

HERBERT'S *THE TEMPLE* AS EARLY MODERN PSYCHOMACHIA

ONE DOES not get very far into the second and by far largest section of George Herbert's *The Temple* ("The Church") before the exhortations of the speaker in the previous "Church Porch" and the early Lenten "complaints" of Christ in "The Sacrifice" turn to some of the most basic and unpredictable elements of the human condition: strife, grief, puzzlement, joy. The churchgoer finds that his entrance in has led to a more, not less, complicated state of affairs. She finds herself caught in the oscillation between a peaceable state and one characterized by strife. Even Christ, Herbert writes elsewhere, experienced this irregular oscillation.¹ If Christ, then certainly his followers.

We tend to attribute such twists and turns to poetic consciousness, supremely evident in Herbert's restless formal innovations and in the quick shifts between and within poems. But Herbert's reference to Christ and his followers suggests something more fundamental for him. The question I wish to pursue in this essay is whether Herbert's poetic consciousness also has an anthropological consistency and rhetorical precedent. The answer to that question also has implications for Herbert's relationship to his reader. I will argue that Herbert leads the reader not only to recognize the interplay of joy and strife within "The Church," a sharply personal task, but also to practice navigating, and responding to, the quick shifts that occur between them. Such practice and the recognition which it depends upon are essential to the temple-building Herbert takes to be the calling of the churchgoer, whose joys and temptations do not look very different from his own. After laying out contrasting ways of reading Herbert's poems for their "inner weather" or their social intent, I take up two elements addressed in *The Country Parson* and at work in *The Temple* that challenge such a contrast: the "double state of the Christian" and the importance of the temple as an image for identity-formation. The early Christian *Psychomachia* describes a similar "double state," though it does not find the language to do so until the very end of the poem.

Prudentius's poem also sets a similar goal — for the reader as for the personified Virtues — of the building of a temple. Recent Prudentius studies suggest that the *Psychomachia*, entering our general vocabulary as "(Psychology), conflict of the soul,"² was more about the civic identity of Christians than has often been supposed. That is

a good reminder for our study of Herbert, too, that the personal need not be exclusively private.

This reading of *The Temple* requires an acceptance of certain preconceptions: belief that an author's prose can be brought to bear, carefully, upon our understanding of his or her poetry³; a theoretical readiness to understand rhetoric and poetry as meaningfully united practices instead of incongruous ones⁴; and a willingness to read Herbert backward in time (we know his interest in the early Christian period) as well as forward. These preconceptions suggest the importance of poetry as a sophisticated human exchange, deeply personal and at the same time importantly social, trying to get something done.

I. PERSONAL AND PUBLIC

DESPITE what is sometimes made of Herbert's deathbed instructions and the later addition of "Sacred Poems and Private Ejaculations" to his title page,⁵ it is clear that Herbert did not distinguish between public and private responsibilities as sharply as later Western society does. Charles Taylor argues that our contemporary sense of self is filtered through modernity "to emphasize our independence and pull us toward an inward focus and an emphasis on feeling and sentiment."⁶ But Herbert is not so far removed from Quintilian's goal that the person, not just the process, become rhetorical, which includes interest in persuading an audience.⁷ The rhetorical mind that informs Herbert's work as Cambridge orator, Parliament member, and pastor is not just a skill he honed, but a way of being, something that he could not have laid aside, or wished to lay aside, while writing poetry. There are at least two reasons to say so.

First, whether we read the poems in *The Temple* as laying down steps in a journey or as repeating a characteristic strategy, we recognize the highly worked interconnections of the volume, marked by divisions and characterized by sequences and networks. Herbert's model is Scripture, itself a text marked by a long history of being read in both personal and social contexts: "Seeing not onely how each verse doth shine," Herbert writes, "But all the constellations of the storie" — "Holy Scripture" (II). Herbert's interest in "constellation" and "storie" reflect his desire to present an ensemble, a whole-in-progress, the formation of a particular kind of identity. To the internal linkages between poems, we could add the poems' many connections to public life: church architecture, the liturgical year, devotional reading, music, commerce, and language. These suggest a larger story within which writer and readers might locate themselves. That larger story integrates

an inward pull and private feeling with public ritual and concern. This integration leads in a different direction than the supposed individualism of the Reformation or the later attempt to separate rhetoric from aesthetics.

Second, Herbert's strong sense of vocation marks an interest in writing for a public good.⁸ In *The Country Parson* Herbert instructs the parson to urge everyone either to work in or to prepare for a vocation, this being essential not only for the individual, created with both hands and mind for such use, but also for the well-being of family, parish, district, even nation (Chapter 32). To suppose that Herbert thought of his poetry as a private exercise is to suppose that he thought of it as a release from vocation. Yet the two New Year's Day sonnets he sent to his mother when he was sixteen and his "Dedication" to *The Temple* strongly suggest his sense of a calling to poetry, a calling he felt longer than his calls to Parliament or to ministry.⁹

To these two arguments for Herbert's writing a rhetorical poetry — his sense of poetic vocation and his desire to create a book of poems which would function on the model of Scripture — we should add his interest in the early Christian era. This interest also serves as a counterweight to absorbing Herbert too easily into the late Modern sense of self that Taylor describes. As to Herbert's historical and intellectual context, A. M. Allchin points to the "massive effort" of people like Richard Hooker and Lancelot Andrewes "to recover something of the balance and openness of the first Christian centuries." Allchin continues, "It was in such a school of thought, which sought to escape from the increasing rigidity of current controversies by an appeal to the method and spirit of the early Christian centuries, that George Herbert was formed" (xii). Herbert's personal interest in the early Christian era is often linked to Augustine, whose *Works* were included in his will.¹⁰ Esther Gilman Richey argues for the influence of Eusebius (86) and states, more generally, that "patristic texts allowed Herbert to pursue a Reformed agenda and, at the same time, to maintain his conformist stance and sacramental vision" (94, n.42). This interest in the early Christian world is evident, both early and late, in Herbert's poetry. In the opening lines of the 1610 "New Year Sonnet" (1), he writes, "My God, where is that ancient heat towards thee, / Wherewith whole shoals of Martyrs once did burn . . . ?" The need for revision of the present can be seen not only in the sixteen-year-old's poem but also in Herbert's late poem "The Forerunners":

Farewell sweet phrases, lovely metaphors,
But will ye leave me thus? When ye before

RENASCENCE

Of stews and brothels only knew the doors,
Then did I wash you with my tears, and more,
 Brought you to Church well drest and clad:
My God must have my best, ev'n all I had.

That “ev’n all I had” should be read in more than the psychological terms which “tears” might suggest. This late poem shows the same revisionary impulse — or mandate — as the early sonnet. It required effort as well as desire. In *The Country Parson*, Herbert recognized the church Fathers as an important resource for addressing contemporary needs. Having already mentioned them in Chapter 4, “The Parsons Knowledge,” Herbert opens Chapter 5, “The Parsons Accessory Knowledges,” by listing the church Fathers first: “The Countrey Parson hath read the Fathers also, and the Schoolmen, and the later Writers, or a good proportion of all.” Herbert’s historical context, his early and late poems, and his instructions in *The Country Parson* all suggest that he found in the early Christian centuries a resource for measuring and revising the insufficiencies of contemporary life. As with his strong sense of poetic vocation and his desire to create a book of poems that would function on the model of Scripture, Herbert’s interest in the early Christian era points to a goal larger than the expression of inner tensions.

And yet, the point of this opening is not to pit the personal against the public but to see them together. At the same time as the public, rhetorical character of Herbert’s poetry deepens its claims beyond the mere exhibition of a complex human consciousness, the range of emotion it exhibits — or performs — is what draws us in. Both pleasure and pain deepen memory. When I read “Temper” (I), I breathe a little “thank you” that God, since the poem presents itself as a prayer of petition, did not accede to Herbert’s prayer that his soul would always feel the joyful sense of participation it sometimes feels. I am drawn to the frank courage of the second of these two opening stanzas.

How should I praise thee, Lord! How should my rhymes
 Gladly engrave thy love in steel,
 If what my soul doth feel sometimes,
 My soul might ever feel!

Although there were some forty heav’ns, or more,
 Sometimes I peer above them all;
 Sometimes I hardly reach a score,
 Sometimes to hell I fall.

The exclamation and praise expressed in the opening quatrain is cast in

the subjunctive mood, as Richard Strier notes, marking as hypothetical the continuing expansion of the rich and joyful experience to which line 3 attests (228). Some indication of Herbert's desire to hold that experience steady — and the cost of its slipping away — can already be heard in the preceding line, whose final foot ("in steel") sounds like a gritting of teeth even as it promises a monumental engraving. (In later stanzas, cost and desire will become more explicit in "O rack me not" and "O let me roost and nestle.") The second quatrain also starts out in the subjunctive ("Although there were some forty heavens"), but it quickly moves to the indicative, picking up the "sometimes" of the opening stanza (l. 3) in its final three parallel clauses: "Sometimes I peer above . . . / Sometimes I hardly reach . . . / Sometimes I fall." The strict parallelism supports not only the widest possible range of spiritual emotion but also the inevitability of unwelcome change.

Let these two stanzas represent the keen inwardness of Herbert's poetry — in the "Temper" and "Affliction" poems most famously, but almost everywhere. Can a poetry of such inwardness at the same time have a public and rhetorical aim? I will argue that it does have just such an aim: the formation of a Christian identity not despite but through what Herbert calls "the double state of the Christian," one "peaceable" and the other "military" (Chs. 33 & 34).¹¹ The movement between the two is an irregular oscillation whose timing is unique to person and situation but whose challenge is experienced by all.

This helps explain Herbert's emphasis on strife. Despite their radical differences in genre and address, both *The Temple*, in its "Dedication," and the *The Country Parson*, in its opening "Note," encourage a helpful strife. "Strife" seems an odd choice for a short introduction. But in the "Note" Herbert writes that it is "a good strife" to aim at "the Form and Character of a true Pastor." Herbert sets for himself this "Mark to aim at." But he invites others to complete the work: "The Lord prosper the intention to myself, and others, who may not despise my poor labors but add to those points, which I have observed." Then he adds, "until the Book grow to a complete Pastoral." Both Hutchinson and Wall refer "Pastoral" to Samuel Johnson's dictionary definition as a "Book relating to the cure of souls." This characterizes the goal of the pastor's "good strife" and rightly places it within the long tradition of "the cure of the soul."¹² The work engages him now and challenges his future efforts at character-formation. Expanded by others' observations, it will grow into a complete Pastoral. That is, strife must be recognized and engaged to bring about healing. He prays for this goal.

