ABSTRACT

Studies in the Literary Life of Edward, Lord Herbert of Cherbury

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This is a sequence of interlinked studies in the writing and intellectual milieu of Edward Herbert (1582-1648). Both Herbert's work and his acquaintance were impressively diverse: he wrote poetry, and was a friend of John Donne; he wrote philosophy, and corresponded with Descartes - producing the first translation of Cartesian philosophy into English; as a theological writer, he came into contact with the leading scholars of religion, and used their work to create something very different of his own. For Edward Herbert, the brother of the Rev. George, came to be seen as the originator of a new and dangerous movement in religious thought.

The thesis considers his work in roughly chronological order, combining a biographical outline with detailed discussion of his major works, their origins and their influence. The first, on the poetry, takes as a starting-point his relationship with Donne, their exchange of ideas, and Herbert's commemoration of his friend in an unpublished, probably autograph volume of verse. The second takes his major philosophical work, De Veritate, and explores its development from the first manuscript (1619) to the last edition (1645), its divergences from the scholastic teaching he received at Oxford, and the response to the work among some of the leading European thinkers of the day. The third is concerned with Herbert's two works on historical subjects, one near-contemporary, the other on the previous century - the century of the English Reformation: his distinctive views on religion emerge - and hints of a cautious attempt to alert the King to the dangers of his unpopularity. The fourth and fifth chapters consider Herbert's two theological treatises. As with the historical works, one of these is addressed directly to a contemporary readership which is supposed to follow his precepts; the other is rooted in the past, less direct in its polemic, revealing a more profound and complex attitude to the problems he saw in organized religion. The last chapter is more textual than literary: it examines a much-disputed work, the Dialogue, with its manuscripts, with the aim of preparing the ground for a better edition than has yet been produced. The conclusion attempts to sum up Herbert's place in the life of the time, and his legacy to his intellectual "nepotes".



Acknowledgments

In the five years occupied by this thesis, I have amassed a long list of acknowledgments.

For the first four years, I enjoyed the friendly atmosphere and excellent library of Somerville College, Oxford. The last year I have been fortunate enough to spend as a Junior Research Fellow at St. John's College, Oxford, which has enabled me to complete my work in a state of comfort impossible for most graduate students.

I have spent much time in the British Library (still in its proper place), the Public Record Office, the National Library of Wales, and - above all - the Bodleian: I should like to thank the staff in all of them, and also the Librarian of St. John's College, Cambridge. The National Library of Wales, the Osler Library, and Lord Egremont kindly allowed me photocopies of their Herbertian manuscripts, and the archivists at the West Sussex Record Office wrote to me several times in connexion with the Petworth manuscript. Dr. David Rees and Miss Sarah Cobbold, Archivist and Librarian of Jesus College, Oxford, were patterns of patience and helpfulness during my chilly weeks with Herbert's marginalia.

On every aspect of Herbert's life, from scandal to scholasticism, I have asked for help and received it lavishly: my thanks to Professor G.R. Batho, Dr. Peter Beal, Professor Terence Cave, Mrs. Carol Clark, Miss Katherine Duncan-Jones, Dr. Mark Edwards, Dr. Kenneth Garlick, Mr. James Irvine, Sir Anthony Kenny, Professor Jacqueline Lagrée, Mrs. Jennifer Loach, Professor D.F. Mackenzie, Dr. David Norbrook, Ms. Michelle O'Callaghan, Dr. Robin Robbins, Dr. Ian Rutherford, Professor Donald Russell, Dr. Alison Shell, Mr. Tom Tarver, and Dr. Ralph Walker. My examiners, Professor Antony Nuttall and Dr. David Pailin, both made useful corrections. I owe a particular debt to Professor John Carey and Dr. John Pitcher, always so generous with encouragement and advice. Special thanks are due also to Dr. Sophie Mills, Mr. Michael Comber, and Mrs. Dorothy Stanley, on whose support I have relied without mercy. Dr. Isabel Rivers has supervised the thesis from the beginning: for her meticulousness, patience, and kindness, I am deeply grateful.

I could wish it were not *de rigueur* in these things to save one's parents till last, as I cannot believe that many people have received such extraordinary parental support, intellectual, emotional, and financial, for such a long time. I have no idea how to thank them. And I apologize to my father. A dedication is poor consolation for a child too cowardly to entitle her thesis "Lord Snooty and his Pals".

Abbreviations

I have used the standard abbreviations for periodicals. In addition, I have abbreviated the works most frequently used as follows:

Beal	P. Beal (ed.), An Index of English Literary Manuscripts (Bristol, 1980)
Bedford	R.D. Bedford, The Defence of Truth: Herbert of Cherbury and the Seventeenth Century (Manchester, 1979)
FK	C.J. Fordyce and T.M. Knox, "The books bequeathed to Jesus College Library, Oxford, by Lord Herbert of Cherbury" in Proceedings and Papers of the Oxford Bibliographical Society V (1936-9), Part II, 53 ff.
Hill	E.D. Hill, Edward, Lord Herbert of Cherbury (Boston, 1987)
Hutcheson	H.R. Hutcheson (ed. and tr.), De Religione Laici (New Haven, 1944)
Lee	S. Lee (ed.), The Autobiography of Edward, Lord Herbert of Cherbury: with Introduction, Notes, Appendices, and A Continuation of the Life (London, 1886)[1]
Rossi	M.M. Rossi, La Vita, le Opere, i Tempi di Edoardo Herbert di Chirbury [sic] (Florence, 1947)[2]
Smith	G.C. Moore Smith (ed.), The Poems, English and Latin, of Edward, Lord Herbert of Cherbury (Oxford, 1923)

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[1] I shall use two editions of this work: Lee's, and that by J.M. Shuttleworth (Oxford, 1976). Shuttleworth uses a different and earlier MS, which includes three passages omitted from the MS used by the earlier editions; his text, however, is unreliable, and chaotically punctuated (see the review by G. Guffey in JEGP 78 (1979)). I have therefore depended on Lee. There is a tendency among Herbertian critics to denigrate him; but his notes are invaluable, and heavily pillaged by some of his detractors (including Rossi).

Lee published another edition in 1906 which claimed to be "revised". In fact, however, this is almost identical to 1886 (it supplies a fuller bibliography of De Veritate, and a couple of alterations in the notes), so I have used the earlier, more widely available edition.

Although Lee calls the work "Autobiography", I refer to it as "Life". The MSS have no title; I have chosen this one for two reasons: first, it is the title used by Walpole, who first published the text Lee edited; second, the word "autobiography" was not available to Herbert himself.

[2] I refer to Rossi's other works by their titles; when there is a possibility of confusion, this one appears as "La Vita".

Translations and Transcriptions

In accordance with regulations, all non-English quotations that appear in the text, except for quotations in modern French, are translated in the footnotes. Quotations that occur in footnotes alone are not translated. If not otherwise indicated, the translations are my own.

I have not altered the spelling or punctuation of the manuscripts, except in cases where contraction is indicated by a manuscript symbol, in which cases I have silently expanded it.

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Introduction

The life of Herbert is very well documented. He was a public figure and a literary man - the two surest ways of immortalizing one's personal life. The sources for reconstructing it are of very varied kinds: from manuscripts of poems, to entries in the public records. Critics of Herbert like to quote Ben Jonson's compliment:

> If men get name, for some one vertue: Then,
> What man art thou, that art so many men,
> All-vertuous HERBERT![1]

His literary life reflects this variety. Although he was not a prolific author, he wrote in most of the genres of his time: theology, philosophy, history - and (occasionally) poetry.

The life of letters was itself only one in which Herbert engaged. The range of interests is impressive; he presented himself, and was regularly praised by his contemporaries, as a man with two lives, the literary and the martial. The combination has its weaknesses. Sometimes Herbert yields to the temptation to use one as an excuse for shortcomings in the other.[2] But there are bonuses too. For him, it provided consolation: he claims in the Life that he was invulnerable to political disappointment "as I ever loved my book, and a private life . . ."[3]. But that assertion comes at the end of a work devoted almost entirely to life

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[1] C.H. Herford and P. and E. Simpson, (eds.), Ben Jonson, VIII 68. The verse is especially attractive for its prophetic force: it goes on:

> on whose every part
> Truth might spend all her voyce . . .

Herbert's special connexion with Truth did not begin until three years after the publication of Jonson's Epigrams; the first MS of De Veritate dates from 1619.

[2] An example of this first is the Preface to De Veritate (added in 1633), where he explains that he has not been able to revise the work as carefully as he might wish because of his public engagments.

[3] Lee, p. 246.

beyond the library, and indicates another bonus for his readers: a complexity in Herbert's life, which has its effect on his work.

There is a mixture of the traditional and the original in all his literary work. As historian, he adopted the old annalistic style, in order to do something different with it; as philosopher, he adapted the language of the schools to new ends; as poet, he worked out idiosyncratic ideas in verses with a familiar "metaphysical" form. Horace Walpole, who first published the Life, summed him up in the preface with a famous paradox,[4] but that work itself is paradoxical: the portrait of a knight-errant that it offers is also a presentation of the self, a pioneering work in a new genre.

Since the later nineteenth century, Herbert studies have been a small but intense field of research. Between 1860 and 1906, there appeared the first edition of the English text of The Expedition to the Isle of Rhé (1860), the first scholarly editions of his poetry (1881) and Life (1886), and a series of biographical articles in the Montgomeryshire Collections. This century has produced a definitive edition of the poetry (1923), in addition to translations of Herbert's magnum opus, De Veritate (1937), and his opusculum, Religio Laici (1944). A vigorous critical tradition has also developed, reflecting the variety of the subject. Some critics have taken his work en masse, but most have picked out some part of it for study: he has drawn literary critics, theologians, philosophers, historians. Because of this range, it seemed more convenient to give accounts of the critical tradition for each work at the

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[4] That "the History of Don Quixote was the Life of Plato". (It may seem churlish to relegate such a smart remark to a footnote; but all who have worked on Herbert know how very thin it wears.)

beginning of the relevant chapter; but something should be said at once about the most important critic of all: Mario Manlio Rossi, who dealt with all of Herbert's work.[5]

Rossi's massive study has recently been described as a "lion in the path"[6] for readers of Herbert. In the introduction, he announced his resolution to use all the evidence he could find; as one reviewer acknowledged,

> He said . . . that it was his ambition to put into the hands of future students all that could be known of Herbert. Such an ambition can seldom have been so nearly fulfilled.[7]

La Vita, however, is no dispassionate tool for research. Rossi was a man of the strongest opinions, on everything; unfortunately for Herbert, the greater part of them was negative.[8] The introduction offers a one-word picture of his subject - it stands as a whole paragraph:

> Edoardo Herbert di Chirbury: un dilettante.

As an invitation to a work of over fifteen hundred pages, that is disheartening. And yet the very fact that so many pages follow it indicates the interest that Rossi himself - despite himself, perhaps - found in that "dilettante".[9]

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[5] Rossi's major studies of Herbert were La Vita and its predecessor, Alle Fonti del Deismo e del Materialismo Moderno (Florence, 1943). He also wrote articles on him, in both Italian and English.

[6] Hill, p. 136. Hill is the boldest of Rossi's counter-critics.

[7] M.H. Fisch, review of Rossi in J.Phil 46 (1949), 203. This review provides an excellent introduction to Rossi. Fisch's remark is closely echoed by R.D. Bedford, The Defence of Truth, p. 23.

[8] Rossi's strictures range from the early Stoics, with their faulty notions of epistemology, to the Bibliothèque Nationale, insufficiently helpful to his researches. A fine example of his implacability is tucked away in the Index, under "Lee": "Lee, Sidney (Solomon Lazarus)".

[9] Rossi's personal involvement in the subject is overwhelmingly evident. He hated Herbert's theology; but he defended him with passion in his political hardships. M.H. Fisch points out his identification with his subject here: he lost his chance to be Professor of Philosophy in Italy - a post, says Fisch, "for which he was eminently fitted" - because he refused to take the Fascist oath (p. 199 n. 4). Perhaps such a man has a right to take

Rossi offers a grim challenge to the reader; still more so to the critic. A long critical silence followed La Vita. No other general study appeared until 1979, when R.D. Bedford published his influential book The Defence of Truth: Herbert of Cherbury and the Seventeenth Century (Manchester, 1979). Eight years later, a very different picture was offered by E.D. Hill, Edward, Lord Herbert of Cherbury (Boston, 1987).[10] The two books have different aims and strengths: Bedford's book brings out the general context in which Herbert wrote, and the Platonic influence on him; Hill offers acute close readings in support of his more radical, less easily assimilable Herbert. The Herbert industry is currently gathering momentum: apart from his regular appearances in general studies of the intellectual life of the period, he has been the subject of a series of articles in French, and another in English;[11] last year another general study appeared, on something like Rossi's scale - if hardly on his level.[12]

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up residence on the moral high ground.

[10] Both these books are discussed throughout the thesis.

[11] Jacqueline Lagrée has edited the Religio Laici, and published a further articles on Herbert illustrating in particular the background to his "Catholic Articles", and his kinship with Spinoza ("Le Cantus firmus d'Herbert de Cherbury" in Revue des Sciences Philosophiques et Théologiques 76 (1992), 3-13; "Les Notions Communes religieuses antécedents et enjeux du Credo Minimum chez Herbert de Cherbury et Spinoza" in F. Mignini (ed.), Dio, L'Uomo, la Libertà (Florence, 1990), 457-9. David Pailin has published articles on Herbert in English and in German: "Herbert of Cherbury: a much-neglected and misunderstood thinker" in W. Creighton Peden and Larry E. Axel (eds.), God, Values, and Empiricism; "Herbert von Cherbury" in J.-P. Schobinger (ed.), Grundriss der Geschichte der Philosophie: die Philosophie des 17. Jahrhunderts (Basel, 1988), 224-39; 284-5.

[12] J.A. Butler, Edward, Lord Herbert of Chirbury: an Intellectual Biography (Lampeter and New York, 1992). It may seem strange that Hill's book, of under 150 pp., should receive so much discussion in the thesis, while Butler's, at nearly 500, should be almost ignored. The reason for this is that Butler's book, although attractive and very readable, seems to me not a scholarly book in the same way: it does not offer an original view-point, and it is not very accurate.

Herbert's reputation is recovering from the setback Rossi gave it, and La Vita is being used for its positive contribution (as Rossi claimed to wish).[13] This thesis makes heavy and grateful use of Rossi, but its scope and style are very different. It is not a biography, but a series of studies on Herbert's literary work, its origins and its reputation. I have laid particular stress on the development of his thought, a subject largely neglected by critics. Although Rossi provided such a full discussion of Herbert's unpublished material, there was (and is) still room for work, and I have made use both of the manuscripts, and - privileged by my location - of another source, not explored before: the marginalia in the books left by Herbert to Jesus College, Oxford. The last chapter aims to provide a starting-point for a proper edition of his last, much-disputed work.

Ben Jonson praised Herbert for the variety of his virtues. His short eulogy goes on to list some of them individually: learning, wit, valour, judgment. This thesis adopts a rather similar approach. Each chapter is built round a work, or a group of works. But Jonson stressed his integrity, as well as his diversity: "thy standing upright to thyself", in his beautiful phrase. For anyone writing on Herbert, there is a difficulty in preserving that integrity. In what follows, I shall attempt to present a coherent picture, though aware that the chapters will only give glimpses; the glimpses may be extended:

> And yet, they, all together, lesse then thee.

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[13] "Prefazione", n.p.

Chronology of Herbert's Life[1]

1582	3/13 March	Born to Magdalene and Richard Herbert at Eyton-on-Severn, Salop, at the house of his grandparents, Francis and Margaret Newport. Remains there until the age of ten.[2]
1591		Goes to Mr. Thelwall to learn Welsh; stays 9 months.[3] Goes to Diddlebury in Salop to be taught by "a certain Mr. Newton".[4]
1596	May/June Oct	Matriculates as gentleman-commoner at University College, Oxford.[5] Burial of Richard Herbert in Montgomery Church.
1597	Feb	H becomes a ward of his uncle, Sir Francis Newport.[6]
1598	Feb/March	Marries his older cousin, Mary, heiress to Sir William Herbert of St. Julians. Returns to Oxford with his wife and his mother.
1599/1600		Birth of first child, Richard.[7]
1600		Leaves Oxford; spends time between his mother's house in Charing Cross and Montgomery Castle, his family home.
1601	?Feb	Presented at Court.
1603	3/13 March April Aug	Comes of age . Made Knight of the Bath. Daughter Beatrice born.[8] H wants to go abroad, but is held back by "the industry of some near" ?Quarrel with Charles Howard, Earl of Northampton and Lord Admiral.[9]
(?)1604-5	Oct - Oct	Sheriff of Montgomery.[10]
1605	March Sep	Appointed Chief Forester (a sinecure).[11] Daughter Florence born.[12] Elected knight of the shire (M.P.) for Merioneth in this year.[13]
1606/7		Friendship with Donne begins.[14]
1607		Montgomery Castle given by the King to H's cousin, Philip (Earl of Montgomery since 1605).
1608		Re-marriage of Magdalene to Sir John Danvers. Parliament grants H leave of absence for 1 year; he goes abroad with Aurelian Townshend. Friendship with Montmorency père et fils begins. French ribbon incident.

		Son Edward born.
1610	Jan.	Returns to England. English ribbon incident.[15]
	July	Incident with Phelips, Speaker of the House.[16]
	late summer	Leaves England again.[17] Quarrels with Howard of Walden at Julyers (1st crisis of Cleves-Jülich). Returns to London; assaulted by Sir John Ayres.[18]
1613	Good Friday	?Visited by Donne at Montgomery.[19]
1614	Feb	Enters Gray's Inn.[20]
1614-15		Returns to Low Country war (Cleves-Jülich II). Visits places of interest, including Heidelberg, Venice, Florence, Rome, and Padua.
1615-16		Duke of Savoy commissions him to raise 4,000 men in France; arrested at Lyons. Visits Geneva. Favoured by Maurice of Nassau.
1617		Prevented from going further by sickness; returns to London with fever.[21]
1617-18		Rift with Sir Robert Harley, an old friend.[22]
1619	May	Departs for France as ambassador.[23] Campaigns for Elector Palatine with James and Louis.
1620	Nov	[Battle of the White Mountain]
1621		Quarrel with the Duc de Luynes, favourite of Louis, occasioned in trying to defend Huguenots. Recalled: arrives in London in early September.
1623	Jan	Sets out for France again. This second embassy dominated by question of French marriage - made difficult by antics of Charles and Buckingham in Spain, and vacillations of James in London.
	June	Finishes <u>De Veritate</u>; shows it to his friends Grotius and Tilenus.
before 1624		Poems in Rawlinson Poetical MS 31.[24]
1624	June	Recalled; <u>Life</u> ends. First, private ed. of <u>DV</u> pub. Disappointed in hopes of senior posts at court.[25] Submits plans for attack on Spain.[26]
	Dec	Made Baron of Castle Island, in the Irish peerage. Moves henceforth between London and Montgomery until c. 1634 (when he begins <u>Life and Raigne</u>).
1626		[Coronation] H presents Charles with a project for the reorganization of the army.[27]

1627	June	Death of Magdalene Danvers.
	Nov	Son Richard m. Lady Mary Egerton (both services conducted by Donne).[28]
1629	April	Made Baron Herbert of Cherbury in the English peerage.[29]
1629-31		Works on The Expedition to the Isle of Ré.[30]
1630	Feb/March	Grandson Edward born.[31]
1631	March/April	Death of Donne. (?) H completes his poetical MS.[32]
1632		Takes seat on the Council of War.[33]
1633		[Galileo condemned] 2nd ed. of DV published.
	March	George dies.
	Sep	DV put on the Index.[34]
1634	Oct/Nov	Death of H's wife; H in Montgomery.[35]
1634/5	winter	Back in London, begins work on Life and Raigne. Given lodgings in Richmond, and access to documents.[36]
1635	April-July	Gregorio Panzani, papal legate at court, reports conversation with H in which he seems well-disposed towards the Church of Rome.[37]
	March	H's paper on ecclesiastical supremacy presented to the King.[38]
	April	Address to the King on foreign and domestic policy.[39]
1635-6	Dec-Jan	Quarrel with son Richard over R's debts.[40]
1636 (?)		Friendship with Mersenne begins: the first letter from H to M on DV seems to date from this year.[41] They begin work on the translation.[42]
1634-9		Critiques of DV from Gassendi, Descartes, and others.[43]
1637		Council of War renewed; H re-elected.[44]
1639		Summoned by the King to York; goes with Henry.[45]
	end of year	Returns to London (to Toothill Street). (?)Corrects Life and Raigne;[46] (?) begins work on subject of "Religio Laici".[47] French ed. of DV pub.
1639-40		Writing De Causis Errorum; writes to Liceti in March that he thinks he will not be able to finish it for the noise of weapons.[48]
1640	April	Introduced into the House of Lords.[49]
	Sep	Goes again to York; votes with Strafford to continue Bishops' War.

1641	March	Votes for condemnation of Strafford.[50]
1642	April	Offers Parliament the proceeds of "a Water-work of his invention"; the offer is declined.[51]
1642	Jan	H sends MSS of Life and Raigne and Biathanatos (presentation copy) to the Bodleian.[52]
	May	Grotius writes to Mersenne with reservations about H.[53]
		Taken into parliamentary custody overnight for moderate defence of the King; retires immediately to Montgomery.[54]
	Sep	[Charles at Shrewsbury]
		H apparently takes in his son Richard's family: R's wife Mary at Montgomery from winter 1642/3.[55]
1643		On bad terms with daughter Beatrice.[56]
		Dispute with Henry over pastorage for Henry's horses.[57]
		Death of Thomas Master, friend and assistant in research for the Life and Raigne.[58]
1643/4		Beatrice arrives at Montgomery.[59]
1644	Feb	Prince Rupert orders H to receive a garrison at Montgomery; H refuses.[60]
	Aug	Rupert writes again - in position of retreat, after parliamentary successes under Cromwell; H refuses this too.[61]
		Parliament seizes the books left by H in London in 1642, and tries to sell them, but is stopped in time.[62]
	Sep	Montgomery Castle surprised by Myddleton's forces. Besieged by Royalists under Sir Michael Ernley; siege is beaten off.[63]
	Oct	Parliament holds public thanksgivings for capture of Montgomery. H leaves Beatrice in the castle, and removes first to King's Street, then to Queen's Street, London, with a few personal servants and his secretary, Rowland Evans.[64]
1645		Publication of 3rd, enlarged edition of DV.
		H working on De Religione Gentilium; sends the MS to Vos for correction. Vos declines, but offers to have work printed in Holland.[65]
1646	(?) Poem	"Enraging griefs . . .".[66]
	Oct	Appointed warden of the stannaries, and steward of the duchy of Cornwall.[67]
1647	March	Parliament agrees to restore castle, on condition that H should promise not to admit anyone of possible Royalist sympathies. Troubles in the town after candidate favoured by Parliament is not elected MP; H is alarmed, but the castle is not attacked.[68]
		Writes to Vos, promising to visit him in order to ask advice about De

		Religione Gentilium.[69]
	autumn	Last voyage to the Continent. Visits Gassendi; (?) goes to Holland.[70]
1648	April/May	Writes last surviving letter, to Sir Simonds d'Ewes, hinting at a marriage between H's grandson, Edward, and d'Ewes' (?)granddaughter.[71]
	May	Appeals to Parliament for a remission of the fine imposed on Richard (a convicted Royalist). It is reduced but not remitted.
		(?)In this year he writes "a manifest of my actions in these late troubles" - lost.[72]
		Continues (begins?) the Dialogue between a Tutor and a Pupil.[73]
	3/13 July	Haak reports seeing H at a performance of Mersenne's experiment with mercury.[74]
	1/10 Aug	Makes will.
(?)	5/15 Aug	Dies and is buried in St. Giles-in-the-Fields.[75]

1. The events up to the time of Herbert's second recall from Paris (1624) are taken, unless otherwise specified, from the Lee. As will be immediately obvious, I have relied heavily on Rossi, and on Lee's notes, although I have made some alterations and additions (see e.g. notes 9 and 16). I have indicated the cases where I have not consulted Rossi's primary sources.

I have followed the Gregorian Calendar; within that, I indicate both Old Style and New Style dates - with some difficulty, as most modern historians use New, Rossi (usually) used Old, and Herbert himself used both. Consequently, I have kept the figures to a minimum; if an occasional one is ten days out, I apologize.

2. For day and month, see his Latin epigram, "In diem natalitium, viz. 3 Mar." (Smith, p. 88. For year, see Rossi, III 376-9 - and his acerbic note in MLN 63 (1948), 144.

3. Lee p. 37 n. provides interesting information about Thelwall: he was the son of the Councillors of the Welsh Marches, and his brother Eubule was, from 1621 to 1631, Principal of Jesus College, to which Herbert bequeathed much of his library. According to R. Williams ("Edward, 1st Lord Herbert of Cherbury", Montgomeryshire Collections XXIV (1890), 92-3, he was "the celebrated Catherine of Berain's fourth husband".

4. For the possible identity of Mr. Newton, see Lee, p. 39, n. 1; Rossi disputes it (I 21 n. 5).

5. See Rossi, III 378-9, for the month. According to the A. Clark (ed.), Register of the University of Oxford (Oxford, 1887-9), II ii 224, H was one of the youngest boys to matriculate at the college in this year: of the three who matriculated with him, two were sixteen, and the third, who was fourteen, was the younger brother of one of the others.

6. There is some doubt over the rôle in this of Sir George More, who played a part in arranging the wardship, and seems to have shared in the duties: see A.M. Charles, A Life of George Herbert (Ithaca, NY, 1977), pp. 30-1, and Rossi, I 26 and n. 16. The wardship is recorded in the "Schedule of the Powis Deeds and Documents", in the National Library of Wales (no. 12736).

7. Rossi, I 44 n.1 (an informed guess) - since there is no record in the Montgomery registers, where the other children are listed, Richard was presumably born at Oxford or St. Julians.

8. Lee, p.87 n.2: from the baptismal register.

9. See Richard Niccols' satirical poem, The Beggers Ape (first pub. posthumously in 1627; believed to have been written c. 1606). This includes a duel between a Horse and a "golden Asse", a vain and foolish upstart: in the notes to the Menston facsimile (1951), Brice Harris identifies this figure as H.

10. Date proposed by Rossi, I 66 n.1.

11. CSP Dom. (1603-11), 207: discussed Rossi, I 67 (who thinks that he was ashamed of it, and so omitted it from the Life).

12. Lee, p. 87 n.3: from the baptismal register.

13. J.M. Shuttleworth (ed.), The Life of Lord Herbert of Cherbury (Oxford, 1971), p. 39 (this occurs in one of the passages missing in the later MS used as a basis by Lee). Rossi (I 63 n. 5) disputes this date, claiming that Herbert's phrase "Myselfe was chosen" must in fact mean "had been chosen", since he must otherwise have entered Parliament half-way through a session; this seems unnecessarily awkward.

14. Rossi, I 83; R.C. Bald, John Donne: A Life (Oxford, rev. ed., 1986), pp. 184 ff. Letters from Donne to Magdalene Herbert dated 1607 (printed in Walton's Life) indicate the early stages of a relationship.

15. CSP Dom. (1603-10), 583. Rossi, I 141: "Era un ossessione . . ."

16. HCJ V 451-2. The incident is discussed by W.R. Notestein, The House of Commons 1604-1610 (New Haven, Ct., 1971), p. 496.

17. See Bald, John Donne, p. 187 n. against Rossi, I 172: Rossi puts it too early (he makes H "in istrada per Julyers" by the end of June - I 149).

18. He returned in late September: he was stopped by Sir Thomas Waller at Dover, and warned to cease hostilities - CSP Dom. (1603-10), 635.

For Ayres, see J. Howell (ed. J. Jacobs), Epistolae Ho-Elianae: Familiar Letters of James Howell, Historiographer Royal to Charles II (London, 1892), p. 718 n.: he was ambassador to Constantinople.

19. The occasion of "Goodfriday: Riding Westward" (5 April - NS). Was it H that he visited? As Rossi notes (I 73 and 206), H did not buy the castle back from Philip until 12 July 1613 (he paid £500: the documents are printed in the Montgomeryshire Collections XX);

on Good Friday of that year, it was still in Philip's possession. However, it seems probable that it was Edward that Donne visited. According to Donne MS H49, he was "Riding to Sr Edward Harbert in Wales" (three other MSS give the destination as Wales; all, and the first edition, supply the date). Bald, John Donne, p. 183 n. suggests: "It is doubtful . . if the Castle was ever out of Sir Edward Herbert's occupancy; after the grant to the Earl of Montgomery he presumably stayed on as a tenant until he bought it."

20. Gray's Inn Register, p. 133. Clearly this was not very important for him; Rossi was apparently unaware of it.

21. His brother George found him "somewhat of the same temper, and perhaps a little more mild, but you will hardly perceive it" (George Herbert to Sir John Danvers (undated - assumed 1618), F.E. Hutchinson (ed.), The Works of George Herbert (Oxford, 1941), p. 366. H had probably developed malaria in the Low Countries: see Rossi, I 261-2.

22. A series of letters from H to Harley between these dates (BL Add MS 70004) provides the earliest evidence for H's unorthodox views on religion. See the discussion in chapter II, "The Synod of Dort and Sir Robert Harley".

23. This period of H's life is the best documented: much of his diplomatic correspondence survives, most of it, since Rossi's time, in PRO 30/53/1-11 (see also SP 78/62-72 for French diplomatic correspondence). Much of it is published in Montgomery Collections XX (1882), and in Rossi, III App. XIX. It is fully discussed in Rossi, II 1-391.

24. "A Description", "To her Mind", "To her Face". See discussion of the MS in H.C.J. Grierson (ed.), The Poems of John Donne (Oxford, 1912), II ciii-iv.

25. CSP Dom. (1623-5), 312: hopes in vain to be made vice-chamberlain.

26. PRO 30/53/9/10, fos. 3-20.

27. PRO 30/53/9/10, fos. 21-22v.

28. See Potter and Simpson (ed.), The Sermons of John Donne (Berkeley and LA, 1953-62), VIII nos. 2 and 3.

29. Cherbury v. Chirbury: this uninteresting question has been the subject of an absurd amount of debate. The reasons for each are quite simple. "Cherbury" was the spelling always used by H himself; it is also traditional as his title. (Both spellings are found in the seventeenth century: there is some evidence to suggest that the name was more commonly spelled with an 'i' in Wales and with an 'e' in England - compare the references in the Powis deeds and documents with the English documents relating to the surrender of the Castle.) "Chirbury" is the modern spelling of the place, and as such is supported by Rossi, who wrote irritably: "Non capisco proprio perché, se si scrive ad esempio 'conte di Carlisle' e non 'conte di Carlile', si continui di scrivere 'Herbert di Cherbury'" (II 440 n. 1). The answer, presumably, is that Carlisle, not a small village, is famous for more than the favourite of King James. Since it seems purely a matter of convention, I spell the name in the more familiar way, with an 'e'.

30. Herbert was responsible for both versions, as is proved by the autograph MSS, Beal HrE 114-20: see chapter III, "The Expedition to the Isle of Ré".

31. The event is commemorated on an autograph MS of the Expedition (Beal HrE 117).

32. BL Add MS 37157. H himself has dated it 1630; since it includes an elegy for Donne, this is impossible. But D died at the beginning of the year (Old Style); which makes it likely that the MS was in fact completed soon after that.

33. See T. Birch, The Court and Times of Charles I (London, 1849), I 21. There is no record in CSP Dom.

34. See Index Librorum Prohibitorum (Rome, 1907), p. 155. In a letter he sent to Peiresc (19/29 October, 1634), Campanella noted his disapproval of this decision: see L. Amabile, Fra Tommaso Campanella ne' Castelli (Naples, 1887), II 234. De Religione Gentilium followed in July 1707.

35. Rossi, II 493-4 quotes from a report of a dispatch sent to Herbert in Montgomery from London in July 1634.

36. See Rossi, II 474-6. The working MS of The Life and Raigne, Jesus College, Oxford, MS 71, declares on its title-page that it was begun in 1634. H made use of the MSS in the Cotton library, closed to the public since 1629 (see K. Sharpe, Sir Robert Cotton 1586-1631 (Oxford, 1979)).

37. Rossi, II 490-500.

38. Printed in Hutcheson, pp. 183-6. It is discussed ad loc, and in Rossi, II 493-4; Rossi apparently does not realize that the paper is taken from Lancelot Andrewes, Tortura Torti (1609).

39. Document in Powis Bequest 1959, Parcel XII = Beal HrE 92.

40. See J.H. Hanford, "Lord Herbert of Cherbury and his Son" HLQ 5 (1942), 317-32, who quotes extensively from letters between them in the Huntington Library.

41. C. de Waard et al (eds.), Correspondance de Mersenne (Paris, 1932-88), VI 353-7.

42. See the letter from H to M in Correspondance, VI 358-9. This is the nearest we have to proof that M was responsible for the translation; it was believed at the time: see the letters of Hübner to Comenius and Grovonius (BL Sloane MS 639; the first is printed in the Correspondance, IX 174).

43. See Rossi, I 473 ff; I 518 ff.

44. CSP Dom. (1636-7), 158.

45. See the back of BM Add MS 37157. It is discussed by Rossi, III 29 n.

46. Rossi, III 32-4. The Jesus MS claims to have been completed in 1639.

47. There exist three printed works on this topic, and several MSS: see Appendix II. It is not certain when any of them was written: Rossi thinks that the version published as Religio Laici came first, and dates it to 1639/40 (III 56 ff.).

48. Rossi, III 34: from F. Liceti, De Secundo-Quaesitis per Epistolas a Claris Viris Responsa (Udine, 1646).

49. HLJ IV 45b.

50. Rossi, III 44 and n.: from BM Egerton MS 2978, fos. 55-6, a list of peers who voted against him.

51. HCJ II 554. Rossi is baffled by this story; but H seems the only possible "Lord Herbert" to fit it. In 1635, H acted as sponsor for a number of mechanical inventions "by a Frenchman" offered to Parliament (CSP Dom. (1635), 62-3). It is not so surprising when we consider his friendship with Mersenne, and interest in his scientific work (see under July 1648, below).

52. See the letter dated January 1643, inserted into the front of the MS (Bod. MS 910), complaining about its (temporary) disappearance.

53. Printed in Correspondance, XI 144-5: M has sent him a book which contains "conceptions hardies et fort semblables a celles de Monsieur Herbert . . Il y en a de telles, que je ne voudrais pas entreprendre de soustenir . . ."

54. HLJ V 77. Myddleton wrote on his behalf to Parliament in 1644, confirming that "Lord Herbert of Cherbury did neither appeare at any time in the Commission of Array though appointed a Commissioner and was not at any assemblyes or meetings of the Lords at Yorke or Oxford or any where else but hath contain'd himselfe at home for the space now of about two yeares and three monethes" (Powis Bequest 1959, Parcel IX no. 4).

55. R. Warner (ed.), Epistolary Curiosities relating to the Herbert Family, pp. 28-9 prints a letter from a Mary to her uncle Henry, from "Mount" - see Rossi, III 86-7.

56. See her letter to him (1643), PRO 30/53/7/30, printed in Rossi, III App. XXXII.

57. Again, only the letters from H survive: they are printed in Epistolary Curiosities pp. 30-2. Henry thought Edward niggardly; Edward thought Henry unreasonable.

58. See H's epitaph for him, printed in Smith, pp. 94-5.

59. Rossi, III 197 n. 22.

60. Both letters in BL Add MS 18981. First letter printed in Lee, p. 151; discussed by Rossi, III 200.

61. Lee, p. 152 = Rossi, III 203 n. 13. Lee found this letter "quaint"; Rossi detects "una sottile ironia".

62. HCJ III 612; HLJ VI 712a-13a. Discussed by Rossi, III 204-5.

63. Documents in NLW Powis Bequest 1959, Parcel IX - the most important printed in Rossi, III App XXXIII, and Montgomeryshire Collections XXII (1888), 179-98. The commander in charge of the operation, James Till, acknowledged that he had tricked H into surrendering (Powis Bequest 1959, Parcel IX no. 3). This letter is summarized by W.J. Smith (ed.), Herbert Correspondence (Cardiff, 1963), pp. 115-18.

64. See letter to H from James Howell, 13th July 1645, quoted by Rossi, III 245 n. 3: Howell mentions the move.

65. Letters printed in G.J. Vos, Opera (Amsterdam, 1699), IV 374-5, 369, 378-9.

66. The first edition of H's poems (1665) gives the date of this poem as 1664: Smith proposes 1644 (p. 162); Rossi prefers 1646 (III 246 and n. 5).

67. HCJ IV 704.

68. Rossi, III 258-61.

69. Letter quoted in Rossi, III 263 from BM Harley MS 7012, fo. 245.

70. Gassendi testifies, in his endnote to his letter H, pub. (posthumously) in his Opera (Paris, 1658), III 411. Rossi (III 419) believes that H must have gone to Holland on the same trip, as there is no other explanation for the transmission of the MS of DRG, published in Holland seventeen years later by Vos' son, Isaac (III 263).

71. Rossi, III 273 from BM Harley MS 286, fos. 311-12.

72. Mentioned in his will, PRO PROB 205/11 138.

73. Pace Rossi and Beal; see chapter VI.

74. Correspondance de Mersenne, XVI 413.

75. The date engraved on his monument, 20th August, has been queried by Evelyn Rogers (Notes and Queries n.s. 28 (1981), 524), with reference to the burial register, and CSP Dom. (1648-9), 232, which give the date as the 5th. But the disparity is odd.

Chapter I: The Poet

I Herbert and Donne

Like so many of his contemporaries, Herbert expected no fame for his poetry. The Life, which ends with the publication of De Veritate, finds no room for it: he appears as soldier, lover, and gentleman-intellectual, but not as poet. His poetic output was modest - nearly all that can be certainly attributed to him, and a little more, is contained in 123 pages of the Oxford text.[1] Nevertheless, his earliest literary work was in verse, and what little he published of it make up his earliest publications.[2] There is nothing very unusual in that - nothing to require special explanation; but Herbert's situation suggests one. As a young man he was a friend of John Donne, a poet almost unrivalled for his impact on his contemporaries.[3]

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[1] "Echo to a Rock" (Smith, pp. 46-7) is in fact by Henry Reynolds: see below, under the discussion of Herbert's personal MS. One short piece, his commendatory couplets for the Lapis Philosophicus of John Case, is not included: see chapter II, "Origins".

[2] The first (1599) was the poem for John Case, who apparently taught him at Oxford (see chapter II, "Oxford"). His "Elegy for the Prince" (Prince Henry) appeared in the 3rd edition of Joshua Sylvester's collection Lachrymae Lachrymarum (1613). The only other poems he published were the long Latin pieces, with De Causis Errorum (1645).

[3] The Songs and Sonets, with assorted Elegies, dominate manuscript collections of the early seventeenth century.

The other name most frequently adduced in connexion with Herbert's is that of Giambattista Marino (1569-1625), an Italian lyric poet famous for his taste for the "marvellous". I have omitted Marino almost entirely, for three reasons. First, The subject has been well treated by earlier critics (the fullest treatment is F.J. Warnke's, in his unpublished PhD. thesis, "'This Metaphysick Lord': a Study of the Poetry of Herbert of Cherbury" (Columbia, 1954)). Secondly, the debt seems to me more formal than substantial, and of very much less interest than that to Donne. These two must excuse the third reason: space.

"Of Donne's relations with Herbert of Cherbury we know . . less than might have been expected."[4] Perhaps so; it is true that he plays no part in the Life, except as the eulogist of Herbert's mother.[5] That daunting figure seems to stand between them as an obstruction, as well as a link: Walton, so enthusiastic about Magdalene, does not mention Edward in his Life of Donne; the quotation above comes from an article on "Donne and Mrs. Herbert". But the evidence for their relations, though sparse, is of remarkably high interest. In addition to the poems by both traditionally believed to be connected, there is a verse letter from Donne "To Sir Edward Herbert, at Julyers", which seems to be part of a poetic exchange.[6] There are two letters in prose - not much, in comparison with Ker or Goodyer; but the first is a dedication, and the second announces one of the most important events of Donne's life.[7] It was "Riding to Sr Edward Harbert in Wales", apparently, that he composed his poem "Goodfriday".[8] Donne the priest preached not only for the funeral of Herbert's

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[4] H. W. Garrod, "Donne and Mrs. Herbert", RES 22 (1945), 168-9.

[5] Lee, p. 20.

[6] No one has ever questioned the connexion (though its nature is questioned) between Herbert's "Ode" and Donne's "Extasie": this and the verse letter are discussed below.

[7] These are discussed below. There are references to Herbert in four other letters by Donne: Letters to Various Persons of Honour (London, 1651) pp. 3 (to Bridget White, a mutual friend, announcing that Herbert has recovered from a fever); 155 (to Goodyere, on Herbert's wish not to be replaced in his embassy before his return); 170 (to Goodyere: D has been offered his seat in Parliament by Herbert, "who makes haste away" - this letter must date from 1614, when Herbert went off to the Low Countries); 283-4 (to George Gerrard: a mysterious reference to "Sir E.H." - Donne apparently offers to explain something to "E.H." on Gerrard's behalf).

[8] For the evidence, see the Chronological Table.

mother, but for the marriage of his son. And Donne was the subject of the longest of Herbert's elegies.[9]

His impact on Herbert was in fact profound. Herbert knew him better than most of his imitators did, and he knew him in a variety of ways: Donne seems to persist in his life, appearing in different kinds of documentation, playing a variety of parts. In this chapter, he will have only a secondary place (he will drop out of sight for some of the second half); but I hope to show something of his importance both as Herbert's most important poetical mentor, and as a guide and foil to his early intellectual life.[10]

Donne and the Critics of Herbert's Verse

Donne, by the end, was formidable to his contemporaries. "I doe not like the office" remarked Henry King, on undertaking a poetical elegy for him.[11] Posterity was to justify the elegists' unwillingness. The old idea of a "school of Donne" tends inevitably to the denigration of the scholars; the catch in being Donne's senior pupil was demonstrated by the inventor of the phrase:

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[9] The others were on subjects Donne also commemorated - Cecilia Bulstrode and Prince Henry: for the latter, so Jonson says, Donne tried "to match Sir Ed: Herbert in obscurenesse" (Herford and Simpson, I 136).

[10] The "coterie of Donne", to which Herbert is usually held to belong, will not make much of an appearance here. This is principally because (although he doubtless met most of them) there is little evidence of his acquaintance with any of Donne's other friends: he knew Jonson well enough to write him a satire, and to receive a short eulogy from him; but he was not a "Sirenaic" (see I.A. Shapiro, "The 'Mermaid Club", MLR 45 (1950), 6-17). More can be said about the relationship of Donne and Herbert if it is studied in isolation; although it may be that something more general can be deduced from it about relationships between poets at this period.

[11] W. Milgate (ed.), The Epithalamions, Anniversaries, and Epicedes, (Oxford, 1978), p. 82. Twelve elegies were published in the first edition of Donne's poetry (1633); Herbert's elegy, not included in the collection, is discussed at the end of this chapter.

> The poetry of Edward, Lord Herbert of Cherbury, the most senior member of the School of Donne, is also the most purely Metaphysical . . . And this may well be because he is also one of the least original personally.[12]

For anyone interested in Herbert's verse, Donne presents something of a methodological problem. The first full-length study of Herbert's poetry tries to keep a balance between pupildom and originality:

> he has justly been called 'the first descendant of Donne in the secular line'. But, unlike Donne, he continued to use the lyric forms of his Elizabethan predecessors. To a far greater degree than Donne he followed the various poetic fashions of Continental Europe . . .[13]

That is an uncertain line of rescue; and thirty years later, it has clearly collapsed:

> a poet of real, if modest, talent. He was also egotistical, addicted to unacknowledged literary borrowing, fond of deliberate obscurity in poetic expression, and almost terminally frigid in his poetic diction.[14]

Donne seems responsible for the worst in Herbert criticism. Patrick Cruttwell, after killing off most of the poems to his own satisfaction, offers the remainder a kind of truce:

> surely Lord Herbert is incomparably more successful . . . when he is anticipating Dryden, than he was when following Donne.[15]

(thus adroitly making it appear that even chronological priority does not altogether exempt one from allegiance to a "School").

Eugene D. Hill, in the most recent, very positive evaluation, has no patience with this kind of attitude; and he makes his own position very clear from the start:

> Herbert's poems will not yield their riches to readers intent on seeing them as successful (or unsuccessful) attempts to write like John Donne. Even those early

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[12] A. Alvarez, The School of Donne (London, 1961), p. 51.

[13] F.J. Warnke, "'This Metaphysick Lord'", p. 5.

[14] F.J. Warnke, John Donne (Boston, 1987), p. 68.

[15] P. Cruttwell, The Shakespearean Moment and its Place in the Poetry of the Seventeenth Century (London, 1954), p. 174.

> poems that most clearly ape Donne's style are built upon thematic concerns that are distinctively Herbertian.[16]

Without wishing to contradict this salutary remark, I should like to make more of the idea of correspondence between Herbert and Donne - the interest for each of the other's ideas. To attempt, in fact, an attack on Rossi's final judgment:

> Fra Donne e Herbert non v'era mai stata comunione vera, ma soltanto imitazione e emulazione di abilità poetica.[17]

Beginnings of a Friendship

The first meeting of Herbert and Donne is dated by the leading authority on each to the winter of 1606-7.[18] Donne's situation at that time was uncertain: he was badly short of money, trying to repair his fortunes after a disastrous marriage. To an onlooker (or a modern critic), Herbert's must seem much better. At the age of seventeen, he was presented to the old Queen; at twenty-one, the new King made him a Knight of the Bath. Stories in the Life suggest an easy relationship with Lady Bedford, Donne's great patron: Herbert was not obliged to ask her for money.[19] But perhaps his situation did not seem very secure to himself. He was involved in a marriage no less difficult than Donne's, though in a different way: his mother arranged one for him at the age of fifteen, and it seems never to have been happy.[20] His few references to his wife in the Life are not affectionate; about his mother

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[16] Eugene D. Hill Edward, Lord Herbert of Cherbury (Boston, 1987), p. 67.

[17] La Vita, I 207: "Between Donne and Herbert there had never been true communion, but only imitation and emulation of poetic ability."

[18] La Vita, I 83; R.C. Bald, John Donne, pp. 184 f.

[19] Lee, pp. 130, 208.

[20] Edward's marriage seems to have been joyless from the start: after his Continental tour, he and his wife never lived regularly together, and she did not accompany him on his

he preserves a reticence, which has often been interpreted to show a muted hostility both to her and to his stepfather, the young Sir John Danvers.[21] It suggests, at least, some lack of warmth. And life at Court may not have been very smooth for him, despite his name and title: a contemporary satire survives in which he is apparently featured as an Ass (a "golden Asse"), ludicrously worsted in a duel with a horse - alias the Lord Admiral, Charles Howard. The Ass is an upstart, vain and self-important, who has acquired his golden caparison by means of a opportune marriage; if, as seems very likely, this is Herbert, another and sadder reason emerges for his failure to accompany Howard to Spain for the ratification of the peace treaty, besides his own guarded reference to "the industry of some near me, who desired to stay me at home".[22]

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embassy. (The dialogue between them on the subject of his going abroad, recorded in the Life, pp. 87-9, is discussed with fine indignation by Antonia Fraser in The Weaker Vessel (London, 1985), p. 86.) The match has been judged in different ways: Rossi is sorry for him; Amy M. Charles, biographer of George Herbert, and no friend to Edward, is anxious to exonerate his mother (George Herbert, p. 32). It is hard not to feel some sympathy with a teenage husband who underlined three sections in his copy of Peter Lombard: "Matrimony", "Angels", and "Free Will" (FK, p. 101: this is almost certainly a student's textbook).

[21] How did Edward feel about his step-father? Judging from the silence of the Life, many critics have assumed that he was hostile (see, for what seems to be the earliest expression of this idea, Hutcheson, p.). Amy Charles follows this line (George Herbert, pp. 59-61). Unfortunately, we have no letters from Edward, to compare with the ones Danvers sent to him in 1614/15. But no attempt at construction should ignore the testimony of Aubrey, who says that he saw them together (A. Clark (ed.) Brief Lives (Oxford, 1898), I 308). Sir Thomas Browne, after all, seems to have made journeys very amicably with his step-father - despite both Dr. Johnson's claim that he was tyrannized by him, and the fact that the Religio Medici, like Edward's Life, has special praise for "their resolution who never marry twice." (See the discussion by N.J. Endicott, "Sir Thomas Browne as 'Orphan', with some account of his stepfather, Sir Thomas Dutton", UTQ 30 (1961).)

[22] Lee, p. 86. The satire is The Beggers Ape, by Richard Niccols, (London, 1st pub. in 1627), rep. with an introduction by Brice Harris in 1957, and approximately dated by him to 1606. Howard, one of Niccols's heroes, is regularly presented as a horse in his satires; Harris identifies the Ass as Herbert (though without much explanation). The identification is the more likely because of the feud between the Herberts and the Howards - to which Herbert's abortive duel with Theophilus Howard may also belong (Lee, pp. 121-4, 326-32). The Herberts had their revenge in 1614 with the downfall of Somerset, favourite and Howard

If Donne had reasons for social restlessness, Herbert had reasons too. It is clear that his voyage to France, shortly after the beginning of his acquaintance with Donne, left him extremely unsettled: in the few months between his first return and his second departure, he contrived to have a duel in the French manner within the grounds of Greenwich,[23] and to behave in so boisterous a fashion to the Speaker of the House of Commons that he was ordered to make an apology (he did so - it was ostentatiously inadequate).[24]

The young Herbert had a rowdy side; he was also intellectually inclined, with his family's powerful interest in questions of faith. The earliest surviving evidence of this predates his acquaintance with Donne by about four years. Among the unpublished papers in the National Library of Wales is a sheet in his best handwriting, signed with his initials and dated "21 December 1602". It is a comparison of the soul with the eye: neither is contaminated by what it beholds, nor has the means of perceiving itself without God's light. It ends by asserting the need for Christ, protector of the blind:

> Our soule wantinge therefore on earth the true lookinge glasse wherein he [sic] may frame high beautyes fit to be spouse of Christ, must turne his mind to that clear mirrour of inaccessible light, wherein we must not use our owne light to be, the medium of our sight, but for [sic] then we shall bee dazled at the light, like as one should behold an infinite dazlinge light through a cleare Christall, but wee must intreate that our moste mercifull Saviour, with the hand of his mercy so to shadowe

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champion. (Edward Herbert was abroad when this happened, but he commemorated the event in an epigram of appropriate woodenness: Smith, p. 87.)

I am extremely grateful to Ms Michelle O'Callaghan for drawing my attention to this satire, which has not been noticed by any critic of Herbert that I have read.

[23] Lee, pp. 95-6. In the note to p. 96, Lee quotes from CSP Dom. (1603-10), 583, the account of the incident by Chamberlain.

[24] See HCJ V 451-2, which gives the date (July 18/28, 1610). This confirms Bald's idea (p. 187 n. 2) that Herbert returned to France somewhat later than Rossi believed (I 172 f. - Rossi makes no mention of the incident).

> that light as it may be so as our degenerate soules, may see to restore theyr deformed senses, to theyr true lustre.[25]

This piece is the most conventionally devout of all Herbert's writings to survive. The next surviving statement of belief dates from 1617: by that time, he was working on a rather different creed, of his own.[26] In December 1602, he was still a minor, probably at his mother's house in Charing Cross, and no doubt under her influence. It was through Magdalene Herbert that he met Donne.

It is quite likely that the rowdiness he exhibited slightly later was another response to that influence - and that Donne seemed to him something of a figure of liberation. On the other side of that same sheet he began another composition, in a different style:

> That the Stoickes tell more fabulous thinges then the poets, and would take away all happines from men by their doctrine
>
> They hold that there is nothing true or false in his owne nature, but that as they are referred to our minde, and that thinges appeare after one fashion to men that are sober, and another fashion to those that are drunken . . .

This does not progress beyond the first sentence, so the point is not developed; but the manner and format strongly suggest that Herbert was trying his hand at a Donnean "Paradox".[27]

This raises the question: how much of Donne's work had he read? Further fragments survive, of uncertain date, indicating further practice in this style of writing. There are six

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[25] This manuscript is now in the National Library of Wales, in an envelope taken from Parcel XXVI of the 1959 Powis Bequest. It is not, so far as I know, ever been noticed before - though it has the invaluable (and unusual) features of signature (EH) and date.

[26] The letters of 1617 to Sir Robert Harley, on the subject of religion, are discussed in chapter II, "The Synod of Dort and Sir Robert Harley".

[27] That it is not some sort of university exercise in disputation is clear from the fact that it is written in English, not Latin.

sheets, all probably written in Herbert's hand:[28] the first two seem to be rough drafts for verse; the others consist of single sentences or phrases, designed to make a neat or witty point. The following are typical: "Enjoying a hapines wch cannot bee comprehended but by mindes capable of the glory of such thoughts"; "I have felt yor misfortune not as mine, but as mine and yors together"; "Thankes yet to his Choller yt hath thus armed mee; passion is no deadly weapon, wee heare his noise before it does [? doth] execution"; "But I submitt, for M. shall never know a reason to contradict C."[29] The last suggests a possible connexion with Herbert's celebrated "Ode", a dialogue between Melander and Celinda; the one before is reminiscent of one of Donne's Elegies:

> O give him many thanks, he'is courteous,
> That in suspecting kindly warneth us.[30]

The manuscript is cryptic, and should not be made to say too much; what can be safely deduced is Herbert's fascination with witty turns of speech, in the Donnean style. Whatever the solemnity with which Donne introduced himself to Magdalene Herbert, his past seems to have preceded him in the mind of her son.

The raffish pose of Donne's poetry was very attractive to his contemporaries - and to their successors, for some generations. There were many imitators of the swaggering sexual

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[28] There is some variation in Herbert's handwriting in his earlier years: it became smaller and more regular as he grew older. He formed his handwriting very deliberately: a small notebook survives (NLW Powis Bequest 1959, Parcel XVIII), in which he has written his name in a variety of scripts. Here some of the writing is unmistakably Herbert's, some of it is larger and more sprawling, but almost certainly his too.

[29] NLW Powis Bequest 1959, packet taken from Parcel XXVI. The most interesting is the first sheet, which contains distinctively Donnean phrases - this is discussed below, with "The Extasie" and Herbert's "Ode".

[30] H. Gardner (ed.), The Elegies and The Songs and Sonnets (Oxford, 1965), p. 15.

persona; Herbert, always apparently less interested in sex than in theology,[31] found inspiration in the intellectual boldness, and the restlessness. He read the prose paradoxes; it is very likely that he had also read another early work - dated very precisely to six months before his own "Paradox": that much-debated work, Donne's "Progresse of the Soul".

The "Progresse" circulated in manuscript with an impudent, Hamlet-style preface promising a series of scandals.[32] It is easy to imagine the impact of its coolly bullying manner:

> Let me arrest thy thoughts; wonder with mee,
> Why plowing, building, ruling and the rest,
> Or most of these arts, whence our lives are blest,
> By cursed Cain's race invented be,
> And blest Seth vext us with Astronomie
> Ther's nothing simply good, nor ill alone . . .

Since Grierson (who called it "disgusting", "repellent", full of "details that seem merely and wantonly repulsive"),[33] many critics have chosen either to ignore the extraordinarily disturbing elements of this poem, or to deny them.[34] So Milgate, in his edition, glosses the verse above:

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[31] Rossi, with brilliant Continental insight, speaks of the "misoginismo abituale di un uomo fortunato con le donne". (Unfortunately, I can no longer find this reference; but it is certainly there, and too good to omit.) See also the interesting article by G. Williams, "Sexual Love and Spiritual Death in Edward Herbert's Poetry", Language and Literature 2 (1974), 16-31.

[32] "though this soule could not move when it was a Melon, yet it may remember, and now tell mee, at what lascivious banquet it was serv'd . . ." (The Satires, p. 26).

[33] H.J.C. Grierson (ed.), The Poems of John Donne (Oxford, 1912), I xviii, 219.

[34] Examples of the first are the solemn aetiologies of W.A. Murray, "What Was the Soul of the Apple?" in J.R. Roberts (ed.), Essential Articles for the Study of John Donne (Hamden, Conn., 1975); of the second, the dispassionate survey of W. Milgate in his edition. John Carey's dazzling discussion in John Donne: Life, Mind and Art (London, 2nd ed., 1990), pp. 134-44, demonstrates the exuberance of its language, but ignores its shock-value. Politicization of it has restored something of Grierson's tone to a few accounts: see A.F. Marotti, John Donne, Coterie Poet (Madison, WI, 1986), p. 131.

> He asserts "nothing is Essentially good, but God . . . So that now both these propositions are true, first, That there is nothing in this world good, and then this also, That there is nothing ill" (Sermons VI 231). This is the mode of Donne's assertion in the poem also . . .[35]

But the point of the sermon is that "there is nothing good but God" (p. 232), whereas the point of the stanza is that everything is relative: no doubt, if asked, Donne would exempt God; but he chooses not to raise the question, presenting instead an argument with a different sound - the argument, in fact, of the Stoics in Herbert's fragmentary "Paradox". What evidence there is suggests that the poem was not regarded at the time as innocuous; Ben Jonson's description of it may be inaccurate in all its details, but it is quite close enough for its conclusion to be taken seriously: "now since he was made Doctor [he] repenteth highlie".[36] Perhaps he had already begun to repent in 1608, when young Edward Herbert set out to define absolute "ill".

An Exchange on Sin

In the summer of 1608, Herbert arrived in France. During this first visit, he wrote two verse satires, in the sharp, swift-moving manner made fashionable by Donne and Marston. The second, addressed to Ben Jonson, reflects the concerns one might have expected (and highly suitable for the creator of Sir Politick Would-bee): the comic antics of the over-eager Englishman in Paris:

> Now, that he speaks, are complemental speeches,
> That never go off but below the breeches ... (68-9)[37]

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[35] Satires, pp. 190-1.

[36] Herford and Simpson, I 136.

[37] Smith, p. 16.

As a newcomer himself, Herbert was "received" by the ambassador, Sir George Carew.[38] Carew wrote a report for King James of life in France, in which (for whatever motives) he emphasized the oppressiveness of Henri IV:

> Concerning the common people, they hold it for a true principle of state in France, that they must be kept low and out of heart by exactions and oppressions; for otherwise they would be apt to mutinies and rebellions: and accordingly they have at his day so many burthens on them, as keep them from all fancy of skipping or running; for they are scarce able to go or wag under them.[39]

Perhaps a word from Carew contributed to the generation of Herbert's first satire, which makes a rather startling contrast to the second: in this, he writes with great harshness about evil in the world, from what appears to be a revolutionary standpoint. It has a particular interest here: since D.A. Keister first made the suggestion in 1947, it has been generally accepted that Herbert sent the satire off to Donne, who took it as the starting-point for his verse letter back, "To Sir Edward Herbert, at Julyers".[40] It seems likely that it was the second part of a kind of exchange which began with the "Progresse of the Soule".[41]

A full paraphrase to this poem is provided by Moore Smith in his edition (pp. 142-4); in the hope of being helpful, I here offer a brief résumé, designed to bring out what I take to be its principal points.

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[38] Lee, p. 90. Carew was the uncle of the poet, Herbert's later protégé on his own embassy.

[39] G. Carew, A Relation of the State of France, with the Characters of Henry IV and the Principal Persons of that Court (London, posthumously pub: 1748), p. 461. There is a MS copy of this work in the 1965 Powis Bequest to the National Library of Wales: it is anonymous, and was attributed by Lord Powis, who owned and had it bound, to Herbert.

[40] D.A. Keister, "Donne and Herbert of Cherbury: an Exchange of Verses" MLQ 8 (1947) pp. 430-4. This supersedes Rossi's view (La Vita, I 121) that Donne never saw it.

[41] This second point was first suggested by Rossi (I 115), who thought that the verse quoted above was Herbert's point of departure: "Herbert risponde che l'origine del male è oscura, ma si capisce che occorre male per vincere il male" (I 116).

Proposal to trace the course of Ill, which was once easy to spot, but now goes about in disguise. It is mysterious in its links with good (1-57). The best image of it is provided by the growth of tyranny: indispensable now, just as Original Sin is indispensable (57-74).[42]

Social hierarchy is based on illusion, since only merit truly differentiates men. The greatest privilege is a free spirit (75-102).

Priests try to convert all political concerns into moral ones, and do what they can to keep down ambitious men - who are otherwise deterred by civic means (103-110).

Why are we now enslaved, when we were born free? We are subdued by a few men, as we subdue beasts (111-126).[43]

Herbert is doing two things in this poem: describing a "state-progresse", and discussing "Ill". Much of its opacity derives from the terse packing of one set of imagery upon another. The technique is comparable to Donne's use in his Satyres of the church and the court as images for each other; Herbert, however, is more impetuous, less controlled, and sometimes incoherent. There appears to be a shift of emphasis in the course of the poem from more moral to more political comment - but it is not easy to pinpoint it. Insofar as there is a precise moment of shift, it seems to occur in lines 57-60:

> which that I may
> Ev'n in his first original display,
> And best example . . .

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[42] "The best image": my rendering of "so States . . . find" (11). Moore Smith anticipates here: "This other evil is the State . . ." But the State is here a comparison. I agree with Grierson, reviewing the edition in MLR 21 (1926), 210-13: "That [the State] is coming later . . ." (p. 211).

[43] I disagree with Smith in some points of interpretation: the most significant concern ll. 7-9 and 59-62. In the first case, I agree with Grierson (p. 211) that "what is least like Good, men hate,/ Since 'twill be the less sin" must in fact mean "what is most like", the opposite of what it says (as happens with comparisons, especially in verse) - Smith's elaborate explanation ("men hate it only when they see it in its most pronounced form") does not convince me. In the second, I query his interpretation of "he/ Who first wanted succession to be/ A Tyrant": "want" at this period more naturally means "lack" than "desire" (so Smith), and I would take the phrase to mean "he who first lacked heirs, and therefore could not establish a tyranny, could have made a better choice of king" (for near-contemporary use of "succession" to mean "heirs", see Cymbeline III 1 7).

But from the beginning, Ill has been presented as a force dimly personified (sometimes masculine, sometimes neuter), progressing "in his long course" (l.2) into "keep[ing] . . greatness" (l. 14 - see ll. 17-23). It is related to political life, and also an image of it. This concentrated scheme gives to the satire a surprising slipperiness.

Moore Smith and Rossi between them locate two sources for its content: I Samuel viii, and the Discours de la Servitude Volontaire (better known as the Contr'Un) of Etienne de la Boétie, friend of Montaigne. The Biblical passage describes the gloomy predictions of Samuel, the High Priest, when the Israelites decide to elect a king: as Smith noted, the "Priests who rav'd/ And Propheci'd" (72-3) are an expansion of Samuel. The passage was a favourite in political writings of the time, and could be used both ways: for monarchy and against it. What is unusual in Herbert's treatment is the concentration on priestly responsibility:

> they did a kind of good
> They knew not of, by whom the choice first stood.

The poem's originality is brought out by comparison with an equivalent passage in the Contr'Un, assumed by all critics since Rossi to be the Satire's major source.[44] According to La Boétie, no people would choose servitude if not "accustomed":

> sinon possible que ce fussent ceux d'Israel qui sans contrainte ny sans aucun besoin se firent un tyrans, duquel peuple ie ne lis iamais l'histoire que je n'en aye trop grand despit, et quasi jusques a en devenir inhumain, pour me resiouir de tant de maux qui leur en advinrent.[45]

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[44] This may be so; but there are other candidates who should be considered, in a full discussion - notably Charron, whose picture of "Loi" and "Coustume" in De la Sagesse (1st pub. 1604) is often strikingly close (see II 8). (Herbert owned this: FK, p. 97). The passage discussed here is in fact one that Rossi claimed La Boétie left out: "La Boétie non porta in campo che argomenti e esempi classici . . ." (I 123).

[45] L. Desgraves (ed.) Oeuvres Complètes de La Boétie (Paris, 1991), I 76-7: "unless possibly it was the people of Israel, who, without constraint or any necessity, made a tyrant for themselves; I never read the history of that people without feeling great bitterness against

La Boétie says nothing of the rôle of the priests: what interests him is simply the disastrous choice, which he, like the Biblical writer, presents as that of the people. Herbert's treatment is distinctively different.

Justifying rebellion at this date was not easy. The revolutionary Huguenots, with whose work the Contr'Un was often published,[46] and whom Herbert as ambassador was to try to defend,[47] faced two distinct kinds of theological problem. First there was the specific condemnation of the idea in the sacred text (notably Romans 13 i: "the powers that be are ordained of God"); second, and more insidious, the general tone of the theology. Neither Luther nor Calvin liked the idea of rebellion: they both preferred, for as long as possible, the doctrine of non-resistance - for which their faith readily offered a theoretical basis.[48] Even

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them for this - even to the point of becoming inhumanly delighted at the many evils it brought on them." I am very grateful to Professor Terence Cave for helping me with this difficult passage.

[46] See accounts of its publications in any of the many recent editions. It was one of the two works by La Boétie not posthumously edited and published by Montaigne; in the Preface to his edition, Montaigne explains why: admirable though the work is, it is not suitable for the "grossier et pesant air d'une si mal plaisante saison." Montaigne's edition appeared in 1572, the year of St. Bartholomew; the Discours began to be published, in more or less complete form, two years later, in collections of Huguenot writings against the Valois government. (By the end of his life, at least, La Boétie was not sympathetic to the Huguenots: see his Memoires sur la Pacification des Troubles, against toleration of two religions in a state.)

[47] For a full account of this, see Rossi, II 174 ff. Some of the problems of Herbert's embassy are discussed in chapter III below.

[48] See Quentin Skinner, The Foundations of Modern Political Thought (Cambridge, 1978), II 19: "[Luther] simply insists that the reason why evil and tyrannical rulers are from time to time ordained by God is, as Job says, 'because of the people's sins' . . . 'he [the tyrant] is ruling not because he is a scoundrel [despite the omnipotence of the Deity] but because of the people's sin." Calvin added the concession to his regular line in a chapter written for the very last edition of the Institutes published in his lifetime (1555).

the celebrated Vindiciae contra Tyrannos stressed that God's "severity" is "most just";[49] this tends to undercut the logic of resistance. If man deserves to suffer, rebellion is not an obvious solution.

La Boétie himself encountered a different problem. His political drift is not undercut by a submissive theology, but it is threatened by its very moral optimism: some men, he asserts, are capable of rising above their surroundings - there are some who

> quand la liberté seroit entierement perdue, et toute hors du monde, l'imaginent et la sentent en leur esprit, et encores la savourent; et la servitude ne leur est dé goust[50]

If liberty of spirit is immune to political surroundings, that also might weaken the case for action. Herbert's "exalted Spirit" seems similarly superior to its political circumstances; but, although "above" Venice (91-2), it is also above subjection, and there seems no easy way of reconciling its ideas with those of the "sugred Divines" of the next paragraph.[51] Those Divines in fact provide him with a steady focus for opposition. There is a fine ambiguity in the word "election" as Herbert turns from statecraft to what, had he lived rather later, he would probably have called priestcraft:

> [the Spirit] happy-high, knows no election
> Raises man to true greatness, but his own.
> Meanwhile, sugred Divines, next place to this . .

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[49] H. du Languet/P. du Plessis Mornay, Vindiciae contra Tyrannos (Edinburgh, 1579), p. 130. However, it persists, God is usually mild with us; and therefore so should kings be. This argument is obviously open to objections: may not a bad king be a rightful punishment? If the king is analogous to God, is he not free to be unmerciful when he chooses? Herbert owned this work (FK, p. 104).

[50] Discours, p. 81: "if liberty were entirely lost and gone from the world would imagine and sense it in their spirit, and still savour it; and servitude is not to their taste . . . "

[51] In this tension between sufficiency and grievance might be seen the beginning of the dilemma of De Religione Gentilium: do the pagans have a legitimate version of religion, or have the priests spoiled it?

What is the origin of Ill? The "Satire" offers two kinds of answer: theological, and political. The two are fused in the figures of the raving priests - the first of many appearances by them in Herbert's writing. On the secular level, his political ideas were flexible (disconcertingly so).[52] But this picture of divine politics remained steady: a premise for development. And, unlike La Boétie or the Huguenots, he points up the connexion with theology itself:

> though now we cannot spare
> (And not be worse) Kings, on those terms they are,
> No more than we could spare (and have been saved)
> Original sin. (69-72)

This obligatory sin is paralleled with oppression on earth. This treatment is reminiscent of Donne's "Progresse":

> So fast in us doth this corruption grow,
> That now we dare aske why wee should be so.
> Would God (disputes the curious Rebell) make
> A law, and would not have it kept? Or can
> His creatures will, crosse his? Of every man
>
> For one, will God (and be just) vengeance take?
> Who sinn'd? (101-7)

Our sin makes us question the justice of original sin . . . But Donne brings himself demurely to heel, with another polyptoton:

> But snatch mee heavenly Spirit from this vaine
> Reckoning their vanities . . . (111-12)

Herbert goes on, and thus goes further. Perhaps he was inspired by the implicit challenge with which Donne ended the passage:

> Arguing is heretiques game, and Exercise
> As wrastles, perfects them . . .[53]

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[52] See the beginning of chapter III below.

[53] Satires, p. 31.

Herbert's priests first chose a king, and their successors inculcate unquestioning obedience, in standard Christian terms:

> Mean while, sugred Divines, next place to this,
> Tells us, Humility and Patience is
> The way to Heaven, and that we must there
> Look for our Kingdom, that the great'st rule here
> Is but to rule our selves . . .
> whom Ambition swayes,
> Their office is to turn it other wayes. (103-10)

By concentrating on the tyranny of the spiritual power, Herbert offers something of potential danger to established religion.

Despite its flickering defiance, Donne's "Progresse" is not really a subversive work in social terms. Its general anarchy undermines any coherent radicalism: whereas the "Satire" shows animals wrongfully subjugated, "Progresse" presents a chaotic ark, in which there is no hierarchy to be inverted. Donne was never seriously attracted by political unorthodoxy; he travelled little, and his attitude to developments in Europe seems to have been simple and reactionary.[54] The aspect of the "Satire" more likely to appeal to him was the theological one. And that is corroborated by his verse-letter to Herbert.

Although the two poems were written some eighteen months apart, it is generally agreed that Herbert's "Satire" and "To Edward Herbert at Julyers" form a dialogue, of some sort.[55] Keister, who first noted the connexion, argued for a rather general response; this

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[54] Unlike Herbert, he apparently rejoiced in the great European movement towards absolutism: "all the other Princes of Christendome, beginne to shake off these fetters, which insensibly and drowsily they had admitted; and labour by all waies, which are as yet possible to them, to return to their naturall Supremacy and Iurisdiction . . ." (Pseudo-Martyr (London, 1610), sigs. B3v-4).

[55] Herbert went to "Julyers" (Cleves-Jülich) in 1610; it may be that he did not show Donne his Satire at once.

has been followed implicitly by critics who have interpreted the two poems differently from Keister. But verbal parallels suggest that Donne not only drew on Herbert's satire, but took its structure as the inverse of his own. So the ark of Herbert's penultimate line appears in Donne's line 2; poison, from the first section of the "Satire", takes up the last section, before the valedictory compliments, in the reply; the couplet endings "rod/God" appear about ten lines before "poison" in Herbert, ten lines later in Donne; and the brief references to original sin occur a short way after the mid-point in the "Satire" (71-2, of 126 ll), and a short way before in "To Sir Edward Herbert" (19-20, of 50).

But if the poem is a "rebuke" to Herbert, as some critics have suggested,[56] it is certainly a subtle one. Donne first gives prime place to "wisdom" (2), which is supposed to keep us from being "beasts" - a condition Herbert had suggested was common. Donne seems to have gone back to his own early "Progresse", where the image of the "floating parke" (l. 29) stands as an emblem for the poem itself, full of "diverse shapes", killing and mating at random. Herbert had taken up that image; and Donne, replying to him, took it back again, internalizing it, so that it becomes a reproach to the idea that man is bestial:

> The foole, in whom these beasts do live at jarre . .
> All which was man in him, is eat away (3, 6)

Then he switches to the divine reason for this condition, which removes primary responsibility from man to God: God sends us "punishments" - but it is our fault if we are unhappy. The first point might be compared with the stoical optimism that underlies the Contr'Un, the second with the Huguenot response to tribulation. Both are answers of a kind to Herbert's challenge. And yet, although formally reversed, the second poem does not read

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[56] Notably Keister, and F.J. Warnke, "This Metaphysick Lord", p. 50.

like a rebuttal of the first. The movement of thought is too similar for that.[57] Donne's poem indicates a more complex response; a profound interest in the same issues.

"To Sir Edward Herbert" may also have some relation to another work with which Herbert has a connexion. The ending has provoked some interest:[58]

> As brave as true is that profession then
> Which you do use to make; that you know man.
> This makes it credible; you have dwelt upon
> All worthy bookes, and now are such a one.
> Actions are authors, and of those in you
> Your friends finde every day a mart of new.

Compare one of Donne's two prose letters to Herbert - the dedication in his manuscript of Biathanatos:

> ytt cannot chuse a wholesomer ayre than yor library, where Authors of all complexions are preservd.[59]

Books seem here to represent a sort of shorthand for this particular relationship: books "of all complexions" - even Biathanatos.

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[57] Compare in particular the couplet in each poem on original sin, with their complementary use of brackets.

[58] See R.S. Bauer, "Donne's Letter to Herbert Re-Examined" in G.A. Stringer (ed.), New Essays on Donne (Salzburg, 1977), 60-73 (who sees it as a veiled reproach to Herbert, as fellow "maker" = poet); Marotti, John Donne, p. 201 (to whom it is an expression of self-reproach); Warnke, John Donne, p. 68 (the most anti-Herbertian explanation: "it is rather a mixed compliment, suggesting as it does that . . . Herbert's friends find his conversation stuffed with borrowings from authors he has read").

[59] E.W. Sullivan (ed.), Biathanatos (Boston, 1984), p. 249 (for the text, see next section). The topos of man as library is not unique, of course (see, for example, Ben Jonson on Donne's friend Goodyer); still, the similarity is perhaps suggestive. R.B. Wollman interprets the verse with sensitivity: "Donne personifies his own books and books of Edward Herbert's library as living 'authors', as if there is little or no difference between the manuscript and the writer" ("The 'Press and the Fire': Print and Manuscript Culture in Donne's Circle" SEL 33 (1993), 89).

Paradoxes

One of the few things generally agreed about Biathanatos among modern scholars is that the work itself dates from some time in 1608 - the year of Herbert's Satire.[60] Herbert's was one of two copies; the other went to Robert Ker, whose relationship with Donne is more fully documented than that of Herbert. But it seems clear from his dedicatory epistles that Donne Jr., who first published it, regarded Herbert's relationship with the book as unique: Herbert is its "patron".[61] Herbert himself, inscribing his copy for presentation to the Bodleian, described it as "dedicatum".[62] Whatever the circumstances of the transcription (some modern editors stress its inaccuracies), comparison of the two letters that accompanied the copies, to Herbert and to Ker, suggests that the connexion of each with the work was of a rather different kind. Whereas Ker is entrusted with it as a favour to Donne - "Keep it, I pray you . . . Reserve it for me if I live" - Herbert is clearly expected to be interested in it for its own sake.

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[60] See for the most detailed discussions the two recent editions of the work: Michael Rudick and M. Pabst Battin (New York and London, 1982), p. x; Ernest W. Sullivan II (New Jersey and London, 1984), pp. xxxiv-vi. The important arguments adduced are two. First, it refers to books published in 1607, but only to parts published before 1608 of multipartite works completed after that date. Secondly, apparent closeness, and priority, to Pseudo-Martyr (entered in the Stationers' Register, 2/ xii/ 1609). Since Sullivan's text is based on Herbert's MS, I follow his. The date of this MS is much more controversial; but 1610-14, the suggestion of Rudick and Battin, seems the most convincing. Unfortunately, the MS has no marks by Herbert, apart from the dedication by him to the Bodleian.

[61] In the letters both to his "much honored frinde Mr Lee at the Cockpitt", and to Lord Oxford (printed by Sullivan, pp. xliv; xlvii). To Lee he described Biathanatos as "somethinge that beelongs to my Lorde Herbert". The first edition was published in 1647.

[62] See the transcript by Rossi, III 411. A year after his presentation of it to the Bodleian, news reached him that it had not been placed according to his instructions, and he wrote to the Librarian, Rous, asking about "a worke of Doctor Donnes called Biathanatos which was dedicated unto mee": see chapter III, "Henry, Herbert, and Charles".

Critics of Biathanatos over the last century have interpreted it very differently.[63] The two editions of the 1980s, prepared with no reference to each other, take different texts as their basis, but their general position on the work's content is remarkably similar: it is, they argue, essentially serious. They acknowledge, however, Donne's own description of it as "misinterpretable".[64] Their interpretation does justice to the earnestness and erudition of the work; nevertheless, comparison of it with the nearly contemporary Pseudo-Martyr, which takes the very opposite attitude to the conscientious duty of suicide, or with the sermons, which refuse suicide in all cases, make it perhaps unlikely that Donne never considered the book heterodox.[65] Whatever his intentions, the book stands as a "paradox". The subject inspires two of the prose paradoxes, which treat it in a more obviously daring way, but to the same end: death is attractive. It seems probable that the longer treatment appealed to Herbert - or Donne thought it would appeal - as much for its boldness as its learning.

Herbert noticed, no doubt, Donne's remarkable ability in re-treating his material. The Biathanatos letter talks about Herbert's library in terms which make a parallel and also a kind of gloss to the verse letter; Biathanatos itself offers something similar for another two lines:

> To us, as to his chickins, he doth cast

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[63] Rudick and Battin, in their long introduction, chart stages of twentieth-century comment: Donne the Libertine; the "tract for the times"; the elusive paradox.

[64] Rudick and Battin, p. xcviii.

[65] Pace Rudick and Battin, p. xviii. Donne considers the question at length in a sermon preached in the early 1620s for the churching of the Countess of Bridgwater: we may wish to commit suicide in certain cases, but "We may not doe it, never" (Sermons, V 211). According to Pseudo-Martyr, "it is not the Conscience it selfe that bindes us, but that law which the Conscience takes knowledge of, and presents to our understanding" (p. 237). Rudick and Battin (p. xxxiii) quote this, quite improperly, in support of their own reading of Biathanatos - a work which depends principally on the idea that conscience, even erring conscience, is a supreme authority. A much briefer but more subtle reading of Biathanatos is offered by N. Rhodes in the Introduction to John Donne: Selected Prose (Harmondsworth, 1987).

Hemlocke, and wee as men, his hemlocke taste . . .

In Biathanatos this idea appears thus:

> all which God doth in this Life, by any of these [sc. Evills] is but phisique: For even Exaecation and Induration, is sent to further salvation in some, and inflicted medicinally. And these Ministers, and instruments of his, are our Phisitians, and we may not refuse any bitternesse, no not that which is naturally poyson, being wholsomly corrected by them.[66]

The image recurs (this is its second appearance); and it provides a convenient ending for the work - an ending which brings out all the relativistic possibilities suppressed in the poem:

> that is certaynly true of this, Which Cassianus says of a ly That it hath the Nature of Ellebore, whollsome in desperate diseases, but otherwise Poyson . . . by the same reason am I excusable in this Paradoxe.[67]

Similar language is used to a very different end: the same ingredients which served him in the poem for an apparent exoneration of God are here used in a plea against orthodoxy.

Donne often seems to go over old objections in order to deny them; but perhaps the very daring of his expression, his love for language "extreme, and scatt'ring bright", rather than any one use for it, tended to keep his thoughts from progressing too far. Herbert's own paradoxes have a tendency to disintegrate - one reason, no doubt, why Donnean critics tend to find him disappointing. What happens to paradox in his hands may be seen from his poem on love and speech - a poem conveniently close to Donne's "Undertaking".[68]

Herbert begins with an arresting line:

I am the first that ever lov'd[69]

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[66] Sullivan, p. 119.

[67] Sullivan, p. 146.

[68] Marotti, John Donne, p. 196, suggests that "The Undertaking" was one of the poems "connected with this private literary relationship" (ie. with Herbert); but does not offer anything more specific.

[69] Smith, p. 27.

The explanation of this seems to be that "contending" for the honour is a vulgarization of love: therefore to dispute the point is to prove it.[70] The poem is vigorously esoteric, pushing the Donnean idea of love's exclusiveness to the extent of concealing its own meaning, or fragmenting it. But the last three verses act as a sort of counterpoint to this: suddenly the poet's position is not self-sufficient or stable, and the tight, unvisual argument (the only image is the diamond of line 14) blossoms into the description of an orange tree, symbolizing a quite different ideal of love. The difference between this and Donne's poem might be summed up by a comparison of Herbert's fourth stanza (on the diamond) with Donne's second (on the "specular stone"). Donne's idea stands as a self-contained epigram; Herbert's opens out vaguely into a recognition of the need for "greater light" - an image which seems to be particularly disunifying for the poem as a whole, since less light was the ideal in stanza 2. The reversal in Donne's poem is much tighter than Herbert's: the hidden is revealed indirectly as the transcendence of sex (ll. 4-5), and the revelation is then dovetailed firmly back into the boast of secrecy ("if you know . . . you will hide").

This poem is particularly striking example of the self-containment of Donne's wit. The thought does not take root, as Herbert's seems so restlessly eager to do; the language which expresses it may thus be differently shaped. One of those early prose Paradoxes - the ones that impressed Herbert - played with the idea of Virtue:

> it is the same to be and to seeme vertuous. Because he that hath no vertu can dissemble none. But he that hath a little may guild, and enamell, yea and transforme much vice into vertu. For allow a man to be discreete and flexible to companies, which are great vertues and gifts of the mind, this discretion wil be to him the Soule and Elixar of all vertue.[71]

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[70] This is not very clear, but deducible from ll. 5-9 and 21-2.

[71] Paradox 6: "That the Gifts of the Body are Better than those of the Mind or of Fortune" (Rhodes (ed.), Selected Prose, p. 43)

The same ideas appeared later in similar phrases to a quite different end:

> If our Soules have stain'd their first white, yet wee
> May cloth them with faith, and deare honestie,
> Which God imputes, as native puritie.
>
> There is no Vertue, but Religion:
> Wise, valiant, sober, just, are names, which none
> Want, which want not Vice-covering discretion.[72]

The style could be used against orthodoxy, or in defence of it. The first prose letter to Herbert dedicated Biathanatos to him; the second, and last, was rather different. Unlike the other, it was very precisely dated - and the date sums up the contents: "January 23, 1614, which was the very day wherein I tooke Orders".[73]

At this point, Donne and Herbert seem to part company. Herbert's scheme of religion was to be presented as the reverse of paradoxical: in De Veritate, he makes frequent reference to "universal consent", and does what he can to convince the reader that agreeing with him is natural and inevitable. Donne, meanwhile, carried his brilliant style into defence of the established religion.

It was perfectly suited for the purpose. As Bedford wittily puts it:

> "Immensity cloystered in thy deare wombe" is not universally accepted, and does not easily lend itself to proof as a Common Notion.[74]

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[72] Satires, p. 70: "To Mr. Rowland Woodward", ll. 13-18. The same nexus of ideas is treated differently again in the verse-letter to Herbert: see above.

[73] PRO 30/53/7/8 = J. Hayward (ed.), Complete Poetry and Selected Prose (London, 1929), pp. 465-6.

[74] Bedford, p. 175. Quotation from "La Corona", l. 28.

But such lines, dazzlingly compressed, touch the heart of Christianity. The idea expressed is itself one of compression.[75] Perhaps Herbert acted with more perspicuity than he knew when he put a paradox and a Christian declaration on two sides of one sheet.

In Walton's account, the acquaintance of Donne and the Herberts began with a gift of divine poems to Mrs. Herbert, "now lost to us".[76] Whatever the value of this assertion, there are traces of Donne's divine poetry in the work of Edward Herbert. Among his early poems there are two "holy sonnets"; one of them "Of our Sense of Sinne", was included in the first edition of Donne's verse. It is not hard to see how this came about: the solemnity of the poem, the appearance of a restless intellect struggling with theology, make it superficially like Donne. Nevertheless, there can be little doubt that those manuscripts were right that attributed it instead to Herbert.[77] Its stoical self-reliance distinguishes it; still more revealing is the absence from it of any sense of an individual communication with a personal God.

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[75] For a superb discussion of this, see R. Ellrodt, L'Inspiration Personnelle et l'Esprit du Temps chez les Poètes Métaphysiques Anglais (Paris, 1960), I viii. A recent article on Donne's paradoxes (G.R. Evans, "John Donne and the Augustinian Paradox of Sin" RES 33 (1982), 1-22) discusses their "Augustinian" dimension as examples of fallen language, but ignores Donne's emphasis on the paradoxes of the faith.

[76] Since the covering letter Walton prints has been shown not to be authentic as it stands, it has been suggested that he was combining it with another letter, of 1609 (see D. Novarr, "The Dating of 'La Corona'", PQ 36 (1957), 262-4). This would make it possible for Donne to have sent her almost all the divine poetry which is not lost: see P.F. O'Connell, "The Order of Donne's 'Holy Sonnets'", PQ 60 (1981), 336. Unfortunately, the only Herbertian collection of Donne's verse (NLW 5380) is a standard one, consisting of assorted Songs and Sonets, with a couple of Elegies: it includes the two poems associated with Magdalene, but not the verse-letter to Edward.

[77] See the discussion by Smith, p. 168. Grierson came to regret including it; it does not appear in Gardner's edition of the Divine Poems.

This second point applies equally to Herbert's other "holy" poem" - a sonnet, which seems to be one of a rather unusual pair. "Love's End" and "A Sinner's Lament",[78] are closely akin - more so than either of them resembles any other sonnet of the period: they employ the same nervous, uneven cadences to tackle the same problem - worship, and the debt owed to the divinity. In one case, however, the divinity is human. In the "holy" poem, the poet sustains a painful monologue; God does not offer the Atonement as a way out of his difficulty. The secular poem takes a more self-confident tone: the poet is tired of his unanswered devotion, not his unworthiness; but the problem of non-communication remains. In both cases, the narrator appears to be frustrated; neither case is as simple as it might appear on a quick reading. The divine poem has a lonely independence; the secular one ends with a declaration that promises future problems (he will be left with a mind like an empty temple - hardly satisfactory, or permanent).

In the secular sonnet, the woman appears as a saint, thus providing a glimpse of an alternative religion. In the first edition, these two sonnets surround a sequence of poems, certainly early,[79] in which Herbert takes on very frankly the problem of sinfulness, and does what he can to establish the beloved as an alternative to the traditional scheme:

> thou alone constrain'st, kindling Desires
> Of such an holy force, as more inspires
> The Soul with Knowledge, than Experience
> Or Revelation can do with all
> Their borrow'd helps . . .

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[78] Both are untitled in the first edition; Smith suggests these names for them (he puts them in brackets).

[79] Of these poems, "A Description", "To her Face", and "To her Mind" appear together in Rawlinson Poetical MS 31, which is believed to date from before 1624 (see the account in Grierson (ed), The Poems of John Donne, II ciii-iv). There is no proof that Herbert did not add to their number later; but since he did not choose to include any of them in his personal poetical manuscript (see below), it is reasonable to conclude that they were written at roughly the same time.

Sure Adam sinn'd not in that spotless Face.[80]

Or again:

> Exalted Mind! whose Character doth bear
> The first Idea of Perfection, whence
> Adam's came, and stands so . . .[81]

(This lady is, we may note, purer than Elizabeth Drury, who

> kept, by diligent devotion,
> Gods Image, in such reparation,
> Within her heart, that what decay was grown,
> Was her first Parents fault, and not her own) .[82]

Such poems function differently from the defiant praises of secular love in the Songs and Sonets. There, the two isolated lovers make an alternative to the world outside, with its order and beliefs - they like to co-opt its vocabulary sometimes, but they do not contradict it. The explicit unorthodoxy of Herbert's lines makes them unusual. However, he finds himself left with a surprising problem: the nature of the lady's (apparently pre-Christian) divinity. This problem takes the form, in these early poems, of an ambiguity over the question whether she can or cannot be apprehended by reason. She represents knowledge, over revelation ("Face" 6-7), and none can mistake her commandments ("Body" 4-5); but she is also a figure of mystery, "wonder", "amaze", and expressible finally only by rhetorical questions, and aposiopesis ("Mind" 11, 13-15). Emancipated from the potentially humiliating background of Christianity, human love seems here to have taken on a mystery and autocracy of its own.

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[80] Smith, p. 5.

[81] Smith, p. 6.

[82] Milgate (ed.), Epithalamions, p. 54.

That sense of mystery brings him quite close to the fearful sound of Donne's religious verse. But in the religious verse of Herbert, the fear is buttressed by a sort of self-reliance; the situation is rather different in some of the secular poetry. The most dramatic examples of this appear in a remarkable manuscript in the British Library - which is the subject of the second half of this chapter.

II Herbert Remembers Donne

Herbert's Selection of his Poems

In the catalogue of Herbert's books from Montgomery Castle,[83] there is a volume of Lancelot Andrewes' sermons, but no Donne. After 1624, Herbert spent much of his time at Court, hoping for employment; it seems very likely that he heard the fashionable preacher preach - but if he did, he seems to have left no record. Unfortunately, we have no explicit testimony for Herbert's opinion of Donne in his later rôle as a "sugred Divine".[84] He did, however, provide an elegy on Donne's death; and the circumstances of its first appearance deserve attention.

The "Elegy" survives not only in the first edition, but in a manuscript compiled and annotated by Herbert himself, BL Add MS 37157. This is a manuscript of peculiar interest

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[83] Now in the National Library of Wales, as NLW 5298E.

[84] On Midsummer Day, 1615, about six months after Donne took orders, Richard Prythergh of the Inner Temple wrote to Herbert about his preaching, which had "to much learninge" for the congregation; unfortunately no reply survives (letter in PRO 30/53/7/11, part printed by Bald, John Donne, p. 312). Prythergh was a regular correspondent of Herbert's at this time: he seems to have taken charge of Herbert's financial arrangements, and perhaps was an official steward (so Rossi, III 401-3).

(such collections are rare); but it has never been taken very seriously, presumably because of Moore Smith's damning verdict:

> The general impression . . . left after comparing, say, the poems in Add MS 37157 with the same poems as they appear in 1665 [the first edition], is that the printed book is based on a manuscript which represented Herbert's second thoughts.[85]

Smith's excellence as an editor has never been questioned (even the demanding Rossi acknowledged "in ben pochi punti posso correggere e completare");[86] nevertheless, he does make one basic assumption that seems, at least, questionable - namely, that the printed book is based on a single manuscript. The description given by Sir Henry Herbert, in his dedicatory epistle, hardly provides proof of this:

> This Collection of some of the scattered Copies of Verses, composed in various and perplexed times, by Edward Lord Herbert your late Grand-father, belongs of double right to your Lordship, as Heir and Executor . . .[87]

The phrase is a conventional one, which shows nothing definite about the condition of the text before printing; nevertheless, it suggests an equally possible alternative. No one doubts that the early collections of Donne's poetry were gathered from various owners - we have a letter from Donne himself, requesting Goodyer to return a number of them for a projected edition in 1614;[88] is it not quite likely that the same sort of procedure lay behind the 1665 edition of Herbert's poems? One strong argument against the single manuscript theory is the

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[85] Smith, p. xxvii.

[86] La Vita, I "Prefazione" (unpaginated): "there are very few points where I can correct and supplement him".

[87] Smith, sig. B2.

[88] Letters to Severall Persons (London, 1651), pp. 196-7. See Alan MacColl, "The Circulation of Donne's Poems in Manuscript" in A.J. Smith (ed.), John Donne: Essays in Celebration (London, 1972), pp. 28-46.

reattribution of one poem, "Echo to a Rock" - now believed to be by Henry Reynolds.[89] If Henry Herbert found this among Edward's papers, it can hardly have been in a personal collection of his own poetry.

Smith and Rossi also make another assumption, which seems never to have been questioned: that MS 37157 is in the hand of a scribe, corrected by Herbert.[90] Undeterred by this rare critical consensus, I believe that it is in fact autograph. If I am right, this should add to its prestige; but even without it, the manuscript is of the greatest value as perhaps the only surviving collection from this date compiled by its author.[91] It deserves more attention than it has yet received.

