

CANTICLES' RHETORIC OF THE EROTICIZED SOUL
AND THE INSCRIBED BODY
IN RENAISSANCE ENGLISH POETRY

By
LISSA BEAUCHAMP, B.A. (HONS.), M.A.

A Thesis
Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies
in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements
for the Doctoral Degree

McMaster University
© Copyright by Lissa Beauchamp, October 2003



Library and
Archives Canada

Bibliothèque et
Archives Canada

Published Heritage
Branch

Direction du
Patrimoine de l'édition

395 Wellington Street
Ottawa ON K1A 0N4
Canada

395, rue Wellington
Ottawa ON K1A 0N4
Canada

Your file *Votre référence*

ISBN: 0-612-97760-9

Our file *Notre référence*

ISBN: 0-612-97760-9

NOTICE:

The author has granted a non-exclusive license allowing Library and Archives Canada to reproduce, publish, archive, preserve, conserve, communicate to the public by telecommunication or on the Internet, loan, distribute and sell theses worldwide, for commercial or non-commercial purposes, in microform, paper, electronic and/or any other formats.

The author retains copyright ownership and moral rights in this thesis. Neither the thesis nor substantial extracts from it may be printed or otherwise reproduced without the author's permission.

AVIS:

L'auteur a accordé une licence non exclusive permettant à la Bibliothèque et Archives Canada de reproduire, publier, archiver, sauvegarder, conserver, transmettre au public par télécommunication ou par l'Internet, prêter, distribuer et vendre des thèses partout dans le monde, à des fins commerciales ou autres, sur support microforme, papier, électronique et/ou autres formats.

L'auteur conserve la propriété du droit d'auteur et des droits moraux qui protègent cette thèse. Ni la thèse ni des extraits substantiels de celle-ci ne doivent être imprimés ou autrement reproduits sans son autorisation.

In compliance with the Canadian Privacy Act some supporting forms may have been removed from this thesis.

Conformément à la loi canadienne sur la protection de la vie privée, quelques formulaires secondaires ont été enlevés de cette thèse.

While these forms may be included in the document page count, their removal does not represent any loss of content from the thesis.

Bien que ces formulaires aient inclus dans la pagination, il n'y aura aucun contenu manquant.


Canada

CANTICLES' RHETORIC IN RENAISSANCE ENGLISH POETRY

DOCTORAL DEGREE (2003)
(English)

McMaster University
Hamilton, Ontario

TITLE: Canticles' Rhetoric of the Eroticized Soul and the Inscribed Body in
Renaissance English Poetry

AUTHOR: Lissa Beauchamp, B.A. (Hons.) (University of Ottawa),
M.A. (McMaster University)

SUPERVISOR: Dr. Mary V. Silcox

NUMBER OF PAGES: v, 310

ABSTRACT

The notion of desire in Renaissance English love and religious poetry resonates with references to Canticles, or the Song of Songs, a biblical lyric that celebrates the erotic relationship between a man and a woman who are identified traditionally as Solomon and the Queen of Sheba. Canticles also has an extensive tradition of spiritual allegory, in which the man is read as Christ and the woman as a representative of humanity; Sponsus and Sponsa perform a betrothal sequence that echoes the anxiety of the Fall in the separation of the lovers and adumbrates their apocalyptic re-union in the consummation of the wedding feast of Revelation. This allegory of erotic desire between divinity and humanity in Canticles' rhetoric inscribes human relationships with spiritual pleasures that are analogous to carnal pleasures: the site of the body as one of pleasure renders the anxiety of apocalyptic anticipation as a stage for the progress of the soul – that is, the body is the setting for the scene of apprehension that opens it to the pleasurable engagement of divine entrance. Correspondingly, the soul's present engagement with the incarnated divine figure of Christ heightens the erotic interactions between men and women, providing a way to extend the pleasures of physical engagement both within and beyond the boundaries of the body and the present moment.

This thesis emphasizes the erotic pleasures of the body and the eroticized pleasures of the soul as the effects of social and spiritual anxiety. Current literary criticism of the English Renaissance tends to focus on anxiety as a dysfunctional psychological effect of corporeality, but I contend that the conception of the psyche, or soul, in this period is far more versatile than current approaches tend to allow. The introductory chapter discusses the historical context of Canticles' exegesis and the four-level model of scriptural interpretation that was still in use during the Renaissance, though with a significantly revised emphasis on tropology, the application of spiritual readings to everyday conduct. This chapter also presents the main issues of investigation in the thesis: scriptural rhetoric, poetic voice, gender as a crucial metaphor of voice, and the interaction between narrative and lyric genres. The following five chapters consider the operation of Canticles' rhetoric in a variety of secular and religious works, including the sonnet sequences of Spenser, Sidney, and Wroth, the religious poetry of Herbert and Crashaw, and the emblem books of Wither and Quarles.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

It is my pleasure to acknowledge the tremendously important people who have contributed, both personally and professionally, to my work in this thesis. Dr. Mary Silcox never failed to surprise (and occasionally confound) me with her subtle and incisive questions, her covertly wicked sense of humour, and her dedication to reading, closely, even the most frustrating early drafts. Dr. Graham Roebuck delighted and reassured me with his dry wit and his encyclopaedic knowledge of everything. Dr. Anne Savage expressed consistent, sincere, and unquestioning confidence in my work. My father, Pierre Beauchamp, never fails to achieve his ambitions, even if he has to redefine them in order to do so, and prompts me never to do less; my sister, Chantal Collins, delights and reassures me with her innocent and omnivorous desire for more; my mother, Linda Beauchamp, expresses steadfast concern for my laundry and eating habits as well as my state of mind, always reminding me that happiness is a practical matter. Both of my grandmothers, Simone Beauchamp and Oralay Barks, exemplify for me an ideal of determination in the form of grace, which I often lack but never forget. Dr. Dennis Desroches, though he was a little late, arrived just in time to make a very good impression indeed. In the Acknowledgements page for his doctoral thesis, he credited one of his undergraduate professors with the principle that it is better to deliver a spectacular failure than it is to produce a mediocre success; his insistence on this paradox constitutes the impression of his character, and he is an example that I cannot do without.

I am also grateful to the various funding bodies that have financially supported my work: to the Ontario Graduate Scholarship programme, the Edna Elizabeth Ross Reeves Travel/Research Fund, and McMaster University's Department of English, thank you.

“I have no more to say; I wish thee as much pleasure in the reading, as I had in writing”
(Quarles, *Emblems, Divine and Moral*, “To the Reader”)

Canticles' Rhetoric of the Eroticized Soul and the Inscribed Body in Renaissance English Poetry

Table of Contents

1. Introductory Chapter	1
Canticles' Rhetoric and the Play of Conversation	6
Gender, the Soul, and <i>Eros</i>	29
Voice and Silence: the Matrimonial Rite (1559)	35
Genre and the Rhetoric of Ambiguity	45
Overview	51
2. The Metamorphoses of Love	54
Wither's <i>Hymnes and Songs of the Church</i> (1623)	57
Quarles' <i>Sions Sonets</i> (1625)	62
Sandys' "A Paraphrase upon the Songe of Solomon" (1635)	66
Spenser's <i>Amoretti</i> and <i>Epithalamion</i> (1595)	69
3. Songs and Sonnets	93
Sidney's <i>Astrophel and Stella</i> (1582)	100
Wroth's <i>Pamphilia to Amphilanthus</i> (1621)	119
4. The Scriptural Body	137
Crashaw's <i>Steps to the Temple</i> (1646)	139
Herbert's <i>The Temple</i> (1633)	158
5. "let us make Emblems of our selves"	178
Wither's <i>A Collection of Emblemes</i> (1635)	
6. "the diuineſt of ſubiectſ": Quarles' <i>Emblems, Divine and Moral</i> (1635)	214
Quarles as reader: the voices of exegesis in the <i>Emblems</i>	216
Quarles as writer: the voices of Canticles in the <i>Emblems</i>	232
7. Concluding Remarks	256
Appendices:	263
Appendix 1 – The Song of Solomon (King James version)	264
Appendix 2 – An Excellent Song which was Salomons (Geneva translation)	271
Appendix 3 – <i>Cantica Canticorum</i> (Vulgate and modern English translation)	276
Appendix 4 – Selected list of Renaissance exegetical texts	286
Appendix 5 – Wither's emblems, figures 1 to 17	289
Appendix 6 – Quarle's emblems, figures 18 to 33	295
Bibliography of Works Consulted	299

Introductory Chapter One
Canticles Traditions and Renaissance English Poetry:
rhetoric, gender, voice, and genre



[Christ] Come, come, my lovely fair, and let us try

These rural delicates; where thou and I
May melt in private flames, and feare no stander-by.

....

O there we'll twine our souls in sweet embraces;
Soul. And in thine arms I'll tell my passion's story:
Chr. O there I'll crown thy head with all my graces

Francis Quarles, *Emblems, Divine and Moral* (1635), Book IV, Emblem 7, ll. 7-9, 39-41

This emblem from Francis Quarles' *Emblems, Divine and Moral* (1635)¹ provides a glimpse of what pleasures Canticles offered to Renaissance writers as a rhetorical model for

¹ All emblem images downloaded from *The English Emblem Book Project* at <http://emblem.libraries.psu.edu/home.htm>. The motto from Canticles seems to follow the Geneva translation: "Come, my welbeloued, let vs go for the into the field: let vs remaine in the villages"; the

their own writing: evocative images, rich allusions, erotic longing, dynamic interaction between male and female participants both in terms of conversation and conduct, and a long history of multi-layered exegetical interpretation operating on physical, emotional, spiritual, and apocalyptic levels. Quarles' emblem is just one example of the complexity, versatility, and ubiquity of the Canticles tradition in Renaissance England. Echoes of images from Canticles, also called the Song of Songs or the Song of Solomon, can easily be found throughout Renaissance love and religious literature.² As attractive and striking as these images are, I believe that the influence of Canticles was far more profound than literary imagery alone. Canticles and its exegetical readings, developed through the centuries of the early, medieval, and reformed churches, gave Renaissance writers and readers a conceptual structure for invoking divine presence and evoking a comprehensive perspective on the world in which they lived.

An exegetical reading of a literary text raises questions of rhetoric, gender, voice, and genre – all questions that have a great deal of relevance to current critical debates. The traditional rhetoric of biblical exegesis associated with Canticles can offer a sophisticated methodology for twenty-first century interpretation of Renaissance English poetry, as I will demonstrate in this study. Both the eroticized spirituality of devotional poems, emblems, and verse paraphrases, as well as the metaphysical eroticism of Petrarchan sonnet sequences, employ the rhetorical strategies that are developed in Canticles exegesis. Canticles' rhetoric also supports and develops poetic structures and genres in ways that incorporate pastoral, marital, and apocalyptic imagery, constituting a conversational network of commentaries that cross and blur the conventional boundaries of structural, thematic, and generic discourses.

King James Version reads “Come, my beloved, let us go forth into the field; let us lodge in the villages.” All biblical quotations in this chapter will refer to the most common or likely translation, depending on the discussion, and will specify the translation used.

² Spenser's *Amoretti* and *Epithalamion*, Shakespeare's *Venus and Adonis*, and Marvell's “The Garden” are conventional examples for the use of Canticles' imagery in the period. See Noam Flinker's *The Song of Songs in the English Renaissance: Kisses of their Mouths* (Rochester NY: D.S. Brewer, 2000); Theresa Krier's “Generations of Blazons: Psychoanalysis and the Song of Songs in the *Amoretti*” (*Texas Studies of Literature and Language* 40.3 [Fall 1998]: 293-327); Stanley Stewart's *The Enclosed Garden: The Tradition and the Image in Seventeenth-Century Poetry* (Madison WI: U of Wisconsin P, 1966); and Israel Baroway's “The Imagery of Spenser and the Song of Songs” (*Journal of English and Germanic Philology* 33 [1934]: 23-45).

Texts and textual devices read each other in the same way that exegesis reads scripture; that is, the practice of reading is one of interpreting textual exchanges and participating in those exchanges by generating a further interpretation of them. Thus a reader, like a writer, performs interpretive inscriptions; what I will be calling Canticles' rhetoric throughout this thesis involves scripture, scriptural constellations associated with Canticles, and the reading or exegesis that makes those associations in order to apply them to worldly conduct. This kind of identification between writers and readers reflects the Renaissance notion of rhetoric: John Rainolds, lecturing on the *Rhetoric* in the late 1570s at Oxford, argued that "Aristotle defines rhetoric as the power or faculty of seeing what may be probable in any situation. . . . [Rhetoric] does not create probabilities, but instead perceives them" (Rainolds, 161). Rhetoric is a way of perceiving rather than simply a method of persuasion performed solely by a text; rhetoric is a perspective, and belongs as much to the reader as to the writer, thus governing the text and determining the devices and figures employed therein, but also depending on an engaged and attentive reader who will assemble the rhetorical connections. In the Renaissance, Canticles becomes a rhetoric – that is, Canticles offers a way of perceiving the world and of writing and reading texts. This concept of rhetoric assumes an analogy between writing/reading and the physical world/worldly perceptions, typically envisioned in the figure of the Book of Nature.³ Textual rhetoric and interpretive commentary are what link reader to writer; in the same way, the divinely created world and its creatures' reading of that world are what link divine to human being(s). The erotic longing expressed in this relationship identifies Canticles as a profound, and profoundly neglected, component of rhetoric.

The rhetoric of Canticles is important in Renaissance literature because its lyric and erotic sensuality focuses attention on the present moment and on worldly concerns, thereby applying mystical perspectives to material ones. The significance of worldly application reflects a fundamental shift in exegetical priorities, begun in the twelfth century and increasingly emphasized in the Reformation, of rendering tropology as the ultimate or "final"

³ Ernst Robert Curtius writes of the "two books" of the medieval and early modern periods, "the *codex scriptus* of the Bible and the *codex vivus* of Nature," which provided a wealth of metaphorical tropes. For instance, the epigrammatist John Owen (1563?-1622) inverts the "book of the world" topos by calling his book a world (Curtius 322).

level of scriptural readings instead of concluding with anagogy, the apocalyptic sense of scripture. Tropology is the turn (from Greek *tropos*, to turn) of mystical allegory and apocalyptic readings toward the individual person in the present day. The rhetorical effect of concluding with tropology renders both apocalypse and allegorical history as immanent rather than imminent; narrative concerns such as chronology and closure are disrupted by the immediacy and indeterminacy of the lyric moment. Tropology, furthermore, is inherently self-observing; the perspective, or rhetoric, of self-observation suspends the usual sense of subjectivity and subject/object relations, since the spectator is also the observed, the object of consideration. The figure of the Sponsa (the female lover in Canticles) personifies the self-observing and self-interpreting human soul; she is desiring and desired, speaker and listener, enclosed garden and opened body. In Song 4:12, the male lover describes his beloved as “A garden inclosed is my sister my spouse; a spring shut up, a fountain sealed” (KJV); this familiar image of female chastity as “enclosed” fertility has directed many of the usual critical evaluations of Canticles’ influence in Renaissance poetry, as well as of the presumed vice of openness as a figure for loose morality. What is often overlooked is the Sponsa’s self-enacted openness, when, in 5:6, she says, “I opened to my beloved ...” (Song 5:6, KJV).⁴ In sexual terms, she is not determined by physical enclosure so much as by her ability to modify the terms of her relationship with her lover, by choosing to open to him what is otherwise enclosed. This ambiguity in sexual terms is reflected in rhetorical strategies of interpretation, which are characterized by alternating assertion and deferral. Just as Sapientia or Philosophy is personified as female in Boethius’ *The Consolation of Philosophy* (6th century), the Sponsa personifies the various senses or levels of scriptural exegesis and their various strategies. Such rhetorical interaction in one figure testifies to the difficulty of distinguishing each level or strategy from another; instead, they overlap and accumulate constellations of meaning. As in a medieval Bestiary, too, the images and figures of Canticles

⁴ The traditions of Christian exegesis read the Sponsa in a variety of ways, depending on the exegete; she is sometimes *Ecclesia*, sometimes Mary, sometimes the soul, and often a combination of these. These alternative readings will be considered in more detail in the section of this chapter entitled “Gender, the Soul, and *Eros*,” but it is worth noting at this point that the Sponsa has several allegorical significations. For a consideration of the rabbinic traditions that preceded and influenced Christian exegesis, see Noam Flinker’s *The Song of Songs in the English Renaissance: Kisses of their Mouths* (Rochester NY: D.S. Brewer, 2000).

are wrapped up in themes and further associations neglected by current criticism that focuses almost exclusively on the “enclosed” imagery of Canticles and the allegory of the Sponsa alone, and rarely includes the full extent of exegetical rhetoric. As we will see, the importance of apocalyptic or anagogical readings is that they inscribe erotic and marital motifs into the present moment of the reader’s presence through the Reformation emphasis on tropology. Canticles’ rhetoric is unique in providing Renaissance writers and readers with the basics of a rhetoric that can pull together such a complex web of figures.

In this introductory chapter, I will isolate and describe the various strands of my argument – exegetical rhetoric, gender, voice, and genre – that work interdependently in the literature. In order to clarify my methodology and my use of terminology, I will begin with an historical overview of Canticles and exegetical traditions, which will also involve some comparison to reader-response criticism and the notion of conversational play in the genre of exegesis.⁵ Next, a discussion of Renaissance notions of gender and the soul in relation to Canticles’ influence will re-assess feminist notions of misogyny and oppression as they are expressed in erotic exchanges. If only because feminist theory tends to rely on definitions of gender that are relatively inflexible when compared to an exegetical model of humanity that attempts to translate gender into something indefinable and yet still fundamentally erotic, theories of gender such as queer theory seem to offer (strangely) more appropriate approaches to scripture and scriptural influence in the Renaissance period. Thirdly, a brief consideration of the poetics of voice will suggest the ambiguity accorded to “gendered” speech in Canticles’ rhetoric, in which male and female lovers speak of their desire in reciprocally borrowed terms that yet sustain a sense of “male” and “female” as distinct. This rhetorical ambiguity will be examined in relation to the roles of husbands and wives as characterized by Canticles’ rhetoric in the matrimonial form of the *Book of Common Prayer* (1559), which many critics have labelled as misogynistic, claiming that the infamous “obey clause” forecloses the ability of a wife to speak. This label, however, is unwarranted; in fact, the “conversation of the wives” is granted at least as much significance as the responsibilities

⁵ James Doelman considers exegesis as a separate genre in itself; see his dissertation, “Biblical Verse Paraphrase of the English Renaissance: A Study in Literary and Social Contexts.” E. Ann Matter also refers to Canticles exegesis as “a genre of medieval Latin literature” (Matter 3). See also Appendix 4, which contains an extensive but by no means complete list of Renaissance exegetical texts.

of the husband's protective power. Furthermore, the significance of silence will be considered as an equally important element of voice. The voices of the two lovers in *Canticles*, for instance, are characterized in overtly sexual speech; their mutual desire is spoken "aloud," but their silences, when one is absent from the dialogue or simply listening to the other's speech, are equally significant. My fourth section of this chapter explains some basic considerations of genre and form in Renaissance literature because the lyric use of voice in the dialogue of *Canticles* is vital to the sonnet sequences, emblem books, and other forms that I will examine in subsequent chapters. These poetic forms have a decidedly lyrical emphasis that presents dialogue between lovers as non-narrative, despite the tendency of many critics to assume some species of "failure" when narrative concerns are not met in lyric forms. I will conclude with a brief outline of the writers and works that will form the basis for my investigations throughout this study. Insofar as reading the *Canticles*' rhetoric affords us a better view of Renaissance poetics in its emphasis on tropological self-observation and self-enacted transformation, exegetical methodologies also offer us a better view of our own critical standards and approaches, and a way of opening and transforming our own kinds of discourses to each other.

Canticles' Rhetoric and the Play of Conversation

Ann W. Astell and E. Ann Matter (regarding the medieval period), and Noam Flinker and Stanley Stewart (with reference to the Renaissance) have all commented recently on the various historical and literary developments of *Canticles* exegesis.⁶ Their analyses, in various ways, extend to address the singular way that monastic, written/scholarly culture interacted with a secular, orally based tradition in the "courtly love" literature of the medieval and Renaissance periods. Yet the continuity of this crossover, from religious rhetoric into secular

⁶ With regard to the popularity and flexibility of *Canticles* exegesis, E. Ann Matter comments that "The extraordinary literary self-awareness of this tradition is evident in the nearly one hundred extant commentaries and homilies on the Song of Songs written between the sixth and the fifteenth centuries, texts which show great complexity and virtuosity of allegorical interpretation" (Matter 3). Yet at the same time, she acknowledges that "the exegetical tradition in general, although essential to medieval culture, is only beginning to be studied by modern scholars" (*ibid.*). For further examples of recent scholarship on the history of the exegetical tradition on *Canticles*, see Noam Flinker's *The Song of Songs in English Renaissance Literature: The Kisses of their Mouths*, Ann W. Astell's *The Song of Songs in the Middle Ages*, and Denys Turner's *Eros and Allegory*.

poetics, during the 16th and 17th centuries remains largely unexplored; critics of the latter period tend to disregard medieval traditions with the assumption that Renaissance thinkers and writers generally did likewise.⁷ Furthermore, current critics tend to confuse certain technical terms of exegesis; for instance, typology, a device of exegesis, is often equated with it. Exegesis, however, from the Greek *egēomai*, to lead or to guide, is exposition; exegesis sets forth, describes, explains, and comments on scripture. It is important to note that exegesis is not a defining explanation of scripture; it is added to scripture, in the margins, to lead or guide the reader but not to replace scripture itself. Typology in biblical exegesis works very much like teleological dialectics: an Old Testament text promises what a New Testament text fulfils, thereby offering thematic as well as structural synthesis. Typology, like dialectical models, presumes a narrative structure in which type and anti-type resolve in a sense of closure. Since three of the four senses in the most common four-fold model of exegesis – literal, allegorical, anagogical – also work, more or less, in narrative terms, confusing typology with exegesis is understandable.⁸ However, the fourth sense of Reformation exegesis, tropology, turns typological narratives toward the present day and insists on the present moment as a fulfilment of history and a direction for prophecy. It is the sense of tropology that, from the twelfth century onward, focuses the religious Reformation in England and English literature, eliciting a metamorphosis of poetic and interpretive practices in Renaissance England. Confusing typological structures with tropological ones is then a crucial misreading of what exegesis, and Renaissance poetics, seek to do; essentially, tropology pairs eschatological concerns with mundane affairs. In other words, the

⁷ For instance, “Herbert ... avoids its [the Song of Song’s] erotic and mystical connotations” (Lewalski 293). Lewalski, Anthony Low, and others have noted various superficial allusions to the biblical epithalamion in Herbert’s *The Temple* and elsewhere, but the critical consensus dismisses erotic associations as sublimated sensuality or physical transcendence, which are presumed to be consistent with a “religious” interpretation. For previous work on this topic, see Barbara Lewalski, *Protestant Poetics and the Seventeenth-Century Religious Lyric* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1979); and Anthony Low, *The Reinvention of Love: Poetry, politics and culture from Sidney to Milton* (Cambridge UK: Cambridge UP, 1993).

⁸ Briefly, the literal/historical level of exegesis refers to the literal sense of the text; the allegorical (from Gk., *allos* –other, and *agoria*, -speaking) to the representative sense of the narrative of human existence and the history of the Church. The anagogical (from Gk., *anago*, -to lead up to) sense refers to an apocalyptic perspective, beyond human existence, in which worldly concerns are translated by the paradox of immortal existence; tropology (from Gk., *tropos*, -to turn) returns the reader to self-interpretation in the application of allegory and anagogy to daily and worldly life. I will elaborate below in further discussion of these four senses.

Renaissance emphasis on tropology signals an enactment of typological concerns, such as the reformed Church of England fulfilling the original promise of the early Greek fathers, in such a way that legacy and prophecy may both be seen in the present institution.

The third-century scholar Origen was the first Christian to theorize an exegetical model as well as to apply it to Canticles, and he relied on rabbinic interpretation for his starting point.⁹ Origen's interpretive strategy incorporates the rhetoric of profane terms that convey sacred significance, as well as the concern to relate the present form and role of the Church to an apocalyptic vision of the future.¹⁰ In *De Principiis*, the first major Christian work to theorize interpretive principles, Origen argues on the basis of scripture itself that a multiplicity of senses or meanings are inscribed within the letter. According to the Greek translation of the Septuagint probably used by Origen, exegetes are instructed to understand a variety of simultaneous meanings in any given passage: "Do thou portray them threefold in counsel and knowledge, that thou mayst answer words of truth to those who question thee."¹¹ As Robert M. Grant explains, "Origen interprets this passage in the light of Paul's threefold analysis of human personality (1 Thess. 5:23) into 'spirit, soul, and body,' and concludes that there is a 'bodily' or literal sense, a 'soul' or moral sense, and a 'spiritual' or allegorical-mystical sense in scripture" (Grant 59). The early Christian theory of exegesis, then, is based on a typological fusion of Proverbs and the Pauline version of human identity: the three senses of scripture correspond to the three components of our existential condition. The human body is thereby inscribed with a sacred significance just as the Word is encrypted in what are sometimes considered carnal writings like Canticles. The sacred significance of physical existence then leads to the turning sense of tropological figuration; things are what they are, but things also signify in ways that suggest other interpretive possibilities.

⁹ See Robert M. Grant's *A Short History of the Interpretation of the Bible*, or A. Skevington Wood's *Principles of Biblical Interpretation: As enunciated by Irenaeus, Origen, Augustine, Luther and Calvin*.

¹⁰ The concept of *Ecclesia* as the *Sponsa* ("betrothed one") of Christ is one that provides a guiding framework for social discourse in Renaissance England that is continuous with medieval and early Christian models, despite – or perhaps because of – the various ideological and doctrinal differences between historical periods.

¹¹ Proverbs 22:20, as qtd. by Origen in *De Principiis* 4.2.4; qtd. in Grant 59 (translation of Septuagint is his own).

The situation that divides body and soul into distinct kinds of existence, or (as some ascetic traditions insist) in “opposing” relation to each other, then raises questions about the nature of present and future existence. The mortality of the body is a figure for the immortality of the soul, associating the present condition with the apocalyptic vision of John of Patmos in the Book of Revelation. Origen’s historically contentious view of Revelation includes the “incorruptible body” of the risen Christian – that is, Origen argues that the human form retains its essential components, however transformed by spatial/temporal context: “Therefore our hope is not one of worms, nor does our soul desire a body that has rotted. . . . For since the nature of this body is to be entirely corruptible, this mortal tabernacle must put on incorruption.”¹² The apocalypse, then, is also a vision or a perspective, not just a literal event or a physical place. As Northrop Frye has noted in his discussion of the Book of Revelation, the “Greek word for revelation, *apocalypsis*, has the metaphorical sense of uncovering or taking a lid off, and similarly the word for truth, *aletheia*, begins with a negative particle which suggests that truth was originally thought of as also a kind of unveiling, a removal of the curtains of forgetfulness in the mind” (Frye, *Great Code*, 135). Frye describes this sense of the apocalypse as “the way the world looks after the ego has disappeared” (Frye, *GC* 138), which suggests a paradoxical perspective of self-observation in the removal of subject-object distinctions. This view reiterates early Christian exegesis such as that of Origen, whose agenda included a notable eagerness to deflect the importance of the literal sense of scripture: “Origen’s interpretations are in part polemic against . . . [those who would] believe, for example, in the literal reality of the heavenly Jerusalem described in the Apocalypse of John” (Grant 59). Yet the corresponding emphasis on allegory, both moral and mystical, as the more significant element of exegesis, repudiates neither the historical basis of scripture nor the bodily basis of human existence; the basis

¹² Origen, *Contra Celsum* V, 19, trans. Chadwick, p. 279; qtd. in Matter 22. Origen was condemned as a heretic by the Second Council of Constantinople in 553, roughly 300 years after his death, due to controversy over his orthodoxy as the Church then saw it. Origen’s approach included an assimilation of classical works supplemented by Christian values: “The early Christian thinkers speculated freely, adopting and synthesising [sic] diverse elements from Greek philosophy, oriental mysticism and Jewish ritual and doctrine into a universal religion. . . . [Origen] conceived God as pure Being; but the active principle of love, which caused God to create, replaced Plato’s beauty and goodness as supreme archetypes” (Nicholas 30-31). See also Curtius 551. As we shall see, Origenic thought remained influential despite official condemnation.

remains the foundation while the accent is simply placed elsewhere. It is worth noting, also, that later medieval exegesis of Canticles was often accompanied by exegesis of Revelation, thereby accentuating the mystical perspective of each without undermining the “literal” as the foundation of the exegetical edifice. However contentious Origen’s ideas were regarding the incorruptible body and the nature of the Trinity in the early formation of the Church and its dogma, his writings remained influential in later developments of exegetical models.

Origen’s work on Canticles extends his principles regarding sacred and profane correspondence, which were in turn based on Judaic models. As a lyric dialogue or performance of erotic love, the biblical poem is “literally” profane. But it also raises concerns about time and mortality as well as pleasure, such as during the episode of the “dark night of the wandering soul” when the female lover searches but cannot find her lover, only to fall asleep and miss his knock at the door (Song 5:2-8). The anxiety of this episode is a spiritual failure (“my soul failed when he spake: I sought him, but I could not find him”) followed by physical punishment (“The watchmen ... smote me, they wounded me; the keepers of the walls took away my veil from me”), just as the spiritual yearning of the lovers effects physical consummation in 3:1-4. Indeed, as E. Ann Matter argues with reference to Origen’s exegetical approach, “the idea of a direct relationship between the mortal [profane] and the incorruptible [apocalyptic] body is central to later readings of the Song of Songs as the love between God and the soul” (Matter 22). The worldly profanity of the erotic Song, in which physical suffering and pleasure reflect spiritual desires, prefigures the revelation of sacred incorruptibility in coherent terms because both this world and the next depend on the continuity of the body – it is the context that changes, not the “text” itself. Similarly, Origen established the Christian perspective for Judaic Old Testament texts by relating them to New Testament prophecies in the typological method ascribed to Paul himself: “For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive” (I Cor. 15:21-22, *KJV*).¹³ In this way, the New Testament

¹³ “There are several passages in his letters where Paul makes some effort to express systematically his conceptions of exegesis. ... The word ‘type,’ which he employs several times, ordinarily means simply *example*; ... In Rom. 5:14 Adam is called ‘a type of one to come.’ He is not simply an example, for he corresponds to Christ not only by resemblance but also by difference” (Grant 18-19). Thus Adam is the type of Christ; and the fulfilment of creation is redemption. Typology works through an implied pattern that inextricably involves both divine and human.

fulfils the promise of the Old while also renewing the promise of revelation in the apocalyptic vision of John. It must be stressed, however, that the apocalypse does not refer only to an event or place in any literal or historical sense. Rather, it refers principally to the revelation of the divine presence of Christ, which is known in the present through reading and which is recorded in exegesis.

The standard four-level medieval model of exegesis was established by John Cassian, a fifth-century monk, in his *Collationes*. As Matter has argued, “Medieval Latin exegesis is striking in the flexibility with which Cassian’s four-fold system is used . . . Yet there is always a self-consciousness in the use of these categories that implies a shared understanding of what they mean, even without explicit reference to the scheme” (Matter 54-55). For my purposes, it will suffice to discuss Cassian’s standard without detailing the many variations on his theme. The four levels of interpretation were summed up in a mnemonic rhyme:

*Littera gesta docet, quid credas allegoria,
Moralis quid agas, quo tendas anagogia.*
(The letter teaches the act, what you should believe allegory,
Moral, what you should do, where you should be heading, anagogy).¹⁴

Cassian’s famous example to illustrate the four senses of scripture is the single word/concept “Jerusalem”: “Jerusalem may be understood in four ways: according to history the city of the Jews, according to allegory the Church of Christ, according to anagogy that celestial city of God, which is the mother of us all, according to tropology the human soul.”¹⁵ Thus the first level is literal, pertaining to the letter of the text or to a concrete event or place in history (i.e., the city in what is now Israel). The allegorical level speaks of an “other” narrative that is encoded in the letter of the text (i.e., the Church of Christ). Indeed, the word “allegory” comes from the Greek *allos*, “other” and *-agoria*, “speaking”; thus allegory is a kind of “other-speaking.” The anagogical level is concerned with the vision of Revelation, “which is the mother of us all” – this is the apocalyptic perspective toward which the Church leads (from Gk. *anago*, “lead up”). The tropological human soul is the return (Greek *tropos*, turn) to the

¹⁴ Qtd. in Matter 54, trans. fn. 22. The rhyme has been attributed alternately to Nicholas of Lyra or Augustine of Dacia.

¹⁵ Qtd. in Matter 54, from *Collationes* XIV.8, SC 54, ed. E. Pichery (Paris, 1958) p. 190.

practice of the reading situation, where the reader embodies the Church, the apocalyptic vision, and the letter she has just read.¹⁶

Matter has established that the allegorical and anagogical levels were emphasized in the ecclesiologically-minded exegesis of the early church (4th to 11th c.), but that by the twelfth century the literal and tropological senses had become the focus:

[While] Song of Songs commentaries reflect changes in the perception of *Ecclesia* and 'her' major impediments in each period ... [t]here is a movement from a sense of 'inside/outside' [in the early and middle ages of the Church] to 'inside/*truly* inside,' in concert with the growing impact of the monastic ideal and related readings of the Apocalypse. ... [By the twelfth century,] the Song of Songs was increasingly read as a dynamic guide to the quest of each human being for union with God[?] ... [furthermore, the] tropological or moral [sense] was not limited to the spiritually elite world of the cloister.

(Matter 109-111, 123)

Here we can see the roots of the Reformation principle of the personal encounter with scripture, and we can also see how the “quest of each human being for union with God” is related to the anagogical structure of *Ecclesia* as a guiding framework for each of her members. *Ecclesia*, as an alternate allegorical figure of the Sponsa, is embodied in the souls that form her membership; *Ecclesia* fosters and supports the soul's efforts to frame the apocalypse in the present day. The tropological emphasis of the twelfth century laid the foundation for later developments in that this emphasis (at least theoretically) allowed “secular” religious exegesis – that is, biblical interpretation outside the cloister. This tropological level warrants some attention, especially in the Canticles tradition, which is so concerned with the sacred/profane correspondence. Tropology is also the basis for my theoretical comparison of exegetical models and reader-response criticism, because both are concerned with self-transformation or self-construction through a reader-text interaction.

¹⁶ According to the traditions of biblical exegesis, the interpreting reader, as the representative human soul of the tropological sense, is gendered feminine with regard to the masculine divine figure. The rhetorical effect of this practice associates the interpretive function with the feminine, thereby indicating a female personification of the interpreter. Just as Wisdom/Sapientia is often characterized as a female figure, as in Boethius' *Consolation of Philosophy* (510-524), Interpretation is considered a feminine operation. This strategy deliberately opens the very notion of gender to a renewed consideration (since most exegetes and their readers were actually men). I have chosen to retain this tradition in order to imitate the rhetorical effect of such figurative gendering on my readers of either sex.

Hugh of St. Victor, a twelfth-century monk, exemplifies the development toward emphasizing literal and tropological significance in exegesis. Interestingly, too, his rhetorical style offers a view of a scholarly community not so different from our own. In his *Praenotiuunculae de scripturis et scriptoribus sacris* (*A Short Preface on the Scriptures and on the Scriptural Writers*), Hugh takes issue with the exegetical approach that focuses on allegory and anagogy over the literal/historical sense of the text and tropological readings, in terms that seem very much like those that more recent theorists use to take issue with each other. Essentially his remarks illustrate Matter's distinction between the ecclesiological emphasis of the early Church and the renewed awareness of personal consequence in the twelfth century:

Since the mystical reading may be derived only from what the letter first sets down, I am amazed at how unblushingly some lay claim to be teachers of allegory though they yet ignore the primary sense of the letter. ... 'We read the letter', they reply, 'but not in the literal way. ... [T]he letter', they add, 'signifies one thing historically, another according to allegory. "Lion", for example, signifies, in the historical sense, a beast; allegorically it signifies Christ; and so the word "lion" signifies Christ'.

I in my turn, will question you, who thus offer proof, how it is that 'lion' comes to signify Christ? ... it is not the word which sleeps with its eyes open, but the animal itself which the word signifies. You should be clear about this, therefore, that when saying that a lion signifies Christ, it is not the name of the animal but the animal itself which is meant. It is this which, as is said, sleeps with its eyes open and, by virtue of a kind of similarity, is a figure of the one who, in the sleep of death which he accepted, has slept in humanity, while remaining wide awake with his eyes open in divinity.

... [T]o ignore the letter is to ignore what the letter signifies and why it is signified by the letter. And that which is signified by the first itself signifies a third thing.

... [E]ven in the case where an utterance is accepted figuratively, it cannot be denied that the letter has its own signification; for when we claim that what is said is not to be understood at face value, nonetheless we still insist that it has some kind of *prima facie* meaning. ... In this way we wish the reader to be warned not to despise this primary foundation for doctrine. ... For the Apostle is our witness that *what is of the flesh comes first, only then what is spiritual* (1 Cor 15:46). ... 'Therefore, read Scripture and learn diligently what it speaks of first in a bodily fashion. ... The signification of terms is the decision of human beings; the signification of events and objects is natural and is the work of the Creator deciding that certain things should be signified through others.

(Hugh's *Preface*, qtd from Turner, 268-272)

Hugh's claim for authority is rhetorically established through critical argument with an opposing approach: "Hugh is practising a *reductio ad absurdum* on his opponents' case"

(Turner, fn. 5, 273), otherwise known familiarly as establishing a “straw man.” Hugh further bolsters his own approach with reference to “the Apostle” Paul, much as current critics will refer to a host of canonical authorities such as Derrida, Foucault, Iser, Frye, Fish, etc. Hugh then proceeds to develop his own theory of exegesis through the semiotic analogy between human language and divine/natural signification. Human language corresponds to the literal meaning constructed by the text; the figurative senses are divinely inscribed in nature, and interpreted by virtue of our status as divinely created beings capable of textual construction and self-interpretation. But beyond this, in *De Sacramentis*, Hugh says that “In the same way as in a human being there are two things, body and soul, so likewise there are two in Scripture, the letter and its sense ... But because not every sign of something sacred may helpfully be described ... in the same way ... it seems best to regard the description just given as an interpretation or manner of speaking rather than a strict definition.”¹⁷ Hugh’s approach frustrates the determination of human and textual definition because it relies on a sustained paradoxical tension between literal and figurative, body and soul, human and divine. “Opposing” terms must be held in tension, that is, without resolution; his objections to “teachers of allegory” is that they seek to determine the divine without first recognizing themselves, and so remain unaffected by allegorical insights. In other words, the arguments of the “teachers of allegory” make little difference to the text, since they are limited to the allegory they have chosen. In focussing exclusively on “other-speaking,” the “teachers of allegory” forget that the observer plays a part in the spectacle and that the observer is then herself a term of a paradox. For example, some feminist approaches, in identifying misogynistic oppression, establish what has virtually become a monolithic allegory of women’s subordination in the Renaissance period, despite the many instances of “exceptional” women that they discuss in order to argue that misogyny is unjust.¹⁸ In other words, the ideological allegory of misogyny and power often relegates the virtuous, strong,

¹⁷ *De Sacramentis* 1.ix.ii., qtd in Turner, fn. 23, 124-125.

¹⁸ See, for instance, Elizabeth Hanson’s “Boredom and Whoredom: Reading Renaissance Women’s Sonnet Sequences” (in *The Yale Journal of Criticism* 10.1 (1997): 165-191), or Coppélia Kahn’s “Whores and Wives in Jacobean Drama” in *In Another Country: Feminist Perspectives on Renaissance Drama*, eds. Dorothea Kehler and Susan Baker (Metuchen NJ: Scarecrow Press, 1991) 246-260. I will be referring to Hanson’s article in greater detail in Chapter Three, and will discuss Kahn’s argument later in this chapter in the section entitled “Voice and Silence: the Matrimonial Form (1559).”

and confident female figure to the status of “exception” rather than acknowledging that she may be a manifest, and perhaps common, alternative to subordinate servitude.

In the Victorine tradition of meditational exegesis that Hugh helped to establish, the soul is transformed when seen in an analogous relation to the divine. As in the apocalyptic perspective, it is the context that changes the understanding of the text, not the “text” itself – just as Hugh insists that a lion remains a lion even while it also figures Christ, the human soul remains within the human body even while she is figured as *Sponsa* to the divine. As Ann W. Astell has described the Victorine Song of Songs practice, the metaphor (“*conversio*”) of erotic expression “combines an earthly vehicle and a divine tenor, [just as] contemplation looks *ad multa* to see the One ... [so that] the conversion of the reader/ beholder involves detachment and attachment, self-denial and the sublimation of desires, based on the recognition of a dissimilar similitude between creatures and their Creator” (Astell 89). In reader-response terms, the text facilitates the reader’s self-knowledge through engagement with the “other” of the text: the comparison sets up the paradox of a self-other analogy that defines each term more clearly, but which cannot determine the relationship because paradoxes cannot be resolved by dialectical synthesis or analogous similarities. The “teachers of allegory” seek only the divine “other” in the figures of the text without reference to the correspondence between actual and figurative signification; they seek transcendence and so cannot envision immanence. The tension of paradox, on the other hand, requires an acknowledgement of its mutually exclusive, yet mutually sustaining, terms. For example, while the “other” of the text may be internalized to some extent, it also remains itself, fundamentally external to the reader; the divine text, too, may engulf the reader’s soul, transforming her relations to her body, while at the same time sustaining the distinct integrity of human subjectivity itself. This subjectivity, which includes the body, is itself sacred because it is created by God; it is also erotically acceptable as the object of divine desire.

The concurrent perspective of the One Spirit and the many souls of humanity is

figured in erotic, marital terms.¹⁹ Again, Matter provides a salient point with reference to the “marital” imagery of Canticles’ tropology: “Identification with Christ, and especially with the suffering body of God incarnate, is the key to this vision of the mystical marriage of the soul. Christian tropological interpretations of the Song of Songs stress that the marriage is consummated only through the overcoming of the earthly human body, but they do so in the most passionate body language” (Matter 137). In a paradoxical rhetorical strategy, the body itself is the means for bodily metamorphosis, just as the letter must be read “literally” for any spiritual or figurative interpretation to take place. Despite the simultaneously literal and eschatological understanding of the apocalyptic Church/New Jerusalem,

It is important to understand ... that in the medieval conception this spiritual union is also corporeal. Whether addressed to the ‘perfect’ of religious life or to the struggling souls of the *saeculum*, this tradition understood the Song of Songs as the *epithalamium* of a spiritual union which ultimately takes place between God and the resurrected Christian – both body and soul.

(Matter 142)

In other words, as Origen had established so controversially, the resurrected Christian retains the essential human composition of body and soul combined. The rhetoric of paradoxical expression is thus suggested by the duality of human identity which is both body and soul; the rhetoric of exegetical texts is modelled on the integrity of the human condition. Origen’s third century fusion of Proverbs and Paul posits the letter and the body as the foundations of the figurative/spiritual elements of each. This rhetorical strategy, however, deserves closer attention than it has so far received.

Indeed, the use of paradox as both a rhetorical strategy and as a figure for the marriage of terms has been called an epidemic in the Renaissance period. Rosalie Colie’s study of rhetorical paradox in the English Renaissance argues that,

For the humanists, rhetoric seemed to open anew the possibility of expressive integrity such as the ancients enjoyed, in which style, form, and matter were

¹⁹ This allegory is, like Pauline typology, suggested by Scripture itself: “Nuptial imagery elsewhere in the Bible, which explicitly identifies Yahweh or Christ with the Bridegroom, Israel or *ecclesia* with the Bride, encouraged both the Jewish Midrash and the Christian allegoresis that contextualized the *Canticum*. See, for instance, Ezekiel 16:8-13; Isaiah 62:4-5; Psalm 45; Hosea 2:8-22; John 3:25-29; Matthew 25:1-13; 1 Corinthians 11:1-13; Ephesians 5:21-33; Apocalypse 19:5-10, 21:1-4, 22:17” (Astell 1, fn.1). It is important to note that nuptial imagery is part of the context of Canticles; but Canticles itself describes a situation of betrothal, not wedding or marriage as such.

inextricably conjoined. ... [T]he rhetorical paradox offered a specific illustration that what was said, to be properly understood, must be said in a particularly appropriate way. ... Paradox as an intellectual construct is self-critical, both of its technique and its matter. ... [P]aradox demands an audience, and an audience desiring to be surprised.

(Colie 34-35)

The human configuration, body and soul combined, constitutes the “matter” of tropological exegesis, and the matter then suggests the paradoxical “style” of bodily metaphors and mystical signification. In Canticles’ rhetoric, the marriage of erotic style and spiritual matter is also a reflection of the joining of two lovers as one. Furthermore, as Colie suggests, paradox demands a desiring audience. Implicit in this statement is a mutual or reciprocal desire between the “subject” and “object,” or between reader and text. Paradox insists on a perpetuation of associated difference rather than a disjunction between self and other, thought and experience, word and thing, sacred and profane: “Each thing contains or implies its opposite; each thing refers to transcendence [of itself]. Both by correspondence ... and by contradiction ... anything in human experience can be perceived at once in its metaphysical as well as in its experiential context” (Colie 32). The tropological sense of exegesis is thus the experiential aspect of the metaphysical apocalypse and incorporates both perspectives in the form of paradox; the analogy of worldly terms is continually deferred by the promise of further and distinctly “other” resolution. In his 1987 article, “How to Avoid Speaking: Denials,” Jacques Derrida suggests why the operation of such rhetorical paradox, and its effect of deferral, is important: “One can never decide whether deferring, as such, brings about precisely that which it defers and alters” (13). This particular paradox is that of the divine promise that I’ve explained as the anagogical sense: deferral itself can never be definitely identified, since what is deferred is somewhat present in the very deferral. Derrida calls this the *khora* (Gk. “the place beyond the border of places”), which he distinguishes from the *via negativa* or negative theology; *khora* “remains alien to the order of presence and absence, [and] it seems that one could only invent it in its very otherness, at the moment of address” (39). The idea of *khora*, then, is the recognition of non-recognition that underlies subject/object analogies, perpetually deferring closure and sustaining distinction. Through the analogy of the allegorical narrative of the Sponsa and Christ, and the deferral paradox of

the anagogical/apocalyptic place without situation and eternity without time, the tropological sense emerges in the form of a rhetoric for the reader – a rhetoric that is experienced in both body and soul because it reflects mystical promise in erotic language.

Noam Flinker, too, begins his abbreviated examination of “the growth of a literary motif” of Canticles with a discussion of “the principles of rabbinic balance in terms of theme (holy and profane), transmissional modes (oral and written) and time (present and future)” (Flinker 12). Flinker’s approach centres around an oppositional balance between profane theme, present concerns, and oral modes on one hand, and holy theme, future concerns, and written modes on the other: “interpretations of Canticles [from the 2nd to the 17th centuries] move back and forth between the poles of apocalyptic closure and lyric openness, between textual determination and oral tentativity, between allegorical spirituality and carnal celebration of the flesh” (Flinker 19). The key feature of balance between the oppositional themes, concerns, and modes requires a paradoxical perspective in order to accommodate closure and openness, tentative determination and spiritual carnality. Flinker’s examination of this ambiguous state of affairs never really addresses the effect of such an approach in terms of reading practices, however; his argument ultimately suggests more than it establishes. Nevertheless, he does demonstrate the continuity between rabbinic and Christian models of scriptural interpretation through Canticles: “both Judaism and Christianity oscillate between a textual longing for apocalyptic closure and a less determined oral openness that is potentially available as a mode of interpretation” (Flinker 11-12). Exegesis is therefore predicated upon a perpetually deferred closure; the narrative sense of typology and its allegory of human history are “subordinated” by the temporal condition of being still in the middle of the story, so to speak.

The rhetorical paradox of tropology transforms this narrative perspective by providing the eternal and universal context with the experience of “here and now.” Astell’s analysis of Hugh of St. Victor’s system of meditational exegesis describes how the Victorines developed a “close relationship” between “the two-in-oneness of text and gloss” and “the rhetorical interest of the twelfth-century commentaries.” Hugh of St. Victor

departed from earlier exegetes in joining the letter to its allegory and considering the two in combination as the knowledge (“scientia”) which is a necessary foundation and motivation for moral action (“tropologia”). According to Hugh’s pairing, the

“factum” that provides a basis for response includes both the historical deed recorded and the allegory that illuminates it, both the letter (with its *pathos*) and the allegory (with its *logos*). Not a simple induction from the letter alone, tropology derives from the analogous relationship between the letter and the spirit and constitutes their synthesis in personal application. Tropology is the reader’s response to the rhetorical appeal of the text, rightly understood: the meeting point of life and letter.

(Astell 20-21)

In this sense, anagogical deferral is both the logical extension of allegorical analogy and the guide for worldly tropology; the apocalyptic perspective links earthly present to eschatological future through the continuity of the body of the Church, which is in turn composed of individual souls.

Furthermore, the perspective is governed by the reader herself in the interpretive act, thereby asserting a measure of agency in the reader’s role. Matter characterizes as “striking” the “flexibility with which Cassian’s four-fold system is used” (Matter 54). Indeed, there are as many variations of the system as there are exegetes, each with a slightly different agenda. While I will not detail these many variations of exegetical method, the mere presence of such variety itself merits comment. The plurality of methodology in exegesis, especially in exegetical commentaries on the Canticles, is suggestive of what Stanley E. Fish calls the analysis of “doings and happenings” that regards literature as a “kinetic art.” Such an approach

forces you to be aware of ‘it’ [the text] as a changing object – and therefore no ‘object’ at all – and also to be aware of yourself as correspondingly changing. Kinetic art does not lend itself to static interpretation because it refuses to stay still and doesn’t let you stay still either. In its operation it makes inescapable the actualizing role of the observer.

(Fish 83)

The tropological exegesis of the twelfth century onward is explicitly geared toward the actualization of the reader through the initiation of interpretive questions: “We may ask ... what this fact signifies about how we ought to behave, or as to what would be a fitting response” (Hugh’s *Preface*, qtd in Turner 268). Moreover, the many variations of methodology would seem to imply that exegetes regarded Canticles as “kinetic.”

To my knowledge, no one has attempted to link reader response criticism and exegesis in theoretical terms, yet a comparison between these medieval and modern theoretical approaches is instructive. While exegesis is generally taken to apply exclusively to the Bible, and reader response to secular literature, there is yet sufficient overlap between the Bible and literature (as books or texts) to justify a comparison with reference to the Renaissance, a time during which God was commonly considered to have authored both the Bible and the Book of Nature. In this perspective, everything is a “text” that may be “read” in mystical terms. Everyone is a “reader” of God simply by virtue of consciousness. Exegetical models are theoretical frameworks for reading sacred texts, but given the widely held belief in the immanent divine presence and the analogy of the Book of Nature, exegetical models suggest the application of a broader interpretive approach – one that, I will argue, applies not only to sacred literature but also to daily experience and thus to secular literature as well. Exegetical works after Origen continue to recognize the rabbinic principle of the relation between sacred and profane, present and future, and these relations are the basis for my investigation of religious and love poetry in the Renaissance. Similarly, the interaction between oral and written cultures in the Canticles tradition deserves closer examination than Astell, Matter, Stewart, and Flinker have afforded it.²⁰

Frye’s writings on the Bible and literature as complementary kinds of scripture – sacred and secular – as well as his four modes of language – descriptive, conceptual, rhetorical, imaginative (*Words with Power*, 3-30) – have suggested my theoretical approach. However, Frye does not articulate an awareness of the link between exegesis and any of his four interpretive modes. Neither does he engage explicitly with reader-response models such as Fish’s notion of “kinetic art.” Nevertheless, his ideas are suggestive of such connections, as I suspect they are intended to be. For instance, Frye’s concept of *de te fabula* in *The Secular Scripture* links the “story of the soul” to “the story of ourselves”:

²⁰ Astell mentions, in a brief discussion of Richard Rolle, her awareness of Matter’s single chapter on the largely oral, courtly love tradition that borrows stylistic and thematic aspects of the exegetical tradition in the medieval period; Flinker discusses only Shakespeare’s *Venus and Adonis* and Spenser’s *Amoretti*, both relatively briefly, in the course of his book; and Stewart spends less than a chapter on the religious tradition that informs the rest of his book. There are numerous studies of Canticles exegesis in Chaucer as well, but I am interested in applying this approach to a broader literary context and in a slightly later period (1580-1648).

It seems that one becomes the ultimate hero of the great quest of man, not so much by virtue of what one does, as by virtue of what and how one reads. . . . The secular scripture tells us that we are the creators; other scriptures tell us that we are actors in a drama of divine creation and redemption. . . . Identity and self-recognition begin when we realize that this is not an either-or question, when the great twins of divine creation and human recreation have merged into one, and we can see that the same shape is upon both.

(Frye, *Secular Scripture*, 157)

Reading, whether in a sacred or secular context, is thus a paradoxical recognition of self as both actor directed by God and creator of the secular performance. This perspective is very similar to Wolfgang Iser's concept of the implied reader, the one constructed by the text who also constructs the meaning of the text. Frye's concept of the reader might best be described by the adjective "heroic": "there is a perspective from which the reader, the mental traveler, is the hero of literature, or at least of what he has read. . . . [T]he message of all romance is *de te fabula*: the story is about you; and it is the reader who is responsible for the way literature functions, both socially and individually" (SS, 185-186). Thus Frye's heroic reader, like Iser's implied reader, is both self-observing and other-observing: the theme, actor, and audience of the story. Yet none of these theoretical critics have addressed the applicability of tropological exegesis in theories of reading practice.

As in Flinker's notion of textual/oral oscillation in Canticles exegesis, oscillation is also an important element of Iser's discussion of reading as play: "The original functions [of denotation and figuration] . . . are never totally suspended, and so there is a continual oscillation between denotation and figuration, and between accommodation and assimilation. This oscillation, or to-and-fro movement, is basic to play, and it permits the co-existence of the mutually exclusive" (Iser, 1987, 332). The basic principles of paradox are common to both Canticles exegesis and to reader-response analysis: both are means of interpreting texts that maintain the importance of considering the "profane" denotation and the "sacred" figuration in playful conjunction with each other. In exegetical theory, this rhetorical playfulness is then extended to justify a multiple interpretive practice with various levels of signification. What is interesting from a reader-response point of view is that the system of exegesis is so variously interpreted: the exegete herself defines how many and what levels she

employs; often, the exegete will adopt different strategies depending on the scriptural text under examination.

Tzvetan Todorov has also argued, in a description of the reading experience, that the diversity of interpretive accounts of any given text can be explained “[b]y the fact that these accounts describe, not the universe of the book itself, but this universe as it is transformed by the psyche of each individual reader” (Todorov 72). Todorov’s diagram for the interpretive transformation is strikingly analogous to the four levels of medieval exegesis: “the author’s account” corresponds to the literal level of signification; “the imaginary universe evoked by the author” is reminiscent of allegory, since it is not literal as such but remains closely tied to the literal points of the narrative. “[T]he imaginary universe constructed by the reader” requires a step that Todorov calls “symbolization,” in which the reader abbreviates (and selects) the elements of the text’s imaginary universe that are most coherent and/or significant with regard to the validity of the imaginary universe, much like the anagogical sense that offers a culminating vision of the allegory of the Church. Finally, “the reader’s account” corresponds to the tropological return to the human soul of the reader’s situation (Todorov 73). Todorov’s model, however, fails to account for a self-reflexive aspect in the final stage. He does admit that the relationship between the author’s evoked universe and the reader’s constructed universe “leads to a psychological projection: the transformations tell us about the reading subject” (Todorov 73). But the transformations also tell the reading subject about herself, and the tropological level of exegesis makes this self-reflexive principle explicit in methodological terms.

Self-reflexivity, or *de te fabula*, is a principle that reader-response criticism particularly, and much current theory and criticism generally, claim to espouse, but just as often fail to recognize. That Todorov neglects to consider this principle is implicit in his tone regarding readers: “His [the reader’s] activity is so natural to him that it remains imperceptible” (Todorov 82). While this may be true of some readers, it is certainly not widely applicable. In fact, as Iser argues,

the discrepancies produced by the reader during the gestalt-forming process take on their true significance [at the end of the reading]. They have the effect of enabling the reader actually to become aware of the inadequacy of the gestalten he has produced, so that he may detach himself from his own participation in the text and

see himself being guided from without. The ability to perceive oneself during the process of participation is an essential quality of the aesthetic experience; the observer finds himself in a strange, halfway position: he is involved, and he watches himself being involved.

(Iser, *Act* 1978, 133-134)

Like the disorienting presence of mirrors, then, texts show us ourselves from an observer's perspective as well as from our original perspective. Furthermore, both perspectives interact with each other to constitute a new experiential context: "participation means that the reader is not simply called upon to 'internalize' the positions given in the text, but he is induced to make them act upon and so transform each other, as a result of which the aesthetic object begins to emerge. ... [T]he images hang together in a sequence, and it is by this sequence that the meaning of the text comes alive in the reader's imagination" (Iser, *Act* 1978, 203). Here the "aesthetic object" is the "meaning of the text" as it is experienced by the reader. The reader's participation is both subjective, piecing together the "positions given in the text" without external reference, and objective, constructing the "aesthetic object" of the text with reference to her experience. In Frye's terms, the reader's recognition of *de te fabula* is her assertion of her role as the hero of the story; in terms of the exegetical model, the emergence of meaning is accompanied by the reader's application of it to herself as the representative human soul of the tropological sense. Far from being imperceptible, as Todorov claims, the reader's interpretive activity is foregrounded in exegetical methodology. Indeed, the "turn" of tropology focuses the "subject" on herself as subject matter.

In a similar argument about the task of literary study in general, Jonathan Culler argues that, "To account for the form and meaning of literary works is to make explicit the special conventions and procedures of interpretation that enable readers to move from the linguistic meaning of sentences [the literal sense, or Todorov's 'signification'] to the literary meanings of works [the figurative senses, or Todorov's 'symbolization']" (Culler 1976, 49). Here Culler unwittingly justifies the theoretical analogy between a medieval exegetical model and current critical models, since both seek to make explicit the procedures and conventions by which figurative meanings are constructed from the literal signification of the text. And as Stanley Fish contends,

we comprehend not in terms of the deep structure alone, but in terms of a *relationship* between the unfolding, in time, of the surface structure and a continual checking of it against our projection ... of what the deep structure will reveal itself to be; and when the final discovery has been made and *the* deep structure is perceived, all the “mistakes,” the positing, on the basis of incomplete evidence, of deep structures that failed to materialize, will not be canceled out.

(Fish 86)

This principle of an interactive balance between literal and figurative senses approximates the exegetical balance between sacred theme and profane style: the “deep structure” of mystical significance is fundamentally rooted in the erotically desiring body of the Sponsa. Again, Fish’s insistence on the experiential nature of reading is also reminiscent of the tropological sense of exegesis: the discovery of “*the* deep structure” of the soul, or of anagogical concerns, co-exists with the awareness of “mistakes” of failed reading expectations (such as narrative or literal closure) and human fallibility generally. The reader may then observe herself, and the text, simultaneously, from the doubled and paradoxical perspective of self and other-observing-self. Furthermore, the oscillation between these perspectives, like that between denotation and figuration, is playful in the sense that conversation may be playful.

This paradoxical and playful perspective is essentially what defines the term “reader” as I am using it here. Like Fish’s “informed reader,” my concept of the reader is “neither an abstraction, nor an actual living reader, but a hybrid – a real reader (me) who does everything in his power to make himself informed” (Fish 87). I would, however, like to clarify what Fish does not: specifically, that the abstract concept of the reader may be found in the rhetorical elements of the text. This distinction is one that insists on the continual interaction between text and reader. Fish’s emphasis on the response of the reader often tips the balance away from the text, distorting textual rhetoric into something that is limited to acting, and reading into a merely responsive role (as if, once the text performs its role, the reader then takes her turn, and then they are finished). Iser’s notion of an implied reader, on the other hand, defines the reader as the one who activates the rhetoric of the text and constitutes “a reality hitherto unfamiliar to himself” (Iser, *Act* 1978, 151) in association with the text:

The implied reader as a concept has his roots firmly planted in the structure of the text; he is a construct and in no way to be identified with any real reader. ... The

concept of the implied reader is therefore a textual structure anticipating the presence of a recipient without necessarily defining him. ... [T]he real reader is always offered a particular role to play, and it is this role that constitutes the concept of the implied reader.

(Iser, *Act* 1978, 34-35)

Iser's implied reader thus tips the balance of interaction the other way; as a "textual structure" and a "structural act," the implied reader is examinable only from a theoretical perspective. While Fish's informed reader is helpful in terms of an affective emphasis and Iser's implied reader from a phenomenological one, my notion of the reader, which I will call the rhetorical reader, seeks to keep both concepts in play. I use the adjective "rhetorical" for its potential double meaning here: the reader is both included in textual rhetoric as well as exercising a rhetoric of her own, making herself informed from textual and other perspectives. The rhetorical reader is both constructed by the artful expression of the text and constructing her response to the text. In this sense, reading and interpretation are equivalent terms in practice; hermeneutics and poetics are analogues in theory.²¹ Essential to this hermeneutic/poetic approach is the principle of self-reflexivity, what Culler has called "a willingness to think of literature as an institution composed of a variety of interpretive operations ... An awareness of the assumptions on which one proceeds, an ability to make explicit what one is attempting to do" (Culler 116). Thus I am proceeding on the assumption that it is desirable to become "*les propres lecteurs de nous-mêmes*" – better or proper readers of ourselves, both individually and collectively. If Fish asks, "what does this text do?" (Fish 75), then Iser asks "what does the reader do?"; I will attempt to ask both questions, with a view to what happens next, once we've asked those questions. The answers will involve a paradoxical viewpoint, since the questions incorporate textual and readerly perspectives, neither of which cancels the other out.

The principles of current theory and practice are not without Renaissance and medieval precedent. This general insight is hardly original on my part; Cathleen M. Bauschatz, for instance, has written about Montaigne's conception of reading as comparable

²¹ Culler states that "poetics is essentially a theory of reading" (Culler 115); hermeneutic is "of interpretation" (*OED*). The distinction here between poetics and hermeneutics is one that I wish to blur; because reading involves interpretation, poetics must also involve an awareness of interpretive methods.

to modern reader-response criticism. She assumes, however, that “The Judeo-Christian tradition, with its emphasis on the primacy of the Word, ... places the reader or listener in a relatively subordinate position, while the text itself reaches out and converts or otherwise touches and changes him” (Bauschatz 266). This subordination of the reader to the text, like the feminist notion of a subordinate wife or the general notion that Christian/religious ideology is necessarily oppressive, does not actually address the historical context of Christian exegetical practice (to say nothing of Judaic interpretation). Christian exegesis operates on the principle of a Word/reader correspondence through the letter/body analogy. Bauschatz actually claims that the “complex idea that the self is like a book, or that experience is like reading, in that one can constantly study it and learn from it ... is a quite original use of the Book of Nature [analogy]” in Montaigne’s *Essais* (Bauschatz 280).²² Apparently, Bauschatz is unaware of Origen’s writings on Proverbs and St. Paul, the Victorine tradition of Hugh, or the exegetical tradition generally. She claims that Montaigne’s influential *Essais* suggest, for the first time ever,

that we examine our own shortcomings ... [and] that the reader is just as capable of self-scrutiny as the essayist. Whether or not the reader of the *Essais* writes (and reads) his own self-portrait, in responding to the *Essais* he will create a verbal image of himself equivalent to “writing” (or reading) a new book of the self. The “je” of the *Essais* blends imperceptibly with the “je” of the reader.

(Bauschatz 283)

Notwithstanding Bauschatz’ claim for originality, Montaigne clearly endorses a traditionally tropological kind of reading for the world: “This great world ... is the mirror in which we must look at ourselves to recognize ourselves from the proper angle. In short, I want it to be the book of my student.”²³ Thus the human soul of the reader is itself the ultimate subject

²² In order to support her assertion of novelty in the early modern period, Bauschatz cites Marshall McLuhan’s *The Gutenberg Galaxy: The Making of Typographic Man* (Toronto, 1962) and Ernst Robert Curtius’ *European Literature in the Middle Ages*, trans. Willard R. Trask (London 1953). Curtius makes no such claim, and rather than supporting Bauschatz’s argument, his discussion of the *codex scriptus* and the *codex vivus* in chapter 16 (“The Book as Symbol”) seems to establish a long-standing and continuously developing tradition. Similarly, McLuhan’s section title for the quotation Bauschatz cites is “Francis Bacon, PR voice for the *moderni*, had both his feet in the Middle Ages.” McLuhan goes on to cite Curtius’ discussion to establish that the Book of Nature and the Bible together helped to develop a sense of *applicatio* rather than *contemplatio* in exegesis in the twelfth century (McLuhan 183-188).

²³ *Complete Essays of Montaigne*, trans. Donald M. Frame (Stanford 1965) I.26.116, 1580 ed.

matter of any reader's interpretation. Bauschatz indicates that self-reflexive reading is a familiar principle to Montaigne and anyone influenced by him, but she fails to address the Christian context that influenced Montaigne. Instead, she reflects uncritically a current bias against Christian ideology and doctrine. Though exegesis originated as a monastic model, it is not so much bound by institutional doctrine as by modern assumptions that it is so bound. The continuing influence of the condemned Origen would not have been possible if exegesis were ideologically determined; neither would the intensely erotic expression of many Canticles exegetes have been possible if it had not been for a degree of intellectual freedom. The paradox of Canticles' rhetoric is that of an existential tension between worldly and other-worldly senses. Such ambiguous complexity is anathema to ideological absolutes that thrive on the language of definitive differentiation, even when they oppose it (for example, between victims and oppressors, men and women, aristocracy and working class, white and black, etc.). The plurality of interpretation is significantly overlooked by current theories that nevertheless claim to value plurality in interpretation.

In order to examine the interactions between literary and religious exegesis in the English Renaissance, I will be adopting a slight variation of the traditional four-level model that was still taught throughout the early modern period.²⁴ In my adaptation, the literal level remains the same; a word signifies a thing or event fairly clearly, relatively speaking. In Renaissance poetry, the literal level of poetics tends to engage the development of a speaking subjectivity, either through a narrative such as in Sidney's *Arcadia* or Spenser's *Faerie Queene*, or in an abstract lyric sense such as in the sonnet sequences or the emblems of Quarles and Wither.²⁵ Similarly, the allegorical sense has a well-documented application in literary criticism; allegory, for my purposes, signifies the "other-speaking" of a referential narrative suggested, but not necessarily defined, by the text. For the purposes of this investigation, the allegory of Canticles can often be identified as a "boy meets girl" narrative; when Christ is

²⁴ "For examples of the perpetuation of the four levels of interpretation" into the 17th century, Stewart directs us to Louis Richeome's *Holy Pictures of the mysticall Figures of the most holy Sacrifice ... of the Eucharist*, tr. By C.A. (1619), John Rawlinson's sermon "The Bridegrome and his Bride" (*Quadrige Salutis*, Oxford, 1625), and Thomas Walkington's *Salomons Sweete Harpe* (1608). Cited in Stewart, 192-193, fn. 31, and 195, fn. 9.

²⁵ See Chapters Two and Three for discussions of sonnet sequences, Chapter Five for further discussion of Wither's *Emblems*, and Chapter Six for Quarles' *Emblemes*.

the boy and the soul is the girl, this allegory is a Christian comedy, as in Herbert's *The Temple* or Crashaw's *Steps to the Temple*.²⁶ When the human equation of this narrative is foregrounded, as in the sonnet sequences, things can get complicated; in Spenser's *Amoretti* and *Epithalamion*, the Christian comedy prevails, while in Sidney's *Astrophel and Stella* or Wroth's *Pamphilia to Amphilanthus*, the comedic elements are heavily parodied by a too literal application of metaphysical concerns, and require significant adjustments.²⁷ The anagogical sense is the governing idea of the allegory, or what the allegorical reading "leads up to." Like the apocalypse to which it so often refers, anagogy is inherently paradoxical because it implies an oxymoronic juxtaposition: the New Jerusalem of Revelation, for instance, is a city without spatial or temporal situation. As I am using the term, anagogy does not imply any literal, historical, or empirical event, place, or thing, as the anagogic is sometimes taken to imply by the "teachers of allegory." Instead, anagogy is an idea that both generates and perpetuates the various structural layers of a text, laying it open and sustaining the tensions of figurative meanings, such as the idea of the temple in Herbert's work, or the ideas of the labyrinth and corona in Wroth's *Pamphilia to Amphilanthus*. The tropological sense involves a return to the literal situation of the reader and to the literary situation of reading. Essentially, tropology makes us "*lecteurs de nous-mêmes*" – readers of ourselves – so that the accumulation of steps from text, through the allegory of literary devices, to the structural and governing concepts of anagogy, return us to a proper perspective of ourselves as interpreters. In a fundamental way, the reader is returned to the literal sense of reading, only now with a sense of a developing subjectivity that listens and responds to the speaking subjectivity of the text. This responsive subjectivity calls attention to the erotic engagement of the soul with Christ through the "present" moment of reading a textual interpretation of scripture or of the Book of Nature (depending on the text). The value of being able to move from religious to literary exegesis is one that is not exclusive to the Renaissance, or at least it need not be. That such rhetorical and interpretive "mixing" took place in the English Renaissance is the assertion of my thesis, which will be demonstrated in succeeding chapters. That it may also take place now – that is, that I may employ an ancient and sacred interpretive model for the purpose of

²⁶ See Chapter Four for further discussion of Herbert and Crashaw.

secular literary investigation – testifies to the inclusive, flexible sophistication of the model itself. Far from being determined exclusively by ecclesiastical structures and doctrinal ideologies, the principles of exegesis are fluid and designed to be adjusted by the exegete who holds the pen. In the case of this thesis, that exegete is me.

Gender, the Soul, and *Eros*

My examinations of Canticles' rhetoric in Renaissance poetry were initiated by questions of gender – specifically, why is the soul gendered female despite concurrent views of women that are often derogatory and misogynous? The consideration of gender in spiritual terms is almost necessarily metaphorical, because the divine does not (always) have a body – or at least, the divine can inhabit any body (i.e., Christ, or Mary, or me). By extension, our souls, which inhabit our bodies, are echoes of the divine integrity of soul; any relation between divine Spirit and human soul is taken to be beyond or apart from the strict confines of bodily existence. And yet, the body is a divinely created substance, too; our mixed form is sanctified and blessed by the conjunction of material and spiritual natures. Material or physically determined gender is thereby applicable to the spiritual senses of interpretation, but problems arise when we conflate physical and spiritual contexts too closely; the model of a masculine, divine lover and a feminine, human beloved is an ideal analogy that requires some adjustment if it is to be applied appropriately to a worldly situation. As Hugh of St. Victor warns us, and the teachers of allegory, it is a mistake to forget that the lion is also a lion that will eat your face off, as well as being a figure for Christ. Men and women have bodies and material concerns that are not figured in the divine/human relationship; men and women actually have sex, and neither is ultimately capable of nor responsible for the creation of the world. At the same time, if the erotic elements of human relationships are to be in any way desirable, they may reflect the erotic bonds of the divine/human model; sex, which produces children, may be considered analogous to the divine creation of the world (thereby associating creation with the erotic act). It is important to see the differences between human and spiritual marriages: the former is a mixed genre,

²⁷ Chapter Two will consider Spenser's *Amoretti* and *Epithalamion*; Chapter Three will examine Sidney's and Wroth's sonnet sequences.

and carries with it all the ironies of mixed forms; the latter is “pure” and purely metaphorical in any genre, and while it may resemble a marriage it is also something else entirely, something that finds its echo in courtship, romance, weddings, and feasts, but which also confronts the body, its pleasures, and its material concerns with an alternative and completely “other” rhetoric. To borrow Derrida’s somewhat vaguely defined notion of *khora*, the spiritual marriage between divine and human is not in opposition to human marriages; instead, its meaning is perpetually deferred.²⁸ It is no accident, then, that literary genres are mixed, and mixed up, by the themes of erotic love; whether in a spiritual or secular context, the “kinds” that are used by Herbert and Wither, or Crashaw and Quarles, or Donne and Sidney, borrow imagery, theme, form, and structural elements from the constellation of traditions associated with Canticles and Revelation. Marriage links separate and distinct categories without losing the sense of distinction that makes each desirable to the other in the first place; men and women may speak and listen to each other, just as prayer and meditation represent human efforts to converse with the divine.

Many Renaissance critics tend to assume that this analogy works the other way around – that is, that the human figures of Canticles are based on Christ and the soul or the Church. This assumption exemplifies Hugh’s description of the misguided and misleading “teachers of allegory” in that the allegory is privileged over the letter. Such a reading leads to problems of confusing worldly concerns with spiritual ones. In fact, the basis is the literal – the human figures – who are then allegorized as Christ and the soul or the Church, as in Quarles’ Emblem IV.7, the epigram to this chapter. The figures of Christ and the soul in Canticles are based on the carnal relations between a man and a woman who yearn beyond their bodies and beyond physical presence – who yearn for something completely “other” than what their bodies alone can offer them. The importance of recognizing the literal level of the allegory – that is, the human body – is that the body enacts desire, but it is the soul that is the seat of *eros*; the soul desires what the body may enact, thereby inscribing the body

²⁸ Since the “perpetual deferral” of *khora* is inherent in such a vague definition, I assume that Derrida is being deliberately ambiguous in order to demonstrate his point. See Derrida’s “How to Avoid Speaking: Denials,” trans. by Ken Frieden, in *Languages of the Unsayable: The Play of Negativity in Literature and Literary Theory*, eds. Sanford Budick and Wolfgang Iser (Stanford CA: Stanford UP, 1987), 3-70.

with an inhabiting presence. The allegory of human Sponsa and divine Sponsus, then, informs secular illustrations of love beyond irony as well as turning spiritual figuration toward present, material, and tangible manifestations of erotic fulfilment.

The language of *eros* has a long history of ambiguous and paradoxical interpretation – it is the very indeterminacy of *eros* that is seen as its evil (by sermonizing detractors) and its strength (by intrepid supporters). As Denys Turner contends, *eros* is what bypasses ideological absolutes:

Erotic discourse is the language *in which* ... [the] polarities [of freedom and necessity, of oneness and differentiation] find their natural mode of expression. ... [T]o love erotically is to yearn for an identity of lover with the beloved which surpasses that which can be attained within any other kind of relationship between them; it is simultaneously to achieve a fuller differentiation within that union than either can possess without it. ... The search for erotic mutuality is the search for a union which does not conflict with differentiation and for a differentiation which is not set at odds with union ... a condition in which the affirmation of the one is not bought at the price of the denial of the other.... [E]rotic writing, whether sacred or secular, characteristically resists the dissolution of the dialectical tensions of identity and difference and of freedom and necessity into the polarisations of mutual exclusiveness. ... Eros is intrinsically paradoxical; and what is distinctive about the language of *eros* is entirely lost if it is misread as the one-sided language of union, at the expense of the language of differentiation.

(Turner 58-59)

Erotic discourse, like exegetical models and reader-response criticism, encourages and allows for a multiplicity of approaches and responses. This variety in turn fosters the meeting of ambiguity with ingenuity and self-reflexive interpretation. Though critics' reasons for dismissing medieval exegesis as a valid critical approach are based on a distrust of its association with Christian dogma and ideology, such an association constitutes an unwarranted disposition.

