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The Meritorious Price of Our Redemption by William Pynchon (1590 - 1662)

A Facsimile Edition of the 1650 Original with an Introduction and Editorial Apparatus

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The Meritorious Price of Our Redemption: A Facsimile Edition reproduces William Pynchon's rare 1650 theological treatise about the Atonement. Written in the dialogue genre and deemed heretical by Boston orthodoxy, the book was burned on the city Commons. More than three hundred years later *Meritorious Price* is transformed in *On Preterition*, a fictional counterpart that is inscribed in Thomas Pynchon's *Gravity's Rainbow*, a landmark in the contemporary American novel. The reworking of the Puritan past in this recent postmodernist novel in part results from Thomas Pynchon's direct descent from his Puritan ancestor, but more than that, it points at important continuities in American literature. Introductory essays by Michael W. Vella, Lance Schachterle, and Louis Mackey explore questions of genealogy, theology, and postmodernism in the presentation of this facsimile edition aimed at scholars and readers of both Pynchons.

Contents: *Meritorious Price: Of our Redemption A Facsimile Edition* reproduces a seventeenth-century theological treatise that was deemed heretical in Boston in 1650. It includes three introductory essays tracing the theological and literary implications of this work by William Pynchon and his impact on descendent Thomas Pynchon.

«I welcome the fact that (the editors) are making this rare work available...It is very much concerned with the issue of textual exegesis and that gives it a particular interest for contemporary students. Moreover, with earlier notions of the monolithic nature of American Puritanism now yielding to a sense of the political and theological diversity that existed within that movement, texts such as 'Meritorious Price' that were previously regarded as eccentric take on greater importance. I am intrigued by the suggestion that 'Gravity's Rainbow' not only plays off against the Pynchon family career and the existence of 'Meritorious Price' but is, in effect, a postmodernist rewriting of 'Meritorious Price'». (Larzer Ziff, Johns Hopkins University)

«The editors are to be congratulated for bringing to our attention a rare seventeenth-century New England tract that also figures in the work of one of our greatest contemporary authors. Scholars of early American literature and culture will be pleased to have so little known an example of radical New England Puritanism in a convenient format and with a detailed introduction.» (Philip F. Gura, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill)

«It's an odd match when students of American seventeenth-century and postmodernist writing come together over a text. But here it is. We're very much in your debt for recovering it, some 342 years after that first debut on the Boston Commons.» (Steven Weisenburger, University of Kentucky)

The Editors: Michael W. Vella is Professor of American Literature at Indiana University of Pennsylvania where he teaches Puritan and postmodern American literature.

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All three professors have numerous publications and share a scholarly interest in Thomas Pynchon's works.