The manuscript confronts the reader at once with two surprises: first, its (autograph) date is certainly wrong; second, it omits about half the poems Herbert had written by the date it claims. To take the less difficult point first: according to Herbert's own note, following the last poem, these are

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[89] See Mary Hobbs, "Drayton's 'Most Dearely-Loved Friend Henery Reynolds Esq.'", RES NS 24 (1973), 421-2. This attribution is supported by Beal, II 167.

[90] This is supported by Beal, II 107: "It is a fair copy made by an amanuensis, who often left spaces for letters or words he evidently could not decipher in his copy-texts; Herbert then went through the manuscript filling in the spaces and making a number of minor autograph corrections and revisions." I am not convinced by this: there seems to me to be only one hand, that of Herbert - most of the corrections represent changes of mind. If it was written by an amanuensis, we must assume the existence of one with handwriting identical to Herbert's, who wrote nothing else for him.

Dr. Beal has since relooked at the MS: in a letter to me, 4 July 1993, he writes: "I was immediately struck by its similarity to Herbert's handwriting - as if it is him, not a scribe, simply writing in his best mode." I am delighted to be able to record this endorsement.

[91] Beal gives no more examples. It has been suggested that Marvell decided the order of his lyrics (see C. Rees, The Judgment of Marvell (London, 1989)); but there is no extrinsic proof in his case.

The Verses of Ed. L. Herbert of Cherbery and Castle-Island, 1630.[92]

But Donne, whose elegy it includes, died on 30 March, 1631. The problem is, of course, greatly diminished when the old calendar is taken into account: Donne died at the beginning of the new year. So it seems reasonable to assume that the volume was completed very soon after that date.

The second problem is more interesting. The poems known to have been written and not included are: the epigram for Jonson's "Horace", dated by Jonson himself to 1604;[93] "I must depart" and the two satires (dated in 1665 to 1608); the elegies for Cecilia Bulstrode (who died in 1609), Prince Henry (1612),[94] and King James (1625); the little complimentary joke on the birth of "my L. of Pembroke's Child", dated by Smith to no later than 1621;[95] and three (at least) of the four poems printed in the first edition as a kind of sequence - "A Description", "To her Face", and "To her Mind".[96] This is quite a representative cross-section of Herbert's total poetic output. Why did he leave them out? Was he tired of the occasional pieces? Was he avoiding repetition, when he omitted the fine sonnets of the Rawlinson manuscript?

There is no certain answer: but what is certain is that MS 37157 is a selection. Thus not only the content, but the arrangement may be significant.[97] One of the manuscript's

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[92] BL Add. MS 37157, fo. 25.

[93] Herford and Simpson, I 134.

[94] This elegy was printed in the third edition of J. Sylvester's Lachrymae Lachrymarum (1614).

[95] Smith, pp. 153-4.

[96] These poems appear in a manuscript (Rawlinson Poet. 31) which predates 1624: see discussion earlier in this chapter.

[97] A table of the manuscript's contents is supplied at the end of the account.

most intriguing features is the double appearance of "To the C of D", on fos. 10 and 21, verbally identical except that fo. 10 has no title - and has been very neatly crossed out. There appears to be nothing wrong with it. Did Herbert decide that the poem would be better later on in the volume? If so, why did he not tear it out? Presumably because the poem on the reverse - the Merlou sonnet - was in the position he wished for it. Twenty-four poems are included: they seem - unlike the contents of the 1665 edition - to be ordered with considerable care, with an eye to both symmetry and variety.

Since the poems are of very varied length (the shortest is six lines; the longest, 152),[98] there is more than one conceivable mid-point; although not pedantically symmetrical, the collection gives the impression of equilibrium. Other groupings are possible: I would take the sonnet to Merlou as a centre. Its gentle antitheses make it a kind of hymn to balance:

> You well compacted Groves, whose light & shade
> Mixt equally, produce nor heat, nor cold,
> Either to burn the young, or freeze the old.
> But to one even temper being made . . . [99]

Moving back from it, we find five poems on black, starting from the poem to Diana Cecyll (untitled in the manuscript), and "The Thought" - a poem which clinches, in Herbert's most Donnean manner, the idea of mutual love. On the other side stand "The Brown Beauty", representative of harmony and (apparently) love returned; the "Green-Sickness" diptych (on anaemic, "white" beauty); the long "Ode", Herbert's fullest consideration of the significance of human love; a "white"-haired beauty,[100] balancing "To her Hair" in the black sequence;

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[98] The "Ode", in its longer version.

[99] Smith, p. 54; MS 37157, fo. 10v.

[100] Smith notes that "white" could at this date mean "blond" (as it still can), and does so in at least one other poem; still, the word is rare in this sense, and creates a very distinctive

a "Ditty" on unrequited love; then, juxtaposed with piquant effect, the frivolous verse "To one Black and not very Hansome, who expected commendation", and the deeply serious sonnet "To Blacke it selfe". The manuscript thus treats the black poems in a more adventurous way than the edition of 1665, which puts this last sonnet immediately after the sonnet "To Black Beauty", and omits "To one Blacke" entirely: in the manuscript, Herbert provides both variety and rough ring-composition, including the white and the brown within the span of the black sequence. Working back from "Diana Cecyll", we come to the "Elegy for a Tomb"; working forwards from "To Black it selfe", we reach the "Elegy for Dr. Dunne".

The end of the volume provides not merely a pair to the beginning, but a kind of conclusion to it. On fos. 2-2v, Herbert explores the state of the scorned lover - first lamenting, then, more vigorously, demanding reciprocity; the last "flesh mistress" of the collection is the "C of D", moved from an earlier place in the middle - one of the harmonious, unmysterious "brown" type, rather than the awesome black or white. She is followed by the extraordinary hymn to Death, explicitly opposed to brown beauty (brown being "the loveliest colour which flesh doth crown"- 72). By its position in the collection, this matches the strange, riddling little epitaph written for his friend Dorset's still-born son, "Born to this and the other world in one". The first and last poems provide the most satisfying contrast: "To a Lady who did sing Excellently", on the difficulty of expression, and the mystery of mutual experience, is answered by the only "divine" poem included - "Echo in a Church", in which the voice that answers supplies all that is needed, for poet and for poem.

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effect.

The manuscript does not include a table of contents: an improvised one might be useful at this point.

fo. in MS	Title	page in Smith
1	"To a Lady who did sing excellently"	44
1v	"On my L. of Dorsets first sonne who dyed in his birth"	30
2	"Ditty" ["Tears, flow no more"]	26
2v	"Ditty" ["If you refuse me once"]	31
3v	"Elegy over a Tomb"	32
4v	["Diana Cecyll"]	34
5	"To her Eyes"	35
6	"To her Hair"	37
7	"Sonnet" ["Black beauty"]	38
7v	"The first meeting"	39
9	"The Thought"	43
10	(Crossed-out version of "To the C of D")	
10v	"Sonnet" ["You well compacted Groves"]	54
11	"The Brown Beauty"	60
11v	"The Green-Sickness Beauty"	68
12v	"The Green-Sickness Beauty"	67
13v	"Ode"	61
17	["Innumerable Beauties, thou white haire"]	97
17	"Ditty" ["Why dost thou hate . . ?"] - 1 stanza	56
17v	"To one Blacke, and not very Hansome, who expected commendation"	97
18	"To Blacke it selfe"	39
18v	(Blank)	
19	"Elegy for Dr. Dunne"	57
21	"To the C of D"	55
21v	"To my Mtris for her true Picture"	48
24v	(Blank)	
25	"Echo in a Church"	47

"To a Lady who did Sing" and "Echo in a Church" are a particularly striking pair. The first, ignored by almost all commentators,[101] is the most obviously "Neoplatonic" poem

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[101] An exception is G. Williams, "Sexual Love and Spiritual Death", p. 20: his brief discussion is wholly different from mine.

that Herbert ever wrote: the first three stanzas give a faithful version of the three-part movement of the Graces, as described by Ficino.[102] Herbert produces from this scheme the "emanatio" of the breathed words, which thus acquire "perfect grace"; their "conversio" towards us, perfecting love; and the "remeatio" of the "perfections", "Composed in the circle of thy face",

> So to make up of all one perfect sweet.[103]

As Ficino said:

> Circulus itaque unus et idem a deo in mundum, a mundo in deum, tribus nominibus nuncupatur. Prout in deo incipit et allicit, pulchritudo; prout in mundum transiens ipsum rapit, amor; prout in auctorem remeans ipsi suum opus coniungit, voluptas.[104]

As the first poem in the collection, it deserves a little more attention. We know from the Life that Herbert was particularly responsive to the charms of "belle cantatrici", a favourite subject of one of his poetic masters, Giambattista Marino;[105] but his treatment of the traditional theme is distinctive. It is interesting to compare Herbert's lady with two later ones, Milton's Leonora Baroni, and Marvell's "Fair Singer": in all three, there seems to be

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[102] M. Ficino, De Amore, (1st pub. 1496), ed. and tr. (into French) by R. Marcel, Commentaire sur le Banquet de Platon (Paris, 1956), tr. by S.R. Jayne, Marsilio Ficino's Commentary on Plato's "Symposium" (Columbia, MO, 1944). See the celebrated discussion in E. Wind, Pagan Mysteries in the Renaissance (London, 1968), pp. 36 ff.

[103] Smith, p. 45; MS, fo. 1v.

[104] Marcel, p. 146 = Jayne, p. 134: "This single circle . . . is identified by three names. Inasmuch as it begins in God and attracts to Him, it is Beauty; inasmuch as, going across into the world, it captivates the world, we call it Love; and inasmuch as it returns to its source and with Him joins its labors, then we call it Pleasure."

[105] He was greatly impressed by a beautiful singing nun in Murano (Lee, p. 152), whom he told: "Die whensoever you will, you will neither need to change voice, nor face, to be an angel". (The compliment turned out even better than he had originally thought: the anecdote concludes: "these words it seemed were fatal, for going thence to Rome, and returning shortly afterwards, I heard she was dead in the meantime.")

a fascination, far stronger than in the equivalent Italian poems, with the paradoxical notion that a beautiful voice somehow encapsulates the normally unconfined:

> how should I avoid to be her Slave,
> Whose subtile Art invisibly can wreath
> My Fetters of the very Air I breath?[106]

Milton goes still further, finding in the wonderful Leonora an argument for pantheism:

> Quod si cuncta quidem Deus est, per cunctaque fusus,
> In te una loquitur, caetera mutus habet.[107]

Both the later poets treat the idea epigrammatically. Herbert's poem finds the phenomenon not so much paradoxical as mysterious, and culminates in a question not, like Marvell's, rhetorical, but open-ended, a true question (though it comes out back-to-front, lacking a needed negative):

> Who is not then so ravish'd with delight
> Ev'n of thy sight,
> That he can be assur'd his sense is true,
> Or that he die, or live,
> Or that he do enjoy himself, or you,
> Or only the delights, which you did give?

True responsiveness obliterates "property", as in Shakespeare's most Herbertian poem; and yet the lady has been praised as one who imposes a proper order on the otherwise chaotic elements. At the beginning of the stanza, her face had seemed to act as a stabilizer, a focus for "remeatio"; in the last six lines, all stability seems to dissolve.[108]

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[106] H.M. Margoliouth (ed.; rev. P. Legouis and E.E. Duncan-Jones), The Works of Andrew Marvell (Oxford, 1971), I 33.

[107] J. Carey and A. Fowler (eds.), The Poems of John Milton (London, 2nd ed. 1980), p. 255, tr. Carey: "If God is all things, and omnipresent, nevertheless he speaks in you alone, and possesses all other creatures in silence."

[108] The face as stabilizer reappears in a poem believed to be much later, "Platonick Love" II: he praises the "beams" of her beauty, and concludes:

> while through them we do discern each Grace,

This lady, the inductive figure at the beginning of the collection, is representative of the whole in combining two tendencies, opposite but equipollent: a tendency towards resolution and harmony; and a tendency away from it. In all his work, Herbert is drawn to the notion of "proper place" - a phrase which recurs throughout his poetry ("desired place" are the last words of what is probably his last poem, "October 14").[109] But he is also fascinated by the idea of infinity, the abolition of fixity. The two provide a pervasive tension.

R.D. Bedford has pointed out Herbert's debt, for his thoughts on infinity, to a thinker in whom he certainly had some interest: Giordano Bruno.[110] His sense of exhilaration in the face of an infinite universe shines forth in the section "De Possibili" in De Veritate - a section greatly expanded from version to version;[111] he also, like Bruno, expressed it in verse:

> Ut Deus interea cumulans sua praemia, nostrum
> Augeat inde decus, proprioque illustret amore,
> Nec Coeli Coelis desint, aeternave vitae
> Secula, vel sec'lis nova gaudia, qualia totum
> Aevum nec minuat, vel terminet Infinitum . . .[112]

> The multiplied lights from every place,
> Will turn and Circle, with their rays, your face. (Smith, p. 72)

This time, the stability achieved is permanent.

[109] I leave the date at that, since the year is disputed: the first edition gives the impossible 1664, which Smith corrects to 1644 (pp. 85; 162), and Rossi to 1646 (III 246 and n. 5). This special interest of Herbert's is noted in passing by Robert Ellrodt (L'Inspiration Personelle, II 66). It is further discussed in chapter II, "Knowledge and Freedom".

[110] Bedford, pp. 101-2.

[111] I shall discuss the changes to De Veritate in the next chapter.

[112] Smith, p. 103 (from De Veritate (1645)): "So that God, piling up his rewards meanwhile, may then multiply our glory, and give light to it with his own love, and there will be Heaven even for Heaven, and eternal ages for age, and for the ages fresh joy, such as the whole era may not diminish nor Infinity end". Bruno prefaced his treatise with three

We know that he owned the dialogue De L'Infinito Universo e Mondi (1584); he also owned another of Bruno's dialogues, the Cena de le Ceneri, set in England.[113] It is possible that he also read a third work, which seems particularly relevant to his poetry: that extraordinary love-treatise, the Eroici Furori.

In that work, Bruno turns the vocabulary of exalted human love - the tradition which the Platonism of Ficino complicated, but left much the same in emotional terms as the Mediaeval fin' amors behind it - into something truly different: the praise of non-human perfection. He makes use of his own, scandalous conception of the universe, which is defiantly non-centralized. The universe, he explains, is infinite, and therefore has no centre.[114] And yet his assertion of the separateness, the unfocussed discreteness, of the parts of the universe is followed by a burst of desire to reach the "proper place":

> Quando . . . mi confortarà a pieno, donando a queste libero ed ispedito il volo, per cui possa la mia sustanza tutta annidarsi là dove, forzandomi, convien ch'io emende

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sonnets: the third begins:

> Quindi l'ali sicure a l'aria porgo;
> Né temo intoppo di cristallo o vetro,
> Ma fendo i cieli e a l'infinito m'ergo.
> E mentre dal mio globo a gli altri sorgo,
> E per l'eterio campo oltre penetro:
> Quel ch'altri lungi vede, lascio al tergo.
>
> (G. Gentili (ed.), Dialoghi Italiani (Florence, 1958), p. 365.

[113] He left De l'Infinito to Jesus College (FK, p. 87, record this as missing, but the current librarian, Dr. David Rees, has recovered it: unfortunately, it has no marginalia). La Cena is listed in the catalogue from Montgomery Castle, NLW 5298E, fo. 19. It is also likely that he knew the Spaccio de la Bestia Trionfante (1583), used by his friend Carew for his "Coelum Britannicum" masque: see chapter V, "Critics of DRG".

[114] De gl'Eroici Furori (1st publ 1585), ed. by G. Gentile in Dialoghi Italiani , ed. and trans. by P.E. Memmo as Giordano Bruno's "The Heroic Frenzies" (Chapel Hill, NC, 1964). In fact the universe, unlike God, is "finitely infinite", being composed of an infinite number of finite parts.

> tutte le mende mie? . . . Oh se tende ed arriva là dove forzandosi attende . . . allora avverrammi l'esser felice . . .[115]

The idea is an ancient one, of course: that everything has a proper place is argued by Aristotle (Bruno's elected enemy) in the Physics, and lies behind the idea of the Great Chain of Being. But in Bruno it acquires a new interest, because he violently rejected Aristotle's views on place, insisting instead on the relative nature of terms such as "up" and "down". And yet, it seems, the new cosmology gave rise to a sense of dislocation.

There is no proof that Herbert was interested in the Eroici Furori as well as De l'Infinito; but it is surely reasonable to suppose that he might have been. (If not, it remains true that he shared some of its more distinctive concerns.) The hypothesis gives extra significance to the sequence of poems to Diana Cecyll - one of only three named persons to appear in Herbert's private manuscript.[116] In the Eroici Furori, "Diana" is an entirely unfleshly figure: she represents the deity immanent in creation - the highest beauty that man can attain. Behind her stands Apollo, transcendent, incomprehensible except as she reveals

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[115] Dialoghi Italiani, p. 1028-9 = Memmo, p. 142: "When . . shall I be fully comforted by giving these [ie. intellectual] potencies free flight, so that my whole substance can fix its home in that place where by my own effort I may amend all my faults? . . Oh, if my spirit attains and reaches the place which with all its power it desires . . . then I shall be permitted to be happy . . ."

[116] Who was Diana Cecyll? According to one manuscript: "Daughter of Cecil Earl of Salisbury - died young". Smith, like Lee (p. 153 n. 1), ignores this, and settles for her cousin, the second daughter of William, second Earl of Exeter, and a famous beauty. Rossi (III 389) returns firmly to the manuscript, and with it a little Diana, born in 1622, who died in 1633. This obliges him to put the poems as late as he can (1631). While agreeing with Rossi that the poems (except for "The first Meeting") are quite unerotic, I cannot believe that Herbert would have described a ten-year-old's hair as "reverend black" without a hint of playfulness. His own manuscript gives nothing away.

In an unpublished note on the "Ode on a Question Moved", John Buxton argued that "Celinda" was also Diana Cecil - by a "Licenciat" style of anagram, which permitted the omission of duplicate letters; he assumed that this Diana was the older one ("Lord Herbert's Celinda", a typewritten note acquired by me with Buxton's copy of the Smith edition).

him. Herbert's Diana takes on both functions, to become both beautiful and mysterious: the "first cause":

> By you doth best declare
> How he at first b'ing hid
> Within the veil of an eternal night,
> Did frame for us a second light,
> And after bid
> It serve for ordinary sight.[117]

The idea that Herbert particularly liked "Diana" is reinforced by a manuscript poem, "To Dianas earthly Deputesse and my Worthy Sister Mrs. Jane Carye", in which he praises her as the moon, inferior only to the sun, her brother (?) Thomas Carew:

> When daies cleare light his compast course hath runne,
> his Sisters fainter beames our hearts doe cheere,
> So you his Sister as my Moone appeare,
> But your faire Brother is to mee ye Sunne . . .[118]

This emphasis on mystery might seem something of a surprise. Herbert was the exponent of an unusually simple, unanguished theology, and regarded the "mysterious" teachings of "sugred Divines" with increasing suspicion. But it is a fact, however surprising, that he sings the praises of some of the most terrifying and unapproachable of all seventeenth-century beloveds:

> absolute in that thy brave command
> Knittinge each haire, into an awfull frowne
> Like to an Hoste of Lightninges, thou dost stand
> To ruine all that fall not prostrate doune [119]

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[117] Smith, p. 36; MS, fo. 5v.

[118] NLW Powis Bequest 1959, packet taken from Parcel XXVI. This is printed in Rossi III 394. Rossi attributes all of the poems in this bundle to Herbert: this has been disproved (see Beal, II 167); but there is no proof that none of the poems is by Herbert, and external circumstances (his friendship with Thomas Carew) make it likely in this case.

[119] Smith, p. 97; MS, fo. 17.

This lady is not extraordinarily black, but extraordinarily white - the difference, however, is not great.

Among Herbert's papers in the National Library of Wales, there is what appears to be the beginning of a treatise on aesthetics.[120] It is rough, and very brief; but it is interesting here because it starts with colour, as "the most visible part of beauty". The ideal here seems to be tied up with the notion of proportion. It starts:

> Beauty consists in Proportion . . . Proportion is 3fold, there is Proportion of Collour
> Figure or Signature
> Order

This is the ideal of the harmony praised retrospectively by Donne in the First Anniversary.[121] Beauty has a "calme light"; Herbert ends with the rather elliptical statement:

> It seemes that Collour havinge somewhat in it of Temper hath that way in it much of Proportion for there is difference betweene palenes and whitenes.

The ideal would seem to be that of his "Brown Beauty", Phaie, in whom

> All in so rare proportion is combin'd,
> That the fair temper most adorns the mind,
> Seemes even to her outward form confin'd.[122]

She is very different from Diana, who being black is beyond colour.

Beauty as proportion; beauty as something beyond it, mysterious. Herbert was not the only writer with an interest in Neoplatonism to run into a contradiction here, as he

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[120] This is printed in Rossi, III 442-3 - but not with perfect accuracy. The quotations above are taken from the manuscript, one sheet in Powis Bequest 1959, packet taken from Parcel XXVI.

[121] "Beauty, that's colour, and proportion" - l. 250. The opposition in the Anniversaries of fragile order to dizzying absolutes of perfection and loss may well have made an impact on Herbert.

[122] Smith, p. 60; MS fo. 11.

broaches the language of the "negative theology", expressing the inexpressible.[123] Plotinus talks about beauty, and about beauty above beauty;[124] in describing the infinite, language loses its ordinary definitions. Is the infinite One beautiful? The Florentine Pico struggled with the question in his ambitious treatise on Platonic love, and he reached two conclusions: God is not beautiful, but above beauty (Book II, chapter viii) - beauty meaning proportion; beauty is more than most people imagine, because the divine is beautiful ("Detailed Commentary" stanza VI).[125]

But Herbert is remarkable in bringing the discrepancy into his love poetry. It evinces a desire for harmony and mutuality - and at the same time a powerful attraction to something quite different. The Brown Beauty is the epitome of "proper place":

> Who doubts but love, hath this his colour chose,
> As that wherein hee would extremes compose
> And as within their proper Centre close[126]

The black is dizzying, not to be located:

> Our sight recoils, and turneth back again,
> And doth, as 'twere in vain,
> It self to you extend

---

[123] The philosophical background to his treatment of black has been well discussed by critics of Herbert's verse (the fullest treatment is given by Warnke, in his thesis). Herbert is using the formulas of the "negative theology", most famously exemplified by ps-Dionysius the Areopagite: according to this the supreme light can only be described in terms of its opposite. For reasons of space, I will say little about this: my interest, rather, is a new one: the contrasts Herbert draws from his two kinds of women. (Earlier treatments all conflate "brown" with "black", in a way I think quite alien to Herbert's treatment of them.)

[124] See the discussion in J.M. Rist, Plotinus: the Road to Reality (Cambridge, 1967), pp. 53 ff.

[125] G. Pico, tr. S. Jayne, Commentary on a Canzone of Benivieni (New York, 1984), pp. 102 f., 155 f.

[126] MS, fo. 11; Smith, p. 60. The printed text is different in the second line:
Since he therein doth both th'extremes compose,

Is it, because past black, there is not found
A fix'd or horizontal bound?[127]

As he explains in the sonnet "To Black it self", black is a denial of revelation.

There is a piquant difference here from Donne, who characteristically associates the sensation of awe not with ideas of infinity and blackness, but with something much more vivid and concrete: Christ's blood, which washes souls from symbolic redness to symbolic whiteness.[128] That particular, personal form could not, it seems, convey Herbert's idea of the numinous.

Herbert's manuscript bears witness to the friendship between the two poets. The second and more obvious piece will be considered later; before it in the collection is something harder, in this connexion, to assess. Here the poetic fragments in the National Library of Wales, mentioned earlier, are relevant. The first of them reads as follows:

Should weare away the happyest season of his strength
in tedious meditation thus, severe discourses, & a cold survey
of beauty that he loves, yet feares to use.
Those babies he,
& (?)E. do beget by gazing in
each others eyes, can inherit nothing.

When love is fixd, and interchangd allready etc.[129]

This piece makes strange reading: it is something like a half-audible echo of "The Extasie".

In the manuscript collection, under the simple title "Ode", is what appears to be the first

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[127] Smith, p. 37; MS fo. 6v.

[128] The nearest Donne comes to the Herbertian manner is in his verse letters to noblewomen, regularly described as "darke texts" who need explication, and alchemical creators who refine the world. But Donne's projected relation to them is different from Herbert's: he is their interpreter, their "trumpet" - less like "nothing" than the rest of the world around them. And he expects some practical benefit from them: see the almost comic ending of the first letter to Lady Bedford.

[129] NLW Powis Bequest 1959, packet taken from Parcel XXVI.

version of Herbert's most famous poem: the poem inseparable in reputation from the "Extasie", generally supposed to be its source.[130]

Both poems appear to derive ultimately from the 8th Song from Sidney's Astrophel and Stella, which they complicate and refine into something very different. Donne shifts the focus of interest from the conflict between love and honour to witty speculations on the relation of body and soul, illustrated by his favourite image of the containing sphere.[131] Herbert deals with the same subject; in perhaps the most remarkable stanza, he asks a question:

> For if no use of sense remain
> When bodies once this life forsake,
> Or they could no delight partake,
> Why should they ever rise again?[132]

Donne's concern with the resurrection of the flesh is notorious;[133] but there is a difference in Herbert's treatment. Mutuality of love as guarantee of personal survival is a distinctive theme, not Donnean: only two of the Songs and Sonets touch on the fate of lovers after death, "The Relique" and "The Anniversarie", and both take of these take off from

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[130] For the inaugurating discussion of this connexion, see G. Williamson, "The Convention of 'The Extasie'" in Seventeenth-Century Contexts (London, 1960), 63-77. Helen Gardner is exceptional in not finding Herbert dependent on Donne: Elegies, pp. 256-7. The relative dates of the two poems are not known. Marotti thinks them roughly contemporary, dating from the early years of the friendship (John Donne, p. 197). E.D. Hill, on the other hand, puts the "Ode" after 1631, finding it "Herbert's greatest tribute to the dead master" (Edward, Lord Herbert, p. 96). He goes on to argue that the "influence" of the last stanza hails from the "recently ascended soul" of Donne (p. 103). This ingenious if eccentric idea relies on the usual notion that Herbert's scheme of the world has no need of mystery, being essentially "benevolent" and uncomplicated.

[131] Cf. "Goodfriday, 1613. Riding Westward" for a spiritual analogue.

[132] MS, fo. 15v = Smith, p. 65.

[133] See in particular Appendix A of Gardner's ed. of the Divine Poems; and J. Carey, John Donne: Life, Mind and Art (London, 1981), where it is a major theme.

characteristic and unHerbertian consideration of the surrounding graves: "Two graves must hide thine and my corse . . ." ("The Anniversarie" 11).

Donne expounded his ideas about the survival of human love most fully in the wedding sermon he delivered for Herbert's son Richard on November 19, 1627:

> Christ does not say expressly we shall, yet neither does he say, that we shall not, know one another there . . . A Resurrection there shall be: In the Resurrection there shall be no Marriage, because it conduces to no end; but, if it conduce to Gods glory, and my happinesse (as it may piously be believed it does) to know them there, whom I knew here, I shall know them . . .[134]

The sermons are supposed to be communal in nature; the lyrics very clearly are not. Resurrected lovers, in the sermon, are less distinctive than the earthly variety, with fewer occupations ("they need no physick, no mutuall help, no supply of children").[135] The passionate individualism of both subjects does not serve to fuse love with personal resurrection - most of the sermon (to the editors' chagrin) is taken up with lengthy conjectures as to how

> that body that was scattered over all the elements, is sate down at the right hand of God, in a glorious resurrection.[136]

One body is envisaged, not two. The lyrics are not excited by that idea either: "The Anniversarie" explains why:

> soules where nothing dwells but love
> (All other thoughts being inmates) then shall prove
> This, or a love increased there above,
> When bodies to their graves, soules from their graves remove.
>
> And then wee shall be throughly blest,
> But we no more, then all the rest.
> Here upon earth, we'are Kings, and none but wee

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[134] Sermons, VIII 99-100.

[135] Sermons, VIII 99.

[136] Sermons, VIII 98

Can be such Kings . . .[137]

Resurrection entails a loss of distinctiveness: for such exceptional lovers, it is preferable to deny the possibility of death ("The Good-Morrow").

By shifting the ideal union to a state post-mortem, Herbert provides a new dimension to the discussion of body and soul: not only the relationship but the survival of the lovers is called into question. Here, as with the praise of fearful women, he seems to use secular love as a means to explore a non-secular kind of anxiety. The context of love provides an opportunity, as in the poems on "Her Face" and "Her Mind", for a brief skirmish with the idea of Original Sin:

> And as when man did first obtaine
> The forbidde knowinge good and ill
> The acte was punished yet still
> The knowledge did in him remaine
>
> So though our Love never impure
> Some outward frailty may retaine
> It shall be cleansed from its staine
> But in its-selfe shall still indure
>
> Or else our Love never forbidde
> Lay subject to a greater curse
> And frailty should be punished worse
> Then what man in perfection did.[138]

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[137] Elegies, pp. 71-2.

[138] MS, fo. 16, stanzas 31-33. These stanzas are missing in the 1665 text: they follow the stanza that starts "And if every imperfect mind . . ." It is not certain whether they were a later addition, or a later subtraction: in favour of the former is the fact that they were clearly written as a unit; of the latter, that the repeated rhyme "remaine . . . retaine" is avoided in the rest of the poem. It is also true that Herbert's later verse does not use Biblical imagery, as the earlier does.

There is some similarity between the first of these stanzas and a stanza of Donne to Sir Henry Goodyere:

> Our Soule, whose country'is heaven, and God her father,
> Into this world, corruptions sinke, is sent,
> Yet, so much in her travaile she doth gather,
> That she returnes home, wiser then she went; (Satires, p. 79).

There is a slight haziness here over the status of their love: it is apparently "fallen"; and yet, like the eponymous "Face", it is treated as analogous to Adam's original state. The over-compression makes Adam's transgression seem somehow desirable; it also tends to undermine the continuity of their love. Knowledge, according to this argument, cannot be separated from sin: what is left of love when it is "refin'd"? Instead of Hill's calm reading, it is possible to see two distinct mysteries: the mystery of the survival of the individual, and the mystery of man's private nature. Both are Donnean themes, but brought together here in a new synthesis.

It is characteristic of the Songs and Sonets that the "Extasie"'s lovers, defiantly displayed to an "observer", should resolve their question in the exclusiveness of each other. Herbert's Celinda seeks her "proper place" (and the very shape of the stanzas seems to tend towards resolution); but she is afraid of the movement of "closing up", which might mean the annihilation of love (53-6). Melander's reply gestures outwards, towards "mystery". The solution he offers is based on their personal merit, and in that sense is not mysterious; but by projecting perfect happiness into the next world, he blurs their identity, as "proper place" is expanded into the infinite:

> So when from hence we shall be gone,
> And be no more, nor you, nor I,
> As one anothers mystery,
> Each shall be both, yet both but one.[139]

Perhaps the nearest Donne ever came to the this moment was in the last lines of "The Relique", with its sudden and beautiful capitulation to the "miracle" that passes description - the beloved herself. The mystery of the "Ode", however, is located in the future, not in the past. The poem takes a wider canvas than "The Extasie": this love is not dependent on the

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[139] Smith, p. 66 = MS, fo. 16v.

present, or the earthly state. The poet is confident of that; but his confidence is not glib or simple. In the "Ode", he unites themes distinguished by Donne as secular and divine, and also effects a magnificent fusion of "place" and its opposite. It is appropriate that it should be the best-known poem in the book where he says farewell to his old friend.

Private Inheritance

> It rests that I should to the world declare
> Thy praises, DUNN, whom I so lov'd alive,
> That with my witty Carew I should strive
> To celebrate thee dead, did I not need
> A language by it self, which should exceed
> All those which are in use . . . (48 - 53)[140]

Among the self-conscious elegists for Donne, Herbert is an outsider. His elegy was not printed with the twelve that appeared in 1633, nor the larger collection of fourteen published in 1635, and afterwards. The omission seems slightly surprising. Most of those contributors would end as Anglican clergymen; but some were not so yet, and others never were - among them Herbert's "witty Carew".[141] The full differences between Herbert and these men had not yet developed. All of them who lived long enough would be Royalists in the war that Herbert did not join - the war that he was to blame so bitterly on the clergy.

The "inexpressibility conceit", taken to the limit here by Herbert, is one used by many of Donne's elegists. According to Henry King, Jonson taught poets to speak; Donne pre-

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[140] Smith, p. 58.

[141] Later clerics included Izaak Walton, Jasper Mayne, and Richard Busby: for résumés of their careers, see Milgate (ed.) Satires, pp. 225, 227-8, 229.

empted them.[142] Herbert develops a popular idea; but it omits other points on which no one else failed to comment - above all, Donne's career as a clergyman. Instead, Herbert offers just four lines of personal characteristics, which, he suggests, "detractors" are busy misinterpreting. It produces an oddly barbed effect:

> they term all thy heat, frowardness;
> Thy solitude, self-pride; fast, niggardness,
> And in this false supposal would inferr,
> They teach not others right, themselves who err . . .

Language, Herbert argues, needs to match its subject; for Donne, the only possible approximation seems to be the inverted speech of "raylers".

Another of the elegists, John Cudleigh; recognized the habit of misrepresentation as an example of the "sick state of man" (l. 41), and one which Dr. Donne was particularly skilled at treating. Chudleigh's poem is interesting here because it very clearly draws on Donne's poem "To Sir Edward Herbert":

> Thriftlesse is charitie, coward patience,
> Justice is cruell, mercy want of sense . . .
> Is good a pill, we dare not chaw to know? . . .
> Who treats with us must our affections move
> To th' good we flie by those sweets which we love . . .[143]

Whereas Herbert makes his poem close in on itself by a double negative - detraction of the detractors - Chudleigh, like Donne's other elegists, stresses the fulfilment of Donne's gifts:

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[142] Margaret Crum (ed.), The Poems of Bishop Henry King (Oxford, 1965), pp. 87 (the elegy for Jonson); 77 (the elegy for Donne). This conceit is, of course, a stock-in-trade in elegies for poets; nevertheless, Donne seems to have embarrassed his elegists more than most poets (Carew's elegy is also eloquent on this).

[143] Epithalamions, p. 106. Milgate gives a potted biography of Chudleigh on pp. 230-1. Walton quotes from this poem (only) in his Life, and calls Chudleigh "a frequent hearer of his Sermons". Compare with this passage "To Sir Edward Herbert":

> Man into himself can draw
> All; All his faith can swallow, or reason chaw.
> All that is fill'd, and all that which doth fill,
> All the round world, to man is but a pill . . . (Satires, p. 82).

He kept his loves, but not his objects; wit
He did not banish, but transplanted it.

Herbert was not interested in the idea of Donne as a cleric. Nor was he interested in the idea of his death - a subject on which some of the poets dwell with curious fascination. As, for example, Henry Valentine:

Doth his body there vermiculate,
Crumble to dust, and feel the Powers of Fate?
Me thinkes, Corruption, Wormes, what else is foule
Should spare the Temple of so faire a Soule . . .[144]

Valentine's elegy is an attempt to write like Donne; such speculations seemed to him, apparently, suitable for such an attempt. This side of the legacy was clearly thrown into prominence by the sensational delivery of Deaths Duell, described in awestruck terms both by King (who doubtless had heard it) and by Daniel Darnelly (who probably had not). Herbert almost certainly had not,[145] and it would clearly be unreasonable to demand something from him more wormy; still, it might be significant that a poem so keenly aware of Donne's language should have no space at all for the distinctive vocabulary and concerns of his last work. The vermiculating body of Valentine's description is reminiscent of Donne's recent description of Herbert's mother -

> That body which now, whilst I speake, is mouldring, and crumbling into lesse, and lesse dust . . .[146]

Instead, Herbert's Elegy offers briefly, in a comparison, a glimpse of his own picture of death:

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[144] Epithalamions, p. 85. Compare the very similar (Latin) lines of Daniel Darnelly, ll. 71-80 (Epithalamions, p. 103).

[145] He was out of London for most of 1631, working away on his defence of the (late) Duke of Buckingham's Expedition to the Isle of Ré - see chapter III below.

[146] Sermons, VIII 92.

> Such tearms [sc. of praise] . . .
> wanting inward sustenance do devolve,
> And into their first Elements resolve.[147]

The distinct fates of body and soul came to preoccupy Herbert no less than they (notoriously) preoccupied Donne; but he dealt with them differently. For forty-six lines of his elegy, he wrote about praise without the least reference to Donne; the detachment of the poem is the result of his refusal to deal on Donne's own terms with those aspects of Donne's mental life most obviously relevant to an elegy. In comparison with the other obsequies, his reads strangely. It is the record of a response both powerful and partial; and thus, I have argued, strictly faithful to the relationship he had with Donne in life.

However, Herbert's poetical manuscript, the setting of the poem, calls once again for a refinement of broad conclusions. Herbert does write about death and decay in the penultimate poem, "To his Mistress for her true Picture".[148] The mistress is death; and, in two distinct sections, Herbert first praises her as "a day-star of the light", and then proceeds to a celebration of decay for which even that wormy generation offers few parallels.

Death is the most impressive of all Herbert's dark/bright women: ultimate, mysterious, and terrifying, a "fatal", "regardful" mistress who defies description:

> Dear Mistress, then
> If you would not be seen by owl-ey'd Men,
> Appear at noon i' th' Air, with so much light,
> The Sun may be a Moon, the Day a Night,
> Clear to my Soul, but dark'ning the weak sense
> Of those, the other Worlds Cimmeriens . . . (27-32)[149]

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[147] Smith, p. 57.

[148] Smith, pp. 48-53 = MS fos. 21v-24.

[149] Smith, p. 49. The MS reads "daslinge" for "dark'ning". This half of the poem probably owes something to Marino's poem "La Vedova": a praise of Night, conceived as a lady in a dark veil with whom the poet is in love. At one point, the lovesick poet sighs: "o mi cangiasse Amore/ in vil gufo vagante,/ perch'avessi a' tuoi piè posa e quiete!" (B.

She has something in common with Ill, whose "mischiefs" rise "in glory and in hurt"; her hair "which are Threds of our Life" allies her with Diana Cecyll ("To her Hair" 8). Perhaps Herbert had also in mind a passage from Biathanatos:

> yet as weake credulous Men, thinke sometymes they see two or three sunnes, when they see none but Meteors, or other apparances, so are many transported with like facility or dazeling, that for some opinions, which they mayntayne, they thinke they have the light and authority of Scripture, When, God knowes, Truth, which is the Light of Scriptures is Diametrally under them, and removed in the farthest Distance that can be.[150]

Both distinguish different orders of light; both oppose to the supreme light the "weak", who are dismissed to the other side of the world. They differ, characteristically, in their account of the supreme light. Herbert holds steadily to the importance of "Vertue" in securing happiness, and does not disparage reason (there is a contrast here with his early piece on the Eye: here we are not in a world of universal helplessness - some of us can see). However, the lover of Death is still clearly passive, in the presence of a epiphany:

> Shine then Sun-brighter through my senses vail . . .
> Come and appear then, dear Soul-ravisher,
> Heavens-light-Usher, Man's deliverer . . . (55, 63-4)

Then, quite abruptly, the poem changes tack. What is the effect on human mistresses? The chosen victim is that antithetical type, the "Brown Beauty":

> Be she nut-brown,
> The loveliest colour which this flesh doth crown:
> I'll think her like a Nut, a fair outside,
> Within which Worms and rottenness abide . . . (71-4)[151]

Croce (ed.), Poesie Varie (Bari, 1913), p. 61). The poem makes a striking contrast with Herbert's: Marino wants to be an owl, so that he can be nearer to her; Herbert's owls represent the uninitiated, who do not understand her beauty - beauty which is not just "not blonde" (the paradox which amuses Marino), but the destruction of familiar human life.

[150] Sullivan (ed.), Biathanatos, pp. 109-10.

[151] It should be said that, despite this disconcerting change, Herbert maintains a remarkable stylistic unity, by the continued use of his strange, original, hybrid words (34,

From this point, the poem acquires a troubling air of absurdity:

> And now, sweet Mistress, let m' a while digress,
> T' admire these noble Worms, whom I invoke,
> And not the Muses . . . (106-8)

There is nothing like this in any of Herbert's other poems.

Could the absurdity be rooted in parody? In the wedding sermon for Richard Herbert (1627), Donne had indulged himself in speculations different in intention, less different in phraseology:

> Where be all the Atoms of that flesh, which a Corrasive hath eat away . . ? One humour of our dead body produces worms, and these worms suck and exhaust all other humour, and then all dies, and all dries, and molders into dust . . .[152]

In the second edition of De Veritate (1633), Herbert added a rather striking sentence to the text of 1624:

> [Cogita qualis foecundo parentum arvo fueris, et ultra Providentiam communem, Gratiae sive Providentiae rerum particulari suas tribue partes.] Si enim vermiculo ex ipsa putridine tuâ progenito Sol denuò conspiciendus, immò et perfruendus orietur, Temetipsum aeternis latitaturum tenebris existimaveris unquam? Absit . . .[153]

Herbert was not insensitive to the physical horrors awaiting the body; but unlike Donne, his instinct was not to revel in the humbling prospect, but to deny its importance. In the poetical manuscript, where Donne is given such a prominent place, the account of "vermiculation" is deferred from the Elegy to this strangely unfocussed, abstract poem - and thus left

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63-4, 103, 115).

[152] Sermons, VIII 98.

[153] 1645, pp. 109-10 = Carré, p. 189: "[Reflect . . . what manner of creature you were in the loins of your parents, and render to special Providence or Grace, and also to Common Providence, its due.] For if the worm which is born of the corruption of your body can gaze at the sun and rejoice in it, can you believe that you are destined to be shrouded in eternal darkness?" Carré has "the body". The passage in square brackets was present in the earlier versions.

suspended between terror and bewildered laughter. The uncharacteristic subject prompted some of the most perfectly Donnean lines he ever wrote:

> Death-priviledg'd, were you in sunder smit
> You do not lose your life, but double it:
> Best framed types of the immortal Soul,
> Which in your selves, and in each part are whole (119-22)

What is not Donnean (in addition to the heavy grotesquerie) is the profoundly pagan atmosphere of the poem. This is especially evident at the end:

> the worst I can do,
> Is but to keep the way that leads to you,
> And howsoever the event do prove,
> To have Revenge below, Reward above. (137-40)

Here, as so often, Donne's language both belongs and does not belong with Herbert's ideas.[154]

In the manuscript, however, this poem is immediately followed by something very different. Throughout the collection, Herbert has continued his search for the "proper place", the "journey's end". In the last poem, the question of place is finally offered an answer:

> Where shall my troubled soul, at large
> Discharge
> The burden of my sins, oh where?
> Echo: Here. (1-4)[155]

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[154] In the Life, he made an attempt to soften this - a little: "where with my honour I could forgive, I never used revenge, as leaving it always to God, who, the less I punish mine enemies will inflict so much the more punishment on them" (Lee, pp. 62-3). Lee quotes the reaction of Walpole: "This is a very unchristian reason for pardoning our enemies . . ." (p. 63 n.).

[155] Smith, p. 47 = MS, fo. 25.

George Herbert ended his poetical manuscript with poems on "Death", "Doomsday", "Judgment", "Heaven" - and "Love": presumably the variation on the Four Last Things was meant to be noticed.[156] Edward chose to end his with the Tetragrammaton:

> O speak before I wholly weary am.
> Echo: I am. (25-6)

The sequence which began with Neoplatonic grace (the "Lady who did Sing") ends with the alternative kind.[157]

"Echo in a Church" is of particular interest for an understanding of Herbert, as rough papers for it survive, dated to 1625.[158] Rossi notes that Herbert seems to have decided on the content to his satisfaction before the form; but there is one interesting change between the fullest of the three drafts and the complete version. After line 18, the drafts read:

> Blest bee thy name, and so much more yet blest
> When for the rest
> Thou wouldst this farther mercy show
> That though a mortall I thy face might knowe.
> Echo: No

Herbert's fair copy avoids this stoniness:

> O may that will and voice be blest,
> Which yields such comforts unto one distrest,
> More blessed yet, would'st thou thy self unmask.
> Or tell, at least, who undertakes this task.
> Echo: Ask

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[156] "The Temple" exists in an MS believed to be copied from the (supposed) holograph: see Hutchinson (ed.) Works, pp. lxx-i.

[157] There is probably a connexion of some kind between this poem and George's "Heaven", also an echo-poem (a genre relatively rare in English poetry). See M.E. Rickey, "Rhymecraft in Edward and George Herbert", JEGP 57 (1958), 502-11: she finds Edward's poem "so far as can be ascertained, the first example in English of the use of the echo form for devotional purposes" (p. 506).

[158] These are now in the Public Record Office: PRO 30/53/9/10, fos. 1r and v, and 25v. They are described by Rossi, III 389-91. Beal reproduces the first page (II 170).

Both the original and the revisions are revealing. There remains the powerful sense of incompleteness and dependence that the echo-form conveys (its chief attraction, no doubt, for George Herbert); what disappears is the further idea that God's goodness is incomprehensible. In his theological prose, this was passionately resisted by Edward - who was to proceed thereby into statements that Donne would have heard with horror; but no one reading the manuscript can doubt his awareness of the mysterious. The collection as a whole reveals a desire - not smug or over-confident - for certainty and for order; this poem locates both quest and discovery in a church. It was perhaps the nearest he could come to a gesture of solidarity with a "sugred Divine."

Something of Herbert, perhaps, was buried with Donne. After 1631, he made no more collections of his poetry; his ideas on religion had begun long since to diverge from Donne's ideas. His poetry also changed. The later poems are more abstract, and closer to the prose: he is no longer attempting to startle the reader. As champion of the "Common Notions of Religion", that was the last thing he wanted - nor did he need to work for it.

From the time of its inception, the literary project dearest to him was always De Veritate. Probably he ceased quite early in the friendship to find much amusement in the first of Donne's "Problems": "Why doe Young Laymen So Much Study Divinity?" Or perhaps he always found one sentence worthy of his approval:

> [The Devil] cannot hope for better Heresies than hee hath had, nor was his kingdome ever so much advanced by debating religion (though with some Aspersions of Errour) as by a dull and stupid security in which many grosse things are swallowed.[159]

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[159] Rhodes (ed.), Selected Prose, p. 53.

Chapter II: The Philosopher

Herbert completed the first draft of his major work in 1619. The last revised edition was published in 1645. Within those dates, he produced two more substantive manuscripts and two Latin editions, and supervised a French translation.[1] The work was given pride of place in his epitaph:

> Hic inhumatur corpus Eduardi Herbert equitis Balnei, baronis de Cherbury et Castle-Island, auctoris libri, cui titulus est "De Veritate".[2]

The boast has a rather forlorn ring to it now - even without the fact that the grave has long been destroyed, and the epitaph exists only in transcriptions. De Veritate did not have the impact that its author had hoped. But it has never been quite forgotten, thanks not only to its own merits, but to the quality and remarkable variety of the criticism passed upon it.

I De Veritate and its Modern Critics

De Veritate has been described and criticized many times, and in very different ways. There are three clear phases in its critical history: contemporary, which is European rather than English; post-contemporary (from Richard Baxter to M.M. Tabaraud), both foreign and domestic,

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[1] See Appendix I for an account of the different versions. The differences will be discussed in the course of the chapter.

[2] "Here is buried the body of Edward Herbert, K.B., Baron of Cherbury and Castle-Island, author of a book entitled De Veritate". Quoted by Lee, p. 299. This is believed to be by his friend, Lord Stanhope; Herbert composed a magniloquent inscription for a monument he wanted (specified in his will), but this was never erected.

focussed - usually with hostility - on his religious beliefs; and modern (from the later nineteenth century onwards), provenance international, in which partisanship is somewhat concealed. The first of these phases will be discussed later in this chapter; the second will be more briefly treated in the chapter on Religio Laici. I shall now attempt an overview of the third.

In the later nineteenth century, Herbert received sympathetic treatment: he was seen as a small but signficant part of some wider field in which the critic was interested. Sir William Hamilton, surveying the Philosophy of Common Sense in his edition of Thomas Reid, praised him as a forerunner of the movement.[3] For Charles de Rémusat, historian of English philosophy, he "can be regarded as the founder of natural religion in England".[4] For W.R. Sorley, he showed "at least the suggestion of a theory of knowledge", inferior to Bacon in his methodology, but superior in depth of insight.[5] For Carl Güttler, author of the second book-length study, he was

> nicht bloss das bekannte Haupt des englischen Deismus, sondern auch ein unbekannter Verläufer des modernen Psychologismus.[6]

Rémusat and Güttler are expositors, rather than analysts; the first extended analysis of Herbert's philosophy was made in 1917 by Armando Carlini, who both examined the work in detail, and attempted to put it into historical context. Previous critics had been content with noting general resemblances, and indicating rather loosely the similarities with ideas of later

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[3] W. Hamilton (ed.), The Works of Thomas Reid (Edinburgh, rev. ed., 1874); some of his praise is reprinted by Carré in the Introduction to his translation.

[4] C.F.M. de Rémusat, Lord Herbert de Cherbury (Paris, 1875), p. iv.

[5] W.R. Sorley, "The Philosophy of Lord Herbert of Cherbury" Mind 3 (1898), 493.

[6] C. Güttler, Lord Herbert von Cherbury (Munich, 1898), p. III: "not only the acknowledged head of English deism, but also an unacknowledged forerunner of modern psychologism."

thinkers (principally Kant, for a priori principles of knowledge, and the "Scottish School" for stress on the criterion of consent); Carlini went further, attacking Rémusat for his "disorganization".[7] He insisted in precise terms on the influence of Herbert on the later seventeenth century, and acutely noted the sources of some of his incoherences.[8]

Carlini's discussion did not make much impact on Herbert studies, which were still a somewhat select affair.[9] A great change in Herbert's academic afterlife was effected in 1937, when M.H. Carré published the first English translation of De Veritate. He provided also a long introduction, in which he explained the basic plan of the work.

But the longest, and - in a sense - most influential critique of the work was that of Rossi, the third chapter of whose magnum opus ("Il Pensatore": La Vita I 273-595) proved a turning-point in its reputation. (Comparison of Carré's two accounts of the work, one before Rossi and

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[7] A. Carlini, "Lord Herbert di Cherbury e la Scuola di Cambridge", Rendiconti della Reale Accademia dei Lincei Classe di Scienze Morali Stoiche e Filologiche 5th ser. 26 (Rome, 1917), 277.

[8] He is perceptive on the problems in conjoining Herbert's idea of "Natural Instinct" with his ideas about the independence of the mind (see p. 301). Carlini's article has not received the attention it deserved; the explanation for this is provided by La Vita. Rossi is harsh about all previous critics of Herbert, but Carlini is his bête noire. His strictures need reconsideration: some of them are entirely unfair (such as his claim that Carlini attributed Herbert's "deism" to Bacon (I 279 n) - see Carlini, p. 306). However, since Carlini, with his supercilious asides on Rémusat, seems to have resurrected the old tradition of ill-tempered writing on Herbert, perhaps a deeper justice is served.

[9] An interesting suggestion about Herbert's intellectual affiliations was made in 1937 by Ernst Cassirer, who connected the criteria imposed by Herbert on his primary area of truth (religion) with the "laws of nature" posited by Galileo: "La Notion de la Vérité et le Problème de la Vérité chez Galilée" Scientia 62 (1937) suppl., 41-8; 69-76. (Since Cassirer's study concerns Herbert only tangentially, I have restricted the reference to a note.)

one after, neatly demonstrates the effect.)[10] Incoherence was the principal target of Rossi's account - or attack. For he turned his formidable philosophical knowledge, and powers of aggression, to a demolition of the myth of Herbert's originality and modernity, and an exposure of his deficiencies. To him, Herbert is

> un pensatore che non rivoluzionò né innovò, ma proseguì per i sentieri battuti della filosofia, riferendosi a Platone e a Aristotile e alla Scholastica senza darsi per innovatore, senza appellarsi dalla filosofia alla scienza.[11]

Rossi's thoroughness, and the breadth of his erudition, had a paralysing effect on Herbert studies. Nevertheless, after an interval of about twenty years, De Veritate began to creep back into scholarly interest. R.H. Popkin, in his hugely influential work on Renaissance scepticism (first published in 1960), devoted half a chapter to the book: while agreeing entirely with Rossi's estimate of it ("This new system for meeting the crise pyrrhonienne is obviously open to sceptical objections at almost every level"),[12] he at least provided it with a new and original treatment.[13]

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[10] Before La Vita, Carré described DV: "It reflects in a more systematic fashion than any other treatise written by an Englishman the philosophical ideas of the period immediately preceding the construction of modern metaphysics based on the outlook of science . . . It initiates in England the development of Natural Theology, and it anticipates the great sequence of rationalism in continental philosophy inaugurated by Descartes. More definitely it forestalls by one hundred and forty years the doctrines put forward by the founder of the Scottish philosophy of common sense. And it even hints . . at Kantian principles . . ." (introduction to M.H. Carré (tr.), De Veritate (Bristol, 1937), pp. 65-6). And after: "The book is an eclectic tissue of theses, haphazardly arranged and presented in turgid Latin. And a nearer view discloses much incoherence and imprecision of thought. Nor can we discern in it any manifestation of the new notions that were stirring at the time of its composition . . . This loose amalgam of doctrine is directed to several incompatible purposes" (review of Rossi in Mind 57 (1948), 238). Carré appears to have been overwhelmed by Rossi. In his book Phases of Thought in England (Oxford, 1949), Herbert is barely mentioned.

[11] I 288: "a thinker who effected neither revolution nor innovation, but proceeded in the worn footpaths of philosophy, referring to Plato, Aristotle, and the Schools without presenting himself as an innovator, without making the shift from philosophy towards science."

[12] The History of Scepticism from Erasmus to Spinoza (rev. ed., Assen, 1971), p. 156.

Then, in 1979, Bedford published the first full-length study of Herbert in English, and altered the picture again: he devoted much of his book to a reinstatement of the "Platonic metaphysic", which Rossi's insistence on Aristotelian and Stoic influence had largely driven out of consideration.[14] Bedford also had a novel view of Herbert's theology: he disregarded the tradition of Herbert the Deist, and presented him as an outspoken Arminian - a liberal Protestant whose opinions, properly understood, were wholly orthodox.

Those most interested in promoting Herbert are, in general, admirers not of his metaphysics, but of his religious ideas, and a critic's attitude to De Veritate is bound to depend largely on his response to these. This response has varied greatly: Rémusat admired them; Rossi detested them.[15] Whatever the muddled origins of Herbert's philosophy as a whole, this part has generally been found both remarkable and new. For Charles Lyttle, in the 1930s, the theology was original, and the real purpose of the whole work.[16] It was on their account that Günter Gawlick reissued facsimiles of Herbert's three long prose works, and it is on them that

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[13] Rossi provided details on Herbert's French contacts, and the contemporary criticism of De Veritate; but he laid much more stress on Herbert's traditionalism, and his debt to Mediaeval philosophy.

[14] Rossi acknowledged in a general way the influence of Hermetic thought on Herbert, and mentioned a few times the work of the Platonist Francisco Patrizi; but he made very little of it, and entirely rejected the influence of Bruno - to the absurd extent of denying that Bruno's De l'Infinito Universo e Mondi, owned by Herbert, had any connexion with his chapter "De Possibili" (I 283-4). Bedford quotes the most Brunonian passage of this at the beginning of his chapter IV (p. 87); see also chapter I above, "Herbert's Selection of his Poems".

[15] He painted a dark picture of their consequences: "cesserà la polemica e con essa scomparirà ogni interesse religioso. E si finirà all'ateologismo, al tramonto del senso religioso, alla notte di Dio in cui ogni vegetiamo" (I 593).

[16] C. Lyttle, "Lord Herbert of Cherbury: Apostle of Ethical Theism", Church History 4 (1935), 247-67.

he concentrates chiefly in his Introduction to De Veritate. In one of the most recent books on Herbert, E.D. Hill goes further: he proposes abandoning the "technical epistemology", and returning to the "hostile theologues" of the later seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, for guidance: they recognized Herbert's real concerns, and thus

> are often better guides to Herbert's book than twentieth-century historians of philosophy.[17]

This takes the idea to the limit; and its limitations become apparent. The idea that Herbert wrote the work

> as a weapon with which to defend his deist religion . . . overt epistemology and psychology is, in fact, covert religious polemic[18]

is surely weakened somewhat by the publication of De Causis Errorum, a work devoted almost entirely to theories of perception, simultaneously with the last edition (1645). It is possible to make too much of the polemic - and thus to simplify De Veritate into a deist manifesto: it is more (or at least more complex) than that.

This complexity prompts a different kind of treatment. The most original part of Gawlick's "Einleitung" was the brief exposition of some of the differences between the editions - a point that Rossi had effectively ignored in his text, although he listed some of them in an Appendix. For the first time, Herbert was presented as a developing thinker; and some of the incoherence became easier to understand. This is a line that seems worth taking further. In this

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[17] Edward, Lord Herbert, p. 19. His main target here is Bedford; but he is very conscious throughout of writing against Rossi, and responds with a high-handedness of which the master himself might have been proud: "It would be difficult to conceive of a less suitable guide to the works of Lord Herbert, the father of English deism, than a scholar who attributes much that he disapproves of in modern thought precisely to deism . . ." (p. iv).

[18] p. 28.

chapter, I shall consider De Veritate as an evolving whole, rather than a slow approach to a theological climax.

This could be a much grander project than I intend. I shall not attempt an extensive philosophical re-examination of De Veritate, for which I am hardly qualified. Both awed and annoyed (like everyone else) by Rossi's account, I shall not attack his verdict directly, but try to bring out some of the work's more interesting features - including some which the author might not have recognized. I shall start with a brief look at Herbert's educational background, with an introduction to his contemporary critics. I shall then attempt a detailed discussion of De Veritate, using Descartes and the others in an effort to draw more particular conclusions about Herbert's unstable place in the intellectual life of his time.[19]

II "De Veritate": Origins and Responses

Origins

1. Oxford

Herbert's intellectual affiliations are complex. Rossi and Bedford provide full, complementary accounts: Rossi concentrates on the Mediaeval background; Bedford is particularly helpful on Platonic influences. This section will concentrate on the question, rather more straightforward, of his formal education.

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[19] The differences between the texts, which I shall discuss throughout this chapter, are summarized in Appendix I.

Herbert went up to University College, Oxford, in June 1596.[20] He studied there until 1600, incidentally marrying and begetting a son. In the Life, he makes some pertinent comments:

> I do not approve for elder brothers that course of study which is ordinarily used in the University, which is, if their parents perchance intend they shall stay there four or five years, to employ the said time as if they meant to proceed masters of art and doctors in some science; for which purpose, their tutors commonly spend so much time in teaching the subtleties of logic, which, as it is usually practised, enables them for little more than to be excellent wranglers, which art, though it may be tolerable in a mercenary lawyer, I can by no means commend in a sober and well-governed gentleman. I approve much those parts of logic which teach men to deduce their proofs from firm and undoubted principles, and show men to distinguish betwixt truth and falsehood, and help them to discover fallacies, sophisms, and that which the schoolmen call vicious argumentations, concerning which I shall not here enter into a long discourse. So much of logic as may serve for this purpose being acquired, some good sum of philosophy may be learned, which teach him the ground of the Platonic and Aristotelian philosophy.

In addition to this, the student should study "the Paracelsian principles", and the works of Bernardino Telesio and Francisco Patrizi (Telesius and Patricius), the sixteenth-century Italian philosophers,

> who have examined and controverted the ordinary Peripatetic doctrine; all which may be performed in one year, that term being enough for philosophy, as I conceive, and six months for logic, for I am confident a man may quickly have more than he needs of those two arts.[21]

At Oxford, Herbert's education was basically scholastic: he was probably taught by John Case, who has been called

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[20] For the details, see the Chronological Table above.

[21] Lee, pp. 48-9, 50.

> the most important representative of Aristotelian thought in England, certainly during the reign of Elizabeth, and quite possibly during the entire Renaissance.[22]

Herbert seems to have thought well of Case at the time: he contributed a commendatory poem of three elegiac stanzas for the first edition of Case's Lapis Philosophicus (1599).[23] As recent work has demonstrated, Aristotelian philosophy in the late sixteenth century was not the stagnant, reactionary programme it was once supposed to be: Case was firmly opposed to Paracelsus, but the authorities he cites include Roger Bacon and Cornelius Agrippa, representatives of the magical tradition. Herbert's proclaimed approval of Telesio and Patrizi need not represent a radical departure.[24]

In later life, it seems, Herbert felt dissatisfied with his university education; but, as the moderateness of his objections shows, he did not feel the radical revulsion of a Bacon or a

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[22] C.B. Schmitt, John Case and Aristotelianism in Renaissance England (Kingston and Montreal, 1989), p. 6. On p. 52, he comments: "The flowering of Aristotelianism lasted for at least three-quarters of a century or roughly throughout the life span of Lord Herbert of Cherbury."

The university Statutes of 1586 enjoined that only the views of Aristotle or writers secundum Aristotelem should be debated during the Lenten exercises (S. Gibson (ed.), Statuta Antiqua Universitatis Oxoniensis (Oxford, 1931), p. 437).

[23] These verses (three elegiac couplets) are not included by Smith. For Case's career, see Schmitt, John Case, chapter 2. His primary attachment was to St. John's; but he lost his fellowship there when he married, and although he continued to teach, did so thereafter on a less institutional basis. The fact that Herbert, still an undergraduate, wrote these verses for him seems proof that they came into contact. It may be significant that another encomiast of the Lapis was George Abbot, Master of Herbert's college.

[24] It is unlikely that Herbert learned much Ramist theory at Oxford, where it was viewed with general hostility. Nor did it leave much mark on his own philosophy, although he left five books by Ramus to Jesus College (FK, pp. 90, 105). He never mentions him; and his concerns were different. The word "methodus" does occur in De Veritate - but it was, in N.W. Gilbert's words, "the party slogan . . . for the Renaissance" (Concepts of Method in the Renaissance (1960), p. 66). Herbert's unsystematic sniping at the Schools is sui generis; he makes no reference to such characteristically Ramist preoccupations as syllogism, collocation, or dialectic.

Hobbes - rather, a desire to improve on the old model. The Life reveals that Herbert still, in old age, prided himself on the quality of his "disputations". It is easy to exaggerate his hostility to the teaching he received, as Gawlick does;[25] in fact, De Veritate shows a thoroughly ambivalent attitude to the schools:

> Quàm jejunae igitur & imperfectae sint vulgatae Scholarum definitiones . . . jam vides Lector . . . Plurima interea istis adjici possunt: quod Scholarum sit opus. Satis enim fuerit hoc in opere Veritatis jecisse fundamenta.[26]

Herbert seem to consider them, unsatisfactory though they may be, as a potential ally, trying to do what he has succeeded in doing, and well equipped for finishing it off. There is no equivalent to the full-scale attacks on them by Bruno, or on Aristotle by Telesio - or on everyone, including Telesio, by Bacon.

Herbert did not reject his Oxford education en masse. It provided him with a starting-point: he proceeded not only to attack, but to assimilate.[27]

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[25] "Einleitung" to De Veritate (Stuttgart, 1966), p. VII: "die Erfahrungen . . . erfüllte ihn für sein ganzes Leben mit Abneigung gegen die Philosophie der Schulen und der Professoren." According to Bedford, "Throughout De Veritate the schoolmen receive the benefit of Herbert's contempt and sarcasm . . his most studied incredulity is reserved for Aquinas" (p. 31). This is puzzling, as Herbert never mentions Aquinas in DV.

[26] 1645, p. 205 = Carré, pp. 285-6: "The Reader may now perceive how meagre and imperfect are the accepted definitions of the Schools . . . He may perceive, too, how capriciously the Authors have constructed their doctrines of truth from the fact that they have omitted any definition of truth . . . Much may be added to what I have said, but I leave this to the Schools. It is sufficient in this work to have laid the foundation of truth." Other references to the Schools occur on Carré, pp. 109, 275 (hostile); 293 (ally); and 276 (to be followed with caution). On p. 38 (Carré, p. 117), he censures those who reject traditional theories entirely, as well as those who accept them without discrimination.

[27] Schmitt makes the point that there was no other philosophy of comparable scope: "If arts education was meant to be reasonably comprehensive and to embrace the range of reliable knowledge, were there alternatives to the Aristotelian synthesis?" (p. 44).

2. Europe

Meanwhile, according to the Life, he was busy learning modern languages. This had a direct, practical application:

> I thought it no such unjust ambition, to attain the knowledge of foreign countries . . .[28]

European travel filled up much of the twenty years of his life between Oxford and the first version of De Veritate.

Since the appearance of Popkin's study, it has been usual to invoke a second background for De Veritate: the "crise pyrrhonienne", the intellectual crisis of Europe, brought on by the Reformation, and especially virulent in war-torn France. The combination of the religious revolution and the first Latin edition of the ancient Pyrrhonist philosopher Sextus Empiricus (1562) created a mood first exemplified in Montaigne's Essais, and first attacked with full force (though vainly) by Descartes. To quote Popkin's account:

> Edward, Lord Herbert of Cherbury (1583 [sic] -1648) was ambassador to France from 1618 until 1624, where he came into contact with both the current of sceptical ideas, and the attempts being made to counteract it.[29]

And Herbert threw his weight behind these attempts.

The beginning of De Veritate does suggest a state of emergency:

> Cum eò deventum sit, ut à prioribus saeculis excogitatae Opiniones nostris id negotii facessant, ut nullus jam sit ferè mortalium, qui in proprio & sibi condicto veritatem indagandi modo acquiescat, sed ad normam peregrinae alicujus sive Ecclesiae, sive Scholae se ita componat, ut sua omnino abneget . . .

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[28] Lee, p. 89.

[29] The History of Scepticism, p. 151.

> subsequentibus saeculis nova et eatenus incognita emersit quae ratione omnino praeposterâ, doctrinas suas ex fide quâdam etiam implicitâ petitas sancire conata est . . . Sed iniquo judicio & luxatis facultatibus.[30]

This second passage seems to give support to the Popkin thesis: "fideism", the use of sceptical arguments in support of religious submission, was never acceptable to Herbert. However, two qualifications need to be made.

The first concerns the background of his "antiscepticism". Were the evasions of the French sceptics the only impulse for his new method? Here the views of the Life on logic are instructive. It is a mistake to practise it in such a way that one becomes a "wrangler", more like a "mercenary lawyer" than a "sober and well-governed gentleman"; but

> I approve much those parts of logic which teach men to deduce their proofs from firm and undoubted principles, and shew men to distinguish betwixt truth and falsehood . . .[31]

What Herbert wanted from instruction was the ability to distinguish truth, and to experience certainty. The process of acquiring it appealed to him much less. "Wrangling" for its own sake irritated him: it ran counter to his own temperament.[32] Around the time of his attendance, the

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[30] 1645, pp. 1; 2 = Carré, pp. 75; 76: "The conclusions arrived at in former ages have now come to weigh so heavily upon our own reflections, that there is scarcely anyone in the world who is content to pursue an independent path in the search for truth; every one submits himself to some alien Church or School; thereby wholly renouncing his own powers . . a strange and unprecedented philosophy appeared in succeeding ages, which superseded reason altogether and sought to establish its doctrines upon the basis of an implicit faith . . But such a doctrine is unacceptable to our reason, and severs our mental powers in two." The ordering of the Latin sounds more urgent, as does the French: "Puis qu'il est arrivé que . . ."

[31] Lee, pp. 48-9.

[32] Herbert's objection to "wrangling" philosophers sounds like a typical "humanist" criticism of Mediaeval scholasticism. But his interest is not in eloquence, but in discovery. He would not have agreed with Thomas Wilson that "a reason is easlier found then fashioned" (The Rule of Reason (London, 1551), sig. B1v; see the discussion in W.S. Howell, Logic and Rhetoric in England, 1500-1700 (Princeton, NJ, 1956), p. 23).

universities were beginning to make use of another method of instruction, less oral and less public; nevertheless, disputations - formal debates - were an essential part of the system.[33] Herbert, as we have seen, remembered his own proficiency with pride; but he wanted something better for his grandson. Although he did form intellectual contacts in France, and there is no reason to doubt that his experience there was important, still, in his quest for certainty, he may well have been opposing something in his earlier, English background. Training in disputation is always training in argument for its own sake; Herbert wanted quick and certain answers.[34]

The second qualification (which has been made, implicitly or explicitly, by others) concerns the nature of De Veritate.[35] Popkin's argument does justice to the urgency evoked in the first sentence; the first problem to strike Herbert, however, is not scepticism, but intellectual passivity:

> nullus jam sit ferè mortalium, qui in proprio & sibi condicto veritatem indagandi modo acquiescat.[36]

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[33] For the development, and a full account of disputation, see M.H. Curtis, Oxford and Cambridge in Transition (Oxford, 1959), chapter 4.

[34] Recently, Popkin's thesis has been challenged by scholars keen to stress the impact of the education which his sceptics and antisceptics received. Two articles, on Montaigne and Mersenne respectively, have pointed to the effects of the humanist reforms: Z.S. Schiffman, "Montaigne and the Rise of Skepticism in Early Modern Europe", JHI 45 (1984), 499-516; P. Dear, "Marin Mersenne and the Probabilistic Roots of 'Mitigated Scepticism'", JHist. Phil. 22 (1984), 173-206. Their argument gives indirect support to mine.

[35] Bedford discusses the currents of religious thought Herbert encountered; Popkin is attacked directly by J. Lagrée in her edition of Religio Laici (Le Salut du Laïc (Paris, 1989), p. 25), for concentrating on Herbert's epistemology at the entire expense of his theology.

[36] 1645, p. 1: see above.

It was not only the sacrifice of knowledge that repelled him in fideism; and "antiscepticism" was not the only powerful influence on him. The Popkin thesis finds no room for Herbert's religious thought.

On his first visit to France, in the last years of Henry IV, he was entertained and impressed by "that brave old General", Henri de Montmorency-Damville, old ally of the once-Protestant King, and leader of the "Politiques" back in the days before the Edict of Nantes.[37] The "Politiques", mostly Catholic (like Montmorency), were an unofficial party who advocated religious toleration for the sake of civil harmony; their religious attitudes and interests were less restricted than those of some disapproving contemporaries. The English ambassador, writing at about the time of Herbert's arrival, distinguished three religious parties in France: Catholics, Protestants, and

> those, who would have a reconcilation of the one and the other, thinking there are many things amiss, which want reformation both in doctrine and government in the papacy; but that the Protestants have not, in their violent courses, taken the best way to that reformation, having, among the bad things, swept out, in heat and lust, many good things also.[38]

An echo of this is audible in Herbert's account of his conversation with "a grave person" at the English College in Rome (in 1614):

> I thought fit to tell him that I conceived the points agreed upon on both sides are greater bonds of amity betwixt us, than that the points disagreed on could break them; that for my part I loved everybody that was of a pious and virtuous life, and thought the errors on what side soever, were more worthy pity than hate . . .

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[37] Lee, p. 91. For the "Politiques", see F.C. Palm, Politics and Religion in Sixteenth-Century France (Boston, 1927), pp. 13 ff.; Skinner, Foundations of Modern Political Thought, II 249 f. The term first came into use in 1564.

[38] G. Carew, A Relation of the State of France, p. 445.

The setting of this declaration gives it extra point. Herbert was invited into the College, but declined,

> the uttermost liberty I had (as the times then were in England) being already taken in coming to that city only, lest they should think me a factious person;

and at the end of his Roman visit, he received word from the College:

> that I was accused in the Inquisition, and that I could no longer stay with any safety.[39]

Travel abroad showed Herbert two things: a civilized attitude to religion; and its vulnerability, and rarity.

On the doorstep of the English College, Herbert professed himself ecumenical; implicit in that was something more - a readiness to rethink the essentials of religion. His travels exposed him to some of the more radical currents of religious thought in Europe. The Life reveals, however briefly, that he took the opportunity to continue his formal education: in Paris, he "much benefited [him]self" from the instruction of Isaac Casaubon; in Italy

> from [Florence] I went by Ferrara and Bologna towards Padua, in which university having spent some time to hear the learned readers, and particularly Cremonini, I left my English horses and Scotch saddles there . . .[40]

Cesare Cremonini was an Aristotelian (the Paduan tradition);[41] but he was viewed with suspicion (also something of a Paduan tradition) for his daring ideas in theology. In the period in which Herbert met him, he was under investigation by the Inquisition. The direction of his unorthodoxy would not have appealed to Herbert (he posed radical objections to the doctrine of

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[39] Lee, pp. 154-5.

[40] Lee, p. 137.

[41] Neither Lee nor Rossi records anything else about him, oddly (Lee, p. 137 n.; Rossi, I 232-4): see the disscussion by Bedford, p. 245. Herbert owned a work by him on Aristotle's physics (FK, p. 80).

the immortal soul); still, he is indicative of the less orthodox ideas to be encountered by a traveller with intellectual interests.

Herberts first "Satire" reflects a defiant attitude towards both politics and established religion. Bedford suggests that he might have met the poet Théophile de Viau, scandalous and persecuted for theological and moral libertinism;[42] it is possible that, during his second embassy, he came across that notorious work, the Quatrains du Déiste, anonymous and unpublished, but widely circulated from the early 1620s.[43] There is something satisfactory in the idea, given the critical tradition of Herbert the Deist; the poem was, in the word of a recent critic,

> the first text in which the writer uses the word as a name for his own version of secular free-thought.[44]

It is also a prize example of free-thought with no trace of moral libertinism. Like Cremonini, the "Déiste" is different from Herbert in his unorthodoxy: he has one argument to defend - denial of eternal punishment - which is disputed by Herbert;[45] and although he does not deny the immortality of the soul, he does not affirm it either. But there are similarities. The Déiste

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[42] Bedford, p. 245; for the career of Théophile, see A. Adam, Théophile de Viau (Paris, 1935).

[43] The Quatrains have been published in this century, twice, the second time by A. Adam in Les Libertins au XVIIe Siècle (Paris, 1964), pp. 90-108. For discussion of their context, and the "crisis of 1619 to 1625" (Spink, p. 6), from the execution of Vanini to the arrest of Théophile, see J.S. Spink, Free-Thought in France from Gassendi to Voltaire (London, 1960) and C.J. Betts, Early Deism in France (The Hague, 1984), chapter 2.

For further discussion of Herbert as "deist", see chapter IV below.

[44] Betts, Early Deism, p. 25.

[45] Herbert considered this question often, and his decision varied: it is discussed briefly in the Conclusion to the thesis.

shares with Herbert his vigorous moral energy; he directs some of it at one of Herbert's targets: the clergy. Religion as established, he insists, is used to keep men down, like animals:

> Utile invention pour brider les esprits
> Des hommes insolens, qui pervers de nature
> Mettent les magistrats et leur loix à mespris
> Pour vivre à l'abandon, sans reigle ny mesure.[46]

That recalls Herbert's first Satire, with its bitter comparison between religion and horse-taming.

Herbert's magnum opus has been presented as a response to a crisis: this may well be so; but the crisis was not a simple nor a single one.

3 The Synod of Dort and Sir Robert Harley

In 1617-18, Herbert sent a series of letters to Sir Robert Harley, an old family friend, on the subject of religion.[47] Five of them survive (no replies, unfortunately): in them Herbert sets out his religious beliefs - and then tries to deal with what must have been a violently hostile reaction.[48]

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[46] Adam (ed.), Les Libertins, p. 99: "A convenient invention for curbing the spirit of the insolent, who, naturally perverse, hold magistrates and their law in contempt, to live at pleasure, without rule or measure."

[47] Harley was a regular guest at Mrs. Herbert's table in 1601, as appears from her "Kitchin Booke", published by A.M. Charles in ELR IV (1974). He was related to the family: see Charles, A Life of George Herbert (Ithaca, NY, 1977), p. 41. An earlier, friendlier letter from him to Edward survives: PRO 30/53/7/10.

[48] The letters are now in the British Library, BL Add MS 70001, pp. 165 ff.; they are printed in HMC Portland III (1894), 8-10 (page references will refer to this; but the text comes from the MS).

> My deare frend, for I cannot forget the Name, study God, study yourselfe, take heed of new and Particular opinions, nor let the name of Church in any Countrey or Tyme deceive you. God's Church is all mankind, though some are his more beloved . . .[49]

the correspondence begins. Harley then, "After a longe silence" "writt a large beleefe" in reply.

Herbert writes back, perturbed:

> Looke on my letter againe. I am sure there is nothinge you will deny, unlesse it bee, that God makes no man whom hee gives not means to come to him . . . For my part, I beleeve whosoever loves God with all his Hart, wch is his will, wth all his mind, wch is his understandinge, with all his strength, which is his faith, and loves his neighbour, as himselfe, is capable of eternall Happines, and thus farre in all relligions, one may go[;] at their perrill who beleeve more, especially in any relligion but ours . . .

A third letter, written almost a year after the first, cannot have helped:

> it is neyther my meaninge, nor, I am sure, my words to say any man may bee saved in any Relligion. I am so farre from it that I scarce know any Relligion, as it is comonly taught, wch hath not some error, and some Ignorance, nor will I give worse names, least I should be thought to presume.[50]

This letter adds a revealing post-script:

> I must not bringe myselfe under censure by the mistakinge of any factious Ignorant, and therfore desire you to keepe these things to yourselfe, till the world bee better prepared to heare them. . .

The penultimate letter was less accommodating still:

> do but consider, whether these reasons can instruct you in a good relligion, which would deceive you in a bad; and then see how poore arguments they are, which bidd you renounce your selfe and tell you the foolishnes of our relligion is better than the wisedom of another. All these motives will make men Turks aswell as Christians.

What Harley made of these truly outlandish proverbs is clear from Herbert's last, touching effort:

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[49] p. 8. This letter is dated July 17, 1617.

[50] p. 9. This letter is dated June 8, 1618.

> I must not contribute so much to the destruction of the friendship betwixt us, as to suffer it to fall on my part; Let me therfore awake you to those Testimonies of affection wch Absence allowes; or if nothing else to cherish the memory of him, who since he knew you first, was, and yf you please, ever, wilbee Your true friend.[51]

The Life, with its stark reference to Sir Robert as one who was "then" (in 1617) Herbert's friend, supplies the end of the story.[52]

It is hard to believe that if he had formulated his Five Articles, he would not have supplied them here (they could hardly have made things worse). So it seems most probable that the sacred quincunx evolved in 1619 - the year in which five very different points were decreed by the Synod of Dort. The two need not be coincidental.[53]

De Veritate began in the year of Dort; it ended in the years of the Westminster Assembly. It developed, but its developments are organic, not radical: it retained the same vision, and the same contradictions. It can be seen as a kind of intellectual commentary on his life: very different influences combine in a distinctive if sometimes incoherent synthesis.

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[51] p. 10.

[52] Lee, p. 181: "being then my dear friend". Lee notes the phrase in his Introduction, p. xx (he italicizes "then"), but offers no explanation.

The same MS volume also includes a letter from Herbert's daughter Beatrice, thanking Harley for his "pious care in my education", which was (apparently the real point of the letter - written about about six weeks after Herbert's death) of more value than her father's "paternal care and provision". What part Harley played in the painful relationship of Beatrice and her father can only be conjectured.

[53] There is no evidence of a connexion; but there is no counter-evidence. The effect of the Synod on one English delegate is well known: see The Golden Remains of the Ever Memorable Mr. John Hales of Eton College (London, 1673).

Response

The contemporary response was correspondingly various. No evidence survives of any reaction to the small 1624 edition (except for the claim of the Life that Grotius and Tilenus urged him to publish it); Herbert entered intellectual Europe with the edition of 1633, which was circulated much more widely. De Veritate was read by Hobbes, Campanella, Hübner, and Comenius; it was discussed at some length by an anonymous friend of Molina.[54] But the most interesting responses came from three French philosophers: Gassendi, Mersenne, and Descartes.

All of these have been discussed more or less fully by critics of De Veritate;[55] most of the relevant letters are available in modern editions. I shall not, therefore, set them out again.

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[54] For an account of contemporary response, see Rossi, I 473 ff and II 518 ff. Molina's friend sent a long and shrewd critique, written from a scholastic view-point (unpublished; draft and fair copy of Herbert's response survive in NLW Powis Bequest 1959, Parcel XIX), some points of which will be included in the discussion of DV.

Hübner sent Herbert a letter with criticism by himself and (anonymous) friends, of which the original survives, badly rotted, in the same parcel: he also sent copies of it, with a covering letter, to assorted (the same?) friends. (Many copies of this survive: there are three in one MS, BL Sloane 639, and another has recently been acquired by the Cambridge University Library, Add MS 8863(5). Much of it is printed by Rossi, III 437-42.) Hübner is very enthusiastic, in the main: he admired Herbert, and thought him undervalued in England. He praised DV also in a separate letter to Comenius; Comenius sent a letter to Herbert (dated 5/15 June 1647), praising him for his discussion of the causes of error (printed in A. Patera(ed.), Komenského Korrespondence (Prague, 1892), pp. 131-3).

Hobbes and Campanella, unfortunately, had very little to say. Hobbes described it as "a high point", in a letter to a friend - but did not explain why (see Rossi II 538: he discounts the description); Campanella received a copy through Peiresc: he declared himself pleased with the present, and displeased with the Papal verdict ("me non adnuente") - but did not apparently send a critique (see the letters between Peiresc and Campanella in L. Amabile, Fra Tommaso Campanella ne' Castelli di Napoli e di Roma (Naples, 1887), II 233 ff.).

[55] All are discussed by Rossi, I 474 ff. There is a full account in English of Gassendi's longer critique by H. Jones, Pierre Gassendi, 1592-1655 (The Hague, 1981), pp. 120-8.

I propose rather to integrate them into the discussion of De Veritate, on which they provide an interesting commentary. This section may conclude with a brief introduction to the three.

The first long critique - which never reached Herbert - came from Gassendi, the admirer of Sextus Empiricus: another attacker of the schools, but from a very different standpoint.[56] Although he is traditionally called a sceptic, Gassendi's scepticism was not, in fact, radical: it was designed, as many recent expositions have brought out, to release scientific investigation from the claims, and thus the obligations, of complete knowledge.[57] But - which is hardly surprising - his most sceptical feelings were evoked by expressions of metaphysical dogmatism. These reached him from more than one source: his two critiques of De Veritate provide something of a preparation for his vastly longer Objections to the Meditations of Descartes - also a champion of certainty, and of intellect over sense-perception.

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[56] Gassendi wrote two letters on DV. The first, addressed to Herbert, was published posthumously in the Opera of 1658 (III 411-19); this, with parts of the second, has been published in an annotated French translation by B. Rochot in Tricentaire de Gassendi (Actes du Congrès de 1955) (Digne, 1957), pp. 251-90. The second is shorter and much harsher: it was sent to Diodati, friend to them both, and is published in the C. de Waard et al (eds.), Correspondance de Mersenne (Paris, 1932-88), IV 335-8; an English translation is supplied by C.B. Bush in The Selected Works of Pierre Gassendi (New York and London, 1972), pp. 109-12. Two copies of this letter survive in MS, so it was presumably circulated (and probably Mersenne saw a copy). A rather cryptic note by Gassendi, published at the end of the 1658 text, explains that Herbert never received the first letter, and that on the visit of the "illustrissimus Baro" in 1647, "exemplum inde descriptum tulit". The assertion by the editors of the Correspondance and by Jones (Pierre Gassendi, p. 120) that the letter was never sent seems to conflict with this statement. This first letter is the more interesting, and it is quoted and discussed in this chapter.

[57] So H. Jones, Pierre Gassendi, p. 151: "the double rôle which Gassendi performs is . . . to promote the importance of sense-experience in the search for knowledge, and to insist that such knowledge as we do acquire through its means is necessarily incomplete." This agrees substantially with the accounts by Popkin in The History of Scepticism, and Ralph Walker, "Gassendi and Skepticism", in M.F. Burnyeat (ed.) The Skeptical Tradition (Berkeley and L.A., 1983).

For the modern reader, the comments of Descartes and Gassendi are the most interesting. But for Herbert himself, the most important reader of De Veritate was their friend and go-between: Marin Mersenne, priest in the Order of the Minims, enthusiast of music and science of every kind, who managed to include among his acquaintance so many of the great names of the time.[58] De Veritate brought Herbert into contact with him; it is a relationship about which it would be interesting to know more.[59]

Probably some time in 1636, Mersenne sent Herbert a list of queries about the work. This is now lost; but the objections are preserved in a rough draft of Herbert's reply, which deals with them one by one.[60] Unlike Gassendi, Mersenne did not offer a systematic critique: he wanted clarification, not demolition. For, although he has been classed with Gassendi as a "mitigated sceptic", he reached his position from the opposite direction - as an attacker of

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[58] Mersenne was a devout priest, attached to one of the most demanding Orders in France (see P.J.S. Whitmore, The Order of Minims in Seventeenth-Century France (The Hague, 1967)); but he engaged happily with Protestants like Hobbes (who remembers him with love in his verse autobiography), as with Catholics mal vus in their own countries (he offered to translate a work of Galileo under suspicion from the Inquisition: see Correspondance, II 173-80; the traditional independence of the Gallican church no doubt explains this). But there were limits to his tolerance, especially in his earlier days: see below.

[59] The standard account is Rossi, Deismo, pp. 1-92. See also the Chronological Table.

[60] Three letters between them survive: two from Herbert, one from Mersenne. Herbert's letters survive in rough drafts, now in NLW (1959 Powis Bequest, packet taken from Parcel XXVI; Parcel XIX): they are not dated, but were probably written in 1636 and 1637. These are printed in Correspondance de Mersenne, VI 354-7 and 359-60. They are hard to read; and the first one, in which he "answers" Mersenne's objections, is transcribed so badly as to be unintelligible (all quotations from this will be taken from the MS). Mersenne's letter is now in the Public Record Office (PRO 30/53/10/211): it is dated 7 August, 1637. This is printed in Correspondance, VIII 475-7.

Herbert was as unresponsive to criticism as most philosophers of the age. His response to each point was that it was unjustified, and that Mersenne should look at the text again for proof. The conclusion is polite but firm: "Quae interea scripsi aeque beneque si placet consule [?], quum nihil quod bilum alicui moveret me intentasse profitear."

scepticism. Himself the author of a defence of truth, La Verité des Sciences contre les Septiques [sic] ou Pyrrhoniens (Paris, 1625), he wanted to make positive use of De Veritate. The second draft-letter reveals that a translation into French has begun.[61] Herbert urged him to soften any objectionable expressions in the original, rather than suppress them: otherwise (as he rather disingenuously put it), someone might notice the difference between the two texts, and assume the worst of the original. In this he seems to have been successful; the translation is very close to the version of 1633.[62]

There is some irony here. Mersenne's earlier work is highly dogmatic: he attacked scepticism, as Herbert did; but he also attacked religious unorthodoxy. Despite his ecumenical friendships, the last chapter of La Verité des Sciences, Book I, considers Bacon's views on scientific certainty and suddenly concludes that in reading Bacon, one must remember that Bacon

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[61] The original salutation on this letter, "Doctissime Mersenne", has been changed to "R[everen]de P[ate]r" - perhaps, as the editors say, because of "le désir qu'avaient les deux correspondants de garder rigoureusement secrètes leurs communications" (Correspondance, VI 359 n. 1: on Mersenne's part, this desire is clear from his letter to Herbert, which asks him not to keep copies.) The name of Mersenne did not appear on the title-page of the translation; the original had, after all, been on the Index since 1633. But it was widely known that he was responsible: see the letters of Hübner to Comenius (printed in Correspondance, IX 174) and - more revealingly - to Grovonius, to whom he claimed that Mersenne was keeping it secret "metu haud dubie curiae Romanae" (BL Sloane MS 639, fo.84v).

[62] Rossi, II 532, discusses the translation, and comments on some points of vocabulary: he notes that Mersenne does not give the word "conformité" in the plural, and makes the pertinent remark: "in realtà al plurale [conformitas] non ha significato comprensibile . . [Mersenne] aveva portato alla luce quell'intimo equivoco nella dottrina delle facoltà . ." I have not noticed any major differences. In the section on religion, where some might be expected, the translation stays very close: occasionally it cuts out an aggressive sentence (eg. p. 208 = Carré, pp. 289, 290: "Quaelibet ex παμφόρω isto (ne dicam παραφόρω) vernabit semine, quaelibet spicabit fides"; "Quodnam ullo aevo abrogabitur commentum, praesertim ubi placia sua coelitùs tradita asserveraverint Nomothetae vaferrimi, quibus falsa veris admiscere, vera falsis diluere in more fuit?"); but most it leaves in.

is a heretic (= Protestant).[63] Another of his targets was the rhyming "Déiste": in 1625, he had published two large volumes under the title L'Impiété des Déistes Refutée - a title hard sought, if not altogether secure. De Veritate, however unsceptical, made a strange ally.[64] Would he have welcomed it six years later - in its final form? It is true that Mersenne seems to have become more tolerant in that time; but Herbert had become more of a challenge . . . It is certain, at any rate, that in 1639, the Minime was pleased with De Veritate. It was duly sent out to his wide circle of acquaintances.[65]

Gassendi attacked De Veritate; Mersenne tried to co-opt it. The response of Descartes was different again. He was the only one to have no direct connexion with Herbert: none of his criticisms is addressed to him.[66] Probably he wrote only under pressure from Mersenne,

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[63] La Verité des Sciences, p. 216.

[64] This whole issue is discussed by Rossi, Deismo, pp. 30-47. He thinks that Mersenne fell into an (excessively) rationalistic view of religion, in his desire to defend it against the atheists - and thus was deceived by a more subtle distinction.

[65] For a discussion of another work traditionally attributed to Mersenne in connexion with Herbert, see Appendix IV below.

[66] Descartes mentions DV in four letters. The first, written in April or May of 1638, is addressed to Hartlib, via one J.W. Eding: Descartes briefly praises its metaphysics, and hesitates about its theology (printed in Correspondance de Mersenne, VII 436.) The other three are addressed to Mersenne. In the first (27 August 1639), he again praises the metaphysics but demurs on its mixture with theology (C. Adam and P. Tannéry (eds.), Oeuvres de Descartes: Correspondance (Paris, 1964-74), II 570-1) (I shall refer to this edition henceforth by the standard abbreviation, "AT"). The second (16 October 1639), written after he had received the French version, is the important one (AT II 596-9; translated by A. Kenny, Descartes: Philosophical Letters (Oxford, 1970), pp. 65-7). The last mention occurs a few months later (25 December 1639): many of Herbert's so-called Common Notions "ne le sont point" (AT II 629).

Afterwards, a tenuous personal link was forged: in 1641, Descartes sent Herbert a first edition of the Meditations; unfortunately Herbert did not join the ranks of the Objectors to that work - but he did produce the first (partial) translation of the Discours de la Méthode (he translated the Fourth Part and the beginning of the Fifth - the philosophical heart of the work: see Appendix III).

anxious to elicit a response; probably also he had a shrewd suspicion that his friend had translated it. Nevertheless, his comments remain among the acutest and most interesting ever made on De Veritate - and have not been given quite their due by critics. In the following analysis, Descartes will be pressed frequently into service.[67]

Rossi, discussing Descartes, points to the "comuni fonti scolastiche" which linked him with Herbert.[68] Gassendi and Mersenne were products of a similar education. All four responded in their own ways. Although different from them all in other respects, Herbert might be compared to Gassendi in his distrust, to Mersenne in his reliance on tradition, to Descartes in his alternative dogmatizing. His work formed part of the grand debate of the earlier seventeenth century, between the New Philosophers and their past.

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[67] Descartes recognized Herbert as a colleague in metaphysical study; some of his criticisms, especially on this subject, seem almost self-referential. His remark that Herbert is exceptionally proficient in metaphysics, which "almost no one understands", is echoed in the beginning of the 1st of the Meditations, where he remarks that they are so "metaphysical" that they may not be popular. Descartes was cautious, complex, and oblique: more could be made of his response to the brasher Herbert. An attractive starting-point would be a famous Cartesian image: the mask, larva, in which he presents himself and his philosophy (this image is a favourite with French scholars: see in particular S. Romanowski, L'Illusion chez Descartes: la Structure du discours cartésien (Paris, 1974)). The word occurs in DV with very different significance: for Herbert, the larvatus, the man in a mask, cannot be a philosopher, and truth cannot be masked: (see 1645, n.p., pp. 134, 156, 225 = Carré, pp. 73, 214, 237, 306).