Indeed, as surprising as it may seem to modern gender critics, queer theory is in many ways an echo of the medieval and Renaissance tradition of assigning the female gender to represent the human soul or the Church. Eve Sedgwick makes a crucial distinction between feminist and gender/queer theory in order to define the latter more clearly; citing Catherine MacKinnon's "totalistic analysis" of gender, Sedgwick declares that "we need more" than such deterministic categories of gender can admit:

To assume that sex signifies power in a flat, unvarying relation of metaphor or synecdoche will always entail a blindness Before we can fully achieve and use our intuitive grasp of the leverage that sexual relations seem to offer on the relations of oppression, we need more – more different, more complicated, more diachronically apt, more off-centred – more daring and prehensile applications of our present understanding of what it may mean for one thing to signify another.
 (Sedgwick, *Between Men*, 10-11)²⁹

What Sedgwick suggests is a more flexible approach to gender that recognizes the “variable” nature of gender throughout cultural discourses in history – a more sophisticated sense “of what it may mean for one thing to signify another” (Sedgwick, *Between Men*, 15) – as Hugh of St. Victor advocated in the twelfth century. Rather than studying “the dynamics of gender definition, inequality, oppression, and change in human societies,” Sedgwick argues that we should study “what resists” such analyses (Sedgwick “Gender Criticism,” 271, 273): “‘Gender criticism’ might here be taken to mean, then, not criticism *through* the categories of gender analysis but criticism *of* them, the mapping of the fractal borderlines between gender and its others” (Sedgwick “Gender Criticism,” 273). Sedgwick’s characterization of queer theory/gay and lesbian criticism is based on Foucault’s argument that “‘modern sexuality’ is already produced through and indeed as discourse” (1992, 279).³⁰ Furthermore, if sexuality is constituted through and as discourse, then “writing is a form of sex, indeed ... its most direct form” (1992, 280). In this sense, Sedgwick’s approach is analogous to Renaissance Canticles’ rhetoric, in which the rhetorically “feminized” soul asserts her desire for the divine. In exegetical discourse, the soul expresses erotic desire to be penetrated by Christ, as well as to be embraced and enfolded by the divine embrace. Such spiritual expression of “physical” desire indicates a notion of *eros* that goes beyond carnal

²⁹ Sedgwick is responding to Catherine MacKinnon’s “Feminism,” pp. 530-531: “Each element of the female gender stereotype is revealed as, in fact, sexual. Vulnerability means the appearance/reality of easy sexual access; passivity means receptivity and disabled resistance ...; softness means pregnability by something hard ... Woman’s infantilization evokes pedophilia; fixation on dismembered body parts ... evokes fetishism; idolization of vapidness, necrophilia. Narcissism insures that woman identifies with that image of herself that man holds up ... Masochism means that pleasure in violation becomes her sensuality.... Socially, femaleness means femininity, which means attractiveness to men, which means sexual attractiveness, which means sexual availability on male terms” (qtd in Sedgwick 7). As Sedgwick comments, “There’s a whole lot of ‘mean’-ing going on. MacKinnon manages to make every manifestation of sexuality mean the same thing, by making every instance of ‘meaning’ mean something different.”

pleasure in that it may be enacted discursively, or conversationally. It also indicates that expression, or discourse, is eroticized; conversation is associated with consummation, with erotic engagement.³¹

I will return to the implications of eroticized discourse (and silence) in the next section; a few words here will suffice to “define” gender and *eros* as I will be using these terms throughout this study. Gender refers, quite simply, to female or male as sexually indicated orders within the human species. What is not simply identifiable are the kinds of roles that may be enacted by a writer or speaker of either gender. While “chromosomal sex” determines the range of possible options for sexual contact and engagement – women may be vaginally penetrated, for instance, while men may be penetrated only orally or anally – gender does not determine the manner of erotically desired contact.³² The nature of erotic desire, as I argued earlier, is seated in the soul rather than the body; *eros* in the Renaissance highlights this element of desire – that is, that *eros* originates in the soul and only thereby engages the body. Problems arise when this divine origin is confused, or forgets its association, with the body: these problems are constituted by the distractions of having a mixed form, which perhaps suggests why mixed generic forms proliferated throughout the Renaissance.

The quality of mixed-ness in the human form fosters a corresponding ambiguity in gendered roles (as well as generic forms, which I will return to in the final section of this chapter). The question then becomes, why would any sense of gender be applied to the soul at all – or to the divine, for that matter? In the Renaissance, metaphors and figures derive iterative power through a close association with the concrete and tangible, which suggests that gender serves to facilitate the figurative sense of divine/human relations; but why is the female gender so consistently employed as a figure for the soul, and not the male? I will

³⁰ See Foucault’s *History of Sexuality: An Introduction*.

³¹ The notion of discourse as inherently erotic is most notably emphasized in Sidney’s *Astrophel and Stella*; see chapter three for further discussion.

³² The term “chromosomal sex” is Sedgwick’s term to distinguish between physical characteristics of gender and what might be called the psychological characteristics of desire. As far as this study is concerned, desire is rooted in the soul; while there is some analogy between current notions of psychology and the Renaissance concept of the soul (psyche does translate as soul, for instance), it is important to note that the two are not identical in the sense that the soul is integrally connected to the divine, and our notions of psychology are not. See Sedgwick, “Gender Criticism,” 273-274.

argue that the female gender is, from a Renaissance perspective, a more appropriate figure for the soul not only because Christ took human form as a man, thereby “appropriating” the male gender for the divine sacrifice, but also because females embody a sense of inward completion that is desirable for the soul as a “chromosomally” defining characteristic; the female gender reflects the desirable qualities of divine integrity of soul in a physical form. In a strictly literal sense, women may contain men both sexually (during intercourse) as well as in the reproductive sense (during which they may also contain other women). Mariological interpretations of *Canticles* (which place Mary as the ideal representative and personification of the Church) point out a fundamental virtue of female identity that is associated with both Church and soul in exegetical practice: Mary contained Christ in pregnancy and opened to give birth to Christ in bodily form in the world. The containing and generative principle, as it is applied to Church and soul, approximates the divine function: our desire for Christ both encloses him safely and brings him forth into the world, just as the divine is both our origin and our originating vehicle. Divine and human desire are thus mutually embodied and reciprocally generative.

The female body is not only the basis for human identity in general but also for the erotic spirituality of *Canticles* in particular.³³ As Luce Irigaray has suggested, women touch themselves “without any need for mediation, and before there is any way to distinguish activity from passivity ... for her genitals are formed of two lips in continuous contact. ... Woman takes pleasure more from touching than from looking” (Irigaray 350, 351).³⁴ Thus, Irigaray continues, female desire precedes the articulation of language as much as it precedes the strict classifications of gender roles. The nature of erotic desire – that of the soul yearning both beyond itself and within itself – therefore accommodates silence as well as

³³ In this sense, too, the feminist perspective of gendered opposition entirely fails to address the symbolic elements of the female in the exegetical approach, if only because it focuses (ironically enough) on the perceived inequality of a divine figure who is male rather than female. I would submit, however, that the qualities of masculinity that Christ espoused as a man have more to do with his physical sacrifice – his chromosomal dispensability, so to speak – than with any divine concern for perpetuating patriarchal oppression here on earth. If Christ had been a woman, and she had been crucified, would a feminist analysis assert that that too was a perpetuation of misogyny?

³⁴ Wroth’s *Pamphilia to Amphilanthus*, for instance, does not blazon the male lover; the imagery emphasizes feeling and touching rather than seeing, a point that recurs in several articles on the subject. See Chapter Three for further discussion.

speech, activity as well as passivity; the female “object” incorporates the male “subject,” so to speak. Like the multiple senses of exegesis itself, female sexuality is “always at least double, goes even further: it is *plural*” (Irigaray 353). Women’s bodies, then, like the exegetical method of variously interpreting scripture, have multiple and various senses that reside within them. Thus when women speak, they may engage any or all of these senses at once; but the plurality of senses remains present whether spoken or not.

Thus “female” voices, speaking or silent, are inherently ambiguous; they assert multiple meanings that elide categorical distinctions. “Male” voices, by contrast, assert definitions and distinctions; perhaps the Incarnation appropriated the male form for Christ so that the message of his sacrifice would be clear. But beyond this, of course, is the sense that categorical clarity is a worldly thing – functional for our purposes, for discussion or speech, but ultimately subordinate to the human ability to interpret beyond or through it, to apprehend the *khora* of the completely “other.” The feminization of the exegetical role is one that speaks through various senses in order to see beyond them; without this rhetoric, there could be no conversational exchange beyond antagonistic reiteration of established classes and degrees of distinction. In this way, the imagery of the enclosed and feminine garden that has dominated the perspective of Renaissance literary criticism regarding Canticles is far more multivalent than has been acknowledged.³⁵ In the Renaissance, the enclosed garden is fundamentally linked to the imagery of the opened female body.³⁶ The enclosed womb that is also open to sexual penetration is a sexual characteristic of plural signification in Renaissance imagery; concretely female but figuratively human, the enclosed garden and the opened body speak on many different levels.

Voice and Silence: the Matrimonial Form (1559)

Voice and silence are important features of Canticles’ rhetoric because Canticles itself is a representation of speech: the lovers speak to and about each other, as well as articulating their own desire. The form of Canticles is reflected in its exegesis, too, in commentaries that speak to and of each other as well as articulating erotic interpretations of scripture. This

³⁵ See, for instance, Stanley Stewart’s *The Enclosed Garden: The Tradition and the Image in Seventeenth-Century Poetry*. Madison WI: U of Wisconsin P, 1966.

representation of speech takes the form of conversation. Erving Goffman has characterized conversation as transformative for the participants because it removes them, for a time, from self-enclosed structures:

What, then, is talk viewed interactionally? It is an example of that arrangement by which individuals come together and sustain matters having a ratified, joint, current, and running claim upon attention, a claim which lodges them together in some sort of intersubjective, mental world. ... Words are the great device for fetching speaker and hearer into the same focus of attention and into the same interpretation schema that applies to what is thus attended. But that words are the best means to this end does not mean that words are the only one or that the resulting social organization is intrinsically verbal in character. Indeed, it is when a set of individuals have joined together to maintain a state of talk that nonlinguistic events can most easily function as moves in a conversation. Yet, of course, conversation constitutes an encounter of a special kind. It is not positional moves of tokens on a board that figure as the prime concern; it is utterances, very often ones designed to elicit other utterances or designed to be verbal responses to these elicitations.

(Goffman, 70-71)

The “special kind” of encounter that characterizes conversation (“talk”) is what also characterizes the responses of individuals involved as more than replies, and often more than words. Goffman uses the term “move” to indicate steps in conversations, many of which are non-verbal (including gesture, facial expression, tone, etc.). What is most interesting for my purposes is the difficulty of designating the term “response” as opposed to “statement”: “Standard sequences ... are not [always] sequences of statement and reply but rather sequences at a higher level, ones regarding choice with respect to reach and to the construing of what is reached for. ... In this way we could recognize that talk is full of twists and turns and yet go on to examine routinized sequences of these shiftings” (Goffman, 73). In *Canticles*’ rhetoric, the “twists and turns” of interpretive choices are, in fact, the “routinized sequences of ... shiftings” and it is the purpose of this study to examine the ways in which such a rhetoric operates.

Furthermore, *Canticles*’ discourse between male and female lovers highlights the fluid exchange not only of “male” and “female” speech, but also the conversational exchange of speaking status: when one speaks, the other attends silently. This arrangement neatly reflects the usual rules of human conversation described by Goffman and employed by

³⁶ See, for instance, Richard Sibbes, *Bowels Opened* (1639) and other titles in Appendix 4.

people every day. What is not usual, and is often overlooked, is that Canticles' discourse is also somewhat playful. In literary and ideological criticism of the past three decades or so, the politics of voice are often conflated with the politics of gender and agency, presuming that (female) silence "means" subordination and/or that (male) speech "means" patriarchal oppression. The problematic connotations of silence and oppression, speech and agency, are often casually linked to the matrimonial form of the *Book of Common Prayer*, critics cite the notorious "obey clause" and/or the metaphor of the husband as the head and the wife as the body of a single, united unit. But this metaphor and the language of the vows themselves are drawn from Canticles' rhetoric. A re-evaluation of the vows here will offer a corrective and alternative reading, one that places Canticles as the "excellent misterie" that contextualizes the language of the vows and demonstrates how the rhetoric of conversational speech is enacted in the ritual of the liturgy.³⁷

While dismissed by some critics as "an independent context" that is too generally accessible to be of any practical use in the examination of biblical influence in literature, the matrimonial form is directly and sufficiently engaged with the rhetoric of Canticles to warrant a close reading here, if only to offer a broad and commonly accessible starting point for a consideration of how Canticles' rhetoric operates in a public Renaissance setting.³⁸ This study insists that biblical influence is not limited to the Bible and is conveyed through an exegetical rhetoric of perspective and form. Thus biblical and exegetical influence will be considered as overlapping literary genres, and the distinctions of sources will be less important than the continuities of interpreted theme and content. Furthermore, the language of the matrimonial form requires review. Too often, critics have taken selective phrases out of context, failing to account for the immediate context such as the potentially mitigating vows of the husband, as well as failing to properly examine the exegetical context. This failure has the effect of mistaking the *figura* for the *res* – or, in other words, mistaking the text

³⁷ I am using the 1559 edition in my discussion here; the 1604 edition is largely unchanged, and the 1623 edition, though it adds further explanation, maintains the substance of the 1559 edition.

³⁸ Carol Kaske scants the liturgy and Book of Homilies "because, as Lewalski says of her similar avoidance, 'it is often not possible or profitable to distinguish between general biblical influences conveyed through private reading, study, sermons, and the like, and biblical influence conveyed through the liturgy'" (Kaske, 6-7, qtg Lewalski, 11).

for the context, just as the “teachers of allegory” privilege interpretation at the expense of close reading.

For the purpose of clarifying the rhetoric of Canticles in the matrimonial form, it is useful to review the literal sense of the Song rather than the focus of the spiritual allegory of Christ and Church or soul; in the sense that the Rite ritually joins two betrothed lovers, this may seem an obvious point to make, since Canticles is also a verbally rendered betrothal in its literal sense. There is an important distinction, however, between the Rite and the Song: the betrothal is not fulfilled by ritual joining in the Song, as it is in the Rite. In this way, the literal sense of the Rite fulfils the promise of Revelation’s wedding feast, which is perhaps what makes it ritual: the echo of eternity in the Rite is the sense of fulfilled promises, of betrothal and apocalyptic union meeting in two human lovers. We may recall what Derrida writes of the rhetoric of deferral, which is set aside in the Rite by the rhetoric of the fulfilled promise. This is not so in Canticles, at least not consistently so. Derrida points out that “Every title has the import of the promise” (Derrida 16); Canticles has many titles, and many promises too. The Song of Solomon, as it is sometimes called, is “sung” in two voices, both of them human, though the female voice speaks almost twice as many verses as the male voice. This suggests that it is as much a Song *about* or *to* Solomon as it is *by* him, since the predominant voice is that of the Sponsa speaking to or about her lover. Similarly, the Song of Songs (or Canticum of Canticles) is explicitly a metatextual title: a song about songs as much as the superlative or exemplar of its genre. Thus the title indicates co-authorship, since there are two speakers: the Sponsa speaks about and to the Sponsus, who speaks in turn to her, offering the promise of conversation. As well, auto-commentary is indicated, since the title suggests how the work represents a genre of “songs”; the promise of this kind of generic commentary will be addressed in the next section of this chapter. If the predominant voice is to be characterized as the voice of agency, then the female voice of Canticles has the prevailing agency in rhetorical terms (by roughly two thirds, depending on the translation).³⁹ Agency and voice are nevertheless mutually constructed in the form of a proclamatory dialogue without the conventional boundaries between distinctions of kind; the female

³⁹ See Appendices 1-3, which includes the texts of the Vulgate Latin and modern English translation, the Geneva translation, and the King James Version of Canticles.

pursues, and the male sleeps; then she sleeps while he pursues. The conventional associations between gendered voices and agency do not therefore apply.⁴⁰ As we will see, the reciprocal responsibility in speech acts of Canticles is reflected in the Rite. Furthermore, the spiritual allegory identifies the divine with the male figure who seeks and is sought after by the female Church-figure, but the interchangeable roles of the human lovers indicates a further identification between divine and human roles. As Denys Turner phrases it, with reference to John of the Cross's *The Ascent of Mount Carmel*, "the union of the soul with God brings about a transformation of agency such that God and the soul become, as it were, a single [creative] agent: 'As a result the operations [of the soul] are not different from those of God; but those the soul performs are of God and are divine operations.'"⁴¹ Thus agency is both human and divine, female and male, reader's and author's, by virtue of an extended allegory that blurs the distinctions of categories through the dialogue between them.

While a number of feminist critics have reasoned that this kind of predominantly female voice nevertheless perpetuates a misogynistic hierarchical model because the female figure is subordinated by her articulated desire for a supposedly "absent" male figure, this argument does not address the form of dialogue, the alternating roles of the female voice within that dialogue, nor the historical context of exegesis generally.⁴² In "courtly love" or Petrarchan lyrics, for instance, the female beloved is often assumed by critics to have no real voice at all, since the male poet writes her lines for her, rendering her a passive and powerless object. As Karen Newman has pointed out, however, the "paradigm of woman as the object

⁴⁰ The form of the dialogue reflects the doubled sense of sexual imagery as well: Frye has noted that "In sexual imagery the relation of male to female is expressed in two ways, depending on whether the two bodies or only the sexual organs themselves are taken as the basis. In one the male is above and the female below [i.e., vertical imagery], in the other the male is at the center and the female surrounds him [i.e., concentric imagery]" (Frye, *GC* 156). I will discuss this doubled sense of sexual imagery further with regard to Sandys' "Paraphrase" in my second chapter.

⁴¹ Turner 60, qtg. *Ascent* III.2.8.p.216.

⁴² For such a feminist reading, see just about any article on Shakespeare's *Venus and Adonis* since about 1976, such as the following selections from *Venus and Adonis: Critical Essays*, ed. Philip C. Kolin (New York: Garland Publishing, 1997): Catherine Belsey's "Love as Trompe-Poeil: Taxonomies of Desire in *Venus and Adonis* (1995)" (261-285); Nona Feinberg's "Thematics of Value in *Venus and Adonis* (1989)" (247-258); Richard Halpern's "Pining Their Maws: Female Readers and the Erotic Ontology of the Text in Shakespeare's *Venus and Adonis*" (377-388); Coppélia Kahn's "Self and Eros in *Venus and Adonis* (1976)" (181-202); James Schiffer's "Shakespeare's *Venus and Adonis*: A Lacanian Tragicomedy of Desire" (359-376).

of exchange” is both “exhausted” and no longer “tenable” (Newman, “Directing Traffic” 1990, 41-42, 47). Newman argues that

[R]eading woman repeatedly as the object of male exchange constructs a victim’s discourse that risks reinscribing the very sexual politics it ostensibly seeks to expose and change. ... [R]eading women as objects exchanged by male desiring subjects ... assumes an unproblematic subjectivity for “men” as desiring subjects and concomitantly assumes as directly accessible woman-as-object.

(Newman, “Directing Traffic” 1990, 47)

Such “victim’s discourse” and the essentialization of gendered values ignore what Theodor Adorno has emphasized as the illusory aspects of subject/object relations: “subject and object are ‘mutually mediated – the object by the subject, and even more, in different ways, the subject by the object.’ For Adorno, objectivity can be conceived without a subject, but not subjectivity without an object.”⁴³ Newman concludes her inflection of feminist politics onto Adorno’s philosophy by asserting that the status of the object is neither exclusive to women nor exclusively undesirable: “By presuming that the object position is always undesirable, we overvalue a phallic model of sexual pleasure and participate in the hegemonic misogynist and homophobic fantasies of our culture; we foreclose for women and men the object position’s potential for desire and pleasure” (Newman, “Directing Traffic” 1990, 51). Indeed, as *Canticles*’ rhetoric demonstrates, the pleasure of the selectively opened body can be an incredibly powerful object of moral virtue for both men and women, signifying physical, emotional, and spiritual integrity and ascribing inherent value to the status of the object.

The critical emphases on the oppressive aspects of the “female-as-object” paradigm are based on what is called the “obey clause” of the *Book of Common Prayer*, and applied to social conduct and literary and dramatic representations of marriage alike. For instance, Coppélia Kahn, in her discussion of the early modern institution of marriage and the theatrical portrayal of wives, admits that “under pressure of a new Protestant ideology of marriage,” biblical interpretive models were changing; yet she still maintains that “Both

⁴³ Newman citing Adorno, “Subject and Object,” 499. Adorno also asserts the “real” aspects of subject/object binarism at the same time: “The separation is real, he claims, because it is a product of real social relations; it expresses ‘the dichotomy of the human condition’ which he ... recognizes as ideological” (Newman, “Directing Traffic” 1990, 48).

woman and marriage are enfolded within the idea that man dominates woman” (Kahn 247).⁴⁴ Kahn justifies this assertion with reference to “sermon after sermon, [in which] the preachers insist that ‘the husband is the head of the woman, as Christ is the head of the Church.’” Yet she seems unaware of the origin and context of the sermons she cites, drawn from the exegetical tradition of the Song of Songs and recorded in the “Fourme of Solempnizacion of Matrimonye” in the *Book of Common Prayer* (1559 edition):

Ye housbandes loue your wiues, euen as Christ loued the Church, *and hath geuen hymselfe for it*, to sanctifie it, purgyng it in the fountaine of water, throughe the worde, that he might make it vnto hym selfe a glorious congregacion, not hauyng spot or wrinkle, or any suche thyng, but that it shoulde be holy and blameles. *So men are bounde to loue their owne wyues, as their owne bodies. He that loueth his owne wife loueth hym selfe. For neuer did any man hate his owne fleshe, but nourisheth and cherisheth it, euen as the Lorde doeth the congregacion, for we are membres of his body: of his flesh and of hys bones. ... This mistery is great, but I speake of Christe and of the congregacion. ...* Ye housbandes, ... Geuyng honour vnto the wyfe ... as heires together of the grace of lyfe, so that your praiers be not hyndred. ...

Ye women, submit youre selves vnto youre owne housbandes as vnto the Lorde: for the housbande is the wyues headde, euen as Christe is the headde of the Church. And he is also the sauoure of the whole bodye. Therefore as the Church or congregacion, is subiecte vnto Christe. ... Let wyues be subiecte to their owne housbandes, *so that if anye obey not the woorde, they may be wonne withoute the woorde by the conuersacion of the wyues* ... so that the spirite be milde and quiete

(*Prayer-Book 1559*, 127-128, italics mine)⁴⁵

Here men “are bounde to love” their wives “as Christ loued the Church”, “as their owne bodies,” and “as heires together of the grace of lyfe.” Correspondingly, women are asked to submit themselves to their husbands “as unto the Lorde ... as the Church or congregacion, is subiecte unto Christe.” The context here is a mutual binding and submission, since the analogy of Christ and Church is one that functions through mutual love. Furthermore, this bodily basis of the marriage contract recalls the literal basis of scripture; men love their wives *like* Christ loves the Church, but as members of the church themselves, they partake in the same submission toward Christ that their wives’ bodies signify in representing the

⁴⁴ What Kahn means by the “new” Protestant ideology remains unclear, since she seems to argue that misogyny defines marriage throughout Catholic and Protestant history.

⁴⁵ See also 1623 ed., p. C5. I have cited the 1559 edition since it predates the earliest work I will be examining – Sidney’s *Astrophel and Stella* (1582) – and would therefore have been the most likely institutional influence throughout the period.

congregation. Interestingly, too, the wife is encouraged to speak, thereby winning others' obedience to the Word through conversation, "so that the *spirite* be milde and quiete" (italics mine).⁴⁶ Thus inner quietude is manifested as an effective spoken rhetoric in the social sphere. This socially rhetorical role is ascribed to wives as objects of social value; the characterization of the husband's love for his wife – "as his own body" – is also an object of moral value, representing a willingness to sacrifice subjective desires for another subject.

The changes Kahn does allow for in "a new conception of marriage that stresses ... mutual affection" are themselves problematized by "what Stephen Greenblatt calls 'the colonial power of Christian doctrine over sexuality,' its power to endorse sexual pleasure within marriage as legitimate but simultaneously to define it, limit it, and reconstruct it as threatening in a newly orthodox way" (Kahn 248). While I am not arguing that the principle of "mutual affection" in marriage is unproblematized by contemporary practices, I would like to make the point that the representative submission of the wife and the corresponding binding of the husband are far more complicated than such hierarchical approaches to the issue can admit. Feminist critics such as Kahn have failed to address the principles of analogy and paradox in Canticles' rhetoric and how it is employed in the husband's and wife's mutual duties to each other. It is, unfortunately, a truism that human principles and practices are often not entirely consistent. It is even more lamentable that Kahn demonstrates this truism so effectively; she simply repeats, without question, the absolutist charge that "Marriage is an immovable obstacle to any improvement in the theoretical or real status of women in law, in theology, in moral and political philosophy" (Ian Maclean, qtd. in Kahn 247). In doing so, she perpetuates a feminist allegory of a partial reading of the

⁴⁶ Note that the word "obedience" derives from the Latin *oboedire*, to listen, to be ready. There is no necessary connotation of subordination or oppression. As well, despite the sexual connotations of the word "conversation," the word here refers to its derivation from the Latin *conversari*, to keep company or to frequent, and the Old French *converser*, to have (verbal) intercourse with. Webster's Dictionary gives Francis Bacon as an example of the Renaissance use of the word: "experience in business and conversation in books" connotes that conversation is an occupation or association esp. with an object of study or subject, a close acquaintance or intimacy. "Conversation" also implies frequent abode in a place, a manner of life, or dwelling in a place, as in KJV Phil. 3:20: "For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ" – or Song 8:13: "Thou that dwellest in the gardens, the companions hearken to thy voice: cause me to hear it."

matrimonial form, and exemplifies how the “teachers of allegory” misuse the ideological authority with which they are invested.⁴⁷

The husband/head, wife/body cluster is based on the erotic relationship of Christ and the Church in *Canticles*, which is in turn built on the divine/human metaphorical relation in the context of a tropological perspective. Essentially, Kahn mistakes the allegorical theme of marriage for the actual practice of marriage and calls the whole institution rotten; much like the “teachers of allegory” who forget the literal sense, Kahn has forgotten that these figures speak in the literal sense of *eros* as well as beyond it. This is all the more unfortunate since her argument is otherwise quite suggestive and intriguing with regard to the theatrical practices of female portrayal. Her mistake is one that confuses literal affect with figurative allegory, thereby reducing both to an either/or hierarchical model that cannot fail to privilege modern gender perspectives over historical continuities; her own ideological position is thus implicitly superior to one that she (and others) have judged precipitately as colonial, limited, threatening, and an overwhelming obstacle to “improvement.” Denys Turner’s explanation of the *via negativa* and its application to current gender concerns makes clear that such either/or positions are inherently flawed because they cannot allow for traditional continuity with current practices:

Without the affirmative way there is no negative way. ... we may, after much familiarity with the description of God as “spirit”, begin to think of God as “disembodied”, until, that is, we see why we must also “seek his face” (Ps. 26:8) or experience his voice shaking the wilderness (Ps. 28:8). And, to acknowledge a more contemporary preoccupation, it is notoriously easy to assume the special aptness of talking about God as male. We learn to see what is deficient about doing so only when, by construing God also as female, it becomes clear that gender language *as such*

⁴⁷ For instance, in citing Maclean, Kahn distorts his argument. After stating that “In all practical philosophy, the female sex is considered in the context of the paradigm of marriage”, Maclean goes on to argue that “dislocations of a fundamental nature ... do occur” as a result of “the activities of queens, queen regents and court ladies, and the emergence of a class of women possessing leisure and the aspiration to fill it profitably. Claims that women have equal virtue and mental powers and an equal right to education become more strident throughout Europe after the middle of the sixteenth century” (Maclean, 66). Furthermore, in “theology, medicine and law” Maclean identifies satire that “is directed against an object other than women: socinianism, prejudice, academic ponderousness. In each case, the effect of the joke is to reinforce the contrary proposition: woman is a human being.” Her status as a figure for satire is appropriate because “it will be evident to those to whom the satire is addressed that there is a discrepancy between what she is and what she is said to be according to traditional authorities” (Maclean 85-86).

fails. That is, we know that gender language [as we understand it, as definitive] fails precisely when we have exhausted *both* its possibilities.

(Denys Turner 55-56)⁴⁸

Generally speaking, then, hierarchically informed models tend to perpetuate the very hierarchical notions that they identify and disparage. Furthermore, they do so at the expense of various traditions and approaches such as Canticles' rhetoric that might, upon closer examination, support the stated goal of better self-knowledge and more considerate social interaction. As I have argued, the self-knowledge of tropology and the social teleology of anagogy are common and related concerns in the Renaissance that have yet to be considered in terms of the genres of exegesis or literary criticism.

In the tropological sense of Canticles, where the predominant speaking voice of the human soul is feminized in relation to the divine, the female gender and interpretive agency are shared by all the souls that make up the body of the Church. This point is significant: both *Ecclesia* and the soul are "sister-spouses" to, and co-agents with, the divine, just as companionship is cited in the *Book of Common Prayer* as one of the purposes of marriage: "for the mutual societie, helpe, and comfort, that the one ought to have of the other, both in prosperity and adversitie" (*BCP 1559*, 122). Institutional and individual bodies were seen as fundamentally linked by analogous functions: the Church and the human soul perform the same role in relation to Christ and share corresponding desires and voices. The implications of such private and public associations in terms of self-construction and speech will be examined in this and succeeding chapters, since "the personal story interacts with ... the ecclesiological" (Turner 38). Christian exegesis, far from being a "colonial power" that defines, limits, and reconstructs sexuality within marriage as threatening, offers a model for social and individual interaction that fosters mutual support and advantage beyond the defining limits of a postlapsarian world – just as they consciously use the terms of worldly conduct to describe the apocalyptic vision. The institutionally inscribed gender roles of husbands and wives emphasize the notion of conversation or dialogue as the basis of social

⁴⁸ As in Derrida's use of the term *khora*, Denys Turner advocates an idea of the divine as beyond the sense of binary paradox and therefore perpetually deferred; God is neither female nor male, subject nor object, but rather something completely "other" which we can apprehend only through paradoxical structures of analogy.

interaction, in which a conversation offers the possibility for “constitut[ing] an encounter of a special kind. It is not positional moves of tokens on a board that figure as the prime concern; it is utterances, very often ones designed to elicit other utterances or designed to be verbal responses to these elicitation” (Goffman, 71). Ultimately, the poetry examined in this study can be described as responses to texts that are themselves responses to scripture in a textual representation of concurrent “actual” conversations.

What do we do with silence, then – the absence of voice? Heather Dubrow has recently raised significant questions regarding the notion of gendered roles and agency through speech and through silence in Petrarchan discourses.⁴⁹ Essentially, she points out that, like discourse and counter-discourse, it is often very difficult to distinguish between “male” and “female” speech and even more difficult to assert that power or subordination are enacted through speech or silence. Indeed, if one person is speaking (or writing), then his or her listeners (or readers) are, technically, silenced by virtue of listening. It is relevant, following a discussion of matrimonial vows, to point out that the word “obedience” derives from the Latin *oboedire*, to listen, to be ready. Ready for what, though? Ready to speak, to respond. The politics of voice, then, are also the politics of exchange; we speak to be heard, and we listen in silence. Insofar as conversations may demonstrate the erotic play of exchange, rather than the politics of power (dominance and subordination), this study will focus on the eroticized responses of ready and attentive readers.

Genre and the Rhetoric of Ambiguity

As I’ve already argued, the Reformation’s reordering of exegetical priorities that places emphasis on tropology (present) as an enactment of anagogical (future) and allegorical (past) concerns has generic implications with regard to narrative and lyric – specifically, the generic categories of narrative and lyric are disrupted and rendered ambiguous by their mixture. As I will demonstrate in succeeding chapters, the rhetorical ambiguity of such generic mixtures serves to guide interpretation without determining it. The flexibility of such guidance bids readers to exercise their own rhetorical ingenuity, both constructing a narrative

⁴⁹ See Dubrow’s *Echoes of Desire: English Petrarchism and its Counterdiscourses* (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1995). Chapter Three will include a more extended discussion of Dubrow’s work on genre and gender.

of lyric moments and rendering the sequential moments of narrative as lyrically significant. In the Renaissance, rhetoric is far more than the art of persuasion; it is both the experience and teacher of “discretion and practical judgment in public life” (Rainolds, 95). John Rainolds’ 1570 lectures on Aristotle’s *Rhetoric* cite Vives on the pedagogical function of rhetoric:

the practice of rhetoric depends upon knowledge of the great arts, and upon practical judgment [sic] of public life ... From where will a person who intends to speak on many important subjects gather proofs if he knows nothing of philosophy – ignorant of history, customs of life, and received morals? And if he should somehow master these things, how will he examine reasons without the tools of plausibility and probability? ... How may our minds be calmed down or incited? ... This is the chief task of a great orator, and it cries out for discussion about the soul. Furthermore, that “decorum” which (as the saying goes) is “the main point of the art,” from where, pray tell, is it to be sought if not from experience of the things which obtain in life, intelligently and keenly observed and recorded?

(Rainolds 99)

Rainolds links discretion as a moral practice to rhetoric as a theory through the experience of the soul, thereby implying a tropological perspective: rhetoric both manifests and teaches the ability to discern and distinguish as a function of practical judgement.⁵⁰ Thus rhetorical analysis will involve a reader-response component, since the rhetorical function of Renaissance texts includes an inherent, though ambiguously determined, reader. Such rhetoric is inclusive, whether intentionally or not; regardless of court politics, doctrine, or ideology, the effect of engaging a reader with her own soul invites a far more flexible approach than has yet been granted to Renaissance readers.

In much the same way as gender and voice operate conversationally, literary texts converse with each other, more or less explicitly: emblematic formal structures set up a dialogue between *pictura* and *subscriptio*, which may be extended to include the reader; sonnet sequences echo and revolve around Petrarchan and Dantean themes; Crashaw steps to Herbert’s *Temple*, and Herbert’s *Temple* imitates the Book of Nature as well as sonnet sequences and emblematic formal structures. The influence of biblical poetics goes far

⁵⁰ Other works on rhetoric and poetry also emphasized the tropological perspective, such as George Puttenham’s *The Arte of English Poesie* (1589), Philip Sidney’s *The Defense of Poesy* (1580-3), and George Gascoigne’s “Certaine Notes of Instruction concerning the making of verse or ryme in English” (1575). See also Kintgen, chapter 5 “Method and Art in Reading” for further discussion.

beyond the narrow definition of poetics; indeed the hermeneutic of conversation is derived from exegetical principles. The history of biblical commentary is inseparable from the Bible itself, which would not include Canticles without the tradition of a metaphorical and spiritualized allegory. But lest we forget that the lion is still a lion, and thus a word that denotes a predator as well as figures a protector, Canticles reminds us that we have bodies and that they may be made “occasions of Good,” that they are not evil in themselves.⁵¹ Similarly, Renaissance notions of genre play with their own generic boundaries with remarkable flexibility, denoting form while at the same time figuring other forms.

Similarly, the rhetoric of Canticles does not correspond to any one kind of poetic form more than another, and not only because it requires translation. I have referred to it as a dialogue, because that is what it is, but in the Renaissance, it is also referred to variously as a ballad, an epithalamion, a canticle, a song, a “sonet” sequence, and perhaps most aptly, the poem of poems.⁵² It is both spiritually and carnally interpreted in verse paraphrases, sermons, pamphlets, conduct books on marriage, meditational exercises, prayer books, and love poetry. The plurality of structures and of structural imitations of Canticles turns notions of narrative into thematic sequences of reciprocal desire. The male and female lovers speak by turns, repeating each other’s instances of loss and finding, satisfaction and parting. The back-and-forth shifting between these two voices is playful and paradoxical: there is no resolution offered by any sense of narrative closure. There is no story “contained” here, despite the oft-cited imagery of the female body as “a garden inclosed ... a spring shut up, a fountain sealed,” which the male lover enters, leaves, and will enter again.⁵³ Perhaps because of this feminized figure of enclosure, the idea of narrative closure is associated with the expected object of erotic longing for tangible and eternal consummation. Indeed, the exegetical pairing of Canticles and Revelation throughout the medieval period seems to indicate a dialectical, or typological, structure for reading a wedding as a New

⁵¹ “I am glad if any thing (which is not evill in it selfe) may be made an occasion of *Good*” (From Wither’s *A Collection of Emblemes*, “The Occasion, Intention and use of the Foure Lotteries adjoynd to these foure Books of Emblems”).

⁵² See Appendix 4, which lists over fifty early modern exegetical works that refer to Canticles.

⁵³ *KJV*, Song 4:12; see also the concluding verses of chapter 8: “Thou that dwellest in the gardens, the companions hearken to thy voice: cause me to hear it. Make haste, my beloved, and be thou like to a

Testament completion of the courtship and betrothal of the lovers in the Old Testament. If Canticles offers no resolution, no ceremonial wedding or ritual feast, Revelation does. Revelation fulfils the betrothal of Canticles, not only by naming the Bride and thereby providing allegorically suggestive connections, but also by narrating an event of ceremonial significance that is thematically tied to the betrothal sequence of the lovers. The wedding and its marital imagery, usually associated with Canticles through typological traditions, belongs more properly to the apocalyptic prophecy of Revelation.⁵⁴ But even the apocalyptic union of the Bride and the Lamb, and the invitation to attend their wedding feast, is open to all who hear and all who thirst, just as the Sponsa opens herself to receive her lover. Canticles and Revelation revolve around the longing for resolution that is both offered and deferred: the two lovers present us with a relationship between two voices that sing to us and to each other without ever becoming a chorus. In this sense, narrative and lyric forms, like genders and voices, play off each other in the exchange that requires further, continual response. The lyricism of Canticles' dialogue is reflected in the exegetical narratives associated with it – so strongly, in fact, that many modern critics still refer to the imagery of Canticles as “matrimonial.”⁵⁵ The persistence of these associations seems to indicate that Canticles and its exegesis offer a unique dialogue between generic distinctions as well as between gender and voice.

As Dubrow has noted, “Lyric has traditionally been seen as an unmediated expression of the subjective and of subjectivity itself. It is frequently associated, too, with the absence of a specific time and place ... Many critics would agree that narrative, in contrast, is generally rooted in a specific time and place” (Dubrow 1995, 28). She notes, too, that these categorizations are not unproblematic:

The Renaissance fascination with genre is another, more straightforward motivation [for counter-discursive attacks within Petrarchan works]. Discussions of literary form in sixteenth-century England manifest a curious paradox: writers of the period are keenly conscious of generic issues, as Sidney's *Defense of Poesy*, together with many

roe or to a young hart upon the mountains of spices” (Song 8:13-14), where the male lover “dwells” in the “feminized” garden but seems to have left it for a time.

⁵⁴ The fulfilment of the “present day” in the matrimonial form is also somewhat deferred, if only because of the prophetic echo of Revelation; see Chapter Two, and discussion of Spenser's *Epithalamion*.

⁵⁵ See Schoenfeldt 257; see also Walby 69.

more minor texts, demonstrates, and yet by and large they do not participate in the type of lengthy, systematic debates about it that were provoked [elsewhere on the continent]. English writers do not neglect genre criticism, but they often incorporate it not in tracts devoted to that purpose but in texts in a rival genre; thus one reason for the appeal of formal verse satire is that it was a medium for critiquing texts in other literary forms. Diacritical desire is, besides so much else, an opportunity to write genre criticism, to define the sonnet by precept in the very course of defining it by example.

(Dubrow 1995, 73)

Though Dubrow's focus is trained on Petrarchism, her comments may be applied beyond secular love lyrics.⁵⁶ Indeed, the traditions of erotic exegesis exert a common influence in secular and religious genres, so that satire and parody between genres will necessarily involve many of the same rhetorical devices and strategies.

One of these rhetorical strategies is the often misunderstood use of ambiguity, in particular what modern critics often refer to as an anxious deferral or ambiguous closure. The notion of postponed or ambiguous closure will be treated specifically in subsequent chapters, but the purpose of ambiguity as a rhetorical device requires some clarification. I have made the point that exegesis works in a variety of ways, and that the method is as variable as the exegete in question. This multiplicity of approach has been compared to reader-response criticism, with some degree of correspondence. But such a diverse strategy necessitates, and is facilitated by, ambiguity; the more determined the text, the less variety in interpretive application. Eugene R. Kintgen's work on Tudor reading practices has established that such rhetorical ambiguity is in fact explicitly recognized by writers of stylistic works such as Philip Sidney, George Puttenham, and George Gascoigne, among others: "Writers must consider their readers, leaving them something to contemplate ... because [textual determination] reveals too much and leaves too little for the ingenuity of the reader" (Kintgen 152). The reader's delight is quite unambiguously linked to the level of rhetorical device and conceit in the instruction of the text:

For Tudor readers, there was pleasure to be had from the text, but it derived partly from their ability to appreciate language well deployed (i.e., in accordance with the

⁵⁶ Rosalie Colie has also written about the extraordinarily keen sense of genre in the Renaissance as well as the remarkable flexibility with which genres are employed by writers in the period. See Chapter Five for further consideration of Colie's *The Resources of Kind: Genre-Theory in the Renaissance* (Berkeley: U of California P, 1973).

dictates of rhetoric), partly from the analytical and comparative operations they had learned to perform on it, and partly from their firm conviction that reading would lead to the improvement of the individual and thus of the society.

(Kintgen 194)

The Tudor “pleasure of the text” is thus derived from the literal and allegorical rhetoric, the analytic impulse to decipher rhetorical purpose, and from the application of rhetorical models to self and society. The first two parts of pleasurable reading are textual or scriptural, as in Todorov’s model; the last two – community and self – correspond to the anagogical and tropological levels of exegesis, or the Book of Nature.

Kintgen’s argument is based on intertextual (conversational) and intratextual (typological) models; the former, he contends, was taught in the *ars praedicandi*, and the latter applies exclusively to biblical texts. Yet there is sufficient evidence even in his own study to indicate that the religious intratextual model was also used in secular reading practices.⁵⁷ Indeed, Kintgen’s analysis of the intertextual secular model does not prohibit a corresponding intratextual aspect: “Those reading for amendment of life would be less concerned with the means of expression and would stress arriving at proper (and multiple) applications of passages. The more utilitarian the reading, the less likely it was to involve comparison and conference with other texts” (Kintgen 185). The intertextual “comparison and conference” of secular methods would seem to be complemented, rather than contradicted, by an intratextual coherence – indeed, the rhetoric of paradox and its resulting ambiguity would direct a reader to consult and compare the various parts of its whole in its self-critical approach. Like the variations of exegetical method, “the impulse [in secular reading] is clear: everything is subject to analysis, and the specific categories used are less important than the analytic impulse” (Kintgen 147). Though Kintgen (like Bauschatz) seems to share the prevalent condescension regarding religious models, his own assertions reflect suggestively on the cohesiveness of secular and religious reading models.⁵⁸ Genre, like

⁵⁷ See Chapter Five, my discussion of Wither’s *Emblemes*, for more specific analysis of Kintgen’s theories of reading in the period.

⁵⁸ Annabel Patterson, too, has written recently on the deferral of authority as a “functional ambiguity” inherent in early modern texts, which, she argues, served to evade censorship and further intellectual freedom. She does not, however, consider the effect of such functional ambiguity in terms of reading practices, nor does she seem aware of the long tradition, in exegetical practices, of intentional

gender, is a system for distinguishing categories that are nevertheless rendered flexibly ambiguous. Like the four senses of scripture, too, the categories need not be exclusive; in fact, Renaissance literature seems to exemplify the dexterity of employing various kinds of voices.

∞

As I will continue to stress throughout this study, ideologies tend to be analogous systems; we need not be Renaissance Christians in order to apprehend a Renaissance Christian model, nor should this reading model be understood or applied rigidly. Each text has its own particular focus, but I contend that, at least, the traditional four senses are all present in each text. The application of this exegetical model will be demonstrated to reflect the principles of flexibility that characterize it, but my approach requires an awareness of all four senses and how they interact, subtly but fundamentally, with each other through the conversational play between rhetoric and interpretation. My critical focus is one that addresses the interaction between letter, allegory, anagogy, and tropology, all within the co-existing and co-operating sites of author, text, community, and reader. Specifically, the rhetoric of *Canticles* will engage the interaction between literal erotic expression, the eroticized allegory of the Church and Christ as figures for humanity and the divine, the governing structural concepts of apocalyptic consummation, and the romance between the reader and Christ through the soul's affiliation with the Church in the "present day." Since I am the exegete of Renaissance literature here, the "present day" applies as much to Renaissance readers as it does to me; the community of the Renaissance Church (in all her forms) and that of literary criticism (in all its forms) are functionally analogous; and the erotic yearning of lovers and readers finds a kind of consummation in a mutually constructive experience that accommodates diversity as a characteristic of such encounters.

Chapter Two will begin to address the complex relations among spiritual, social, and sensual sensibilities through *Canticles*' rhetoric in the Renaissance. Verse paraphrases of *Canticles* will demonstrate how the tradition implied in the matrimonial form is transmitted by secular writers such as George Wither, Francis Quarles, George Sandys, and Edmund

obscurity designed to engage the ingenuity of the discriminating reader and to discourage the unimaginatively literal reader. See Patterson's *Censorship and Interpretation*.

Spenser. Consideration will be given to a confluence of influences from classical models, biblical poetics, and exegetical hermeneutics in the structure of Edmund Spenser's *Amoretti* and *Epithalamion* (1595).

Chapter Three will continue to address secular love lyrics. Philip Sidney's *Astrophel and Stella* (1582) develops the mode of conversational play to its furthest extent in a worldly context, but stops short of any attempt to resolve the paradoxes of the world by both insisting on and deferring the possibility of consummation between the lovers. This insistence on deferral has the effect of demonstrating the indeterminacy of Canticles' rhetoric, where the lovers only promise. While Mary Wroth's *Pamphilia to Amphilanthus* (1621?) seems to contrast a classical model of disconnected subjectivity with a Christian kind of sublimation, I will show that the allegory of the soul as the bride of Christ is incorporated, contributing to structural, thematic, poetic, and rhetorical components of the sequence that emphasize a tropological rhetoric. Indeed, as one critic has argued, Wroth constructs herself as a self-written object of value; I will argue that Wroth constructs Pamphilia as a self-written object as well, not only representing an echo but exemplifying one.

In Chapter Four, examinations of Richard Crashaw's *Steps to the Temple* (1646) and George Herbert's *The Temple* (1633?) will offer some insight into the wide range of authority provided by Canticles' rhetoric. Herbert accentuates the role of the Church as the Bride who supplies a "body" for the soul's expression. Crashaw's intensity of imagery, too, focuses on the body as a means of relating spiritual identity – indeed, he has written several poems that are very nearly emblematic in their considered interaction with frontispieces and pictures – but his work is nominally a "Step" toward Herbert's work, and Crashaw's body is more tangibly inscribed and erotically charged than Herbert's architectural and communal body.

Chapter Five will offer a brief overview of the development of exegetical influence in late medieval and Reformation English Bibles, with consideration given to issues of translation, marginalia, and illustrations. I will then go on in Chapter Five to discuss George Wither's *A Collection of Emblems* (1635) and, in Chapter Six, Francis Quarles' *Emblems, Divine and Moral* (1635) as emblematic collections of diverse interpretive elements that reflect the formal variations of Reformation Bibles as well as Canticles' rhetoric. Both Wither and Quarles use the forms of the emblems to signify the body and soul. The juxtaposition of

picture/body and word/soul implies a multiple reading practice, just as the illustrations and marginal glossing of Reformation Bibles continued to guide sacred interpretation.

Furthermore, the multiplicity of forms in emblem books and Bibles will be seen as perpetuating a rhetorical ambiguity in that the variety of formal elements encourages a variety in interpretation, both textually and socially.

I will conclude with a brief reconsideration of exegesis as an alternative critical approach, both in the Renaissance and in current criticism. For instance, while this study has focused on poetic works, how applicable is it to theatrical practices, prose works, and ephemera? As well, I have focused on works from a largely Christian society on their own terms; but how applicable are those terms beyond Renaissance English literary culture? While such questions are not formally within the scope of this project, I will suggest some of the possibilities and problems that my methodology brings to light in Renaissance literary study.

Chapter Two

“The Metamorphoses of Love in Renaissance England” (some verse paraphrases of Canticles [1623, 1625, 1635], and Spenser’s *Amoretti* and *Epithalamion* [1595])

This chapter will offer a consideration of four poetic works that employ Canticles’ rhetoric with regard to human relationships. George Wither’s musical psalter, *Hymnes and Songs of the Church* (1623) and Francis Quarles’ *Sions Sonets* (1625) both engage an ecclesiastical structure by invoking the allegory of Canticles and applying it to individual social conduct. George Sandys’ “A Paraphrase upon the Songe of Solomon” (1635) and Edmund Spenser’s *Amoretti* and *Epithalamion* (1595), on the other hand, invoke the erotic structures of a human relationship in order to implicate the dynamics of social exchange. This is a fine distinction: the point is that Canticles’ rhetoric features the use of multiple voices and therefore multiple perspectives, a deliberate conflation of sacred and erotic themes, and a mix of generic discourses that are employed from a variety of rhetorical stances in Renaissance poetry. The common influence of Canticles in the “official” prayer books, the “unofficial” musical and verse paraphrases, and in Spenser’s secular poetry demonstrates a diversity of perspective that is still intelligibly related to the same set of exegetical sources. Ultimately, such diversity is not only tolerated but fostered by the singularly paradoxical rhetoric of Canticles – a rhetoric that simultaneously constructs past and future in the present tense.

Noam Flinker and Stanley Stewart have both examined secular paraphrases of Canticles in Renaissance England with a view to their influence on the love poetry of the period.¹ Flinker’s book concentrates on William Baldwin’s *The Canticles, or Balades of Salomon* (1549), and his reading of *The Balades* “is essentially a call to reread subsequent English literature in terms of the intertextual pressures that *Canticles* imposes on later Renaissance writers in England” (Flinker 65). While Flinker’s argument establishes crucial generic influences for the ancient traditions of Middle Eastern epithalamic works, his contextualization of the biblical poem jumps from ancient Middle Eastern works to those of Renaissance England with barely a glance at the intervening Christian medieval tradition. As

¹ See Noam Flinker’s *The Song of Songs in the English Renaissance: Kisses of their Mouths* (Rochester NY: D.S. Brewer, 2000) and Stanley Stewart’s *The Enclosed Garden: The Tradition and the Image in Seventeenth-Century Poetry* (Madison WI: U of Wisconsin P, 1966).

I outlined in my introductory chapter, the “later Renaissance writers” were heavily influenced by the English Reformation’s return to early Christian Church writings, which were in turn established with the help of anagogical exegesis of Canticles that connected it to the promise of Revelation. The notion of *Ecclesia* as betrothed but “not yet” married to Christ is a crucial element of ecclesiological development, and yet it is an overlooked conceptual similarity between early medieval and Reformation doctrinal approaches. In fact, the desire to stabilize the institution of the Church – be it medieval Catholic or sixteenth-century Church of England – makes it hardly surprising that a common metaphor is used in both situations, if only to emphasize a sense of legitimacy through the historical legacy. The distinction, however, is in the development and popularizing of tropological exegesis from the 12th century onward, which grew to provide an impetus for the Reformation of established Catholic doctrine. The early Church of England, then, adopts an anagogical pose in its doctrine in order to bolster its institutional authority (just as the early Roman church did), while maintaining a clearly tropological perspective in its practice (in order to distinguish itself from the Roman church).

Flinker’s reading of Canticles exegesis in Renaissance literature indicates a resurgence of critical interest in this topic. Nonetheless, his reading is hampered by a lack of awareness of the subtle connections and developments from the early church to the Renaissance, such as the growing emphasis on tropology. Like Bauschatz’ presumption of originality in Montaigne’s *Essais*, Flinker’s discussion gives the impression that Baldwin’s is a singular and pioneering work in its time:

In some of his poems, Baldwin treats the conflict between flesh and spirit so as to establish an apparent reading on a literal, even sexual level only to reinterpret these patterns in a manner that reinscribes the sexual as an aspect of the spiritual. ... [T]his pattern gets especially intense as Baldwin’s translation of the language of the Bible seems to get more and more explicitly erotic.

(Flinker 50)

Essentially, Baldwin is developing the principle of sacred and profane balance, which Flinker has identified as rabbinic in origin. That the two are related in rhetorical terms – sacred content expressed in profane style – is, in fact, a crucially emphasized paradox of the Christian exegetical rhetoric of Canticles. Based on conversations with Bernard of Clairvaux

around 1124, William of Saint Thierry wrote the *Brevis Commentatio*, which explains the western medieval reasoning for erotic expression in mystical exegesis:

The Bride speaks to the Bridegroom: *May he kiss me*, she exclaims, *with the kiss of his mouth*. But there is a language of angels and there is a human language. Human language is the way of speaking appropriate to human persons; and by means of it the holy Spirit reveals his mysteries to human beings in parables ... What is more, it was for this reason that God himself was made man for all human beings, so that they, who did not know how to think of God, could, through the man they did know ... raise up their rational power of understanding. ... Of all the kinds of fleshly love there are, there is none so attractive, none found more commonly desirable, than the union of Bride and Bridegroom; and so it is of the spiritual, of the [union of the] created spirit with the uncreated. In the one case the two become one flesh; in the other the two become one spirit.

(William of St. Thierry, *Brevis*, qtd in Turner 281)

Thus the two themes – sacred and profane – are combined in the analogy of the human form as text: body and soul are related by their mutual co-existence in us and, “what is more,” in Christ. First, carnal union is “desirable” and good, “and so it is” that spiritual union is also desirable and good; the body is the basis for spiritual allegory, and not the other way around. Indeed, the analogy between human marriages of gender differences, and spiritual marriages of metaphysical differences, inscribes the soul with erotic attributes as much as it explains the spiritual significance of physical terms. In the context of the highly eroticized language of Canticles’ rhetoric, then, it is scarcely unexpected that Baldwin’s translation is so “explicitly erotic”; neither is it the only one of its kind in the period to integrate spiritual yearning with erotic language. The rabbinic origin of this rhetorical style is emphasized in later Christian exegesis that depends on New Testament fulfilment of Old Testament promise.

Similarly, Stewart lists and briefly discusses almost twenty different examples of this genre,² Baldwin’s among them. Stewart argues that “Competition developed between the songs of the courtly lover and the lyrics of Solomon and David. ... Solomon and David, like Wyatt and Surrey, wrote songs of love, the paraphrase of which offered the English poet his best hope of routing bawdy court lyrics” (Stewart 3). But, like Flinker’s study, Stewart’s

² James Doelman’s dissertation, “Biblical Verse Paraphrase of the English Renaissance: A Study in Literary and Social Contexts,” considers exegesis as a separate genre in itself; Matter also refers to Canticles exegesis as “a genre of medieval Latin literature” (Matter 3). See Appendix 4.

otherwise comprehensive work does not deal extensively with the medieval precedent for this argument nor, more importantly, does he address the exegetical methodology that gives rise to secular and religious interaction, other than to note it briefly in passing, perhaps because he assumes that such interaction is competitive and therefore antagonistic to some extent.

For my purposes, four examples of secular poetic commentary will suffice to demonstrate the influences between secular and religious themes in this period. Two of them – George Wither’s “Song of Songs” from his *Hymnes and Songs of the Church* (1623) and Francis Quarles’ *Sion’s Sonets* (1625) – have been discussed by Stewart, and their concerns are mainly religious and based in scripture. The third, however, is rather more obscure; George Sandys’ “A Paraphrase upon the Songe of Solomon” was originally suppressed in 1635 and not published until 1641 because of its sensual intensity.³ Yet it too is clearly informed by religious concerns, making several references to divinity and to an apocalyptic perspective. These examples are relevant not only because they establish an exegetical continuity between medieval and Renaissance perspectives, but also because they demonstrate the overlapping concerns of church, soul, and body in their respective rhetorical emphases. Furthermore, these three examples confirm a coherent link to the treatment of Canticles exegesis in the

³ Following the poem in the manuscript is a short verse entitled “The Judgm^{nt} of Sidney Godolphin, on the former worke not printed”:

Not in that ardent course, as where he wooes,
The sacred Spouse, and her chast love persues
With brighter flames; And with a higher Muse:
This worke had bin proportion’d to our sight
Had you but knowne wth some allay to write,
And now preserv’d your authors strength and light:
But you soe Crush those odors, soe dispense
Those rich perfumes, you make yet too intense:
And such! Alas! As too much please our sense.
(British Library, MS Lansdowne 489, p. 127).

Sandys’ “Paraphrase” was later published, in 1641, without Godolphin’s “Judgement,” and with relatively few significant revisions. Stewart refers to the 1641 edition of Sandys’ “Paraphrase,” but does not seem to be aware of the original suppressed version of 1635. The manuscript is bound among some parliamentary papers; I found it by tracing a footnote from Graham Roebuck’s biographical entry on Godolphin (*Dictionary of Literary Biography, Second Series, Seventeenth-Century British Non-Dramatic Poets*, vol. 126, ed. M. Thomas Hester [Detroit: Brucoli Clark Layman, 1993]).

matrimonial form of *The Booke of Common Prayer* discussed in the previous chapter. The concluding discussion of Spenser's "wedding poems" will suggest that Spenser draws from exegetical hermeneutics and the matrimonial form as much as from biblical poetics themselves, just as his fellow Renaissance exegetes did.

Wither's poetic paraphrases of biblical works are scored for musical performance, thereby making his psalter an unauthorized addendum to the Prayer Book.⁴ Each of Wither's ten "Canticles" is prefaced by a prose gloss detailing the allegorical and mystical significations of Wither's paraphrases, and the collection of the "Song of Songs" itself has its own general preface. This general preface dramatizes the stylistic paradox of erotic expression:

Such is the mercy of God, that he taketh aduantage euen of our naturall affections, to beget in our soules an apprehension of his loue, and the mysteries that tend to our true happinesse; so, fitting his diuine expressions to the seuerall inclinations of men, that meanes might be prouided to winne some of all. ... [I]n this *Song of Salomon* (wherein is mystically expressed the mutuall affection betwixt *Christ* and his *Church*, with the chiefe passages thereof throughout all Ages from *Abel* to the last Iudgement; at which time their blessed *marriage* shall be fully consummated) he dost most mouingly impart vnto vs, the rauishing contentments of the *diuine Loue*; by comparing it to that delight which is conceaued in the strongest, the commonest, the most pleasing, the most naturall, and the most commendable of our affections. And doubtlesse; it powerfully preuaileth to the enflaming of their spirituall *Loue*, who seeke rightly to understand and apply the mysteries and expressions herein contained.

(Wither 9)

Wither here summarizes the medieval argument for erotic expression as a viable means toward the spiritual apprehension of divine love, a rhetoric that invites the ingenuity of the discerning reader at the same time as it subverts the attempts of "carnal" readings to misuse mystical significations. Wither uses language that is highly reminiscent of William of St. Thierry's words in the twelfth century (see quotation above, page 50). As well, Wither indicates his use of the traditional allegory of Christ and Church, the anagogical "last Iudgement," and the tropological application of "the mysteries and expressions herein

⁴ For detail on the publishing history of psalters not officially sanctioned by the Church, see James Doelman's article, "George Wither, the Stationers Company and the English Psalter," *Studies in Philology* 90 (Winter 1993): 74-82.

contained” as valid authoritative contexts for his interpretation, despite some modern critical interpretations that argue that Protestant exegesis dismisses medieval terms and methods.

Eugene Kintgen, for instance, has argued that there is a “Protestant desire to avoid the kind of fourfold allegory typical of the Roman Catholic Church” (Kintgen 125).⁵ Kintgen cites William Perkins’ *The Arte of Prophecyng* (1592) on the subject: “The Church of rome maketh 4. Senses of Scriptures, the literall, allegoricall, tropologicall and anagogicall. ... *There is one onely sense and the same is the literall.* An allegorie is only a certaine manner of uttering the same sense. The Anagoge and Tropologie are waies, whereby the sense may be applied.”⁶ While Kintgen goes on to argue that this constitutes a “rejection” of fourfold exegesis, he misses the complexity of the very quotation he cites. The paradox of exegesis, and particularly Reformation exegesis, is that while there may only be “one sense,” there are multiple “waies” to interpret that sense (“whereby the sense may be applied”). Stewart’s brief explication of Reformation Canticles exegesis suggests a more accurate reading than Kintgen’s:

For many writers of the Renaissance it would be ... true to say that these levels were thought to merge into each other. ... [T]he typical Renaissance semantic argument ... holds that meaning, especially sacred meaning, exists independent of linguistic forms. Allegory transcends history ... precisely in the way in which it apprehends this “mysticall” meaning beyond form. Allegory does not stop with the simple relation of the truth of history; it fully renders the glory of the future and of all time. ... [T]he “mysticall” dimension is divided into levels, the allegorical, tropological, and anagogical. ... [and] the commentator could hold the various levels to be, simultaneously, both different and the same.

(Stewart 18-19)

Thus the four senses of medieval exegesis “merge” into one sense, called most commonly the literal; this one sense has multiple designs and applications that go far beyond what modern thought would consider “literal.” Far from “rejecting the fourfold sense of Scripture” (Kintgen 126), Renaissance exegetes like Wither (as well as Quarles, Sandys, and Spenser) merely distinguish between the literal sense that includes interpretive senses and the various mystical “waies” that are distinguished in any given reading. Stewart quotes John Weemes’ *Exercitations Divine* (1634) on the four-level model to clarify this point: “These are

⁵ Eugene R. Kintgen, *Reading in Tudor England* (Pittsburgh PA: U of Pittsburgh P, 1996).

⁶ Perkins 737, qtd in Kintgen 125.

not properly divers senses, but divers applications of one sense to our instruction, faith, and manners” (qtd. in Stewart 19). Thus allegory “instructs” us of the history of the Church, including the typological correspondences between Old and New Testaments; anagogy directs the development of “faith” in the revelation of apocalyptic thinking; and tropology applies historical instruction and apocalyptic faith to present-day human conduct and “manners.”⁷

This is not to say that the difference between Roman and reformed Churches is only semantic. In fact, Wither’s first of ten Canticles paraphrasing the scriptural Canticles addresses the typological and apocalyptic nature of the three Churches (Jewish, Roman, and reformed). His tripartite allegory for the Bride in the gloss first refers to the Jewish Church (“the whole *Catholike Church*, from the time of Abel, till his [Christ’s] first coming” [Wither 9]). The “Church of the Gentiles” enters next, “intreating an undespysed union with the Synagogue of the Jewes, both confessing and excusing her blemishes” (Wither 9). Then, “the whole *Catholike Church* is againe introduced, as desiring to be fed and guided by her beloued *Shepherd* ... her Petition is most graciously answered, and she is directed to follow the steps of the holy *Patriarkes* and *Prophets*” (Wither 9). Thus the confirmation of scriptural authority is the divine answer to the yearning of the English Sponsa/Church for guidance.⁸ Exegetical models are thus uncorrupted by the “Church of the Gentiles,” since their origin corresponds to sacred scripture. Furthermore, the Church is characterized by the Sponsa’s desire for her beloved, and by the corresponding “pleasure he will take in our loue” (Wither 9). But like the several applications of the literal sense, the allegory of (English) Church as Sponsa may instruct us on the typological history of Jewish and Roman churches before

⁷ George Scheper also argues that the “literal sense” of the Reformation is the anchor for the various spiritual senses: “types remain as a significant instance of what the Catholics called the spiritual sense but what the Reformers insisted on calling the full literal sense, a purely semantic distinction” (552). See George L. Scheper’s “Reformation Attitudes toward Allegory and the Song of Songs,” *PMLA* 89 (1974): 551-562. Like Stewart, however, Scheper does not identify the distinctly tropological focus of Reformation exegesis, a distinction that is more than semantic.

⁸ As I discussed in the previous chapter, Christian exegesis was developed in accordance with scripture and the early Greek fathers of the Church (through Origen’s typological reading of Proverbs and St. Paul).

culminating typologically in the re-introduced, re-formed “whole *Catholike Church*.” Thus a single allegory may itself be characterized and applied severally.⁹

Wither’s second Canticle sets forth “the mysterie of Christ his Incarnation,” which answers the typological promise of the Old Testament: “His birth and repose betweene the Two Testaments” is likened to the repose of the lover between the breasts of his beloved, justifying the erotic manner of the Canticle’s expression. The metaphor of the Testaments as breasts is a traditional exegetical comparison, as the scriptures feed and nurture the faithful with beauty and spiritual “food.”¹⁰ The Old and New Testaments enclose Christ, who in turn “interchangeably” encloses the Church in his loving embrace: “Christ and his *Church* doe (as two Louers) interchangeably preferre one another before all others, by way of comparison” (Wither 10). Wither’s interpretation of the Incarnation typologically extends the divine/human analogy from Church to individual member: Christ embraces the human form so that divinity may be embraced by our (albeit limited) apprehension.¹¹ The ensuing Canticles detail the nature of typology in tropological terms, the Incarnation as a “betrothal” between divine and human forms, the alliance of Fortune to individual mind-body correspondence,¹² the Passion, the Resurrection and Ascension, the relation between Church and individual, the nature of “mutuall enterchange” of affections, and a summarizing conclusion of “what we should minde concerning this life, and what desire we should haue

⁹ The tropological application of allegory derives most notably from the influence of Hugh of St. Victor. See George Scheper: “it is not allegorical interpretation but the interpretation of allegories with which Hugh is concerned” (554). Wither’s initial allegory follows Hugh’s method by interpreting the Church as a plural body characterized by the tropological first person plural: “[the] pleasure he will take in *our* love.”

¹⁰ See Gregory the Great (Turner 226); Alcuin of York (Turner 259-260); and Denys the Carthusian (Turner 426). Cf. also my discussion of Crashaw’s “Blessed be the paps which Thou hast sucked” in Chapter 4, and Quarles’ *Sion’s Sonets* and his annotations:

These curious Apples of thy snowy *breasts,
Wherein a Paradise of pleasure rests;
They breathe suche life into the rauisht ^cEye,
That the inflam’d beholder, cannot ^ddie
* The old and new Testaments
c The san[c]tified and zealous reader
d The second Death (*Sion’s Sonets*, XII.5.3-6).

¹¹ Cf. William of St Thierry: “it was for this reason [i.e. that human language may be used by God to speak in parables for our better understanding] that God himself was made man” (qtd in Turner, 281).

¹² See my discussion of Wither’s Emblem 3.5 (the Gryphon) in Chapter Five.

to the comforts of the world to come” (Wither 16). Taken together, Wither’s concerns balance the association between Church and doctrine on one hand, and individual interpretation and conduct on the other. Wither’s explicit instruction to his reader is to sing his verses; as I noted earlier, musical scores accompany the poetic paraphrases while the gloss often indicates an appropriate liturgical/social occasion for the Canticle. The musical form echoes the ecclesiastical framework of Wither’s interests, since the liturgy and singing are usually communal events. Rhetorically, the framework of the liturgy reflects the enfolding nature of the Church as the literal body that contains the spiritual significance of her members.¹³

Alternatively, Francis Quarles’ *Sion’s Sonets* (1625) emphasizes the general community as readers rather than as church-goers. In a prefatory note, Quarles writes “To the Readers”:

Readers, now you haue them. May the end of my paines be the beginning of your pleasures. . . . It is the *Song of Songs*, I here present you with: The Author, King SOLOMON, the wisest of Kings; The matter mysticall, the diuine of subiects; The speakers, CHRIST, the *Bridegroome*; the CHVRCH, the *Bride*; The end, to invite you all to the wedding.

(Quarles 122)

The ascription of authorship to Solomon addresses the literal (or historical) level of signification; the two speakers – Christ and the Church as the Bridegroom and Bride respectively – identify the formal and allegorical echo of Canticles’ dialogue. The reader’s “pleasure” in the “diuine of subiects” implies the rhetorical paradox of sensual expression; the “wedding” alludes to the consummation of Revelation;¹⁴ and the invitation applies these mystical matters to the reader. Thus sensual and spiritual are associated through the personal

¹³ Such a balanced association between anagogical and tropological concerns is typical of Wither’s approach, as his *A Collection of Emblemes* (1635) also indicates (again, see Chapter Five).

¹⁴ The apocalypse is often referred to as a wedding or consummation; Quarles says elsewhere in his paraphrase,

. . . till the joyes of our espoused hearts
Be made*compleat, the World ne’remore shall part [u]s
* at the [general] Resurrection (*Sion’s Sonets* IX.6.7-8).

This is based on several passages from the Book of Revelation and was a common theme in exegetical traditions. For instance, *KJV*, Rev. 19:7 and 9: “Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready . . . Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb.” Cf. Also Rev. 22:17: “And the Spirit and the Bride say, Come.”

invitation to participate in the apocalypse (thereby linking anagogical framework to tropological application through the allegorical identification of Church and Bride). The readers – “you” – are implicated, through direct address, as the rhetorical subjects from the beginning of Quarles’ text: “now you haue them.” Quarles’ paraphrase is therefore written in a more contemplative mode than Wither’s liturgically oriented *Hymes*; Quarles’ inclusion of marginal exegesis, like that of the Genevan Bibles, emphasizes the silent response of solitary reading while yet reminding his readers that they are members of a community nonetheless.¹⁵

A few words must be said to explain the style and structure of *Sion’s Sonets*. As Stewart has noted, the poems are not really sonnets in the technical or formal sense of the genre. In fact, Quarles’ “sonets” vary from 8 to 96 lines, making

content rather than form the defining characteristic of the sonnet ... [T]hese “sonets” in no case adhere to established norms. Yet the title is clearly meant to invite comparison. These are the “sonets” of “Sion,” and their subject [matter] is the accepted theme of sonnet sequences, namely, erotic love. Perhaps even this divergence from the fourteen-line, iambic pentameter form in both its Petrarchan and English variations fits the purpose of Quarles’ work. The term “sonet” refers, not to the formal arrangement of the poems, but to their thematic material. Their arrangement, moreover, is a mirror image of the subject matter of secular sonnets. ... [T]he effect of the title is rhetorical. ... it reminds the reader of the ambiguity involved in the contemplation of love.

(Stewart 8-9)

If the theme of erotic love defines the content of *Sion’s Sonets*, and the “subject” is the reader, this serves to further the rhetorical analogy between the beloved of the lover’s address and the reader. Moreover, as S.K. Heninger, Jr., has noted, the words “song” and “sonnet” “were actually synonymous” in the Renaissance: “Their regular pairing resulted from some

¹⁵ Anthony Low distinguishes between meditative, contemplative, and liturgical modes: “The meditative mode imitates in whole or in part the process of formal meditation; ... it usually starts with a scene or image ... and then moves through an examination of that scene in the faculties of the soul to arrive at colloquy with God. ... The contemplative mode is a record of or wish for direct mystical experience of God rather than a mimesis of experience; it invites the reader, to whom it speaks directly, to seek or share understanding of something intensely private, thus tending ... to proceed ... associatively. The liturgical mode, formed on public devotions, tends toward song rather than speech; such poetry invites the reader to become a performer of the verse singing directly to God as do hymns, and by so doing to celebrate or pass through a ritual action” (Low’s “Metaphysical Poets and Devotional Poets,” in *George Herbert and the Seventeenth-Century Religious Poets*, ed. Mario A. Di Cesare [New York: Norton, 1978], 229; qtd. in Davis, 107). See Chapter 4 for further discussion.

persistent urge in English to link two alliterative synonyms, apparently for reinforcement. ... It was George Gascoigne who in 1575 first attempted to limit the meaning of ‘sonnet’ in English to a poem of fourteen lines.”¹⁶ The flexibility of sonnet definition in Quarles’ *Sions Sonets* substantiates the generic commerce between forms. This formal incorporation, moreover, reflects the thematic conjunction of carnal and spiritual *eros*, so that Quarles’ “sonets” are not only “a mirror image of the subject matter of secular sonnets” but of the scriptural canticles as well.

Indeed, the principle of “mutuall enterchange” is everywhere emphasized in Quarles’ poetic dialogue between Bride and Bridegroom. At one point, the Bridegroom declares,

Looke in the Crystall mirrours of mine eyes,
And view thy beautie; there thy beautie lyes;
See there, th’vnmated glorie of thy Face,
Well mixt with Spirit, and diuine grace;
The eyes of Doues, are not so faire, as ‘thine:
O, how those eyes, inflame these eyes of mine!

^t The Holy Prophets

(Quarles, IIII.3-8, p. 124)¹⁷

The divine eyes reflect human beauty; since the divine is infused with humanity, humanity is then infused with divinity, and human eyes then inspire divine desire. Even the syntax echoes the exchange of desire: “how *those* eyes inflame *these* eyes of mine” (italics mine). At another point, the bride speaks “in the person of the BRIDEGROOME,” reporting what she thinks she hears her “true Love” say (VIII.1.1) – even the voice may be ambiguously interchangeable.¹⁸

¹⁶ Heninger, 91, fn. 4; see also Gascoigne’s “Certayne Notes of Instruction Concerning the Making of Verse or Ryme in English,” 1:55. Note also that epithalamions are defined as wedding songs, so that Spenser also pairs the two forms. See also further discussion in Chapter Three with regard to Sidney’s and Wroth’s insertions of songs into their sonnet sequences. Despite Gascoigne’s efforts to limit the definition of sonnets to poems of 14 lines, it seems that this definition remains flexible at least until 1635.

¹⁷ Quarles imitates the format of the marginal exegesis in the Geneva Bible by using superscript letters to indicate the correspondence between marginal comments and the text that they comment on. See Chapter 5 for further discussion of the paratextual apparatuses of Reformation Bibles.

¹⁸ Quarles’ use of the terms “Bride” and “Bridegroom,” as opposed to, for instance, Sandys’ use of “Sponsa” and “Sponsus,” seems to emphasize the immanence of the apocalyptic wedding trope. As I indicated in the previous chapter, Sponsa and Sponsus are “betrothed ones,” though the adumbrated wedding trope is often emphasized by translating the terms as Quarles does.

Similarly, the marginal notations that gloss the traditional allegory (as Quarles interprets it) serve to emphasize the interaction between Solomon's authorship of the Song, divine authorship of scripture, Quarles' authorship of the *Sonets*, and the reader's authorship of self through reading herself as a figure for the poem's desiring and desired object. One of the Bridegroom's paeans to the beloved makes this last point of interaction clear:

O sacred Simetrie! O rare Connexion
 Of many perfects, to make one perfection!
 O heauenly Musicke, where all parts doe meete,
 In one sweet straine, to make one perfect sweete!
 O glorious Members, whose each seuerall feature
 Diuine, compose so, so diuine a Creature!
Faire soule, as all thy parts vnited, bee
 Entire, so summ'd are all my ioyes in thee.

 Thy breath, whose Dialect is most Diuine,
 Incends quicke flames, where Ember'd sparkes but shine;
 It strikes the Pleader's Reth'ricke with derision,
 And makes the dullest soule a Rethoritian.

(Quarles XX.16.1-8, 19.5-8)

Like the one "literall sense" of scripture, the Church is a "sacred Simetrie" of multiple parts; furthermore, the union of these parts constitutes a creature described as "diuine." Even the "dullest soule" who is part of the Church is a "Rethoritian" if she understands her membership. Though dull, each part is "perfect" and "divine" through association; it is this divinely desired association, and the mutually shared desire of each soul, that confer divine perfection and sacred symmetry on the human institution. The reader, then, must constitute herself in association with the Church allegory that includes the sense of community, with the apocalyptic perspective (anagogy), and particularly with Christ through the person or voice of the Bride (tropology) – just as the lovers construct each other in and through their mutual desire for each other. Wither's concerns focus on the instruction of Church doctrine and "right" or proper interpretation through the personal application of social discourse: membership in the Church is the means to self-construction, which is reflected in the form of his paraphrases as a Psalter. Quarles, on the other hand, makes self-transformation a reason for membership in the Church: the wedding is inscribed in the institution, but the invitation is addressed to the readers, since the wedding cannot take place without the Bride,

any more than the Church can exist without the souls that constitute her membership. *Sions Sonets* emphasize the intimacy of erotic love both formally (in the generic theme of sonnets) and rhetorically (in the direct address to his readers as readers).

