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# Typology and the Self in George Herbert's "Affliction" Poems

by A.E. Watkins

Of all Idolatries, God deliver us from a superstitious worship  
of our selves. – Thomas Adams, 1624<sup>1</sup>

Textual representation of the self has received ample attention in scholarship on George Herbert and his poetry for the last decade. The influence of theology on such representations, however, has received less attention. Indeed, Herbert's theological beliefs largely determined his poetic project and dominate the relevant scholarship, leading to Michael Schoenfeldt's understandable complaint that "critics of George Herbert have focused on the spiritual and theological components of his poetry at the expense of its engagements with the material world."<sup>2</sup> Yet, scholarship on the self and its embodied form has counteractively focused on secular directives at the expense of theological conceptions of selfhood, which were readily available to early modern subjects.

Herbert's own depiction of corporeality in his "Affliction" poems provides a valuable example of such theological directives on selfhood and their spiritual function.<sup>3</sup> The "Affliction" poems are the most substantial of the numerous identically titled poems in *The Temple*, and while a few scholars have discussed whether the poems perform a spiritual progression, most have focused on autobiographical elements in "Affliction" (I).<sup>4</sup> Such focused readings, however, have largely neglected the role these autobiographical elements play in the spiritual progression from self-absorption to selfless devotion.

The series' progression from "the autonomous self" to "the poet's relationship with God, the communal, the historical and typological" has been best documented by Daniel Rubey.<sup>5</sup> Rubey's study of the "Affliction" series aptly defines the poems' spiritual progression, but what proves most valuable is Rubey's depiction of the necessary reconsideration of selfhood along the way. The gap Rubey leaves, though, is the lack of discussion on the body/self dynamic and how fideistic belief systems manage the speaker's self-conception throughout the series. In Rubey's argument, only the end of the "Affliction" series

provides typological representations, when, in fact, the entire series utilizes typological symbolism to portray how the body and self should be understood through religious directives. Over the course of the series, Herbert depicts the speaker's changing views of his corporeality via a shift in typological representation of the speaker, i.e., from an antitype of the enclosed garden to a spiritually redeemed self fully incorporated in the ultimate antitype of Christ.<sup>6</sup>

Because Herbert uses typology to understand and represents corporeal conditions, the subsequent discussion will begin with a review of recent studies on corporeality in the early modern period followed by a review of typology's prevalence in seventeenth-century England and Herbert's use of it. I will then discuss "Affliction" (I) and how it represents a theologically determined understanding of embodiment that is established via the typological pairing of the speaker's body with Eden. After a discussion of changes in the speaker's attitude and understanding of these typological significations through "Affliction" (II), (III), and (IV), I will argue that these shifts in self-representation portray a progressive spiritual maturation that culminates in the series' final poem when the speaker takes on a new typological representation as a Christological type. The speaker's spiritual progression will be measured by the "paradigm of regeneration," or the gradual restoration of the image of God in man, discussed by Barbara Kiefer Lewalski in *Protestant Poetics and the Seventeenth-Century Religious Lyric*.<sup>7</sup> The study will conclude with a closer look at the parallel between spiritual progression and self-representation as well as what this parallel says about the importance of theological directives on selfhood to early modern subjects.

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In his essay "Self and Selfhood in the Seventeenth Century," Jonathan Sawday presents an analysis of Albrecht Dürer's *Self-Portrait* of 1512, an illuminating study of corporeality in the early modern era and one of the first to discuss embodiment in terms of religious directives. Sawday, following R.D. Laing, defines embodiment as a corporeal understanding of the self where the individual has "an experience [of the] body as a base from which [one] can be a person with other human beings."<sup>8</sup> Applying this understanding of the body as a locus of the self and thereby a medium for self-expression to

Dürer's self-portrait, Sawday concludes that the value of the painting lies in its exemplification of "a complex exercise in identification of oneself within a larger fideistic framework of belief."<sup>9</sup> Sawday never discloses the method, symbolic or otherwise, by which one identifies oneself "within a larger fideistic framework." His analysis focuses on the painting's exemplification of a reflective engagement with embodiment, highlighting Dürer's self-identification rather than his self-incorporation into a larger identity beyond his individual body.

