



# Milton and the Preaching Arts

*Jameela Lares*

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## **Milton and the Preaching Arts** Jameela Lares

This study on John Milton's scholarship aims to demonstrate the extent to which Milton's work reflects the dominant discourse of his age, preaching. During the 16th and 17th centuries, the pulpit consistently commanded greater audiences than did the stage and many of the era's great poets were also preachers. Milton himself argued that poetry can serve "beside the office of a pulpit" and prepared his life's work at the greatest English centre for formal homiletics of its time, Christ's College, Cambridge; yet this connection has been virtually ignored by scholars and critics in examining Milton's poetry and prose. The author challenges the longstanding assumption that Milton the poet paid no attention to the ministerial training of his past, and she demonstrates how he appropriated many structures from English preaching in his own work. Of the five sermon types first described by Hyperius, Milton favoured the unusual combination of correction and consolation favoured by his first Cambridge tutor. Milton's use of homiletics, as explained by the author, may help to resolve many critical issues related to his work, in particular the last two books of "Paradise Lost", the whole of "Paradise Regained", and his prose commentaries. This text should be of interest to both literary scholars and scholars of church history and homiletics, "Milton and the Preaching Arts" also surveys sermons and sermon manuals, Bible commentaries and works of religious controversy on the issues of English church government and scriptural style.

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