Sandys exhibits a third strategy of Canticles' rhetoric, one that does not seem to fit into any one of Low's three modal categories (meditative, contemplative, and liturgical). Insofar as Sandys writes a formal dialogue between "Sponsa" and "Sponsus" that is organized as a series of "Cantia," it may be considered somewhat liturgical. But Sandys' poetic paraphrase is hardly a hymn; he offers no marginalia or gloss, and there are few direct references to Canticles' spiritual allegory. While his poem does indicate an awareness of the apocalyptic wedding trope, his emphasis is decidedly sensual and the paraphrase remarkably free from the biblical source. It reads very much like the "courtly love" lyrics of the period, except that it is in the form of a dialogue (thus it is neither meditative, since the "scene" and manner of address shift according to the speaker, nor contemplative, since it does not directly address the reader). The awareness of the apocalyptic wedding is structured by the typological interaction between Canticles and Revelation:

[Sponsa] Behold the Royall Solomon
High mounted, on his fathers throne,
Crowned, wth the Crowne his Mother plac't
On his smooth Browes; with gemms inchac't
At that Solemnized Nuptiall feast
When Joy his Ravish't Soule possest.

(Cant. 4, 123v)¹⁹

Later, in Cantius 6, the Sponsus responds; after comparing his beloved's beauty to the "Divine Jerusalem" (125), he says:

Me thought, my Ravish't Soule, was raised
Unto a Chariott, swift as winds,
Drawne by a People's willing minds.
[Chorus] Returne, faire Sulamite, Returne,
To us who for thy absence mourne

(Cant. 6, 125v)²⁰

¹⁹ This passage does not appear in the published version.

²⁰ The published version reads "My people's" rather than "a People's."

These two sections raise a number of points. First, the Crown of Revelation is placed on the “Royall Solomon”’s brow by his mother, who (in mariological exegesis) may be identified with Mary as she personifies and represents the Church. This is echoed by the Sponsus in the second quotation, in which his “Soule” is raised into a chariot “Drawne by a People’s willing minds.” Thus the Church is identified as co-agent of the apocalyptic “Divine Jerusalem.” Secondly, the echo of the Chorus, which elsewhere in the poem is reserved for the Sponsa, here supports the Sponsus, calling the beloved to return from her absence. I would suggest that Sandys’ Sponsa represents the regenerate human soul, while the Church is identified allegorically with the Mother figure who nourishes the lovers’ alliance. This version of the allegory incorporates the mariological and ecclesiastical traditions of the early Church, without disrupting the more direct focus of the dialogue between Christ and soul: Church and soul are presented as separate characters and voices rather than through a single symbolic figure; thus the intimacy between two lovers is constructed without the interference of the “whole *Catholike Church*,” who is nevertheless present as a supporting and protective figure.

This emphasis on intimacy serves further to accentuate the sensual concerns of Sandys’ poem. Without marginalia or gloss, the reader must attend to the verse without explicit interpretive guidance.²¹ The overt sensuality is therefore all the more subversive – at least potentially, to one not inclined to read “aright.” Moreover, given the Origenic tradition of body/text/literal sense correspondence, the form of Sandys’ verse is rhetorically reflected in the sensual emphasis of its content. Like “courtly love” lyrics, Sandys’ “Paraphrase” constructs the body through the use of poetic voices. The difference, however, is that these voices are doubled and mutually engaged in construction with only occasional contributions

²¹ The prevalence of marginalia in biblical works of the period (such as Quarles’ *Sions Sonets*) and its absence in Sandys’ verse paraphrase and the KJV is a complicated issue. As Kaske points out, “Although one watchword of the Reformation was *sola Scriptura* (Scripture alone), this could be taken not radically, to mean that the Bible alone is its own interpreter to the eye of faith, but conservatively, to mean that no doctrine or practice may stand unless based on Scripture. Even the Geneva Bible ... contains glosses, which doubled in number in the Tomson revision of 1576” (Kaske 14). Biblical translations and their tendencies in the English Reformation will be treated more comprehensively in Chapter Five. My point here is to indicate that the absence of marginalia or distinct exegesis would have been noted, and may have contributed to the initial suppression of Sandys’ paraphrase.

from the chorus.²² Interestingly, too, and contrary to current evaluations of “courtly love” poetry, it is the female beloved who articulates sensual desire and explicitly characterizes that desire as mutual. In *Cantius 2*, she says:

He brought me to his Magazines,
 Replenish't wth refreshinge wines,
 And over me, a tender maid,
 The Ensignes of his Love display'd

 I am my Loves, and he is myne,
 So mutually our Soules Combine.

(*Cantius 2*, 122 and 122v)

While the imagery here presents the male “over” the female, she herself identifies the embrace as mutual. Frye has noted that “In sexual imagery the relation of male to female is expressed in two ways, depending on whether the two bodies or only the sexual organs themselves are taken as the basis. In one the male is above and the female below, in the other the male is at the center and the female surrounds him” (Frye, *GC* 156). Indeed, Sandys’ *Sponsa* employs both ways of expressing sexual imagery:

Although I sleepe, my Passions wake
 For he who knoc't, thus sadly sayed,
 My Love! My Sister! ...
 O! Let me enter! ...
 Can I, assent to thy request,
 Disroab'd and newly layd to rest?
 Shall I new cloath my selfe againe?
 And feet so lately washed, distaine?
 But when I had his hand discern'd,
 Drawne from the latch, my Bowels yearn'd;
 I rose! Noe longer could deferre,
 T^ounlocke the Doore ...

(*Cantius 5*, 124)

This section emphasizes the acquiescence of the female in such a way as to make explicit the mutual nature of the sexual imagery: “I rose .../ T^ounlocke the Doore.” Without her

²² It could also be argued that the Chorus incorporates a communal and supportive commentative function within the text; however, though the involvement of the chorus as public witnesses for the lovers’ relationship suggests the manner of ideal social involvement, its function does not interpret much, as reading is meant to do.

corresponding desire, the Sponsus remains locked out, and his body over, or inside, hers would be oppressive rather than desirable – the “opening” of Cantius 5 implies that the “over me” of Cantius 2 is desirable and not coerced. The allegory of Christ and soul reveals why it must be her voice that speaks of desire in sexual terms: her acquiescence, and not Christ’s request, is what crowns him and draws his chariot with “a People’s willing minds” – in fact, our acquiescence embodies him and brings him forth, manifesting a Second Coming in each willing mind. The apocalyptic perspective is the willing, acquiescing mind that gives body and form to spirit, not just the fiery trumpet and brimstone at some day hence. In order to animate the “willing mind” of the reader, Sandys’ rhetoric requires attentive and ingenious interpretation, if only because there is no distinct guiding commentary to indicate the exegetical elements of his poem as such. Literally, then, Sandys’ lack of marginalia, where marginal exegesis should or might be, accentuates the site of tropology. The “turn” of personal application is inscribed in reading practice, which requires a reader to enact her interpretation in the world beyond the text.

Edmund Spenser’s “wedding poems” are an even more tropological application of Canticles’ rhetoric. Like Sandys’ “Paraphrase,” Spenser’s wedding poems also evoke Canticles and its typological realization in Revelation, but Spenser invokes an exegetical pairing of scriptural texts in order to foreground the interpretative work he performs (rather than the works he is interpreting, as Sandys’ formal arrangement of his poem does). The *Amoretti* sequence, like Canticles, is a lyric echo of a narrative in that the sonnets proceed according to thematic associations rather than events of a plot, while the *Epithalamion*, like Revelation, offers the ceremonial event of a marriage that signals closure in narrative terms. Despite the closing ceremonies of wedding, feast, and consummation, the *Epithalamion* sustains a sense of indeterminacy: the final tornata returns the reader’s attention to the status of the poem as a reading event when the poet addresses the poem itself, thereby extending Spenser’s text beyond what we might ordinarily expect from narrative “closure” of an ordinary kind – the lovers marry and then live on, leaving the reader with the sense of an apocalyptic “end” yet to come. Spenser’s wedding poems reflect the rhetorical bonds of form, matter, and style that yoked Canticles and Revelation together from the 4th century

onward. Both the sonnet sequence and the epithalamion that follows it are also tied together by rhetorical paradoxes, by the matter of present love, itself a constructed paradox of *eros* and *caritas*, and by a stylistic evocation of play between classical and Christian paradigms of erotic fulfilment. These rhetorical bonds of form, matter, and style are what characterize the vague term “courtly love,” which I will discuss in more detail with specific reference to Spenser in this chapter (as well as the next, which will deal with Sidney and Wroth).

Wither’s, Quarles’, and Sandys’ reworkings of Canticles illustrate that the traditions of exegesis in the Renaissance are consistent with those of the medieval period. Spenser’s poems take Canticles’ rhetoric in a radically tropological way, not only by including the typological fulfilment of Revelation in his own wedding feast, but also in the sense that he describes (however figuratively) his own betrothal and wedding. Such poetic figuring of biblical and exegetical motifs is what constitutes a tropological application: the divine/human allegory is enacted by Spenser and his bride Elizabeth.²³ Spenser’s *Amoretti* and *Epithalamion* (1595), published together and often referred to as Spenser’s wedding poems, yoke a sonnet sequence to an epithalamion with some Anacreontic verses in between. This odd conjunction of forms has drawn perennial comment from a variety of critics, but just as often, little analysis of the strangeness of such a formal conjunction – though perhaps the common approach, which seems to focus analysis on one or the other of the wedding poems, accounts for the dearth of investigative comment.²⁴ Heather Dubrow, one of the

²³ In 1934, Israel Baroway referred to Spenser’s “*Canticum canticorum* translated” (24), and established the link between the wedding poems and Canticles – for instance, he points out that both these epithalamions take place in summer despite the generic tradition to set epithalamions in winter. See Baroway, “The Imagery of Spenser and the Song of Songs” (*Journal of English and Germanic Philology* 33 [1934]: 23-45).

²⁴ The poems are most often considered separately; see William Clarence Johnson’s *Spenser’s Amoretti: Analogies of Love* (Lewisburg: Buckness UP, 1990); Reed Way Dasenbrock’s “The Petrarchan Context of Spenser’s *Amoretti*” *PMLA: Publications of the Modern Language Association of America* 100.1, (January 1985) 38-50; Lisa M. Klein’s “Let us love, dear love, lyke as we ought”: Protestant Marriage and the Revision of Petrarchan Loving in Spenser’s *Amoretti*” *Spenser Studies* X, (1992) 109-138; Theresa M. Krier’s “Generations of Blazons: Psychoanalysis and the Song of Songs in the *Amoretti*” *Texas Studies of Literature and Language* 40.3, (Fall 1998) 293-327; Noam Flinker’s chapter “Canticles, Baldwin and Spenser’s *Amoretti*” in *The Song of Songs in English Renaissance Literature: Kisses of their Mouths* (Cambridge: D.S. Brewer, 2000), 66-87; David Chinitz’ “The poem as sacrament: Spenser’s *Epithalamion* and the golden section” *Journal of Medieval and Renaissance Studies* 21, (Fall 1991) 251-268; Elizabeth Mazzola’s “Marrying Medusa: Spenser’s *Epithalamion* and Renaissance Reconstructions of Female Privacy” *Genre: Forms of Discourse and Culture* 25.1, (Spring 1992), 193-210.

notable exceptions to this trend, suggests that

the generic shifts in the sequences in question also imply a significant shift in vision. ... Spenser ... [is] looking at the problems explored in [his] sequence from a different perspective, which is represented by the change to a different genre. Behind that shift lies the implication that the values inherent in and symbolized by the sonnet, notably the emphasis on obsessive and undying passion, virtually preclude closure: to end the sequence and the emotions it details, one must, literally and metaphorically, move to a different genre.

(Dubrow 1987, 221)

Dubrow concentrates on the generic tensions of the wedding poems, and navigates clearly through the formal signals of Spenser's work, but she does not consider the wealth of biblical references that inform Spenser's structural motifs and thus the generic shifting that she identifies. The lovers in the *Amoretti* and the *Epithalamion* are constructed within Petrarchan or "courtly love" conventions, but Spenser's use of a parallel Christian model serves to highlight another, distinct set of values for the poems that is more than merely "Protestant." The significance of classical allusions – especially to Narcissus and Echo – in such a Christian context engenders a sense of ambiguous openness to both the sonnet sequence and to the epithalamion. The settings of Lent, Easter Day, and the feast of St. Barnabas provide both a social and an eschatological perspective that recontextualizes the classical myth as it is found in Ovid.²⁵ M. Thomas Hester suggests that classical and biblical allusions are typologically related in Spenser's works: "all views, all motifs, all poses, ... are 'types' of love ... [that] shadow the Christian antitype ... [T]hrough a typological examination of different 'kinds' of love ... the lyricist learns both 'naturally' and 'supernaturally' what love is (an image of and participation in divine love)" (Hester 187).²⁶ This kind of typological reading, however, is only allegorical in the exegetical sense; beyond the typological allegory of classical and biblical relations, I am suggesting that the allegory

²⁵ Lent is indicated in *Amoretti* sonnet XX: "This holy season fit to fast and pray"; *Easter* "occurs" in sonnet LXVIII: "Most glorious Lord of lyfe that on this day,/ Didst make thy triumph over death and sin"; and, in *Epithalamion* 15, the "holy" day that Spenser asks be his alone is near midsummer, when "the sunne is in his chiefest hight,/ With Barnaby the bright" (June 11).

²⁶ See also Flinker: "the *Amoretti* as a series of 'little loves' cite a great many different approaches to love and then understand even the pagan sources in terms of Christianity. ... [T]hese materials become a way of presenting love in terms of ultimate spirituality" (Flinker 69). As we shall see, however, this Christian narrative is not the "ultimate" in terms of resolution as Hester, Flinker, and others describe it.

figures a special kind of fulfillment in human terms, in the tropological enactment of Spenser's courtship, betrothal, and wedding.

I've chosen to focus on Ovid's Narcissus and Echo as a functional symbol of the Petrarchan tradition because it seems to me that Spenser uses these particular Ovidian allusions as a mimetic and deliberate contrast with the Christian metamorphoses of the Canticles lovers in order to elaborate and distinguish each genre or kind of relationship. The Petrarchan form of Spenser's *Amoretti* is thereby itself metamorphosed in the Christian terms of a reciprocal relationship between two lovers rather than through the classical failures of either one, just as the Christian theme is threatened by the anxieties of tragic metamorphoses. Spenser's lover and beloved are shaped coherently and in relation to each other: the beloved's cruelty is a reflection of the lover's physical desire (lust and cruelty being complementary faults) and his love for her is echoed in her beauty (affect and beauty being complementary virtues). Their faults are thus shared obstacles that they may overcome for mutual benefit, asserting the "inward self" as a "better mirror" (*Am.* 45) than the illusory reflections provided by narcissistic or unreciprocated love. Spenser's *Amoretti* and *Epithalamion* thus recast the Petrarchan tradition into the mutually reflecting rhetoric of Canticles and Revelation. Spenser interweaves the rhetorics of secular and sacred, private and public, through the conjunction of his verses – just as the body and soul of each of the lovers is integrated and then interwoven with the other's in the "endless monument" (*Ep.* 24) of the text. The figures of Narcissus and Echo, moreover, serve to remind the reader of typical errors that can unbalance a mimetic model by not acknowledging it as such, and by trying to force a unified vision onto a situation that involves at least two perspectives.²⁷

This very problem of assuming that a unified vision is desirable is what has plagued the criticism of Spenser's *Amoretti* and *Epithalamion*, both individually and as a composite.

²⁷ Earlier work on Canticles and Spenser, like Flinker's discussion of the *Amoretti*, focuses on imagery and sometimes the theme of erotic love as the "ultimate spirituality" (Flinker 69) in an attempt to establish specific influences, such as Baldwin's *The Canticles, or Balades of Solomon*. While this is valuable work, it fails to address the larger structural and generic elements between the various wedding poems, which reflect a variety of exegetical themes and structures drawn from Canticles and Revelation. In other words, there is a complex web of textual commentary involved that is too easily overlooked by trying to trace individual influences, including those of the Bible itself. See Krier, Stewart, and Baroway.

Charlotte Thompson's excellent article is a notable example of a composite approach; but her purpose is qualified by a tendency to synthesize the poems in monolithic stylistic terms rather than to comprehend them as textual conversations responding to each other with distinct "voices" of their own. Thompson envisions Spenser's wedding poems along the lines of Dante's *Commedia* – that is, teleologically leading upward in a seamless ascent toward divine union:

From such a perspective God looks down upon the busy world of men; and the reader, thus elevated by a proportional change in scale, begins to enter into the perspective of eternity. ... [Spenser] translates his little world and its personae into a timeless paradise. The reader may also end in the *Epithalamion*, content with these insights to have risen to things spiritual and eternal from his temporal starting point. ... The reader's ascent has moved progressively from local, historical time to that universal history which embraces aeons.

(Thompson 332-333)

While this is certainly a valid argument to make, Thompson's ascending or progressive interpretation does not account for the equally carnal emphasis throughout the poems; nor does she deal with Spenser's paradoxically formal/personal rhetoric which resists such notions of resounding "unification." David Chinitz, on the other hand, describes the *Epithalamion* (but not the *Amoretti*) as

embod[ying] *two* rhetorical stances: one (that of the invocation and envoy) in which the poet recognizes and admits the literarity of his effort, including its lack of affective power, and a second, framed by the other, in which he dares to assert the affective power of his words. Of course, any such play is held to be qualified beforehand by the framing device. ... [T]he trouble with seeing *Epithalamion's* opening and closing movements as frank admissions of the rhetoricity of the main body of the poem is that they are equally rhetorical.

(Chinitz 266)

Chinitz, then, privileges the "rhetorical" duality of voice over the typological and allegorical narrative elements noted by Thompson. These two arguments – Thompson's ascending model and Chinitz' doubled rhetorical model – are equally valid, yet each fails to account for several crucial points. For instance, Chinitz neglects to explain the somewhat different "double" rhetoric in the *Amoretti*, which precedes and to some extent establishes the doubled mood of the *Epithalamion*. In the *Amoretti*, poet-lover and beloved lady exchange voices and roles, as do the lovers in *Canticles*. That this doubled rhetoric is preserved, though

somewhat differently, in the poet's voice in the *Epithalamion* that follows, indicates that there is a far more complicated rhetorical interplay and development than Chinitz seems to realize. Chinitz seems also to use the term "rhetoric" as synonymous with "poetic voice," though, as I've argued in the introductory chapter, Renaissance rhetoric is primarily a way of perceiving, which is then expressed in the use of poetic voice; in this sense, his argument suggests that the "double" voice/rhetoric conveys a flexible or doubled perspective, though Chinitz never addresses this as an issue of his analysis. Thompson, on the other hand, privileges the ascending or progressive rhetoric of the poems at the expense of the "descending," affective, and equally rhetorical motif of *eros*; the lovers, after all, do end up in bed together. For all intents and purposes, both Chinitz and Thompson ignore the figure of the Lady almost entirely in the elision of the speaking voice with the situation of his relationship to another.

My point is that just as the marriage "elevates" the carnal embrace, it also functions as an earthly institution in a corresponding descending motif. Ascent and descent mimic the two rhetorical stances of formal structure and affective involvement, and the various exchanges between gender roles. Duality of voice in the *Amoretti* is not entirely written over by Spenser's husbandly role in the *Epithalamion*, where there is an exchange of vows. The oratorical Bridegroom is personally implicated because the Bride says "I do." His ceremonial formality interacts with the affective import of the occasion for him as well as for her, a relationship that is established in the preceding sonnets. Thus the lyrical nature of the *Amoretti* carries over into the *Epithalamion*; despite an ascending mode of narrative closure that reflects typological relations between the two poems, there is also a descending mode of lyrical openness that draws from the sense of the apocalyptic perspective. These two modes contribute to the intensity of tropological focus in Spenser's wedding day: the future is therein adumbrated, specifically for these two lovers. Flinker points out, too, that

The sequence [*Amoretti*] is ... more lyrical than narrative as it resists closure ... [The beloved] regularly avoids the [poet's] pursuit without ever rejecting him. This pattern is parallel to the way in which the lovers in *Canticles* rarely seem to unite. They avoid each other more often than they enact their desires for union and in so doing maintain a highly charged atmosphere of desire.

(Flinker 66)

The *Epithalamion* continues this lyrical emphasis on moments that resist closure, emphasizing the “highly charged atmosphere of desire” despite (or perhaps because of) the implicit consummation. After the *Amoretti*, the union of the lovers sustains erotic engagement because the reader takes it on; *we* want to know what happens after dark, and after the final tornata.

Recent criticism has re-evaluated the nature of Petrarchan sonnet sequences; rather than assuming that they are concerned only with “the substance and reality of love” (Okerlund 46), they are now being seen also as constructions of subjectivity. Reed Way Dasenbrock refines the broad theme of subjectivity with regard to “courtly love” poetry: “The love situations Petrarchan poets describe and the attitudes their poems express are characterized by instability and discontinuity” (Dasenbrock 38). This critical revision goes some way toward resolving the perennial problem of defining “the substance and reality of love,” since love is not the only subject anymore – the subject is the subject, and the “individual” lover is often represented as internally divided, alienated from the world and yet seeking sensual consummation, as are Narcissus and Echo.²⁸ In light of the resonance of Narcissus and Echo in Petrarchan characterization, this difference in emphasis is revealing: Narcissus and Echo are utterly failed subjects who cannot even establish or maintain physical integrity, let alone any notion of “psychological” subjectivity. Spenser’s *Amoretti*, along with, and partly because of, the *Epithalamion* that follows, complicates the development of “individual” subjectivity by doubling it, just as Ovid does the myth of Narcissus and Echo – though with an entirely different effect. In Spenser’s wedding poems, both lover and beloved are acknowledged individually; both man and woman seek inward integrity as well as cohesion with regard to each other. Poet and lady are constructed through their negotiation of a mutual, socially contextualized contract. The Narcissistic echoes of the Petrarchan form are thus recontextualized as a painful, but necessary, framework for love: the integrity of self is mediated, not only as a goal in itself, but also in order to integrate the beloved other.

²⁸ Note the Latin etymology of “individual” – from *individuus*, undivided – in which there is a sense of the inextricable involvement of both body and soul, no matter how conflicted this involvement may be.

The notion of subjectivity is still somewhat paradoxical, since integration with an other is logically contradictory to strict integrity of self.²⁹ Yet paradox, too, falls within the *ethos* of courtly love, which, Theodore Silverstein argues, is based on the paradoxical tension between carnality and spirit (Silverstein 82). Silverstein offers neo-Platonism as the source of this paradox, because of “its dualism of body and soul”:

The yearning attempt of the soul to escape carnality and rise to a state of rest in its supernatural origin results in an outlook, a process, and a psychology which seem to offer a basis for what ... lies at the heart of courtly love: that it begins in natural desire, that the beloved is superior to the lover, that it rises beyond carnality to something higher and better, that its desire, constantly self-examining and self-renewed, takes on a characteristic intensity and zeal.

(Silverstein 82)

Courtly love’s “intensity and zeal” are thus based on the integrity of bodies and souls – both within the singular self and beyond the strict confines of self. The classical model of Narcissus and Echo is thus a failed one in which bodies physically waste away and souls endlessly repeat their muteness because each lacks an appropriate kind of inward integration; the absence of self-examination results in an absence of self-renewal. Yet the model of erotic desire itself is not necessarily compromised since it depends on the particular terms of the paradox – that is, the lovers themselves. The Canticles lovers, alluded to throughout the *Amoretti* and *Epithalamion*, demonstrate the feasibility of desire; the contrast between them and Narcissus and Echo could not be more clear. The lovers of Canticles speak to each other and are heard; they perform a dialogue that represents the ideal toward which Spenser and Elizabeth may move, away from the illusory self-sufficiencies of Ovid’s failed lovers. This “higher and better” ideal is not just an ascending motif, however, as Thompson and Silverstein have characterized it. It also moves forward in temporal terms, much like reading does: the lovers learn to accommodate first their own desires, and then each other, over the accumulated events of textual and calendrical time.

The classical and Christian paradigms therefore maintain an oscillating balance of

²⁹ Recall Adorno’s concepts of subject and object as “mutually mediated – the object by the subject, and even more, in different ways the subject by the object” (Adorno, qtd in Newman 49). Subjectivity depends on the conception of the object; I would argue that the object, however self-sufficient, is meaningless without the subject’s conception of it.

tensions throughout the wedding poems. The doubling of rhetorical voices and genres is reflected aptly in the Ovidian references, most notably in the allusions to Narcissus and Echo. It is worth considering the myths briefly before returning to their echoes in the wedding poems. Ovid introduces the metamorphoses of Narcissus (into a flower) and Echo (into an insubstantial repetitive sound) after Tiresias' hermaphroditic developments. Tiresias' doubled gender unfolds into his prophecy regarding the doubled tragedy of Narcissus and Echo. The perspective thus offered links the "author" to his/her story: the blinded Tiresias sees the distinctions of gender quite clearly, having experienced both, and Arthur Golding's 1567 translation characterizes Narcissus and Echo according to their respective genders. Narcissus, in his own reflection, is consumed by self-regard and an inability to see beyond his own body, while Echo fades in her projection of love onto another. Visual introspection and auditory projection are linked as gendered manifestations of a similar problem in each figure's story.³⁰ Narcissus is blinded by the paradox of his wasting condition, just as Echo deafens him with her muteness:

He knowes not what it was he sawe. And yet the foolish elfe
 Doth burne in ardent love thereof. The verie selfsame thing
 That doth bewitch and blinde his eyes, encreaseth all his sting.
 Thou fondling thou, why doest thou raught the fickle image so?
 The thing thou seekest is not there. And if aside thou go,
 The thing thou lovest straight is gone. It is none other matter
 That thou doest see, than of thy selfe the shadow in the water.
 The thing is nothing of it selfe: with thee it doth abide,
 With thee it would departe if thou withdrew thy selfe aside.

...

It is my selfe I well perceyve, it is mine Image sure,
 That in this sort deluding me, this furie doth procure.
 I am inamored of my selfe, I doe both set on fire,
 And am the same that swelteth too, through impotent desire.
 What shall I doe? be woode or woo? whome shall I woo therefore?
 The thing I seeke is in my selfe, my plentie makes me poore.
 I would to God I for a while might from my bodie part.
 This wish is straunge to heare, a Lover wrapped all in a smart

³⁰ The tragic Ovidian lovers seem to parody the matrimonial form, where the wife is characterized by her eloquence and husbands by their commitment to regard/see her as Christ does the Church, loving her "as their own bodies." Cf. Milton's *Paradise Lost*, and the resonances of the Narcissus/Echo myth in Eve's aural seduction by the serpent following her visual self-seduction when gazing at her own reflection in the water.

To wish away the thing the which he loveth as his heart.

(Golding's trans. of Ovid, III, ll. 540-548, 582-590)³¹

Narcissus fails, like Sidney's Astrophel, to make the distinction between substance and illusion, and between self and other. Vision and knowledge are conflated, despite Narcissus' own acknowledgement of the error: "I am inamored of my selfe ... through impotent desire." His desire to part from his body in order to satisfy it is a paradoxical desire because it can find no resolution between the desire of his soul and the "object" of his own body.³² Neither is his desire any less carnal for this wish: his desire is one that confuses love with tangible possession. Ovid's Narcissus could be a poster boy for the English Petrarchan tradition of the sonnet sequences, a tradition that resounds with tortured youths pining for false embraces, admiring the "fluent water" of unsatisfied longing, dying, "as it were," in the mortality of the body again and again (Sandys' trans., 160).

Echo's situation, too, is fraught with falsely projected desire:

This Echo was a body then and not an onely voyce.

Yet of hir speech she had that time no more than now the choyce,

That is to say, of many wordes the latter to repeate

(Golding's trans. of Ovid, III, ll. 447-449)

Thus she may, and does, choose to desire Narcissus, yet

... nature would not suffer hir nor give hir leave to ginne.

...

As readie with attentive eare she harkens for some sounde,

³¹ See also George Sandys' somewhat more moralizing translation of the *Metamorphoses* (1632) for comparison: "[Narcissus is] a youth; that is, the soule of a rash and ignorant man; beholds not his own face, nor considers of his proper essence or virtue, but pursues his shadow in the fountaine, and strives to imbrace it; that is, admireth bodily beauty, fraile and like the fluent water; which is no other then the shadow of the soule: for the minde doth not truly affect the body, but its own similitude in bodily forme. Such *Narcissus*, who ignorantly affecting one thing, pursues another; nor can ever satisfie his longings. ... [T]he soule, so alienated from it selfe, and doting on the body, is tortured with miserable perturbations; and dyes, as it were, infected with that poyson: so that now it rather appeareth a mortall body then an immortall soule" (Ovid, Sandys' translation [1632], Book III, p.160).

³² The Renaissance conception of the soul as seated in the mind is complemented by the heart (as the regulator of the blood, and thus the animal spirits or passions) being the seat of the body and thus of carnal impulses. At the same time, while the two functions of imagination (the soul) and perception (the bodily senses) are both dependant on the same vehicle, i.e., the body. See Thomas Vicary, *Anatomie of Mans Body*, 1577 and Thomas Wright, *The Passions of the Minde*, 1601.

Whereto she might replie hir wordes, from which she is not bounde.
 (Golding's trans. of Ovid, III, ll. 469, 471-472).

Echo's inability to "begin" is figuratively linked to Narcissus' distaste for her, which Golding presents as the cause for her shame and thus her physical wasting. Like a parody of a Prayer Book wife, she speaks without conversing. Both Narcissus and Echo, as ineffective lovers, literally leave their bodies behind because they waste their senses in fruitless sensual pursuits; but since this is a tragedy of love, it seems implicit at least that for love to succeed, the bodies of both the lovers must remain engaged in the project. Interestingly, too, both Narcissus and Echo reflect key elements of the Petrarchan lover's voice: both fixate on the love object, both are ineffective pursuers, and neither can "survive" his or her own ineffectiveness. This theme is tragic because it inverts the ideal love relationship of mutual support and affection which is offered in the matrimonial form of the *Booke of Common Prayer*, as well as because the speech attempts of Narcissus and Echo cannot elicit coherent responses.

Such a tragic reflection of the marital model of exchange offers us an alternative way to read the Narcissus model in the *Amoretti*. Like a self-indulgent habit, the classical model of unfulfilled and unresponsive desire is meant to be overcome. In this sense, the temporal setting of Lent informs the poetic love tokens, and calls for closer examination. Lent is a season of abstinence and self-deprivation, during which Christians are encouraged to give up something in a symbolic emulation of Christ's imminent sacrifice at Easter. This practice of *imitatio Christi* reminds us that there is an analogy between the incarnated Christ and the average human being: both have mortal bodies and immortal souls. The eschatological perspective of the Redemption of Man is designed to result in an awareness of the causal connection between self-sacrifice and self-integrity: we are defined not only by our actions, but also by our ability to understand, and thus modify them – in effect, to be self-responsive or responsible. Indeed, the *Amoretti* lover encourages this seasonal *imitatio* in his lady in sonnet 9, when, after dispensing with conventional comparisons for her eyes, he writes: "Then to the Maker selfe they likest be,/ Whose light doth lighten all that here we see" (*Am.* IX. 13-14). However, the lover has more difficulty applying this principle to himself. Like Narcissus, he lacks self-responsiveness; the self-indulgence of narcissistic habits of mind is

significantly repeated – like an echo – in sonnets 35 and 83, with the singular difference of “seeing” for “having” in line 6:

My hungry eyes through greedy covetize,
 Still to behold the object of their paine:
 With no contentment can themselves suffize,
 But having pine and having not complaine.
 And **having/seeing** it they gaze on it the more:
 In their amazement lyke Narcissus vaine
 Whose eyes him starv'd: so plenty makes us poore.
 Yet are mine eyes so filled with the store
 Of that fair sight, that nothing else they brooke,
 But lothe the things which they did like before,
 And can no more endure on them to looke.
 All this worlds glory seemeth vayne to me,
 And all their showes but shadowes saving she.

(*Am.* 35/83)

Like Narcissus, the lover is captivated by the visual “object of [his] paine” and confuses vision with possession: “so plenty makes us poore,” as in Golding’s translation of the Narcissus myth (ll. 587). But the visual object is, significantly, not a mirrored reflection of himself. Instead, the *Amoretti* lover’s object is the beloved; it is the physical body of his lady, and not his own reflection, that captivates him. In this sense, the evocation of Narcissus is an analogy for the “seeing-possession” that he craves, but his vision is clearly “lyke Narcissus vaine” – not identical to it, instead seeing beyond himself like the Echo he formally makes in sonnet 83. The word “having” in sonnet 35 suggests that he is failing to make a fundamental distinction, very much like Narcissus or Echo. The difference between the classical and the *Amoretti* lovers, however, is in their ability to learn to respond to each other. Indeed, in sonnet 83, “having” is replaced, more properly, with “seeing.” The vanity of “this worlds glory” is in the possession of it; but there is no vanity in simply seeing the beloved in a worldly context, especially when it distinguishes her difference. “Having” implies that he may possess her like a worldly thing; “seeing,” however, implies that she is an exception, contrasted more strongly because he cannot, and no longer wishes, to “have” her.

In both sonnets, the Lady is an exception from superficial mimesis, the “seeming” vanity of “this worlds glory,” which is emphasized in the second version. But what constitutes her exceptional nature? I would suggest that her essential “otherness,” and hence

her self-assured subjectivity, make it impossible for her to be even an ironic narcissistic “object.” In sonnet 45, the lover writes,

Leave lady in your glasse of cristall clene,
 Your goodly selfe for evermore to vew:
 And in my selfe, my inward selfe I meane,
 Most lively lyke behold your semblant trew.
 ...
 ... if your selfe in me ye playne will see,
 Remove the cause by which your faire beames darkened be.

(*Am.* 45, 1-4, 13-14)

It would “seem” that he is inviting her to be a narcissistic subject, offering himself as nothing more than a reflective surface. But in recognizing his own potential to reflect inwardly, he recognizes also what Echo does not – that inwardness is doubled; the lady’s “vew” is granted significance, as is her ability to see plainly (as Narcissus cannot). In such doubled inwardness, narcissism no longer applies. Sonnet 58, “By her that is most assured of her selfe,” makes specific her poetic voice, and paradoxically renders this very “self-assurance” as an isolating, alienating, and essentially flawed condition: “he that standeth on the hyghest stayre/ Fals lowest: for on earth nought hath endurance” (*Am.* 58, 11-12). Feminine self-assurance, though it insists on the presence of inward “subjectivity,” is also redefined as pride, and rendered at least as self-indulgent as masculine aggression in pursuit. This feminine vice is fostered by the “enclosed garden” imagery of Canticles; but the *hortus conclusus* is desirable as a virtue only if it may be entered. Finally, Sonnet 78 offers a resolution to the complaint of the Narcissus sonnet (35), invoking the wandering soul of Canticles who seeks her lover, and concluding with the couplet: “Ceasse then myne eyes, to seek her selfe to see,/ And let my thoughts behold her selfe in mee” (*Am.* 78, 13-14). The lover, in ceasing to yearn for a possession of her in bodily terms, directs his own gaze inward, with the interesting effect of doubling the subjectivity as well as the mirror image. Furthermore, erotic longing is returned to its proper context; he still desires to behold her outward form, but this desire is recontextualized by an inward perspective that complements and fosters the “external” view of her. Similarly, the notion of outward enclosure is rendered protective rather than self-limiting in her corresponding physical internalization of him on the wedding night in the *Epithalamion* that follows.

When the Narcissus sonnet is repeated in sonnet 83, the only textual difference (other than context) indicates that the lover no longer mistakes “seeing” for “having.” He is now aware of the distinction between substance and illusion, and this awareness distinguishes him from Narcissus. Furthermore, with the preceding development of a doubled subjectivity in the sequence, the second time this sonnet appears it echoes somewhat differently. The lover’s eyes are still hungry, but the awareness of both his own reflective capacity and her inward presence suggests far more clearly the distinction between her physical body and the “shadowes” of “this worlds glory”: she is substantial, because her substance is both physical (unlike poor Echo’s) and spiritual (unlike the lustful Narcissus). The lover is then quite willing to starve his body and blind his eyes in order to fill his mind with such brightness (see sonnet 88) – but not wastefully, like Narcissus. Instead, because he has managed to coordinate his own erotic desire in an appropriate configuration of body and soul, he can then relate beyond himself and find sustenance in the relation. The imminent physical separation at the end of *Amoretti* is then just that – physical, a matter of geographical location – just as the starving and blinding is only metaphorical now that the spiritual brightness is concrete and sustainable.

In poetic terms, moreover, the distinction between literal and figurative speech is paradoxically elided at the same time that it is established; interior and exterior space are defined by their physical reality, yet surpassed by a metaphysical connection. The resolution of complaint at the end of sonnet 78 is combined with a particularly interesting foreshadowing of physical separation:

Lackynge my love I go from place to place,
 Lyke a young fawne that late hath lost the hynd:
 And seeke each where, where last I sawe her face,
 Whose ymage yet I carry fresh in mynd.

(*Am.* 78, 1-4)

What is notable here is the echo of the Song of Songs, 3.1-4, where the beloved seeks her lover in the streets of the City only to find him, and part from him again. The biblical lyric also concludes with a physical separation: “O my welbeloved, flee away, and be like unto the roe, or to the yong heart upon the mountaines of spices” (Song 8.14, Geneva trans.). The lovers may still hearken to each other’s voices despite separation, because the beloved other

has been seen inwardly – the two are integrated, in a way that subordinates physical separation to metaphysical relation. In one sense, this kind of subordination would seem to reinforce the Lenten context, specifically by placing *eros* below *caritas* in an hierarchical scheme of love. However, the evocation of Canticles complicates any notion of rigid hierarchical categories. The emphasis on metaphysical relation does not dismiss the intensity of anguish in physical parting. Indeed, John F. Benton has argued that courtly love is essentially an ironic conceit, relying on the ambiguities between *eros* and *caritas* as a relief from the “natural tendency ... to think in very rigid categories” (Benton 31). The echoes of Canticles in the *Amoretti* serve to recall the very real pleasures of the body – pleasures that are enhanced, rather than dismissed, by an equally real spiritual consubstantiality. That these pleasures are deferred in the *Amoretti* may be attributed to the Lenten theme; but deferral does not necessarily signify that carnality itself is unimportant, nor that desire is destined to be perpetually unfulfilled.

How, then, do we make sense of the Anacreontic verses at the end of the *Amoretti* proper? How do they function in the Lenten and Easter context? I would argue that they function as just such an ironic device as Benton refers to as characteristic of courtly love, reminding the reader of the suffering of classical themes uninformed by a Christian exegesis. Francis Quarles’ *Emblems, Divine and Moral* uses a similar device in Book II, emblem 8, where Venus and Cupid are pictured in a parody of the pieta model.³³ The emblem’s *subscriptio* elaborates classical and Christian disjunction through a dialogue between Venus and Christ, also called the Divine Cupid. In the *Amoretti*, the “instability and discontinuity” of the Petrarchan convention is served by such a parodic treatment; what is significant is that the discontinuity is constructed by Spenser’s introduction of Christian *ethos* and temporal setting, and by the radically doubled subjectivity of a sonnet sequence whose title is not the names of the two lovers. Rather than making the lovers discontinuous, Spenser leaves them only

³³ See Appendix 6, fig. 33, and discussion in Chapter Six. Hester has referred to the Anacreontic verses as belonging to an “epigrammatic emblem genre,” but he neither elaborates nor gives specific references (Hester 185). Thompson argues that “The ‘anacreontics’ represent [an] enigmatical place in part by representing the hours of night and the state of sleep and dreams. ... Formally, the ‘anacreontics’ shift observably toward the childlike as a fitting preliminary for entering the forthcoming paradise of the *Epithalamion*” (Thompson 331, 332). While both critics suggest interesting avenues for further investigation, that is all they do.

temporarily separated, momentarily desolate. The love tokens – the sonnets themselves – are the material connection of promise between the lovers; the *amoretti* signify ambiguous ownership rather than singular consciousness. The point here is that the title of the *Amoretti* marks a refocusing of the usual practice of foregrounding individual and distinct characterization, however representative such characterization may be, at the same time that the characterization of subjectivity is being explored – for instance, even the Elizabeth sonnet names three distinct Elizabeths, as opposed to the singularity of characterization in Shakespeare’s *Venus and Adonis*, Sidney’s *Astrophel and Stella*, or Wroth’s *Pamphilia to Amphilanthus*.³⁴ Venus and her peevish Cupid, like Narcissus and Echo, are not so fortunate: they have no epithalamions sung for them.³⁵

The Anacreontic verses, then, establish a “resolution” of sorts that identifies classical models of love and leaves them behind as a previous stage of development. Rather than materially owning each other, the *Amoretti* lovers possess only the signs or promises of love that characterize their private relationship. The continuity between the sonnets and the epithalamic song is not made through classical models, but rather a Christian model – that of the Bride, who is figured as Elizabeth in the private context of the *Amoretti* and as the Church community in which the lovers are wed in the *Epithalamion*. The emblazoned Bride in sonnet XV is partially echoed in stanza 10 of the *Epithalamion*, which is also a partial echo of Canticles’ blazon of the female beloved:

Beholde, thou art faire my love: beholde, thou art faire, thine eies are like the doues among thy lockes, thine heere is like the flocke of goates, which loke downe from the mountaine of Gilead.

Thy teethe are like a flocke of shepe in good ordre, which go up from the washing: which euerie one bring out twinnes, and none is baten among them.

Thy lippes are like a threde of skarlet & thy talke is comelic: thy temples are within thy lockes as a piece of a pomegranate.

³⁴ See Chapter Three for further discussion of Sidney’s and Wroth’s sonnet sequences.

³⁵ It is worth noting that Golding’s translation of the *Metamorphoses* concludes the tale of Narcissus and Echo with a dirge:

The water Nymphes, his sisters, wept and wayled for him sore

And on his bodie strowde their hair clipt off and shorne therefore.

The Wood nymphes also did lament. And Echo did rebound

To every sorrowfull noyse of theirs with like lamenting sound (III, ll. 635-638).

In generic terms, the kinds of songs associated with classical and Christian models would not likely be missed by Renaissance readers.

Thy necke is as the towre of Dauid buylt for the defense: a thousand shields hang therein, and all the targates of the strong men.

Thy two breastes are as two yong roes that are twinnes, feding among the lilies.

(Song 4:1-5 from Geneva translation; see also 6:5-7)

The *Amoretti* blazon is almost exclusively above the neck: eyes, lips, teeth, forehead, hair, and hands “suggest beauty ... in symbols of transcendent value” (Baroway 35) – that is, precious jewels. Despite the carnal desires expressed in the sonnet sequence, the *Amoretti* blazon is notably chaste when compared to that of the *Epithalamion*, a poem that we might expect to be more concerned with the metaphysical connection between the newly married couple. Stanza 10 of the *Epithalamion* begins with an echo of sonnet XV – eyes like sapphires and an ivory forehead – but then boldly proceeds to cheeks and lips like apples and cherries, “charming men to byte,” and continues below the neck not to the hands but to the breast, paps, and neck. The breast is like cream, continuing the sensual food metaphors; the paps are like lilies, echoing the flower blazon of *Amoretti* sonnet LXIV as well as Canticles’ twin roes feeding among lilies; and the neck is like a marble tower, just like Canticles’ tower of David. The architectural motif of the biblical blazon involves the Church as an embodiment of the Bride also.³⁶ Again, the Narcissus/Echo motif is recontextualized by Christian use: the echoes of the *Epithalamion* record that “all the woods shal answer and theyr eccho ring,” but this is no Ovidian wood nymph pining. This echo is that of the community of the Church, each soul figured as a “virgin” companion to the Bride of the poet.

Dubrow argues that “Spenser plays both the secular and the spiritual elements of his *Amoretti* against the urbane and amoral vision of his Anacreontics. ... [I]n the ‘Epithalamion’ he suggests that marriage and its genre offer a partial resolution of the problems of the *Amoretti* and the short lyrics that follow it. Yet in resolving it also replicates, in so doing providing two different perspectives on its own genre” (Dubrow 1995, 81). These different perspectives on the epithalamic genre are not only spiritual vs. amoral, secular vs. urbane; they are also classical and Christian. In the *Metamorphoses*, only Echo echoes Narcissus, and he repulses her; in the Anacreontics, Venus shushes the fretful Cupid. Spenser’s echo of the Canticles Bride rebounds, despite the ceremonial silence that falls in stanza 17, when the bride and bridegroom repair to the “brydall boures” (l. 299). The silence envelops the lovers

in a protected and welcome privacy, in the enclosed space required for intimacy. Spenser reminds us of the need for protection in stanza 19, of the “hidden feares,” “misconceived dout[s],” “deluding dreames” and “dreadful sights,” “sad affrights,” “housefyres,” “lightnings,” “the Pouke,” and “other evill sprights” (l. 336-342). The darkness silences the resounding echoes of the day, but in doing so, recalls the anxieties of the physical body – as well as the generic tensions of the *Amoretti* and the Anacreontic verses. The replication of generic tensions in stanzas 17 to 20 “translate[s] the laments about loss and sexual threat in the *Amoretti* into a different key ... at once introduc[ing] and contain[ing] the possibility of danger, ensuring that the contrast between Spenser’s epithalamion and his sonnets, though real, is by no means complete or unchallenged” (Dubrow 1995, 79). The Narcissus or classical model of terminal love is necessarily tragic, because the conclusion will always be the death of either love or the lovers themselves. The recasting of love into the Christian comedy requires an apocalyptic wedding, and thus an indeterminate “conclusion”; if lovers are successfully joined, they must remain so eternally, beyond the limits of textual, poetic, or physical forms. Thus the exchange of the *amoretti* as love tokens is “resolved” by removing the physical distance at the end of the *Amoretti* and physically reflecting spiritual consummation on the wedding night. And yet this resolution remains complicated by the narrative requirements of “what happens next?” because the apocalypse has yet to “occur.”

The “potential space” for “exchange,” as Theresa Krier has noted, is geographically diminished. In *Amoretti* 63 and 64, she comments: “the lover moves closer and closer to the beloved: he is ‘Coming to kisse her lyps,’ a syntax that focuses attention on the space between them” (Krier 311). Krier’s psychoanalytic reading of Canticles in the *Amoretti* is based on “[D. W.] Winnicott’s model of the development of play, [in which] exchange is itself the fundamental activity – exchange between lovers and more particularly exchange of created artifacts ... which themselves reciprocate by structuring the world for the maker”

³⁶ See Chapter Four’s discussion of Herbert’s *The Temple*.

(Krier 301).³⁷ Just as the physical separation is complemented by metaphysical relation in *Amoretti*, physical proximity in *Epithalamion* is accompanied by metaphysical fears. The situations between bodies and hearts/souls oscillate continually; the play of exchange between the lovers is thereby never stabilized, because it cannot be fixed. It must continue indefinitely, thereby re-placing the anxiety of desire in yet another context – that of divine/human consummation.

Wolfgang Iser describes this kind of continual and indefinite exchange in terms of the interaction of denotation and figuration as “a continual oscillation” in which the “original functions ... [of textual rhetoric] are never totally suspended,” thereby “permit[ting] the coexistence of the mutually exclusive” (Iser 332). Thus, denoted absences and figurative presences contribute to “world-making” (Iser 326) in the play of the text. In the diminishment of space between bodies, and in the post-Lenten context, we might now understand why the focus shifts toward *eros* and carnality again, just as the blazoned Bride in the *Epithalamion* is more explicitly uncovered than in the blazon of the betrothed in the *Amoretti*. Charles S. Singleton has asserted that courtly love was all play – and specifically, play between the classical god of love and the Christian God of Love:

Christians *have* found ways, after all, of playing *to one side* (as play must do if it is to be play), or *out-from-under*, the Christian cult; perhaps we should say, to one side of the Christian’s central and overriding concern for the salvation of his soul – which concern is the “serious business” of life, with respect to which *play* is recognizable as such, for *play* becomes possible only if there *is* the “serious” whereby it can exist as the “playful” ... [I]t might suffice to remind ourselves that such a thing as *carnival* did and does exist, Carnival followed by Lent and repentance: a carnival time followed by lenten time, and therefore clearly marked off as being “a time.” Carnival is, or was, a traditional play-time for Christians, a kind of *playground*; and, in fact, has some of the trappings of courtly love.

(Singleton 47-48)

Like Carnival “play-time,” the *Epithalamion* is clearly marked off as time by the twenty-four stanza-hours. But this play does not precede Lent; instead, Lenten time, with all its

³⁷ Krier’s application of this model to Canticles involves an extensive evaluation of the mother figure, whose house (and figurative presence, through repeated reference) offer protection to the lovers. In the *Amoretti*, Krier notes the absence of maternal reference; she does not, however, discuss the analogous protective frame of the social and religious context (perhaps because it is only made explicit in the *Epithalamion*).

penitence, has already occurred in the *Amoretti*. The wedding, its feast, and the consummation of the lovers occurs at the high point of summer (stanza 15), well after the privations of Lent and the seasonal resurrection of Easter; Spenser identifies the day of his wedding as the feast of St. Barnabas, the “son of consolation” (Jones 40). As this allusion to consolation suggests, the wedding day and night offer a sense of resolution to the lovers: they are, finally, together forever. But the reminder of anxieties, however recontextualized, signals the anagogical deferral of apocalyptic consummation. The rhetoric of Canticles identifies the beloved with the Bride of Revelation and the city setting with the heavenly New Jerusalem. In Revelation, the Day of Judgement is referred to as a wedding day, which has bred a long tradition of figuring the Church, and the souls that make up the Church, as the Bride to the divine Bridegroom, Christ – just as Spenser’s bride is arrayed and made ready in stanza 7:

Now is my love all ready forth to come,
 Let all the virgins therefore well awayt,
 And ye fresh boyes that tend upon her groome
 Prepare your selves; for he is coming strayt.
 Set all your things in seemely good aray
 Fit for so joyfull day,
 The joyfulst day that ever sunne did see.
 ...
 ... let this day let this one day be myne,
 Let all the rest be thine.
 Then I thy soverayne prayses loud wil sing,
 That all the woods shal answer and theyr eccho ring.

*(Epithalamion ll. 110-116, 125-128)*³⁸

The opening lines refer to the Bridegroom in the second person, but by the end of the stanza, the poet speaks as the Bridegroom in the first person again; the language that echoes Revelation here makes the speaker himself the concrete basis for the allegory of Christ. This “one day’s” consummation is then figured in terms of mortal death, when the soul is wed to her divine consort. As Spenser suggests, though, consummation also implies the possibility

³⁸ *KJV* Revelation 19:7-9: “Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints. And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb.”

of continued life through progeny. The interaction between life and death in the act of consummation constitutes an oscillating exchange of mutually exclusive interpretations. As in the *Amoretti*, the space of exchange is both potential and potentially compromised by the anxieties of the body and its distracting presence. Play, then, is a mode of paradox in that opposing terms never find resolution – they just keep playing eternally, apocalyptically.

Spenser's sonnet sequence employs courtly love conventions and a Petrarchan form; if we accept that Petrarchan concerns involve the discontinuities and instabilities of subjectivity, and that courtly love is a playfully ironic conceit, then we must also accept that subjectivity, in a largely Christian society, will involve the paradoxical tension between body and soul. In the *Amoretti*, the lover complains of being unable to see anything beyond his beloved lady; his ingenious and corresponding request that she see herself in him offers a paradoxical "resolution" to the discontinuities of Petrarchan practice as much as it adumbrates the Christian *ethos* of marriage. Inherent in this adumbrated Christian *ethos* is a criticism of Petrarchan convention in the figure of Narcissus, who cannot see anything but himself, and Echo, who sees only Narcissus. Indeed, the Christian ideal of marriage offers a functional paradox, as opposed to the Narcissistic attempt to assert one subjectivity at the expense of an other, only to end in a wasting of both.

Lisa M. Klein, in her examination of Protestant marriage and Spenser's revision of Petrarchan loving, points out that "it is the [lover's] renunciation of force that enables the [beloved's] act of submission" (Klein 113).³⁹ Klein's evaluation of conduct books on marriage concludes with this assessment of the lovers of the *Amoretti*:

... the intimate, mutual relationship represented in the *Amoretti* qualifies our view of the "finished products" presented to public view on the marriage day. Spenser does not merely substitute for the Petrarchan hierarchy a patriarchal one: he does not subordinate the mistress to fulfill a desire for male power. Of crucial significance is the fact that the poet-lover, too, is conformed to this ideology of marriage in which the husband exercises not absolute power but a benign authority. ... Elizabeth Boyle is transformed into a godly wife, true, but Spenser also creates himself as the ideal husband.

(Klein 132)

³⁹ Lisa M. Klein, "Let us love, dear love, lyke as we ought": Protestant Marriage and the Revision of Petrarchan Loving in Spenser's *Amoretti*" (*Spenser Studies: A Renaissance Poetry Annual* X, ed. Patrick Cullen and Thomas P. Roche, Jr. New York: AMS Press, 1992, 109-138).

As Klein establishes, with reference to various Renaissance conduct books on marriage, the “ideal husband” is characterized by an attentive waiting, “a paradoxical attitude of patient persistence” so that the “godly wife” “may perceive herselfe to have entred, not into servile thraldome, but loving subjection” (Klein 125; qtg William Whately, *A Bride-Bush, or a Wedding Sermon* [London, 1617], 28). The wife’s obedience – a word that raises hackles and bares teeth in a modern context – is, in this context, perhaps better understood as attentive compliance. As I’ve pointed out already, the Latin root of “obedience” simply refers to listening, to being ready to respond; in the sense that the *Amoretti* describes a betrothal, the word seems appropriate here.

Dubrow, however, cautions us about the potential mistake in the narrative desire “to subscribe to the partial truth” of closure: “to read the movement toward the ‘Epithalamion’ as merely the triumph of mature Protestant love would be to enforce one allegory at the expense of another” (Dubrow 1995, 79). The human lovers’ anxieties, while “resolved” by their marriage, are still present in the sense of an apocalyptic echo. This echo adumbrates the significance of Spenser’s tropological focus: the application of these wedding poems to a domestic situation offers a model for the anagogical purpose of the Christian community. As Flinker puts it, “Allegorical, textual apocalypse establishes a pattern of meaning in the sequence that moves toward a sense of narrative closure which is finally resisted by the unexpected conclusion of the sequence” (Flinker 87). The *Amoretti* delineates the lovers as separate, though connected, just as the sonnets establish the classically tragic models of love as an initial stage of courtship. The Anacreontics distinguish the failures of Venus’ tradition, and the *Epithalamion* emphasizes a renewed context for erotic desire, in which marriage connects us to the divine in a shared eschatological vision, with all its attendant anxieties and redemptions:

Song made in lieu of many ornaments,
 With which my love should duly have bene dect,
 Which cutting off through hasty accidents,
 Ye would not stay your dew time to expect,
 But promist both to recompens,
 Be unto her a goodly ornament,
 And for short time an endlesse monument.

(*Epithalamion* 24)

This marriage in “short time” is finally situated as a “goodly ornament” only in the sense of apocalyptic “long time.” The pressures of narrative time, which have been so emphasized throughout the structural forms of the wedding poems, and which are here recalled as a “promist . . . recompens,” give way to the spiritual context that is the source for this echo. Indeed, there are many allegories at work here, but the figuring of marriage as a model for divine/human relationships is not so much allegorical as it is tropological: Spenser figures out how to be a good husband from “reading” the allegory of divine/human romance in Canticles, as well as the apocalyptic resonance of matrimony in Revelation. Thus it is not so much a narrative that Spenser presents us with, as it is a tropological enactment of a personal event that ultimately comments on the possibility of performing the divine/human apocalypse in worldly terms. By identifying the apocalyptic marriage as an appropriate and ideal context, Spenser and Elizabeth may develop their own marriage.

Through the patient persistence of a lover and the attentive compliance of his beloved, Spenser’s *Amoretti* and *Epithalamion* construct subjectivity as a mutual enterprise articulated through marriage rather than subordinated to it. Narcissus, as an impetuous youth, and Echo, as an over-compliant nymph, provide a disturbing and persistent reminder of the difficulties of this delicately balanced enterprise: it is easy to err on one or the other side of a paradox in a foolish attempt to resolve it. The “mirror image [of *Amoretti*’s sonnet 45] suits the poems’ Christian context and conveys good advice for the wife, who ought to look to her husband as the image of Christ. There she will see her own divine nature mirrored” (Klein 128). More than this, the exemplar husband “is drawn to goodness by his mistress’ virtue” (Klein 128). Spenser’s doubled subjectivity also involves mutual submission: the lovers must temper themselves for the marriage relationship to work, though without losing the integral sense of self that makes each desirable to the other in the first place. This tempering enacts a particularly Christian metamorphosis of its own. Like the divine creation of humanity that combined body and soul in each of us, making us more than a sum of parts, the marriage of true lovers both broadens the context of subjectivity and makes singular that which had been diverse. Similarly, the “willing minds” that embody the apocalyptic consummation are integrated symbolically in the marriage contract; the echo of

“attentive compliance” figures the yearning of the Church as the Bride of the “patiently persistent” Christ. Finally, the “goodly ornament” and “endlesse monument” (*Ep.* 24) of marriage is the paradox of diversity within unity, which permits the co-operation of mutually exclusive subjects.

Spenser’s echo of the principles of the matrimonial form is thus also an intensely focussed tropological reading of Canticles and Revelation – one that paradoxically subverts the narrative elements of the “story” by drawing attention to the unfinished story that is being echoed there. The husband’s body and the wife’s head incarnate the divine/human relationship in the act of marital consummation. As Wither’s musical paraphrase mimics the liturgical psalter forms, Spenser’s poems imitate exegetical forms, alluding to liturgical and social contexts as the public context for personal love; like Quarles, Spenser mixes generic forms in order to re-examine conventionally assumed themes; like Sandys, Spenser offers no marginal biblical commentary to enforce the authority of his textual interpretation of scripture and instead emphasizes the intimacy of playful courtship. This context of his own courtship and wedding day signals that tropology is being demonstrated in the willing minds that give body and form to the soul. In the form of Bride and Bridegroom, Elizabeth and Spenser offer themselves to the reader as examples to be interpreted further. The interpretive poet then turns into an hieroglyphic to be read, so that, again, the interpreting reader is marked as the site of tropological authority.

Chapter Three

Songs and Sonnets:

Philip Sidney's *Astrophel and Stella* (1582) and
Lady Mary Wroth's *Pamphilia to Amphilanthus* (1621)

“my soule shall harbour thee” (*A&S*, Eleventh song)
“While soule and body are together found ...
I am myselfe, and blest” [*P to A*, xxx, lii]¹

This chapter will concentrate on the issues of gender and poetic voice in Sidney's *Astrophel and Stella* and Wroth's *Pamphilia to Amphilanthus*. I've chosen to compare these two sonnet sequences because, as in *Canticles*, they reflect the versatility of gender that may be employed by a speaker of either gender; both Sidney's and Wroth's speakers invoke a sense of dialogue and conversation with the “other,” though in very different ways, only to disrupt any sense of the “other” as marginal. Instead, the other is incorporated as another subject of the conversation. Sidney's sequence, as his title indicates, employs two speakers who engage with each other in the context of an ongoing conversation; as in Spenser's *Amoretti*, this conversational discourse alludes to the roles of husbands and wives in the *Book of Common Prayer*, roles that themselves draw upon the exchanging rhetoric of *Canticles*' lovers. Wroth's sequence, on the other hand, seems to dispense with the conceit of dual speakers; as the title indicates, Pamphilia is the sole speaker, but she constructs herself as a writer of sonnets who converses with a number of deliberately imaginary figures and concludes her sequence by addressing and including the actual reader as one of her conversational partners. In both sequences, the speakers' expectations for a conversational exchange between lovers are invoked by *Canticles*' dialogue as an allusive and elusive textual reference, formally (with the inclusion of songs in both sequences), rhetorically, by constructing the “other” gender/voice as fundamentally reflected in the speaking subject, and generically, by alluding to *Canticles* as an influence with regard to matters of erotic dialogue. When the beloved other is removed,

¹ All quotations from Sidney's *Astrophel and Stella* will refer to sonnet or song numbers that are standard in various editions. Quotations from Wroth's *Pamphilia to Amphilanthus* will refer to the lower-case roman numerals in square brackets in the left margin of G. F. Waller's edition, which number the poems and songs in sequential order.

the notion of subjectivity and the object observed or gazed upon are therefore subverted in a radically revisioned self-transformation, in which the self and the sense of the “other” are absorbed into each other. Ultimately, Astrophel’s and Stella’s gendered positions are asserted in a mutual “absent presence,” and Pamphilia asserts her femininity in relation to Christ’s, and the reader’s, regard for her. In both cases, an “other” in terms of gender is needed to contextualize the speaker’s own sense of self through conversational interaction; but the other can only be recognized as an other through identification with self-determined characteristics.

Again, as in Spenser’s *Amoretti* and *Epithalamion*, the Ovidian motif of Narcissus and Echo is useful to characterize notions of voice and spectacle as metamorphic modes of self-enacted transformation: the reflected and refracted gaze is echoed in the voice of the poet/lover who attempts to converse with the beloved object. Though Sidney and Wroth employ different classical devices to imply this seeing/hearing conjunction, the significance of self-observation as self-interpretation is a theme that develops over the course of both sequences.² Similarly, Canticles’ rhetoric is evoked as part of this metamorphosis from (classical) sensory dependence toward (Christian) sensory appreciation. In both sequences, Canticles’ themes, imagery, and rhetoric subvert the circular logic of simply seeing or hearing: speech becomes dialogue and takes on a kind of virtuoso playfulness; visual metaphors of the blazoned body illustrate both the body of the beloved “other” as well as the erotic desire of the speaking subject’s psyche or soul. The blazoned speaking soul, deconstructed and then reassembled, is exposed to the reader’s gaze in a series of lyric moments that are commonly called sonnets.

Many critics have argued for one definition of sonnet sequences or another.³ The sheer volume of debate regarding the category of sonnet sequences suggests that they are,

² Paul Allen Miller argues that “Cupid appears throughout *Astrophil and Stella* in full Ovidian guise, with his torches and arrows, his siege machinery, and his capacity to render the poet an elegiac *servus amoris*. J.G. Nichols has labeled these thematic images Petrarchan, but they are more properly termed Ovidian, inasmuch as Petrarch derived them directly from Ovid” (Miller 508). The Ovidian Cupid is also one of Pamphilia’s fancied speakers in Wroth’s sequence, and in the Anacreontic verses at the end of Spenser’s *Amoretti* (see discussion in Chapter 2).

³ For further discussions of the generic developments of sonnets and sequence in the English Renaissance, see Thomas P. Roche, Jr.’s *Petrarch and the English Sonnet Sequences*. New York: AMS Press, 1989; Reed Way Dasenbrock’s “The Petrarchan Context of Spenser’s *Amoretti*” in *PMLA*:

like exegesis itself, remarkably fluid in terms of theme, as well as easily defined in terms of form (i.e., a sequence of fourteen line poems or a systematic interpretation of biblical scripture). Even this formal requirement is not necessarily as characteristic in the Renaissance as it is in 20th century criticism of the period, since Quarles' *Sions Sonets* disregards the 14-line form in favour of something else (perhaps theme); Quarles' identification of Petrarchan form in his title suggests that sonnets are not exclusively associated with Petrarchan themes. Sidney and Wroth both insert songs into their sequences as well, demonstrating that the formal elements of sonnet sequences may be more fluid than many critics have yet to admit.⁴

Another aspect of the sonnet sequence debate that is particularly pertinent here is the common epithet "Petrarchan" and the corresponding sense that Petrarch's *Canzoniere* is the traditional "first" in this category – that all sonnet sequences derive from Petrarch in one way or another, based on the formal arrangement of sonnets themselves. As I have argued, however, the form is far more flexible than Petrarch's example may seem to indicate; indeed, as Heather Dubrow suggests in *Echoes of Desire: English Petrarchism and its Counterdiscourses*, it

Publications of the Modern Language Association of America 100.1 (January 1985): 38-50; Dubrow's *Echoes of Desire: English Petrarchism and its Counterdiscourses* (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1995); S.K. Heninger, Jr.'s "Sequences, Systems, Models: Sidney and the Secularization of Sonnets," in *Poems in Their Place: The Intertextuality and Order of Poetic Collections*, ed. Neil Fraistat (Chapel Hill, NC: U of North Carolina P, 1986) 66-94; Charlotte Thompson's "Love in an Orderly Universe: A Unification of Spenser's *Amoretti*, 'Anacreontics,' and *Epithalamion*" in *Viator: Medieval and Renaissance Studies* 16 (1985): 277-335; and John Webster's "The Methode of a Poete': An Inquiry Into Tudor Conceptions of Poetic Sequence" in *ELR* 11.1 (Winter 1981): 22-43.

⁴ S.K. Heninger, Jr., notes that the words "song" and "sonnet" "were actually synonymous" in the Renaissance: "Their regular pairing resulted from some persistent urge in English to link two alliterative synonyms, apparently for reinforcement. ... It was George Gascoigne who in 1575 first attempted to limit the meaning of 'sonnet' in English to a poem of fourteen lines" (Heninger, 1986, 91, fn. 4; see also Gascoigne's "Certayne Notes of Instruction Concerning the Making of Verse or Ryme in English," 1:55). Clearly, by the time Sidney writes *Astrophel and Stella*, songs and sonnets are recognized as distinct forms, and yet still paired or intertwined generically; note also that epithalamions are defined as wedding songs, so that even Spenser pairs the two forms. Donne's *Songs and Sonets* appeared in 1633, and in 1621, Wroth's pairing of the two forms indicates a similar interest in pairing songs with sonnets; in 1625, Quarles' *Sions Sonets* does not even conform to the rule of 14 lines. Despite the flexibility of sonnet/song definition, then, they were often paired, which supports my assertion that they are formally and generically linked to Canticles. See also Elise Salem Manganaro's "Songs and Sonnets in *Astrophil and Stella*. A Reading of Sidney's Poetics," in which she argues, not entirely convincingly, that the sonnets display an Aristotelian verisimilitude that is counter-balanced by the Platonic idealism of the songs.

seems that both Petrarch's and English Petrarchan love lyrics are inherently counter-discursive. Dubrow borrows and redefines the term "counterdiscourse" from Richard Terdiman:

[counter-discourse] is meant to apply to a range of reactions against a dominant discourse. Because it can readily be declined in the plural, 'counterdiscourse' aptly suggests the variety of ways Petrarchism was resisted and rejected. Moreover, this label is more appropriate than 'anti-Petrarchism' for describing the many instances in which a text both espouses and rejects Petrarchism or the cases in which its relationship to that discourse is, in more senses than one, too close to call.... The relationship between discourse and counterdiscourse is a closely matched and often indeterminate power struggle.

(Dubrow 1995, 8).⁵

Dubrow's analysis of Petrarch's own counter-discursive devices suggests that he was working within, rather than establishing, a tradition of counter-discursive love lyrics. Furthermore, the term "counter-discourse" suggests that there is a "dominant discourse" that elicits response; the counter-discursive elements of Petrarch's own *Canzoniere* would then seem to indicate that he is developing and responding to an already established theme/genre. Though Dubrow focuses on the generic elements of counter-discursive devices, I would suggest that such an "indeterminate power struggle" or negotiation between discursive strategies and counter-discursive tactics is an exegetical rhetoric associated with Canticles tropology.⁶ Secular love lyrics both sustain and reverse the sacred/profane emphasis of Canticles rhetoric, however, in a self-conscious and deliberately playful way: in Sidney's sequence, for example, the desires of this world are countered by virtue for Astrophel, while for Stella, virtue is countered by the body's distractions.

⁵ Dubrow cites Terdiman's *Discourse/Counter-Discourse: The Theory and Practice of Symbolic Resistance in Nineteenth-Century France* (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1985).

⁶ Michel de Certeau writes of the process of reading as a metamorphic negotiation between reader and writer. He distinguishes writers' strategies from readerly tactics: a strategy "serve[s] as the basis for generating relations with an exterior distinct from it" and a tactic "belongs to the other. As tactic insinuates itself into the other's place, fragmentarily, without taking it over in its entirety, without being able to keep it at a distance ... In reality, the activity of reading has ... all the characteristics of a silent production: the drift across the page, the metamorphosis of the text effected by the wandering eyes of the reader, the improvisation and expectation of meanings inferred from a few words, leaps over written spaces in an ephemeral dance. ... This mutation makes the text habitable, like a rented apartment" (*The Practice of Everyday Life*, xix, xxi).

It seems to me that a convincing rhetorical “source” for the “Petrarchan” tradition of sonnet sequences is that of *Canticles* and *Canticles*’ rhetoric: the self-titled Song of all songs, the “Poem of Poems,” or the Lyric of lyrics, elicits intertextual interpretation of a generic and formal nature because of its meta-generic title and its scriptural status.⁷ Furthermore, the rhetoric of bodily figures that represent both self-enclosure as well as spiritual, subjective openness to the beloved other is one that incorporates Dubrow’s sense of counter-discourse in sonnet sequences. The *Canzoniere* of Petrarch, for instance, includes both *in vive* and *in morte* sections, each considering the counter-related themes of worldly conditions and heavenly allegories, just as *Canticles* and Revelation exegesis does; Spenser, as I argued in the previous chapter, also writes tropological poems of his own betrothal and wedding as examples or types of divine/human courtship and consummation, structurally imitating *Canticles* and Revelation. Sidney’s *Astrophel* is well aware of Stella’s soul, however distracting her bodily presence may be, just as she is concerned about his body and his potentially compromised soul; and Pamphilia is troubled by her lover’s spiritual absence regardless of his physical position with regard to her. As S.K. Heninger, Jr. notes, with reference to Sidney’s *The defense of poesie*, “content is a metaphor for form, the means by which form is made knowable. The experience of reading, then, involves apprehension of the subject matter only as a means of comprehending the proportion and harmony that reveal the form” (Heninger, 1984, 5). Sonnets as lyrics that are formally “synonymous” with songs, and the counter-discursive elements of sonnet sequences, both suggest that *Canticles* is a common scriptural progenitor for the kinds of sequences that Petrarch and his fellow poets in England wrote: the conversation between lovers as content is a metaphor for the intertextual and counter-discursive form of sonnet sequences. The metaphysical concerns that are complicated by physical presence or absence are symptomatic of *Canticles*’ rhetoric,

⁷ Marion Campbell points out that “The search for origins is a common and intelligible, but doomed, project, since our notions of where we come from depend on our sense of where we are, and the past is invariably constructed in the image of the present ... there is no monolithic interpretation of Petrarch” (Campbell, 84). While I do concur that the study of literary “origins,” sources, and influences is compromised in various ways by historical distance, I also think that Campbell’s qualification – that “‘Influence’ must be recognised not as an objective fact, nor an authoritative source of meaning, but as a critical method” – legitimizes a careful consideration of literary traditions as continually developing and interactive rhetorics (Campbell, 85).

as is the mixing of lyric and narrative forms – the narrative tendencies of allegory and anagogy as sequence are disrupted by the lyricism of tropology. The shifting of medieval romance narratives toward the kind of lyric sequences we find in the 16th and 17th centuries is similarly an indication of the increasingly tropological rhetoric of literary engagement.⁸ Tropology directs the interpreting reader’s gaze toward herself and toward the present moment; lyric genres would seem to encourage such “present” application more consistently and immediately than narratives that take the reader out of herself for the duration of the telling. The hybrid combination of lyric sonnet and narrative sequence, then, heightens the present tension of temporal awareness, eliciting the world as content as a means to comprehend the form of the sonnet sequence; the erotic conversation between Astrophel and Stella is a metaphor for the conversing voices of written texts as well as social conversation. Thus the Renaissance preoccupation with forms and genres is another symptom of a tropological approach toward literature. Rosalie Colie, in her lectures on Renaissance genre theory, commented that “our perceptions of anything at all ... are mediated by forms, collections, collocations, associations ... [W]e learn so naturally by forms and formulae that we often entirely fail to recognize them for what they are” (Colie 1973, 5). The significant point here is that, as Colie puts it, “*We* supply the connectives: *we* see why the [form] applies to a given figure, what in an epigram supports the idea pointed to by figure and [form]” (Colie 1973, 41).⁹ This process of supplying connectives can be seen as an exegetical task itself: reading considers first form (literal), then matter (allegory of body and soul, for instance), followed by the structural elements of sequence in the case of sonnets (the anagogy of the “dominant” or governing idea of the collection).¹⁰ Finally, the reading turns on the reader’s discretionary judgement and application to herself.

⁸ This is, of course, not to say that there are no medieval love lyrics, nor that there are no Renaissance love narratives; rather, I am noting that the predominant genre for writing about erotic love tends to take narrative forms in the medieval period and gradually shifts toward lyric forms from the 12th century through the Renaissance. The meeting point for both forms (lyric and narrative) is the sequence of sonnets.

⁹ Colie’s discussion here considers the functions of the emblem form, but, as I will argue in Chapters Five and Six, the formal components of emblems reflect explicitly the implicit functions of forms in other kinds of literature such as sonnets and sonnet sequences.

¹⁰ “The dominant may be defined as the focusing component of a work of art: it rules, determines, and transforms the remaining components. It is the dominant which guarantees the integrity of the

With regard to sonnet sequences, the tropological sense turns on the ambiguous use of voice: sonneteers tend to use, as Spenser does, a “doubled” rhetoric in which poet and speaking persona are both conflated with and differentiated from each other. In other words, the speaking poet Astrophel and the actual poet Sidney are discrete enough that we can distinguish the two roles for critical purposes of discussion, but both roles are spoken by the same voice, so that it is actually quite difficult to identify when one role or the other is being enacted. In this way, the poet is a model for self-application, but he or she deliberately does not appear to be consistently present as a distinctly performed role; the reader may then step into the poet’s spot from time to time, substituting herself for the nominally governing authorial voice. When Stella speaks, for instance, her words are recorded as Astrophel hears them, and we readers may hear her words as an intimate eavesdropper, either beside or in place of the poet Sidney; similarly, when Astrophel speaks, we are addressed as much as Stella is addressed. Alternatively, when Pamphilia constructs imaginary dialogues with Cupid, Venus, and then Christ, we hear her inner voice as if she speaks to us directly, without the necessary or explicit intrusion of commentary from the poet Wroth. In both cases, the poetic voice is radically disrupted by the speaking voice, at least from a reader’s perspective: the immediacy of the speaking voice is how we identify the poet’s work, which blurs the lines between imaginary moments and “real” ones. This crucial equivocation of blurred voices results in a blurred sense of distinction between self and other, both within the poems themselves and between poems and readers, especially in terms of gender distinction and desire. Despite a variety of approaches that insist on asserting that self-construction and desire are necessarily obsessive and anxious, and that Petrarchan sequences have “less to do with erotic impulses” than “the struggle to fix or create the self by means of language,” we are, after all, reading expressions of erotic desire in sonnet sequences, whatever else may be addressed in the allegorical margins.¹¹

structure” (“The Dominant,” in *Readings in Russian Poetics: Formalist and Structuralist Views*, ed. Ladislav Matejka and Krystyna Pomorska [1971; rpt. Ann Arbor: U of Michigan P, 1978], pp. 82-87; qtd. in Heninger, 1986, 92, fn. 11). Heninger argues, somewhat inconsistently, that this is usually the Lady in sonnet sequences, but in a tropological application, the Lady may also be the reader.