The conception of the self as embodied is also a central tenet of Michael Schoenfeldt's *Bodies and Selves in Early Modern England*. Like Sawday, Schoenfeldt focuses on the expression of psychological interiority through representations of embodiment, or "the effort to express the material self as a site of inwardness, and the elusiveness of the self."<sup>10</sup> In discussing "the ways in which the inner self is constructed by carefully regulating the substances that enter and exit the physical body," Schoenfeldt addresses the corporeal/spiritual dynamic via the humors and the significance of food with theological signification, specifically the Eucharist.<sup>11</sup> Similarly, Sarah Skwire focuses on how "the word 'ague' emphasizes the inextricable tie Herbert finds between the spiritual and physical."<sup>12</sup> Both of these studies draw important and necessary connections between the physical body and the spiritual self. Yet, both studies support, implicitly in Skwire's case and explicitly in Schoenfeldt's, the notion of the body as a *base* from which an autonomous selfhood is understood and by which it is defined. Though some of Herbert's poems portray the self as embodied, the spiritual value of this conception of selfhood is actively refuted in others, especially the "Affliction" series, which enact a reconceptualization of the self through theological directives that argue for a communal rather than an autonomous identity.<sup>13</sup> Furthermore, each study prioritizes the corporeal over the spiritual by understanding the body/self dynamic through a hermeneutics of bodily functions and symptoms as opposed to a hermeneutics of the Scriptures.

A focus on Herbert's poetic study of selfhood as determined by theological symbol systems takes its lead from Herbert's own articulation of the Scriptures as his means for self-understanding: "Thy words do finde me out, & parallels bring, / And in another make me understood" ("Holy Scriptures" [II], ll. 11-12). Even if we ignore Herbert's own claims, the ubiquity of the Bible in England and its role

as the Protestant pathway to salvation argue for its significance to the construction of identity and ideology during the early modern period. As Joseph Galdon notes, “The Bible was the most widely read of all books in the period. . . . [It] was not only read, but was known and used, and the scriptural concept of man and the world exerted a deep and lasting influence even on the ordinary laymen of the period.”<sup>14</sup> Debora Kuller Shuger echoes Galdon’s claim when she states that “the Bible remained the primary locus for a good deal of what we might classify as cultural, psychological, or anthropological reflection.”<sup>15</sup> But the Bible was not just widely read, it was also subject to individual interpretation as Protestantism placed the authority of the Bible above the church and gave each practitioner agency in finding salvation in its pages.<sup>16</sup> With this emphasis on individual hermeneutics, the “concept of man and the world” expounded by the Bible was left to the determination of the reader. Indeed, Herbert’s lines above evoke the individual interaction with the Scriptures as well as their central importance to one’s conceptions of the world and self.

Though Protestantism stressed the value of subjective biblical readings, multiple symbol systems did influence how early modern subjects understood its meanings. Of these systems, typology has been the most commonly studied. Galdon, for instance, argues that early modern subjects “invariably read the Bible typologically,” but even if one finds this assertion overstated, Galdon’s work as well as that of Lewalski, Rosemond Tuve, and Richard Strier has shown the importance of typology to Herbert and other seventeenth-century poets.<sup>17</sup> The symbol system of typology – where Old Testament figures, called types, prefigure or foreshadow New Testament antitypes – provided Herbert with a wealth of symbols readily known to his seventeenth-century audience by which to understand and with which to convey his own worldviews. One of the most famous typological pairings at that time was the enclosed garden and Mary. Mary, as *hortus conclusus*, became a redemptive antitype of the flawed garden of the Old Testament.<sup>18</sup> What is especially interesting about the typological relationship between Mary and Eden is how it establishes a symbolic representation of the self as enclosed within and represented by the body.

Though the enclosed garden type was originally recapitulated and fulfilled by Mary, the shift in typological pairings developed by Protestant exegetes altered the implications of the Virgin as garden





a part unawares of wo" (ll. 23-24). No longer does the speaker exist in the eternal and flower filled "May" of the enclosed garden; instead, he realizes his fallen condition of "sorrow" and "wo."

The speaker is not just an antitype of Adam, however; he is also an antitype of the garden itself. Soon after the bliss of Eden ends, the speaker laments, "Sicknesses cleave my bones, / Consuming agues dwell in ev'ry vein" (ll. 26-27). In the double meaning of "cleave," the "Sicknesses" both penetrate and cling to his bones, making the body a host while dismembering it at the same time. As Skwire keenly notes, Herbert uses physical sickness to "make particular and physical the idea of the completeness of human deficiency."<sup>25</sup> And while these afflictions suggest the body's vulnerability, more specifically, they present the body as an enclosure that is undermined when penetrated. In this way, the speaker's body parallels the enclosed garden itself, which is similarly breached and infested by sin. No longer the once secure garden, where his "thoughts reserved / No place for grief or fear," the speaker's body is now "thinne and lean *without a fence* or friend" (ll. 15-16, 35; my emphasis). The enclosure of the body, the speaker finds, is ultimately lacking. He is left fenceless, and his interior self seems almost entirely vacated when he feels himself "blown through with ev'ry storm and winde" (l. 36). Whether as diseases or wind, the speaker's afflictions *permeate* the enclosure of his body.<sup>26</sup> In breaching his enclosure, these afflictions destabilize the once clear distinction between inside and outside. They encroach upon the speaker's interiority, having symbolically broken the body's ability to offer a physical definition of the self. In this way, the speaker's afflictions ultimately present a threat to his conception of self.