[68] Rossi, I 474. The locus classicus on Descartes and the schools is E. Gilson, Le Rôle de la Pensée Médiévale dans la Formation du Système Cartésien (Paris, 1930). Mersenne was educated at the same collège. Gassendi was also educated by Jesuits, and indeed went on to teach the traditional course: "I always made it a point that my auditors should be able to defend Aristotle well . . ." (Preface to his Exercises against the Aristotelians, in C.B. Bush (ed. and trans.),Selected Works, p. 19). The distinctively Aristotelian nature of Herbert's university education is significant here.

III "De Veritate"

None of the seventeenth-century texts gives the reader much help in grasping the shape of the work as a whole. There is no table of contents in any of them, and the section-headings are fitful and infrequent. The position is not much improved by Carré, who divides the text into thirteen uneven chapters, some of only two or three pages, others of over fifty. Gawlick's table goes to the other extreme: it regroups Carré's chapters into ten, and subdivides them into seventy-two subsections.

Both of these attempts are of limited helpfulness. A middle way was mapped out by Rossi, who tackled the work not in strict sequence, but according to "zone di pensiero".[69] This idea seems to me a helpful one, though the "zones" I shall define are fewer and larger than his, and follow (roughly) the order of the book. I propose to discuss:

1. Truth and Knowledge
2. Knowledge and Freedom
3. Freedom and Reason
4. Reason and True Religion

These will overlap, and there will be some necessary repetition; but in that, they will be only a pale shadow of their subject.[70]

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[69] I 275.

[70] Limitations of space (and philosophical knowledge) have necessitated omissions: in particular the "Zetetica", the system of questions attached (shakily) to "discursus", will not be discussed. It seemed to me the least interesting, as well as the most confusing, part of the book.

Truth and Knowledge

Rossi observed that, of all the seventeenth-century philosophers whose books bore the word "truth" in their titles, Herbert was the only one who attempted to define it.[71] This procedure provided Descartes with his first objection:

> qu'elle raison aurions nous de consentir a ce qui nous l'apprendroit, si nous ne sçavions qu'il fust vray, c'est a dire, si nous ne connoissions la verité?[72]

This is the old objection of Plato's Meno: how can I find out a thing without knowing it already?[73] Plato had taken this as a radical question of epistemology. On that interpretation, Descartes himself might be vulnerable: as he acknowledged, Herbert "traite d'un suiet auquel i'ay travaillé toute ma vie";[74] the "quest for truth" provides a heading for the fourth Meditation, and the title of a late, unpublished dialogue.[75] He did not question the possibility of seeking true knowledge. In fact, the letter shows that his real objection was quite different: it concerned definition.

A full discussion is supplied by Rossi, I 459 f.

[71] I 301.

[72] AT II 597 = Kenny, p. 65: "What reason would we have for accepting anything which could teach us the nature of truth if we did not know that it was true, that is to say, if we did not know truth?"

[73] Men. 80 d. The question leads Socrates to the doctrine of recollection from an earlier life.

[74] AT II 596 = Kenny, p. 65.

[75] La Recherche de la Verité . To quote Kenny, "[Descartes'] whole philosophy can be described as 'the search after truth'" (Descartes: a Study of his Philosophy (New York, 1963), p. 193).

> Ainsy on peut bien expliquer quid nominis a ceux qui n'entendent pas la langue, & leur dire que ce mot verité, en sa propre signification, denote la conformité de la pensée avec l'obiet . . .[76]

It is possible, that is, to explain what the word "truth" means. And Descartes does so: truth is a matter of relation. It is not an item for solitary definition.

Descartes was here drawing on his scholastic training to identify a crucial flaw in Herbert's proceeding. The most celebrated discussion on Truth from the Schools began with the question:

> utrum veritas sit in re vel tantum in intellectu.[77]

Like Herbert, Aquinas notes the rival definitions of SS Augustine and Anselm:[78] the great question to resolve is whether truth is or is not relative. If it is, how do we avoid "the error of the ancient philosophers who said that all that seems is true?" The answer is theological. Truth has two forms, "veritas rei", and "veritas intellectus":

> veritas invenitur in intellectu secundum quod apprehendit rem ut est, et in re secundum quod habet esse conformabile intellectui.[79]

The two are united by the nature of God:

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[76] AT II 597 = Kenny, pp. 65-6: "Of course it is possible to tell the meaning of the word to someone who does not know the language, and tell him that the word truth, in the strict sense, denotes the conformity of thought with its object".

[77] Aquinas, Summa Theologiae PP q 16 a 1, in the edition by the Dominican Fathers (London, 1963-76), IV 74-5: "is truth in things or only in the mind?" All quotations will be taken from this edition.

[78] PP 16, 1 = IV 76-8: these are the same definitions that Herbert lists (without attribution) on 1645, p. 5 = Carré, p. 79: Augustine - "Truth is what exists"; Anselm - "Truth is a Right Quality which can only be apprehended by the mind." They are identified by Rossi, I 308.

[79] PP 16, 5 = IV 87-9: "you find truth in the mind when it apprehends the thing as it is, and truth in the thing when it possesses being comformable to mind."

> antiqui philosophi . . . quia considerabant quod verum importat comparationem ad intellectum, cogebantur veritatem rerum constituere in ordine ad intellectum nostrum. Ex quo inconvenientia sequebantur . . . Quae quidem inconvenientia non accidunt si ponamus veritatem rerum consistere in comparatione ad intellectum divinum.[80]

"Veritas intellectus" depends on the power of the intellect to apprehend a thing; "veritas rei" depends on the power of the thing to produce a true perception of itself. The measure of truth, its true definition, is the actual perception of it by God.[81] As Descartes summed it up:

> lorsqu'on l'attribue [Truth] aux choses qui sont hors de la pensée, il signifie seulement que ces choses peuvent servir d'obiets a des pensées veritables, soit aux nostres, soit a celles de Dieu;[82]

Following this line of argument, John Case explains that truth has a threefold definition: it refers to God, who is the "measurer"; to the thing, or the sign of a thing, which is the "measured"; and to the abstraction made by the human intellect from things and signs. This last is the unreliable one:

> quoniam mens humana saepe in abstrahendo errat, Sectae tum in humanâ, tum in divinâ philosophiâ oriuntur.[83]

But Herbert took a different path. Along with the definitions of truth offered by Augustine and Anselm, he threw out that of St. Thomas, who called it "adaequatio rei et

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[80] PP 16, 1 = IV 78: "Early philosophers . . since they observed that truth implies relation to an intellect . . were forced to make the truth of things consist in a relation to our intellect. This led to difficulties . . . The difficulties do not arise if we make the truth of things consist in a relation to the divine intellect." See the discussion by E. Gilson, L'Esprit de la Pensée Médiévale (Paris, 1944), chapter XII.

[81] In De Veritate I 10, Aquinas explains: "ad intellectum divinum nulla res potest esse falsa."

[82] AT II 597 = Kenny, p. 66: "when [truth] is attributed to things outside thought, it means only that they can be the objects of true thoughts, whether in our minds or in God's..

[83] J. Case, Ancilla Philosophiae (Oxford, 1599), p. 9: "since the human mind often errs in making abstractions, sects spring up, in human as in divine philosophy."

intellectus."[84] The theological idea of veritas rei preserved the status of truth as an epistemological ideal; Herbert sacrificed this, by abandoning the mind-of-God argument, while insisting on a theory of truth in which "veritas rei" appeared. He thus ran into irresolvable problems in his definition.[85] His seven initial Propositions on the nature of truth fit clumsily with the four Kinds that he posits: veritas rei, veritas apparentiae, veritas conceptus, and veritas intellectus.[86] So propositions 1, 2, and 3, "Est Veritas", "Haec Veritas est coaeterna, seu coaeva rebus", "Haec veritas est ubique",[87] belong to veritas rei, though this is not made explicit until proposition 4, "Haec veritas est in se manifesta", which attaches itself to veritas apparentiae (to which proposition 5, "Tot sunt veritates, quot sunt rerum differentiae", is also attached);[88]

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[84] PP 16, 1 = IV 78-9: "the equalizing of the thing and the mind". This is rejected on 1645, p. 5 = Carré, p. 79.

[85] It is possible that Herbert was encouraged in this by a book he owned and marked: Celsus Manzinius, De Cognitione Hominis, quae lumine naturali haberi potest (Venice, 1587) (FK, p. 89), who begins with a discussion of truth: "rei veritas, est ipsiusmet rei esse, & iccircò eo modo quo res se habet ad esse, ita etiam se habet ad veritatem: esse verò rei est ipsamet causa. hinc consentaneè sequitur ut rei causa sit rei veritas." (p. 6: Herbert's underlining). Manzinius is perhaps thinking of the Scotist extension of St. Thomas's account, whereby truth is relative not only "ad ens intelligens", but also "ad ens producens": see M.F. Garcia, Index Theologicum (Karachi, 1910), (pp. 716-18). But his book is entirely based on the notions of cause and effect, and how one should try pass between the two: he has nothing more about "truth", as a definition (and no more underlinings by Herbert).

[86] Herbert's fourfold definition may derive from the scholastic idea that the distance between object and human intellect is bridged by "species", the sensible aspect of the thing, by which the mind conceives the "concept" of it, which is then grasped by the intellect. (See (e.g.) E. Gilson, The Christian Philosophy of St. Thomas Aquinas tr. L.K. Shook (London, 1957), chapter VII.) The connexion between propositions and categories of truth is made more explicit in De Causis Errorum, pp. 1-60.

[87] 1645, p. 8 = Carré, p. 83: "There is truth", "This truth is as eternal or as ancient as things themselves", "This truth is everywhere".

[88] 1645, pp. 8, 9 = Carré, pp. 84, 85: "This truth reveals itself"; "There are as many truths as there are differences of things".

veritas conceptus is given one proposition, no. 6: "Differentiae rerum a potentiis, sive facultatibus nobis insitis innotescunt"; and the gnomic proposition 7, "Est veritas quaedam harum veritatum", is made to apply to veritas intellectus - in one of Herbert's two conflicting definitions of it (see below).[89]

This has a rather arbitrary appearance (why should 2 and 5, for example, be assigned to different categories?). When he turns to "conditions" for the four kinds of truth, the source of the problem becomes clearer: the so-called veritas rei, or veritas objecti, is ambiguous. Most of the time, it is in fact a relative term masquerading as an absolute. For the "truth of thing", to Herbert, lies in the distance, size, etc., of a thing in relation to a human observer; and there can be no real difference between this kind of truth and veritas apparentiae. But De Veritate offers also another, quite different idea of veritas rei, which has nothing to do with appearance:

> inhaerens illa conformitas rei cum seipsâ[90]

According to this version, "truth of thing" is not relative. Gassendi recognized what had happened:

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[89] 1645, pp. 10, 11 = Carré, pp. 86, 87: "The differences of things are recognised in virtue of our innate powers or faculties"; "There is a truth of all these truths".

[90] 1645, p. 12 = Carré, p. 88: "the truth of thing is the inherent conformity of the thing with itself". In Carré's version, the word "with" seems to have fallen out.

It is not clear how far Herbert was aware of this problem. The first condition for veritas rei, which sums up the others, was first added in the 1623 MS: it spells out the limitations of veritas rei, conceived as a relative term, in its first sentence: "Quod reverâ existit, non statim verum esse objectum satis constat" (1645, p.13 = Carré, p. 90). So perhaps he felt some unease quite early on; since he made no further alteration, however, it cannot have worried him much.

> Non etiam satis capio quamobrem omnem Veritatem, Veritate Rei exceptâ, conditionalem esse dicas, ac deinde tamen ipsi rei veritati conditiones suas non minus assignes, quam aliis . . .[91]

Veritas intellectus is another site for confusion. Herbert's treatment of the first three truths is prescriptive: they require suitable distances, lengths of time, undamaged sense organs. Thus they are all conditional. But it is not clear whether "truth of intellect" is conditional or not. On its first appearance, it is called the sum of the other truths, the "veritas veritatum". But on its second, the question is complicated:

> ad Veritatem Intellectus accedimus. Qui certè divinum quiddam cùm sit, externis rerum non indigens ministeriis, suis gaudet veritatibus.[92]

These "peculiar" truths are only occasioned, not provided, by sense-objects: they are the innate "Common Notions" of which so much is to be made. The ambiguity resulting is the equivalent to that incorporated in his notion of veritas rei: this is an absolute notion of "truth", coexisting with a conditional one.[93]

Herbert starts from the vocabulary of the Schools; but he is attacking a different kind of problem. He is aiming to give not only a definition of truth, but a vindication of its possibility. The challenge is not, it seems, just that we do not know anything, but that there is nothing to be known. Hence the first proposition, of which the meaning is much less clear than the urgency that Herbert attaches to it: "Est Veritas". His confusion over veritas rei indicates that he is

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[91] Opera (Paris, 1658), III 412a: "I do not quite understand why you say that all truth is conditional except for truth of thing, when you then assign conditions to truth of thing just as much as the others . . ."

[92] 1645, p. 27 = Carré, pp. 104-5: "I pass now to intellectual truth. It is clear that since there is something divine in it, it does not stand in need of outside aid, but rejoices in truths peculiar to itself." Carré substitutes "spiritual" for "divine"; I have reverted to the original.

[93] Rossi discusses the two incompatible pictures of veritas intellectus, I 329-33.

concerned with something beyond truth: he wants to prove the possibility of certainty. As Gassendi saw,

> praestat quidpiam attexere de scopo libri praecipuo, qui sanè alius esse non potest, quàm ut Veritas rerum innotescat. Totus quippe in eo labor . . .[94]

To that end, he marshals an incoherent assortment of ideas, from the Schools, the Neoplatonists, and elsewhere. A whole world-picture opens up in support.[95]

By starting with the definition, Herbert exposed the incoherence of his enquiry. Other writers, such as his friend Mersenne, took the definition for granted, as they concentrated on the means of knowledge and certainty. Herbert in fact accepts, like Mersenne, that we do not have perfect knowledge, and he reverts repeatedly to the recognition that truth is a relation, a conditional concept; but he has a natural tendency to think of "truth" as an independent thing, something about which general statements of existence might be made.[96]

Man can assert truth; Herbert does not think of referring to the divine intellect for guarantee. The result is incoherence, in the old terms he chooses to employ; but the intention detectable behind the details is new and surprising. Herbert's universe derives from God, and

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[94] III 412b: "the main purpose of the work . . can surely be nothing but discovering the Truth of things. Indeed, the whole effort is directed to that end . . ." Gassendi, of course, rejected this undertaking from the start: "Caeterùm quae mea hebetudo est; caligo semper, ac stupidus, rudisque perinde remaneo, quoties naturam, veritatemve rei minimae vestigare [sic] tento."

[95] Carlini, p. 288, offers a contrast between De Veritate and Augustine's De Vera Religione: here also "la Verità è il principio; ma . . è dio stesso, di cui le idee costituiscono il sistema delle verità supreme . . ."

[96] See especially the table at the end of his chapter on discursus, in which the 10 "Zetetica", designed to find out the truth of any proposition, are finally applied to Truth itself, giving its whereabouts, purpose, etc.

is directed by the divine Providence, as does and is De Veritate;[97] but the approach he sets out is independent, secular. Herbert's attitude to the Truth was very different from that of John Case, whose analysis (quoted above) continues as a stern warning:

> Malè . . intellectis medijs, (quae sunt res & verba, sint illa verba scripta vel voce prolata) finis non acqueritur, id est possessio veritatis. Monendi ergo hîc sunt iuvenes studiosi philosophiae, ut meliori iudicio maiorum acquiescant, suisq; ingenijs nimium non confidant.[98]

Herbert, as we saw, believed that almost no one retained his intellectual independence: a fact that he deplored.[99] He himself, "casting his books aside", turned finally to his own inner "truths", and set about putting them in order.[100]

Popkin finds De Veritate an inadequate response to scepticism; Rossi found it patchy and inconsistent. Both problems derive from a radical conflict in Herbert's allegiance: he uses and relies on the Schools, but he distorts their doctrines; he is committed to certainty and unity, but also to independent thought.

The work is a bold one. The passage quoted above invites comparison with the beginning of the Discours de la Méthode (1637), in which Descartes describes the progress of his

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[97] Herbert regularly calls both a product of "Nature and Grace" - the second defined by him in his introductory Glossary as "Providentia divina particularis": see e.g. 1645, p. 3 = Carré, p. 78.

[98] Ancilla Philosophiae, p. 9: "If the means are . . not well understood (the means being things and words, whether written or projected orally), the end is not achieved, that is, the possession of truth. Young students of philosophy should thus be warned at this point that they should agree with the better judgment of their elders, and not put too much faith in their own intelligence."

[99] See the very beginning, quoted under "Origins".

[100] 1645, p. 3 = Carré, p. 78. Carré over-interprets the Latin: "Veritates nostras . . in ordinem digessimus" is not a claim to "construct" our own truths.

emancipation from the teaching he received: he labours to maintain that his endeavour was private, that he does not recommend it to the majority, and that all public revolutions are disastrous. Herbert confidently includes mankind in his reforms. As in the case of Descartes, this can seem ironic: while it is the exploration of the private self that makes the Discours revolutionary, Herbert's claims of independence sometimes accompany doctrines that look very familiar. Even the "zetetica", the Ten Questions, apparently such an obvious capitulation to the Aristotelian categories and their descendants, are presented as a manifesto of liberty for the layman in philosophy:

> Usus denique Quaestionum nostrarum est, ut earum ope homo quicunque sive doctus, sive indoctus, sive Graecus, sive Barbarus, ex puris naturalibus & experientiâ doctrinam certissimam conficere possit . . . absque ullius praeceptoris adminiculo[101]

What unites the work is its powerful sense of optimism and confidence, both in man and in a benign, reasonable God. Doubt does exist in his system; but it is not granted the status of problem. Truth, whatever its precise definition, is a battle-cry at once of assurance, and of freedom.

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[101] 1645, p. 201 = Carré, p. 282: "Finally, the value of my questions lies in the fact that with their help any man, whether learned or ignorant, whether Greek or barbarian, by the light of his unaided powers and his experience, can achieve certainty . . . without the guidance of any instructor."

Knowledge and Freedom

Granted that "there is truth", how do we come to know it? Herbert's equipment for enquiry looks traditional: we know by means of "faculties" or "powers".[102] This is an idea with a long history. According to the Aristotelian tradition, as mediated through the Arabian commentators, the human soul, which is rational, includes in itself lesser kinds, a "sensitive" and a "vegetative" soul: all have their own powers, more or less clearly defined.[103]

Herbert's system is peculiar. He does not usually distinguish different phases of the soul (although the sensitive soul is invoked once, rather vaguely, in the search for a locus for sin);[104] but he does give it a range of powers or faculties, grouped together into four categories: Natural Instinct, which we share with all created things, and which corresponds to the powers commonly attributed to the vegetative soul; Internal Senses; External Senses; and Discursus, discursive thought, which is unique to man.

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[102] 1645, p. 4 = Carré, p. 78. The formulation he uses is discussed below. He uses both words, "facultas" and "potentia"; "facultas" is his regular term.

2 The "vegetative soul" has powers of nutrition, growth, and generation (all unconscious powers); to the "sensitive soul" belong five external senses, and four or five internal: the "common sense"; fantasy, and/or imagination; the "estimative" power (providing instinctive responses); and the memory. It also has faculties of motion and emotion. The powers of will and judgment belong to the higher, rational soul. The original, initiating discussion is Aristotle's De Anima II 3 = 414b; by the end of the sixteenth century, there was considerable variation on this scheme.

[104] 1645, p. 99 = Carré, p. 179.

He then proceeds to discuss these, in this order; but the scheme is much less clear than that might suggest, as nothing in De Veritate is quite, or only, what it first seems. Although the discussion begins with "Natural Instinct", it might be more helpful to start instead with some of the odder features of the total system.

The most obviously peculiar part of Herbert's psychology is the extravagant claim he makes about the faculties as a whole. Although there are four "classes",

> Tot sunt facultates, quot sunt rerum differentiae, & vice versa.[105]

He guards against possible excess:

> Maximè interea cavendum, ne quae saepè explorata habuisti, tanquam nova ducas.[106]

- not everything which seems unique is so, and thus there are fewer "differences of things" than some people suppose: a plant that blooms annually requires of its observer only one faculty to perceive each year's different flowers. But, carefully applied, the statement stands. It was universally disliked at the time. The most obvious objection was well put by Mersenne:

> Tantum facultatum quantum rerum numerum non probari satis efficaciter, quia sit eadem intellectus facultas tam latitudinem quam profunditatem atque Longitudinem ad Geometriam spectantes contempletur quia et oculus eadem vi tam nigredinem quam albedinem metitur et intuitur.[107]

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[105] 1645, p. 30 = Carré, p. 108: "There are as many faculties as there are differences of things and vice versa."

[106] 1645, pp. 31-2 = Carré, pp. 109-10: "You must take the greatest care not to assume as new what has been often experienced".

[107] "That the number of faculties is equal to the number of things is not sufficiently proved, since it is the same faculty, intellect, that considers latitude no less than depth and longitude (as regarding geometry), and since the eye measures and sees both blackness and whiteness by the same power". By way of reply, Herbert simply sent him back to De Veritate: "Consule si placet totum Caput à pag. 30 ad 36 ubi quo sensu tam facultates quam res . . . capiantur . . ." It was also one of the objections of Hübner, and Molina's anonymous friend.

Herbert, however, was adamant. He added passages insisting on it in the edition of 1633, and De Causis Errorum sets out another, long defence of it.[108]

Herbert's theory represented a change from the old scholastic psychology; but it was a change in the opposite direction to that taken by the rest of the intellectual world. Although he seems to purge some old ingredients (the only one of the traditional "internal senses" that he discusses at all is memory), his new additions must have seemed not only bizarre, but archaic. The "faculties" were falling out of fashion; multiplication of them to infinity was hardly likely to appeal. Descartes' response was more profound than that of the other critics: using a favourite image, he objected:

> [ceci] ie ne puis entendre autrement que come si, a cause que la cire peut recevoir une infinité de figures, on disoit qu'elle a en soy une infinité de figures, on disoit qu'elle a en soy une infinité de facultez pour les recevoir . . . ie ne voy point qu'on puisse tirer aucune utilité de cete facon de parler, & il me semble putost qu'elle peut nuire en donnant suiet aux ignorans d'imaginer autant de diverses petites entitez en nostre ame. C'est pourquoy i'ayme mieux concevoir que la cire, par sa seule flexibilité, reçoit toutes sortes de figures, & que l'ame acquert toutes ses connoissances par la reflexion qu'elle fait . . .[109]

But Herbert would not be moved from the theory; and he had his reasons.

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[108] 1645, pp. 35, 77 = Carré, pp. 113, 157; DCE, pp. 110 ff. The first example is given below.

[109] AT II 598 = Kenny, p. 66: "This seems to me like saying that because wax can take an infinite number of shapes, it has an infinite number of faculties for taking them . . . such a mode of speech seems to me quite useless, and indeed rather dangerous, since it may give occasion to ignorant people to imagine so many little entities in our soul. So I prefer to think that wax, simply by its flexibility, takes on all sorts of shapes, and that the soul acquires all its information by the reflexion which it makes." See K. Park, "The Organic Soul" in C.B. Schmitt et al (eds.), The Cambridge History of Renaissance Philosophy (Cambridge, 1988), pp. 464-85, especially p. 480.

The need for so many faculties was in fact implicit in his first formulation of the quest. To find truth, for Herbert, is to use the faculties in a particular way: we must bring the right "faculty" into "conformity" with its object.[110] This is different from the scholastic picture. The faculties are traditionally supposed to be a means in the soul, to action, perception, or some other function;[111] but their status as verbal nouns is here considerably qualified by the idea that they transmit information by "corresponding" to items in the world outside - so qualified that they appear to be dependent on another verb (bring). If the faculties themselves do not operate by contact of some kind with objects, but only by alignment in parallel with them, then we can see why Herbert requires so many: the verbal noun has become a noun proper, and a one-to-one relation between faculty and object results.[112]

Herbert, in fact, was trying to combine two radically different approaches to the problem of knowledge: to use a spatial terminology, he proposes a "vertical" theory, according to which we have powers that are our channels of communication with the outside world; and a "horizontal" theory, by which we "correspond" with it. The metaphysical bases of these two theories are different: the second, and not the first, assumes an idea of unity between man and the world. The combination enabled him to stress either one of two very different ideas.

1 The first is "analogy".The chapter on the Internal Senses, he presents a full picture:

> Mens nostra Deo, Corpus mundo insigniter respondent, & omnium in mundo differentiarum rationes aliquae in homine describuntur;

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[110] Carré, p. 78 = 1645, p. 4.

[111] For Aquinas on the action of the "powers of the soul", see especially PP 78, 1.

[112] For a learned and complex account of this, see Rossi, I 366.

This is one origin of the theory of corresponding faculties:

> undè propositio nostra, Quot sunt rerum . . . tot sunt facultatum differentiae, insurget. . . In Humores igitur, sive Elementa Microcosmi totam rerum seriem transplantari volumus . . .[113]

The idea of man as the link-point of the universe, combining earthly and divine, is scholastic, but acquires much greater prominence in the work of the Renaissance Neoplatonists, who made much of the ancient idea of analogy between microcosm and macrocosm.[114] Gassendi, Mersenne, and Descartes made no reference to this part of Herbert's philosophy: it was not an interest that any of them shared. But it was presumably one of the book's high points for Fortunio Liceti, who became his friend and admirer, and dedicated to him (with enthusiastic praise of De Veritate) his quaint work De Mundi et Hominis Analogia (1635). This consists of fifty-nine chapters comparing the two in a wearying abundance of ways: as deriving from God, as illustrating Aristotle's four causes, etc. Herbert was never inspired to these lengths; but De Veritate gives the idea an important place. As he explains (see first passage above), one cause of the multiple-faculties theory is this idea of cosmic analogy. The language used to express that theory reveals this: our knowledge is a matter of cor-respondence, con-formity, sym-pathy.

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[113] 1645, p. 89 = Carré, p. 169: "our mind clearly corresponds to God and our body to the world, and principles of all the differences in the world are inscribed in man. From this follows my proposition that the number of differences in the faculties corresponds to the number of differences in things . . . I hold, then, that the entire order of things is represented in the humours or elements of the microcosm".

[114] Bedford is especially good on the similarities between Ficino and Herbert - see in particular pp. 113-15, on the Theologia Platonica and DV. Schmitt, John Case, p. 167, stresses the interest among sixteenth-century Aristotelians in Neoplatonic thought on love. The concept of man as "microcosm" is found in Aristotle (Physics VIII 2); but the doctrine was much more important to the Neoplatonists.

There is a parallel between the objects of our knowledge and ourselves.[115] But this notion of correspondence, though related to a Neoplatonic idea, is developed in a peculiar way by Herbert: the theory of multiple faculties is new. It was this theory that enabled him to be so particularly precise and certain: there is one faculty for every phenomenon. It helped him, for example, in his fastidious preoccupation with time:

> neq; illam parvi ducas, suo ut stare feceris ordine. Quandoquidem verò quaedam facultates circa praesentia, quaedam circa praeterita, quaedam etiam circa futura versantur, omninò disquirendum est quaenam harum conformantur. Evenit enim, ut si praeterita pro praesentibus, vel futuris, vel vice versâ, in alterna harum complicatione accipias, totae ut turbentur et è loco moveantur Facultates. . .[116]

This appears to be a greatly strengthened form of an idea inherent in the system of cosmic hierarchy: that man has an appointed place. By restricting the rôle of the individual faculties in this way, Herbert secures his knowledge, reduces the possibility of error (significantly, a metaphor from "wandering": losing one's place).

2 The other great attraction was different. A theory of corresponding faculties is a theory of correspondence; but it is also a theory of faculties. We have as many faculties as we have

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[115] This "vision of concord", informs the heart of Bedford's discussion. Bedford puts Herbert into a tradition of Hermetic Platonism: an important location, but not the only one.

[116] 1645, p. 51 = Carré, p. 129: "we must not think it unimportant to classify . . correctly. Under the category of time some faculties are concerned with the present, some the past, and others with the future. We must carefully enquire which of these have been brought into conformity. For the whole series of faculties is thrown into disorder and [they] lose their proper positions when we take those which refer to the past as though they referred to the present or future, and vice versa." Herbert wrote two poems on watches and sundials, one in English, one in Latin (Smith, pp. 1; 89). DV also distinguishes a special faculty for the instant, the "momentum temporis" (1645, p.192 = Carré, p. 273: "Quae igitur circa motum versatur Facultas, nimis haeret, ita ut totum effluxerit necesse est, ex quo indicatur instans.")

things on which to use them, and Herbert delights in their ready availability; they do not, however, function automatically. We are responsible for recognizing the proper conditions for their use. This becomes an exhortation to free thought:

> nisi ultra facultates sapere lubeat, quas si Sensu Interno edocti plurimas fecimus, non opus est ut Auctores moremur, Sensus ipsos in testimonium ubique adducentes.[117]

Indeed, the proper use of the faculties is a test to be used on the "authorities":

> Quod igitur heic docemus, est, ne sapiamus ultra facultates; sed ut id semper in lectione auctorum occurrat, Ex qua facultate probant, suas quas adducunt sententias.[118]

Thus the new theory of corresponding faculties contrives to promote both certainty and independence: certain knowledge, against the orthodoxies.

Both aims are sharply illustrated by the most famous part of his epistemological-psychological system: the famous Common Notions, his "innate practical principles", as Locke called them,[119] inextricably connected with Natural Instinct, and carrying with them the means of man's salvation.

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[117] 1645, p. 103 = Carré, p. 183: "Unless we desire knowledge beyond the range of our faculties, which under the guidance of inner consciousness we find to be numerous, it is unnecessary to waste time with the authorities, because at every point we can appeal for proof to these experiences themselves."

[118] 1645, p. 6 = Carré, p. 81: "we should not seek for knowledge beyond our faculties. But in reading the authorities we should always notice the faculty which they employ to prove their views." See also 1645, pp. 17, 26, 103 = Carré, pp. 94, 103, 183.

[119] P.H. Nidditch (ed.), An Essay Concerning Human Understanding (Oxford, 1979), I iii. For more on Herbert and Locke, see "Freedom and Reason".

Noam Chomsky calls Herbert's Common Notions "Perhaps the earliest exposition of what was to become a major theme, throughout most of this [sc. the seventeenth] century" (Cartesian Linguistics (NY and London, 1966), p. 60).

To revert to the question posed at the beginning of this section: how do we come to know? According to the Aristotelian tradition, which insisted on the essential nature of man as union of body and soul, we have only one source for knowledge: "there is nothing in the intellect that was not in the senses."[120]

This conception of human knowledge, as derived a posteriori, dominated in the Middle Ages, thanks in large part to the championship of Aquinas. But it never entirely drove out its rival: the Platonic conception, favoured by St. Augustine, by which the senses serve only as a means of reminding the soul of its own innate knowledge.[121] And this theory had a burst of popularity in the early seventeenth century - partly, no doubt, as a defence against the resurgence of scepticism. As an assurance of certainty, this kind of knowledge had more force than the other: it amounted to an insistence that we do have knowledge, and thus that the sceptic is being deliberately perverse.

Herbert made use of this defence. He included knowledge a priori in his complex account of man's capacity. We have not only "faculties" which enable us to discern the truth: we also have "Common Notions" - inner truths, not deriving from sense experience.[122] Herbert firmly rejects the scholastic picture of the mind as a "tabula rasa", a clean slate - for him, the

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[120] On the history of this famous scholastic tag, see P.F. Cranefield, "On the origins of the phrase 'nil est in intellectu quod non prius fuerit in sensu'" JHist.Med 25 (1970), 77-80.

[121] See in particular E. Gilson, Le Rôle de la Pensée Médiévale, pp. 27 ff.

[122] As was argued above, the infinite number of his faculties puts them half-way to being items in the mind anyway; the clash I shall suggest between Natural Instinct and Common Notions is an extension of the paradox of corresponding faculties.

Common Notions are the basis of our knowledge.[123] This terminology is used against the threat of scepticism, and it is used in two ways. Since the Notions are supposed to be "common" to us all, Herbert claims that the basis for the whole system is "universal consent":

> Summa igitur veritatis norma, erit Consensus Universalis.[124]

But the reader is not to be bullied into agreement:

> Neque grave ducas istas ex auctorum sententiis eruere . . . propositionem illam cui sensus internus respondet, in suam ultimam Notitiam Communem, & Facultatem denique conformantem resolve, & illud tanquam primum apud te habe.[125]

In this way Herbert tries to forestall the objection that universal consent is something separate from Common Notions.[126] Universal consent has, in the history of philosophy, been a favourite

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[123] Aquinas uses the phrase in PP 79, 2; 84, 3; etc. Herbert rejects it: 1645, pp. 54, 113 = Carré, pp. 132, 193. It originates with Aristotle: De Anima III 4 = 430a1.

[124] 1645, p. 39 = Carré, p. 117: "Universal consent . . will be found to be the final test of truth." See Rossi I 410 ff. - this is a Stoic criterion of truth, not an Aristotelian or Platonic one. For the Stoics, it has a metaphysical basis in the notion of the Logos, the rational soul of the universe, in which all men share (see the helpful discussion by D.J. Scott, "Innatism and the Stoa", PCPS ns 34 (1988), esp. p. 147).

[125] 1645, p. 62 = Carré, p. 142: "You need not labour to extract these notions from the views of the authorities . . . refer whatever assertion is recognized by your inner sense to its fundamental Common Notion and then to its conforming faculty and adopt it as a first principle." Carré uses the third person; I have reverted to the second.

[126] Descartes made the objection anyway: "[Herbert] prend pour regle de ses veritez le consentement universel; pour moy, ie n'ay pour regle des mienes que la lumiere naturelle, ce qui convient bien en quelque chose: car tous les hommes ayant une mesme lumiere naturelle, ils semblent devoir tous avoir les mesmes notions; mais il est tres different, en ce qu'il n'y a presque personne qui se serve bien de cete lumiere" (AT II 597-8 = Kenny, p. 66). It is not clear, however, that Descartes could really afford such an attack. The Second Objectors to the Meditations argued that some people do not in fact have an idea of God; faced with this challenge, Descartes was forced to half-deny it - in terms very like Herbert's: men think they do not have the idea, because they have muddled it (AT VII 138 = Cottingham, II 99: cp. 1645, p. 214 = Carré, p. 295). The characteristic difference is that Herbert naturally thinks of "atheism" as the result of external influence, not personal inadequacy.

answer to relativists and sceptics; in Herbert's hands, it becomes something else too - a manifesto of independence.

Common Notions

The Common Notions, those "treasures" of knowledge, are introduced with a historical pedigree:

> Communes Notitiae (veteribus κοιναὶ ἔννοιαι) fuerunt principia illa sacrosancta contra quae disputare nefas[127]

Herbert has an "occasionalist" picture of them: they need to be provoked by objects, but they do not derive from them.[128] De Veritate is "punctuated", as Bedford says, with exalted praise of them.[129] And yet they remain something of a blur.

One basic question is left unanswered: are they actually in the mind, as items of knowledge, or are they only potentially there? The distinction between these tapers to a fine point; and the question is asked regularly not only of Herbert, but of others who favour "innatist" doctrines. The Stoa itself expounded the idea of tabula rasa, the blank mind, as well

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[127] 1645, p. 47 = Carré, p. 125: "Common Notions, the κοιναὶ ἔννοιαι of the ancients, were sacred principles which could not be lawfully disputed". The phrase κοιναὶ ἔννοιαι is used by Plutarch in his attack on the doctrine (Moralia 1058e-86); he treats it as a Stoic doctrine. Herbert would also have known the discussion of the idea in Book I of Cicero's De Natura Deorum. Although he thus identifies the Notions as Stoic, Herbert attaches to them a charisma which suggests that the real influence behind them is Platonic: real knowledge in that system, unlike the Stoic, belongs to another world (his idea that they are "confused" in us also sounds Platonic). By the time of Cicero, however, the two schools were somewhat mixed: see F.H. Sandbach, "Ennoia and Prolepsis", in A.A. Long (ed.), Problems in Stoicism (London, 1971).

[128] Carré, pp. 120, 132 = 1645, pp. 42, 54.

[129] p. 75.

as "common notions"; critics disagree on the degree of articulation these notions were supposed to have.[130] Bedford exploits the ambiguity to defend Herbert against Locke:

> It was not ideas as such that Herbert claimed to be innate (and this may explain in part the very few instances Herbert himself is able to give of innate ideas), but modes of thought, the very processes of the mind.[131]

And yet Herbert seems very anxious to secure the advantages of the first claim: certainty; immediacy. In a very confused account, he defines three "orders" of Common Notions: something seems to go wrong with them (it is hard to see in what sense his second-class specimens are Common Notions at all); but the basic point is clear enough:

> Inter Communes . . . illae primum obtinent locum, quae ex omni objecto nulla interposita mora, conformantur. Quae enim segniùs deprehendimus, non sine discursus ministerio perficiuntur.[132]

The "first order" of Common Notions is given six distinguishing characteristics: priority; independence of any other principle; universality (apart from "imbeciles and sceptics"); certainty;

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[130] Like the Epicureans, the Stoics made knowledge originally dependent on sense-perception; but this knowledge builds up over time to produce concepts which provide a basis for judging later impressions. (See on this M. Frede, "Stoics and Skeptics on Clear and Distinct Impressions" in M.F. Burnyeat (ed.), The Skeptical Tradition (Berkeley, etc., 1983).)

[131] Bedford, p. 78; see also p. 163. This is the distinction between "strong" and "weak" innatism, which J.H. Yolton tries (with some difficulty) to maintain in John Locke and the Way of Ideas (Oxford, 1956). In fact Herbert gives quite a large number of examples - but their heterogeneity confirms that there is a problem: Religion is a Common Notion, as are all the ingredients of religion on which everyone agrees (1645, p. 43 = Carré, p. 121); mind and body are both Common Notions; so are the maxims that you should do as you would be done by, and that things that affect us in the same way are "quo ad nos" the same (1645, pp. 88; 54; 52 = Carré, pp. 168; 133; 130). At one point he asserts that everything that affects anyone is a Common Notion (1645, p. 108 = Carré, p. 188).

[132] 1645, p. 48 = Carré, p. 127: "The first place . . among Common Notions is held by those which are directly brought into conformity with every kind of object. Those which we grasp less immediately are attained only with the aid of discursive thought." See also 1645, pp. 58, 60 = Carré, pp. 137, 139.

necessity; immediacy.[133] All of these are designed to convey definiteness, security: Herbert is anxious to differentiate the Notions from the vagaries of discursus. It is true that we are responsible for setting them in order; but they are their own ultimate test:

> Notitias interea Communes . . . eruere, & suam in eutaxiam componere, etiam labore improbo, (tanquam operae pretium) non semel consulimus. Nihil enim illis ritè dispositis pulchrius vel cogitari potest; si quae interea maneant dubia, Notitiae Communes in subsidium compellandae sunt, ut quae solae ista enodare queant.[134]

This seems to suppose a much more positive, settled idea than the "processes of the mind": the Notions are items. As such they are attached (with a characteristic complication) to a process - a faculty.[135] Herbert designates one that guarantees certainty and disables hesitation: "natural instinct", the most basic means of apprehension, shared with all created things, anticipating ordinary human intellection. Like "analogy", this notion emphasizes the relationship between man and the rest of creation - although the terms used exaggerate the idea, and make it peculiar.[136]

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[133] 1645, 60-61 = Carré, pp. 139-41.

[134] 1645, p. 55 = Carré, pp. 133-4: "I repeatedly beg the Reader, in spite of the persistent labour which it involves, to extract and arrange in systematic order all the Common Notions . . . it is a task worth the effort, for nothing fairer can be imagined than the harmonious array of the Common Notions. But where there is uncertainty, we must have recourse to the Common Notions themselves, for they alone can resolve it."

[135] Herbert has difficulty making the attachment - a difficulty expressed as a confusion of noun and verb: 1645, p. 44 = Carré, p. 122: "Quia desunt nomina (verbum enim instingo est obsoletum,) aliquando per Instinctum Naturalem innuimus facultatem conformantem, aliquando ipsam conformitatem in actum . . ."

[136] Thus the highest intellectual faculty is identical with the lowest. There is no space here for a full discussion of this idea: it must suffice to say that modern critics (with the notable exception of Rossi: I 401 f.) have usually been fairly happy with it, and adduced other examples, of varying convincingness (for a recent instance, see R.A. Greene, "Synderesis, the Spark of Conscience, in the English Renaissance" JHI 52 (1991), 195-220); Herbert's contemporaries were less happy. Mersenne urged Herbert for more explanation; Descartes, sometimes cited as

Its attraction for Herbert is easy to understand. Natural Instinct, being the most basic means of apprehension, the instinct of self-preservation, that which pervades creation, has a kind of security to it:

> adeò . . . necessaria, ut nec morte tolli videatur.[137]

It "forestalls" discursus.[138] However, Common Notions do not occur in any other form of life; and Herbert does not relinquish all idea of personal responsibility for them. He falters on the question whether - once provoked by objects - Common Notions are immediately apparent. A guarded, negative explanation is offered of man's rôle as orderer:

> Neque . . . communes dicimus Notitias istas, quia velint nolint in omni homine explicantur; sed ideò communes esse perhibemus, quia, nisi ipsi praecludamus viam, communes sunt.[139]

We must organize them in defending our independent judgment against the Schools:

> nullo ferè in argumento Auditores suis strophis non quodammodo emung[u]nt [Scholae], quod nunquam contingeret, si Notitiae Comunes suo retexerentur ordine . . . neq; ex

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a parallel, objected that Herbert was running together two quite different things, one elevated and one bestial (see AT II 599 = Kenny, p. 67). In the third Meditation, he was careful to distinguish two quite different meanings for the word (AT VII 38-9 = Cottingham II 26-7). Herbert also uses the phrase "vis plastica" (1645, pp. 88-9, 92 = Carré, pp. 169, 172) for his primitive sense of "natural instinct": this is discussed briefly in chapter VI, "Heroes in Heaven".

[137] 1645, p. 45 = Carré, p. 123: "it is so essential that even in death it cannot be destroyed."

[138] 1645, p. 60 = Carré, p. 139: "anticipat".

[139] 1645, p. 47 = Carré, p. 126: "I do not . . call these notions common because they are revealed in every man, whether he will or no; they are termed common because they would be so but for the fact that we ourselves block the path." I have restored the metaphor, concealed in Carré's "we ourselves prevent them entering our minds."

> aliquibus Notitiis Comunibus . . . nisi in suam compingantur seriem (pulcherrimum veritatis systema) insurgere [possunt].[140]

An ambiguity remains in the status of the Common Notions: how much individual effort do they require? Herbert wants his Common Notions to be certain, and he wants them not to interfere with man's freedom. Two distinct tendencies are apparent here, yoked rather uneasily under one heading. The Common Notions have a key rôle to play in the formation of Herbert's theology, as a demonstration of security and certainty, on a new, radical basis; but a tension remains. And this unresolved debate between innate knowledge and personal experience has further implications for his conception of man, and of human reason.

Freedom and Reason

Discursus

So far, this discussion has taken in only the affirmative parts of De Veritate. These are matched with negatives, expounded with equal energy. The most comprehensive of Herbert's bogeys is discursus, non-intuitive, non-immediate knowledge, the old Aristotelian model for ordinary human understanding, which he pits against the Common Notions.

Herbert's attacks on discursus, when he made them, were vehement:

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[140] 1645, p. 249 = Carré, p. 333 : "there is hardly any type of argument in which the Schools cannot throw dust in the eyes of their disciples . . . This would never occur if the Common Notions were arranged in order . . . the fair system of truth cannot spring from any Common Notions . . . unless they are arranged in due order."

> Mira licentia Discursus. Caetera animantia, si non necessarias, attamen immediatas & aequales ubiq; produnt actiones. Solus Homo ex quadam discurrente, & (cujus vicem doleas) satis frequenter titubante agitatus facultate . . . deprehenditur . . . Caespitat enim Discursus palans, & saepiùs posternitur . . . Proinde jure suo natalitio soli Legi Naturae obstrictus Homo, sub aliâ instituitur.[141]

Why was he so hostile? A good, if perhaps rather indirect, indication is provided by his most illustrious later critic, Locke, in his attack on innate ideas.

When, some time in 1671,[142] Locke took up De Veritate to see what it said about "innate principles", it was their qualities of "certainty", "necessity", etc., that struck him - and on the grounds of which he rejected the theological crown of Herbert's system: the five Common Notions of Religion. He attacks them on philosophical rather than theological grounds - not for content, but as means:

> Though I allow these to be clear Truths, and such as, if rightly explained, a rational Creature can hardly avoid giving his assent to: yet I think he is far from proving them innate Impressions in Foro interiori descriptae.
>
> (I iii 15)[143]

"Self-evidence" is suspect to Locke, as philosopher - self-evident maxims are not to be taken as the basis of knowledge (IV vii); reliance on such information is dangerous, since it "eased the lazy from the pains of search", so that they no longer use their reason (I iv 25; IV xix 8). And yet, at other times, a different note is heard:

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[141] 1645, pp. 152 = Carré, p. 233: "Discursive thought is undisciplined. All other creatures behave under the spur of necessity or at least uniformly and without deliberation. Man alone has the misfortune, through his tendency to discursive reflection, to be the frequent victim of indecision . . . Discursive thought wanders among by-paths, often stumbling in its tracks . . . Thus man, though bound by birthright only to the law of Nature, submits himself to a different code".

[142] For chronology of Locke's interest in Herbert, see R.I. Aaron and A. Gibbs (ed.), An Early Draft of the "Essay upon Human Understanding" (Oxford, 1936); and Locke's own account at Essay I iii 15.

[143] An Essay, p. 77.

> Some of the Ideas that are in the Mind, are so there, that they can be, by themselves, immediately compared, one with another: And in these, the Mind is able to perceive, that they agree or disagree, as clearly as that it has them. . . this . . I call Intuitive Knowledge . . . In the Discovery of, and Assent to these Truths, there is no Use of the discursive Faculty, no need of Reasoning, but they are known by a superior, and higher Degree of Evidence. And such, if I may guess at Things unknown, I am apt to think, the Angels have now, and the Spirits of just Men made perfect, shall have, in a future State, of thousands of things, which now, either wholly escape our Apprehensions, or which, our shortsighted Reason having got some faint Glimpse of, we, in the Dark, grope after. (IV xvii 14)[144]

It seems to have been just such an idea that gave discursus so unattractive an aspect to Herbert. Locke's thought here was traditional: for the scholastics, as for the Platonists, discursus was - of course - inferior to divine knowledge ("inferior", said St. Thomas, in Platonic terminology, "as movement is to stillness").[145] To this extent, Herbert is not unusual; and perhaps this explains the silence on the point of Descartes and Mersenne, as well as the unsurprising silence of Gassendi.[146] However, this did not make it contemptible per se, or a subject for ill-feeling - and it certainly did not put man at a disadvantage over lesser creatures.[147] Herbert here is unusual.

However, there is a complication in his response. He denounces discursus at length as unreliable and conditional, and not to be used in any situation in which Common Notions

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[144] p. 683.

[145] PP 79, 9: divine knowledge is instantaneous: angels understand "simpliciter et absque discursu." Discursus literally means "running about": it is knowledge that develops, and is thus essentially time-bound.

[146] Though the silence of Mersenne is more surprising, given the scholastic, non-a prioristic basis of his thought: cf. his defence of the syllogism against his "Septique": it is set out in parts because man, unlike the angels, cannot grasp everything at once (La Verité des Sciences, p. 196). The only one of the critics to object was Molina's friend (fo. 17): Herbert, uninspired as usual by criticism, replied simply that he had not intended to denigrate it entirely.

[147] Aquinas uses the word several times (though it is not very common - see below, note 159), never in derogatory terms (see eg. PP 14, 7; 58, 3, ad 1).

are available.[148] Thanks to this "faltering faculty", man, alone in Creation, is given to hesitation.[149] But that very fact is seen to be inseparably connected with free will:

> Proindè eandem latitudinem discursui ad errorem obtigisse, quae libero arbitrio ad malum, cogita Lector.[150]

Discursus, unlike Natural Instinct, is unique to man; and so is freedom.

Freedom and "Discursus"

Free will receives some of the highest praise of De Veritate.

> Superest Arbitrii libertas (unicum illud naturae miraculum) universas Facultates quas animae vendicamus, permeans . . . . ita & candidissimè rationem aliquam infinitatis suae in Arbitrii libertate impertivit . . . Quatenus igitur Homo liber est, infinitus est; neque enim quod liberum est, vel infinitum, ullum obtinet terminum.[151]

In Herbert's world-scheme, Natural Instinct and free will are placed at opposite ends:

> Est . . . Instinctus Naturalis & in homine & in animantibus reliquis prima Facultatum, Libertas arbitrii ultima . . Elementorum actiones sunt planè necessariae; paulò liberiores vegetabilium actiones deprehenduntur; in licentiam denique quandam bruta prorumpunt; sed hiis omnibus exolvitur homo . . . In arbitrii igitur libertatem tanquam in ultimam aliquam differentiam asserimur.[152]

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[148] See especially 1645, pp. 151 ff. = Carré, pp. 233 ff.

[149] 1645, p. 152 = Carré, p. 233: "titubante . . . facultate". Carré translates: "indecision".

[150] 1645, p. 154 = Carré, p. 235: "Observe, Reader, that discursive thought has as great a tendency to error as free will to sin".

[151] 1645, p. 82 = Carré, p. 162: "There remains free will, that unparalleled wonder of nature, which pervades all the faculties which I have claimed for the soul . . . [God] has most gloriously endowed us with an element of His infinity in free will. . . Man, then, is infinite in so far as he is free; for what is free or infinite has no limit." Carré has "fortunately" where I suggest "most gloriously".

[152] 1645, pp. 83-4 = Carré, pp. 163-4: "Natural Instinct is . . the first of the faculties both in man and in other creatures, while free will is the last. . . The activities of the elements are clearly determined; those of vegetables can be seen to be a little freer; animals emerge further into a greater liberty, but man is released from almost every constraint . . . In free will, then, we arrive at the final characteristic of man".

He recognizes a paradox here, of a traditional sort: you cannot choose not to seek happiness, though the means you choose may conflict with the divine will.[153]

There is a natural tension in any moral system committed to both personal responsibility and a benign, omnipotent deity. Still, there is something surprising in his praise:

> Qui nequam esse non potest, quomodo bonus fuerit? Necessariae actiones, nostrae non sunt. . . Quae spontaneae actiones, solummodò sunt nostrae. Gaude igitur te libertate in opposita donatum esse; & cùm te bonum pro virili praestas, mercedem à Bonitate illâ Supremâ pete, exige, habe; quo pacto revera sapies. Interea maximè cavendum est, ne ex peccato deformes imaginem illam Divinam, & quae contumeliam non patitur, à Beatudine illa aeternâ ablegeris.[154]

The freedom to go wrong is not one of free will's traditional benefits. Aquinas explains that there is a superior kind, enjoyed by angels, which is free from this side-effect:

> when an angel chooses, its choice does not follow on inquiry and deliberation, but on an immediate apprehension of the truth.[155]

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[153] 1645, p. 64 = Carré, pp. 143-4. This is common: Aquinas quotes Augustine and Aristotle, to give exactly Herbert's point: "sumus domini nostrorum actuum secundum quod possumus hoc vel illud eligere. Electio autem non est de fine sed de his quae sunt ad finem, ut dicitur in Ethic." (PP 82, 1 = XI 219).

[154] 1645, p. 84 = Carré, p. 164: "How could anyone be good who is incapable of wickedness? Determined actions are not our own actions at all. . . Only voluntary actions belong to us. Give thanks for the gift of freedom to resist, and if you prove yourself independent, you may seek, demand and obtain your reward from the supreme goodness. But be careful lest you mar the divine image through sin, and so deprive yourself of Eternal Blessedness, which does not suffer abuse." A few words have been altered; I have restored the 2nd person, from Carré's 3rd, and altered the last sentence: Carré takes ablegeris as a perfect active subjunctive, and quae as referring back to imago; I take it as a present passive subjunctive, and quae as referring forward to Beatitudo.

[155] PP 59, 4 = IX 178-9. Angels thus have free will "excellentius" than men. Herbert's point was used by Ralph Cudworth to argue that free will is "a thing which of necessity belongs to the idea or nature of an imperfect rational being" (J. Allen (ed.), A Treatise of Free Will (London, 1838), p. 63).

The non-discursive nature of angelic knowledge gives them an essentially different sort of free will.[156]

Herbert admits no such complications. In De Veritate, the power to err is presented as a sort of bonus - a splendid chance to "prove yourself independent". In one of the two philosophical poems on human life published with De Causis Errorum (1645), he announced that virtuous men are in fact superior to the angels just because of the greater difficulty of being virtuous men:

> Amplior unde simul redhibetur Gratia nobis
> Quam vel coelitibus, primum quos protulit aevum,
> Cùm status iis cunctis qui fit praeclarior, ortu
> Hunc habeant ipso, magna & vi Numinis, illis
> Quae dedit esse Deos; sed quae jam Gloria nobis,
> Parta ità fit virtute pia, proprióque labore,
> Ut facile heic Numen voto respondeat omni;[157]

He did not attempt to connect this with natural instinct: free will, as he saw, is compared to a very different kind of knowledge. Discursus never lost its negative sense for him; but his

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[156] There is quite a striking contrast between Herbert's descriptions of free will, and those of Descartes, who also held that it was infinite: "if I always saw clearly what was true and good, I should never have to deliberate . . . in that case, although I should be wholly free, it would be impossible for me ever to be in a state of indifference" (Meditations IV: AT VII 58 = Cottingham II 40).

[157] "De Vita Coelesti" (Smith, p. 104). "A larger grace will thence be given to us in return than to the heavenly ones [angels], born in the first age, since they have their position, which is more illustrious, by birth and the great might of the Deity, who allowed them to be gods; but the glory that we have is born of pious virtue, and our own hard work, so that the Deity is ready to respond to all our prayers." I have glossed "caelites" as angels, as no other suggestion is made: this poem is discussed at the end of chapter 6 below.

In the famous Oration on the Dignity of Man, Pico also praises man for his unfixed position in the world hierarchy. But Pico is interested in the power this freedom gives of rising to union with the Godhead; Herbert is praising it as a source of moral superiority.

vocabulary shifted. In the last edition of the work, we can see the word giving place to one larger and more suggestive: ratio.[158].

Words for Reason

For Aquinas, discursus, the less common word, was synonymous with ratio, the regular word for human reason - naturally enough, as this was supposed to be discursive.[159] Carré's translation assumes that they are synonymous for Herbert too, as discursus appears sometimes as "discursive thought", sometimes as "discursive reason", and sometimes simply as "reason".[160] But Herbert himself seems oddly unclear in his usage. There are very few occasions in De Veritate where ratio is given a pejorative sense: on all of them, it is identified with discursus explicitly or by context (the other word having been used immediately before); or else, in one case, it is distinguished as "something inferior":

> Iniquè . . . ab Archiatro factum, qui ut doctrinam illam sacram, quae supra rationem, convelleret, rationem (id est, aliquod inferius) ad eorum probationem quae sunt Instinctus Naturalis deposcebat.[161]

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[158] Herbert is never unambiguously in favour of discursus, and the relationship with free will remains a parallel, not a fusion: in the Latin Religio Laici, he remarks that "neque Voluntas Discursum, aut vice-versa per se adsequatur" (Hutcheson, p. 114). However, the "Voluntas" in question here is presented as equivalent to mental understanding, ratio; the word discursus appears nowhere else in Religio Laici.

[159] In R.J. Deferrari et al (eds.), A Lexicon to St. Thomas Aquinas (Baltimore, MD, 1948), the word is called "synonym of ratio and ratiocinatio, the opposite of cognitio sine discursu" (p. 319). The word seems quite rare - perhaps because it was felt to be no more than a synonym.

[160] Bedford (implicitly) supports him: "Herbert certainly identifies discursus with ratio" (p. 69).

[161] 1645, p. 62 = Carré, p. 141: "The master-physician . . erred when in order to destroy the sacred doctrine of Natural Instinct which governs reason he insisted on using reason, a lower kind of power, to prove those beliefs which belong by right to natural instinct." The "master-physician" is Galen: see Rossi, I 357 n.

or this:

> in animo habe proprium esse Instinctus Naturalis irrationaliter, hoc est sine discursu operari.[162]

or this:

> Notitiae Communes . . . supra rationem (id est discursum) credi postulant.[163]

Carré's translation assumes an identity, which Herbert's text leaves ambiguous: the phraseology works equally well to protect ratio, to define it further before the condemnation. There may be a superior kind of ratio which would not be condemned - a kind not identical with discursus. For, unlike discursus, ratio has a central and positive rôle in De Veritate. The "irrationales" are the cause of religious strife; ratio is not to be shaken off.[164]

But the word ratio also has some quite different possible meanings - of a kind that can complicate the whole question. Herbert's awareness of this comes out clearly in his idiosyncratic discussion of human nature (Carré, pp. 255 ff). Man is traditionally defined as an "animal rationale"; Herbert objects:

> utroque termino infirmabimus. . . Neque . . . semper est animal, in utero enim vitam degit vegetabilem . . . Neque denique semper est rationale, ἀλογίαν enim cum bestiis communem obtinet; inde indoles ovinae, avinae, lupinae, caninae; neque solus, (ut enim mittam bruta &c.) ipsa Elementa habent rationem propriae conservationis, ultra quod nihil sapit.[165]

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[162] 1645, p. 42 = Carré, p. 120: "it must be remembered that it is the nature of natural instinct to fulfil itself irrationally, that is to say without deliberation." Carré translates "foresight".

[163] 1645, p. 153 = Carré, p. 234: "Common Notions . . lead us beyond reason, in other words discursive thought."

[164] Carré, pp. 296; 72 = 1645, pp. 214; "Praefatio" (n.p.): "excutere". This same practice of qualifying "ratio" before condemning it obtains in the replies to Molina's friend.

[165] 1645, p. 174 = Carré, pp. 255-6: "I shall show that both terms of this definition are at fault . . [Man] is not always an animal, for in the womb he leads the life of a vegetable . . . Finally, man is not always rational, for his possesses irrationality in common with the beasts. Accordingly he has the properties of the sheep, the bird, the wolf, and the dog; nor

Ratio can mean not just "reason", but something like "rationale": the essential principle of a thing.[166] So Herbert finds himself saying both that man is not always rational, because he is also akin to the rest of creation; and that all of creation has ratio.[167] It is perhaps this very ambiguity that gave the word a privileged place in Herbert's ambiguous system - it seems to have a special harmony with Natural Instinct/Common Notions. The negative connotations of human deliberation - its uncertainty - seem to have been contained, for him, in the descriptive term "discursus"; thus ratio is kept clear for its principal function in the book: as the opposite, not to Common Notions, but to credulitas, blind faith.

In the passage, quoted above, in which ratio is rejected as the "ultimate difference of man", Herbert offers a new candidate: not free will or discursus, but religion - "religion and faith".[168] But that formulation is rather unsteady; for "faith", in De Veritate, is a difficult word. Herbert explains that there are two sorts, a good and a bad:

> Quae igitur circa praeterita versatur Facultas, (ut memoriam sive quidem reminiscentiam mittam) fide quadam tacitâ respondet, quam tamen ita à credulitate distinguimus, ut licet historiam olim conscriptam inter verisimilia relegemus, (ut quae à narrantis auctoritate pendeat) quaedam sacra tamen in Auctoribus occurrere posse, quibus nemo ferè adsensum negaverit, pro confesso habemus; quo pacto tanquam

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is he the only being which is rational, for, to say nothing of the animals, even the elements possess ratio appropriate to their own preservation, and could not function without it".

[166] See the Oxford Latin Dictionary sub ratio: 12.

[167] Molina's friend noted this, and objected: Herbert seemed to have said "et in homine collocatur irrationalitas, et in Elementis ponitur ratio" (p. 8). Herbert replied in his usual unsatisfactory manner: "Numquam dixi Hominem simpliciter esse Animal irrationale . . ."

It is instructive to compare Herbert's qualifications of the traditional definition with the objections of Descartes in the Recherche de la Verité: Descartes remarks that both terms are in fact in need of explanation: "Ex hac enim quaestione duae nascuntur aliae: nempe prima, quid sit animal, secunda, quid sit rationale" (AT X 516 = Cottingham, II 410). As he did with Herbert's account of truth, Descartes objects here to the form of the definition, which seems to restrict the possibility of real enquiry.

[168] 1645, p. 175 = Carré, p. 256.

> Instinctus Naturalis, vel saltem Gratiae opus genuinum, hujusmodi omne agnoscendum est.[169]

Thus Herbert tries to connect his "good" faith with his other good form of non-discursive knowledge: Natural Instinct, the part-time equivalent of Common Notions. But there is a lack of conviction in the attempt - and it is no surprise to find some further scrabbling round the edges of the sacred writings:

> ut varii fuerint Auctores, quos miro nexu inter se composuit saeculum istud posterius, quid tamen non ⌣ toto contextu, quid non tanquam sanctum, & à Deo profectum opus piè credi possit? . . Si quid tamen in sacrum quemvis, vel prophanum librum, ex incuriâ, vel quidem curâ temporum olim irrepsisse compertum fuerit, unde Deus Opt. Max. malè audiret, & attributa Divina ex consensu universali agnita convellerentur, si non emendandum codicem (quod novum non est) saltem interpretes incusandos, qui à mente Authorum & ipsa demum Analogia fidei discedentes, opiniones invexerunt Notitiis Communibus repugnantes, quidni arbitremur? Sed de hiis modestè & intra terminos . . .[170]

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[169] 1645, p. 192 = Carré, p. 273: "the faculty which is concerned with the past - I exclude memory and recollection - is expressed by a kind of silent faith. I distinguish this from belief [credulitas], so that while I class history as probable, since it depends upon the authority of the writer, I acknowledge that sacred things [Carré: "influences"] may appear in the authors, from which no one would withhold assent. Every instance of this kind must be acclaimed as genuinely due to natural instinct, or at least to Grace." The last phrase was added in 1645. Rossi pronounces on the distinction: "la distinzione viene a corrispondere esattamente alla distinzione fra rivelazione e verità, fra rivelazione e religione naturale" (Deismo, p. 83).

[170] 1645, pp. 233-4 = Carré, pp. 315-16: "The Bible may indeed be the work of a number of writers whose order has been settled in a remarkable way by a later age; yet why should we not humbly believe it to be inspired throughout, and accept it as a work sacred and issuing from God? . . . But if, by the neglect or indeed the diligence of time, there has crept into a sacred or profane book any passage which maligns God or calls in question those divine attributes which are universally recognised, why should we not agree either to amend the work - and this has been done before - or to charge its interpreters with error, in that they have departed from the writer's meaning and even from the analogy of faith, since they have stated views which conflict with Common Notions? But I speak with humility and caution on this subject". I have emended the translation slightly; the most important change affects the second sentence, where Carré's "if carelessness or the passage of time" loses the dry contrast Herbert intends: "ex incuriâ, vel quidem curâ".

Humility and caution are hardly the prime features of this startling (if serpentine) passage; dating as it does from the manuscript of 1619, it anticipates the great scriptural controversies of the century by some forty years.[171]

The problem with "faith", fides, in a system of religion is that it usually means belief in someone else's experience - acceptance of something of which one has no direct proof. Herbert retains the idea of "good" faith: sometimes he describes it as faith which coincides with his own system of beliefs; sometimes it is extra, and personal - but then it is not communicable:

> Si cui tamen aliquid ex Revelatione constiterit, quod fieri posse sive in vigiliis, sive in somno agnoscimus, in usum reponat; eâ lege, ut sibi sapiat, nisi publico aliquid permittatur bono. Neq; enim ad humanum genus spectare posse videtur quod Facultatum indicio communi non constat.[172]

Ratio is never opposed by Herbert to the good fides: the opposition could not arise, since he never imagines how they might clash; but it is regularly and increasingly opposed to the bad, and their opposition provides the backbone of all the later works on religion (which barely

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[171] The most recent edition of Popkin's book adds a chapter on Spinoza, whom he finds both "sceptic" and "antisceptic": a dogmatist whose views on religion which were one of the great scandals of the late seventeenth century. Spinoza was interested in English religious thought; it seems unknown whether or not he had read Herbert, but remarks such as the above on the scriptures come very close to some of the claims of the Tractatus Theologico-Politicus (1669/70). The differences between the two are too great for the similarity to be more than superficial; but the same, more complex label would suit Herbert too. (For a lucid comparison, see J. Lagrée, Le Salut du Laïc, pp. 108-16.)

[172] 1645, pp. 222-3 = Carré, pp. 303-4: "If . . anyone receives some truth by revelation, which I recognize can occur both in the waking state and in sleep, he must make use of it, on condition that unless he is entrusted with a message of interest to all, he should reserve it to himself. For it is not likely that what is not evident to the common judgement of the faculties, can have any bearing on the whole human race." I have altered the phraseology slightly to make it closer to the Latin (also, unfortunately, less elegant than Carré's). Richard Baxter saw the point: if revelation must be made "to oneself", "if an Angel from Heaven should appear to all men in the Town and Country save one, or if all save one saw a thousand miracles to confirm a Revelation, yet that one could not be sure of it" (More Reasons for the Christian Religion and No Reason Against it (London, 1672), pp. 139-40).

mention discursus).[173] From the first beginning, fideism had seemed to him despicable (the work begins, in all versions, with an attack on it).[174] The word discursus itself would not do as champion - not only because the Schools had made it a second-best form of knowledge, but also because Herbert himself had burdened it with the task of explaining how it is that not everyone does agree with the truths he found so obvious; however, the scholastic idea of it as distinctively human, and potentially subject to error, became more attractive. Over time, the dilemma resolved itself into a new vocabulary, as Herbert concentrated the force of his moral optimism against his second enemy - more dangerous, in his eyes, than the "imbeciles and sceptics".

Herbert's final stress on ratio might seem surprising, given his initial attack on discursus. But it becomes less surprising on reflection. His impatience with delay and uncertainty led him to favour any means of knowledge that would avoid them: hence, any other than discursus. But it is perhaps just because he did not clearly distinguish between the most basic vital force and the highest intellectual power - natural instinct and the common notions - that discursus, as the opposite of both, remained vital; and, as his second great desire, intellectual independence, came to predominate, the faculty of hesitation was vindicated as the faculty of freedom.

There is one further point to be made about Herbert's use of the word ratio.

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[173] Only once did he try to rank ratio, fides, and discursus against each other: in a very tortuous and restless passage of De Causis Errorum (pp. 54-60), he sets out an elaborate dance-pattern in which duets of ratio-internal senses, faith-internal senses, faith-discursus, etc., are all found deficient on their own, without the integration of everything else (though even here ratio and discursus are not compared). The MSS reveal what a hard time Herbert had with this passage; he never attempted it again.

[174] See the passage quoted in the section on "Origins".

In the two later editions of De Veritate, he adds the word with an adjective: either "common" reason or "right" reason, or on one occasion the two together:

> Plurima enim inter Authores jactata comperiet, quae haut videat quomodo vel illis constiterint unquam, aut ulli hominum (saltem ex rectâ communique ratione) satis constare possint.[175]

As used by St. Thomas, "right reason", recta ratio, is identified with prudence: unlike ordinary ratio, it is conceived as a moral, practical term, linking knowledge with virtue and piety:

> Manifestum est autem quod rectitudo rationis humanae comparatur ad rationem divinam sicut principium motivum inferius quod movetur ad superius, et refertur in ipsum; ratio enim aeterna est suprema regula omnis humanae rectitudinis. Et ideo prudentia, quae importat rationis rectitudinem, maxime perficitur et juvatur secundum quod regulatur et movetur a Spiritu Sancto;[176]

Robert Hoopes, in his study of it, defines its "Christian humanistic sense" as

> That faculty in man which directs his thought and his behavior.[177]

Knowledge and morality are brought into harmony; "right reason" is reason touched by grace.

These definitions are used by H.R. Hutcheson, in his edition of the printed Religio Laici, to explain the tension that he senses between "rationalism" and its reverse in Herbert's thought:

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[175] 1645, p. 237 = Carré, p. 319: "The Reader will find many statements in the authors which he may have difficulty in understanding how they were ever reached; he may well wonder how anyone could reach them, as long as he relies, that is to say, on right and common reason." Carré writes "common sense". So far as I can tell, Herbert uses "right reason" and "common reason" quite indiscriminately.

[176] SS 52, 2 = XXXVI 113: "Clearly the rightness of the human reason is related to the divine reason as a lower principle of motion to a higher which it comes back to, for the eternal reason is the supreme rule for all human rightness. Hence prudence, which signifies the rightness of reason, is above all helped and completed by being moved and ruled by the Holy Spirit."

[177] R.H. Hoopes, Right Reason in the English Renaissance (Cambridge, Mass., 1962), p. 103. He traces the concept back to Plato's Charmides, and the phrase to Cicero.

> The answer lies in the phrase recurring in Herbert's works, recta Ratio . . . To be "right", reason must be subordinated to the higher faculties, without which it cannot reach correct conclusions.[178]

Now, it is certainly true that right/common reason can have explicit moral significance for Herbert: he uses it, after all, in religious contexts.[179] However, the phrase is generally used with a rather aggressive air - as when he explains that the "law of common reason" does not favour adding anything to the five-point scheme of religion,[180] or that matters for which we use "right reason" should be examined by each individual for himself.[181] And Hutcheson and Bedford are misleading in their assertion that the phrase "recurs" in Herbert's works: it hardly ever appears before 1645, by which time Herbert was deeply embroiled in the conflict of reason with faith - a conflict which, as Hoopes demonstrates, the concept of "right reason" was supposed to avoid.[182]

There remains the question: is Herbert's recta ratio subordinate to any other powers? The only possible candidate would be Natural Instinct, the faculty attached to Common Notions; but Herbert never makes this comparison. He has other aims in view.

Although "right reason" in the late works (including the last edition of De Veritate) is akin to the humanistic ideal in its moral basis, it seems to be an altogether more

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[178] Hutcheson, p. 38. This is closely echoed by Bedford, pp. 169-70.

[179] See eg. the English "Religio Laici" (ed. H.G. Wright), p. 299: "Common Reason" includes "love of Goodness & Truth".

[180] 1645, p. 224 = Carré, p. 305. The phrase is used twice.

[181] 1645, p. 239 = Carré, p. 322.

[182] In the earlier versions of DV, it is introduced once, as a term used by the schools, which he renders in his own terms as "deductionem alicujus principii, sive notitiae communis in suam infimam latitudinem, per quaestiones nostras" [the Zetetica] (1645, p. 59 = Carré, p. 138). When Mersenne worried about Natural Instinct, Herbert assured him that he had relied on "right reason" as well as universal consent: probably he was providing his friend with a comforting scholastic translation.

independent concept. It is not contrasted with an inferior kind of reason: the word discursus is not brought into opposition to it. The two words do not represent a polarity, but a shift in emphasis and interest. He has moved on.

Reason and True Religion

"Est Veritas" proclaimed Herbert, at the beginning of his magnum opus; the first of the famous "Common Notions of Religion" lightly echoes it: "Esse Supremum aliquod Numen".[183] Rossi's examination of the 1619 manuscript revealed that the theological section was more elaborately integrated into the main body of the text in its earlier form: the printed versions omit a long connecting passage.[184] According to Rossi, Herbert made the cut in recognition that he could not really reconcile three things: the previous "course of De Veritate", the "principles of natural religion", and the passage on Revelation. This exaggerates the significance of the omission: in fact more or less all of its content can be

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[183] This is concealed by Carré's translation of the first as "Truth exists", the second as "There is a Supreme God" (pp. 83; 291). Rossi dissents from Carré's translation of the first, but not the parallel. In the table supplied with the "Zetetica", Herbert puts the question "Does Truth exist?" ("An sit") and answers it: "Veritas est" (1645, p. 204). This appears in French as "La Verité est"; the first as "Il y a de la Verité". Descartes uses a similar device in the Meditations - it is particularly clear in the French translation, which he apparently approved: "Il y a déjà quelque temps que je me suis aperçu que, dès mes premières années, j'avais reçu quantité de fausses opinions pour veritables . . ."; "il y a longtemps que j'ai dans mon esprit une certaine opinion, qu'il y a un Dieu qui peut tout . . ." (F. Alquié (ed.), Oeuvres Philosophiques (Paris, 1963-73), II 404; 408).

[184] This is printed by Rossi, III 427-33.

found in the surrounding parts of the printed text. But there is a difference in atmosphere. The link-passage is devoted principally to the idea of "Eternal Blessedness" - there is only one, brief reference to religious strife.[185]

There is one peculiar fact which deserves mention here. In 1622, Herbert had a fair copy made of De Veritate (completed, more or less, three years before). He dedicated it to his old secretary, William Boswell, and his "most beloved" brother George,

> ea lege
> ut siquid contra bonos mores vel quod
> fidei verae Cathol. adversetur
> expungent;[186]

The manuscript reaches the end of the strictly epistemological part of the work, omits the first draft of an intermediary passage between that and the theology, moves straight to the title "De Revelatione" - and at this point abruptly stops. All the theology of the 1619 manuscript is missing. Herbert was not unaware of the possible response in the household of Magdalene Herbert.

He did not offer his thoughts on religion to George; but they continued to develop in a direction the latter would surely have deplored. The passage in the printed text introducing the Common Notions of Religion, added half in 1623, half in 1633,[187] begins:

> De Revelatione sermonem illicò habituri, quaedam tanquam ipsius Revelationis praecognita, exaranda duximus. Neque enim omnis Revelationem ostentans Religio,

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[185] Rossi, I 432 = BL Add MS 7081, fo. 105v.

[186] BL Sloane MS 7081: "on this condition, that anything contrary to virtue, or in opposition to the true Catholic faith, they will excise."

[187] The passage runs from 1645, pp. 208-10 = Carré, pp. 289-91. The 1633 part is "Theories based upon implicit faith" (1645, p. 208) to "all these considerations depend upon Common Notions" (1645, p. 209).

bona; neque demum quae ejus auspiciis prodit, vel necessaria quaevis vel quidem utilis doctrina.[188]

This appears in 1623: the atmosphere has already changed. The 1633 text moves on to attack credulitas:

> Quae enim de implicitâ fide . . . minùs ad rem faciunt. Hujusmodi autem sunt, Rationem Humana exauctoranda, Fide substituendam esse: Penes Ecclesiam sua (quae errare non potest) jus Divini cultus extare cujus judicio idcircò in omnibus insistendum: Neminem ita propriis viribus confidere debere, ut sacrosanctam Antistitum Verbique coelestis Praeconum potestatem in examen revocare sustinuerit. . .[189]

Descartes and Gassendi both responded with unease to Herbert's theology. Descartes, writing to Mersenne, was cautious:

> Pour ce qui est de la religion i'en laisse l'examen a Mrs de la Sorbonne . . . il a plusieurs maximes qui me semblent si pieuses & si conformes au sens commun, que ie souhaite qu'elles puissent estre approuvées par la theologie orthodoxe.[190]

In the letter he sent to Hartlib, he was somewhat more forthright:

> loquor hic tantùm de iis quae Metaphysica in eo occurrunt, omissis quae ex Theologia habet. Illa enim talia sunt quae nondum ita intelligam, ut judicium de iis meum tibi perscribere audeam. Id tantùm addo, si Authori placuisset continere sese intra

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[188] 1645, p. 208 = Carré, p. 289: "Before I proceed to discuss revelation, I think that certain assumptions which underlie our notions of revelation ought to be examined. Every religion which proclaims a revelation is not good, nor is every doctrine which is taught under its authority always essential or even valuable."

[189] 1645, p. 208 = Carré, p. 289: "Theories based upon implicit faith . . . are here irrelevant. Instances of such belief are: that human reason must be discarded, to make room for Faith; that the Church, which is infallible, has the right to prescribe the method of divine worship, and in consequence must be obeyed in every detail; that no one ought to place such confidence in his private judgment as to dare to question the sacred authority of the priests and preachers of God's word". For a seventeenth-century translation of this, see Appendix I.

[190] AT II 599 = Kenny, p. 67: "What he says about religion, I leave to be examined by the gentlemen of the Sorbonne . . He has many maxims which seem to me so pious, and so much in conformity with common sense, that I hope they may be approved by orthodox theology."

> veritates naturali raticinio acquisitas, nec tangere revelatas, non minus sibi forte quàm lectoribus longe uberius satisfacturum fuisse.[191]

Gassendi, who had no sympathy with Herbert's positivism even in secular matters, was eloquent here. He saw that Herbert's insistence on a religious creed that is natural and innate cuts to the heart of Christianity. The lessons that Herbert thought were universal were not so, protested Gassendi: they were really particular - a Christian privilege:

> ut nos ista verè, religioseque profitemur, ita velim consideres, an nisi inter Christianos fuisses innutritus, ista venissent tibi in mentem.[192]

Here he recognized the potential dangers of De Veritate:

> Nempe quos apud caeteras genteis philosophari observamus, rationem audiunt, fidem seponunt, de veritate cùm agitur, quòd nisi evidenter constet de veracitate dicentis, ea falsitatem pro veritate inducere valeat.[193]

But Herbert was resolved; the changes made to this chapter in the later editions all point in the same direction, away from the "gentlemen of the Sorbonne". A stirring example (added in 1645) occurs under "Revelation":

> quid tandem de Revelationibus quae Sacerdotibus olim factae praedicantur existimandum est? . . . Caeterum pace tantorum virorum . . . conditiones, hasce etiam in Sacerdote suo non ineptè requirat Laicus. 1. Ut extra dubium omne ponatur Revelationem Sacerdoti obtigisse. 2. Revelationem illam à Deo Summo, sive proprio

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[191] Correspondance de Mersenne, VII 436: "I speak here only about the metaphysics that occurs in it, omitting its theological points. For on these I am not yet clear enough to venture to write you my opinion. I add only this, that if the author had chosen to confine himself to the truths acquired by natural reasoning [raticinio], and not touched those of revelation, it would perhaps have been much more fully satisfying for himself, as well as his readers."

[192] III 418a: "those things which we profess, truly and religiously: I would have you consider whether they would have occurred to you had you not been bred among Christians".

[193] III 418a: "Certainly those whom we observe philosophizing among the other nations listen to reason and reject faith, when they discuss truth; for if the veracity of the speaker is not obvious and certain, [faith] could impose falsity instead of truth."

ore . . loquenti . . . Haec quidem Sacerdos probet, priusquam Laicus sese totum ejus Revelationi credat. . .[194]

- for example, the five Common Notions. If there is a problem in matters of religion, it is the fault of the priests - whose work ought to be the inculcating of those Notions.[195] From the champion of truth, Herbert has turned into the champion of the layman: the word laicus is used for the first time in the passage above. It was a rôle he was to sustain for the rest of his literary life.

The formulation of the Common Notions of Religion varies very slightly from one occurrence to the next; but there is no substantial change between 1619 and the latest work. In De Veritate, 1645, they run as follows:

Esse Supremum aliquod Numen[196]

Supremum Istud Numen Debere Coli

Virtutem cum pietate conjunctam (quae sub probâ Facultatum comformatione hoc in Opere describitur) praecipuam partem Cultus Divini habitam esse & semper fuisse

Horrorem scelerum Hominum animis semper insedisse; Adeoque illos non latuisse Vitia & scelera quaecunq: expiari debere ex poenitentia

Esse praemium, vel poenam post hanc vitam[197]

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[194] 1645, pp. 227-8 = Carré, pp. 309-10: "what are we to think of those revelations which are solemnly asserted by the priests to have occurred in former ages? . . . In spite of such a body of authority the ordinary layman may fairly demand from his priest the following criteria . . Firstly, that it be proved beyond all doubt that a revelation has been given to the priest. Secondly, that the revelation should have proceeded from the supreme God, speaking with His own voice [etc., etc., etc.] . . . A priest should offer satisfactory credentials on all these points before the layman can yield implicit trust in his revelation." The four points listed here reappear in the Appendix ad Sacerdotes, and in DRG.

[195] See 1645, pp. 225-6 = Carré, pp. 306-7.

[196] 1645, p. 210: "There is some supreme Deity". This is not quite the same as Carré, p. 291: "There is a supreme God".

[197] 1645, pp. 210-220 = Carré, pp. 291-300: "That supreme Deity ought to be worshipped; The connection of Virtue with Piety, defined in this work as the right

These have a clearer and more concentrated function in De Veritate than the other Common Notions. They are precise; and they are a weapon:

> superstitionibus fabulisque abdicatis, quinque articulis nostris solummodo insisteret, nisi infelicius suo in genere hominibus quàm ipsis ovibus ingenium contigisse dicas . . .[198]

As originally conceived, the Common Notions (as we have seen) were a means of inner certainty, and thus would serve as a defence against coercion. In the context of religion, Herbert's search for truth was always urgent:

> nullus jam sit ferè mortalium, qui in proprio & sibi condicto veritatem indagandi modo acquiescat, sed ad normam peregrinae alicujus sive Ecclesiae, sive Scholae se ita componat, ut sua omnino abneget[199]

At the end of the work, this idea is much more important, as Herbert concentrates on true religion and its enemies - unscrupulous priests.

His characteristic dislike of half-way positions continues, as is made clear in the treatment of probability. According to the initial definition, this is supposed to be distinguished from truth and falsity:

> quod cum neque verum simpliciter, neque falsum respectu nostri perhiberi possit, ancipitem sensus inducit, & de praeteritis praecipuè heic praedicari solet.[200]

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conformation of the faculties, is and always has been held to be, the most important part of religious practice; The minds of men have always been filled with horror for their wickedness. Their vices and crimes have been obvious to them. They must be expiated by repentance; There is Reward or Punishment after this life". The long form of the fourth was expanded in 1645 from the simple "Vitia et Scelera Quaecunque Expiari Debere ex Poenitentia".

[198] 1645, p. 224 = Carré, p. 305: "If we set aside superstitions and legends, the mind takes its stand on my five articles, and upon nothing else. To deny this would be to allow less sense to men than to sheep". This passage was added in 1645.

[199] 1645, p. 1 = Carré, p. 75: "there is scarcely anyone in the world who is content to pursue an independent path in the search for truth; every one submits himself to some alien Church or School; thereby wholly renouncing his own powers."

[200] "Elenchus", n.p.: "[probability is] that which can neither be held simply true nor false with respect to us, but has a double sense, and is usually predicated particularly of the past."

That unusual last phrase indicates the difficulty Herbert will have in keeping it distinct from falsity, of a particular kind:

> Fides quae ex solo auditu pende[]t, Philosophia ex principiis vel incertis vel haud necessariis concinnata, Medicorum praesagia ex insidis conjecturis . . . Dogmata non satis inter se cohaerentia, & hujus modi universa demum quae neque planè recipi, neque rejici solent, inter verisimilia numerantur.[201]

Descartes had similar feelings: when a friend of Mersenne's criticized the Dioptrique, he wrote to the Minime:

> il a pensé que, disant qu'une chose est aisée à croire, ie voulois dire qu'elle n'est que probable. En quoy il s'est fort éloigné de mon sentiment. Car ie repute presque pour faux tout ce qui n'est que vraysemblable; & quand ie dis qu'une chose est aisée à croire, ie ne veux pas dire qu'elle est probable seulement, mais qu'elle est si claire & si evidente, qu'il n'est pas besoin que ie m'arreste à la demonstrer.[202]

As one scholar remarks

> There seems no real room in his system for the concept of learning.[203]

The same might be said of De Veritate. But there is a difference in their objections: for Herbert, the uncertainty of "probability" links it naturally with narratives of the past, told by someone else. The category of probability becomes a way of keeping revelations in their place:

Probability and possibility both have an "anceps sensus": for the fate of "possibility", see below.

[201] 1645, pp. 236-7 = Carré, p. 319: "the faith which rests solely on hearsay, the philosophy which is a patchwork of doubtful or casual principles, the prophecies based upon specious assumptions of medical men. . . all incoherent dogmas and all similar beliefs which cannot clearly be accepted or rejected, must be classed as probable."

[202] AT I 450-1 = Kenny, p. 42: "he thought that when I said that something was easy to believe, I meant that it was no more than probable; but in this he has altogether mistaken my meaning. I consider almost as false whatever is only a matter of verisimilitude; and when I say that something is easy to believe I do not mean that it is only probable, but that it is so clear and so evident that there is no need for me to stop to prove it."

[203] Kenny, Descartes, p. 103.

> quae ex aliorum authoritate simplicitèr pendent Enunciationes, plus minùsve dubiae vel verisimiles existimandae sint.[204]

Certainty and freedom are both at issue.

Herbert is not the kind of philosopher to retract - he prefers to reuse his own words in a different sense; but, as with discursus, a change is perceptible in his treatment of Common Notions. In 1645, he twice adds the phrase "common reason" in close connexion with the Five:

> Neque enim aliâ lege Providentiam Divinam Universalem (summum Dei attributum) asseri posse ex Communis Rationis Principiis saltem eviceris.[205]

> Quidni igitur juxta Communis saltem Rationis normam de rotundâ Dei Religione (uti alibi diximus) ac de circulo existimari possit.[206]

- that is, that nothing can be added to it. Reason is the guarantee. There is no sudden change: the language of innatism is still used (in the Appendix ad Sacerdotes, the "means" to "a more blessed state" are said to be "inscribed in our souls", and the phrases "Common Notion" and "inscription" do occur in a religious context in De Religione Gentilium);[207] but there is something of a shift. In 1645, the name "Common Notions" gives place to "Catholic Articles" and "Catholic Truths", phrases with no metaphysical history, and consequently

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[204] 1645, p. 239 = Carré, p. 321: "the propositions which depend simply on the authority of others, should be taken to be more or less doubtful or probable." This passage was added in 1645.

[205] 1645, p. 224 = Carré, p. 305: "by no other method could the existence of Divine Universal Providence, the highest attribute of God, be proved [by the principles of common reason]" (square brackets = 1645).

[206] 1645, p. 224 = Carré, p. 305: "Why, then . . following the law of common reason, can we not apply the same rule to the perfect sphere of God that we apply to any circle?"

[207] Appendix in De Causis Errorum (1645), p.; De Religione Gentilium: 1663, p. 6 = pp. 11-12.

lacking in superrational implications.[208] The change culminates, I think, in his discussion the original Gentile religion, which he finds wholly admirable, but explains in calmly empiricist terms:

> Licet igitur in seipso antiquior sit Dei illius summi cultus, uti qui in ipso corde sit descriptus; quatenus tamen ex splendidis & incorruptibilibus Solis & Lunae corporibus primum ejus specimen aliquod utcunque habuerint Majores nostri . . . In operibus quippe suis cum eluceat Dei Potestas, Sapientia, Bonitas, cum ex illis etiam nobis praecipuè innotescat, haut sane aliter Deum congredi potuerunt.[209]

The method of apprehension has shifted; what is not affected is the extraordinary content of the Five.

The apparently detachable nature of De Veritate's theology makes it akin to some earlier causes of controversy. Telesio added arguments for the existence of God twenty years after the first edition of his great work De Rerum Natura, and Pomponazzi ended his scandalous De Immortalitate Animae with a submission to revelation. But the theology of De Veritate has the reverse effect: it is a challenge, not an effort at reconciliation.[210]

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[208] This phrase is introduced on 1645, pp. 207, 224, and 225 = Carré, pp. 288, 305, and 306. The two phrases are yoked, with a vague "sive", in Hutcheson (ed.), De Religione Laici, p. 124 (as also in the first DV passage). He has referred throughout to "Catholic Articles", or "Catholic Truths", making only one other use of the phrase "Common Notion". In DCE, Common Notions have almost dropped out of sight: he promises to put them into Part II, which was never written; but the three-page stop-gap he provides at the end of the extant work does not suggest the sort of rôle they had in DV (in DCE, they are said to assign the right senses to their objects).

[209] DRG, p. 6 = Lewis, p. 11: "Now, although the Worship of the Supreme GOD, is more antient in itself, being written in the Heart, yet . . . our Ancestors received the first Indications of Him from those splendid incorruptible Bodies, the Sun and Moon . . . For the Power, Wisdom, and Goodness of God shining in his Works, and he being best manifested to us by them, they could hardly come to the knowledge of Him any other way." (I have altered Lewis's "could not" to "could hardly" in the second sentence.) Rossi comments on this, III 144-5: "Così la creazione non è più un'idea innata . . . ma un'idea acquisita osservando il disegno dell'universo che lo prova fatto da un solo Dio."

[210] De Rerum Natura was first published in 1565; its theological part (the discussion of the "two souls"), hard to reconcile with the rest, was not added until 1586. Pomponazzi's treatise (first pub. 1516) concluded with the argument that since immortality was guaranteed

The challenge grows stronger from version to version: in 1645, he added a long passage which included the circle image (quoted above) - thus effectively denying the possibility of adding to his system.[211]

To the embarrassment of some later opponents, Herbert was confident that he had experienced a special relationship with the divine when he was hesitating over whether to publish De Veritate (1624), to which he expected "much opposition". On a windless day in summer, he decided to refer the matter to a higher authority. In the words of the Life:

> I took my book, De Veritate, in my hand, and, kneeling on my knees, devoutly said these words:
> "O thou eternal God, Author of the light which now shines upon me, and Giver of all inward illuminations, I do beseech thee, of thy infinite goodness, to pardon a greater request than a sinner ought to make; I am not satisfied enough whether I should publish this book, De Veritate; if it be for Thy glory, I beseech Thee give me some sign from heaven; if not, I shall suppress it."
> I had no sooner spoken thee words, but a loud though gentle noise came from the heavens, for it was like nothing on earth, which did so comfort and cheer me, that I took my petition as granted, and that I had the sign I demanded, whereupon also I resolved to print my book. This, how strange soever it may seem, I protest before the eternal God is true, neither am I any way superstitiously deceived herein, since I did not only clearly hear the noise, but, in the serenest sky that ever I saw, being without all cloud, did to my thinking see the place from whence it came.[212]

This was to be a particularly irritating story for his anti-deist critics, defending miracles and revelation against his disparagement, but forced to refuse this particular one - which would justify De Veritate.[213] But it posed no problem for Herbert himself: faith and the

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by Scripture, all his earlier reasoning must in fact be false.

[211] See Appendix I.

[212] Lee, pp. 248-9.

[213] John Leland has a rather comical battle with it: he remarks that "any Christian writer who made such a claim would be accused of enthusiasm", and goes on to distinguish Herbert strenuously from St. Paul (A View of the Principal Deistical Writers, (London, rev. ed. 1755), I 25: he is closely followed by M.M. Tabaraud, Histoire criticque du Philosophisme Anglois (Paris, 1806), I 81). Hill supplies an attack on the incident by Timothy Dwight, an American poet, published in 1788 (Edward, Lord Herbert, pp. 113-14). For Herbert,

extraordinary may be admitted - but they are not expected to clash with regular forms of knowledge, and they must be personally transmitted.[214] This sort of faith is extravagantly praised in the section "De Possibili":

> [Fides] sola ita futura anticipet, sola demum ipsa aeterna ita praeveniat, ut illis quodammodo hac in vita fruamur. Neq; igitur fide circa praeterita, nisi Comunes Notitiae viam sternant, huic nostrae commisceas . . .
>
> At parum fidi supremâ se totos excidere die putant . . . Te interim ita procerum, ita excelsum, ut in ea omnia erigaris quae probè nosti, sive coelestia sive aeterna tandem fuerint?[215]

But the changes to De Veritate reveal some tension here. In 1645, Herbert added a long introduction to "De Possibili", advising caution:

> Verisimile (ex acceptione nostrâ) praeterita, Possibile futura, utrumque dubia & incomperta quaevis denotat . . . quod circa Possibilia sive futura, haut ita facilè statui potest Theorema . . . Si intereà veras (obscuras lict) prophetias posteris consignatas fuisse olim contenderit quispiam, videat saltem num ad pictoris instar vel formam hominis venturi particularem, aut ad historici instar, actionum diarium . . . disertim tradiderit Propheta . . .[216]

Leland, and deism, see chapter IV below.

[214] Herbert's experience did not clash with his idea of what was reasonable, one might cynically add. In his Studies in the History of Natural Theology (Oxford, 1915), pp. 347-8, C.C.J. Webb defends his consistency here in much these terms - against the rather superficial comment of Lee: "[it] strangely contrasts with the advanced views that Lord Herbert elsewhere advocates respecting the subject of Revelation" (p. 249 n.). (Webb's account of Herbert is discussed in chapter V, "DRG and its Critics".)