In Herbert's "Dedication" to *The Temple*, a good strife is set, in the first place, between the poems and the poet: "Accept of them and me, / And make us strive, who shall sing best thy name." The focus is futural, marking a competition between finished poems and unfinished life, emphasizing what the poems might provoke in him. The next line, "Turn their eyes hither, who shall make a gain," opens the effort to a larger group of readers, who, like him, will seek to rival the poems with their lives. Similar to the way "strife" relates to Pastoral ("cure") in *The Country Parson's* "Note," so here "striv[ing]" is related to "making a gain." Those who cannot strive for such gain, who would only "hurt themselves or me" — those should be cautious, or even "refrain," lest they have a detrimental performance (or non-performance) of the poems. There is no category for neutral appreciation of the poems as self-standing artifacts reflecting the complexity of human consciousness. The poetry, like the prose, presents and encourages — in its lyric form makes repeatable — a good strife.¹³ This raises a question about how we conceptualize the reading of poetry.

II. WHAT IS READING FOR?

AS READERS of complex poetic texts, we enjoy the "gorgeous blossoming of consciousness" (Robinson 143) that we project for the author and observe unfolding in ourselves as we follow the pull of phrase, line, and word. It intimates something larger than we have yet grasped and at the same time assures us of the depth of our human consciousness. If we call this thought, it is the kind of thought that goes beyond our usual notion of it, involved as it is with rhythm, feeling, and surprise. It seems to be what contemporary novelist Marilynne Robinson praises as that thought which "elaborates itself, finding its way to conclusion, recruiting memory, bias, and mood among other things, all more or less persistent, most of them unconscious and unarticulable." Robinson continues, "Our singularity lies above all in the negotiations the mind makes with itself" (90-91). Such negotiations are performed with restless formal innovation in Herbert's poetry. His poetry presents a good test case for whether and under what condition poetry can be both intimately personal and profoundly social, both keenly aesthetic and thoroughly rhetorical, open both to psycho-aesthetic and to more anthropological readings.

A. An Interior Landscape

Throughout the twentieth century, Herbert was read primarily for

the quick shifts in interior landscape that his poems expressed. The poet who opens the first three stanzas of "Easter" with imperatives that function like exclamations, "Rise heart; thy Lord is risen. Sing his praise / Without delays" and "Awake, my lute, and struggle for thy part / With all thy art" and, the command which sounds most celebratory of all, "Consort both heart and lute, and twist a song / Pleasant and long" — this same poet is capable in "Affliction" (II) and "Affliction" (IV) of opening salvoes that function like desperate prayers to fend off God and self-consciousness: "Kill me not ev'ry day, / Thou Lord of life" and "Broken in pieces all asunder, / Lord, hunt me not, / A thing forgot." The short returns in the "Affliction" poems closely resemble those in "Easter," but to opposite effect. The radical shift between "Easter" and these two "Affliction" poems is not unique to them but frequent. Herbert "[m]ost typically . . . shifts the affective tone between the ending of one poem and the beginning of the next," John Bienz notes, taking for his example the calm assurance with which the second "H. Baptisme" ends and the emotional turbulence with which "Nature" begins: "Childhood is health" followed by "Full of rebellion, I would die." Or note, Bienz says (9), the "tortured ambivalence" with which the first "Affliction (I)" ends and the "unmixed contrition" with which the next poem, "Repentance," begins. These quick shifts happen not only between but often within poems. "Decay," for instance, begins "Sweet were the days" but ends with "all things burn." Or, to show the opposite kind of movement, the first three stanzas of "Vertue" begin by addressing the day, rose, or spring as "Sweet" but end with "must die" while the fourth and final stanza shifts to the soul which "though the whole world turn to coal, / Then chiefly lives."

Herbert's ability to hold such contraries together won him a renewed interest in the twentieth century. Here is Eliot in 1921: "Our civilization comprehends great variety and complexity, and this variety and complexity, playing upon a refined sensibility, must produce various and complex results. The poet must become more and more comprehensive, more allusive, more indirect . . ." (65). Eliot's championing of the Metaphysical poets in the first half of the twentieth century shifts emphasis from Donne to Herbert by the last half of the century.¹⁴ Though Eliot has the Modernist poet in mind, his statement also introduces the decade of Joyce's and Woolf's great novels of consciousness: *Ulysses* in 1922 and *Mrs. Dalloway* and *To the Lighthouse* in 1925 and 1927, respectively. Complexity acting upon a modern sensibility, and a modern sensibility acting upon it: this became such a high value that articulating the twists and turns, the alertness of con-

sciousness, sometimes became a goal unto itself, an aesthetic and even a spiritual goal.

Such an interest in consciousness pre-dates the Modernists, to be sure. Catherine L. Hobbs places it as early as the eighteenth century. In *Rhetoric on the Margins of Modernity*, Hobbs states, "A modern view is to detach language and rhetoric from the social life of a community, privatizing both, as the individual and his interior perception of reality become more important" (161). Even when the active character of language is recognized, "the energy from that insight is often channeled into the activity of private expression, that is, representation of an interior landscape" (162). John Stuart Mill, writing not quite a century after the late eighteenth-century rise of aesthetics, thought this focus on private expression was especially true of poetry. In "Thoughts on Poetry and Its Varieties" (1860), he writes what later will get referenced in many forms, "eloquence is *heard*; poetry is *overheard*" (348). He elaborates, "Eloquence is feeling pouring itself out to other minds, courting their sympathy, or endeavoring to influence their belief, or move them to passion or to action." On the other hand, "Poetry is feeling confessing itself to itself in moments of solitude, and embodying itself in symbols which are the nearest possible representations of the feeling in the exact shape in which it exists in the poet's mind" (349; qtd in Sell 26). Eloquence moves outward, toward persuasion; poetry inward, toward feeling.

Much modern criticism has read Herbert's poetry as if from Mill's privileged position of overhearer, allowed to witness the workings of an interior landscape. Aldous Huxley notes the "inner weather" of Herbert's mind in his 1932 *Texts & Pretexts*: "The climate of the mind is positively English in its variableness and instability. Frost, sunshine, hopeless drought and refreshing rains succeed one another with bewildering rapidity. Herbert is the poet of this inner weather" (12). F. E. Hutchinson, who quotes this passage in the "Introduction" to his 1941 edition of Herbert's *Works*, adds his own psychological explanation: "[Herbert] is resilient and passes quickly from fits of depression to reassurance" (lxix). In his "Commentary" section, Hutchinson combines psychological and aesthetic judgement: "Herbert's recovery from depression often marks the conclusion of a poem which begins in sadness; sometimes the recovery is only reached . . . in a succeeding poem [arguing that "The Bag" fulfills "Longing"]" (530).

In the 1970s, Helen Vendler, attentive to the "Mozartian inventiveness of [Herbert's] verse" (100), introduces her *Poetry of George Herbert* by saying that she will "offer a reading of Herbert which sees as the primary subject of his poems the workings of his own mind

and heart rather than the expression of certain religious beliefs" (4). She adds, in a judgment that fits Mill's generalization above, "To approach such private poetry as an exercise in public communication with an audience is to misconstrue its emphasis" (5). Vendler describes the complexity of Herbert's writing in a way reminiscent of early Eliot's emphasis on the paradoxical, referring to an unresolved internal battle between anxiety (desiring the familiar) and aggression (demanding critique). "The artless borrowed beginning soon becomes the scrutinized personal statement," Vendler writes (56). Herbert, in this view, is instructive because he remains open to the jostling of two nearly equal but opposing sides of himself.¹⁵ "He seems to have existed," Vendler writes, "in a permanent reversible equilibrium between the two extremes of tradition and originality, diffidence and protest, the filial and the egotistic. His poems do not 'resolve' these extremes into one attitude; rather, they permit successive and often mutually contradictory expressions of the self as it explores the truth of feeling. At any moment, a poem by Herbert can repudiate itself, correct itself, rephrase itself, rethink its experience, reinvent its topic" (56). The modern world is fascinated by such a protean consciousness. Perhaps that is what leads Vendler to speculate, "If the gist of Walton's report in his *Life* of Herbert is correct . . . , to give 'a picture of . . . many spiritual conflicts' was Herbert's essential intent, and the notion of a 'dejected poor soul[s]' deriving comfort from the poems arose only subsequent to composition" (5). As good a reader as Vendler is, here aesthetic consciousness frees itself too fully from society and rhetoric.

By the mid-1980s, Richard Strier challenges Vendler's separation of poetry and theology. In *Love Known: Theology and Experience in George Herbert's Poetry*, Strier brings to bear his reading of Luther and Calvin and establishes himself as another of Herbert's major twentieth-century critics, especially adept at combining historical and formal analysis. But Strier's emphasis on "the interiority and internal power which Herbert saw as the special features of the new dispensation" keeps the emphasis on an interior landscape (159). Though Strier's ear and wide reading alert us to influences of the Protestant Reformation, he underestimates its interest in issues of participation and exchange, social issues.¹⁶ For example, Strier celebrates (187) the phrases "Reversed thunder" and "Engine against th' Almighty" in "Prayer" (I) but gives no notice to the poem's opening line, "Prayer the Church's banquet, Angels' age," which, as Helen Wilcox points out, "immediately suggests that the subject of the poem is communal or liturgical, rather than private prayer" (178, Note on Title).¹⁷ Strier states that "The Church" is "the record and the dramatization of a single I-

thou relationship" (166). From Eliot and Huxley to Vendler and Strier, Herbert's governing image of the "temple" is referred primarily to the individual heart and to an interior landscape which has all the complexity of modern consciousness.

While Strier describes Reformation poetry as the poetry of "inwardness and individualism," Matt Jenson more recently has shown Luther's conviction, as seen in his Commentary on Romans 7, that human beings are prone to be *incurvatus in se*, curved in upon themselves. Luther follows his mentor Staupitz, Jenson argues, "in rejecting 'self-scrutiny as a course of consolation'" (74).¹⁸ Jenson's phrase, moved from a theological to an aesthetic context, might describe the major way Herbert's poems, and perhaps lyric in general, were viewed throughout the twentieth century.¹⁹ But might Herbert's deeply personal poetry, presenting the widest range of human emotion, nevertheless intend a public task and audience, design "a good strife" for readers as well as author?²⁰ Another strand of criticism opens a window to its social dimension.