¹¹ See Gary F. Waller’s “The Rewriting of Petrarch: Sidney and the Languages of Sixteenth-Century Poetry” in *Sir Philip Sidney and the Interpretation of Renaissance Culture: The Poet in his Time and in Ours*, ed. Gary F. Waller and Michael D. Moore (New Jersey: Barnes & Noble, 1984), 69-83, or Anthony Low’s

At the beginning of Sidney's *Astrophel and Stella*, Astrophel signals some confusion regarding his "text": "Foole, said my Muse to me, looke in thy heart and write" (*A&S*, 1). This statement would seem to indicate that he reads himself, but in sonnet 3 he writes that "in *Stellas* face I reed,/ What Love and Beautie be, then all my deed/ But Copying is, what in her Nature writes" (*A&S*, 3). Essentially, he reads and writes himself and copies Stella's face, eliding the distinction between his own heart and her face as Nature's Book. Either way, or both, the process of writing an interpretation is an exegetical one, especially after signaling that the lovers' bodies are both texts to be read. Yet, in sonnet 28, Astrophel seems to disdain the meticulous structures of the exegetical process in favour of his non-esoteric subject matter:

You that with allegories curious frame,
 Of others children changelings use to make,
 With me those paines for Gods sake do not take:
 I list not dig so deepe for brasen fame.
 When I say, *Stella*, I do meane the same
 Princesse of Beautie, for whose only sake,
 The raines of *Love* I love, though never slake,
 And joy therein, though Nations count it shame.
 I beg no subject to use eloquence,
 Nor in hid wayes do guide Philosophie:
 Looke at my hands for no such quintessence:
 But know that I in pure simplicitie,
 Breathe out the flames which burne within my heart,
Love onely reading unto me this art.

(*A&S*, 28)

This strategy, however, of claiming "simplicitie" and disavowing established esoteric approaches, is a rhetorical conceit.¹² By explaining what he disavows he reminds his readers of the very thing he pretends not to endorse; then he proceeds, in the next sonnet, to

The Reinvention of Love: Poetry, Politics and Culture from Sidney to Milton (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1993). This approach is also remarkably common in psychoanalytic analyses of Renaissance love lyrics such as sonnet sequences and Shakespeare's narrative poems, in which desire and anxiety are equivocated at the expense of the pleasures that are afforded to Renaissance writers by Canticles rhetoric.

¹² See, for instance, Wither's "Preposition to the Frontispiece" and my discussion of it in Chapter Five. Another example might be Henry V's successful wooing of Catherine in Shakespeare's play. Henry protests: "I cannot look greenly, nor gasp out my eloquence, nor I have no cunning in protestation" (5.2.142-143), but he wins her just the same.

endorse it with a highly allusive scriptural blazon of Stella and Love: “Her breasts his tents, legs his triumphall carre:/ Her flesh his food, her skin his armour brave” (*A&S*, 29). Architectural, food, and martial metaphors are drawn from Canticles 4:1-5 and 6:5-7.¹³ If we are not to “dig so deepe for brasen fame,” then why does he provide us with such suggestive allusions to Canticles?

In fact, Astrophel’s explanation that the Book of Nature is his text, in his own heart and in Stella’s face, renders his poems as tacit exegesis. That the sequence does echo scripture in sonnet 29 does not contradict the disdain he expresses in sonnet 28 for “allegories curious”; like Hugh of St. Victor, Astrophel disdains the methods of the “teachers of allegory” and writes a different kind of interpretation. This is an exegesis of the body, one that is an extended blazon of this present lively world, and this blazon deliberately focuses on Stella’s face and Astrophel’s heart in turns, in order to establish that both belong to the context of this world. Some critics have misunderstood the distinction that Sidney is making with regard to different kinds of religious ideals; Heninger, for instance, argues that Sidney follows Petrarch’s disdain for Augustine in the sonneteers’ emphasis on the worldly situation, which then produces anxiety for the speaker and expresses cynical rejection of all religious ideals:

Petrarch subtly shifts the focus of the sonnet sequence. The unifying factor, the dominant, is no longer the ethereal essence of the lady herself but rather the response of the lover to her. . . . Petrarch is not dealing with other-worldly ideals in a religious context. A poem for him does not as a first priority lead us back to heaven, as Augustine had prescribed, but more importantly it acquaints us with the human condition on earth. . . . [Similarly, Astrophel] accepts the torment of unrequited love as a continuing condition. He is not reconciled to his plight by either theological doctrine or philosophical argument, and he does not pledge to commemorate the lady or her values in further poetry more worthy of her [as Dante and Spenser do]. His poems, in fact, reveal shameful passion more than chaste adoration. . . . his love, it seems, keeps him from heaven rather than providing the means, however circuitously, of arriving there.

(Heninger, 1986, 73, 77)

Aside from the oversimplified equivocation of “ethereal” lady and “other-worldly” religious

¹³ See Chapter Two and Chapter Four for further discussion of bridal blazons in Spenser and Herbert respectively.

ideals that he identifies monolithically as Augustinian, and their binary opposite, the “shameful passion” of this world that “seems” to keep Astrophel from heaven, Heninger assumes further that neither Petrarch nor Sidney could deal with both this world and the heavens in a negotiation of appropriate relationship. The focus on “the response of the lover” to his lady is a tropological variation, signifying a rhetorical shift of perspective from Augustinian allegorical narrative forms to Victorine tropological lyric forms.¹⁴ While Petrarch may have “originated” the form of sonnets themselves, at least for English writers, this invention reflects and incorporates a larger cultural dynamic that, from the twelfth century through the Renaissance, translates the allegory of heavenly ideals into a vision of worldly possibilities where men and women may love each other as well as God.

Sidney develops this translation just as Petrarch did. Like Laura, Stella remains beyond Astrophel, unavailable to him; but for different reasons. “Stella is not a celestial spirit, above the carnality of love-making – *au contraire*, she belongs in another man’s bed”; rather than the beatific and saintly virgin, Stella is a married woman and “resides unremittingly in this world” (Heninger, 1986, 77). Heninger assumes that Sidney criticizes and rejects “religious ideals” when Sidney criticizes Augustinian esthetics, which I would agree that Sidney does do; but it does not follow that Astrophel’s passion is therefore “shameful” or unequivocally anxious. Adoration need not be “chaste” in the current sense of the term: the deliberate playfulness of Astrophel’s engagement with Stella, and the problem between them, are both based on worldly circumstances. They desire each other despite Stella’s obligation to her husband. Astrophel’s passion is then less shameful than it is frustrated by her contradictory responses to him, and in the worldly context here, “heaven” is a deferred goal, secondary to earthly concerns. Astrophel is not kept from heaven by carnal desires any more than Sidney rejects carnal love; instead, Astrophel and Stella are kept from worldly consummation with each other, and Sidney uses both his speakers’ voices to

¹⁴ Augustine lived in the 4th and 5th centuries, when, as Matter establishes, ecclesiastical structures still needed allegorical readings to support theological authority; by the twelfth century, Hugh of St. Victor turns from the solid foundations of *Ecclesia* toward the individual souls of her membership. By the fourteenth century, Petrarch considers himself, Laura, and his response to her as worthy subjects for “heavenly allegory” that is directed toward moral, or tropological, application.

describe the difficulties and frustrations of living in the world, being in love, and yet respecting the rules of social discourse.

Dubrow has commented that the lady “herself represents a type of counterdiscourse” within the counter-discourse of the sonneteer’s voice itself, rather than an “inviolable unity,” as Campbell and others have considered her to be (Dubrow, 1995, 45; Campbell, 89). The lady is, to some extent, a device of anagogical concern: her characterization and voice figure what the sonnet sequence leads up to – the response that she provides will determine which direction his desire may take. (This approach will have interesting complications when we come to Wroth’s *Pamphilia to Amphilanthus*, in which the lady is the sole speaker addressing herself to an absent, and utterly silent, man.) Stella is the beloved “other” to whom Astrophel addresses himself, whom he reads as he does his own heart; but she is also a speaker through whom we may read Astrophel as well, and her status as speaker is a rhetorical device that Sidney employs to advance Astrophel’s desires beyond the pursuit of mere physical pleasure. Just as Astrophel is a speaker, so is Stella; Sidney stands behind both his titular speakers, not just the one with whom he shares a gender – and if that is not confusing enough, Sidney sometimes switches and conflates the kinds of roles they play in a way that incorporates Canticles’ rhetoric. In the Eleventh Song, for instance, Stella and Astrophel conclude their conversation in the form of a dialogue. Stella opens the Song with a response to Astrophel’s plaining outside her window; they speak back and forth, and then she dismisses him for fear of “*Argus* eyes.” The final four sonnets of the sequence follow, and it is clear that Stella will no longer return Astrophel’s calls. The spoken exchange of the Eleventh Song evokes both the Sponsa’s anxiety when she yearns but cannot find her lover, when she is “sick of love,” as well as the Sponsus’ leaving at the end of Canticles – common Canticles themes in many sonnet sequences. The final impossibility of Astrophel’s and Stella’s betrothal, then, underscores the irony of marital echoes in this Song: Stella’s request that Astrophel leave her because his presence angers or endangers her suggests that his compliance with her request is a personal sacrifice for her comfort, as husbands are required to provide for their wives. Stella’s removal from the sequence also supplies her with the wifely characteristic of obedient responsiveness, but not to Astrophel – rather, to her husband.

Who is it that this darke night,
 Underneath my window playneth?
 It is one who from thy sight,
 Being (ah) exild, disdayneth
 Every other vulgar light.

Why alas, and are you he?
 Be not yet those fancies changed?
 Deere when you find change in me,
 Though from me you be estranged,
 Let my change to ruine be.

Well in absence this will dy,
 Leave to see, and leave to wonder:
 Absence sure will helpe, if I
 Can learne, how my selfe to sunder
 From what in my hart doth ly.

But time will these thoughts remove:
 Time doth worke what no man knoweth.
 Time doth as the subject prove,
 With time still the affection groweth
 In the faithfull Turtle dove.

What if you new beauties see,
 Will not they stir new affection?
 I will thinke they pictures be,
 (Image like of Saints perfection)
 Poorely counterfeting thee.

But your reasons purest light,
 Bids you leave such minds to nourish?
 Deere, do reason no such spite,
 Never doth thy beauty flourish
 More, then in my reasons sight.

But the wrongs love beares, will make
 Love at length leave undertaking;
 No the more fooles it do shake,
 In a ground of so firme making,
 Deeper still they drive the stake.

Peace, I thinke that some give eare:
 Come no more, least I get anger.
 Blisse, I will blisse forbear,

Fearing (sweete) you to endanger,
But my soule shall harbour thee.

Well, be gone, be gone I say
Lest that *Argus* eyes perceive you,
O unjust fortunes sway,
Which can make me thus to leave you,
And from lowts to run away.

(*AeS*, Eleventh song)

This responsive song has elicited some consideration from critics, but none have linked it substantially to the responsive form and themes of Canticles.¹⁵ Katherine J. Roberts notes that “these are Stella’s last words; in the last four sonnets of the sequence, Sidney once again shows Astrophil distanced from Stella and lost, uncomprehending, in his own misery” (Roberts 84). Nona Feinberg remarks that “In the end, it is no longer the hero’s running away which moves us, but the heroine’s remaining” (Feinberg 18). Roberts and Feinberg conclude that the lovers are, in the end, isolated from each other, and that neither of them is particularly happy to be so – Roberts notes the suggestion of the “evil husband loom[ing] behind Stella as he has throughout the sequence” (Roberts 84). While Stella’s husband certainly presents a hindrance to Astrophel’s and Stella’s potential union, however, I would hesitate to call him “evil”; Stella’s obedience to her husband is a previously established contract, and there is no indication that her husband, however resented by either speaker, exerts a dominating force any more than the “*Argus* eyes” or “lowts” of society in general. His existence as Stella’s husband, and her status as his wife, is what keeps Astrophel outside the physical structure of his female beloved (the window as well as the lady’s body), and

¹⁵ See Thomas P. Roche, Jr.’s *Petrarch and the English Sonnet Sequences*, especially the chapter on Sidney’s *Astrophil and Stella*; and Katherine J. Roberts’ *Fair Ladies: Sir Philip Sidney’s Female Characters*, which also includes a chapter on *Astrophil and Stella*; John G. Nichols’ *The Poetry of Sir Philip Sidney: An Interpretation in the Context of his Life and Times* (Liverpool UP, 1974); Richard B. Young’s “English Petrarch: A Study of Sidney’s *Astrophil and Stella*” (*Three Studies in the Renaissance: Sidney, Jonson, Milton* (Yale UP, 1958); Elise Salem Manganaro’s “Songs and Sonnets in *Astrophil and Stella*. A Reading of Sidney’s Poetics” (*Explorations in Renaissance Culture* 15: 1989, 121-136); William A. Ringler, Jr., ed., *The Poems of Sir Philip Sidney* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1973); Sherod Cooper, *The Sonnets of Astrophil and Stella: A Stylistic Study* (The Hague: Mouton, 1968); James Cotter, “The Songs in ‘Astrophil and Stella’” (*Studies in Philology*, 67: 1970); Annibel Jenkins, “A Second ‘Astrophil and Stella’ Cycle” (*Renaissance Papers*, 1970, 73-80); and Nona Feinberg’s “The Emergence of Stella in *Astrophil and Stella*” (*SEL* 25: 1985, 5-19).

thereby softens the notion of “masculine” sexual aggression in favour of “feminine” chastity: Stella keeps him there and sends him further away. Furthermore, Astrophel claims that “my soule shall harbour thee,” using a rather feminine kind of enclosure image despite the physical circumstances that gender him male. And he does so for a husband’s reason: “Blisse, I will bliss forbeare,/ Fearing (sweete) you to endanger.” Astrophel sacrifices physical bliss and his own comfort to ensure Stella’s safety, just as a husband vows to do in order to win a wife’s responsive attention and obedience. In other words, Astrophel sacrifices all possibility, all claim, to Stella’s responsiveness by leaving her alone so that she can honour her vows to her “evil” husband. Correspondingly, Stella’s “remaining,” which Fienberg finds so moving, is at least as applicable to Astrophel from the reader’s point of view. We don’t read of Stella after Astrophel leaves her; we read Astrophel’s solitude, which radically transforms the perspective of the Sponsus’ leaving at the end of Canticles; the last voice we hear in Canticles is that of the Sponsa calling to her lover to return. Thus Astrophel expresses both “male” and “female” kinds of desire with regard to Stella: in sacrificing his “male” desire to penetrate and thereby satisfy his carnal desire, he responds to her request obediently, and therefore sustains the “feminine” positions of chaste self-enclosure for both of them. In the final, mutual absence, the notion of Astrophel’s subjectivity is radically transformed by his new object status: he leaves, and is also left alone with only himself to consider and offer to the reader. In his “male” sacrifice, he absorbs the “other” status of the observed or gazed upon beloved as an element of his speaking position, which is that of “the faithfull Turtle dove.”¹⁶ Astrophel’s desire is expressed in ways that are sometimes male (husbandly) and sometimes female (self-enclosed but accessible).

Astrophel’s isolated conclusion, in the four sonnets that follow the Eleventh Song and conclude the sequence, is an embittered acknowledgement of the sacrifice he has made, gazing ever upward at the “absent presence *Stella*” who “is not here” (sonnet 106). He does

¹⁶ In Canticles 1:14-15, the Sponsus concludes a blazon of his lover: “My loue, beholde, thou art faire: beholde, thou art faire: thine eyes are like the dooues. My welbeloued, beholde, thou are faire and pleasant: also our bed is grene: the beames of our house are cedres.” The Geneva translation glosses as follows: “Christ accepteth his Churche and commendeth her beautie. That is, the heart of the faithful wherein Christ dwelleth by his Spirit.” This gloss suggests that the “house” of the lovers, within which they dwell, is built of faithful conversation or dialogue.

harbour her in his soul, too: her “works in [him] prevaile” until the end (sonnet 108). She dismisses him because she is of this world and must abide by its rules; he is annoyed because his heart, which maintains the image of Stella, is also worldly. Indeed, this pattern – that of Stella’s voice (or look, or manner) as one that establishes Astrophel’s response, and thereby characterizes him and directs the movement of the sequence – is repeated elsewhere. As much as she is assigned the usually feminine, responsive role – that of answering his requests with “yes” or “no” – she also exerts a significant directing power, eliciting response from Astrophel. Dubrow, too, argues that

Her voice in the sequence, like that of Petrarch’s Laura, assumes multiple and contradictory roles but is often positioned as the counterdiscourse that criticizes not only Astrophil in particular but also Petrarchism in general. In so doing, it provides one of the clearest examples in the English Petrarchan tradition of the workings of female speech – and of the dangers of reducing that complex phenomenon to broad generalizations about silencing.

(Dubrow 1995, 115)¹⁷

Stella’s presence and voice in Sidney’s sequence are significant, not just because she speaks but because she speaks playfully with Astrophel. Furthermore, as I have already argued, the female role as exemplified in Canticles and as it is elaborated and ascribed to a wife in the matrimonial form of the Prayer Book, is also a discursive one. The conversation of a wife should be rhetorically effective, responding to those in need and converting suffering to safety and comfort. The speech of the Sponsa in Canticles, moreover, expresses erotic desire, offering sensual comforts (food, rest, etc.) as well as asking for them.¹⁸ The point I

¹⁷ “Should one assume that speech and power, or, more specifically, speech and agency, are necessarily linked? Under what circumstances and to what extent can silence itself be a form of power? What are the connections between the poet’s valuations of his own speech and that of the woman?” (Dubrow 46). Dubrow’s discussion of genres and genders raises important questions regarding our notions of gendered roles and agency, pointing out the power of Christ’s silence in the face of his raucous tormentors, as well as the “contradictory” roles that “female” speech may assert (42). See Fienberg’s “The Emergence of Stella in *Astrophil and Stella*” (*SEL: Studies in English Literature 1500-1900*, 25.1: Winter 1985, 5-19) or Marotti’s “‘Love is not love’: Elizabethan Sonnet Sequences and the Social Order” (*ELH* 49.2: Summer 1982, 396-428) for examples of the kind of feminist reading that privileges politics and subjectivity at the expense of erotics and the power of the object. As Elizabeth M. Hull points out, “It might be well to restore the context for the quotation in Marotti’s title: love, after all, is not love which *alters* love” (Hull 176).

¹⁸ Cf. “Stay me with flagons, and comfort me with apples: for I am sicke of loue” (Song 2:5, Geneva); and “I wil lead thee & bring thee into my mothers house: there thou shalt teache me: & I wil cause thee to drinke spiced wine, & newe wine of the pomegranate” (Song 8:2, Geneva).

am making here is that speech is conversational, requiring response, and that the voice of the Sponsa is taken up by both Astrophel and Stella in turn: Stella's request in the Eleventh Song for Astrophel to leave her is a request for alleviation, because he distracts her from her wifely obligations to another. As such, speech cannot simply be gendered according to sex.¹⁹ "Female" speech both responds to and elicits "male" speech, and vice versa; furthermore, the gender of speech can be conflated, as when Astrophel's words echo the female lover of Canticles as well as the husband in the *Book of Common Prayer*. A conversation is, literally, a "turning around," and this turning around is continual for the duration of the speaking voices involved. Like the oscillation of denotation and figuration that Iser describes as play, the conversational context of any speech act is reversed by its response, which is in turn reconstructed by the next response, indefinitely.²⁰ Thus Stella's dismissal of Astrophel in the Eleventh Song doesn't quite silence him – he goes on for four more sonnets. But it does remove the conversational context from him, limiting his ability to elicit further exchange with her – she is no longer able to respond to the comfort he offers her, nor is she able to direct the conversation further. And in asserting silence and removing herself from the sequence, she limits her own ability to govern his conclusion as well as his ability to continue responding to her. Thus, like the Sponsa, Astrophel has the last word, but she is no longer listening or obedient to him in turn; it is Stella who, like the Sponsus of Canticles, has directed the conclusion of the sequence by remaining silent and leaving the stage. The roles of the leaver and the left behind are conflated this way, with an interestingly tropological rhetorical effect: the removal of the desired object foregrounds the role of the reader, because if Stella is no longer listening, to whom are the final four sonnets addressed?

This playful, and ultimately ironic, conversational context in the sequence up to the end of the Eleventh Song is one that reflects the motifs of speech and mutual regard that recur throughout the sequence. The discursive forms of play themselves require closer examination, since, as in Canticles, the frustrations of physical desire and absence accompany the pleasurable banter. In sonnets 61 to 63, for example, Stella defends true love against

¹⁹ Indeed, the gender of the speakers in Canticles varies, depending on the translation; see Appendices 1 to 3.

²⁰ See Iser's "The Play of the Text" in *Languages of the Unsayable: The Play of Negativity in Literature and Literary Theory*, eds. Sanford Budick and Wolfgang Iser (Stanford CA: Stanford UP, 1987) 325-339.

Astrophel's clumsy assaults, and he plays with his own "failures" in order to continue the engagement with her successfully:

Oft with true sighes, oft with uncalled teares,
 Now with slow words, now with dumbe eloquence
 I *Stellas* eyes assaid, invade her eares;
 But this at last is her sweet breath'd defence:
 That who indeed infelt affection beares,
 So captives to his Saint both soule and sence,
 That wholly hers, all selfnesse he forbears,
 Then his desires he learns his lives course thence.
 Now since her chast mind hates this love in me,
 With chastned mind, I straight must shew that she
 Shall quickly me from what she hates remove.
 O Doctor *Cupid*, thou for me reply,
 Driv'n else to graunt by Angels sophistrie,
 That I love not, without I leave to love.

(*A&S*, 61)

He attempts to "invade" her in sensual terms in order to imitate her effect on him: "I *Stellas* eyes assaid, invade her eares." She counters this strategy by claiming that such "infelt affection ... / ... captives ... both soule and sence," and that he should respect her physical integrity by forbearing to penetrate her senses. Her response invokes the "Saint" of love, who chastens his willing mind; he responds by invoking "Doctor *Cupid*" to answer for him, deliberately offering a parody of the philosophical approach that she has introduced in a mock-academic dispute between Ovidian and Christian metamorphoses of love. By invoking Cupid as a Doctor of Philosophy, and by referring to "Angels sophistrie," he frames her position in another, invoking the rigid rules of academic debate in a playful and irreverent manner that also turns his initial sensual invasion into an eroticized metaphorical embrace.

Astrophel continues his playful parody in sonnet 62, in which Stella now participates by maintaining and clarifying her "argument" that is "not blind" – not Cupid's, not Ovidian, but rather Angelic:

Late tyr'd with wo, even ready for to pine
 With rage of *Love*, I cald my Love unkind;
 She in whose eyes *Love* though unfelt doth shine,
 Sweet said that I true love in her should find,
 I joyed, but straight thus watred was my wine,

That love she did, but loved a Love not blind,
 Which would not let me, whom she loved, decline
 From nobler course, fit for my birth and mind:
 And therefore by her Loves authority,
 Wild me these tempests of vaine love to flie,
 And anchor fast my selfe on *Vertues* shore.
 Alas, if this the only mettall be
 Of *Love*, new-coind to helpe my beggery,
 Deare, love me not, that ye may love me more.

(*Ac&S*, 62)

The “authority” of Stella’s Love is asserted as “true love”: “Sweet said that I true love in her should find.” She claims here to love him in a “nobler course” that she wishes him to take as well, instead of the “vaine love” that tires him (like the Sponsa who is “sicke of love” and asks for the refreshment of flagons and apples in Song 2:5). It is this vain love that prompts him to call her unkind, and which she realigns when she asks him to “anchor fast myself to *Vertues* shore” rather than physically penetrate her. He sustains the play of an academic debate by insisting on a semantic distinction: “love” in the final line depends on two different definitions so that it is not a contradictory statement.²¹ Philosophy, too, depends on semantic definition and clarity of expression – the rules of grammar and syntax determine sense. This triad of sonnets on teaching the distinction between Ovidian and Christian “love” devolves into an exercise in playing with the rules of semantics and grammar in the concluding giddiness of sonnet 63, which amounts to a concession of the argument to Stella:

O grammer rules, o now your vertues show;
 So children still reade you with awfull eyes,
 As my young Dove may in your precepts wise
 Her graunt to me, by her owne vertue know.
 For late with heart most high, with eyes most low,
 I crav’d the thing which ever she denies:
 She lightning *Love*, displaying *Venus* skies,
 Least once should not be heard, twise said, No, No.
 Sing then my Muse, now *Io Pean* sing,
 Heav’ns envy not at my high triumphing:
 But Grammers force with sweet successse confirme:
 For Grammer sayes (o this deare *Stella* nay,)
 For Grammer sayes (to Grammer who sayes nay)

²¹ This technique, of using an abstract noun to contrast significantly different senses, is also used by Richard Crashaw. See Chapter Four for further discussion regarding the Theresa poems.

That in one speech two Negatives confirme.

(*AS*, 63)

In feigning triumph through the rule of the double negative, Astrophel plays the pedant who glories in trivia. At the same time, he plays the fool to Stella's virtuous argument, and though she may be serious and reproving of him, she has also not refused to speak and to play her serious role in the mock-serious exchange. Thus, while her counter-discursiveness is critical, it is also playfully engaged: her turning of his penetrative metaphor in sonnet 62 is a partial concession that effectively persuades him to concede the point of her virtue, and these mutual concessions then enable the conversation to continue. Stella is, in this sense, seduced by words as much as Astrophel is seduced by her beauty: to the extent that she engages in pleasurable banter, she follows the rules of pleasant and considerate conversation which also govern marriage. If they both concede, they both "win"; if either refuses, they both lose in the sense that the conversation is no longer sustainable.²²

Despite the worldly limits of this playful marital context, however, it is still an ironic game. The rhetoric of semantic play elsewhere in the sequence, for instance in sonnet 24, which puns on the name "Rich," has inspired many critics to ponder the question of autobiographical reflection; that is, how much is Astrophel's voice Philip Sidney's, and how much of Stella's character is Penelope Rich.²³ Marion Campbell notes the particular limitations of such biographical approaches: "The pressure of 'real' people and historical events is continually felt in these poems, and I suggest that this is one of the main reasons why it is difficult to identify literary structure or closure. The 'end' ... is to be achieved not

²² Cf. Goffman: "Just as we see that a response may refer to more than a whole statement, so, of course, we must see that it can refer to something less ... although a reply is addressed to meaningful elements of whole statements, responses can break frame and reflexively address aspects of a statement which would ordinarily be 'out of frame,' ordinarily part of transmission, not content – for example, the statement's duration, tactfulness, style, origin, accent, vocabulary, and so forth" (43). Stella's reply is one of virtue, but her response picks up the penetrative metaphor and transforms it. In response, Astrophel gives up "Doctor Cupid" in favour of "something less" and so concedes his own limitations with regard to philosophical debate: "In effect, it is not that the grammarian's perspective can make sense out of even single, isolated sentences, but that these sentences are the *only* things his perspective can make sense out of" (30).

²³ Heninger and Dubrow present the most notable and interesting analyses of biographical data and their relation to Sidney's literary work.

in the aesthetic sphere, but in personal, social, or political life” (Campbell 91). She links this biographical urge to the form of the sonnets themselves:

clearly the tension between smaller and larger units of formal organisation – between ‘sonnet’ and ‘sequence’ – is one of the major values of this mode of poetry. It holds out the promise of unity, but refuses to provide it. ... Any interpretation which seeks a coherent unity will leave some loose ends; any individual reading will emphasise some elements at the expense of others, in a process replicated by the history of readings of the poem from the time of Nashe onwards. It seems clear, then, that any perception of a unified form for the collection is less likely to denote an inherent property of the text than a construction by a particular reader ... Reading the poem involves us in a process of structuration, rather than leading to an apprehension of structure.

(Campbell 92)

As in Sandys’ scriptural “Paraphrase” that includes no marginal gloss, or in the formal requirement of assembling connectives between picture and words in emblems, Petrarch’s innovation in writing sonnet sequences that include no prose explication foregrounds the reader’s authority; the reader must “provide the connections and fill in the gaps” (Campbell 93). I have suggested, in the case of Spenser’s wedding poems, that poetic voice in the Renaissance is conceived in a doubled sense: the body and the soul have different concerns, and so any “individual” is capable of self-contradiction as well as self-critique or even self-parody, as Astrophel demonstrates in sonnets 61-63. The principle of definition by contraries – dominant and counter-discourses, for instance, or body and soul – applies beyond categorical definition. Indeed, the definition that results from contrast and commentary induces comparison and analogy too. Analogous qualities broaden the context of distinction and blur the lines between generic and formal categories, such as physical and spiritual, or songs and sonnets, or Augustinian allegory and Victorine tropology, or male and female speech, or poetic and speaking voice. The deliberate mixing of forms and roles in Sidney’s sonnet sequence that includes eleven songs elicits questions about the other categories he mixes. It is hardly surprising that scholarly commentary insists on filtering everything back into its proper category in an attempt to “deconstruct” the messiness of the text, which Astrophel himself does not fail to poke fun at in sonnets 61 to 63. But I would argue that Sidney has already categorically deconstructed his own text by including songs and a beloved’s desiring responsive voice, and that, as Campbell and Colie argue, it is necessary for

a reader to reconstruct it, to re-order and reconnect the categories of genres and forms so that his intricate blending may instruct us beyond the illusions of stable categories of any kind, such as those of historical biography. Furthermore, the final four sonnets that are implicitly addressed to the reader in Stella's "absent presence" emphasize that the reader has a rhetorical obligation to contribute something to this sequence – something that Stella had contributed but which is now no longer hers to provide. The rhetorical response of "a process of structuration, rather than [being led] to an apprehension of structure" conflates Stella's responsiveness with that of the reader: we are, finally, placed in the position of the beloved, and our response of rhetorical construction is what ultimately opens the sequence beyond its conclusion on the page. After Astrophel writes "The end of Astrophel and Stella," the tropology of the reader begins, and the signal for this tropological effect is Astrophel's solitary voice speaking to the reader, implicating her as an intimate conversational partner.

Critical approaches that insist on the obsessive anxiety of self-construction tend to misread an allegory at the expense of the pleasures recorded and played out for us in the literal reading of the text. As Dubrow has warned us,

The tendency to read love as a decoy for another subject may well remind us of the type of allegorical temper that sees allusions to religious ideas virtually everywhere; in the case at hand, the equivalent of the original, transcendental signified is politics ... [B]oth Petrarchism and anti-Petrarchism are indeed often about subjects like politics, history, or the relationships among men, but they are always – and often primarily – about love, desire, and gender as well.

(Dubrow 1995, 10)

Thus the "paradigm of the dominant and manipulative poet and silent mistress" for example, or the poet who is covertly currying courtly favour, "is deceptive not merely because it neglects that variety but also because it typically presupposes the stability of gender categories" as well as power dynamics (Dubrow 1995, 11). *Canticles* rhetoric challenges the sense of categorization and the stability of distinction by virtue of its flexible and conversational exploration of verbal and textual exchange. Scripture is both responded to and interrogated by exegesis, which associates readers with writers. More importantly, with regard to sonnet sequences and love lyrics, the rhetoric of *Canticles* identifies itself with the erotically desiring voice of a woman, the *Sponsa*. The interrogating and responding voice of

the exegete, like Stella, is figured conventionally as the responding female, and the rhetorical reader, like the writer, both constructs and is constructed by the text that elicits her response. The scholarly desire to categorize is therefore an exercise in allegory that goes only halfway without the reconstruction of anagogy and its tropological application to the reader herself, which is why, in sonnet 28, Sidney is so specifically disparaging with regard to allegories while yet suggesting scriptural allusions in sonnet 29. The doubled readership of these sonnets – both the lady and the eavesdropping readers, common to most sequences – further suggests that the exegetical rhetoric of Canticles is an important critical method that Sidney incorporates in *Astrophel and Stella*.²⁴ Like Sandys' "Paraphrase" in 1635, Sidney's *Astrophel and Stella* does not elaborate his verses with connecting prose exegesis; Campbell calls this "Petrarch's innovation" with regard to love lyrics, but it may also reflect an innovation in collections of religious lyrics as well (a subject that will be considered more thoroughly in the next three chapters). Similarly, the practice of scriptural exegesis develops tropologically to displace the centrality of scripture and brings responsive exegesis from the margins into the centre of a reader's attention, thereby eliciting further response. In the Renaissance, exegesis may stand alone without scripture, as in Wither's *Hymnes and Songs of the Church*, Quarles' *Sions Sonets*, or Spenser's sonnet sequence and epithalamion.²⁵ Sidney's *Astrophel and Stella* disparages the allegory of betrothal and marriage because that is precisely and ultimately what obstructs the lovers; but the allegory is present nonetheless, framing the playful speech of the lovers' conversations. It is this allegory that results in the anagogical concern of the sequence, the final separation of the lovers, in which they are united paradoxically in mutual isolation. This paradox of united isolation is then the tropological crux of the final four sonnets.

This paradox is established throughout the sequence because of Stella's consistent status as a speaker. Even when Astrophel provides an otherwise conventional blazon of

²⁴ Cf. Campbell: "Influence' must be recognised not as an objective fact, nor an authoritative source of meaning, but as a critical method" (Campbell, 85). The examination of influences as a critical method then legitimizes a careful consideration of literary traditions as continually developing and interactive rhetorics.

²⁵ Note also that the King James Version of 1611 dispenses with marginal exegesis. See Chapter Five for further consideration of Reformation practices of Bible translation.

Stella in sonnet 77, he conflates Stella's looks, face, hand, lips, and skin with her presence, her grace, her words, her voice, and her conversation which is "true speech":

Those lookes, whose beames be joy, whose motion is delight,
 That face, whose lecture shewes what perfect beautie is:
 That presence, which doth give darke hearts a living light:
 That grace, which *Venus* weepes that she her selfe doth misse:
 That hand, which without touch holds more then *Atlas* might;
 Those lips, which make deaths pay a meane price for a kisse:
 That skin, whose pass-praise hue scorns this poore terme of white:
 Those words, which do sublime the quintessence of blisse:
 That voyce, which makes the soule plant himselfe in the eares:
 That conversation sweet, where such high comforts be,
 As consterd in true speech, the name of heav'n it beares,
 Makes me in my best thoughts and quietst judgement see,
 That in no more but these I might be fully blest:
 Yet ah, my Mayd'n Muse doth blush to tell the best.

(*ACS*, 77)

Despite the conventionally "Petrarchan" tone of this pseudo-blazon, sonnet 77 employs the blazon form to consider more than merely physical attributes. That is, rather than comparing physical attributes to concrete things like jewels, flowers, armour, or pillars, Astrophel's blazon of Stella interprets her body in terms of her virtuous attributes. In this sense, "Those lips, which make deaths pay a meane price for a kisse" suggests that the mortality of sensuality is conflated with "the name of heav'n it [the conversation emanating from those lips] beares." The physical blazon of Stella opens her body to express the inward spiritual attributes that her body expresses, and this openness is the innate quality of her subjectivity that has seduced Astrophel. Robert L. Montgomery also discusses sonnet 77 (or the first 13 lines, at least) to argue that "As an emblematic figure, Stella embodies the terms of ethical and emotional conflict that we routinely suppose define Petrarchism as a system of balanced and unresolved moral tension. The impasse between female refusal and male importunity was ordinarily expressed so as to forbid reconciliation or compromise ... [but] Sidney's procedure is different" (Montgomery 45-46). Essentially, Montgomery contends that "however Astrophil presents himself, whether deliberately or obliquely through the tone of his utterance, he does so as a form of response to [the fact of Stella's marriage]" (Montgomery 47). Stella is then an emblem of obstruction, of female refusal, for

Montgomery; but this argument privileges the physical/literal success of seduction rhetoric as a defining characteristic of both seduction and rhetoric. In fact, it is at least also true that Astrophel has been seduced by Stella's "true speech," that he has been persuaded to speak in the rhetoric of a husband as a response to Stella's status as a wife. The *Book of Common Prayer* defines the role of the wife in terms of her conversation, just as Stella is blazoned in terms of her conversation in sonnet 77 and elsewhere; and the husband's role is defined in terms of his (physical) sacrifice for her comfort, just as Astrophel concedes the academic debate of sonnets 61 to 63 and sacrifices his seduction for Stella's comfort in the Eleventh song. Canticles' rhetoric is also a "form of response" to which the Eleventh song and the blazon of sonnet 77 allude. Astrophel's nominally male soul "plant[s] himself in the eares" to hear Stella's voice, and this poem is a blazon of his response to her – a response that is both physical and spiritual, since his "Mayd'n Muse doth blush to tell the best." This coy reference to the physical presence, both of Stella and of Astrophel's response to her, is clearly sexual; instead of concluding with a *volta* that calls her inner virtue the source of her beauty, as is more usual, Astrophel concludes his blazon of her virtues with a *volta* that says she is also physically beautiful.

The conversation of Stella – her verbal responsiveness – is the seductive source of Astrophel's yearning for her as well as what defines her for the reader who will replace her in the final four sonnets (and then assume Astrophel's place as well after that). That he also desires her physically provides the anxiety of Ovidian desire, but the identification of her "true speech" and his spiritual desire is the result of a metamorphosis of another kind. Anthony Low characterizes sexual longing in classical terms: "Greedy inconsolable desire is ever waking, ever crying, for food and for satisfaction that it cannot have – now, at once, and always" (Low 20). Like a fussy baby, Cupid frets and complains to his mother, who shushes him to be quiet.²⁶ Low defines the notion of "ideal" love according to the feudal values of courtly love – values that, curiously, sound similar to the wifely virtues described in the *Book of Common Prayer*: "Men follow feudal superiors or worship ladies because they thus give

²⁶ Cf. Quarles' Book II, emblem 8 (Appendix 6, fig. 33); and Spenser's Anacreontic verses at the end of the *Amoretti*, which are emblematic in themselves. Again, see Miller's "Sidney, Petrarch, and Ovid, or Imitation as Subversion," in which he identifies this trope as Ovidian.

meaning to their lives, and establish their own inmost identity as persons. The idea that one gains worth by loving and serving what is worthy is a basic tenet inherited from the feudal past and approved by most writers of the time” (Low 23). Thus, Low concludes, “the conflict [of *Astrophel and Stella*] is ... between *two forms* of love and desire, ideal and sexual”: “desire is a necessary part of a vision that includes ‘*Love*’ combined with ‘reason’ This powerful combination of longings for a spiritual ideal and a sexual object proves impossible for Astrophil to maintain – yet equally impossible for him to relinquish [throughout the sequence]” (Low 24-25). However, I would argue that Astrophel cannot relinquish this conflict because he identifies Stella’s embodiment of virtuous ideals with his own sexual desires: the two are conflated as one in his own heart and voice as well as in her face and voice. Low’s argument that ideal and sexual desires conflict oversimplifies the complexity of the deliberate conflation of carnal virtue, incarnated in Stella’s face and dwelling in Astrophel’s heart. Especially after she concedes a kiss midway through the sequence but insists on withholding any further physical concessions, the implication of her contradictory obligations – to her husband and to her own heart’s “true love,” or to Astrophel – is then reflected in Astrophel’s own “conflated” responses to her. This paradoxical situation is defined by its interminable closure; both kinds of desire, for ideal and for sexual consummation, are sustained by each other in the form of the sequence of lyrics itself. The longing for more applies to desire in every sense – physically, emotionally, and spiritually. The paradox of sustained *eros* is that it requires only continuance of longing, so that something is always still desired (whether that something more is consummation or continued conversation). No satisfaction is enough, at least not for long; the “quietest judgement” is disrupted almost immediately by the blushing “Mayd’n Muse.”

What is “the best” that a maiden muse would blush to tell, or that inspires “Jealousie” in the next sonnet (78)? It hardly matters. From a reader’s point of view, the only matter of consequence is that we are aware of something withheld, something kept back, both by Stella with regard to Astrophel and by Astrophel with regard to his readers – we do not get the specifics. Just as a silence falls in stanza 17 of Spenser’s *Epithalamion* to protect the lovers from prying eyes (among other poukish frights), so the withheld sexual explicitness is a kind of testimony of protectiveness here in sonnet 77. For Astrophel to

withhold “the best” of Stella he endorses the propriety of their mutual contract: “They love indeed, who quake to say they love” (sonnet 54). In *Canticles*, the lovers are also explicit about their implicit sexual contract: “His left hand is vnder mine head, & his right hand doeth imbrace me. I charge you, o daughters of Ierusalem, by the roes & by the hindes of the field, that ye stirre not vp, nor wake my loue, vntill she please” (Geneva, Song 2:6-7). The Geneva translation glosses this as follows: the Sponsa “testifieth her great desire toward her housband ... she desireth to be comforted, & felt it. Christ chargeth them [which] haue to do in the Church, as it were by solemne othe, that thei trouble not the quietnes thereof. This is spoken of Christ, who toke vpo[n] him our nature to come to helpe his Church.” The sexual innuendo of the lovers, prone and at least one of them sleeping, is interpreted as the mutual and sustaining comfort of a husband and wife. Again, as in the Eleventh Song, Astrophel grants a husbandly comfort – i.e., privacy – to Stella in response to her blazoned wifely conversation. These two lovers play at being married; the irony is that it is play, and can be only play, because Stella is already married to another man.

Consequently, the titular speakers give way to the reader who is invited to imitate both Astrophel and Stella, to turn rhetorically inward to apply the pleasant diversions of these sonnets in whatever way discretion disposes her to do. We may continue to define genre, form, gender, etc. to our advantage, as many have done, by examining the parts and pieces of Sidney’s work. What I find most interesting, however, is what comes after such definition: what difference does it make, and how do we profit from it? The flexibility with which rhetorical categories are dismantled by Sidney’s constructions of voice is endlessly fascinating, instructing us how to read beyond the anxiety of desire and inscribing erotic yearning with hope: “That in my woes for thee thou art my joy,/ And in my joyes for thee my only annoy” (Sonnet 108). Woes and joy are both equally present here; though Stella is gone, “So strangely (alas) thy works in me prevaile” (108). After reading the book of Stella, Astrophel, like the readers of this sequence, is left with the problem of having read and shelved the book, and being left with empty hands and a full mind; his final four sonnets prefigure the reader’s finishing of *Astrophel and Stella*. After Stella/the Sponsa departs from the sequence, Astrophel/the Sponsus demonstrates that he may also occupy the position of remaining behind by continuing to speak from a solitary position. When he leaves us, then,

both options, like Stella's works, prevail in us. The allegory of marital/erotic conversation is thereby uprooted by the anagogical concerns of united isolation: Stella, the nominal reader of Astrophel's sonnets, concludes the sequence in the Eleventh song and leaves Astrophel and his other readers alone, so that we may value conversation for its own sake if only by contrast to the "silence" that speakers and readers alike must now espouse. The tropology of *Astrophel and Stella* is then the silence of the speakers that Sidney bequeaths to his readers, to apply these conversations' virtues to our own. Just as the Sponsa and her companions call to the Sponsus to make haste so that they may hearken to his voice again, Sidney's final sonnet in *Astrophel and Stella* quits the conversation; the reader, then prevails in the posture of the Sponsa and her companions in *Canticles*, waiting indefinitely for the return of the beloved and the renewed potential for exchange with him.

Wroth's Pamphilia is already situated at the end of *Canticles*, so to speak, in the sense that she awaits the response of her lover. Like Astrophel, she is frustrated because this response is not forthcoming in any worldly sense; but unlike Astrophel, she is far from silenced by the absence of conversational exchange with her beloved. Instead, Pamphilia invents conversational possibilities in her dialogues with various imaginary/fancied partners – Cupid and Venus initially, and then Christ, her own soul, and the reader. It is surely significant that the title of this sonnet sequence is *Pamphilia to*, rather than "and," *Amphilanthus*: he is not one of Wroth's invented speakers in the way that Stella is included in Sidney's poems. From the outset, then, Amphilanthus is addressed rhetorically as a reader for the poems and only a reader; the only speaker identified in the title is Pamphilia, alone. And yet she converses with Cupid, Venus, and Christ, not to mention addressing her own soul, and concludes by addressing the reader as a potential fellow writer. The inward dialogues that make up the majority of the sequence, however, are all subsumed within the parameters of Pamphilia's speech; her speech is directed toward multiple objectives, conveying inward discussions with internalized others with the notable exceptions of Amphilanthus and the reader, neither of whom respond within the text of the sequence. Pamphilia is characterized as the unloved object, disregarded in terms of exchange, and beginning in isolation – that is, where Sidney leaves off. This is the literal level, in which the

woman Pamphilia addresses love sonnets to the man Amphilanthus. She then ends up, curiously, where Astrophel begins, dismissing the “discourse of *Venus*, and her sonne” (*P to A*, ciii) when she asserts the skill of her fancy to invent internal dialogues – its authority to construct a multiplicity of voices that are, essentially, all part of her singular voice.²⁷ In this sense, Pamphilia’s speech evokes the dialogue of *Canticles* itself; Pamphilia’s sonnets and songs write all the voices in each conversation, thereby establishing an allegory of Ovidian figures through the dialogues with Venus, Cupid, and other classical figures of love. These dialogues then lead up to the corona, and the anagogical conversation with Christ, in which Pamphilia repossesses her own heart because he gives it back to her. In the corona, and afterward, Pamphilia demonstrates tropology by conversing with her own soul and then by directly addressing the reader; again, like Astrophel, she gives the titular role of the beloved to the reader by concluding this way.

This exegetical rhetoric of expanding meaning by establishing a series of allegorical, anagogical, and tropological senses, expressed in the inward manner of Pamphilia’s conversations and characterized by her choice of addressees, is modeled on the dialogue of male and female lovers’ responsive speech in *Canticles*. Pamphilia assumes the roles of both lovers, just as Astrophel expresses both male and female kinds of desire in the Eleventh Song of *Astrophel and Stella*: Pamphilia is anguished Sponsa in her lover’s worldly absence, and crowned Sponsus in her divine lover’s presence. Various critics have noted that images and themes of duality in the sequence reflect the duality of “subjectivity” in Pamphilia herself. Dubrow, for instance, notes that “[W]roth expresses many of her ambivalences [as a female writer] by evoking two very different female figures [the ‘wholly passive speaker’ and Venus, ‘the active and powerful goddess of love’]. In so doing, [Wroth] also hints at her preference for assuming multiple roles” (Dubrow 1995, 140). Not only does Pamphilia invoke an alternative female figure, but she also invokes alternative male figures as well: Eros

²⁷ Astrophel dismisses conventional and classical conceits in sonnets 3, 15, and elsewhere: “You that poore *Petrarchs* long deceased woes,/ With new-borne sighes and denisend wit do sing./ You take wrong waies those far-fet helpes be such/ As do bewray a want of inward tuch” (sonnet 15). This is a conceit in itself, which distinguishes his own poetry from that of other love poets, and which Pamphilia employs as well during her sequence. But the dismissal at the end of the sequence is no conceit, because it is at the end and because she has already replaced Venus’ discourse with that of Christ.

and Anteros, the worldly/classical and divine Cupids: “Wroth plays two types of love against each other [in the male figures], a conflict that encompasses but is by no means confined to the dialogue between Petrarchism and anti-Petrarchism” (Dubrow 1995, 157).²⁸ This duality of gendered others as well as voices is reflected in the flexibility of generic themes and the forms associated with those themes. The “discourse of *Venus*, and her sonne” (final sonnet) that Pamphilia struggles with in her grammatically complex sonnets up to sonnet lxxvi (just before the corona) gives way to the counter-discourse of Christ as an erotic lover, a counter-discourse that is signaled by the inclusion of twenty syntactically clear songs throughout the sequence and by the corona of sonnets dedicated to “LOVE” in the sub-heading that precedes the corona.²⁹ The corona, especially, marks a notable shift in the mode of address, after which Pamphilia directs her sonnets to her readers rather than to any one of her fancied respondents. In terms of form and imagery, too, the labyrinth that opens and closes the corona sequence encloses the speaking voice in a way that strangely reflects her new sense of comfort and safety in a re-directed openness to Christ. The reader’s response is thus implicit in Pamphilia’s rhetoric, instead of utterly absent, as Amphilanthus’ speech is. The structure of the sonnets themselves, arranged in the form of the corona and invoking a labyrinth to begin and end it, mirrors the enclosed garden of the soul from Canticles that Pamphilia now recognizes in her own form (both textually and physically): the sonnets are complex, labyrinthine and carefully interlinked, just as Pamphilia’s dialogues are, and the image of the crown that signals her revelatory openness to Christ is a blessing that marks her way out of the otherwise enclosed labyrinth.

What makes *Pamphilia to Amphilanthus* rhetorically sophisticated is that the mixing of male and female voices in Pamphilia’s textual conversation is reflected in the mixing of forms (songs and sonnets): the contrast between Eros and Anteros is analogous to the struggle between Venus and Pamphilia herself, the self-characterized model of constancy, and the

²⁸ Again, see Quarles’ emblem II.8, and Spenser’s Anacreontic verses (discussion in Chapter Two).

²⁹ In Waller’s edition, this sub-heading appears on page 73.

complications of the sonnets are disrupted by the fluidity of the songs.³⁰ Far from a lack of conversation, in which the “female” voice is self-enclosed and isolated perpetually in her “problematic” desire as Elizabeth Hanson has argued, Pamphilia constructs her own dialogues through the generic figures of Petrarchan and scriptural traditions as well as through the kinds of erotic relationships that are possible between these figures and herself.³¹ The literal limits of the non-responsive Amphilanthus are succeeded by the allegorical limits of various Ovidian figures; these limits are translated by the erotic response of Christ which “penetrates” and thereby opens the labyrinth, and finally Pamphilia’s status as writer of sonnets and songs turns toward directly addressing and giving advice to the reader. Hanson declares that “gender codes signify powerfully within poetry, shaping what it will mean for a woman to appropriate a particular poetic tradition. . . . [T]he Petrarchan tradition posed specific problems for women because of its simultaneous emphases on the integrity of the first-person voice and on erotic expression” (Hanson 183). As we have seen with *Astrophel and Stella* and the *Amoretti*, however, the cohesion or “integrity of the first-person voice” depends on the subject’s erotic conversational exchange with another, and this integrity involves a doubled kind of rhetoric that is not exclusive in terms of gender. Furthermore, in the context of Canticles’ rhetoric or love more generally, this kind of conversation usually involves the mutual expression of desire. “Petrarchan” sonnet sequences tend to disrupt this mutual expression in a variety of ways, but given the influence of Canticles’ rhetoric, it is difficult to see why such expression would pose “specific problems for women” such as Wroth. Rather, the Sponsa of Canticles would seem to pose significant advantages for women writers, since they are already female and would more “naturally” imitate Canticles’ rhetorical model of human desire in the articulation of the Sponsa. As Dubrow again points out with regard to gender and generic issues,

³⁰ Elaine V. Beilin also notes the emblematic figures of Eros and Anteros, and she argues that because Amphilanthus does not mediate the same transition from Eros to Anteros as Pamphilia does, that constancy is therefore exclusive to women. Since the male Anteros or Christ is the figure who elicits Pamphilia’s transition by example, however, this conclusion seems somewhat oversimplified. See Beilin’s “‘The Onely Perfect Vertue’: Constancy in Mary Wroth’s *Pamphilia to Amphilanthus*,” in *Spenser Studies* 2, (eds. Patrick Cullen and Thomas P. Roche Jr. Pittsburgh: U of Pennsylvania P, 1981, 229-245), 233-234, 240.

³¹ See Hanson’s “Boredom and Whoredom: Reading Renaissance Women’s Sonnet Sequences” (*The Yale Journal of Criticism* 10.1 (1997): 165-191), 183, 186.

Generalizations about the masculinity of Petrarchism ... need to be modulated not only by the activities of women poets on the Continent but also by the workings of that tradition in England and elsewhere, especially its tendency to elide gender boundaries. Petrarch himself is associated with the veil and footprints he elsewhere assigns to Laura. The agency connected with speech is sometimes denied to the Petrarchan poet and bestowed on his lady. And in important senses that poet is the object of his mistress's gaze. ... Wroth is responsible not for introducing the erosion of boundaries but for intensifying an ongoing process.

(Dubrow 1995, 158)

The female sonneteer participates legitimately within, rather than struggles against, Petrarchan forms, because those forms are legitimized by the legacy of *Canticles*, which identifies a tradition of “female” expressions of erotic desire in a reciprocal context of exchange. Pamphilia as sole speaker disrupts the notion of mutual exchange not because she is female, but because she is not interrupted by the responses of Amphilanthus – he remains consistently silent.

The significance of Amphilanthus' silence, however, has failed to capture much attention from critics who seem remarkably persistent in their attempts to prove that Pamphilia is a strictly allegorical figure for Wroth herself. Rosalind Smith, for instance, in her article on the politics of withdrawal, has commented on the ways in which erotic expression tempers a politicized or feminist reading of *Pamphilia to Amphilanthus*, “embedding its criticism [of court and gender politics] in erotic discourse” (Smith 424). Smith argues that, just as Elizabeth had male sonneteers, James may have a female one, and that “According to contemporary representations of James as Solomon, his relationship with the dark and comely bride enlarges to become the exemplar of Christ's love refracted through the divinely elected king ... However, this association of James and Solomon also carried the negative connotations of an excessive corporeal sensuality” (Smith 426). Smith's very interesting remarks on the allegorical allusions to *Canticles* are made in passing, however, and unfortunately they are not developed; she does not consider the dynamics of withdrawal in *Canticles* itself as part of her political reading of Wroth's sequence. Although not acknowledged, it is this gendered legacy of *Canticles*' female speaker that authorizes the embedded commentary on gender, rhetorically evoked in the voice of Pamphilia herself. Wroth may deliberately invoke the *Sponsa* to her king, as well as tacitly compare his court to

Elizabeth's and Wroth's verses to those of Elizabethan sonneteers. But where does this leave Pamphilia, and how does this legitimacy of (Wroth's) authorship reflect on the nominal speaker (Pamphilia)? Such identification between Wroth and Pamphilia makes little difference to a reading of the sequence: Wroth names her speaker Pamphilia and Pamphilia writes fancied dialogues with imaginary respondents, and I contend that this rhetoric constructs further possibilities for the sequence beyond those of biographical allegory. In any case, the point of literary allegory is that it suggests further possibilities for literary engagement; biographical readings refer to histories beyond the text, and often fail to return to the literature that inspires them.

Unfortunately, this critical tendency overshadows the complexities of textual analysis with the obfuscation of historical allegory as a conclusive and final explanation of the text. Since Wroth may well have been influenced by her uncle's sequence, and because hers begins where his ends and ends where his begins, it would not be too simplistic to infer that they shared similar attitudes regarding literary exegesis – and thus that their sequences may offer far more than autobiographical references. Astrophel's disapprobation of “allegories curious” in sonnet 28, for instance, shows disdain for a certain kind of interpretation that insists on strict correspondences and hierarchies. Pamphilia's engagement with the discourse of Venus and Cupid is as painful as her non-engagement with the desired Amphilanthus, so that in order to avoid pain and discover pleasure, she, like Astrophel, develops a renunciation of rhetorical approaches that limit the potential for discursive engagement to inescapably submissive/dominant roles. Daniel Juan Gil offers an interesting variation on the biographical approach to *Pamphilia to Amphilanthus*, limiting his analysis of Pamphilia and Wroth to the common characteristic of authorship. His emphasis on Wroth therefore does not entirely obscure the points he makes about Pamphilia, which are ultimately far more useful in terms of understanding the sequence. Gil argues that Wroth constructs herself, and Pamphilia, as the beloved object for readers; that though Pamphilia desires to be Amphilanthus' beloved (in a passive sense), she ends up asserting her own desire for Christ's reciprocal love for her; and that Wroth similarly asserts her object status with regard to her readers. Citing Karen Newman and Adorno, Gil characterizes the notions of female subjectivity and objectivity in *Pamphilia to Amphilanthus*: “subjects are not born *a priori* but are

made through mutually constituting interactions with objects, and this dependance upon objects leaves complex marks on subjects” (Gil 75). Gil then argues that

Rather than breaking the woman out of her conventional position [as beloved object], this sonnet [42 or xlvi] insists upon a deepened occupation of that position, even suggesting a fundamental identification of the feminine speaker with it. The speaker’s authority emerges not as the refusal of conventions that silence her but as an aggressive occupation or reoccupation of her conventionalized site together with an insistence that it *is* conventionalized.

(Gil 79)

In other words, Gil contends that the writer (Wroth) asserts the “fundamental identification” of herself as “conventional” beloved object of love, desired by an other, in sonnet xlvi; I would contend, however, that in this sonnet, Pamphilia asserts the exegetical voice of being desired by God and responding to it as the anagogical concern of the sonnet sequence. Her assertion of desire may be typical of “male” speech in some ways and “female” speech in other ways; but my point here is that this combination of gendered positions, as beloved object and desiring subject, is typical of the female voice of Canticles’ rhetoric, encompassing contemplative silence (in the worldly or literal sense that her dialogues are all internal) as well as expressing the erotic desire for exchange with her reading audience.

Sonnet xlvi, which Gil refers to in the quotation above, is an example of the spectacle of isolation that encloses Pamphilia:

If euer loue had force in humane brest,
 If euer he could moue in pensiu heart:
 Or if that he such powre could but impart,
 To breed those flames, whose heat brings ioyes vnrest.
 Then looke on me; I am to these adrest,
 I am the soule that feeles the greatest smart:
 I am that heartlesse Trunck of hearts depart;
 And I that one, by loue, and grieffe opprest.
 None euer felt the truth of loues great misse
 Of eyes till I depriued was of blisse;
 For had he seene, he must haue pittie show’d.
 I should not haue beene made this Stage of woe,
 Where sad Disasters haue their open show:
 O no, more pittie he had sure bestow’d.

(*P to A*, xlvi)

Here the rhetorical condition of affect is posed to assert that the speaker is an object: “Then looke on me; I am to these adrest,/ I am the soule that feeles the greatest smart.” What she misses is “eyes” – not her own, but blind Cupid’s: “For had he seene, he must have pittie show’d.” The concluding three lines blame her position as unappreciated spectacle for her grief; she asserts that she is “this Stage of woe.” Pamphilia’s stage of misery is what identifies her precisely because she has no one to see her, and her “open show” is the paradoxical consequence of having no audience.³² The desired gazer would then, implicitly, offer some protection for her subjective openness, if only because an appreciative response is considerate. Cupid, like Amphilanthus, is blind to her open heart, and this blindness disrupts her attempts to speak because neither can respond if they cannot see her.

Pamphilia’s “Stage of woe” dramatically allegorizes her unfulfilled erotic desire, which makes Cupid an audience of absence like Amphilanthus; their lack of sensory appreciation makes them inadequate and therefore dispensible as erotic objects, and when she then proceeds to dispense with them, she (and we) see more clearly what she desires and what she learns not to desire. Similarly, the allegory of Ovidian love in *Pamphilia to Amphilanthus* repeatedly devolves into considerations of “Iealousie” and the “Tombe” (in sonnets lxvi to lxxi, for instance); the equation of jealousy and the grave echoes Canticles’ “love is strong as death, jealousy is cruel as the grave” (8:6) and indicates that the sensual anxieties of Ovidian allegories are cruel because they are not “strong as death.” Instead, jealousy and suspicion are subject to mortality, and ultimately succumb to the body’s earth-bound limitations.

In the context of the Ovidian allegory, Pamphilia’s anguish is the result of conflating verbal response with visual regard, as Echo and Narcissus do. In Song 6 (xlii), for instance, she implores “You happy blessed eyes” to “looke on me who doe at mercy stand”; in sonnet xlvi, she says again “Then looke on me; I am to these adrest,/ I am the soule that feeles the greatest smart.” Like the unfortunate Echo, Pamphilia grieves because her beloved will not

³² According to Gil, all this could describe Wroth as poet and Pamphilia as speaker equally well; Gil argues that the theatrical metaphor of Pamphilia’s situation applies as much to Wroth, whose tacit publication of her sonnets puts her on a stage of sorts as well. But Wroth has not yet published the sonnets; she is still writing them. This situation of unappreciated public spectacle cannot be considered with regard to Wroth’s publication of the sequence as Gil describes, and furthermore, makes little difference to a reading of the poems themselves.

hear her, and her physical presence is made insubstantial by his lack of regard for her. Her conflated desires to be seen and to be addressed have inward consequences. In sonnet xxx, for example, she is physically compromised without a heart, since she has given hers to him and has received nothing in return:

Deare cherish this, and with it my soules will,
 Nor for it ran away doe it abuse:
 Alas it left (poore me) your brest to choose,
 As the best shrine, where it would harbour still.
 Then fauour shew, and not vnkindly kill
 The heart which fled to you, but doe excuse
 That which for better did the worse refuse;
 And pleas'd be, though heartlesse my life spill.
 But if you will bee kinde and iust indeed,
 Send me your heart, which in mine's place shall feede
 On faithfull loue to your deuotion bound,
 There shall it see the sacrifices made
 Of pure and spotlesse Loue, which shall not vade,
 While soule and body are together found.

(*P to A*, xxx)

Her heart has left her, “fled” to Amphilanthus, and “heartlesse my life spill[s].” The concluding line is an important condition: if he sends his heart, she will feed it with her love “While soule and body are together found.”³³ His absence is a deficiency of both regard and response, both visual presence and verbal attentiveness, and a refusal to reciprocate her gift of her heart, which is then also an absence of physical exchange; he doesn’t look at her with love, so they cannot converse, and thus she will, like Echo, “spill” and “vade” without a heart. The Ovidian discourse with Venus and Cupid is then an allegory for the absent and failed discourse that she “has” with Amphilanthus.

In an attempt to circumvent his lack of attention in the fourth song (xxviii), Pamphilia adopts the pose of the *Sponsa*, casting her lover as only temporarily gone but

³³ See also sonnet xlv, in which Pamphilia criticizes conventional love lyrics: Pamphilia writes, “Alas, thinke I, your plenty shewes your want” (*P to A*, xlv). This echo of a common Renaissance proverb is also found in Golding’s translation of the Narcissus myth: “my plentie makes me poore” is Golding, ll. 587, and Spenser’s *Amoretti* also alludes to it in sonnets 35 and 83: “so plenty makes us poore” (see Chapter Two). See Tilley’s *A Dictionary of the Proverbs in England in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Cenuries*, entry P427 (p. 547). The confluence of this proverb with Ovidian characterizations of Narcissus subtly supports the idea that self-regard can be covetous if it is taken literally or exclusively as self-regard.

metaphysically present to her nonetheless. This adoption of a non-Ovidian pose signals the anagogical direction of the sequence, adumbrating what the allegorical discourse with Venus and Cupid will lead up to:

Sweetest love return againe,
 Make not too long stay; ...
 Let vs not thus parted be,
 Loue, and absence nere agree.

But since you must needs depart, ...
 ... take my heart ...
 So in part we shall not part,
 Though we absent be,
 Tyme, nor place, nor greatest smart,
 Shall my bands make free

(fourth song, xxvii)

In giving her heart to him, however, she does not receive his in return; she asks him to adopt a husband's role to "cherish this, and with it my soules will" (xxx), to promise a husband's vows to comfort his wife with his own sacrifices. But she repeatedly offers her obedient response, her constancy, before he has vowed anything at all; she repeats herself because she perceives no change in herself or in her suffering, and so keeps offering obedience in the hope that someone will respond with comfort.³⁴ Later, she obeys Fortune; when she is troubled by her solitude, Fortune appears to her, as Venus' servant:

Till rise (said she) Reward to thee doth send
 By me the servant of true Louers ioy:
 Bannish all clouds of doubt, all feares destroy;
 And now on Fortune, and on Loue depend.
 I her obey'd, and rising felt that Loue
 Indeed was best, when I did least it moue.

(xxxvi)

However, she soon realizes that Venus and Fortune, like Amphilanthus, cannot help her discomfiting soul-sickness, any more than Cupid could refrain from inflicting it; in Song 10 (lix) she draws out the analogy of a bad sovereign and a bad lover. It is ambiguous as to whether she means to criticize Venus (whom she has been serving) or Amphilanthus (as a

³⁴ She vows "obedience" in sonnet viii (to Amphilanthus), twice in xxxvi (to Fortune and Venus), and finally in lxxix (to Christ).

bad lover).³⁵ I would argue that she “means” to criticize both by drawing out their similar inadequacies in the terms of Canticles’ responsive rhetoric, in which the lovers speak back and forth to each other.

Pamphilia is thus foreshadowing, in poems like Song 10, the dismissal of Ovidian figures that takes place in the corona. By the ninth sonnet of the corona, she keeps only herself and Christ in the translated ideal of true love. In the final, twentieth song (xciv), just after the corona, she signals this new context by addressing her readers – not Amphilanthus anymore, but us – enjoining us to love truly in speech as well as deed:

Louers learne to speake but truth,
 Swear not, and your oathes forgoe,
 Giue your age a constant youth,
 Vow no more then what you’le doe.

Thinke it sacriledge to breake
 What you promise, shalle in loue
 And in teares what you doe speake
 Forget not, when the ends you proue.

(twentieth song, xciv)

Constancy, then, is more than pleasant or anguished vows to Venus, Cupid, or lover; it is a true correspondence between desire and the action that expresses it, inner voices enacted outwardly “while soule and body are together found” (*P to A*, xxx). The anagogical crown of the soul’s discourse with Christ is what returns Pamphilia’s heart to her, realigning body and soul together. In this new translation of discourse into mutually responsive dialogue, there is no longer a fixed sense of submissive and dominant figures; Christ is Pamphilia’s lover as much as she is his, and the sense of submission she feels toward him is no longer a compulsive or necessary characteristic of her voice. As in Canticles, the lovers exchange responses, and the absence of either does not compromise this exchange because it is sustained by mutual erotic desire. In the fourth corona sonnet (lxxx), for instance, Love/Christ’s “pleasing sting” “pierce[s] your tender heart”; in the twelfth corona sonnet, Pamphilia describes how her embracing response to divine penetration results in pleasure:

And who so giue themselues in this deare kinde,
 These happinesses shall attend them still,

³⁵ In an allegorical sense, Wroth may also be alluding to James, as Smith argues.

To be supplide with ioyes enrich'd in minde,
With treasures of content, and pleasures fill.

(*P to A*, lxxxviii)

Pamphilia's soul now possesses the heart of a lover; it is not given away to an other, but rather, the previous concept of "other" is disrupted when the subject Pamphilia asserts her position as Christ's beloved object. Her heart is thereby re-incorporated into her own body when she becomes the object of Christ's conversation, because his desire for her penetrates her heart and crowns her response to him. He too is crowned by her desire, which accepts and is filled by his "pleasing sting."

This radical shift of perspective is indicated in Pamphilia's rhetoric in the corona of sonnets. The two significant images of this sequence of fourteen sonnets are the labyrinth, which opens and closes the corona sequence, and the crown that names it: "A Crowne of Sonnets dedicated to LOVE" (p. 73). These two images are figures of enclosure, but they are also envisioned as open to Christ. Mary Moore draws attention to the labyrinthine corona that figures the form of female integrity as an "enclosed garden." She argues that Wroth's use of the labyrinth to open and close the corona sequence

represents perplexity even as it perplexes. Wroth achieves this effect through syntax and poetic forms that mime two physical traits of labyrinths: enclosure and complexity. The labyrinth and the sonnet are coupled fittingly to these ends. Like mazes in classical literature, the sonnet is identified through [such] metapoetic tropes in English as enclosed space and highly crafted form ... Wroth magnifies the confines of the sonnet through contracted syntax that elides articles and pronouns and creates ambiguous referents. ... Such tricky syntax mimics labyrinthine complexity; difficult to follow and cleverly wrought, it demands pause and standstill. The corona formally embodies enclosure through reiterative opening and closing lines, creating a closed poetic crown, dramatically engaging the reader in the female sense of self that Wroth depicts.

(Moore 109)

Moore, unfortunately, assumes that these enclosed poetic forms and images are "created to suit the shapes of male erotic desire" (Moore 109), thereby perpetuating a binary and strict opposition between female enclosure and male penetration as exclusively female and male respectively. The scriptural motif of the "enclosed garden" of the female lover, however, is not so much about desire as it is about desirable self-integrity; furthermore, the metaphor of enclosure, while it maintains the sense of the female *Sponsa* because it is founded on the

physical form of the female body, is applicable to men as well because it figures the soul and/or the Church. Thus the desire for the “female” *hortus conclusus* is equally articulated by men and women, insofar as self-integrity is desirable and not exclusive to either gender. Nonetheless, Moore’s analysis of labyrinth, corona, sonnet form, and ambiguous syntax as indicators of the rhetoric of female singular speaker addressing a nominally male lover is useful: Pamphilia is both labyrinth to herself and corona for Christ. Moreover, it is through her interactions with both Cupid and Christ that her sense of integrity is developed for the reader: her perpetual openness to the former is without discretion and leaves her in misery, compelling her to seek the safety of enclosure that Christ’s crown offers.

The labyrinth-corona that is offered up to “LOVE” in “endless praise” (sonnet lxxvi) is the integrity of a speaking subject who is also an object of desire. The world, and she in it, are still a labyrinth beginning and ending the corona sequence in separation from the divine lover, but the labyrinth is also a crown that she may wear in the sense of the immanent apocalyptic perspective: her desire for Christ embodies his presence in her otherwise earth-bound heart.³⁶ The allegory of love that was a tomb or grave associated with “Jealousie” and “Suspition” earlier in the sequence (lxvi to lxxi, for example, repeatedly play with images of Cupid and tombs) is now the “wombe for ioyes increase” (lxxviii). Instead of the strict contraries she sought to run from but could not shun (in xiv), now “black is discern’d by white” (lxxix) – contraries support rather than oppress each other, providing definition and developing her discretionary openness. Christ’s comforting responsiveness is discerned by contrast to Cupid’s inability to assuage her anguish; and Pamphilia discerns her own integrity by contrast to Venus’ indiscreet commands, by Cupid’s fretful inconstancy, and by Amphilanthus’ absence. Instead of constant desire, constancy is redefined as longing for Christ:

³⁶ Smith sees the “vision of Revelation in the fourth sonnet of the corona” as a reflection of “the Protestant shift to a belief in the imminence of the apocalypse” (Smith 428). However, the belief in the imminence of the apocalypse is hardly a “Protestant shift” and is in fact just as typical of early medieval interpretive emphases as it is common to Reformation exegesis. Furthermore, as Origen in the 3rd century and Hugh of St. Victor in the 12th century have recommended, such exclusively allegorical readings privilege the literal and allegorical prophecy of scripture at the expense of any mystical understanding that may be applied to the soul in a more immediate sense; a belief in the imminence of the apocalypse is self-defeating unless it is complemented by an understanding of the immanence of apocalyptic rhetoric.

Never to slake till earth no Starres can see,
 Till Sun, and Moone doe leaue vs darke night,
 And second *Chaos* once againe doe free
 Vs, and the World, from all diuisions spight

(lxxx, 4th corona)

This apocalyptic context for Constancy opens the grave of human mortality and figures apocalyptic resurrection in the erotic penetration of Pamphilia's heart and soul:

He may our Prophet, and our Tutor prooue,
 In whom alone we do this power finde,
 To ioyne two hearts as in one frame to mooue
 Two bodies, but one soule to rule the minde.
 Eyes which must care to one deare Obiect binde,
 Ears to each others speech as if aboue
 All else, they sweete, and learned were; this kind
 Content of Louers witnesseth true loue.
 It doth enrich the wits, and make you see
 That in your selfe which you knew not before,
 Forseeing you to admire such gifts should be
 Hid from your knowledge, yet in you the store.
 Millions of these adorne the throane of Loue,
 How blest are they then, who his fauours prooue?

(lxxxii, 6th corona)

Both Prophet of the future and Tutor for the present, the divine Cupid binds hearts rather than breaking them. In a tropological sense, this binding applies not only to worldly marriage, joining two hearts, bodies, and minds in one soul, but also effects the binding of soul to body, enriching the wits. Pamphilia signals this turn by shifting from “our” to “you,” addressing the reader: “this kind/ Content . . . make[s] you see/ That in your self which you knew not before.” Self-knowledge here is equated with self-integrity, easing the pain of the mortal heart by opening the perspective to include the immortal soul. The heart she gave away to Amphilanthus earlier is thereby returned to her by Christ and her rhetoric shifts correspondingly from addressing the fancied/textual lover Amphilanthus, who never speaks, to the actual/social reader who might. Her discourse with Christ thus enables her to speak as a writer to her reader; the anagogical relationship with him endows her with a tropological authority to speak as a lover and as a sonneteer.

This rhetorical shift re-aligns Pamphilia in relation to her readers, who are literally reading her in this world. “In this strange labyrinth how shall we turn,” indeed – the earth-bound question that opens and closes the corona remains unanswered because it is now directed toward the reader. The crown of Revelation, however, offers a potential model for a worldly response: “be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death” (KJV, Revelation 2:10-11). Pamphilia offers her soul as crown to God, but accepts her heart (and the labyrinth of the world) from him in order not to be hurt by the death of “Jealousie” and “Suspition” (sonnets lxvi to lxxi):

To thee then, Lord commander of all hearts,
 Ruler of our affections, kind, and iust,
 Great King of Loue, my soule from faigned smart,
 Or thought of change, I offer to your trust,
 This Crowne, my selfe, and all that I haue more,
 Except my heart, which you bestow'd before.

(lxxxix, 13th corona)

Thus the worldly “discourse of *Venus*, and her sonne” is ours to own if we want it, bestowed along with the heart that feels. Though Pamphilia leaves off such discourse in the final sonnet of the sequence, she does so with the comment to herself that “what’s past shewes you can loue/ Now let your Constancy your Honour proue”:

My Muse now happy lay thy self to rest
 Sleepe in the quiet of a faithfull loue,
 Write you no more, but let the Phant’sies moou
 Some other hearts, wake not to new vnrest.
 But if your Study be those thoughts adrest
 To truth, which shall eternall goodnes prooue;
 Enjoying of true ioy the most, and best
 The endles gaine which neuer will remoue.
 Leau the discourse of *Venus*, and her sonne
 To young beginners, and their braines inspire
 With storyes of great Loue, and from that fire
 Get heat to write the fortunes they haue wonne.
 And thus leau off; what’s past shewes you can loue,
 Now let your Constancy your Honor proue.

(*P to A*, ciii)

The second person here addressed is “My Muse,” and Pamphilia asks her to “mooue/ Some other hearts” with the “discourse of *Venus*, and her sonne.” Pamphilia offers a description of her sequence as an allegory of the genre, and clearly characterizes this genre as something that is preliminary to the pleasures of proving Constancy and Honor to the divine lover. After addressing her Muse in the opening lines, Pamphilia addresses herself and implicates the reader with the ambiguous use of the second person pronoun: “... if your Study be those thoughts adrest/ To truth .../ The endles gaine which neuer will remoue” then “Leaue the discourse of *Venus*, and her sonne/ To young beginners.” Just as Astrophel blazons Stella in order to read her virtues in his sonnet 77, Pamphilia’s story “of great Loue” establishes a context in which she may prove her Constancy and Honor through appropriate social discourse with her like-minded readers. The ambiguity of “your Study” not only models her tropological response to her self-interpreted desire; it also summons a tropological response to her sequence from her readers.³⁷

From the opening sonnet, when in darkness “sleepe ... did” Pamphilia’s “senses hyre,/ From Knowledge of [her] selfe,” the “burning hearts” and flames of love tortured her. In the final sonnet, it would seem that in the fire and heat of her “storyes of great Loue” she is purified and her senses returned to a knowledge of herself. As Gil suggests, Pamphilia offers herself to the desiring gaze of the reader through her offer of the corona, her self, and all that she has more to the divine, as a desirable demonstration of how to overcome the loss of a lover: re-orient yourself to the one who will not leave by translating yourself into a textualized object of divine interpretation. In other words, not only is she desirable to view or read, but she is also desirable to imitate in social terms. Her enactment of subjectivity – that is, female “opened” subjectivity that is predicated on being a desirable self-enclosed

³⁷ As she writes in the seventh corona sonnet, “Love will a Painter make you, such, as you/ Shall able be to draw, your onely deare” (lxxxiii). Cf. Wither’s Emblem 4.44:

... let us make
 An *Emblem* of our selves, thereby to take
 More heed, how God is moved towards them, ...
 For, as wee somewhat have of every *Creature*,
 So, wee in us, have somewhat of his Nature:
 Or, if it bee not sayd *the same* to bee,
 His *Pictures*, and his *Images* are wee. (Wither, *Emblems*, 4.44)

See Chapter Five for further discussion of this emblem.

object of desire – reflects the exchange of roles between lovers in *Canticles* as well as the exchanging respondents to whom she addresses herself. In this rhetoric of succeeding discourses, each counter-discourse is an inherent component of its preceding “dominant” discourse: as each respondent is succeeded by another, a new level of exegesis is developed. Rhetorical strategies are then determined by the tactics of interpretation or, in Pamphilia’s case, self-interpretation. The ambiguity of Pamphilia’s difficult syntax, for instance, is a strategy designed to be flexible enough to incorporate a variety of responsive tactics, so that the reader is able to shift from one interpretive sense to the next. Unlike Sidney, though, Wroth manages to perform this complex operation without the usual other – without Amphilanthus to whom the sequence is nominally addressed. Amphilanthus is no Stella; he never has a voice in *Pamphilia to Amphilanthus*, though his refusal to speak seems to emphasize the fact that he is addressed nonetheless (however rarely). Initially, this silence casts him in the traditionally obstructive role of the Petrarchan lady, a gender reversal that we might expect from a female poet; however, Pamphilia soon replaces him with other, and finally better, conversational fancies. He is exchanged for the Ovidian figures of Cupid, then Venus, who are themselves both abandoned for Christ. In the end, Pamphilia’s versatility in conversational partners is what ends up developing and characterizing the true Constancy of the Sponsa that she claims throughout the sequence, and the role of the titular addressee – Amphilanthus – is finally given to the potentially responsive audience of readers when the poet addresses her closing remarks to the reader.