[215] 1645, pp. 242; 244 = Carré, pp. 325; 327: "Faith alone anticipates the future, and forestalls the eternal, so that it enjoys them to a certain extent during this life. Belief in the past must not be confused with the faith I have just described unless Common Notions lead us to it . ."; "those who lack faith think that at the last day they utterly perish . . . Are you not aware that you are so sublime and exalted a being that you can attain all things which you truly know even though they are heavenly or eternal?" The second passage was added in 1633. Charles Lyttle, "Apostle of Ethical Theism", p. 248, notes the close similarity between this second piece and an exuberant passage from Milton's "Seventh Prolusion" (F.A. Patterson et al (eds.), The Works of John Milton, (New York, 1931-8), XII 254).

[216] 1645, pp. 240-1 = Carré, pp. 323-4: "Probability . . in my terminology, signifies the past, possibility the future, and both refer to what is uncertain and unknown . . . it is not so easy to determine the theory of possibility or futurity . . . If anyone should maintain that

Like probability, possibility has a "double sense", neither truth nor falsity; the good sort of faith was attached to possibility, but solution now seems less satisfactory. The bright vision of "De Possibili" recedes slightly from view. For Herbert himself, both moods continued, but they began to be expressed in different forms: the ecstatic tone infuses the late, quasi-autobiographical poems published with De Veritate, while the treatise itself becomes drier and angrier. The changes contribute a little to the understanding of something beyond Herbert: the belligerent rationalism of later unorthodox thought.

It is tempting to leave De Veritate at the lyrical core of "De Possibili", with its soaring, impatient rhythms, its questing spirit still rising and enlarging into infinity. But Herbert himself ends the work rather differently: with an exceptionally arid section on Falsity, to which in 1645 he added a preface frogmarching the reader back: "in memoriam revocanda sunt, quae suprà attulimus".[217] These prove to be the fourfold definition of truth with which De Veritate began. The end is simply a recapitulation of the beginning; Herbert was determined to have at least a formal unity.

Conclusion

> Ideò res unaquaeque in infinitas ferè partes videtur divisibilis, sed quia in unitatem (ultimum scilicet Infinitatis Characterismum) tandem resolvi necesse est, utraque simul constare videtur.[218]

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true, though obscure prophecies have been verified by subsequent events, I invite him at least to consider whether the prophet has accurately depicted the particular appearance of the future man as clearly as a painter, or his daily behaviour as closely as an historian."

[217] 1645, p. 248 = Carré, p. 332: "considerations which I have advanced in an earlier section must be recalled."

[218] 1645, p. 247 = Carré, p. 330: "everything seems capable of being divided into an infinity of parts, but since it must in the end be resolved into a unity (the ultimate

Herbert might perhaps have replied thus to my analysis of De Veritate - which has declined his ready offers of consolidation in favour of a more disjunctive approach. Unity itself provides a kind of theme in De Veritate. Truth is a unity; so is the world, and its contents. The claim is important: De Veritate, like the world it posits, is held together by "analogies", and by words like "analogy". The critic may follow a similar approach. Bedford does so: he binds the pieces of Herbert's philosophy together as he goes, to produce a sort of whole. But De Veritate requires much glossing and much contextualizing to make it really coherent; I have not attempted to do this, although very aware that Bedford follows the grain of the book (which regularly asserts its own homogeneity), while I do not. This discussion has trailed after the seventeenth-century critics, rather than the moderns. But I have tried to show that heterogeneity is not necessarily destructive to his endeavour: that the restlessness of De Veritate, its shifting focus, give it a particular interest, not only in its parts, but as a developing whole. Taken in parts, the work falls into an incoherent jumble (Rossi); viewed from one fixed angle, it is only part-visible, appearing as a classic piece of Renaissance Platonism (Bedford), or an avant-garde manifesto of deism (Hill). De Veritate offers material for all three pictures; but it is also the personal record of a quick, undisciplined intelligence, moving between aims hard to reconcile, and thus reflecting in little a development occurring meanwhile on a larger scale: from a half-magical world-view to a solidly "Enlightened" distrust of the superrational; from the vocabulary of the schools to a new, more secular language. Perhaps no other single work illustrates that development so well.

The "unity" of De Veritate, the distinguishing mark of the whole, is its lack of doubt. The originally flamboyant opening of "De Possibili" is dampened by the additions of 1645; but the firm self-confidence is not shaken. Let the last word come, after all, from "De

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characteristic of the infinite), infinity and unity appear to meet."

Possibili" - in one of its less purely lyrical, more truly Herbertian moods: a mood of deep, self-appreciating optimism, as one honourable gentleman predicts the conduct of another:

> An mercatoris subdoli vafritiae aeterna (quae ostentabatur) foelicitatem mihi quasi praestinati, & tantum non potienti exuetur pactum? An mihi fraudi erit immortalitas & Beatitudo illa aeterna, quâ jam frui incoeperam? . . . Nonne meam, nonne suam liberabit fidem Deus Optimus Maximus?[219]

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[219] 1645, p. 246 = Carré, p. 329 : "Is it likely that eternal happiness should be offered to me as an article is offered for sale, and then, just as I am about to purchase it, that the contract should be broken in the manner of a dishonest tradesman? Am I to be defrauded of the immortality and eternal blessedness which I was on the point of enjoying? . . Will not Almighty God honour my faith, and his own?" I give up with regret Carré's version of the last sentence: "Will not Almighty God abide by His promise as I do by mine?"

Chapter III: The Historian

I The Expedition to the Isle of Ré

On his second and final return from his French embassy in May 1624, Herbert at once directed his energies towards obtaining a position of dignity at Court.[1] Despite direct appeals to the omnipotent favourite, Buckingham, "then my noble friend",[2] he found little forthcoming in the last months of James, or the first four years of Charles: he had hoped for the post of Vice-Chamberlain, and believed that he had been promised an English peerage; he received an Irish peerage, and a place on the Council of War,[3] a body appointed at the end of James' reign. He consoled himself by taking this position very seriously. Since Buckingham seemed to have persuaded James to a war with Spain, Herbert promptly drew up a memorandum with five possible plans of attack: he recommended the third of them, which was the seizure of Cadiz.[4] It is possible that his paper had some influence in determining the ill-fated expedition of 1625.[5]

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[1] The principal source for the historical part of this first section is Rossi, II 395-455.

[2] Lee, p. 229.

[3] Hopes to be Vice-Chamberlain: CSP. Dom. (1623-5), 312 (Chamberlain to Sir Dudley Carleton). Elected to the Council of War: see T. Birch (ed.), The Court and Times of Charles I (London, 1849), I 21. Claims he was promised an English peerage: see his letter to Charles of 8 May 1626, printed by Lee, pp. 257-9. Rossi, II 418 suggests that this had been promised to him by Buckingham. In a letter to Conway from Paris, he protested that recall without the gift of "some place of Honor or Preferment" would be an unbearable disgrace (SP 78/72, printed by Rossi, III 468).

[4] This paper is now PRO 30/53/9/10, fos. 3-20 = Beal HrE 93. It is discussed by Rossi (II 408-16) - he compares it (favourably) with Bacon's proposals on the same topic.

[5] This is Rossi's idea. Herbert owned a copy of the "Charge . . . against the Viscount Wimbledon Generall of the last Cales Voyage with his Answere [etc.]" (NLW Powis Bequest 1959, Parcel XII 2 - marked with his monogram).

He also, in the same year, wrote another paper. This had no influence; but is sufficiently remarkable to merit discussion. It is entitled "A designe for a perpetuall intertainment of about 15,000 Foote and 3,000 Horse for his Maties service", and is a detailed plan for the raising and maintaining of a private militia for the King. It begins with the "priviledges to the Gentry and Yeomanry wch shall enter into this Militia" - marks of favour designed to make the office attractive, with special reference to their clothes:

> they may weare some order on their outward garment, the yeoman in cloth, the gentleman in silke, and officers in silver and gold, with some little marke for distinction of their severall degrees[6]

Then "Motives to induce the Parlament" are proposed, of two basic kinds: defence against invasion, and the avoidance of special levies. The final part is devoted to "Benefits to his Maty in particular", and these again are of two sorts, foreign and domestic:

> his Maty herby might not only give reputation to his Advisers abroad, but in case of refusall might send auxiliary forces on that part his Maty pleaseth, and to give Law to all Christendome, when otherwise they would not make him Arbiter of their differences . . .

It will give Charles greater "Autority" "then any Princes that ever ruled in this Cuntrey."

The interest, if not the importance, of this document is obvious.[7] A standing army even of this size, devoted primarily to his service, would indeed have given Charles

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This MS is noted by E.E. Kimelman, "Lord Herbert of Cherbury as Historian" (PhD diss. Harvard, 1977) - the most valuable unpublished work on Herbert that I have read.

[6] This is now PRO 30/53/9/10, fos. 21-22v = Beal HrE 113, printed in Rossi, III 484-6.

[7] See Hobbes in Behemoth on the effect such a force could have had (W. Molesworth (ed.), English Works (London, 1840), VI 166). In the words of a modern historian, "It was as obvious to contemporaries as it has been to subsequent historians that the critical constitutional question over which the Civil War began was the question of the control of the militia" (R.F. Tuck, "'The Ancient Law of Freedom': John Selden and the Civil War" in J.S. Morrill (ed.), Reactions to the English Civil War 1642-1649 (Oxford, 1982), p. 145).

The English hostility to the new Continental style of soldiery, and consequent difficulties in fighting foreign forces, is one of the principal themes in C. Russell, Parliaments and English Politics 1621-1629 (Oxford, 1979).

independence against his Parliament. Herbert had planned that two-thirds of it should always be abroad, reasserting English power there; but it had many other possibilities. Had Charles taken his advice, he might have furnished himself with a New Model Army before the Personal Rule.

Why did Herbert suggest it? Above all, of course, to please the King; but it was, in any case, a fashionable topic. James' desire to improve the quality of the existing militia (one result of which had been the creation of the Council of War) was greatly exceeded by that of his son, who began improvements as soon as he became King. Herbert's was not the only memorandum produced in this year: two proposals for arming and training the existing forces were also made.[8]

Much of the impetus behind the new interest in the armed forces came from awareness of superior armies abroad, especially the forces of Spinola - of which Herbert had had personal experience in the previous decade. His commitment to the idea of a strong English militia is clear from a striking comment he makes on the Dissolution of the Monasteries:

> it is clear, that if the profits of those which were dissolv'd, had been imploy'd for a setled entertaining and payment of a Royall Army at land, and a great Fleet at Sea . . . our King without having recourse to any other meanes, might (besides securing his Realm) have given the Law in great part to all his Neighbours.[9]

Henry had in fact "experimented with the formation of a reserve army of men" - a plan which came to nothing, partly because of the expense, and partly of "opposition to this potential rod of iron".[10] Charles' interest in the militia came to rouse the same anxieties;

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[8] See L. Boynton, The Elizabethan Militia 1558-1638 (London, 1967), pp. 209 ff. These proposals (SP 16/13/42-4) are discussed on pp. 245-6.

[9] The Life and Raigne of King Henry VIII (London, 1649), p. 377.

[10] Boynton, Elizabethan Militia, p. 9.

he rested his right to levy troops on the much-disputed "royal prerogative" - as Herbert had expected:

> because all things of this kinde do concerne his Maties prerogative, I should bee glad his Matie were pleased to referre them to a further discussinge, before his Maties Counsailes of State and Warre . . .

Had he foreseen the possible domestic results? We cannot be sure, though it is clear that his first thought was for war abroad. But he had witnessed a king using arms against his own subjects: during the period of his embassy, Louis XIII had begun his crusade against the French Protestants. Did he think the parallel quite inapplicable to England - or was he, perhaps, impressed by the movement towards a consolidated, centralized State that he had seen?

That is one possible answer; but matters are made more complicated by his next literary attempt to please the King, which was of a very different nature.

It was as writer rather than courtier that he next received notice from Buckingham. Herbert was to provide an official defence of the last disastrous expedition, this one led by the Duke in person:

> It pleased my Lorde Duke of Buckingham heretofore to committ unto my charge the composinge and putting into order of certain commentaries (hastily written) concerninge his Journey to the Isle of Re.[11]

The story of this venture has been told many times. Buckingham, in his public Manifestation (dated 21 July, 1627), presented it as a spiritual duty:

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[11] Powis (ed.), The Expedition to the Isle of Rhé (London, 1860), p. xxix. All references will be to this edition, unless otherwise specified. "Rhé" is the spelling used by Powis (he gives the work its title); it is more commonly spelt without an "h", as Herbert spells it.

> What part the Kings of great Britaine, have alwayes taken in the affaires of the reformed Churches of this Kingdome, and with what care and zeale they have laboured for the good of them, is manifest to all . . .[12]

The other reason is revealed by Buckingham's denial:

> But put the case it be alledged that the King my Master hath bin moved to take Armes for othere considerations, as the detention and seasure of all the Shipps and Goods of his Subiects at Bourdeaux, and other places of this Kingdome, to the breaking and manifest contravention of the Treaties betweene the Crownes, which in this point are expresly to the irreperable preiudice, yea to the totall ruine of commerce . . . The answere to all that is, that . . . the King my Master and his Subiects have hitherto profited most by this breach . . .[13]

But England was not happy at Richelieu's policy of naval expansion; and the expedition had a powerful secular impetus too. Buckingham's Instructions from the King enjoined first recapture of the ships at Bordeaux, and reassertion of English commerce; then, if the Huguenots at La Rochelle welcomed it, assistance to them in their precarious position under a hostile King. Herbert preserves this order in his narrative.[14]

On June 27 (N.S.), the expedition set sail, Buckingham magnificent in the admiral's ship (the cost of his equipment came to over £10,000).[15] Two days after arriving off Ré, a small island off the coast of La Rochelle, Buckingham sent envoys to the city, offering aid. The Huguenots, to his surprise, were very reluctant to involve themselves, and even tried to exclude the envoys. Their misgivings were fully justified by the sequel. Buckingham tried

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[12] A Manifestation or Remonstrance of the Most Honourable the Duke of Buckingham (London, 1627), p. 1. According to the Venetian ambassador, the manifesto "is not generally approved since the pretext of religion is obviously false, as at the outset there was no complaint save on the score of private passions and interests" (CSP Ven. (1626-8), 376).

[13] Manifestation, p. 6.

[14] Expedition, pp. 12-13. This is not to deny the importance attached in England to the Huguenot cause - stressed in a recent article by T. Cogswell, "Prelude to Ré: the Anglo-French Struggle over La Rochelle, 1624-1627" History 71 (1986), 1-21.

[15] R. Lockyer, Buckingham (London and New York, 1981), p. 373.

to capture the island, a convenient landing place for La Rochelle, by starving out the inhabitants; Richelieu, who took charge of the crisis, managed to convey provisions despite the Duke's blockade, until at last it was the English forces who were reduced to near-famine. Six months later, the English forces returned home, reduced to less than half of their original numbers.[16] La Rochelle, forced into open enmity with Louis, was besieged by the royal forces, and two subsequent expeditions under English noblemen were unable to relieve it. On October 18, 1629, the city finally surrendered.

The expedition had begun well; a combination of bad luck, bad management, and very competent opposition had overwhelmed it. But Buckingham had few friends outside his immediate circle, and few tried to defend the expedition. There is a painful contrast between the "Journal" published by the government to raise morale, and the private journal of one of Buckingham's subordinates, probably Sir Richard Grenville, who describes the Duke as listening to "insinuating Sycophants", and making one mistake after another.[17] The response of the English public was fiercely hostile:

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[16] The official estimate was 4,000; the French sources rate it much higher. See Rossi, "Lo Sbarco Inglese nell'Isola di Ré (1627) e la polemica militare nel XVII secolo", Nuova Rivista Storica 21 (1937), 338. Buckingham's attempts to reduce the popular estimate, and their lack of success, are reported in Birch, I 285, 291.

[17] The official journal is called A Continued Iournall of All the Proceedings of the Duke of Buckingham his Grace, in the Isle of Ree, a part of France. In whom are combined Religion, Fortitude, and Clemencie; being the true Characters of a noble Generall. Published by Authority (London, 1627: dated August 17). This work, discussed by Kimelman (pp. 51-2), consists of two dispatches, apparently by the same, enthusiastic soldier: the second is marked "Received at Court August 15"; it is thus presumably the journal referred to in CSP Dom. (1627-8), 297, where it is said to have been "examined, and in some places corrected, by Nicholas."

The Journal is published in George Grenville's Genuine Works in Verse and Prose (London, 1736), III 246-61. A recent book on Richard Grenville concludes that "[the Journal's] authorship cannot be established with certainty", but that it "was unquestionably produced by someone who served at Rhé, and it is an ably written account of the campaign" (A.C. Miller, Sir Richard Grenville of the Civil War (London, 1979), p. 14).

> How comes this voyage t'have such bad effect,
> Without close treacherie, or great neglect?
> Thou had'st a navie royall neede not feare
> All the French power . . .
> But oh! what men or angels can devise
> To excuse thy base ignoble cowardise . . .[18]

And by the time Herbert had written his account, even its occasioner was in no position to be pleased:

> This heavy burden (which I could by no excuse avoyd) beinge at last undertaken by me, his nefarious Death by the Handes of an Assassin did intervene . . .[19]

Among French writers, however, the subject was extremely popular. When Herbert began, three gloating versions had appeared; before he wrote the introductory epistle "Ad Lectorem", there was yet a fourth (with which he dealt in the epistle).[20] It was these Frenchmen, he claimed, who provoked him into defending the English name - and one Frenchman in particular. He chose to direct his defence against the most official (and also the most irritating) of the three: Arcis Sam-Martinianae Obsidio et Fuga Anglorum a Rea Insula (Paris, 1629) by one Jacques Isnard, subsequently appointed historiographer to Louis.[21]

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[18] "The Duke Return'd Againe. 1627" (F.W. Fairholt (ed.), Poems and Songs relating to George Villiers Duke of Buckingham (London, 1856), p. 22).

[19] Expedition, p. xxix.

[20] Rossi, II 451, claims that he found the fourth writer, the Jesuit Philibert Monet, less offensive than the others; "Ad Lectorem" makes it very clear that this is not the case.

The "Ad Lectorem" does not exist in English; the editor of the English text took it from the Latin edition.

[21] Expedition, p. xxxv: "aliquid jam majus attentat Isnardus quidam ex Provin. Provin. [sic] Senatûsque Parisiensis Advocatus." It was likely to have a wider audience than the two earlier accounts, as the only one written in Latin.

The information on the later career of Isnard is taken from Rossi, II 450.

This formal enemy is, of course, very useful for Herbert, providing him with a means of dealing with the less defensible actions of the English at Ré. The most shameful example - which Herbert clearly felt to be shameful himself - is Buckingham's decision to round up the women in St. Martin, the principal town on the island, and force them into the fortress he was besieging, in order to hasten its surrender: when the besieged refused to admit them, the English fired on the women until they relented. Isnard related the incident in baroque detail ("elegantly", as Herbert puts it); Herbert objects:

> Isnard deales not ingenuously with us, while suppressinge the proper appellation hee cals these women Orthodoxall, which even himselfe in anothere place, p. 130, calls Catholique . . .

Aware, apparently, that this triumph of vocabulary is not quite enough, he plunges on:

> my Lrd D. of Buckingham . . . with a notable document of Piety . . would have every one sent to her owne husband . . . what Judge not meerly venall would thinke him more worthy of blame who drives and compell this wife to go to her husband, or he who refuses and rejects her?[22]

There is undoubtedly something shaming in such sophistry; but there is also an air of personal defiance, as if Herbert feels he has just saved himself from what appeared an agonizing thrust from Isnard. For Herbert conducts his defence in the spirit of a duel. As champion of the English side, he officially identifies himself with the combatants - particularly in the many passages where the French fail to offer a fight:

> why did they not overthrow persons who were tyred out with the fury of their owne difficult attempt? Why did not the Garrison sally out on the other side? What might not men (double in number to ours) performe in this kinde? But the same Author, though falsely, saith the night drewe on. But how then was the day spent? [etc][23]

Isnard, reveals Herbert, is an unworthy antagonist. He jibes constantly at Isnard's Latin (which is of a trilling, precious nature: "Stylum si probas, probo; si probè improbas, nec

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[22] Expedition, pp. 84, 85.

[23] Expedition, pp. 208-9.

improbo" and so on)[24]: Isnard, he says, is always inventing words by Latinizing French ones, instead of referring to Caesar or Livy - and the charge, though it looks pedantic, has an extra-linguistic significance. The words of Isnard are his weapons: he appears to win the duel (the English are undeniably defeated); but Herbert wishes to reveal the victory as somehow base, inferior to the doomed heroics of his own side:

> yf it bee granted that the French did triumphe over the vanquished, it must not bee denyed but the English triumphed even over the Victory it selfe . . .[25]

Nevertheless, most critics who have spent much time on the work have detected another side to Herbert's response. Kimelman gives the most straightforward version of this idea:

> Herbert's summation of the Rhé encounter is contradictory and ambiguous. Plainly he desires to be generous and chivalrous as becomes a courtier and also to be even-handed as becomes a reasonable man.[26]

Rossi's disapproval of Buckingham (and others) led him to a more positive view of Herbert here:

> E ben vero che, punto per punto, Herbert difende Buckingham contro i critici francesi. Ma non sogna nemmeno di sottacere o di travisare gli eventi, come avrebbe fatto un apologista coscienzoso - o un giornalista moderno.[27]

Rossi recognized that, despite the "polemical emphasis", the picture that emerged from Herbert's account was more damaging to Buckingham than the dispassionate reconstruction

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[24] Isnard, Fuga, sig. e ii. For Herbert's sneers, see particularly "Ad Lectorem", pp. xliv-lii - but the charge recurs as a motif throughout the work.

[25] Expedition, p. 286.

[26] Kimelman, p. 48.

[27] Rossi, II 454: "It is certainly true that, point by point, Herbert defends Buckingham against the French critics. But he still did not dream of concealing or misrepresenting events, as a devoted apologist would have done - or a modern journalist."

of S.R. Gardiner - who in fact both omitted points that Herbert included (for example, Buckingham's failure to find any way of blockading the fort he was trying to besiege),[28] and included some rather suspicious facts that Herbert omitted - such as the Duke's heroic rescue of a stranded seaman.[29] Perhaps the most striking example of this discrepancy concerns Buckingham's failure to make his first assault on the smaller of the two forts on the island, La Prée, which was hardly defended. Gardiner majestically withholds censure:

> It is not for me, remembering the controversy about attacking the north side of Sebastopol after the battle of the Alma, to say whether Buckingham was right or wrong in neglecting La Prée . . . As matters stood in July, there was no danger of the landing of the French troops at La Prée, because there were none to spare on the mainland.[30]

Buckingham's latest biographer is more doubtful:

> it might have made more sense in military terms . . .[31]

Rossi, of course, condemns him without hope of appeal. And this has the support of Grenville, who suffered for it:

> if we had passed by the Fort [of La Prée] (which had neither Ordnance mounted, nor any body to resist us but an old Woman, as we afterwards heard) . . we might have easily had it, (the Enemy having formerly quitted it, as a Place not tenable) and might have kept it for a Retreat . . .[32]

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[28] See, for his account of the whole, S.R. Gardiner, A History of England 1603-42 (London, 1893), VI 167-200. On pp. 180-1, Gardiner discusses three attempts on Buckingham's part to do this: the first two fail; he does not reveal the fate of the third. Herbert does (pp. 108-9).

[29] Gardiner, VI 174. This is recorded in the Continued Iournall, p. 11; I have not found any other source for it.

[30] Gardiner, VI 195-6 nn.

[31] Lockyer, Buckingham, p. 383.

[32] (?)Grenville, "Journal", p. 249; see Rossi, "Lo Sbarco", pp. 150-1. Henri de Rohan, the great Huguenot commander who tried to help Buckingham, was of the same opinion: from this decision, he thought, "vint tout son mal" (Memoires du Duc de Rohan . . . jusques à la paix faitte avec les Reformez au mois de Iuin 1627 (Paris, 2nd ed., 1646), p. 281).

Herbert, while apparently defending Buckingham from criticism, allows the reader to see that the failure was a direct result of the duke's inexperience:

> the lesse [fort], calld De La Pree, was of that moment that some of our antient and well experienced souldgers thought fitt to beginne with it. But the pretenders to my Lrd D. of Buckingham's favour . . . did on the other side alleadge that the greater beinge tooke in, the lesse would not longe hold out. In this opinion, therfore, the other Colonells, though unwillingly, were concluded; who well consideringe how fitt a place this was to lande the enemy's forces, would have begunne with it first.[33]

A more colourful view of Herbert's intentions than that of Rossi or Kimelman is offered by Hill, who finds them ironical:

> sooner or later . . the reader catches the mockery with which Herbert views the duke's fatal obsession with politesse[34]

It is certain, at least, that Herbert's account was not satisfactory to Buckingham's greatest friend. A draft survives of a letter from Herbert to an unnamed functionary (probably Sir John Coke):

> Y.H. When your H. shall referre more to mee, I doubt not but to be able Godwilling to answer it <u>as well as the rest</u> leastwise as farre as to make good my Intentions, for the boldnes your H speaks of . . though I confesse your censure comes from his M. comands, and is done by that Authority I have observed in your Annotations yet give mee leave to say the mistaking comes from your <u>selfe only</u> wch your H therfore upon better advise will I hope acknowledge . .[35]

It is not hard to pick passages to which Charles might have objected, and scholars have not been slow to do so; but it is has not been noticed that we have more specific evidence, from

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[33] <u>Expedition</u>, p. 50.

[34] Hill, p. 53.

[35] The letter is transcribed by Rossi, "Lo Sbarco", p. 134 n. It is now PRO 30/53/7/14. Rossi identifies the recipient on the grounds that "Y.H." must stand for "Your Honour", which most naturally refers to the Secretary of State, at this time Sir John Coke.

the markings on one of the manuscripts[36]- the complete, autograph English manuscript generally believed to have been submitted to the King.[37]

Three long passages in this manuscript are marked: they occur on pp. 3, 42-5, and 65-6 of the printed English text. The first, which offers substitutions, is marked by the editor; the others, which are crossed out in the manuscript, appear in the printed text, unmarked. They are all objectionable in different but obvious ways. The first is short enough to quote in full:

> Therfore he [James I] made a league with the house of
> for noe Wordlie [sic] Cause he was willing to
> Austria, which ~~neyther for cause of affinity, of pretence of~~
> breake to all
> ~~Relligion and common profitt hee would breake.~~ This seemes
> the World is so well knowen
> ~~abundantly testified by the miserable condition of his sonne in~~
> ~~law, who beinge expulsed from a kingdome, not sought but offered,~~
> that
> ~~did togeather loose his Patrimony. But~~ there is no Neede, that

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[36] These MSS = Beal HrE 114-20. HrE 114 is the marked MS. The presence of the dedication to Charles and the absence of the epistle to the reader make it likely, as Rossi and the editor, Powis, suggest, that it was the copy submitted for royal approval.

[37] We know from the letter to "Y H" that one MS (at least) was submitted: the only possible candidates are the fair copies - the Bodleian Latin MS (HrE 119), and the English (HrE 114). That the English was submitted is suggested not only by the markings but by the fact that Herbert has written it out, with a dedication to Charles, but no dedication to the reader (the title of the dedication is given, but no text beneath it).

Herbert mentions in two letters that he wrote the work in two languages (SP 16/412/77; PRO 30/53/7/14); but he never reveals which came first. Rossi assumed that it was the English; the MSS are confusing, as the two rough Latin MSS (Beal HrE 117 and 118) are much rougher than the fragmentary English, and parts of them are certainly earlier; but sometimes the English seems to be earlier, and the safest conclusion is that he wrote in both languages simultaneously, and worked over both at different times. It is certain that the Latin fair copy (HrE 119) is the latest: it omits one of the suspect passages altogether; the earlier Latin includes them, with some variations of detail. As the work was not published in Herbert's lifetime, it seems that even HrE 119 was not improved enough.

I should particularly sett doune those thinges which are vulgarly spoken.[38]

As the corrections make explicit, this was hardly the approved style for describing the late king's foreign policy.[39]

The second passage is the longest: it occurs at the end of chapter IV, and reasons for cutting it are clear:

> [Nothing shall] hinder me yet to confesse freely that this expedition was undertaken wholly without my knowledge*, and not disclosed before it was fully resolved . . . I did, indeed, more than once foretell that which happned, although I will not deny but the undertakinge fell out worse than I could imagine; for though our slender provision for so great an affaire, and other concurringe circumstances, did seeme to promise no great successe, yet that it should prove so dommeageable to those in whose behalfe it was enterprised, did appear sufficiently by no argument.[40]

* in the earlier, fragmentary English MS (HrE 115), Herbert originally wrote "advise"; then changed it.

In the final Latin manuscript, and the printed Latin, this passage is omitted.

The first passage shed doubt on peace; this sheds doubt on war. They may appear inconsistent; but both derive from Herbert's continued loyalty to the "Winter King", Frederick, late of Bohemia - whom he seems to have considered the proper subject for an English expedition, with war against France a pragmatic second-best. He begins his account by setting the European scene, by means of a debate on English policy:

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[38] Expedition, pp. 2-3 = HrE 114, pp. 1-2. According to Powis, pp. xx-i, its previous owner, one David Laing, thought these corrections were in the hand of Charles I. Rossi is not convinced (III 486). It is certain, however, that they were not made by Herbert himself. (The handwriting in the first is not his, and it is in the same ink as the two deletions.)

[39] It is in fact rather like Isnard's condescending approval of the same piece of inaction: "[Charles] aberravit ab illâ Parentis probitate & virtute; quâ, vel Religionis praetextu, Rebellium in iustos Reges partes numquam esse fovendas duxit, nec fovuit; imò ipsummet Generum, Palatinum Comitem ad Rhenum, dum posset, tueri contra suum Imperatorem noluit" (Fuga Anglorum, p. 41). For Herbert's loyalty to Frederick, see below.

[40] Expedition, pp. 42-4 = HrE 114, pp. 23-4.

> we should not so much consider what ought as what might bee done. That counsailes must be proportioned alwayes accordinge to the power and force that must execute them. Therfore, that the warre, which could not without inconvenience bee made in Germany, should be transferd to France . . . More over that it might so fall out as our expedition thither might have its conclusion in a confederacy for a joynt unitinge our Forces to recover the Palatinate.[41]

Instead of directing their attention to Germany, the English had attacked France, and there made things worse for those they meant to aid. Herbert (unlike the gloating Isnard) does not mention the final fate of the Rochelais; but they provide a tragic sub-theme throughout his account. Their dilemma is presented starkly in chapter XVIII, when the French have succeeded in penetrating the blockade:

> Breefly, the Rochellers omitted nothinge wherby their affaires might subsiste, for though at out arrivall they seemed necligent, now they were ingaged in the busines it was necessary for them not to leave it of . .[42]

For Herbert, who had appealed vainly to Louis during his embassy on the Huguenots' behalf, saw very clearly what Buckingham had done to them:

> the Rochellers, who had much exhausted their Gardners [sic] to assist us, intreated ernestly that they might not bee forsaken in this calamitous time. For they said it must come to passe, that themselves beinge destitute of those provisions where with they furnished us must become a pray [sic] to the Enemy that was lodged under their walls.[43]

When Buckingham finally decided to abandon the expedition, they were desperate:

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[41] Expedition, pp. 8-9. Herbert's correspondence during his embassy shows his devotion to Frederick's cause, and attempts to move his king to action on his behalf.

[42] Expedition, p. 160.

[43] Expedition, p. 165. For Herbert's efforts as ambassador, see Rossi, II 163 ff: he advised Louis, on his own authority, to treat his subjects "of ye religion" decently (see letter to Naunton, printed Rossi III 449-51). "Gardners", though it looks like a misprint for "garners", is confirmed by the autograph MS (HrE 114), fo. 91. The Latin has "sua exhauserant".

> they ernestly entreated that his Excy would not departe the Island till they had gott in so much corne as might supply that wherewith they furnished us, otherwise that they must perish.[44]

The third censured passage, in chapter VII, concerns Buckingham himself, and his real motivation:

> [Richelieu] did somewhat slight my Lrd D. of Buckingham in his solemne Ambassage to the French Court. What occasion my Ld D. of Buckingham might give herof I will not dispute . . . Layinge aside therfore the antient affection he bore to that nation (which myselfe beinge Ambassador in France can sufficiently testify), and havinge gotten a just cause, he lost no time for the performinge his intentions . . . Of so much moment it was thought to bee, that these powerfull persons with their Princes were in ill termes with each other.[45]

This passage was originally more forthright still: in the earlier English MS, Herbert substituted the personal testimony "myselfe beinge Ambassador" for the non-committal "which himselfe beinge Ambassador . . can sufficiently justify"; and "just cause" was a second thought for "sufficient cause".[46]

The third passage was finally softened; but its significance is integral to Herbert's narration. Like other courtly observers, he perceived as a principal cause of the war the deep personal antipathy between Buckingham and Richelieu, first ministers in such different

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[44] Expedition, p. 211. The bitterness was not all on one side, unsurprisingly: Granville's "Journal" puts the English case: "the Rochellers would not be sensible of our Wants; but for the small Provision they sent, they sold it at a tripple Value of the Worth . . ." (p. 257).

The Huguenot view was expressed by Rohan, in terms close to Herbert's: "Voilà ce qui s'est passé en cette derniere guerre, où l'assistance que la Ville de la Rochelle a eu d'Angleterre, n'a servy qu'à manger ses vivres, & à faire resoudre les habitans de perir de faim . . ." (Memoires, p. 465).

[45] Expedition, pp. 65-6 = HrE 114, pp. 35-6.

[46] This MS (HrE 115) works quite hard on the second phrase: it starts with "iust cause enough", refines it to "sufficiently iust cause", and finally manages (in the margin) "a sufficient iust Cause". Plain "just cause" clearly took quite a struggle. (The earlier Latin MSS, HrE 117 and 118, are also restless here.)

traditions. Richelieu had, of course, a profound contempt for Buckingham, whom he described in his Mémoires as

> un homme de peu de noblesse de race, mais de moindre noblesse encore d'esprit, sans vertue et sans étude, mal né et plus mal nourri . . . il étoit entre le bon sens et la folie, plein d'extravagances, furieux et sans bornes en ses passions . . .
> Le Cardinal, par l'autorité du Roi et la sagese de ses conseils, essayoit de soutenir les affaires et avoit pitié de cet homme comme d'un furieux qui se déchire soi-même; mais il ne put pas tellement remédier à tout que la chrétienté en reçût un notable dommage.[47]

He despised Buckingham's unreliable posturing; no doubt he also resented the effortlessness with which the Duke gained and retained the unquestioning love of two kings ("fortune peu ordinaire", as he remarked, with restraint).[48]

Richelieu had not been in power for long, and, to many onlookers, his bad relations with the Duke made the two look childishly similar. The malicious Comte de Tillières, French ambassador to the Court of St. James, was well aware of their antipathy ("la prudence ne marche pas toujours avec la dignité", was his pious conclusion); he treats it in the comic mode, by means of two letters:

> En l'une . . qui était du cardinal de Richelieu, le Monsieur qui la commence n'étant en tête, mais seulement avec un espace de trois doigts, le duc de Buckingham, en lui faisant réponse, n'y en laissa point du tout; et en une autre, le duc de Buckingham n'ayant mis en la souscription que votre bien humble serviteur, le cardinal de Richelieu ne croyant pas qu'elle fût assez humble pour un grand cardinal et un premier ministre de l'État de France, lui mit votre très-humble serviteur, mais apres

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[47] Société de l'Histoire de France (ed.), Mémoires du Cardinal de Richelieu ed. (Paris, 1912-27), VI 247-9: "a man of little nobility by race, and less still in spirit, without virtue or learning, ill born and worse bred . . he was half-crazy, extravagant, frenzied, beyond restraint in his passions . . . The Cardinal, by the order and wise counsel of the King, tried to keep things going, and felt pity for him, as one might for a maniac in the process of destroying himself; but he could not do enough to prevent all Christendom from receiving severe hurt."

[48] Mémoires, V 84.

> l'effaça par un trait de plume qui n'empêchait pas la lecture. Enfin, ce procédé tout à fait ridicule et impertinent produisit la guerre entre ces deux couronnes . . .[49]

For Isnard, the hostility was simply an inexplicable weakness on the part of the Duke:

> Verùm flagrans invidiâ & odio in eum, cuius consiliis, & curâ sane maximâ, Rex Christianissimus potentissimâ ope sublevaret obsessos[50]

Herbert, of course, is writing on the other side; but he does not make Tillières' mistake of equating the two men. Unlike Isnard, he has not much to say on Richelieu, but that little is revealing. Before the remarks on Buckingham's reactions to him (passage 3 above), Herbert provides a quick sketch:

> In the meane while the Cardinall of Richelieu had the administration of affairs. Hee, indeed, beinge an active man, and fitt for businesses, did so watch over all that concernd the Kinge, that whatsoever he managed seemd to prosper; besides, it is said that hee proceeded ever in cleare and ouvert termes. This seemes sufficiently testifyed by the estate of those of the relligion in France [i.e. the Huguenots], the Cardinall havinge so behaved himselfe towards them, that, through his true dealinge they have beene more brought under then by others false. For while the Cardinall (as beinge

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[49] M.C. Hippeau (ed.), Mémoires inédites du Comte Leveneur de Tillières (Paris, 1862), p. 68. "In one . . from Cardinal Richelieu, the introductory 'Monsieur' was not at the top of the page, but only isolated [from the text of the letter] by a space the width of three fingers; so the Duke of Buckingham, in reply, left no space at all. In another, the Duke of Buckingham signed himself simply 'your right humble servant'; and Cardinal Richelieu, thinking this insufficiently humble for a great cardinal and a First Minister of the State of France, put 'your very humble servant', and then crossed it out, with a stroke of the pen which did not prevent it from being read. The result of this ridiculous and inappropriate behaviour was war between these two kingdoms". Tillières was Herbert's counterpart during his years as English ambassador to France; his Mémoires, composed almost entirely of his grievances against all those in power (including Louis XIII), should be read for comparison with Herbert's Life - which acquires thereby a new attractiveness.

See also the views (disparaging to both) of Padavini, the Venetian ambassador to Savoy (CSP. Ven. (1626-8), 335.

[50] Fuga Anglorum, p. 211: "Really he [Buckingham] was burning with spite and hatred towards him whose counsel and quite unmatchable care had been a most potent aid to the Most Christian King in raising the siege". To read Isnard's account as a whole is to share Herbert's contempt for him: his abuse of Buckingham here is occasioned by his annoyance (asserted several times) that the English retreated at all - an act of sheer spite, he opines - instead of waiting on the island for a completion of the massacre described with bloody glee on p. 236.

> held a man of unquestionable faithfullnes) did remove all doubtes and scruples out of their perplexed minds, they thought it better to trust to his words then their owne strength. Herupon at least [sic] they were divided, and therin occasion given to gaine or suppresse them the more easily . . .[51]

The patient ruthlessness of the procedure (as seen by Herbert) is perfectly captured in those smooth phrases: the reader is brought up sharp against the last sentence - inevitably linked to those before, as the climax to a long policy of misleading frankness.

In Herbert's account, Richelieu makes an unmistakable contrast to Buckingham. With the Duke, a different technique is used: since he is the central figure of the English version, Herbert supplies not one, extended character-sketch, but a series of characterizing comments. He appears to make a good entrance to the narrative:

> warre was resolved; my Lord Duke of Buckingham, for that towardlynes by which hee seemd borne and made to all that was extraordinary, beinge chose cheefe leader.[52]

Certainly it is a more colourful image than Richelieu's - "an active man, and fitt for businesses"; "the active Cardinall".[53] But Herbert proceeds to explore the implications of Buckingham's glamorous "towardlynes". The Rochelais, approached by Buckingham's envoys, urge him to wait

> till Soubize [one of the envoys] with some auxiliary forces were joyned with him. But my Lrd Duke of Buckingham (to whom all delay was more hurtfull then that it could bee repared by these meanes) answered that . . . hee was able to do allways his Master's businesse with his Master's forces.[54]

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[51] Expedition, pp. 64-5.

[52] Expedition, pp. 13-14.

[53] Expedition, pp. 64, 83.

[54] Expedition, p. 28.

During the course of his account - his first extended piece of English prose - Herbert displays a disconcerting knack with negative constructions, which tend to produce an effect of distance, coolness; most of them cluster around the actions of the Duke:

> my Lrd D. did indeed . . . shew the greatnes of his minde (but not with such successe as might answer it) from a prosperous beginninge, thinkinge all would bee sutable. But those whom immoderate hopes do flatter, some unprosperous accident doth, for the most part, undeceive.[55]

At the supreme crisis, when the besieged fortress offers to surrender, Buckingham's concern with his image is disastrous to the whole force:

> while sometimes hee thought it a brave thing to conquer, and subdue, and then againe it seemd no less glorious to spare the prostrate and reduce them to better sense, hee was in no little perplexity how to behave himselfe, but how unseasonably, that I may not say carelessly, the event seemd to teach.[56]

Buckingham's vacillations give the French twenty-four hours - and in that time they manage to relieve the fort:

> It greevd my Lrd Duke of Buckingham now that hee had shewed this facillity, for he knewe at last Clemency did become a Cominander, but not before the enemy was alredy overthrown.[57]

The friendly accounts of Gardiner and Lockyer rest largely on the thesis that Buckingham was unlucky with the arrival of supplies. Herbert reveals something more:

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[55] Expedition, p. 62. Compare (e.g.) pp. 245-6: "although my Lrd D. from the beginninge of the combate exhorted them equally to maintaine the reputation of their Cuntrey, yet a fitt place to give proofe of their valour beinge wantinge, all his speech was but in vaine. But neyther succeeded it well that our men did not seeme all of one minde ..."

The same technique is used for other events about which Herbert had reservations - fighting France in the first place, for example: "There that just cause was neyther wantinge, nor perchance good Havens and Frends would bee defective; besides that for performinge herof so vast expenses were not required" (pp. 8-9).

[56] Expedition, p. 139.

[57] Expedition, p. 156. Lockyer's account (Buckingham, p. 398) muffles this peripateia by not mentioning the fact that the fort had actually offered to surrender: "There could have been no greater blow to English hopes, for the citadel had been relieved at the very moment when it was about to capitulate."

> though my Lrd D. of Buckingham, by letters written not longe before to my Lrd of Holland, had declared his purpose of departinge, and consequently had rejected all supplies as unusefull at this time, yet in a latter Epistle hee declared that his purpose (through the Rochellers intentions) was altered ...
>
> My Lrd D. of Buckingham in the meane while, beinge not sufficiently constant to his first resolution, overthrowes both his owne and frends affaires.[58]

And still Buckingham will not return to England. To the amazement of both sides, he resolves on a sudden, last attack on the now much-strengthened fort:

> our souldgers and marriners were all so weake with want of victualls, or cast doune for want of health, that the best remedy for sicknes was their scarsity of meate, and for scarsity of meate their sicknes . . . Breefly, now there was no occasion to stay but such as would have affrighted away any other; that is, my Lrd Duke of Buckingham was ashamed to departe now the enemy drew neare ...[59]

The attack is, of course, a fiasco. Buckingham draws up his men "neare certaine windmills",

> and here that brave D. dares them to battaile. Hee did hope, indeed, that the often provoked French would at last fight as became souldgers; neyther did it hinder him that his companions were so diminished that hee had scarse 3000 foote and LVIII horse with him.[60]

As the English forces, badly depleted, retreat to their ships, Buckingham is Buckingham still:

> although my Lrd D. from the beginninge of the combate exhorted them equally to maintaine the reputation of their Cuntrey, yet a fitt place to give proofe of their valour beinge wantinge, all his speach was but in vaine.[61]

Even now, he is only with difficulty deterred from plunging into La Rochelle:

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[58] Expedition, pp. 164-5; 166. Rossi, of course, picks up the point ("Lo Sbarco", p. 324).

[59] Expedition, p. 199.

[60] Expedition, p. 226. The windmills recur, and begin to look suspiciously like a joke (Herbert was an enthusiastic reader of Spanish, and he owned Don Quixote); but of course they were serving a serious purpose (Buckingham wanted to destroy French sources of provision).

[61] Expedition, pp. 245-6.

> It may seeme strange to the reader now that my Lrd Duke's minde was not yet sufficiently prepared to bee gone ... But they who knewe well his inward disposition will easily afford beleefe to what shall bee here sett downe.[62]

A modern commander would be damned irrevocably by such a synopsis, in the eyes of a modern reader. But Herbert's narrative resists reading simply as a cumulative denunciation of Buckingham's mismanagement. Unlike Isnard, Herbert is in the position - less rewarding for a courtier, but more so for a literary artist - of defending the losing side: Buckingham, it is clear, is not the sort of man who can overcome the best-laid plans of the Cardinal (for whom "whatsoever he managed seemed to prosper"); but there are other criteria for admiration. Herbert undoubtedly saw the calamitous results of Buckingham's behaviour, and his shrewd eye traced the effect to the cause; but this did not mean that he did not feel the attraction of the Duke's style of battle.

> neyther did it hinder him that his companions were so diminished . . .[63]

Buckingham's reckless heroics are, among other things, heroic. Even the most absurd, horrible moment of all has its own mad grandeur:

> The day beginninge to breake those Frenchmen who were to shew the way presented themselves; ladders also were brought, but much shorter then was requisite; for beinge applied to the walls they did not reach them. In this unfortunate and unusuall manner of assaylinge our men yet bravely attempted the Cittadell . . . you would have said yet they did not so much pretende to victory as to a brave and honorable death. For when they almost attained the height of their ladders, and had no further meanes to go on, castinge their threatninge eies aboute, they remained unmovable till they were shott and tumbled doune. This hindred not their fellowes yet to followe ...[64]

After describing Louis' careful provisioning of his troops, Herbert explains why he has described it:

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[62] Expedition, p. 268.

[63] Expedition, p. 226.

[64] Expedition, pp. 203-4.

> All which I have the more willingly inserted, both that the vigilancy of that Kinge might remaine testified to posterity, as also that it may bee an argument how our small and sickly companies ... were not despised, but that as much care was used to force them out of Re as yf an huge army had been there.[65]

Herbert, ready himself, in younger days, to continue a duel with no more than the stump of a sword,[66] admired the courage of the English forces, as well as the "vigilancy" of the French king.

Herbert is helped in this line of defence by the fact that Isnard had chosen to accuse the English of cowardice (as well as treachery, violence, etc.). Above all else, he is irritated by Isnard's title: Fuga Anglorum. This is not, in fact, a promising approach for Isnard, since his own hero, Richelieu (to whom the work is dedicated), did not defeat Buckingham by aggression, but by attrition - and Isnard praises him for his "wonderful carefulness", his "incredible diligence": not the vocabulary of heroism.[67] The military hero, Toiras, who defended the fort against the English, is praised; but his glory is somewhat reduced by Isnard's determination to observe the hierarchy of the French command. The principle is clear from the Dedication, in which Richelieu's own triumph is explained:

> Laborat in Te LUDOVICUS . . .[68]

Louis, although he personally led forces against La Rochelle, never came to Ré himself - for the first few months, indeed, he was too sick to move at all; nevertheless, Isnard explains, he was the real power behind the beleaguered fort. His cheering letters to Toiras are printed in full; his "sapientia" is always the prime mover.

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[65] Expedition, p. 180.

[66] Lee, p. 133.

[67] Fuga Anglorum, pp. 82, 247.

[68] Fuga Anglorum, sig. a iii.

Isnard is far too much of a sycophant to provide any intelligent political analysis; but he does make one incidental remark which has a certain resonance. Richelieu, he says, was obliged to act without instructions from the King (as the latter was ill):

> Hinc solicitudo maior, & gravior cura premebat. Nam dum Principis imperio rem geris, maior securitas, minus periculum: dum iniussu, & inscio, rei summae incumbis, ita geras necesse est, ut postquam gesta intellexerit, nihil sit, quod Regium offendat animum, sed omnia imperantis votis respondeant. Res, Mediusfidius, ardua, & maioris quam quis credat, negotij.[69]

Like Herbert, Isnard provides a short history of the island of Ré; the differences between the two accounts are instructive. Isnard explains that the Rochelais had seized it (in 1622), but were beaten off under Louis:

> Victis enim navali praelio Rupellanis, classem Regiam, Anglorum, & Batavorum auxilia ducente Duce Monmorancio tunc Oceani Gallici Praefecto (Admirallium appellant) hoc nondum abrogato munere; accessit huic victoriae erepta Rebellibus, & Regi suo tandem vindicata Insula.[70]

The marginal note makes the essential point:

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[69] Fuga Anglorum, p. 80: "This caused greater anxiety and heavier care to lie upon him [Richelieu]. For if you act with the power of the ruler, there is more security and less danger; but if you occupy the highest position without the instructions or knowledge of the King, you must act in such a way that when he hears of it, there is nothing that can offend the Royal mind, but everything must correspond to the ruler's wishes. An incredibly strenuous undertaking."

[70] Fuga Anglorum, pp. 28-9. "For the Rochelais being once defeated in a naval battle, with the Duke of Montmorency, at that time still Commander of the Gallic Ocean (called an Admiral), leading the royal fleet, plus English and Dutch auxiliaries - by this victory, the island was taken from the rebels, and at last restored to its King." The "auxiliaries" were a very sore point with the English, who always claimed that they had lent the ships to Louis on the understanding that they would not be used against the Huguenots (see Buckingham's Manifesto, p. 3). Montmorency had ceased to be Admiral by no wish of his own: see the lively account of his career in C.J. Buckhardt (tr. B. Hoy), Richelieu and his Age (London, 1970), II 71 ff.

> Tamdem [sic] sub Ludovico XIII illis [Rupellanis] adempta [insula] imminentis ruinae initium & auspitium [Rupellanis] fuit.[71]

For Herbert, Louis was not the hero of the incident:

> Not-with-standinge [the Rochelais' efforts], by the meanes of the brave minded and nobly borne Duke of Montmorency, it was two yeares since brought into the subjection of his Kinge . .[72]

His admiration for the French aristocracy contributed to Herbert's complex response to the expedition. (The passage above reveals something of the the personal difficulties of his embassy, in which his concern for the Huguenots must have produced some awkwardness with his courtly acquaintances.)[73] He is careful to explain that he has no quarrel with the French - only with those who attack the "English Name".[74] For Montmorency, he had a special regard: he had been befriended by Montmorency's father, Henri I de Montmorency-Damville, on his first visit to France (he gives him lavish recognition in the Life); Henri II, the conqueror of Ré, had been courteous to him during his embassy.[75] Unlike Isnard, Herbert is interested less in Louis (whom he hardly mentions) than in Toiras, the commander - who had responded in chivalrous fashion to some of Buckingham's gestures (when Buckingham sent him a gift of melons, he returned orange flower water and cyprus-powder;

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[71] Fuga Anglorum, p. 28: "At last, under Louis XIII, Ré was taken from the Rochelais, and was the beginning and portent of their impending ruin."

[72] Expedition, pp. 49-50.

[73] Herbert's sincere distress at the Huguenots' peril was remarked by the Venetian ambassador to France - who was coldly amused by his "frantic theology", on hearing him protest against the idea of religious persecution (CSP. Ven. 1619-21, 494). His aristocratic connexions perhaps explain why he had so much less to say of the Huguenots than the Palatine, after his return.

[74] Expedition, "Ad Lectorem", p. xliv.

[75] See the letters between them, now in PRO 30/53/10, printed in the Montgomeryshire Collections XX (London, 1886), 93, 220.

an exchange of letters between them on the subject of capitulation, courteous to the last degree, is printed in full).[76] It is not, perhaps, surprising to learn that Richelieu himself was much irritated by Toiras' failure to equip himself properly before the siege began:

> Il avoit su la descente des Anglois trois mois auparavant et, comme si c'étoit assez de parler, il se contentoit de se vanter qu'il ne manquoit de rien et de refuser l'assistance de tout le monde . . . Il pouvoit, par le loisir que les Anglois lui donnèrent depuis le jour de leur descente, se munir de toutes choses sans frais . . . mais il étoit si troublé, et tous ceux qui étoient avec lui, qu'on eût dit qu'il ne vouloit pas gâter le logement de l'armée angloise[77]

At one point, Herbert seems to hint at an explanation of the odd discrepancy in his account between the high worth of the French commanders, and their failure to respond to English belligerence. It occurs in a description of Gaston d'Orléans, the King's brother, on campaign:

> Aboute this time the Duke of Orleance, the Kinge's only brother, came to the French Army . . . Howsoever there was nothinge done at that time for the releefe of the beseeged, the cause whereof neyther doth Isnard teach, nor myself require at his hands. Let it suffice that it was not through this generous Prince's fault yf any thinge that might bee for the honor of France were omitted.[78]

Rossi's comment is surely justified:

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[76] Monet and Isnard also print these letters: Herbert gives them twice over in the English version, first in French and then in English; in the Latin text, they appear four times, first in Latin, then in French, then in Isnard's Latin, then in Monet's. Buckingham sent the gifts of Toiras as a token to his wife; she, however, not appreciating the particular game in which her husband and his foe were engaged, refused to use them for fear they might be poisoned (Lockyer, Buckingham, p. 392).

[77] Memoires, VII 104: "He had known that the English were coming three months before, and, as if talk were enough, he contented himself with boasting that he needed nothing, and refusing everybody's assistance . . . With the leisure the English gave him from the day of their arrival, he could have provided himself with everything without expense . . . but he was so insane, as were all with him, that one would have thought he did not want to spoil the landing of the English army . . ." Richelieu ends his account of the expedition with a harsh denunciation of the ambition and greed of Toiras (VII 277-83).

[78] Expedition, pp. 91-2.

> pare, da certe allusioni di Herbert e da alcune frasi del Bassompierre, che effettivamente il duca d'Orleans volesse tentare l'impresa di cacciare gli Inglesi da Ré e ne avesse gia la possibilità, ma che per gelosia tanto il re che il cardinale gli impedissero qualunque mossa decisiva.[79]

When Buckingham finally surrenders, he does so in the chivalric mode - and insists on giving the glory to Toiras:

> the Honor of havinge defended the Cittadell belonged to Toiras only, through whose invincible patience and courage (beinge above all constraint) hee must confesse himselfe overcome.[80]

Toiras had served his King well, and would do so again; but he did not end happily:[81] after a series of successes and honours, culminating in the Marshalship, he was suspected of treachery, and died in exile.[82] Montmorency, lord of Languedoc, was to fare worse still.

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[79] Rossi, "Lo Sbarco", p. 320: "it seems from certain allusions in Herbert and some phrases in Bassompierre that the Duke of Orleans wanted to attempt the task of chasing the English from Ré and had already the opportunity, but that the jealousy of both King and Cardinal prevented him from making any decisive move." Bassompierre was the brother-in-law of Tillières; his account provides a vivid picture of the difficulties of ruling the French nobility. Being a Marshal of France, he positively refused to command alongside the duc d'Angoulême (who was not), and was only kept from flouncing back to Paris by the assurance that he could command a force distinct from the royal army. In the passage to which Rossi seems to refer, he describes the King's reluctance to send Gaston, "jalloux de la gloire que son frere y pourroit acquerir" (Chantérac (ed.), Journal de ma Vie: Mémoires de Bassompierre (Paris, 1875), III 297).

[80] Expedition, p. 213. Herbert takes this account from Isnard; he rejects Isnard's conclusion to it, in which Buckingham acknowledges his "flight": "for that my Lrd Duke never thought nor spake in this sense I dare confidently affirme . . ." (p. 214).

[81] This makes him a rather unfortunate example of an aristocrat who was well rewarded by Richelieu for his loyalty, as he is in D. Parker, "The Social Foundation of French Absolutism 1610-1630", P&P 53 (1971), 75.

[82] See de la Chenaye-Desbois and Badier (eds)., Dictionnaire de la Noblesse (Paris, 1864), IV 887-8 (under "Caylar"): "il fut disgracié par des motifs particuliers au premier Ministre, & fort éloignés de ternir la gloire du Maréchal, qui, exilé, dépouillé de son Gouvernement & de ses pensions, fut cependant choisi par le Duc de Savoie . . . pour être Lieutenant-Général de son armée . . ."

He recklessly joined forces with Gaston against Louis and Richelieu, lost, and was put to death. Tapié gives a memorable account of his last stand:

> The governor of Languedoc, armoured and helmeted like a knight, took part in the battle personally and fought to the utmost of his ability using both sword and pistol. He broke through to the seventh rank of the royal army. He was wounded in the face and blood was pouring from his mouth when his horse rolled to the ground, almost crushing him beneath its weight. "A moi, Montmorency!" he was shouting . . .[83]

The destruction of the Huguenots was only one of Richelieu's four main aims, according to his Testament Politique:

> Je lui promis [à Votre Majesté] d'employer toute mon industrie et toute l'autorité qu'il lui plaisoit me donner pour ruiner le parti huguenot, rabaisser l'orgueil des Grands, réduire tous ses sujets en leur devoir et relever son nom dans les nations étrangères au point où il devoit être.[84]

Since the Huguenots and the aristocrats were both dangerous, and were always forming dangerous alliances,

> There was [in the 1620s] a deliberate and systematic attempt to detach the nobility from the Huguenot party and to integrate them into the movement against La Rochelle.[85]

The reduction of La Rochelle was a victory of the greatest consequence for Richelieu's policy. It was followed by the defeat of the Huguenot strongholds in southern France, and clinched by the Edict of Alès, which annulled most of the privileges deriving from the Edict of Nantes: the Huguenots were to be allowed to keep their religion, but denied any special areas of their own, the right to form political assemblies, and the right to raise arms.

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[83] V.-L. Tapié (tr. and ed. D. McN. Lockie), France in the Age of Louis XIII and Richelieu (rev. ed. Cambridge, 1983), pp. 307-8.

[84] L. André (ed.), Testament Politique (Paris, 1947), p. 95: "I promised His Majesty that I would use all my industry and all the authority he pleased to give me to ruin the Huguenot party, to lower the pride of the great men, to subdue all his subjects to their duty and to raise his name among foreign nations to the point where it should be."

[85] D. Parker, La Rochelle and the French Monarchy: Conflict and Order in Seventeenth-Century France (London, 1980), p. 115.

As ambassador to France in the early years of Louis, Herbert had watched their positioning worsening. He had been recalled for the second and last time in the very month in which Richelieu became First Minister; he thus had very little personal experience of him, but it is clear from his library that he followed the Cardinal's career with interest.[86] Though he left no explicit verdict on Richelieu's activities, something can perhaps be gleaned from his remarks on another great cardinal-politician, less fortunate in his king:

> One error seem'd common to both [Wolsey and Henry], which was that such a Multiplicity of Offices and places were invested in him. For as it drew much envy upon the Cardinal in particular, so it derogated no little from the Regall authority, while one man alone seemed to exhaust it all. Since it becommeth Princes to do like good Husbandmen when they sow their grounds, which is, to scatter and not to throw all in one place.[87]

The programme outlined in the Testament Politique would have been no surprise to Herbert, if we may believe his retrospective account:

> the Duke of Guise coming to see me one day, said, that they should never be happy in France, until those of the religion [the Huguenots] were rooted out: I answered, that I wondered to hear him say so: and the Duke demanding why, I replied, that whensoever those of the religion were put down, the turn of the great persons, and governors of provinces of that kingdom, would be next . . . which speech of mine was fatal, since those of the religion were no sooner reduced unto the weak condition in which they now are, but the governors of provinces were brought lower, and

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[86] The manuscript catalogue, NLW 5298E, contains several works by and about Richelieu, from the 1630s (mostly on fos. 22v-23v). The one surviving letter to Herbert from his admirer James Howell, in Paris, is mostly devoted to description of the Cardinal: "There be some Sycophants here that idolize him, and I blush to read what profane Hyperboles are printed up and down of him . . . Certainly he is a rare Man, and of a transcendent reach, and they are rather Miracles than Exploits that he hath done, tho' these Miracles be of a sanguine dye (the colour of his habit), steep'd in blood . ." (J. Jacobs (ed.), Epistolae Ho-Elianae: the Familiar Letters of James Howell (London, 1890), pp. 352-3). Howell later wrote a history of Louis, Lustra Ludovici (London, 1646), in which he did what he could to soften the English defeat at Ré (pp. 77-85), while acknowledging all the tactical errors, such as ignoring la Prée.

[87] The Life and Raigne, p. 315.

curbed much in their power and authority, and the Duke of Guise first of them all: so that I doubt not but my words were well remembered.[88]

The Expedition indicates a divided attitude to the enterprise: admiration in the face of prudence, and detachment despite the requirements of patriotism. On the one side, we see Buckingham, filling the pages with his relentless dash; on the other, Richelieu, the coming man, mentioned very sparely, but established from the beginning as the controlling presence behind the French strategy. The shape of Herbert's account provides a kind of counterpoint to its contents: at the beginning, the event is placed in historical context, with a marked lack of enthusiasm; by the end, the English force alone is left, as like as Herbert can make it to the army at Agincourt:

wee obtained a famous victory by fine force in the open feeld at Samblanceau . . .[89]

But meanwhile the Duke, who began so bravely, comes to an end with something rather like a whimper:

At lengthe comminge to Plimouth, my Lrd Duke took Post horse to go to Court, where, fallinge on his knees before his gratious Kinge and Mr, hee was received not with out the wonted testimonies of acceptance.[90]

Buckingham survived the campaign, but only by a few months. His assassin, John Felton, claimed that he was inspired to the act by the parliamentary Remonstrance, issued in June 1628; among the charges brought against the Duke was his mishandling of the Ré expedition.[91] But Felton hardly needed that reminder. He had fought at Ré himself.

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[88] Lee, pp. 216-18.

[89] Expedition, pp. 283-4.

[90] Expedition, pp. 280-1.

[91] See the report in Rushworth, Historical Collections (London, 1682), pp. 619 ff., especially p. 624.

Histories of Failure

Herbert's bequest to Jesus College included a folio edition, with parallel Latin text, and commentary by Franciscus Portus, of Thucydides.[92] It is not unreasonable to assume that the famous Classical prototype of his disastrous subject occurred to him as he wrote: the great Athenian expedition to Sicily in 414 BC, in which, as his acquaintance Hobbes translated it at just this time,

> being wholly overcome in every kinde, and receiving small losse in nothinge, their Army, and Fleet, and all that ever they had, perished (as they use to say) with an universall destruction. Few of many returned home. And thus passed the businesse concerninge Sicily.[93]

The ordering of Herbert's penultimate chapter is peculiarly Thucydidean: after the Duke's "wonted" reception, Herbert turns his attention to the men under his command:

> the next question was of casheeringe our men, which beinge done, those who outlived sicknes and mischance returned home, where attending their hurts many recovered, some also, through tedious and Cronicall diseases, pined away. And this is the summary narration of the voyage of the Isle of Re, accordinge to the relation given me, in which I protest to have written nothinge out of Partiality.[94]

But whereas Thucydides' epilogue to the story is a short, stark depiction of the dazed response given to this news in Athens, Herbert ends with a rousing "Peroration" to the French:

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[92] FK, p. 78. The book is now missing.

[93] Eight Bookes of the Peloponnesian Warre, (London, 1629), p. 467. The parallel occurred to Gardiner: "The officers were . . . sweeping the horizon with their telescopes for the first signs of Holland's fleet, as in old days the soldiers of Nicias gazed across the Sicilian sea for the triremes of Demosthenes" (VI 195).

[94] Expedition, p. 281. This is the end of the chapter.

> our victories were masculine, glorious, and due to our virtue; . . yours was only oportune, obnoxious, and momentary.[95]

Thucydides, in the view of Hobbes,

> affected least of any man the acclamations of Popular Auditories, and wrote not his History to win present applause . . . but for a Monument to instruct the Ages to come.[96]

Herbert, obviously, was writing a work of a very different kind; nevertheless, his claim to impartiality is not entirely disingenuous. Unlike Isnard, he does not conceal (or gloat over) the worst actions of his side. Like Thucydides, he registers his disapproval of the venture from the beginning (see the second censured passage). Still, once it happened, he accepted a share in it - assumed, as he saw it, the double role of letters and arms:-

> Sed ne expatiemur nimis, nos quidem qui (Genialem quamdam sortem secuti) utrisque aliquamdiu militavimus. . .[97]

Thus doubly equipped, he recreates the campaign both as current event (so he challenges the French at the end), and as distant failure: "And this is the summary narration of the voyage of the Isle of Re . . ."

Something of the same combination appears again in the much longer, strictly historical work that was Herbert's next assignment from the King.

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[95] Expedition, pp. 284-5.

[96] Eight Bookes, sig. a2.

[97] Expedition, "Ad Lectorem", p. xlv: "let us not digress too much, we who (following some native destiny) have fought a while with both". The idea is picked up again at the end, in his address to the French: "To you (whether brave or lerned) French, I must now appeale awhile . . ." (p. 281).

The Life and Raigne of King Henry VIII (1649)

In 1635, Herbert produced two memoranda of rather different kinds. In April, he wrote again about the state of Europe, and England's proper response. A dispirited note sounds from the beginning: some Princes, he acknowledges, do not like advice; and he himself

> beinge more remote then many other, from your Majesties Affaires, I shall not bee able to speake accordinge to those premisses, which are requisite for deliveringe a solid opinion . . .[98]

Nevertheless, he is on the Council of War; and thus has a certain locus standi. The thesis of his paper is that Spain is the natural enemy, and not the Low Countries - Spain is never going to help in the recovery of the Palatinate. And Charles should not be frightened by Dutch Republicanism: that will never spread to his own domain:

> since the wisest of them [sc. the Dutch] find, that republiques in steed of one Kinge have many, and that besides wee in generall acknowledge your Mtyes government so temperate and mild that wee thinke ourselves not only much happier then they but then any Nation livinge.[99]

Herbert was not alone in his desire to redirect English foreign policy towards more Protestant alliances; but Charles, as he knew quite well, was not over-fond of advice. There is nothing to suggest that the paper was taken seriously.[100]

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[98] NLW 1959 Powis Bequest Parcel XII no. 10 = Beal HrE 92. It is discussed, and largely transcribed, by Rossi, II 480-4 nn. In particular, he claimed, he was not well-informed about the fishing disputes; though since he certainly owned his friend Grotius's book on the subject (NLW 5298E, fo. 24v), this may be too modest.

[99] MS, fo. 3v = Rossi, II 484 n. 21. An appeal for "a more strict alliance with the States of the United Provinces", as against "the Pope and his adherents", formed the 17th of the 19 Propositions of 1642; but Charles, like his father, had no political sympathy with Holland.

[100] Charles was, in fact, secretly negotiating with Spain at this time, and also attempting to impede Richelieu's plans for an anti-Spanish coalition by dragging out negotiations for a

But the other paper, the so-called "Paper on Ecclesiastical Supremacy", was more successful. This was first published by H.R. Hutcheson in 1944 from a collation of the two extant manuscripts;[101] he remarks that it is derived from part of the Tortura Torti of Lancelot Andrewes (1609), a defence of the Oath of Allegiance:

> whoever thought of drawing on Andrewes for arguments displayed diabolical ingenuity, for what was intended as a defence of Anglicanism against the papacy was now used to promote the subjection of Anglicanism to the throne.[102]

The paper follows Andrewes in extracting from the Old Testament examples of kings who controlled religious developments; then two new sentences are added:

> To which also our Princes have added Certayne Considerations of State, as namely, That it is unsafe to divide the people, betwixt temporall, and spirituall obedience, or suspend them, betwixt the Terrours of a secular death, and Eternall punishm[en]ts. Moreover as they have thought it unfit that a Subject should partake a supreme Authority with them in Ecclesiasticall Affayres; soe have they found it noe lesse dangerous to have invested in a farre remote, and obnoxious Prelate, who may sometymes want the Power, and sometymes the meanes of giving that Order, which is requisite.[103]

The implicit protest against persecution, on the one hand, and disorder, on the other (in which both extreme Protestantism and the Church of Rome are deftly implicated) is thoroughly Herbertian.

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possible alliance with France (see Gardiner, VII 351 ff.).

However, if the paper did Charles no good, it did Herbert no harm: when the Council of War was renewed in 1637, Herbert was included in it again (CSP. Dom. (1636-7), 158 - this time his name appeared on the official list).

[101] Hutcheson (ed.), De Religione Laici, pp. 183-6; the MSS are Beal HrE 128 and 129. The work is discussed (briefly) by Rossi, II 494-5.

[102] p. 183.

[103] p. 185.

It is not a sycophantic paper.[104] As Hutcheson observes, Herbert, unlike Andrewes, gives the "important final position" in his account to the limitations to royal power: one in particular, though it came from the bishop, must have been sincere:

> Not to arrogate any power of Creating new Articles of Faith, or bringing in stray, & different forms of religious worship.[105]

If Hutcheson is right about the origins of the paper, it would be interesting to know quite what the brief was. The fact that one manuscript, dated 14 May 1635, bears the inscription "shewed to his Grace the Arch Bpp [sic] of Canterbury by the Kings Command" seems to prove that Charles accepted it, and was not (as Rossi assumed) irritated by its stress on kingly limits.[106] The reason for inverting Andrewes' order is less likely to be any desire on Herbert's part to sustain the authority of the clergy, than a desire to please Charles - whose ideas on the relations of Church and State were not, perhaps, as "Erastian" as some.

It was one of many ways in which he differed from his mighty predecessor, King Henry VIII.

It is not known exactly when Herbert began to work on his great History. According to the working manuscript, corrected and partly written by him, it was begun in 1634 and

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[104] Pace Lee, p. 266, who calls it a "very imperfect and servile version of his own theological opinions".

[105] p. 186.

[106] "Questa dichiarazione antierastiana poteva esser gradita a Laud, ma non tanto forse al Re o almeno alla fazione più assolutistica della Corte" (II 495). Rossi clearly did not read Hutcheson; he thought the whole work original. Lee, rather oddly, thinks that "the King did him a deservedly ill service" by showing it to Laud (p. 266).

completed in 1638; but that may refer only to the writing, not the research.[107] The dedication lays the responsibility - and thus demands for gratitude - on the King:

> I present here in all humble manner unto Your Maiesty a Worke, the Authority whereof is solely Yours: not yet so much because it tooke its first beginning from Your Majesties particular, and (I may say) unexpected commands, but that the parts thereof, as fast as I could finish them, were lustrated by Your gracious Eye . . .[108]

Perhaps Charles was not really as insistent as Herbert liked to assert; but he provided the budding scholar with accommodation at Richmond, and also with access to State documents and other material not generally available.[109] These he used conscientiously: scholarly readers have always been impressed by his diligence, which introduced a new standard into writing on Henry.

> The lord Herbert [commented Bishop Burnet] judged it unworthy of him to trifle as others had done, and therefore made a more narrow search into records and original

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[107] The original MS is Jesus College MSS 71-4 (it is bound in four folio volumes), now in the Bodleian. It was apparently bound by its first owner, the antiquary Henry Topp: the first few sheets comprise a table of contents drawn up by him, and some jottings (signed) recording his progress in recovering missing leaves. This MS is Beal HrE 121. There are two more complete MSS (HrE 122 and 123), also in the Bodleian (MS Ashmole 1143; MS Bodl. 910); and an autograph rough draft of a part (HrE 124), in the National Library of Wales.

HrE 125, also in the National Library, should not be included in the Herbert catalogue (pace Rossi): it is a staunchly Foxean account of Henry's victories over the Pope, complete, marked with Herbert's monogram, and no doubt consulted by him.

On HrE 121, Herbert dates the beginning of the work to 1634. Rossi accepts this (II 467 f.), although (because?) Lee opts for an earlier date (p. 264), on the strength of a letter from Herbert to the Secretary of State in 1639, claiming to have spent lavishly on historical research "for these last seven years".

[108] The Life and Raigne, sig. A2-v.

[109] Herbert made full use of the Cotton MSS; Cotton's library was closed by royal command in 1629, and it is not clear that scholars had free access to it again until the Interregnum. See K. Sharpe, Sir Robert Cotton 1586-1631: History and Politics in Early Modern England (Oxford, 1979), pp. 80-2.

> papers than all that had gone before him; and with great fidelity and industry has given us the history of king Henry the Eighth . . .[110]

Herbert's canvas was wide:

> I am the more particular in the Relation of these passages [he has just given detailed accounts of Spanish-French negotiations in 1526], both that the example is rare, as that it leads to the understanding of that which followeth in our History; and the rather, that it was the subject that chiefly took up the time and thoughts of our King, whensoever his prospect was turnd on forraigne affaires[111]

In one important case, he preserved a document otherwise lost - the letter, tremulously courageous, from Cranmer to Henry, hinting at a pardon for the condemned Cromwell.[112]

> Like most historians, ancient and modern, Herbert made Truth his banner:
>
> I intend not to describe him otherwise, either good or bad, but as he really was.[113]

But that, he recognized, was an elusive goal:

> It is not easie to write that Prince's History, of whom no one thing may constantly be affirmed. . . It is unpossible to draw his Picture well who hath severall countenances.[114]

Henry's reign followed its own harsh pattern, not easily summed up as a whole. Herbert tried various techniques: at times he defends him, in his Expedition manner - that is, by attacking a foreign commentator:

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[110] G. Burnet, The History of the Reformation of the Church of England ed. N. Pocock (Oxford, 1865), I 5-6.

[111] Life and Raigne, p. 194. Holinshed explicitly directs his readers, in such cases, to histories of the country concerned.

[112] Life and Raigne, p. 457. This is accepted by Cranmer scholars (eg. J. Ridley, Cranmer (Oxford, 1965), pp. 201-3) and printed in J.E. Cox (ed.), The Works of Thomas Cranmer, Archbishop of Canterbury, Martyr, 1556 (Cambridge, 1844-6), II 401.

[113] Life and Raigne, sig. A2v.

[114] Life and Raigne, p. 1.

> for Monluc himself, it may be doubted where he was in either of these Fights, since he makes no particular mention of them, nor gives any good account of his person . . .
>
> All which I have more particularly observed out of our Histories and Records, because, notwithstanding his shamefull flight, he strives so much to vilifie our Nation.[115]

But Henry's most effective belligerence, unfortunately, was directed against his own subjects and wives; and sometimes Herbert seems acutely conscious of the absurdity of a tactful treatment:

> [possible spouses] stood off, as knowing in what a slippery estate they were if the King, after his receiving them to bed, should, through any mistake, declare them no Maids . . .[116]

Occasionally he extracts events of personal interest from the long annals of the reign: so Montmorency, ancestor of his old host, appears in a small but colourful rôle, with his house, so dear to Herbert:

> The admirable situation whereof, and variety of country pleasures about it, made the Emperor wish he had such another place, when [i.e. "although"] it had cost him one of his Provinces . . .[117]

A rather long passage is devoted to his own ancestors - a civilizing force, he insists, in the wild Wales of the early sixteenth century; but also a breed of noble warriors:

> by my great Grand-father Sir Richard Herbert (son of Sir Richard Herbert, renowned for that alone he passed and returned twice thorow an hostile Army at the Battell in Banbury-Field, 8 Edw. IIII.) such Justice was used, as I finde him in our Records highly commended to the Kings Counsell . . .[118]

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[115] Life and Raigne, pp. 522, 523.

[116] Life and Raigne, p. 497.

[117] Life and Raigne, p. 451. See his sonnet "Made upon the Groves near Merlow Castle" (Smith, p. 54).

[118] Life and Raigne, p. (370). The pagination in the first edition is chaotic; I shall give in brackets any number on its second appearance (none appears more than twice; but some have no numbers at all).

But the tone is usually very different. The one clue we have about Herbert's motivation (outside the work itself) is a disconcerting report by Gregorio Panzani, papal agent at Court, who claimed that Herbert had told him that he intended to treat Henry unfavourably, and the Church of Rome as favourably as he could.[119] Panzani would hardly have liked the result; but the story is interesting as an indication of Herbert's eirenic intentions. In telling a story of continual strife, he withdrew into a mood of disengagement: the style is on the whole distant and dispassionate (the remark about the reservations of eligible wives is quite typical). In passages closely imitated from earlier writers, Herbert invariably seems less involved.

There is something to be said for this, of course; but many readers have found it strangely frustrating. In 450 years of Henrician biography, most people have felt quite strongly about him, and readers of Herbert have been irritated by the deadpan tone - the direction of their irritation following their own ideas on the subject. So Rossi, predictably magisterial:

> Fraintendendo Riforma e scisma, vedendo in essi sforzi verso la libertà, mentre non lo erano mai stati, a Herbert sfuggivano i veri scopi delle riforme di Enrico VIII: il miglioramento morale, una Chiesa nazionale, l'equilibrio fra potere civile e potere ecclesiastico[120]

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[119] Panzani wrote two letters to Rome, 17/27 April, 1635 and 15/25 July, 1635 (published by Rossi, II 498-9). Herbert apparently told him that he was pleased with Rome for not censuring DV "severamente" (an odd response, as it was put on the Index in 1633): the second letter strongly suggests that it was a desire for still less severity that prompted him to cultivate Panzani. He went on, it seems, to say that he acknowledged the Roman Church as the mother of all churches, and that he would be glad to submit DV to the Pope. How much value motherhood has in this context is not clear. Rossi comments: "da questi colloqui, da queste promesse, nulla uscì di positivo" (II 499).

[120] "Misunderstanding Reformation and schism, seeing in them impulses towards liberty, which they never were, Herbert failed to see the real scope of Henry's reforms: moral improvement, a National Church, balance between civil and ecclesiastical power . . ." (II 513).

For Rémusat, by contrast, Henry was a "tyran bizarre" - and he disliked and despised what he saw as an air of bland approval. He summed up:

> Il est froid pour toutes les causes que son temps trouvait sacrées . . . il y a des lacunes dans son livre, parce qu'il y en avait dans son esprit.[121]

Whatever the truth of the second point, the first is hard to deny. But it tempts the critic to invent ways of getting round it. Even Rossi, who insists on the flatness of the narrative, tries to liven it up for himself by devising hatreds for Herbert, such as Thomas More: "he must have been very repulsive to Herbert", he insists - and yet the latter describes him quite placidly as "so excellent a Person".[122]

However, later writers have found real points of interest, by considering more profoundly the context in which Herbert wrote. Both Kimelman and Hill have cultivated fertile areas: for Hill, Herbert's interest in the reign is entirely theological, and his attitude is, once again, ironical:

> No more ironic background can be imagined for the emergence of Herbert's last portrait of that prince of "his own" - as opposed to a general - reformation.[123]

- while for Kimelman, his chief concern is political:

> Herbert goes beyond portraiture; he strongly and courageously emphasizes the fact that Henry was a master of concilation and persuasion who was in harmony with the

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[121] Lord Herbert de Cherbury, p. 105. Kimelman notes that the most vigorous response came from Swift, who owned the book, and annotated it in characteristic fashion: "Hellish Dog of a King", "The profligate Dog of a King", etc.; as for Herbert, "This palliating Author hath increased my Detestation of his Hellish Hero in every Article." (These notes are published in H. Davis (ed.) The Prose Works of Jonathan Swift (Oxford, 1939-68), V 247-51).

[122] La Vita, II 512; Life and Raigne, p. 344.

[123] Edward, Lord Herbert, p. 63. Hill's discussion is, as usual, short, incisive, and stimulating.

> law and with his subjects. In effect, he handed Charles a mirror in which the Stuart could see the inverse reflection of his own reign . . .[124]

Both of these ideas are helpful, and deserve to be followed; but stress on either, or even both, of them exclusively can give a misleading view of the work. As in the Expedition, Herbert fluctuates between detachment and involvement: the contrast in the later work is much more pronounced. For here he both refuses repeatedly and explicitly to express an opinion (restricting himself to the dryest of comments) - and also includes interests of his own in naked form, inventing speeches for his personae in order to do so.[125] Whereas the Expedition was composed with involvement and detachment in alternation, the Life and Raigne is a narrative with another kind of narrative inside it.

Herbert, Henry, and the Historians

Herbert drew on original material, much of it unavailable to earlier writers; but he drew on those writers too. He did not confine himself to England, but made use also of Continental works, for example Sleidanus (for the Reformation), Sandoval (for Spain and the Empire), and Sarpi (for the Council of Trent).[126] His own technique, however, is best demonstrated

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[124] Kimelman, p. 60.

[125] For examples of this, see below. Scholarly historians of the early seventeenth century were much more wary of this habit than their predecessors: Camden was firm: "Speaches and Orations, unlesse they be the very same verbatim, or else abbreviated, I have not meddled withall, much less faigned" (The Historie of the most Renowned and Victorious Princesse Elizabeth, late Queene of England . . . Composed by Way of Annals tr. Robert Norton (London, 1630), sig. B2v. (The final Latin version of the work was first published in 1615.)

[126] Kimelman has a thorough discussion of the sources Herbert used, tracing them where possible to the two library catalogues (pp. 75-99). I shall discuss only those of particular interest, which I shall examine in more detail than Kimelman.

by comparison with other works devoted to Henry, which are those he most often cites: above all, Hall, Holinshed, Polydore Vergil, and John Foxe.[127]

Henry VIII, in 1634, looked, or could look, rather different from Henry VIII in 1550. The Tudor accounts of him are most interesting, perhaps, for what they show of the authors' own times. For Hall, Henry was a hero - the man who captured Boulogne (for a time, at least), and brought down the clergy. However, writing as he was at the beginning of the next reign, in an England suddenly very Protestant, he was constrained to note the misfortunes - martyrdoms, as Foxe was soon to make them - that befell zealous Reformers under Henry. For this, he had two basic methods: blaming the clergy (usually Wolsey - but also Bonner, at this time safely in the Tower); and rushing through, or entirely omitting the incident, usually filling the space with exhaustive descriptions of clothes, pageants, and the trappings of glorious monarchy. An example: the year of the Six Articles, which he himself calls (or rather, quotes "some others" as calling) "bloudy", is filled up with a lengthy description of the arrival of Anne of Cleves.[128]

In the first edition, the life of Henry comes to 263 folio sheets; half of them are devoted to the first fifteen years. Even a reader whose knowledge of the reign derived wholly from Hall would sense the constraint, the odd lacunae in his account: the trial of the Reformer John Lambert (one of Foxe's principal Henrician heroes) is reported - but elicits no comment whatever from Hall, because Henry himself presided, and acted as chief interrogator; the death of Anne Boleyn (the very worst embarrassment for all Protestant

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[127] Herbert was well-acquainted also with the Catholic tradition, exemplified most notoriously in Nicholas Sanders' De Origine et Progressu Schismatis Anglicani (first pub. 1585), which he discusses; he owned this, and also a Catholic play about Henry, Henricus VIII, seu schisma Anglicanum, tragoedia (Louvain, 1624) (FK, pp. 109, 114).

[128] E. Hall, The Triumphant Reigne of Kyng Henry the VIII, in The Union of the Two Noble and Illustre Famelies of Lancastre and Yorke (London, 1550).

commentators) occupies half of one side - as opposed to her coronation, which takes ten - and at no point does Hall reveal what she was supposed to have done. The nearest he allows himself to a regret is a guarded comment on Thomas Cromwell:

> in deede he was a man, that in all his doynges, semed not to favor any kynde of Popery, nor could not abide the snoffyng pride of some prelates, which undoubtedly whatsoever else was the cause of his death, did shorten his life . . .[129]

"Whatsoever else" it was, it was not, clearly, to be blamed on Henry.

Holinshed's later, composite account follows precisely the same pattern: over two-thirds of the work is lavished on the first fifteen years, and the author ensures that the final picture left in the reader's mind is one of spectacular clothing - endless Christmasses at Greenwich - jousts in honour of weddings - revels - coronations of ephemeral queens.[130]

There is a charm to all this, and an appearance of naiveté; but a closer look reveals something else: the operation of censorship - more than half internalized, perhaps - on anything that might threaten Henry's glory.[131]

On one thing all the sixteenth-century chroniclers were agreed: the villain of the reign was Wolsey. (The fact that Henry drove him to death half-way through it no doubt has something to do with the top-heavy structure of the histories, noted above.) On Wolsey everything could be blamed: prodigality; greed; oppression, especially of London. Wolsey

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[129] Triumphant Reigne, fo. ccxlii. The wonderful "snoffyng" is watered down to "snuffing" in the adoption of this paragraph by both Holinshed and Grafton.

[130] I calculate that of the 3rd volume of the Chronicles of England (London, 1587), in which Henry occupies some 180 pages, over 40 are devoted to revels and clothes almost entirely.

[131] The most horrible example of Tudor Henry-cult known to me is a little book of poems in his honour by Ulpian Fulwell, The Flower of Fame [etc.] (London, 1575): it ends with clumsy serenades to Anne Boleyn, Jane Seymour, and Katherine Parr, in which the Anne Problem is resolved by treating her death as if it were some kind of natural disaster, mourned by all. If Fulwell was indeed Spenser's Malfont, as has been suggested, this solution should have mollified Mercilla.

was the point at which the Protestant historians could agree with their Catholic predecessor, Polydore Vergil, whose bitterness over the Reformation, undisguised in the last book of his History, is all directed against the Cardinal.[132]

This hatred (though not its cause) was inherited by the most influential of all sixteenth-century historiographers, John Foxe, whose work Herbert owned and used.[133] In the mighty progress of the Acts and Monuments, thousands are swept into one or other of the only two camps Foxe will recognize: True Church or Whore of Babylon; Emperor or Pope. He drives fearlessly through Henry's tangled reign, sorting good from bad: Henry is predominantly good, of course, as the first royal defier of the Pope; but Foxe is not afraid of him, and when it is not possible to lay all the blame on Bonner, Gardiner, or Wolsey, he reproaches him directly:

> how much more commendable for thee, O king Henry! (if that I may a little talk with thee, wheresoever thou art), if thou hadst aided and holpen the poor little sheep [i.e. Lambert] . . . I know you did not follow your own nature therein, but the pernicious counsels of the bishop of Winchester: notwithstanding . . . the time shall once come, when as ye shall give account of all the offences which you have either committed by your own fault, or by the counsel or advice of others . . .[134]

Hall had kept mention of More to a minimum; Holinshed had allowed him a measure of praise; Foxe strode in:

> whatsoever he was beside, a bitter persecutor he was of good men, and a wretched enemy against the truth of the gospel, as by his books left behind him may appear . . .[135]

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[132] According to Polydore, Wolsey was responsible for the divorce, goaded by Katherine's attempts to reform him. The last book of his Anglica Historia was published posthumously (in 1555).

[133] This is further discussed below.

[134] S.R. Cattley (ed), Acts and Monuments (London, 1837), V 235.

[135] Acts and Monuments, V 99.

Such deaths provide a useful example for comparison of the two historians. On Lambert, Herbert commented calmly:

> so deep a tincture doth Religion give, as being once throughly entred, nothing afterward can either change or efface it.[136]

For the occasion of Fisher's execution, Foxe indulged himself in a grim joke:

> It was said that the pope, to recompense bishop Fisher for his faithful service, had elected him cardinal, and sent him a cardinal's hat as far as Calais; but the head that it should stand upon, was as high as London bridge ere ever the pope's hat could come to him.[137]

Herbert also recognized the incongruity of the situation; but Foxe's grim insistence - "ere ever the pope's hat could come to him" - is airily thrown away:

> the Pope, who suspected not perchance that the Bishops end was so neere, had for more Testimony of his favour to him, as disaffection to our King, sent him the Cardinalls Hatt, but unseasonably, his head being off.[138]

That "unseasonably" epitomizes the objectionableness of the work to so many of its readers; also his distance from his sixteenth-century forerunners.

This cool, detached style has some similarity to that of a work with which Herbert's was often reprinted: Bacon's History of the Reign of King Henry VII. An example: the English ambassador to the Holy See, who has just praised His Holiness extravagantly,

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[136] Life and Raigne, p. 439. David Hume took much the same view: "Lambert . . possessed that courage which consists in obstinacy" (The History of England, (London, rev ed. 1763), IV 209). As for More, "Nothing was wanting to the glory of this end, except a better cause, more free from weakness and superstition . . ." (IV 151-2). For more on Hume and Herbert, see below.

[137] Acts and Monuments, V 99. Foxe is here following Hall closely, but he intensifies Hall's rather flabby ending: "the head it should have stande on, was as high as London bridge or ever the hat could come to Bishop Fysher, and then it was to late, and therfore he neither ware it nor enioyed his office" (Triumphant Reigne, fo. ccxxvi).

[138] Life and Raigne, p. 392.

> was very honourably entertained, and extremely made much on by the Pope, who knowing himself to be lazy and unprofitable to the Christian world, was wonderful glad to hear that there were such echoes of him sounding in foreign parts.[139]

But there is a difference in their techniques. Here is Bacon, on Henry's use of his twisted ministers:

> The people (into whom there is infused for the preservation of monarchies a natural desire to discharge their princes, though it be with the unjust charge of their counsellors and ministers) did impute [harsh exactions] unto cardinal Morton and Sir Reginald Bray[140]

Here is Herbert, on a similar incident - the so-called Amicable Grant:

> as this seem'd to be done, without that the King was fully inform'd thereof, so when the sequence appear'd, it was resolved to disavow the whole proceeding . . . This got the Cardinall many a Curse, and the King as many Blessings. Notwithstanding, under [the] Title of Benevolence he required great summes of all his Subjects . . .[141]

While Bacon's style is polished and aphoristic, Herbert prefers dry observation of the facts, without explicit conclusion; stylistically, perhaps, he stands between Bacon and the chroniclers.[142]

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[139] J. Spedding, R. Ellis, and D. Heath (eds.), The History of the Reign of King Henry VII in The Works of Francis Bacon (London, 1887-92), VI 61.

[140] VI 239-40.

[141] Life and Raigne, p. 172.

[142] This is a regular charge brought against Herbert by modern writers on historiography: F.S. Fussner is typical: "The literary defects of the book were those typical of the times: a glut of quotations, and failure to break through the limitations of the annalistic form" (The Historical Revolution (Westport, Ct., 1962), pp. 158-9).

Perhaps the best contemporary defence of the "annalistic form" was offered by Hobbes in the preface to his Thucydides, in answer to the objection of Dionysius of Halicarnassus "That the method of his History is governed by the time, rather than the periods of severall actions" - so that he abandons events "in the middest" in order to discuss other, simultaneous events. Hobbes replied: "his purpose being to write of one Peloponnesian Warre, this way he hath incorporated all the parts thereof into one body, so that there is unity in the whole . . . Whereas the other way, he had but sowed together many little Histories . . ." (sig. a 4).

For like them, and unlike the late Lord Chancellor, Herbert was anxious above all to describe events: the comments and explanations he provides are thinly interspersed through wads of facts and documents. To Bacon, history meant, above all, explanation:

> Above all things (for this is the ornament and life of Civil History), I wish events to be coupled with their causes.[143]

Herbert, however, was particularly reluctant to ape "divine" knowledge. Cardinal Pole, he observes at one point, presumed to know too much about the motivation of others:

> Neither will it satisfie all men, that [Pole] pretends (in more than one place) to have known even so much as the Kings thoughts (by Revelation,) so that I shall leave these things to the liberty of the indifferent Reader . . .[144]

Explicitly rejecting an idea is different from never raising it, and Herbert has his own peculiar ideas about revelation; but he does at least coincide with a more traditional view of history. And Herbert's attitude to Henry was also closer to the chroniclers' than that of many of his contemporaries. Cool as it may appear to a modern reader, Herbert himself was aware that his picture of Henry was unfashionably favourable:

> I am not yet ignorant that the King, whose History I write, is subject to more obloquies, then any since the worst Roman Emperours times.[145]

Towards the end of the sixteenth century, the favour of historians began to recede from Henry. The greatest of them depicted his reign with no sentimental pride: of its conclusion, he remarked:

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[143] De Augmentis in The Works, IV 300-1.

[144] Life and Raigne, p. 259. Modern critics have noted the risks in Bacon's omniscient manner: "Neither did Bacon perceive that emphasis on the interpretation of hidden causes and motives opens the way to the introduction of fiction, no matter how plausible its ostensibly factual histories" (L.F. Dean, "Sir Francis Bacon's Theory of Civil History Writing" in B.W. Vickers (ed.), Essential Articles for the Study of Francis Bacon (Hamden, Ct., 1968), p. 227).

[145] Life and Raigne, "Dedication", sig. A2v.