B. A Social Practice

Much can be learned from the narrative of psychological risk, of a self-scrutinized inwardness. But another narrative can also be told, one that imagines the social side of the poet's work. Let Stanley Fish, Helen Wilcox, and Paul Dyck represent those critics who have begun to look toward the active social character of Herbert's poetry. Fish and Wilcox relate his poetic practices to his vocation as catechist or parson, Dyck to contemporary practices of religious reading. In *The Living Temple*, Fish argues that Herbert the poet and Herbert the catechizer employ the same image and have the same goal of temple-building. "In the period 1540 to 1640," Fish writes, "when one thinks of catechizing, one thinks of temples" (69). He offers ample historical evidence, including this prayer that introduces the 1623 abridged version of John Mayer's catechism: "Thou which art the Master-builder of thine owne house, settle me as one of thy living stones upon the right foundation, Jesus Christ; in whom I may daily grow up, till that all the building coupled together, groweth to an holy Temple in the Lord" (55). Temples clearly also are an important image for Herbert's book of poems. By Fish's count, "no less than sixty-two poems in [Herbert's] sequence can be directly related to the temple topos (and these sixty-two are spaced so that there are never more than three poems in succession without such a direct relationship)" (88).²¹ But the link between catechizer and poet goes deeper than the transfer of image from one genre to another. It

also extends to strategy or practice. Fish maintains that Herbert the poet has the same designs on the reader as Herbert the catechizer has on the catechumen. Unlike “the cut and dried transaction described by other catechists,” Fish writes, Herbert’s practice aims to create a dynamic “situation” (26) in which the catechumen can “discover what he is” (Ch. 21; qtd. 27, 41). So too with the poetry. “If the never-ending process of self-examination is what these poems record,” Fish writes, “it is also what they provoke” (125). Understanding this strategy of engagement and correction is more important, Fish argues, than trying to decipher an overall pattern to the poems (120-25). Fish may light too easily on “radical ambiguity” (157) as the goal of catechizing and of the poems,²² but he contributes these three elements to our understanding of Herbert: 1) the importance of temple-building as an image for religious formation; 2) the development in Herbert of what we might call a rhetorical mind, which operates across genres; and 3) the importance of a strategy or project that opens outwards, toward others.

While Fish identifies a strategy that spans Herbert’s work as catechist and poet, Helen Wilcox more recently extends the comparison to a full-orbed consideration of Herbert’s country parson’s tasks. In “Hallow’d Fire; or, When Is a Poet Not a Priest?” Wilcox writes, “In his writing and life [Herbert] brought together the homely and the skillful, the plain style and divine rhetoric, and the role of rector of a church and that of poet-psalmist of *The Temple*” (91). Later, she makes her point more explicit: “Herbert’s devotional poems . . . enact a range of functions expected of a priest” (103). Wilcox explains that “the lyric forms and modes” of the poems “shar[e] the chief characteristics of the ministry such as preaching, expounding scripture, catechizing, and praying” (103). Wilcox is rich in examples. Concerning preaching and expounding scripture, she writes: “Herbert’s storytelling poems such as ‘Redemption,’ ‘Love Unknown,’ and ‘Peace’ use narrative tones that are based on parables, folktales and proverbs; as he advises in *A Priest to the Temple*, the congregation will have no difficulty in remembering ‘stories and sayings,’ and Jesus himself chose to speak in parables since by the use of ‘familiar things’ doctrine can be made to ‘slip the more easily into the hearts’” (102). With a nod to Chana Bloch’s *Spelling the Word*, Wilcox continues, “Indeed, the influence of the Bible underlies virtually every lyric of *The Temple*, whether the speaker is teaching, praying, or complaining. . . . [N]umerous poems expound the specific scriptural passages that are either referred to in their titles, used as refrains, or embedded in their vocabulary. This, too, is a poetic version of a priestly task — in fact, a combination of two important roles of

the priest: the liturgical reading of lessons from the Bible, and the interpretative and meditative preaching on a scriptural text" (102). The poems "mirror in their rhetoric and purpose the church's tasks as performed by the priest." They "express intimate spiritual experience yet, like the Psalms, simultaneously convey a sense of shared ritual" (103). Wilcox's reading fits Mary Carruthers's larger historical point that in the Middle Ages and the early modern era "[t]he book, like the church, is not an object to be observed and studied for what it is in itself but as a machine to be observed and studied for social and ethical purposes — along the example of the liturgy. The book/church is not an end in itself but a means" ("Master Builder" 891). Fish and Wilcox see prose and poetry, priestly and poetic vocation, together. This helps persuade them that the temple may include but is not limited to the heart, that the poems express more than their author's self-consciousness.

Paul Dyck's more recent work also interprets "The Church" as having a larger social goal, not by relating it to the author's practice as preacher-poet but by placing it within the contemporary context of religious reading. He focuses especially on the opening poem, "The Altar," and where it fits within the discourse of early English title-pages. The title pages to Bibles, prayer books, and devotional materials, Dyck finds, functioned both to encourage and to shape reading. After offering extensive, often pictorial, evidence of the heart and altar images used in both Calvinist and Laudian title pages, and noting that those images were frequently inscribed with words from David's penitential Psalm 51, Dyck asks, "[H]ow does Herbert, in making his altar a heart, or better yet, his heart an altar, play with and blend the commonplaces of altars and hearts in early modern England?" (565). For Dyck, the answer begins with recognizing the altar as a site of worship: "Biblically, the altar, because it is a site of worship . . . is always charged with the possibilities of right worship and wrong worship, and here everything is at stake: one will leave better or worse" (565). Dyck argues that "The Altar" includes both the imputation of holiness through Christ's sacrifice and the confession of brokenness in the speaker/reader undergoing the process of sanctification (570). The perfect image and humble text show that "completeness cannot be achieved by overcoming brokenness, and conversely, brokenness does not prevent completeness" (569-70). In fact, Dyck writes, "[t]he poem's paradox is that this brokenness is . . . part of and necessary for completion" (570). To Dyck, what is true of the opening poem is also true for "The Church" as a whole. Its poems remind us that "[a] central task of the Christian life is to know both [brokenness and completeness] at once, a task of knowing that has everything to do with memory, remember-

ing the one when one encounters the other" (570). This is personal through and through but also, as we can see through Dyck's references to the title pages of Bibles, prayer books, and devotional materials, vital to worship and community-building. As the centerpiece of the poem, the temple should be read in relationship to Augustine's definition of memory as an architectural object with an ethical dimension (*Confessions* 10. 8. 12). The paradox of brokenness and completeness fashions the memory as an altar for serving God and world, something both writer and reader are to learn to do.²³

To recognize what a modern choice we make in construing poetry as "the activity of private expression" or "representation of an interior landscape" (Hobbs 162), we need only set it alongside earlier choices — Ivan Illich's image of medieval reading as harvesting "the vineyard of the text" (57-58), for example, or Mary Carruthers's tracking of the architectural images for memory, as if the purpose of medieval writing and reading were to construct, plank by plank, the house of memory (42-45; 160-67). Such images present reading and writing as events, enactments, not representations, and recognize the sociality of reading and writing. This conception of reading and writing does not end abruptly in the early modern period. It influences, as noted above, the final couplet of Herbert's "Dedication": "Turn their eyes hither, who shall make a gain: / Theirs, who shall hurt themselves or me, refrain." The social aim of Herbert's poetry is made explicit again near the end of "Obedience," where Herbert writes, "How happie were my part, / If some kind man would thrust his heart / Into these lines." The same goal appears at the end of "Praise" (III): "O that I might some other hearts convert, / And so take up *at use* good store: / That to thy chests there might be coming in / Both all my praise, and more!" (my emphasis). Though the phrase "*at use*" likely refers here to "with interest . . . or credit" (Wilcox 545), it also retains its general sense of usefulness.

There is little reason to suppose that Herbert did not share some of the interest his friend Francis Bacon had in the question of usefulness. In "Lent," for example, Herbert writes, "Neither ought other mens abuse of Lent / Spoil the good use" (ll. 28-29). In Chapter 10 of *The Country Parson*, "The Parson in his House," Herbert, perhaps recalling the Anglican spirituality promoted by the community at Little Gidding, writes, "Even the walls are not idle, but something is written, or painted there, which may excite the reader to a thought of piety."²⁴ In Chapter 32, he describes idleness, usefulness's opposite, as "the great and national sin of this Land" and in "Businesse" tags it as the error of the "foolish soul" who does not sorrow for sin and seek renewal (ll. 1, 15). Herbert's concern about his own poetic idleness reveals itself in his

desire, like Hopkins, to be as fruitful as the natural world, the flower in "The Flower" or the orange tree ("That busy plant!") in "Employment" (II) or the tree in "Man" — indeed as, "Providence" says, all things are meant to be. In "The Quidditie," originally titled "Poetry," Herbert asks about the usefulness of poetry. He states what poetry is not in the first quatrain and what it cannot do in the second. Nonetheless, he concludes the third quatrain, "But it is that which while I use / I am with thee, and *Most take all*." The phrase Herbert italicizes is variably interpreted, with reference both to a card game and to Scripture, but clearly Herbert's interest is in what poetry can *do*, not just what it can be.²⁵ In this respect, poetry fits the more general advice given in the "The Church Porch" in a six-stanza section on discourse. Herbert advises to "husband it" (l. 302). As with economics (ll. 151-56) and foreign wisdom (ll. 355-60), something is not true until it is used, exchanged, or "digested." Immediately following the six stanzas on discourse comes the general advice, "Be useful where thou livest" (l. 325). Debra Rienstra argues that Herbert's interest in the usefulness of poetry applies beyond usefulness to himself. Such devices as "simple Scriptural phrases, musical imagery, and refrains or antiphonal patterns . . . suggest that the speaker is now in church, joining his voice with the congregation" (34). Herbert intends his poetry, I am arguing, to help his readers, as well as himself, to understand the vicissitudinous character of life and the pursuit of faithfulness within it. As with vocation, this is important for the individual, family, parish, district, even nation.

The social intent of Herbert's poetry was felt by the anonymous author of the "Commendatory Verses" that accompanied it as late as 1838 (Pickering, London): "Here a divine, prophet, and poet lies, / That laid up manna for posterities" (xvii). It is not as if the anonymous author thought the first two offices could provide manna, but not the third — or that the first two offices were rhetorical while the third was not. Don Paul Abbott writes that the "civic and forensic origins of rhetoric are never out of sight in Renaissance literature; that is, literature, like rhetoric itself, is always argumentative and persuasive, never neutral" (156). He reminds us that those who most shaped sixteenth-century British education, Erasmus and Vives, described discourse as "the instrument of human society" and considered language the "treasury of culture" (154). Margaret Downs-Gamble similarly notes, in her work on early modern literature, that "our tendency to distinguish [poetic language] as art severs [it] from its functional capacity."

The narrative of psychological risk and self-scrutinized inwardness needs to find space for the social, giving up the private though

not the personal element, in understanding Herbert's poems. Social readings also need to respect the personal character of Herbert's poetry. Vendler is surely right when she states of "The Bag," the poem Hutchinson describes as the expression of depression, "The problem of the poem is not, 'What is my ultimate destiny?' but 'How do I stay courageous through despairing times?'" (176). Herbert urges the country parson to be alert to such times in the life of his parishioners, having studied them in his own (Chapter 33), and to bring appropriate remedy when required (Chapter 34). Though deeply personal, the poems have that kind of outward reach, too. More than psychology determines the poems' movement between affliction and joy. Herbert has an anthropological reason for holding them together, too. To it we turn next.