While these afflictions occasion a crisis of self that appears both physically and psychologically painful, they will eventually prove beneficial: as part of his calling the speaker must learn to accept the "purging, or mollifying, or breaking of the heart which readies it for the gifts of repentance and saving faith."<sup>27</sup> Yet, at the end of "Affliction" (I), the speaker still resists the corporeal and spiritual assaults he faces. He wishes that he were "a tree" and that "some bird would trust / Her household to me," making him a secure enclosure ("household") once again (ll. 57, 59-60). As the caged bird commonly symbolized the embodied soul in the widely popular emblem books of the seventeenth-century, the speaker's assertion is clear: he wants to remain an autonomous self whose soul stays rooted, caged even, in its bodily



enclosure.<sup>28</sup> Again the symbol shows a discrepancy in understanding between speaker and author: while the speaker remains resistant to his afflictions, Herbert reveals their spiritual value. The afflictions prove embodiment to be a spiritually flawed conception of selfhood, as it makes the self autonomous, other than and separate from God.

In "Affliction" (II), the mollification of the calling continues, which the speaker misinterprets as a threat to his existence, saying, "Kill me not ev'ry day, / Though Lord of life" (ll. 1-2). A shift can be found, however, in this second "Affliction" poem; whereas Christ was absent in "Affliction" (I), here the speaker acknowledges "thy one death for me" (l. 2). The speaker spends the first two stanzas obsessing over Christ's Passion and his inability to match Christ's bodily suffering: his "broken pay" doesn't match Christ's "one death" (ll. 2, 4). On the one hand, this attention to the Passion signals the speaker's justification, his recognition of God's true gift in the "forgiveness of his sins by Christ's satisfaction for them."<sup>29</sup> On the other, this competition with Christ exemplifies the speaker's pride and reinforces his distinction from Christ in making them competing opposites. But the speaker also begins to realize that God does more than just afflict the elected. He recognizes that his "Lord," through His crucifixion, is both pleasure and pain. He sees God both as the source and as the reliever of his grief:

Thou art my grief alone,  
 Thou Lord conceal it not: and as thou art  
 All my delight, so all my smart:  
 Thy crosse took up in one,  
 By way of imprest, all my future mone. (ll. 11-15)

Not only does Herbert establish God as an "all" that conflates the binaries of "delight" and "smart," but he also diffuses the opposition between the speaker and God by relating how Christ takes up all the speaker's "future mone." The speaker has begun to identify his body with Christ's instead of with the garden, which signifies a shift toward this new typological pairing. Furthermore, Herbert establishes a precedent by representing God's ability to conflate binary relationships with his "cross," which encompasses both the speaker's "delight" and "smart."<sup>30</sup> Such an awareness is unlikely the speaker's; yet, the double

meaning of "Thy cross" prefigures his typological absorption into the body of Christ in "Affliction" (V).

The speaker of "Affliction" (III), however, remains typologically tied to the Old Testament Adam instead of Christ, which is seen when the speaker recalls that "thy breath gave me both life and shape" (l. 7). Furthermore, the body continues to represent an enclosure, evident in its ability to retain breath. The poem, however, presents the waning of the enclosed garden/embodiment trope in two principle ways. First, the poem opens with a sigh of grief from the speaker, which the poem affirms as an exhalation of God's breath. Herbert writes, "My heart did heave, and there came forth, *O God!* / But that I knew that thou wast in the grief" (ll. 1-2). The speaker asserts that the exhalation of God's breath will lead to death and then reveals his aspirations for it when he states, "Or if some years with it escape, / The sigh then only is / A gale to bring me sooner to my blisse" (ll. 10-12). The imagery of these lines reenact the Fall in a manner similar to "Affliction (I)." The "gale" recalls the storms that penetrated the speaker in the earlier poem and further dissolves that self to a point near death. In both poems, the enclosure of the body is found to be permeable, but here the speaker realizes this permeability is fortunate, since it might lead to "blisse." The speaker, in hoping for his own death, seems aware of the need for affliction, for its ability to bring the self closer to God. The speaker, however, mistakes his afflictions for a threat to his physical existence when they are instead a threat to his embodied and autonomous self-conception.