> Being returned out of France after the winning of Boloigne, and great expence of money, whilest hee lamented the distraction of England through new opinions daily springing up, and England it selfe sighed and groaned, seeing her wealth exhausted . . . her Abbyes plucked downe, being the monuments of ancient piety, the blood of her Nobility, Prelats, Papists and Protestants, promiscuously spilt . . . he beinge swolne with fat, breathed out his last . . . A magnanimous Prince, in whose great wit were confusedly tempered great vertues, and no lesse vices.[146]

With the fracturing of English Protestantism under Elizabeth, indiscriminate approval of the "new opinions" was no longer possible for a thoughtful man. The growth of historiography was also bad for Henry, as the antiquarians found it hard to forgive so much destruction of the visible past.[147] And a third source of antipathy - the one which particularly interested Herbert - was the attitude of the clergy.

John Foxe had welcomed Protestant bishops; "Martin Marprelate" and his successors did not.[148] The clergy of the late sixteenth century and after found themselves under attack as much from English Protestants as from Rome. They recognized in this the bad side of the Reformation. Long before the publications of Heylyn, the best-known apologist of the Laudian position, and before Laud himself had refused to license a re-issue of the Actes and

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[146] W. Camden, Annals, p. 5.

[147] A notable example of this is John Speed, whose Historie of Great Britaine (London, 3rd ed., 1632) follows a traditional line, pro-Henry and anti-monastic, but who chooses to end his account of the reign with 45 pages on the suppressed monasteries and hospitals, "to retaine their memorials, (though their walls are laid waste) as well for the reverence wee owe unto venerable Antiquitie, as for the example of their Founders holy zeale" (p. 1042).

[148] But see J. Facey, "John Foxe and the Defence of the English Church" in P. Lake and M. Dowling (eds.), Protestantism and the National Church in Sixteenth-Century England (London, 1987): Foxe refused to accept a clerical post, which seems to indicate "a certain ambiguity of attitude" towards any ecclesiastical establishment (p. 184).

Monuments,[149] Bishop Godwin's history of Henry, Edward, and Mary was first published (anonymously) in 1616 - and it is boldly hostile to Henry.

This is a work of particular interest for Herbert; for it was one that he owned, and it used, in the Latin and the English editions, the same frontispiece as his (an engraving by one "T. Cecill").[150] Its most remarkable feature is its staunch refusal to use Wolsey as scapegoat: indeed, Godwin seems to be his first (and almost only) champion:

> Certainly they that lived in that age, would not sticke to say, That this Kingdome never flourished more, than when WOLSEY did, to whose wisdome they attributed the wealth and safetie that they enioyed, and the due administration of Iustice to all without exception.[151]

So by 1634, the tradition of writing on Henry was varied, and an historian had many models from which to choose. Herbert was aware that Henry was a highly controversial figure. In context, the surprising flatness of most of his narration becomes less surprising: he had no intention of siding either with the Reformers or with reactionary churchmen:

> although I cannot but pity the ruine of so many pious Foundations . . . [still] Religion seem'd not so much to suffer hereby, as some of the Clergy of those times and ours would have it believed . . .[152]

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[149] In 1637. Laud shared Charles' views on Henry (for which see below); in a private letter he ascribed the death of Prince Henry (1612) to divine disapproval of the Tudor: "you see his name is gone" (quoted by H.R. Trevor-Roper, Archbishop Laud, 1573-1645 (London, 2nd ed. 1962), p. 451).

[150] FK, p. 107. The work has no scholarly value, and is mentioned only once in Herbert's margins; its interest lies in its attitude to its subject. All three Tudors have gloomy imprese under their portraits: Henry's reads: "Regem dedi iratus eis".

[151] F. Godwin, Annales of England Containing the Reignes of Henry VIII, Edward VI, Queene Mary tr. M. Godwin [his son] (London, 1630), p. 33. Godwin is thus able to make full use of a fact other biographers disguise as best they may: "WOLSEY being taken away, to whom shall we impute . . [the] Lust, Tyrannie, and Avarice" of the second part of the reign (p. 97)?

[152] Life and Raigne, p. 444.

He did not follow Foxe on Wolsey, with his sensational story of the blackened, stinking corpse; but neither did he follow Godwin - he blames the Cardinal, characteristically, for being a religious revolutionary in disguise:

> the Cardinall had his free scope and liberty to sway all things, under Colour of doing the King service. For, whatsoever hee went about, that was his Pretence; though (for the most part) in labouring to Reforme, hee did nothing but Innovate . . .[153]

Wherever possible, he suspended judgment - as he did on Anne Boleyn, beloved of Foxe:

> whether She, or any else were in fault, is not now to be discussed . . .
>
> Sanders saith her Father died shortly after for grief; but our Heralds affirm, it was till about two yeers after 1538. But that we may leave them both to their Grave and silence . . .[154]

Perhaps no one else has ever described that event with so little emotion.

In the last edition of De Veritate - the edition published after he had finished the Life and Raigne - Herbert announced that it was not for the historian to impose an opinion:

> Tametsi . . insigni Historiographo circa res gestas fidem . . . libentèr tribuerim: Si tamen Consectaria vel Porismata ex praemissis deducere satagit, non jam illum ceu Historicum, sed Oratorem, Politicum, vel Philosophum &c specto[155]

Nevertheless, there is a moral purpose to it - though it is not the purpose supposed by Foxe.

Herbert's copy of the Acts and Monuments contains scholarly jottings on Foxe's evidence,

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[153] Life and Raigne, p. 58. In a brief, sympathetic but somewhat impressionistic account of the work, W.M. Merchant, "Lord Herbert of Cherbury and Seventeenth-Century Historical Writing", Transactions of the Hon. Soc. of Cymmrodorion (1957), asserts that the story of Wolsey is the "central 'plot'" of the whole (p. 60); this seems something of a distortion of the book's shape.

[154] Life and Raigne, p. (381); (386). No Protestant writer before the nineteenth century seems to have believed that Anne was guilty. The first chroniclers say as little as they can; later, she was the regular subject (with Cromwell) of impassioned defence.
Anne's father, the Earl of Wiltshire, in fact died in 1539.

[155] 1645, p. 239 = Carré, p. 322 : "Even though we place full confidence . . in the account of the past given by a distinguished historian, yet if he occupies himself with assessing the consequences or advantages of his facts, I look upon him no longer as an historian, but as a preacher, a statesman, or a philosopher."

but also something more revealing: underneath the frontispiece, Herbert laments the desertion of the Book of Nature, which is certain, for the uncertainties of faith.[156] For him, history is, above all, a means of setting out his creed of certainty, the five Common Notions or Articles:

> earum [ie. Notitiarum Communium] disquisitioni . . inservit historia . . . Magno igitur bono nostro Historiarum lectioni impenditur tempus, cùm exinde non solùm verum, sed etiam Bonum elici possit.[157]

For Herbert, so studiously aloof from the usual partialities, had others of his own.

Politics and Religion in the "Life and Raigne"

Herbert's work was not the only royal biography dedicated to Charles in the years before the Civil War. In 1640, the poet Habington dedicated a history of Edward IV. The dedication provides a connexion between subject and context:

> When we, your subjects, looke backe upon that age, how ought we to congratulate the present? Wherein, free even from the noyse of warre, we have hitherto by the excellent Wisedome of your Majesties government, lived safe and envied. The Almighty grant all your people knowledge of their owne felicity . . .[158]

Three years later, Sir Richard Baker dedicated his lengthy Chronicle of English history to the Prince of Wales - and here the tone is much less confident:

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[156] FK, p. 75, (this inscription appears on vols. I and II - II being the fair copy): "Magnam olim depravandae relligionis ansam dederunt qui a Libro naturae certam Dei cognitionem passim exhibente, ad incerta temerariaq; fidei cujusvis animum abducentes severum illum genuinumq Dei Cultum operum sanctimonia . . . [not legible] melioris vitae fiducia constantem sive traditionibus vexabant, sive ritubus ceremonijsq, ad ostentationem compositis molliebant."

[157] 1645, p. 236 = Carré, pp. 318-19: "history is useful for the purpose of discerning them [the Common Notions] . . . The time, therefore, which we give to the reading of history is well employed, since we can derive from it not only truth but also goodness."

[158] W. Habington, The History of Edward IV, King of England (London, 1640), sig. A2v.

> although the Example of your Royall Father be not amongst [the reigns described], yet it may be sufficient that while you have the Acts of others upon Record, you have his under View, by which he seemes to say unto you, Disce puer virtutem ex me, verumque laborem; Fortunam ex aliis. . .[159]

It was traditional for historians to insist on the didactic value of their work; but these prefaces show something more - a personal urgency. Something of the same is detectable in Herbert's less straightforward (and earlier) Preface:

> if some mixture of ill be discovered . . it might yet conduce to the generall, by the same reason that certaine noctious ingredients, being put into Antidotes, make their operation more Powerfull. . . I wish yet that good Princes may seldom use this maxime, it being (at best) but a dangerous suspected wisdome. Since State-government, where it is well administered, will rarely need such helps . . .[160]

In the 1630s, it might still be worth offering the King a few hints. The most obvious one occurs towards the end of the book:

> During this Session of Parliament [1540] some wrong was offered (as our Histories say) to their ancient Priviledges; a Burgesse of theirs being arrested: whereof the King understanding, not onely gave way to their releasing him, but punishment of the offenders . . . By which means, the King (whose Master-piece it was to make use of his Parliaments) not onely let Forraign Princes see the good intelligence betwixt him and his Subjects, but kept them all at his devotion . . . suffering his Parliament rather to take notice of his wants, then to supply them; which yet served to [prepare] them upon his next occasion.[161]

"(Whose Master-piece it was to make use of his Parliaments)": Charles, at the time the Life and Raigne was complete, had not called a parliament for nine years.

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[159] A Chronicle of the Kings of England from the Time of the Romans Government unto the Raigne of our Soveraigne Lord King Charles (London, 1643), sig. A1v. The quotation comes from Aeneid XII 435-6: "Learn, my son, goodness and hard work from me; learn good fortune from others".

[160] Life and Raigne, "Dedication", sig. A3-v. It is not surprising to learn from the MSS that the dedication was not entirely to the King's liking; see below.

[161] Life and Raigne, p. 475. In the first draft, the last clause is added with a caret in Herbert's hand (Jesus College MS 73, fo. 309). The printed text reads "supply them upon his next occasion": this is clearly a mistake, as all the MSS read "prepare".

The story of this burgess, one Ferrers, began to interest historians in the later sixteenth century. The earliest accounts of it, in Charles Wriothesley's and in Grafton's Chronicles, and in Hall, do not take much notice: it is no more than a minor fray between City and Parliament. It is first given full treatment by Holinshed, who claims that

> this case hath been diverslie reported, and is commonlie alleged as a president [sic] for the privilege of the parlement.[162]

Unlike his predecessors, he gives the verdict of Henry on the case:

> First commending their wisedomes in mainteining the privileges of their House (which he would not have to be infringed in anie point) he alleged that he being head of the parlement, and attending in his owne person upon the businesse thereof, ought in reason to have privilege for him and all his servants attending there upon him. So that if the said Ferrers had beene no burgesse, but onlie his servant, yet in respect thereof he was to have the privilege as well as anie other.[163]

The point is, of course, ambiguous - the King flatters Parliament by demanding privilege for his own servants.[164] Henry's relations with his parliaments have been a subject of much dispute. It is clear that the reign was a critical time in the development of Parliament; but it is much less clear that Henry was really interested in promoting it. And Herbert's account conveys this, in the edged phrase "make use of".[165] In the next century, Hume was to be

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[162] R. Holinshed, Chronicle, III 956b. The story seems not to have interested writers on Henry, however: the only example I have found is Baker (pp. 53-4). Perhaps he too was thinking of Charles.

[163] Chronicle, III 956b.

[164] S.E. Lehmberg, The Later Parliaments of Henry VIII 1536-1547 (Cambridge, 1977), remarks the ambiguity: "that any special rights of the King and his attendants should depend upon Parliament . . would seem to limit the plenitude of power which attached directly to the imperial Crown. On the other hand the King's remarks can be taken as weakening the position of Parliament, for according to Henry, Ferrers owed his immunity to his position at court quite as much as to his place in the Commons" (p. 170).

[165] See the passage quoted above.

explicitly negative: for him, Henry's parliaments are "servile and prostitute"; they are "the usual instrument of his tyranny".[166]

If Herbert intended (as Kimelman suggests) to establish Henry as a model for Charles, it is a somewhat cynical model. But Henry was certainly an exemplar of kingly control. A constant theme of the Life and Raigne is that Henry always managed to implicate others:

> all his Subjects voices being comprehended in his Parliament, no man could accuse him, who did not in some sort first condemn himself . . .[167]

What evidence we have suggests that Herbert knew, or was made aware, how little Charles was likely to enjoy such hints. The first manuscript includes a long sentence on the rapport between Henry and his Parliament: it is crossed out, and does not reappear.[168]

Herbert had a divided attitude to Henry, the English monarch who came nearest to absolute rule. He was impressed by him:

> his most irregular actions represented such a Type of greatnesse, as crooked lines drawn every way, which though not as Compendious and direct as the strait, seem yet to have in them somwhat more of the infinite . . .[169]

> Is it, because past black, there is not found
> A fix'd or horizontal bound?[170]

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[166] History of the England, IV 238, etc. Compare this with the enthusiastic view of Pollard: "No monarch . . . was ever a more zealous champion of parliamentary privileges" (Henry VIII (London, re-issue, 1966), p. 207).

[167] Life and Raigne, p. (399).

[168] Jesus College MS 73, fo. 464. It starts: "At home, it was his constant rule, never to do any thing of moment, without his Parlaments [written in bold]; to which yett hee seldome opend Himselfe; untill hee had in one kinde or other, endeared them . . ."

[169] Life and Raigne, p.(400).

[170] Smith, p. 37.

asked Herbert the poet, praising the mysteries of "black beauty". As in the love poetry, so in the history there is an attraction both towards the calm and moderate, and towards the "irregular", the "great" - the "infinite". Herbert could not present Henry as a model of true conciliation; but, as with Buckingham, he responded also to something different.

But he also had prudential reasons for approving of the royal supremacy. His personal concern is evident: the issue receives a formal debate between two anonymous mouthpieces, the defender of supremacy having the last (and much longer) word. The two sentences he inserted into Bishop Andrewes' paper on the subject are taken up in the Life and Raigne and made into a powerful appeal for national peace:

> can a Kingdome be safe, if the Secular Magistrate command one thing, and the Spirituall another? Must not the subject on these termes be suspended betwixt his Obediences, or distracted into some Schisme or Rebellion?[171]

For there is nothing in a king's interest other

> than to conserve at home, a perpetuall Peace of Religion; which also will be with . . . much advantage to their subjects[172]

Herbert supports the Henrician line; but he insists on his own reasons for doing so. The Pope is an enemy to "Unity of Religion"

> (which might easily follow, when the unnecessary points were layed aside);[173]

and his church is guilty also of the other great Herbertian sacrilege, innovation:

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[171] Life and Raigne, pp. 363-4.

[172] Life and Raigne, p. 364. After setting out the terms of the Act of Supremacy, Herbert refers the reader to a number of Henrician books, "Whence also the learned Bishop Andrews in his Tortura Torti, seemes to have drawn divers Assertions of the Regall Authority, to which therefore the curious Reader may have further recourse" (p. 381).

[173] Life and Raigne, p. 365.

> will they yet exact new Beleefes, and obtrude new Articles? When the Lawes of God, only written in Mens hearts, and the Decalogue, for so many Ages were thought to suffice for Salvation?[174]

Like Wolsey, the Catholic Church is dangerous not because it is conservative, but because it introduces new complications, and threatens the true faith. So much might have been said by a Reformer, anxious to assert the existence of his own church "before Luther": but a Reformer would not confine his creed in such a way as to omit the New Testament.

What, then, of Herbert's attitude to the Reformation? Crucial to the interpretation of this is a notorious document, positioned just at the midpoint of the work. In a "Passionate Speech", Bishop Fisher tells the Lords "That the Commons would nothing now but down with the Church." Following this,

> one who had made use of the Evangeliques Doctrine so farre, as to take a reasonable liberty to judge of the present times[175]

announces his own religious views. The speech is a brief version of the treatise Herbert was to publish as "Religio Laici"; it culminates in a strong statement of Herbert's five Catholic Articles.[176] However, notes Herbert,

> as few men are of the same mind in all Points of Religion, so this Overture was entertain'd diversly . . . The resultance whereof finally was that a Reformation was pray'd, as farre as might bee, in Religion: Though when Particulars were examin'd, it was found, that some diseases therein were like that of Cancer Occultus, which Physicians say, it is more safe to let alone, than to Cure.[177]

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[174] Life and Raigne, p. 366.

[175] Life and Raigne, p. 293.

[176] For the argument of Religio Laici and the cognate works, see the next chapter.

[177] Life and Raigne, p. 296.

The first reader to remark on this passage was, appropriately, Hume - whose comment is positively Herbertian in its reserved suggestiveness:

> Lord Herbert has . . preserved the speech of a gentleman of Grey's-Inn [?], which is of very a singular nature, and contains such topics as we should little expect to meet with during that period. [He summarizes it, at some length] Such sentiments would be deemed latitudinarian, even in our time; and would not be advanced, without some precaution, in a public assembly.[178]

Without saying so, he strongly implies that he thought Herbert had invented it. Few now would disagree.[179] There is something very satisfactory in the sight of Hume, free spirit of the eighteenth century, slipping into his history a passage written for the occasion by Herbert, free spirit of the seventeenth.[180]

Theology does not occupy a large percentage of the Life and Raigne. Burnet, praising it, considered that

> in the transactions that concern religion, he dwells not so long as the matter required . . . judging it perhaps not so proper for one of his condition to pursue a full and accurate deduction of those matters.[181]

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[178] History of England, IV 104-5. I am most grateful to Dr. Isabel Rivers for this reference.

[179] The seminal work on this is H.A.L. Fisher, "The Speeches in Lord Herbert of Cherbury's Life and Reign of Henry VIII" EHR 20 (1905), 498. The first to make the suggestion openly was M.M. Tabaraud, a nineteenth-century historian of deism, who quotes the story, with Hume's comment, and concludes that, since the speech does not occur in other early histories, "Il seroit très-possible, au reste, que ce discours fût de l'invention de lord Herbert, qui a voulu faire parler l'orateur . . . comme il auroit pu parler lui-meme" (Histoire criticque du Philosophisme anglois (Paris, 1806), I 24). In the Expedition, Herbert acknowledges his proceeding quite openly: Buckingham calls a conference to consider whether or not to retreat; a speech follows for "Yes" with the introduction: "It is probably that someone did speak in this sense . . ." (p. 269).

In the Jesus College MSS, fair copies of this and other set-pieces appear on separate pages (see below for more examples).

[180] Hume made heavy use of Herbert in his work on Henry: sometimes he read him less than responsibly. Here he seems to have invented the "gentleman of Grey's-Inn".

[181] The History of the Reformation, I 6.

Herbert said as much himself:

> my intention being not (in a History) to discusse Theologicall matters, as holding it sufficient to have pointed at the places where they are controverted[182]

Nevertheless, the passages on religion are the ones that stay in the mind - the ones in which Herbert reveals most of himself. Through the conscientious, factual record runs a Herbertian analysis: an analysis which might be entitled the Failed Reformation.

As towards Henry, Herbert felt ambiguously towards the Reformation, but with much more intensity. His stray comments add up to two principal ideas: the Reformation was beneficial, in freeing the laity from a tyrannical church; but it opened the door to dissent and disunity. Few Protestant writers dared to be so unenthusiastic about the translation of the Bible:

> not a few Inconveniences were observ'd to follow. For as the People did not sufficiently separate the more cleare and necessary parts thereof from the obscure and accessory . . . they fell into many dangerous opinions: little caring how they liv'd, so they understood well, bringing Religion thus into irresolution and Controversie.[183]

Controversy, from Herbert's position, seems uniquely pointless; at such moments, we are suddenly made aware of that position.

His perspective on religion was unique: it was focussed steadily on his Five Articles. One of their most striking appearances is occasioned by a much-related event: the meeting

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[182] Life and Raigne, p. 390.

[183] Life and Raigne, p. 323. Herbert here agrees with Henry, whose last speech to Parliament (the "mumpsimus and sumpsimus" speech) lamented the outbreak of laic theologizing. Foxe was indignant: "St. Jerome wisheth the Scriptures not only to be read of all men, but also to be sung of women at their rocks, of ploughmen at the ploughs, of weavers at their looms, &c" (V 535 n. 5). In the Jesus College MS, this passage is written out neatly by Herbert, for insertion into a rough scribal page (MS 72, fo. 367v).

between the ruling Inca, Atabaliva, and the Spanish conquistadores.[184] In Herbert's version, the encounter begins thus:

> Picarro having his Forces in a readinesse, sent a Dominican Frier, with a Crosse in one hand, and a Breviary in another, who (as the Spanish writers have it) told Atabaliva (then in the head of his Army) that God was Three, and yet One, and that he made the World of nothing, and that he sent his Sonne down to be born of a Virgin, and to die for our sinnes upon a Crosse, like that he bore; and that he rose the third day; and left St. Peter his Vicar, and the Pope his Successor, who had given the Emperor that Countrey; if he would not believe this, commanding him also to make War, and destroy him & his Religion.[185]

"Sandoval" records the marginal note; and the speech is in fact a close translation of the Spanish - except that Herbert has truncated it, to make it yet balder and less persuasive than the original (Herbert's one sentence condenses nine in Sandoval).[186] Sandoval ended his account with apparently solemn thanks to God, first for the riches acquired by Spain, and then ("lo que mas es") for the triumph of Christianity over Satan;[187] nevertheless, the episode was traditionally controversial, even in Spain. Herbert was not unique in being shocked.[188] His originality lies in the sequel - his account of the Inca's religious knowledge:

> Atabaliva, who though full of superstitious worship, did yet venerate a supreme Deity (confessed in those parts by the name of Viracocha . . .) and together acknowledged

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[184] Life and Raigne, pp. 182-3. Herbert calls him "Atabaliva" - some writers call him "Atahuallpa".

[185] Life and Raigne, p. 182. The MSS reveal that Herbert wrote "Piçarro" with a cedilla, as it was spelt in old Spanish. This passage was added to the Jesus College MS in a fair copy by Herbert (MS 72, fo. 12).

[186] P. de Sandoval, Historia de la Vida y Hechos del Emperador Carlos V; Herbert also used the Commentarios Reales de los Incas, by Garcilaso de la Vega. Garcilaso's account was first published in 1617; Sandoval's in 1618.

[187] P. de Sandoval, Historia (Madrid, 1955), II 132.

[188] The most celebrated denouncer was Montaigne, in his essay "Of Coaches"; the first was a Spaniard, Bartolomeo de las Casas.

> Vertue and Vice, Reward and Punishment, after this life, as believing the soule Immortall; found this Ambassage strange . . .[189]

The Inca, like everyone else, in Herbert's view, knew all about the five Catholic Articles.

Herbert was not an ordinary Protestant, nor a Catholic; and his view of the Henrician reforms was accordingly unusual. In strong contrast to both Reformed and unReformed, he thought well of the Ten Articles of 1536, which cut the number of sacraments to three, retaining Penance as well as Baptism and the Eucharist:

> whatsoever any of the Reformed might say for their onely two Sac[r]aments, it was thought by some, that . . . Penance might have been retained still upon some terms as a third; both as there is no other generall way then Aversion from sin, and Conversion to God known to all mankinde for making their peace with him, and obtaining pardon. And as the other two Sacraments being particular Rites onely of the Christian Church, are in their explication subject to so much difficulty and disputes, as no lesse then a mans whole age is required to studie them . . .[190]

For repentance is, of course, the fourth of the Five Articles.

The first published comments on Herbert's history gave full recognition to its reservations about reformed religion:

> How many Heresies the first Translation of Tyndal produced in few years, let my Lord Herbert's History of Henry the Eighth inform you; Insomuch that for the gross errours in it, and the great mischiefs it occasion'd, a Sentence pass'd on the first Edition of the Bible, too shamefull almost to be repeated.[191]

So Dryden, treading a delicate line before his conversion. He continued to find supporting evidence in the Life and Raigne after it:

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[189] Life and Raigne, p. 182.

[190] Life and Raigne, p. 405.

[191] Preface to Religio Laici, in H.T. Swedenberg et al (eds.), The Works of John Dryden (New Haven, 1955-), II 105. The Whig journalist Henry Care responded angrily: "Too shameful! I pray, Sir! to whom? . . . 'Tis perhaps necessary that Cromwels Panegyrist and so passionate an admirer of Pere Simon, should cast a Squint Eye not only on Poor Tyndal, but all English Bibles, and in a word the whole Reformation" (quoted in Works, II 356). For Dryden and Herbert on Religio Laici, see chapter IV, "Religio Laici and its Successors".

> the immediate Effects . . of this Schism, were Sacriledge, and a bloody Persecution of such as deny'd the King's Supremacy in Matters wholly Spiritual, which no Layman, no King of Israel ever Exercis'd, as is observ'd by my Lord Herbert.[192]

But this is a travesty of Herbert's position. As we have seen, he approved of the royal supremacy, for the quite Drydenic reason that it protected the people from the dangers of a divided allegiance - and also from religious oppression. If he made himself the historian of the Failed Reformation, Herbert did not belittle his subject by claiming that it had never been worth the attempt:

> Neverthelesse, as by frequent reading of the Scripture at this time, it generally appear'd what the Roman Church had added or alter'd in Religion, so many recover'd a just liberty, endeavouring together a Reformation of the Doctrine and Manners of the Clergie, which yet, through the obstinacy of some, succeeded worse, than so pious Intentions deserv'd.[193]

Herbert, Henry, and Charles

> Thus ended HENRY the Eighth his Life and Raigne, which for the first yeares of his Government was like NERO's Five yeares, Admirable: for often Victories and happy Successe in war, Glorious: for the many changes under it, Memorable: For the Foundation of the Churches Reformation, Laudable: to Queenes, most unhappy: for the Death of so many (for the most) great Personages, Bloudy: and for the frequent Exactions and Subsidies, and Sacrilegious Spoile of the Church, much Preiudiciall to the Estate, Grievous and Burthensome to the Subiect.[194]

As Godwin's verdict makes clear, Henry was arousing mixed feelings in the early seventeenth century. In particular, he seems to have disturbed Charles I. According to Sir Thomas

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[192] The Defence of the Duchess's Paper, Works, XVII 317. The notes, no doubt correctly, take the reference to be p. 402 = 362 (the second being the mistaken number given by the first edition) - the big debate on supremacy, discussed above.

[193] Life and Raigne, p. 323.

[194] F. Godwin, Annales of England, p. 207.

Herbert, his devoted companion at the end, this complicated the arrangements for Charles' own funeral:

> they at first thought, that the Tomb House would be a fit place; it was erected by the magnificent Prelate Cardinal Wolsey . . . for his great master King Henry VIII, but this place . . they waived. . . For if King Henry VIII were buried there (albeit to that day the place of his burial was unknown to any) yet . . his Majesty (who was a real Defender of the Faith . . .) would upon occasional discourse express some dislike of King Harry's proceedings, in misemploying those vast revenues [from the religious houses he had suppressed] . . . and by demolishing those many stately structures which . . . might at the Reformation have in some measure been kept up and converted to sundry pious uses. Upon consideration thereof, these gentlemen declined it . . .[195]

With the Civil War, the idea seems to have grown up of some sort of sinister link between the fates of the two kings. Long after Charles' death, at the end of the Interregnum, a curious work appeared with the sensational title: A Messenger from the Dead, of Conference, full of Stupendious horrour . . . between the Ghosts of Henry the 8. and Charls [sic] the First of England . . .[196] An especially peculiar feature of this is its evasive attitude to Charles: the ghost of Henry explains, "almost boastfully",[197] that Charles must suffer for his predecessor's sins; but he is not, apparently, without guilt himself:

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[195] R. Lockyer (ed.), The Trial of Charles: A Contemporary Account Taken from the Memoirs of Sir Thomas Herbert and John Rushworth (London, 1959), p. 144. Charles' respect for Church property is the subject of chapter 14 of the Eikon Basilike: "no necessity shall ever, I hope, drive me or mine to invade or sell the priests' lands . . . I had rather live, as my predecessor Henry III sometime did, on the church's alms than violently to take the bread out of bishops' and ministers' mouths" (P.A. Knachel (ed.), Eikon Basilike (Ithaca, N.Y., 1966), pp. 80-1).

[196] The work is ascribed to "R.P.", identified in the Bodleian catalogue as one Reginald Perrinchief, later a whole-hearted defender of Charles. The work was first published in Latin in 1657; the English translation appeared in 1658. I owe this reference to B.D. O'Hehir's work on Cooper's Hill, Harmony from Discord, a Life of Sir John Denham (Berkeley, etc., 1968).

[197] O'Hehir, Harmony, p. 87 n. O'Hehir does not remark on the evasiveness.

> Flatter not yourself . . . We deserve greater punishments, by committing greater offences [than rebellious subjects], they offend against a mortall King, we against a King immortall . . .[198]

Both, it seems, were guilty of arbitrary government: despite all the differences, they were both controversial Kings of England, inevitably bonded.

There was a bond, of course, between any two kings. Thirty years before, Charles' father had smarted when Henry was attacked: Ralegh's History of the World, which moved with rather harsh abruptness from denunciation of Henry to adulation of James, provoked the comment that it was "too sawcie in censuring princes".[199] It was never quite clear how far a subject might abuse a monarch.

> Herbert, for his part, claimed that he was happy to leave Henry behind him:
>
> what this Prince was, and whether, and how far forth excusable in point of State, Conscience or Honour, a diligent observation of his Actions, together with a conjuncture of the times, will (I conceive) better declare to the judicious Reader, then any factious relation on what side whatsoever. To conclude; I wish I could leave him in his grave.[200]

"A fine ending indeed for such a weighty book!" was Rossi's response.[201] But to a seventeenth-century reader, the phrase suggested something more. One of the three Bodleian copies, fol. Delta 624, is annotated throughout by one Thomas Tourneur, who wrote on the last page:

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[198] A Messenger from the Dead, p. 8.

[199] Chamberlain to Carleton, 5 Jan. 1615; quoted by C.A. Patrides in his edition of the History of the World (London, 1971), p. 11.

[200] Life and Raigne, p. 575.

[201] "Bella chiusa davvero per un libro così ponderoso!" (La Vita, II 515). Later critics have noticed the neat inversion of Bacon's farewell to Henry VII: "he dwelleth more richly dead, in the monuments of his tomb, than he did alive in Richmond or any of his palaces. I could wish he did the like in this monument of his fame" (The Works VI 245 - first noted by J.H. Anderson, Biographical Truth: The Representation of Historical Persons in Tudor-Stuart Writing (New Haven, 1984), p. 197).

> The reason of these suspitious words were [sic] a Tradition yt Kinge Harryes body was taken up in ye reigne of Queene Mary and burned, by a knight one of her privy councellors . . . but [Fuller, in his Church History] thinkes it more probable yt K. Harry is there quietly reposed.[202]

Herbert's remark, apparently so dismissive, turns out to have more substance to it. He died too soon to see Fuller's belief (or hope) confirmed: that happened, ironically enough, at the funeral of Charles. Sir Thomas Herbert explains that, despite the initial hesitation, it was decided that Charles should after all be buried in the Tomb House, with Henry and Jane Seymour. After the vault was opened, a soldier broke into Henry's grave, with an eye to loot. He was stopped in time; but the attempt had one positive result:

> this manifests that a real body was there, which some that have hard thoughts of King Harry, have scrupled.[203]

Whatever Charles' original enthusiasm for the project, Herbert seems to have realized by the time of its completion that it would not see publication: he sent a handsome manuscript of it to the Bodleian, along with the copy of Biathanatos which had been dedicated to him.[204] We do not know why he gave it up, nor why Charles disliked it - if indeed he felt so strongly. We know only that he wanted the dedication to be "a little altered".[205] Perhaps

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[202] Life and Raigne, p. 575. Tourneur identifies himself on a blank sheeet inserted after p. (384). This copy has some historical importance, as Tourneur has provided long quotations from the diary of one Anthony Anthony, a clerk in the Ordnance Office (see E.W. Ives, Anne Boleyn (Oxford, 1986), p. 376 n. 59).

[203] The Trial of Charles I, p. 146.

[204] Now catalogued as Bod. MS 910. The letter to Rous, complaining that an envoy of Herbert's had not been able to find it, has now been inserted into the front of the MS. Rossi asserts that he sent it to the library "perché non andasse perduta, nella confusione del momento" (II 517); this is an overreading of his claim to have done it "untill I departed out of this life or gave further order". The letter is dated "ye Last of January 1643" (= 1644).

[205] Someone has written: "to be altered a little about ye beginning by his Mats Comand" by the Dedication on the Ashmole MS; a note to the same effect appears in the same place in JC MS 71.

Herbert was "too sawcy in censuring princes"; or perhaps he did not disapprove enough of the appropriation of Church lands. Was Henry treated too harshly, or too well?

> Sidney Lee, never his friend, drew an unattractive picture of Herbert in 1645:
>
> He gave the finishing touches to his History, and wrote a bombastic dedication addressed to the King whom he had deserted[206]

Lee puts the situation in its worst light; but it may be that there was a connexion where he saw a mockery. Perhaps Charles finally lost his hold on Herbert by failing to take seriously his attempt to make sense of the national past; perhaps the most heart-felt hint in the work was the reminder of the repute and favour afforded to former Herberts:

> I finde him in our Records highly commended to the Kings Counsell . . .[207]

Perhaps this last disappointment finally decided Herbert: like those aristocrats he so admired in France, he had other ways to die than in the service of a thankless king.

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[206] Lee, p. 292. This is disproved by the date of Herbert's letter to Rous (see above).

[207] Life and Raigne, p. (370).

Chapter IV: The Theologian: Part I

I A Layman's Faith

In 1639, Herbert wrote to his friend Fortunio Liceti about his latest project, De Causis Errorum. He could not get on with it, he complained, for the sound of armaments.[1] He repeated the complaint in 1645, at the end of the published text: he would complete it later, in quieter times. But, though the treatise itself might be incomplete, he had provided it with an appendix: the title-page proclaimed: "De Causis Errorum: una cum Tractatu de Religione Laici et Appendice ad Sacerdotes. . ."

Religio Laici is unusual among Herbert's works in achieving two modern editions, one English and one French, both supplying translations and valuable notes. H.R. Hutcheson provides a sketch of "deism";[2] Jacqueline Lagrée links Herbert with major European thinkers of his day.[3] But it is something of a pity that the pleasurably discrete volumes offer only a fraction of that complex part of Herbert's oeuvre that falls under the general title "Religio Laici".[4]

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[1] See Rossi, III 34. There are some eight partial MSS of De Causis Errorum in the Powis Bequest to the National Library of Wales: one of them (HrE 104) bears a date: "Opus Ed. Baronis Herbert de Cherbury 1640".

DCE is the one Herbertian prose work hardly discussed in this thesis. My justification for this (besides the usual problem of space) is that DCE is devoted almost entirely to epistemology, and this is not very different from that in DV. The passage on religion is translated and discussed in this chapter.

[2] H.R. Hutcheson (ed.), De Religione Laici (New Haven, 1944). Hutcheson takes this title, presumably, from the title-page of the first edition. However, this is part of a longer phrase (see above): the running title is "Religio Laici", which is the title on all the MSS. (See for support of this position Bedford, pp. 169-70, n. 45. It might be said on Hutcheson's behalf that Locke uses his title: Essay, I iii 15.)

[3] J. Lagrée (ed.), Le Salut du Laïc (Paris, 1989).

[4] For a full account of the texts, see Appendix II below.

The longest of the texts is the Latin Religio, which covers the most topics; it was published as an appendix to a work on epistemology, and it makes reference (of a sporadic, unhelpful kind) to Herbert's theories about it.[5] It is also linked to De Veritate more closely than the others: the figure of the Traveller is taken up from De Veritate, and combined with the Laicus.[6] This work divides naturally into five parts.

It begins by stating the dilemma of excessive choice: there are so many religions, all of which insist on their exclusive rightness. Although it is difficult, we must try to examine our path. The priests cry up Faith and Reason, but confuse them and try to persuade us that reason is corrupt. Why should it be, if faith is not? The Viator must pray to God and investigate religion: the result will be the discovery of universal Truths.

Herbert turns then to the "truths of faith" - which lead him at once to the twofold definition of faith familiar from De Veritate. The good sort is man's highest gift; the bad is dangerous, and expounded at much greater length. The Viator must beware the dangers of transmission; even if true, an indirect revelation is no more than probable to its hearer.[7] Men must judge for themselves about the questions of history. Anything should be believed that does not clash with the divine attributes (the slight value of this is clear from the ruling that even what is "infecta", not performed, and thus not actually true, should be taken as evidence of God's qualities).[8]

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[5] The Zetetica are mentioned on p. 102; discursus is attacked (its only mention) on p. 114.

[6] The Viator first appears in 1633: 1645, p. 209 = Carré, p. 290. The word "laicus" is first used in 1645: see chapter II, "Freedom and Reason".

[7] Cf. also 1645, pp. 231-2 = Carré, pp. 314-15.

[8] Hutcheson translates "infecta" as "impossible", which seems to give the wrong sense here.

The second part is concerned with the word of God and the Sacred Book. The Viator should come to this with ideas of reason versus the bad sort of faith in his mind; this will lead him to the Scriptures, which are the best book of this kind. But not all of the Scriptures: Herbert continues his remarks in De Veritate on the textual difficulties. What we can be sure about in the Bible is the body of Catholic Truths - five in number. Everything else is there to confirm these.

Can anything be added? Herbert insists first that we should avoid anything in dispute: it will take too much time to be sure of it. The way of blessedness is hard to follow but easy to see. In fact all religions do make additions; but the layman should stick to truth found by reason. What of the Gentile religions? It is briefly and tentatively suggested that polytheism might be symbolic (p. 104).[9] At any rate, the superstitions were introduced by the pagan priests.

The question is repeated: are the Catholic Truths sufficient? Here Herbert faces, for the only time, the possibility that there might be something missing in his scheme of religion (p. 108). But he insists that whatever that is (undefined), it is nothing important. As to the priests, they would not lose everything: he is careful to explain that they will be needed to expound the Truths, and to perform distinctively clerical functions.[10] But they must be careful not to make remission of sin too easy. God has made rules for this, and God does not change; the Catholic Truths are constant.

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[9] This is the beginning of an idea crucial to De Religione Gentilium: see chapter V, "Scope and Function". At its earliest appearance, in the first version of DV, it is dismissed out of hand: 1645, p. 212 = Carré, p. 293.

[10] These include the tasks of opening and closing temples, "peccatorum remissionem ex vera paenitentia denuntiandi", burying the dead - and receiving offerings made by the laity. Herbert seems genuinely anxious to offer an attractive package, though one suspects that this would not have attracted his brother George.

The last part begins with the subject of human free will. This acts as a cause, within the workings of Providence (p. 114), which it complements and fills out. Herbert now turns on the doctors of the Church, who have tried to tyrannize the laity. We have a choice between reason and an inescapable labyrinth - "or rather" we must find articles on which all are agreed.[11] The Viator should ignore the threats of the priests. But virtuous priests are to be honoured: they do good work in keeping the people in order. Once the Catholic Articles are established, it will be clear that any accretion is not worth fighting over.

Finally, the two purposes of the treatise are summarized: to promote harmony, and to resolve religious questions with a definite answer.

To this, Herbert adds a coda, apparently as an afterthought.[12] In it he stresses both his non-combative intentions, and his commitment to the Articles: whether they are sufficient or not he cannot say; but virtue is better served by this code of belief than any other. He ends by submitting the book to the "true Catholic Church".

Religio Laici, as disingenuous as the rest of Herbert's writing, develops De Veritate in two ways at once. The prolonged attacks on the priests are new - one sentence in De Veritate is expanded into a regular motif;[13] but he is anxious not to break too sharply with the clerical establishment. Both the hostility and the desire for reconciliation are pressed upon the reader. It seems likely that this second desire explains why the work retains much of the vocabulary from the earlier work: the Articles are quite often said to be "inscribed",

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[11] "or rather" is Hutcheson's translation of Herbert's "Quin" (p. 120). It is not made clear whether the articles are to be equated with reason here or not - a characteristic evasion.

[12] It does not appear in any of the MSS: see Appendix II.

[13] 1645, pp. 225-6 = Carré, pp. 306-7. In fact the last edition of De Veritate shows something of the same development: Herbert is more aggressive than in the earlier editions, but also inserts some brief and rather clumsy overtures to the clergy.

a phrase that emphasizes their superrational origin (even though there is the usual confusion between their apparent obviousness and Herbert's pride at having found them). The work aims both at freedom and at preservation, which are not wholly consistent: some notably oppressive language occurs:

> Quum enim ab indubia ista Doctrina nullus subterfugii patet locus, omnes severo Dei ex Virtute Cultui, Pietati, Vitaeque sanctimoniae unanimiter studebunt . . . ut si aliqua ex parte desciverint, Magistratui sive Spirituali, sive Saeculari Summum Contumaces plectendi Spiritus competat Ius.[14]

If Religio Laici was written with some idea of making Herbert's religion acceptable to the Church, however, he must have abandoned it before publication; for this "Appendix" was followed by one of its own, the much shorter Appendix to the Priests. This is an aggressive address, challenging them to show that faith and revelation are as valuable as Herbert's Catholic Truths. The priests are given eight points to consider: the first three are positive - is not God's Providence the best source of religious knowledge? The last five are negative - how can anything be added, when the Scriptural tradition is so uncertain, the result is schism and civil war, and nothing of moral value is added, since it plays down the importance of virtue? This work pits reason sharply against faith; the difference between the

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[14] Hutcheson, pp. 126-7: "since there is no clear occasion for stealing away from this undoubted doctrine, all men will be unanimously eager for the austere worship of God by virtue, for piety, and for a holy life . . . so that if insolent spirits revolt on account of some portion of it the spiritual or secular magistracy will have the best right to punish them." Hutcheson quotes the comment of C. Güttler: "Also auch im Bereiche der Herbert'schen Vernunftkirche ist eine Censur des freien Gedankens nicht ausgeschlossen!" It is a remark to bear in mind when considering Herbert as an advocate of toleration: his confidence in his own beliefs could make him alarmingly dogmatic. (For a brief discussion of this large topic, see the Conclusion to the thesis.)

good and the bad types of faith (from De Veritate) is indicated, but hardly allowed to muffle the impact.[15]

The other two texts were not apparently designed for publication. There is a contrast between these also: the longer one, "Religio Laici" in English, is autobiographical in tone (it seems likely that it was originally designed as part of the Life), whereas the short one, "Quid Laicus", is hortatory, and crisply argued.[16]

The English text, in a mangled form, was in fact published after Herbert's death by Charles Blount, who used it as a core for his own Religio Laici.[17] Blount introduces a number of headings (only some of them relevant to Herbert's text); Herbert has none, but the work divides roughly into three parts. In the first, he poses the problem: controversy over religion. He presents a choice of options: to examine all religions, or to decide on universal articles of belief.[18] The first is declared impossible, but followed anyway by two pages of comparative religion:

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[15] Excerpts from the anonymous translation of this work are given in Appendix II below. It has a peculiarly close relation with DRG: see the end of DRG chapter XV (discussed in chapter V, "Scope and Function"), and the wood simile in DRG, p. 212. This suggests that Appendix ad Sacerdotes is later than Religio Laici.

[16] The English text was published, from one of its three surviving manuscripts, by H.G. Wright in MLR 28 (1933), 296-307. The Latin has not been published: extracts from it, with translation, are given in Appendix II below.

[17] This is discussed below, under "Religio Laici and its Successors".

[18] This is a development of a thought only incidentally treated in the two published texts: Section V of the Appendix ad Sacerdotes, and Religio Laici, pp. 100-2, assert the impossibility of resolving the priests' disputes either by investigation or by accepting their axioms; see also the passage from the Life and Raigne quoted by Hutcheson, p. 180.

> because here something must bee attempted least wee should seeme wholly to forsake our selves.[19]

Herbert attacks the idea of revelation as a criterion for belief, in rather stronger terms than in De Veritate,[20] and warns against "build[ing] new doctrines" on it (p. 301).

In the second part, he turns to the second option - not wholly distinct, as this also has required him to "study" and "looke out" (p. 301). His search for universal agreement brings him to the Articles, which are expounded and defended at length, especially repentance (given five supporting arguments).[21] Additions to them are attacked.

The last part concerns faith, divided as usual, and with stress, as usual, on the bad kind. Herbert insists that he is a Christian, and moves through an interesting sequence of thought: he wants the Bible as the best work of morality; besides which he was brought up a Christian; but he found so many disagreements that he decided to build on the "generall" authority of the Church:

> To conclude I embraced the five Articles for the reasons abovementioned from whence coming to the Doctrines of Faith I beleived piously upon the reverend Authority of the Church that which was unanimously taught by them and did not imply Contradictions.[22]

This text is close in tone to the Latin Religio Laici, though it does not allude to the De Veritate epistemology. Like the Latin, it is not primarily polemical; but here the concern is not, it seems, to mollify the clergy (Herbert nowhere indicates a positive rôle for them),

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[19] "Religio Laici", p. 297. Cf. Hutcheson, p. 86.

[20] "Religio Laici", p. 299; 1645, p. 226 = Carré, p. 308.

[21] These five arguments are of two basic sorts: man's weakness; and the unfairness of giving him no strength to improve. This list appears also (with minor variations) in the Dialogue (pp. 22-3, 258 ff.), in DRG (p. 198 = Lewis, p. 320), and in the Life (Lee, p. 61).

[22] "Religio Laici", p. 307.

but to declare his own basic orthodoxy. A similar tension pervades it: Herbert seems ready to leave a place for something more than the Articles, but he can never decide what this thing should be; and the place keeps filling up.

The short piece "Quid Laicus", "What the Layman should Decide about the Best Religion", is the most impressive of the group. The format is different again: this purports to be a letter of advice, addressed to one "J.G.".[23] It is tightly and clearly organized. The debate between reason and faith is equated here with the old dilemma between exhaustive investigation and blind credulity: the solution is the Articles. The argument is clear, but so is the twist in it:

> Ex quibus patet neque Rationem sane ubi cunctae quovis Saeculo vel Regione non explorantur Relligiones, vel Fidem tuto in Ditione vel singulari aliqua Ecclesia adhiberi posse. . . ad Rationis normam diriguntur Articuli[24]

The distinction is more apparent than real: the articles are not distinct from reason. The possibility of additions is then discussed, with a new frankness. Superstitious additions are wrong;

> Quod tamen inique factum; ut fatear nihilominus ex Dei providentia bonum e malis ipsis eliciente, in Veritatem aliquam Catholicam collimasse saltem isto modo Sacerdotes. . . Quam etiam ob causam articulos Religionis indubios ex recta et universali Ratione depromptos (etiam mediis controversis et erroribus) colere, reliqua porro ex Ecclesiae Authoritate accipere et credere potius, quam Veritatibus Catholicis excidere debebant. Ut negari tamen non possit, quin sapientius fecerint, qui

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[23] For the possible identity of this person, see Appendix II.

[24] "From this it is clear that we can safely invoke neither Reason, since all religions in every age and area have not been explored, nor Faith in any particular dominion or church . . . The Articles . . . are drawn up according to the rule of Reason" (text taken from the fair copy, at the end of "Religio Laici" in the 1965 Bequest (HrE 135): see Appendix II).

> Relligionis partes ita ab invicem distinguebant, ut vera a verisimilibus, possibilibus, et falsis discriminarentur.[25]

After a rather aggressive defence of the Articles, the piece concludes with the image of religion as a circle, introduced to De Veritate in 1645.[26]

These four texts, together with the additions to De Veritate, are written at much the same time, to address the same problems. Within the limits of the Five Articles, they offer quite a range: personal testimony in the English "Religio Laici"; concilation in the Latin; outright aggression in the Appendix; strong, firm summary in the letter to J.G.

That account is, of course, reductive. Consider the English "Religio Laici", for example: we cannot be sure that it is a "personal testimony", even if it was intended for his family - or especially if. The Life as a whole leaves little doubt that Herbert was self-conscious, a poseur; the image of his religious self that he wanted to leave to his grandson may not have been identical with its original.[27] There is a danger of over-simplifying the intricate topic of the Layman's Faith - a danger which is, in part, Herbert's deliberate creation. The "Religio Laici" works are all short and apparently direct, proposing a simple solution to a throttlingly intricate problem. Locke, after beginning his critique of Herbert

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[25] "but I may still say that by the providence of God, which brings good even out of evil, the priests were directed even in this way to some Catholic Truth . . . because of this they should honour the indisputable articles of religion, brought out by right and universal Reason, even amidst controversies and errors; and take the rest on the authority of the Church, rather than lose the Catholic Truths. But it cannot be denied that they were the wiser ones who so distinguished the parts of religion from each other that they could judge truth probability, possibility, and falsehood."

[26] See Appendix I.

[27] The same caveat must apply to the "Praecepta ad Nepotes", written in the person of an ancestor.

with a particularly knotty bit of De Veritate, turned quickly on to the "little Treatise".[28] Its brevity makes it rather like an interlude between the two major works, De Veritate and De Religione Gentilium. But it is also a link; and it should be considered as a work with a past, and a future.

II Origins and Context of "Religio Laici"

In his study of the "advent of reason", Mario Sina discusses the impact on Herbert of the Dutch Arminians, and in particular Grotius.[29] De Veritate Religionis Christianae, published, like De Veritate, in Paris in 1624, was influential in England;[30] it is very likely that it influenced Herbert, who was his friend, and wrote a celebratory epigram on his escape from religious persecution.[31] Like Herbert, Grotius pleaded for peace; and he had, next to the Calvinists, a high opinion of human potential. The subject of the treatise is probably one they discussed together in Paris.

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[28] Essay, I iii 15: Locke was presumably looking at one of the copies of DV (1645) bound together with DCE and its appendices (his library catalogue (ed. J. Harrison and P. Laslett (Oxford, 1971)) does not list Herbert).

[29] M. Sina, L'Avvento della Ragione (Milan, 1976), pp. 147-65. As Sina discusses this at some length, it is dismissed rather summarily here.

[30] Barbara Shapiro remarks that it "in many ways provided the starting point for English thinkers seeking a rational basis for scriptural truth" (Probability and Certainty in Seventeenth-Century England (Princeton, N.J., 1983), p. 95). The 1624 edition (Latin) was in fact the second; the first (Dutch) appeared in 1622. It was translated into English, whole and in part, many times after 1632 (the first, complete translation).

[31] Smith, p. 90. Grotius was imprisoned in 1619 by order of the Calvinist Stadtholder, Maurice of Nassau (Herbert's old commander in the Low Country wars); he escaped to Paris in April 1621.

De Veritate Religionis also explores an area that Herbert was to reach some time later: the nature and status of pagan religion. The work of another Dutch Arminian, Gerard Vos (or Vossius), a friend of Grotius, provided him with a factual basis for his own work on the subject; Grotius's little book included a section "Against Paganism", which clearly drew, as Herbert was to do, on Augustine's City of God.[32] Their treatment of this subject, however, indicates also the difference between the two men. Grotius was writing not only for men like Herbert (in Latin), but (in Dutch) for sailors, who were supposed to use their new knowledge to spread the Word across the world;[33] his account of paganism is an attack, and a warning. In Religio Laici, as we saw, Herbert began to develop a rather more complex, sympathetic argument. The title each chose is significant: Herbert wrote on Truth, and on Religion; Grotius wrote on the Truth of the Religion of Christianity.[34]

Sina castigates Rossi for emphasizing Herbert's Classical sources at the expense of contemporary influence;[35] he himself, however, significantly misplaces Religio Laici. His study begins in the 1640s, but Herbert's work is not discussed until the third chapter, along with works written some forty years later - two chapters after another English work to which it is probably related. Three years before Religio Laici there appeared the first, pirated edition of the Religio Medici of Thomas Browne.

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[32] See chapter V, "In Defence of Eclectic Paganism".

[33] See the end of his Dedication.

[34] As Sina says, "Un'identica esigenza, quella di giungere ad una formulazione chiara e definitiva dei capisaldi della vera religione, anima le pagine del di questo scritto del Grozio e quelle del De Veritate di Herbert . . . Con una sola, ma fondamentale differenza: mentre quella del Grozio, e dei teologi liberali in genere, fu un'apologia del cristianesimo, l'opera di Herbert fu l'apologia della religione naturale" (p. 153).

[35] L'Avvento della Ragione, p. 149; Sina refers in particular to La Vita, I 493-4.

The similarity of the title is not a frivolous point. The format, applied to works in English, became very popular at the end of the century; by that time, four works had appeared under the title Religio Laici.[36] The vogue left Religio Medici behind; but it is clear that some at least of those English Religiones of the Restoration are written with an eye on Browne.[37] Herbert used Religio Laici as the title for works in both English and Latin, as if he regarded it as a phrase independent of language. His Welsh library catalogue, apparently drawn up in 1636, shows that after his decision to take on the history of Henry VIII (and thus to commit himself to the life of a scholar, rather than a politician), Herbert doubled the number of his books - he bought avidly and widely, and in particular he bought theological works (treatises, rather than sermons). He owned a copy of Lord Manchester's Contemplatio Mortis et Immortalitatis; it is more than likely that he read Browne.[38]

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[36] Dryden's poem appeared in 1682; an attack on this by "J.R." in 1688; and, in 1683, "Charles Blount"'s Religio Laici -which was "borrowed" from the unpublished work by Herbert (see below). G.D. Atkins, The Faith of John Dryden: Change and Continuity (Lexington, KY, 1980), reports finding "sixteen works with similar titles . . . between 1645 and 1695" (p. 5) - unfortunately, he does not list them.

[37] Religio Clerici refers to Browne obliquely but unmistakably: "I like not that high flight of the Father . . Certum est, quia impossibile est; nor his who said, there were not Impossibilities enow in Religion for an active Faith . . . (London, 1681, p. 31). George Mackenzie's Religio Stoici (1663) reveals its indebtedness by its style - a brilliantly successful pastiche. In the early eighteenth century, Religio Bibliopolae was to be quite explicit about it (see the Preface to the Reader).

[38] Contemplatio: NLW 5298E, fo. 7: pub. 1631. This catalogue, which lists more works in English than the Jesus catalogue, may be dated by the fact that almost half of the books were published after 1630, but none after 1636. Thus it cannot show Religio Medici; but it does provide some relevant information.

It may be significant that the Earl of Dorset, Herbert's old friend "Ned", recommended the work (in its pirated edition) to Sir Kenelm Digby, who also had an interest in Herbert's philosophy: the copy of the French De Veritate in Pennsylvania University Library carries an inscription proclaiming that Digby presented it to the Jesuit College at Liège (see Hutcheson's bibliography, p. 157)).

If so, it seems to have been reciprocal; for Browne's library contained a copy of De Veritate, in the French edition.[39] This gives perhaps a particular point to one characteristic disclaimer:

> I have no Genius to disputes in Religion, and have often thought it wisedome to decline them, especially upon a disadvantage, or when the cause of truth might suffer in the weaknesse of my patronage . . . Every man is not a proper Champion for Truth, nor fit to take up the gantlet in the cause of Veritie . . . I vi[40]

Browne would not present himself to the world as a successor to that gallant philosopher Edward Herbert, of whose youthful military exploits at Cleves-Jülich he could have heard from his own step-father.[41]

Religio Medici is, on first reading, the most unHerbertian production imaginable. Herbert began his philosophical career as an avowed anti-sceptic: in religion, he was the promoter of a creed that would do away with disagreements and doubts. His laicism gives him a sort of superiority:

> being a meere Laick I had neither will nor leasure to engage my selfe in the clearing of these doubts for the studying of which alone my wholle life did not suffize. .[42]

The word "meere" has a wholly sarcastic sound; the contrast with the passage from Browne quoted above could hardly be sharper.

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[39] It appears in the Catalogue of his and his son's books auctioned in 1710 (ed. T. Ballard (London, 1710), p. 32). Browne claimed, in the Preface to the 1643 edition, that he had "composed" RM "about seven yeares past" - confirmed by II 41, where he describes himself as under thirty (he was born in 1605). However, it is quite likely that he would have known the earlier, Latin edition of De Veritate from his time abroad.

[40] L.C. Martin (ed.), Religio Medici and Other Works (Oxford, 1964), p. 6.

[41] For the behaviour of Browne's step-father, Sir Thomas Dutton, at Cleves-Jülich, see J. Bennett, Sir Thomas Browne (Cambridge, 1962), p. 4. Herbert and Dutton were acquainted: see Rossi, I 77.

[42] "Religio Laici", pp. 306-7.

And yet both works were written at the height of the same crisis, of which both were deeply aware. If Religio Medici is unHerbertian, it is also an attempt to grapple with problems given new force in the 1640s.

The beginnings of Religio Laici and Religio Medici both show awareness of living at a critical time - but for very different reasons.

> I have live to behold the highest perversion of that excellent invention [sc. the "presse"]; the name of his Majesty defamed, the honour of Parliament depraved, the writings of both depravedly, anticipatively, counterfeitedly imprinted . . .[43]

Browne writes as an Anglican under siege (the noisy Dissent of Norwich is well known).[44] "I should violate my owne arme rather then a Church window", he proclaims; and the context gives the words particular force. He was not a fighter, but he was quietly loyal to his political beliefs.[45]

Herbert's record, of course, was very different. He had, until war began, been a moderate supporter of the King. He had attended the Council at York in 1639, and voted with Strafford for prosecution of hostilities against the Scots. He had voted in 1640 that Charles should be granted his supplies before the grievances of the Commons were discussed.[46] Then, in 1642, he made his last appearance in the House of Lords for two and a half years. It was not a happy one: he was, says the House of Lords Journal, "committed

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[43] Religio Medici, p. 1.

[44] See in particular J.T. Evans, Seventeenth-Century Norwich (Oxford, 1979), pp. 105-50.

[45] He refused to subscribe to a fund set up for the regaining of Newcastle for Parliament (Bennett, Browne, p. 22). The "Church window" was altered in 1643 to the less painful "Church".

[46] C.H. Firth notes that this was by no means a majority view among the lords temporal: "only the solid episcopal vote saved it from defeat" (The House of Lords during the Civil War (London, 1910), p. 66).

for words".[47] The House had decided to vote that the King's move to York marked the beginning of a war on Parliament, and that anyone who chose to assist him was a traitor. Herbert rose to object:

> I should agree to it, if I could be satisfied that the King would make War upon the Parliament without Cause.

He was committed into custody over night. On his release, he apologized to the House, and asked permission to leave London for the Spa, "for his Health". On those grounds, and with that destination, he was allowed to go. When he next attended, in October 1644, it was as the pensioner of Parliament.

Writers on Herbert since the Second World War have tended to be much less censorious of him than Lee, or the two Victorian critics for whom

> Lord Herbert's double offence of disloyalty and breach of trust in the surrender of Montgomery Castle cannot be defended, and admits of but little extenuation.[48]

- or than some non-Herbertians continue to be.[49] He had, after all, no particular reason for devotion to the Stuarts, who had consistently disappointed his hopes and ignored his services; his old devotion to the Winter Queen did not extend to her son Rupert, whose efforts in Wales he declined to support.[50] He was not alone in his position: the case of Sir Thomas

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[47] HLJ V 77.

[48] "M.C.J." and "G.S." (M.C. Jones and the Rev. G. Sandford), "Herbertiana" in Montgomeryshire Collections, VI (1873), 423. The Montgomeryshire editors made reparation fifteen years later, however, by publishing in full the extenuating circumstances: see below.

[49] See, e.g., C.V. Wedgwood, The King's War 1641 to 1647 (London, 1966), p. 337; R. Hutton, The Royalist War Effort (London, 1982), p. 150.

[50] Lee notes this coldly (p. 279). Bedford, who defends Herbert with vigour, suggests that he might have been disgusted by the behaviour of Charles Gerrard, the Royalist commander, "who was killing and torturing his way through west Wales" (p. 17).

Roe, also a diplomat, also disappointed of high office, is particularly close.[51] In the case of Herbert, we have some first-hand evidence for motivation. Among his papers in Wales is a sheaf of jottings taken from contemporary writing on the events of the 1640s. They cover a range of ideas, but the predominant concerns are two: first, to establish a government that respects its people's wishes; second, to make peace.[52] Between them, these two desires seem to account for Herbert's non-involvement quite well. He was not allowed, however, to maintain it. After the capture of his castle (by trickery, as is now quite clear),[53] and an unsuccessful attempt by the Royalists to reclaim it, he seems to have sided quite happily with Parliament, continually protesting his enthusiasm for their cause as he appealed to them for money.[54]

No doubt Herbert did not sympathize very deeply with Charles; nothing in his record suggests a devotion to Parliament either. But he knew his enemy. De Causis Errorum is officially epistemological, continuing the examination of conditions of perception begun in

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[51] See G.E. Aylmer, "Collective Mentalities in Mid-Seventeenth-Century England: IV. Cross-Currents: Neutrals, Trimmers, and Others" TRHS 39 (1989), 1-22: on p. 7, he lists a number of other comparable examples.

[52] Rossi transcribes some of these, III 492-504. Although not by Herbert, they are proof that he was deeply interested in contemporary events. I have succeeded in identifying only one of them for certain: Thomas Povey's celebrated tract, The Moderatour Expecting Sudden Peace (February, 1643), which Herbert has compressed and converted into the third person. Another of them seems related to the Briefe Answer to Dr. Ferne (December, 1642) by Jeremiah Burroughs, later one of the five Dissenting Brethren of the Westminster Assembly. The papers in this packet discussed by Rossi support Parliament, if anyone; there is another, which appears to defend the Royalist position. "God inanimates every State with one Power, as every man with one Soule" runs one typical sentence. Herbert seems to have tried out both positions; but the desire for peace clearly went deepest.

[53] See Rossi, III 207 ff.; the evidence, letters from James Till, the commander who captured the castle, and from Colonel Myddleton, is in NLW Powis Bequest 1959, Parcel IX, printed (with other topical pieces) in the Montgomery Collections, XXII (1888), 179-98.

[54] Drafts of petitions are to be found in this same parcel; they are discussed by Rossi, III 243 ff.

De Veritate; but it finds room for six pages on reason and faith, which are quite incongruously emotional:

> Quàm fucata interea dolosaque sit humana authoritas vix dici potest: ut enim fallere non voluisse detur, quis falli non potuisse asseverabit? praesertim cum hii qui sartam tectamque indè tuentur dignitatem, imponant aliis facile . . . Atque utinam hisce satis terminaretur finibus misera hominum sors, neque ipsa Mania Rabiesque accederet, sed . . . adeò malè cum humano genere agitur, ut ob fides [sic], vel commenta sua, quae alterutrinque deriserit sapiens, adeò saeviant mutuo digladienturque mortales, ut regiones integras devastare, hominesque superiorum suorum dictis audientes, caeteraque bonos, neci dare satius ducant, quam ut non credant, quae neque ipsi sanè credere possunt.[55]

Browne's violated church window opens sharply onto a scene of savage iconoclasm;[56] Religio Laici makes a comparable effect with the emblematic Keys:

> Doctores singuli quacunque veste stolave amicti, quemcunque Apicem, Cucullumve induti, nullam nisi ex propria Fide, propriisque Miraculis, aut nullam saltem sine illis adornari patientur Religionem; Si omnem eliminaverint Doctrinam quae non hac intraverit porta, sibi ipsisque solis tandem claves servaverint, quantam (Deus bone!) invehent Tyrannidem?[57]

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[55] DCE, p. 57: "How murky and treacherous human authority is can hardly be expressed: for even if we grant there is no wish to deceive, who will claim that he cannot be deceived? Especially since those who keep their dignity intact and protected in this way impose easily on others . . . [and things are worse than this: would that imposition were all that was involved] without the assaults of Madness and Delirium: but . . things are so bad for the human race, that for their faiths, or inventions - things laughable to a wise man - men rage at each other, take up swords against each other, and prefer to devastate whole regions; and give men, obedient to the orders of their superiors, and in other matters good men, over to death, rather than let them not believe what they themselves could hardly believe without insanity." I have departed from Herbert's punctuation, which does not make for easy reading; but I suspect that my more orderly sentences may have rather less force than his long outbursts.

[56] This image is picked out for special mention by M. Wilding in Dragon's Teeth (Oxford, 1987), p. 109.

[57] Hutcheson, p. 119: "The [Doctores] clad in whatever garb or robe, wearing whatever cap or hood, have allowed no religion to be adorned with any but their own faith and their own miracles (or at least none that did not include these). If they banish every doctrine which does not enter by this gate, and if finally they keep the keys for themselves and themselves alone, good God! what tyranny they will introduce!" Hutcheson translates "Doctores" as "schoolmen"; but this need not be what Herbert means. Cf. also Appendix ad Sacerdotes, p. 158. This passage is missing in all the MS drafts (see Appendix II).

On 27 October, 1643, the Westminster Assembly held a debate on the "Power of the Keys".[58] The Appendix ad Sacerdotes seems to have a particular body in mind:

> etiam inter Coetus illos particulares, qui in Codices alicujus Sacri verba jurarunt, Sectae complures & Schismata suborta sint, dum aliae & aliae interpretationes sensûs Codices adducuntur . . .[59]

The word "laicus", as we have seen, was introduced to the 1645 edition of De Veritate: it was used in this way by other aggressive writers in the 1640s:

> this all Christians ought to know, that the title of Clergy S. Peter gave to all Gods people, till Pope Higinus and the succeeding Prelates took it from them, appropriating that name to themselves and their Priests only; and condemning the rest of Gods inheritance to an injurious and alienat condition of Laity, they separated them by local partitions in Churches . . . as if they meant to sow up that Jewish vail which Christ by his death on the Crosse rent asunder.[60]

Language used by laics of clerics from the earliest times, invested with new significance by the Reformation, was given another burst of life in the movement against the hated Laudians.[61]

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[58] See the discussion by R.S. Paul, The Assembly of the Lord (Edinburgh, 1985), pp. 146 ff. They debated the question whether the power was given to the Apostles as Apostles, or just as believers. As Paul observes, "Behind this debate one senses there was a very strong and traditional concern for maintaining the distinction between clerical and lay persons and for reaffirming ministerial authority, against the Independents' insistence that ecclesiastical power should be corporately in the hands of the whole congregation" (p. 147).

[59] Appendix ad Sacerdotes (1645), p. 157: "even among those particular Assemblies, which take their oaths by the words of some Sacred Book, abundant Sects and Schisms have arisen, while various interpretations of the sense of the Book are invoked." I supply my own translation, as the English MS seems to me to miss the point by translating "Coetus" as "societies" (fo. 46).

[60] The Reason of Church-Government in The Works of John Milton, III i 257-8.

[61] It was to be used again against their "jure divino" successors, the Presbyterians, in whom Milton had originally had such faith: see (e.g.) William Walwyn, The Compassionate Samaritane (1644), in W. Haller, Tracts on Liberty in the Puritan Revolution (New York, 1934), III 75-6.

English Arminianism had changed since Herbert's days with Grotius in Paris. The story of another friend of Grotius, Isaac Dorislaus, has particular resonance here.[62] In 1627, Dorislaus was chosen by Fulke Greville as the first occupant of his new chair of history in Cambridge. During his second lecture, Dorislaus expressed some sympathy with the Dutch revolt against Spain. There was no third lecture. Laud stepped in, and "chair and subject were extinguished together in 1627."[63] This story neatly encapsulates the difference between the Jacobean and the Caroline versions of Arminianism. Herbert himself had fought against Spain some fifteen years earlier; back in 1621, he had also been sufficiently attracted by Dutch schemes for a united church under James to send the King a plan devised by Daniel Tilenus, a friend he shared with Grotius.[64] The twin ideals of toleration and unity held high by these Dutch Arminians harmonized with his own desires for freedom and certainty; but Laudianism, with its exalted clergy and Court of High Commission, could not attract him.

Not, of course, that New Presbyter looked any better. The "Religio Laici" works exhibit hostility of equal weight to both. In the English text, Herbert seems - however restlessly - desirous to remain within the pale of the "reverend Authority of the Church"; the reverse side of this is his explicit unhappiness at the variety within that Church:

> whereas I thought my selfe obliged for the dischardge of my Conscience to study not onely all Religions that have beene or are in the world, I found the Christian Religion in its divers sects alone of greater Intricacye then that I could by any Reason or Authority dissolve or unty the many scruples or knotts in them . . .[65]

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[62] For a masterly account of this affair, and its context, see H.R. Trevor-Roper, "Laudianism and Political Power", in Catholics, Anglicans and Puritans (London, 1987).

[63] Trevor-Roper, "Laudianism and Political Power", p. 80.

[64] See Rossi, II 176-7, who cites a letter from Boswell, one of Herbert's secretaries, to Calvert, 11/21 May 1621. Herbert addressed one of his topical poems to Tilenus (Smith, p. 90).

[65] "Religio Laici", p. 298.

Both ends of the spectrum are attacked: the predestinationists, as believing a doctrine both merciless and detrimental to virtue; the others, who, while believing (correctly) in the importance of good works, make too much of the clerical power - and as Herbert proceeds these turn naturally into priests:

> Againe I found others who though they doe not say they could tell who were predestinated but in stead thereof recomended good works as the most effectuall meanes on our Parts for coming to God did yet otherwise teach divers things . . . For as they said they had Power to remitt sinnes and this Remission againe was graunted upon noe very difficult Termes men did not feare to returne to sinne againe when they found Pardon soe Easy . . .[66]

What was left? By 1642, Grotius felt uneasy about Herbert's religious views, and took the trouble to dissociate himself from them.[67] According to its author, Grotius gave De Veritate (1624) his blessing; it remains hard to believe that he felt entirely happy with it. The later editions exacerbated tendencies already clearly apparent in the earlier ones. In the 1640s, however, Herbert's writing reveals a new anger, and a sense of urgency. The situation seems to have become intolerable; and every version of Christianity has been involved.

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[66] "Religio Laici", pp. 304-5. This text goes on to blame "ye Proneness of men to sinne", rather than "the doctrine of theire Preists or Teachers", for this state of affairs; in the "Quid Laicus", there is no question of this: the priests are blamed squarely for interfering with the proper means of reconciliation with God.

[67] He wrote to Mersenne, in response to a book containing "conceptions hardies et fort semblables à celles de Monsieur Herbert . . . Il y en a de telles, que je ne voudrais pas entreprendre de soustenir . . ." (Correspondance de Mersenne, XI 144-5).

III "Religio Laici" and its Successors

Response to Religio Medici began even before the first authorized edition;[68] Religio Laici had longer to wait. As Sina's placing of him recognizes, Herbert's work became active in debate some forty years later, long after his own death.

The first sign of English interest in him (apart from one insubstantial reference by Lord Brooke) seems to be Nathanael Culverwell's Learned and Elegant Discourse of the Light of Nature (published posthumously, in 1652).[69] Culverwell, a Cambridge man with leanings towards both Platonism and Puritanism, addresses Herbert in the course of his moderate defence of reason: he does not attack the Articles per se (Culverwell likes the fact that Herbert talks about faculties, and does not talk about pre-existence); but he demurs at the rôle Herbert gives them.[70] This objection is made much more emphatically in 1672 by Richard Baxter, in a work addressed to Herbert's brother Henry.[71] Baxter's attitude to the Five is interesting. He is careful to define his criticisms: only one of them is "not a Notio Communis" - repentance, which could never be enough to atone for man's sin without the

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[68] See Joan Bennett, Sir Thomas Browne, p. 54: Kenelm Digby's Observations on "Religio Medici" was written after reading the pirated text of 1642; Alexander Ross's Medicus Medicatus: or the Physician cured by a Lenitive or Gentle Potion: with some Animadversions upon Sir Kenelm Digbie's "Observations on 'Religio Medici'" appeared in 1645. Browne tried vainly to deter Digby from publication until the authorized text appeared: see the letters between them printed in L.C. Martin's edition of Religio Medici, pp. 76-8. For a detailed account of their criticisms, see J.N. Wise, Sir Thomas Browne's "Religio Medici" and Two Seventeenth-Century Critics (Columbia, MO, 1973). They will appear briefly in chapter V, "The Salvation of the Heathen".

[69] See the Introduction to the edition by R.A. Greene and H. MacCallum (Toronto, 1971). Culverwell will reappear briefly in chapter V, under "Salvation of the Heathen".

[70] Greene and MacCallum (eds.), An Elegant and Learned Discourse, pp. 131-2.

[71] More Reasons for the Christian Religion and No Reasons Against It (London, 1672).

sacrifice of Christ.[72] Baxter's answer to Herbert's system is to add new "Notiones" of his own:

> that all men are sinful and depraved even from the first (however it came to pass) that they are indisposed to the certain duties and ends, which their nature was formed for.
>
> That mans darkness is so great, that he learneth all this from nature alone, with great imperfection, doubtfulness and dissatisfaction:
>
> That therefore a further supernatural Revelation, which is sure would be a great confirmation and satisfaction to mans mind.[73]

This represents the beginning of the phase that in chapter II I called "post-contemporary". Baxter is moderately hostile. Most of the attention attracted by Herbert from 1660 to the end of the century was not English but German, from Lutherans and Calvinists, who were extremely hostile.[74] The most famous example is the De Tribus Magnis Impostoribus of Christian Kortholt (Cologne, 1680), who triumphantly reclaimed that notorious title to characterize Herbert, along with Hobbes and Spinoza, as an hypocritical atheist.[75] Like Baxter, but in a rather different spirit, Kortholt produced a list of addenda to Herbert's creed.[76] Michael Berns immolated the same trio on his Altar der Atheisten (1692), although he found Herbert less bad than Hobbes (himself less bad than Spinoza). He was attacked in a similar way and on similar grounds by G.N. Seerupius, in his university exercise De Legis

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[72] More Reasons, p. 119. Herbert knew that the fourth Article would be the most controversial: the later expositions add long defences of it.

[73] More Reasons, p. 123.

[74] See Gawlick's bibliography in his edition of De Veritate (Stuttgart, 1966), and the invaluable discussion by Bedford, pp. 248-51. I have not managed to find all the works they cite; what follows is a sketch - quite enough, I imagine.

[75] Kortholt explains his association of Herbert with Hobbes - surprising, on the face of it: one attributes too much to reason, the other too little; both believe that revelation is only conclusive to the person who receives it directly (pp. 99-100).

[76] De Tribus Magnis Impostoribus, p. 29.

Mosaicae Divina Origine et Auctoritate Diatribe adversus Edoardum Herbertum Baronem de Cherbury (Cologne, 1678); but J.F. Buddeus thought him less an atheist than a "naturalist" - distinguishing him from Hobbes and John Toland.[77]

The first reference I have seen to Herbert as a "deist" dates from 1714, in a work by a Presbyterian, Thomas Halyburton -the most hostile of the English critics.[78] Halyburton's own religious views made him particularly hostile to Herbert: he disliked the "new Divinity" of his age, in which, as he saw it, the old tenets of the Reformation "began to be decry'd".[79] Later attacks on "deism" tended to begin from a position less remote from Herbert's own, and presented him as potentially dangerous, rather than actually wicked. John Leland, the respected historian of the phenomenon, begins his View of the Principal Deistical Writers with Herbert, but mollifies his criticism: like Baxter, he approves of the Articles, as far as they go:

> It were to be wished, that all that glory in this character [of "deist"] would agree with this noble Lord in a hearty reception of those articles . . .[80]

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[77] Theses Theologicae de Atheismo et Superstitione (Jena, 1717): he defines "naturalistae": "[ii], qui rationis scita ad salutem consequendam sufficere arbitrantur, principem eum tenere locum". Herbert is not an atheist; however, "negandum tamen non est, talia eum asserere, & fundamenti loco ponere, quae ad evertendam funditus religionem Christianam pertinent. Non dubitabit hac de re, qui sequentia eius recte consideravit principia" (p. 182).

[78] Natural Religion Insufficient (Edinburgh, 1714). Halyburton sees deism as popish, in encouraging doubt among the laity (who then retreat to Rome, as the position of greatest reassurance, presumably - Halyburton does not quite spell it out); he makes a pleasing pair with Tabaraud, the Catholic critic (Histoire Critique du Philosophisme Anglois (Paris, 1806)), who puts it down to the Reformation.

[79] Natural Religion Insufficient, pp. 25-6.

[80] A View of the Principal Deistical Writers (London, 1745), I 7. See also pp. 3, 22. Leland praises Halyburton, in a back-handed fashion: "the narrowness of his notions in some points hath prejudiced some persons against his work, and hindered them from regarding and considering it so much as it deserves" (p. 22). For Herbert as "deist", see the next section.

By the end of the eighteenth century, the movement had apparently proceeded so far that Herbert looked almost benign: in comparison with Bolingbroke and Hume, he seemed to Ogilvie "often the advocate of Christianity . . ."[81] The last of the storm was clearing.

One result of this was the disappearance of Herbert from the public view. Back in 1680, he was highly visible, receiving not only his strongest obloquy, but his staunchest support. At some time in that decade, he was adopted fitfully as a patron by a notorious figure: the dazzling and yet shadowy Charles Blount, who somehow acquired access to his manuscripts.[82]

Writers on Herbert have tended to be hostile to Blount. In the eyes of Hutcheson, his championship brought Herbert into bad repute: Blount "steals not merely words, but ideas, and in giving them a somewhat new dress he cheapens them . . ."[83] It seems unhelpful to pursue this line very far. Blount did give Herbert credit (if insufficient), and warm praise; where Hutcheson detects an "unpleasant smartness", one might diagnose a rather reckless excitement about his subject. Phillip Harth's description remains the best:

> he was a publicist for, and propagator of, freethinking of any kind . . . he was a popularizer of other men's works who freely adapted their writings to present needs.

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[81] J. Ogilvie, An Inquiry into the Causes of the Infidelity and Scepticism of the Times (London, 1783), p. 56. From this perspective, indeed, it seemed that "even Hobbes is not always explicit or casuistical in his declarations against it" (p. 56). Ogilvie begins his book with a gentlemanly disclaimer: "Among all the species of disquisition, the polemical is perhaps the most unpleasant to a man endowed with any portion of sensibility" (p. vii). Times had changed indeed.

[82] More information about Blount is offered in the Note at the end of chapter VI. One of his few supporters was William Empson, who provided a moving defence of him in the last of three erratic articles on Dryden's "Religio Laici" ("A Deist Tract by Dryden" EIC 25 (1975)). There is an enthralling account of his "battle" with Gilbert Burnet for the shop-worn soul of "Strephon", Lord Rochester, in the last chapter of D.C. Allen, Doubt's Boundless Sea (Baltimore, MD, 1964).

[83] Hutcheson, p. 74.

> . . he served as a promoter and lending librarian of unorthodox manuscript tracts on religion[84]

His relevance to this chapter is concentrated in the second prose Religio Laici of the century, published by him in 1683 with salutes to Herbert. The basis of this is the English "Religio Laici", expanded by about one-third with extra material, Herbertian and other, to produce a work less focussed, much more restless than its (part) original.[85] And yet its immediate instigation is more precise: it claims still closer connexion with another Religio Laici, the great Anglican poem of his alleged friend, John Dryden.[86]

The relationship between these two co-opted sponsors of Blount has been much debated, without much agreement. Harth, author of the most detailed study of Dryden's Religio Laici, considers it unlikely that Dryden had Herbert in mind when he used his title.[87] Hutcheson, by contrast, assumes that there must be a conscious allusion.[88] Harth's point is based on the difficulty he perceives for Dryden in seeing any of Herbert's work in the 1680s;

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[84] Contexts of Dryden's Thought (Chicago, 1968), p. 91.

[85] Blount also used the Dialogue (see chapter VI), bits from a work "De Anima" by his father (later published in his own Miscellaneous Works), and no doubt other things too. It is tempting to find original the malicious little vignettes inserted in Herbert's text - e.g. this: "An History drawn in a Picture may have in it Representation of Battels, Slaughters, Drunkards, harlots, and Firing of Cities, Shipwracks, or the like; and yet may be as lovely a Piece of Painting, as if it represented an Assembly of Divines" (Religio Laici (London, 1683), pp. 57-8). On the other hand, the phrase seems very topical for the 1640s, and it may be that he was using a lost manuscript of Herbert's. If he was using any of the extant MSS of "Religio Laici", it was most probably the one now in Petworth House: see Appendix II.

[86] For the connexion between Blount and Dryden, see Harth, Contexts, pp. 92 ff. - who is surely right in his verdict that Blount intended to embarrass Dryden, and succeeded.

[87] "Even if Dryden was aware of this book and knew its contents . . . the wisdom of giving his poem the same title appears questionable" (Contexts, p. 62). In the course of his impetuous engagement with the texts, Empson scorned this idea: "Turning Dryden into a booby is carried to a wild extreme here" ("A Deist Tract by Dryden", p. 89).

[88] "it is Herbert's statement of the philosophy that he is considering" (p. 57).

this is weakened by the fact that there was a revival of interest in him at just this time. It is not easy to dismiss the connexion. Dryden had certainly seen the Life and Raigne, to which he refers in the Preface to Religio Laici; and he gives his "Deist" five points, which look very close to those of Herbert - much closer than to the similar lists quoted by Harth.[89] Beyond this, there is no proof, but no disproof either. Dryden was criticizing either Herbert's system, or one very like it.

What criticisms did he make? The "Deist" in the poem has "too much exalted the faculties of our soul":

> Vain, wretched Creature, how art thou misled
> To think thy Wit these God-like Notions bred!
> These Truths are not the product of thy Mind,
> But dropt from Heaven, and of a Nobler kind.
> (64-7)[90]

This sets up a contrast Herbert tended to avoid; Bedford presents the paradox in its strongest form:

> one can imagine Herbert quite happily joining Dryden in re-affirming his own view that man's original and natural knowledge of God is the product of revelation (in the sense of Natural Instinct of divine origin) and not of discursus.[91]

Even discounting the evidence that Herbert became less concerned to denigrate discursus, however, there remains a crucial difference between the two. For Dryden, "revelation" does

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[89] Harth draws on Stillingfleet's Letter to a Deist (1676) - which lists eight, and clearly derives from Spinoza's Tractatus Theologico-Politicus; and on the treatise by "A.W.", "Of Natural Religion, as opposed to Divine Revelation", later published in Blount's Miscellaneous Works (London, 1695) - which lists seven (though indeed, as Halyburton (p. 222) notes, these are hardly more than Herbert's Five in effect). Even without Religio Laici, he could have found the Five in the Life and Raigne. (For Dryden and the Life and Raigne, see chapter III, "Politics and Religion".)

[90] Swedenberg et al (eds.), Works, II

[91] Bedford, p. 207.

not have this sense: it means public manifestation through the Scriptures.[92] And yet there is a further complication, at once pulling them closer together and pushing them further apart. Some critics have felt that Dryden leaves his position in the poem weak by objecting only to the means of the Deist's knowledge. Baxter added new Common Notions, of a distinctively Christian sort; Dryden, although he impresses the Fall and Atonement in stern terms on his Deist, seems remarkably cavalier on the central tenet of the Christian faith:

> We hold, and say we prove from Scripture plain,
> That Christ is GOD; the bold Socinian
> From the same Scripture urges he's but MAN . . .
> I think (according to my little Skill,)
> To my own Mother-Church submitting still)
> That many have been sav'd, and many may,
> Who never heard this Question brought in play. (311-21)

The occasion of this is the Catholic objection that non-Catholic Christians are never in agreement with each other. Herbert had also made this point. His solution was the Five Articles; Dryden here prefers to jettison the question entirely, in the interests of "common quiet", and the obedience of the "unletter'd Christian" to "The few . . . Born to instruct".[93]

Dryden's Religio Laici is a work very different in outlook from Herbert's. Herbert was promoting a radical position; Dryden was defending one reached through more than a century of compromise. The poem takes on a wide range of opponents - "deists", Catholics, Dissenters - and thus it assumes a variety of oppositional poses; the first and last bring him into confrontation with the earlier Layman, and with the circumstances in which his last

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[92] Herbert's first critic, Culverwell, had noted the difference: the Church is built "upon a more Adamantine and precious foundation" than Herbert's common notions (A Learned and Elegant Discourse, pp. 131-2).

[93] This point, ignored by Harth, is much emphasized by Empson; Atkins, The Faith of John Dryden, p. 94, concedes "Dryden's recognition, perhaps fleeting and quickly repressed, that Scriptura sola is vulnerable in the way Catholics, Socinians, and others claimed, on the most fundamental question of all, Christ's nature."

works had been written. Herbert saw the origins of the Civil War, the work of the priests; Dryden saw its result, a "crawling Brood" of headstrong sects. Despite the stalwart refusal to accept the overruling authority of Rome, the savage language of the last section suggests that the dissenting "Rabble", and the threat they implied to civil unity, were always his chief horror.[94] Unlike Herbert, he saw the potential of the "vulgar" not for intellectual freedom, but for insanity, under the excuse of Scripture. The sects and the "deists" are placed at opposite ends of the poem: they might be considered the double legacy of the Revolution. The result is a paradox: Dryden offers a defence of his belief which is hardly a defence of Christianity; his motivation is the very opposite of Herbert's.

The Deist of the poem, unlike the sectarians, is single. But the definition of that term has proved as fissiparous as the sects themselves.

IV Herbert and Deism

As with most terms of the sort, the definition of "deism" is complicated, and thus of debatable use; but it seemed appropriate to include a brief discussion here, as the term has been applied to Herbert so often, from the seventeenth century to the twentieth - with very little consistency.[95]

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[94] Snobbery is a ready part of Dryden's Catholic arsenal: see the Preface to the Defence of the Duchess's Paper, sneering at Bishop Stillingfleet for "his good Friends the Rabble" (Works, XVII 296).

[95] The vagueness of the term explains the very different examples of "deist"offered by Hutcheson, Bedford, and L.I. Bredvold in his article, "Deism before Lord Herbert", Papers of the Michigan Academy of Sciences, Arts and Letters IV (1924), 431-42.

I shall not be concerned with another phenomenon which E.D. Hill has introduced to Herbert studies: "philosophical", as opposed to "historical" deism (Edward, Lord Herbert,

If words adhered to their etymological meanings, "deism" would mean simply "belief in God". This belief is the basis of all the "positive" religions: what distinguishes "deism" from "natural religion" is that "deism" is a system by itself, self-sufficient.[96] However, as a recent historian of deism has noted, although this definition provides a constant element, it is theoretical rather than historical as a total account.[97] During its first three centuries, "deism" was always a polemical term, never offered dispassionately by either its few proponents, or its many enemies;[98] the term arose as a danger or challenge to Christianity, and they developed together. The first attackers, though they named and thus appeared to isolate the phenomenon, found it in practice indistinguishable from that older bogey, atheism. In the first definition (1564 - by Pierre Viret, a friend of Calvin) and the first one in English (1621 - by Robert Burton), the initial attempt to distinguish deists from atheists soon

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pp. 22-3): a belief, located by him in "the eighteenth century", that God, like a watchmaker, set the world in motion and then left it to itself. His authority here is an article by A.R. Winnett, with the provocative title "Were the Deists 'Deists'?" (Church Quarterly Review 161 (1960)). Winnett discusses some of Leland's examples, measures them against this "philosophical" criterion, and finds them lacking. The procedure has some value, as this "philosophical" sense of "deism" seems to be popular; but the problem is that it seems to give the "watchmaker" definition a kind of historical validity - which remains to be proved. Winnett names no holders of this belief; he does not even suggest a date for it, as Hill does. "The eighteenth century" will hardly do when Leland himself wrote in the middle of that century. The watchmaker definition is not, in fact, entirely distinct from "historical" deism: some of the deists attacked in Clarke's Boyle lecture (1705) apparently held an Epicurean view of God; but Clarke does not consider these as more "philosophical", different from the others. It seems likely that Hill supplied a century for his spectral "philosophers" out of a recognition that they are in fact a parodic version of Anglican orthodoxy after the Restoration. But there seems to be no evidence that they ever existed outside the imagination of intellectual historians; and they have already usurped space enough.

[96] This is basically the definition of G.V. Lechler, Geschichte des englischen Deismus (Stuttgart, 1841), quoted by R.E. Sullivan, John Toland and the Deist Controversy: a Study in Adaptations (Harvard, 1982), p. 213.

[97] Sullivan, John Toland, p. 213.

[98] For the first self-professed "Déiste", see chapter II, "Origins": he is concerned almost entirely with the issue of eternal punishment.

collapses;[99] the cloudiness which surrounded the word "atheism" spread quickly over the less familiar term.[100] What awareness of difference persists tends to work to the deists' disadvantage: they are especially shifty, pretend-believers.

It has often been remarked that there is a hiatus of sixty years between the first appearances of "deist" and "deism" in English.[101] After the Restoration, the words appear quite frequently in polemic: there is still some variety, but now more of an effort is made to keep them distinct from atheists.[102] A regular cast-list emerges - often with Herbert at its head.[103] The resurrection of the term in the Restoration is linked with him, in a rather complicated way. In 1682, Dryden introduced the word "deism", in a poem with the same name as Herbert's religious tract: he did not mention this, but equated the term with exclusive

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[99] Viret's account is quoted extensively by Bayle (tr. des Maizeaux), The Historical and Critical Dictionary of Mr. Peter Bayle (London, 1738), V 482 n. According to him, "Deists [is] a new word in opposition to that of Atheists. For the word Atheist signifies one that is without God, so they would hereby signify, that they are not without God, because they believe that there is one . . . but as for Jesus Christ, they do not know who he is . . ." This definition seems precise; but a few lines later, Viret has forgotten the distinction, and is speaking of "this execrable Atheism". Compare Burton, The Anatomy of Melancholy, III 4 ii 1.

[100] For the difficulties in defining "atheism" in this period, see D.C. Allen, Doubt's Boundless Sea, and G.E. Aylmer, "Unbelief in Seventeenth-Century England", in D. Pennington and K.V. Thomas (eds.), Puritans and Revolutionaries (Oxford, 1978).

[101] There is a similar gap in French: "déiste" - 1564 (Viret); "déisme" - 1660 (Pascal).

[102] See Sullivan, p. 211, and D. Wootton, "Lucien Febvre and the Problem of Unbelief in the Early Modern Period" JMH 60 (1988): "by the late seventeenth century . . . The term 'atheist' was increasingly restricted to those who denied God's existence, 'deist' was used for those who admitted God's existence but rejected revealed religion, and a new term, 'theist' (1662), was introduced" (p. 704). Stillingfleet's Letter to a Deist (1676) and W. Stephens's Account of the Growth of Deism in England (1696) are among the texts that bear this out. For these later "deists", see in particular Leslie Stephen, English Thought in the Eighteenth Century (London, 1876), I 74-277.

[103] Halyburton judged him the first who "lick'd Deism, and brought it to something of a Form" (Natural Religion Insufficient, p. 219); to the more cautious Leland, "His lordship seems to have been one of the first that formed Deism into a System" (A View, I 3).

belief in Herbert's Articles. In 1683, Blount produced a prose work with the same name, explicitly based on Herbert, but not mentioning "deism"; in 1695, A Summary Account of the Deist's Religion was published under Blount's name: this did not mention Herbert or the Articles, but exalted reason and denigrated revelation.[104] Herbert was fastened to "deism" from both sides: Blount made extensive use of him; Leland put him first in his list.

Many critics have been eager to dissociate Herbert from this later phase of religious controversy, and it is important to mark the distinctions.[105] Leland himself did so; in contrast to the later targets of the book, Herbert is treated with cautious respect. He is a "deist"; but Leland is regretful about it, as he is also moral, and innocent of scurrility. The movement in Anglican orthodoxy after the Restoration towards a rational moralism made it possible to see Herbert as distinct from other suspect figures - a distinction invisible to Kortholt, who was content to label Herbert "atheist". The word "deism" became popular as its etymological sense began to have a chance of calm consideration. In his Boyle Lecture, Samuel Clarke produced a fourfold classification of "deists", ranging from pseudo-atheists to pseudo-Christians: a "true deist", one

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[104] An Account was published in Gildon's chaotic edition of his late friend's Miscellaneous Works (1695). It is preceded by a letter from Blount, introducing but not entirely endorsing it: his delight in trickery and reader-baiting makes its actual authorship anyone's guess. There is one further piece - to make the confusion worse still: in the same year as Blount's Religio Laici, George Rust's Discourse of the Use of Reason in Matters of Religion was published, with the editorial subtitle Shewing, That Christianity Contains Nothing Repugnant to Right Reason; against Enthusiasts and Deists: this makes use of Herbert's four faculties, as "hugely suitable to our present Purpose".

