there is no new thing under the sun,' (Ecclesiastes 1:9) and that 'all is vanity' (1:2). In Ecclesiastes, 'The preacher sought to find out acceptable words: and that which was written was upright, even words of truth' (12:10). So, too, does Rossetti ask of her subject, 'is it true?' However, Rossetti ignores parts of the book inconsistent with her thesis, such as the warning that 'The words of the wise are as goads, and as nails ...' (12-11) and that 'of making many books there is no end; and much study is a weariness of the flesh' (12:12).
14. The 'masterly translator' to whom she refers is Dante Gabriel Rossetti, according to the annotations made by the author in a copy of the book at the University of Texas at Austin. ('Notes' to *Selected Prose of Christina Rossetti*, eds. David A. Kent and P. G. Stanwood [London: Macmillan, 1998], note 175, p. 392).
15. Amos 9:9, 'I will sift the house of Israel among all nations, like as corn is sifted in a sieve'; Isaiah 30:28, 'And his breath ... shall ... sift the nations with the sieve of vanity'.
16. Luke 22:31, 'Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat'.
17. In a July 27 entry for *Time Flies*, Rossetti uses Satan's desire to sift Christians as a proof that Christians are inherently good: 'We are certified as good seed by Satan's desiring permission to sift us' (*TF* 143).
18. In *Letter and Spirit* (1883), the book which precedes *Time Flies*, this recognition of the problems inherent in human attempts to translate divine truth is taken to an extreme which comes close to despair. "To modify by a boundless license of imagination the Voice of Revelation ... falls within the range of human faculties. And thus may not light be thrown on that mass of bewildering error ...

which at every turn meeting us as man's invention, is after all a more or less close travestie of truth? So like in detail, so unlike as a whole, to the truth it simulates, that alternately we incline to ask: If so much is known without immediate revelation, wherefore reveal? If truth pervades such errors, if such errors can be grafted upon truth, is truth itself distinguishable, or is it worth distinguishing?' (LS 10–11).

6 Imagining Faith: Earth and Heaven in *The Face of the Deep*

1. Frederick E. Maser, *Christina Rossetti in the Maser Collection*, with essays by Mary Louise Jarden and Frederick E. Maser, foreward by James Tanis (Bryn Mawr College Library, 1991), p. 20.
2. Genesis 31:10. This is said by Rachel, Jacob's barren first wife, about her childless state. She has her husband take her maid to wife, then claims the maid's child as her own.
3. *Called to Be Saints* was dedicated to Maria Rossetti, and the poems of *Sing-Song* 'dedicated without permission to the baby who suggested them'.
4. A. Smellie, 'Christina Rossetti and Her Message', *Wesleyan Methodist Magazine* 118 (1885) 203–6, quoted in *Christina Rossetti: Critical Perspectives, 1862–1982*, ed. Edna Kotin Charles (London: Associated University Press, 1985), p. 23.
5. Colleen Hobbs, 'A View from "The Lowest Place": Christina Rossetti's Devotional Prose', *Victorian Poetry* 32 (autumn-winter, 1994) 411.
6. Catherine Musello Cantalupo, 'Christina Rossetti: The Devotional Poet and the Rejection of Romantic Nature', in *ACR*, p. 275.
7. *The Letters of Virginia Woolf*, vol. 1, 1888–1912, ed. Nigel Nicholson (New York: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 1975), p. 258.
8. 'After this I beheld, and lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the Throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands', (Revelation 7:9).
9. 'the tongue is a little member, and boasteth great things. Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth! / And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity: so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell' (James 3:5–6); 'the tongue can no man tame; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison', (3:8).
10. Mary Arseneau and Jan Marsh, 'Intertextuality and Intratextuality: The Full Text of Christina Rossetti's "Harmony on First Corinthians XIII" Rediscovered', *The Victorian Newsletter* 88 (fall 1995) 20.
11. According to Eastons Bible Dictionary, bdellium 'designates a product of the land of Havilah and ... was probably an aromatic gum like balsam ... Others think the word denotes 'pearls or some precious stone'. Biblical amber is not the fossilized resin we know today, but a compound of silver and gold, or possibly brass. (www.crosswalk.com) Both bdellium and onyx stone originally appear in Eden in Genesis 2:12, 'And the gold of that land is good: there is bdellium and onyx stone'.

12. The Ethiopian Eunuch was converted to Christianity by Philip the evangelist. The Eunuch is reading Isaiah and Philip asks him, 'Understandest thou what thou readest?' (Acts 8:30) and he replies, 'How can I, except some man should guide me?' (8:31).
13. Robert M. Kachur, 'Repositioning the Female Christian Reader: Christina Rossetti as Tractarian Hermeneut in *The Face of the Deep*', *Victorian Poetry* 35, no. 2 (summer 1997) 3.
14. Antony Harrison, *Christina Rossetti in Context*, p. 101.
15. Joel Westerholm, "'I Magnify Mine Office": Christina Rossetti's Authoritative Voice in her Devotional Prose', *Victorian Newsletter* 84 (fall 1993) 14.
16. In addition, the first three images are (so to speak) 'simple', while the last three have a biblical inflection: the 'gourd of a day and a night' alludes to Jonah 4:4–11, while the 'harvest' and 'vintage' are familiar images of judgment and salvation in the New Testament, including Revelation itself (for example, 14:15–20).
17. There is a similar treatment of the theme of hope in *Time Flies* when Rossetti writes, 'Hope, like the rainbow, can be evoked out of clouds and gloom to supply a bridge between earth and heaven: but can only be evoked by the sun-like love of God' (*TF* 279).
18. Rossetti's use of the Revised Version here, instead of the Authorized Version, underscores the idea that human works cannot be fulfilled or complete during the time of humanity's separation from God.
19. Sardis is one of the seven Asiatic churches judged in Revelation 3:1–6. Rossetti here is using Sardis as a metaphor for all humanity.
20. Helen Michie, *The Flesh Made World: Female Figures and Women's Bodies* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), p. 87.
21. 'And behold, a woman in the city, which was a sinner, when she knew that Jesus sat at meat in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster box of ointment' (Luke 7:37).
22. 'While adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel' (1 Peter 3:3).

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