As Herbert portrays affliction's purpose in recapitulating the fortunate Fall, he also shifts further from enclosed garden typology. Indeed, the "gale" seems to "bring [the speaker] sooner" to his typological and redemptive incorporation in Christ. The last stanza of the poem reestablishes Christ's example of affliction affirmed in "Affliction" (II). Herbert writes:

Thy life on earth was grief, and thou art still  
Constant unto it, making it to be  
A point of honour, now to grieve in me,  
And in thy members suffer ill. (ll. 13-16)

In these lines, Christ's sacrifice, his "grief," does not end with death but rather continues, as Christ is "still / Constant unto it." Herbert marks

an important transition here in the relationship between the speaker and God when the former recognizes their shared suffering. Christ's grief is in the speaker, and via the suffering "members" of the Church, God still "suffer[s] ill." The speaker, as member of the church, also becomes a feeling member of God's body. The speaker's autonomy is negated, but not through a bodily dissolution.<sup>31</sup> Instead, Herbert portrays a reconceptualization of selfhood, one that is in line with the spiritual stage of sanctification, which "involves the actual but gradual repairing of the defaced image of God in the soul."<sup>32</sup> The speaker's body does not dissolve, but rather, the speaker has begun to typologically recognize Christ in his own self-image.

Like the first three "Affliction" poems, "Affliction" (IV) portrays the symbolic destruction of the embodied self; however, it also offers the gradual rebuilding of a new typological self-conception. At the onset of the fourth poem, the speaker is only aware of his deconstructed embodiment: "Broken in pieces all asunder, / Lord, hunt me not, / A thing forgot" (ll. 1-3). A reference to the speaker's near death in "Affliction" (III) is found in an allusion to Psalm 31:12 in these first three lines: "I am forgotten as a dead man out of mind: I am like a broken vessel." As a broken, formerly embodied self, the speaker tells God not to bother searching for the self he expects to no longer exist. Yet, the breaking of the speaker's embodiment does not necessarily infer a self-dissolution. The speaker's self remains. He still experiences his subjective existence and his affliction. He is still "tortur'd in the space / Betwixt this world and that of grace" (ll. 5-6), which affirms that he maintains a bodily existence even if he no longer feels himself encapsulated by that corporeal form. What he has abandoned is the conception of his *embodied* self, his "broken vessel." The self is not dissolved but being readied for reconstruction. The speaker has traded in the secular directives by which he had once built his self-conception. Now, the Scriptures guide him and the poem alike.

As affliction has rendered the speaker's body utterly permeable, it continues further, encroaching on the speaker's psychological and physiological interior. Herbert writes:

My thoughts are all a case of knives,  
Wounding my heart  
With scatter'd smart,

As watring pots give flowers their lives.  
 Nothing their furie can controll,  
 While they do wound and pink my soul. (ll. 7-12)

Once again, affliction causes the breach of the soul's enclosure. Here, however, it is the speaker's own "thoughts" that cause the contents of his heart to spill. Herbert's tortured syntax allows for two readings. In the first, the heart is wounded and thereby waters the garden; in the other, the heart receives the knives as flowers receive water, which suggest the heart is the garden. In conflating both, as the "Affliction" series has previously instructed the reader to do, the garden becomes both inside and outside, utterly unenclosed. This reading is further supported by the speaker's divulgence that the internal "elements" of his body "are let loose" (l. 17).

Though the speaker's body is further permeated, the garden imagery remains. The typological shift from the enclosed garden antitype to incorporation in the antitype of Christ is not yet complete because the speaker has yet to fully restore Christ into his own self-conception. The garden metaphor suggests, seemingly, a regression back to the original typology of "Affliction" (I). The speaker, however, shows resistance to this symbolic backslide when he begs his God, "let not their plot / Kill them and me, / And also thee" (ll. 19-21). Herbert establishes that a reformulation of the self as Eden (flowers in "their plot") undoes the speaker's spiritual progress. To return the speaker to a prelapsarian condition is merely to enclose him again, separating himself from his God once more. Yet, the speaker comes to realize that God's afflictions are "With care and courage *building* me, / Till I reach heav'n, and much more, thee" (ll. 29-30; my emphasis). This symbolic rebuilding aptly conveys the typological and spiritual maturation of the speaker, enacting the gradual regeneration of the image of God in man.

In the first stanza of "Affliction" (V), the speaker continues to realize what his author has known all along: the answers are in the Scriptures. Herbert writes:

My God, I read this day,  
 That planted Paradise was not so firm,  
 As was and is thy floting Ark; whose stay

And anchor thou art onely, to confirm  
 And strengthen it in ev'ry age,  
 When waves do rise, and tempests rage. (ll. 1-6)

In these lines, Mary Ellen Rickey notes that Herbert "celebrates the Fortunate Fall, a theme ever attractive to Herbert, by comparing the placidity of Eden and the troubled, though eventually transcendent, course of the ark of Christ's church."<sup>33</sup> The speaker's own typological recapitulation of the fall has indeed proven fortunate. The loss of his previous pairing with the garden allows the speaker to recognize the spiritually superior typological relationship with the body of Christ, figured here as the "Ark."<sup>34</sup> By professing the superiority of the Ark over "planted Paradise," the speaker makes his typological preference for Christ over the enclosed garden undeniably clear. In this typological switch, the speaker makes a parallel alteration to his conception of selfhood. Rejecting the autonomy of embodiment figured by the enclosed garden, the speaker reconceives himself as part of a whole, as a member in the body of Christ.