Sidney’s Astrophel circles like a moth around the flame of Stella, the fixed star; she moves out of his view, however, and he is left alone and waiting for her unlikely return. Pamphilia, on the other hand, describes herself as the flame, without any moth: “one heart flaming more than all the rest” (*P to A*, i). Through her sequence, though, she reconstructs herself as a fixed star and she also constructs the “moth” of divine and social regard. She (like the Church as Sponsa) hearkens to the scriptural speech of *Canticles* in order to evoke the voice of the desirable human object – herself – of divine subjectivity. That she does so in the literal absence of a respondent highlights the legacy of *Canticles*’ rhetoric further, because the male lover is often absent for the Sponsa as well (most notably in the dark night

of the soul, when she wanders through the city streets in search for him, but also at the conclusion of the Canticles). Petrarchan sonnet sequences invoke this imagery from Canticles repeatedly, claiming that they are “sick of love” and thereby signaling that the speech of a female Sponsa is what characterizes human love.³⁸ The silence or implicit refusals of a divine figure in religious poetry, or a beloved figure in sonnet sequences, is what effects both narrative disruption and lyric association: the speaker must then read herself first in order to speak to, and elicit response from, the beloved other.

While “gender is [not] necessarily the overriding determinant of subjectivity,” Sidney and Wroth both demonstrate its usefulness by deconstructing the politics of sexual exchange (Dubrow 1995, 144). Gender in these two sonnet sequences is hermaphroditic; both genders provide their own rhetoric of desire for any subject or object. The exchange of erotic play requires an other; and as we will see in the poetry of Crashaw and Herbert in the next chapter, regardless of the sex of the beloved object, the subject may take up whichever gender role is appropriate to the desired kind of exchange. The virtues of the human soul, like those of the female body, are chastity, self-enclosure, and discretion. These virtues are not exclusive to women, however; Astrophel, for instance, is far more constant than Pamphilia, in that he converses with Stella only (as far as we know, though she does accuse him of engaging in other liaisons in the Eleventh Song, which he denies). Exegesis of Canticles and Revelation renders the relations between men and women as a reflection of divine/human relations. Mortal self-integrity effects spiritual integrity, which then opens the potential for relations with the divine spirit. The “enclosed” form of the sonnet echoes the mortal form of the body: brief, lyric, and with a *volta* at the end, the sonnet formally figures mortal existence. The sequence of sonnets, however, mimics the multiplicity of lyric moments and gendered voices that the “individual” soul may accommodate. A sequence may be indefinite, and is also indeterminate in narrative terms, mimicking the experiential accumulation of present moments. In this sense, sonnet sequences are the most intensely focussed application of Canticles tropology: they emphasize the immediacy of a present situation that is always implicitly unfinished because it is worldly and our attempts to develop self-integrity in such an unfinishable world.

³⁸ See KJV Canticles 2:5 and 5:8.

Chapter Four
The Scriptural Body:
 Crashaw's *Steps to the Temple* (1646) and Herbert's *The Temple* (1633)

In this chapter, I will focus on the rhetoric of the inscribed body – that is, on the human body as a text and on eroticized images of scripture that describe and interpret the body in Crashaw's *Steps to the Temple* and in Herbert's *The Temple*. This method of using scripture as a metaphor for the human body and/or human institutions is an important device of Canticles' rhetoric because it is based on the allegory of the Church as a human body that, in the figure of the Sponsa, yearns for the divine. The scriptural body also informs the eroticized relations between lovers' souls in the sonnet sequences and love lyrics that I've already examined in previous chapters, but in the religious poetry of Herbert and Crashaw (as well as in the emblem books of Wither and Quarles, which I will focus on in the next two chapters) the emphasis of rhetorical devices falls on the body as a textualized vehicle for the soul's relations with God. The rhetorical reflections of the Sponsa and Sponsus in the *Book of Common Prayer's* description of husbands and wives are also employed by these religious poets, and I will continue to argue that erotic exchange is the foundation for a flexible public representation of subjectivity; however, in this wider social context that includes the allegory of the whole Church, and where more than two people are concerned, the rhetoric of tropological concerns requires some adjustment. Both Crashaw and Herbert tend to figure the individual body as a text, inscribed by God as scriptural and to be read as complementing scripture (that is, as "natural" exegesis). Furthermore, self-exegesis or tropology is highlighted by both poets as an example of how to approach God, thereby incorporating the body and worldly concerns into the otherwise textual discourse of exegesis. In *The Temple* (1633), for instance, George Herbert accentuates the allegory of the Church as the Sponsa who supplies a communal context for the individual soul's expression of desire for God, protecting the soul's openness in a nurturing embrace; personal conduct then initiates interaction between private contemplation and public liturgy.¹ Alternatively,

¹ See also Wither's *Hymnes and Songs of the Church*, and discussion in Chapter 2, where Wither incorporates the idea of the Church as Sponsa to exemplify the enclosed openness of the soul.

Crashaw's intensity of imagery focuses on the body as a means for expressing desire for the divine; Crashaw's *Steps to the Temple* (1646) foregrounds the pleasure of reading the divine in the world through the device of reading bodies as scripture.² It is important to note that the inscription of the body for religious purposes does not necessarily constitute an ascetic approach to the body, as many critics of Herbert and Crashaw have assumed; rather, the more eroticized the body is, the more we may appreciate it as a text written by the divine.

Despite the chronology of publication, then, Crashaw's text will be read as a preliminary step toward the metaphorical collection of the Temple that Herbert presents, because the integrity of body and soul in Crashaw's poetry prefigures the integrity of the Church, the individual, and the divine in Herbert.³ For both poets, though, the body as temple is both singular and plural, masculine and feminine, loving subject and beloved object. The perspective offered by religious poets, as by their contemporary sonneteers, regards *eros* as properly seated in the soul, but expressed by the body and particularly by the heart: the heart is then an indivisible agent for the soul, bestowed (as in *Pamphilia to Amphilanthus*) by God.⁴ The Temple/body is therefore presented by Crashaw and Herbert as a paradox and therefore rhetorically ambiguous: How are we to interpret any meaning when so many potential contradictions are continually, concurrently presented to us? In rhetorical terms, a paradox is defined by an irresolvable tension between two or more seemingly

² See also Quarles' *Sions Sonets*, and discussion in Chapter 2; Quarles emphasizes his own interpretive reading of Canticles in order to characterize his readers' pleasure in "the diuineſt of ſubiectſ."

³ I will not address Herbert's architectural motifs in terms of The Church-Porch, The Church, and The Church Militant as a textual structure for *The Temple*. Other critics have argued both for and against variations on this theme; see Esther Gilman Richey's "The Political Design of Herbert's *Temple*," p. 90-91, fn. 7. My focus here is on Herbert's analogy for a dwelling place – i.e., the model of discourse or scriptural conversation – which Crashaw also uses, though somewhat differently; see Phil. 3:20-21: "For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ. Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself." The connotation of conversation as a dwelling place characterizes the world in which we live, as well as the heavens to which we aspire. For Herbert, this "place" is the Church; for Crashaw, it is in Herbert, Theresa, prayer books, and scripture.

⁴ The status of the heart as both carnal and spiritual is an empirical consideration as well as a literary conceit in the Renaissance: "No Philosopher can denie, but that our passions are certain accidents and qualities, whose immediate ſubiect, house, and lodging is the very facultie and power of the ſoule, because all vitall operations (of which ſorte Paſſions are) challenge, by right, that the mother which hatched them, ſhould alſo ſuſtaine them, and harbour them in her owne houſe" (Thomas Wright, *The Paſſions of the Minde* [1601], p. 60).

opposed things (not by synthesis or resolution of thesis and anti-thesis, as in dialectic or typology). From the Greek *para*, beside or beyond, and *doxa*, opinion, a paradox is defined as a self-contradictory statement of relation between things or ideas that conflicts with preconceived notions of what is reasonable or possible – in other words, a paradox is beyond what we might ordinarily think (OED). Paradox, then, is an ontological contrariness; the rhetorical effect of paradox is indeterminacy, a fundamental lack of closure that yet manages to distinguish its own contrary terms. In this sense, then, exegesis of the body is paradoxical: because interpretive models of divine works cannot fully determine the divine plan, they work on the principle of open-ended elaboration.⁵ *The Temple* and *The Steps to the Temple* demonstrate this strategy of indeterminacy through intertextual references to scripture, the Book of Nature, and human literature as self-exegesis. In doing so, they comment on themselves, presenting strategic responses to works already written as a model for engaging similar responsive tactics from their readers.

In 1646, thirteen tumultuous years after the publication of Herbert's *Temple*, Richard Crashaw published his *Steps to the Temple*.⁶ As even a cursory glance at literary criticism of Crashaw's works will indicate, Crashaw reads the Book of Nature very much with a physical, bodily sense – in a bloody or grotesque sense, as several have said. Where Herbert's titular metaphor is the Temple itself as a building, Crashaw's is the steps toward Herbert's ecclesiastical edifice – or, perhaps more accurately, a pilgrimage toward Herbert's rhetoric. Crashaw's title places Herbert as a rhetorical ideal or goal, a destination at which to arrive; thus Crashaw's titular metaphor is that of the pilgrim on a spiritual quest toward an

⁵ Exegesis derives from Greek *egeomai*, to lead or to guide. My use of the term "exegesis" in the following considerations of Renaissance religious poetry does not refer to any particular ecclesiastical or exegetical doctrine; in fact, my argument depends on the common elements between doctrines, be they medieval or Renaissance, Roman or reformed, Catholic or Protestant.

⁶ This was followed by a second, revised edition in 1648, and, after Crashaw's conversion to Roman Catholicism and exile from England, a further edition with more significant revisions, additions, and a new title (*Carmen Deo Nostrum*) appeared in 1652. My discussion of Crashaw's work will refer primarily to the first edition of 1646, as I wish to avoid issues of revision and authorial intention. As well, the issues of a politically historical reading, which would have to consider a sense of exile from the English church of Herbert's *Temple*, are not relevant to the earlier drafts – a fact which has somewhat compromised Crashawian criticism, most of which assumes a teleological drift toward Roman Catholic conversion even in readings of earlier works.

apocalyptic perspective that is nominally identified with Herbert's poems. *The Temple* is then invoked as Crashaw's anagogical concern, the "New Jerusalem" of a utopian community of the catholic faithful; the consummation of the wedding, and its reflection in the consuming of the eucharistic feast, will take place in this Temple, constructed by Herbert's rhetoric of the tropological Church and rendered apocalyptic by Crashaw's exegesis of Herbert in his own poetry. Crashaw's rhetoric includes the use of the "impersonal" voice of the "witness," which Lorraine Roberts has compared to baroque painting techniques, where the artist/viewer is invited into the picture through the use of *trompe l'oeuil* effects that place the artist as the viewer in the picture.⁷ Roberts characterizes this rhetoric as the "prominent use of present tense in addition to ... personal and dramatic features" such as direct address, "frequent questions, exclamations, commands, and demonstratives" (Roberts 1990, 69). The effect of immediacy and fluidity thereby serves to demonstrate emotional affect, which then mediates response between event and reader: Crashaw uses these techniques "not because he wants us to know him personally, but because they are means to affect the emotions not only of the persona [of the witnessing poet] but also of the reader, who is brought close to an event from the past through the dramatic witness and mediator, a person like himself" (Roberts 1990, 71). In this way, Crashaw's testimonial style can be emotionally laden while remaining "impersonal" and objective, as in Spenser's *Epithalamion*.⁸ This strategy of an emotionally involved but impersonal witness is common to late medieval and Reformation exegesis of Canticles and Revelation, and it serves to emphasize the tropological response of the reader.⁹ Furthermore, if only because Crashaw is using a written text to convey his

⁷ Lorraine Roberts, "Crashaw's Sacred Voice: 'A Commerce of Contrary Powers,'" in *New Perspectives on the Life and Art of Richard Crashaw*, ed. John R. Roberts (Columbia: U of Missouri P, 1990) 66-79.

⁸ See David Chinitz' "The poem as sacrament: Spenser's *Epithalamion* and the golden section" (*Journal of Medieval and Renaissance Studies* 21 [Fall 1991]: 251-268), and my discussion of Spenser in Chapter Two.

⁹ In the *Brevis Commentatio* (1120-1124), William of St. Thierry wrote that "The love of God in the christian soul has three stages. The first is sensual or animal; the second, rational; the third is spiritual or intellectual. ... But all three loves, or levels of love, often run together and mutually support one another and in a sort of shared and friendly generosity with one another in which they each abound, give to and receive from one another: for the higher often takes pleasure in and enjoys the delights of the lower and sometimes the lower is filled with and moved by the joy of the higher, with the middle way running back and forth between either and rejoicing in both" (qtd in Turner, 277, 279). Thus the rational rhetoric of the witness and the affective rhetoric of the participant are mutually sustaining;

testimonial experience, the reader literally witnesses his *Steps* as a reading experience. Just as Crashaw has read Teresa's works, or Herbert's, or the wounds of Christ, and described the affective experience of interpreting them, he demonstrates and (implicitly) annotates the reader's experience of his own work. The immediacy of Crashaw's bloody metaphors, and of his self-observance, serves to eroticize the motif of spiritual quest.¹⁰ The quest is a specifically human archetypal motif that is motivated by yearning, and in Canticles rhetoric, the human desire for more is traditionally eroticized, thereby invoking the sense that "more" involves an erotic exchange with an other.¹¹ Crashaw's directness with his reader is that of an intimate conversation, invoking privacy and contemplative thought; the situation of reading a book is likened to the *hortus conclusus*, the self-enclosed protective atmosphere of solitary reading which he refers to in the deeply personal rhetoric of the Theresa poems, poems that illustrate his own experience of reading her books. This is the blessing of the body as Crashaw presents it, which is also the blessing of humanity in general – that we may incorporate texts as we interpret things in the Book of Nature, which of course includes the enclosed and opened body of the incarnated Christ.¹²

Herbert draws on this idea of textual body as a blessing too; but he places more emphasis on the body's interaction with the structural context offered by the Church of souls than Crashaw does. Crashaw focuses on the individual body/soul as a text that leads up to

the combination of these two perspectives is a technique of Canticles' rhetoric that reflects the theme of the profane/sacred paradox.

¹⁰ Claude J. Summers discusses the erotic nature of the spiritual quest in "The Bride of the Apocalypse and the Quest for True Religion: Donne, Herbert, and Spenser," in "*Bright Shootes of Everlastingness: The Seventeenth-Century Religious Lyric*," ed. Claude J. Summers and Ted-Larry Pebworth (Columbia: U of Missouri P, 1987) 72-95.

¹¹ Much heated debate has been generated with regard to Crashaw's use of gendered desire and erotic metaphors, and yet Canticles is rarely mentioned. Anthony Low's chapters on Herbert and Crashaw in *The Reinvention of Love* encapsulate the critical consensus with regard to the privileged anxieties of desire: "Donne yearns without expecting any answer in this world; Herbert yearns like a lover and is answered lovingly, but as a child by its father or a servant by his kind. Crashaw never yearns" (Low, 115). I will discuss Crashaw's physical and erotic longing later in this section, but at this point it is worth noting that a degree of anxious prudery seems to attach itself to a variety of stylistic issues in Renaissance criticism, saying far more about critics' desires and expectations than about those of Renaissance writers.

¹² The word "blessing" derives from the Old English *bledsian*, to consecrate with blood, and the French *blessier*, to wound. A blessing is therefore both a reminder of mortality, and of its contrary, immortality.

the ecclesiastical body as context. His “baroque excesses” signal a tropological concentration that precedes and adumbrates Herbert’s rhetoric of structural integrity in the tropological Church. Crashaw’s rhetoric is one of emblematic demonstration, noting the excesses of the body and turning them into natural significations of divinity. In making a poetic example of his own reading of the liturgical and devotional Herbert, he dramatizes the form of exegesis, which is contemplative, meditative, and liturgical by turns. Walter R. Davis has argued that Crashaw writes in a combination of meditative and liturgical modes, because he uses scenes and images as concrete points of examination and because the reader is invited to join in the hymn-like, and thus public, praise.¹³ Yet there is a contemplative element at work here, too: despite the tone of the “impersonal witness,” Crashaw’s experience is not so much artificially rendered, but spoken directly to the private and singular reader. And despite Davis’ argument that Crashaw combines only two of the modes, the contemplative element is an inherent rhetorical effect of both his meditative images and scenes as well as his liturgically allusive hymns. Ultimately, Davis’ assertions collapse in his own vague definition of “mode” as “a manner of response inducing response” (Davis 108).

Certainly, then, Crashaw’s manner is “modal”; his response to the meditational scenes and images he illustrates invites a contemplative response from the reader, which then leads her (in the manner of steps, bit by bit) toward the more liturgical hymnody of Herbert’s *Temple*. I would prefer, however, to describe Crashaw’s “mode” more precisely as an exegetical method of textual discursiveness, an openness to other texts, in that he demonstrates an interpretive response to other scriptures that, in turn, invites further interpretation – not only of the texts he interprets in his own poetry but also of his own

¹³ Davis, “The Meditative Hymnody of Richard Crashaw,” *ELH* 50.1 (Spring 1983: 107-129). Davis cites Anthony Low’s distinctions between meditative, contemplative, and liturgical modes: “The meditative mode imitates in whole or in part the process of formal meditation; ... it usually starts with a scene or image ... and then moves through an examination of that scene in the faculties of the soul to arrive at colloquy with God. ... The contemplative mode is a record of or wish for direct mystical experience of God rather than a mimesis of experience; it invites the reader, to whom it speaks directly, to seek or share understanding of something intensely private, thus tending ... to proceed ... associatively. The liturgical mode, formed on public devotions, tends toward song rather than speech; such poetry invites the reader to become a performer of the verse singing directly to God as do hymns, and by so doing to celebrate or pass through a ritual action” (Davis 107; citing Low’s “Metaphysical Poets and Devotional Poets,” in *George Herbert and the Seventeenth-Century Religious Poets*, ed. Mario A. Di Cesare [New York: Norton, 1978], 229).

methods in doing so through the omnipresent metaphor of physical conversation. Just as Herbert's *Temple* paratextually imitates the *Book of Common Prayer* through the physical similarities of typeface, duodecimo size, and printer's marks like the pilcrow (¶),¹⁴ Crashaw models and invites the immediacy of spiritual interpretation. He uses common meditational techniques such as the biblical scene of Christ's birth (in "Sospetto d'Herode"); he echoes liturgical events and rituals (in "On a prayer book sent to Mrs MR"); and he speaks directly to the reader of his lyrically rendered experiences throughout the "narrative" of his *Steps*. This rhetorical method is typical of exegetical writing, which is often ecstatically contemplative, quietly meditational, and liturgically allusive by turns.¹⁵

Crashaw is keenly aware of exegetical techniques; yet rarely does he name the Bible, the two testaments, or scripture as such. This does not mean that he does not refer to them at all; rather, that he tends to employ bodily metaphors to refer to scripture, thereby underscoring the analogy of the Book of Nature. This technique of using the human body as the primary analogy for pretty much everything is a well established strategy of Canticles' rhetoric, which has yet to be noted by modern critics of Crashaw's poetry.¹⁶ The clearest example of his use of this technique is the Divine Epigram, "On the still surviving markes of our Saviours woundes," in which the wounds of the crucified Christ are written words that the poet may read:

¹⁴ For an analysis of paratextual connections between Herbert's *Temple* and the *Book of Common Prayer* (1604), see Stephen Buick, "In imitation of Mr. George Herbert: Christopher Harvey's *The Synagogue* and the fashioning of George Herbert's identity during the revolutionary decades." Paper presented at the 37th International Congress on Medieval Studies, Kalamazoo, MI, May 2nd, 2002.

¹⁵ Regardless of Crashaw's status as Roman Catholic or English catholic, his exegetical method remains consistent throughout the revisions of his *Steps* and *Carmen Deo Nostro*. It is this method that I aim to examine; furthermore, the catholic concept of *Ecclesia* does not depend on sectarian issues of affiliation, since it refers to the community of the faithful – as John Wall has called it, "the living temple of Christian fellowship, composed of the faithful themselves, who must welcome the stranger" (Wall 171).

¹⁶ Despite the post-enlightenment re-writing of Renaissance philosophy, in which Man is equated ideally with Reason and the body with the lower or bestial passions, even Francis Bacon seems familiar with the idea that man – literally, the body – is the measure of all things: "The deceptions of the senses must be referred to the particular inquiries concerning sense and the objects of sense, excepting only that nature with reference to man and not with reference to the universe; and this is not to be corrected except by reason and universal philosophy"; "For everything tangible that we are acquainted with contains an invisible and intangible spirit which it wraps and clothes as with a garment" (*Novum Organum* [1620], II, xl, 215, 208).

What ever story of their crueltie,
 Or Naile, or Thorne, or Speare have writ on Thee,
 Are in another sence
 Still legible;
 Sweet is the difference:
 Once I did spell
 Every red letter
 A wound of thine,
 Now, (what is better)
 Balsome for mine.¹⁷

The “red letter” of Christ’s wounds and the poet’s “balsome” refers to the words of Christ in the gospels; but the story of physical “crueltie” is “still legible,” “in another sence” and spelled in the poet’s interpretation. The distinction here – the “Sweet . . . difference” – between the literal cruelty of Christ’s physical suffering and the spiritual remedy of interpreted significance is a “better” distinction than one or the other offers alone, because these perspectives are mutually dependant: there is little emotional basis for comforting human suffering without Christ’s physical sacrifice, and this sacrifice would only be cruelty without further interpretation.

A second example of “grotesque” imagery is perhaps more familiar, though its use of established exegetical techniques is not. “Blessed be the paps which Thou hast sucked” is cited in almost every modern critical article that discusses Crashaw’s work:

Suppose he had been Tabled at thy Teates,
 Thy hunger feeles not what he eates:
 Hee’l have his Teat e’re long (a bloody one)
 The Mother then must suck the Son.

(Crashaw, 94)

This Divine Epigram has been interpreted alternatively as perverse, erotic, homoerotic, ingenious, and in bad taste, by various critics of various theoretical persuasions, along with breast and suckling imagery elsewhere in Crashaw’s poetry.¹⁸ To my knowledge, none have cited the common medieval and Reformation association between breasts, nursing, and

¹⁷ *The Poems English Latin and Greeke of Richard Crashaw*, ed. L.C. Martin (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1927), 86. All references to Crashaw’s poetry will refer to this edition by page number, and, where required, stanza number.

¹⁸ Richard Rambuss’ discussion is notable in that he considers the erotic implications of cross-gendered characterization in this poem; see further commentary below.

breast milk with the Old and New Testaments of the Bible, biblical interpretation, and the spiritual nourishment thereby derived.¹⁹ George Wither alludes to this cluster of associations in his *Hymnes and Songs of the Church* (1623); in his second Canticle, the argument sets out that “*This Song seemeth to set forth the mysterie of Christ his Incarnation, whereby the Churches first Petition* [i.e., divine embraces] *... is accomplished.*” The Song begins:

While that the *King* was at repast,
My *Spikenard* his perfumings cast;
And twixt my breasts repos'd my *Deare*

(Wither, *Hymnes*, 10)

In Wither's terms, the Bride (the singer of this song) is the Church, and she offers the sustaining and nourishing scriptural tradition as her part in the mutual embrace with the divine Lover. Indeed, the Song goes on to describe a correlation between food and comfort:

With *Flagons* me from fainting stay:
With *Apples* comfort me, I pray;
For I am sicke of *Loue* (alas).

(Wither, *Hymnes*, 11)

In fact, this interpretive association can also be traced through Denys the Carthusian in the fifteenth century and Nicholas of Lyra in the fourteenth century.²⁰

Crashaw's Divine Epigram may seem somewhat more palatable in this context, which also goes some way toward clarifying the biblical motto. Luke 11 refers to the scriptural passage in which the disciples ask Christ how to pray, to which he responds with the Lord's Prayer: “Our Father which art in heaven ...”. This is followed by an analogy between earthly and spiritual families, in which men are exhorted to give to their children as

¹⁹ As I noted earlier, this symbolic association between breasts and the two Christian Testaments is also common to rabbinic interpretations of the twin scrolls of the Torah as breasts.

²⁰ “According to Origen,” writes Denys, “the breasts of the Bridegroom are to be read as the secrets hidden in the heart or bowels of Christ, that is, they are the treasures of wisdom and knowledge which are hidden within him, by which he nourishes the hearts of his faithful. But it is also possible to interpret the two breasts of the Bridegroom as the two commandments of charity; or again, as the Old Testament interpreted in its spiritual sense and the New” (Turner 426). Denys the Carthusian died in 1471; his *Enarratio in Canticum canticorum* were collected in 1555 in the *Opera Varia*. Nicholas writes that “*Your* [the Bride's] *two breasts* are the two Testaments, from which the children begotten in Christ draw milk for their growth, as is said in 1 Peter 2:2: *Like new born babies of men, without anxiety long for the milk on which you may grow in salvation?*” (Turner 405). The *Postillae Morales seu Mystice* of Nicholas of Lyra dates from 1339; it was collected in 1471. As I noted in the second chapter, Quarles also uses this metaphor in *Sions Sonets*.

they would be provided by God (KJV, Luke 11: 5-13). This in turn is followed by another incident:

And it came to pass, as he spake these things, a certain woman of the company lifted up her voice, and said unto him, Blessed is the womb that bare thee, and the paps which thou has sucked. But he said, Yea rather, blessed are they that hear the word of God, and keep it. ... The Light of the body is the eye: therefore when thine eye is single, thy whole body also is full of light; but when thine eye is evil, thy body also is full of darkness.

(KJV, Luke 11: 27-28, 33)

The substance of Christ's nurture is here figured as the word of God, for all; the chapter goes on to highlight the discrepancy between words and deeds in the company of the Pharisees. The availability of the word of God is a blessing for all humanity, including, as Crashaw points out, the mother of God herself; we are likewise exhorted to share it with our children. The association of such a blessing with the bloody wounds of Christ emphasizes the physical nurture of his sacrifice, as in "On the still surviving markes of our Saviours woundes."

Hearing the word and keeping it is thus as common as breastmilk: every child who survives to hear does so only because it has been (literally) fed and nurtured already. R.V. Young, Jr. has argued that

the scriptural elements of Crashaw's poetry provide a revealing insight into the intellectual dynamic of biblical poetics: the poet seeks to rewrite the Word of God in his own imitation or version of "scripture," thus inscribing the Word – Christ's name and presence – in his own soul in the blood of the Lamb.

(Young, 1990, 31)

Young goes on to apply biblical poetics as a literary model and argues that this kind of poetic crossover into secular writing is not limited to Protestant or Roman traditions: "The assimilation of the self to scriptural types was, in fact, a common preoccupation of Catholics and Protestants during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries" (Young, 1990, 37). Yet Young does not examine the implication of this comparatively universal practice with reference to exegetical rhetoric. In fact, the assimilation of scriptural types to oneself and one's choices of conduct is the tropological sense of exegesis, which, since the twelfth-century, contributed to the developing focus of Reformation rhetoric. Crashaw's bloody paps, then, are a literal rendering that signify the (female) body as a preliminary and crucially

indispensable step toward any notion of community or structure: even Christ would not have survived infancy without a parent's nurture. Thus the nurturing element of scripture is identified with the nurturing functions of the body, and it is important to note that physical nurture is associated with both genders through the female: breastmilk and (menstrual) blood are both feminine physical operations, while the blessing of blood sacrifice is male. In any case, both genders are connected by the common element of blood and the need for sensory sustenance, and this connection marks us hieroglyphics of divine creation.

The arrangement of poems in *Steps to the Temple* suggests a lyrical structure that is indebted to exegesis – that is, the *Steps* is a lyrical reading of *The Temple* as a book, and employs textual/interpretative motifs such as the Book of Nature in order to suggest a sequence of lyric moments, much like that of sonnet sequences. The distinction, then, between Herbert's *Temple* and Crashaw's *Steps* toward the *Temple* is the distinction between the singular human body as an eroticized site of contemplation, and the plurality of the Church body as a structure principle that may represent singular bodies. Herbert uses the four senses of exegesis as a poetic structure for various poems in his *Temple*. Along the way, the metaphor of a building as a structure becomes a paradoxical rhetorical framing device – paradoxical in that the variety of meanings elucidated defies strict notions of containment or framing in the same way that interpretive senses open rather than circumscribe the signifying possibilities of the text. Crashaw, on the other hand, does not indicate any such “enclosing” structure, insofar as neither within nor between his poems can we argue that there are “parts” or defined stages with markers to delineate that the other foot is now stepping, so to speak. The exegetical demonstration of the body that he performs is less framed, or progressive, in a narrative sense, than Herbert's elaboration of an ecclesiastical framework for the body. Instead, Crashaw introduces scenes, events, and characters, and consistently subverts the “enclosing” qualities we might expect regarding place, time, and subjectivity – and often conflating the usual gender associations with scriptural places, events, and characters in order to direct his reader's attention toward the “opening” methods of lyrical contemplation. This lyrical reading, or series of readings, of the body is exegetical because the kinds of tropes that Crashaw employs correspond to the three spiritual senses of exegesis: places that are usually allegorized are repositioned and redrawn; historical events

and their attendant prophecies are reinscribed as immanently present, as in anagogy; and characters are metamorphosed into texts, which Crashaw's reader may then translate through his text in a radically tropological fashion. All three spiritual senses in Crashaw's poetry are, more or less, imbricated with the pleasure of erotic engagement, which is both signaled and supported by a gender rhetoric that, because it is aesthetically "grotesque," urges an affective response.

Many critics who examine the notion of gender in Crashaw's poetry, however, apply the charge of "feminine," either to idealize or to disparage Crashaw's "grotesque" imagery and to justify its tremendous emotional appeal for better or for worse.²¹ As Richard Rambuss points out with refreshingly playful irreverence, the usual critical models of what constitutes "feminine" actually privilege and promote heteronormative, and often stereotypical, categories of gender that in turn support an exclusively allegorical kind of reading at the expense of lyrical tropology, which tends to disrupt the categories of allegorical associations. For instance, in his discussion of the oft-cited "Blessed be the paps which Thou hast sucked," Rambuss notes that the "operations of Christ's body in this epigram are neither determinately male nor determinately female ... that body is given a 'Teat' that is mammary and phallic at the same time" (Rambuss 263). Rambuss is arguing principally against Caroline Walker Bynum, who advocates "wip[ing] away ... assumptions" regarding the female body and any notion of associated sexuality, since "Medieval images of the body have less to do with sexuality than with fertility and decay" (Rambuss 265, qtg Bynum). To this Rambuss poses the very interesting question: "why should we turn away from regarding the body as always at least potentially sexualized, as a truly polysemous surface where various significances and expressions – including a variety of erotic ones – compete and collude with each other in making the body *meaningful*?" (Rambuss 268). He concludes with an important distinction:

²¹ See Paul A. Parrish, "'O Sweet Contest'" Gender and Value in "The Weeper," in *New Perspectives on the Life and Art of Richard Crashaw*, ed. John R. Roberts (Columbia: U of Missouri P, 1990), 127-139; Eugene R. Cunnar, "Crashaw's 'Sancta Maria Dolorum': Controversy and Coherence," also in *New Perspectives on the Life and Art of Richard Crashaw*, ed. John R. Roberts (Columbia: U of Missouri P, 1990), 99-126; Maureen Sabine, "Crashaw and the Feminine Animus: Patterns of Self-Sacrifice in Two of His Devotional Poems," *John Donne Journal* 4.1 (1985): 69-94; and Anthony Low's chapter on Crashaw in *The Reinvention of Love* (Cambridge UP, 1993).

In Crashaw's poetry ... gender never really poses a limit to what the devout body can perform or what can be performed on it. The subject positions of penetrator and penetrated, possessor and possessed, can variously and successively be assumed by both the male and female bodies depicted in Crashaw's *lyric* performances, which themselves regularly speak back and forth across gender.

(Rambuss 271; italics mine)

I concede Ramuss' point that Christ's erotic portrayal is indeed, at the very least potentially, homoerotic, insofar as the reader may consider himself or herself to be male. However, I would continue to assert that in the Renaissance there is some sense – if only metaphorical – in which the human soul of the reader is also considered to be feminine. In fact, this rhetoric adds, or has contributed, to flexibility in Renaissance lyric treatments of gender and desire in ways that current criticism does not usually acknowledge: regardless of physical gender or “chromosomal sex,” the notion of the soul as female contributes to versatility in poetic treatments of gender and gender relations. The notion of gender/desire as a determinant of subjectivity, or of rhetorical expectations, is therefore a trope that is invariably exposed as a worldly illusion, a condition of material existence, despite the basis of the metaphor which is the actual female body. A few examples of each kind of categorical subversion used by Crashaw – spatial/allegorical, temporal/anagogical, and intersubjective/tropological – will establish that Crashaw deliberately eroticizes both his own poetry and images of texts for the purpose of seducing the reader and involving her affective consideration of the present moment of reading the poem. At the same time, these examples will also demonstrate that the four senses of Canticles rhetoric deliberately engage such subversive devices in order to facilitate the opening of the spiritual body – that is, in order to emulate the Sponsa's rhetoric of being an open subject to her beloved.

Crashaw's versatility with regard to the “gender” of place is particularly evident in “On the Assumption” (p. 139-141). Despite the many Freudian, neo-Freudian, Jungian, Lacanian, or other psychoanalytic impulses to focus on mothers and maternal imagery as erotic in Crashaw's poetry, this is one of the few poems that involves the Virgin Mother herself as the central figure.²² Consonant with mariological tropology of Canticles, however,

²² A particularly incoherent example of a psychoanalytic reading of Crashaw's works is Graham Hammill's “Stepping to the Temple,” *South Atlantic Quarterly* 88 (Fall 1989): 933-959. He concludes, and I quote the whole sentence, “Between.”

in this poem she is the ideal representative of humanity as the *Sponsa*, rather than motherhood. She is dressed in courtly love imagery, climbing, with “cristall orbs” clearer than stars, toward heaven, though she is herself heaven – “heaven must go home” (l. 1-6). So far we have a very admirable scene that tells us little more of Mary than Petrarch tells of Laura – or than Pamphilia tells us of Amphilanthus. But then *Canticles* is invoked, and the usual association between the female and the enclosed and worldly garden is inverted by placing a male figure in the heavenly garden and the female character outside it:

... harke how th’immortall Dove
 Sighs to his silver mate: Rise up my Love,
 Rise up my faire, my spotless one,
 The Winter’s past, the rain is gone:
 The Spring is come, the Flowers appeare,
 No sweets since thou art wanting here. (ll. 7-12)

 Shee’s call’d againe, and will shee goe;
 When heaven bids come, who can say no?
 Heav’n calls her, and she must away,
 Heaven will not, and she cannot stay.
 Goe then, goe (glorious) on the golden wings
 Of the bright youth of Heaven, that sings
 (Crashaw, “On the Assumption,” ll. 19-24)

In *Canticles*, the female figure does not “go” anywhere, except seeking her lover within the city gates when he is gone, as we have seen in the sonnet sequences. The *Sponsa* is usually identified with her garden, her vineyard, her mother’s house; indeed she is “A garden inclosed ... a spring shut up, a fountain sealed” (Song 4:12), and in the final verse she sings to her lover to “Make haste, my beloved, and be thou like to a roe or to a young hart upon the mountains of spices” (Song 8:14). In Crashaw’s “On the Assumption,” however, she is not enclosed, shut up, or sealed, as we might expect of the Virgin Mother as the *Sponsa*; she is making haste toward her home, where the divine *Sponsus* sits, calling her to make haste and come to him. This inverts the characteristic locations of male and female lovers in the biblical lyric, and suggests a transposition of associations as well: the place of the purportedly feminine garden/body is not fixed; or if it is, the male beloved occupies it while the female lover comes and goes. Like the gender inversion of Astrophel’s association with the *Sponsa*’s role of “active” wanderer in the dark night of the soul, the *Sponsus*’ wandering and

imminent return at the end of Canticles is here assigned to Mary. Mary is both “holy mirth/ Of heaven” and “humble pride of Earth,” both “Crowne of Women” and “Queen of men” (ll. 59-62). She is entirely capable of performing both fleshly nurture in an enclosed domestic setting (in the Nativity Hymn that precedes “On the Assumption”) and the dynamic action of heavenly assumption. Thus the rhetorical ambiguity of gendered settings invites a responsive comparison: the reader, like Crashaw, may see nurturing or domestic men as Christlike (rather than effeminate or cowardly) and dynamic women as sanctified like Mary (rather than shrewish or inappropriately raucous). The relation between gender and gender roles is rendered indeterminate because of this kind of exchange in roles, and the possibilities of tropology invite alternate interpretations of “gendered” social conduct in the mundane versions of these places. Thus the allegory of heavenly matters for worldly ones is also inverted: the world is an allegory for the heavenly garden, and Mary’s ability to move between heaven and earth is representative of our present abilities to read such an allegory of our own existence in hers.

In “Sospetto d’Herode” (p. 109-126), a biblical event is subverted in anagogical terms, thereby exposing the narrative chronology of past and future as another illusion of worldly conditions.²³ Of the 66 stanzas, the fifth to the fiftieth describe the situation of Satan and his hellish minions outside the boundaries of this world.²⁴ The event of Herod’s killing of children within the district of Judæa, from Matthew 2:16, is thereby significantly

²³ Dubrow notes that, though such conventional associations are not entirely unproblematic, “Lyric has traditionally been seen as an unmediated expression of the subjective and of subjectivity itself. It is frequently associated, too, with the absence of a specific time and place ... Many critics would agree that narrative, in contrast, is generally rooted in a specific time and place” (Dubrow, 1995, 28-29). Despite the imbedded narrative of Satan in the framing narrative of the “Sospetto d’Herode,” the effect of the juxtaposed narratives is to render the final scene intensely lyric.

²⁴ “Sospetto d’Herode” is a partial translation of Giambattista Marino’s *La Strage degli Innocenti* (1605-1608). Claes Schaar points out usefully that “Many critics have called attention to the great freedom of the rendering [of Marino’s poem]; one of them observes that it may be considered ‘an interpretation rather than a mere literal translation of the original’” (Schaar, 12). For the purposes of this analysis, it is pertinent to note that Crashaw’s translation of Marino does not name Crudeltà (the leader of the “foule hags”), he omits the “Infernal Council” motif, and he does not translate beyond the first of four parts (in the Venice edition that Crashaw probably used; see Schaar 11. These departures from Marino’s poem serve to emphasize the centrality of Satan’s character and theme, which is ultimately, and that much more dramatically, overthrown by the domestic quiet of the final stanza.

displaced by the portrait of Satan as a formidable avenging character from a revenge tragedy. Like Marlowe's Dr. Faustus, too, Crashaw's Satan is an "Intellectual." After lifting "his malignant Eyes, wasted with care,/ To become beautifull in humane blood" (ll. 11), he attempts to decipher the portent of Christ's birth:

... faine would he start
Above his feares, and thinke it cannot be.
Hee studies Scripture, strives to sound the heart,
And feele the pulse of every Prophecy.
.....
But these vast Mysteries his senses smother,
And Reason (for what's Faith to him?) devoure.
How she that is a maid should prove a Mother,
Yet keep inviolate her virgin flower;
How Gods eternall Sonne should be mans Brother,
Poseth his proudest Intellectuall power.
How a pure Spirit should incarnate bee,
And life it selfe weare Deaths fraile Livery.

(Crashaw, "Sospetto d'Herode," st. 20, 21)

Satan's "senses" are smothered by the "vast Mysteries" that he studies; but like the teachers of allegory that Hugh of St. Victor derides for their willful ignorance of the body and the letter, Satan reads wrongly. In striving "to sound the heart,/ And feele the pulse" of prophecy, he misses the point of the actual heart that pulses in every human body, in every human incarnation. In much the same way, he sends his "foule Hags" off to Herod, telling them to use their full arsenals of cruelty: "Anger, and love, best hookes of humane blood" (st. 35).²⁵ But while Satan may be right in this assessment, he overestimates his minions' arsenal of tricks, which do not actually include "love." Love is the crown that Christ wears, better than Herod's; as Crashaw concludes, Satan's war is as foolishly ineffective as Herod's attempted assassination:

Make to thy reason man; and mocke thy doubts,
Looke how below thy feares their causes are;
Thou art a Souldier *Herod*; send thy Scouts
See how hee's furnish't for so fear'd a warre.
What armour does he weare? A few thin clouts.

²⁵ This line echoes Canticles' "love is strong as death; jealousy is cruel as the grave" (Song 8:6), offering a subtle contrast between Satan and Teresa since the same allusion appears in the Teresa poem; see discussion below.

His Trumpets? tender cryes, his men to dare
 So much? rude Shepherds. What his steeds? alas
 Poore Beasts! a slow Oxe, and a simple Asse.

(Crashaw, "Sospetto d'Herode", st. 66)

Thus the titular character's status is subverted by the prominence of the vengeful, over-achieving intellectual Satan, who, like the teachers of allegory, insists on missing the point spectacularly. But more importantly, even Satan's status is overturned in the final stanza. What emerges from the conflated times (Satan belongs to "angelic time"), narratives (Old Testament prophecies and New Testament fulfillment), and events (the Fall of Satan and Herod's fall) is a flexibility of perspectives that foregrounds the ordinary and humble trappings of the present. Analogies are made, and sustained, in the "Sospetto d'Herode," and this enables the reader to read aright, feeling her own incarnated pulse and sounding her own heart in the intensely mundane details of Christ's Incarnation. The present moment is therefore strangely foregrounded, despite the otherwise historical events described, and the significance of these histories is that small, quiet, everyday events (like reading a book) resound beyond the big bad spectacularly impotent Satan. The sweeping and juxtaposed narratives of Satan and Herod are subverted by the intensely lyric, enclosed, and domestic scene of Christ's birth, which effectively opens the temporal context beyond the recorded events of history and prophecy. The suggestion is then that simple, everyday comforts are immeasurably more powerful than the complexities of political or even supernatural power, and that if we incorporate a rhetoric that is directed toward and leads up to such quiet moments, then the promise of biblical prophecy is written into and fulfilled in everyday life. In this way, the allegories of history and the anagogical promise of the apocalypse are turned dramatically toward mundane and domestic fulfillment, in the same way that *Canticles'* erotic yearning is fulfilled both in the promises of Revelation and in the present-day rites of matrimony.

Crashaw's gender rhetoric also subverts the usual associations of the imagery he uses to characterize male and female characters. While water imagery predominates in the first half of the *Steps*, beginning with "The Weeper," fire imagery prevails in the last half. It seems customary to associate water imagery with femininity and passivity, and fire with masculinity and agency; Crashavian critics have regularly noted such correlations between gender and

imagery in the characterizations of Mary Magdalene, Jesus, and Theresa.²⁶ And indeed, in the many articles discussing the Teresa poems, critics have noted her depiction in both water and fire imagery, fusing the qualities of both genders in an ideal saintly representation.²⁷ Yet few have also noted that certain kinds of water and fire imagery also allude to particular books of the Bible. “In memory of the Vertuous and Learned Lady Madre de Teresa that sought an early Martyrdome” (p. 131-136) undertakes to capture the character of a woman whom Crashaw knows only through her own words.²⁸ Her characterization as a woman writer is explicitly rendered by the poet’s “Apologie for the precedent Hymne” (p. 136-137), in which he explains that Teresa’s book taught him both her character and how to write. It is important to note that this “Apologie” is directed both to Teresa as well as to the reader in a way that suggests that Teresa’s effect on the poet is a model for Crashaw’s desired effect on his reader:

Thus have I back againe to thy bright name
Faire sea of holy fires transfused the flame
I took from reading thee. ...

...

Thine owne deare books are guilty, for from thence
I learnt to know that Love is eloquence.

...

Christ’s Faith makes but one body of all soules,
And loves that bodies soule ...

(Crashaw, “Apologie,” ll. 1-3, 7-8, 17-18)

As elsewhere, Crashaw models his exegetical rhetoric for the reader in order to elicit a similar response to his own work. Teresa’s Spanish language, her Roman faith, and her gender are translated by the eloquence of Love. As well, along with the “feminine” water/fluid we might expect after reading “The Weeper” and other poems meditating on female saints in

²⁶ For example, see Cunnar’s “Crashaw’s ‘Sancta Maria Dolorum’” on “The Weeper,” Rambuss’ “Pleasure and Devotion: The Body of Jesus and Seventeenth-Century Religious Lyric,” on Christ, and Benet’s “Crashaw, Teresa, and the Word” and Low’s *The Reinvention of Love* on Teresa.

²⁷ See Benet’s “Crashaw, Teresa, and the Word,” Revard’s “Crashaw and the Diva: The Tradition of the Neo-Latin Hymn to the Goddess,” Low’s *The Reinvention of Love*, and Bertolasco’s “A Jungian Reading of Crashaw’s ‘The Flaming Heart.’”

²⁸ While it is more common to refer to the 1652 version of this poem, entitled “The Flaming Heart,” I am using the 1646 version in order to be consistent with my reading of *Steps to the Temple*. Again, this decision is in no small part motivated by a desire to avoid issues of revision and possible authorial intention.

this collection, Teresa also possesses a fair amount of “masculine,” fiery, penetrating darts and flames, just as Satan does in the “Sospetto d’Herode”: she is a “faire *sea* of holy *fires*” (italics mine).

My reading of these water and fire images, however, involves more than gender associations; in fact, Crashaw’s translation of Teresa in these two poems applies specific images of biblical books to describe Teresa’s character in a profoundly tropological sense. Crashaw’s emblematic translation of Teresa in scriptural terms operates as a powerful example of how to read a body as scriptural. Water imagery in Crashaw’s characterizations (of the Magdalene, Christ, and Teresa) may be read as allusions to Canticles’ *hortus conclusus*, which is “a spring shut up, a fountain sealed . . . A fountain of gardens, a well of living waters, and streams from Lebanon” (Song 4:12, 15); similarly, fire imagery may be read as emblematic of the Book of Revelation’ purifying fires (see Rev. 8:7-13). These scriptural associations make sense because there are a number of other imagistic allusions to Canticles and Revelation that are not watery or fiery: jewels, crowns, stars, etc. That the two biblical books are paired in Teresa, furthermore, is not surprising in exegetical terms, since the two biblical books are linked by the typology of Canticles rhetoric: both involve Brides, Bridegrooms, and an erotic relationship that is consummated after physical absence. That absence is often figured as mortal death, such as the martyrdom that Teresa seeks in the title of the poem. In Crashaw’s characterization of Teresa, her early childhood yearning for martyrdom is the effect of her inability to consider physical death in any way other than as an erotic fulfillment:

Shee never undertook to know,
 What death with love should have to doe
 Nor hath she ere yet understood
 Why to show love shee should shed blood,
 Yet though shee cannot tell you why,
 She can love and she can dye.

Scarce had shee blood enough, to make
 A guilty sword blush for her sake;
 Yet has shee a heart dares hope to prove,
 How much less strong then death is love.

(Crashaw, “Madre de Teresa,” ll. 19-28)

The first mention of death is mortal death; as in Rev. 2:11, however, the “second death” of this passage is apocalyptic union with the divine, which is the only kind of death that Teresa understands.²⁹ Crashaw’s nice conceit here highlights Teresa’s elevated inability to grant significance to mortality. Teresa’s desire for a martyr’s death is a manifestation of her intuitive understanding that divine love translates the body into eternity; mortality, for her, is not so much transcended as it is entirely written as erotic yearning for the divine spouse and the conditions of apocalyptic union: Crashaw’s interpretation of Teresa’s “death” is a translation of what she herself calls life in her books. Thus, at her mortal death, Angels shall

Weave a Constellation
Of Crownes, with which the King thy spouse,
Shall build up thy triumphant browes.

(Crashaw, “Madre de Teresa,” ll. 143-145)

This passage alludes to Revelation 12:1: “And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of stars.” What follows Teresa’s re-union with the divine spouse is a developed allusive description of apocalyptic community, where “Thousands of crowned soules” are “Themselves thy crowne” (ll. 167-168), and “Each heavenly word” will “bee/ Both fire to us, and flame to thee” (ll. 160-161). The poem concludes with a clarifying distinction between mortal death and eternal life drawn from Revelation:

And where so e’re hee sitts his white
Steps, walke with him those ways of Light.
Which who in death would live to see,
Must learn in life to dye like thee.

(Crashaw, “Madre de Teresa,” ll. 180-183)

The final couplet seems especially contradictory, eliding the distinction between “in death” and “in life,” without the context of Revelation 2:10-11. Again, the “second death” refers to the apocalypse, which Teresa and her exegete/poet do not fear because they aspire to the

²⁹ “Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death” (KJV, Revelation 2:10-11). See also discussion of this kind of semantic conceit in Sidney’s *Astrophel and Stella*, sonnets 61-63, in Chapter Three.

“crown of life.” Thus, learning to die in life is an apprehension of the rhetoric of eternity, where the mortality of the body is merely a step toward the apocalyptic Temple of Crashaw’s title. It is worth noting, too, what Revelation has to say about the temple in the New Jerusalem: “And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it” (Rev. 21:22). Thus the mortal body is a present incarnation that adumbrates the apocalyptic temple which is the body of Christ – just as, for Herbert, the Church building merely represents the community of souls that build and sustain it.

Teresa’s character, then, is demonstrated not so much in terms of her gender or assumed terms of another gender, though associations between water and women, or between fire and men, may be common enough. Beyond this, however, is inscribed a host of biblical allusions that effectively draw Teresa as scriptural – specifically, that draw her as particular books of the Bible, as Canticles and the Book of Revelation. Since Crashaw has learned Teresa from reading her books, it is hardly unexpected that his “hymn” to her should celebrate her in associative images of scripture. Indeed, even this inscription of the Bible into Teresa’s character finds a suggestive source in Revelation itself: “Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God ... and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name” (Rev. 3:12) and “Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand” (Rev. 1:3). Thus Teresa is both written on by God, and blessed by her own reading of scripture; as is Crashaw, by virtue of reading her; as is his reader, by virtue of reading Crashaw’s *Steps*, one of which is Teresa herself. Crashaw’s interpretation of Teresa models a translation of her faith, her gender, and her language, so that the reader may perform the same operation with Crashaw’s poems, thereby taking her own step toward her own temple without the intervening inhibitions of gendered categories. In this sense, then, Crashaw’s *Steps* involve a strangely paradoxical release of each step at the point that it is made: each distinction, be it a distinction of gender, time, or place, is succeeded by images that enfold the distinction within its “opposite,” rendering the ideas of male and female, history and prophecy, or heaven and earth as topologically human,

eternal, and present in the body that reads itself as an erotically charged hieroglyphic of the divine.

Herbert's *Temple* invokes the methods of Canticles' rhetoric as a way of reading divine structures in the world, thereby rendering the human construction of the Church as a reflection of divine creation. In doing so, he highlights the structure of his own text as he progresses through it: Herbert employs a number of containing or framing devices that end up contradicting themselves by opening, rather than enclosing, this text just as the Sponsa is both enclosed garden and opened body. Indeed, the architectural motif of *The Temple* figures not just the structure of the Church, but also those who build it, animating the edifice by filling it with bodies. Each body of the congregation, furthermore, figures the temple in the same way that the temple figures it: each body is animated by a soul that, in turn, signals the divine presence that is ultimately the focus of Herbert's interpretation. Similar to Crashaw's poetry, whose subject is himself as exegetical reader, and echoing also the blurring of textual definition between scripture and commentary in medieval and Reformation Bibles too, the very notion of "text" in *The Temple* is opened beyond what we might ordinarily think – the world is figured as the Book of Nature, and the human body is the key hieroglyphic of divine signification that opens the world to examination. Contrary to Crashaw, though, Herbert includes the concept of *Ecclesia* in *The Temple*; he addresses himself to a plural audience of readers in order to reflect the opening up of the temple as enclosed body. The exegetical notion of the physical body as an hieroglyphic of the divine is a particularly important example of the kind of rhetorical paradox that "defines" itself in open closure because the body, animated by the soul, signifies the divine presence, which is a mystery beyond human definition. That this ecclesiastical body is representative of a plurality of other bodies signifies a further extension of the rhetoric of the Sponsa: she is plural and each reader is one of her members, a representative of her status by physical or bodily analogy.

It will be recalled that the inclusion of the "profane" Canticles within the biblical canon is what initiated Origen's third-century Christian exegesis of betrothal and thus the names of Sponsa and Sponsus; typologically linking the courtship and betrothal of the lovers to the apocalyptic wedding feast of Revelation justified the spiritual allegory, despite

concurrent secular traditions that employed the carnal imagery of Canticles as a romantic trope. The interactions between sacred and profane traditions of love with regard to this religious lyric are well established by the seventeenth century.³⁰ Criticism of *The Temple* often notes the influence of seduction rhetoric in the religious context of the divine-human relationship: forms such as the sonnet, garden imagery, the theme of physical separation and metaphysical union, and the voice of the beseeching, anguished lover are common in both genres. But this kind of “conventional” crossover is then assumed to be antagonistic or censorious of secular concerns – concerns which are, admittedly, depicted as impermanent, worldly, and insubstantial in a religious context.³¹ But secular love poetry itself often discloses its own failures in a self-parodic stance, and this common attitude between secular and religious poetry is too often assumed to be (simply) at odds.³² In fact, the common attitudes in secular and religious verse seem to agree that the body and its sensual desires need to be addressed, ironically or sincerely, rather than dismissed; ephemeral materiality is thus a paradoxical condition of *eros* and erotic exchange, whether its context is romantic or religious. Herbert’s structural strategy employs many of the same devices as Spenser’s wedding poems, for instance, blazoning the Church as a beloved Bride and adopting the tone of an observant, expectant, and sometimes impatient Bridegroom – or, alternately, the tone of an obedient Bride.

³⁰ See Noam Flinker’s *The Song of Songs in the English Renaissance: Kisses of their Mouths* (Rochester NY: D.S. Brewer, 2000) or Stanley Stewart’s *The Enclosed Garden: The Tradition and the Image in Seventeenth-Century Poetry* (Madison WI: U of Wisconsin P, 1966).

³¹ In *Protestant Poetics* (1979), Barbara K. Lewalski states that “Herbert ... avoids its [Canticles’] erotic and mystical connotations” (Lewalski 293). Anthony Low, somewhat inconsistently, denies that there is any element of eroticism in Herbert’s poetry: “His poems evoke the seductive, the sensual, and the scatological only in order to exemplify sin or temptation. Sometimes, they embody religious longing in the language of romantic love, but they refrain from even the mildest suggestion that there might be a resemblance between a man’s pure love for a woman and Christian *caritas*, or that God’s love for souls and for his Church might be like a husband’s love for his wife” (Low 101). Various critics have noted allusions to the biblical epithalamion in Herbert’s *The Temple*; in addition to Lewalski and Low, see Chana Bloch, *Spelling the Word: George Herbert and the Bible* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985). But the critical consensus dismisses erotic associations as sublimated sensuality or physical transcendence, a binary division that is presumed to be consistent with a “religious” interpretation.

³² See, for example, Philip Sidney’s *Astrophel and Stella*, sonnet 15, in which “Sidney proceeds to attack those who draw their inspiration solely from classical sources” (Richard S. Sylvester, ed., *English Sixteenth-Century Verse: An Anthology* [New York: W.W. Norton, 1974], 425, note 2).

The blazon of the human body as an architectural structure in Herbert's *Temple* is a notable example of Canticles' rhetoric that is used in both secular and religious poetry. Canticles resonates with architectural blazons of the Sponsa: "Thy neck is like the tower of David builded for an armoury, whereon there hang a thousand bucklers, all shields of mighty men" (Song of Songs 4:4).³³ Similarly, the historical construction of the Church in "The Church Militant" is built on this basis of female erotic fecundity:

... above all, thy Church and Spouse doth prove
 Not the decrees of power, but bands of love.
 Early didst thou arise to plant this vine,
 Which might the more indeare it to be thine.
 Spices come from the East; so did thy Spouse,
 Trimme as the light, sweet as the laden boughs
 Of *Noahs* shadie vine, chaste as the dove,
 Prepar'd and fitted to receive thy love.

(Herbert, "The Church Militant," p. 190, ll. 9-16).³⁴

The temporal building of the personified Church in "The Church Militant" rests on this initial characterization, just as Spenser's future bride is blazoned with precious jewels in the *Amoretti* (sonnet XV), flowers (sonnet LXIX), fruit and architectural ornaments (*Epithalamion* 10).

Despite the disputed status of "The Church Militant" and its place in *The Temple*, the echo of Canticles in "thy Church and Spouse" can be seen in many other places in Herbert's book.³⁵ Furthermore, the examples of Spenser's blazons of his future bride and Herbert's blazon of the Church reflect the exegetical custom of referring to humanity as feminine and enclosed in relation to the divine: "A garden inclosed is my sister, my spouse; a spring shut up, a fountain sealed" (Song 4:12). The exegesis of the desired human mate involves an allegory of betrothal: the Church is the Bride to Christ just as Elizabeth is Spenser's bride.

³³ For examples of secular blazons that suggest allusions to Canticles, see Edmund Spenser's *Amoretti*, sonnet XV, or Sidney's *Astrophel and Stella*, sonnet 12; see also discussions in Chapters Two and Three.

³⁴ *The Works of George Herbert*, ed. F. E. Hutchinson (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1941). All quotations of Herbert's *The Temple* give page and line references from this edition.

³⁵ Again, I will not address Herbert's architectural motifs in terms of The Church-Porch, The Church, and the inclusion or exclusion of The Church Militant as a textual design for *The Temple*. Other critics have argued both for and against variations on this theme; see Esther Gilman Richey's "The Political Design of Herbert's *Temple*," p. 90-91, fn. 7.

But just as Spenser's allegory of Elizabeth is tropologically applied to his actual bride, Herbert's allegory of betrothal also applies, tropologically, to the individual souls that make up the Church, each a bride in herself. It is important, then, to recall that the *Sponsa* describes herself as physically open to her beloved, thereby inscribing the rhetoric of physical openness on the souls of the brides that are enclosed by the divine perspective of the Church. The desire of courtship and betrothal is therefore a seductive and erotic trope that works on a number of different levels at the same time, both literally when the lovers are human and in a spiritual context where the human soul yearns for union with the divine. The metaphorically female body represents humanity's physical nature, the Church as a building, and the various souls that are the community of the faithful. Each level expands the enclosures of the previous sense, yet without compromising the integrity of previous signifiers; Herbert's poetry in *The Temple* develops rather than forecloses structural integrity as a supportive device that paradoxically sustains openness. Spenser's marriage is a human model for relations with the divine as much as Herbert's Church is a spiritual model for human affairs, and the kind of exchange that this rhetoric engages is erotic because it promises interminable and desirable exchange.

In his article, "The Problem of Sexual Reference in George Herbert's Verse," Alan Rudrum suggests that modern categorizations of kinds of love derive from the omission of "eros" in the New Testament: "classical Greek has four different words for [love], ... *eros* ... is in fact notably absent from [the original Greek of the New Testament]" (Rudrum 21). He goes on to explain that Plato uses *eros* to describe "the intensity and strength of human passion [that is] an appropriate analogue for the love of man's soul for higher things"; *eros*, in fact, "denote[s] the supreme human desire, that for knowledge, [which Plato regarded as] the chief virtue."³⁶ *Eros*, then, is defined by yearning and by desire, be it carnal or spiritual or both. In this sense, the "courtly love" and "metaphysical" traditions – terms which I use with deliberate caution and skepticism – both turn on the erotic rhetoric of Canticles and its promised fulfillment in the Book of Revelation, which is in turn an apocalyptic vision of

³⁶ Rudrum 21; qtg. Boyce W. Blackwelder, *Light from the Greek New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1958), 33. It will also be recalled that Origen attempted to synthesize Platonic and Christian philosophy, so that despite the omission of "eros" in the New Testament, there is a basis for its traditional inclusion in early Christian exegesis.

interpretation is what distinguishes late medieval and Reformation exegesis from that of the 3rd to 11th centuries.³⁸ Despite the presumed novelty of Protestant poetics, then, “the painstaking analysis of the personal religious life” characterizes the tropological sense of exegesis, whatever the century.³⁹ This “novel” emphasis derived from twelfth-century exegesis, and the Reformation made explicit the reordering of exegetical priorities. In practice, the reformed Church of England refocused the methods of interpretation toward the present-day application of tropology, rather than the eschatological principles of anagogy. All four of the medieval senses were maintained, but there was a crucial rhetorical shift in order and method.

The divine “art of love,” then, that is to be “read” in God’s “book,” is not exclusive to the Bible; it is also legible in the physical forms of Nature such as human bodies. The method of turning divine love back to its origin, moreover, is the tropological work of individuals in daily life. The turning of tropology is a way of seeing human conduct as a reflection of divine love in, for example, the restoring of wealth to the poor and other charitable works listed in “The Thanksgiving,” in “mend[ing] common wayes” and in “mend[ing] mine own without delays” (l. 33-34). Thus the turning, as a figurative trope, works toward turning human behaviour, just as Hugh of St. Victor established in the twelfth century: “We may ask ... what this [biblical] fact signifies about how we ought to behave, or as to what would be a fitting response. ... Therefore, read Scripture and learn diligently what it speaks of first in a bodily fashion.”⁴⁰ God’s Book of Nature, specifically secular human nature, can itself offer a practical basis for literary interpretation just as the Bible inspires

³⁸ For further elaboration on the developments of exegetical methodologies, see E. Ann Matter’s *The Voice of My Beloved: The Song of Songs in Western Medieval Christianity* (Philadelphia PA: U of Pennsylvania P, 1990), 109-111, 123, and discussion in Chapter One, “Renaissance Exegesis of Canticles and the Play of Conversation.”

³⁹ Lewalski 13. Lewalski, and others, have assumed that the “emphasis upon the constant scrutiny of personal emotions and feelings is a primary cause of that introspective intensity and keen psychological awareness so characteristic of seventeenth-century lyrics” (Lewalski 20). In fact, as E. Ann Matter argues, the tropological sense “came into its own in the twelfth century ... [when] the Song of Songs was increasingly read as a dynamic guide to the quest of each human being for union with God” and that this emphasis “was not limited to the spiritually elite world of the cloister” (Matter 123).

⁴⁰ Hugh of St. Victor, *Praenotiuunculae de scripturis et scriptoribus sacris*, trans. Denys Turner. Turner, *Eros and Allegory: Medieval Exegesis of the Song of Songs* (Kalamazoo MI: Cistercian Publications, 1995), 268, 271.

exegesis. In other words, texts and their interpretive apparatuses operate intertextually; and every intertextual allusion is, at least nominally, exegetical too. Furthermore, as Anthony Martin has suggested, the intertextual element of parody also works exegetically; he gives Francis Holyoke's 1627 definition of the Latin *parodia* as "A turning of verse into another signification by altering of some few words."⁴¹ The other signification, therefore, maintains a sense that the source is as apparent as the parody; alternative significations then turn on each other in a way that is characteristically playful rather than simply censorious or antagonistic.⁴² In other words, parody is a rhetorical device that evokes the turning of tropology: parody involves an implicit comparative interpretation between the textual source that is being parodied and the kind of turning that the source is subjected to in the parody, just as tropology employs scriptural significations that are turned into daily conduct.

Martin's examination of Pembroke's "Song," the apparent source for Herbert's "A Parody," establishes that the source-poem evokes physical oppositions only to subvert them metaphysically; ultimately, Martin says,

the lovers can transcend the sensible world, with its mutability and attendant [physical] separations. However, it is noticeable that in these lines, where a transcendence of the material and sensible is postulated, the "wit" works within a system of sensual, physical imagery. ... In the ambiguity of the line "Even then our souls shall kisse" the paradoxical difficulty of the position is delineated ... Thus, [physical] absence is not something merely to be surmounted but is in a sense necessary to "true" love. When the lovers are physically present to each other, by implication, their souls are absent.

(Martin 460)

Moreover, "The separation is not just temporary, but is seen to be temporal, a result of material existence" (Martin 461). Martin's interpretation of a secular love poem may apply to Canticles as well, which also concludes with a physical separation and metaphysically erotic yearning: "Thou that dwellest in the gardens, the companions hearken to thy voice: cause me

⁴¹ Anthony Martin, "George Herbert and Sacred Parodie," *Studies in Philology* 93.4 (Fall 1996), 451. Note also that the Latin *verso*, to turn, is involved in this definition: English verses, then, are potentially tropological, if we are to consider Anne Ferry's work on the associative use of homonyms and etymologies in the period (see Anne Ferry, *The "inward" language: sonnets of Wyatt, Sidney, Shakespeare, Donne* [Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983]).

to hear it. Make haste, my beloved, and be thou like to a roe or to a young hart upon the mountains of spices” (Song 8:13-14). Chapter 8 of *Canticles* also includes the phrase Crashaw uses to characterize Teresa (and to contrast her with the arsenal of Satan’s minions): “love is strong as death” (Song 8:6). This paradoxical equation is the central epigrammatic paradox of physical existence and metaphysical awareness that ties secular and sacred love poetry together and suggests that the final separation of the *Canticles* lovers is, allegorically, mortal death: the *Sponsa* awaits her beloved’s return to her earthly garden in which “Thou dwellest” from the heavenly mountains to which he has temporarily gone. The mortality of the body is what renders the sensual element of desire frustrating and distracting. How much “easier,” then, to dismiss the body’s distractions and focus desire on an immaterial divine object or the beloved’s soul? The irony of Herbert’s *Temple* is that this very desire is impossibly, paradoxically, irresolvably driven by the body/temple metaphor of his title. The natural desire for physical, tangible presence beyond metaphor is then a defining and divinely conferred characteristic of humanity.⁴³ Martin has pointed out the subtlety of Herbert’s “A Parodie,” in that it does not “indulge” in “refutation” or “a mere substitution of divine terms for profane” – Herbert does not criticize profane terms. Rather, the voice of Herbert’s poem is that of the “beloved who is left alone [and who] necessarily sees things differently ... the ‘answer’ provided is going to say different things” (Martin 464). What Herbert does, then, is take a different perspective on exactly the same situation, literally answering Pembroke’s “Song” in the voice of a female beloved who has been left by her lover: “O what a damp and shade/ Doth me invade!/ ... Ah, Lord do not withdraw” (Herbert, “A Parodie,” p. 183-184, l. 11-12, 16). Rather than criticize or refute profane terms, Herbert’s answer validates the secular and erotic terms of the “question” by using sexualized language throughout the poem. More than this, Herbert picks up not only where Pembroke leaves

⁴² In “Sacred ‘Parodie’ of Love poetry, and Herbert,” Tuve also argues that the presumed Renaissance definitions of “parody” as ridicule do not correspond to Herbert’s use of the word in the title of this poem.

⁴³ Cf. also Pamphilia’s heart, divinely bestowed so that she may show that she can love in the discourse of Venus and her son. See also Phil. 3:20-21: “For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ. Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.” The connotation of conversation as a dwelling place characterizes the world in which we live, as well as the promise of the heavens to which we aspire.

off, but also where Canticles reaches a conclusion: the female beloved is left, calling to her lover to re-join her in the garden of the world, that she (and her companions) may hear his voice. Traditionally, the female beloved is allegorized as the Church (for anagogical purposes) and as the individual human soul (for tropological purposes). Exegetes would customarily refer to the human soul as “she” – that is, the representative soul of the divine-human relationship is gendered female and placed in the world, just as Herbert’s parody assumes the voice of the Sponsa who has been left in the world.

Herbert’s rhetorical stance on the separation of the lovers thereby renders Pembroke’s speaker as a nominal Christ, without losing the characteristics that make him a lover also, offering a metaphysical union as a way of dealing with physical separation and supporting the pleasure of desire. In this sense, the female beloved’s response is remarkable: instead of finding a “solution” to the presumed anxiety of absence by means of reasoning out the paradox and bypassing one of its terms (i.e., the physical), “A Parodie” accentuates the erotic longing that is the effect of physical absence. Rather than trying and inevitably failing to resolve the paradox, Herbert’s “Parodie,” like *The Temple* as a whole, perpetuates it. If only because this absence establishes the desire of the soul, it is worth having and cherishing; if only because desire implicates an other, or another subjectivity that desires Herbert’s own as a beloved object, it is valuable and virtuous. Herbert’s “female” voice expresses a yearning, and thus an erotic, desire for the divine lover that is reciprocated, as well as initiated, by Pembroke’s “Song.”

The first stanza of Herbert’s “Parodie” establishes the paradox as the context for the poem:

Soul’s Joy, when Thou art gone,
 And I alone,
 Which cannot be,
 Because thou dost abide with me,
 And I depend on thee

(Herbert, “A Parodie,” p. 183-184, l. 1-5)

The desired other is both absent and “abiding” – both present “with” the beloved and “gone.” The metaphysical conceit of Pembroke’s “Song” is sustained and attenuated, not ridiculed or criticized. It would perhaps be more appropriate to suggest that Herbert’s use of

parody is playful, turning his verses only slightly from Pembroke's "Song," by invoking the Song of Songs. The turn involved is one that applies the erotic/romantic situation of Pembroke's lyric to spiritual matters, without changing the erotic element. "A Parodie" thus responds to one song (Pembroke's) in the voice of another (Canticles), weaving secular *eros* together with scriptural *eros*, and thereby offers an important comment on eroticism: it is not debased or degraded because it is already incorporated in the scriptural Song of Songs. The paradoxical exchange between these three texts finds a perpetuated tension and pleasure in the response of Herbert's poem, if only because Herbert's "Parodie" emulates the responsive dialogue of Canticles in the very act of parodying Pembroke's "Song."⁴⁴ Such a parody is not censorious of romantic love, but rather celebrates it by partaking in its manner of expression for divine conversation.

The Temple can be seen as a kind of parody of exegetical rhetoric itself, responding both to the Bible and to the divine "text" of the Book of Nature – a book which, ironically or not, includes *eros* in the human body as well as the soul. In "Love" (I), for instance, the "authour of this great frame" is addressed, and Herbert asks and answers: "Who sings thy praise? onely a skarf or glove/ Doth warm our hands, and make them write of love" (p. 54, l. 13-14). The "frame" here is the body, whose "author," "standing by," observes and tolerates the "play[ing] out [of the] game" of secular love (l. 1, 11, 10). But the second sonnet, "Love" (II), indicates that despite the *carpe diem* conceit that does not directly or explicitly include praise of God in "mortal love," human love itself is not indited any more than the body/frame that is the "workmanship" of the divine (I, l. 8). Paradoxically, after the praise of God "consume[s] our lusts," "Then shall our hearts pant Thee" (II, l. 5-6). Like the kissing souls of Pembroke's "Song," the heart that pants evokes a "paradoxical difficulty," to use Martin's phrase, eliding the organ of the desire with a sensual act of spiritual yearning only after "lust" has been "consumed."⁴⁵ While lust is twice mentioned as the flaw of "mortal love," it is redeemed by this third witty association with a fuller context. The body

⁴⁴ This kind of invocation of one text in order to respond to another may have influenced Crashaw's similar responsive strategy in his *Steps to the Temple*.

⁴⁵ Cf. Crashaw use of "death" in the Teresa poem, where the same word signifies differently the second time it appears.

itself, when properly seen as inhabited by the soul, may “put on incorruption.”⁴⁶ *Eros*, then, can be made an occasion for good, just as the corruptible body is not necessarily corrupted.

It is significant to note the link between the potential corruptions of mortal *eros* – the “skarf or glove” – and the virtuous principles that are also associated with divine *eros* – the panting heart. This connection derives from the early medieval practice of coupling exegesis of Canticles with that of the Book of Revelation. According to E. Ann Matter, “The Song of Songs and the Apocalypse were ... increasingly read together [in the fourth century], as two accounts of the same divine plan; ... an apocalyptic theme in Song of Songs exegesis is well developed by the twelfth century.”⁴⁷ Herbert’s treatment of *eros*, which critics have tended to regard as sublimated erotic yearning, can thus be seen in a larger context of Canticles’ rhetoric. The typological relation between the edenic garden of Genesis and the post-apocalyptic city of the New Jerusalem is situated in the traditional interpretations of the garden and city of Canticles. The biblical epithalamion, or wedding-song, however, does not actually describe a wedding; rather, Canticles recounts the courtship and betrothal that precedes the promised wedding feast of Revelation. Like the deferral of incorruption and immortality, it is the promise of marital consummation that defines the virtue of erotic yearning – a virtue that is always potentially present in the otherwise corruptible body. It is worth emphasizing this point if only because it has been so consistently misunderstood; critics are all too ready to refer casually to the “matrimonial imagery” of Canticles without making the distinction that the matrimonial imagery is actually apocalyptic and derives from Revelation, and is only associated with Canticles through typological exegesis.⁴⁸ Moreover,

⁴⁶ As Origen established in the 3rd century, the body/soul paradox of human existence remains the same after death, except that the body “puts on incorruption” along with immortality in the apocalyptic city: “Therefore our hope is not one of worms, nor does our soul desire a body that has rotted. ... For since the nature of this body is to be entirely corruptible, this mortal tabernacle must put on incorruption” (Origen, *Contra Celsum*, V, 19, trans. Chadwick, 279; qtd in Matter 22).

⁴⁷ Matter 89; see also Matter 101.

⁴⁸ See, for example, Michael C. Schoenfeldt, *Prayer and Power: George Herbert and Renaissance Courtship* (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1991), 256-257. Schoenfeldt declares that “Behind Herbert’s portrait of his encounter with God in ‘Love’ (III) are the biblical parable of the wedding feast and the sensuous imagery of the song of Solomon.” Like many critics who note and discuss the imagistic and thematic influence of Canticles, however, Schoenfeldt fails to make the distinction between biblical poetics and the exegetical traditions that structure and inform our understanding of biblical texts.

the failure to distinguish between scriptural text and exegetical association leads to a further problem. Michael Schoenfeldt contends that

in order to make simple sense of ["Love" (III)], one must either suppress the erotic or cultivate it at the expense of the sacred, [for] the erotic and the religious, although never separated in the poem, work against each other even as they are expressed in precisely the same language. If this figure is an enticing lover, it is proper for the speaker to draw back, to grow slack, to refuse the seduction. But if this figure is God, then to draw back, to grow slack, to refuse to enter, is bad, evidence of unregenerate pride.