III. THE "DOUBLE STATE" OF THE CHRISTIAN

ONE WAY of reading "The Church" is to see Herbert presenting moments in the double state of the Christian, making the experience memorable and guiding the "good strife" introduced in his "Dedication." He engages his reader as fellow traveler, someone who has passed over the threshold of moral teachings into the church, which belongs to what artist Deborah Aschheim calls the "more public space of architecture and history . . . something we have a personal relationship with, but is also shared" (Steinbach 67). What waits inside the door is less a safe enclosure than a winding journey, alternating between vexation and joy. Sometimes it resembles a battle narrative more than a journey, the sanctuary less, not more, secure than its porch.²⁶ For the person who has passed into this temple, struggle and conflict remain. The exhortations of the speaker in "The Church Porch" and the Lenten complaints of Christ to his people in "The Sacrifice" soon turn to some of the most basic and unpredictable elements of the human condition as Herbert voices the unsteady double state of poet and reader, both building and being built into a temple of God.

This doubleness is familiar to most readers through the five "Affliction" poems and in the "Temper" poems, as well as others. Herbert names it in the final couplet of "Affliction" (V), "My God, so temper joy and wo, / That thy bright beams may tame thy bow." The woe stretches nearly to despair in the brusque openings to poems such as "Conscience," with its charge, "Peace, pratler, do not lowre"; and "The Discharge," with the assertive double spondee at the end of its opening address, "Busie enquiring heart, what wouldst thou know?"; and "The Familie," with its *Macbeth*-like opening call, "What doth this noise

of thoughts within my heart?" Their counterpart can be found in the openings to such poems as "Antiphon" (I) ("Let all the world in ev'ry corner sing") and "Easter" ("Rise heart; thy Lord is risen. Sing his praise / Without delays") and "Praise" (II) ("King of Glorie, King of Peace, / I will love thee").

The poet of "The Church" explicates this "double state of a Christian" in Chapters 33 and 34 of *The Country Parson*. In Chapter 34, "The Parson's Dexterity in Applying of Remedies," Herbert defines "the double state" introduced in the previous chapter, and turns to the steps the parson can take to address it. "The Country Parson," he writes, "knows, that there is a double state of a Christian even in this life, the one military, the other peaceable." He identifies the "military" as the state we enter "when we are assaulted with temptations either from within or from without." The "peaceable" is "when the Devil for a time leaves us, as he did our Savior, and the Angels minister to us their own food, even joy, and peace; and comfort in the holy Ghost."

Something of this "double state" has been recognized by all, or nearly all, of *The Temple's* readers. This is true for Dyck's theological exposition of "brokenness and completeness," and for Vendler's aesthetic understanding of Herbert's "permanent reversible equilibrium between . . . two extremes," and for Hutchinson's psychological description of depression and reassurance. Whether emphasizing interior landscape or addressing social practice, readers recognize the contrasting elements in Herbert's perception of the human condition and the quick shifts between its two states. Daniel Doerksen refers directly to Herbert's "double state of the Christian" in introducing the final two chapters of *Picturing Religious Experience*. Those chapters describe a pattern of conflict and resolution that Doerksen connects with Calvin's notion of sanctification, "the *growing* and *building* process involved" in becoming "*temples holy to God*" (131). Sanctification, Doerksen writes, "is for Herbert as for Calvin a life-long process in which conflicts necessarily recur" (175). For Herbert, "there always remains the alternation between the militant and peaceable states." Because of this alternation, his "'temple' is no permanent, rigid edifice but a human dwelling-place for God that is continually in a state of renewal, and continually in need of it" (200). Vendler comes to a similar assessment, despite her resistance to theological readings, when she describes Herbert's poetic strategy in "The Flower." She writes that "two truths of experience [are] at war in the poem. . . . Until we are 'fast in Paradise,' the poem tells us, we are caught in the variability of mortal life, in which, however intense renewal may be when it comes,

it comes uncertainly and not for long" (53). For Vendler, this is true of most of Herbert's poems, certainly of his strongest poems.

Herbert experiences the tension of the "double state" as universal, its reality unstable, surprising, often disappointing. He seldom blinks. He trusts that healing is possible in distress. Herbert's argument in Chapter 34 about the universality of the "double state" is succinct: even Christ experienced its fluctuations. "These two states were in our Savior," he writes, "not only in the beginning of his preaching but afterwards also," giving Matthew 22:35 and Luke 10:21 as examples. If true for Christ, Herbert reasons, then surely so for his followers: "And they [the two states] must be likewise in all that are his." This claim of universality warrants, even mandates, exploration of the double state, finding appropriate remedy, on the one hand, or alert celebration on the other.

Herbert is as keenly aware of the non-linear progression of the double state — what Vendler calls his recognition of "the variability of mortal life" — as he is of its universality. The movement from the military to the peaceable state is not like the movement from epic warfare to the founding of a new people, or from David's warfare to Solomon's temple-building — or even like the movement from the church porch into the church. It's not a first-this-and-then-that movement and is certainly not once for all. This is clear in clauses such as "*when* the servant of God, freed *for a while* from temptation" (Chapter 33) or "*when* the Devil *for a time* leaves us, as he did our Savior," and in the advice to "put bounds and hoops to their joys so [they] will . . . last the longer, *and when they depart*, return the sooner" (Chapter 34, my emphases). This irregular, all-too-human oscillation is what requires the parson to "hav[e] a Spiritual Judgment, according as he discovers any of his Flock to be in one or the other state," so he can "appl[y] himself to them."

Herbert not only describes these two states but also recommends appropriate remedies or counsel for each. To be applied well, these require knowledge of the parishioner's, parish's, or nation's present state. As we have seen in "Temper" (I), one's state can change radically and quickly: "Sometimes I peer above them [some forty heavens] all; / Sometimes I hardly reach a score, / Sometimes to hell I fall." Remedy requires a physician's dexterity, beginning with survey of one's own and others' situations, a kind of practical knowledge or social hermeneutic — what Herbert refers to as the parson's "spiritual judgment," gained through his own experience of the double state of the Christian.²⁷ Chapter 33 makes an analogy to the physician who not only has book knowledge but has experienced the illness himself. There is no

remedy without discovering what requires it. While those in a peaceable state may only need to be reminded of vigilance and restraint, those in the military state require a more complex understanding and address.

To further "the parson's dexterity in applying of remedies," Herbert divides the military state of the Christian into two main categories, atheism and despair. He suggests three possible remedies for the first and two for the second. "If the Parson suspect the first," Herbert writes, "and find sparks of such thoughts now and then to break forth, then without opposing directly (for disputation is no Cure for Atheism) he scatters in his discourse three sorts of arguments; the first taken from Nature, the second from the Law, the third from Grace." Herbert discusses each at some length before concluding, "With some of these heads enlarged, and woven in his discourse at several times and occasions, the parson settlenth wavering minds." For the second category, despair, the parishioners are "not so much doubting a God, as that he is theirs." If the parishioner doubts God's interest in her due to her *creatureliness*, her being made of "dust and ashes," she should be reminded that "no perfect Artist ever yet hated his own work." If she fears her own *sinfulness* besides, she should be answered that God showed his love for her not only in Creation but also in Christ's passion, a second love, as it were, unnecessary at Creation.

The attention Herbert gives to survey and remedy is more rhetorical than analytic, more contingent and open to the element of surprise than to logical conclusion.²⁸ In Chapter 5, Herbert writes, "Now if a shepherd know not which grass will bane [poison], or which not, how is he fit to be a shepherd? Wherefore the Parson hath thoroughly canvassed all the particulars of human actions, at least all those which he observeth are most incident to his Parish." Later, in Chapter 32, "The Parson's Surveys," this emphasis extends beyond the parish when Herbert describes idleness as "the great and national sin of this Land." As Christopher Hodgkins remarks, this chapter shows Herbert "concerned not only with religious matters narrowly defined, but also with legislative action, industrial development, class tensions, courtly corruption, national security, and international relations" (20). Because everyone experiences the military state, everyone requires remedy at one time or another. This requires of the parson/shepherd a "thorough canvass[ing] of all the particulars of human actions."

Herbert is clear, in Chapter 33, that recognizing what the individual or state needs is more important to the holy life than rectitude of character. The chapter title, "The Parson's Library," does not prepare us for the bookless definition of "library" in its opening sentence:

"The Country Parson's Library is a holy Life." That is the first surprise — the library is a life, life a library — which probably owes something to Augustine's *On Christian Doctrine*.²⁹ The second surprise is just how much temptation is part of the holy life. Temptations are "studied," not escaped, their remedies meant to be shared. Herbert writes, "[T]he Parson having studied, and mastered all his lusts and affections within, and the whole Army of Temptations without, hath ever so many sermons ready penn'd as he hath victories," and again, "For the temptations with which a good man is beset, and the ways which he used to overcome them, being told to another, whether in private conference, or in the Church, are a Sermon." The past tense of these two sentences may suggest that the temptations have been faced down, but nearer the end of Chapter 33 Herbert makes clear that the parson, like his audience, still requires instruction. Herbert repeats St. Paul's recommendation (Romans 2:21) that the parson "first preacheth to himself, and then to others."³⁰ This is a surer background for understanding Herbert's relationship to his reader than the speculation by Vendler that "If the gist of Walton's report in his *Life* of Herbert is correct . . . , to give 'a picture of . . . many spiritual conflicts' was Herbert's essential intent, and the notion of a 'dejected poor soul[s]' deriving comfort from the poems arose only subsequent to composition" (5). Here Herbert assumes that the personal and the social hold together in the shared susceptibility to disease and remedy. That assumption runs deep enough to complicate and inflect the poetry as well as the prose.

The universality of the "double state of the Christian"; its non-linear, unstable character; the close survey of situation and appropriate strategy for remedy — these are also deeply ingrained in the poems' engagement with their reader. While the second element (non-linear or unstable progress) could fit a description of Herbert's poetry as "interior landscape" or "changeable weather," the first and third suggest a larger impulse, more universal and more active. They suggest performance more than self-representation, in individual poems such as "Assurance," which addresses despair, one of the two categories Herbert lists under the military state, in the first three stanzas; turns to address God in the next three stanzas, with remedy very much like the "second love" described in Chapter 34; and then returns to address the despairing thought with which the poem began ("O Spitefull bitter thought! / Bitterly spitefull thought! Couldst thou invent / So high a torture?"), this time equipped to defeat it — "What for it self love once began, / Now love and truth will end in man" — his final couplet opening out to a broader audience than either the despairing thought, addressed in stanzas one through three, or God, addressed in stanzas four through

six. Other times the performance character of Herbert's poems can be seen in the turn a sequence takes, enacting the "good strife" recommended in the introductions to both the prose and the poetry. The final stanza of "Repentance," for example, makes the turn from a military to a peaceable state at midpoint of a seven-poem sequence.³¹

Does Herbert's work, exploring the widest range of human emotion, "the variability of mortal life," resist the privatization of art and religion prominent since the nineteenth century, though perhaps abating today?³² At the end of "Affliction" (IV), Herbert writes that if God is in it, "Then shall those powers, which work for grief" work to "thy praise and my relief; / With care and courage *building me*, / Till I reach heav'n, and much more thee" (my emphasis). *The Temple* presents that process, makes it memorable, repeatable — not the heaven part but the building, or being built, part.³³ It is to this Christian identity-formation — a temple being built with builders characterized by a double state of temptation and joy, who remain restless and incomplete — that we turn next. An essential part of this building is recognizing a spiritual warfare, the variable state of the Christian, the limits of self-construction, and the value of community.