The speaker goes on to state his desire not to part again from God: "As we at first did board with thee, / Now thou wouldst taste our miserie" (ll. 11-12). The shift from "I" in the first stanza to "we" in the second and here in the third rhetorically performs the speaker's abandonment of his previous conceptions of an isolated, discrete self. These lines also perform numerous conflations, which reinforce the idea of corporation in the body of Christ as Church. The "Board," for example, suggests mankind's condition as boarders in Eden, but also refers to the communion table and the cross. The use of "board" as communion table and cross also appears in "The Collar," where the speaker says, "I struck the board, and cried, No more" (l. 1). The conflated references to the cross and communion table in "board" become remarkably significant when considering Herbert's current project, which, similar to "The Collar," is the speaker's adoption of a Christological selfhood. By putting the cross and communion table in such proximity, Herbert points to the merging of God and man in Christ, and the subsequent merging of Christ and man via communion. But, in addition to communion, Herbert's present effort is to portray the parallel action of typologically accepting Christ's image into one's own self-image.

The final stanza of the poem and sequence reads:

Affliction then is ours;  
We are the trees, whom shaking fastens more,  
While blustering windes destroy the wanton bowres,  
And ruffle all their curious knots and store.  
My God, so temper joy and wo,  
That thy bright beams may tame thy bow. (ll. 19-24)

Here, grief goes from providing a somatic experience to engendering a conflation of man and Christ in a single body, in the single pronoun "ours." In this one word, Herbert resoundingly and finally gives the speaker over to a typological union with Christ. The typological fulfillment signified by speaker's and Christ's conflation in "ours" also reveals "the perfect restoration of the image of God" in the speaker: his glorification.<sup>35</sup> Thus, Herbert's speaker has not only achieved a more complete typological relationship but also a spiritual enlightenment.

Though the move from "Affliction then is ours" to "We are the trees" could be read as another regression back to the enclosed garden trope, the collective trees deny the speaker's individuality and thus negate the autonomy inherent to the enclosed garden symbol of embodiment. The "shaking" of the trees, earlier established as a symbol of affliction, will further root the individual tree to the collective, and eternal, body of Christ. The "shaking" also indicates the exposure of the trees and flowers, figured in "knots," to outside elements. The speaker has not been placed, as part of a collective, in another confinement; rather, like Christ who symbolically fulfills all types, the plant life is indicative of all creation, not the garden exclusively. Herbert has delineated the multitude of events, people, and institutions of biblical history into the body of Christ, who fulfills all typological relations, even the antitypes to the enclosed garden.

God's affliction, Herbert ultimately shows, brings the speaker from his early misconception of the calling to his salvation via typology, which repairs the image of God in the self. But part of this salvation consists in affliction's ability to destroy the individuating principles of embodiment. In contradistinction to the singular tree the speaker had wished to become in the first "Affliction" poem, the speaker in "Affliction" (V) recognizes his body as analogous to a tree that is part

of a larger forest. This synecdochic relationship of the speaker is paralleled by the speaker's typological incorporation into the body of Christ. In several of the "Affliction" poems, and elsewhere in *The Temple*, the afflictions of the speaker are synonymous with Christ's passion. In "Affliction" (II), the speaker recognizes that "so all my smart: / Thy cross took up in one" (ll. 11-12). In "Affliction" (III), the speaker recognizes that Christ's "grief," which He is "still / Constant unto," has become manifested in the speaker: "now to grieve in me" (ll. 13-15). In "Affliction" (IV), the "knives" impale the speaker, "pink [the speaker's] soul," and ultimately threaten both his and God's existence (ll. 7, 12, 19-20). In each case, the afflictions the speaker receives represent both physical and spiritual pangs, but more importantly, in each example these physical breaches are shared by the speaker and Christ.

\* \* \* \* \*

In general, scholarship on Christological self-representations has analyzed them as bodily depictions of an autonomous and seemingly unaltered psychological inwardness, neglecting the extensive deconstruction and reconstruction of selfhood they suggest. Stephen Greenblatt, for example, has referred to Christological self-representations as "a somatic, religious experience," a "process of absorption where bodies take on the significance of religious symbolic structures."<sup>36</sup> Indeed, Herbert's "Affliction" poems depict somatic experiences in that they portray bodily pain as manifestations of spiritual experiences. Such experiences show the process by which the self-image takes on the image of Christ, which is necessary for the paradigm of regeneration. Moving from election to glorification, the speaker of Herbert's "Affliction" poems doesn't simply absorb signification; rather, his self-conception has been utterly deconstructed through the shift in typological representation, which has engendered the reconstruction of the image of God within himself. Herbert's speaker exemplifies an understanding of oneself as a synecdochic relationship with a larger identity: the communal body of Christ. In such a self-conception, identity, spirituality, and even suffering are shared, liberating the Christian subject from the sense of God's alienation. While spiritually ameliorative, this process must necessarily be painful as the pain permeates the embodiment that physically enacted the self's autonomy. To reconceive the self, Herbert's poetry argues, the bodily form must first be