(Schoenfeldt 263)

The paradoxical rhetoric of exegesis, however, serves to perpetuate the established tension between the "erotic" Canticles and the "religious" sense of apocalyptic union, which is why "they are expressed in precisely the same language." Suppressing one and cultivating the other, as Schoenfeldt claims "one must," serves to privilege one kind of narrative resolution at the expense of the erotic exchange between two kinds of perspectives. Such a misreading presumes too much and results in an unnecessary confusion, if only because "the erotic and the religious ... [are] never separated in the poem." In other words, we might consider that such "complications" explain the paradox rather than disrupt the dialectic process of our own expectations.⁴⁹

Indeed, as John Celestin Walby points out, "It was through the body and the senses that paradise was lost – seeing, touching, tasting, eating the apple. And so, it is through the regenerate body and the regenerate senses that it must be regained – seeing, touching, tasting, eating Christ's body" (Walby 67). The eucharistic metaphor thus lends apocalyptic significance to the feast in "Love" (III) – and, conversely, apocalyptic significance is associated with each celebration of the Eucharist. Walby goes on to say that "This reversal of the Fall may account for the conflation of genders and the gestures of female seduction in

⁴⁹ After a confusing consideration of maternal sexuality and patriarchal transcendence that results in "androgyny that is political as well as sexual," Schoenfeldt finally concludes by asserting that "The love that Herbert anatomizes and practices throughout *The Temple* is not just *caritas* but also *cupiditas*, not just *agape* but also *eros*. Its medium is the flesh his God assumed as well as the spirit to which all life tends. Rather than functioning as an impertinent distraction from devotion, sexuality is the warp of that carefully woven fabric through which Herbert attempts to comprehend and express the divine" (265, 270). Schoenfeldt's inattention in his analysis to exegetical rhetoric, however, makes this conclusion seem rather more contrived than it needs to be.

the characterization of Love that many critics have noticed in the poem: Christ is both male and female in redeemed form, recapitulating and reversing the fateful actions of the first human couple” (Walby 67). In other words, the incarnated Christ shares in the traditional characteristic of the feminized human soul, while still maintaining the divine characteristics of a masculine lover as in “A Parodie” (or as in Crashaw’s “Blessed be the paps ...”). In this sense, the rhetoric of paradox extends to the divine Incarnation itself: the characteristic of Christ’s humanity is asserted in a paradoxically doubled gender, in which he models for us the flexibility with which gendered desire may be asserted.

“Love” (III), moreover, demonstrates a reformed exegetical methodology in the development of the themes of Love – that is, the three stanzas proceed through allegory, to anagogy, and finally to tropology. Rather than concluding with anagogy, the sense that “leads up to” the apocalyptic wedding feast, the final stanza of Herbert’s “Love” (III) concludes with a focus on tropology, the sense of “turning” into the present day. This reordering has the interesting effect of articulating the immanence (rather than imminence) of erotic, apocalyptic, and marital themes. The first stanza introduces the allegory of seduction:

Love bade me welcome: yet my soul drew back,
 Guilty of dust and sinne.
 Yet quick-ey’d Love, observing me grow slack
 From my first entrance in,
 Drew nearer to me, sweetly questioning,
 If I lack’d any thing.

(Herbert, “Love” [III], p. 188-189, l. 1-6)

The allegory of Christ and the soul as lovers establishes the hesitancy of the human beloved, as well as the divine invitation, attentive observation, and approach. Love is “quick-ey’d” and attentive to his guest in this allegory of love; it is, furthermore, difficult to see the “dilemma” between secular and sacred terms here, since the erotic yearning is “made welcome” by Love himself. By naming Christ “Love,” Herbert suggests a paradoxical rhetoric of eroticized “entrance” into the poem, an entrance that welcomes both the body and the soul of the human guest.

The second stanza elaborates the allegory in anagogical terms, recalling the feast and consummation of Revelation:

A guest, I answer'd, worthy to be here:
 Love said, You shall be he.
 I the unkinde, ungratefull? Ah my deare,
 I cannot look on thee.
 Love took my hand, and smiling did reply,
 Who made the eyes but I?

(Herbert, "Love" [III], l. 7-12)

The reference in line 12 to the story of creation in Genesis recalls the inability of humankind to look on God after the Fall; the invitation to look on the divine returns the soul to an Edenic kind of approach. The alpha and omega of scripture – creation and apocalypse – are joined in the worthy human guest who may gaze upon the divine again. Furthermore, the motif of returning to origins adumbrates the turning of the final, tropological stanza, toward the present day of worldly existence:

Truth Lord, but I have marred them: let my shame
 Go where it doth deserve.
 And know you not, sayes Love, who bore the blame?
 My deare, then I will serve.
 You must sit down, sayes Love, and taste my meat:
 So I did sit and eat.

(Herbert, "Love" [III], l. 13-18)

The speaker's offer to "serve" the feast turns the *topos* of sacrifice to the human beloved; the human sacrifice of dying in love for God reciprocates Christ's sacrifice for love of humanity. The sitting at table and the tasting and eating of the meat also echoes the dining metaphor of the eucharistic host – an interesting and suggestive homonym in itself.⁵⁰ The seductive play between host and guest in "Love" (III) is situated in the oscillating exchange of roles between them. As a model for social practice, the etiquette of exchange in this final stanza in which host and guest serve each other applies to the common daily event of sitting to eat,

⁵⁰ The liturgy of the eucharist itself suggests this erotic offering in husbandly terms, despite Low's contention that divine/human relations are not at all like those of marriage for Herbert. Christ's words from the Last Supper ask the celebrants to eat in remembrance of him: "Take this bread and eat it: this is my body that is given up for you." The husband, too, in the Solemnization of Matrimony, is asked to imitate Christ and give up his body for his wife's comfort.

which is also recorded at various points throughout the Bible. In the final line, the invitation of the first line is consummated: “Love bade me welcome . . . So I did sit and eat” (l. 1, 18). Such astounding simplicity does not privilege sacred over secular, nor does it “suppress” or “cultivate” *eros* at anyone’s expense. Rather, the guest is honoured by the equally honourable host. Furthermore, both the past innocence of Genesis and the erotic promise of Revelation is applicable in the present, immediate day in the mundane practice of sitting to eat.

The turning of verse, into parody and back out again, or from apocalyptic to eucharistic feast and then back out toward daily events, is also evident in the playful interaction between books and readers at several key places in *The Temple*. From the Bible to the Book of Nature and back toward our readings of our selves within the divinely created world, the metaphor of the textual body turns both ways: bodies may be read, and texts may be sensually appreciated. In “The H. Scriptures” (I), the Bible is invoked for “Ladies,” who are told to “look here; this is the thankfull glasse, /That mends the lookers eyes” (p.58, l. 8-9). This mending need not be postponed to the Second Coming of Christ; our eyes, however corruptible, may yet read and interpret the divine presence in the present day: “Seeing not onely how each verse doth shine,/ But all the constellations of the storie” (“The H. Scriptures” [II], p. 58, l. 3-4). This clearly indicates that mended eyes see variously, seeing “all the constellations” of “each verse.” What is not immediately clear is why Herbert addresses “Ladies” so particularly and emphatically, which I find both intriguing and playful. While it is an unfortunately common enough complaint that vanity is a feminine vice, it is also a common rhetorical practice to refer to the human soul in feminine terms, based on the allegory of the Bride. The allusion to feminine readers in the first of the “The H. Scriptures” sonnets signals the description of exegetical methods in the second one, a practice that proceeds by connecting allusions between scriptural verses, and then applying those connections beyond scripture to the Christian’s life:

This verse marks that, and both do make a motion
Unto a third, that ten leaves off doth lie:

...

These three make up some Christians destinie:
Such are thy secrets, which my life makes good,
And comments on thee; for in ev’ry thing
Thy words do finde me out, & parallels bring,

And in another make me understood.

(Herbert, "The H. Scriptures" [III], l. 5-6, 8-12)

Here "some Christian" is the speaker of the poem, whose "life makes good" by commenting on the divine. Scriptural texts bring parallel allusions to him, integrating his existence as an interpretive "text" into the divine Creation. Just as the female gender represents the addressed readers of the poem and alludes to the corruption of vanity, so the speaker offers the self-regarding (or self-interpreting) text as a variant model of virtue. He offers his reading of his own reflection in the mirror of scripture in order to demonstrate that the self, and especially the bodily temple that houses the soul, is an hieroglyphic of the divine; what a mirror shows us is ourselves as reflections of our divine origins.⁵¹ This figuring of the self – soul within body – as a basis for further interpretation of the divine derives ultimately from Origenic principles of exegesis that were established in order to justify the inclusion of Canticles as a biblical text in the third century. Origen based Christian exegesis on Proverbs 22:20: "Do thou portray them threefold in counsel and knowledge, that thou mayst answer words of truth to those who question thee."⁵² As Robert M. Grant explains, "Origen interprets this passage (typologically) in the light of Paul's threefold analysis of human personality (I Thess. 5:23) into 'spirit, soul, and body,' and concludes that there is a 'bodily' or literal sense, a 'soul' or moral sense, and a 'spiritual' or allegorical-mystical sense in scripture" (Grant 59). The human body is thereby inscribed with sacred significance, just as divine Word is encrypted in what are otherwise profane writings like Canticles.⁵³

The sacred and profane are thus woven together in a paradox of plural singularity, which is rhetorically figured in and throughout *The Temple*. It is through the traditional

⁵¹ Cf. Chapter Five, discussion of Wither's emblems 4.23 and 4.41, which both feature a well-dressed and coiffed woman looking into a hand-held mirror.

⁵² Septuagint, trans. Charles M. Grant, *A Short History of the Interpretation of the Bible*, 2nd ed. with David Tracy (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984).

⁵³ Cf. de Lubac: "It's like this, if we take care primarily of our souls, we neglect to give to the body all that is necessary to it: in this way, killing our own bodies, the soul will not be saved; thus the letter of Scripture, which consists in history [the literal sense], is again in this comparable to the human body" (431). ("C'est comme si, pour mieux prendre soin do son âme, on négligeait de donner au corps tout ce qui lui est ncessaire: en tuant ainsi son propre corps, l'âme ne se sauverait pas; or la lettre de l'Écriture, qui consiste dans l'histoire, est encore en cela comparable au corps humain" [431]). The translation from the French is my own.

allegory of Canticles that the temple may figure the incarnated body of the divine in Christ, the beloved/Church as a building, the Church as a communal embodiment of beloved souls, or the individual soul that is a member of the Church's body. Through the allegory of seduction and marital consummation, this series of identifications figures the Church and her souls as a Bride and Christ as her Bridegroom. *The Temple*, allegorically interpreted, signifies an eroticized relationship with the divine. Herbert asserts in "The H. Scriptures" that his life may comment on and interpret the Bible because he has read it with mended eyes; he implores "Ladies" to do the same, not only to echo the "feminine" corruption of vanity but also to allude to the equally "feminine" redemption of the human soul as Christ's Bride. The basis for the exegetical edifice is the literal sense, which Reformation exegetes emphasized as the "one onely" sense. The Book of Nature, then, must be read with a physical, bodily sense, so that it may be accurately figured and interpreted. In this perspective, *eros*, the yearning for something beyond subjectivity and/or the body, is the greatest blessing – if only because the word "blessing" derives from the Old English *bledsian*, to consecrate with blood, and the French *blesser*, to wound. The paradox of desire is that it is both painful and pleasurable, consecrated by its own ambiguous conditions; desire inspires anxiety but it is also valued as a cure for despair.⁵⁴ In Herbert's *Temple*, erotic desire corresponds to hope, and it is figured in and through the literally metaphysical body.

Canticles' rhetoric and structural principles offer a methodology for interpreting other texts, calling or hearkening to other voices. The Reformation emphasis on the literal sense as the "one onely" sense concentrates, paradoxically, on the metaphor or figure of the human body and its purpose as a scriptural temple – that is, to house the soul and the divine

⁵⁴ Again, there is an empirical basis for this association between the pleasures of *eros* and the state of the soul. Robert Burton, for instance, advocates taking "prayer and physic both together": "God works by means, as Christ cured the blind man with clay and spittle ... As we must pray for health of body and mind, so we must use our utmost endeavours to preserve and continue it. Some kind of devils are not cast out but by fasting and prayer, and both necessarily required, not one without the other. ... [Alternatively,] St. Bernard [of Clarivaux], in the description of his monastery, is almost ravished with the pleasures of it. 'A sick man' (saith he) 'sits upon a green bank ... and feeds his eyes with variety of objects, herbs, trees, to comfort his misery, he receives many delightsome smells, and fills his ears with that sweet and various harmony of birds. Good God' (saith he), 'what a company of pleasures hast Thou made for man!'" (Burton, *Anatomy of Melancholy* [1621], v. 2, p.9, 75).

so that we may read ourselves in our own bodies. Crashaw's *Steps to the Temple* and Herbert's *The Temple* keep circling around images of words, letters, language, books, names, and bodies that speak to each other. The commerce of texts as conversational voices is particularly clear if we compare Crashaw's "On a prayer booke sent to Mrs M.R." to Herbert's "The H. Scriptures" (I and II).⁵⁵ Herbert's poems on the Bible describe an interpretive method that clearly involves making intertextual connections as well as applying interpreted material to "my life," if only to comment "on thee":

... for in ev'ry thing
Thy words do find me out, & parallels brings,
And in another make me understood.

(Herbert, "The H. Scriptures" [II], ll. 9-12)

Herbert here addresses "Ladies," though he offers himself as an object of "female" interpretation – he is penetrated by his recognition of scriptural parallels that "in another" make him understood to himself: in surrounding himself with scripture, he implicitly penetrates it in a "male" erotic metaphor. He thereby clarifies himself to himself, and in offering such an example to "women" readers he deliberately conflates gendered sexual metaphors (just as Crashaw does in his characterization of Christ in "Blessed be the paps which Thou hast sucked"). *The Temple* is also a visual imitation of the *Book of Common Prayer*, so that Crashaw's poem on the prayer book further imitates Herbert's *Temple*, at one step removed: just as his title places his book on the way toward Herbert's book, so his poem considers a prayer book that is on the way toward the Bible of Herbert's poem. Crashaw's poem, too, is addressed to a lady, Mrs M.R.; the address to a singular lady parodies/turns the plural of Herbert's address to "Ladies" in a way that is consistent with the singular address, its effect of intimacy, and the pilgrimage motif toward the communal vision of the *Temple*. Crashaw here suggests that his addressed reader wanders just as Mary does in "On the Assumption," but with different implications: just as Herbert's "Ladies" may imply the

⁵⁵ Virginia Tufte, in a discussion of the medieval epithalamium, mentions that "In the seventeenth century Richard Crashaw wrote ... an ascetic epithalamium to accompany his gift of a prayer-book to a young woman" (Tufte, 81). As the following examination will clarify, however, this poem is not exactly "ascetic."

corruptions of vanity as well as the redemption of the human soul, Crashaw's "Mrs M.R." may wander in both the wrong and the right directions:

Onely bee sure,
The hands bee pure
That hold these weapons and the eyes
Those of turtles, chast, and true,
Wakefull, and wise

But if the noble Bridegrome when he comes
Shall find the wandring heart from home,
Leaving her chaste abode,
To gad abroad:

Doubtles some other heart
Will git the start,
And stepping in before,
Will take possession of the sacred store

Effectuall whispers whose still voyce,
The soule it selfe more feeles than heares.
(Crashaw, "On a prayer booke," ll. 21-25, 41-44, 54-57, 61-62)

The wandering soul will then miss the sacred store of the divine lover:

Amourous Languishments, Luminous trances,
Sights which are not seen with eyes,
Spirituell and soule peircing glances.

An hundred thousand loves and graces,
And many a misticke thing,
Which the divine embraces
Of the deare spowse of spirits with them bring.
For which it is no shame,
That dull mortality must not know a name.

(Crashaw, "On a prayer booke," ll. 63-65, 75-80)

These sensually described spiritual delights may seem an odd hymn for the *Book of Common Prayer*. The erotic pleasure of the liturgy, and of reading and interpreting it, must surely have been more common in the Renaissance than it is today. Indeed, the verse goes on to become even more explicit:

Make haste to meet her morning spowse:
And close with his immortall kisses.

Happy soule who never misses,
 To improve that precious houre:
 And every day,
 Seize her sweet prey;
 All fresh and fragrant as hee rises,
 Dropping with a balmy showre.

 ... shee shall tast
 At once, ten thousand paradises
 Shee shall have power,
 To rifle and deflower

Happy soule shee shall discover,
 What joy, what blisse,
 How many heavens at once it is,
 To have a God become her lover.

(Crashaw, "On a prayer booke," ll. 96-104, 106-109, 115-118)

The duty, then, of church attendance and devotion is inscribed with "delicious" erotic pleasure; the eucharistic rite is endowed with the "tast" of "ten thousand paradises," and receiving the host even confers a deflowering power – the kind of desire that Mrs M.R. may rightly enjoy is one that conflates gendered penetration with enveloping. It must be admitted that this power is no more to be taken literally by Mrs M.R. than by the Ladies of Herbert's poems. My point, however, is that it is no less sensually effective because of that. Desire is a physical pleasure in itself, regardless of physical determinations; the erotic satisfaction of chaste virtue is inscribed in both the liturgy and scripture alike because they draw and comment on each other. Like Herbert before him, Crashaw reads the Book of Nature with a sense of appreciation for the body that carries the message. *Eros*, the yearning for something beyond the body, does not write over the desiring body. Instead, it is the literal scriptural body that forms the basis for reading; it is erotic desire, both in and for the body, that marks us, like a blessing, with hope.

Chapter Five

“let us make Emblems of our selves”:
George Wither’s *A Collection of Emblemes* (1635)

This chapter will consider the formal arrangements of Bibles and George Wither’s *A Collection of Emblemes* (1635) as an example of how Canticles’ rhetoric permeates Renaissance notions of hybrid genres. Emblems, with their diverse formal elements of picture and word, offer a multi-layered model for co-operative reading practices in Renaissance England – practices that are reflected in the formal arrangements in vernacular Bibles as well as in the paratextual framework of Wither’s emblem book. The emblematic rhetoric of *pictura* as body and *subscriptio* as soul indicates an inherent engagement between the formal elements of emblems, an engagement that draws on Canticles’ rhetoric because it legitimizes the body’s pleasure as an hieroglyphic of the divine.¹ Moreover, both Bibles and emblem books annotate themselves: these annotations take the form of illustrations and/or “marginal” exegesis in bibles and textual explication in emblems that clearly demonstrate the tropological emphasis of Reformation exegesis. Peter Daly’s *Literature in the Light of the Emblem* introduces the field of emblem studies, and he establishes that “Th[e] renaissance preoccupation with universals in a broadly Platonic sense evidently merges with the medieval concern for allegorical exegesis, and the emblem was frequently a later vehicle for their conjunction. Notions of universal ideas, the image of the great chain of being, and Nature regarded as God’s Second Book are but different articulations of a sense of underlying order” (Daly, 1998, 52). As an introductory study on emblems and emblematic concerns, however, Daly’s work does not significantly elaborate the exegetical rhetoric of Canticles so particularly adopted by emblematisers. The combination of picture and word in a hybrid form demonstrates the emblematiser’s ability to elucidate ideas about the similar composition of the human form (body and soul) in a formal way. Thus, instead of the implicit involvement of

¹ As we will see, the formal arrangements of emblems involve some technical terms: the *pictura* (picture, usually an engraving) is almost always accompanied by a motto that summarizes the moral depicted; this pair is then accompanied by an explanatory poem called a *subscriptio*. This basic tripartite structure can be built upon, as in Quarles’ *Emblems, Divine and Moral*, with the addition of patristic quotations and epigrammatic poems (see Chapter Six for further discussion of Quarles’ emblems).

the rhetorical reader, the combination of picture and word and the marginal exegesis of early Reformation Bibles mimic the incorporation or embodiment of scriptural interpretation as an inherent and explicit element of scriptures (whether scriptures are biblical or “natural”). The formal conjunction of emblems indicates an obligation to read both picture and textual interpretation together, seeing the pictures and hearing the words as co-operative rhetorics – just as a reader of Bibles reads the Word and the guiding commentary together in order to incorporate the multiply-layered message of Scripture.

Yet the charge of explicitness has often been leveled at emblems in a derogatory sense, alongside critical approaches that place emblems in a subsidiary category of literature.² Such efforts to marginalize emblems as valid and important examples of poetic or literary tradition stem from a corresponding ambivalence with regard to Reformation exegetical practices. Indeed, despite Origen’s development of a hidden spiritual allegory to justify the inclusion of Canticles in the biblical canon, the “explicitness” of the four-level model is often mistaken as too didactic to be really relevant for current theoretical interests, and its use in emblem books seems to put modern critics at a disadvantage: the chasing of esoteric allegories is no longer in fashion, and once an allegory is identified, the task of interpretation

² See Charles A. Huttar, “Herbert and the Emblematic Tradition” in *Like Season’d Timber: New Essays on George Herbert*, ed. Edmund Miller and Robert Di Yanni (New York: Peter Lang, 1987), 59-87. This approach may be traced to Rosemary Freeman’s reading of emblems, which, while it is often suggestive and subtle, tends to be limited by taking the rhetorical conceits of emblems at face value: “The reason for [Wither’s] airy dismissal of the original sense [of the emblems] lies partly in the fact that the pictures were imported from Holland and some of them seemed to him exceptionally obscure, but it is mainly due to Wither’s consciousness that his material belongs to a tradition now obsolete. He introduces the emblems by such phrases as ‘in former times’ . . . He does not conceal his impatience with the plates and is anxious to get to what he regards as the real business of his book, moral improvement . . . The result is that for most readers Wither offers overmuch of Lamb’s ‘plain moral speaking’ and too little explanation of the symbolism of the pictures” (Freeman 144-145). Peter Daly has already successfully dealt with such a limited approach by demonstrating how Wither regularly elaborates traditional correspondences without crediting them as such, thereby rendering them relevant in a fresh way that has none of the sermonizing authority of esoterica (Daly, “George Wither’s Use of Emblem Terminology” in *Aspects of Renaissance and Baroque Symbol Theory*, eds. Peter M. Daly and John Manning [New York: AMS Press, 1999], 27-38). Furthermore, Freeman’s assumptions regarding authorial intention leave little to be said about readers and their interpretations, apart from what the author himself says.

is considered to be completed.³ In fact, both emblems and scriptural exegesis are far more dynamic and interactive than they have been credited with being. Rosalie Colie, for instance, identifies the poetic influence of emblems in the common reliance on diaeresis – “the actual and conceptual space around each of [the emblem’s] elements, caption, figure, and epigram” (Colie, 1973, 41). In her discussion of Marvell and Herbert, Colie notes that these poets, too, rely on diaeresis, which compels the reader to consider latent pictorial images as components of their poems:

We supply the connectives: *we* see why the adage applies to a given figure, what in an epigram supports the idea pointed to by figure and adage. Further, such space between its elements may be seen as necessary in a form relying on such different sorts of allusion, as the emblem does. Its epigram insists on syntactical compression; its figure often seems to illustrate nothing at all without its verbal accompaniments to direct our thoughts to the “idea” lying behind this ensemble of parts. [The same] directive lies behind the structure of [Marvell’s and Herbert’s] images ...
(Colie, 1973, 41-43)⁴

This “ensemble of parts” itself mimics the hieroglyphic of veiled truth; the veil must be pulled aside by a “piercing reader” willing to penetrate and embrace the idea (Colie 37), thereby rendering the “idea” as a seductively erotic object for the reader. This eroticized rhetoric of veiling and revealing truth parallels that of scripture and scriptural exegesis, too, so that it is hardly surprising that emblematisers borrowed exegetical rhetoric.

Before returning to a consideration of Canticles’ rhetoric of the body as a concrete pictorial figure for the eroticized soul in Wither’s *Emblemes*, I want to consider briefly some

³ See, for instance, Huston Diehl’s incredibly selective analysis of the labyrinth theme in “Into the maze of self: the Protestant transformation of the image of the labyrinth” (*Journal of Medieval and Renaissance Studies* 16.2 [1986]: 281-301), and discussion in Chapter Six.

⁴ Colie’s remarks are especially interesting with regard to my arguments in the preceding chapter on Herbert’s structural forms: “I want to suggest that in George Herbert’s collection of sacred poems, *The Temple*, can be found something of the emblem-technique of immediacy ... *The Temple* as a whole resists schemes to organize it into a consistent structure, although scholars have tried to fit it to one or another Procrustean bed. Actually, I think this is deliberate: that Herbert, in good Protestant form, planned to call upon a reader’s ever-revived capacity to contribute to his own revelation. ... I want to suggest that there is a major emblematic sub-theme in Herbert’s *Temple* as a whole; that the collection is, among other things, a ‘school of the heart’ much like continental devotional emblem books” (Colie, 1973, 50, 52-53, 57). Colie’s remarks here support my argument that tropological rhetoric resists categorizing impulses by calling upon the reader to “contribute to his own revelation”; she also suggests that emblems are another conspicuous but under-acknowledged literary genre that draws upon this rhetoric.

recent scholarship on the developments of Reformation Bibles, specifically the incorporation of marginal exegesis and the inclusion of allegorical and explanatory illustrations, in order to explore the scriptural basis of emblematic rhetoric. The interaction between text and interpretation in vernacular bibles is a more well-developed, and somewhat less biased, field that sheds light on the rhetorical strategies used in emblem books. For instance, Francis Higman has demonstrated that, in the sixteenth-century, Genevan Calvinism advocated a movement toward “guided reading” through the use of marginal exegesis, so that any reader of the newly vernacular Bible would have read the suggested interpretations and typological connections included alongside scripture. This development of guided reading was supported by the inclusion of maps and diagrams that further elucidated some of the more obscure qualities of foreign and ancient geography and measurements, such as that of Noah’s Ark or the architectural configuration of the first Temple in Jerusalem. This shift from the Vulgate to vernacular translations of the Bible, Higman argues, is marked by a “clear policy in Geneva to make scripture widely available in affordable editions” (Higman 116). Higman cites the title-page of the 1559 Barbier-Courteau Bible, commonly referred to in England as the Geneva Bible:

LA BIBLE

QVI EST

Toute la sainte Escriture, ascauoir le vieil & nouveau Testament:

DE NOUVEAV REVEVE, AVEC AR-

gumens sur chacun livre, nouvelles annotations en marge, fort vti-

les: par lesquelles on peut sans grand labeur, obtenir la vraye intelligence du sens de l’Escriture, avec recueil de grande doctrine.

Il y a aussi quelques figures & cartes chorographiques de grande vtilite, l’vsage desquelles pourrez voir en l’espitre suyante.

(qtd in Higman, 116)⁵

As Higman indicates, “All of these reading aids imply a particular way of reading the Bible. They draw attention to the literal meaning of the sacred text, encouraging the reader to

⁵ “The Bible, which is all of the holy scripture, including the old and new testament: a new translation, with arguments for each book, new notes in the margin, [which are] greatly useful: by which we may without great labour obtain the true intelligence of the sense of scripture, with the help of broad doctrines. There are also several figures and maps of local regions and buildings of great usefulness, the method of which you may see in the next chapter” (my translation).

concentrate on the historical truth of the book rather than on dwelling on allegorical interpretations, as was the case in mediaeval exegesis” (Higman 117). As we have seen in the writings of Hugh of St. Victor and others, the medieval emphasis on allegorical readings had in fact already begun to decline in the twelfth century. The emerging pattern of guided reading in the early Reformation is therefore not only a continuation of the decline in strictly allegorical tastes, but also an extension of the late medieval emphasis on the literal sense of the Bible and the further application of allegory and anagogy in the tropological sense.

And yet, while Higman is perfectly right to claim that “images which appeal to the imagination are excluded” from Genevan Bibles (Higman 120), there is a remarkable continuity between early Reformation allegorical illustration in Germany and Holland, and the later explosion of printed emblem books which retain all four senses of exegetical rhetoric. Andrew Pettegree traces the evolution of the allegorical pictorial theme of the Law and the Gospel from Cranach’s workshop and beyond, which he claims reinforced “core messages” in scriptural reading aids such as marginalia (Pettegree 123). Initially, Pettegree notes the shift from Marian and saintly portraits as biblical illustrations toward allegorical themes such as “Justification of Faith, [or] the allegory of sin and redemption known as the Law and the Gospel” (Pettegree 126).⁶ Allegorical themes in Bibles were often accompanied by biblical citations that clarified them (Pettegree 126) – and which would also be clarified by the illustrations in turn. Pettegree also notes that, by the mid-sixteenth century, printed bibles dropped such allegorical illustrations (Pettegree 131). What he does not trace is the

⁶ Given that at least one of the poets discussed in this study later converted to Roman Catholicism, it is worth noting in passing that this shift from iconographic portraiture to allegorical themes occurs simultaneously in Protestant and Roman Catholic Bibles: “there is no clear correlation between the confessional orientation of a particular edition of the Bible and the illustrations it employed. Illustrations moved back and forth between Protestant and Catholic versions with little apparent pattern or clear didactic purpose” (Pettegree 130). Crashaw’s iconography is often confusingly linked to his conversion, in one way or another, despite the consistency of its development; Pettegree’s point suggests that the context of a writer’s religious affiliation may not be as significant as it has been made out to be. See also R. V. Young, Jr.’s “Crashaw and Biblical Poetics” in *New Perspectives on the Life and Art of Richard Crashaw*, ed. John R. Roberts (Columbia MO: U of Missouri P, 1990), 30-48.

corresponding surge in the numbers of printed emblem books.⁷

The recurrent example of the Law and the Gospel that Pettegree discusses (fig. 1) is strikingly similar to Wither's Frontispiece (fig. 2). The two biblical illustrations depict the Old and New Testament stories as alternative paths toward heaven at the top of the page; Wither's Frontispiece pictorially allegorizes the earth-bound glory of the easy path up the mountain, which ends in an inglorious fall on the left, and the more difficult path toward the heavenly city on the right. In the "Preposition to the Frontispiece," Wither describes his initial dissatisfaction with the overly allegorical illustration chosen by his printer, followed by his justification for including it anyway. Wither's "Preposition" is a rhetorical example of exegesis that characterizes his rhetorical approach to the *picturae*, rather than just a transmission of received knowledge to be learned (though it may be that as well, since there is at least the transmission of traditional correspondences in this picture and elsewhere in the *Emblemes*), Wither's stance explains that there is a difference between mere appearance and interpreted meaning. Wither's contempt for the esoteric connotations of knowledge that are depicted in the elaborately symbolic frontispiece is not only acknowledged, as Freeman notes, but overturned:

The AUTHOR, was as much displeas'd, as Hee
 In such Adventures, is inclin'd to bee;
 And, halfe resolv'd, to cast this PIECE aside,
 As nothing worth: but, having better ey'd
 Those *Errors*, and *Confusions*, which may there,
 Blame-worthy (at the first aspect) appeare;
 Hee saw, they fitted many *Fantasies*
 Much better, than what Reason can devise;
 And, that, the *Graver* (by meere *Chance*) had hit
 On what, so much transcends the reach of *Wit*,
 As made it seeme, an Object of *Delight*,
 To looke on what, MISFORTUNE brought to light:
 And, here it stands, to try his *Wit*, who lists

⁷ See Michael Bath: "The best statistics available suggest that at least fifty emblem books were published in England up to the year 1700, in over 130 printings and editions. In the same period at least one thousand emblem books were published on the continent", in *Speaking Pictures: English Emblem Books and Renaissance Culture*, 7. For a "recent and fuller account" of the historical context in which emblem books rose to prominence, Bath directs us to Peter Daly, *The English Emblem and the Continental Tradition*, New York: AMS Press, 1988, 1-60.

To pompe the secrets, out of *Cabalists*.

(“A Preposition to this Frontispiece”)⁸

From the “first aspect” it appears “as nothing worth;” but “having better ey’d,” Wither notes how “meere *Chance*” and “MISFORTUNE” afford him the opportunity to present the piece in a different light with his “Preposition.” In the same way, his readers may tolerably find use even in a book they may judge as inferior or even disagreeable. The context of the *pictura* provided by the *subscriptio* adds further significance to the inherent pictorial meaning: the Frontispiece is a typically allegorical rendering of the heavenly and hellish paths that are both open to mankind. We may ascend the easy way only to fall from the top, or take the hard way to the heavenly city atop the mountain. Wither’s exposition is exegetical in nature because, like biblical commentary, it guides the reading of this allegory of choice by offering a translation that is itself subject to further evaluation by the reader in her consideration of both picture and text: she will have to choose not only the emblems she reads but how to read them. By explicitly overturning his own initial judgement of the Frontispiece, Wither implicitly advocates patient consideration for the emblems that follow. This, in effect, places authority in the book itself – literally, in the reader’s hands – through the suggestion of a co-operative approach between Wither and his readers that mimics his own approach to the *picturae* that he borrows from other sources.⁹

The “Preposition to the Frontispiece” itself may be interpreted exegetically. The Frontispiece is described as an “Object of *Delight*” (literal); it is also “what MISFORTUNE brought to light” (allegorical, signifying the choice Wither makes regarding the inclusion of the Frontispiece). The Frontispiece as a pictorial allegory of esoteric allegories then confirms the inappropriateness of its own complex notions of knowledge, which are exclusive to the educated, and so is left to stand as a representative figure for privileged improprieties that Wither chooses to “exclude” from his work. Moreover, the Frontispiece “is not evill in it

⁸ George Wither’s *A Collection of Emblemes: A Scolar Press Facsimile*, 2nd ed. (London: Scolar Press, 1973). All references to *A Collection of Emblemes* are to this edition; images from Wither’s emblem book have been downloaded from *The English Emblem Book Project*.

⁹ The borrowing of others’ *picturae* from continental engravings is common in English emblem books; see Daly and Silcox, *The Modern Critical Reception of the English Emblem* (New York: K.G. Saur, 1991).

selfe,” and “may be made an occasion of *Good*.”¹⁰ Analogically, then, the governing concern of the Frontispiece is in its Preposition; the explained context emphasizes the operation of Wither’s choices as reading author. Wither’s “Preposition to the Frontispiece,” like the *Emblemes* in general, is also a clear instruction to the reader to see *hors texte* – or in this case, *hors pictura*. What “so much transcends the reach of *Wil*” and renders the Frontispiece “an Object of *Delight*” is that it is so unsuitably esoteric. The delight is in the recognition that it was only included by misfortune among Wither’s otherwise sincere and inclusive *Emblemes* – an appropriate preface for a book that depends on definition by contraries. Furthermore, Wither’s “Preposition” is responsible for this delight, and so provides an inseparable textual substance that is associated mnemonically with the Frontispiece. The absence of inclusiveness in the Frontispiece itself is explicitly called into presence by the “Preposition” through Wither’s acknowledgement of his own initial displeasure and subsequent delight. The emphasis on authorial self-interpretation in turn calls the reader into tropological self-awareness because the device *is* a device; but Wither’s identification of the device as such prompts a similar rhetorical engagement from the reader because Wither identifies himself as a reader as well.

It is worth noting, moreover, that the Frontispiece bears a striking similarity to pictorial allegories included in early vernacular bibles. Wither’s disapproval of the ornate Frontispiece would seem, then, to be a criticism of such outmoded strategies in bibles, while at the same time he perpetuates the allegorical strategy in his “Preposition.” Like the paradoxical guidance of scriptural marginalia, however, such implicit auto-commentary only encourages further interpretation on the part of the reader. In the turning paradox of the “mysticke-sense” (1.38 and elsewhere), the *hors texte* element is the reader’s recognition of her own operation as a rhetorical element of the text. The “natural and true” relation between book and world is signaled by the presence of the reader whose interpretation brings book

¹⁰ This argument, that things that are not evil in themselves may be made an occasion of good, is Wither’s argument to justify the format of the Lotteries for this emblem book. Further discussion of the Lotteries will elaborate below.

and world together. The reader is then the hieroglyphic of the world while reading – and the emblem of the book in the world, depending on our perspective; the mystic tropological sense is the analogous relation between divine presence in the world and readerly presence in the book – in Iser’s terms, the mystic sense moves apparent absence into presence.¹¹

Wither’s rhetoric of exegesis, in the “Preposition” and elsewhere, suggests that reading pictures and words separately is a feigned or superficial interpretation, rather than an essential or “true” interpretation of the emblem. This contrary relation between feigned appearance and essential substance is a consistent concern in Wither’s *Emblemes*, just as ephemeral materiality is a concern in sonnet sequences and religious poetry. Wither repeatedly instructs his readers about the dangers associated with feigned performances of duty, love, devotion, and knowledge.¹² But beyond this, Wither refers to himself as the reader or illustrator of his borrowed pictures, rather than as the ultimate authority for them. His text is therefore explicitly an interpretive performance on the pictures he sees, and thus functions as do the commentaries of biblical works, offering his own rhetoric as a guiding demonstration that is legitimized by the reader’s own evaluation of the emblems. Since Wither is, rhetorically, an example of a reader, he prepares his readers to observe and incorporate the reading methods he presents as his interpretation of the *picturae*. As such a demonstration of readerly practice, Wither’s text also appears as a mimetic representation of reading, and the reader is analogously identified with Wither, inasmuch as Wither casts

¹¹ “In the Aristotelian sense, the function of representation is twofold: to render the constitutive forms of nature perceivable; and to complete what nature has left incomplete. In either case mimesis, though of paramount importance, cannot be confined to mere imitation of what is, since the processes of elucidation and of completion both require a performative activity if apparent absences are to be moved into presence” (Iser, “Play,” 325).

¹² For example, see Emblem 1.14, fig. 3 (aping emblem):

I must confesse I cannot chuse but smile,
When I perceive, how Men that worthlesse are,
Piec out their *Imperfections*, to beguile,
By making shoves, of what they never were.

.....
A *Pigmy-spirit*, and an *Earthly-Minde*,
Whose looke is onely fixt on Objects vaine

.....
Til like an *Ape*, in *Humane-Vestments* clad,
Which, when most fine, deserveth most disdain.

himself as a reader too. As Daly explains, “From Schöne [Warncke] takes the functional description of the emblem as a combination of ‘representation and interpretation,’ which has its intellectual roots in medieval exegesis and allegory with their practice of interpreting *res* on the basis of inherent properties. In fact, Warncke reduces the emblem genre to the function of representation and interpretation, focussing on a *res significans*” (Daly and Silcox 22). My use of the terms “representation” and “interpretation” is suggested by this quotation, but not bound to it, especially insofar as the representation of the world (in the *pictura*) and the interpretation thereof (in the *subscriptio*) is not entirely distinguishable in functional terms. Certainly, *picturae* are interpreted in the *subscriptiones* as representations, based on the inherent properties of traditional correspondences such as those in the medieval bestiary; but I contend that the *subscriptiones* are also rhetorical representations that occasionally depart from tradition, and which are themselves subject to a reader’s interpretation. Indeed, as much as Wither asserts the fact of his own interpretation, he also defers legitimacy to the reader’s evaluation, and this rhetorical strategy makes room for the reader in “the actual and conceptual space around” the emblems themselves (Colie, 1973, 41).

The moral virtue both offered and exemplified by Wither is an injunction to read “aright,”¹³ that is, to distinguish and to recognize world and book as analogously related to each other, rather than to simply reflect either like a mirror. Reading Wither aright is reading with a degree of self-evaluation (or in postmodern terms, self-reflexivity) as well as textual attention, just as his illustrations of the *picturae* are full of self-commentary as well as interpretations of the *picturae* themselves. Wither’s alleged arbitrariness in assigning meaning to the *picturae* borrowed from Rollenhagen has been well refuted by Peter Daly.¹⁴ But the question remains, why is reading linked so fundamentally to rhetorical strategies? Michael Bath, too, has observed that “Wither’s dismissive comments [regarding esoterica and Rollenhagen’s text] have ... to be seen as part of a reader-oriented rhetorical stance and

¹³ “He who reads by directing ‘his inwarde eye to beholde & knowe our heuenly father ... he readeth a right with grete fruite” George Joye, *An Apologye made by George Joye to satisfye ... w. Tindale*, 1535, RSTC 14820, fol. C7r, quoted by O’Sullivan, 28.

¹⁴ See Daly, Peter M. “The Arbitrariness of George Wither’s Emblems: A Reconsideration”, in *The Art of the Emblem*, eds. Michael Bath, John Manning and Alan Young. New York: AMS, 1993. 201-234.

should not be taken at face value. The reasons for that rhetorical stance, however, themselves seem to require further investigation” (Bath 120). In other words, the issue of Wither’s “rhetorical stance” as a reader himself remains to be addressed – that is, what is the relation between rhetorical practices and reading practices? Rhetorically, Wither presents textual and reading practices as much the same thing in order to include and engage the reader in his interpretation, just as the biblical translators offered a “guided reading” alongside the principle of *sola scriptura*.¹⁵ In functional terms, this rhetorical approach is characteristic of Canticles’ rhetoric and tropology because it requires the reader to respond to the voice of the text, or more precisely, to join the conversation of texts that are invoked in the *Emblemes*. The rhetoric of responsive voice, conferred on the reader, is signalled by its erotic interweaving of rhetoric and response: the reader must pierce and embrace the ideas of a piercing and embracing text. Schöne has established that “Above all, the interest in the *sensus tropologicus* appears to survive in the emblem-artists’ conception and interpretation of the world. It [the *sensus tropologicus*] refers to the significance of things and facts for the individual and his destiny, for his path to salvation and his conduct in the world. In this sense, the emblematic mode still conceives of all that exists as at the same time embodying significance” (Schöne, qtd in Daly, 1998, 48). Above all, the invitation of tropology is its promise of pleasurable engagement with worldly others through the present pleasures of textual engagement.

The Lottery is perhaps the most explicit structural indication of the tropological focus of Canticles’ rhetoric in *A Collection of Emblemes*. The reader must spin the dial that directs her to the lottery verse that is (theoretically, at least) most appropriate to her character and situation. This action then puts the reader in the director’s chair, so to speak, and implicates her in a necessarily self-inscriptive role – that of writing onto her own particular situation the moral of the lottery verse chosen by her own hand. The reader is then directed

¹⁵ The sixteenth-century emphasis on *sola scriptura* in Bible translations underscores the mimetic or literal priority of scripture in interpretive practices, thereby conferring authority on the lay reader as interpreter. See Orlaith O’Sullivan’s “The Bible Translations of George Joye,” in *The Bible as Book: The Reformation*, Orlaith O’Sullivan, ed. And yet, the principle of “guided reading” in marginal exegesis persists until the 1611 King James Version, when, just as emblems replaced allegorical biblical illustration, I would suggest that secular poetic forms undertook to supply interpretive guidance with regard to scripture.

to a specific emblem, which elaborates more generally on the moral of the lottery verse. After having made the connection between particular situation and emblematic moral, however, the rhetorical example of the emblem is that much more significant, and that much less general; the structure of the Lottery therefore supports Wither's contempt for esoterica expressed in the "Preposition to the Frontispiece." Similarly, after having made the link between specific situation and applied moral, the formal connection between picture and word is that much easier to apprehend: seeing and hearing become complementary practices of an interpretation that involves both general and specific perspectives. The application of moral to personal situation requires the analogous apprehension of abstract idea and practical act. Symbolic representation in both picture and word speak on diverse levels of signification, each of which is elucidated both for us (generally) and by us (particularly). It should also be noted that there are six extra lottery verses for each book – that is, a total of twenty-four lottery verses that variously instruct the reader to try again, select her own emblem, read them all, etc. Ultimately, the Lottery serves to accentuate the way in which the book will be read, since there are so many explicitly different instructions; even if a reader should choose to ignore the Lottery and simply read the book sequentially, her choice is an explicit one. In this sense, the co-operation (or lack thereof) between reader and author is foregrounded in the Lottery structure of the book. The fact that the Lottery is a game, and therefore incorporates a sense of play, is a point to which I will return.

Wither's allowance for individual or particular perspectives has led to a common critical assumption of "arbitrariness" in the assignation of meaning between picture and word. Indeed, in Wither's address "To the Reader," Bath cites Wither's confession "that he is unable to explicate the meaning and his readers must make whatever sense of it they can" (Bath 112). Wither even complains of the textual restrictions on his Muse:

Something, also, I was Confined, by obliging myself to observe the same number of lines in every Illustration; And, otherwhile, I was thereby constrained to conclude, when my best Meditations were but new begunne: which (though it hath pleased Some, by the more comely Uniformitie, in the Pages) yet, it hath much injured the libertie of my Muse.

("To the Reader")

In fact, this complaint may be taken as an instruction for the reader to annotate his interpretation with her own, since Wither's choices are constrained by the space allotted to

him. At the same time, the “comely Uniformitie” that “hath pleased Some” alludes to the Appearance/Substance relationship that recurs throughout the *Emblemes*. “Comely Uniformitie” such as that of the Frontispiece is not always what it seems, and we ought to look beyond it to decipher further. Textual practice in emblems, however, does not just refer to the actual text, but also to pictures. A common Reformation notion, attributed to both Luther and Richard Morison, was that “things sooner enter by the eies than by the ears.”¹⁶ The *pictura* of the emblem, then, “enters” the reader first, and the *scriptio* is then (chronologically, at least) secondary to it. The *pictura* is analogous to the biblical text, and the *scriptio* to the marginal notations of exegesis. Emblems and exegesis may be read as a kind of Renaissance reader-response exercise, inasmuch as reading them provides instruction on how to construct an interpretation of them. Exegesis in *subscriptiones* operates as an exemplar reader within the text, effectively demonstrating the interpretive function of reading itself. This is not to say that the “flesh-and-blood reader” – i.e., this critic – will claim “to be able to find the implied reader ... suspended in the amber of the text” (Bible and Culture Collective, 35). Rather, the reader is identified with and addressed by Wither’s rhetorical demonstration of reading.

The implication of an exegetical approach to emblems is that emblematic rhetoric may be more clearly exposed for what it is – i.e., an exegetical form that deliberately mimics scripture. Wither, as the self-described “illustrator” of the *picturae* he borrows from Rollenhagen, demonstrates a reader’s interpretive operation in terms of various levels or senses, just as a biblical exegete does. Moreover, he does so in a straightforward and reliable way: Wither’s illustrations do animate the otherwise inappropriately esoteric *picturae*. While the textual content of Wither’s *Emblemes* refers very directly and practically to human action and behaviour, Wither’s rhetorical strategy works by the logic of definition by contraries, clarifying each of the contrary themes through their very difference as well as demonstrating the abstract, moral correspondences between different themes. The definition of contraries has a further purpose in terms of mnemonic devices. Abstract and esoteric “conceits” are

¹⁶ “When Luther wrote his version of ‘into the common people things sooner enter by the eyes than by the ears’, the reference was to pictures. ... When the same phrase was used in England by Richard Morison, that ‘things sooner enter by the eies than by the ears’, the reference was to plays” (Tatiana C. String, “Politics and Polemics in English and German Bible Illustrations,” 141-142).

inscribed more effectively when associated with “images sensible,” as Francis Bacon pointed out: “Emblem reduceth conceits intellectual to images sensible, which strike the memory more.”¹⁷ Bacon’s aphorism explains the formal conceit of emblems, in that they hieroglyphically represent the human body and soul: the *pictura* corresponds to the body that houses, or encloses, the elucidating qualities of the soul that are opened and explained in the *subscriptio*. The generic connections between emblems and scriptural exegesis are clarified by this conceit, since scripture is also considered to have a basis in the human body. Wither’s use of the four exegetical senses is a demonstration of what such a model can do; regardless of the degree of moral abstraction, a tropological focus will always render morals in direct and everyday terms.

This formal hybrid of picture and word under the generic aegis of exegesis is a crucial element of the theory of emblem rhetoric. Bath’s comments summarize nicely some of the critical questions raised by these formal relations:

Put quite simply the issue is whether the emblem depends on the invention of original but arbitrary connections between image and meaning, or whether the relation between sign and referent depends on some deeper and more intrinsic (‘natural’) affinity. . . . The form [this issue takes] in emblem theory is a consequence of the fact that the emblem was conceived both as an art of rhetorical invention in which novel or witty connections were suggested between signifier and signified, and at the same time as an art which used inherent meanings already inscribed in the Book of Nature by the finger of God. The latter assumption goes back, of course, to medieval traditions of biblical exegesis and allegory [and is associated with hieroglyphics as the ‘natural’ or original mode of language].

(Bath 3)

Bath finds it curious that hieroglyphics were “accommodated to received traditions of scriptural exegesis and Christian allegory” (Bath 3), but since the finger of God inscribes all of Creation, it seems only fitting to adapt notions of a natural language to a Christian allegory. Indeed, the understanding that “things sooner enter by the eyes than by the ears,” depends on the principle that “there is nothing in the understanding which was not before in

¹⁷ Bacon’s *Advancement of Learning*, II.xv.3; qtd in Daly, 1998, 42. Cf. Erasmus: “As Erasmus put it in his advice on how to order one’s scheme of topical places: ‘For those things which are related among themselves serve to indicate further what follows. And the memory of contraries occurs in the same way’” (Bath 34, qtg. Erasmus’ *Opera Omnia*, vol. 6, 258).

the sense.”¹⁸ The senses of exegetical signification, in other words, derive from the body’s senses. Any reading must then be associated with the senses, with the body and particularly with the eye and ear (since seeing and hearing are the principal senses used while reading). Since *picturae* are frequently associated with the body and the text with the soul, and emblems offer *picturae* as well as language, they are essentially hieroglyphics, simultaneously and formally incorporating picture and word as signifying components. Wither’s rhetorical concern with the “combin’d virtues of body and minde” (emblem 3.5) then seems quite reasonable in this formal context, in which the form is a combination of *pictura* and *scriptio* that manifests itself in the hieroglyphic of the reader’s embodied presence.¹⁹

For instance, interpretation is itself addressed as a recurring motif, one that Wither divides into the defining contraries of Appearance and Substance in order to characterize each as components of interpretation more clearly. He often begins with simple opposition, showing one (Substance) to be virtuous while the other (Appearance) is corrupt or harmful. But just as often a subsequent emblem will explore how, under certain circumstances, Appearance is also valuable when properly elucidated by Substance (see fig. 4 and fig. 5 – 4.23 and 4.41). The women and their glasses in these two emblems recall the counter-related ideas of “Minds-unconstant” and “seemlinesse” – the former being an uncertain state of mind that manifests itself in superficial fretting, the latter being an external manifestation of good judgement. In both cases, meaning is related to appearance, but the significance of that relation is different in each emblem. The self-regarding women actually signify opposing meanings – lack of judgement in 4.23 and good judgement in 4.41. But the *picturae* (or appearance) for the emblems are remarkably similar and therefore mnemonically linked: a

¹⁸ *Nil est in intellectu, quod non prius fuit in sensu*. Bath calls this tag “Comenius’s quotation of a famous Aristotelian dictum [which] provides the theoretical agenda for [Comenius’s *Orbis Sensualium Pictus*].” Comenius’s book is an “illustrated primer for teaching Latin” which is “undoubtedly” informed by the idea that emblems and hieroglyphs are useful in the instruction of rhetoric. The translation is by Charles Hoole, 1569. Quoted in Bath 41.

¹⁹ Wither’s contemporary, Francis Quarles, also alludes to humanity as a hieroglyphic of God: “Before the knowledge of letters, God was known by hieroglyphics. And indeed, what are the Heavens, the earth, nay, every creature, but Hieroglyphics and Emblems of his glory?” (*Emblems, Divine and Moral* [1635], “TO THE READER”). Given the emblematic convention of associating *pictura* with the body and *scriptio* with the soul, it would seem that notions of divine hieroglyphics are far more fundamental to emblem theory than current criticism has so far acknowledged. See also Daly, 1998, 17.

well-dressed woman holds a mirror in her right hand, toward which her head and eyes incline. The mirror itself is a traditionally symbolic device of mimetic appearances, because a mirror simply reflects what it sees without evaluation – as is explained in the *subscriptio* for Emblem 4.23. The evaluative function of “seeing,” however, applies to the reader who can distinguish between the similar appearances of 4.23 and 4.41. In fact, there are subtle differences that signify the opposition – differences which could easily go unnoticed by an inattentive or indiscriminating reader. As Eugene Kintgen notes, with reference to Erasmian pedagogical principles, “judgment is based on *decorum*, ... ‘decency,’ ‘seemlynesse,’ ‘comelynesse,’ and ‘pleasant approche’” (169). If we are to be more than mirrors, we must exercise the same good judgement regarding our selves as does the woman in Emblem 4.41 who stands firmly on the ground. The woman in Emblem 4.23 is “More wavering, than a *Feather*, or the *Winde*” and stands on a winged ball to signify her “*giddinesse*, and *ficklenesse* of mind.” In the evaluative function of comparison, we may see ourselves, and reflect Wither’s interpretation, simultaneously: we are both the woman who looks in her glass, and the glass that reflects her.

The correspondence, moreover, between book and world “had always been conceived as analogic or mimetic, and its image was the mirror” (Bath 123). The analogy between book and world (or woman and reader, or glass and book) indicates that reading not only reflects the world but may also be applied to the world. This interpretation is not only mimetic in its reflective aspect, but also tropological in its application, interpreting both book and world in each other. The rhetorical device of the mirror implicates the function of emblems in that both mimetic and tropological properties are associated with mirrors and pictured in these emblems. The woman holding the mirror, then, is analogous to the reader holding the text; these two emblems are hieroglyphics of the reader-emblem relation, first showing that they do reflect each other (in 4.23) and then revealing the potential significance of such a reflection when it is reflected back and applied to the reader (in 4.41). Finally, the reader who can apply this interpretation to herself and her conduct will, in effect, enact the rhetoric of the emblem in her social relations, mirroring the rhetoric in herself and offering herself as a virtuous object of seemliness for other interpreters in the world.

In this sense, the representative and interpretive components of Wither's emblems are a kind of "show and tell": the *pictura* shows, and the *subscriptio* tells. This simple comparison, however, belies the more complex inter-relation between pictorial mimesis and emblematic interpretation, a relationship that itself mimics the human combination of body and soul. Wolfgang Iser's comments on the formal, and characteristically playful, elements of this kind of mimesis are helpful:

the function of representation is twofold: to render the constitutive forms of nature perceivable; and to complete what nature has left incomplete. In either case mimesis ... cannot be confined to mere imitation of what is, since the processes of elucidation and of completion both require a performative activity if apparent absences are to be moved into presence. ... [T]he process then no longer entails reaching behind appearances in order to grasp an intelligible world in the Platonic sense, but turns into a 'way of world-making'. ... [W]hatever is repeated in the text is not meant to denote the world, but merely a world enacted. ... Hence, in disclosing itself fictionality signals that everything is only to be taken *as if* it were what it seems to be, to be taken – in other words – as play.

(Iser, "Play," 325-327)

The "play," then, of "show and tell," is particularly apt with respect to emblems generally and to Wither's Lottery structure in particular: the mimetic aspect of the emblem is the "showing," and the tropology of the lottery verse is the "telling," the rhetoric of the mimetic illusion that remakes the world in its disclosure of how the emblem pertains directly to the reader. The illusory qualities of mimesis, therefore, are not necessarily corrupt. Indeed, in the sense that mimesis precipitates "world-making," it can be constructive. The mimetic qualities of pictorial representation and demonstrative tropology in the *Emblemes* resemble the mimetic immediacy of sonnets and songs that highlight the formal or fictional devices of their own rhetoric. Eugene Kintgen's notion of intratextuality in religious reading models is also useful here: "the religious counterpart of intertextuality," intratextuality is "the heaping up of references to other parts of the Bible" (Kintgen 113). While Kintgen associates this method exclusively with the Bible – that is, as synonymous with typology – the counter-related emblems of women and mirrors, for instance, show that the intratextual references of an emblem book must be taken into account at least as much as the esoteric, intertextual

allusions.²⁰ Ultimately, the intratextual devices of the *picturae* in the *Emblemes* support the “true” reflection of divine correspondences that mimics biblical structures, thereby designating Wither’s book as divinely inspired. The element of the Lottery – a game – as a rhetorical framing device that explicitly involves the reader’s participation in the intratextual mimesis of scripture is what makes the “world enacted” in the text into a game of world-making. This “game” follows the “rules” of the four senses of exegesis, which involve the interactions between scriptures and readers.

This intratextual strategy is also like that of biblical exegesis in terms of the relations between pictorial and textual forms themselves in each emblem. The *pictura* is analogous to the “original” biblical text and the *subscriptio* is analogous to the exegetical commentary, providing a “guided reading” of the primary text that is directed toward the reader’s incorporation of a new, and potentially transformative, perspective. In his article “George Wither’s Use of Emblem Terminology,” Peter Daly has established that Wither’s use of emblem nomenclature echoes that of exegetical models, i.e., “type” (4.9), and “morall” (3.22). With reference to the latter example, Emblem 3.22, Daly argues that “Wither is working within the inherited framework of Christian exegesis, which sought the spiritual or mystic sense both [sic] in Scripture, the Book of Nature, and classical antiquity” (33).²¹ Daly does not, however, go on to consider the implications of this argument, nor does he clarify what the “spiritual or mystic sense” is. Like biblical exegesis, emblems work on four levels or in four ways. The first is literal, and constitutes the description of the *pictura*, just as

²⁰ Kintgen notes that “for the simpler sort, this [religious] model of reading would be tacit and unanalyzed: they would consider it ‘the way one reads’ and would not be conscious of the calculated method . . . followed by the preachers. They would learn from experience what others had learned from instruction” (Kintgen 139); and “even in the secular sphere there is an implicit analogy of faith” (184). Despite this affirmation of the overwhelming applicability of religious models for secular reading, Kintgen also assumes that “Religious readers seek to believe and take for granted” (186). I would contend, however, that “reading small sections, analyzing them minutely, comparing them to other texts” (187) is contradictory to a goal that “believes and takes for granted.” Rather, I am arguing on the basis that the “analogy of faith” is explicitly, rather than gratuitously, applied to the secular sphere, and that it forms a common context for social intercourse as well as personal application through the traditional principles of exegesis.

²¹ Cf. Sidney’s, Spenser’s, and Wroth’s uses of Ovidian devices and figures such as Venus, Cupid, Narcissus, and Echo within the “inherited framework of Christian exegesis.”

biblical commentary begins with the literal or historical narrative of events.²² The second level is allegorical, and aligns a symbolic design with the *res* that is signified by the pictorial symbol (see fig. 6 – motto and *pictura* of emblem 3.5):

The *Gryphon*, is the figure of a creature,
 Not found within the Catalogues of *Nature*:
 But, by those Wits created, who, to shew
Internall things, *externall Figures* drew:
 The Shape, in which this *Fiction* they exprest,
 Was borrow'd from a *Fowle*, and, from a *Beast*;
 Importing (when their parts were thus combin'd)
 The *Vertues*, both of *Body*, and of *minde*:
 And, Men are sayd on *Gryphons* backes to ride,
 When those mixt *Vertues*, them have dignify'd.

The *Stone* (this *Brute* supporting) may expresse
 The firme abiding, and the solidnesse
 Of all true *Vertues*. That, long-winged *Ball*,
 Which doth appeare fast-linked therewithall,
 The gifts of changing *Fortune*, doe implye:
 And, all those things together, signifie,
 That, when by such-like *Vertues* Men are guided,
 Good *Fortune* cannot from them be divided.

(Wither, Emblem 3.5)

The allegory of Gryphon as both Fowl and Beast, resting on the Stone of Virtue and attached to the Ball of Fortune, is the alliance of Fortune to those who combine the virtues of body and mind. At this point, though, the allegory is still general, and the moral remains abstract. What are the gifts of Fortune, and how do they manifest themselves? Wither continues:

If this be true (as true I this believe)
 Why should we murmure, why repine, or grieve,
 As if our *Studies*, or our honest paines,
 Deprived were of some deserved gaines?
 Why should we thinke the world hath done us wrong,
 Because we are not register'd among,
 Those thriving men, who purse up evr'y day,

²² Again, my understanding and use of exegetical terms and models derives from E. Ann Matter's discussion of Cassian's *Collationes* (5th c.) in *The Voice of My Beloved: The Song of Songs in Medieval Christianity*, 54-55. Cassian's four levels are: historical (pertaining to the events described in the biblical text), allegorical (pertaining to the Church), tropological (pertaining to the human soul and everyday conduct), and anagogical (pertaining to God and the apocalyptic City of Revelation). Note that in Reformation exegesis, the tropological sense displaces anagogy as the final sense.

For *twelve hours labour* more then *twelve months pay*?
 If we our *paines* rewarded cannot see,
 Wee count our *Merits* greater then they be.
 But if we bide content, our worth is more;
 And rich we are, though others think us poore.

(Wither, Emblem 3.5)

Here Wither challenges the conventional, material appearance of Fortune by showing how, “though others think us poore,” we are still fortunate “if we bide content.” The opposition between material and “internall” aspects of Fortune renders the emblem more universally practical, for contentment is available to all. The Gryphon, as “a creature,/ Not found within the Catalogues of *Nature*” also represents “*Internall things*” in an “*externall Figure*.” The combined virtues of body and mind are not naturally visible either, any more than the kind of Fortune that Wither associates with them. This third level of interpretation is much like the anagogical sense of scripture, because it describes what the literal and allegory “lead up to” (from Gk. *anago*, to lead up to) – the internal things that we often take for granted. Furthermore, “If the signifier means something and simultaneously indicates that it does not mean that something, it functions as an analogue for figuring something else which it helps to adumbrate” (Iser 330). Anagogy, then, discloses an awareness of a literal-allegorical relation, and permits the coexistence of the otherwise mutually exclusive meanings in a third interpretive sense. Moreover, as Iser goes on to clarify the relations between denotation and figuration, “The original functions ... are never totally suspended, and so there is a continual oscillation between denotation and figuration ... and [this oscillation] permits the coexistence of the mutually exclusive” (Iser, “Play,” 332). The anagogical sense is thus inherently paradoxical, sustaining the oscillation of literal and allegorical meanings. Anagogy holds internal, intangible concepts (such as Fortune, or the apocalypse) and external figures (such as the Gryphon, or the celestial city) in an irresolvable tension. The anagogical sense is used here by Wither to show the governing concern of the emblem that is not “pictured”: the idea of abiding contentment. The Gryphon was created “to shew,/ *Internall things* [in] *externall Figure*?” and the concluding four lines explain how, “if we bide content,” we ourselves may “draw” or manifest an internal Fortune and thereby create our own “externall figure” for abiding contentment: we may, tropologically, perform the Gryphon’s virtues in

the “Catalogues of Nature.” The relation of emblematic picture and text is then manifested in the Gryphon (allegorically), in Wither’s interpretation (anagogically), and in the reader (tropologically).

Thus an imaginary figure like a Gryphon may have substance and signifying qualities beyond pictorial illustration, just as the soul may be materially significant despite its lack of empirical tangibility in the natural world. The mimetic image may be translated into the practice of abiding contentment in the combined virtues of body and mind. As I’ve already mentioned, Bath’s approach to emblem interpretation includes what he calls the recognition of the *hors texte* element: “Such recognition demands . . . that pervasive technique in Renaissance writing where understanding depends on the recognition of sources” (Bath 31). Beyond this, however, I am suggesting that Wither cites as much of his sources as is required for the reader to supply the *hors texte* element from within her own experience of reading (that is, intratextually, from the other emblems in the book). This strategy is one that requires a reader’s active involvement in the emblem’s *topos*. As with scripture, the original or natural “text” of the *pictura* is read by the exegete, providing a guiding model for further interpretation. The exegetical commentary of the *subscriptio* provided by Wither suggests allegorical, anagogical, and tropological senses of the scriptural/pictorial representation. But Wither’s interpretation also operates as a representation itself, mimicking the process of exegesis; the final turn of tropology is the substitution of the reader’s interpretation for Wither’s, in her application of the emblem’s moral to her own situation. This final turn is a requirement of the Lottery structure, making the moral both instructive as well as entertaining. In fact, the Lottery verse for the Gryphon emblem very boldly draws the reader’s attention to her own tendencies toward hubris:

Thou hast, unworthily, repin’d,
Or, been displeas’d in thy mind,
Because, thy *Fortunes* doe not seeme
To fit thy *Worth* (in thy esteeme:)
And loe, to check thy discontent,
Thy *Lot*, a *Morall*, doth present;
And shewes, that if thou *vertuous* bee,
Good Fortune, will attend on thee.

See, *Emb. V.*

(Lottery Verse, 3.5)

While the reader may not entirely welcome the news that she is “too big for her britches” in the Lottery verse, the promise of Good Fortune and the emblem of the Gryphon vouch for an abiding contentment that somewhat softens the potential affront and seduces the reader into considering the practical virtue of humility.

Just as in biblical models of exegesis, the various levels of interpretation are not easily separated. Rather, they are interpenetrating and cumulative, and tropology is both a return to the literal and an augmentation of it: the “Mysticke-sense” (1.19, 1.38, 2.3), which Wither so often mentions, is associated with “Hieroglyphicall Signification” (1.38 and elsewhere). The mystic or tropological level of interpretation may be distinguished from anagogy and allegory by its rhetorical turn, which addresses the reader as a reader. The tropology of exegesis returns the reader to an application of interpretive strategies to herself (from Gk. *tropos*, to turn). This turn also involves the explicit identification of interpretive interaction within the components of the emblematic text and its reflection in the emblematic reader. Though Rollenhagen’s *picturae* are hardly the Word of God, revelation of “Christian Doctrine” in “Heathenish Hieroglyphickes” (1.38) demonstrates the immanence of the divine Word in the book through its correspondence with the Book of Nature. It also shows how Wither, as a reader of the natural world in the *picturae*, can find a moral that is relevant to him as a seventeenth-century anti-Laudian, Arminian, Puritan Christian who also wrote what he considered to be prophetic poetry.²³ Yet he never explicitly identifies himself as such; he identifies himself only as a reader, an “illustrator” of ideas inherent in the *picturae*. That he has ideological affiliations may be assumed from the implications of some of his commentary, but these affiliations are secondary to his primary role as reader. And since this primary role is rhetorically devised to be an inclusive example, his readers may also set their

²³ “George Wither . . . came to adopt an Arminian position in spite of his steady hostility to the Laudian party that was its principal support. Such alignments should remind us that Puritanism was not always synonymous with Calvinism, nor was a Laudian always going to be Arminian in theology” (Parry 192). Furthermore, Wither “liked to think that his verse had a prophetic power, or, after an event, a retributive force, but either way he sang – or shouted – of God’s judgements” (Parry 190). For example, Emblem 4.13 argues against predestination, and several others suggest hypocrisy in men of the clergy; still others describe how each man is rewarded according to how well he deserves it, thereby promoting virtue not just for its own sake, but so that we may deserve the divine reward.

ideological adherences aside while reading the *Emblemes* in order to incorporate and practice the illustrative strategies of the book.

Canticles' rhetoric of the body thus serves to elicit the divine *dictum*, or scripture, in the reader's experience through Wither's exemplary application of the "esoteric" *picturae* to his own particular situation, and through his seductive combination of direct address (in the Lottery verses) and abstract moralizing (in the emblems). This strategy of formal and informal tones explains why Wither does not name his sources, why he presents himself as the sole "authority" for their illustration, and why he adopts a denigrating tone toward the supposedly esoteric intention of the *picturae* in favour of his own interpretations, however modestly he qualifies them. He asserts his ideological affiliations only through general allusions and by implication – that is, he admits that he adheres to a political position without making this an issue that might exclude those who do not share his views. Wither's intratextual method is foregrounded in order to displace authority from esoteric regions of scholarship and to replace it in the book – in the reader's hands, so to speak. The rhetorical effect is to transfer "ancient Hieroglyphickes" into individual practice without the connotations of a sermonizing authority. In true "Protestant" spirit, the individual reader encounters the Word of God through the Book of Nature without the necessity for a mediating figure, though the principle of "guided reading" offers a sample of interpretation nonetheless; the Lottery and the tone of personal advice lend an intimacy to the formal tones of the emblems themselves. As in biblical exegesis, reading aids (the *subscriptio*) and *sola scriptura* (the Book of Nature represented in the *pictura*) work together, and Wither demonstrates consistently that the divine *dictum* is present in the everyday world – as are the shadows of deception and illusion. The tropological sense is a reiteration of scripture in the rhetorical presence of the reader who sees, hears, interprets, and animates the divine in the Book of Nature everyday. Wither's text, as a "reading" of the *picturae*, is a hieroglyphic itself, signifying a reader's interpretation of the divine presence in the world. This hieroglyphic, as he presents it, goes beyond exclusive ideological positions because it may be adapted and applied to any number of them. Rhetorical value, then, is not so much dependent on the determined meaning of the text, but rather on the methods of interpretation themselves. That we interpret is clear, but value is centred on the awareness of our interpretive function

and the self-reflexivity of the tropological approach. The four levels of exegesis, like reader-response theory, provide a hermeneutic model of self-awareness in interpretation. The hermeneutics of biblical exegesis require the exegete to be explicitly involved in the text; Wither's personal comments on his reader's situation in the Lottery verses put him almost intrusively in the text. Such involvement, however, paradoxically assumes that the text is open to interpretation – that is, that the “literal” text is ambiguous and open-ended, because the reader's choices will determine how the text is used. Wither asserts, from the beginning (in the “Preposition to the Frontispiece”), that the visible *pictura* is potentially deceptive. But this assertion is conveyed in the accompanying textual substance, thereby both qualifying and perpetuating the illusory potential of sensual impression. Like the Lottery, the *picturae* are redeemed by right use: “I am glad if any thing (which is not evill in it selfe) may be made an occasion of *Good*” (“The Occasion, Intention and use of the Foure Lotteries adjoynd to these foure Books of Emblems”). Wither's use of exegetical strategies asserts that the divine *dictum* is thus not exclusive to biblical scripture; it is immanent in the Book of Nature, and requires only a reader's involvement to realize and perform it. Any reader may see this perspective, provided that she penetrates “externall Figures” by exercising the “Internall things” of her opened soul.

We have seen how the Gryphon, for instance, is the external or visible hieroglyphic of integral body/mind alliance.²⁴ But what does Wither mean by body and mind or soul in turn? Since body and *pictura*, soul and *subscriptio* are common emblematic correspondences, Wither's illustration of each is worth considering in further detail. Ultimately, the integrity of body and soul is much like the Appearance/Substance relation of Wither's emblems: the illusions of the body, while mortally significant, are qualified by an interpretive correspondence with internal and eternal things. Emblem 1.40, for example, elucidates the common moral “like moths to a flame” to describe the illusory aspects of sensual dependence (see fig. 7 – motto and *pictura* 1.40):

When you doe next behold the wanton *Flyes*
About the shining *Candle*, come to play,

²⁴ This theme of body/soul alliance is comparable to Wroth's construction of Pamphilia as an object of “constant” or enclosed virtue, or to Crashaw's reading of the body as an enclosed object of consideration. See Chapters Three and Four for further discussion.

Untill the *Light* thereof hath dimm'd their Eyes,
 Or, till the *Flame* hath sing'd their Wings away:
 Remember, then, this *Emblem*; and, beware ...

For, as the *Wandering-Fires* which in the Night,
 Doe leade unwary *Travellers* astray,
 Alluring them, by their deceiving Sight,
 Till they have altogether lost their way:
 Right so, fantasticke *Beauty* doth amaze
 The Lust-full *Eye*, allures the *Heart* aside,
 Captives the *Senses* (by a sudden blaze)
 And, leaves the *Judgement* wholly stupefy'd.

(Wither, Emblem 1.40)

Physical beauty seduces the senses; eye and heart are then captives to it, just as the moth veers toward the candle flame in the foreground of the *pictura*, while in the background, various courtly pastimes are depicted to indicate the similarly seductive qualities of pleasing manners. The stupefaction of the mind is not the worst that can happen, however:

Nay, if Men play too long about those *Torches*,
 Such is the Nature of their wanton *Flame*,
 That, from their Bodies (unawares) it scorches
 Those *Wings* and *Feet*, on which they thither came.
 It wasteth (ev'n to nothing) all their *Wealth*,
 Consumes their precious *Time*, destroys their *Strength*,
 Bespots their *Honest-Fame*, impaires their *Health*,
 And (when their Fatall Thread is at the length)
 That thing, on which their Hope of *Life* is plac't,
 Shall bring them to *Destruction*, at the last.

(Wither, Emblem 1.40)

Here the flame, like the flies that are attracted to it (in line 1), is “wanton”, and it is also fatal. Such sensual dependence is destructive because it is illusory, fooling us by mimicking virtue in outward appearance only, just as courtly pastimes can be empty of virtue despite their pleasant appearance. Such mimetic illusions not only stupefy the judgement of the mind but also impair health and hope of life. The desires of the body are cast as fruitless and harmful, as in Emblem 1.27: “Where *Hellen* is, there, will be *Warre*,/ For, *Death* and *Lust*, Companions are” (1.27, motto). Contrary to the conventional associations of illumination with vitality, it

is light (in the candle-flame) that is associated with gloom, despair and barrenness.²⁵ As light affords us the ability to see, so it offers the possibility of sensual deception. Sensual dependance is thus a deception here (and elsewhere) that is associated with death.²⁶

Similarly, Emblem 1.7 describes how “To *Youth* and *Musicke*, *Venus* leaneth most” (1.7) in its allegory of the dangers of sensual seduction in aural terms. But, as with the visual mimesis of the flame (1.40) or the fickle woman and her glass (4.23), music’s aural appeal is later invested with an inner virtue – in this case, True-Love. In Emblem 2.20, “*Love*, a *Musician* is profest,/ And, of all *Musicke*, is the best” (2.20, motto). Again, as with the “invisible” abiding contentment of the Gryphon, music’s sensual appeal has both an internal and an external or visible effect. After claiming to “teach you (*Ladies*) to discover/ A true-bred *Cupid*, from a faigned Lover” (2.20), Wither illustrates the effects of the former as indicators of truth:

Each *word* he speakes, will presently appeare
To be melodious *Raptures* in your ear:
Each *gesture* of his body, when he moves,
Will seem to *play*, or *sing*, a *Song* of *Loves*:
The very *lookes*, and motions of his eyes,
Will touch your *Heart-strings*, with sweet *Harmonies*;
And, if the *Name* of him, be but exprest,
‘Twill cause a thousand *quaverings* in your breast.
Nay, ev’n those *Discords*, which occasion’d are,
Will make your *Musicke*, much the sweeter, farre.
And such a moving *Diapason* strike,
As none but *Love*, can ever play the like.

(Wither, Emblem 2.20)

True-Love, then, includes an inner response to aural and visual stimuli (“in your ear” and “in your breast”), rather than an outer scorching of wings and feet, as in the response to “Beauties Flame” (1.40). This is not to say that bodily desire plays no part in True-Love, since hearing is still a function of the senses. But hearing is associated with “Each *word* he

²⁵ For correlating interpretations of darkness as illuminating and productive, see 1.9 and 2.17, where Night is associated with interpretive meditation because daylight offers too many worldly distractions.

²⁶ Other emblems which elaborate the destructive aspects of sensual deception are 1.7 (Affectation), 1.14 (Narcissistic mimicry), 1.20 (Hypocrisy’s sieve), 1.22 (Vertue and Vice), 1.27 (Helen of Troy), 2.6 (again, destruction’s flame), 2.21 (Seeming-lovers), 4.21 (aged Beldame masked), and 4.22 (feigned lovers again).

speakes” in a language that is both sensual and spiritual – indeed, it is a hieroglyphical language, the “word” spoken and the gesture seen in a harmony of inclusive signification. The bodily response is not to be trusted wholly, but neither is it to be taken for granted since it is directly related to, and legitimized by, God’s Book of Nature. The ideal of “mutuall-duties,” “mutuall-helpes” (3.28) and mutual desire and affection in marriage is Wither’s anagogical context for the illusions of flaming desire (see fig. 8 – motto and *pictura* 1.34):

... those chast *Fires*
 Which on *Loves Altars* keepe a Lasting-Heat;
 Are those, which in two Hearts, two *Like-Desires*
 Upon each other, mutually beget ...
 And, if to warme thee by *Loves Fires* thou seeke,
 Thy *Peere* in *Yeares*, and *Manners*, pray to finde;
 Let both your *Aymes*, and *Longings*, be alike;
 Be one in *Faith*, and *Will*; and, one in *Minde*.
 So, you shall reape the fruits of your Desire,
 And warme each other with a kindly *Fire*.