[105] Notable exemplars of this are Bedford, and Hutcheson (who distinguishes deism into two phases: a good one - where the examples are thinkers interested in toleration, not previously labelled as "deists" - and a degenerate one, starring Blount). The distinction is duly marked by Sullivan; but it must be said that he exaggerates Herbert's reputation for orthodoxy (he asserts, rather misleadingly, that Baxter commended De Veritate "as an aid to Christian apologetics" (p. 220)).

> with reverence and modesty, with sincerity and impartiality, with a true and hearty desire of finding out and submitting to Reason and Truth[106]

must surely accept the "Reasonableness" of Christianity.

Until certain doctrines were accepted, however, a gulf remained. Matthew Tindal, self-professed "Christian deist", tried to turn Clarke's scheme to his own advantage: the truths of religion are all known to all men by reason; therefore there is nothing necessary to add to the "true Deists'" belief.[107] But Tindal's efforts were not accepted by the clergy. There was more that was necessary; and Leland could not find it in Herbert's religion. As we saw in chapter II, the story of the divine sign, the "loud though yet gentle noise" which approved De Veritate, embarrassed him - he gave it a "Post-script" of eight pages, explaining it away: Herbert was tired, he was expecting something of the kind, there were no distinct words.[108] Leland's embarrassment stems from the common idea of "deism" as involving hostility to "revealed" religion.[109] The problem is similar to that exploited by Bedford, trying to separate Herbert from Dryden's deists; unlike Bedford, Leland recognized that Herbert's "revelation" was something different from the Christian variety. It is not enough to have a revelation, if it is of the wrong kind. Even if we ignore the increasing rationalism and audacity apparent in each new edition, the religion promoted by De Veritate never made any

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[106] S. Clarke, A Discourse concerning the Unchangeable Obligations of Natural Religion, and the Truth and Certainty of The Christian Revelation (1st pub. 1705) in The Works (London, 1738), III 606.

[107] Christianity as Old as the Creation (London, 1730), chapter XIV.

[108] Leland explained that it had been sent to him by an admirer of Herbert who thought that it "would be acceptable to the friends of religion" (A View, I 24).

[109] As Sullivan says, "the repudiation of revelation . . . has been taken as the distinguishing feature of deism" (p. 218). (An example is William Stephens, An Account of the Growth of Deism in England (London, 1696), p. 4: "DEISM is a denial of all reveal'd Religion."

mention of the historical, unobvious truths of Christianity. All the more complex definitions of Herbert's religion offered by Rossi depend on a simple fact:

> nelle opere di Herbert non si trovava citato una sola volta il nome di Gesù.[110]

The fuzzy edges left on it by history make "deism" a distracting term. The question "Was Herbert a Deist?" might be less confusingly phrased: "Was Herbert a Christian?"

V Herbert and Christianity

It is always difficult to assess "subversion" in literary texts. Critics may vary radically in their interpretations; their disagreements reflect the complex presentation by their authors. The issue seems clearer after the second half of the seventeenth century. Blount, Collins, and Leland's later specimens were always regarded with suspicion; when Toland declares that Christianity is not mysterious, or Blount gives his verdict that "He is the best Christian, who makes the honestest man",[111] there is little temptation to take their words in an innocent sense. But even in the most notorious cases, the dissimulating technique creates an uneasiness in the reader: is the author entirely insincere? Gibbon exploits this in a notorious passage:

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[110] "in Herbert's works there is not one mention to be found of the name of Jesus" (I 496) (this is not quite accurate: see chapter I, "Herbert and Donne", for the early paper on the eye and the soul). Rossi offers definitions of deism, and natural religion in La Vita, I 493: deism is "un teismo che neghi il valore religioso della Rivelazione"; natural religion is "la dottrina che attribuisce la nostra conoscenza di Dio a ragioni naturali e non soprannaturali, pur senza escludere la possibilità della Rivelazione." These definitions are followed by C.J. Betts, Early Deism in France (The Hague, 1984), who calls La Vita "the best general study of deism in recent decades" (p. 4 n.). In his earlier study, Deismo, p. 8, Rossi produced another scheme, rather different, and considerably more elaborate: this distinguishes deism, strict deism, natural religion, rational religion, theism, religious rationalism, and religious naturalism.

[111] Anima Mundi, or, an Historical narration of the Opinions of the Ancients concerning Man's Soul after this life: according to unenlightened Nature (London, ?1679), sig. A2v.

> Apollonius of Tyana was born about the same time as Jesus Christ. His life, that of the former, is related in so fabulous a manner by his disciples, that we are at a loss to discover whether he was a sage, an impostor, or a fanatic.[112]

There is always an element of uncertainty in the response to such writing, as the blandness of the offending words makes itself felt along with the stinging intention. With Gibbon, the frequency of such moments, the audacity, and the contemporary outrage make the direction of his indirection apparent enough. The situation before the Restoration is much less clear. The penalties attached to blasphemy were more alarming; and - cause and effect of that - the psychological difficulties of blaspheming were greater. The authors naturally took take greater care to protect themselves; and their impulse to subversion tended to be complicated by deep-rooted fear of following a dangerous argument to its conclusion - so that a critic who claims to be stripping off layers of protection may be damaging the fabric beneath. The modern reader faces two hazards: naïveté, and anachronism. The new revisionists, David Berman, Tullio Gregory, and others, set themselves against the first, opposing themselves to scholars like Lucien Febvre and Richard Popkin - themselves reacting against earlier critics, whom they accused of the second.[113] The current situation suggests that Herbert (viewed for some time through Bedford's influential eyes) may be due for reclassification as a theological radical.[114]

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[112] This deservedly famous piece, from the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, is printed by Ogilvie, An Inquiry, in the post-script to the Table of Contents, with an indignant objection to the "awkward discriminating parenthesis", which is italicized. The needle-point malice drew blood.

[113] See the collection of essays in M. Hunter and D. Wootton (eds.), Atheism from the Reformation to the Enlightenment (Oxford, 1992). There is an interesting discussion of the issues in the Preface to the re-issue of R. Pintard, Le Libertinage Erudit (Paris, 1983: 1st pub. 1943).

[114] E.D. Hill leads the way; but as his book is modest in length, and published in the Twayne's English Author Series, it has not made the impact it might have done on intellectual historians. The reclassification seems the more likely because, at the same time

As with all the others who have found a place in that unstable category, the feelings of Herbert towards the established Church are open to debate. On the one occasion when we know he was reproached with leaving no room in his system for Christ, he reacted with great indignation.[115] But this does not prove that the accusation was unjustified, or that his response was entirely disingenuous. It is possible that Herbert dissimulated. One obvious defence against from this possibility is provided by his unpublished writing. There may be some constraints here too: the English "Religio Laici" is the most explicitly Christian of the group - far less controversial, one would think, than the Appendix ad Sacerdotes, published in Herbert's lifetime; but then it was intended for an audience, though not a public one. But there is a category exempt even from this. There is space here to discuss one item: the marginalia in one of his books, Origen's Contra Celsum, left (by a pleasant irony) to Jesus College.

The Contra Celsum is one of the most heavily annotated of Herbert's books.[116] It has another feature, of almost suspect helpfulness: a date, 1636, scrawled on the top of page

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as the recent revival of subversive interpretation, there has been a new interest in the French influence on seventeenth- and eighteenth-century English thought; Herbert's French contacts are particularly well documented.

[115] Molina's anonymous friend made the objection: "non erat opus ut Christus Ecclesiam aedificaret; cum ex Creatione, quaelibet Anima habeat intra se Ecclesiam, hoc est, Notitias communes". "Nescio quid atrocius ab Anonymo excogitarj potuit, ut me traduceret", spluttered the outraged author: Christ is needed to complete our knowledge. He ends by insisting on "Quantum . . . deferat" Christ to the Notions - proved by his commands to "Love God with all your mind", etc. (p. 11 of the paper, in NLW 1959 Bequest, Parcel XIX).

[116] D. Hoeschelius (ed.), Contra Celsum libri viii (Augsburg, 1605) (FK, p. 100). The other is an incunabulum of Neoplatonic writing, including the De Mysteriis of Iamblichus (FK, p. 75), the end papers of which are covered with Herbertian observations in English and Latin - ranging from remarks on truth, to little jottings for courtly speeches and jokes: "French is no good language for earnest, un sage homme meethinkes is not a wise man, and une sage femme is a midwife. EH." It is interesting that the only remark credited to someone else (Pico) is also the only one to mention Christ.

265, with the signature "Thomas Master" - an amanuensis of Herbert, whose hand may be traced in some of the corrections added to the Greek.[117] So the marginalia are presumably earlier by a few years than the "Religio Laici" works. As we saw, the Latin Religio Laici shows the beginnings of a sympathetic attitude towards pagan religion; in the marginalia he is harsher, applauding Origen's assertion that a symbolic kind of monotheism is "stultissimum" (p. 388). There is no doubt that he supports Origen against Celsus. Although he notes the times when Origen seems to approve of Celsus's remarks, and once offers him the benefit of the doubt,[118] he comments approvingly that Celsus has been caught out, that he lies, that his opinion is "stulta et insanis"[119].

Sometimes, however, his marginal glosses move some way from Origen's point. In one place, Origen seems to have some trouble with Celsus's jibe that the appearance of Christ was "despicabilis": that may be, retorts Origen, but this does not necessarily mean that His appearance was "vilis", and anyway some Scriptural texts deny it. Herbert comments:

Utrumque fuit, et diformis, et formosus; sed diversis: ut nunc est ejus Doctrina.[120]

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[117] Herbert was clearly fond of this man: see his poem on their games of shovelboard, and moving epitaph (Smith, pp. 93-5). According to Aubrey and Wood, Master lived with Herbert for some time, and helped him in his researches for the Life and Raigne (see the summary in Lee, p. lxi). (Wood, characteristically, adds that the "drudge" was responsible for translating De Veritate into Latin: since there are no English drafts, and several Latin ones, all heavily worked over in Herbert's writing, this can be dismissed.)

[118] On p. 215, beside Origen's stricture, he suggests that Celsus's words might be better interpreted.

[119] On pp. 190, 381, 226.

[120] p. 332: "It was both, deformed and beautiful to different people - just as his doctrine is now".

This idea, the perils of religion, is not in the text. On a later page, Origen defends the existence of differing sects within Christianity by analogy with doctors: the more the better, when we need a cure. Herbert notes:

> Non negat hîc, sed dari in alijs sectis quoque dissidia ostendit.[121]

These marginalia are suggestive, but not conclusive; Herbert does not distinguish himself from the Christian side, but he seems to adopt a position of some detachment. In order to assess them, the nature of the Contra Celsum itself should be considered. It is a work of Christian apologetics, but from a suspect hand: Origen was, from the time of his pupil Jerome, regarded with unease by the Church for his peculiar and elaborate metaphysics, which tended to make Christianity more like Greek philosophy than others thought desirable. His defence of Christianity against Celsus is philosophical and moralistic: he tends to minimize their differences, emphasizing the excellence of Christ's example, rather than his uniqueness. In this, Herbert supports him, and seems to push him further. Origen claims that divine communication is manifested not only in Christ but in those who have followed His life on earth; Herbert comments:

> ita ut doctrina [caret: potius] quam Mors Christi heic innuatur tanquam caussa salutis.[122]

Perhaps so; but discovering such an intimation requires some effort.

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[121] p. 120: "He does not deny this, but shows that conflict occurs in other sects too".

[122] p. 130: "so it is intimated that the life of Christ, rather than His death, is the cause of salvation." This is a more extreme (or forthright) version of the argument later put forward by Edward Fowler, in The Design of Christianity (London, 1671): "it is in order to our being encouraged to sincere endeavours to forsake all sin . . . that our Saviour shed his blood . . ." (p. 92). (The argument led Fowler into a protracted debate with Bunyan.)

It is clear that Herbert read the Contra Celsum with the closest attention. The results of his reading appear in De Religione Gentilium - where the pagans are treated altogether more warmly.[123] And in the Dialogue, this edition is singled out for special praise:

> there being divers things of importance extant therein, which are not translated into Latin, either by him [the editor], or Gellenius, or any else, that I know.[124]

In his own text, Herbert writes some of these in beside the editor's translation: the longest of them is a phrase about the Virgin's supposed adultery with a soldier, given in square brackets in the Greek. Perhaps this is merely scholarly; perhaps not. There is no scurrility of this kind in Herbert's published work, which is serious and austere. Still, it may be that such impudence, suppressed, provided some of the energy for more responsible arguments; in the Dialogue, the last work of all, that irreverent voice is at last given a full hearing.

The unpublished material considered in this chapter is informative, within its limits - partly, indeed, because of them. Neither the Contra Celsum marginalia nor the "Religio Laici" manuscripts represent Herbert's final thoughts on religion: there was more to come, which he would attempt to publish.[125] The cautious opinions about pagan religion in the unpublished writing seem to give negative confirmation to the theory that his theological ideas became more radical with time. But there are also positive conclusions to be drawn. The marginalia, with their emendations of the Greek, prove how deeply Herbert was concerned with issues of Christianity. But, in private as in public, he evinced no attraction towards the

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[123] There is some indication that Herbert came to think rather more highly of Celsus: see the next chapter, "In Defence of Eclectic Paganism".

[124] A Dialogue between a Tutor and a Pupil (London, 1768), p. 171. See chapter VI for the authenticity of this work.

[125] For his attempts to have DRG published in Amsterdam, see chapter V, "A New Challenge".

figure or faith of Christ: his first response was always revulsion from the conflict he saw as its result. In the texts considered so far, however, there has been no specific discussion of Christian (as against sectarian) doctrine. That would come in the next major work, devoted to that controversial topic: the religion of the pagans.

Chapter V: The Theologian: Part II

I A New Challenge: Herbert and the Pagans

> The quarrels, and divisions for Religion were evils unknowne to the Heathen: and no marvell; for it is the true God that is the iealous God; and the gods of the Heathen were good fellowes.[1]

In the last edition of De Veritate published in his lifetime, Herbert alerted the intellectual world to the prospect of further work on comparative religion:

> Inter Ægyptios & barbaros omnes Nationes quoq; hujusmodi quidam Ritus obtinuêre; Quorum plurimos in Lib. nostro De Gentilium Religione, Errorumq; apud eos Causis (nondum edito) adduxi.[2]

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[1] F. Bacon, "Of Religion" (1612 version of the final "Of Unity in Religion"), in E. Arber (ed.), A Harmony of the "Essays" (London, 1895), p. 422. The sentence was omitted in the edition of 1625.

[2] 1645, p. 217 = Carré, p. 298: "Among the Egyptians and all the heathen races rites of expiation by lustration, sacrifice, etc., prevailed. I have referred to many of them in my book 'On the Religion of the Gentiles and their Errors', not yet published." Carré mistranslates: "my book 'On the Religion of the Gentiles' and also in my work, not yet published, 'On the Causes of Errors'". All Herbert's own references to the work have this, the full title: see Chapter VI for its occurrence in the Dialogue. De Religione Gentilium must have been composed around the same time as De Causis Errorum, since it refers to this as unpublished, and is so referred to itself in DV 1645.

The work was first published in 1663, with an English translation by William Lewis in 1705: The Antient Religion of the Gentiles and Causes of their Errors Consider'd. (The Latin title ends at this point, Lewis' title continues: The Mistakes and Failures of the *Heathen Priests* and *Wise-Men*, in their Notions of the *Deity*, and Matters of *Divine Worship*, are Examin'd; With regard to their being altogether destitute of DIVINE REVELATION.) The work ends with "Censura Religionis Gentilium" - well described by Rossi as "piuttosto una difesa e una apologia" (III 147). In the autograph manuscript, this section is separate from the rest of the text, and Rossi believed (III 152 f.) that Herbert meant it as the grand conclusion to a two-volume work, the second "nella quale forse avrebbe trattato di culto degli animali come esposto nel terzo e quarto libro di Vos." This can probably be discounted from the text itself: "in Animalcula quaedam postea cultus quidam particularis descenderit, explicandum maneret, nisi quod inter nationes quasdam solummodo & praesertim inter Aegyptios cultus neutiquam universalis extiterat." (p. 12 = Lewis, p. 21). However, the text also provides a promise to write a book " de caussis errorum circa religionem" (p. 98 = Lewis, p. 159). So perhaps he felt that he had not fully matched his title; or again, this may

By August 1645, the work was sufficiently complete for Herbert to send a manuscript to Gerard Vos, the great Dutch scholar of religion, whose work De Theologia Gentili . . . sive de Origine ac Progressu Idololatriae he had taken as its basis.[3] With it he sent a letter, full of praise for the "Coriphaeus of this century", but insisting almost at once on a problem which was worrying him: there were points of disagreement between them, and he wanted to consult Vos further about them. Without a pause, he turns to a feature of his own work:

> Providentiam quidem universalem, summum Dei attributum semper agnovi; cujus (obscuris scilicet) vestigiis in ipsa Gentium Religione insisto. Neque obstitit, quod Ecclesiae Patres, egregii scilicet Authores, saepe contra Gentiles invehantur. Plurima enim ficta, & falsa, & inania; ut in eorum Religione deprehendi queant, eundem tamen Deum Opt. Max. ac nostrum, ex eadem virtute coluerunt. Praemium bonis, poenam malis post hanc vitam statuentes.[4]

He added innocently that "others" might draw conclusions from this as to the ultimate fate of the pagans; he himself would say nothing on that topic.

He repeated the request two weeks later, but still Vos did not rise to the bait. He responded in courtly terms to the oeuvre as a whole ("Delectatus sum plurimùm"), and

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be a definite forward reference to the Dialogue (see chapter VI).

Lewis's translation is very readable, though it takes some liberties (it has a tendency to leave out phrases not necessary for the sense). As with Carré, I shall use the printed translation as a basis, and provide page numbers to both it and the Latin of 1663.

[3] The letters between Herbert and Vos are printed in the posthumous edition of Vos's Opera (Amsterdam, 1699), IV 374-5, 369, 378-9. They are discussed most fully by Gawlick, in the "Einleitung" to his facsimile reprint of DRG (Stuttgart, 1967), pp. XI-XV. Vos's enormous work was finally published posthumously, edited from his MSS by his son, Isaac - who also published Herbert's work - in nine books (1668). Only the first four books appeared in time for Herbert (in 1641).

[4] 15/25 August, 1645; Vos, Opera, IV 375: "I have always recognized the Universal Providence, the highest attribute of God; and I would follow its traces (obscure though they be) even in the Religion of the pagans. Nor has it stopped me that the Fathers of the Church, excellent authors of course, often inveigh against the pagans. There are indeed many things that are feigned, and false, and worthless to be discerned in their religion; but they worshipped the same God as we do, by means of the same virtue, allotting rewards for the good, punishment for the bad after this life."

assured Herbert that he was not worried about their disagreements. He himself followed the maxim of his father-in-law, Franciscus Junius: "Sic ego, sic ille". He would not go beyond a cautious promise: since Herbert was so anxious, and he did not want to disappoint so distinguished a person, he would explain his own point of view on "some things",

> Et quia longioris ea res operae sit, si non unis, pluribus id literis faciam.[5]

But he did not specify the things; and he made no response to a leading remark by Herbert on priests and repentance.[6] Nor, apparently, did he ever supply the promised critique. Further study of De Religione Gentilium may well have convinced him of the value of Junius's advice.

Vos's own work has aptly been called

> A fantastically detailed and, consequently, pedantic history of the debasement of Christian worship[7]

It was not so much the subject that distinguished it: it drew on a work by Selden, De Dijs Syris (which Herbert also used);[8] what was extraordinary was its scale. It was huge: Herbert consulted only the first two books, and they alone ran to 126 chapters and over seven hundred pages. The enormous quantity of information made him the leading authority on pagan religion for some decades: "Doctus Vossius", "the learned Vossius", is a refrain in De

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[5] Postr. Id. Iun. = 14/24 June, 1646, IV 379: "And since this is rather a long task, I may do it in several letters, rather than one."

[6] 15/25 January, IV 379: "ea praesertim quae circa quinque Articulos nostros Cathol. proferri possint equidem expiationum genera varia, quae in remedia criminum, excogitabant, sive vafri, sive inepti sacerdotes, à nullo adhuc satis adhuc tractata esse, pro dignitate argumenti puto."

[7] D.C. Allen, Mysteriously Meant (Baltimore and London, 1970), p. 68.

[8] J. Selden, De Dijs Syris (Leiden, rev. ed. 1629).

Religione Gentilium - picked up some twenty years later by Edward Stillingfleet, in his Origines Sacrae (1662). Herbert's work relies on it throughout: but he made of it something very different.[9] Quite what that was, however, has been the subject of some dispute.

The Critics of "De Religione Gentilium"

Like De Veritate, De Religione Gentilium has inspired diverse criticism. Unlike De Veritate, it was published posthumously, and thus missed the other's first wave of response: its critics, fewer in number, divide clearly into the post-contemporary and the modern.

Criticism of De Veritate tended to include the later work, as more of the same bad thing. As we shall see, it provided more striking quotations. One of the first to criticize it incidentally was Abraham Heidanus; his comments were, one might say, recognizable:

> Haud satis exploratum sibi fuisse dicit, quomodo Optimus Maximusque audiret ille Deus, qui inscios invitosque crearet damnaretque homines . . . quaeso, quid hoc aliud est, quam ex suis cogitationibus & viis aestimari vias & cogitationes Dei, & suspicionibus suis circumscribere Deum?[10]

The twentieth-century critics, as usual, show nothing of this stifling unanimity. The earliest treatment is that of C.C.J. Webb, who made it the concluding chapter of his fine work on natural theology. He describes how the distinction between natural religion and

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[9] There is some similarity between Herbert's treatment of Vos here and of the Schools in DV: "doctus Vossius" can consulted for confirmation, or further information (pp. 40, 53, 103), or taken to task for explanations with which Herbert disagrees (eg. pp. 30, 86-7). Herbert makes frequent acknowledgement of his debt to Vos; but, even without the new polemical design, DRG is not a mere précis: it includes new information, as well as readiness to qualify or dissent. Rossi exaggerates the debt: "Con rarissime eccezioni, ogni citazione, ogni allusione, ogni indicazione viene dal De Idololatria . . ." (III 110).

[10] A. Heidanus, De Origine Erroris libri 8 (Amsterdam, 1678), Book VI chapter xi, pp. 370-1: "He says it has not been made clear enough to him how they could call that God "Most Good and Great", who created Men only to damn them, without their knowledge, and against their will . . . what, I ask, is this but to judge the ways and the thoughts of God by one's own thoughts and ways, and to circumscribe God by one's own mistrust?"

revealed religion formulated by Aquinas in the Summa contra Gentiles enabled later thinkers to concentrate on religious truths available to the reason, and Herbert is his culminating example: De Religione Gentilium is "a pioneer work on 'comparative religion'".[11] It is not, in Webb's view, unChristian:

> All merely traditional religion is set aside; but for one bred a Christian to disown his debt to the teaching of such a religion as Christianity, which seemed to Herbert to tend throughout to the support of the five articles of Natural Religion, he regarded as ungrateful.[12]

Rossi (whose views on natural religion were strong and negative) perceived that the arguments in De Religione Gentilium are often oblique. He stressed the author's personal commitment to the work, but declined to take parenthetical professions of Christian loyalty at face value:

> è evidente, attraverso i giri e rigiri dell'argomentazione di Herbert, che la sua tesi fondamentale è che il culto sta alla base della superstizione, precede e genera la credenza negli dei falsi e bugiardi.[13]

The Latin text of De Religione Gentilium was reissued in facsimile in 1967 by Günter Gawlick, who provided it, as he had De Veritate, with an introduction (although this one is much less full). He too recognizes an element of disingenuousness in Herbert's strategy;[14]

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[11] C.C.J. Webb, Studies in the History of Natural Theology (Oxford, 1915), p. 347.

[12] p. 352. In the formulation of Aquinas, we can reach by reason knowledge of one God, with His qualities, and the immortality of the soul; we require faith for the Trinity, the Incarnation, and the Atonement.

[13] III 132-3: "it is evident, through the turning and returning of Herbert's argument, that his basic thesis is that organized worship is based on superstition, and precedes and generates belief in deceitful and lying gods" (Rossi is quoting presumably from the Inferno, I 72, on pagan gods.) He discusses DRG in III 108-55.

[14] G. Gawlick, "Einleitung", p. XI: "Wenn Herbert zu der Frage, ob die Heiden also nur auf Grund der fünf Artikel, ohne Sukkurs der Offenbarung, selig werden konnten, keine Stellung nehmen will (ebd.), so ist dies kein Eingeständis seiner Unentschiedenheit, sondern nur ein Zeichen jener Vorsicht, die er sich in seinem von religiöser Erregung geschüttelten Zeitalter auferlegen musste."

but, although he does not call Herbert Christian, he is clear that the pagan religion was at least no improvement in his eyes:

> Bei allem Verständnis für die Religion der Heiden . . . hat Herbert dennoch keinen Augenblick ernstlich daran gedacht, die Religion der Heiden in ihrer empirischen Gestalt zu billigen oder gar für besser als die christliche zu halten. . . Die blutigen Opfer im Dienste der einen wogen gewiss nicht leichter als die Glaubenskriege im Gefolge der anderen.[15]

He does not suggest that Herbert might have seen some similarity between the two.

No one had yet supposed that Herbert was attracted to paganism per se - as a rival system, rather than another repository of identical truth. This situation altered in 1970, with the publication of D.P. Walker's book The Ancient Theology. This puts Herbert into a rather different context: De Religione Gentilium, argues Walker, is not simply a manifesto of natural religion: it is more than this, and thus an advance on De Veritate. He notes the addition of the circle image for the Articles in the 1645 edition of that work,

> which make it much more difficult to take [the Five] as the basis for a Christian superstructure[16]

But a superstructure there must be:

> In what kind of religion would he have wished to see the world united? The De Veritate cannot help us with this question because it is so highly abstract and general, and so carefully discreet; but his last work, the De Religione Gentilium, does give an answer . . .he was not a Magus . . . But . . . as with Bruno and Campanella, the

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[15] p. X: "With all his understanding for the pagan faith . . . Herbert had never for a moment seriously thought of approving of the pagan religion, in its actual form, nor indeed of ranking it above Christianity. . . The bloody sacrificial offerings of the one weighed no less heavily than the wars of religion that followed in the wake of the other." There is not very much about sacrifice in DRG: it is treated at much greater length in the Dialogue.

[16] D.P. Walker, The Ancient Theology (London, 1972), p. 167: he takes the example from Gawlick's "Einleitung" (for the significance of this and other additions, see chapter II above). This brief discussion does not attempt to do justice to the learning and elegance of Walker's account, which makes telling use of contemporary authors for the whole issue of pagan salvation.

> ancient religion of the stars has conquered Christianity. This was the religious superstructure to be built on the five Common Notions[17]

This raises some interesting questions. It is not quite clear how far the saving clause "he was not a Magus" is supposed to take us, if Herbert is being classed with Bruno. In the Spaccio della Bestia Trionfante, Bruno explains that wise men are able to use the truths of religion, in order to acquire special knowledge and power: magic.[18] The "Ancient Theology", as Walker describes it, is usually allied to an active belief in magic - from which Walker is prepared to exempt Herbert. In this he is surely correct.[19] But Herbert's lack of interest in this is a radical difference between him and the tradition of "prisci theologi". The astral religion has indeed a "superstructure", around its supposedly universal, monotheistic core: spirits, of vaguely Neoplatonic origin, closely associated with the heavenly bodies, are fused with Christian angels and demons to give a layer of intermediary beings, dealings with whom form the basis for magical activity. In what sense, if any, did Herbert observe an "astral" religion, in addition to his belief in a non-magical, universal religion of five points?

Walker seizes on a recurring idea in De Religione Gentilium: that pagan religion has been misinterpreted by critics because they have mistaken its terms of reference. They have

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[17] pp. 175, 176, 184. Herbert himself does not use the word "superstructure", but it is very popular with free-thinkers later in the century.

[18] Spaccio della Bestia, III ii; A.D. Imerti (tr.), The Expulsion of the Triumphant Beast (New York, 1964), pp. 238-9. In the view of Frances Yates, "Bruno was an intense religious Hermetist, a believer in the magical religion of the Egyptians as described in the Asclepius, the imminent return of which he prophesied in England" (Giordano Bruno and the Hermetic Tradition (London, 1964), p. 155).

[19] Herbert had an interest in magic: witness the number of books on it that he left to Jesus College, and the shield inscribed "Magica sympathia" in one of his best-known portraits; but he never talks about magical activity. The cures he describes in the Life are all natural - there is no equivalent to the "sympathetic powder" of which Kenelm Digby was so proud. Herbert had no desire to promote man to new heights; his desire, rather, was to pull away the mists which he saw obstructing man's perception of the height on which he was born.

confused the signifier with the sign: pagan religion, as seen by Herbert, is essentially symbolic. Walker makes deft use of this to support his own idea:

> Since Herbert has repeatedly assured us that in the good ancient religion such worship always was symbolic, we may legitimately infer that he does not reject star-worship.[20]

But this seems to leave the question: how much substance is left to star-worship once it is rendered symbolic?

Nine years later, Bedford, in defence of a very different picture of Herbert, took up the last quotation:

> Since Herbert accepted pagan star-worship as a symbolic cult, Walker suggests that "the good ancient religion" must therefore have been Herbert's own religion, and invites us to "legitimately infer that he does not reject star-worship" - which may be rather like saying that since my parish priest accepts the truth of the Old Testament I may legitimately infer that my parish priest is a Jew.[21]

The disagreement here depends on the nature and significance of the "superstructure": if my parish priest dresses like a Hasid and rests on Saturday, I may have some show of legitimacy for inferring that he is a Jew. Bedford, however, restricts Herbert firmly to "a solid and aggressively ethical Arminianism".[22] To support this interpretation, he quotes passages in which Herbert seems polite towards Christianity:

> Haec inquam et similia Virtutis, Pietatis, Hierarchiaeque priscae argumenta, licet adducant Gentiles, imò licet Hierarchiam illam tandem ubique conspicuam fuisse . . . Haut efficient tamen haec, ut ab Idololatriae suspicione, nedum ab ipsa Idololatriâ,

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[20] p. 181. Herbert's idea of "symbolic religion" is discussed in the third section.

[21] Bedford, p. 185.

[22] p. 191. Bedford may seem to be in line here with Rossi, who claims that Herbert here reveals consciousness for the first time of "il motivo profondo del suo pensiero religioso: l'arminianismo o pelagianismo programmatico" (III 116). But since Rossi argues for a Herbert who "non sente il cristianesimo", which it is one of Bedford's chief aims to refute, his terminology here must be taken to mean something much less precise. A scholar who does agree (explicitly) with Bedford is P. Byrne, who discusses DRG in this way in Natural Religion and the Nature of Religion (London and New York, 1989), pp. 22-37.

> ita semetipsos purgare queant Gentiles . . . at neque ut non fabulares essent eorum Historiae, ritus inepti; ut non Virtus, Pietasque omnis denique à Christianâ Ecclesiâ instaurata ornataque esset.[23]

However, adds Herbert, in the sequel which Bedford does not quote, to add anything to the five Articles "seems to me to pronounce a bold, rash and severe Sentence . . .": beyond them, nothing is suggested by "Common and Right Reason", and beyond that we should not presume to enquire. Bedford takes him here, as in De Veritate, au pied de la lettre in his pallid disclaimers of confidence in the absolute sufficiency of the Five; but here, as there, the weight of Herbert's argument - admittedly serpentine - seems to fall against him.

This objection is made by E.D. Hill, for whom Herbert is neither Egyptian nor Laudian, and who attacks Walker (explicitly) and Bedford (implicitly) together. Against the anodyne account of Bedford, he returns once again to the early critics; against the "superstructure" of Walker, he opposes simply an infrastructure, of sarcasm and covert attack. This analysis has its usual strengths, and weaknesses. Looking at Herbert through the eyes of Kortholt, Hill sees only the satirist and guerrilla - who certainly is there. But an account which goes no further does not at all represent the experience of reading the book.

Whatever his theological judgement over all, Herbert's fascination with the whole topic is obvious. None of the critics has room (and neither will I) for the passages of innocent, eager antiquarianism which take up so much space: the page devoted to stories of

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[23] 1663, pp. 216-17 = Lewis, p. 364: "Tho' the Heathens may bring such Arguments, and many more, of their Virtue, Piety and Antiquity of their Hierarchy, and that it became very Eminent and Conspicuous . . . It will still be impossible for them to acquit themselves of the Suspicion of Idolatry . . . and that their Histories were not Fabulous, their Rites ridiculous, and in short, that all Virtue and Piety was not Restored and Adorned by the Christian Church." Quoted by Bedford, p. 187.

the Sirens, for example.[24] Like so much of Herbert's work, De Religione Gentilium is difficult to define. All the Herbertian critics of both periods might be startled by the judgement of one historian of comparative religion:

> Lord Herbert of Cherbury . . . may claim to have initiated in this country the comparative study of religion. He holds no consistent position, but examines sympathetically the various opinions of his day . . .[25]

Is it possible, despite everyone, that Herbert was not really partisan at all? That requires very selective reading; but it does recognize the element of disinterested scholarship which is partly responsible for the different reactions of Walker, Bedford, and Hill.

The Table of Contents is characteristically misleading. It suggests at first a scholarly investigation:

> 2. De Religioso cultu Gentilium; quo significatu Deus olim acciperetur; quid primo ac praecipue in hac rerum universitate cultum esset. 3. Cur variae appellationes Deo olim datae. Quaenam illae essent. 4. De Solis cultu, variisque ejus nominibus.[26]

Then the conclusion suggests something moralistic, and finally negative:

> 15. De sanioribus Ethnicae Religionis partibus. 16. Censura Religionis Gentilium.[27]

But Herbert explains his starting-point differently again:

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[24] The Sirens are a particularly charming example (1663, p. 89 = Lewis, p. 144): they seem to run right out of Herbert's control, until he stops himself with a sudden "Sed de his nimis". It is significant of his real interest in the subject that none of this erudition is taken from Vos - although he too has much to say on water-deities (De Theologia Gentili, I 660-724).

[25] A.C. Bouquet, Comparative Religion (London, rev. ed., 1950), p. 21.

[26] 2. The Religious Worship of the Heathens; what they antiently meant by God; what was the first and chief Object of their Worship. 3. Why so many various Appellations were formerly given to God, and what they were. 4. Of the Various Worship of the Sun, and his several Names.

[27] 15. Of the most Sound parts of the Religion of the Heathens. 16. A Censure upon the Religion of the Heathens, and the Occasion of it.

> Quum diu multumque mecum reputassem, num ad salutem aeternam comparandam communia aliqua media cuncto humano generi ita proposita essent, ut Providentia divina Universalis inde adstrui & stabiliri posset. . .[28]

It is very much easier to chart the plan of his source, Vos's De Theologia Gentili. Each volume is divided into two parts: II, III, and IV are much the longest, "on the worship of spiritual creatures", "on the worship of the heavenly bodies", "on the worship of the elements"; I, only four chapters long, explains Vos's approach: "in which is discussed the remains of the original religion and their neglect, nation by nation." The exhaustive account of pagan rites and deities rests on a secure metaphysical basis. His first sentence explains it:

> Immensum hoc beneficium est, quòd Deus, non contentus hominem condidisse, eum, praemio vitae aeternae proposito, rationem docuerit colendi sui. Sed diabolus, quâ invidiâ erat, perferre non potuit, si terrae filius, se, qui origine tanto nobilior foret, de caelesti arce dejecto, ad tam sublimem eveheretur gloriam ac dignitatem.[29]

This being so, Satan brought about the Fall. And this is the root cause of all non-Judaeo-Christian religion - which Vos goes on to describe. Herbert's Contents page suggests that this position of disapproval is reached by the end; but the book has meanwhile conducted a very different argument. The context and implications of this argument make a convenient starting-place.

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[28] 1663, p. 1 = Lewis, p. 1: "When, for a long time I had employ'd my most serious Thoughts, in considering whether any common Means for the obtaining Eternal Salvation, were so proposed to all Mankind, that from thence we might necessarily conclude and infer the Certainty of an Universal Divine Providence".

[29] Vos, De Theologia Gentili, I 1: "This is an immense benefit, that God, not content to have settled man, offered him the prize of eternal life, and taught him the means of worshipping Him. But the devil, envious, could not endure the thought that a son of earth should be lifted to such sublime glory and dignity when he himself, so much nobler in his origin, had been flung from the heights of heaven."

II The Salvation of the Pagans: Views Early and Later

The relevance of the pagans to the contemporary world was not, of course, a new idea: it was integral to the approach of any Renaissance writer to the study of other religions.

> the study of religion could never come into its own so long as it was subordinate to any system which used the facts of religion to establish its own doctrines. Religious phenomena as distinct from spiritual experience must be investigated on their own merits historically and comparatively independent of any preconceived theories or accepted loyalties.[30]

This creed, from a modern scholar of comparative religion, was conceivable to Herbert's contemporaries only in part, and his ancestors not at all. The two questions, or forms of one question - what is the status of pagan religion? Can non-Christians be saved? - go back to the early Church; the growth of expertise in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, when scholars knew more Hebrew, and more texts had been recovered, naturally contributed to an ancient debate.[31]

> The problem is embedded in the New Testament, with the first Christian dogmata:
>
> without faith it is impossible to please him. (Heb. xi 6)
>
> Neither is there salvation in any other for there is none other name [than Christ's] under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved. (Acts iv 12)

What, then, of those who had no faith in Christ? The non-Christians whose fate caused anxiety were of two kinds: those who did not hear the Gospel because of their geographical limitations, and those who did not hear it because of their position in time.[32] The first had

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[30] E.O. James, Comparative Religion (London, rev. ed., 1961), p. 18.

[31] There had been a change: Vos and Selden are both more antiquarians than moralists, and neither has the explicit mission of Herbert (they do not discuss pagan salvation). However, both make apparent their own attitude to the beliefs they describe.

[32] Only the good ones were a problem, naturally enough. There was no difficulty, either for Protestants or for Catholics, with those who heard and rejected it.

been less worrying before the sixteenth century, when the voyages of discovery brought back the unwelcome truth that the area of spatial exclusion was in fact considerable;[33] these are not the pagans of De Religione Gentilium.[34] The other category, exempt from empirical alteration, was a problem with a fuller history. This was crystallized by St. Augustine: if faith was necessary for salvation, as the Apostles and Evangelists said it was, then there could be no hope for the unbeliever. Earlier fathers had thought that virtuous pagans might have been released from Hell by Christ, during the Harrowing; Augustine rejected the idea.[35] And it was quite impossible that they could be saved in some way independent of Christ:

> quid faciet humana natura vel quid fecit, quae vel antea non audierat hoc futurum vel adhuc non comperit factum, nisi credendo in Deum, qui fecit caelum et terram, a quo et se factam naturaliter sentit, et recte vivendo ejus impleat voluntatem, nulla fide passionis Christi et resurrectionis imbuta? Quod si fieri potuit aut potest, hoc et ego dico, quod de lege dixit Apostolus: Ergo Christus gratis mortuus est . . ."[36]

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[33] This was hard to reconcile with the declaration of St. Paul: "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. But I say, Have they not heard? Yes verily, their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world" (Rom. 17-18). See L. Capéran, Le Salut des Infidèles: Essai Théologique (Toulouse, 1934), pp. 84 ff. for attempts to deal with this. My discussion of the issue depends largely on Capéran's other study, Le Salut des Infidèles: Essai Historique (Toulouse, 1934), and on A. Vacant and E. Mangenot (gen. eds.), Dictionnaire de Théologie Catholique (Paris, 1899-1972).

[34] It is interesting that, besides the barbed piece on the Inca in the Life and Raigne (see chapter III, "Politics and Religion in the Life and Raigne"), Herbert does not discuss modern pagans, when others did. Relevant here probably is his illness of 1618: the Life tells us that he wanted to travel in Turkish lands, but could not. Travel was recognized as a cause of latitude: as Mersenne remarked, "Enfin, lorsqu'ils [the "déistes"] voyagent, et qu'ils voyent diverses facons de vivre, et diverses sortes de religion entre les divers peuples qui habitent la terre, ils ayment mieux ne rien croire du tout, que de suivre celle-cy, celle-là" (L'Impieté des Déistes, I 804).

[35] Only the Patriarchs, in Abraham's Bosom (the most firmly established of the various Limbos devised in Catholic history), were released. See Capéran, Essai Historique, pp. 110-32, and Dictionnaire, IV 590 ff: "Descente de Jésus aux Enfers".

[36] Augustine, De Natura et Gratia, II 2: quoted by Capéran, Essai Historique, p. 118: "What will be or has been achieved by human nature which either did not hear in the past that this would come about, or does not now know that it has happened - unless by believing in the God who made heaven and earth, by Whom it knows by nature that it was made, and

The explanation made a harsh kind of sense: God foreknew that He would be rejected by those to whom He did not reveal Himself.

Theologians can hardly avoid projecting the preoccupations of their own time into eternity: the pagans suffered for the struggles of Augustine with Pelagius, which drew him into a doctrine many were to find alarming. It was softened significantly during the Middle Ages, in particular by St. Thomas.[37] But it was revived in its hardest form during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries: first by the Reformers, who passed it down to the more puritanical of their successors; then, within the Catholic Church itself, by the Jansenists. At the time when Herbert turned his attention to the problem, it was a particularly fashionable one in both England and France, Herbert's two intellectual homelands.[38]

In England, the question was broached by Dr. Thomas Browne, the Anglican, who was charitably inclined, but tentative.

> It will . . . and must at last appeare, that all salvation is through Christ; which verity I fear these great examples of vertue [the good pagans] must confirme, and make it good, how the perfectest actions of earth have no title or claime unto Heaven. I 54
>
> I doe desire with God, that all, but yet affirme with men, that few shall know salvation, that the bridge is narrow, the passage straite unto life; yet those who doe confine the Church of God, either to particular Nations, Churches, or Families, have made it farre narrower than our Saviour ever meant it . . .I 55[39]

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by living uprightly it can satisfy His will, without being filled with faith in Christ's Passion and Resurrection? If this could or can be done, I say to you what the Apostle said of the Law: 'then Christ is dead in vain.' The reference is to Gal. ii 21: "if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain."

[37] See Capéran, Essai Théologique, pp. 84 ff.

[38] The principal weakness of Capéran's historical essay is his refusal to distinguish between Protestants: he lumps them all together as cruel and harsh, giving no examples beyond Luther and Calvin. Although their arguments were different, liberal Protestants also struggled for the pagans: some examples are discussed below.

[39] Religio Medici, p. 52. For the possible connexion between Herbert and Browne, see chapter IV, "Religio Laici" in Context".

He came under attack for this from his two implacable critics, Kenelm Digby, the Catholic, and Alexander Ross, the Presbyterian. Both are irritated by his fluttering (here as elsewhere). Digby favours charity:

> Truly . . I make no doubt at all, but if any followed in the whole Tenor of their lives, the dictamens of right Reason, but that their Iourney was secure to Heaven. . . But it is most true, they are exceeding few, (if any) in whom Reason worketh clearly and is not overswayed by Passion and terrene affections; they are few that can discerne what is reasonable to be done in every circumstance . . . And fewer, that knowing what is best, can win of themselves to do accordingly; . . . so that after all that can bee expected at the hands of nature and reason in their best habit, since the lapse of them, wee may conclude, it would have beene a most difficult thing for any man, and a most impossible one for mankinde, to attaine unto Beatitude, if Christ had not come to teach, and by his example to shew us the way.[40]

Digby's confident beginning collapses almost comically as the memory of dogma catches him up. Only Ross, the condemner, takes a strong, coherent line:

> how specious soever their lives and actions were in the eyes of men, yet without Christ they were nothing else but splendida peccata, glorious enormities[41]

The dilemma of Browne and Digby helps to explain why Donne, who seemed to favour the pagans in his implosive "Satyre IV", would not, once in orders, give a verdict either way.[42] It reveals, in fact, an essential flaw in the debate: the unstable nature of the pagan defence. The problem was not, as Digby discovered, unique to Protestants.

This situation had perhaps two principal causes. One was the actual nature of the pagans; the other (discussed towards the end of this section), a more theoretical point about nature in general. The first was empirically determined: granted that some regard was paid

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[40] K. Digby, Observations on "Religio Medici" (rev. ed. 1644), pp. 71-3.

[41] A. Ross, Medicus Medicatus: or the Physicians Religion Cured (London, 1645), pp. 62-3. The phrase comes from Augustine; it is explicitly rejected by Herbert in the Dialogue, p. 210: "for that expression is too bitter".

[42] See Sermons, III 357 f., and the discussion by E.M. Simpson, A Study of the Prose Works (Oxford, 2nd ed., 1943), pp. 108-9.

to good behaviour, there was an onus on the probationer to abstain from bad behaviour, and above all idolatry. And this was hard to disprove in the case of any documented pagan.[43] Nevertheless, the volume of debate on the subject indicates a general anxiety. There was a desire among the more liberal-minded to rescue pagans who were well-behaved.

There was a similar movement in France. In 1642, Franҫois de La Mothe le Vayer, a friend of Mersenne, published a treatise on La Vertu des Payens: the defence is broken-backed, like Digby's, but it begins valiantly enough, with an attack on critics who damn the pagans en masse.[44] Meanwhile, Mersenne himself (who had softened somewhat since the days of L'Impieté) was writing on the subject to the Socinian Martin Ruar, in terms of solicitude.[45] He goes to the heart of the problem:

> Sed ajunt [alii], non agit ob amorem et gloriam Dei, ad quem qui non refert omnia fur est et latro. Sed nullus praeter id, quod potest, agere tenetur: lumen illud Christianum Deus nunquam illi praebuit, quo si tantisper illustraretur, magnis passibus me forte superaret. Qui promptissimus est ad omnem actum virtutis et corde profitetur, se, quidquid agnoverit bonum et honestum esse, strenue facturum, qualem

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[43] Extensive evidence of this is provided by a work acknowledged by Herbert as a source: F. Collius, De Animabus Paganorum (Milan, 1621), written with special reference to the Council of Trent (see 1663, p. 3 = Lewis, p. 6: "sed praecipuè Collium virum doctum de animabus Paganorum scribentem . . . perlegi." The English text misprints the name as "Crellius" - another theological writer.) Even doing good works, the pagans did not stop being infidels; good works thus could not give them a right to salvation. God's liberality will provide for the virtuous (p. 90); but when he passes to examples, the only ones about whom Collius feels any confidence are good or reformed non-Jews in the Old Testament, the Magi, the Sibyls, and one Falconilla, saved (as Aquinas had said) by the prayers of St. Thecla.

[44] After the brave beginning, La Mothe subsides into the usual tactic: nescience. Even his hero, Seneca, is not sure of salvation (La Vertu des Payens (Paris, 1642), p. 316).

[45] For his development, see Lenoble, Mersenne, chapter 14, esp. pp. 559 ff. Despite this, I do not think there is evidence that he changed sufficiently to write the "Axiomata" discussed in Appendix IV: there is no suggestion in the correspondence that the Socinian belief is as good as his own, although his increasing desire for Christian unity has led him to call a truce: cf. Correspondance, XI 109: "Si nondum potestis credere, donec major illucescat dies, ne damnetis eos qui credunt."

> nunc suppono Hieroclem, aut Arrianum ejus discipulum, aut alium quempiam, damnabiturne à Christiano tanquam criminis reus, aut nulla virtute praeditus?[46]

Hierocles and Arrianus, he goes on, believed in God, and ascribed to Him the same qualities as Christians do; but the emphasis of his argument fall squarely on their "virtue". The passage makes a striking contrast with Augustine's views De Natura et Gratia.

"Nullus praeter id, quod potest, agere tenetur": Mersenne here appeals to the sentiment which found expression in that controversial formula, "Facienti quod in se est, Deus non denegat gratiam" - "To one who does what he can, God does not deny grace." The formula is ancient and perennial;[47] it is a defence against the dangers implicit in extreme theories of human helplessness. But it has always been felt to require careful handling. St. Thomas's discussion reveals the difficulty: it must not be allowed to clash with such Scriptures as Jer. xviii 6, in which man is clay to the divine Potter.[48] The solution is to lay all possible stress on "gratia": the formula must be interpreted to mean "To one who does

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[46] Correspondance de Mersenne, XI 111: "But some say that he [the good pagan] is not acting for the love and glory of God, and whoever does not relate everything to Him is a robber and a thief. But no one is obliged to do more than he can: God never showed him that Christian light which, had it touched him even a little, might perhaps have put him far beyond me. Whoever is eager for every act of virtue, and declares from his heart that he will strive to do whatever he knows to be good and righteous - Hierocles, for example, or his disciple Arrianus, or some other person: is he to be damned by a Christian like a condemned criminal, or someone without virtue?" Hierocles and Arrianus were Neoplatonic philosophers.

[47] The sentiment pervades Capéran's historical essay, in a variety of forms (see under "Facienti quod in se est", in his index). The phrase is believed to originate with Ambrosiaster: see ST XXVII, 125. Herbert calls it "scholastic", and in the Life and Raigne (p. 555), he describes its appearance at the Council of Trent: it took on new meaning for Catholics after the harsh formulations of the Reformation.

[48] ST PS 112, 3: "utrum necessario detur gratia se preparanti ad gratiam vel facienti quod in se est". The key words are "necessario" - an alarm-word - and "gratia". The clay image is taken up to still more dismal effect by St. Paul in Rom. ix 21.

what he can by the aid of grace".[49] Without this emphasis, the formula threatens to unseat the paramountcy of grace - by which ordinary considerations of fairness are made obsolete. "If it be of works, then is it not of grace." Mersenne comes perilously close to talking about fairness. The answer is supplied in its most whole-hearted form by Antoine Arnauld, the Jansenist: the punishment of the virtuous

> n'est autre chose qu'un vice contre la justice, lorsque l'on préfere les uns aux autres dans la distribution des biens qui appartiennent également à tous: Or, qu'est-il dû à toute la nature humaine depuis sa revolte, que la peine et le supplice?[50]

That is the basis of the whole problem with the pagans. Man needs faith in Christ, because Christ redeemed Man, because Man is fallen, therefore ordinary "fairness" does not apply (though Arminians and orthodox Catholics have more regard for it than Calvinists and Jansenists):

> Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life. (Rom. vi 18)

Original Sin explains why it is that Natural Theology, the approach to God by reason, is not enough. St. Paul had taught that the pagans had a "law unto themselves", written in their hearts; but since the Fall, this alone was not enough for salvation.[51] As Digby explained,

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[49] To put the matter at its simplest. There is a long tradition of dispute within the Catholic Church over what kind of grace this must be ("elevans" or merely "sanans", etc.) which need not be followed here.

[50] De la Necessité de la Foy en Jésus-Christ (posthumously pub. in Paris, 1701), I 14: "is nothing but a fault against justice if one prefers one side to another while distributing goods which belong equally to all. But what is due to the whole of human nature, since its revolt, except pain and punishment?" Arnauld directed his attack against La Mothe le Vayer.

[51] Aquinas (ST PS 109, 4) explains that the fall of man makes the law of nature insufficient for salvation.

> after all that can be expected at the hands of nature and reason in their best habit, since the lapse of them, wee may conclude it would have beene a most difficult thing for any man, and a most impossible one for mankind, to attaine unto Beatitude, if Christ had not come . . .[52]

The explanation works in two ways. It denies man the right to salvation; and it accounts for his actual misbehaviour - especially his idolatry. It thus enables a theologian to be theoretically generous, without having to admit any individual pagans to blessedness. Vos cheerfully admits that the better sort believed in one God; but, as the heading to I iii explains:

> Non pervenisse vulgò gentiles ad omnem de Deo notitiam, quam naturae lumine assequi potuissent: & variae caussae, unde haec ignorantia sit profecta. . .[53]

The first one started the work, in I i: Satan, the Fall, and Original Sin.

This was the shape of the problem as Herbert inherited it. Original Sin vitiated man's nature; there is thus no likelihood of salvation, since he will probably be an idolator, and thus a denier of God. There was only one hope in general use: that of a private revelation. Culverwell, Herbert's first published critic, offered this, rather faintly:

> it was in his power, if he pleased, to reveale Christ unto them [the pagans], and to infuse faith into them after an extraordinary manner; Though indeed the Scripture does not afford our charity any sufficient ground to believe that he did; nor doth it warrant us peremtorily to conclude the contrary.[54]

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[52] Observations upon "Religio Medici", p. 71: see above.

The contentual difference between natural and revealed theology is formulated by St. Thomas in the Summa contra Gentiles: see previous section.

[53] De Theologia Gentili, I 22: "The pagans in general did not reach as much knowledge of God as they could have done by the light of nature: and there are various causes for this ignorance". He summed up: "non jam disputamus, an gentiles omnes omni ex parte verum negarint Deum: sed sufficit nunc nobis, quod etiam gentilium eximii in ea, quam haberent, notitia, vita cultuque eum abnegarint" (p. 26).

[54] N. Culverwell, A Learned and Elegant Discourse of the Light of Nature, pp. 165-6. For Culverwell and Herbert, see chapter IV "Religio Laici and its Successors".

Herbert clarifies his opinion of that straightaway:

> Alios igitur conveni Theologos, qui Christum Paganis sive Gentilibus sanctè honestéque viventibus in ipso mortis articulo revelatum, eosque ita in Paradisum adductos esse contendebant. Sed quia neque ex historiis, neque traditionibus, neque validis tandem conjecturis firmata essent, mihi parùm verisimilis videbatur eorum opinio: Hosce tamen Sacerdotes prioribus longe clementiores in humanum genus agnovi; sed qui nihil solidi ad muniendum eorum dogma afferrent.[55]

In the substance of this he would have agreed (to the surprise of both, no doubt) with the Calvinist Tuckney, who rebuked Culverwell sternly:

> as for the ways and means which are propounded by divines, by which Christ and Salvation should be revealed to them [sc. the pagans], in my weak eye (and it is not an evil one) they seem no way promising, as sufficient or likely to effect it.[56]

But whereas Tuckney wanted less, Herbert wanted much more. For this, he required to settle two obstacles: pagan idolatry; and Original Sin.

III The Scope and Function of "De Religione Gentilium"

Seen in its theological context, the general argument of De Religione Gentilium seems obvious; when it is examined on its own, however, complexities appear. Vos states his position clearly at the outset: idolatry results from the Fall. Herbert's opening is, undeniably,

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[55] 1663, p. 3 = Lewis, p. 5: "I met with some other Divines, who asserted, That Christ was revealed to such Heathens as led pious and honest Lives, at the very moment of their Death, and so they were conveyed to Paradise. But their Opinion being neither founded on Historical Tradition, or Rational Conjecture, it appeared to me very improbable; but I must needs confess, those Divines shew much more tenderness towards Humane Kind, though they have nothing solid to support their assertion."

[56] A. Tuckney, None but Christ (sermon preached in Cambridge, 1652; published in London, 1654), p. 74.

clotted. First, he says, he read the Fathers, who condemned the pagans; then he read the pagans themselves, who disappointed him so much that

> nihil propius abfuit quam ut in vulgarem de Ethnicis opinionem descenderem. Caeterum quum Providentiam divinam Universalem haud ita pro dignitate suâ asseri posse perspicerem, sedulo inquirere coepi, num Deus eodem significato quo apud nostros audit, olim acciperetur . . . quicquid paulo supra sortem humanam, vel captum vulgi constitutum erat, Deus protinus ab illis habebatur; ubi tamen vel Summi, vel Optimi Maximique attributum una adjunctum fuit, Deum nostrum Patremque communem iis titulis indicatum fuisse satis liquet. . .[57]

This is an ingenious answer. The pagans talked about "God" differently from us, because they meant something different, because their worship was in fact the same, but "symbolic". His clearest explanation occurs towards the end:

> ut clariora fiant quae de cultu Religioso statuebant veteres, Clarissimi Vossii sententiam secuti, cultum omnem in proprium, symbolicum, vel mixtum distinguimus. Cultus proprius est ut Dei summi, Solis, vel Lunae, vel Coeli, vel Mundi totius in seipsis: symbolicus cultus ut Dei summi in Sole, Coelo, vel Mundo . . . Mixtus, iisque subordinatus, est, quando Deus summus colitur in Sole; Sol in Igne, vel Hercule; Ignis in flammâ, vel candenti prunâ; Hercules in effigie suâ, vel statuâ.[58]

In one sense it is true that he follows Vos, who had also made this distinction:

> Primum verò, quod saepe nec veteribus satis fuit observatum, distinguere opus est inter cultum proprium, & symbolicum.

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[57] 1663, pp. 1-2 = Lewis, pp. 2-3: "I was very much inclin'd to be of the common Opinion against them. But then again, when I consider'd that this was altogether incompatible with the Dignity of an Universal Divine Providence, I began to make a diligent Enquiry, whether they meant the same by GOD as we now do . . . they ascribed Divine Honour to whatsoever was above the common Rank of Mankind, or exceeded the Apprehension of the Vulgar; But still it is very evident, that where-ever we find the Attributes of Summus, Optimus, Maximus . . . they meant the same GOD and common Father with us."

[58] 1663, p. 183 = Lewis, p. 295: "to make yet more clear what Notions the Antients had of Religious Worship, I shall follow Vossius, and divide all Worship into Proper, Symbolical and Mixt. Proper Worship is, the Adoration of the Supream GOD, the Sun, Moon, Heaven, or the whole World; particularly and respectively in themselves: Symbolical, is the Worshipping the Supream GOD in the Sun, Heaven or World . . . The Mixt, which is Subordinate to the others, is, when the Supream GOD is worshipp'd in the Sun; the Sun in Fire, or Hercules; Fire in Flame, or a Burning-coal, and Hercules in his Statue or Effigies."

> Proprium voco, quando, quod colitur, propriè & in se Deus esse existimatur. Qualis fuit cultus Solis ipsius, vel Herculis, sive Thebani, sive alterius gentis.
> Symbolicum appello, cum quid colitur, non quia credatur Deus; sed quia Deum significet. Quomodo Sol cultus in igni Vestali, Hercules in statua.[59]

Both Vos and Selden were ready, indeed, to conflate the pagan gods into one - a practice proposed by some pagan philosophers. However, as for the idea that the pagans might avoid the charge of idolatry by this sort of procedure, Vos explicitly rejects it:

> Scio, distinxisse philosophos quosdam, inter cultum supremi numinis quem Iovem dixere; illumque daemoniorum, & heroum: Iovi tribuisse imperium supremum, & à nullo dependens: daemoniis autem, & heroïbus, dependens ab alio, eoque subordinatum sive subalternum . . . Sed sic argumentantes, an argutantes, dicam, non omnis purget Oceanus à crimine faedae superstitionis.[60]

They can be rolled into one; but one of their own. Herbert does not draw this conclusion. The most important difference between his "symbolism" and that of Vos is that he, unlike his forerunner, accepts an identification of the pagan "supreme deity" with his own God. Both Vos and Selden are happy both to conflate pagan gods in theory and to describe the actual worship of individual gods, without worrying whether the practice represented blasphemy in regard to the theoretical monotheism; Herbert took the extraordinary step of

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[59] De Theologia Gentili I 30: "First we must make a distinction often not even sufficiently observed by the Ancients: between proper worship, and symbolic. I call worship "proper" when the object of worship is thought to be a God, properly and in se. An example of this is the worship of the sun itself, or Hercules, whether the Theban Hercules or that of some other race.

"I call worship "symbolic" when something is worshipped not because it is believed to be a God, but because it represents a God. An example of this is the worship of the sun in the vestal fire, or the worship of Hercules in a statue." Selden, De Dijs Syris, pp. 229-30 agreed: "haut amplius sane adeo haesitandum est, quin ex uno Belo, Baale, seu Iove (sub quibus vocibus à veri DEI cultu deficientes Solem inprimis adorabant) ad morem priscorum ridiculum invocato, innumeri illi tituli fuerint propagati."

[60] I 296: "I know that some philosophers have distinguished between the worship of the supreme deity whom they called Jupiter, and the worship of demons and heroes: to Jupiter they ascribed the supreme power, independent of anyone else; demons and heroes had power dependent on another, subordinate or secondary to his . . . But those who make this argument, or assertion, I should say, all the Ocean will not clear from the taint of filthy superstition." Here the Arminian Vos sounds very like the Jansenist Arnauld.

applying this system to the monotheism in which he himself believed. This is his first answer to the problem of idolatry.[61]

Although Selden and Vos did not use the ideas of "symbolism" and "reduction" as a means of saving the pagans, the idea did lead to some ambivalence towards them: it was felt to be an improvement on polytheism simple. This crystallized into the concept of a spiritual élite. Only a few people, in the view of Vos, understand about reduction.[62] Selden explains that the priests wrapped up the monotheistic core of their religion with fables, for a necessary purpose:

> Ea [the priests' own belief] erat, UNICAM esse supremam omnium causam, UNICUM orbis moderatorem in innumeris illis cultum; quem tametsi in vulgus ejuscemodi disciplinae satis incapax edere noluerint . . .[63]

Some few "eximii", concedes Vos, did recognize this kind of creating, non-pantheistic notion of God; but they were the small minority. And having restricted their numbers, he then reduces them to insignificance: they did not live up to their ideas (think of Socrates, sacrificing vulgarly to Asclepius at the point of death).[64]

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[61] Something similar was to be tried thirty years later by Ralph Cudworth, in The True Intellectual System of the Universe (1678), who also wanted the pagans to demonstrate the naturalness of monotheism. His outlook, however, is firmly Christocentric, and thus very different from Herbert's: he is emphatic that this does not absolve the pagans from the charge of idolatry (I iv 35).

[62] p. 374: "pauxilli".

[63] De Dijs Syris, p. 62: "[The priests' own belief] was, that there was an UNIQUE, supreme cause of all things, an UNIQUE ruler of the world, worshipped in these innumerable forms; but this they chose not to divulge to the public, which was unable to understand such a doctrine."

[64] See the earlier section, for the fate of examples. The invocation of Erasmus did not secure Socrates a position: La Mothe le Vayer thought that the mention of Asclepius might have been a joke, but he demurred on his actual salvation (La Vertu des Payens, pp. 87 ff.).

Herbert's new version of "symbolism" detoxifies Asclepius. His sights, however, are set not on Socrates and his kind, but on a much wider field. For him, the common people are not "unable to understand": on the contrary, they are the better part of a new division, which he substitutes for the old élitism. And here he proposes his second, more familiar defence: the attack on the pagan priests.[65]

> neque sacra, ritusque Gentilium effecêre, ut plebes populusque tum temporis mihi plane exosi sint. Quum sacra illa, ritusque, Sacerdotum prorsus inventa fuerint . . . Quum praecipua itaque à casto Dei Summi cultu defectio in Sacerdotalem ordinem non inepte rejici debeat. . .[66]

He seems to be adapting Vos's phraseology into a weapon against them:

> Haut efficient tamen haec, ut ab Idololatriae suspicione, nedum ab ipsa Idololatriâ, ita semetipsos purgare queant Gentiles, quin ansam gravissimam errorum populo (qui symbolicum illorum cultum haut satis forsan intellexit) ubique dederint. . .[67]

That rather startling use of "Symbolical" indicates that something has happened to Herbert's argument. He has, in fact, two answers to the problem of idolatry: symbolism; and priestly corruption. They are united - and they seem to run together in his mind - in clearing the ordinary pagan, the "laicus", from any blame; but they leave a fundamental incoherence in the account of pagan religion. Was it acceptable, or not? Was it acceptable only in

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[65] In Rossi's words, "Per Herbert i filosofi sono anche nemici ostinati ed arbitrari del monoteismo: l'infrazione della verità cattoliche che sono universali deve infatti provenire dai pochi, sacerdoti o dotti, e non dai molti, dal popolo comune, che già Herbert aveva preso sotto la sua protezione . . ." (III 144).

[66] 1663, p. 2 = Lewis, p. 3: "neither their Religious Worship or Rites, could ever make me have an ill Opinion of the Common People, they being the Invention of the Priests only . . . Their great Defection from the Pure Worship of the Supreme God being justly to be attributed to the Sacerdotal Order".

[67] 1663, p. 217 = Lewis, p. 364: "It will . . be impossible for them to acquit themselves of the Suspicion of Idolatry, or even from the Practice of it; (for they gave great occasion to the People to fall into very gross Errors, who [perhaps] had not a right Notion of their Symbolical Worship)" (Lewis interprets the clotted syntax well enough). Cf. the passage of Vos quoted above. This paragraph starts off by identifying "them" as simply "Heathen"; by the end, they have become priests, opposed to the laity.

containing the Articles, or could more of it be defended? The battle lines of Hill and Walker come into view: there are really two arguments, an attack, and an apologia.

The first - the negative, anti-clerical argument - was deeply felt.[68] How much Herbert had invested in his pagan laymen is proved very strikingly by comparison of De Religione Gentilium chapter XV with the Appendix ad Sacerdotes, published with De Causis Errorum in 1645.[69] There he remarks that all priests, whatever their particular religion, claim to be able to show four things, which together give special authority to their own version of God's message. In De Religione Gentilium, these same four points are presented as questions on which "one of the Laity amongst the Heathens should demand satisfaction from his priest":

> Si tamen plurima alia ad Religiosum Dei cultum postulari, quam quae in quinque articulis supra memoratis continentur, mordicus contenderint sive prioris, sive posterioris, saeculi Sacerdotes, ea nempe, quae ex oraculo aliquo divino sive effato, aut verbo Dei jubenter; ita quidem, pace tantorum virorum, non inepte responderit Laïcus Gentilis, scilicet ut oraculum hujusmodi, sive effatum, si verbum Dei asseratur: haec requirere . . . Haec inquam si faxint Sacerdotes, utramque paginam etiam illos fecisse fatebitur facile Laïcus Gentilis.[70]

Vos, following Augustine, explains that the priests took some blame for pagan oracles, but not the lion's share:

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[68] The second, Walker's insight, will be further discussed in the next section.

[69] See chapter IV, "A Layman's Faith". Part of a seventeenth-century translation of the work is given in Appendix II below.

[70] 1663, pp. 217-18 = Lewis, pp. 365-6: "If more be required to compleat the Religious Worship of GOD, than what is contain'd in the aforemention'd Five Articles, the Priests of the former and present Ages will tenaciously assert it is contain'd in some Oracle deliver'd by Divine Inspiration, or commanded by the Word of GOD. But, with Submission to such Great Men, one of the Laity amongst the Heathens would answer, That these things are requisite, to prove the Truth of an Oracle . . . When the Priests have perform'd this, the Lay Heathen will readily submit to their Injunctions." The four points listed are substantially identical with those in DV 1645, pp. 227-8, and in the Appendix ad Sacerdotes, pp. 156-7: see chapter III "Reason and True Religion".

> Nec satis est, si in sacerdotum subsistatur sollertia, quia multa praedicarentur, ad quae non pertingeret mens humana.[71]

Hence, Vos concludes, demons are not to be excluded. As Augustine explained:

> constat . . . nefarios daemones atque immundissimos spiritus hac omni civili theologia invisendis stolidis imaginibus et per eas possidendis etiam stultis cordibus invitatos. VII 27[72]

Herbert deals with that idea crisply:

> Quis enim commercium aliquod inter . . . Daemones, & human genus ostenderit? Et ut detur, inter Daemones illos aliquos aëriis vestiri corporibus, quis tamen eos publice conspexit? quis unquam aperte homines invasit Daemon? . . . nihil aliud heic tuto statui posse arbitr[o]r, quam ut qui pie sancteque heic vivit, sibi à Daemone nullo metuere necesse habeat.[73]

He had no time for such ideas: the trouble, as he saw it, had a purely human origin.

Herbert's attitude to the pagans and their religion is quite independent; he is not inclined to accept false explanations, or false alliances. Although he is happy to misrepresent his predecessors on occasion, he will not accept compromise on humiliating terms. Hence his rejection of the private revelation theory; also, perhaps, his reaction - at first sight

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[71] De Theologia Gentili, I 44: "Nor is it enough to say that the priests are cunning, for many things are predicted beyond the reach of the human mind." Vos is much more committed to the agency of demons than is Selden, who discusses pagan worship of false gods without suggesting that they were themselves responsible for it. This leaves him with something of a gap in causation, which he fills with vague ablative absolutes: "Accedente vero Daemoniorum . . . cultu . . . procedente tandem in infinitum errore . . ." (p. 51: other examples occur on pp. 196, 202).

[72] B. Dombart and A. Kalb (eds.), De Civitate Dei (Stuttgart, 1981), I 310 = tr. by H. Bettenson, The City of God (Harmondsworth, 1972), p. 289: "it is clear . . . that this "civil" theology has invited wicked demons and unclean spirits to gain possession of the hearts of the stupid." The "civil theology" is the official pagan state religion; see below. There is more about Herbert and demons in the next section.

[73] 1663, pp. 226-7 = Lewis, p. 380: "who can demonstrate, that there ever was any such Intercourse between . . Demons, and Mankind? And should it be granted, that some of them do assume Bodies of Air; yet whoever [publicly] saw them? Or when did any of them visibly Attack any Man? . . . this I am sure of, he that leads a Pious and Religious Life [here], need not be afraid of any Demon."

surprising - to that most celebrated offer of syncretism, St. Paul's speech to the Athenians, in which he identifies their "Unknown God" with his own.

> This equation had been welcomed, with careful qualifiers, by Vos:
>
> Cùm verò non vereatur Apostolus Paulus dicere, Athenienses, licet ignorantes, coluisse illud numen, quod ipse annuntiaret: facilè mihi persuadeam, postquam Christiana doctrina gentilibus innotuit, etiam qui necdum reciperent Christum, majori tamen curâ aciem animi in naturam Dei intendisse, ac quadam confusâ notitiâ invocâsse non tam rerum naturam, quàm naturae opificem, & rectorem Deum. . .[74]

Selden treated it with still more circumspection:

> vocabulum quod illi cum mysterio Daemoni male tribuebant, voluit Paulus ut ad rerum Creatorem, cui competebat, transiret.[75]

But Herbert rejects the identification completely:

> Arae ignoto Deo positae meminit Epimenides: suo tempore etiam extitisse aras Athenis, quae Βωμοὶ ἀνώνυμοι, arae sine nomine appellarentur, testans: quarum una forsan fuit illa à B. Paulo tum visa, ubi ad Athenienses concionem habuit . . . Caeterum duriuscule Deus ignotus Atheniensium ad Deum Iudaeorum refertur . . . Nam Deus ille ignotus Atheniensium alias certe fuit, atque ideo puto arâ donatus, ne aliquis forsan incultus apud illos esset Deus: ut belle tamen heic instruendi Gentiles occasionem captarit Apostolus.[76]

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[74] De Theologia Gentili, I 15: "Since indeed the Apostle Paul was not afraid to say that the Athenians, though unwittingly, worshipped that deity that he himself was proclaiming, I can easily believe that after the Christian doctrine was known to the pagans, even those who did not yet accept Christ still concentrated the force of their intelligence more assiduously on the nature of God, and called, with some confused idea, not on Nature, but on the God who is the creator and ruler of nature . . ." This did not, however, do them much good (see the last section). Confusion of God and Nature - of the creature with the Creator - was a standard charge against the pagans. The great advantage of the "unknown god" was that he could have no positive characteristics, which might stand in the way of assimilation into Christianity. The identification was to be welcomed by Cudworth, True Intellectual System, I iv 14.

[75] De Dijs Syris, p. 205: "the word which they falsely ascribed, with secret rites, to a Demon Paul transferred to the Creator of the universe, for whom it was fitting."

[76] 1663, p. 166 = Lewis, pp. 267-8: "Epimenides speaks of Altars, To the Unknown God; and in his time there were Altars at Athens, which they call'd Nameless Altars; and in all probability St. Paul saw one of them when he preach'd to the Athenians . . . But it seems a little strained to make this Unknown God the same as the God of the Jews . . . It's very plain to me that this Unknown God amongst the Athenians was quite different, and therefore

All this is consistent with his treatment of the Bible. Vos here took the standard line, and reinforced it:

> Imò nec dubium, quin ex Samsone nostro, qui Thebano illi Herculi par vel suppar fuit, occasionem quoque rapuerint Phoenices, Aegyptii, ac Graeci . . . ne heros suus ullâ parte illo populi Dei inferior videretur. Quemadmodum & penè extra controversiam omnem ponimus, fabulam de Hercule in balaenae ventre commorante, fuisse confictam ex prophetica Ionae nostri historia.[77]

Compare Vos on Hercules with Herbert's coolly non-partisan version:

> Herculi suo ea tribuunt Phoenices, quae Iosua in Cananeâ gessit. Suspicio quoque est à leone interfecto, & aliis circumstantiis Samsonem eundem ac Herculem fuisse: de quibus omnibus, & aliis hoc nomine vocatis, inter alios videatur Vossius l. 1 de Idololatr. qui plurima huc spectantia congessit. Brevi omnes viri fortes Hercules vocabantur. .[78]

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they erected him an Altar, least any God amongst them should be destitute of Worship; tho' the Apostle very ingeniously took occasion from it to instruct them." The same explanation may account for another omission: the passage of Romans on "the law written in their [the pagans'] hearts" (II xv), which is a divine guide for them - a passage offered by Dryden (among others) to explain any pagan goodness, and to offer them some vague hope of reward. Herbert was not tempted, as he might have been, to identify this inscription with his own Articles, also divinely inspired.

[77] I 381: "In fact there is no doubt that from our Samson, who was equal or superior to the Theban Hercules, an opportunity was taken by the Phoenicians, Egyptians, and Greeks . . . to prevent their hero from seeming inferior in any respect to that of the Chosen People. In this way - and we put this beyond all question - the story of Hercules in the belly of a whale was concocted out of the story of our prophet Jonah." See also p. 225, on Bacchus in India: "Sunt in fabula tamen ista quaedam priscae veritatis lineamenta; si in Libero hoc intueamur divinum Mosen; per Indiam verò capiamus Arabiam." The significant words are "noster" in the first passage; "veritas" in the second. D.C. Allen (Mysteriously Meant, pp. 65-6) discusses the "obsession", from the Renaissance to the Enlightenment, with finding Biblical originals for pagan notables. Ralegh's History of the World, Book I, chapter vi, is a fair example of this practice in extenso. Selden does not use it; but he states his purpose at the beginning in basically similar terms: "literas ita misceo prophanas, ut sacras illustrent . . ." (fo. **4).

[78] 1663, p. 103 = Lewis, pp. 166-7: "The Phoenicians relate the same things of their Hercules, as Joshua did in the Land of Canaan. And I strongly suspect from the killing of the Lion, and other circumstances, that Sampson and Hercules were the same; but for this, consult [among others] Vossius de Idololatria, lib. 1 who hath Collected very much upon this Subject. In short all Valiant Men went by the Name of Hercules".

The Bible is not his point of departure. In De Religione Gentilium, pagan religion is judged not by a Christian standard, but by another, more fundamental, which the Christian in part embodies.

Six years after the completion of Herbert's work, another radical defence of the pagans appeared in England. John Goodwin, the "Great Red Dragon of Coleman Street",[79] argued for the salvation not of a few but of pagans en masse. This was effected, conveniently, through Christ.

> No Interpretation of what the Apostles did, in, or about the discharge of . . . their Commission . . . can render them obedient and faithful therein unto their great Lord and Master, but onely that which supposeth every Creature to have been sufficiently Evangelized or taught by them . . . and that all the World was put into a sufficient capacity of beleeving, or (which is the same) into a way of having the Gospel even in the letter of it made known unto them
>
> Christ dyed for all without exception, because all without exception are bound to beleeve.[80]

At times, Goodwin comes very close to Herbert:

> I confess my apprehensions concerning the extent of the Power and Abilities of the Light of Nature carefully preserved, prudently managed, and industriously improved and imployed, run very high . . . I have no ground at all to beleeve or think, that such Jews, who before, and under, yea and long after Moses, did beleeve in God unto Salvation, had Jesus Christ discovered unto them in any such Vision of Particularities, as that exhibited in the Gospel.[81]

The belief in Christ seems to amount simply to a belief in the willingness of God to forgive sin and be gracious:

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[79] The splendid phrase of his enemy, Thomas Edwards - quoted by William Haller, Tracts on Liberty 1638-1647 (New York, 1934), I 31.

[80] J. Goodwin, The Pagans Debt, and Dowry (London, 1651), pp. 34-5; 60. In the Bodleian copy (B7.8 Linc.), this is bound together with the reply by the Rev. Obadiah Howe (see below). Goodwin's book is particularly interesting if it is true, as Rossi suggested, that he was the "J.G." addressed in the MS versions of RL - see Appendix II. (I cannot feel any confidence in this myself.)

[81] pp. 35-6.

> as the Rock, out of which Moses, or God by Moses, gave them water to drink, is said to have been, Christ, viz., spiritually, in type, or representation: in like manner, yea and with much more pregnancy and neerness of signification, and revelation, the patience, and goodness, and bountifulness of God dayly vouchsafed unto the Heathen, may be termed, Christ.[82]

Such an explanation stood no chance in Cromwell's England. The "pagan preacher" was attacked by Obadiah Howe, the Puritan preacher, for what seemed to him a quite specious attachment to the name of Christ. In fact the position is quite simple:

> If Christ died for all, then he would certainly make such discoveries of this purchase to all, that they may have this salvation purchased, applyed, and that without exception. But he doth not the latter, therefore not the former.[83]

Goodwin had artfully appealed to that difficult verse of Romans:

> their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world (x 18)[84]

In this way, he clearly hoped to save the pagans on the basis of an apparently rigorous formula. Herbert proceeded differently, and he was not vulnerable at the points Howe noticed, because the mission of Christ plays no part in De Religione Gentilium. This is connected inextricably with another omission, of critical importance for the pagans: along with the doctrine of vicarious Redemption, he gives up the doctrine of vicarious sin:

> Quod ad principium malum è lapsu Adami accersitum spectat, id facile Theologis nostris discutiendum relinquo: neque enim vulgo, satis liquet, quomodo . . . atrox horrendumque illud scelus commiserit, unde ejus posteri criminis illius insontes, nihilque tale probantes, suppliciis aeternis ita addicerentur, ut non nisi plusquam humanâ victimâ post tot saecula placaretur Deus?[85]

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[82] p. 9.

[83] O. Howe, The Pagan Preacher Silenced (London, 1655), p. 3.

[84] The Pagans Debt, and Dowry, p. 10; see the previous section.

[85] 1663, p. 165 = Lewis, p. 265: "I shall leave our Divines to treat of that Principle of Evil, which is derived from the Fall of Adam; for it is not very evident to an ordinary Capacity, how . . . he should perpetrate so horrid and tremendous a Crime, for which his innocent Posterity, that [did not approve it], should be doom'd to eternal Punishments; and

Belief in God is crucial in Herbert's system; but the rejection of Original Sin clears away the inevitable Christian problems over fallen freedom.

Unlike the earlier works, De Religione Gentilium explicitly addresses Christian doctrines, and sets out a new position. His impulses were given new strength by his discovery of a community of virtuous non-Christians he wanted to save. There is something almost impudent in his flaunting of that battered old Christian tag - taken, he says, from the Schools:

> Inter alia tamen axiomata hoc ab illis sancitum esse reperi, Nempe facientibus quod in se est, non deesse gratiam salutarem.[86]

IV In Defence of Eclectic Paganism: Heroes and Demons

But it was not quite enough to say that the priests were cunning, and their doctrine false. Although there is much polemic in De Religione Gentilium, there is also another, positive view, which is differently focussed. The work looks forward to the priest-baiting of the Enlightenment; but it also looks back, to the great pro-pagan tradition of antiquity - and the attacks on that tradition.

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after so many Ages nothing could appease and reconcile GOD but more than Humane Sacrifice." For the phrase substituted in square brackets, Lewis has "could not be concern'd in it". This passage earned Herbert qualified approval from William Empson - discussed by Bedford, pp. 201-2. Bedford concludes: "It is the dogma of eternal punishment which appals him . . ." (p. 202). But that is only incidental: what appals him is the dogma of Original Sin.

[86] 1663, p. 3 = Lewis, p. 6: "Amongst other Axioms, I found this an established one amongst them . . .Saving Grace is never wanting, to those that do all that is in their power."

Among the most important ancient authors for the writing of De Religione Gentilium were disputants, locked together for posterity in a polemical embrace.[87] Origen, most controversial of the Fathers, chose the pagan Celsus for exhaustive refutation; Augustine conducted, for much of the City of God, a quasi-dialogue with the pagan philosopher Varro.

Origen and Celsus appear once, in chapter fourteen.

> satis liquet, ad Virtutis Pietatisque normam ea omnia (ex veterum doctrinis) exigi debere . . . non solum in Dei summi cultu, sed in eodem praecipuo saltem cultus genere, Gentiles cum Christianis concordasse . . . adeo ut Celsus non vereatur objicere doctissimo Origeni, nihil ad Virtutem sanciendam à Christianis adductum fuisse, quod non idem Ethnici semper statuerent; quin et severiora in hunc finem inter eos tradi praecepta, quam ex eorum Nomothetis aperte colligi possint, contendebant nonnulli.[88]

Herbert moves straight on to examples of virtuous cult; Celsus is not given an answer.

Herbert perhaps changed his mind about Celsus, as he did about pagan religion, after annotating his copy of the Contra Celsum.[89] It is easy to see why he might have come to

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[87] It was a Mezentian embrace: the fact that none of the disputants was prepared to listen for a moment to the opposition is well symbolized by the fact that each Father is grappling with a corpse. Augustine is the more distanced in time from his adversary (about five hundred years), but at least he knew who he had been; Origen had no very clear idea about Celsus. He thought he was an Epicurean, but evidence seems to show that he was a Platonist: see the Introduction to H. Chadwick (ed.), Contra Celsum (Cambridge, rep. 1980), p. xxviii. A third famous pair, who appear elsewhere in Herbert's work but not here, are Cyril of Alexandria and the Emperor Julian - recently deceased. Herbert annotated his copy of the Contra Julianum, without judging between them; he made a little précis of it for himself (now in NLW Powis Bequest 1959 Parcel XIX), in which the debate seems even-handed. Julian's ideas occur a few times in DRG, and he is praised on p. 213 (Lewis, p. 358).

[88] 1663, p. 185 = Lewis, p. 299: "it is most apparent that by the Doctrine of the Ancients, all those things are reducible to Rules of Virtue and Piety . . . the Heathens did not only agree with us Christians in worshipping the Supream God, but also in the same most principal and essential kind of Worship . . . so that Celsus durst challenge the Learned Origen to shew what was in the Christian Religion that tended more to the establishing of Virtue than the Heathens had acknowledged before; nay some go farther, and assert that their Precepts are more Strict and Severe, and tend more directly to this End [than can be easily found from their Lawgivers]."

[89] See chapter IV, "Herbert and Christianity".

find him attractive - a patrician, isolated from what he saw as a betrayal of both reason and the hallowed past for the sake of fanaticism and nonsensical dogma. There was also something further. Celsus used polytheism to what appeared to be a monotheistic end:

> whatever there may be in the universe, whether the work of God, or of angels, or of other daemons or heroes, do not all these things keep a law given by the greatest God? And has there not been appointed over each particular thing a being who has been thought worthy to be allotted power? Would not a man, therefore, who worships God rightly, worship the being who has obtained authority from him?[90]

Compare Herbert:

> Turpe & indecorum . . . estimaverant, non advenerari ea, unde ortum ducere, & in quae redire animas suas (Deo summo ita volente) crederent antiquitùs Philosophi Sacerdotesque Gentiles.[91]
>
> neque verisimile est, inferiorem hunc illis invideri cultum, qui in Deum summum omnium authorem & ultimo redundat. . .[92]

On Celsus, a modern scholar writes:

> The veneration of local gods does not detract from the worship of the supreme God, since they are like satraps or provincial governors . . . Alternatively, it may also be claimed that it is always one and the same God who is being worshipped in different

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[90] Chadwick (ed.), Contra Celsum, p. 453. I have not supplied the Greek: my printer would not stand for it.

[91] 1663, p. 40 = Lewis, p. 65: "The Antient Heathen Philosophers and Priests, thought it very sordid and indecorous, not to worship those things from whence they thought they derived their Original, and whither (by Divine Permission) they believed their Souls were to return."

[92] 1663, p. 169 = Lewis, p. 272: "It is . . . very improbable that he [the "Supream God"] should be displeas'd with this Adoration paid to inferior Deities, in regard it ultimately terminates in the Supream GOD Himself." The Dialogue develops this idea in a charming way: "Pupil I like well, for my part, that some kind of reverence be given to all the great parts of nature, since in my particular (though scarce so much as a shred of them) I am not offended, when some little inferior worship is given me, though if I took this otherwise given (in its lst relation) than to God . . . I should not only be vain, but arrogant and impudent" (p. 59).

> places under many different names. Celsus is prepared to defend traditional paganism on either basis.[93]

Celsus has been described as a pagan with an "uneasy conscience . . . a polytheist who knows he ought not to be."[94] He believed in one supreme God, over all the others; but he could not give up the traditional forms of worship, because they were traditional: they constituted the state religion in which he had been brought up. This makes his protest richer and more profound: he was not simply a sniper, but a man with beliefs of his own to defend - sometimes at the expense of a sharp argument. He was, writes Chadwick, "no second-century Voltaire".[95]

Neither (pace Hill) was Herbert a seventeenth-century one.[96] As the two quotations above reveal, he had some sympathy not only with the notion of "symbolic" religion, the second of Celsus's two solutions, but also with the first: the notion of a divine hierarchy. The Supreme God is supreme; but He may have subordinates. In defending this, Herbert came into sharp collision with St. Augustine. Before discussion of the particular issue of

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[93] H. Chadwick, Early Christian Thought and the Classical Tradition: Studies in Justin, Clement, and Origen (Oxford, 1966), p. 28.

[94] Chadwick, Early Christian Thought, p. 29.

[95] Chadwick (ed.), Contra Celsum, p. xxii.

[96] Herbert's use of Celsus anticipated the bolder spirits of a later age: see in particular his rôle in Blount's Oracles of Reason - sharply reproved by Josiah King, in Mr. Blount's "Oracles of Reason" Examined and Answered (London, 1698). Blount writes: "I am angry with Celsus, who calls this Account [the Mosaic account of Creation] an old Wifes Fable; upon which Origen replies very well by way of Answer, ὅτι μετὰ τροπολογίας ταῦτα εἴρεται. . However, Celsus himself does in what follows, acknowledge, that the fairest Interpreters, both among the Jews and the Christians, were ashamed of the literal sense, and therefore accommodated them to Allegories." King comments: "No Man who hath read Mr. Blount's Oracles can believe him, when he says, he is angry with Celsus . . ." (quotation and answer in King, p. 48). But Blount shows no attraction to anything in pagan religion itself; Herbert's attitude, as usual, is more complex.

hero-cult, something more general should be said about his interest in that second great pagan-Christian debate.

The attitude of St. Augustine to Varro, the pagan spokesman of the City of God, is mixed.

> Iste igitur vir tam insignis excellentisque peritiae . . . qui tam multa legit, ut aliquid ei scribere vacuisse miremur; tam multa scripsit, quam multa vix quemquam legere potuisse credamus; iste, inquam, vir tantus ingenio tantusque doctrina, si rerum velut divinarum, de quibus scripsit, oppugnator esset atque destructor . . . nescio utrum tam multa in eis ridenda contemnenda detestanda conscriberet. VI ii[97]

Presumably Augustine thought that he was ensuring only derision, contempt, and abhorrence for Varro; but, like Varro, he became the repository for the view he expounded. Most of the remains of Varro's theological writing are preserved in the City of God.[98]

Unlike Celsus, Varro was an antiquarian, not a polemicist: he was writing in the first century B.C. But he shows something of the same embarrassment when discussing the nature of his religion. He divides it into three parts: "mythical", "physical", and "civil". The first is the religion of the poets - the myths as popularly reported: this he deplores. The second is the religion of the philosophers, and is largely allegorical and naturalistic (gods are explained as forces of nature): this he approves, but warns that most people will not

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[97] Dombart and Kalb, I 247-8 = Bettenson, p. 230: "He was a man of pre-eminent, of unparalleled erudition . . . a man who read so much that we marvel that he had any time for writing; who wrote so much that we find it hard to believe that anyone could have read it all. If this man, with all his talents and all his learning, had intended to attack and eradicate those "divine matters" of which he wrote . . . I do not know whether he would have recorded so many elements in "theology" which can arouse only derision, contempt, and abhorrence." Augustine is never discussed by critics of De Religione Gentilium; but Herbert's opposition to him seems to me a vital force in it. He certainly wrote with the City of God at his side: see, e.g., the list of major deities (1663, p. 114 = Lewis, p. 185), which follows exactly Augustine's order (VII 1), rather than that of Vos (p. 465). He mentions Varro-in-Augustine at least six times. For a full discussion of Augustine on Varro's three-part scheme, see J. Pépin, Mythe et Allégorie (Paris, 1958), pp. 276-392.

[98] The second of the five volumes into which Augustine himself divided the work is largely devoted to refuting Varro.

understand it, and are better off without it. The third is the religion of the public, celebrated by social functions and official cult: this is necessary to the running of the State.[99] Augustine aims to break down this delicate synthesis by identifying the first with the third through the theatre (a state institution, dependent on poets):

> Quis theatrum instituit nisi civitas? Propter quid instituit nisi propter ludos scaenicos? Ubi sunt ludi scaenici nisi in rebus divinis, de quibus hi libri tanta sollertia conscribuntur? VI v[100]

The "natural" religion is attacked later, on its own:

> Ipsas physiologias cum considero, quibus docti et acuti homines has res humanas conantur vertere in res divinas, nihil video nisi ad temporalia terrenaque opera naturamque corpoream vel etiamsi invisibilem, tamen mutabilem potuisse revocari; quod nullo modo est verus Deus. VII xxvii[101]

So Varro's attempts to make paganism respectable are rejected on their own terms; but Augustine prefers a simpler technique:

> Cur haec frustra referre nituntur ad mundum? Quod etsi possent, pro Deo vero mundum nemo pius colit; et tamen eos nec hoc posse veritas aperta convincit. Referant haec potius ad homines mortuos et ad daemones pessimos, et nulla quaestio remanebit. VI xxviii[102]

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[99] Varro attributes this scheme to Q. Mutius Scaevola, a jurist and pontifex writing fifty years earlier.

[100] Dombart and Kalb, I 254-5 = Bettenson, p. 236: "only a city community establishes a theatre. And the sole object of a theatre is the presentation of stage shows. And stage shows can only be classed among "divine affairs".

[101] Dombart and Kalb, I 309 = Bettenson, p. 288: "When I consider the "naturalistic" explanations by which learned and shrewd scholars attempt to turn these human affairs into divine activities, I see nothing which cannot be referred to temporal activities in this world, to an entity which is material, invisible perhaps, but subject to change. This cannot be the true God . . ."

[102] Dombart and Kalb, I 312 = Bettenson, p. 290: "Why all this effort to refer all this [pagan mythology] to the world? Even if the attempt succeeded, no truly religious person worships the world in place of the true God. Anyhow, the facts prove beyond all doubt that

Herbert makes some use of Varro-in-Augustine in De Religione Gentilium. He is less interested in Augustine-on-Varro, and makes no attempt to represent his attitude:

> Virtutem Romani religiose coluerunt, eique divinos honores tribuerunt, ut B. August. ex Varr. lib. 4 de C. D. c. 20 docet.[103]

One would not guess the original from that bland reference:

> Virtutem quoque deam fecerunt; quae quidem si dea esset, multis fuerat praeferenda. Et nunc quia dea non est, sed donum Dei est, ipsa ab illo impetretur, a quo solo dari potest, et omnis falsorum deorum turba vanescet . . . Has deas non veritas, sed vanitas facit; haec enim veri Dei munera sunt, non ipsae sunt deae. I V xx[104]

When Herbert comes to Varro's threefold analysis of theology, he remodels it in a distinctive way, which is far from that of Augustine.

> Loco Varronis claudam, quum supradictis lucem adferat: Tria sunt genera Theologiae, eorumque unum Mythicon appellatur, alterum Physicon, tertium Civile. . .[105]

He quotes the passage, and concludes:

> Ex quibus Varronis verbis, non minus quam ex Platonis Platonicorumque sententiâ supra allatâ, quum satis constet, Theologiam Gentilium partim ex recta ratione, partim

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the attempt is impossible. They should rather refer all this to dead men and demons; and that would be the end of the question."

[103] 1663, p. 187 = Lewis, p. 301: "The Romans paid religious Worship to Virtue and attributed divine Honours to her, as St. Augustine De Civit. Dei cites out of Varro." Herbert's reference is in tune with Cicero, De Natura Deorum, ii 79, in which the cult, identified as Stoic, is praised.