destabilized by afflictions. Parallel to this function of bodily pain is another: to accept the image of Christ into one's own self image, one must take on Christ's wounds. In this way, Christ's image becomes a typological model for the Christian's mutually physical and spiritual path to salvation.

Yet, such an argument for the spiritual necessity of reconceiving the self is not Herbert's alone, nor is the assumption that the body played a role in this process. As Thomas Adams's quotation in the epigraph to my essay suggests, idolatry of the self was a principle concern for Protestants. Adams's discussion stems from 1 Corinthians 6:20, which articulates the need for both body and self to play a part in the salvational process: "We are bought with a price, therefore let us glorify God both in body and in spirit, for they are his." Adams goes on to articulate the need to "cleanse" and "purge" oneself so that God's "temples" may be fit for His habitation.<sup>37</sup> These terms certainly evoke Herbert's "Affliction" series as well as the title of his book of poems, *The Temple*. More importantly, Adams, like Herbert, suggests a salvational process in line with the "paradigm of regeneration," which Lewalski argues "was widely accepted by English Protestants of whatever persuasion."<sup>38</sup> Further examples of the body as contact zone between materiality and spirituality have been well documented in many of the texts cited in this study. Providing a litany of such examples seems unnecessary; yet, in closing, I hope only to reinforce what their studies have already suggested: the need for a dialectical approach to material and spiritual directives in early modern studies. As the seventeenth century proves a stage on which fideistic belief systems and material realities constantly engaged, contradicted, and even complemented one another, scholarship must be ever mindful of the certainty that early modern subjects understood their world in both theological and material terms.

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#### Notes

1. Thomas Adams. *The Works of Thomas Adams*. (London: Thomas Harper, 1629), p. 307.

2. Michael C. Schoenfeldt, *Bodies and Selves in Early Modern England: Physiology and Inwardness in Spenser, Shakespeare, Herbert, and Milton* (Cambridge: University of Cambridge Press, 1999), p. 96.



3. All quotations from Herbert are from *The Works of George Herbert*, ed. F.E. Hutchinson (1941; corr. rpt. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1964), and will be cited in the text of my essay by line number for poems and page number for prose.

4. For arguments on behalf of the “Affliction” poems as a progression or series, see Joseph Summer, *George Herbert: His Religion and Art* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1954), p. 87; Hermine Van Nuis, “Herbert’s ‘Affliction’ Poems: A Pilgrim’s Progress,” *Concerning Poetry* 8, no. 1 (fall 1975): p. 8; and Daniel Rubey, “The Poet and the Christian Community: Herbert’s Affliction Poems and the Structure of The Temple,” *Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900* 20, no.1 (winter 1980), p. 106. Mary Ellen Rickey argues that “Affliction” (IV) does not support the series in a significant way (and thereby that the series does not maintain a unified import) when she states the change of its title from “Tentation” to “Affliction (IV)” cannot be “assign[ed] . . . a definite cause”; see *Utmost Art: Complexity in the Verse of George Herbert* (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1966), p. 117. Bill Smithson asserts that the sequence “does not reveal a progressive development of spiritual growth” and claims the issues inherent in “Affliction (I)” and “Affliction (V)” are answered by (II) and (III); see “Herbert’s ‘Affliction’ Poems,” *Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900* 15, no.1 (winter 1975): p. 126. Paul Dyck acquiesces, “The poems may be read as a series” but argues instead for their being read as “an unordered group” of similar themes; see “‘Thou didst betray me to a lingering book’: Discovering Affliction in *The Temple*,” *George Herbert Journal* 28 (fall 2004/spring 2005): 32.

5. Rubey, “The Poet and the Christian Community,” p. 106.

6. Typology is a correlation between Old Testament persons, events, and institutions and their recapitulation or fulfillment in New Testament figures. The Old Testament figures, or types, were viewed by Christian exegetes as prefigurations or shadows of their New Testament antitypes. Both type and antitype were considered historical realities instead of allegories or fictive representations. Typologically, Christ is seen as the ultimate antitype of all types, thereby encapsulating the entirety of the Christian Church; see Barbara Kiefer Lewalski, *Protestant Poetics and the Seventeenth-Century Religious Lyric*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979), pp. 131-32.