IV. POETIC PRECEDENT AND FASHIONING A TEMPLE

THE TEMPLE is about building and is itself a kind of building. The first claim is clear enough. Its title (*The Temple*), the opening poem of "The Church" ("The Altar"), the placement of "Sion" (about Solomon's temple) at midpoint, plus an abundance of interchangeable references to "house" or "palace" — all point towards building as a primary topic. As we have seen, Stanley Fish states that "there are never more than three poems in succession without such a direct relationship [to the temple topos]" (88). *The Temple* also regularly engages the architectural elements that give the church its spatial organization and the liturgical year that gives its worship direction.

Building is not only a topic, however. It is also the function of *The Temple*. Its title references New Testament accounts which emphasize the temple's *being* built, in process, growing. In 1 Peter 2:5, for example, the "spiritual house" is less object than goal: "Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house." The emphasis on process is even clearer in Ephesians 2:20-22: "And [ye] are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner *stone*; In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit." In "The Altar," Herbert

contrasts the finished poems to the unfinished life: "That if I chance to hold my peace, / These stones to praise thee may not cease."³⁴ Like stones, the poems that follow construct *The Temple's* temple; the poet's and the reader's life should do the same, but that matter is not yet settled. There is a kind of competition between poem and life, as expressed in "The Dedication": "Lord, my first fruits present themselves to thee; / . . . Accept of them and me, / And make us strive, who shall sing best thy name." This is a good strife. The poems, achieving an independent reality, stir memory, ask for a life that recognizes, as the Psalmist put it, that "Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it" (KJV, Psalm 127:1). The parallel second half of the verse moves from the personal to the civic: "except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain."

This emphasis on building is also found in *The Country Parson*. In the opening sentence of Chapter 21, "The Parson Catechizing," Herbert describes the goal of the second of "the three points of [the parson's] duty" as "to multiply and build up this knowledge to a spirituall temple." Fish collapses this second point into the first, catechizing, and contrasts that with the third point, the making of sermons.³⁵ The long sentence's ambiguous ending makes such a reading possible. But the initial naming of "three points" and their enumeration in three parallel infinitive phrases ("the one, to infuse," "the other, to multiply and build up," and "the third to inflame") recommend against such a reduction.³⁶ Kept distinct, the three points of the parson's duty line up with the three traditional offices or tasks of the orator: *docere*, *delectare*, *movere*. Herbert, the former Orator of Cambridge, would have known these three traditional offices from a Ciceronian tradition and, reframed, from Augustine — and through sixteenth-century writers like Erasmus and Calvin who were part of the humanist revival of classical rhetoric.³⁷ The second office, *delectare*, always more ambiguous than the other two, was associated with the artful shaping of language, whose goal would not be to instruct (*docere*) or to move to immediate action (*movere*) but to be an artistically pleasing confirmation (or correction) of opinion.³⁸

The case for taking the parson's points of duty as analogous to the orator's offices is clearest for the first and third points. "To infuse a competent knowledge" defines *docere* and "to inflame this knowledge, to press, and drive it to practice" signals *movere*.³⁹ The second point of duty connects most directly to the poetic production of the *Temple* — both because of the shared image of temple-building and because *delectare* marked the middle style of liturgy, poetry, and song. Herbert's address to the reader in the opening lines of "The Church

Porch" makes the same connection that Augustine described in *Christian Doctrine* (4. 26) between *delectare* and the listener's willingness to hear and consider: "Hearken unto a Verser, who may chance / Ryme thee to good, and make a bait of pleasure. / A verse may finde him, who a sermon flies, / And turn delight into a sacrifice" (3-6).⁴⁰ The *Temple's* goal matches the second point of duty Herbert names: "to multiply and build up this knowledge to a spiritual temple." Given the long-established use of architectural images for memory, the goal of both the second point of the country parson's duty and of Herbert's writing and arranging of poems could be described as building a certain kind of memory, helpful both in joy and distress.⁴¹ A "spiritual temple" cannot be built up without a person's interest in inhabiting it. *Delectare* generates that interest more readily than does *docere* or *move*.

Comparison to an early Christian poem, Prudentius's *Psychomachia*, can clarify Herbert's effort in the *Temple* to recognize the unstable, non-linear progression of the Christian and, within that recognition, to encourage the building up of a spiritual temple. The *Psychomachia's* relevance is easier to understand today than thirty years ago due to new interest in its complex relationship to Roman epic and its effort to build an alternative Christian identity.⁴² Herbert's work shares four fundamental commitments with the *Psychomachia*: use of temple-building as an image for the formation of a Christian identity; presentation of the unstable "double state of the Christian"; a parodic stance towards an inherited poetic tradition; and correlation of the personal and civic. Explicating these common commitments can clarify Herbert's goals as well as account for the "intimacy" and "persuasion" that characterize his work.⁴³

In Prudentius's *Psychomachia* the Old Testament themes of warfare and temple-building, spiritualized through Paul, draw upon but also begin to change the classical epic tradition.⁴⁴ The hand-to-hand combat is not with Trojans or Latins but between the Virtues and the Vices; the founding of a new people is associated with the building of a temple, not a city. After Faith has dispatched Discord, and Concord is finished praising peace (naming *pax* six times in four lines), Faith informs the assembly that there is a peace-time effort as important as the efforts they undertook for war: "One task alone, ye captains, now that war is over, remains for a noble effort to perform: the task that Solomon, the peaceful heir of a warlike throne, the unarmed successor to an armed court, set on foot" (ll. 804-07). This, of course, refers to Solomon's temple, a matter of the heart but also, it turns out, a corporate endeavor. The emphasis on temple-building resembles Her-

bert's emphasis in the final stanza of "Affliction" (IV): "With care and courage building me, / Till I reach heav'n, and much more thee." That is, both poems image Christian identity-formation as a kind of temple-building.

In addition to using temple-building as an image for Christian identity-formation, Prudentius and Herbert use two nearly identical phrases, "the double state" and "two-fold being," to describe the life of a Christian. St. Paul's description of the struggle between "the old" and "the new humanity" (*anthropos*) (Rom. 6:6, Eph. 2:15 and 4:22-24, Col. 3:9-11) and Augustine's notion of the "divided will" (*Confessions* 8.9) resonate with Herbert's sense of "the double state of the Christian." But they do not fit it exactly. Herbert states that even Christ has known this double state, so it cannot be precisely what Paul has in mind, or Augustine either, for Christ has known temptation but has never been part of the old humanity; nor has he had "insufficiency of the will," described by Augustine as "a sickness of the soul which is weighed down by habit" (*Confessions* 8.9). Herbert's "double state of a Christian" is more related to the Christian's ongoing strife or relief from strife, temptation or joy, both of which Christ did know. The early fifth-century Prudentius, second only to Augustine in medieval influence and a favorite author for Erasmus, is a more likely precedent for Herbert's "double state of the Christian."⁴⁵

That becomes most evident at the very end of the poem. At its beginning, as part of the Invocation, Prudentius positions the allegory of Virtues and Vices as a narrative about Christian identity and the kind of battle it requires: "The way of victory is before our eyes if we may mark at close quarters the very features of the Virtues, and the monsters that close with them in deadly struggle" (ll. 18-20). A similar turn marks the poem's concluding verse paragraph (ll. 888-915). Though it begins as if it will introduce a song ("We give to thee, O Christ, . . . unending thanks")⁴⁶ it shifts, in its second sentence, to a purpose statement like that given in the invocation: "Thou didst wish us to learn the dangers that lurk unseen within the body, and the vicissitudes of our soul's struggle" (ll. 888-92). With that last phrase, "the vicissitudes of our soul's struggle" (*luctantique animae . . . casus*), Prudentius's final verse paragraph veers from its classical model, at the very last moment turning the first-then of wartime combat and peacetime temple-building into two overlapping, ongoing events. This overlapping breaks from the Virgilian epic tradition and from the Old Testament story of David, the man of war, and his son Solomon, the chosen peace-loving builder of the temple. Learning "the vicissitudes of our soul's struggle" becomes, at the end of the poem, an ongoing task, not a preliminary

accomplishment. “We,” the first-person plural, gets re-introduced here, indicating how *we* still have conflicting affections: “How often, when the plaguing sins have been driven away, have we felt our soul aglow with the presence of God, how often, after these pure joys, felt our heavenly nature grow cool and yield to foul desire!” (ll. 899-902). To explain the Christian temple-builder’s ongoing experience of struggle, Prudentius points to the “non-single nature of humankind” (l.904 — *non simplex natura hominis*), later specified as “our two-fold being” (l.909 — *duplex substantia vires*).⁴⁷ It seems, in the poem’s concluding lines, as if the struggle (as with Herbert) may in fact contribute to the building: Christ “builds the golden courts of his temple, creating for the soul, *out of the trial of its conduct*, ornaments for rich Wisdom to find delight in as she reigns forever on her beauteous throne” (ll. 912-15, my emphasis).

Knowledge of “our two-fold being” deeply influences Herbert’s “The Church” from its beginning. Herbert surveys the double state of the Christian, starting with his own sometimes frightening experience of it, articulates the sharpest afflictions as well as deepest joys, and searches out strategies for healing or praise, knowing that the formation of a Christian identity is not a settled matter. His understanding of this double state encourages a persistent poetic strategy, an identifiable movement from a military to a peaceable state, and back and forth again, a movement connected to physical environment, money, law, “things of ordinary use,” Old Testament narrative, allegory, doubt, affliction — all of them of use, if one “could . . . but take them right” (“Man’s Medley”), that is, engage them in a Christian identity-formation. Though Prudentius learns from and parodies Roman epic while Herbert intervenes in a more intimate lyric tradition, Herbert shares Prudentius’s interest in presenting the double state of the Christian and provoking its faithful navigation. In fact, both are interested in creating an alternative poetry that would contribute to the formation of an alternative identity and alternative society.