[104] Dombart and Kalb, p. 169 = Bettenson, pp. 158-9: "They also made Virtue a goddess. If she really was a goddess, she certainly ought to have been preferred to many of the others. In fact, since virtue is not a divinity, but a gift of God, men should seek to gain virtue from him who alone can grant it and the whole mob of false gods should be sent packing . . . It is not truth that creates those goddesses; it is folly. Those virtues are not themselves divinities; they are gifts of the true God."

[105] 1663, p. 227 = Lewis, p. 381: "I will conclude with a Place in Varro, in regard, it will afford some light to what was said before. There are three kinds of Theology, [Mythical], Natural and Civil." Lewis gives "Mystical" for "Mythical".

> ex Mythicis Poëtarum fabulis, partim ex Sacerdotum sanctionibus concinnatam fuisse. . .[106]

The distinction has changed utterly: Varro's second type, the "natural", here appears as "sound and solid Reason"; the "mythic" religion stays as it was; and in place of the state religion, which Varro had defended, Herbert puts his usual villains, the priests. C.C.J. Webb makes an observation which, though not concerned with Herbert, is still very suggestive here:

> between the "civil theology" of Varro and the "revealed theology" of later times there is a close resemblance . . . "revealed theology" was conceived to include and even to start from a record of historical events and of positive ordinances, and . . . it was just such positive ordinances and narratives concerning the beings who were worshipped thereby that constituted the civil theology of the ancients . . . the discrepancy of the "mythical" theology from the "civil", implied in the division adopted by Varro, arose among the Greeks in consequence of the growth of a great natural literature over against the local cults . . . Normally [sic] the stories of the "mythical" and the rites of the "civil" theology would have gone more closely together; and the two combined would have corresponded to the Revealed Theology of later times.[107]

In a world where the "civil" religion depends on Revelation, Herbert preferred to stick to the view expressed in Varro's account of "myth": all that is not "sound and solid Reason" is wrong; and one body of society can be isolated and blamed for it. The élitism of Varro's view is gone. "Sound and solid reason" is not the property of any particular group.

Herbert differs from Varro in sharpening his antithesis: he accepts only one form of religion. He differs from Augustine in accepting any of the three heathen categories. This does not mean acceptance of Varro's "natural" theology: De Religione Gentilium has some laborious considerations of pantheism, but they tend to be non-committal:

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[106] 1663, p. 227 = Lewis, p. 382: "From this of Varro, as the Opinion of Plato, and the Platonists before recited, it appears that the Religion of the Heathens was compil'd partly, from sound and solid Reason, partly from the Mysterious Fables of the Poets, and partly from the Inventions of the Priests . . ."

[107] Studies in the History of Natural Theology, p. 19.

> Ita inscriptio Romae effossa in monte Caelio: Optumus Maximus Caelus aeternus, ubi attributum Optimi Maximi, quod Iovi semper etiam ex majorum sententiâ competere testatur Cicero l. I de N.D. Caelo heic adscribitur . . . Ubi igitur Caelum, immo & omnis Caeli gyrus, ut ex Herodoto & Strabone liquet, Iovis nomine insignitur, non heic Aeternum numen omnia gubernans, sed sensibilis ejus imago, aliqua saltem, intelligenda est.[108]

But in discussing Varro's scheme, he does not unpack the "sound and solid Reason", but leaves it in a blanket approbation. Augustine abandons it all, impatiently, as a demonic distraction from the Truth; Herbert stays, for his five, pre-Christian Articles.

But he had thought hard about Varro, and Celsus; and he stayed also for something more.

V Pagan Improvements and the Political Setting of "De Religione Gentilium"

In the first half of the seventeenth century, both in England and in France, confidence in free will and human merit tended to accompany an emphasis on the importance of the clergy, and also on cooperation with the King and government. The debate on pagan salvation follows this pattern. La Mothe le Vayer was Richelieu's protégé, and dedicated La Vertu des Payens to him:

> MONSEIGNEUR,
> Les peuples qui ont adoré le Soleil allumoient du feu sur ses Autels, ne trouvant rien dans la Nature de plus digne de luy estre offert, encore que ce fust une bien petite lumiere qu'ils faisoient paroistre devant celle de ce grand Astre. Ie prens la hardiesse de les imiter en vous presentant ce traitté de la Vertu des Payens, quoy qu'elle n'ait

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[108] 1663, p. 54-5 = Lewis, p. 88: "There was this Inscription dug out of Mons Caelius; Optumus Maximus Caelus Aeternus; the most Good and Great Eternal Heaven; where the Attribute of most Good and Great, which Cic, lib.I. de N. D., affirms by the most universal Opinion, was due only to Jupiter, is here given to Heaven . . . whensoever the Heaven, or all the Celestial Bodies, are called by the Name of Jupiter, we are not to understand that Eternal Deity that governs all things, but only some sensible Representation of him, as will appear both out of Herodotus and Strabo." Cp. Augustine, IV ix.

> rien de comparable aus Vertus Chrestiennes & plus qu'Heroïques de Vostre Eminence. . .[109]

Sir Thomas Browne, as we saw, expressed his allegiance plangently in the Preface to Religio Medici:

> I have lived to behold the highest perversion of that excellent invention [the press]; the name of his Majesty defamed, the honour of Parliament depraved, the writings of both depravedly, anticipatively, counterfeitly imprinted . . .[110]

Herbert, unlike Browne, was an aristocrat, a man with connexions at Court; it might seem unsurprising that he should view the virtuous non-Christians with tolerance. But there are anomalies in his position: he did not give the King the support that everyone expected; and he did not (pace Bedford) express any belief in Christian doctrine.

Rossi found De Religione Gentilium "a defence, the best defence of his neutrality."[111] The description is acute. By the simple fact of its composition, the work provided its author with one excuse for non-participation: he was a scholar, concerned to save his library, writing against time:

> Ipse quidem plurima huc facientia congessi olim, sed sexagenario jam ac multis curis negotiisque implicito ignoscendum, si provinciam hanc aliis administrandam relinquero. . .[112]

He was also a man with a mission:

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[109] La Vertu des Payens, sig. aijv: "MY LORD, Peoples who worshipped the Sun lit a fire on his altars, finding nothing in nature more worthy of being offered to him, although it was a very small light that they produced, beside the light of that great Star. I take the liberty of imitating them in presenting to you this treatise on the Virtue of the Pagans, although it cannot compare with the Christian and more than Heroic Virtues of Your Eminence . . ."

[110] Religio Medici, p. 3; see chapter IV, "Religio Laici in Context".

[111] III 155: "una difesa, la migliore difesa della sua neutralità."

[112] 1663, p. 181 = Lewis, p. 293: "I have formerly made some Essay towards it [a complete account of pagan worship], but being now Sixty Years old, and involv'd in the Care and Affairs of the World, I desire to be excused if I leave it to some that have more leisure".

> . . . Affatim quidem ad institutum nostrum facit, si nugivendorum Sacerdotum praecipuum scopum in cudendis eorum doctrinis ostendam . . .[113]

However, the hostility to priests in De Religione Gentilium is not always confined to them.

> Quomodo interea sive ex Sacerdotum commentis, quibus saeculis illis minus dediti fuere, sive ex Principum, Antecessores suos Diis aequales esse jactantium, tyrannide, sive ex servili & foeda populi adulatione, hominum cultus inter haec irrepserit, jam illustrabimus. . .[114]

The question of hero worship makes a complex contribution to this subject. On the confusion of heroes with stars, he remarks:

> Quod Heroes suos postquam fato heic functi essent, syderum nomine, vel sydera Heroum nomine vocitarint Gentiles, id non ita Sacerdotum vitio, ac moerentis adulantisque populi, aut successorum illorum Heroum impotenti studio verterim: non parvus tamen inde ad virtuem stimulus suffigebatur. Quidvis enim praeclari vel ardui facile attentarit homo, qui non caput tantum, sed nomen ejus astris inferri posse crediderit.[115]

This remarkable concession makes it less surprising that the heroes whose worship he sometimes condemns as superstitious are the main focus in his account of the worship of Liberty:

> Libertas ut Dea inter Romanos olim culta fuit, ut libertatem daret; haut aliud quippe praeclarius in Rep. bene constitutâ exoptaverit quispiam; sed quia libertatem hanc

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[113] 1663, p. 181 = Lewis, p. 293: "it will be sufficient to my purpose if I shew the deceitful Tricks of the Priests . . ."

[114] 1663, p. 99 = Lewis, p. 160: "whether it were from the Inventions of the Priests, or from the Tyranny of Princes, who boasted their Progenitors, were equal to Gods, or the servile and base Flattery of the Populace, that the Adoration of Men obtain'd and crept into the World, I intend now to shew."

[115] 1663, p. 226 = Lewis, p. 379: "It must not be laid to the Priests Charge, that Heroes after this Life were called by the Names of Stars, or Stars after their Names, but to the Sorrow and Flattery of the People, or the Ambitions of their Successors; tho' it proved a very great Incitement to Virtue. For what will not a Man attempt that is Excellent tho' difficult, that believes not only his Head, but his Name shall be placed amongst the Stars." Walker is the only critic to notice Herbert's preoccupation with heroes; but he discusses it in very different terms (see below).

> neque in aeternum exuere vellent Gentiles; ideo Heroas suos caelo donatos liberrimos statuebant, adeo ut non caelestibus tantum bonis, sed corporeis etiam terrestribusque, licentiâ quadam vagâ, pro libitu suo, ut illis fas esset. . .[116]

There is close connexion in Herbert's mind between heroes and liberty - freedom from coercion, and the right of moral responsibility. The whole issue forms one of the principal topics of the long and deliberately confusing speech by the "Crafty Priests" of chapter XIV.

This long monologue is divided into three parts: the first on the duty to extend worship to inferior deities; the second on the ranks of gods; the third on worship of the elements and of man.[117] All three are elusively described, and summed up accordingly. For the first, the Priests seem to envisage one supreme God throughout, so Herbert's principal point is safe; but this is backed up by the idea that some of the inferiors may be "self-existent and coeternal", with which he would not have agreed. For the second, the three ranks of gods, "supercelestial" (which have nothing to do with men), "celestial" (stars), and "subcelestial" (demons) are all disallowed by the rest of the book, since they all seem to

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[116] 1663, p. 193 = Lewis, p. 311: "Liberty was worshipped by the Romans as a Goddess, to procure them Liberty; for there is nothing more excellent and desirable in a well constituted Common-wealth; but the Heathens did not think Eternity it self divested of this Liberty; they imagined their Heroes, that were advanced to Heaven, in a State of perfect Liberty; and did not only enjoy Celestial but Corporeal Goods also, according to their Pleasure, and with an uncontrouled Liberty . . ." It will be apparent that the original does not have quite the power of Lewis's translation, with its emotive italics.

[117] 1663, pp. 168-70 = Lewis, pp. 271-4; 1663, pp. 170-5 = Lewis, pp. 274-82; 1663, pp. 175-80 = Lewis, pp. 282-90. This speech is discussed by Hill and by Walker, with results characteristically different. According to Hill, "Herbert yields . . . to the temptation to let the wheedling priests speak in their own defense. Their superficially plausible, but fundamentally ridiculous, explanations form comic high points of the book" (pp. 43-4). Walker: "In this 'not uncomely theology' [Walker's translation of "Theologiam . . non invenustam"], says Herbert, are 'egregious truths' mixed with improbabilities and falsehoods; but he does not tell us which is which" (p. 184). He "suspects" that Herbert disliked the first and third sorts of god; I agree with this, but not with his further assertion that "earlier on he had discussed demons who execute God's punishments without expressing disapproval." I have not found a single instance of the word "demon" used positively in DRG, except in quotations: Herbert seems careful to avoid it.

require prayer independently of God - an idea which Herbert in his own person invariably rejects. The third, however, produces an ineradicable ambivalence, resulting apparently from his curious fascination with the idea of a carefree God, a God who leaves the actual execution of His orders to some sort of intermediary.[118]

Herbert never comes quite clean on his opinion of this. Perhaps his feelings are best represented by this leisurely passage:

> Beatum quippe Deum particularium (nisi quatenus in specie genereque suo continerentur) rationem habiturum, ab antiquioribus ἄτοπον , vel absurdum esse existimabatur; adeò ut satis ducerent particularium administrationem hominibus probe hac vitâ functis demandatum à Deo summo fuisse; quos ideo sacrificiis conciliandos esse suadebant Sacerdotes.[119]

The distinction between "antiquiores" and "Sacerdotes" suggests the point at which Herbert's sympathy ends: we should not worship them; but they do have some private responsiblity in Heaven.[120]

This passage illustrates conveniently the difference between Herbert's real view and that ascribed to him by Walker - the only critic to notice his interest in heroes. For Walker,

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[118] Augustine was vehement on this subject - having first translated it into his own terms: "Praeclara igitur sanctitas Dei, qui non miscetur homini supplicanti, et miscetur daemoni arroganti" - etc. (VIII 20, Dombart and Kalb, I 350 = Bettenson, p. 327). The idea that God does not deal directly with man is Platonic (Smp. 203A, cited by the saint); Herbert's description seems to depend quite heavily on Augustine's account of the Platonists, though his concern with Providential care has rather a Stoic sound (see e.g. Cicero, DND ii 164) - and the stress on divine tranquillity perhaps owes something to the Epicureans.

[119] 1663, p. 220 = Lewis, pp. 369-70: "the Antients thought it very absurd, that the Blessed God should have any regard to Particulars (unless as they are contain'd in their Genus and Species) and esteem'd it more agreeable, to suppose, that the Supream God committed the Administration of Particulars to Men that had led exemplary Lives; whom therefore the Priest said, ought to be made Propitious by Sacrifices." One possible result of this scheme, of course, is to siphon off responsibility for evil onto subordinates. This is not a result in which Herbert shows much interest in DRG; but it is discussed at some length in the Dialogue.

[120] This passage is discussed further in the next section.

the confusion of heroes with stars is essential: all Herbert's positive references to heroes can then be used as evidence of support for an "astral" religion. But Herbert nowhere approves of the conflation; it is heroes, not stars, to which he is drawn.[121]

And why not? As Herbert saw it, hero-worship in its pure, laic form ought to be perfectly acceptable to Christians:

> id quidem ut à recepta inter plurimos hodierno die sententiâ non prorsus abhorreat (quum heroïbus Gentilium ea ipsa propemodum munia, quae olim divinis sanctisque animis in Caelum receptis, saeculis fieri posterioribus tributa sint)[122]

And he issues a direct challenge:

> Novi quidem Patres Ecclesiae saevè in Gentiles invehi, quod Deos-homines colerent; sed fucus heic forsan lectoribus factus, quod illi diversa à Gentilibus significatione acceperint Verbum Deus, velut supra ostendi: adeo ut apud Gentiles Deus-homo (vix puto) plus innuat (ubi mystica omnis abest interpretatio) quam apud Patres Ecclesiae μακάριος, vel Sanctus. . .[123]

Augustine had (followed by Vos) tried to use the indisputable parallel to his own advantage, by insisting that Christians do not worship saints;[124] for Herbert, however, the heroes are not demons, but exemplars and inspirations of virtue:

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[121] The stars play a different rôle in the book: they represent Providence, the "eternal law" by which God governs the world but does not interfere with human freedom: see 1663, p. 222 = Lewis, p. 372). The most important difference between Herbert and Celsus is contained in this: Celsus believed in intermediate spirits between man and the supreme God, some of whom were evil, and needed placating; there is no sign of this magical world-view in DRG.

[122] 1663, p. 223 = Lewis, p. 375: "[This] is an Opinion, not much unlike what is generally received now a days; for they in those latter Ages, attribute the same Power and Office to the Souls of the Blessed in Heaven, as the Heathens did formerly to their Heroes".

[123] 1663, pp. 109-10 = Lewis, pp. 177-8: "I know the Fathers of the Church bitterly inveigh against the Heathens, for worshipping Deified Men; but here they impose upon their Readers, because they took the Word God in another sense than the Heathens meant it, as I shewed before; and I am of Opinion, that a Deified Man, signified no more amongst the Heathens [when mystical interpretations are put aside], than Macarites, or a Saint doth with the Fathers of the Church . . ."

[124] VIII 27; cp. Vos, I 64-8.

> Quidvis enim praeclari vel ardui facile attentarit homo, qui non caput tantum, sed nomen ejus astris inferri posse crediderit.[125]

The whole Augustinian argument has been turned on its head: the pagan heroes are the same sort of beings as saints, not something sinister; and they are a reminder of the limitless possibilities on offer for one who makes good use of his freedom and free will.

In his second letter, Herbert presses on Vos his point about "corrupt priests", and the danger of taking the Fathers entirely at their word. He seems here to be hinting at another kind of support from his mentor - one which would bring them closer together. Perhaps he had in mind the sort of relationship realized in the 1680s by another Dutch theologian and a popularizing Frenchman: Anton van Dale and Bernard de Fontenelle, who both wrote controversial works on pagan oracles.[126] Fontenelle strips Dale's work of most of its erudition, and exaggerates the message, which is much the same as Herbert's: that all that was wrong with pagan religion was the fault of the priests. The manner, however, is different: Fontenelle is an ironist, working at a remove from his subject (unlike Herbert, he had no new scholarly material to add to his source), and without a positive message of his own. Herbert's tone, here as elsewhere, fluctuates between sarcasm and passion, detachment

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[125] 1663, p. 226 = Lewis, p. 379 (see above). Compare Augustine, on Varro: "utile esse civitatibus dicit, ut se viri fortes, etiamsi falsum sit, diis genitos esse credant, ut eo modo animus humanus velut divinae stirpis fiduciam gerens res magnas adgrediendas praesumat audacius . . ." (III 4, Dombart and Kalb, I 350 = Bettenson,p. 92)

[126] Fontenelle's Histoire des Oracles (1686) draws on van Dale's De Oraculis veterum Ethnicorum dissertationes duae (1683). Although he was uneasy at the flagrant flippancy of Fontenelle's adaptation, van Dale's own work was audacious; in 1696, he published another work, with the seemingly familiar title De Origine et progressu idololatriae et superstionum, in which he "not only took vigorous issue with precursors like Vos but also made it very plain that primitive Judaism was just as crude and idolatrous as the ethnic cults which were thought to imitate or pervert it" (Allen, Mysteriously Meant, p. 79). Van Dale and his imitator are discussed by F.E. Manuel, The Eighteenth Century Confronts the Gods (Cambridge, Mass., 1959), pp. 41-53.

and involvement. Their statements of intent are instructive to compare. Fontenelle, attacking traditional theories about oracles (first, that they were inspired by demons; second, that they stopped with the birth of Christ), sighs over the status accorded to prejudices:

> ces préjugez qui entrent dans la vraye Religion, trouvent, pour ainsi dire, le moyen de se faire confondre avec elle, et de s'attirer un respect qui n'est deu qu'à elle seule. On n'ose les attaquer en même temps quelque temps quelque chose de sacré. Je ne reproche point ces exces de Religion a ceux qui en sont capables, au contraire je les en loüe, mais enfin quelque loüable que soit cet excés, on ne peut disconvenir que le juste milieu ne vaille encore mieux, et qu'il ne soit plus raisonnable de démêler l'Erreur d'avec la Verité.[127]

Herbert, as he told Vos, thought that the history of paganism needed a new interpretation. But his immediate aim was different:

> Novi satis quidem juxta nostros nulla ex Providentia comuni media sufficientia haberi, ubi gratia illorum sive Providentia particularis non una subvenerit, & in eundem concurrerit finem; sed neque aliud volui, quam ut Providentia Universalis cuncto human generi quovis modo constaret.[128]

The passage that outraged Heidanus is fired itself by a spirit of outrage:

> Equidem haut satis mihi exploratum fuit quomodo Optimus Maximusque audiret ille Deus, qui inscios invitósque crearet damnaretque homines.[129]

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[127] L. Maigron (ed.), Histoire des Oracles (Paris, 1908), p. 4 = Aphra Behn (tr.), The History of Oracles (London, 1688), pp. 3-4: "these prejudices that are in the true Religion are, as I may say, so closely interwoven with it, that they have drawn that respect to themselves which is only due to the true Religion; and we dare not find fault with the one for fear of attacking at the same time something that is holy in the Other. I do not reproach this excess of Religion in those that are capable of discerning, but rather praise it; yet whatever Commendations they may deserve, we cannot but confess that a just medium is much the safest course; and that it is more reasonable to remove error from truth, than to venerate error because it is mix'd with truth."

[128] 1663, p. 4 = Lewis, p. 6: "I know it is a generally receiv'd Opinion, That Common Providence doth not afford sufficient Means, without the Concurrence of Grace and Particular Providence: But my Design is to make it evident, That an Universal Providence is extended to all Mankind."

[129] 1663, p. 3 = Lewis, p. 5: "I could not understand how they [the Fathers] could call that God Most Good and Great, who created Men only to damn them, without their knowledge, and against their will." For Heidanus, see the first section of this chapter.

It is the spirit of that earlier free thinker of France, the rhyming "Déiste" so lengthily opposed by Mersenne. Theologians had produced an image of God unacceptable in its cruelty: "most Good", Herbert explains, in one of his most impressive passages, must come before "most Great".[130] The arguments of De Religione Gentilium are a natural extension from those of Religio Laici. Herbert enjoyed Vos's information for its own sake, but he also used it to make his personal theory both weightier and darker: the tyranny of the priests now predates Christianity; and priests past and present have formed a kind of conspiracy against the virtuous pagans, the first corrupting their religion, the second condemning them to Hell in spite of their fundamental goodness. Across the millenia, the modern layman offers his ancient avatar a supportive if slippery hand.

Fontenelle's irony was not disturbed by any positive feelings towards the pagans; he did not suggest that their oracles were anything but absurd.[131] Still, at times, one of Herbert's pagan enthusiasms, his hero-worship, has something of the Enlightenment about it:

> Ut libere tamen fatear, Gentilium circa eos qui verè essent Heroës, doctrinam haut ita pingue vel peregrinam sonare, ut non aliquid pulchri eximiique alat. Neque enim vel pigri sedere, vel nudae contemplationi sese totos dedere, vel, tanquam inutiles hujus mundi partes, res mortalium, unde originem duxerunt, negligere putabantur! sed ea

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[130] 1663, p. 160 = Lewis, p. 258.

[131] A neat comparison is provided by their remarks on a common topic: the deification by Alexander the Great of his late friend, Hephaestion. Fontenelle mocks the idea that "il n'eust fallu qu'une fantaisie d'Alexandre pour envoyer un Demon en possession d'une Statuë, qui fust devenuë par là une éternelle occasion d'erreur à tous les hommes" (pp. 100-1). For Herbert, the important point is the oracle's reply: that Hephaestion should be honoured as a hero, not a god. He deserved the first (1663, p. 106 = Lewis, p. 172). Herbert took the story from Vos - who related it with great disapproval, as an example of false worship (I 182-3). In one perspective, Herbert seems to stand between Vos and Fontenelle - Vos, who took the story seriously; Fontenelle, who was not shocked by it. In another, he is further removed from them both than they are from each other. For both despised the pagan religion, however much they disagreed about its seriousness; only Herbert discriminated, and took it on something like its own terms.

> ubique procurare, quae tum naturae eorum convenientia, tum Diis hominibusque grata essent.[132]

It is characteristically circumspect (phrases such as "haut ita pingue vel peregrinam" form a sort of leit-motif in the work).[133] A contemporary of Voltaire was to give the idea a more forthright treatment:

> Where the deity is represented as infinitely superior to mankind, this belief, tho' altogether just, is apt, when joined with superstitious terrors, to sink the human mind into the lowest submission and abasement, and to represent the monkish virtues of mortification, penance, humility, and passive suffering, as the only qualities, which are acceptable to him. But where the gods are conceived to be only a little superior to mankind, and to have been, many of them, advanced to that inferior rank, we are more at our ease, in our addresses to them, and may even, without profaneness, aspire sometimes to a rivalship and emulation of them. Hence activity, spirit, courage, magnanimity, love of liberty, and all the virtues which aggrandize a people.[134]

Herbert was ahead of his time in his appreciation of these active pagan qualities; but he was also responding most directly to his time. The heroes were free; they were not the same as God, but they were honoured subordinates, with an important rôle to play - Herbert never declared (perhaps never decided) just how important. It is easy to see in them the apotheosis of the feudal aristocracy, a reminder of his own past - an alternative to the centralizing vision of Charles Stuart.

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[132] 1663, p. 225 = Lewis, p. 378: "I must here acknowledge that their Doctrine about those that were Heroes in Reality, is not so harsh and strange, but contains some Things Noble and Eximious. For they did not suppose them to be idle, and wholly engag'd in [Self-] contemplation, or useless Parts of the World, and negligent of the Affairs of Mankind, from whom they originally sprang; but were constantly employ'd about such Things, as were most agreeable to their own Natures, and grateful to the Gods and Men."

[133] See, eg., p. 57: "haut mirum adeo videri debet . . ."; p. 85: "quod neque mirum videri debet . . ."; p. 99: "Qui quidem haud ita absurdus, & absonus videretur . . ."; p. 108: "Quod etiam haut ita mirum inter eos videri debet . . ." The subject in each case is some example of pagan belief.

[134] D. Hume, The Natural History of Religion, in Four Dissertations (London, 1757), p. 99.

A reminder; also, perhaps, a hope. How closely Herbert identified them with himself is revealed by the pair of poems he published with De Veritate in 1645: De Vita Humanâ and De Vita Caelesti, his speculations on the life to come. These may provide a conclusion to this chapter.

VI Heroes in Heaven

The year 1645 saw the publication of an assortment of Herbert's work. Together with De Causis Errorum, he published Religio Laici, the Appendix ad Sacerdotes, and three long Latin poems, De Vita Humana, De Vita Caelesti, and the Praecepta ad suos Nepotes: disquisitions on life, the afterlife, and the moral duties of life.[135] The last poem combines moral precepts with the last instructions of a will ("save my books"), which make it a moving farewell to the reader. Some copies of the compilation are bound together with the last substantive edition of De Veritate, also published in this year: in these copies, the book which

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[135] The first two poems have a rather complex history: they appear also in the Life, in a slightly different form. De Vita Humana in fact appears in three versions: thirty lines of it (roughly the first thirty as printed in 1645) appear in "AuE" (to use Rossi's terminology), the MS of the Life dictated by Herbert. The rest, and De Vita Coelesti, do not - they are not relevant to the context (discussion of infancy, and the analogy between it and the afterlife). More, however, has been added to the later MS, "AuW" (the text used for the first edition of the work ("Walpole"), and every other except Shuttleworth). Here DVH has 44 lines (as Walpole prints: Rossi's assertion that this MS had 48 lines (III 393, 510 n.) is mysterious), as against 100 in De Causis Errorum; DVC also appears in this MS (and Walpole), with 72 lines, as against 102 in DCE - the last two lines in DCE are free-standing, and act as a sort of coda to both poems. All texts of the Life before Shuttleworth give the longer versions; Shuttleworth supplies these in the Textual Notes - but he transcribes them rather inaccurately (in his transcription, DVC ends abruptly at l. 69: the last three lines have simply been omitted). A translation - elegant, and fairly accurate - of the two poems (in the longer Life form) is given by Margaret Fuller in her essay "The Two Herberts", in Papers on Literature and Art (London, 1846).

had begun life twenty-five years before is brought to an end with preparations for Herbert's death.[136]

His life was bound up with his theology; it is not suprising that the two strange poems on the metaphysics of life should also be a kind of commentary on his own work. Analogy is give an important rôle: he argues again, as he had done in De Veritate, that progression from the womb to the world is a foretaste of the progression from the world to the beyond. The "plastic power", De Veritate's other name for "natural instinct" in its primitive sense, is given a starring rôle in De Vita Humana:

> PRIMA fuit quondam genitali semine VITA,
> Procurasse suas dotes ubi Plastica Virtus
> Gestiit, & vegeto molem perfundere succo . . .
> Scilicet haud tantas utero committeret arcto
> Plastica vis vires, ubi nullus viribus usus; . .
> Nì citò venturae fuerit cùm conscia Vitæ
> Intus adornasset quae nobis Commoda cuncta. (1-36)[137]

The precipitous ascent in the last part of De Vita Humana and the beginning of De Vita Caelesti recalls "De Possibili" - though Herbert allows himself some latitude in the poetry (he speaks of the "laquearia Coeli", the "panelled ceiling of Heaven" (DVC 13), a phrase

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[136] The Bodleian copy, 4 H7 Art. Seld, is so bound.

[137] Smith, p. 100: "The first LIFE existed once in the seed of generation, where the PLASTIC POWER chose to administer its gift, and irrigate the mass with its enlivening sap . . . Surely, the Plastic Force would not commit such powers to a narrow womb where there was no use for them . . . if it were not that, knowing of the Life soon to come, it had adorned us inside with all that we need." Bedford, pp. 107-8, notes that W.B. Hunter, in his classic article on the "plastic power" ("The Doctrine of Plastic nature in the Seventeenth Century" Harvard Theo Review 43 (1950), 197-213), finds its first English usage in Henry More's poem Psychozoia - some 30 years after Herbert was using it in Latin. The Cambridge Platonists wanted such a power as a defence against the fashionable mechanism: there was no question of identifying it with the intellect. As Cudworth explained: "this plastic nature is so far from being the first and highest life, that it is indeed the last and lowest of all lives . . ." (True Intellectual System, I 251).

censured in De Veritate).[138] De Vita Humana reproduces also the confusion of focus in De Veritate: the shifting subject of the poem, and the elusive rôle of the "plastic power", seems the natural result of his unsatisfactory distinction between "faculties".[139]

But the most interesting connexion is the heroic one, the connexion between the two autobiographical poems and De Religione Gentilium.

In De Vita Coelesti, meeting heroes is one of the various pleasures on offer in heaven.

> Sin placet Heroas veteres quos intulit Astris
> Prisca Fides, fecêre Deos praeclaraque gesta,
> Illic suspicere, & demum reverenter habere,
> Cùm quos heic alii ex humili virtute parârunt
> Ad superos aditus, illi vel fortibus ausis
> Evicêre olim, mox tum distinguere vultus
> Tum jubar heic licet, & radiantes visere frontes.
> (68-74)[140]

The process of thought by which Herbert reaches them is significant. De Vita Coelesti begins with determined joyfulness:

> Toto lustratus Genio, mihi gratulor ipsi,
> Fati securus, dum nec terroribus ullis
> Dejicior, tacitos condo vel corde dolores,
> Sed laetus mediis aerumnis transigo vitam,

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[138] 1645, p. 246 = Carré, p. 329: "Iter . . . conficienti primò occurret coeruleum illud, quod Coeli laquearia existimat vulgus, sed imperitè. Est enim aeris portio tenuissima . . ."

[139] See chapter II, "Knowledge and Freedom": in the poem, the subject begins as the "vis plastica" (1-21), which becomes the "spiritus" (23-5); the "mens" (26-8); some blurred passives, clustered presumably about the "mens" (37-44); the "mens" again (45-53 - more or less clearly); the poet himself (60 ff.). The mind and the plastic power are sharply distinguished in 24-6, but coincide in their actions in other lines: the mind takes over as formative principle in 26-7; the plastic power has consciousness of the life to come, 29-36.

[140] p. 105: "Or if one choose to look up in that place [Heaven] at the old Heroes whom the Faith of old carried to the Stars, and made them Gods and their deeds renowned - to look up at them, and to hold them in reverence, because the approaches to the blessed ones which others won by humble virtue, these in the past overcame by brave undertakings: then, at once, one can make out their faces and their glory - can see there their radiant faces."

Invitisque malis (quae terras undique cingunt)
Ardenti virtute viam super Æthera quaerens . . .
(1-6)[141]

There is stress throughout on the power of the will. Because of this:

Amplior unde simul redhibetur Gratia nobis
Quam vel coelitibus, primum quos protulit aevum,
Cùm status iis cunctis qui fit praeclarior, ortu
Hunc habeant ipso, magna & vi Numinis, illis
Quae dedit esse Deos; sed quae jam Gloria nobis,
Parta ità sit virtute pia, propriòque labore
(43-8)[142]

The two options that precede the meeting with the heroes are congruous with it:

Sic ubi Libertas chara est, per amoena locorum
Conspicua innumeris Coelis discurrere fas est,
Deliciasque Loci cujusvis carpere passim,
Atque vices illis rursus praebere recentes,
Aut mage si reliquis locus heic arrideat ullus,
Non diversari tantùm, sed ponere sedes:
Sin placet ex Coelo miseris succerere passim,
Quos terris sors dura premit, vel praemia ferre
Fortibus atque piis, dat nobis Numen ut uti
Non precibus tantùm liceat, sed legibus illis
Provida quêis aequè cunctis sua Gratia constat,

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[141] p. 103: "My whole spirit purified, I rejoice in myself, unworried about my fate - I am not cast down by any fears, nor do I hide silent pains in my heart: I pass my life joyfully in the midst of calamities; despite evils (which rim the land on all sides), I seek a path by my blazing virtue above the sky . . ."

[142] p. 104: "Grace will be returned to us, more even than to the heavenly ones, brought forth in the first Age: for their status (though it be more illustrious) they have from their very birth, by the mighty power of the Deity, who granted that they should be gods; but that which is our Glory is born of pious virtue and our own labour . . ." Cf also "The Idea" (p. 78):

you more than an Angel be,
Since being here to sin and mischief free,
You will have rais'd your self to their degree:
(82-4)

It is a curious fact that, of the four longest passages in the DCE text missing from the "AuW" MS of the Life (ll. 43-9, 50-5, 78-81, 96-100), three comprise the subjects with which we are here concerned: heroes, and the astral body.

Ac ope mox illos, hos vel mercede juvemus.
(56-67)[143]

Liberty and good works lead naturally to Herbert's conception of the denizens of Heaven.[144]

Not only shall we meet heroes: we shall be heroes ourselves. In De Vita Humana, the later stages of life run over the usual distinction of life and death, and the narrator appears in a heavenly setting:

celsas Superûm possim conscendere sedes,
In coelisque ipsis latè suffragia ferre
Libera, ceu Divus; (74-6)[145]

Compare De Religione Gentilium:

> Quod Dii enim Supercaelestes boni sint, ex eorum propria natura; quod homines, ex arbitrio proprio evenit . . . Homines in Caelum relatos mediatores erga Deum summum existere, & pro mortalibus intercedere, arbitramur; adeoque non tanquam judices, sed tanquam Patronos propitiandos esse . . . hosce in judicium vel mediatorum nostrorum album referri non est quod dubitetis; praesertim si mortales tanquam in communi mundi civitate constituti, ejusque pars aliqua, suffragia in caelum ferre possint; quod mihi non ita à ratione absonum videtur . . . [146]

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[143] pp. 104-5: "when Liberty is one's choice, one may wander through the lovely places, bright with innumerable Heavens, gathering everywhere the delights of each place, and giving one's pleasures always a fresh setting; or, if some one place attracts one more than the rest, one may not only wander but settle oneself.

"Or if one choose to help from on high those everywhere who are unhappy, oppressed by harsh fortune on earth, or to bring rewards to the brave and pious - the Deity grants that we may exercise not just prayer, but those laws by which His provident Grace is available to all; and we may support these with aid, those with a premium."

[144] We will also meet those we love, as in the Ode: DVC, 15. But they occupy only one line.

[145] p. 102: "I may sit upon the high seats of the Blessed, and cast my vote freely and extensively in very Heaven, as if divine . . ."

[146] 1663, pp. 178-9 = Lewis, pp. 286-8: "that the Supercelestial Deities are good, proceeds from their own proper Nature, but that Man is so from his own free Will . . . Men, admitted into Heaven . . will be Mediators between [God] and Mortals, and intercede for them; and upon this account, they ought to be made propitious, if not as Judges, yet as Patrons . . . such as these, are our Judges or Patrons; especially, if Mortal Men, being a constitutive part of this common City of the World, have only Suffrages in Heaven; which appears very rational . . ." The Latin makes clearer than the English Herbert's uncertainty

There is also another link between De Religione Gentilium and the poems, of an obscurer kind. This is the vehicle in which the disembodied Herbert will act as a hero: his "aerial body".

> Mox hanc sin exuo vitam
> Quae terris proprior, nec dum purgataque forsan
> Aut asserta siet; tenue & simul exuo velum
> Aëreum, primo quo mens est acta vehic'lo
> Ad superas auras, tum (ne jam pristina poscam
> Gaudia, consuetae repetens consortia carnis)
> Induit aethereo me totum corpore Virtus
> Plastica . . . (62-9)[147]

What is the origin of these strange intermediaries? According to E.R. Dodds, they derive from certain isolated passages in Plato and in Aristotle.[148] The idea acquired real importance among the later Neoplatonists, who were the first to give the soul an eternal "vehicle" ( ); it passed with the Neoplatonic tradition to the Latin West, and reached the Middle Ages and Renaissance via Macrobius. But not without some difficulty, as may be seen from a later controversy.

The aerial/aetherial/astral body was to be popular with the Cambridge Platonists; it appears in Cudworth's True Intellectual System of the Universe - where it was picked up and held under hostile scrutiny by Cudworth's eighteenth-century editor, J.L. Mosheim.[149] His

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about their precise rôle (even though he is protected here by the priestly speaker).

[147] p. 101: "if soon I shed this life, which belongs more to the earth, and perhaps is not yet purified or emancipated; then, simultaneously, I cast off the aerial covering, in which, as its vehicle, the mind is conveyed to the breezes above, and (that I might not yet ask for the original joy, but should seek again that which is akin to the familiar body) the Plastic Force covers me all over with an aetherial body." Cf. DVC 96: "Nostras mox etiam formas renovare licebit" (sc. "vis . . ingens/ Numinis", ll. 93-4).

[148] E.R. Dodds (ed.), Proclus: the Elements of Theology (Oxford, 1963), Appendix II: "The Astral Body in Neoplatonism".

[149] Mosheim published a Latin translation of the work, with his comments of his own, in 1733: these were translated in the edition of the original by J. Harrison (London, 1845). The

concern is prompted by the clash between it and the "glorified body" of I Cor. xv. The two were much too close to coexist.[150] Christianity also specifies eternal embodiment, in a body changed but somehow different; but this will not happen until the Last Judgment, and anyway there will be only one body, not a graduated series.

Herbert, however, in De Religione Gentilium, is remarkably overt in his approval:

> longe verisimiliorem sententiam à Platone adduci credimus, qui, de statu Animarum post hanc vitam loquens, ait: Primam quandam sentiendi naturam, quae substantialis origo sensuum reliquorum est, totamque potestatem sensitivae facultatis in se continet, post hanc vitam in seipsam replicari, & deinde in aëreo corpore exeri; (quo etiam involuta tum hoc ingreditur corpus, tum ex illo egreditur) subjungens porro Animam humanam in Corpore hoc crassiori ad breve tempus habitare; in aërio verò Corpore per multa saecula; in caelesti vel aethereo per omnia. Denique addit, Animas hasce aëreo Corpore vestitas, ultrices esse scelerum impune contra seipisas, vel corpus, quo usi sunt in hac vita, commissorum. Quae omnia quum neque asseri satis, neque negari possint, in verisimilium loco ponimus. Et quidem praeter solennem illam notitiam communem, nempe [the 5 are set out], Nihil quod verisimile magis esset, ab illis statui posse decernimus[151]

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comments on the aerial body occur in Harrison's ed., III 259 ff.

[150] Cudworth's liking for the idea seems to stem from his insistence (in itself quite orthodox) that only God is naturally incorporeal. These "vehicles" are also found in Henry More, who links them with his belief (not shared by Herbert or Cudworth) in the pre-existence of the soul: they are the half-way form between spirit and flesh, attractive to the soul, which explain its original wish for incarnation. In his prose work, The Immortality of the Soul (London, 1659), More distinguishes three vehicles; DVH also appears to envisage three, the "aerial", the "aetherial", and the "celestial" - although the last two are identical in DRG. For More, and for Herbert, the last vehicle is permanent.

[151] 1663, p. 209 = Lewis, p. 337 (mispag. 353): "The Opinion of Plato of the state of Souls after this Life, seems far more probable [than others]. That the first Nature of Sensation, which is the substantial Origine of the other Senses, and contains the whole Power of the sensitive Faculty[,] after this Life is closed up in it self, and putting on an Aerial Body, with it enters to one Body, and goes out of another[,] and that the Humane Soul Inhabits this Terrestrial gross Body for a small time, but the Airy for many Years, and the Celestial or Aetherial for ever. Then [he] adds, these Souls being clothed with Airy Bodies, do revenge the Injuries done them in this Life, or the Bodies that belonged to them. All which, I leave my Reader to judge of, as he thinks fit, tho' there is nothing which we can find amongst them, that carries more probability in it, unless it be those common Principles [the Articles]." Lewis is rather opaque here: I have changed the punctuation in the interests of sense. The marginalia to Herbert's copy of the Contra Celsum reflect his interest in the Platonic theory: pp. 244-50; 358.

Quite why he is so impressed by it, Herbert does not explain. Perhaps one answer is to be found in the general independence of his persona in Heaven. Unlike the body in the Pauline resurrection, the "aerial body" is not the result of a sudden miracle, the "twinckling of an eye", so intoxicating to Donne: it is gradual, as Herbert "casts off" the coarser elements. It seems, indeed, almost voluntary. Herbert's idea of union with God involves mutual congratulation:

> Sin laudare Deum lubeat, nos laudat & ipse
> Concinit atque Chorus Superûm . . .(DVH 88-9)[152]

Herbert's Heaven is not only independent: it is centrifugal. The vision of himself in his "celestial body", seated among divinities, makes a fine contrast with Spenser's prostrate appearance in the Hymne to Heavenlie Love; it also makes a contrast, of a less obvious kind, with the later vision of Traherne:

> To sit in the Throne of God is to inhabit Eternity . . . GODs Throne is His Omnipresence, and that is infinit . . . The Omnipresence therfore and the Eternity of GOD are our Throne, wherin we are to reign for evermore. (CM IV 72)[153]

Traherne is buoyant where Spenser is abject; but the idea that praising God should only be one option of several (and not the first to be suggested) would be as unthinkable for the one as for the other. It is possible that one of the attractions of the "aerial body" was the means it seemed to offer of self-containment, and thus autonomy.

There is another, related reason why Herbert might have inclined towards the "aerial body": his perennial concern with that elusive goal, the "proper place". Several of the poems

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[152] p. 101: "If we wish to praise God, He praises us too, and the Celestial Chorus joins in . . ."

[153] H.M. Margoliouth (ed.), Thomas Traherne: Centuries, Poems, and Thanksgivings (Oxford, 1958), I 206-7.

reveal a preoccupation with the question where the elements of the body go after death. It is possible for him to dispatch them quite neatly:

> Doth the Sun now his light with yours renew?
> Have Waves the curling of your hair?
> Did you restore unto the Sky and Air,
> The red, and white, and blew?
> Have you vouchsafed to flowrs since your death
> That sweetest breath?[154]

However, the poem reveals that there is a cost to a disintegration of the person into "proper places": an irresolvable grief remains:

> Tell us, where are those beauties now become,
> And what they now intend:
> Tell us, alas, that cannot tell our grief,
> Or hope relief.[155]

The person, the union, is gone. What can be done? Christianity offers the resurrection of the whole person; in the "Ode on a Question Moved", Herbert seems to accept this. But apparently it ceased to satisfy him. Probably he was repelled by the fact that it is a doctrine unique to Christianity; it is probable also that he was not excited by it as was Donne because he conceived of body and soul in a more Platonic manner, responding more to their essential difference than to their essential unity.[156] The "aerial body", as alternative to full corporeal resurrection, offers an image of union which is fainter, but still offers a solution to the problem remaining at the end of the "Elegy over a Tomb". Donne was anxious at the prospect of losing any of himself; Herbert was anxious more selectively, but still anxious.

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[154] "Elegy over a Tomb" (Smith, p. 33).

[155] Smith, pp. 33-4.

[156] See for this argument Ellrodt, Les Poètes Métaphysiques, II 26-30. Ellrodt mentions the "aerial body" on p. 30 (though not by name: he does not discuss the doctrine).

As he explains in De Veritate, not only will our spiritual strengths survive: we will keep also our good looks:

> nihil . . . ex quo unus verus homo, immo & speciosus audis, non superest.[157]

This prompts the conclusion that if Donne wanted to maintain his identity, Herbert wanted to maintain his image. The "aerial body" is a fittingly spectral solution.

But can such a solution last? The need for a body of some kind after death is given its most thoughtful treatment in a late poem, the "Meditation on a Wax Candle Burning Out". Here the puzzling relation of body and soul is compared with that of a candle and its flame. The imagery is dense and difficult. In the third stanza, Herbert reflects on the physical disintegration of the candle:

> And while thou doest thy self each where disperse,
> Some parts of thee make up this Universe,
> Others a kind of dignity obtain,
> Since thy pure Wax in its own flame consum'd,
> Volumes of incense sends, in which perfum'd,
> Thy smoak mounts where thy fire could not attain.[158]

The anomalous position of the "smoak" here suggests something like the "aerial body" of the Latin poems. But when the candle-allegory is dismantled, the process it described becomes more opaque than ever. At first (stanzas 4 and 5), the soul seems to be an unwilling prisoner in the body, eager to escape; the body will not suffer when this happens, because it will be in its proper "station". Then, in the sixth stanza, the body seems to be rarefying into something more permanent - with the result that "in [it] we more then once may live" (36).

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[157] 1645, p. 92 = Carré, p. 172: "Nothing . . . which endows you with a true singleness of mind and even fine looks, fails to survive."

[158] Smith, p. 83.

But the question is left finally unresolved: either the elements will be "refined", or they will be discarded, leaving the soul to ascend alone to the great "where" of its desire.

The "Meditation" is ambivalent; the same ambivalence can be traced in the two Latin poems too. The coda to De Vita Coelesti leaves the position unclear:

> Haec si conjecto, mortali Corpore fretus,
> Corpus si exuerim, Quid ni majora recludam?
> (101-2)[159]

Are all kinds of body to be cast aside? The rhetoric of the question seems to suggest so. And this is not false to the Latin poems. Beside the centrifugal, independent impulse there runs another, quite different.

> Incassum nec cedit Amor, qui coeptus ab alto
> In Numen redit, & commercia mutua pangens
> Intima perpetuae conjungit foedera vitae:
> Sed nec vana Fides tot praedita viribus, omnes
> Ut penetrans coelos, se Numine figat in ipso,
> Donec sit Vitae compos consorsque futurae:
> (DVH 84-9)[160]

> Sin magè Coelesti jam delectamur Amore,
> Solvimur in flammas, quae se lambuntque fovéntque
> Mutuò, & impliciti sanctis ardoribus, unà
> Surgimus amplexi, vinc'lo junctique tenaci
> Partibus & toto miscemur ubique vicissim,
> Ardorésque novos accendit Numinis Ardor.
> (DVC 82-7)[161]

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[159] p. 106: "If I can make these conjectures while dependent upon a mortal body, shall I not unclose greater things, once I have cast the body aside?"

[160] p. 102: "Love does not give way in defeat, Love which, beginning on high, returns to the Deity, and makes an intimate bond, by mutual compact, with eternal life; but nor is Faith in vain, which is gifted with so many powers, able to enter every heaven and join itself to the very Deity, until it is part and consort of the life to come."

[161] p. 105: "Or if, rather, we are ravished by Celestial Love, we melt in flames which lick and nourish one another; and, bound up in the holy heat, we rise up as one in their embrace - held by the binding chain, we are blended in everywhere in our turn, every part of us, and the Ardour of the Deity kindles ardours new."

The idea that the soul, after bodily death, might be swallowed up into a compound, a united, unindividuated soul, is an old bugbear for Christians - the heresy of Averroes. St. Thomas attacked it in force; his opposition to it is at least part of his reason for insisting on the essential union of body and soul.[162] Without this bodily dimension, there is no obvious reason why two souls should not occupy the same space. As Henry More was to express it:

> phansies deem
> That Rationall souls (whom they suppose but one)
> By the divided matter many seem . . .[163]

The curious thing about Herbert's Vita poems is their apparent attraction to both of these ideas: independence, and a sort of self-obliteration.

Is there an equivalent to this paradox in De Religione Gentilium, where the "aerial body" and the heroes are so warmly praised? One might perhaps make a connexion with the unresolved dilemma in that work between positive hero-cult, "symbolic" religion, and corruption by priests: impulses, unreconciled, towards a less and a more strict monotheism. There is a more obvious parallel in his conflicting tastes for "brown" and "black" ladies: those who represent self-possession and the mean, and those who do not; or in his ambivalence towards Buckingham, and Henry VIII. But the significance of the dilemma, as far as theology is concerned, is strictly limited. Anticipation of bodily loss is not accompanied by fear. He wants to have two things at once: the two possible outcomes in the "Meditation" are both seen in a positive light. So in De Religione Gentilium, all three answers to the problem of pagan religion provide justification for the pagan laity. The

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[162] See in particular ST PP 76.

[163] H. More, "Antimonopsychia" ("Against the Unity of Souls") in Philosophical Poems (Cambridge, 1647), p. 286. More finally decides that the principle of individuation is in fact the memory. The soul is enabled by this to "descry/ Herself unto herself" (stanza 36): it ensures a measure of discrete existence even in Heaven.

variety does not produce a radical incoherence; rather a richness, a complexity within an apparently simple world-view.

The pagans benefited from Herbert's intellectual restlessness, from his blended impulses of rebellion and worship. They provided him, as if in return, with ideals for his own posthumous future. But he was not quite finished yet.

Chapter VI: The Tradition

> Truely for my part I thinke it a bold assertion to speake Categorically either way; since the Argument of no side will conclude any certainty: In which case, it would be fitt humbly to inquire what is most probable, imploring together the Divine assistance, for it imports us to discover as much as we can into our future Estate . .

The subject in question is the mortality or immortality of the soul; the text is a manuscript of A Dialogue between a Tutor and a Pupil, widely accepted as the work of Herbert.[1] The passage should be something of a surprise to students of Herbert - including readers of the printed Dialogue. For it is its first public appearance.

We shall return to this; let it stand for now as an invitation to a discussion which will begin with some more traditional material.

I Summary of the "Dialogue"

The general outline of the work is fairly well known. The author anticipates Hume in his use of the dialogue form for discussion of natural religion; but he uses it with none of his literary sophistication. The two speakers of the Dialogue are given no characteristics to distinguish them from anyone but each other, and that only formally: one instructs and the other questions, but there is no sense of personal interaction. Both are equally committed to their principle, which is hostility to religion as taught by priests. On the positive side, the two rehearse Herbert's cherished five-point scheme (pp. 7 f., 69, 271, etc.), which is said to

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[1] The work was so entitled in the first edition, though all the MSS call it "Dialogue". It was first printed in 1768, under Herbert's name. There have been two reprints, and a third is imminent: a facsimile, published by Gawlick (Stuttgart, 1971) with a full introduction ("Einleitung") and defence of Herbert's authorship; another in the Garland series (New York and London, 1979); the third in the Thoemmes Key Press series (Bristol, 1993) (forthcoming)).

The 1768 edition ("1768") will be followed here unless another text is specified.

consist of the only beliefs universally accepted (pp. 13-14, etc.). On the negative side, they

> prosecute . . matters of faith, and belief, as far as it was either joined to, or mixed with the said articles[2]

These are shown, repeatedly, to be superfluous and dangerous: as the Tutor remarks near the end:

> any thing added to, or taken from our five Catholick articles, was, if not false, yet, at least, indemonstrable to a rational man, upon what pretence of faith soever it was urged.[3]

It is a daring work, more outspokenly anti-Christian than any of Herbert's unquestioned productions (though it praises the words that it allows - a careful selection - to be Christ's).[4]

The work has no obvious structure. It is perhaps best conceived as five parts: an introduction on the nature of true religion, and the greater claims of reason than of faith (pp. 1-14); the origins of other religious ideas, and their lack of value (14-105); then, at great length, discussions of heathen treatments of the first four articles: 1 and 2 together - the recognition of one primary God, and varieties of worship (106-127); 3 - superstitious practices masquerading as piety (127-198); and 4 - the most coherent: a long critique of sacrifice, with special reference to the Atonement. The fifth article is treated only incidentally, in some of the many excursuses (see below).

The work apparently sets out to channel the erudition of De Religione Gentilium into a personal religious declaration, after the manner of Religio Laici. In points of detail, the

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[2] p. 14.

[3] p. 271.

[4] p. 244. It has a particularly outspoken attack on St. Paul, via Herbert's old favourite, the Emperor Julian, for "his desultory manner of passing from one hard point to another, without clearing any thing sufficiently, as far as Julian could understand him; and indeed to have been, if not the sole, yet the chief beginner of the most controverted points, which at this time vex the world" (p. 170).

work coincides considerably with the first of these; but it is much less easy to follow. The dialogue form rules out the helpful headings; it is a baggy creation, and tucked in along the way are pages of pure antiquarianism, and also speculations of the author's own, only loosely connected with the Gentiles, and not polemical in tone. These treat a variety of other Herbertian concerns - ideas of analogy, the problem of infinity, the nature of the soul. The end result is an enormous coil of discussions, some of them breathing "the spirit of the Enlightenment",[5] others redolent rather of the high Renaissance, with its eclectic Platonism, and perception of man as part of a unified Creation.

This combination of "revolutionary"[6] attitude with old world-view, plus fluid, repetitive form, makes the Dialogue peculiarly elusive. What follows is largely an elaboration of that truth.

II Authorship

The authorship of the work has never been unquestioned. Its first, anonymous publisher claimed to have acquired the manuscript from the author of Antiquities of Palmyra, the seventeenth-century antiquary Abednego Seller, who identified it by its content:

> It plainly appeared to me, when I read this book, that the Lord Herbert of Chirbury was the author. Compare his principles and reasonings with those of his printed works.[7]

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[5] Gawlick, "Einleitung", p. V: "Jede Seite dieses Werkes ist vom Geist der Aufklärung geprägt."

[6] "Einleitung", p. IX.

[7] Quoted in the publisher's foreword to the first edition (London, 1768). In the foreword, Seller's abbreviation of his name to "Ab." is falsely expanded to "Abraham" - see Rossi, III 532.

The publisher followed Seller, despite the insistence of the Herbert family that they knew nothing of it, and the lack of references to it in any of Herbert's undoubted works. These negations are not unanswerable, as Gawlick showed: the family had not wished Walpole to print the Life four years previously, and might well have shrunk still further from exposure of their ancestor as the "father of English deism"; the lack of references is not a difficulty if we assume that the "Dialogue" is the latest of Herbert's works. (In the form in which it is now known, it must certainly be so.)[8]

The first argument (rather than claim) for Herbert's authorship was offered by Hutcheson, who made use of that shady perennial, Charles Blount. Hutcheson pointed to a curious remark in Bayle's Dictionnaire under a discussion of Philostratus's Life of Apollonius. Apollonius (of Tyana), a pagan sage and miracle-worker, was offered by Philostratus as the pagan answer to Christ: he was revived for this purpose by subversive spirits of the post-Restoration, and especially by Blount, who translated the work and added notes offering "several insinuations against the miracles of our Saviour" - as Leland put it.[9] According to Bayle, however, these notes were only adopted by Blount: they derived from

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[8] As the owner of one of the manuscripts noted, the work seems to date itself, in a confusing way.* On p. 146, it notes that after comets and other portents, "all manner of mischiefs have succeeded, after their apparitions, which also have continued many septenaries of years; those of ours 1618, being not yet it seems expired." But on p. 202, it refers to the Book of Common Prayer as "not long since among us" - the Book was suppressed in 1644, and finally banned in 1645. It must in fact be later still: Gawlick noted a reference to a book by Elias Schedius, De diis Germanis . . ., first published in 1648 - the year of Herbert's death ("Einleitung", p. XV).

*Modern scholarship has not shared the manuscript's sense of confusion: the 1618 sentence, as Rossi (III 531) remarked, does not actually say that 1618 is the current year; nevertheless it remains, to my mind, odd.

[9] A View, I 38. Blount's translation, The First Two Books of Philostratus, was published in 1680: the notes make explicit use of Donne's first Paradox, and Biathanatos. Bayle's assertion would surely have been a surprise to Leland (apparently he did not see it): A View distinguishes Herbert from Blount and the others for his positive, high-minded ideas (I 8-9); and the account of Blount begins with his translation of Philostratus.

Herbert.[10] This seems to call for some explanation. Hutcheson takes the one nearest to hand: Blount was using Herbert's Dialogue.[11]

The second to argue for Herbert's authorship was Gawlick - though he is admirably undogmatic about it. The Introduction to his facsimile reprint puts it beyond doubt that whoever wrote the Dialogue had an extraordinary knowledge of Herbert's work, including some manuscripts; and that his reading coincided to a notable extent with Herbert's library. More than that, Gawlick concedes, is not finally proved. But he offers an forceful defence of the pro-Herbertian position, against the persistent incredulity of Rossi, that most formidable of opponents.

Rossi first put his case in the biography; he repeated and strengthened it ten years later. He asserted that the content was impossibly unHerbertian: it contained contradictions with his theories; it was too extreme; it contained a kind of erudition alien to Herbert's "mentalità".[12] Gawlick takes up this challenge in his Introduction: he argues convincingly that there is no real contradiction; and he notes that there is a development in Herbert's thought towards a more rationalistic position.[13] He does not explicitly address Rossi's more general objection that the work displays a "different kind of erudition" from any of Herbert's

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[10] P. Bayle, tr. des Maizeaux, Historical and Critical Dictionary (London, 1738), I 383 n.

[11] Hutcheson, pp. 72-3. There are indeed many verbal coincidences between the two works. Rossi, who does not accept the Dialogue, decides not simply to reject Bayle's story (which would be "ben comodo", as he admits): he explains it as a use by Blount of a few scurrilous anecdotes among Herbert's papers against Catholicism (in NLW, Powis Bequest 1959, packet taken from Parcel XXVI: Rossi greatly exaggerates the daring of these - they would be quite at home in the Acts and Monuments).

For more on Blount and the Dialogue, see the end of this chapter.

[12] La Vita, III 315 ff.; 530-3. He returned to the attack in "Herbert of Cherbury's Religio Laici: a Bibliographical Note", Trans. Edinburgh Biblio. Soc. 4 (1957), 45-52.

[13] "Einleitung", pp. XVI ff.

earlier works - for that, he relies on his own painstaking lists of parallel passages, the first showing coincidence of phrases and references with Herbert's other work; the second, coincidence of authors named in the Dialogue with authors in the catalogue of Herbert's books left to Jesus College.[14]

Since 1768, the reader has thus been given a choice: to reject the posthumous book on Herbert's behalf, or to accept it. Both views have had some success: Rossi is followed by Beal; Gawlick is followed by Hill, and by the publishers of the two more recent reprints.[15] But a choice based on the text of 1768 is an over-simple one.

In an endnote to his Introduction, Gawlick tells a story which is inconclusive, but interesting. In 1687, Leibniz claimed to have found, in the local bookshop at Cassel, a manuscript on religion, in English, by Herbert.[16] This might have been another copy of the English "Religio Laici", suggests Gawlick, or perhaps a manuscript of the Dialogue. This manuscript is no longer extant, so the question cannot be decided; but it brings into view others which are. There are "Dialogue" manuscripts in existence, and it is unfortunate that Gawlick chose to ignore them in his Introduction - and his text. For 1768 is a last resort: the most cursory glance shows that. It contains lines of pure gibberish in place of Latin; senseless English; punctuation that seems at times to have been fired onto the page with an ink pellet; and several blanks, where a word or phrase could not be read. And there is no reason to resort to it. None of the complete manuscripts is as bad as this: they all provide

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[14] The earlier, MS catalogue, NLW 5298 E, does not reveal anything more.

[15] For these, see above, note 1. Many scholars have preferred not to commit themselves - a recent example is Bedford.

[16] "Einleitung", p. XXIX.

superior Latin and Greek, fill in all of the gaps, and eliminate - in varying degrees - most of the nonsense.

Rossi, who missed so little, did not miss the manuscripts: he provides a brief account of them in the biography.[17] But since he rejected the Dialogue on behalf of Herbert, he did not consider them in any detail. This is long overdue. This chapter is not an attempt to establish a text, but it is intended to provide a new basis for discussion.

III The Text

The Weaknesses of 1768

To anyone who has ever had to use it, the inadequacies of the printed text hardly need illustration; still, it may be some comfort to know how much worse it is than the manuscripts.[18] Distinguishing its shortcomings under headings, I provide here a few consoling examples, before considering the manuscripts in their own right.

1) Gaps

These occur on pp. 71, 159, 197, 213, and 223. p. 71 and p. 213 will be discussed below; the others should read as follows:

p. 159 eggs, and made of cheese
Missing word: dice (R, fo. 144; B, p. 166; A, fo. 51v).

p. 197 What the rites of those times were, I find not, though Plutarch mentions a certain and that we must suppose . . .
Missing word: ἱερουργία (R, fo. 176; B, p. 207;
A is wild here: αιερεεία (fo.63))

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[17] La Vita, III 530-3. Rossi provides a description of the physical appearance of the MSS.

[18] The abbreviations for the MSS will be as follows:
R = Oxford, Bodleian Library, Rawlinson MS c 95; B = Bodleian Library, Ballard MS 54;
A = London, BL Add MS 29770.

p. 223 Serofa Divinitatis, the of divinity
All MSS give the correct "scrofa" or "scropha" for "serofa"; none supplies a gloss except for B, p. 232, which fills the gap: sow.

2) Confusion of sense

Examples of gibberish will be found in plenty below. Two examples for now of omitted negatives: the word "not" is omitted on p. 61 in the statement that the atheist says of God that "he hath providence", and on p. 115, where punishment "is to be considered otherwise, than as a part of [God's] justice". The MSS all supply it.

3) Names

A minor point; but almost all of Gawlick's examples of authors also included in Herbert's bequest to Jesus College are misspelled/misprinted in his text: "Srisellus" (Seysellus), and "Betulrius" (Betuleius) all appear correctly in all of the MSS; R and B also manage "Haeschelius" and "Zwinger".[19]

4) Latin and Greek

Latin errors include the following (the first chosen because it is hard to guess; the second to indicate the kind of confusion most commonly found):

p. 118 semque in sint
R, fo. 109; B, p. 121; A, fo. 39v: semper in cursu sint

p. 135 Oracula ex eo ipso appella sunt, quod in est his Deorum oratio; so that oraculum is properly effatum Dei oni
R, fo. 125; B, p. 140; A, fo. 45: Oracula ex eo ipso appellata sunt, quod inest in his Deorum oratio. So that oraculum is properly effatum oris Dei [B and A: Dei oris][20]

1768 has particular difficulty with word division ("inest", "deest", etc. regularly appear as two words); this is true also of the Greek, which is largely correct apart from this and its

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[19] They also manage "Casaubon" for "Causabon"; but Herbert himself usually did not. They are particularly important for the names: R explains "Albertus Drurerus" (p. 174) as Dürer (fo. 157); all explain Plato's "Ctetias" (p. 270) as "Critias" (fo. 236; p. 277; fo. 83v).

[20] Add omits "in", and possibly breaks in the middle of "inest".

difficulty with the letter ν . This may indicate that some of the corruption came in late - perhaps at the printing stage.

The Manuscripts

There are three MSS of the "Dialogue" which correspond more or less closely to 1768. There is also a fourth, BL Add MS 4366, which appears to be an abridged and disordered copy of the other BL MS (Add 29770): it is not coherent, being composed of unconnected sheaves.[21]

These manuscripts (the Oxford and London manuscripts) divide into two classes. R and B are much closer to each other than either is to A (though B is the nearer of the two); the other BL MS is much closer to A.

The fifth, fragmentary manuscript is not directly related, and will be discussed separately.

I The Oxford and London MSS

The Oxford Manuscripts

Both are good texts, with accurate Latin and Greek; both are written in a small, late secretary hand (see below). R is missing one page - lost apparently before it was bound, since it gives the number of the missing page at the bottom of the page before (fo. 140 = 1768, bottom of p. 153 - top of p. 156). R includes few glosses in the text; most are added on the facing blank page, in some 8 cases in the first hand, in some 25 in the hand of the ?owner (see

[21] Rossi, who apparently did not notice its incompleteness, believed that it was in "several hands". This is by no means clear; at the beginning of each sheaf, the writing is blacker and bolder, but it tails off almost imperceptibly until it is much fainter, so that there is a contrast between the end of one sheaf and the beginning of the next.

below). An oddity is its practice of transliterating the Greek over the top (in the first hand). This is not done in B.

All of R's glosses appear in B, either in the text or (very rarely) in the margin. The authorial hand has added signposts to both texts, on R, fos. 119-61 = B, pp. 133-87 (roughly my Part 3 - see "Summary").

B and R are mysteriously related. They are apparently in the same hand (I), but they are not verbally identical. Most of their differences are trivial; some not (more below). They seem also to have belonged to the same person, for the jotting on the endpapers appears to be in the same hand (II), which is larger and bolder. Hand II has written notes on the two MSS, which overlap, but are not identical: on the second page of R are four paragraphs on the paramount importance of Reason, of which the fourth, beginning

> It is a pleasure incomparable for the mind of man to bee setled, landed, and fortifyed in the certainty of Truth

appears again, alone, on the last page of B. The verso of this page in R carries a verse tag:

> Non neq; decipitur Ratio, nec decipit unquam

which appears on the flyleaf of B. Hand II has marked the text certainly of R, probably of both: it transfers some 25 of B's glosses to R, and one passage of text; it also (almost certainly) supplies in the margin of B (p. 221) a passage, present in R, that had been omitted. But B is its preferred text: on at least two occasions, it corrects a coherent R reading to an apparently equivalent B reading (fos. 87, 143).

In addition to these two, R is marked by at least one (just possibly two) more hand(s), which has/have added comments in the margin: some are disapproving (eg. "Most repugnant to Divine Revelation", on fo. 2); some are simply signposts (eg. "To select Catholick Articles for Religion", fo. 6). (For the possible identity of Hand III, see under "Provenance".)

Like 1768, and unlike De Religione Gentilium, R and B put references to other works into the text, rather than the margin. But they both (and A with them) make two exceptions to this rule: all three MSS note, beside a passage on harmony,

G. Ven. Min.
Kepel

- presumably a reference of some kind to Francisco Giorgi ("the Friar of Venice"), and to Kepler; some forty pages later, they make a still more opaque reference to "C. Scaliger", which will be discussed below.[22]

The London Manuscripts

MS A is a full text. It is written in a neat, basically italic hand, which has left spaces for the Greek and Hebrew.[23] This is supplied by a hand using much darker ink, which has gone over the original, underlining the Latin and overwriting parts of letters (giving the work an odd, spotty appearance). The second hand may be the same: the letter-forms seem very similar, though the dark letters are much less neat. It has added a full table of contents ("Analysis") at the back, keyed into the text by numbers beside each Pupil's speech, and also the marginal pointers common to R and B. Its Greek is extremely hard to read (word-division and accentuation are patchy), but seems generally correct. A is a less satisfactory text than the others, on the whole; but it has its moments: on at least one occasion, it avoids a mistake made by all the others (see below).

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[22] The first would be on 1768, p. 59 - is on R, fo. 56; B, p. 62; A, fo. 20v; the second, 1768, pp. 92-3 - R, fo. 86; B, p. 96; A, fo. 31v.

[23] There are only a few words of Hebrew in any of the texts: 1768 and B seem to have the most (4), and R the least (1). A has 2.

The other manuscript in the British Library can be put aside for our purposes; it is radically defective, and contains nothing different from A.

The Relations between the Oxford and London MSS

None of the surviving MSS is the basis of 1768; the relationships between them are obscure. Of the three complete ones, the weakest, A, agrees with 1768 when it and B disagree with R (see above); it also agrees with it, and disagrees with the others, in the number of glosses and verse translations.[24] Nevertheless, there are occasions where the wording of 1768 agrees with the Oxford manuscripts against it: an example occurs at p. 193, where all the texts read "clean[e] washt away" apart from A, which seems to be amended to read "cleare"; another is provided by one of 1768's gaps: on p. 71, it reads

> you may observe, that and doctrine was not a sufficient mark for asserting an infallibility in their church.

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[24] 1768 contains 15 of these (including single lines); the Oxford MSS have another 5. The extra ones are, in all but two cases, translations of every short Latin tag left untranslated in 1768 and A. The remaining two are expansions of references in 1768 and A: p. 126: "Olim truncus eram, &c" and p. 191: "Persius . . . sat. 2. ecceavia, &c" [sic]. In both cases, R gives 5 lines of Latin + translation, and B pastes these in on scraps of paper. If "Imilce" finds a place in Herbert's collected verse (as in Smith, p. 99), these should presumably do so too; since I think her claims weak (see below), and the verses are so short, I do not reproduce them here.

A point that should be noted: "Imilce" loses a word in the first line as given by 1768 (p. 231) - and thence Smith (p. 99). It should read:

What piety is this with blood to stain

"Piety", of course, is required by the scansion.

Apart from the two expansions noted above, R includes few of its translations in the text: most of them are provided on the facing blank page, c. 20 in the original hand, the rest apparently in Hand II (some passages are not translated at all). B incorporates the great majority of these; those that appear in the margin are the ones that 1768 and A omit. The text is always substantially the same (except in one case where R has a radical variant).

R and B supply the gap: "this unity of opinion "; A (fo. 25) does not leave a gap, but it does not fit into 1768: "ye unity of doctrine was not . . ."

Speech-attribution reveals how close, and how bewildering, the relations between the four texts are. In three places, R differs from 1768; B agrees with R in two out of the three cases: in the third, it agrees with A.[25] In each case, A slips up, producing two "P" attributions in succession. (Even when obviously wrong, 1768 maintains a veneer of coherence.) This is clearly not a coincidence; how it happened is less clear.

In Muted Praise of R

R is the MS with the largest number of independent readings, which are almost always equal in value or superior to the others. It is also the one to which most has been added, by the first and the second hands. Since most of these additions are incorporated by B, it seems likely that R is the earlier manuscript; but B has variants, and the owner of them both corrects R on occasion to a reading in B (see above). There may have been another manuscript from which both somehow descended. In some twenty cases, slight differences are left between the two: in every one, 1768 and A either agree with B or have a different

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[25] These occur on 1768, pp. 34, 40, and 93. In the first, the Pupil is made to give the Tutor advice on his reading - advice which the Tutor interrupts (with the word "wherein") and finishes himself. R gives the Tutor his head from "Concerning which", and does not break at "wherein". B and A apparently saw that this was an unpromising word with which to begin a new speech, and so make no break there; but having missed the earlier break, they are left with two "P" speeches. On 1768 p. 40, the Tutor continues his speech into a new paragraph, beginning with a request for information, then answering it; B and R give the first sentence of the new paragraph to the Pupil, the second to the Tutor. A gives the question to P, but then fails to revert to T, again producing two "P"s in a row. On 1768, p. 93, B and R are together again: here their reading makes no real difference to the sense (they give the end of the Tutor's speech to the Pupil, but he is remarking, rather than instructing); A messes it up from the beginning, giving "T"'s whole speech to "P" (two in a row), and then continuing that speech to the end of the following "P" speech, doubtless in order to get back to a much-needed "T".

reading. Most of the R/B divergences are trivial ("the hand of God" - B, p. 176, v. "the finger of God" - R, fo. 152, is a typical example); sometimes not so.[26] A and 1768 seem to descend by an obscure route from B; both depart from it on occasion, almost never for the better. R should be used as the base for any proper edition of the work. (One curious - perhaps meretricious - advantage would be the loss of the dispiriting "etc." as the last word: in R alone, the sentence is rounded off:

> Besides wch though I could make divers other animadversions, yet will I at present content my self with these. (fo. 239))

However, R is not above suspicion. It makes only one or two obvious errors, of the kind favoured by 1768; but further inspection reveals deeper problems. One of the oddest differences between R and B may serve to demonstrate both their comparative merits, and their limitations.

> And because Nimrod is the ancientest* Lawgiver recorded in History,* I shall begin at Him, either by that name, or one of the Saturns, or one of the* Zoroasters, (for all these names have bin attributed to him.) This great person being the father of Belus, who lived before Moses 736 years, and was Lawgiver to the Babylonians, if not to the Chaldeans, (upon wch account we must make Nimrod more ancient then or chronologers do, the Chaldeans reckoning# their dynastyes to begin 432 000 years before the Floud*) is reported by some (perchance fabulously) to have gotten into his hands the Ritual or Ceremonial Books of Jupiter Sagus*, out of the Authority whereof he instituted a certain Religious Worship. (R, fos. 86-7)

represents a marginal gloss:

> C: Scaliger.
> Can: Isag.
> L.2:3:

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[26] Examples of this are given below. Let me slip in here a reading of R's which I believe to be correct, but which may not be universally accepted: on p. 102, 1768 makes an unprecedented reference to a "supercilious priest". All the MSS agree, except for R, which gives "superstitious" (fo. 95). Lectio facilior, perhaps; but I have little doubt that it is the right one.

(This rather opaque reference is elucidated by Vos, the chief authority for De Religione Gentilium, in another marginal:

Canorum Isagogicorum lib III p. 312[27])

The asterisks represent the places where B (p. 96) varies:

ancientest] most ancient; recorded in History] that is recorded to common History; one of the] om.; Floud] Iliad; Sagus] Sayus

Two of the variants are trivial; one of them is unquestionably a corruption (Sayus for Sagus, "the Prophetic One" - certainly an odd phrase, but quite intelligible in the context); the last, and most spectacular, is surely another ("before the Iliad" is a most eccentric phrase; though how the same hand can produce both "Floud" and "Iliad" is something of a puzzle).

A (fo. 31v) agrees substantially with B here, with three differences: first, expansion of the abbrevation to "Isagog."; second, further corruption of "Sayus" to "Sayrs"; third, it does not start a new sentence at "this great person", but does so at "The Chaldeans" (after "chronologers do") - confusing the sense. It thus seems to pave the way for 1768, which blends the marginalia into a corrupt and wildly punctuated text, to produce a truly extraordinary paragraph:

> because Nimrod is the most ancient law-giver, that is recorded by common history, I shall begin at him, either by that name or one of the Saturn's, or Zoroaster's, (for all those names have been attributed to him) this great person being the father of Belus, who lived before Moses 736 years, and was law-giver to the Babylonians, if not to the Chaldeans: upon which account, we must make Nimrod more ancient than our chronologers do. The Chaldeans reckoning their dynasties to begin 432,000 years before the Iliad, (C. Scaliger. an. Isagog., lib 2. 3. is reported by some, perchance fabulously, to have gotten into his hands the ritual or ceremonial books of Jupiter,) say out of the authority of which, he instituted a certain religious worship;
> (pp. 92-3)

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[27] De Theologia Gentili, I 212. The work, by J.J. Scaliger, was published in 1606.

Note the absurd rationalization of "Sayus" to "say". Unfortunately, "C. Scaliger" was not rationalized but incorporated. ("an. Isagog." must be explained by the interpretation of the second C. as a lunula).

The Relationship with "De Religione Gentilium"

The closeness of these two works is, of course, a fact that could be used either for or against Herbert's authorship of the Dialogue. Did someone else pillage De Religione? Or did Herbert himself re-use some favourite material? Two particular examples may show how ambiguous the matter is.

1) First one which shows the Dialogue improving on De Religione. On 1768, p. 191, (R, fo. 171), we find a quotation from Virgil about "oscilla", and a discussion of them, very close to a passage of De Religione (p. 202); but the discussion uses different authors, and the Virgil reference is corrected (Georgic II, for De Religione's Georgic I).

2) The second, which depends on a text from Cicero's De Natura Deorum, is more intriguing. I quote it first from R:

> Let that wherein is some extraordinary power be called a God, of wch sort is faith, understanding, whom we see consecrated in Capitoll, next to M. Aurelius Scaurus; but faith was before consecrated to Attilius Calatinus. You see the temple of vertue . . . (R, fo. 188)

Now for B:

> That wherein there is some excellent virtue is called a God, as Faith, as Understanding, whom we see dedicated in the Capitol, next to M. Aurelius Scaurus. [in margin ?Hand I: but before ffayth had bine consecrated ~~by~~ to Attilius Calatinus.] You see the temple of Vertue . . . (B, p. 221)

1768 is confused here, and renders the whole passage:

> that wherein there is some excellent virtue, is called a God, as faith, as understanding, whom we see dedicated in the capitol, next to M. Aurelius Scaurus; but before faith had been consecrated by Attilius Calatinus, you see the temple of virtue . . (p. 211)

Obviously, 1768 has mispunctuated; but the Oxford manuscripts themselves are peculiar. A temple next to M. Aurelius Scaurus . . ? And 1768 makes better sense than R, or than B's second thought, when it makes Calatinus the dedicator, rather than the dedicatee.[28] If this is Herbert's attempt at translating Cicero, it is not very impressive.

This is not the first time the passage has appeared in Herbert's work. It is quoted in Latin in De Religione Gentilium; and the real sense is provided here by the posthumous translation of that work:

> Whatever thing has any Power in it, is more eminently called so, and that very Power is stiled a Deity; as Faith, the Mind, &c, which were dedicated in the Capitol by Emilius Scaurus; but Faith was consecrated before by Attilius Colatinus; there is the Temple of Virtue . . .[29] (my italics)

Lewis, the translator, presumably looked up the original; for what he found in the printed text of Herbert's Latin was defective, by one crucial word:

> Res ea in qua vis inest major aliqua sic appellatur, ut ea ipsa vis nominetur Deus, ut Fides, ut Mens, quas in Capitolio dedicatas videmus proxime [] M. Aemilio Scauro: ante autem ab Attilio (vel Otacilio) Calatino erat Fides consecrata: vides Virtutis templum . . .[30]

With the omission of "ab", "proxime Scauro" is naturally translated "next to", rather than "recently by". No edition of De Natura Deorum seems to have this reading; it is thus unlikely that Herbert would have made the mistranslation himself. The printed edition of De

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[28] This second bizarrerie I cannot explain. It is the only example I have found where 1768 - accidentally? - has a reading preferable to that of R.

[29] Lewis, p. 298 (italics omitted).

[30] DRG, p. 185. The position is further complicated by the mistaken "Aurelius" for "Aemilius" in all the "Dialogue" texts except A (fo. 67). A is interesting here: it mispunctuates with 1768, putting a full stop after "Scaurus", and a comma after "Atilius"; but it differs from all the other texts in giving Scaurus his correct name. On the other hand, it makes something like Lewis's mistake with "Collatinus".

Religione Gentilium appeared after his death; but proof exists, in the form of a holograph, that he did not make a mistake here in transcribing Cicero.[31]

The two cryptic marginalia discussed above ("G. Ven. Min." and "Scaliger") may also reveal something here. The Latin DRG makes full use of its margins: the references are sometimes more, sometimes less informative, but they are not confusing.[32] It is hard to believe that the two examples in the Dialogue originally looked as they do in the Dialogue manuscripts.

The Provenance of the Oxford and London MSS

Before leaving these MSS, we should consider what we know of their origin - with particular reference to a throwaway suggestion by Rossi.

A and B offer no clues as to their original owners. The flyleaf of A asserts:

Ld Herbert
of Cherbury wrote about 1618 p. 93,
tho' part of it seems to be wrote since
vid p. 126[33]

B is no more informative: Hand II brands it:

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[31] For the MSS, see chapter V above. The passage occurs in one of the holographs, and reads "proxime a M. Aemilio Scauro" - as does the secretarial MS.

[32] Example of a less helpful one, from DRG p. 81:

Fr. Patr.
Posid.
Strab.

The names are intelligible enough; but we are not told where in their works to look.

Example of a more helpful one, from p. 67:

Fr. Geo.
Ven. Tom. 3.
c 13.

Something like this must be intended by the "G. Ven. Min." marginal.

[33] A reference to the dating problem: see note 8 above.

Baronis Herbert de Cherbury
Scriptum ineditum

The incomplete MS supplies another name: on the verso of the flyleaf is written "Pembroke".

R has more. At the top of the first page of text, on the left of the title "Dialogue", is written "Anglesey his booke", in a different hand from I or II; on the right, a hand that is almost certainly Hand II has written:

Let this booke bee restored
to the Owner
Edm. Rassingham

Rossi suggested that either Pembroke or Anglesey might be the author of the work. Gawlick, in his only reference to the manuscripts, remarks that it would be an odd way of referring to the author; it seems much more likely that they owned it - at some point in its career.[34]

To establish the identity of these characters, more work is needed (for example, on the date of the paper). Rossi suggests that "Pembroke" is Thomas, the eighth Earl (1656-1733), the grandson of Herbert's cousin Philip, and a virtuoso and collector. No literary works are ascribed to him. "Anglesey", he thinks, is Arthur Annesley, first Earl (1614-86), a political figure and book collector.[35] He was also a writer; but no comparable work has been ascribed to him. He is probably Hand III, the owner who commented on the manuscript; on one occasion sh(rthand appears in its marginalia, and there are a few words of it just beneath the name "Anglesey". I would guess that the last of these words is "Cherbury": the letters C-h-e-r-b seem to be discernible.

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[34] La Vita, III 532-3; "Einleitung", p. XXV.

[35] DNB I 475.

"Rassingham", the most obscure, is also (as Hand II) by far the most interesting of them. He attended neither university, nor any Inn of Court; Rossi had no suggestions, and I have not succeeded in tracing him.

IV The Text II: The Welsh Manuscript

It is time at last to turn to the manuscript quoted at the beginning: NLW 5296E, the most suggestive and also the most perplexing of the five.

The sheets of this manuscript, found, with most of Herbert's remains, in Powis Castle, were bound at some time before 1945, and given the title "Various Leaves from 'A Dialogue between a Master and a Pupil'".[36] It is heavily corrected, all in the same hand (a rather uneven secretary script). The contents are as follows:

1. "15-16"[37] = 1768, pp. 17-19 (nearly identical): on the obligation to believe Old Testament narrative (no proof that Moses was an eye-witness).[38]

2. "29-30" = pp. 104-21 (outline - see note 4 below): defence of pagan religion; explanation of polytheism (it was only symbolic).

3. "9-12" = pp. 213-20 (some parts very close): specific gods; sacrifices offered to them. There is a different distribution of mythological detail (more in 1768 at the beginning of the passage, more in W at the end).

4. "15-18" = pp. 223-9 (quite close): sacrifices; human sacrifice. Unlike the later texts, W here forgets almost entirely about the dialogue form.

5. "55" (a half page; not in other texts): refers reader to an unpublished work on Gentile religion for defence of Gentiles against patristic censure.

6. "230-1" (not in other texts): on the survival of the soul.

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[36] R.I. Aaron is the first scholar to discuss this MS ("A Possible Early Draft of Hobbes' De Corpore", Mind 35 (1945), 355). I shall refer to it henceforth as W.

[37] The leaves are numbered; but the numbers are not of much value (see below). Here I give them in inverted commas.

[38] This passage is very close to DRG, p. 14.

The page numbers make no sense - they include a duplicate (15); the manuscript provides no clues as to the structure of the work. It seems to suggest that it was composed in fragments, to be connected later.[39]

The Significance of W

W is of the highest significance for all questions about the Dialogue. Unfortunately, Gawlick was able to dismiss it (with the modest disclaimer that he was not "competent" to make any judgment) because there are Herbertian champions both for and against it: Rossi, who saw it in 1957, and insisted that it was not in the hand either of Herbert or of any of his known amanuenses;[40] and R.I. Aaron, who saw it twelve years earlier, and claimed that

> if it is not his it is in the hand of one of his secretaries.[41]

But without claiming a high order of palaeographic competence, I think it is possible to proceed rather further than this. The catch-all blur is inadmissible: Herbert varied his handwriting somewhat (he was interested in it), but its basic form is a small, neat italic. It

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[39] On p. 29, the Pupil's speech is equivalent to 1768, p. 105, but ends before the printed version, and is followed by a row of slashes; underneath, "T" is crossed out, and "Pupil" substituted at the beginning of a new question, found in 1768 on p. 106. The Tutor's reply corresponds to 1768, pp. 117 ff. (the discussion of the word "deus"). The long intervening passage in 1768, on the first cause, the origin of evil, the nature of infinity, and free will, is all missing.

[40] Rossi, "Herbert of Cherbury's Religio Laici", p. 52.

[41] "A Possible Draft", p. 355.

became heavier and less fluent with his arthritis; but it did not greatly change.[42] I have little doubt that Gawlick's question

> is it really beyond question that the MS is not by Herbert?[43]

can be firmly answered: yes. Arthritis, however severe, cannot explain the metamorphosis of a lifetime's italic into a secretary hand.

We are at once confronted by the harder question: can W be in the hand of anyone but its author? Rossi denied it:

> The corrections are so involved and intersecting and extensive, that one must aver that it was almost impossible to do such correcting and revising under dictation. . . No author can dictate such a set of corrections . . .[44]

At first sight, it is hard to imagine disagreeing. The MS is covered in corrections, some written currente calamo, and all in the transcribing hand. This second point is particularly striking. All the other surviving works dictated by Herbert were corrected by himself, as

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[42] The fragmentary autograph MS of DRG is evidence of this: it was composed at most five years before the end of his life. Herbert's self-consciousness is clear from the little variants he introduces and maintains consistently in particular MSS; a small, early notebook survives (Powis Bequest 1959, Parcel XVIII), in which he has written his signature in a variety of scripts (see chapter I, "Beginnings of a Friendship").

[43] "Einleitung", p. XXVI: "Steht es wirklich ausser Zweifel, dass das MS. 5296 nicht von der Hand Herberts geschrieben ist?"

[44] "Herbert's Religio Laici", p. 52.

well as the scribe:[45] the combination of heavy alteration and no correction by anyone else makes W a very unusual piece of dictation.

Nevertheless, there is an overriding reason for believing that this is in fact what it is - namely, the nature of some of the obvious errors that remain in the manuscript. Here are some examples:

1. p. 10 In the low and dark dominions of these Gods, Minos AEochus were thought to iudge
"Æochus" could only be an aural error for "Aeacus", second of the Judges of the Underworld.

2. p. 11 Others yet derive Libare a λιβος στιλλα
This is a curious error: a piece of mock-Greek. "Stilla", a drop, is a Latin word, roughly equivalent to the Greek λίβος - it is used here as a gloss. The later texts are all superior here: R, fo. 192 has "came from λίβος or λιβὰς , stilla"
B, p. 226 and A, fo. 68v have an equally possible variant: "came from λείβω , or λιβὰς stilla."
(1768 limps up behind: "come from λείβα , or λιβὰς stilla.")

Even in the precious cases where W clearly preserves the true reading against the later texts, dictation may be detected. A good instance of this occurs on p. 15 (2):

> From hence then perchance they were called Mysticae sive Mistericae, and by Plautus Sincerae Sacres.

The correct reading in the Plautus passage is in fact "sinceri sacres" - "sacres", the pre-Classical plural of the adjective "sacer". The later texts, not recognizing this unusual form, replace it with something more familiar: "sincera sacra" (R, fo. 198; 1768, p. 223; etc.). But "sincerae" is a mistake - one which belongs more naturally to the ear than the eye.

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[45] In the case of DRG, we have drafts in Herbert's own hand, and a copy written out by an amanuensis and corrected by Herbert. In the case of the Life, the (apparent) first draft is in the hand of this same secretary (whom Rossi identified as one Rowland Evans, from some other MSS signed with his name); but it is corrected both by "Evans" and by Herbert. (For this MS, see Rossi III and the last section of chapter V above: it is printed, not very satisfactorily, by J.M. Shuttleworth. He claims that some sheets give proof of "transcription" rather than dictation; but unfortunately he does not explain or illustrate the point.)
The handwriting of the Evans MS looks very like the Dialogue hand; but since Rossi denied this (and Beal follows him), more is needed to break the deadlock.

The matter is, to my mind, clinched by a page with no equivalent in the later texts - p. 55. This refers to De Religione Gentilium, as follows:

> which point also much more might be found in a book intituled de Religione Gentilium Errorumq; apud Deos causis though not as yet printed.

In a passage added to the third edition of De Veritate (1645), Herbert had written of DRG in almost exactly the same terms:

> Quorum plurimos in Lib. nostro De Gentilium Religione, Errorumq; apud eos Causis (nondum edito) adduxi. (p. 217)

Only dictation, surely, can explain the corruption of "apud eos" into the senseless "apud Deos".

Still, W, though not an authorial draft, was dictated by its author. Its star reading occurs on p. 9 - 1768, p. 213:

> I find mention also that Minerva was worshipt of those who desired Wisdome & Deus Catius of those who desired witt ..

Even the best of the manuscripts is fazed by this deeply obscure deity: R, like B, reads "Deus Caseus" (a cheesy suggestion). The two London manuscripts try a name: "Deus Cassius". 1768 offers one of its favourite gambits: "Deus ". But "Deus Catius" it should be: he appears in the City of God (IV 21) as "the god . . . who was supposed to make one shrewd (catus)".[46]

W also has value beyond its own readings. It makes it clear that the R's taste for Latin over translation is closer to the original; "Imilce"'s position in the canon of Herbert's verse is seriously weakened by the fact that W has no translation for the one Latin verse that it includes (its p. 11; 1768, p. 216, like the other manuscripts, translates it).

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[46] The City of God, tr. H. Bettenson, p. 160.

However, as the table above reveals, its value in establishing the text of the Dialogue is limited. It represents a tiny proportion of the whole; it also seems likely that it was extensively revised, so that the authority of the best manuscript is not necessarily undermined by expansions or contractions.

In addition, W makes mistakes of its own. The "Catius" passage quoted above lists three other gods; W does not score quite so highly overall. The second appears as "Deus Consors". 1768 and the other MSS give "Constans". Both seems to be rationalizations; neither is possible. The word should in fact be "Consus", another obscure deity in the City of God, concerned with agriculture.[47] Here W is closer, and its alteration again suggests aural rather than visual reception. The third deity, "Deus Sentinus", is managed by all the texts. With the fourth, "Deus Vitumnus", the god of long life, W fails. All the others manage it; W offers "Ventumnus" - almost certainly distracted by "Sentinus", immediately above. Let us end this section with an example of R's merits.

> To Magna Mater or the Earth also a Cow with Calfe was ordinarily killd in April. As also to the Moone, out of some Similitude betwixt her hornes & the Oxen's. As also to Venus Cornuta; Whether they did discerne ~~the moon~~ Venus to [caret: be] falcata or [written supr.: sometymes] Cornuta as [caret: our] Telaescopiae ~~doth~~ doe now declare, or for some other Reason I know not: (W p. 16 (2))

Now for 1768 (B and A differ only in minor points, which I have not marked):

> To Magna Mater, or the earth, a cow with calf was sacrificed in April. It was a sacrifice, also, to the moon, out of some similitude betwixt her horns, and the ox's. If we may believe Avicen, a whole ox, heretofore, fell out of the air down upon the earth, but rotted presently. To Proserpine, a barren cow was offered, but to Venus a fruitful one; why, yet, they did call Venus, Cornuta anciently, unless by the help of telescopium, or perspicil, if not by the greater sharpness of their sight above ours, they discovered her to be falcata, or Cornuta. (p. 224)

Notice:

1. Added information.

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[47] City of God, IV xi.

2. Correction of "telaescopiae". The uncertainty in W over singular/plural here perhaps indicates that the scribe heard the unfamiliar word "telescopia", wrote down a singular verb ("doth") automatically, taking it as feminine singular; then corrected, and went back to make the word into a feminine plural.

3. Lost syntax in the fourth sentence.

Here is the last sentence from R:

> Why yet they did call Venus Cornuta anciently, unlesse by the help of or Telescopium, or some other instrument of the same use (if not by sharpness of their sight more than ours) they discovered her to be falcata, or cornuta, is hard to ghesse. (fo. 199).

For this passage, the palm clearly goes to R.

V Herbert and the "Dialogue"

It is time to state my own position. Like Gawlick, Hutcheson, Moore Smith, and the rest, I cannot believe that the work - the core of it - is not by Herbert. But I think the matter a messier one than anyone has acknowledged. Accepting W gets us only a small part of the way; for the rest, we do not have a stable text. It is more than likely that its present form is a revision by someone other than the author; it is even possible that some passages are pure interpolations (see Note below). It is a text to be treated with caution.

But to reject it outright, especially after Gawlick's Introduction, would be not cautious but very audacious. It would mean, in fact, accepting an obligation to explain why someone else was pretending to be Herbert.[48] That applies also to anyone rejecting anything beyond W.