(Wither, Emblem 1.34)

Mutual desire thus serves to unite two people in two ways: desire is both sensually warming as well as spiritual, linking two minds, as is depicted in the *pictura* of a robust fire.²⁷

Like the Frontispiece and the Lottery structure, the body and its desires are “not evil” in themselves, and “may be made an occasion of *Good*.” Similarly, the “Heathenish Hieroglyphickes” of emblems are not inherently deceptive, and through the reader’s tropological operation and her recognition of her participation in the textual rhetoric, she may make them an occasion of good for herself. The combined virtues of body and mind (or soul) are analogous to the combined virtues of emblems’ formal disparities. Again, the *hors texte* element is the reader herself, who can see and hear pictures and words from a particular and doubled perspective – from outside, looking into the book, and from “inside” the book, looking out into the world of her experience. The book’s natural affinities with the world outside it are supplied by the reader’s incorporation of the book as an exegesis of the world. The practice of reading emblems is thus the *pictura* of comprehension as well as its own *subscriptio*, an invisible hieroglyphic written throughout Wither’s text.

Wither's reader as hieroglyphic or emblem, and her awareness of herself as such, is also the tropological sense of his own rhetorical voice: he speaks as a subject, but the conversation he has with Rollenhagen's *picturae* is "confined" by textual space. His inventive use of the Lottery emphasizes the continuing play beyond the confines of the text he offers; every time a reader spins the dial, she reorders the emblems in the sense that she selects one out of the order in which they are presented. Wither's "mystic sense" is demonstrated not in esoteric asceticism but in the practice of a doubled rhetoric: he is both exemplary subject/performing interpreter of Rollenhagen as well as exemplary object of virtuous interpretation for the reader. Thus he presents himself as a rhetorical example with whom the reader may identify, occupying a "female" kind of ambiguity like that of Canticles' Sponsa: he is both enclosed (to the point of constraint) by textual space and opened to the reader's choice of his emblems. In "The AUTHORS Meditation upon Sight of his Picture," Wither evokes his own ambiguous status as speaking subject/picture and exemplary object/illustrator by presenting his own picture as an emblem to be read:

A PICTURE, though with most exactnesse made,
Is nothing, but the *Shadow* of a *Shade* ...
Our *Everlasting-Substance* lies unseene,
Behinde the Fouldings, of a *Carnall-Screene* ...
... as I view ...

Even so, methinks, I see
A glimpse, farre off, (through FAITH's *Prospective glasse*)
Of that, which after *Death*, will come to passe;
And, likewise, gained have, such meanes of seeing,
Some things, which were, before my *Life* had being,
That, in my *Soule*, I should be discontent,
If, this my *Body* were, more permanent;
Since *Wee*, and all God's other *Creatures*, here,
Are but the *Pictures*, of what shall appeare. ...

If therefore, of my *Labours*, or of MEE,
Ought shall remaine, when I remov'd, must be,
Let it be that, wherein it may be view'd,
My MAKERS *Image*, was in me renew'd ...
That, I to others, may some *Patterne* be ...

(Wither, "Authors Meditation upon Sight of his Picture")

²⁷ In the background to the right, two lovers embrace in postures that implicate Canticles 2:6: "His left hand is under my head, and his right hand doth embrace me." These lovers are clearly distinct from the courtly lovers depicted in 1.40, one of whom kneels to the other.

We are but shadows of a shade, only copied pictures of what shall appear. Conversely, all that shall remain of Wither as author is the pattern of his and his maker's image, an everlasting substance that "lies unseen" but which "may be view'd" through the glass of Faith. But what is this glass of Faith? How does it reveal what will "come to passe" after Death? And how does this transformation of substance to pattern through Death relate to a reading of body and soul in emblems?

Certainly, the body/*pictura* as "Carnall-Screene" implies the idea of a veil, beyond which is revealed a new perspective. This new "meanes of seeing" is apocalyptic, recalling the focus of biblical anagogy – that of the New Jerusalem of Revelation, beyond the veil of mortality and material existence.²⁸ In Emblem 2.32, Wither refers to death as the "Bridegroom" who summons us. The anagogical sense of Canticles and Revelation casts the Bridegroom as Christ and the Bride as the Church. In the context of Death, then, the marriage of Christ and his Church is an analogy for the divine/human relation, which is consummated in Death: the "Carnall-Screene" is also a bridal veil. In the traditional terms of Canticles' rhetoric, then, death and love are linked: "love is strong as death: jealousy is cruel as the grave" (Song 8:6).²⁹ Jealousy, here, is the desire to possess worldly things, the mimetic appearance of love that makes cruel companions of the grave and lust. True-Love transcends the grave, even as the two are linked by the contrast, as in Emblem 2.37: "*Death, is unable to divide/ Their Hearts, whose Hands True-love hath tyde*" (2.37, motto). True-Love transcends the mortality of the body in the joining of two integral bodies and souls, in which dying is a transformative act of union rather than a final state of separation.³⁰ This

²⁸ Cf. Northrop Frye's notion of "apocalypse" and "aletheia": the "Greek word for revelation, *apocalypsis*, has the metaphorical sense of uncovering or taking a lid off, and similarly the word for truth, *aletheia*, begins with a negative particle which suggests that truth was originally thought of as also a kind of unveiling, a removal of the curtains of forgetfulness in the mind" (Frye, *Great Code*, 135). Frye does not acknowledge the erotic undertones of such veilings and discoverings, however the etymology does suggest that revelation of the soul involves bodily metaphors.

²⁹ All biblical references in this chapter are taken from the King James Version (1611).

³⁰ See Mary Silcox, "'The Shadow of a Shade': Death and the Emblem in George Wither's *A Collection of Emblemes* (1635)," in which she explains Wither's notions of Death and details the textual transformation he performs in translating Death as an event into dying as an act. This paper is forthcoming in a book on emblems and death, and I am grateful to the author for the opportunity to have read it in manuscript.

transformation of death is thereby a signifier for True-Love, because the two are co-extensive in the apocalypse of Revelation.³¹ Mutual desire between two bodies and souls in marriage is then analogous to the formal union of *pictura* and *subscriptio*, which in turn represents the integrity of singular body and soul beyond mortality. Reading, like True-Love, marries the formal elements of the emblem book: reading and True-Love unify text and body with significance through the interpretive element of the soul. Instead of the parodic companionship of Death and Lust seen in Helen of Troy's adulterous example (1.27), we have the tragic but True-Love of Thisbe (see fig. 9 – motto and *pictura* 1.33):

But, where *True-Love* begetteth, and enjoyes
 The proper *Object*, which shee doth desire,
 Nor *Time*, nor *Injury* the same destroyes;
 But, it continues a *Perpetuall Fire*.
 Like am'rous *Thisbe* to her *Pyramus*,
 On all occasions, it continues true:
 Nor *Night*, nor *Danger*, makes it timorous;
 But, through all Perills, it will him pursue.
 Thus, both in *Life*, in *Death*, in all estates,
 True *Lovers* will be true-*Associates*.

(Wither, Emblem 1.33)

This fire is perpetual because it is both “mutual” and “proper” (or, appropriate), reflecting discretion and good judgement: Thisbe pursues her lover into mortal death because it does not offer an obstacle for her desire. Time, injury, night and danger have no power to destroy it, and neither can Death.³² Analogously, true readers, like true lovers, “will be true-Associates” with the book. We will behold it as the woman with the constant-mind regards her self in her mirror in Emblem 4.41, and we will exercise the faculties of the soul's or mind's-eye in order to read aright. This “seeing” with a constant mind is seeing with the glass of faith, or what Kintgen has called the “analogy of faith” which is also applicable to the secular sphere (Kintgen 184, see also note 20). The perspective of faith is that Love

³¹ Cf. Crashaw's “Madre de Teresa,” who “never undertook to know,/ What death with love should have to doe.” Instead, Teresa (in Crashaw's rendering of her) does not distinguish between erotic desire and eternal life, thereby leaving the significance of mortality effectively unacknowledged.

³² Cf. Spenser's *Epithalamion*, stanza 17, in which a ceremonial silence falls to protect the new lovers from “poukish frights.”

reconstructs Death – True-Love “comes to passe” after Death in “everlasting substance.”³³

In this context, the background scenes of the Cross and Crucifixion in several *picturae* are crucial elements of illustration – yet Wither does not treat them in his text with any directness, and often not at all. At this point, the recurrence of an image without explicit guidance to accompany it should be recognizable as a key to the guiding pattern of the text. Iser says that “we react to an image by building another more comprehensive image” (Iser 186); but Wither takes this a step further and builds a series of guiding images for us with this collection of eight emblems. The first four depict crosses: the Cross in 1.21 is a grave marker, and the *subscriptio* allegorizes the cyclical harvest of wheat as the regeneration of the human soul beyond death (see fig. 10). The Cross in 1.31 points beyond the human hand that holds it and toward the wisdom of the stars (see fig. 11).³⁴ Emblem 1.47 demonstrates how “The Crosse, doth shew, that Suffring is the Way” of Christ’s Passion toward the Crown of Revelation (see fig. 12).³⁵ Emblem 2.13 describes how true friendship, like the Cross depicted here, transcends suffering, making bondage into a common covenant (see fig. 13). The next four Crucifixion emblems, especially, focus on the intangible promise of the Resurrection. Like the constant-minde of the woman with the mirror (4.41), constant-faith in Emblem 2.19 inclines her eyes and head toward the cross she holds in her right hand. Her left hand holds the cup of comfort, and she too is crowned with the Crown of Revelation (see fig. 14). In Emblem 3.20, the Pelican in her Piety, piercing her own breast to feed her

³³ As Origen established in the 3rd century, the body/soul paradox of human existence remains the same, except that it “puts on incorruption” along with immortality in the apocalyptic city: “Therefore our hope is not one of worms, nor does our soul desire a body that has rotted. . . . For since the nature of this body is to be entirely corruptible [though not necessarily corrupted], this mortal tabernacle must put on incorruption” (Origen, *Contra Celsum*, V, 19, trans. Chadwich, 279; qtd in Matter 22). Though Origen was condemned as a heretic at the Second Council of Constantinople in 553, his ideas remained influential – especially for the Reformers of the 16th and 17th centuries, who preferred to associate themselves with the original apostolic church and the Greek fathers. See also the otherwise “paradoxical difficulty” of the “panting heart” in Herbert’s “Love” (II), and Teresa’s inability to grant anything but erotic significance to mortality.

³⁴ There are several emblems that deal with the stars, constellations and esoteric knowledge in a more or less laudatory manner, about which more study needs to be done in order to explain the seeming contradiction between Wither’s *subscriptiones* and his paratextual rhetoric of contempt for esoteric knowledge.

³⁵ Revelation 2:10: “be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.”

brood, allegorizes the comfort of blood sacrifice in Christ's death (see fig. 15).³⁶ The Victor of the East in Emblem 4.8 is not named, but the Crucifixion scene in the top left of the *pictura* identifies him as Christ, and the *subscriptio* echoes the now familiar theme of material versus "internal" Fortune, since we cannot take material possessions, such as the pictured clothing, with us after Death (see fig. 16). The final Crucifixion emblem contains a play on Wither's name: "'Tis true, a *wither'd-branch* I am, and seeme/ To some, as voyd of *Hopes*, as of esteeme" (4.9, see fig. 17). By this point, the phrase "seeme/ To some" is a clear indication that the actual situation is quite the opposite: Wither is no "*wither'd-branch*," no matter how much he may resemble one in "seeming."³⁷ Similarly, the entombed figure below the crucified Christ is only a seeming corpse; the Ark of the Covenant on the right signals the motif of revelation as fruit-bearing. In each of these eight Cross/Crucifixion emblems, we are presented with a dual and paradoxical perspective – that of the picture of Death and the accompanying context of hopeful Love. Each of the *picturae* and *subscriptiones* characterizes the notion of mortality as an illusion of finality, since the mortality of the body is only the pictured half of the story.

Comfort through suffering, and substance in inner or spiritual virtues (friendship, wisdom, faith, fortune and hope) are familiarly paradoxical – almost conventional – ways of considering the spiritual correspondences within material disparities. Yet material or literal disparity, which is figured in the emblem's dual form, is also seen in the figure of a human being who is both body and mind/soul. Mystical correspondence incorporates the hybrid nature of both emblem and human. The marriage of body and soul pictured in the Gryphon reflects the marriage of *pictura* and *subscriptio* in the emblem.³⁸ But the Cross and Crucifixion, like "musicke," elucidate the significance of this hybrid union in yet another sense, that of the divine and human in the Incarnation of Christ. The symbol of the Cross itself marries Death to Love, because Christ died for love of humanity. If, as I have argued, the many fires

³⁶ Cf. Crashaw's "On the still surviving markes of our Saviours wounds" and discussion in Chapter 4; Crashaw reads the wounds as blessings, or marks of consecration, that comfort humanity.

³⁷ In addition, Emblem 4.18 shows Christ resurrected with his cross borne across his shoulders, and Emblem 4.22 shows the removal of his body from the cross for burial. I have not dealt with these two in an effort to maintain clarity, but mention them for anyone who may wish to pursue the Resurrection theme further.

and flames of True-Love are linked to reading by the analogy of marriage, then the Cross is the *pictura* of True-Love in its divine incarnation. Through textually ascribed associations, an object of torture and death can allegorize comfort and everlasting love in a hybrid conjunction of disparate ways of “seeing.”³⁹ As in the case of the Gryphon, the tropological sense of the Cross informs us that we, like Christ, are emblematic by our very nature: we are the echo of the divine Incarnation, since we are two forms (body and soul) in one. That this formal union is also characteristic of marriage only emphasizes the analogy of erotic love as a functional paradox. The analogy of faith then refers, more precisely, to apocalyptic anagogy and the presence of God in the Book of Nature. The analogy of *eros*, however, connects the eschatological concerns of anagogy to present concerns and daily, worldly conduct: the redemption of Christ’s sacrifice is enacted by the reader’s understanding, acceptance, and figurative repetition of it in her human incarnation of True-Love as self-enclosed openness, specifically in romantic relationships. Canticles’ theme of uniting body and soul through desire that is both carnal and spiritual is, in Wither’s *Emblemes*, governed by these Cross and Crucifixion emblems: the body of Christ blesses and marks us all as divine and beloved incarnations.

Despite Wither’s pose as just another reader, and despite the lack of erudition required to supply the *hors texte* element of reading, his *Emblemes* still provide us with a significant amount of substance to interpret.⁴⁰ And despite the disdain he expresses for esoterica, he can yet distinguish – as he hopes his readers will distinguish – that some erudition is worth having:

... the Learned mount ...
 Their *Fancie*, thorow *Worlds* imaginary;
 And, by *Ideas* feigned, shewes them there,
 The nature of those *Truths*, that reall are.
 By meanes of *this*, oure *Soules* do come to know

³⁸ Emblem 2.41 pictures the Centaur who also symbolizes the union of animal and spiritual natures of humanity: “Oh God, vouchsafe thou so to marry/ The gifts of Soule and Body, both, in me.”

³⁹ Cf. Crashaw’s “On the still surviving markes of our Saviours woundes” and my discussion in Chapter 4.

⁴⁰ Again, see Daly, Peter M. “The Arbitrariness of George Wither’s Emblems: A Reconsideration”, in *The Art of the Emblem*, eds. Michael Bath, John Manning and Alan Young. New York: AMS, 1993. 201-234.

A thousand secrets, in the *Deep*s below;
 Things, here on *Earth*, and, things above the *Skyes*,
 On which, we never fixed, yet, our eyes.

(Wither, Emblem 2.43)

Thus it is through imaginary worlds and external figures (like the Gryphon and the Cross) that we come to know real truths about our world and internal things about our selves. If we are to make emblems of ourselves, as Wither enjoins us to do, then our souls' *scriptio* must have an external figure. The theory behind visual signification is elaborated in many of the emblems such as 2.43 (above). More specifically, the practice of visual signification is demonstrated in the emblem of the Gryphon, which can be interpreted as a very pragmatic set of instructions on how to "draw" abiding contentment. The *picturae* signify the body's inclusion in the Book of Nature which also supplies figures for unseen or internal things so that we may know them. Similarly, if we are to make emblems of our selves, the emblem will signify its truth value through an apparent or sensual correspondence to the natural world – that is, through the formal integrity of body and soul.

The appearance of disparity in form is therefore an illusory one, but it is an illusion that we are meant to see as such. As in the "Preposition to the Frontispiece" and the "Author's Meditation on his Picture," the "soul" or substance of the *pictura* is often quite contrary to what a "first aspect" might indicate. Furthermore, the illusion of either an esoteric or too literal meaning is a constant danger to be avoided. As Henri Estienne describes the "chiefe aime" of emblems in *The Art of Making Devises* (1648),

The chiefe aime of the Embleme is, to instruct us, by subjecting the figure to our view, and the sense to our understanding: therefore they must be something covert, subtile, pleasant and significative. So that, if the pictures of it be too common, it ought to have a mysticall sense; if they be something obscure, they must more clearly informe us by the words, provided they be analogick and correspondent.⁴¹

Thus the emblem is "significative" and "ought to have a mysticall sense." In fact, the meaning is accessible to all who may read the finger of God in the Book of Nature, which is perhaps why Wither does not treat the Cross explicitly in his text. Wither enjoins us to make

⁴¹ From Henri Estienne, *The Art of Making Devises: Treating of Hieroglyphicks, Symboles, Emblemes, ... Done into English* by Tho: Blount, *Gent.* (London, 1648), p. 7-8. Qtd. in Linden 7.

ourselves symbols that signify our meaning as God's creatures – just as Christ has his emblem of the Cross to signify his "True-Love" toward humanity:

... So, let us make
 An *Emblem* of our selves, thereby to take
 More heed, how God is moved towards them, ...
 For, as wee somewhat have of every *Creature*,
 So, wee in us, have somewhat of his Nature:
 Or, if it bee not sayd *the same* to bee,
 His *Pictures*, and his *Images* are wee.

(Wither, Emblem 4.44)

Wither's rhetorical strategy provides us with a model by which we may see and then recognize ourselves as models of and for the divine. The divine is immanent, as we each "have somewhat of his Nature." Though divine and human are not "*the same*," we encounter the divine nature in our fellow creatures as well as in ourselves. We are hieroglyphics of God, and our existence then signifies his presence, for example, in our ability to feel erotic desire. Bath's observation that the "correspondence between world and book ... had always been conceived as analogic or mimetic, and [that] its image was the mirror" (Bath 123) brings us back to the two emblems of the woman holding her glass. Wither playfully and boldly presents us with choices, and those two emblems are illustrative of that choice. Either we may fret and fuss our unconstant-minds away in an unknowing, mimetic self-regard, or we may manifest fitness in a "seemly" respect for the closeness between human and divine in the Cross and the divinely human body of the Crucifixion – or in the Gryphon, if we prefer – in the tropological rhetoric of *eros*.

The analogy of faith is thus accomplished through the erotic rhetoric of tropology. Disparities of form, both within the emblem and in the world, are paradoxically related to each other by an erotic exegesis. Wither's rhetorical strategy subordinates the esoteric qualities of an intertextual approach in order to highlight the importance of personal and practical application of ideas in a particularly tropological way. This erotic rhetoric of personal revelation or self-discovery depends on an actively participating and responsive reader – one who will form the connections between the emblems with Crosses and Crucifixions, or Gryphons and Centaurs, or women (and pygmy men) with mirrors, and then apply them to her own experience of the world. This rhetorical practice is drawn from

traditional principles of scriptural exegesis, yet, like exegetical rhetoric, is far less determined by institutions or ideologies than by its own intrinsic ambiguities. Ultimately, the functional ambiguity of such a rhetorical practice shifts interpretive authority to the reader, who may paradoxically participate in an already written text – whether it is an emblem book, the Bible, or the Book of Nature.

Chapter Six
 “the diuineſt of ſubiectſ”:
 Francis Quarles’ *Emblems, Divine and Moral* (1635)*

This chapter will focus on the most intensely tropological kind of Canticles’ rhetoric, in which the literal, allegorical, and anagogical discourses are structurally and explicitly directed by the tropological rhetoric of the self-interpreting soul in Francis Quarles’ *Emblems, Divine and Moral*.¹ We have seen how George Wither’s *Emblemes* and George Herbert’s *Temple* present similar rhetorical stances and structural devices, offering themes of enclosure that paradoxically sustain openness. Both the emblemist and the poet demonstrate, structurally and thematically, the multiply-layered interpretive method that the reader may develop through an active engagement with their works, though in Wither’s emblems the addition of the Lottery fosters a relatively keener sense of a tropological contract between the reader and Wither. Canticles’ rhetoric is thereby incorporated both structurally and thematically in Herbert’s *The Temple* and Wither’s *Emblemes*. As in Herbert’s and Wither’s books, Quarles’ *Emblems, Divine and Moral* foregrounds the reader’s rhetorical ingenuity in a particularly exegetical way. But Quarles’ use of Canticles as an exegetical rhetoric is somewhat more explicit in the formal and rhetorical arrangements of his book, which includes patristic quotations from medieval works (just as he incorporates his own marginal commentary in *Sions Sonets* in order to offer a guiding sample of interpretation). In addition to these structural strategies, Quarles, like Richard Crashaw, employs an intensely erotic and tropological rhetoric that foregrounds the body and the senses as sites of pleasure as well as

* “Sion’s Sonets Sung by Solomon the King” [1625] in *The Complete Works in Prose and Verse of Francis Quarles*, Vol. II, ed. Rev. Alexander B. Grosart [New York: AMS Press, 1967], 122. In the prefatory note, Quarles writes “To the Readers”: “Readers, now you haue them. May the end of my paines be the beginning of your pleasures. . . . It is the Song of Songs, I here present you with: The Author, King SOLOMON, the wiſeſt of Kings; The matter myſticall, the diuineſt of ſubiectſ; The ſpeakers, CHRIST, the *Bridegroome*: the CHVRCH, the *Bride*; The end, to invite you all to the wedding.”

¹ Again, and briefly, in terms of a literary approach, the historical level of exegesis refers to the literal sense of the text; the allegorical (from Gk., *allos* –other, and *agoria*, –speaking) to the representative sense of the narrative of human existence. The anagogical (from Gk., *anago*, –to lead up to) sense refers to an apocalyptic perspective, beyond human existence, in which worldly concerns are translated by the paradox of immortal existence; tropology (from Gk., *tropos*, –to turn) returns the reader to self-interpretation in the application of allegory and anagogy to daily and worldly life.

pain, thereby inscribing the body as the origin of the spiritual rhetoric he employs. Contrary to critical work on Quarles to date, I argue that his five-book structure of five-part emblems is clearly arranged in a deliberate and careful manner that reflects the eroticized motif of the spiritual journey, just as Crashaw's *Steps* evokes the motif of the quest or pilgrimage. But the metempsychosis, or progress of the soul, that forms the "narrative" connections of Quarles' *Emblems* emphasizes the lyrically present and everyday application of mystical Revelation as a tropological effect of Canticles itself. Quarles uses the seductive rhetoric of personal testimony by appealing to the reader's senses and explicitly borrowing the voices of Canticles and the erotic promise of the Book of Revelation. Because Quarles' rhetorical strategies mimic both the voices of Canticles and its exegesis, I shall spend some time analysing each in turn in order to explain how authorial organization and Quarles' reading voice are both carefully designed to incorporate the sense of his conversational rhetoric with other texts as well as between himself as writer and his reader. The first section of this chapter will examine Quarles' rhetorical voice as a reader of the other texts that he includes in his work – the biblical mottoes, patristic quotations, and the pictorial sources he borrows from other sources. This design deliberately places Quarles as a reader of others' works, framing his *Emblems* as traditionally exegetical. The second part of this chapter will build on the careful patterns examined in the first section by demonstrating how Quarles also identifies himself as a writer, the compiler of other sources to which he has contributed but also the exemplary guide through those sources, in order to prompt a similar engagement with the *Emblems* from his reader. Quarles' authorial voice is most notable in his ambiguous use of pronouns that seem to address the reader directly but that also seem to refer to himself at the same time; indeed, as we will see, Quarles invokes the voices of Canticles itself in a variety of ways that paraphrase the Sponsa's and Sponsus' desire in the first person voices of dialogue.

Despite the clear evocation of Canticles' rhetoric in terms of both authorial voice and exegetical or readerly structure, Quarles' use of Canticles' rhetoric in his *Emblems* is often overlooked or misinterpreted by his critics. Indeed, as I argued in the previous chapter on Wither's *Emblemes*, the emblem genre formally echoes the principles of Canticles' rhetoric: both are based on the typological relation between texts and bodies, and seek to engage the reader's ingenuity through the elaboration of rhetorical ambiguity, explaining divine

mysteries of self-enclosure through metaphors of the opened body. Like Crashaw's use of Herbert's *Temple* as an anagogical framework or goal, Quarles develops a structure of anagogical concern in terms of tropological self-integrity through the questing elements of Canticles' marital allegory. His five books of fifteen five-part emblems are governed by tropological concerns – the problem of delivering the self from the anxieties of worldly existence is the anagogical objective that frames the emblems, but the practice of doing so is an exercise of tropology. Three paratextual emblems indicate the tropology of the exercise: the “Invocation” at the beginning of Book I sets the theme of worldly suffering and illusion, the “Entertainment” at the beginning of Book III shifts this theme toward the divine presence and pleasures that the world affords us, and the final “Farewell” emblem (at the end of Book V) signals the revelation that textual interpretations may have practical consequences in the world, effectively re-making the world through a different perspective. Apocalyptic and scriptural allegories, then, are employed as strategic devices to be effected by the reader's tactical exercise of tropological rhetoric, and Quarles demonstrates the operation of this kind of rhetoric in his own self-guided metempsychosis.

Quarles as reader: the voices of exegesis in the *Emblems*

Quarles' elaborate five-part emblems constitute his own readings as one of the exegetical voices represented in the *Emblems* as a whole. The five parts of Quarles' emblems are: *pictura*, motto, *subscriptio*, patristic quotation(s), and epigram. The *picturae* are borrowed from two main sources, which I will discuss in further detail below, and obviously the biblical and patristic quotations are borrowed also, thereby incorporating at least four “authors” in each emblem.² In the case of IV.7, for instance, which I used as an epigraph for the introductory chapter, the motto is taken from Canticles 7:11: “Come my beloved, let us goe forth into the fields; let us remaine in the villages.” In the King James version, the Sponsa speaks these words, and the *pictura* shows the Anima/soul figure leading

² As I pointed out in the last chapter, the borrowing of others' *picturae* from continental engravings is common in English emblem books; see Daly and Silcox, *The Modern Critical Reception of the English Emblem* (New York: K.G. Saur, 1991).

Amor/Christ through a doorway (see **fig. 18**, IV.7).³ The *subscriptio*, in the form of a dialogue between Christ and the Soul, is allegorical, identifying the figures represented in the *pictura* as the lovers in Canticles. Christ's inviting words and the Soul's response to him emphasize the eroticized nature of their relationship:

[*Christ*] Come, come, my lovely fair, and let us try
 These rural delicates; where thou and I
 May melt in private flames, and fear no stander-by
 ...
 O there we'll twine our souls in sweet embraces;
Soul. And in thine armes I'll tell my passion's story:
Chr. O there I'll crown thy head with all my graces

(Quarles, *Emblems*, IV.7)

Significantly, the *pictura* itself, of two child-like figures holding hands and walking forward out of a gated doorway, is not explicitly erotic; it is the interpretive text accompanying the *pictura* that qualifies divine/human relations as erotic. In addition to “private flames” and “sweet embraces”, Quarles' erotic expression depends on his use of the future tense: we *will* twine our souls, I *will* tell my passion's story, and I *will* crown thy head. The invitation of the Sponsus in the *subscriptio* therefore evokes the “future” of apocalyptic union, in which the wedding feast of the Lamb (Christ) and the Bride brings eternal life to humanity, which is the “crown” of Revelation.⁴ This kind of extended allegory, directed toward apocalyptic union, identifies Canticles' marital anagogy. The anagogy of Canticles is traditionally a marital metaphor, guiding the erotic yearning of the soul toward the anticipated vision of Revelation; the child-like figures of Quarles' *pictura*, then, are walking toward the blissful fields and villages of eternal consummation. The request for privacy, the “private flames” and “sweet embraces,” imbricate this spiritual consummation with connotations of physical pleasure.

Furthermore, the use of dialogue in this emblem imitates the form of the motto taken from the biblical Song, in which a man and a woman speak by turns of their erotic

³ All figures are reproduced from The English Emblem Book Project (<http://emblem.libraries.psu.edu/home.htm>) which supports the full, original text. Textual references to Quarles' *Emblems* will cite Book and emblem numbers. All biblical references in this chapter use the King James Version.

⁴ “Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life” (Rev. 2:10), which is also the motto for the “Farewell” emblem that concludes Quarles' book. Chapter 21 of Revelation includes an extended “blazon” of the holy city, the new Jerusalem, and the Lamb's Bride.

desire and involvement. The voice of the female Soul in erotic engagement with Christ is a tropological identification, which is a moral discourse that is implemented in the present material conditions of human manners and interactions. Indeed, following the dialogue of Christ and the Soul, Quarles inserts two patristic quotations from St. Bernard of Clairvaux that emphasize this connection between human conduct and the heavens: “O blessed contemplation! the death of vices, and the life of virtues! ... by thee, things earthly and transitory are changed into heavenly and eternal.”⁵ Through contemplation – attentive consideration, as when reading or as required of husbands and wives to each other in the matrimonial rite – worldly things are metamorphosed into divine “things.” This seems to indicate that there is another sense of apocalypse, that is, the revelation of the mind that transforms physical or worldly concerns (such as gender, agency, etc.) through an alternative perspective. Bernard is cited again: “Happy is that house, and blessed is that congregation, where Martha still complaineth of Mary.” The domestic house and the spiritual temple are analogous here, in that both require variety in their membership to run smoothly. However, as Quarles adds in the concluding epigram, though “Happy’s that house where these fair sisters vary;/ But most, when Martha’s reconcil’d to Mary.” While Bernard alludes to the spiritual allegory of *Canticles*, in which the Church stands for all her souls as Christ’s *Sponsa* or betrothed one, Quarles’ qualification reminds us that in terms of everyday domestic relations, the biblical story of Martha and Mary quarrelling is not one to follow literally. It is better, then, to remember that we are all souls betrothed to Christ, not only through membership in the Church congregation but also by virtue of our souls, and our attentive consideration of him and of each other. Quarles’ emphasis on the present and domestic element of the analogy is consistent with his emphasis on erotic language to describe spiritual connections: by focusing on the pleasures of everyday things that are present and before us, Quarles turns the usually ascetic path of metempsychosis toward a more profound understanding of worldly pleasures.

⁵ The exact sources for Quarles’ patristic quotations are often difficult to ascertain; there is no modern scholarly edition that includes annotations. The first quotation from Bernard does not indicate any particular work, attributing it to “S. BERN.” only; the second provides only “S. BERN in Ep.” as the source. Bernard of Clairvaux is most notably associated with his extended treatment of *Canticles* in 86 sermons during the twelfth century (1136-1137).

Modern criticism of Quarles has failed to address the extended implications of this self-directed rhetorical strategy in his *Emblems*. Dale B.J. Randall and Huston Diehl have each taken a single emblem from Quarles' book (I.14 and IV.2 respectively) and discussed it in the context of Reformation literary themes, but apart from the context of the rest of Quarles' book.⁶ Diehl even goes so far as to extrapolate what she considers to be the theme of IV.2 (the labyrinth, **fig. 31**, to be discussed below) and apply it to the whole work: Quarles, she concludes, emphasizes "the arduous and difficult paths of the labyrinth ... [and] denies his pilgrim any participation in his own salvation" (Diehl 287). This reading reveals the difficulties involved in taking an emblem out of sequential context as well as disregarding emblematic conventions generally; Diehl's condescension regarding Christian ideology, too, betrays the more general critical problem of anachronistic readings that subordinate Renaissance concepts of the soul to postmodern concepts of the psyche.⁷

In a somewhat more historically faithful approach, Ernest B. Gilman has noted that, in reading emblems, "Ideally, image melts into speech, speech crystallizes the immediacy of the image" (Gilman 389). With regard to Quarles' sources, however, he states that "In the process of adaptation ... Quarles subtly modifies his [Jesuit] sources to give the larger design of the work a distinctively Protestant cast" (Gilman 392).⁸ But Gilman assumes that such modification, in removing the original (Jesuit) framework, leaves Quarles' book without a structure: "each of Quarles' poems stands independent, as an individual moment in a Christian life rather than as a step in a sequence which presupposes the smooth co-operation

⁶ Randall, "Phosphore Redde Diem. Ancient Starlight in Quarles' *Emblemes* I.14," *John Donne Journal* 6.1 (1987): 91-103; Diehl, "Into the maze of self: the Protestant transformation of the image of the labyrinth," *Journal of Medieval and Renaissance Studies* 16.2 (1986): 281-301.

⁷ In a discussion of emblematic narrative prose, Peter M. Daly notes in passing the critical problem of "imposing, no matter how subtly and implicitly, an anachronistic psychological pattern ... by setting up the theme of 'self-realization,' ... as the focal centre of the [work], to which all other themes are relegated, or at least related" (Daly 1998, 198). The distinction he makes is one that current criticism often takes for granted, that is, that psychological notions of "self-realization" bear an analogous rather than an identical relationship to religious motifs of metempsychosis.

⁸ Gilman records that "Quarles takes all but ten of his plates from two Jesuit emblem books published in Antwerp in the 1620s, the *Pia Desideria* (1624), by Herman Hugo, and the *Typus Mundi* (1628), put out by the College of Rhetoric of the Society of Jesus and dedicated to Saint Ignatius. ... Quarles largely ignores the texts in the *Typus Mundi* and the *Pia Desideria* except for an occasional paraphrase or for a general similarity in theme dictated by the content of the device" (Gilman 392). See also Gordon S. Haight, "The Sources of Quarles's *Emblems*," *Library* 16 (1936): 188-209.

of text and image to guide the reader along a steady course” (Gilman 393).⁹ Gilman essentially concludes that Quarles fails to satisfy narrative requirements that Gilman has himself presupposed, which then leads him to infer that “the visible world, as it is pictured in Quarles, becomes a realm of concealment that both resists and fascinates us. No longer a mirror of the divine, it reflects the anxieties of our own attempts to decipher it” (Gilman 409). While this reading may be accurate enough with regard to the first two books, it falls short of recognizing the developments and complexities of Books III to V. Certainly, the visible world is an illusion for Quarles; but the anxiety of deciphering such an illusion is recontextualized at the end of Book II in the recognition that it is an illusion. The trick of the world that releases Quarles and the discerning reader from captivity to it involves a different perspective, one that reveals the world as a pleasant garden in which we may converse with God and with each other. Just as we have seen in the sonnet sequences of Spenser, Sidney, and Wroth, in Herbert’s *Temple*, in Crashaw’s *Steps to the Temple*, and in Wither’s *Emblemes*, the anagogy of the apocalyptic perspective renders physical existence as a present and useful concern: suffering is worth enduring because it leads up to self-examination and a renewed perspective, which is ultimately pleasurable. The context for the periodic expressions of anguish in Quarles’ *Emblems* is one that enlarges the sense of the world to include both pleasure and the divine. If the world is a mirror for us, it is only because the divine’s creations incorporate such a reflective capacity. Quarles asks his reader to read, or interpret, the reflection *as a reflection*, a representation of something else. The anguish of living in a fallen world is what prompts the attempt to interpret beyond its confines, but “the anxieties of our own attempts to decipher” are only the beginning of Quarles’ metempsychosis.

The context for the world that Quarles presents in Books III to V is the apocalyptic perspective of anagogy as it is applied to everyday life. As I have already discussed, the anagogy of *Canticles* associates the garden setting with that of Eden and the city setting with that of the New Jerusalem of Revelation. The setting of *Canticles* is thus both before and after time; the world as we know it does not yet exist (in the garden), and no longer exists (in

⁹ Gilman labels this lack of structure as “Protestant” though he never really specifies what he means by the term Protestant nor what such an affiliation has to do with Quarles’ structure or lack thereof.

the city). Worldly concerns, such as gender and agency, are translated in this perspective; the voices of Canticles are both desiring and desired. The form of dialogue between voices is one of mutual exchange between the female and the male lovers just as the setting includes both prelapsarian garden and post-apocalyptic city within the same geography. In this rhetoric, the conventional associations and distinctions (both Renaissance and postmodern) between gender, agency, and temporal/spatial situations do not apply, and neither do the distinctions of narrative closure and lyric openness. Like Herbert's architectural motif of physical structure, neither the biblical poem nor Quarles' *Emblems* is "contained" by narrative form, despite the many images of enclosure in each. The "narrative" sequence of metempsychosis is episodic at best; the scenes, speakers, and perspectives change from one emblem or verse to the next. Yet the critical allegation that Quarles fails to meet narrative or structural expectations confuses "our" anxieties and failed expectations with Quarles' *Emblems*.

Michael Bath, like Gilman, seems to take for granted that any structure or framework must necessarily imply narrative progress and closure, and that "significant ambiguity" is therefore a rhetorical disappointment:

The way Quarles's book ends is full of significant ambiguity: the organisation of the sequence continually suggests the idea of spiritual progress, only to frustrate or deny that progress. If the *Itinerarium mentis* were to succeed, we might expect the City of God to be the vision of its concluding meditation or emblem. But, very strangely, such a vision occupies not the last, but the penultimate emblem of the whole collection. ... [W]hat we have here is not a culminating mystical union ... but a provisional prolepsis.

(Bath 216)

Bath infers, furthermore, that the "textual status" of the "Invocation", "Entertainment" and "Farewell" is ambivalent in structural terms and proposes "a [rhetorical] pattern of postponed closure" for the book as a whole.¹⁰ However, for Quarles, spiritual "progress" is contingent upon the frustration of expectations that invest an improper degree of authority

¹⁰ Indeed, Bath's reference to the "City of God" as the vision of the penultimate emblem (V.14, **fig. 22**) indicates that he is not even considering the "Farewell" as an emblem. Yet the "Invocation", "Entertainment, and "Farewell" are composed of *picturae* and *subscriptiones*, which indicate thematic perspective and developments, as I will go on to discuss. If they were not emblems, why then would Quarles have composed them with *picturae* and mottoes?

in the determining or defining role of the text. The flexibility of engagement required by a multiple-sense exegetical rhetoric precipitates the awareness that reading itself cannot remain isolated within textual forms because an interpretive element is required to supplement (and interact with) the textual rhetoric of tropology. Indeed, the paratextual apparatus is quite resolute insofar as it indicates first a worldly theme (“Invocation”), then a change in theme toward more spiritual matters (“Entertainment”), and finally a closing reflection (“Farewell”). Moreover, the reading “pattern” is one of immanent openness rather than postponed closure. It may seem as though I am making an overly subtle distinction, but insofar as Quarles’ emphasis does move consistently away from notions of closure and textual determination, as is indicated by the structural apparatus as well as the content of his emblems, closure is renegotiated as frustrating a more desirable perpetuation of “progress”: “provisional prolepsis” is the vision of mystical union, culminating throughout the *Emblems*. Narrative form and closure, therefore, are not so much postponed as they are unimportant; the significance of ambiguity or prolepsis is that the reader is required to interact with the text through interpretive rhetoric, rather than expecting the structure of the text to “progress” toward a culminating mystical vision of union for her. Like the reflection of the divine in the world, such culmination is immanently present and need only be recognized through an appropriately developed and considered interpretation. Placing such a vision only at the end of the sequence of emblems would, in fact, contradict the *ethos* of the book, which considers “endings” and “beginnings,” together and by turn, throughout its oscillating sequence. The back-and-forth movement of the sequence can be seen as a rhetorical device in itself, designed to signal both the illusion of linear “progress” and the oscillating or spiralling play of eroticized response and deferral.

Notwithstanding the variety and influences of his sources, Quarles does combine the emblems in his own way. His arrangement of the *picturae*, and the accompanying text, constitutes a clear structure of its own. Quarles’ *Emblems* operates as a coherent whole through the paratextual explanations of the “Invocation”, “Entertainment”, and “Farewell”, which indicate a change in theme within the conversational context he sets up between his sources. Quarles’ concept of a personal relationship with the divine begins in the general moral of human existence in the perfidy of the world (see “Invocation”, **fig. 19**, where the

sorrowful soul is surrounded by sensual delights and appeals to the skies for relief). Book I begins with Eve (I.1) and Adam (I.2), and proceeds to depict the classical Cupid (I.3-10) and worldly darkness and deception (I.11-15) as mirror images of each other. Seeing the worldly Cupid in contrast with the divine Amor is the definition by contraries of Book II, which develops the contrast between the worldly Cupid and the “Divine Cupid,” the Amor/Christ figure of Books III to V. Such a contrast between sacred and profane is a conventional, and oppositional, view, which is indicated by the figure of the soul oppressed by those very material conventions in the “Invocation”. It is clear that the Anima figure of the “Invocation”, which does not appear again until the “Entertainment” of Book III to re-introduce the figure of the soul, is literally (or pictorially) absent from Books I and II in order to emphasize that her suffering is a consequence of disregarding the soul’s presence in this earth-bound context. In the “Entertainment” at the beginning of Book III, she is wounded and unmasked (see the “Entertainment”, **fig. 20**) and is accompanied by Quarles’ request to “draw near” and see better. The “Entertainment” alters the focus from worldly to spiritual matters: Book III addresses the relationship between the soul and Christ, culminating with mortality; Book IV introduces Christ in marital imagery, helping the stricken soul; and Book V links the themes of the last two books – mortal death and erotic fulfillment – to the soul and Christ in a reciprocal association that translates the confines of the world into something else entirely. Finally, in the “Farewell”, the Anima figure is returned to her actual state, but with a different perspective: the reader is herself represented in the *pictura* as a reader, and is crowned with the Crown of Revelation as she reads (see the “Farewell”, **fig. 21**). Thus we are shown first our fallen biblical/classical history as context in Book I, followed by the contrast between Christian redemption and classical imagery in the classical and divine Cupids in Book II. Then the soul’s relation to Christ is developed through his mortal sacrifice, his immortal love, and our reciprocal sacrifice and love in Books III to V.

The sequence, then, is carefully arranged to indicate changes in perspective and emphasis. These changes of perspective, indeed, reflect the two main sources and their different approaches; yet these differences may also indicate why Quarles chose to combine them. Bath establishes that “though [Quarles] draws selectively from *Typus Mundi* [the main source for Books I and II], he uses every one of the forty-five emblems in *Pia desideria* [the

source for Books III to V] in exactly the same order as the original, and of the twenty alterations he makes to the sixty-eight pictures in his *Emblemes* [sic], none has any doctrinal – that is to say sectarian – significance” (Bath 201). Beyond this, Bath notes that Quarles supplied patristic quotations for the first two Books (*Typus mundi* did not include them, but *Pia desideria* did), “thereby increas[ing] the conformity between the two parts to his book” (Bath 212). Yet the disappearance of Latin mottoes in the last three Books is also noted by Bath and ascribed to the lack of Latin mottoes in *Pia desideria*. Why, if Quarles supplied patristic quotations “to increase conformity,” did he not also supply (or delete) Latin mottoes for the same reason? While conformity explains the addition of patristic quotations, then, clearly there is a reason beyond conformity in the overall design of Quarles’ *Emblems*. For this reason, the “Entertainment” between the two sources (at the beginning of Book III) is an important example that clarifies why these two sources are combined here in Quarles’ book. After the worldly and profane illusions of the world have been developed in the first two books (based on *Typus Mundi*, though significantly re-arranged), the “Entertainment” exhorts us to

... draw near,
Shake hands with earth, and let your soul respect
Her joys no farther, than her joys reflect
Upon her Maker’s glory ...

(Quarles, *Emblems*, “The Entertainment”)

Thereafter, the focus broadens, from the alienating anguish of a captive and captivating world, to include the soul (generally) and the reader (specifically). The *picturae* in Books III to V, taken from *Pia Desideria* and not significantly rearranged, then go on to depict the soul rather than Cupid interacting with the divine. The coincidental disappearance of both Cupid and Latin mottoes in Book III is suggestive of a link between them – a link that categorizes classical devices as worldly – that is, not evil in themselves, yet no longer necessary or functional in this new, more comprehensive approach.¹¹ The title of the “Entertainment” itself seems to imply that the preceding two books have served only as prologue for the

¹¹ Cf. Wither’s use of the Lottery in his *Emblemes*: “I am glad if any thing (which is not evill in it selfe) may be made an occasion of *Good*” (“The Occasion, Intention and use of the Foure Lotteries adjoynd to these foure Books of Emblems”).

“main attraction” that follows (though one not chosen arbitrarily).¹² In this sense, the apparent discontinuities of the pictorial sources is presented as part of a larger, more comprehensive, rhetorical pattern. The relation between them is clearly not based on conformity alone; the “Entertainment”, however, makes this non-conformity a rhetorical development both through the recurring presence of the divine Cupid/Amor/Christ figure, as well as through the disappearance of the worldly Cupid who is replaced by the Anima/soul figure. The more comprehensive approach of Books III to V is one that may “shake hands” and part with the fallen world because divine origin is visible through it. The reader is asked to “draw near” and renew her efforts to see better. Seeing better involves seeing beyond worldly or textual confines and conventions – seeing the devices of worldly anxieties and suffering for what they are, as ways of prompting an effort to see and do better. The movement in Quarles’ *Emblems* is from a familiar concept of worldly mortality to the apocalyptic sense of immortality; in between is an accumulating series of images that fundamentally shifts the context from social convention and worldly history to a hitherto unfamiliar present that includes personal, historical, and eternal narratives. But how does Quarles’ use of Canticles’ rhetoric and its back-and-forth dialogue apply in this movement from mortal to eternal life?

As Elizabeth Hill has suggested, “The basic pattern of ... Books III-V of Quarles’ *Emblemes* [sic] is a two-steps-forward, one-step-back movement, a scheme of seeking, finding, and losing again,” much like the oscillating sequence of Canticles itself (Hill 175). She notes, too (with reference to V.3, **fig. 24**) that the Anima figure “has loved him [the Amor/Christ figure] and lost him, sought him and found him, and has moved, perhaps without perceiving it herself, in an upwards spiral toward union” (Hill 180). Where Bath, Gilman, and Diehl have all seen “provisional prolepsis,” reflected anxieties of perception, and denied participation, Hill’s reading recognizes the rhetorical union of allegory, anagogy, and tropology as a governing structural principle (though she does not describe this marriage in exegetical terms). The oscillating or spiral movement guides the demonstration of

¹² Entertainment can also be defined also as the act or art of holding in the mind, as, for instance, one is said to entertain a paradox (from Old French *entretenir*, from *entre-* mutually and *tenir-* to hold, from Latin *tenere*).

metempsychosis, or the “progress” of the soul; such progress does not follow strict linear patterns, nor does it circle about endlessly. Rather, such inflexible patterns are associated by Quarles with the worldly illusions of progress.¹³

Quarles not only converses with Canticles’ rhetoric, but his method of alluding to the biblical poem and its patristic exegesis often echoes Canticles itself, which involves an elaborate pattern of conversations with his various sources. Hill’s analysis of the rhetorical influence of Canticles in Quarles’ *Emblems*, while suggestive, does not show an awareness of the exegetical tradition of tropology, nor does she discuss the theoretical implications of the oscillating, spiral patterns she describes. For instance, this oscillating movement is also reminiscent of Iser’s discussion of reading as play, which is particularly pertinent with regard both to Canticles’ rhetoric and to Quarles’ *Emblems*. Iser insists that signification is multiple: “The original functions [of denotation and figuration] ... are never totally suspended, and so there is a continual oscillation between denotation and figuration, and between accommodation and assimilation. This oscillation, or to-and-fro movement, is basic to play, and it permits the co-existence of the mutually exclusive” (Iser, “Play,” 332). The oscillation of play is fundamental to an understanding of the pseudo-sequential lyricism in Canticles, in which the lovers seek, find, lose, and recover each other, and then finally part again. Hill describes how this oscillation operates in Quarles’ *Emblems*, when, though an emblem may appear to be *non sequitur* in the sequence, “it is actually another turn in the spiral of the soul’s ascent, a step forward from the apparently backwards direction of its predecessor ... Whereas the soul was helpless in the previous emblem, she is now the senior – and active – partner, the big sister” (Hill 178). Hill is here discussing Emblems IV.8 and IV.9, though the oscillating/spiral movement she describes is also employed elsewhere in the sequence, such as in V.14 and V.15.

¹³ See, for instance, emblem I.4: “She [the world] clothes destruction in a formal kiss,/ And lodges death in her deceitful smiles”; or the epigram for emblem I.15:

My soul, sit thou a patient looker on;
Judge not the play before the play is done:
Her plot has many changes: ev’ry day
Speaks a new scene: the last act crowns the play.

Other examples can be found in emblems II.2, II.4, and II.6.

The beginning of the Fall and mortality, and the ending of Revelation and immortality, are joined in these two emblems (see **fig. 22**, V.14). In Book V, emblem 14, Quarles writes:

Ancient of days, to whom all things are NOW, ...
 That, uncontain'd, at once doth fill all places ...
 Excuse my bold attempt, and pardon me
 For showing sense, what faith alone should see ...
 The palace glory is, the palace light:
 There is no time to measure motion by ...
 Here stay, my soul, and, ravish'd in relation,
 The words being spent, spend now in contemplation.

(Quarles, *Emblems*, V.14)

The Anima figure of the *pictura* is seen from behind, bathed in the light of a heavenly vision. As Bath has argued, this apocalyptic vision “should” be the final word; but as Hill has suggested, the back-and-forth oscillation of Quarles’ *Emblems* is not linear. The “uncontain’d” palace of “no time” and “all places” is followed by V.15, which echoes the “final” parting of the lovers in Canticles (see **fig. 23**, V.15): “But go not far beyond the reach of breath” (V.15). This parting is depicted in the *pictura* as Amor and Anima salute each other as Amor leaves Anima seated beneath a tree to join a deer on the hillside, and the accompanying quotation from Augustine signals that such parting has its purpose too:

Fear not, O bride, nor despair; think not thyself contemned if thy Bridegroom withdraw his face a while, all things co-operate for the best; both from his absence, and his presence, thou gainest light: he cometh to thee, and he goeth from thee: he cometh to make thee consolate; he goeth, to make thee cautious, lest thy abundant consolation puff thee up: he cometh that thy languishing soul may be comforted; he goeth, lest his familiarity should be contemned; and being absent, to be more desired; and being desired, to be more earnestly sought; and being long sought, to be more acceptably found.¹⁴

The strange conjunction of presence and absence alternates playfully, and “all things co-operate for the best.” But the vantage of faith is the advantage of divine alchemy that draws

¹⁴ Emblem V.15, patristic quotation from Augustine, *Scala Paradisi*, Book 9, Chapter 8 (Auctor *Scalae Paradisi*. Tom: ix. Aug. Cap. viii.).

us near in an upward spiral, draws down the divine in the same motion, and affords us the perspective of seeing the pattern of the whole.¹⁵

As Stanley Fish has demonstrated, the chronological process of reading is always balanced, but never negated, by the final revelation of sense:

[W]e comprehend not in terms of the deep structure alone, but in terms of a *relationship* between the unfolding, in time, of the surface structure and a continual checking of it against our projection . . . of what the deep structure will reveal itself to be; and when the final discovery has been made and *the* deep structure is perceived, all the “mistakes,” the positing, on the basis of incomplete evidence, of deep structures that failed to materialize, will not be canceled out.

(Fish 86)

The “mistakes” of oscillation between the denotative allegory of the world in Books I and II, and the figured earthly paradise in Books III to V, finally rest in the perpetually turning tension of paradox, where the two remain paired and always in relation to each other. The world remains a labyrinth, but seeing it as such means that we may also see it as a potentially immanent crown at the same time.¹⁶ The pattern of the oscillating spiral is also used imagistically in Quarles’ borrowed *picturae*: an orb, quartered, with a cross protruding from it, symbolizes the fallen world in that the two systems (linear and circular) are only superficially grafted onto each other rather than integrated (see **fig. 27 and 28** for examples). This symbol is depicted at least fifteen times in the first two Books (thirty emblems in all), but only once, in Book V, thereafter. Instead, the linear cross and the cyclical orb of the world

¹⁵ Stanton J. Linden’s “Alchemical Art and the Emblem” discusses the similarities between alchemical and emblematic literature in the early modern period, during which, he argues, there arose a new concern to “anthropomorphize, allegorize, and analogize” which in turn emphasizes “interiority, [and] a desire not merely to describe, but to *represent* and *interpret* the nature and properties that were being worked upon.” This new esoteric and philosophical focus in alchemy then “helped to re-direct the alchemists’ traditional concern away from the physical transmutation of metals and toward an interest in moral and spiritual purification and regeneration in the mind and heart of the practitioner” (Linden 11). Beyond this, I would suggest that the physical body (as co-extensive with mind and heart or soul) is also purified and regenerated, both in alchemical philosophy and in emblematic literature such as Quarles’ *Emblems* that refer to the analogical sense: “LORD, what an alchymist art thou, whose skill/ Transmutes to perfect good from perfect ill!” (IV.4, epigram). The notion of metamorphosis is therefore more accurate than transformation in the apocalyptic sense, since the body remains a body, though it is changed through the purifying and regenerative process of the soul’s perspective.

¹⁶ Cf. Wroth’s *Pamphilia to Amphilanthus* and my discussion in Chapter Three; the Corona of sonnets dedicated to LOVE opens and closes with the image of the worldly labyrinth.

are united in the spiral form of the Bride and Christ entwined, as illustrated in V.3 (**fig 24**, where the lovers crown each other with encircling arms). Enclosure, then, is translated; instead of just a “trap” or a “bubble,” worldly sensuality can also be an embrace or a kiss. Both suffering and pleasure are linked to the condition of mortality and to the regeneration of the already immortal soul. The concurrent presence of sensual “beginning” and spiritual “end” integrates them in a co-operation that may entertain co-extensive conditions; neither the senses nor the spirit is privileged since the body sustains the soul and the soul animates the body.

The significance of this spiral image is in its dual direction: like the oscillating, back-and-forth movement of play, the divine descends toward humanity out of love, and humanity assembles together to invoke divine love, thereby ascending toward the divine.¹⁷ Similarly, Quarles’ reader may engage in a kind of responsive dialogue with the *Emblems* that translates the very notion of textual or mimetic representation into one of revelatory tropology. The elusive other that lies beneath the surface of allegorical reading is unveiled in the emblematic analogy of the human form, which seduces a reader into inserting herself as the principal term of the allegory of metempsychosis; and thus to interpret herself in relation to the pictures and words of the text just as Quarles does. Thus “profane” expression is justified, since it is only through the senses – the eye and the ear – that we may read the letter; the employment of the body to read itself sanctifies its purpose as a medium for the interpreting soul. As Gregory of Nazianzus is cited at the end of V.8, “How I am joined to this body I know not ... O strange conjunction and alienation: ... before I enjoy peace, I am at variance” (210).¹⁸ The *pictura* for emblem V.8 depicts a rather pensive skeleton imprisoning a soul in its ribcage (see **fig. 25**). The conjunction of body and soul can be a prison for both, but this same conjunction of parts may also provide the reader with the means to see beyond the imprisoning ribcage of her body. The conjunctions of body/soul

¹⁷ Cf. Spenser’s concurrent motifs of worldly ascension and apocalyptic descent, discussed in Chapter 2. As well, Herbert uses a “doubled” rhetoric of erotic and religious expression; see Chapter 4.

¹⁸ Emblem V.8, patristic quotation from Gregory of Nazianzus, *Orationes lectissimæ* XVI, BLC no. 681.a.2. Note that the “strange conjunction and alienation” of body and soul here echoes the dynamic of divine/human interactions, as cited by Quarles in the patristic quotation from Augustine in V.15.

and picture/word analogies may also perform divine functions – that of wedding disparate forms within a single structure. This divine operation is reflected by Quarles’ emblem book itself, which mirrors the components of the human form and which also weds his various and disparate sources. The operation of wedding sources, as well as pictorial and textual forms, results in a kind of turning or altering of previous significations. Though body, *pictura*, and (Jesuit) source maintain their original integrity, they are integrated by their associations with the soul, the *subscriptio*, and by Quarles’ structural design.

This metamorphosis of sources reflects the worldly incarnation of the human spirit and the Second Coming of the divine that transforms not the world itself, but the human perspective of the world. For instance, in Book III, emblem 7, Quarles writes that “my desire/ Is, phœnix-like, to perish in that fire” (III.7). Quarles’ desire to perish in the divine is “phœnix-like;” this is not a sublimation of the body or ascetic self-sacrifice but an eroticized desire for perpetual self-renewal (to “rise” from the flames), since the phœnix always rises anew from its ashes.¹⁹ The perpetuation of eroticized engagement is then rhetorically offered to the reader when Quarles says in the *subscriptio* of V.8:

Can the burning coal
Of thy affection last without the fuel
Of counter love? ...
Remember, O remember thou art born
Of royal blood; remember thou art sworn
A maid of honour in the court of Heav’n ...
The Son and Heir to Heav’n’s Triune JEHOVE
Would fain become a suitor for thy love.

(Quarles, *Emblems*, V.8)

Instead of “emphasiz[ing] the enormous distance between the human figure and his God, and between earth and heaven” or “eliminat[ing] any suggestion that man can move a step toward his goal through any act of his own or any effort of will,” (Diehl 285) as Diehl and others have concluded, Quarles’ use of Canticles indicates that “one-way” or hierarchical agency is tyrannical “without the fuel of counter love” between human and divine, male and female, body and soul. The soul and God partake of the same image; if we profess our desire for God, we perform a divine role, bidding the divine to incarnate itself, just as the

divine bids us to converse in prayer. The reader may thereby embody the apocalyptic incarnation, manifesting a Second Coming of Christ in the realization of his immanent presence. This Second Coming, like the “second death” of Revelation 2:10-11, is not “real” but rhetorical – it is a matter of sustained perspective that guides conduct in this earth-bound life.²⁰ The apocalyptic crown of Revelation is then an hieroglyphic of rhetorically engaged reading: just as the soul imprisoned in the ribcage of the mortal body is liberated by her ability to entertain the immanent presence of Christ as suitor, the emblem of exegesis does not escape worldly concerns but rather translates them into an everyday, and individual, apocalypse.

Finally, then, the organization of Quarles’ *Emblems* seems to urge a sequential but not a narrative emphasis. The arrangement of the first two Books, based on *Typus Mundi* and carefully re-arranged with added patristic quotations, gives way to the last three Books that are based fairly closely on the Amor/Anima relationship of *Pia Desideria*. The deliberate design that combines these two sources emphasizes the second three Books, if only in terms of quantity: there are fifteen more emblems taken from the second source than there are from the first. But, as I have argued, the worldly concerns of the *Typus Mundi* emblems are important “mistakes,” types that deliberately address the problems of suffering and vice so that we may appreciate these problems as shadows that prompt us to see and do better. As Anima, the reader is invited to “draw near” and greet the world anew in “The Entertainment.” In doing so, she changes both herself and the world through a different kind of engagement: rather than the oppressive suffering, self-neglect, and anxiety of the soul’s pictorial absence that is the focus of Books I and II, Anima re-acquaints herself with the world’s, and her own, divinely inscribed pleasures.

¹⁹ Cf. Wither’s rhetorical posture of contempt for esoterica, which is not so much Puritan self-reliance as it is a way of encouraging attentive discretion with regard to traditional sources.

²⁰ “Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death” (KJV, Revelation 2:10-11). Cf. Crashaw’s “Madre de Teresa” and my discussion in Chapter 4.

Quarles as writer: the voices of Canticles in the *Emblems*

In previous chapters, I have discussed some of the variations of Canticles' allegories – ecclesiastical and mariological, for instance, where the Church or Mary is identified with the Sponsa. In these allegories, tropology turns the application from these representations toward the singular soul through the allegory of the other term, providing a sense of the one soul as a member of the plural body of the Church or the generative body of Mary.²¹ But there is another variation in the allegory of metempsychosis, in which the Sponsa is the individual soul and no other allegorical term is present to mediate this representation. The reader/writer herself plays out the spiritual betrothal sequence, turning back and forth from apocalyptic city to edenic garden, seeking, finding, and losing the Sponsus again. In this allegory, birth and death are the beginning and ending; anagogy opens the allegory of the soul to include the “origin” of the garden of Eden and the “ending” of the New Jerusalem. These structural narratives involve temporal metaphors: the anagogy of human beginnings and endings is simultaneously present alongside the individual soul's literal birth and death. The soul progresses from birth to death as a representative of all humanity, rather than being represented by another figure at any stage of the interpretation: she, as individual, encloses the other allegorical figures. Furthermore, the effect of including past and future in the present circumstances of everyday life emphasizes the tropology of the singular soul in the lyric moment of immediacy. The narrative structures are therefore compromised, rendered episodic and lyrical; expectations of “progress” or closure are complicated by the resounding emphasis on the “middle” of the story that implicitly contains its own and others' beginnings and endings. The reading soul is herself the nominally feminized “container” for the Church, and for Christ, in a way that emphasizes her openness to the divine as well as her innate capacity to safely enclose the divine. Quarles renders this variation of the *ad multa* perspective throughout the five books of his *Emblems* through an ambiguous mode of

²¹ Cf. the *ad multa* perspective of Victorine meditational practice: as Ann W. Astell has described the Victorine approach to the Song of Songs, the metaphor (“*conversio*”) of erotic expression “combines an earthly vehicle and a divine tenor, [just as] contemplation looks *ad multa* to see the One ... [so that] the conversion of the reader/beholder involves detachment and attachment, self-denial and the sublimation of desires, based on the recognition of a dissimilar similitude between creatures and their Creator” (Astell 89).

addressing the reader: in the first two Books, for instance, it is not usually clear whether “thou” refers to a figure in the *pictura*, or to Quarles himself, or to the reader herself, and the Anima of the last three books is similarly ambiguous. In addition to presenting himself as a reader of biblical, exegetical, and pictorial sources, then, Quarles also employs the voice of an exemplary guide through those sources, as a writer who has read, interpreted, and re-constituted his sources in order to prompt a similar rhetorical contribution to his *Emblems* from his reader.

In the first two books, the worldly context is depicted as dissatisfying because the speaker sees only her own reflection in the world that can neither return nor respond to the desire for more than a reflection of allegorical others.²² The figure of Adam rather than the soul in the *pictura* of I.2 (see **fig. 26**) alludes to the fallen state of humanity; the inability to see more than a fallen human reflection alludes, too, to the myth of Narcissus:

See how the world ...
 Is now degenerated, and become
 A base adult'ress, whose false births do fill
 The earth with monsters, monsters that do roam
 And rage about, and make a trade to kill:
 Now glutt'ny paunches; lust begins to spawn;
 Wrath takes revenge, and avarice a pawn;
 Pale envy pines, pride swells, and sloth begins to yawn.

(Quarles, *Emblems*, I.2)

The seven deadly sins that emerge from the globe in the *pictura* are spawned from the world's monsters here as much as from the Fall of Man; the world produces only reflections of sin, and we may only see ourselves as reflections of our own sin in the world, endlessly repeating. Adam gazes at his own reflection and holds a mirror to the emblematic device of the world (the quartered orb with a cross protruding from it), which associates him visually with the classical figure of the self-regarding Narcissus. Adam is addressed as “thou” in the *subscriptio* that advocates repentance, but this manner of address is also applicable to the reader:

Lament, lament; look, look, what thou hast done:
 Lament the world's, lament thine own estate:
 Look, look, by doing, how thou art undone;

²² Cf. Pamphilia's soul-sickness as a result of her frustrated desire for conversation with Amphilanthus, and her subsequent fancied dialogues with the allegorical figures of Venus and Cupid; see my discussion in chapter 3.

Lament thy fall, lament thy change of state:
 Thy faith is broken, and thy freedom gone,
 See, see too soon, what thou lament'st too late,
 O thou that wert so many men, nay, all
 Abridg'd in one, how has thy desp'rate fall
 Destroy'd thy unborn seed, destroy'd thyself withal!

(Quarles, *Emblems*, I.2)

Adam is all men “Abridg'd in one,” and so his Fall exemplifies all the sins of mankind in the same way that Eve’s dialogue with the seductive serpent in the preceding emblem exemplifies the sins of womankind (i.e., succumbing to seductive rhetoric). Though Quarles does not explain why he represents the Fall of Eden in two separate emblems, it is significant that the genders are represented separately; in the context of the fallen world, humankind is and remains internally divided by this gender demarcation as well as by the lack of correspondence between physical and spiritual elements in individuals of either gender. Though both Adam and Eve are subject to the same vices and temptations, they suffer in separation.

Adam and Eve’s fall from grace in the first two emblems of Book I is also indicative of something crucial with regard to Quarles’ rhetorical strategy: Eve and Adam, as precursors of Mary and Christ respectively, signal that there will be a typological fulfillment of the Fall of Man through their sacrifices later in the book. In other words, a biblical or typological structure for Quarles’ book is prompted by a beginning that imitates the biblical beginning, alerting the reader to the potential for scriptural revelation in the course of her reading these emblems. Indeed, as the reader discovers, Eve in I.1 prefigures not Mary but the *Sponsa* who appears as *Anima* in Books III to V (in scriptural tradition Eve is more usually the type of Mary as historical mother and allegorical Bride of the Lamb). In this sense the typological expectations turn from scriptural allegories toward a very focussed tropology, in which the reader as *Anima* takes Mary’s place as *Sponsa*. Indeed, Quarles advocates such a self-directed reading from the outset in “TO THE READER,”

An emblem is but a silent parable: Let not the tender eye check, to see the allusion to our blessed SAVIOUR figured in these types. In holy Scripture he is sometimes called a sower; sometimes a Fisher; sometimes a Physician: And why not presented so as well to the eye as to the ear? Before the knowledge of letters, God was known by hieroglyphics. And indeed what are the Heavens, the earth, nay, every creature,

but Hieroglyphics and Emblems of his glory? I have no more to say; I wish thee as much pleasure in the reading, as I had in writing.

(Quarles, *Emblems*, xviii)

Even through fallen and dystopic visions of the world, the divine can be perceived, because “God was known by hieroglyphics.” From the beginning, “false” manifestations, such as Adam or Narcissus or Cupid, are echoes of “true” ideas, and the illusion is that they are opposed to truth rather than crucially and characteristically precursors of truth: they represent the anxieties of succumbing to seductive rhetoric that prompt us to see and do better. Moreover, the hieroglyphics by which we know God are clearly identified as “the Heavens, the earth, nay, every creature.” We are the fallen versions of the divine who yet retain aspects of the divine as well as of the world – we dwell in the worldly garden that has a divine origin and end. Furthermore, we embody and naturally express the paradox of the dual form: the emblem and the hieroglyphic are figures for human existence, which is both physical and spiritual.²³ The insistent link in emblem theory between invention and recovery of innate truths is then also a paradox of interpretation.²⁴ Daly offers the following context for Renaissance linguistics:

It is important at the outset to recognize that the renaissance conception of the Egyptian hieroglyphs was in fact a misconception. The renaissance humanists believed that each picture sign represented a word; that is, they took the hieroglyphs for ideograms. The truth is more complicated. [In fact,] ... the picture signs of common objects ‘were used as graphic elements with the sound value of the Egyptian word for the object they represented’ [Iversen 12]. ... During the renaissance, Egyptian hieroglyphs were regarded as an ideographical form of writing used by Egyptian priests to shadow forth enigmatically divine wisdom. ... [The]

²³ Cf. Crashaw’s “Apologie,” where he argues that Teresa’s works transcend the issues of linguistic translation.

²⁴ See Bath: “Put quite simply the issue is whether the emblem depends on the invention of original but arbitrary connections between image and meaning, or whether the relation between sign and referent depends on some deeper and more intrinsic (‘natural’) affinity. ... The form [this issue takes] in emblem theory is a consequence of the fact that the emblem was conceived both as an art of rhetorical invention in which novel or witty connections were suggested between signifier and signified, and at the same time as an art which used inherent meanings already inscribed in the Book of Nature by the finger of God. The latter assumption goes back, of course, to medieval traditions of biblical exegesis and allegory [and is associated with hieroglyphics as the ‘natural’ or original mode of language]” (Bath 3). As I argued in Chapter 5, Bath finds it curious that hieroglyphics were “accommodated to received traditions of scriptural exegesis and Christian allegory” (Bath 3), but since the finger of God inscribes all of Creation, it seems only fitting to adapt notions of a natural language to a Christian allegory.

emphasis [is] on their universal significance, which rests upon a Platonic assumption. In Platonic theory ideas were believed to exist independent of their expression in different languages.

(Daly 1998, 17, 23)

Thus hieroglyphic representation is, in the Renaissance, innately divine, and this notion renders language of any kind as the divinely conferred instrument of human translation. Language, and especially language that employs a pictorial element to consolidate the abstraction of verbal expression, is what links us to God, and this understanding of linguistic operations as originally and ultimately divine is what identifies the covenant between human and divine. Furthermore, this covenant that is written in the “inward parts” of God’s people is also potentially erotic in Jeremiah 31:31; the Lord “was an husband unto them” whom he has forsaken, and the new covenant that will be written “in their hearts” promises that he will be so again.²⁵

In this sense, the pictorial consolidation of verbal expression that is demonstrated in the *Emblems* underlines the tropology of metempsychosis: the *picturae* that portray the soul’s journey expose the “inward parts” of the divine/human covenant of betrothal. The recognition of the mimetic or denotative quality of allegory precipitates the paradoxical understanding of how we are figured not only *in* the picture (representation) but also *as* the picture (interpretation). Quarles identifies human existence as an hieroglyphic figure by which we may know God through self-interpretation. This identification has the effect of theoretically placing the reader within Quarles’ emblematic text *a priori* – the Anima figure of the “Invocation” foreshadows the focus of Books III to V – just as in the world, the Church serves as a present and communal basis for the apocalyptic church of the New Jerusalem (in *Sions Sonets*, or in Herbert’s *Temple*). The first two books, as the journey of the soul through the fallen world, depict the classical Cupid and Venus and fallen biblical figures such as

²⁵ Cf. Jeremiah 31:31-33: “Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the LORD: But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people.”

Lucifer (in II.10, II.11, and elsewhere), Adam, and Eve, all in contrast to the Divine Cupid. The operation of typological relationships that constitutes the combination of Quarles' two pictorial sources is therefore also the basis for the relationships between Quarles' many scriptural sources and the reader: the hieroglyphic of textual conversations is the type that is fulfilled in the reader's rhetorical contribution of interpretation.

And yet, the consequence of the worldly setting of Books I and II is still the soul's suffering: the reader is frustrated by Quarles' conjectural tone and by a rhetoric that addresses her but does not picture her.²⁶ For instance, emblem II.2 illustrates the biblical motto from Ecclesiastes 4:8: "There is no end of all his labour; neither is his eye satisfied with riches." Quarles' *scriptio* is decidedly moralizing, and despite the first person plural and the second person singular, does not seem very inclusive:

We sack, we ransack to the utmost sands
 Of native kingdoms, and of foreign lands;
 We travel sea and soil, we pry, we prowl,
 We progress, and we prog [sic] from pole to pole;
 We spend our mid-day sweat, our midnight oil,
 We tire the night in thought, the day in toil:
 We make art servile, and the trade gentile
 (Yet both corrupted with ingenious guile),
 To compass earth, and with her empty store
 To fill our arms, and grasp one handful more ...
 And what's inclos'd, incloses the inclosers.
 Now reader, close thy book, and then advise;
 Be wisely worldly, be not worldly wise;
 the world's a trap.

(Quarles, *Emblems*, II.2)

The litany of what "we" do devolves into a virtual dismissal: "Now reader, close thy book, and then advise." The *pictura* for II.2 (see **fig. 27**) depicts the divine and classical Cupids, with only a shadowy figure in the far background – possibly an observing "reader" but not clearly so. Such a representational arrangement is only temporarily alienating, however, and it does have the effect of rendering such a world observable through the allegorical emphasis. As Iser points out, the "image-building" of reading

²⁶ Cf. Pamphilia's anguish in her fancied dialogues with Cupid and Venus, and her grammatically complex sonnets, until the inclusion of Christ in the Corona sonnets.

eliminates the subject-object division essential for all perception, so that when we 'awaken' to the real world, this division seems all the more accentuated. Suddenly we find ourselves detached from our world, to which we are inextricably tied, and able to perceive it as an object ... so that we can view our own world as a thing 'freshly understood.'

(Iser, *Act*, 140)

The reader is both trapped by the world pictured for her in the first two Books, and yet not included in the pictures themselves: the reader is the latent and shadowy background figure who, through reading, is moved into presence in Book III. The subject-object division of allegorical (other-speaking) readings in Books I and II is reconstructed as a direct exchange between divine subject and beloved human object as Amor pursues and seduces the amorous Anima in Books III to V.

The self-directed reading of ourselves as hieroglyphics is also applicable to the issue of gender. The traditional terms of Canticles' rhetoric feminize the interpreting reader with regard to the word she reads, just as the soul is feminized in relation to God. The effect of this feminine pronoun (both in the texts I have been examining as well as the one that I am writing) is that conventional notions of gender are called into question, thereby rendering them potentially more flexible. Quarles, too, suggests that, ultimately, even a feminized perspective is redemptive only if the concept of gender that carries predetermined or worldly characteristics is rendered flexible and interchangeable. More than simply seeking the divine beloved, he tells us, in Book II, Emblem 6 (see **fig. 28**), to

Look off, let not thy optics be
 Abus'd: thou see'st not what thou should'st:
 Thyself's the object thou should'st see,
 But 'tis thy shadow thou behold'st:
 And shadows thrive the more in stature,
 The nearer we approach the light of nature.

(Quarles, *Emblems*, II.6)

Here "thy shadow" is the reflection of the worldly Cupid, but it is also, by the implication of stance and gaze, the reader who regards the text: Cupid is looking at us, and his reflection also faces us. Like Wither's emblems of the women and their looking-glasses and his meditation on his own picture, Quarles' emblems insist that such pictures are shadows unless

they are read with an awareness that they are *our* shadows. The patristic quotation from Hugh of St. Victor (II.6) clarifies the mimetic element of physical existence:

In vain he lifteth up the eye of his heart to behold his GOD, who is not first rightly advised to behold himself: First, thou must see the visible things of thyself, before thou canst be prepared to know the invisible things of God; for if thou canst not apprehend the things within thee, thou canst not comprehend the things above thee; the best looking-glass, wherein to see thy GOD, is perfectly to see thyself.²⁷

Here Quarles, unlike Wither, explicitly uses an authority figure, Hugh of St. Victor, to legitimize the tropological application of emblems as devices that reflect the integrity of the reader's body (of either gender) and soul. The mimetic quality of the mirror is an emblematic opportunity to consider oneself as an object, and to interpret what it means to be a beloved object; again, gender is not at issue. The rhetoric of the first two books is clearly concerned with the proper apprehension of things perceptible to the senses, such as gender – “the visible things of thyself?” – and the corresponding paradox of their illusory aspects. The “shadow thou behold'st” in the emblem's mirror regards the reader, and so doubles as a latent presence for the reader – a presence that will be manifested in Book III (in emblem V.4, which I will return to below). If our optics are to be true, then we must “see” ourselves as allegories, as viewers observing our own presence, which is the hieroglyphic, or figured reflection, of the divine in the world; Anima's female gender is therefore allegorical, not literal. Quarles' “glass of faith” includes its human viewer, and thereby also includes, by implication, the divine creator of humanity and the world. As the reader becomes increasingly self-observing, she transforms her own position as reader to one of writing herself into the “world-making” of the textual mimesis of the world. She thus remakes herself as textual just as Quarles re-writes *Typus Mundi* and *Pia Desideria* as *The Emblems, Divine and Moral*.