The poems’ shared interest in temple imagery and in the Christian’s two-fold being suggests there may be other common elements that could bring a new perspective to Herbert’s poetry. Two of the most important are the poems’ parodic intent and their correlation of the personal and the civic. Prudentius uses the same verse form as Virgil, includes phrases from the *Aeneid*, gives an invocation at the beginning of his narrative, and early on announces the subject of his poem — all strategies associated with the ancient epic. Further, the hand-to-hand combat between the Virtues and Vices owes much to the ancient epic’s depiction of individual warriors, as in this passage

from the battle between Faith and Discord: "No further did Faith, the Virtues' queen, bear with the outrageous prisoner's blasphemies, but stopped her [Discord's] speech and blocked the passage of her voice with a javelin, driving its hard point through the foul tongue" (ll. 716-19). Despite using many of the strategies associated with the Virgilian epic tradition, Prudentius's work has a rival goal. Just as the *Aeneid* was meant to form or reform the citizen of pre-Christian Rome, the *Psychomachia* seeks to present what critic Marc Mastrangelo calls a "vision of Christian Roman identity" (4). While Virgil has Anchises say to Aeneas, in Book Six, "Roman, remember by your strength to rule / Earth's peoples — for your arts are to be these: / To pacify, to impose the rule of law, / To spare the conquered, battle down the proud," Prudentius has Sobrietas say to her regiment, "Have you forgotten, then, the thirst in the desert, the spring that was given to your fathers from the rock? . . . Stand, I pray you. Remember who ye are, remember Christ, too. Ye should bethink yourselves of your nation and your fame, your God and King, your Lord. Ye are the high-born children of Judah" (ll. 371-73, 381-84). The Preface similarly emphasizes identity-formation. While Book One of the *Aeneid* reminds its readers early on, "So hard and huge / A task it was to found the Roman people," in his Preface Prudentius tells us, "This picture has been drawn beforehand to be a model for our life to trace out again with true measure, showing that we must watch in the armor of faithful hearts" (ll. 50-52).⁴⁸ As we have seen, the transition from invocation to narrative sounds the same note: "The way of victory is before our eyes if we may mark at close quarters the very features of the Virtues, and the monsters that close with them in deadly struggle" (ll. 18-20). Prudentius learns from Virgil's strategies but parodies his goal.

In this respect Prudentius's work parallels Herbert's parodic relationship with the Petrarchan lyric tradition.⁴⁹ Developing Cristina Malcolmson's insight that "Herbert's 'sacred parody' . . . should be seen as a process of *answering* [that tradition] on a large, even a lifetime scale," Debra Rienstra specifies how Herbert addresses the Petrarchan sequence at the level of themes, motifs, and structural patterns, "in order to engage in the ongoing and complex process of 'outstripping' it" (24). Herbert's relationship with an earlier, largely secular tradition shares much with Prudentius's re-purposing of Virgilian epic, described this way by Karla Pollman: "[T]he usage of Vergilian and other verse fragments serves as a basis of reference that enables both the preservation of the pagan literary tradition and its development into a new way of representation" (61).⁵⁰

Prudentius's work not only shares with Herbert a parodic relationship to an earlier secular poetic tradition, it also correlates the personal and the civic in ways that are instructive for our reading of Herbert. Though the battlefield for the Virtues and Vices is the mind, Concord's speech celebrating peace congratulates the assembly of Virtues for having "wiped out the cruel savages that had beset *the dwellers in the holy city*" (ll. 752-54, my emphasis). Faith's charge to the assembly to make preparations for the Son of Man to "enter *the city of the cleansed body*" (ll. 818-19, my emphasis) sounds a similar note. The inner chamber of the Solomonic temple, located in the mind, clearly also has social implications: "Here mighty Wisdom sits enthroned and *from her high court* sets in order all *the government of her realm*, meditating in her heart *laws to safeguard mankind*" (ll. 875-77, my emphases).

The reader is prepared for this larger civic interest by the poem's Preface. Prudentius highlights Abraham's life, referencing the stories of the Sacrifice of Isaac, the Rescue of Lot, and Sarah's Bearing a Child Late in Life. Pollman describes the relationship of preface to epic this way: "The allegorical and typological construction of the events surrounding Abra(ha)m and Sarah in the preface to the *Psychomachy* . . . defines the topic and embeds it within the interpretative framework of the epic: in the same way as Abraham fought against the gentiles, everyone should fight against vices; as a reward, through the grace of God and with the help of Christ they will then, as Sarah bore a son despite her sterility, produce a progeny that is virtuous and pleasing in the eyes of God" (53). Though the Preface emphasizes work to be done in the heart, the biblical stories, as well as the concluding reference to "our life," suggest the formation of a new identity such as Abraham, Lot, Sarah, and the whole community of their followers are called to live.

In the invocation that follows the Preface, Prudentius writes, "say, *our King* . . . what help there is . . . to guard her [the soul's] liberty, what array with superior force withstands the fiendish raging in *our heart*" (ll. 5-11, my emphasis). The plural first-person pronouns lead, in the next three lines, to this clear reference to the church: "For, O kind leader, Thou hast not exposed the followers of Christ . . ." (11-13). Prudentius has both biblical and classical grounds for correlating heart and church.⁵¹ As Mastrangelo writes, his "corpus keeps faith with all the great poetry that preceded it by representing the central issues of its time in terms of a meditation on both the individual and the collective" (13). Pollman comes to the same conclusion, writing, "[T]he *Psychomachy* can be read on several levels: as an allegorical and metaphorical representation of the inner battles of the individual,

as a contrafacture to pagan epic models, and finally also as a typological description of the path of the Christian Church to salvation" (61). Recalling the long tradition that Prudentius stands in but also changes helps us receive Herbert's poetry as both intimate and persuasive, a non-sparing survey of the double state of the Christian, presenting moments of affliction and joy as well as strategies for healing in the temple of one's heart and in the temple of Christian community.⁵²

V. A READING OF "THE FAMILIE"

The Familie" includes many of the elements we have considered in the earlier sections of this essay: a Prudentian-style allegory of the Virtues in the middle two stanzas, affirmation of the double state of the Christian in the final two, and a personal and communal significance for "house" — here, as in "Man" and "The World," a stand-in for temple. It may also be considered parodic in its shift from the lover's struggle between love and reason to the believer's struggle between joy and grief. It provides a good challenge to the claim that Prudentius provides a helpful frame for Herbert's work. Here's the poem:

What doth this noise of thoughts within my heart
 As if they had a part?
 What do these loud complaints and pulling fears,
 As if there were no rule or eares?

But, Lord, the house and familie are thine,
 Though some of them repine.
 Turn out these wranglers, which defile thy seat:
 For where thou dwellest all is neat.

First Peace and Silence all disputes control,
 Then Order plaies the soul;
 And giving all things their set forms and hours,
 Makes of wilde woods sweet walks and bowres.

Humble Obedience neare the doore doth stand,
 Expecting a command:
 Then whom in waiting nothing seems more slow,
 Nothing more quick when she doth go.

Joyes oft are there, and griefs as oft as joyes;
 But griefs without a noise:
 Yet speak they louder, then distemper'd fears.
 What is so shrill as silent tears?

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This is thy house, with these it doth abound:
And where these are not found,
Perhaps thou com'st sometimes, and for a day;
But not to make a constant stay.

Both personalist and civic readings have placed a claim on this poem. Both have seen the poem as bleak in its beginnings and at its end. With Prudentius as context, I will argue that the poem is both personal and civic — they need not be exclusive — and that Herbert's final warning doubles as encouragement. Though Freer reads the poem as a portrait of "the mind's maladies" (226) and Summers and Pebworth read it instead as a complaint about "the disorderliness and noise of the Puritan wranglers who defile God's church" (5), there is little reason to choose one at the expense of the other. Herbert, like Prudentius and the long tradition before him, assumes a correlation between the personal and the social. The opening line's "noise of thoughts within my heart" records a deep personal distress like that we might associate, in the Petrarchan tradition, with unrequited love. Yet the stanza's last two lines, parallel to the first two ("What doth . . . As if" / "What do . . . As if") already prepare the reader for a broader reading of the second stanza's opening line. That line, "But, Lord, the house and familie are thine," allows the literal "house and familie" to come alongside the figurative "family of thoughts" with which the poem begins. Further, the allegorical character of the middle two stanzas generalizes the conflict and thereby continues to broaden the range of "house and familie." At the same time, the request of stanza two and recognition of stanza six are as personal as prayer. The personal and social pull in the same direction.

As to the bleakness of the poem, that is indisputable. But does it persist? In Wilcox's summary of modern criticism, she writes that "[m]any critics note the 'downcast' . . . or uncertain tone of the final stanza" (477). Vendler describes the poem as one of Herbert's "poems of grief," which "show[s] Herbert attempting to rule disorderly outcries and bring them into some sort of equilibrium." She continues, "he appears at first to disavow complaints and fears ('these wranglers') entirely, but then finally gives them houseroom so long as they remain noiseless" (258-59). In Summers and Pebworth's more sociological reading, the poem ends with the visible Church as a house "of griefs as oft as joys" (l. 17). But one could also say that the poem presents a moment scarred by discord but also asserts, as in the *Psychomachia's*

final verses, the value of struggle not only before but even in the building of the temple.

While the second stanza positions the poem as prayer, the prayer is a little pushy at first ("But, Lord . . . turn out"), carrying the opening questions' exasperation forward under the petulant, overly tight control of argument ("But," "though," "for"). Though punctuated as two sentences, the stanza works like a complex sentence: since "the house and familie are thine . . . Turn out these wranglers" (ll. 5, 7). The last line doubles up on the insistence, "For where thou dwellest all is neat" (l. 8), and also triggers the two allegorical stanzas that follow. Those stanzas act as a kind of hinge for the poem, connecting stanzas five and six to stanzas one and two, the latter stanzas echoing but also correcting the former. The turn in the poem occurs between its two allegorical stanzas. Their introduction of four servants (Peace, Silence, Order, and Obedience) gives some specificity to the last line of stanza two ("where thou dwellest all is neat") at the same time as it bends the poem toward the universal. The difference between the first three and the fourth of the allegorical figures can be seen in the verbs they take and in the way they are grouped. The first three figures are grouped together in the third stanza and take active verbs ("control," "plaies," and "makes") and an equally active verbal modifier ("giving all things their set forms and hours"). They usher the reader into that beautiful Keatsian final line, "Makes of wilde woods sweet walks and bowres"; but they might also fit too well the strong-willed prayer of petition uttered in stanza two and the governing "rule" that the exasperated speaker wants to reassert in stanza one.

The fourth figure, Obedience, seems, at her introduction, much less active than the first three (she only "stands") though she is given her own stanza and ascription ("Humble Obedience"). This title is important: in "Humilitie," Humility sits the lowest but is the most faithful of the Virtues. Here Obedience is slower to action than the other three figures, still only "stand[ing]," but her verbal modifier shows her attentiveness: "Expecting a command" (l. 14).⁵³ The first contrast in the poem comes in the chiasmus and the rhyme that complete the stanza: "in waiting *nothing seems more slow, / nothing more quick* when she doth **go**" (my emphasis). She has power in restraint and power in action, answering better than the other three servants to both calls. This changes the direction of the verse and the prayer. Instead of a progression, the final two stanzas return to and correct the first two, changing petition into recognition.