7. Lewalski, *Protestant Poetics and the Seventeenth-Century Religious Lyric*, p. 16-19.

8. R.D. Laing, quoted in Jonathan Sawday, “Self and Selfhood in the Seventeenth Century,” in *Rewriting the Self: Histories from the Renaissance to the Present*, ed. Roy Porter (New York: Routledge, 1997), p. 38.

9. Sawday, “Self and Selfhood in the Seventeenth Century,” p. 43.

10. Schoenfeldt, *Bodies and Selves in Early Modern England*, p. 2.

11. Schoenfeldt, *Bodies and Selves in Early Modern England*, p. 96.

12. Sarah Skwire, "George Herbert, Sin, and Ague," *George Herbert Journal* 28 (fall 2004/spring 2005): 24.

13. Schoenfeldt does argue that "eating nonetheless offers Herbert a scenario for profound community between heaven and earth"; however, there is a further argument to be made, I believe, for communion's destabilization of the embodied, autonomous self; see *Bodies and Selves in Early Modern England*, p. 127. The relationship between communion and the mutual incorporation of Christ in Christian and Christian in the body of Christ will be explored later in this study.

14. Joseph A. Galdon, *Typology and Seventeenth-Century Literature* (Netherlands: Mouton and Co., 1975), p. 12.

15. Debora Kuller Shuger, *The Renaissance Bible: Scholarship, Sacrifice, and Subjectivity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), p. 4.

16. A major distinction of the Protestant doctrine was the emphasis that "each Christian individual must be his own priest," which resulted in the importance of the scriptures to guide those individuals; see Charles H. and Katherine George, *The Protestant Mind of the English Reformation, 1570-1640* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1961), p. 29.

17. Galdon, *Typology and Seventeenth-Century Literature*, p. 11; for previous studies on Herbert's use of typology in particular, see Galdon, *Typology and Seventeenth-Century Literature*, pp. 74-75, 81, 83, 93, 119, 125-32, 138-39; Rosemond Tuve, *A Reading of George Herbert* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1952), 112-37; Lewalski, *Protestant Poetics and the Seventeenth-Century Religious Lyric*, pp. 283-316; and Richard Strier, *Love Known: Theology and Experience in George Herbert's Poetry* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983), pp. 159, 179.

18. As Stanley Stewart argues, the interpretation of Mary as a pure garden "was one of the most familiar ways in which the Virgin was known to the Middle Ages" and was commonly referenced in the seventeenth century; see *The Enclosed Garden: The Tradition and the Image in Seventeenth-Century Poetry* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1966), pp. 41-43.

19. Lewalski, *Protestant Poetics and the Seventeenth-Century Religious Lyric*, p. 129.

20. According to the Protestant clergyman William Perkins, "Election is Gods decree, whereby on his owne free-will, he hath ordained certaine men to salvation, to praise of the glorie of his grace"; see William Perkins, *The Work of William Perkins*, ed. Ian Brewared (Abingdon: Sutton Courtenay Press, 1970), p. 284.

21. Each of the following scholarly studies articulates in varying degrees of certainty the autobiographical nature of "Affliction" (I): Margaret Bottrall, *George Herbert* (London: John Murray Ltd., 1954), p. 10; Helen Vendler, *The*

*Poetry of George Herbert* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1975), p. 41; Michael C. Schoenfeldt, *Prayer and Power: George Herbert and Renaissance Courtship* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), p. 70; Summers, *George Herbert: His Religion and Art*, p. 183; Elizabeth Clarke, *Theory and Theology in George Herbert's Poetry* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997), p. 215; Cristina Malcolmson, *Heart-Work: George Herbert and Protestant Ethic* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999), p. 104. Singleton, Schoenfeldt, and Malcolmson spend considerable attention on the role of courtly behaviors and language in Herbert's poetry. Marion White Singleton's express purpose in *God's Courtier* is a recognition of "the extent to which biography and history are configured within the image of God's courtier"; see *God's Courtier: The Celebration of a Different Grace in George Herbert's Temple* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978), p. 4. Schoenfeldt states that *The Temple* "exploits the same rich set of correspondences between sacred and secular power," (*Prayer and Power*, p. 59). Malcolmson refers to the existence of Herbert's courtly self and religious self as a "double identity" in *The Temple* (*Heart-Work: George Herbert and Protestant Ethic*, p. 69).

22. Schoenfeldt, *Prayer and Power: George Herbert and Renaissance Courtship*, p. 70.

23. For other possible readings of Herbert's speaker, in the "Affliction" series or otherwise, see Barbara Leah Harman, "George Herbert's 'Affliction' (I): The Limits of Representation," *English Literary History* 44, no. 2 (summer 1977): 267-85.