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[48] This does seem to be Rossi's position, judging from his comment on the botanical reference common to the Life and the Dialogue: "si tratta di idee che Herbert certo esprimeva anche in privati conversari, con tutti. Bastava conoscerlo per sapere che teneva alle sue conoscenze botaniche . . ." (La Vita, III 532).

I shall end by considering two things: first, some of the points - different from those noted by Gawlick - that link Herbert with the work; secondly, what it contributes to our knowledge of his thought.

The "Dialogue" and Other Works

I The Mark of Herbert

Among Rossi's objections to the Dialogue was the fact that it is written in English.[49] This does, at least, raise an interesting point about Herbert's late work. Rossi himself argued, very plausibly, that the English MS "Religio Laici" had been intended by Herbert as a replacement (much longer) for the passage on religion in his original draft of the Life.[50] This idea could, I think, be adapted for the Dialogue. The Life is an attempt at self-presentation: its predominantly external nature makes it difficult to square with the image that emerges from his other works. But the replacement of the Catholic Articles passage helps to link the two: he does seem to have wanted to insert his more private concerns into the work, however lumpily. The Dialogue is, over all, a piece of religious polemic; but its loose folds cover a number of other topics, of personal concern to Herbert himself. A couple of these were noted by the first editor; the two I shall discuss here are a metaphysical one, and a personal one.

1. The idea-cluster "soul-place"

Moore Smith noted some linguistic echoes of the poetry in the Dialogue:

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[49] La Vita, III 532.

[50] See Appendix II. This theory is strengthened by the subtitle of another MS of the English "Religio Laici": "Being a piece taken out of A greater worke of ye Authors".

And therefore I, who do not live and move,
By outward sense so much as faith and love,
Which is not in inferior Creatures found,
May unto some immortal state pretend,
Since by these wings I thither may ascend,
Where faithful loving Souls with joys are crown'd.[51]

Compare:

> anciently it [was] thought that the parts of man, which were capable of being joined again to the soul, might be so rarified and exalted by the fire, as thereby to obtain quicker passage, and be hastened to their place . . .

a passage ending with a reference to

> the wings of faith and love, which bring the soul to its desired place. (p. 165)

There is an even clearer analogy with the poem thought to be Herbert's last (he is addressing his "enraging griefs"):

b'ing again converted by his Grace
To godly sorrow, I may both efface
Those sins first caus'd you, and together have
Your pow'r to kill turn'd to a power to save,
And bring my Soul to its desired place.[52]

Herbert's peculiar fascination with the "place" of the disembodied soul appears in the Dialogue, in a passage very similar to another poem:

If then, at worst, this our condition be,
When to themselves our Elements are free,
And each doth to its proper place revert,
What may we not hope from our part divine,
Which can this dross of Elements refine,
And them unto a better state assert?[53]

> If human bodies remain . . after death in their principles the elements, and therein continue perpetual parts of the world, might not the heathens as well believe, that the said bodies retained some impressions, from the several souls which governed them,

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[51] "A Meditation upon his Wax-Candle burning out" (Smith, p. 85). Smith notes the resemblance on p. 162.

[52] "October 1664", p. 86. The real date of this is not certain: see chapter V above.

[53] "A Meditation", p. 84.

> as wax doth of the seal, and that mens souls thereby might lay claim to so much of the elements, as they enjoyed in this life, in the quality of proprietaries, and consequently, though absent, and happy in some other and better place, than this our world doth afford, may challenge an interest in those said elements .? (p.125)[54]

The adaptation of this phraseology from verse to prose would be a remarkable act for a different mind.[55]

2. Herbert in the Civil War

On two occasions, the Dialogue states that modern priests are worse than their ancient equivalents, in that they were the first to draw their followers into war (pp. 100; 262-3). The subject leads the Tutor and Pupil, otherwise faceless, to something like self-revelation:

> untill my conscience could be satisfied of the lawfulness and justice of the cause, or that I knew good orders were given for maintaining the war, by the raising, governing, and conducting an army, which should prosecute the same, I would not stir notwithstanding all [the priest's] oracles and revelations . . . I speak not as if I were one of those tame fellows, that would fear to draw my sword, when my conscience or honour were interested in a good cause, but that I would not have such easy credit given to any priest, who would engage me in a war upon his single revelation. (pp. 101-2)

According to his will, Herbert left instructions that his autobiography, together with "a manifest of my actions in these late troubles", was to be published by "a person, whom I shall by word of mouth entreate". This was never performed. The nearest we have to it is these few sentences from the ever-surprising Dialogue.[56]

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[54] The sentence that clinches the paragraph is unfortunately corrupt in 1768, which reads: "To be brief, will not other bodies be in some sort bodies still, even after our souls relinquish them?" R, fo. 117 and B, pp. 129-30 insert "o " before the second "bodies", and A, fo. 42 has "our"; probably the first "other" is a corruption, and "our" should occur twice.

[55] This cannot, of course, avoid the possibility that a deliberate forger was at work. But for coincidences like these, we would have to posit someone of quite remarkable involvement and skill.

[56] Rossi discusses the omission, III 270-1, 512-13. He comments: "E alla disonestà di questo ignoto che si deve il duro giudizio della posterità sul contegno di Herbert" (III 513).

II Changes

If the Dialogue explains something about Herbert's life, it also gives a new twist to his relations with the later "deists" - and in particular Charles Blount. As Leland saw, these "successors", who used Herbert for his attacks on established religion, were not committed to all of the Five Articles: in particular, they destabilized the fifth (posthumous reward and punishment), by querying the immortality of the soul. The principal purpose of Blount's slippery Anima Mundi (?1679) is to attack the doctrine of personal immortality; Toland delivered a more direct and concentrated onslaught in the second of the Letters to Serena (1704). It is possible that Herbert's own increasing concern with the state of the soul after death - will it have a body? if so, what will it be like? - is related to an awareness of the vulnerability of Article 5.[57]

> One of Locke's objections to innatism was that it was a form of spiritual tyranny:
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> it was of no small advantage to those who affected to be Masters and Teachers, to make this the Principle of Principles, That Principles must not be questioned: For having once established this Tenet, That there are innate Principles, it put their Followers upon a necessity of receiving some Doctrines as such; which was to take them off from the use of their own Reason and Judgment . . . I iv 24[58]

In the Dialogue, as in all his works, Herbert expounds his Articles; but his commitment to theological freedom seems at last to break through the dogmatic formulation he had always so cherished. For the first time, he subjected an Article to examination. The passage does not appear in 1768, or in any of the manuscripts but W. It is the passage with which we began:

> Truely for my part I thinke it a bold assertion to speake Categorically either way; since the Argument of no sides will conclude any certainty . . . I must confesse, that

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[57] For Herbert's concern with the question which physical faculties survive death, see the end of the last chapter.

[58] An Essay, pp. 101-2.

> they who say the Soule of Man is immortal, have given themselves much disadvantage; Since it is more then can be demonstrated to an obstinate Man; But had he said that it is much more rational to beleive, that the Soule remaynes after this life, then that it is extinct, there would not have bene so much opposition to this opinion. 1 because the body (which is the most gross part of our fabrique) doth not so dissolve or perish but that it remaynes still in its Elements. Which being granted, it will follow, that they would continue as long as the World doth. (p. 231)

It is the same language (compare it with the verses quoted earlier); but it is being used with a most unexpected twist.

VI Conclusions

How much has all this proved? Not, unfortunately, the question of authorship - but it should make life still harder for those who continue to dispute the popular view. The most important document here is W; that, contrary to appearances, is not autograph, and thus cannot disprove Herbert's authorship.

Beyond this, I hope to have made some points of practical application:

1. 1768 is a very imperfect text; there exist means for extensive improvement. Future discussion of the work should rely on them: the best text we could have would be based on R, checked against De Religione Gentilium and W, and with W's extra passages added at the end.
2. If we do accept the work as Herbert's, we must accept the whole of W, some of which has never been printed - and bear the new passages in mind when discussing Herbert's late work.

Herbert, whom Ben Jonson called "so many men", is a notoriously difficult conglomeration to grasp. Consequently, there is a temptation to select one aspect of his thought, and push it, to the exclusion of all others. One lesson of this last, riddling text is

surely that his thought was not static, a fixed ball of distinguishable threads, but mobile, subject to development right to the end.

Note: Charles Blount

It is clear that we do not have the Dialogue in the form its author would have wished. Without rejecting Herbertian authorship for the lost original, it is reasonable to guess that it has been "organized" into its present form by someone else. My guess is that the much-maligned Charles Blount may have something to do with this.[59] Blount, Herbert's self-proclaimed pupil, certainly had access to his manuscripts, and there are also passages of the Dialogue in his work: he appears to have derived from it not only parts of Philostratus, but two other pieces too - both his lively little pamphlet Great is Diana of the Ephesians, and a short letter on augury.[60] This second piece inspired an elegant piece of detective work by Hutcheson, who pointed out that Blount has "sneezing" where the Dialogue has "neesing",

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[59] Blount has had few friends since his death. The only full-length work on him is Ugo Bonanate, Charles Blount: Libertinismo e deismo nel settecento inglese (Florence, 1972); this is unfortunately not very helpful on his connexion with Herbert (Bonanate is unaware of the English "Religio Laici", and believes that Blount's work is an adaptation of the Latin). Rossi is responsible for the only real attempt to trace the link: "Charles Blount's father, Sir Henry Blount . . was knighted in 1640, when Lord Herbert was in London and at the Court. At the same period Lord Herbert was connected with Hobbes with whom later on, after the Restoration, Charles Blount became intimate . . . Charles Blount may well have preserved some kind of connexion with Sir Henry Herbert [possessor of Herbert's literary remains] and his family . . . Charles Blount was born in the same year (1654) as Henry Herbert, the son of Sir Henry Herbert . . and they went together to Trinity College, Oxford" ("Herbert's Religio Laici", p. 47).

[60] The full title of Diana continues: or, the Original of Idolatry, together with the Politick Institution of the Gentiles Sacrifices (London, 1680). Blount also used the Dialogue elsewhere: Gawlick, "Einleitung", p. XXXI, gives a list of parallel passages, to which more could be added.

and concluded from this that Blount had updated the spelling, and thus could not be responsible for the original Dialogue.[61]

But could Blount have added anything? There are few passages that have no analogue at all with the rest of Herbert's oeuvre; but there is one that makes me sympathize with Rossi in his feeling that the type of erudition shown is not characteristic.[62] The long accounts of Greek philosophical sects are worked into an argument that philosophers were the first (good) teachers of religion; but the accounts themselves have nothing to do with religion - they are entirely independent catalogues raisonnés, lists of philosophers and their followers. Now in 1684, Blount published a sort of study-aid called (briefly) Janua Scientiarum. A comparison of the Dialogue's philosophers with JS Book VII (the books are only a few pages long) reveals an almost perfect coincidence of names, and some rather distinctive phrases.

It is usual to explain Blount's procedure as one of extraction;[63] in the present case, one might argue against this:

1. Janua Scientiarum as a whole is quite independent of Herbert (most of it is taken up with questions of geography and political science);

2. the philosophers fit much better into this work than into the Dialogue.

There is a further point, which impresses me more. The first sentence of the Dialogue reads oddly:

> Since through your good directions, I have so much profitted in my studies, that I conceive myself able to distinguish between truth and falsehood, according to the

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[61] Hutcheson, p. 74.

[62] La Vita, III 532.

[63] This is certainly true of the coincidences between Dialogue and Diana, as some of them occur in W.

> ordinary rules of logick taught in our universities; and besides, have learned in great part from you geography, chronology, and history . . . (p. 1)[64]

"Geography, chronology, and history": certainly the Pupil would not have learnt these things from Herbert. But with Charles Blount, he might have had more luck. The full title of Janua Scientiarum continues: or, a Compendious Introduction to Geography, Chronology, Government, History, Phylosophy, and all Genteel Sorts of Literature.[65]

Blount and the Dialogue are both too unpredictable for any grand theory to be built on this; still, it asks to be noticed. Could it perhaps be Blount's way of stamping his own signature on the work he found and "organized"? It is possible, at least, that we have failed to recognize some of the intimations of this most enigmatic work.

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[64] Rossi also smelled a rat here: why the "ordinary rules of Logick", when Herbert had devised his own system of categories, the "zetetica" of De Veritate? But that is not really such a problem: it is not necessarily different from the assertion in the Life that "I approve much those parts of logic which teach men to deduce their proofs from firm and undoubted principles, and show men to distinguish betwixt truth and falsehood . . ." (Lee, pp. 48-9).

[65] Another critic has recently arrived at the idea of a Herbertian kernel with Blountian wrapping: J.A.I. Champion, in The Pillars of Priestcraft Shaken (Cambridge, 1992), pp. 140-6. He argues that the Dialogue contains information not available in Herbert's lifetime, and he singles out four particulars: the discussion of oracles (pp. 130-4) "could most likely have been drawn" from Fontenelle; the discussion of the taboo on eating pork (pp. 68, 70) comes from Stubbe's An Account of the Rise and Progress of Mahometanism, of which the MS was not complete until 1671; the statement that Moses' writings were transcribed from memory by Esdras is not said before La Peyrère; and the idea that Jewish religion originated in Egypt is dismissed in De Religione Gentilium - and discussed by Blount.

I find only the first of these at all persuasive. The discussion on pp. 68-70 concerns the Jewish faith and its particular, non-universal nature, which hardly requires Stubbe: I cannot see a reference to Mahomet, on p. 68, p. 70, or anywhere else in the Dialogue; the theory about the Mosaic writings was advanced, after all, by Porphyry, and Champion's assertion is not supported by the book he cites, Popkin's Isaac la Peyrère (Leiden, 1987) (see p. 72); as to the Egyptian origins of Judaism, the idea is approved on several occasions in DRG (see p. 19 = Lewis, p. 31; p. 32 = Lewis, p. 53; p. 85 = Lewis, p. 137). Champion's attractive theory that the Tutor and Pupil represent Herbert and Blount is unfortunately exploded by their appearance in the Welsh MS, which Herbert dictated himself.

Conclusion

This sequence of studies has reached a ragged end. From the composition of the Dialogue to the date of his death, different kinds of uncertainty cloud our picture of Herbert's last days.[1]

The winter of his life was a sad one, as he said.[2] He had not received the recognition he wanted, either as a statesman or as a scholar. The Life, that deceptively famous work, sounds self-consoling, and yet unconsoled. It celebrates the past, but it also provides a roll-call of the fallen: Montmorency the younger, and Bouteville, "that brave cavalier which all France did so much celebrate", both dead by royal command; Frederick, Elector Palatine, from whom Herbert "received much good usage", dead in exile; Henry of France, defender of the Huguenots, cut down by "that villain Ravaillac"; Buckingham, murdered and unmourned.[3]

Well into later life, Herbert clung to his dream of influencing events, of promulgating his blessedly reasonable system; nevertheless, his emotional life seems to have been based entirely in the past. His relations with his family also indicate that he looked backwards for emotional sustenance: the Life devotes many more pages to his ancestors, and even his siblings, than his wife or his children. With his siblings he tried to remain friendly - or

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[1] For the problem with the date, see Chronological Table.

[2] "In diem Natalitium" (Smith, p. 88).

[3] For the fate of Montmorency, see the end of chapter III above. Bouteville, the great duellist, fell victim to Richelieu's efforts to suppress that habit. Lee comments on Herbert's similar treatment of two of his ancestors, whose exploits he praises: "He discreetly omits to mention that [they] were taken prisoners on the battlefield, and beheaded at Northampton . . ." (p. xxv).

certainly with his brother Henry, whom he knew best.[4] But he was not very successful. Surviving letters show Henry complaining of Edward's niggardliness: "His Lordship deals like an Elder Brother, and the Lord forgive him for it" runs one, not unrepresentative.[5] That complaint sounds much more loudly in letters from two of his children, Richard and Beatrice - both of whom are mentioned with great distrust in his will.[6] Rossi may well be right in tracing his bad relations with his children to another sad fact: that they were brought up without him, by his estranged wife.[7] He was not, it seems, a man who found it easy to attract love. Henry, dedicating his edition of the poetry, could think of no warmer epithet for his brother than "learned".[8]

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[4] Henry finished his education in France, and was useful to Edward in his embassy there. He played a significant rôle on at least one occasion: the Duc de Luynes confided to Henry the French interest in a marriage between Prince Charles and the King's sister - a confidence which (for what it was worth) Henry at once passed on to Edward, who did what he could with it in his official capacity (CSP Ven. (1619-21), 21).

[5] PRO 30/53/7/17: dated 1634. The addressee is not named, but is probably Richard Griffith(s), a family retainer, with whom Henry was on friendly terms. Amy Charles refers to the remark, oddly, as a "wry comment" that "could only have been born of experience and forbearance" (George Herbert, p. 83).

[6] For Richard's letters, see J.H. Hanford, "Lord Herbert and his Son", HLQ 5 (1942); for Beatrice, see Rossi, III 521 (there is more evidence for each, among the Welsh papers and in the PRO). Herbert's will is catalogued as PRO PROB 11/205 138: in it, he made his grandson his principal heir, leaving Richard the use of the property under charge not to damage it; he warns three times that Beatrice should not be allowed to purloin the diamond-studded ribbon he intended for his grandson.

[7] Rossi, II 467 ff.

[8] Smith, sig. B2. The Henry Herbert of the dedication is certainly this Henry, although he addresses Edward's grandson as his own nephew (see Lee, p. 302): there was no one of that name in the next generation.

Henry's Dedication as a whole suggests some interesting reservations. It manages to work in discussions of the relative virtues of faith and reason, and of the inadequacy of heathen religion, as if he were attempting to re-educate the deceased:

> The way of Vertue appeared to the Heathen to be th'only way to Happiness, and yet they knew not many Vertues which are the Glory of Christianity . . .[9]

A few later years, the Rev. Baxter confirmed Henry's unease, with an explicit comparison to "his and your holy and excellent Brother" - the near-sainted George.[10] The critical tradition might be said to begin in the family.

Despite recognition of some good qualities, that tradition remained predominantly negative well into this century; it would probably have made the end of Herbert's life still bleaker to read some of Rossi's pronouncements.[11] Only quite recently has he acquired whole-hearted champions, who have tried to make a more attractive unit of his life and his theology. Prime among these are those two very different admirers, Bedford and Hill. To Hill, Herbert is a theological radical: every apparent vagary is explained as "ironical". He appears as an inaugurator, a father of the Enlightenment. Bedford's view is different. He is more concerned with Herbert's background than his deistic future, less interested in "irony" than in a simple and positive motivation he perceives: the heart of Herbert's endeavour is identified as Toleration, a topic necessarily marginal in the narrative of Hill.[12] Roland

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[9] Smith, sig. B3v.

[10] More Reasons, sig. A3.

[11] Lee, and even Rémusat, both of whom devoted so much time to him, found him fatally defective in spirit (see Rémusat's comment on the Life and Raigne, quoted in chapter III above; and Lee's "Continuation of the Life", passim). Herbert would probably not have welcomed the big brotherly feelings towards him that Rossi professed (see the Preface) - especially when they resulted in such putting-down.

[12] The contrast Hill draws between Herbert and Grotius has perhaps an extra-intentional significance here: "Grotius was a tolerant Christian; Herbert was a deist" (Edward, Lord

Bainton cited Castellio and Locke as writers who connected questions of epistemology with the question of liberty;[13] between these two, Bedford inserts Herbert, and De Veritate.

This perception is attractive. Herbert appears in a warmer light, as adherent to an ideal currently and locally admired. In summing up Herbert's philosophy and life, it is important to consider that ideal - and how far Herbert really subscribed to it. The location of him between Castellio and Locke brings out one interesting anomaly. As Bedford himself expresses it in an earlier chapter:

> [Herbert's] is the alternative and opposite strategy to that of Castellio . . . Herbert chooses to point not to our uncertainties but to what anyone, of whatever particular persuasion, can assent to, and in his view must assent to.[14]

Castellio's plea for an end to persecution depends quite heavily on the limits of human knowledge: he argues that disputes over religion should be less dogmatic than disputes over questions of morality (for example, the wrongfulness of murder), because the Bible is essentially difficult to understand.[15] Locke, in the Essay, gives toleration a basis in "our mutual ignorance", which should deter us from "treat[ing] others ill, as obstinate and perverse, because they will not renounce their own, and receive our opinions" (IV xvi 4). Castellio's insistence on pious uncertainty, the importance of doubting some things,[16] has a superficial resemblance to the concluding phrase of the Appendix ad Sacerdotes and "Quid Laicus" - "as some things may be piously believed, others may be piously left uncertain"; but

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Herbert, p. 22).

[13] R.H. Bainton, "Sebastian Castellio and the British-American tradition", quoted Bedford, pp. 229-30.

[14] Bedford, p. 76.

[15] This is emphasized particularly in the Preface to his translation of the Bible, dedicated to Edward VI.

[16] See (e.g.) De Arte Dubitandi (1st pub. 1937), I xvii.

there is a difference. Herbert has not been defending uncertainty at all, but an alternative certainty, of his own.[17]

This is not hard to explain. He held an easier position than Castellio or Locke in that the creed he wanted had never been put into practice, and thus he had no history of disagreements for which to account and lament; he could claim that no one had ever rejected it, and thus he never really made an effort to envisage a compromise. That enigmatic classic, the Colloquium Heptoplomeres of Jean Bodin, adduced by Bedford as part of the same endeavour, differs crucially in seeking to find harmony among the various representatives assembled - not to subordinate them to Toralba, the champion of "natural religion" alone, who would seem to be Herbert's analogue.[18] There are dangers to Herbert's procedure. The circle image in De Veritate stands as a warning, as well as a guarantee: nothing else is to be added. At one disconcerting point in the Latin Religio Laici, the priests are offered the Articles as the best ground for punishing disaffection. Herbert should not be too closely identified with a tolerant Arminian like William Chillingworth, who could never explain exactly which points he found essential in Christianity, and was prepared to admit the salvation of any man who found the religion "more likely to be true than false".[19]

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[17] Bedford stresses the elements of uncertainty in Herbert's thought more heavily than I have. Behind all this lies a large question: is any epistemology beyond scepticism really compatible with toleration?

[18] Critics of this work have never been able to agree on the author's own spokesman (Toralba? the learned Jew? the tolerant Muslim? the hospitable Catholic? the sceptic?) - a remarkable tribute to Bodin. (See, for a quick summary, F.A. Yates, "The Mystery of Jean Bodin", in Ideas and Ideals in the Northern Renaissance (London, 1984), p. 141.)

[19] From an unpublished paper, quoted by Robert Orr, Reason and Authority: the Thought of William Chillingworth (Oxford, 1967), p. 81. In the words of Orr, "He is no more clear . . . as to what in fact are the 'controversies necessary to be decided' in the Church, than he is as to the 'points fundamental' in the Scriptures. He does not even say whether the two are identical" (p. 134).

Still, that offer to the priests in Religio Laici is unusual.[20] Most of the time, they are the enemy. As we saw in chapter II, Herbert was never happy with the idea of probability - but not because it left the people too free. To Chillingworth and Locke, probability provided an opening for toleration; to him, it suggested clerical deceit. His thought in fact developed in two directions: he became less ready to admit any compromise with orthodoxy, more outspoken as a champion of laic independence. Although he was not, as far we know, at all interested in the ideas of the sects - he knew what they ought to believe - he did not doubt that they could reach the truth for themselves. He never maintained a distinction between reason and his five Catholic Articles of universal religion; the converse of this is that the Articles are always seen as reasonable, amenable to individual comprehension. By the end of his life, the impulse to freedom seems to be gaining over the impulse to certainty. The Dialogue suggests, for the first time, that variety might not be a bad thing.[21] And in the unpublished portion of the Welsh manuscript, a possibility is (though tenuously) put forward of dislodging one of the sacred Five: the survival of the soul.

There is something of a paradox here, nevertheless. Becoming less dogmatic on that particular point brought Herbert closer to the more obviously tolerant "Déiste" of the "Quatrains", but took him further away from the concerns of his contemporaries. It is significant that W.K. Jordan, the historian of English toleration, did not welcome Herbert as

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[20] For discussion of this, see the first section of chapter IV above.

[21] Dialogue, p. 72: "subdivisions in religion, are so far from ruining the religion, from whence they were first divided, that they rather strengthen and fortify it." This is an idea put forward by More in the Utopia (II ix), but still controversial in the late seventeenth century: see the controversy sparked off by Martin Clifford, A Treatise of Humane Nature (London, 1674).

a champion.[22] Jordan's word for him is "cold": he is found to be chillingly detached from "the religious preoccupations of his age".[23] Certainly it is hard to find a definition of toleration which suits both him and Cromwell, protector of "tender consciences": these were not supposed to include consciences too tender for the New Testament. And Herbert had difficulty in reaching some of the recognized tenets of tolerant thinkers. He was very concerned with the question whether punishment would be eternal, but he could not make up his mind about it: in some works he insists that even if further punishment is required after death, it need not last for ever;[24] but in the Dialogue, his last work, he accepts the possibility of eternal punishment as part of God's justice (pp. 26-7). His respect for definite rules clashed here with his desire for more flexibility. This clash may also help to explain why, despite repeated promises, and insistence on it in all his works, he failed to write a book on conscience.[25] Emphasis on the ideal of toleration tends to conceal Herbert's originality - one sad result of which was that his response to religious strife was unusable in his own time. His position in the last years of his life, defending dead pagans, deaf to the clamour from his live children, has a certain appropriateness. His general goodwill had no direct applicability; his past, his true homeland, seemed a long way away. There were good reasons, both public and private, for his "tristis hyems".

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[22] W.K. Jordan, The Development of Religious Toleration in England (London, 1932-8), III 435-44: "Herbert was not at heart a religious man, nor did he have any direct interest in the problem of liberty of conscience" (p. 436). J. Lecler (tr. T.L. Westow), Toleration and the Reformation (New York and London, 1960) has room for Herbert only as a "deist" (II 435).

[23] p. 443.

[24] See e.g. DRG, p. 196 = Lewis, p. 316; English "Religio Laici", p. 301.

[25] Promises: e.g. DV (1645), p. 106. Rossi searched vainly for traces: La Vita, II 540.

Disappointed with his life, Herbert found consolation in preparing for his death. This had always been a favourite subject: he wrote three epitaphs for himself (excluding the one in his will), of which one at least is dated 1615.[26] But the collapse of his political hopes in the 1620s seems to have felt something like a rehearsal for death, which concentrated his mind on it. The Life ends with the recall from France, in 1624; that need not be an accident. In 1629, the year in which he finally received his unsatisfactory English barony, he annotated a book on the funeral customs of the Roman aristocracy.[27] His comments reveal interest both in the honour the patricians were granted, and in the method of their disposal. Beside the description of cremation, he writes:

> Romani curabant defunctorum Corpora cremari, satius ducentes in ignem, nobilissimum caeloq; cognatum elementum abire, quam putridine corrumpi[28]

These desires, for the "noblest element", and for a resolution of the self into a nobler and a less noble part, inspires much of Herbert's late poetry: the candle, resolving itself into flame and wax, is his most developed image of dying; the monument he planned for himself - a tremendous affair - culminated apparently in a "heart flamboul", a flaming heart.[29] His "earthly parts", meanwhile, disjoined from his "rationall" ones, were to be interred in hugger-mugger,

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[26] "Epitaph. in se Romae factum, 1615" (Smith, p. 88).

[27] J. Gutherius, De Iure Manium, seu de Ritu More et Legibus Prisci Funeris (Paris, 1615) (FK, p. 111). The annotations are curiously public in manner: he dates his reading of the work, and directs the reader to a section on public monuments "in vivorum et mortuorum gloriam" (pp. 365-6).

[28] p. 140: "the Romans took care to cremate the bodies of the dead, preferring to depart into fire, the noblest element, related to the heavens, rather than to rot in corruption."

[29] The account is reported by D. Lloyd, State-Worthies (London, 2nd ed., 1670), pp. 1017-21, reprinted by Lee, p. 300 n. 1.

> forbidding all mourning or shewe of mourning thereat since my soule through Gods great mercie willbe in happines, and that so wretched a thinge as a Carcasse deserves itt not[30]

Had it been conceivable at the time, he would certainly have chosen to be cremated: the idea brought together his identification with a heroic past, and his desire to be free of his baser elements. But nothing went as he would have liked it. The monument was never built - Richard, a convicted Royalist, overwhelmed with debt, was in no position to build it, even had he wished to; the epitaph on his tomb was not the one specified in the will; the tomb itself (for what comfort that might have given him) was destroyed in the Great Fire. His modest prayer for Henry VIII - "I wish I could leave him in his grave" -[31] was not granted in his own case. Nor was his cherished library kept intact - his last poetic injunction to his "Nepotes".[32]

For the reader, however, the story of the death itself is not a disappointment. It seems appropriate that this should occupy most of Aubrey's very brief Life of Herbert: it is a suitable pendant to the autobiography. On his deathbed, it seems, he asked Ussher (ex-archbishop) for the sacrament, on the grounds that

> "if there was good in any-thing, 'twas in that", or "if it did no good 'twould doe no hurt."[33]

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[30] PRO PROB 11/205 fo. 256.

[31] Life and Raigne, p. 575.

[32] "Praecepta" (first pub. with De Veritate, 1645) (Smith, p. 118). Apart from the bequest to Jesus, "i manoscritti e libri di Herbert andarono dispersi, nonostante la sua preoccupazione" (Rossi, III 291).

[33] A. Clark (ed.), Brief Lives, (Oxford, 1898), I 307.

Ussher refused to administer it on these terms, "for which many blamed him"; but the refusal does not seem to have caused much distress: shortly afterwards Herbert "turned his head to the other side" and "dyed . . . very serenely."

The image of the dying man turning away from his age towards the future is a powerful one: it impresses itself strongly upon Hill, who puts the story at the end of his introduction to Herbert the Deist. It was, he explains, an advanced sort of death:

> Unbelievers in eighteenth-century France would make a high art of dying "like a philosopher". The key point, they would argue, was "to evade the clergy rather than defy them".[34]

The Reverend George had left a pattern for death à la chrétienne;[35] this provided a pattern of a different kind. That is one way to see the story. And yet Edward Herbert did not die in eighteenth-century France, but in England, in the last years of the Civil War. The scene may anticipate the "philosophes"; it also makes a peculiar parallel to another of Aubrey's deathbeds - a story related by Bedford, though not as a comparison.[36] A few years before Herbert's came the death of William Chillingworth, Royalist and divine, fallen, like spoils of war, into the hands of the Saints. Chillingworth was nursed grimly by his tormenting benefactor, Francis Cheynell, who persisted in his hope that the patient would come to repent his Arminianism (embodied in his defence of the Religion of Protestants).[37] Cheynell was

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[34] Edward Lord Herbert, p. 16. Hill draws on P. Chaunu, La Mort à Paris: seizième, dix-septième, et dix-huitième siècles (Paris, 1978).

[35] See Walton's fully-orchestrated account: "one last terrific bout with Satan, and then triumph and glory", as William Haller put it, in a more general context (The Rise of Puritanism (New York, 1938), p. 108).

[36] Bedford tells the story with his usual stylishness on p. 233.

[37] The story was written up afterwards by Cheynell, under the title Chillingworthi Novissima (London, 1644).

thwarted: Chillingworth, wounded for a cause in which he only half-believed, died steadfast in the faith for which he suffered so much doubt.

Chillingworth might perhaps be described as a martyr.[38] Herbert was not a martyr, in the modern sense. He avoided Chillingworth's fate, because he had already refused to make Chillingworth's decision: he would not side either with the scribes and pharisees or with the publicans and sinners.[39] Detached from the ideas of his contemporaries even as he tried to engage with their problems, he died between two worlds. The effects of this were both positive and negative: he was isolated, and felt his isolation; on the other hand, he did not pay the highest penalties required by that passionate age. Cheynell threw The Religion of Protestants into its author's grave, with the recommendation that they should rot together; De Veritate would certainly have met the fate Herbert had reserved for his earthly parts.

But though that was avoided, there was a similarity between the two deaths. Herbert also died, so it seems, bearing witness to his own notion of religion. It would surely have comforted him to have it known that he died "very serenely", despite the best efforts of the clergy - that he maintained his perfect confidence that God, if no one else, would abide by the promise he knew He had made:

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[38] Chillingworthi Novissima came to be regarded as the (unintended) record of a martyrdom. It was republished in 1725: the new title-page carries a quotation from Locke: "I acknowledge my Obligations to you for . . . one of the most villainous Books that ever was printed; it is a Present I highly value". The editor adds a rather self-admiring post-script declaring his contempt for the book.

[39] Chillingworth's memorable characterization of the two sides in the Civil War: see A Sermon Preached before his Majesty at Reading (Oxford, 1644), p. 14.

Sic immortales partes, à partibus illis
Quas mors absumit, dissociare queas,
Et dum Divinos Sensus in Numine figis,
Te totum placido conciliare Deo[40]

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[40] Smith, p. 110: "Thus may you distinguish your immortal parts from those parts which are consumed by death; and while you fix your divine senses on the Deity, you may be wholly united with God in His good pleasure."

Appendix I: De Veritate: Texts and Translation

There are three complete manuscripts of De Veritate, and three substantive editions, with a translation into French (1639), which is probably the work of Mersenne.

The earliest manuscript, BL Add MS 7081, is autograph, dated 1619. It has the same basic form as the final version, although there are many incidental differences; the most important is the long passage between the Zetetica and the Common Notions of Religion, for which a different, shorter passage is substituted in later texts (Carré, pp. 286-91).[1]

The second manuscript, BL Sloane MS 3957, is a fair copy, in the hand of a secretary, but corrected (in a few places) by Herbert. This is dated 1622, and dedicated to George Herbert and William Boswell (Herbert's secretary in France). It departs from 1619 in many places, including the connecting passage (see above), which it omits - but without providing any equivalent to the later substitutions, ending abruptly with the heading "De Revelatione".

The third manuscript, in St. John's College, Cambridge (I 5 and 6), is dated "consum. 1623". It is autograph, heavily corrected. Rossi, who did not see it, assumed that it was the redaction for 1624, but this is not the case: although closer to 1624 in its final version than the other two, it remains closer to them than to the printed text in several places. Its relations with the other manuscripts are surprising: in several cases, it gives the 1619 text, and then corrects it to a reading present and uncorrected in 1622. It seems most likely that "consum.", which Rossi took to be a sign that it was a printing manuscript, in fact signifies that it was finally completed at that date: that Herbert finished 1619, and began to write a corrected

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[1] The MSS have all been re-catalogued since Rossi examined them. The link passage - transcribed, not always accurately, by Rossi (III 427-33) - is discussed under "Reason and True Religion".

version (1623), which developed as he went along; and that he had this (or an intervening, now lost manuscript) copied into 1622 - while retaining 1623 as a working manuscript, which he continued to alter after 1622 had been abandoned. The religious connexion in 1623 is significant: it begins with a much-altered version of 1619; then a page of it is crossed out, and on the facing verso a page of what was to be the 1624 text appears, and it continues as 1624 to the end.

1624, the first, rare edition, dedicated "To the Whole Human Race", was published without a preface.[2]

1633 is the first "public" edition, dedicated "To every Reader of Sound and Unprejudiced Mind": the Preface is now supplied, the chief effect of which is to stress the importance of independent judgment. This edition adds a number of passages (about seventeen pages in all). Many of them merely repeat and emphasize points already made elsewhere in the text; the most interesting may be summarized:

1. 1645, pp. 99-102 = Carré, pp. 178-82 (from the beginning of the last paragraph on p. 178 to the end of the first paragraph on p. 182): on the origin of sin, which proves to be not in the senses, nor in the intellect (Herbert suggests medical causes).[3]

2. 1645, pp. 208-9 = Carré, pp. 289-90 (from "Theories based upon implicit faith" to "all these considerations depend upon Common Notions"): a hostile passage on priestly imposition.

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[2] "Universo Humano Generi" (1624); "Lectori Cuivis integri & illabati Iudicii" (1633). This second is translated into French: "au Lecteur d'un Iugement entier & candide". Gawlick notes the change - and the paradox of 1624's grandiose dedication, and small circulation.

[3] This passage was picked out for censure by Leland: "This apology may be carried very far, so as to open a wide door to licentiousness, and would soon introduce a very loose morality" (A View, I 6).

3. 1645, pp. 244-7 = Carré, pp. 327-30: the last 3 paragraphs on Carré, p. 328 were added in 1645) (from "But those who lack faith" to "I dilate too much upon this topic"): the rhapsodic passage on the afterlife in "De Possibili" is greatly lengthened.

In general, there are more expressions of laic self-confidence -and he adds the new phrase "recta ratio", "right reason", always with a favourable sense.[4]

1645, though it adds only 6 pages to 1633, is the most conspicuously independent of the texts. At the beginning, it offers a glossary of its more arcane or deceptive terms, explaining that "Ad Methodum quod spectat, nova omnino cùm sit, vel necessum fuit, vel usitata saltem (ubicunq; fieri potuit) in nostrum pertrahere sensum vocabula."[5] Then it continues the developments of 1633. Two more references to "recta ratio" appear.[6] The great majority of its changes occur here, in the section on religion. In the passage from Carré, p. 305 ("Why, then, as I have said elsewhere") to the end of p. 307, all new in 1645, Herbert makes it clear that nothing is to be added to the five Articles:

> Quidni igitur juxta Communis saltem Rationis normam de rotundâ Dei Religione (uti alibi diximus) ac de circulo existimari possit; ut qui aliquid addiderit vel dempserit, ejus formam vitiaverit, integritatemq; corruperit? Sed neq; heic temerè aliquid statuerim. Equidem nihil hinc demi posse ultro asseveraverim. An vero quaedam addi Religioni Rotundae, uti circulo, commodè possint, non ita ambegerim; modò spectabilis circuli forma ita conservetur, ut nullâ ex parte oblitescat.[7]

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[4] There are many small additions in the section on religion. The phrase "recta ratio" is discussed under "Freedom and Reason".

[5] 1645, n.p. = Carré, p. 73: "it was necessary for me . . . either to coin new terms, or to adapt those in common use, whenever possible, to my own meaning" Unfortunately - and unaccountably - Carré then omits this "Elenchus Verborum", which explains Herbert's use of words such as "Revelatio".

[6] 1645, pp. 237, 239 = Carré, pp. 319, 322.

[7] 1645, pp. 224-5 = Carré, pp. 305-6: "can we not apply the same rule to the perfect sphere of the religion of God that we apply to any circle? If anything is added to it, or taken from it its shape is destroyed, and its perfection ruined. I do not, however, wish to decide too hastily on this question. I would, indeed, firmly maintain that it is impossible to remove

Compare an earlier passage:

> lineae inflexio aequalis à centro est differentia essentialis constitutiva circuli, & quia exinde ab omni figura distinguitur, & quia ita circulum constitutuit differentia ista, ut si aliquid vel demptum fit, vel superadditum, novum objectum detur.[8]

He also adds a dampening preface to "De Possibili": possibility, previously an opportunity for mystical rapture, has been contaminated by the thought of priestly fraud.[9]

1639 is a translation of 1633. It is faithful, more or less (and much easier to read), though Herbert himself expressed anxiety about its divergences in a letter to Mersenne.[10] Surprisingly, perhaps, it seems to make almost no attempt to soften 1633's strictures against the clergy.

There is one more, peculiar piece in this dossier: a translation, four pages long, from the beginning of the section on the common notions of religion (probably the version of 1645).[11] This is part of a mysterious Herbertian MS in Petworth House, written in an

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any feature of religion. But whether anything can suitably be added to the orb of religion, as to a circle, I am not so certain." (This is noted by Gawlick, pp. XXXIII-IV.) The language leaves it ambiguous whether anything can be added to a circle (I have changed Carré's "as is possible", which seems to resolve it); commonsense provides the answer that it cannot. The image tells against Bedford's milder reading: "He did not in practice claim that the five articles provided a complete religion . . ." (p. 189).

[8] 1645, pp. 170-1 = Carré, p. 252: "the equal curve of a line from its centre is the essential and constitutive difference of a circle, since it distinguishes it from every other figure, and so constitutes it that if anything is removed from it or added to it it becomes a new object."

[9] Carré, pp. 323-4 = 1645, pp. 240-2: "Si tamen leviori negotio Prophetias fieri posse contenderit quispiam, non morabor, sed ne sibiipsi imponat, ex animo tantùm optaverim" (pp. 241-2).

[10] See chapter II, "Response".

[11] The edition of 1633 adds to this section; 1645 does not add anything more. But the other pieces in this MS come from work published in 1645 (see Appendix II), so it is probable that this does too.

unfamiliar, seventeenth-century hand.[12] Since it has never been published, and is brief, I reproduce it here.

The common notions touching Religion[13]

Being about to speake of Revelation, wee thinke fitt to premise certaine praecognita thereof; for neither is every Religion wch pretends Revelation presently good, nor is every Doctrine authorised by her [sic] either necessary or profitable. Some things may bee effaced, and expunged, and some things must. To wch purpose the Doctrine of the common Notions doth serve; so that without the helpe thereof there can bee no fitt choyce made either of Revelation, or Religion.

ffor whatsoever is spoke of implicite fayth, not only in our owne country but also in forrain Nations, is little to the purpose. Of this sort are these common sayings, namely *That humane Reason is to bee discarded, and ffayth substituted in her place. That the reason of divine worship lyeth in the power of the Church, wch cannot err, in whose judgment therefore wee must wholy rest. That none ought so much to relye on his own strength, as to dare to question the sacred Power of the Prelates, and Preachers of the word. That those things wch are asserted, though they exceede the spheare of mans capacity, are yet grounded on such true Principles, and causes, that they are not to bee discussed, but embraced. That God can doe those, and greater things then those.*[14] These, and the like arguments according to the diversity of ages, and countryes, are wont to assert as well false, as true Religion. ffor what notable Impostor will not suggest such things as these to his followers? What strange Religion may not on these termes bee mantained? What forgery shall in any age bee abolished, especially where crafty Law-givers affirme there Doctrines to bee delivered from Heaven?

Wherefore unlesse common Notions open the way to Truth, and give to every Article its authority, how can it bee that every senslesse opinion should not bee abolished? Those that endeavour to establish there Doctrines by the Lesbyan[15] and uncertaine Rules of credulity, doe iust like them who that they may the more easily pull out a Travellers eyes, promise to bee his Guides in the Journy hee is to goe. But it is far otherwise, for God at the last day will require an account of every ones actions not according to an others fayth, but according to his owne. Wherefore the Praecognita of Religion are to be setled upon the grounds of *Universall wisedome*, that whatsoever is added by the true dictate of fayth, may

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[12] For details on this MS, see Appendix II.

[13] The original has no paragraph divisions.

[14] Italics represent a clear alteration of handwriting.

[15] The Latin reads: "ex ambiguis Lesbiisq; credulitatis regulis" (1645, p. 209). The French translation of this refers to "Lesbiennes" (p. 270). Carré gives no hint of it.

rest upon the same foundation as a peice [?] of true freize and cornish [sic], whence it appears that every Religion is not presently to bee embraced, but those things first to bee diligently examined, wch give honour and authority thereto; all wch you shall find to lye in the common Notions. ffor who, turning over that huge pile of Books, wherein are so many circuitious [sic] and pompous expressions would not laugh at the fictions and Impostures of certaine ages, did they not beare a shew of sanctity of life? Who would give his name, and even pin his ffayth on the Church, disporting herselfe with so many Rites, Ceremonies, and Fooleries, were not the worship of God, Piety, Repentance together with Reward and Punishment held forth? ffinally, who would beleive a Prophet himselfe, did hee not referre whatsoever hee spake, to the most High God?

I should bee tedious should I runne over every particular, let it suffice that none of those things can consist without the helpe of Common Notions, wch wee so highly esteeme, that I account him the best Prophet, That the best Religion, and That the best Church, wch cometh neerest to the observation of them.

Finally, a note on the translation.

With the notable (if predictable) exception of Rossi, writers on Herbert have thought highly of the Carré version:

> Professor Carré has accomplished the difficult task of turning Herbert's Latin into readable English while remaining scrupulously faithful to the original.[16]

Even those less impressed by its "readability" have applauded its accuracy:

> Even in Meyrick Carré's careful English rendering, De Veritate is not an easy book to read. Almost without exception, though, the difficulties of the English translation are those of Herbert's Latin original. Some readers may, in moments of exasperation, wish that Carré had ventured a more interpretative translation, abandoning literality in favour of clarity.[17]

Rossi found it "insoddisfacente"; and in the course of his exposition, he notes phrases with which he disagrees. These are always occasioned by difficulties of interpretation; and Rossi's proclaimed "improvements" may not convince all readers.[18]

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[16] Hutcheson, p. 156.

[17] Hill, p. 18.

[18] An example may be found on I 373, a reworking of Carré's version (pp. 108-9) of 1645, pp. 30-1.

All students of Herbert must be grateful to Carré, whose task was daunting, and who has made life so much easier for us all. But there quite enough obvious and puzzling errors to make the translation less than authoritative. A few examples:

> unà cum libertate animum abjecisse videntur.[19]
>
> they appear to have lost their spirit at the moment they have gained their freedom.[20]

> [the Common Notions which spring from Natural Instinct carry conviction] ut non sit quod Sensus Externos ad probationem postules.[21]
>
> though this is not so when we require the external senses to prove them.[22]

> [against the theory of the mind as a tabula rasa] Liber igitur ut sit clausus, sese no nisi ad objecta explicans . . tabula rasa non sine injuria dicitur.[23]
>
> while we can think of the mind as a closed book in so far as it is not open to objects, it cannot be justly called a clean sheet . . .[24]

> Haec . . ab Antistibus modestè expendi vellem, atque ita, ut (arcanis quibuscunq; consiliis praetermissis) in id incumbant; ut in officio suo tum erga Deum tum erga proximum peragendo (juxta sanctissimum praeceptum eo fine traditum) strenuè laborent populi.[25]

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[19] 1645 sig. a 3v: they seem to have thrown away their freedom together with their spirit.

[20] Carré, p. 72.

[21] p. 56: so that you do not require external senses to prove them.

[22] Carré, p. 135.

[23] p. 54: Although it is a closed book, only open in response to objects . . it cannot fairly be called a clear slate.

[24] Carré, p. 132.

[25] pp. 225-6: I should like this to be considered by the priests, moderately, and in such a way that (putting secret counsels on one side) they might concentrate on making the people work hard at their duty towards God and towards their neighbours (according to the most sacred precepts given for that purpose). The "secret counsels" are ambiguous: are they godly, or priestly?

> I humbly recommend these considerations to the judgment of the priests, with the hope that they may abandon their mysteries, and direct themselves to accomplishing their function towards God and His interests in accordance with the most sacred maxims given us to that end, and so exert themselves on behalf of the people.[26]

In addition to the sustained pieces of mistranslation, there are several small errors which make nonsense of the text.[27] There are also some deliberate alterations which alter the meaning and impression. Carré converts nearly all the second-person injunctions into third-person rules: the results are often sadly tame:

> [If it is a Common Notion that Nature does nothing in vain] cogita Naturam dicentem, Ipsa nihil facio frustra[28]
>
> we must hold that it is the very voice of Nature which asserts it.[29]

Sometimes this preference for the third-person can be misleading, as here:

> [The second condition for belief is] Ut tibi ipsi patefiat[30]
>
> that revelation should be give to some person.[31]

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[26] Carré, pp. 306-7.

[27] For example: on p. 107, Carré, p. 187, the word "more" is missing from the sentence: "a supreme power, which is nowhere clearly perceived . . ."; on p. 193, Carré p. 273, the word "not" has been omitted in the sentence "eternity . . can be explained by movement". (This last example was noted by A.T. Shillinglaw in his review of the translation, Mind n.s. 47 (1948), 257.) On several occasions, word-order has been distorted to give confused sense.

[28] p. 54: think of Nature saying "I do nothing in vain".

[29] Carré, p. 133.

[30] p. 226: that it should be be revealed to you yourself. He goes on to explain why: "quod enim revelatu ab aliis accipitur, non jam revelatio, sed traditio, sive historia habenda est . ." -- for what is held by others to be revealed, is no longer to be taken as revelation, but tradition, or history.

[31] Carré, p. 308.

And another problem with the translation is the omission of any notes or index - even Herbert's own "Elenchus verborum", or glossary, published in the 1645 edition, is omitted by Carré.[32]

However, despite Gawlick's facsimile re-edition (also noteless), Carré's text is still much more easily accessible than the Latin, in any edition; and so I have followed him wherever possible, supplying the Latin in a note. Where it was not possible, I have substituted a translation of my own, but supplied the relevant page number in Carré.

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[32] Although he includes the passage that mentions it: "the following table" - p. 73. The lack of apparatus is regretted by Shillinglaw in his review (p. 258).

Appendix II: the Texts of "Religio Laici", with Extracts

I The Texts

In 1645, Herbert published a volume entitled De Causis Errorum, cum Tractatu de Religione Laici et Appendice ad Sacerdotes de Religione Laici, nec non quibusdam Poematis. These two works "On a Layman's Faith" were the only two to be published in his lifetime; the MSS are more complicated. Most of them are described by Rossi III 54-66; there is a fuller account in Beal's Index (HrE 130-8); this account aims to be fuller still.

The MSS can be distinguished under four headings:
"Religio Laici" - Latin;
"Religio Laici" - English;
"Appendix to the Priests" - English;
"Quid Laicus" ("What the Layman should Decide about the Best Religion") - Latin.

1. Latin "Religio Laici"

This was published in 1645 (see above), and republished, with a translation, by H.R. Hutcheson, as De Religione Laici (New Haven, 1944).[1] There are several MSS approximating to it, none identical.

1) HrE 130} loose sheets, in Bundle XIX, without a number. The first is labelled HrE 131} "Appendix". The two seem to have been put in together. The first is described by Rossi as corresponding to part of p. 129 of 1645, and part of pp. 133-6. All sheets are heavily corrected.

2) HrE 132 in Bundle XIX, no. 6, labelled "Appendix". This is the complete 1645 text, up to p. 151 (section 7): it ends with a version of the last sentence of the 1645 text of the Appendix ad Sacerdotes, "Faxit Deus . . ."[2] but omits everything else. (This last sentence does not occur in this place in the 1645 text in the Bodleian, but does so in most copies, as in Hutcheson).

3) HrE 133 in the packet taken from Bundle XXVI. This ends as before, but the "Faxit . . " sentence is crossed out, then "Finis" is crossed out, and "Reliquum est ut dubia quaedā soluamus etc. vid. fol: Laxum" is added. But the passage in the printed text (omitted from

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[1] For Hutcheson's unfortunate choice of title, see chapter IV above.

[2] In HrE 135, the fair copy, the sentence runs: "Faxit Deus O. M. ut in eius gloriam, publicumq; bonum cedant quae heic exarata; quae sincera ex Fide Documenta haut minus inde veneremur"; HrE 132 omits "bonum" and supplies "quum" after "exarata". This sentence concedes more than the one finally printed: "Faxit Deus ut ad ampliandam ejus Gloriam, Pacemque Communem stabiliendam cedant quae heic exaravimus" (Hutcheson, p. 132).

passage 2)) which begins "Reliquum est", is in fact not added; instead, the MS continues with the "Quid Laicus" (see below).

4) HrE 135 in the 1965 Bequest. This is a fair copy of 2), + "Quid Laicus" (see below). It is the only one to bear the title "Religio Laici".

There appears to be no MS text for the passage in 1645 after point 7 (pp. 151-4, separated in the printed text by a rule from what came before). This seems to be a bridge passage between the MS "Religio Laici" and the Appendix. It is a defence of the system of Catholic Articles against any particular religion: the Articles themselves, summarized earlier in the work, are here formally set out, with numbers. The format is strikingly different: while the earlier part has followed, with a few detours, the progress of an imaginary "Viator", to whom Herbert applies his advice, this part proceeds by positing objections, from "Objicientibus" (Hutcheson, p. 126), "Nostrates" (p. 128), "aliqui" (id.), and finally "Antistites" (p. 132). The Appendix, immediately after it, takes the form of a series of demands made to the Sacerdotes to justify their particular religion against the Articles.

2. English "Religio Laici"

This was published by H.G. Wright, in MLR 28 (1933), from a fair copy in the National Library of Wales (NLW 5295 E = Beal HrE 136). It is wholly independent of the Latin. It is in the hand of an amanuensis (most probably Rowland Evans), corrected by Herbert.

Two copies of this MS also exist:

2) HrE 137 in the Osler Library. This is described by S.E. Sprott, "The Osler Manuscript of Herbert's Religio Laici", The Library 5th series 11 (1956), 120-2. He observes that it is corrected by Herbert; "The variant readings seem not to establish either manuscript as copy for the other. The fact, however, that none of Herbert's emendations in the Osler Manuscript appears in the Welsh Manuscript gives the former some importance as a document that represents Herbert's considered opinions, whatever their date" (p. 120).[3]

3) HrE 138 at Petworth House. This MS, in a different hand, comes with two other items: an English version (unique) of the "Appendix" (see below), and an English version of the beginning of the theological section of De Veritate, also unique (see Appendix I).

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[3] This article is savaged by Rossi, in "Herbert of Cherbury's Religio Laici" Edinburgh Bibliographical Society Transactions vol 4 part 2 (1956-7). Rossi's complaints are all wholly unjustified. Sprott does not contradict himself, and "the complexities of Herbert's life and bibliography", which he is castigated for omitting, are irrelevant to his article. It is hard to resist the conclusion that Rossi was piqued at having missed a piece of Herbertiana. His outburst would not be worth mentioning, except that Beal refers to it in his description of the MS, using it as a warning to the reader. The reader should ignore it.

Thanks to the Osler Library, which supplied me with a photocopy, I have looked at this MS: Sprott's account is scrupulously careful. (I would be inclined to risk a guess that the Osler MS was in fact later: the extra bits in it tend to sound like additions.)

In La Vita, Rossi makes no mention of these MSS. They were also unnoticed by Hutcheson in his edition of 1944. They both saw the Welsh MS later: Hutcheson published a hasty apology in Journal of Philosophy (1946); Rossi, never apologetic, published a fuller account in 1957 (see footnote 2 above). In it, he suggested an source for the MS. The original MS of the Life contains a brief discussion of Herbert's religious beliefs, which is absent from the later MS: the English "Religio Laici" "most probabl[y] . . . represented a longer account of natural religion, an account that Herbert derived from the Latin Religio Laici, and, unsatisfied with the three pages dedicated to his deistic hobby horse in AuE [Rossi's name for the original MS of the Life], meant to add to AuE." Thus the omission of the pages from the later MS is also explained.[4] This theory is given strong (unacknowledged) support by Sprott, in his article on the Osler MS (see above): "A subtitle (which is not in the Welsh MS) describes the work as 'Being a piece taken out of A greater worke of ye Authors'" (p. 121).

3. "Appendix to the Priests"

There are no Latin MSS of the 1645 text; but there is an English version, in the Petworth MS, following "Religio Laici". The provenance of this seems to be unknown.[5] Since it has not been published, an extract from it is given at the end of this Appendix.

4. "Quid Laicus"

There are 3 MSS of this unpublished work.

1) HrE 133 (see above).[6]

2) HrE 134 (see above), entitled "Quid Laicus de Relligione optima statuerit", with "Resp. J.G. petentj" written over the top.

3) HrE 135 (see above)

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[4] The pages are printed by Shuttleworth, pp. 29-31. In La Vita, Rossi had conjectured that they had been censored from the later MS.

[5] Apparently nothing else is bound in with the MS. It may have been acquired by the 10th Earl of Northumberland, Algernon Percy, or one of his descendants: the Percys are ancestors of the present owner of Petworth, and bequeathed much of the library. However, according to the County Archivist for the West Sussex Record Office, who supplied me with a photocopy, the binding looks nineteenth century. Professor G.R. Batho, a specialist on the Percy family, writes: "The fact that the MS lacks the Percy book badge strongly suggests to me that it was not the property of the ninth Earl and raises a question mark as to whether it was a late acquisition, perhaps by the Duke of Somerset" (private letter, 7 July, 1993).

If any of these three English MSS was the one used by Charles Blount, it must have been this one, since he includes integral parts missing from Wales, but omits all the addenda with carets in Osler, as this does.

[6] The title here is mutilated: there is a hole in the page after "Respon" until "tenti".

This is different again in format. It is a debate between Reason and Faith, resolved in favour of the the Articles: Faith alone leaves the layman at the mercy of the churchmen; Reason alone cannot bring certainty, because we do not have time to investigate all the religions in the world. (The distinction between Reason and the Articles quickly collapses, and the enemy for almost all of the work is blind faith in priests.)

We cannot be certain who "J.G." was. Rossi suggested John Goodwin, author of the The Pagans Debts and Dowry (see chapter V above). It seems likely, though, that he (or she) was someone well known to Herbert, intellectually subordinate, whom he felt it appropriate to educate. (The Griffiths family, old retainers of the Herberts, come to mind.)

Since this MS has not been published, an extract from it, with translation, is given at the end of this Appendix. (The text chosen is HrE 135, the fair copy.)

II Extracts

1. Appendix to the Priests

If, nothwithstanding the Preists of whatsoever Religious order in whatsoever Country (for I challenge all without exception) dislike the things wee have here alleged, and reprove me as sustaining the person of a Laick in an unseemly manner, let them ingenuously declare there opinion concerning these Queryes, that the question may at length bee decided, Whether the Orthodox Religion be not rather to bee begun and established from these Principles of the Divine universal Providence, then from those Positions of Fayth, wch being deduced from certaine perticular Revelations heretofore made in some perticular Region of the world; suppose that the secreet [sic] counsells of God have in that maner bine discovered to posterity for ever, when notwithstanding the cheifest parts of them are every where with great sharpnesse and [?]feircnesse controverted in the Schooles; So that though there were excellent use to bee mad [sic] of those Positions in poynt of Divinity, yet whether it bee not necessary to confesse that the first and cheifest place is rather due to those Principles that are agreed upon, then to those that are controverted? Nor let the Preists endeavour to interpret the series of universal Truths with there Particular Revelations, but rather search whether any Doctrine of fayth may bee safely settled from some particular Revelation, wch a wise Laick may not easily embrace without it.[7]

[The 6 "Queryes" follow. The first concerns the universality of Providence; the second and third list the Articles, and challenge the Priests to produce valid additions]

4.ly Whether those things which have bine, and are wont to bee added from the authority of the sacred writeings, wch hath bine received in any age and country bee in there original suspected, involved, and controverted, and wholy reiected by those societyes that have adhered to other ffayths, as being grounded on no necessary demonstration? ffor though it bee an undoubted Axiome, that the supreame God is most true and can neither deceive,nor bee deceived, yet how shall divers Lawgivers, or Preists in divers parts of the world, respectively prove

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[7] For the close similarity between this and a passage of DRG, see chapter V above.

1. That the supreame God, with his owne mouth, or (according to others) by the mouth of an Angell, or some inferior Power, did speake something;
2. That that speech was kept in there memory, and at several tymes faythfully rehearsed to others;
3. That true coppies of that speech were consigned to posterity, so that nothing in following ages by the default, or negligence of scribes wa added, detracted, or altered;
4. That that particular speech made to a particular Lawgiver, or Preist, doth not only necessarily belong to all other lawgivers, and Preists, but doth also oblige the verie Laicks themselves in all places, so that they may be thence induced to receive new and uncouth Lawes, or new Doctrines of fayth; especially, if by that meanes they should bee forced to revolt, or recede from the Principles of Right Reason? Neverthelesse it will bee worthy of our observation, that by those Edicts, which Lawgivers have given out to bee promulgated from heaven, the people were for the most part made more iust and peaceable, but by those Doctrines that have bine vented by Preists, or Interpreters of Oracles, whether mercenary, or fantasticall, they were made more uniust and turbulent.

5ly Whether amongst those particular societies, that have devoted themselves to the words of some sacred Book, sundry sects and schismes have not sprung up, whilest several interpretations of the sacred Booke are produced wch the Preists so stifly maintaine on all sides, that they had rather drive there flocks into intestine broyles, then recede from there opinions?

[He goes on to demand hard testing of miracles.]

6ly Though it should be granted that amongst the many sacred Books, wch either have bine, or now are extant, that some one ought undoubtedly to bee received, and all controversyes thereby to bee decided, yet ought it to bee enquired, whether the new Doctrines that are thence produced, and promiscuously divulged by the Preists to the good of man-kind, especially those that hold forth such a Predestination to life, or Eternal Damnation, as dependeth on the meer pleasure of God; or that teach how sins may bee blotted out by ffayth only, or wch promise entire remission from the Keyes,[8] or Divine Power delivered to Preists, since men by that means doe the lesse looke to themselves, as lookeing upon the Decree of God as the only cause of our future state after this life, or assure themselves that Eternal salvation may bee obtayned without much adoe, and without almost any regard to there works or useing the assistance and merits of others, wholy forsake and neglect there owne Duty, or finally perswade themselves that there syns shall be forgiven by the meer abolution of the Preist, since it is observed that this course not only the Divine Universal Providence is cast into the straights of certaine ages or countryes, but the severity of virtue, and chastety of Religion is much empaired, yea, and Hatred and feirce contentions by this means fomented amongst men, although the Doctrines of there ffayth bee warily and correctly (as much as they may bee) dispersed among the people.

[He stresses the importance of virtuous action, as the only hope of peace.]

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[8] For the possibility of a topical reference here, see chapter IV above.

Wherefore let the Preists unfold and consider these things in there order, and whatsoever things may from the Rule of Common Reason seeme doubtfull, let them resolve them by the Principles of the same Reason, that so they may passe to those things wch are of fayth, since each of them hath its own Province nor is there any sufficient authority of fayth, but what is procured to it by Right Reason. ffor though fayth bee altogether above Reason, yet let them thinke that it cannot otherwise bee solidly enough established and grounded, unlesse the understanding bee in order to that fayth, and that Right Reason lead the way, before there can any commodious choyce of fayth bee made, whose parts they ought so to examine by piecemeale, that they receive not any whole Booke, nor any text thereof, or so much as a versicle as authentick and undoubted, untill all the propositions, according there praedicates and copulaes bee brought to the due tryall of humane facultyes . . . Wherefore, let not the Preists maintaine any fayth, either against, or so much as besides Reason, but that fayth only wch is so deduced from the Principles of Right Reason . . .

[More on the strict criteria to be applied to Scripture. Adulterated religion leads to atheism. He ends with an appeal to the Layman:]

And thus wee ingenuously crave the opinions of the more learned concerning our Queries, in as much as wee thinke it meet and right that Laicks should as they piously beleive some things, so in like manner piously doubt of some things.[9]

2. Quid Laicus . . .[10]

In Relligione quavis Rationem et Fidem prae caeteris Facultatibus spectabiles omne agnovit Saeculum. De ordine tamen quo usurpari debent necdum conventum est.

Quidam Fidem, alii Rationem praeponunt: Qui Ratione utuntur duce, Argumentum afferunt, quod inter varias quae diversis Saeculis, et Regionibus extitere vel in praesens extant Relligiones, haut aliter quam Ratione adhibita, de optima decerni nequeat. Omnes igitur quotquot unquam fuere, vel sunt conferri debere, ut delectu habito, certam compendiariamque ad salutem suam inveniat Laicus Viam.

Qui a Fidei partibus sunt, Ratione excussa factum satis existimant, modo Antistibus et Superioribus in Regione quam incolunt, Assensus praebeatur; Neque enim de Relligione optuma solliciti sunt, sed penes illos solos Verbum Dei, mediaque ad salutem aeternam existere credentes, reliqua sive superbe sive imprudenter reijciunt. Sed multa utroque modo sequuntur Incommoda. Si enim ad Relligionem optumam definiendam, singulae exquirendae ediscendaeque sunt, tum universum Orbem peragrare, tum innumeras callere linguas opportebit; Quod ut fieri posse detur, totumque in id impendi debere Aevum, haut tamen Officii sui in Conscientia fruetur Laicus, ullus si fortasse delitescat Author, aut ipse minimus Relligionis cujusvis in aliquo Mundi Angulo Articulus. Quid quod linguae Aegiptiaca, Hetruscaque quae mysteriorum olim faecundissimae, antiquatae jam et prorsus deperditae

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[9] The English MS adds a last sentence: "God grant that what wee have here written may turne to the enlargement of his Glory, and to the establishment of the common Peace."

[10] The Latin excerpts are followed by translations, with connecting passages in italics.

sint? Adeo ut heic quoque haerere necessum sit. Ut taceam interea homines se domi continere nequire, aut sumptus aliter erogare posse quam ut Nomadum more ubique vagarentur; et unusquisque in alienam ditionem alternatim, et quod magis est, impune abiret.

Sed neque iis qui Fidem tueri solent melior Conditio obtigit. Si enim hiisce omnibus postpositis unde optuma asseretur Relligio, precocem quandam in Relligione propria Fidem obtendere sat habuerint Laici, Quis non in unaquaque Ditione praeclare de Deo sive Lare suo merebit Gerulus, quisnam non Orthodoxa aget Relligio?

[Every age has acknowledged that, in any religion, *Reason* and *Faith* are to be considered before the other faculties. But as to the order in which they should be exercised, there is still no consensus.

Some put Faith first; others Reason.

Those who make Reason their guide put forward the argument that among the various Religions which have existed, and still exist, in different ages and areas, it is not possible to decide which is best except by adhering to Reason. All religions, therefore, as many as there have been and are, must be compared, so that the Layman can make his choice, and find a quick and certain path to his salvation.

Those who stand for Faith dismiss Reason and think it enough to give assent to the religious leaders and chiefs of their region. They do not worry about what is the best religion: they believe that the Word of God and the means to everlasting salvation lie with those men alone, and reject other matters - out of pride, or out of folly.

But many inconveniences follow either way. If, in order to distinguish the best, religions must be sought out and thoroughly investigated one by one, we must traverse the whole world, and acquire skill in innumerable languages; even granted the possibility of this - and it would require a whole lifetime spent on it - still the Layman cannot rest satisfied that he has fulfilled his duty if one author has chanced to slip past him, or the very slightest article of any religion in any corner of the world. What of the Egyptian and Etruscan languages, once so rich in mysteries, now obsolete, and actually lost? So much so that we are stuck, even here. To say nothing of the fact that men could not stay at home, or spend money on anything but ubiquitous travel, like Nomads; and that everyone should alternately enter foreign dominions, and - which is more - leave them in safety.

But those who look to Faith are in no better condition. If, laying aside everything by which one could claim to have the best religion, laymen held it sufficient to put forward some premature faith in their own religion, then what low person, in any part of the world, will not deserve the best from his god or guardian deity - what religion will not be orthodox?]

[He concludes that we must "favour them both", avoiding the "whirlpools of credulity" and the "rocks of controversy"]

In unaquaque Relligione igitur quae olim innotuit, vel in praesens innotescit, quaedam Rationis, quaedam Fidei documenta sunt. Qui autem ad Rationis normam diriguntur Articuli, haut in simplici tantum conjectura nituntur, sed tum ex aeternis quibusdam Caussis tum communi hominum voto, stabiliuntur et constant.

[Thus in any religion which has ever been known in the past, or is known in the present, some points relate to Reason, and some to Faith. The Articles which are drawn up according to the rule of Reason do not depend on simple guesswork alone, but are kept steady and stable by both the eternal Causes and the general desire of mankind.

[He lists the Five, stressing their universality. It is all right to add to them "traditions, ceremonies, rites, mysteries, revelations, initiations, etc.", provided that they do not get in the way, or assume undue importance. God has managed to keep men mindful of the Five despite everything; but it is better to take them in unadulterated form:]

. . . seu Amor Dei versus Humanum Genus ex Traditione aliqua (quantumvis inepta) suaderetur, sive horror scelerum ex diro aliquo sacrificio incuteretur, haut ita longe aberrabant, ut non impressa aliqua facta, nota inusta fuerit. Quam etiam ob causam articulos Religionis indubios ex recta et universali Ratione depromptos (etiam mediis controversiis et erroribus) colere, reliqua porro ex Ecclesiae Authoritate accipere et credere potius, quam Veritatibus Catholicis excidere debebant. Ut negari tamen non possit, quin sapientius fecerint, qui Relligionis partes ita ab invicem distinguebant; ut vera a verisimilibus, possibilibus, et falsis discriminarentur; aut si ardua nimis videretur Methodus, ut in Foro interiori saltem Veritatibus Catholicis fidem certam et exploratam, reliquis porro non ita certam tribuerint.

[whether it was that the love of God for the human race was conveyed by some tradition (however inept), or that the loathing of evil deed was inculcated by some dread sacrifice, they were not too far from the mark for some impression to be made, a sign burned in. And because of this they should honour the indisputable articles of religion, brought out by right and universal Reason, even amidst controversies and errors; and take the rest on the authority of the Church, and believe it, rather than lose the Catholic Truths. But it cannot be denied that they were the wiser ones who so distinguished the parts of religion from each other that they could judge truth from probability, possibility, and falsehood; or, if the method seemed too difficult, entrusted a firm and worked-out faith to the Catholic Truths in their conscience, and a less firm one to the rest.]

[The work ends with a long explication of the Five Articles]

Hae autem sunt Veritates Catholicae, ex quibus nullus non olim Deum colere potuit. Neque igitur vanum est Nomen D.O.M. aut vera illius Relligio conficta, aut Providentia ejus quovis saeculo vel Regione deficiens aut manca. Quantumvis igitur Divinae huic, et universali Relligioni Superstitiones et fabulas adjecerint nonnulli, et in immensam ita extulerint molem, licet alii etiam illam diminuerint quodammodo, et contraxerint, dum compendia ad salutem aeternam Ecclesiae alicujus Authoritate munita suggerunt; Cavendum tamen comprimis [sic] est, ne Veritates Catholicas laedant, vel eludant. Si enim ex Providentia Divina ubivis Gentium sanciuntur, et constant, Quid ni de Relligione perfectissima ac de Circulo statui possit, ut qui aliquid addiderit, vel dempserit, ejus formam vitiaverit, aut continuitatem solverit, integritatemque corruperit. Licet igitur quovis saeculo ex Ecclesiae Authoritate in subsidium venire possent complura Dogmata, Traditiones, Sacramenta, Ritus, Mysteria, haut illis tamen ita insistendum est, ut praeclarius aliquid Veritatibus Catholicis a Deo Opt. Max. datum universo humano generi existimet Laicus. Unde etiam totum orbem in iis quae sunt Relligionis ad concordiam adduci posse nullus dubitet. Quum enim de Principio Salutis nostrae scilicet Deo Opt. Max. et mediis beatiorem vitam [sic],[11] scilicet, virtute et Resipiscentia; et fine, scilicet, praemio, vel poena

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[11] The word "ad" has been omitted after "mediis".

conventum sit; haut satis viderit quorsum de Reliquis ita aspere litigetur; quum uti quaedam pie credi alia etiam pie ambigi possint.

[These are the Catholic Truths, by which everyone at every time could worship God. So God is not an empty name, nor is His true religion a fiction,nor is His Providence lacking or deficient in any age or area. However much some people may have added superstitions and fables to this divine and universal religion, and raised it into a huge pile; although others have actually reduced and squeezed it, offering guides to eternal salvation armed with the authority of some church; still we must beware, above all,[12] lest they should damage or evade the Catholic Truths. For if, thanks to Divine Providence, they are sanctioned and recognized among all races, why should the same not be said of perfect religion as of a circle? - whoever adds anything to it or takes anything away spoils its shape, breaks its coherence, and corrupts its wholeness. So although in every age, by ecclesiastical authority, a crowd of dogmata, traditions, sacraments, rites, and mysteries comes to its aid, they are not to be stressed so much that the Layman thinks God has given anything to mankind more glorious than the Catholic Truths. Let no one doubt that these can draw the whole world into harmony on points of religion. For since there is agreement on the principle of our salvation, that is God, and the means to a better life, that is virtue and repentance, and the end, that is reward or punishment, the Layman cannot see why there is such bitter dispute about the rest, seeing that, as some things may be piously believed, others may be piously left uncertain.]

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[12] "Comprimis": this seems to be an invention of Herbert's, by analogy with "imprimis".

Appendix III: Herbert's Translation from the "Discours de la Méthode"[1]

I know not whether I may entertaine you with my first Meditations; Since they are so Metaphisicall, and so rare, that it may bee they will not please the world. Yet to the end yt Men may judge if the grounds wch I have taken bee firme, I finde myselfe in a manner obligd to speake of them. I had long since observed yt as concerning Manners, wee are tied many times to follow those opinions wch we know to bee very uncertaine, as confidently as if they were most undoubted: (as I have before said) but because at yt time I desired to attend onely ye search of Truth, mee thought I was to doe the contrary, and to reject as absolutely false what could minister the least doubt; That so I might see whether after all this, there remained ought in my Beliefe wch was unquestionable.

Thus because our Senses sometimes deceive us; I resolved to suppose; That nothing was such as wee imagind it to bee: And because there are men wch mistake themselves in reasoning, and that touching even the most simple Conclusions of Geometry, and so runne into Paralogismes, I conceived myselfe to bee subject also to Error, and so rejected as false all the reasons and arguments wch I had formerly admitted for Demonstrations. And finally considering that whatsoever Thoughts wee have waking, may in like manner arrive to us when wee sleepe, when yet there is not one of them true; I resolved to imagine that whatever had heeretofore entered into my minde, was no more true then the Illusions of my dreames. But assoone as I observed that while I strove thus to thinke that all was false, it must necessarily bee true, that I wch thought it, must bee something; And marking that this Truth, **I thinke, therefore// I am**, was so firme, and assured, as not to bee shaken by the most extravagant Suppositions of the Sceptiques, I conceived that I might without scruple receive it for the first Principle of the Philosophy wch I sought.

Next, examining attentively **What I was**, and finding that I could faine myselfe to have no Bodie, and yt there were no World, nor place, whereby I should bee limited,[2] but for all this, that I could not faine that **I was not**; And on ye contrary part, from that very consideration, that I thought to doubt of the Truth of all things else, it followed most evidently, and most certainly, that **I was**: Whereas if I onely ceased to Thinke, though whatsoever I had heretofore imagined were True, yet I could have no Reason, nor Argument to prove that **I was**; but of this I understood, that I was a Beeing, whose whole essence, or nature is onely to **Thinke**; and wch to its existence needs no place, nor depends upon any thinge Materiall. So that I, (i.)[3] my **Soule**, whereby I am that I am, is wholy distinct from

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[1] Harvard Eng MS 995 = BL Microfilm M/471. This translation comprises the Fourth Part of the Discours and the beginning of the Fifth. It is written out neatly, but is not a final copy (the square brackets are original: Herbert had not yet apparently decided what to do with these passages). It has no date.

Some words and phrases are written in noticeably larger letters; I have represented this by bold lettering. The page-breaks are represented by //.

[2] Herbert here expands the French: "je pouvais feindre . . . qu'il n'y avait aucun monde ni aucun lieu où je fusse". Perhaps the translator, with his particularly acute sense of "place", found this more than he could imagine imagining.

[3] "(i.)" or "i." is Herbert's abbreviation for "id est".

the Body; and easier to be knowne then it; and that though the Body were not at all, the Soule yet should not cease to bee what it is.

After this, I considered in generall what is requird to a proposition that it be True, and Certaine; For since I had now found out one wch I knew to bee such, methought I was bound to inquire also wherein consisted this Certainty; And finding that in all this, **I thinke therefore I am**, there is nothing to assure mee that I say true, but this onely, that I see most cleerely that whatsoever Thinkes, must first Bee, I passed my judgment that I might take it as a generall Rule, That **the things wch wee conceive very evidently, and // distinctly are all True**; But onely that there remaines some difficulty to marke well, and rightly wch they are, wch wee[4] doe evidently conceive.

In pursuit whereof reflecting [on my former Thoughts, and considering] that I doubted [of some thinges] whereby it followed that my Being was not fully perfect (for I perceivd clearely that it was a greater perfection to know then to doubt) I sett myselfe to inquire whence I learnt to thinke of any thinge more perfect then myselfe, and I knew evidently that this must bee from some Nature wch was in effect more perfect As concerning the Thoughts wch I had of diverse thinges without myselfe i. of Heaven, Earth, Light, Heate, and a Thousand others, I was in no great paine to know whence they proceded, for seeing in them nothing why I should acknowledge them my Betters, I might thinke, that if they were True, they were Dependances, or Appurtenances of my Nature, in as much as it had some Perfection; And if they were not, that I held them from nought; i. that they were in mee inasmuch as I was subject to Imperfection, or Defect. But I could not thinke thus of the Idea of a Being more perfect then myselfe; for to hold this Idea, or derive it from nought or Nonentity, I saw manifestly was a thinge impossible. And because it implied no lesse Contradiction, That the more perfect bee the dependance of the lesse Perfect, then that something proceed from nothing, I found that I could not hold, or derive the said Idea from myselfe; So yt it remaind, that it was put into mee by a Nature wch was Truely more Perfect then ~~myselfe~~ and wch had in it selfe, All Perfections of wch I could have any Idea; And this to speake one Word is God.//

To this consideration I added, That since I knew certain Perfections of wch I was not owner, I was not the onely Essence existing; (that I may have leave to use freely the Schoole words) but that there must needs bee some other more perfect, of whom I depended, and derived whatsoever I enjoyed: For had I bin alone, and so independant as to have from myselfe all that little Perfection wch I was possessed of, I could aswell by the same reason have had from myselfe all the Surplus, wch I found was wanting to mee; and so I should have bin Infinite, Eternall, Immutable, Allwise, All-mighty, and finally enjoyed all the perfections I could observe in God. For poursuing the Argument wch I began, to search out the nature of **God**, as farre as my nature was capable; I was onely to consider of all the Thinges whereof I found some Idea in myselfe, whether the fruition, or possession of them were a Perfection, or no. And I was assured That some of them wch noted some Imperfection were not in him, but all the rest were. As I saw hee could not bee subject to doubt, Inconstance, Sadnes, and the Like, since I myselfe could wish to bee exempt from them.

After this, I had besides the Ideas [or Imaginations] of diverse sensible, and Bodily thinges: For though I should suppose that all was but Fantasticall, and that whatsoever I saw, or imagined was false, yet for all that I could not deny that those Ideas were truly in my

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[4] Carets around word.

minde; But becaue I had alreadie perceived clearely in myselfe that the Understanding Nature is distinct from the Bodily, considering that all Composition argues Dependance, and that Dependance// is a manifest Defect, I judged hence, That it could bee no Perfection in **God** to bee composed of two Natures, and consequently that hee was not so composed. But that if there were any Bodies in the World, or any [minds or] Intelligences, or other Natures wch were not fully Perfect, their Being must depend of His Power, in such sort as without Him they could not survive one Moment.

After this, I undertooke the search of other Truths, and proposing for myselfe the Object of Geometry wch I conceived as a continued Body, or Space indefinitely extended in Length, Bredth, and Thicknes, divisible into diverse parts, capable of various figures, and greatnes, and wch might bee moved, and transposed all manner of wayes, (For the Geometers suppose all this in their object) I ran through some of the most simple Demonstrations; and having marked well that the great certaintie wch all the World allowes those Demonstrations, hath no other Foundation then that men Conceive them evidently according to the Rule wch I spake of even now; I observed also that there was in them nothing at all wch might assure mee of the existence of their Object. For to instance, I well saw that a Triangle being supposed, its three Angles must needs bee equall to Two Right; But for all this I saw nothing wch might assure mee that there was any Triangle in the world: Whereas coming againe to examine the Idea, or Conceipt wch I had of a Perfect Being; I found that in it Existence was comprised in the same manner as in the Conceipt of a Triangle, this Truth is comprehended, That its Three Angles are equall to Two Right. Or in the conceipt of a Sphere this, That all its// parts are equally distant from the Center, or rather more evidently. And hence it followed, That the Being, or Existence of GOD, wch is this Perfect Essence, is at least no lesse certaine then any Geometricall Demonstration can bee.

But the cause why many men perswade themselves, that it is a hard matter to knowe **God**, and the nature of their Soule, is, that they never advance their Spirit above those thinges wch are apprehended by Sense, and that they are so accustomed to consider nothing without taking it into their Imagination (wch is the proper way for thinges materiall onely to come into our mindes), that whatsoever is not imaginable, is by them esteemed unintelligible: wch is manifest in that the Philosophers themselves in the Schooles hold as a Maxime, That there is nothing in the Understanding but what was formerly in the Sense; where yet it is most certaine, that the Ideas of **God**, and ~~of~~ the Soule have never bene: And it seemes to mee that they who will make use of their Imagination to apprehend them, doe as if they went about to heare Sounds, or smell perfumes with their eyes. Onely there is this Difference, that the Sense of Sight assures us of the Truth of its Object no lesse then doe those of hearing, and smelling; Whereas neither our Imagination, nor our Sense can ever assure us of any thinge if our Understanding doe not intervene.

Finally, if there bee yet men not sufficiently perswaded of the Existence of **God**, and their Soule, by the reasons wch I have alleged, I would have them know, that all other thinges, whereof perhaps they thinke themselves most assured,// as that they have a Body, that there are Starrs, an Earth &c. are lesse certain. For notwithstanding wee have a morall Assurance of these matters, wch is that wee cannot doubt of them under paine to bee held extravagant; yet when there shalbe question of a Metaphisicall Certainty, no man under paine of being accounted unreasonable, can deny but that there is ground enough given to doubt of those thinges, Since it may bee noted that a man in his sleepe may imagine himselfe to have another Bodie, That hee sees other Starres, another Earth &c. Whereas none of all this is so. For how know wee that the Thoughts wch wee have in our Dreames are more false then the rest, since they bee many times altogether as lively, and quick? And let the best witts

study this as long as they list, I believe they shalbe able to render no sufficient reason to solve the Doubt, unlesse they first suppose the Existence of **God**.

For first, even that wch erewhile I tooke for a Rule, i, That those thinge wch wee conceived most clearly, and most distinctly, are all True; hath no assurance but this, That God is, and that Hee is a Perfect Beeing; and that whatsoever is in us proceeds from Him; Whence it follows, That our Ideas, or Notions being Reall Thinges, and wch come from God, as farre forth as they are cleare, and distinct, cannot but bee True. So that if wee have of those many times diverse wch partake of Falshood, they are of the race of those onely wch contein in themselves something// confused, and obscure, by reason that herein they participate of Nullity, that is they are so confused in us, because wee are not fully Perfect. And it is evident yt it implies no lesse Contradiction, that Imperfection, or Falshood (as such) should proceed from ~~Nothing~~ **God**, then yt Truth, or Perfection should proceed from nothing. But if wee knew not that All wch is Reall, and True in us, comes from an Essence Perfect, and Infinite, Let our Ideas, or Notions bee never so cleare, and distinct, wee could have no Reason to Assure us that they had the Perfection to bee True.

Now after the knowledge of God, and our Soule, hath given us such Assurance of this Rule, it is easy to understand that the Fancies wch represent themselves to us whilest wee sleepe, ought not at all to make us doubt the Truth of our Thoughts when wee wake. For if it so fall out that even in Sleepe wee have any Idea, or conceipt very distinct, for example, That a Geometer finde out some new Demonstration, his Sleepe shall not prejudice the Truth heereof. As for the Error most ordinary in our Dreames, wch represents to us diverse Objects in the same manner as our outward Senses doe, it forceth not that wee take occasion thence to mistrust the Truth of such Ideas; Inasmuch as they may after the same sort many times deceive us, though wee sleepe not.[5] As when those wch have the Iaundice see all thinges yellow, or when the Starres, or other Bodies by reason of their// great distance appeare unto us smaller then they are. For to Conclude, bee it that wee Wake, or bee it that wee Sleepe, wee ought never to suffer ~~them~~ ourselves by any perswasion to bee carried beyond the evidence of our Reason; And I would have it observd that I say of our Reason, and not of our Imagination, or Sense; Although wee see the Sun most cleerely, yet wee ought not for all that to judge him to bee no greater then our Eye apprehends him; And wee may imagine distinctly, a Lions head fastined on the Body of a Goat, without that wee ought thence to conclude that the world hath such a thinge as a **Chimere**; For Reason tells us not that what wee see, or imagine so, is True; But it informes us That all our Ideas, or Notions must have some Foundation of Truth; It being not possible else that God wch is All-perfect, and All-True should have put them into us. And whereas our Reasonings are never so evident, nor so entire while wee Sleepe, as while wee Wake, though many times our Imaginations are then no lesse if not more lively, and expresse; Reason tells us also that our our [sic] Thoughts, since they cannot all bee true, because wee are not fully perfect, whatsoever Truth they have must infallibly bee found rather in those' wch wee have waking then in our Dreames.[6]

I would bee glad heere to goe on, and shew the whole Chaine of other Truths, wch I drew out of those already sett downe; But because to doe so, it were necessary yt I spake of diverse Questions Controverted among the learned// with whom I would not willingly

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[5] Cp. De Veritate, p. 23 = Carré, pp. 101-2 for a very similar argument about dreams.

[6] The Fifth Part begins here.

clash; I conceive it better to let them alone, and to say onely in generall what they are, that so I may give leave to wise men to judge whether it bee convenient that ye Publique bee more particularly informed thereof, or no.

I continued still firme in the Resolution wch I had taken, wch was, To suppose no other Principle then that wch I made use of to Demonstrate the Existence of **God**, and the Soule, and to admitt nothing for Truth wch seemed not unto mee more cleare, and certaine then Geometricall Demonstrations had done: And yet I am bold to say, That in a small time I have not onely found the meanes to satisfy myselfe concerning all the Principall Difficulties commonly handled in Philosophy; But also that I have observed certaine Lawes wch God hath so established in Nature, and whereof Hee hath likewise imprinted such Notions in our Soule, that having once made sufficient Reflexion thereon, wee cannot possibly doubt but yt they are exactly observed in all things wch the World containes, or produceth. Afterwards considering the Consequents of those Lawes, methought I had discovered many Truths of more Profitt, and Importance, then all whatsoever I either apprehended before, or hoped to apprehend.

But because I tooke upon mee to lay downe, and unfold the said Principles in a Discourse, wch for some considerations I have forborne to publish, I cannot// give further notice of them, then by telling briefly the Contents thereof &c.

Appendix IV: Herbert, Mersenne, and the "Axiomata"

Like almost everyone who has ever described the Herbert-Mersenne connexion, I have avoided all mention of the most peculiar document: a manuscript, headed "Notiones Communes circa Relligionem", written in Herbert's hand, found by Rossi and attributed by him to Mersenne.[1] He made this attribution because, in the second of Herbert's letters to Mersenne, there is a mention of "Axiomata tua circa communes notiones, ad Relligionem spectantes".

> The paper begins with are four general "Notiones", as follows:
>
> Prima non existere in hoc mundo, neue tamen a nobis ipsis compactos esse, sed ab aliquo, qui singulas partes probè noverit, ex quibus componimur, putà Cartilagines, Arterias, Nervos, Vaenas, etc. ipsum animum insuper addiderit, qui partes istas huc illuc moveat, et pro libito transferat.
>
> Quemlibet Hominem huic Authorj suo gratias agere debere, et quodlibet obsequium praestare, statim atque noverit, quem sibi Cultum ab homine velit exhiberj; Si vero nullum Cultum declaret, ad sapientes cultus illius Institutionem, atque prescriptionem, non ad insipientes attinere.
>
> Posse nobis aliquem Cultum ab Authore nostro praescribj, quo illum ut par est, veneremur, eoque nobis Imposito Conscientiam obstringi, et nefas esse ab eo resilire.
>
> Posse illum Authorem singularem hominem edocere [et] in aliorum hominum Doctorem, atque Legislatorem instit[u]ere, cuj teneamur obsequi illiusque verbis firmissime crede[re] prout Author ille jusserit.[2]

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[1] He published the paper, with commentary, in Deismo, pp. 47-50. The MS is in NLW Powis Bequest 1959, Parcel XIX.

[2] Deismo, p. 47: "There are no original elements in this world [? this seems to be the sense], yet neither were we put together by ourselves, but by someone with true knowledge of the individual parts of which were are composed - the cartilege, arteries, nerves, veins, etc.; he added to these a mind, which could move those parts this way and that, and shift them at pleasure.

"Every man must give thanks to this Creator of his, and perform whatever worship He wishes man to offer to him, as soon as he knows it; if none is declared, he should go to the wise, not the foolish, for the establishment and regulation of worship.

"Some worship may be prescribed for us by our Creator, by which we are to venerate

These are followed by twenty-seven more particular "Postulata", of an eloquently rationalist nature:

> Proximam et immediatam credendi Obligationem, non a revelatione, sed a Rationis, seu Conscientiae dictamine proficiscj, ac pendere, Ita ut nullus unquam teneatur, aut etiam tutò credere possit, nisi Ratio concluserit, edixeritque Conscientia credendum esse.[3]

They do not look Herbertian: there is no mention of the five Articles, no attacks on the clergy, and much more general scepticism. But can they really be by Mersenne?

Rossi thought so, and he was followed by the editors of the Correspondance (who reprinted his text). The attribution is not denied by Lenoble, either; but then, although he praises Rossi's work in his Preface (it appeared when his own book was at the press), and adds a few pages drawn from it on the relationship with Herbert,[4] he makes no mention of the paper at all. Perhaps he felt that it was not easy to reconcile it with his picture of Mersenne; this would not be surprising. For it is surprising to find a priest in the first half of the seventeenth century insisting that every man must be guided by his own judgment, and if he does so, is not obliged to believe anything particular - including the existence of God:

> Eum qui nequidem potest Dej assentirj existentiae, quidquid tandem meditetur, et agat, ad nihil aliud obligari, quam ad illud quod proprium rationis tribunal

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him; our conscience is bound by this, and it is unlawful to transgress it.

"That Creator may instruct one man, and make him the teacher and law-giver for other men, whom we are bound to obey, and in whose words we are bound to have firm trust, as that Creator has ordained it."

[3] Deismo, pp. 48-9: "The proximate and immediate Obligation to believe derives from, and depends on, not revelation, but Reason, or the dictates of Conscience. So that no one is ever bound, or even safely able, to believe, unless Reason has decided and Conscience has declared that he should." Rossi seems to have identified the "Axiomata" as the "Common Notions": it is surely more likely that, if the letter does refer to this paper, the "Axiomata" are the "Postulata" - statements about the Notions.

[4] Lenoble, Mersenne, pp. viii, 562-3.

cogitandum, faciendumve praescripserit[5]

Rossi's attempt to make the "Postulata" sound more orthodox than De Veritate - by claiming that they envisage only one true religion - is exposed by the text:

> Unde sequitur quamcunque Relligionem, quatenus ex Rationis praescripto recipitur, esse rationalem, et naturalem . .[6]

There are in fact three possibilities. The first is that Herbert wrote the paper himself: this seems most unlikely on internal evidence. The second is that he did not, and that it has no connexion with Mersenne either: this is quite possible, but uneconomical with the facts, given the letter to Mersenne. There remains the possibility that the letter and the paper are related. This may be subdivided: either Mersenne wrote the paper, or he had some other connexion with it. The only evidence for his authorship is the single word "tua", added with a caret; it seems rather slender, for such a burden of proof. It is, after all, possible that "tua" meant only "those Axiomata you mentioned" - or even "those Axiomata sent to you". Certainly Mersenne was a cleric with an unusually wide range of friends, and was quite audacious in encouraging them; but it would be a very different thing to inaugurate a daring movement himself, and there seems to be no parallel case. The whole issue ought to be examined by a Mersenne scholar. Meanwhile, I confine the subject to an appendix.

There is no positive proof that the paper Rossi found was that referred to in Herbert's letter at all; still, since his discovery seems not to be by Herbert, it remains a strong

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[5] Deismo, p. 50: "He who, cannot even believe in the existence of God, whatever he finally intends and does has no obligations beyond what the tribunal of his own reason prescribes to be thought or done."

[6] Deismo, p. 50: "Whence it follows that any Religion, in so far as it is taken from the command of Reason, is rational, and natural". This applies also to the palliating description of them by Gawlick, in his Introduction to the DV facsimile, p. XXVII: "Es ist ein interessantes Dokument der christlichen Religionsphilosophie" (etc.): the name of Christ is never mentioned.

possibility. In that case, something can be salvaged: whatever his own opinions, Mersenne desired to include as many savants as he could in the exchange of letters and new ideas - and he was prepared to circulate new ideas about religion, as well as physics.

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[1] This lists only MSS cited in the text. Where possible, I have supplied the reference in Beal (catalogued as "HrE" with the number).

[2] These bequests transferred most of the material previously housed in Powis Castle (some of it went to the Public Record Office).

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