It is clear in stanza five that the four allegorical figures introduced in the middle stanzas do not diminish the "loud complaints and pull-

ing fears” of stanza one. “[G]riefs without a noise” (l. 18) may at first seem an improvement, or at least a disciplining, as Vendler supposes, of the “disorderly outcries” (258) of stanza one. But in the following line we are told that these noiseless griefs “speak louder then distemper’d fear,” running deeper than the “noise” and “pulling fears” of stanza one. The later stanza’s final line memorably asks, “What is so shrill as silent tears?” It sounds the same note as Malcolm speaking to Macduff in Shakespeare’s *Macbeth*: “The grief that does not speak / Whispers the o’erfraught heart and bids it break” (4. 3. 209-20). The “noise of thoughts” that led to stanza one’s exasperated questions gives way to a more serious grief but also a longer perspective. The double use of “oft” in the fifth stanza’s opening line contrasts with the deictic “this noise” and “these complaints” of stanza one. As the perspective broadens from singular event to a lifetime’s struggle, so does the scope. Joys are part of the whole in stanza five’s understated monosyllabic opening line: “Joys oft are there, and griefs as oft as joys.” Griefs may deepen but they are not the whole of life.

Just as stanza five plays against stanza one, stanza six echoes and corrects stanza two. These are the two stanzas that situate the poem as prayer, stanza two’s “Lord, the house and familie are thine” being answered by “This is thy house” in stanza six. But the second time the request “to turn these wranglers out” disappears. Petition turns to recognition, argument to reverence: this house — heart, family, church — “doth abound” with joys and griefs (“abound” picking up “oft” and “as oft” from the previous stanza’s opening line, again signaling the enlarged scope). Next comes the remarkable conclusion that God does not stay long in the house “where these are not found.” The irregular, frequent shifts between grief and joy get tied to the “constan[cy]” of God’s “stay.” The final two lines contrast strongly with the last two lines of stanza two. There God’s seat is described as “neat,” turning away all possibilities of “defile[ment]”; here recognition that one is stretched between joy and grief, teaching humility, is required if God is to “make a constant stay.” This recalls the statement in “Vanie” (I) that God “mellow[s] the ground / With showres and frosts, with love & aw” and also, as we have seen, the statement in Chapter 34 of *The Country Parson*, that “These two states were in our Saviour, not only in the beginning of his preaching, but afterwards also, as *Matthew* 22:35. He was tempted: And *Luke* 10:21. He rejoiced in Spirit: And they must be likewise in all that are his.” The poem stacks up another instance of human distress, of being “assaulted with temptations either from within or from without.” Prayer does not eradicate this distress but places it within a larger context. It brings some recognition and healing — in

“my heart” (stanza one) and in thy “house and familie” (stanza two), in what Summers and Pebworth call the “poem’s contrapuntal public and private dimensions” (6).⁵⁴

Herbert dramatizes the state of discord experienced, at unpredictable times and places, by the church-goer. The complaining subjunctive (“as if they had a part” — l. 2) gets stripped away by the poem’s end, where it is clear that noisy thoughts, complaints, fears, griefs do have a part. By the prayer’s end Herbert recognizes, for himself and for his reader, that discord must be part of the whole. Humble Obedience (stanza four) proves more useful than Peace, Silence, and Order (stanza three) when griefs abound as much as joy. But there is also this encouragement: if God’s stay will be short where the alternation between griefs and joys is not found, where they are found God will “make a constant stay.” The poem articulates a condition of life that Herbert feels in his pulses (“What doth this noise of thoughts within my heart . . . ?”) but which he also trusts is universal, regularly unpredictable, and capable of remedy if God attends the unsteady but obedient formation of a humble Christian.

This is a recognition and promise present in other poems as well. In “Man’s Medley,” for example, Herbert writes,

Yet ev’n the greatest griefs
 May be relieve,
 Could he but take them right, and in their ways.
 Happie is he, whose heart
 Hath found the art
 To turn his double pains to double praise.

In “Joseph’s Coat,” the final couplet affirms, “I live to shew his power, who once did bring / My joys to weep, and now my griefs to sing.” In “The Bunch of Grapes,” Herbert writes, “Lord, if I must borrow, / Let me as well take up their joy, as sorrow” (ll. 20-21). One advantage of giving their due to grief and fear is the humility that Herbert and his reader learn again and again in these poems, as in the final couplet of “Busnesse,” “Who in heart not ever kneels, / Neither sinne nor Saviour feels,” or in the final lines of “The Flower,” which teach us to accept that we are “but flowers that glide” — “Who would be more, / Swelling through store, / Forfeit their Paradise by their pride.” As bears repeating at this point, most important to our discussion is the final stanza of “Affliction” (IV):

Then shall those powers, which work for grief,
 Enter thy pay,

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And day by day
Labour thy praise, and my relief;
With care and courage building me,
Till I reach heav'n, and much more thee.

This is the primary value of the double state of the Christian. The struggle between the two states can contribute to the Christian formation of author and reader, to the building of a new identity.

Prudentius's discovery of a language that breaks from the epic tradition provides a helpful corollary for reading Herbert. Their shared interest in the double state of the Christian and in temple imagery can help us understand what is at stake in Herbert's poetry, including its parodic character and its correlation of the personal and the civic.⁵⁵ Using Prudentius to frame Herbert's work helps us join the emotional range, lyricism, and personal quality of Herbert's poetry with his drive to work out a religious anthropology for himself and others, one that recognizes the temptations and afflictions that trouble the building of a Christian identity but also contribute to it.

VI. THE TEMPLE AND THE ARTS

IN *ENGLISH Literature in the Sixteenth Century* C. S. Lewis writes that a good Elizabethan love sonnet, like a good song, "was like a good public prayer: the test was whether the congregation can 'join' and make it their own It does not matter who is speaking in 'Since there's no helpe' any more than in 'Oh mistress mine' The whole body of sonnet sequences is more like an erotic liturgy than a series of erotic confidences" (491).⁵⁶ Jonathan Culler extends this insight in *Theory of the Lyric*, where he argues that current theories cannot account for the intimacy and persuasion he experiences while reading lyric poetry. He finds a more helpful resource in the ancient idea of *epideixis*, a commemorative discourse that orients us towards the future as well as celebrates something from our present or past. Culler leans on Jeffrey Walker's revisionary *Rhetoric and Poetics in Antiquity* to reestablish the persuasive element in lyric. Culler writes, "Walker maintains that lyric is the original form of epideictic rhetoric — what later became the rhetoric of praise and eloquence — which works to shape communal judgments about what is right and thus to create values" (307).⁵⁷

In this view, epideictic rhetoric is not a late embellishment that follows the more hard-working deliberative and judicial rhetoric but is given foundational work to do, work that shapes our judgment and values. Beginning with Homer and Hesiod, epideictic prepares the way

for the pragmatic rhetoric of lawcourt and assembly. Walker describes “epideictic argument” as a “‘soul-guiding’ eloquence that calls its audience to acts of judgment and ethical positioning” (ix). He explains, “it shapes the ideologies and imageries with which, and by which, the individual members of a community identify themselves; and, perhaps most significantly, it shapes the fundamental grounds, the ‘deep’ commitments and presuppositions, that will underlie and ultimately determine decision and debate in particular pragmatic forums” (9). This description fits Herbert’s poetry well. So does Walker’s claim that “[e]pideictic can also work to challenge or transform conventional beliefs” (9). One way of reading the long middle section of *The Temple* is to see Herbert stacking up moments, not only recording but reenacting them, in his own and imagined others’ traversing of the double state of the Christian. As in his recommendations for the parish, so in his poetry he is interested in close survey and strategies for remedy, for himself and for others. This makes the poetry deeply personal, but also a poetry that means to be joined rather than overheard. We do not overhear a private cry or meditation so much as participate in surprising navigations of identity, both personal and social, within and even through the double state of the Christian. In the terms Mastrangelo uses to describe Prudentius’s work, the *Temple* presents “a renewed concept of the self and its relation to the political community and the world” (4).

NOTES

- 1 See Chapter 34 of *The Country Parson*.
- 2 *Collins English Dictionary – Complete and Unabridged*, 12th Edition, 2014.
- 3 Stanley Fish’s connection of the poetry to what Herbert says about teaching catechism (Ch. 21) and Helen Wilcox’s broader connection of the poetry to the preacher’s tasks described in *The Country Parson* (“Hallow’d Fire”) are two noteworthy examples of a productive connection of Herbert’s poetry and prose.
- 4 I am thinking here especially of Jonathan Culler’s recent work in *Theory of the Lyric* and Jeffrey Walker’s work in *Rhetoric and Poetics in Antiquity*, which Culler also draws upon. Also see Vander Weele, “The Usefulness of Literature.”
- 5 This subtitle does not appear either in the Bodleian or Williams manuscript. See Hutchinson li-liiii.
- 6 The phrase comes from Donald Roth, 12, in reference to Taylor’s *Sources of the Self*, 112-13 and 302.
- 7 See James J. Murphy, 75.
- 8 Shaw applies to Herbert’s interest in vocation William Perkins’s distinction between a general vocation, “that, whereby a man is called out of the world to be a

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child of God,” and a personal one, “the execution of some particular office, arising of that distinction which God makes between man and man in every societie” (20). In the terms I develop here, Herbert’s separate personal vocations of parson and poet connect in his desire to build up his own and others’ general vocation. This fits Perkins’s third rule concerning personal vocations, which Shaw summarizes as “everyone must join the pursuit of his personal calling to his general one as a member of the Church.”

9 On Herbert’s sense of poetic vocation, see Benet’s book-length study.

10 See Hutchinson (382). Many have noticed the influence of Augustine on Herbert’s prose and poetry; see Pahlka for a book-length study.

11 These terms center the discussion in Part Four of poetic precedent.

12 See Kolbet for a history of the classical “Cure of the Soul” tradition and Augustine’s revision of it. Note, especially, his final chapter, “Therapy and Society.”

13 Since “The Pulley” draws on Hesiod’s Pandora myth in *Works and Days*, it is possible that Herbert knew Hesiod’s reconsideration of strife in the same work to include a strife that “is good for mortals” (5. 24), the strife which he urges upon his brother Perses. For Hesiod’s reconsideration of his first estimate of strife as always bad (in the *Theogony*), see Athanassakis’s note to *Works and Days*, 5. 10-29. Shakespeare gives strife a positive meaning in *Measure for Measure* when he has Escalus say to the disguised Duke that the Duke is “One, that above all other strifes, Contended especially to know himselfe” (3. 1. 490).

14 This is true for poets as well as critics, including Elizabeth Bishop, Richard Wilbur, Spencer Reese, and Chana Bloch, who also writes a monograph on Herbert and the Psalms, *Spelling the Word*. The Poetry Foundation lists Coleridge, Emerson, Dickinson, Hopkins, Auden, Anthony Hecht, and “perhaps Robert Frost” as part of the “School of Herbert.”

15 In the conclusion to her chapter on “Imitators and Adapters,” Vendler’s description of Herbert’s poetry nearly coincides with Schiller’s description of the aesthetic attitude, in which freedom comes from the equal and strong opposition of feeling and reason, or sense drive and form drive (see especially letters 11-15 and 18). Vendler’s passage concludes, “If it appears that one of these values must ‘win’ and the other must ‘lose,’ there is *a priori* something wrong with the way the problem is being seen or voiced” (136).