24. Richard Todd effectively summarizes the distinctions between the *liber foris* and *intus*: "The situation before the Fall had been that there were two books, *intus* [the Book of Divine Ideas] and *foris* [the Book of Appearances]. Man had been unique among sentient creatures in that . . . he could read the 'language' of both. . . . After the Fall, in which man in a single act of curiosity and pride unwarrantedly placed prior emphasis on the *liber foris* . . . , the clarity of the *liber intus* became impossibly clouded." Here, Todd indicates that "man's single act of curiosity and pride," which points to man's momentary prioritization of the Book of Appearances over the Book of Divine Ideas, precipitated the Fall. See *The Opacity of Signs: Acts of Interpretation in George Herbert's The Temple* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1986), p. 39.

25. Skwire, "George Herbert, Sin, and Ague," p. 24.

26. Judith Butler describes how "the entire surface of the body would have to achieve an impossible impermeability" in order "[f]or inner and outer worlds to remain utterly distinction." Furthermore, the "'inner' and 'outer' constitute a binary distinction that stabilizes and consolidates the coherent subject. . . . If the 'inner world' no longer designates a topos, then the internal fixity of the self . . . become[s] suspect." Butler's argument focuses primarily on

gender identity, and she ultimately views body permeation as subversive and pollutive. Regardless, her discussion of the body's relationship to the self has been a helpful guide for this study. See *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (New York: Routledge, 1990), p. 132-34.

27. Lewalski, *Protestant Poetics and the Seventeenth-Century Religious Lyric*, p. 21.

28. The image of the tree and the symbolic value of the bird are found in popular Protestant emblem books. One common image in George Wither's *A Collection of Emblemes, Ancient and Modern* (London, 1635) is of a tree that signifies the earthly existence of man (pp. 28, 217, 243). In the first, the tree is weighted with stones and a board to represent grief. In the second, the tree of Jesse is being planted by God's hand. In the third, a tree stands against strong winds blown from clouds. Another common emblem was of a caged bird, representing the embodiment of the soul. Wither's collection contains one such emblem where a bird is shown as advantageously caged. Lines below the image read: "And, though, the body be not so confin'd; / Art straitned from some liberty of *Minde*" (p. 84). A similar image is found in Geoffrey Whitney's *A Choice of Emblemes, and other devices* (Leyden, 1586), p. 36. Herbert himself utilizes this image in "The Collar" when the speaker tells his heart to "Forsake thy cage" (l. 21). In combining the images of tree and caged bird in "Affliction" (I), Herbert's speaker requests a refortification of his embodiment to provide his soul a more secure household, which is symbolically related to a replanting in the garden.

29. Lewalski, *Protestant Poetics and the Seventeenth-Century Religious Lyric*, p. 16.

30. In "The Crosse," the title symbol, for the speaker, "make[s] my hopes my torture," which is referred to as "cross actions" (ll. 27, 32). Here, the symbol of the two perpendicular beams of wood more clearly becomes a symbol of conflation of two opposing ideas.

31. The thought process I have outlined here for the speaker approaches Stanley Fish's conception of the role of self-dissolutions in Herbert's poetry. Fish states: "If God is all, the claims of other entities to a separate existence, including the claims of the speakers and readers of these poems, must be relinquished. That is, the insight that God's will is all is *self*-destructive. Since acquiring it involves abandoning the perceptual and conceptual categories within which the self moves and by means of which it separately exists. To stop saying amiss is not only to stop distinguishing "this" from "that," but to stop distinguishing oneself from God, and finally to stop, to cease to be"; see *Self-Consuming Artifacts: The Experience of Seventeenth-Century Literature* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1972), pp. 156-57. While I agree in part with Fish regarding the importance of selfhood's deconstruction

to Herbert's portrayal of salvation, a distinction needs to be made between a total dissolution of self that equates to death and restructuring of the self form an autonomous entity to a part of a larger whole.

32. Lewalski, *Protestant Poetics and the Seventeenth-Century Religious Lyric*, p. 18.

33. Rickey, *Utmost Art*, p. 65.

34. According to Rickey, the "Ark," as typological model for the speaker, bears multiple meanings, all of which are correlated into a unified redemption in Christ. The Ark most immediately recalls the Old Testament vessel, but also "The ark itself . . . symbolizes the church and its members"; furthermore, "The ark of the Old Testament was . . . sometimes glossed as Christ Himself, the Refuge of all in time of trouble." Thus, both the Ark of the flood and the Ark of the Covenant are typologically united by their antitype in Christ. See *Utmost Art*, p. 66.

35. Lewalski, *Protestant Poetics and the Seventeenth-Century Religious Lyric*, p. 18.

36. Stephen Greenblatt, *Renaissance Self-Fashioning: From More to Shakespeare* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983), p. 230.

37. Adams, *The Works of Thomas Adams*, p. 307.

38. Lewalski, *Protestant Poetics and the Seventeenth-Century Religious Lyric*, p. 18.