16 For Calvin, see Billings on “participation” and Vander Weele on “exchange.”

17 The greater importance of public over private prayer matches Herbert’s statement in Chapter 37 that “Charity to the public hath the precedence of private charity.”

18 Luther writes in his commentary on Romans 7, “being so deeply curved in on itself (*incurvatus in se*) [our nature] not only bends the best gifts of God towards itself . . . but it also . . . seeks all things, even God, for its own sake.” See Jenson, Ch. 2, “Luther’s Radical and Religious Incurvature,” 47-97. Calvin and Erasmus sound similar warnings. See Calvin’s reflection on “Love thy neighbor” (*Institutes* 2.8.54:417) and Erasmus’s reminder that the individual was for the good of a larger whole (144-45).

19 Jenson borrows the phrase “self-scrutiny as a course of consolation” from

David Steinmetz. See Martha Woodmansee's description of the German Pietist influence on the rise of aesthetics and its separation from rhetoric, especially her Chapter 1.

20 I wonder if this dichotomy is more easily deconstructed by writers than by critics. Contemporary poet and compositionist Eli Goldblatt, for example, recently described the two impulses of the writer as "the desire to speak out of your most intimate experiences and to connect with communities in need" (442).

21 The temple is present at the book's midpoint in "Sion" as well as in the title of the collection. See Wood's graceful essay on "Solomon's temple" for a greater emphasis on the individual heart.

22 Indeed, Fish argues prominently elsewhere that Herbert's poems' inwardness is so intense as to make them "self-consuming," constantly pointing to their source in God alone — and thus implicitly marginalizes the rhetorical, social dimension. See "Letting Go: The Dialectic of the Self in Herbert's Poetry," *Self-Consuming Artifacts* (Berkeley: U of California P, 1972), 156-223.

23 The place of the paradoxical in the Christian tradition goes back at least as far as Philippians 2:5-8, probably the first Christian hymn, celebrating the humility and exaltation of Christ. Paradox also characterizes Sedulius's "Easter Song" and a passage such as this in Augustine's Sermon 191 (perhaps a precursor to the medieval tradition that Herbert engages in "The Sacrifice"): "Man's Maker was made man, that He, Ruler of the stars, might nurse at His mother's breasts; that the Bread might be hungry, the Fountain thirst, the Light sleep, the Way be tired from the journey; that the Truth might be accused by false witnesses, the Judge of the living and the dead be judged by a mortal judge, Justice be sentenced by the unjust, the Teacher be beaten with whips, the Vine be crowned with thorns, the Foundation be suspended on wood; that Strength might be made weak, that He who makes well might be wounded, that Life might die. He was made man to suffer these and similar undeserved things for us, that He might free us who were undeserving . . ."

24 See Wall's note (69). Shaw reports that Herbert had "Your life is hid with Christ in God" painted at his wife's seat when he was restoring Bemerton Church (73, quoting *Aubrey's Brief Lives* 137).

25 See Wilcox's summary in *Poems* 255, n. 11 & 12.

26 It is hard to see that "Love" (III), the final poem of "The Church" moves very far beyond this chiasmus in "The Reprisal," the fourth poem in the collection: "Though I can do nought / Against thee, in thee I will overcome / The man, who once against thee fought." The same movement is repeated in "Justice," "The Holdfast," and "Bitter-Sweet," to name a few. Billings's distinction between the reciprocal and the responsive gift (175) is helpful. Kathryn Tanner makes a similar distinction in *Economy of Grace*, especially 58-71.

27 I take the phrase "social hermeneutic" from Gerald Bruns's essay on Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*.

28 Doerksen's language of "conflict resolution," adopted from L. C. Knights (58), seems to me an overly analytic description of Herbert's approach.

29 In *On Christian Doctrine* Augustine comments that "the life of the speaker has greater weight" than eloquence in the matter of whether or not he is "obediently heard" (4. 27).

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30 Herbert could have found a Scriptural basis for this relationship in passages such as Hebrews 5: 2-3: "[Every high priest] can have compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way; for that he himself also is compassed with infirmity. And by reason hereof he ought, as for the people, so also for himself, to offer for sins" (KJV). See Blacketer (37-59, especially 38, 50, and 57) for the long "School of God" tradition, stretching at least from Augustine to Calvin, which insisted that his or her words be instructive to the speaker first.

31 See Wilcox, *Poems* 168.

32 See Clausen on the privatization of poetry in the nineteenth century, Chapters 3 & 4.

33 Building or being built seems to fall somewhere between an active and passive voice, an eager watchfulness. This description evokes something like Simone Weil's understanding of "waiting" as attentiveness. See Vander Weele on the vocations of reading and writing in Herbert and Weil.

34 See Dyck's relation of "The Altar" and *The Temple* to religious reading in the early seventeenth century.

35 In his book on pedagogy and rhetoric in Calvin's interpretation of Deuteronomy, Blacketer makes the same move, emphasizing the importance of teaching and persuasion, the first and third of the orator's offices, for Calvin's rhetoric (see p. 23, e.g.). If he would cast a wider net and also consider Calvin's commissioning of Marot's Psalm poems for the Genevan psalter, then *delectare* would also be seen as important to the identity-formation of individual and church.

36 Though Fish marshals considerable historical evidence associating catechism instruction with temple-building, it would be more correct to limit the role of catechizing to the laying of foundations, as is explicitly done in Fish's examples from Robert Allen in 1600 (57) and T. Walkington in 1609 (59). In Herbert's prose and poetry, temple-construction refers more broadly, as it had for Paul, to building a Christian identity. In the final stanza of "The Windows," Herbert writes, "Doctrine and life, colors and light, in one / When they combine and mingle, bring / A strong regard and awe." The same note is sounded in Chapter 1 of *The Country Parson*: "The Duty [of the parson] is to do that which Christ did, and after his manner, both for Doctrine and Life."

37 Originary texts include Cicero's *Brutus* and *Orator* and Augustine's *On Christian Doctrine*, Book Four. See Blacketer on Calvin's place in the more general humanist revival of classical rhetoric, especially 61-68 and 79-82. Note that Hugh Blair and George Campbell, in the eighteenth century, still work with the traditional three aims described by Cicero and Augustine. See Fleming 511.

38 I am drawing on Jeffrey Walker's description of epideictic as a non-pragmatic eloquence that "shapes the ideologies and imageries with which, and by which, the individual members of a community identify themselves" (9). Epideictic, or ceremonial discourse, was most associated with the middle style.

39 Here is the opening sentence in which they appear:

The Country Parson values Catechizing highly: for there being three points of his duty, the one, to infuse a competent knowledge of salvation in every one of his Flock;

the other, to multiply, and build up this knowledge, to a spiritual Temple; the third to inflame this knowledge, to press, and drive it to practice, turning it to reformation of life, by pithy and lively exhortation; Catechizing is the first point, and but by Catechizing, the other cannot be attained (82-83).

40 Calvin also respects the middle style's ability to shape the listener when he commissions Clement Marot to find a verse form that could convert the Psalms to hymns.

41 See Mary Carruthers, especially 43-45 on the Ark of God and Noah's Ark as images for memory. Carruthers mentions a biblical basis for architectural imagery in Proverbs 24: 3-4 (300, n.115) and in Matt. 6: 19-20 and Romans 2:5 (34). Dyck is good on *The Temple's* efforts to shape the memory of its readers.

42 I come to this new interest primarily through the work of Marc Mastrangelo.

43 These are Culler's terms for lyric poetry in *Theory of the Lyric*.

44 See Macklin Smith, 126-41.

45 Erasmus's *Enchiridion: Handbook of the Christian Soldier* describes human life as a "sort of perpetual warfare" (Ch. 1) requiring "weapons of the Christian soldier" (Ch. 2) and remedies for "certain special vices" (Ch. 9-13). Rienstra points to "the psychomachia poems in English sonnet sequences," giving Sidney's Sonnet 52, "A Strife is grown between virtue and love," and Shakespeare's Sonnet 46, "Mine eye and heart are at a mortal war," as examples (33). In his study of pre-university Latin education in Trecento Florence, Paul Gehl lists Prudentius as one of the three most studied authors, along with Aesop and (most popular) Prosper of Aquitaine's *Epigrammata* (111). It was the *Dittochaëon*, however, not the *Psychomachia*, that was used most at this level (143-52).

46 Prudentius, like Herbert, loved music, and wrote twelve liturgical hymns for his *Cathemerinon*, one of which, "Of the Father's Love Begotten," is still sung today. See Simon Jackson for Herbert's attachment to music.

47 C. S. Lewis writes, "[This] passage is only a single sentence; but it comes from the heart and reveals in a flash the real genesis of the poem: 'War rages, horrid war / Even in our bones; our double nature sounds / With armed discord.' It was no prosaic desire for innocent epic that moved Prudentius to write, and his contemporaries to read, the *Psychomachia*. It was their daily and hourly experience of the *non simplex natura*" (73).

48 Compare to Herbert's "The Bunch of Grapes": "For as the Jews of old by God's command / Travel'd, and saw no town, / So now each Christian hath his journey's spann'd: / Their story pens and sets us down" (ll. 8-11).

49 I discuss Rienstra and Malcolmson below, but also see Anthony Martin and John Ottenhof for analysis of sixteenth-century religious parody and what modern critics such as Tuve, Martz, Strier, and others have made of its influence on Herbert.

50 Dante, who uses but "corrects" both Virgil and a courtly love tradition, could be seen as the middle figure between Prudentius and Herbert.

51 See Mastrangelo, 126-32.

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52 Augustine mediates Paul's description of the "temple" as both individual and collective (see, e.g., II. Corinthians 6: 15-16) in ways that fit Herbert's opening poem of "The Church": "For all of us together are his temple and all of us individually his temples, since he deigns to dwell both in the united heart of all and in each one separately When we lift our hearts to him, our hearts are his altar; with his only begotten Son as our priest we seek his favour" (*City of God* 10.3).

53 The reference to "waiting" two lines later makes one wonder how well Milton knew these lines when he wrote his famous "They also serve who only stand and wait."

54 Also qtd. in Wilcox, *Poems* 476, who supplies evidence for "the interlocking of these images of individual, family, house and church" (478, n.5).

55 A number of other interests shared by the two poems deserve quick mention: a preparatory stage (battle or porch); figural interpretation (Prudentius's "In Abram's life we see a plan / of Faith accommodate to man" and Herbert's "Their story pens and sets us down"); allegorical warfare; and a love of music and reference to music in their poetry. Not to be lost in this naming of other shared interests is the poets' revisionary impulse, and the effort to form a new identity that includes, but also extends beyond, art.

56 Lewis might question whether Herbert turns the tradition of Petrarchan love poetry to a new use, intervening in its history, or retrieves that which Petrarchism had interrupted.

57 Laurent Pernot gives a recent well-regarded survey of epideictic but limits his discussion to prose, mostly Roman prose writers.

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