The shadow of worldly reflection changes in the renewed perspective of Book III's “Entertainment”; when Quarles tells us, “let not thy optics be/ Abus'd,” in Book II, the reflected shadow is both the condition and the redemption of humanity, depending on whether or not the mimesis is recognized as a device of typology. Optical transgression is a

²⁷ Emblem II.6, patristic quotation from Hugo [de Sancto Victore], *Liber De Anima*, B1.C no. Ac.1269.

failure to recognize mimetic play as mimetic, a failure which takes the shadow for substance, thereby foreclosing the potential for interpretive exchange between the promise of types and their fulfillment. The movement from Book II to III is from a concern with the nature of illusion to one of interpretation and self-recognition. The “Entertainment” (see **fig. 20**) recontextualizes the reader’s worldly situation in a double-faced setting: rather than seeing just the world, she sees herself in the light of the divine creation, which also contains the world. Without this extrinsic recognition of self observing self, a reader will be confused and prone to the seduction of worldly illusion since that is all she can see. Like Narcissus, the reader who cannot see herself will be unable to consummate with, or find meaning in, a mere reflection or allegory because it will always be an alienating other without any correspondence to self.²⁸ Such an allegory will have abstract meaning without personal significance, because significance “can only be ascertained when the meaning is related to a particular reference, which makes it translatable into familiar terms” (Iser, *Act*, 150-151). Quarles’ perspective insists on seeing the literal meaning in relation to the figurative reference in order to put the mystical “waies” or applications of the “one onely” literal sense into operation.²⁹ Emblem II.6 (**fig. 28**), like the “Invocation,” foreshadows the more concentrated effect of Books III to V, when the world – the emblematic figure of the orb and cross – is removed from the *picturae* and the emblems reflect the Anima/reader directly: in altering the pictorial focus from the world to the soul, the reader is realigned with herself through self-observation when the emblems themselves become mirrors of the reader’s soul. The fresh understanding of the world is that it is the world, and not humanity, that is a “bubble,” “captive,” a “trap,” or a “labyrinth” – all circular images that Quarles uses throughout the first two books to convey the illusory nature of enclosure:

The world itself, and all the world’s command,
Is but a bubble. ...
The world’s a seeming paradise, but her own

²⁸ Cf. Spenser’s *Amoretti*, where the two human lovers must each develop a sense of subjectivity by paradoxically looking beyond themselves and seeing the inward subjectivity of the other as a familiar reflection of their own internal composition.

²⁹ “The Church of rome maketh 4. senses of Scriptures, the literall, allegoricall, tropologicall and anagogical. ... *There is one onely sense and the same is the literall.* An allegorie is only a certaine manner of uttering the same sense. The Anagoge and Tropologie are waies, whereby the sense may be applied” (William Perkins, *The Arte of Prophecyng* (1592); qtd in Kintgen, 125).

And man's tormentor;
 Appearing fix'd, yet but a rolling stone
 Without a tenter;
 It is a vast circumference, where none
 Can find a centre.

(Quarles, *Emblems*, I.6)

Paradoxically, the perceptible world is rendered as insubstantial: it is a “seeming” and an “appearing” “tormentor.” This worldly insubstantiality then prepares the reader for the different rhetoric of the last three Books, which urge her to concentrate on her own substantial relation to the divine Amor figure, a relationship that is the proper, true, and pleasurable context for earthly matters.

When Quarles vilifies the world as a “trap,” he is referring to the world without the divine, which is an illusion brought on by the fallen state of humanity and an over-reliance on the senses. This trap is a false reliance on “substance” of a purely sensual nature: what can be seen or touched or trapped in the hand. When he refers to the “poor captive world” and declares “How has thy lightness giv'n/ A just occasion to thy foes illusion!” (I.11), he is asserting the seductive power of that illusion. But far from being “torn between truth and veiling; shadow and substance” (Bath 218), Quarles goes on to appeal to the divine and uses the erotic sensuality of Canticles to redeem the Fall into the world:

Pull, gracious Lord! let not thy arm forsake
 The world, impounded in her own devices:
 Think of that pleasure that thou once didst take
 Amongst the lilies and sweet beds of spices.

(Quarles, I.11, epigram)

Here we are reminded that the divine was incarnated and felt pleasure (as well as suffering) as does the soul: the *pictura* (see **fig. 29**) shows the divine Cupid trying to pull the “world” away from Satan’s fleeing chariot and back toward the celestial City. In Canticles, the sensual world is liberated from its fetters because the earthly garden of Eden co-exists with the New Jerusalem of the Book of Revelation. This combined vision of sensual Eden and spiritual apocalypse is the *alpha* and *omega*, the beginning and the end, of biblical scripture and its

allegory of human existence; it is what redeems the tragedy of the Fall and the Passion.³⁰ In this sense, “postponement of closure” is indeed a result of “significant ambiguity” (Bath 214), but it is a rhetorical failure only from a strictly allegorical perspective. The combination of “narrative” or sequential structure and lyric or episodic rhetoric metamorphoses conventional reading methods that try to do one or the other, and Quarles’ reader must read both sequentially and lyrically, so to speak, recognizing the various “waies” that each emblem is connected to other emblems both earlier and later in the book. Moreover, the soul herself replaces the figure of Adam or Eve as representative human; the fallen soul’s metempsychosis begins in suffering and alienation, but through this imitation of Christ’s Passion, she encompasses human and divine experiences of suffering and of pleasure.³¹ The fallen Eden in Book I (emblems 1 and 2) is thus transformed into the lover’s garden of Canticles in Books III to V (see V.3, **fig. 24**); and the “poor captive world,” similarly, is translated into the New Jerusalem of V.14 (**fig. 22**). Bath’s expectations regarding closure – that “we might expect the City of God to be the vision of [*Emblems*] concluding meditation or emblem” – insist on an allegorically rendered narrative of eschatology. Bath assumes that the City of God is the end of the story, and so misses the significance of Quarles’ rhetorical ambiguity, which conveys an immanently apocalyptic perspective throughout, if only because the present moment exists eternally *in medias res*. The City of God is everywhere present in the tropological metamorphosis of the crowned human soul, who is, in fact, pictured as such in the final “Farewell” emblem (**fig. 21**). Thus the end, like the beginning, is present; chronological closure, like the distinctions of gender, is yet another worldly illusion that depends on a false expectation. Instead, Quarles’ *Emblems* guide his reader to re-examine her expectations of texts as well as bodies. Just as his readings of his sources have taught him to be both reader and writer, he prompts a similar rhetoric in his reader by sustaining an ambiguous rhetorical voice: he is always both reader of his sources and writer of his own book, addressing both himself and the reader directly.

³⁰ “I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty” (Rev. 1:8); see also Rev. 1:11, 21:6, 22:18.

³¹ This kind of *imitatio Christi* could also be read as typologically fulfilling the scriptural type of Christ’s suffering in the present day, so that the human soul both fulfils the Second Coming through personal divine incorporation and also prefigures the “future” sense of Christ’s Second Coming as well.

Quarles employs *Canticles* itself to support his oscillating, back-and-forth rhetoric in those *subscriptions* that are written as dialogues, such as IV.7.³² The conversational rhetoric then serves to characterize the monologues he writes otherwise as implicit dialogues with an unrecorded respondent – the lyric eroticism of metempsychosis is always already performed with a conversational companion. Quarles’ allegory of metempsychosis conveys an intense and direct connection between himself and the divine through the allegory of betrothal and marriage: but he casts both himself and the reader as the beloved who seeks her lover, finds him, loses him again, then reunites with him only to separate from him again.³³ The highly erotic and sensual imagery of *Canticles*, which, despite the spiritual allegory, cannot be ignored in the allusive references, identifies the conversation as intimate or familiar. In this sense, the emblematic form that reflects the body/soul metaphor of human identity, which in turn conveys the basis for a spiritual affinity with the senses rather than alienation from them, also associates the idea of conversation with intimacy and play, as we have seen in the dialogue between Christ and the Soul in emblem IV.7.³⁴ Quarles’ erotic expression in the *Emblems* is a constant reminder both of the allegory of the suffering soul in the fallen world, and of the soul’s pleasurable yearning for something beyond herself in the world, that is, for the comfort of interpersonal conversation that makes the world (rather than the heavens) her

³² Other emblems written as dialogues are I.1 (Eve and the Serpent), II.8 (Venus and Divine Cupid), III.3 (Soul and Jesus), III.14 (Flesh and Spirit), and finally IV.7 (Christ and Soul); emblem III.10 is written as a conversation between Jesus, Justice, and a Sinner.

³³ See, for example, the epigram for emblem V.12:

How art thou shaded, in this veil of night,
Behind thy curtain flesh? Thou seest no light,
But what thy pride doth challenge as her own;
Thy flesh is high: Soul, take this curtain down.

Many of the concluding epigrams address the “Soul” directly in this way, though it is not always clear whose soul is being addressed, since Quarles often shifts his use of pronouns from “we” to “thou” to “I” within a single *scriptio*, and these are followed by patristic quotations that also use a variety of voices, before the concluding epigrams.

³⁴ “Conversation,” derives from the Latin *convorsari*, to keep company or to frequent, and the Old French *converser*, to have (verbal) intercourse with. Webster’s Dictionary gives Francis Bacon as an example of the Renaissance use of the word: “experience in business and conversation in books” connotes that conversation is an occupation or association esp. with an object of study or subject, a close acquaintance or intimacy. “Conversation” also implies frequent abode in a place, a manner of life, or dwelling in a place, as in KJV Phil. 3:20: “For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ” – or Song 8:13: “Thou that dwellest in the gardens, the companions hearken to thy voice: cause me to hear it.”

dwelling place. Canticles' pleasures evoke this sense of the world, and our physical bodies, as desirable sites for communion with the divine. Through an appreciation for these divinely created pleasures, we may find God, as long as we sufficiently prepare ourselves to distinguish between false pleasures and true ones – between desires that are merely or gratuitously physical and those that are both pleasurable and useful because they sustain the soul as well as the body.

This qualification of discretion emphasizes the connection or union between body and soul, and between *pictura* and *subscriptio*. The embodied soul of each individual is the basis for human/divine conversation: the human body supplies the figure, the corporeal agent that is animated by both the divine Spirit as its “head” and by the inner activity of the soul. The significance of the body as such a vessel for the desiring expression of the soul inscribes humanity as co-agents with the divine: God’s agent in the world must take a human form, whether through Christ, the Church, or the individual human body. In the formally conjoined elements of emblems, it is also relevant to note that the figure of the body is also the basis of the common Renaissance metaphor of the husband/wife (or monarch/subjects) relationship: the wife is the body and the husband is the head, but both are conjoined by the figure of the indivisible living body. The sensual mysticism that conveys co-agency to (feminized) humanity echoes in the “The forme of solemnization of Matrimonie” in the *Booke of Common Prayer* (1623), where the allegorical roles of Sponsus and Sponsa are inscribed in the “head and body” of husband and wife:

O God which hast consecrated the state of Matrimonie to such an excellent mystery, that in it is signified and represented the spirituall mariage and vnitie betwixte Christ and his Church: looke mercifully vpon these thy seruaunts, that both this man may loue his wife according to thy word, as Christ did loue his spouse the Church, who gaue himselfe for it, *louing and cherishing it euen as his owne flesh*: and also that this woman may be louing and amiable to her husband ... *Hee that loueth his owne wife loueth hym selfe*. ... This mystery is great, but I speake of Christ, and of the Congregation. Neuerthelesse, *let every one of you to loue his owne wife, euen as himselfe*. ... For the husbände is the wiues head, euen as Christ is the head of the Church, and he is also the Sauour of the whole body. ... Let wiues be subiect to their owne husbands. *So that if any obey not the Word, they may be wonne without the Word, by the conuersation of the*

wives, while they behold your chaste conuersation . . . so that the spirit be milde and quiet, which is a precious thing in the sight of God.³⁵

The matrimonial form here makes clear the mutual co-agency of wife and husband, Church and Christ, repeating that “Hee that loueth his owne wife loueth hym selfe” – the distinction here between self and other is not a strict one of separation, hierarchical or otherwise. Taken in this context, the analogy of head and body – the head is still a part of the body, after all – figures an appreciative relation between the two parts of the whole, rather than the dominance of one part over the rest of the body. Strictly allegorical interpretations – i.e., interpretations that miss the point of this “excellent mystery” – figure the head and body as separate and antagonistic, each vying for ascendance, like Eve and Adam in the first two emblems of Book I of Quarles’ *Emblems*. The erotic metaphor of the body as a paradigm for divine/human relations thus undercuts the conventional notion of an hierarchical agency imposed upon subordinate, helpless souls: “Christ did loue his spouse the Church, who gaue himselfe for it, *louing and cherishing it euen as his owne flesh.*” Furthermore, it is contextually clear that the husband is instructed to love his wife because of, rather than in spite of, her symbolic embodying qualities, just as the Church is symbolically the embodiment of Christ; and that “if *any* [including husbands] obey not the Word, they may be wonne without the Word, by the conuersation of the *wiues*” (italics mine) – wives’ conversation is meant to be exemplary in its responsiveness as well as in its ability to induce a like responsiveness in others. Similarly, emblems do not privilege picture over words or vice versa; they are inextricably conjoined, just as Quarles combines his two sources to make his own book. The “head” of his contributions in *subscriptions* and epigrams would not work well at all without the “body” of the *picturae*, biblical mottoes, and patristic quotations that he assembles to support the book.

Indeed, the function of the body during the seventeenth century is not completely separated from the functions of the mind or soul; the status of the passions as both carnal and spiritual is an empirical consideration as well as a literary conceit in the Renaissance: “No Philosopher can denie, but that our passions are certain accidents and qualities, whose

³⁵ *The Booke of Common Prayer: 1623*. Facsim. ed. (Columbus OH: Lazarus Ministry Press, 1998), p. C4v, C5; italics mine.

immediate subject, house, and lodging [the heart] is the very facultie and power of the soule, because all vitall operations (of which sorte Passions are) challenge, by right, that the mother which hatched them, should also sustaine them, and harbour them in her owne house.”³⁶ The relation, then, between a masculine head (husband, monarch, or God) and a feminized body (wife, subjects, or human being) in this period has an analogy in the empirical understanding of the co-operation of soul and body, thereby serving to consolidate the metaphor as a true reflection of the finger of God in the Book of Nature. As an emblematic conceit, the analogy of body and soul as *pictura* and *subscriptio* respectively is a variation of the body and head analogy of marriage.³⁷ Thus, in Quarles’ *Emblems*, the divine Amor’s desire is embodied in the Anima/soul of *human* desire; and the eroticized yearning for divinity brings forth the divine in the tangible world just as pictures and words from a variety of sources cooperate in the emblems of Quarles’ book, finally turning back into the worldly application of the reader’s interpretation.

In terms of Quarles’ Anima, it is important to stress that the soul is also a physical entity, incarnated in the “immediate subject, house, and lodging” of the heart and harboured there as in a house. It is for this reason that the Sponsa is figured as feminine: because she carries something animate within her as a woman carries a child in pregnancy. But this feminine symbolism is not necessarily exclusive; because it figures the soul’s presence in the body, the feminine figure applies to “male” creative abilities as well (such as Quarles’ textual “reproduction” of his *Emblems*). What is significant is the incarnating element of the human

³⁶ Thomas Wright, *The Passions of the Minde* (1601), p. 60. Cf. also Marvell’s “A Dialogue Between the Soul and Body”:

BODY But physic yet could never reach
 The maladies thou me doest teach:
 Whom first the cramp of hope does tear,
 And then the palsy shakes of fear:
 The pestilence of love does heat,
 Or hatred’s hidden ulcer eat;
 Joy’s cheerful madness does perplex,
 Or sorrow’s other madness vex;
 Which knowledge forces me to know,
 And memory will not forgo.

³⁷ Both head and body are connected by the heart, which is another emblematic conceit in itself in the *Schola Cordis* or School of the Heart tradition (Christopher Harvey, for example, produced an emblem book in this tradition).

figure who connotes generation in a physical way. This emphasis on physical connotations mediates the gestures of Anima and Amor as well: in Book V, Emblem 4, the soul is pictured as a woman (as she is throughout Books III to V), facing, gesturing and moving toward Amor/Christ (see **fig. 30**, V.4). Amor/Christ's head is turned toward the pictured Anima, but his body is confronting and gesturing toward the reader, thereby addressing the pictured female lover with his gaze and the actual reader with his body. The female lover pictured is then a concrete figure for the reader; both the reader and Anima are identified through Christ's regard and physical attitude (just as, in II.6, **fig. 28**, the worldly Cupid faces and reflects the reader). In the patristic quotation for this emblem, Quarles cites Augustine on Canticles' tropology:

... if a bride can be joined to her bridegroom with so great an ardency of mind, that for the extremity of love she can enjoy no rest, nor suffer his absence without great anxiety, with what affection, with what fervency ought the soul, whom thou hast espoused by faith and compassion, to love thee, her true GOD, and glorious bridegroom?³⁸

The allegory here identifies the bride as the soul, and so is specifically tropological in focus; Quarles' emblematic metaphor mediates between sensual and spiritual "marriages," assigning the feminine role to the human reader through Christ's physical address. The typological movement that we have seen in the Adam/Amor figures, or in Eve/Anima, for instance, can also be seen in moving from II.6 (**fig. 28**) to V.4 (**fig. 30**). V.4 shows that the *pictura* still serves as the reader's mirror, but the interpretive task now involves the whole *pictura* as itself a reflection that includes Anima and Christ, whereas before (in II.6) the Divine Cupid stood beside the pictured mirror that reflected only the worldly Cupid and the latent reader. The emblem is now, in V.4, itself a mirror rather than a picture that includes a mirror as one of its devices; furthermore, the reflection framed there includes a concrete figure that is presented and addressed as the reader. Christ's and Anima's physical gestures toward each other in V.4 indicate too that interpretation extends beyond intellectual or spiritual comprehension; indeed, comprehension co-extends to the whole body, involving physical and social kinds of

³⁸ Emblem V.4, patristic quotation from Augustine, Bishop of Hippo, *De Meditationes* Chapter X (Med. Cap. X.). It should be noted that Augustine employed an alternative series of combinations of the 4 senses, "but few other Latin Christian authors followed this lead" since Augustine's "system is rather vague for use as a guide" (Matter, 53).

interaction as part of the reading method.³⁹ Thus the reader is identified as Quarles' respondent, both as she is reflected by the mirror of the *picturae* and by the direct address of the *subscriptiones*.

In the course of reading Quarles' *Emblems*, the reader's rhetoric of the world and herself in it is fundamentally translated: she, and the fallen world, become allegorical reflections of the divine, and so she may interact with divinity insofar as the sensual world of Books I and II is revealed to include the divine Amor in the world. After the fallen images of the soul in the "Invocation" and the fallen devices of the world throughout Books I and II, Quarles unambiguously addresses his readers in the "Entertainment" at the beginning of Book III – an overture in which the rhetorical veil of mimetic illusion is revealed for what it is:

All you whose better thoughts are newly born,
 And (rebaptiz'd with holy fire) can scorn
 The world's base trash ...
 ... draw nigh:
 ... if thou swim
 In wealth, see him in all; see all in him:
 Make Heav'n thy mistress, let no change remove
 Thy royal heart, be fond, be sick of love:
 What, if he stop his ear, or knit his brow?
 At length he'll be as fond, as sick as thou:
 Dart up thy soul in groans: thy secret groan
 Shall pierce his ear, shall pierce his ear alone ...
 Heav'n's never deaf, but when a man's heart is dumb.

(Quarles, *Emblems*, "The "Entertainment")

This passage signals a renewed beginning in the *Emblems* which has specific reference to Canticles: "be fond, be sick of love."⁴⁰ The divine/human relationship is one that is immanent and reciprocal rather than hierarchical or oppressive. Those who see the world and the divine in categorical terms are asked to "see *him* in all; see all in *him*," as well as to "Make Heav'n [our] *mistress*" – the divine and the human have no fixed gender. This relationship is one in which a lover who is "sick of love" can be heard by "his" divine

³⁹ For other *picturae* that suggest that physical gestures signify a corporeal element of spiritual engagement, see also fig. 18 (IV.7), 23 (V.15), 24 (V.3), and 31 (IV.9).

⁴⁰ "Stay me with flagons, comfort me with apples: for I am sick of love" (Song 2:5); "I charge you, O daughters of Jerusalem, if ye find my beloved, that ye tell him, that I am sick of love" (Song 5:8).

beloved, thereby surpassing the conventional limitations of unrequited worldly love in both the “courtly love” traditions and the more extreme forms of Puritan self-abnegation. In fact, worldly notions of gender are incidental in the divine/human relationship described here, and remain as such only to serve as reminders of the world to which they do apply. That is, since worldly marriages involve two genders, heavenly marriages involve two states (body and soul, or human and divine). The allegory, then, uses sensual imagery to convey an analogous interaction between divine and human, and/or between soul and body.

Furthermore, the body is the agent of *eros*: divine love is incarnated in Christ the lover (not God or Holy Spirit, but the incarnated persona of the divine, Christ). Human love is represented in the beloved’s female body – a body, in other words, that by virtue of gender may both contain and bring forth and bear fruit, both literally and figuratively: female bodies are both enclosed and opened in the process of pregnancy. The literal denotation of gender and the “waies” of figuration alternate, permitting the co-existence of otherwise mutually exclusive interpretations. Like gender, moreover, chronological closure is also a “literal” illusion, belonging to the world of mere reflections that dominates the first two Books. The “true” world is that of the soul, which goes on past the last page of the “Farewell” in the experience of the reader. It is worth noting that the Book of Revelation itself concludes not only with a “Farewell” – “The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen” (Rev. 22:21) – but also with an invitation from “the Bride:” “And the Spirit and the Bride say, Come. And let them that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely” (Rev. 22.17). The Spirit, the Bride, and “them that heareth” invite the thirsty and the willing to quench themselves with “the water of life.” This water of scriptural revelation, while it is “free” to all, requires a preliminary choice – the willingness of the thirsty to drink it.⁴¹

The human will to choose “earth” or “heaven” makes both available to us, and, as I remarked earlier, the choice depends on and emphasizes our discretion – or in other words, on how we choose to emphasize the body’s presence as a harbouring house for the desiring soul. What choice we make is contingent upon an attentive perspective and on an active

⁴¹ Cf. Sandys’ chariot of Revelation, drawn by the people’s willing mind, which I examined in Chapter 2.

responsiveness; in Book IV, for example, the speaking Anima figure “surround[s] the weary earth” (IV.2, **fig. 31**) in what Diehl has erroneously called a passive acceptance of an imposed burden:

Thus I, the object of the world's disdain,
 With pilgrim face surround the weary earth;
 ...
 Fond earth! proportion not my seeming love
 To my long stay; but let my thoughts deceive thee:
 Thou art my prison, and my home's above;
 My life's a preparation but to leave thee:
 Like one that seeks a door, I walk about thee:
 With thee I cannot live; I cannot live without thee.

...

Epig. 2

Pilgrim, trudge on: what makes my soul complain,
 Crowns thy complaint? the way to rest is pain:
 The road to resolution lies by doubt:
 The next way home's the farthest way about.

(Quarles, Emblems, IV.2)

The *pictura* for IV.2 shows a figure encircled by a labyrinth, holding a string that links her to the far-off Amor/Christ atop a tower. The word “surround,” which might in another context imply that the speaking figure contains the worldly burden in a passive sense, here indicates that “travel” or “circumnavigate” is a more appropriate synonym, since she must traverse the labyrinth’s maze to reach the divine tower. Furthermore, instead of the conjectural tone of Books I and II, in IV.2 Quarles uses an imperative first person voice: “Fond earth! proportion not my seeming love/ To my long stay; but let my thoughts deceive thee.” Anima addresses the world and declares what her life is – “a preparation but to leave thee” and goes on to explain why she stays so long. Though it is true that there is some anxiety expressed here – “My life’s a preparation but to leave thee:/ Like one that seeks a door, I walk about thee” – yet there is also an acknowledgement that the speaker “cannot live without” the worldly labyrinth. The reason for this dependence is clearly expressed in the epigram: “what makes my soul complain,/ Crowns thy complaint.” In other words, the burden of suffering is one that is not necessarily inscribed in Anima’s being, but one that she takes on willingly, actively engaging worldly illusions in order to discover the crown that is

beyond the world and yet figured in the world.⁴² The impression of passive or imposed characteristics in IV.2, which Diehl has interpreted as emphasizing “the arduous and difficult paths of the labyrinth” and denying the “pilgrim any participation in his own salvation” (Diehl 287), not only misreads the labyrinth emblem itself but also misconstrues further characterizations of responsiveness as passivity elsewhere in the *Emblems*. Somewhat ironically, Diehl’s inattentiveness demonstrates a lack of discretion with regard to her reading choices: rather than actively engaging the emblem’s imperative declarations, she submits to the anxiety of the world as a “prison” and so remains trapped in it.

Indeed, Anima’s active seeking is one of the characteristic differences between the first two books and the last three. While the supine Anima in the “Invocation” sets the tone for constraint and suffering in Books I and II, later in the *Emblems*, Anima compares herself to Atlas, who “bears but Heav’n, [while] my folded arms sustain/ Heav’n’s Maker, whom Heav’n’s Heav’n cannot contain” (IV.9, **fig. 32**). The verb “sustain” makes Atlas’ bearing of Heaven seem passive by comparison to Anima’s active nurturing support of the child in the *pictura*. Furthermore, IV.9 is also a typological fulfillment of emblem II.8 (**fig. 33**), where Venus holds and shushes her Cupid in a parody of the *pieta* model. Venus’ part of the dialogue in the *subscriptio* of II.8 is full of complaint regarding her fretful child, while IV.9 (**fig. 32**) describes how the soul feels privileged to sustain the uncontainable divine.⁴³ The generative redemption of humanity is thus a willingness to respond to divine nurture in kind; the deliberate choice to embrace and nurture the divine presence in the world rather than be smothered by material concerns thereby re-writes the Fall of Man because in choosing, we employ the gift of Knowledge that we took through sin.⁴⁴ Responsiveness is therefore characterized in two ways: both in a virtuous sense, when the soul is open and receptive as is the mother figure in IV.9, or in a negative way, when the soul is closed and petulant as is Venus in II.8. Again, these feminine connotations of responsiveness are representative of

⁴² Again, see Wroth’s Corona sequence, which begins and ends with the image of the labyrinth that figures the Crown of Revelation.

⁴³ Cf. Spenser’s Anacreontics and the peevish Cupid in Sidney’s and Wroth’s sequences (Chapters 2 and 3).

⁴⁴ Cf. Crashaw’s “Blessed be thy paps...”, in which he alludes to the nurturing scriptures as breasts that feed all those who are old enough to hear (see also Luke 11).

humanity, not literal, so it is important not to confuse the issue of gender with that of agency or the lack thereof.⁴⁵

In a strictly allegorical model for reading that does not include the reader's interpretive participation in anagogy or tropology, multiple and co-extensive senses are dismissed as rhetorical flaws or failures. Critical models that focus on allegory as structural and therefore somehow definitive cannot adequately deal with a text that subverts preconceived notions of division (formal or existential) because allegory is a fixed set of references depending on a chronological narrative structure and on strict notions of ontological definition. The rhetoric of lyrical openness, however, guides the reader to see beyond allegorical sequences in what Quarles characterizes as a divine rhetoric that is beyond the concerns of time and place while at the same time emphasizing here and now. The interpretation of anagogy and tropology adds dimensions to the allegorical picture and assembles connections between allegorical hierarchies and formal oppositions – a reader provides textual reconstruction through her interpretive engagement, and this reconstruction is the exercise of her rhetoric as much as it is Quarles' method for arranging his book of emblems from re-arranged Jesuit sources. The tropological turn makes emblems of our reading selves through interaction with the guidance of a text that emphasizes self-reflection and self-application. The reader's interpretation assembles the various senses of Quarles' emblematic rhetoric, animating the *picturae* and performing her own annotations in response to the models of eroticized marital rhetoric in the text.

In the same way that the trap of the world is translated by a rhetoric that includes the reader and the divine as extrinsic respondents, so textual form is reconstituted by the reader's participation in the conversation. Determinacy cannot remain exclusive to the text if the reader is to have an interpretive function at all. Images of enclosure, like the labyrinth in

⁴⁵ For a notable example of such a faulty confusion, see Elsie Leach's "The Popularity of Quarles' *Emblemes*: Images of Misogyny," *Studies in Iconography* 9 (1983): 83-97. Leach reads all circular images as feminine and focuses on the Eve emblem (I.1) as definitive of Quarles' misogynistic attitude toward women; she also argues that II.8 (Venus and peevish Cupid, **fig. 33**) "is a profane parody of the Madonna and Child, and significantly it is the only representation of the mother/child relationship in *Emblemes*" (Leach 86) – thereby ignoring emblem IV.9 (**fig. 32**). She also ignores the Adam emblem (I.2) completely, as well as the gender of the Anima figure in Books III to V.

IV.2, are typologically fulfilled by the embrace of lovers and by Quarles' embrace of "Heav'n's Maker" in IV.9. This typological structure mimics that of the relations between Old and New Testament figures, so that Quarles mimics scriptural patterns in the design of the *Emblems*. Similarly, mimetic reflections are translated into the revelatory inclusion of the reader as the Anima figure.⁴⁶ The reader can thus "detach himself from his own participation in the text and see himself being guided from without" (Iser, Act, 133) by the rhetorical strategy of tropological metempsychosis. Such detachment, however, does not deny participation; rather, the reader's involvement is furthered by the understanding of her rhetorical operation as self-interpreter.

At the end of his *Emblems*, Quarles bids us "Farewell" with a citation from the Book of Revelation: "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will crown thee with life" (Rev. 2.10). At the end of the "Farewell", Quarles writes:

shall my feeble strife
Be crown'd? *I'll crown it* with a crown of life.

...

O, man's a base rebellious child,

And thou a very gracious Father.

The gift is thine; we strive, *thou crown'st* our strife;

Thou giv'st us faith: and faith a crown of life.

(Quarles, *Emblems*, "The "Farewell""; italics mine)

The crown is both Quarles' and ours, proffered both by Quarles and by God, and it is obtained by faith that it is always already there. The guidance of the text provides a mirror in which the reader may view herself as God might see her – in other words, she is guided by the emblems toward a divine perspective of herself as beloved object. As Wither also says, our attainment of this perspective is not "the same" as the divine, but "wee ... have

⁴⁶ See II.6 (**fig. 28**), V.4 (**fig. 30**), and the "Farewell" (**fig. 21**) for examples of *picturae* that include the image of the reader. Cf. also Wither's emblems 4.23 and 4.41, both of which picture well-dressed women holding mirrors; as I argued in Chapter 5, these emblems and their signalled meanings (fickleness and seemliness respectively) indicate that readers have a responsibility to make discrete choices.

somewhat of his Nature” and so may imagine it to some extent.⁴⁷ Textual closure, like sensual dependence, is the literal illusion: true satisfaction comes with the parting of the book and the reader, when the rhetorical operations of reading have brought about a reconstruction of the world and the reader as divine reflections. The realization of this design lifts the requirement for textual dependence and “closure,” rendering the text uncontainable rather than unclear; similarly, the roles of “writer” and “reader” become interchangeable. It is worth noting again that *Canticles* also concludes with the parting of the lovers: “Thou that dwellest in the gardens, the companions hearken to thy voice: cause me to hear it. Make haste, my beloved, and be thou like to a roe or to a young hart upon the mountains of spices” (Song 8: 13-14). The true love relationship of the biblical lovers is the pattern of the reading experience of open closure. Quarles’ readers too must part from the book; but they may still hearken to its voice through continued co-operation in its rhetoric.

Quarles’ *Emblems, Divine and Moral* establishes the physical world as an ephemeral background against which the foregrounded matter of the reader (himself and us) and the divine may be revealed. The levels of exegetical signification are intrinsically interwoven by the turning of the pilgrimage allegory and apocalyptic immanence into a tropological re-animation of the earth-bound self. The rhetorical interweaving of *Emblems* enjoins the considered attention of the reader in order to deconstruct and then reconstruct the progress of the soul for herself. For Quarles, as for Wither, the intrinsic substance of an appearance is its extrinsic interpretation. Quarles interprets worldly appearances as essentially insubstantial in the first two Books so that he may reconstruct physical existence in sensual, substantial terms that derive explicitly from *Canticles* and its erotic voices. The paradox of a tangible mysticism is thus illustrated in the context of an intangible world. This double paradox is then rhetorically reflected again in the structure of the whole book; as Hill has noted, the

⁴⁷ Cf. George Wither’s Emblem 4.44:

... So, let us make
 An Emblem of our selves, thereby to take
 More heed, how God is moved towards them, ...
 For, as wee somewhat have of every *Creature*,
 So, wee in us, have somewhat of his Nature:
 Or, if it bee not sayd *the same* to bee,
 His *Pictures*, and his *Images* are wee.

(Wither, *A Collection of Emblemes* [1635], 2nd ed. [London: Scolar Press, 1973], 4.44).

sequence moves back and forth from despair in divine absence to hope in the divine presence – as does *Canticles*.⁴⁸ Quarles' *Emblems* merges the various “waies” of applying scriptural sense; his interpretation belongs to the genre of exegesis while retaining its own particular, and secular, emphasis. And like Crashaw after him, Quarles appreciates the sensual, earth-bound body that conveys the soul of erotic, and blessed, desire.

⁴⁸ Hill, “Quarles as Dramatist,” *Comparative Drama* 29.1 (Spring 1995): 168-182. Hill's argument centres on Books III to V.

Concluding Remarks

What I have tried to figure out in this thesis is why Canticles' imagery, themes, and the lyric forms of erotic dialogue are so pervasive in Renaissance English poetry. What I have figured out is that there is a rhetoric or perspective that informs and underpins the uses of erotic imagery, themes, genres, and gender dialogues and that this rhetoric derives from complex and sophisticated traditions of biblical exegesis – Canticles' rhetoric, as I have called it. Canticles' rhetoric belongs not so much to Canticles itself, but to the perspective of the body as the origin of pleasure and anxiety. This perspective derives most notably from readings of Canticles, and it inscribes the body as a legitimate site to be read as well as from which to read texts. The body as a divine hieroglyphic is erotically charged with desire and is desired by God, but its legitimacy also confers a responsibility to read others in the same way, that is, as desiring and desired by God. Furthermore, this rhetoric does not disappear or fade away after the Renaissance; it is still present in the critical methodologies that academics continue to employ today, though current criticism tends to focus on the anxieties rather than on the pleasures of this rhetoric. While our political, technological, and historical/cultural concerns are specifically distinct from those of the Renaissance, there are yet significant bases for useful analogy through what I have identified as a crucial shift in Reformation exegesis. The emphasis of tropology, in which the moral sense or the psyche defines the subject as the object of observation, is common to both the Reformation and to 21st century critical concerns.¹ The differences of religious doctrines and ecclesiastical affiliations do not necessarily disrupt this analogy. In fact, these differences may instruct us more clearly about the nature of Renaissance religions because they stand out beside the familiar emphasis on the sense of the self and the subject's relation to her community. In addition, such an analogy between moral concerns in the present and in the Renaissance can help us to clarify our own sense of the psyche, despite the often widely presumed cliché of the godlessness of current culture.

¹ I am referring, specifically, to psychoanalytic models of criticism, though many critics employ these models loosely enough that there is a sense of the psyche and its anxieties in literary criticism that can be considered general.

The rhetoric of tropology – of applying mystical perspectives to material concerns – is ultimately what Origen used to justify the inclusion of Canticles in the biblical canon. By the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in England, this kind of exegesis had developed to include “material” or carnal expression in order to emphasize the pleasures of mystical engagement as well as to comprehend the anxieties of pain. These mystical pleasures and pains derive from concrete sensory engagement with the world, and our ability to understand anything beyond a sensory level is the blessing of conscious self-awareness. This blessing is what marks humanity as an hieroglyphic of divine creation, inscribed in our “inward parts” (Jer. 31:31) as a sign of betrothal but also signified in our outward parts and their ability to feel pleasure. In this sense, Canticles’ rhetoric engages our awareness of the distinctions between inward and outward “selves,” between the ability to feel pleasure and the ability to conceptualize and present that feeling. This kind of rhetorical exercise prompts an alternative perspective on the world and our place in it, opening up preconceived ideas to re-examination and re-evaluation.

Gender is a remarkably fluid concept in this rhetoric. This thesis challenges feminist critical models of gender and agency as monolithic concepts, fixed (or at least with fixed associations and relations), and predetermined by a hackneyed image of misogyny that renders any example of female strength as necessarily problematic or “exceptional.” I question this gender model by demonstrating some of its limitations, and by engaging with some of the fascinating alternatives that gender and queer theory offer. These models of gender as indeterminate, or conceptual, or expressed through desire rather than based on and defined by biological characteristics, show a remarkable continuity with Canticles’ rhetoric. Furthermore, the implications of extending these theoretical analogies between Renaissance and current gender theories has a great deal of potential in terms of the new field of cultural studies – do Renaissance gender relations adopt the flexibility of Canticles’ rhetoric in domestic, legal, social, political, and leisure activities? How, and why or why not?

For instance, it is commonly known that women were not permitted to act on the Renaissance stage; and yet there is no lack of female characters in Renaissance plays, and recent work has established that women were well represented in the audiences of theatres. Is this perhaps an example of how gender is conceived of as a flexible, because it could be

played out in a fiction?² It is significant, surely, that even female characters often “cross-dressed” in the context of the plays themselves. Is there a useful analogy between theatre and Church, and between the exclusivity of male actors and male priests? And what roles did (and do) women actually play in congregations and audiences? As well, it would be very interesting to examine the theatrical uses of Canticles’ and its rhetoric, since the stage “literally” imitates dialogue or conversational speech. For instance, Thomas Middleton’s *A Chaste Maid in Cheapside* (1613) concludes with a faked double funeral that turns into a wedding in a Church when the bride and bridegroom rise from the coffins to be married, and then are told to take their winding sheets for wedding sheets by the joyful congregation on the stage. This highly ironic (and very funny) allusion to the marital theme of Canticles and Revelation is just one among many examples of how scriptural traditions can appear on the stage.

Canticles’ rhetoric dismantles the categories of genre as well as gender, as in the mixed formal requirements of emblems and the conflated themes of religious and secular love poetry. My examinations of sonnet sequences and religious poetry collections argue that there is a great deal of useful overlap – common characteristics that have often been neglected or dismissed by Renaissance critics of the past and present. This kind of comparison could also apply usefully to many other religious and love poets, such as John Donne: both in terms of theme and form, Donne’s *Songs and Sonets* and the *Holy Sonnets* invite further comparative analysis. Donne’s sonnets and songs are an important example of how Canticles’ rhetoric operates in the Renaissance. The use of the sonnet form for both secular and sacred purposes by the same poet is a significant instance of how different kinds of scriptures are permeated by each other: love for a woman and love for God are both expressed by Donne in the same literary form. Furthermore, the examination of such formal, generic, and gendered crossovers need not be limited to the English Renaissance. Canticles remains a vital and important literary scripture throughout Judeo-Christian history. Toni Morrison’s *The Song of Solomon* and *Beloved*, Salman Rushdie’s *The Ground Beneath her Feet*

² Bruce R. Smith, for instance, argues that theatrical cross-dressing indicates a homosexual subtext, but this approach privileges the realities of the stage at the expense of the fiction. See Smith’s *Homosexual Desire in Shakespeare’s England: A Cultural Poetics* (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1991).

(1999), and Morley Callaghan's *Such is my Beloved* (1934) are just a few modern novels that draw on the lyric voices and themes of Canticles. In many ways, the critical engagement I have demonstrated here is meant to encourage further engagement beyond the chosen areas and texts included in this thesis.

Without intending to, the organization of my chapters has managed to reflect a sequential development of the three spiritual senses of exegesis – a matter of some surprise to me when I realized it shortly after completing drafts of all six chapters, since I had set out with the idea that all three senses were inextricably woven together, and would likely have to be explained by continual references to how the literal level of my poetic examples invoked all three senses simultaneously. Instead, I found that the pattern of the four senses (as it was observed in the Renaissance) had to be followed in order to explain each properly. My readers will recall the mnemonic rhyme that monks used to recall the four senses of scripture and their inter-relationships:

*Littera gesta docet, quid credas allegoria,
Moralis quid agas, quo tendas anagogia.*
(The letter teaches the act, what you should believe allegory,
Moral, what you should do, where you should be heading, anagogy).³

Chapters 1 and 2 tend to emphasize the established allegories of Canticles itself in more or less direct readings of the scriptural poems as they operate in the English Renaissance and are couched in current critical terminology. In the introductory chapter, for instance, I characterize the rhetoric of Canticles and its exegesis as conversational and playful, as informed by a highly flexible conception of gender, as informing Renaissance notions of voice through the expression of the Sponsa's desire in the matrimonial rite, and as contributing to the Renaissance understanding of literary genres as adaptable and often overlapping ways of figuring meaning. The second chapter builds on the explanation of allegorical readings in the first chapter with four considerations of such readings of Canticles – two of which, by Wither and Quarles, are religiously oriented, and two of which, by Sandys and Spenser, are more romantically inclined. Both chapters operate to establish that religious

³ The Renaissance order is: literal, allegory, anagogy, tropology. Qtd. in Matter 54, trans. fn. 22. The rhyme has been attributed alternatively to Nicholas of Lyra or Augustine of Dacia.

and romantic applications of Canticles are themselves adapted from traditional interpretations and that these kinds of applications often overlap with each other.

Chapters 3 and 4 lead my readers toward a clearer comprehension of how four more poets employ Canticles to what seem like widely divergent purposes that are yet linked by a common analogy through the use of Canticles' rhetoric. Sidney and Wroth write sonnet sequences that deliberately engage questions of generic as well as subjective purpose; indeed, I have argued that it is the nature of sonnet sequences to pose such problems so that the reader must figure out the various strands of the complex web of literal and allegorical conversations. The unannotated first-person speaker of the poems is always implicitly doubled in the beloved object, and such a literal rendering of implicit conversation signals the allegory of textual conversation with other poems of the same kind, such as the songs that interrupt the sequence of sonnets. Ultimately, sonnet sequences and their speakers interrogate themselves to the extent that the reader is seduced to do so as well, and in doing so becomes implicated in the rhetoric of poetic engagement. The significance of female speakers – the Sponsa, Pamphilia, Stella, and (arguably) Crashaw's Teresa, among others – is that they demonstrate that the concept of gender as it is employed in Canticles' rhetoric is not determined by the writer's or the speaker's biological sex; the sex of authors and readers is therefore, for all intents and purposes of this thesis, irrelevant. When the issue of gender is so construed – that is, when gender is primarily a figurative adjective that does not bear any necessary relation to biologically determined gender, but rather serves to characterize kinds of desire in the subject – questions of biologically determined gender are beside the point. This construction of gender as figurative and flexible works both for writers as well as for readers, and prompts other kinds of questions about conventional categorizations such as poetic genres as well. Similarly, the temples of Crashaw and Herbert present us with the figure of an unanimated physical structure that is metaphorically inhabited by human presence. Herbert's Church, and Crashaw's Herbert, both initiate similar kinds of eroticized entering: the architectural structure and the textual structure are aroused to life through the beloved reader's penetration. In all four poets, then, the literal and allegorical elements of romantic or religious erotic engagement lead up to the same analogical purpose, which is that of seducing the reader into an active role in the text.

Chapters 5 and 6 introduce a relatively new field of Renaissance investigation that focuses its rhetorical strategy on urging the reader to interpret her own behaviour. The emblem books of Wither and Quarles employ paratextual devices that frame their works as deliberately textual conversations with others' pictorial arrangements. Furthermore, the Lottery in Wither's *Emblemes* and the metempsychosis of Quarles' *Emblems* bid the reader to imitate the written methods of interpretation beyond the confines of the texts she reads. Such overt demonstration of interpretive patterns in emblems is therefore strategically oriented toward figuring these patterns as a reading method, both for texts and for social interaction. In this sense, the tropological self-commentary of the authors is merely a guiding paradigm for social rhetoric and action. In the same way that marginal exegesis disappears from biblical translations in 1611, implicitly directing the reader to examine scripture without guidance, emblem books constitute a kind of guiding exegesis without scripture: the genres of scripture and exegesis need not appear together on the page in order to converse through the reader's rhetorical engagement, since tropology locates the primary site of interpretation not in the text but in the reader who reads many texts and brings them together in the world.

Of course, recognizing this kind of organizational method in my own work is only one way of understanding it, and I offer it here as one way of concluding this thesis. As Stanley Stewart concludes his book on ordinary language and the mystique of critical problems,

Presentation of evidence is akin to philosophy's putting 'everything before us' so that 'everything lies open to view.' This is not to say that nothing is hidden from us, or that nothing hidden from us can be of any importance, but only that 'what is hidden ... is of no interest to us' as we go about the critical task at hand: to generate or judge statements about times and voices other than our own.

(Stewart, 1997, 278)⁴

The implication of concluding is thus that something has been opened to view, but that there is always the potential that something else remains hidden. While in one sense, it is true that "what is hidden" is for the moment "of no interest to us," Canticles' rhetoric perpetuates the

⁴ Stewart is quoting Ludwig Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations* (trans. G. E. M. Anscombe, Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1958), 126.

parousia (deferment) of ultimate revelation in critical as well as poetic terms because it depends on an eroticized meeting between readers and texts. In other words, *eros* is potentially figurative just as gender is: though the sexual metaphors of penetration and enclosure are based on actual sexual encounters, the anxieties and pleasures of those encounters inscribe a reading rhetoric with a desire for further engagement. The “success” of textual seduction depends on entertaining the balance between disclosure and deferral, between what “lies open to view” and what remains to be opened.

Appendices

Appendix One: King James version of the Song of Songs	264
Appendix Two: Geneva translation of the Song of Songs (from <i>The Geneva Bible</i> , a facsimile of the 1560 edition, with an introduction by Lloyd E. Berry [Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1969])	271
Appendix Three: Vulgate Text and English translation of the Song of Songs (from E. Ann Matter's <i>The Voice of My Beloved: The Song of Songs in Western Medieval Christianity</i> [Philadelphia: U of Pennsylvania P, 1990])	276
Appendix Four: Selected List of English Renaissance texts on the Song of Songs and its exegesis	286
Appendix Five: Title pages of 1541 and 1533 Bibles and Wither's emblems, figures 1 to 17	289
Appendix Six: Quarles' emblems, figures 18 to 33	295

1017

THE SONG OF SOLOMON

CHAPTER 1

THE song of songs, which is Solomon's. *1 Ki. 4. 32.*

2 Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth: for thy love is better than wine. *ch. 4. 10.*

3 Because of the savour of thy good ointments thy name is as ointment poured forth, therefore do the virgins love thee.

4 Draw me, we will run after thee: the king hath brought me into his chambers: we will be glad and rejoice in thee, we will remember thy love more than wine: the upright love thee. *Ho. 11. 4.*

5 I am black, but comely, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, as the tents of Kedar, as the curtains of Solomon.

6 Look not upon me, because I am black, because the sun hath looked upon me: my mother's children were angry with me; they made me the keeper of the vineyards; but mine own vineyard have I not kept.

7 Tell me, O thou whom my soul loveth, where thou feedest, where thou makest thy flock to rest at noon: for why should I be

as one that turneth aside by the flocks of thy companions?

8 ¶ If thou know not, O thou fairest among women, go thy way forth by the footsteps of the flock, and feed thy kids beside the shepherds' tents.

9 I have compared thee, O my love, to a company of horses in Phâr'-āōh's chariots. *ch. 2. 2, 10; 4. 1.*

10 Thy cheeks are comely with rows of jewels, thy neck with chains of gold. *Eze. 6. 11-13.*

11 We will make thee borders of gold with studs of silver.

12 ¶ While the king sitteth at his table, my spikenard sendeth forth the smell thereof.

13 A bundle of myrrh is my wellbeloved unto me; he shall lie all night betwixt my breasts.

14 My beloved is unto me as a cluster of camphire in the vineyards of En-gē'-dî.

15 Behold, thou art fair, my love; behold, thou art fair; thou hast doves' eyes. *ch. 4. 1; 5. 12.*

16 Behold, thou art fair, my beloved, yea, pleasant: also our bed is green.

17 The beams of our house are cedar, and our rafters of fir.

SONG OF SOLOMON 2, 3 1018

The Church's Love

CHAPTER 2

I AM the rose of Sharon, *and* the lily of the valleys.

2 As the lily among thorns, so *is* my love among the daughters.

3 As the apple tree among the trees of the wood, so *is* my beloved among the sons. I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit *was* sweet to my taste. *Re. 22.1, 2.*

4 He brought me to the banqueting house, and his banner over me *was* love.

5 Stay me with flagons, comfort me with apples: for I *am* sick of love.

6 His left hand *is* under my head, and his right hand doth embrace me. *ch. 8.3.*

7 I charge you, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, by the roes, and by the hinds of the field, that ye stir not up, nor awake *my* love, till he please. *ch. 3.5; 8.4.*

8 ¶ The voice of my beloved! behold, he cometh leaping upon the mountains, skipping upon the hills.

9 My beloved is like a roe or a young hart: behold, he standeth behind our wall, he looketh forth at the windows, shewing himself through the lattice.

10 My beloved spake, and said unto me, Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away.

11 For, lo, the winter is past, the rain is over *and* gone;

12 The flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing of

birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land;

13 The fig tree putteth forth her green figs, and the vines *with* the tender grape give a *good* smell. Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away.

14 ¶ O my dove, *that art* in the clefts of the rock, in the secret *places* of the stairs, let me see thy countenance, let me hear thy voice; for sweet *is* thy voice, and thy countenance *is* comely.

15 Take us the foxes, the little foxes, that spoil the vines: for our vines *have* tender grapes. *Ps. 80.13.*

16 ¶ My beloved *is* mine, and I *am* his: he feedeth among the lilies. *ch. 6.3; 7.10.*

17 Until the day break, and the shadows flee away, turn, my beloved, and be thou like a roe or a young hart upon the mountains of Bē'-thēr. *ch. 4.6; 8.14.*

CHAPTER 3

BY night on my bed I sought him whom my soul loveth: I sought him, but I found him not. *Is. 26.9.*

2 I will rise now, and go about the city in the streets, and in the broad ways I will seek him whom my soul loveth: I sought him, but I found him not.

3 The watchmen that go about the city found me: *to whom I said*, Saw ye him whom my soul loveth? *ch. 5.7.*

4 *It was* but a little that I passed from them, but I found him whom my soul loveth: I held

Christ's Love to Her . 1019 SONG OF SOLOMON 4

him, and would not let him go, until I had brought him into my mother's house, and into the chamber of her that conceived me.

5 I charge you, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, by the roes, and by the hinds of the field, that ye stir not up, nor awake *my* love, till he please. *ch. 2.7; 8.4.*

6 ¶ Who *is* this that cometh out of the wilderness like pillars of smoke, perfumed with myrrh and frankincense, with all powders of the merchant? *ch. 8.5.*

7 Behold his bed, which *is* Solomon's; threescore valiant men *are* about it, of the valiant of Israel.

8 They all hold swords, *being* expert in war: every man *hath* his sword upon his thigh because of fear in the night.

9 King Solomon made himself a chariot of the wood of Lebanon.

10 He made the pillars thereof of silver, the bottom thereof of gold, the covering of it of purple, the midst thereof being paved *with* love, for the daughters of Jerusalem.

11 Go forth, O ye daughters of Zion, and behold king Solomon with the crown wherewith his mother crowned him in the day of his espousals; and in the day of the gladness of his heart.

CHAPTER 4

BEHOLD, thou *art* fair, my love; behold, thou *art* fair; thou *hast* doves' eyes within thy locks: thy hair *is* as a flock of

goats, that appear from mount Gil'-ē-ād. *ch. 1.15; 5.12; 6.5.*

2 Thy teeth *are* like a flock of sheep that *are* even shorn, which came up from the washing; whereof every one bear twins, and none *is* barren among them.

3 Thy lips *are* like a thread of scarlet, and thy speech *is* comely: thy temples *are* like a piece of a pomegranate within thy locks.

4 Thy neck *is* like the tower of David builded for an armoury, whereon there hang a thousand bucklers, all shields of mighty men. *ch. 7.4; Ne. 3.19.*

5 Thy two breasts *are* like two young roes that are twins, which feed among the lilies. *ch. 7.3; Pr. 5.19*

6 Until the day break, and the shadows flee away, I will get me to the mountain of myrrh, and to the hill of frankincense. *ch. 2.17.*

7 Thou *art* all fair, my love; *there is* no spot in thee. *Ep. 5.27.*

8 ¶ Come with me from Lebanon, *my* spouse; with me from Lebanon: look from the top of A-mā'-nä, from the top of Shē'nir and Hermon, from the lions' dens, from the mountains of the leopards. *De. 3.9.*

9 Thou hast ravished my heart, my sister, *my* spouse; thou hast ravished my heart with one of thine eyes, with one chain of thy neck.

10 How fair is thy love, my sister, *my* spouse! how much better is thy love than wine! and the smell of thine ointments than all spices!

SONG OF SOLOMON 5 1020

Christ's Graces

11 Thy lips, O *my* spouse, drop as the honeycomb: honey and milk *are* under thy tongue; and the smell of thy garments *is* like the smell of Lebanon. *ch.5.1.*

12 A garden enclosed *is* my sister, *my* spouse; a spring shut up, a fountain sealed.

13 Thy plants *are* an orchard of pomegranates, with pleasant fruits; camphire, with spikenard,

14 Spikenard and saffron; calamus and cinnamon, with all trees of frankincense; myrrh and aloes, with all the chief spices:

15 A fountain of gardens, a well of living waters, and streams from Lebanon. *Jo.4.10;7.38.*

16 ¶ Awake, O north wind; and come, thou south; blow upon my garden, *that* the spices thereof may flow out. Let my beloved come into his garden, and eat his pleasant fruits. *ch.5.1.*

CHAPTER 5

I AM come into my garden, my sister, *my* spouse: I have gathered my myrrh with my spice; I have eaten my honeycomb with my honey; I have drunk my wine with my milk: eat, O friends; drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved. *ch.4.11,16.*

2 ¶ I sleep, but my heart waketh: *it is* the voice of my beloved that knocketh, *saying*, Open to me, my sister, my love, my dove, my undefiled: for my head is filled with dew, *and* my locks with the drops of the night.

3 I have put off my coat; how

shall I put it on? I have washed my feet; how shall I defile them?

4 My beloved put in his hand by the hole of *the door*, and my bowels were moved for him.

5 I rose up to open to my beloved; and my hands dropped with myrrh, and my fingers with sweet smelling myrrh, upon the handles of the lock.

6 I opened to my beloved; but my beloved had withdrawn himself, *and* was gone: my soul failed when he spake: I sought him, but I could not find him; I called him, but he gave me no answer.

7 The watchmen that went about the city found me, they smote me, they wounded me; the keepers of the walls took away my veil from me. *ch.3.3.*

8 I charge you, O daughters of Jerusalem, if ye find my beloved, that ye tell him, that I *am* sick of love.

9 ¶ What *is* thy beloved more than *another* beloved, O thou fairest among women? what *is* thy beloved more than *another* beloved, that thou dost so charge us? *ch.1.8.*

10 My beloved *is* white and ruddy, the chiefest among ten thousand.

11 His head *is as* the most fine gold, his locks *are* bushy, *and* black as a raven.

12 His eyes *are as the eyes* of doves by the rivers of waters, washed with milk, *and* fitly set.

13 His cheeks *are as a bed* of spices, *as* sweet flowers: his lips

Christ's Love to the Church 1021 SONG OF SOLOMON 6; 7

like lilies, dropping sweet smelling myrrh.

14 His hands *are as* gold rings set with the beryl: his belly *is as* bright ivory overlaid *with* sapphires.

15 His legs *are as* pillars of marble, set upon sockets of fine gold: his countenance *is as* Lebanon, excellent as the cedars.

16 His mouth *is* most sweet: yea, he *is* altogether lovely. This *is* my beloved, and this *is* my friend, O daughters of Jerusalem.

CHAPTER 6

WHITHER is thy beloved gone, O thou fairest among women? whither is thy beloved turned aside? that we may seek him with thee.

2 My beloved is gone down into his garden, to the beds of spices, to feed in the gardens, and to gather lilies.

3 I *am* my beloved's, and my beloved *is* mine: he feedeth among the lilies. *ch.2.16;7.10.*

4 ¶ Thou *art* beautiful, O my love, as Tirzah, comely as Jerusalem, terrible as *an army* with banners.

5 Turn away thine eyes from me, for they have overcome me: thy hair *is as* a flock of goats that appear from Gil'-ě-ād.

6 Thy teeth *are as* a flock of sheep which go up from the washing, whereof every one beareth twins, and *there is* not one barren among them. *ch.4.2.*

7 As a piece of a pomegranate *are* thy temples within thy locks.

8 There are threescore queens, and fourscore concubines, and virgins without number.

9 My dove, my undefiled is *but* one; she *is* the *only* one of her mother, she *is* the choice *one* of her that bare her. The daughters saw her, and blessed her; yea, the queens and the concubines, and they praised her.

10 ¶ Who *is* she *that* looketh forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, *and* terrible as *an army* with banners?

11 I went down into the garden of nuts to see the fruits of the valley, *and* to see whether the vine flourished, *and* the pomegranates budded. *ch.7.12.*

12 Or ever I was aware, my soul made me *like* the chariots of Am-mín'-ă-dīb.

13 Return, return, O Shû'-lă-mîte; return, return, that we may look upon thee. What will ye see in the Shulamite? As it were the company of two armies.

CHAPTER 7

HOW beautiful are thy feet with shoes, O prince's daughter! the joints of thy thighs *are like* jewels, the work of the hands of a cunning workman.

2 Thy navel *is like* a round goblet, *which* wanteth not liquor: thy belly *is like* an heap of wheat set about with lilies.

3 Thy two breasts *are like* two young roes *that are* twins.

4 Thy neck *is as* a tower of ivory; thine eyes *like* the fish-

SONG OF SOLOMON 8 1022 *The Love of the Church*

pools in Heshbon, by the gate of Bath-rabbim: thy nose *is* as the tower of Lebanon which looketh toward Damascus.

5 Thine head upon thee *is* like Carmel, and the hair of thine head like purple; the king *is* held in the galleries.

6 How fair and how pleasant art thou, O love, for delights!

7 This thy stature is like to a palm tree, and thy breasts to clusters of grapes.

8 I said, I will go up to the palm tree, I will take hold of the boughs thereof: now also thy breasts shall be as clusters of the vine, and the smell of thy nose like apples;

9 And the roof of thy mouth like the best wine for my beloved, that goeth *down* sweetly, causing the lips of those that are asleep to speak.

10 ¶ I *am* my beloved's, and his desire *is* toward me. *Ch. 6. 3; Ps. 45. 11.*

11 Come, my beloved, let us go forth into the field; let us lodge in the villages.

12 Let us get up early to the vineyards; let us see if the vine flourish, *whether* the tender grape appear, *and* the pomegranates bud forth: there will I give thee my loves.

13 The mandrakes give a smell, and at our gates *are* all manner of pleasant *fruits*, new and old, *which* I have laid up for thee, O my beloved. *Ge. 30. 14; Ma. 13. 52.*

CHAPTER 8

O THAT thou *wert* as my brother, that sucked the breasts of my mother! *when* I should find thee without, I would kiss thee; yea, I should not be despised.

2 I would lead thee, *and* bring thee into my mother's house, *who* would instruct me: I would cause thee to drink of spiced wine of the juice of my pomegranate.

3 His left hand *should be* under my head, and his right hand should embrace me. *Ch. 2. 6.*

4 I charge you, O daughters of Jerusalem, that ye stir not up, nor awake *my* love, until he please.

5 Who *is* this that cometh up from the wilderness, leaning upon her beloved? I raised thee up under the apple tree: there thy mother brought thee forth: there she brought thee forth *that* bare thee.

6 ¶ Set me as a seal upon thine heart, as a seal upon thine arm: for love *is* strong as death; jealousy *is* cruel as the grave: the coals thereof *are* coals of fire, *which* hath a most vehement flame.

7 Many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it: if *a* man would give all the substance of his house for love, it would utterly be contemned.

8 ¶ We have a little sister, and she hath no breasts: what shall we do for our sister in the day

when she shall be spoken for?

9 If she *be* a wall, we will build upon her a palace of silver: and if she *be* a door, we will enclose her with boards of cedar.

10 I *am* a wall, and my breasts like towers: then was I in his eyes as one that found favour.

11 Solomon had a vineyard at Bā'-āl-hamon; he let out the vineyard unto keepers; every one for the fruit thereof was to bring a thousand *pieces* of silver. *Ma. 21.33*

12 My vineyard, which *is* mine, *is* before me: thou, O Solomon, *must have* a thousand, and those that keep the fruit thereof two hundred.

13 Thou that dwellest in the gardens, the companions hearken to thy voice: cause me to hear *it*. *ch. 2.14.*

14 ¶ Make haste, my beloved, and be thou like to a roe or to a young hart upon the mountains of spices. *ch. 2.17.*

Repent betime. The song of The soule immortal.

1 To wit, an-
greaſe canic.
k Meaning ear
nal ſoules whe
reunto youth
is giuen
Chap. XII.
a Before thou
come to a con
tinual miſerie:
for when the
cloudes remai
ne after y^r raine,
manie grief
is increaſed.
b The bands,
which kepe y^r
bodie
c The legs.
d The teſtie.
e The eyes.
f The lippes,
or mouth.
g When the
clawes ſhal
ſcarce open &
not be able to
cheer nonore
h He ſhal not
be able to ſteepe
i That is, the
wilde pipes,
or the eares
ſhalbe deafe &
nor able to
heare ſinging.
k To climbe
he becauſe of
their weakeneſſe,
or thei
ſoupe downe,
as though they
were afraid leſt
anie thing ſhul
de hit them.
l Thei ſhal tre
ble at thei go,
as though they
were afraid.
m Their head
ſhalbe as white
as the bloſ-
ſomes of an al
monde tre.
n Thei ſhalbe
able to beare
nothing.

10 Therefore take away grief out of thine heart, and cauſe euil to departe from thy fleſh: for childholde & youth are vanitie.

CHAP. XII.

To thinke on God in youth and not to differre til age.
The ſoule returneth to God in Wiſdome in the gift of God and conſiſteth in fearing him and keeping his commandments.

Remember now thy Creator in the daies of thy youth, whiles the euil daies come not, nor the yeres approche, wherein thou ſhalt ſay, I haue no pleaſure in them:

Whiles the ſunne is not darke, nor the light, nor the moone, nor the ſtarres, nor the cloudes returne after the raine:

When the keepers of the houſe ſhal tremble, and the ſtrong men ſhal bowe them ſelues, and the grinders ſhal ceaſe, becauſe thei are fewe, and they waxe darke that loke out by the windowes:

And the ſdores ſhal be ſhut without by the baſe ſounde of the grinding, and he ſhal riſe vp at the voice of the birde: & all the daughters of ſinging ſhal be abaſed.

Alſo thei ſhal be afraid of the hie thing, and feare ſhalbe in the way, and the almonde tre ſhal flouriſh and the graſhopper ſhalbe a burden, and concupiſcence ſhalbe driuen away: for man go-

eth to the houſe of his age, and the mourners go about in the ſtreete.

While the ſiluer corde is not lengthened, nor the golden ewer broken, nor the pitcher brokē at the well, nor the whele broken at the ciſterne:

And duſt returne to the earth as it was, and the ſpirit returne to God that gaue it.

Vanitie of vanities, ſaith the Preacher, all is vanitie.

And the more wiſe the Preacher was, the more he taught the people knowledge, & cauſed them to heare, & ſearched forth, and prepared manie parables.

The Preacher ſoght to finde out pleaſant wordes, & an vpright writing, and the wordes of truth.

The wordes of the wiſe are like goades, and like nailes: faſtened by the maſters of the aſſemblies, which are giuē by one y^r paſtour.

And of other things beſides theſe, my ſonne, take thou hede: for there is none end in making manie booke: and muche reading is a wearines of the fleſh.

Let vs heare the end of all: feare God & kepe his commandments: for this is the whole dutie of man.

For God wil bring euerie worke vnto iudgement, with euerie ſecret thing, whether it be good or euil.

o Meaning the narrowe of the backe bene the ſawes
p The little ſiluer ewer
q The little ſiluer pitcher
r Meaning the ciſterne
s Meaning the well
t Which is the head
u That is, the heart, out of which y^r bodie draweth the powers of liſe
v The ſoule conſidereth the other goodes of ioy or ſorrow
w ſpeth out as the whele
x Which are well applied by y^r maſters, whome he calleth maſters
y That is, by God
z Theſe things can not be comprehended in booke, or learned by reading, but God muſt inſtrude the heart that y^r manie onely knowe y^r wiſdome is the trueſcience, & the way the-
reunto is to feare God.

AN EXCELLENT SONG which was Salomons.

THE ARGUMENT.

In this Song, Salomon by moſte ſweete and comfortable allegories and parables deſcribeth the poſſible loue of Ieſus Chriſt, the true Salomon and King of peace, and the faithfull ſoule or his Church, which he hath ſanctified and appointed to be his ſpouſe, holy, chaſt and without reprehention. So that here is declared the ſingular loue of the bridegrome toward the bride, and his great and excellent benefites wherewith he doeth enrich her of his pure loante and grace without anie of her deſeruings. Alſo the earnest affection of the Church which is inflamed with the loue of Chriſt deſiring to be more and more ioyned to him in loue, and not to be forſaken for anie ſpot or blemiſh that is in her.

“Eia a ſong of ſongs: ſo called becauſe it is the chiefſt of the 1005, which Salomon made as a muſicorde.”
1 King. 4.32.

a This is ſpo-
ken in the per-
ſone of the
Church, or of
the faithfull
ſoule, inflamed
with y^r diſire
of Chriſt, who
me ſhe loueth.
b The ſinging
of the great be-
nefit.
c Thei that are
pure in heart &
conuerſation.
d The faithfull
confeſſe that
thei can not
come to Chriſt
except thei be
drawen.

CHAP. I.

The familiar talke and myſtical communication of the ſpiritual loue betwene Ieſus Chriſt and his Church.
The domeſtical enemies that perſecute the Church.

Et he kiſſe me with the kiſſes of his mouth: for thy loue is better then wine.

Because of the fauour of thy good ointments thy name is as an ointment powred out: therefore the virgines loue thee.

Drawe me: we wil runne after thee: the



King hath broght me into his chambers: we wil reioyce and be glad in thee: we wil remember thy loue more then wine: the righteous do loue thee.

I am blacke, o daughters of Ieruſalem, but comelie, as the frutes of Kedār, & as the curtines of Salomon.

Regarde ye me not becauſe I am blacke: for the ſunne hath looked vpon me. The ſonnes of my mother were angry againſt me: thei made me the keeper of the vines: but I kept not mine owne vine.

Shewe me, o thou, whome my ſoule loveth,

e Meaning the ſecret loye y^r is not knowne to the worlde.
f The Church conſeſſeth her ſpots & blemes, but hathe confidence in y^r fauour of Chriſt.
g Kedār was Iſhmaels ſonne, of whome came the Arabians y^r dwelt in tentes.
h Which with-
in were all ſet with precious ſtones.
i Conſider not the Church by y^r outward appearance.
k The corruption of nature through ſinne, and afflictions.
l Mine owne brethren, whiche ſhulde haue moſte fauoured me.
m She conſeſſeth her owne negligence.
n The ſpouſe ſeling her fauour, becauſe ſhe hath band onely for lucre.

The Churchis beautie. Salomón. Her desire to Christ. 281

Whome thou
hast called to
the dignitie of
pastors, and
that let forth
their owne
dreames in
stead of thy do
ctrine.
Christ speaketh
to his Church, bid
ding the that
are ignorant to
go to the pas
tors to learne.
For thy spiri
tual beautie
and excellencie
there was no
worldlie crea
ture to be com
pared vnto
thee.
The Church
reioyceth that
she is admit
ted to the com
panie of
Christ.
He that be
more desire vn
to me
Christ accep
teth his Char
che and com
mendeth her
beautie
That is, the
heart of the
faithful where
in Christ dwell
eth by his Spi
rit.

ueth, where thou feedest, where thou liest at
noone: for why shulde I be as she that turn
eth aside to thy flockes of thy copanions?
If thou knowest not, O thou the fairest among
women, get thee forth by the steppes of the
flocke, and feede thy kiddes by the tents of
the shepherdes.
I haue compared thee, O my loue, to the troupe
of horses in thy charrets of Pharaoh.
Thy chekes are comelie wth rowes of stones,
and thy necke with chaines.
We wil make thee borders of golde with
studdes of siluer.
Whiles the King was at his repast, my
spikenarde gaue the smel thereof.
My welbeloued is as a bundle of myrrhe
vnto me: she shall ye betweene my breasts.
My welbeloued is as a clustre of camphire
vnto me in the vines of Engedi.
My loue, beholde, thy art is faire: beholde,
thy art faire: thine eyes are like the dooues.
My welbeloued, beholde, thou art faire
and pleasant: also our bed is grene: the
beames of our house are cedres.

CHAP. III.

The Church desireth to rest vnder the shadowe of
Christ. She heareth his voyce. She is compar
ed to the dooue, and the enemies to the foxes.

I Am the rose of the field, & the lillie of
the valles.
Like a lillie among the thornes, so is my
loue among the daughters.
Like the apple tree among the trees of the
forest: so is my welbeloued among the sonnes
of men: vnder his shadowe had I delite,
& sate downe: and his frute was swete vnto
my mouth.
He brought me into the wine celler, and
loue was his banner ouer me.
Stay me with figons, and comfort me
with apples: for I am sicke of loue.
His left hand is vnder myn head, & his
right hand doeth embrace me.
I charge you, O daughters of Ierusalem,
by the roses & by the hindes of the field,
that ye stirre not vp, nor waké my loue, vn
til she please.
It is the voyce of my welbeloued: behol
de, he cometh leaping by the mountaines,
and skipping by the hilles.
My welbeloued is like a roe, or a yong
hart: lo, he standeth behinde our wall, lo
king forth of the windowes, shewing him
selfe through the grates.
My welbeloued spake & said vnto me, Ar
ise, my loue, my faire one, & come thy way.
For beholde, winter is past: the raine is
changed, and is gone away.
The flowers appeare in y^e earth: the time
of the singing of birdes is come, & the voi
ce of the turtle is heard in our land.
The figge hath brought forth her yong
figges: & the vines with their small grapes

haue cast a sauour: arise my loue, my faire
one, and come away.
My dooue, that art in the holes of the
rocke, in y^e secret places of y^e staires, shewe
me thy sight, let me heare thy voyce: for
thy voyce is swete, and thy sight comelie.
Take vs y^e foxes, y^e little foxes, w^{ch} destroy
the vines: for our vines haue small grapes.
My welbeloued is mine, and I am his:
he feedeth among the lillies,
Vntil y^e day breake, & the shadowes flee
away: returne, my welbeloued, & be like a
roe, or a yong hart vpon the mountai
nes of Bethel.

CHAP. IIII.

The Church desireth to be ioyned inseparably to Christ
her husband & Her deliuerance out of the wilderness.

In my bed by night I fought him that
my soule loued: I fought him, but I founde
him not.
I wil rise therefore now, and go about in
the citie, by the stretes & by the open pla
ces, & wil seke him that my soule loueth:
I fought him, but I founde him not.
The watchemen that went about the cit
tie, founde me: to whome I said, Haue you
sene him whome my soule loueth?
When I had past a litle from them, then I
founde him whome my soule loued: I roke
holde on him and left him not, til I had
brought him vnto my mothers house into
the chamber of her that concieued me.
I charge you, O daughters of Ierusalem,
by the roses and by the hindes of the field,
that ye stirre not vp, nor waké my loue vn
til she please.
Who is she that commeth vp out of the
wildernes like pillars of smoke perfum'd
with myrrhe and incense, & with all the
spices of the marchants?
Beholde his bed, which is Salomons:
thre score strong men are round about it,
of the valiant men of Isiael.
Thei all handle the sworde, & are expert
in warre, euerie one hath his sworde vpon
his thigh for the feare by night.
King Salomón made him selfe a palace
of the trees of Lebanon.
He made the pillers thereof of siluer, &
y^e pauemēt thereof of golde, the hangings
thereof of purple, whose middes was paue
d wth the loue of y^e daughters of Ierusalem.
Come forth, ye daughters of Zion, &
beholde the King Salomón wth the crowne,
wherewith his mother crowned him in
the day of his marriage, and in the day of
the gladnes of his heart.

CHAP. IIIII.

The praises of the Church. She is without blemish in
his sight. The loue of Christ towards her.

Beholde, thou art faire, my loue: behol
de, thou art faire: thine eyes are like the
dooues: among thy lockes thine heere is

Thou that
art ashamed
of thy sinnes,
come & shewe
thy lillie vnto
me.
Suppress: y^e
heretics whil
les they are
yong, that is,
whilst they be
ginne to shewe
their malice: &
destroy y^e vine
of the Lord.
The Church
desireth Christ
to be moke
ready to helpe
her in all dan
ger.

The Church
by night, y^e
is in troubles
seeketh to Christ,
but is not inco
municably heard.

Shewing y^e
alough we be
not heard as y^e
first, yet we
must still conti
nue in prayer
til we see co
foure.
Which decla
reth, that we
must seke vnto
all, of whome
we hope to ha
ue anie suc
cour.

Read Chap.
27.

This is refer
red to the
Church of Is
raell, w^{ch} was led
by the wilder
nes during ye
res.

By the bed
is meant the
Temple, which
Salomon ma
de

He alludeth
to the watche,
which kept y^e
Temple.
Orchards.

All ye, that
are of the no
ber of y^e faith
ful
Christ beco
me man was
crowned by y^e
loue of God &
the glorious
croune of his
diuinitie.

Because
Christ achieueth
in his Church,
he commendeth
all that is in
her.
Chap. 281

That is, sinne
and error is
driven backe
by the com
ing of Christ
which is here
describ'd by y^e
spring time,
when all
things flourish.

The fountaine of grace. The song of Wicked watchmen.

b He hath respect to the multitude of the faithful, & are manie in number.

like the b flocke of goates, w loke downe from the mountaine of Gilead.

Thy tethe are like a flocke of shepe in good ordre, which go vp fro y washing: which cuerie one bring out twinnes, and none is baren among them.

Thy lippes are like a threde of skarlet & thy talke is comelie: thy temples are within thy lockes as a piece of a pomegranate.

Thy necke is as the towre of Dauid buyle for defenfe: a thousand shields hang therein, and all the targates of the strong men.

a Wherein are knowledge, & scale, two precious jewels.

Thy two c breastes are as two yong roes that are twinnes, feding among the lilies.

Vntil the day breake, and the shadowes flee away, I wil go into the mountaine of myrrhe and to the mountaine of incense.

Thou art all faire, my loue, and there is no spot in thee.

d Christ promisseth his Church to call his faithful from all the corners of the world.

Come with me from Lebanón, my spouse, euen with me from Lebanón, and loke from the top of Amanáh, from the top of Shenir and Hermón, from the denues of the Lyons and from the mountaines of the leopardes.

e Christ calleth his Church the sister in respect that he had taken the flesh of man. f In that he made his Church beautiful, & riche, he loued his guttes in her.

My e sister, my spouse, thou hast wounded mine heart: thou hast wounded mine heart with one of thine f eyes, & with a chaine of thy necke.

My sister, my spouse, how faire is thy loue? how muche better is thy loue then wine? & the sauour of thine ointmets the all spices?

g Because of thy confession and thanksgiving.

Thy s lippes, my spouse, droppe as honie combes: honie and milke are vnder thy tógue, & the sauour of thy garments is as the sauour of Lebanón.

My silter my spouse is as a garden inclosed, as a spring shut vp, and a fountaine sealed vp.

Thy plantes are as an orcharde of pomegranates with swete frutes, as camphire, spikenarde,

Euen spikenarde, and safran, calamus, & synamom with all the trees of incense, myrrhe and aloes, with all the chief spices.

h The Church confesseth that all her glorie, & beautie cometh of Christ who is y true fountaine of all grace.

O fountaine of the gardens, o well of liuing waters, and the springs of Lebanón.

i She desireth Christ to comforte her, and so powte the graces of his Spirit vpo her, which Spirit is ment by the North and South winde.

Arise, o i North, and come o South, and blowe on my garden that the spices thereof may flowe out: let my welbeloued come to his garden, and eat his pleasant frute.

CHAP. V.

Christ calleth his Church to the participation of all his treasures. 3 She beareth his voyce. 6 She confesseth her nakednes. 10 She praiseth Christ her husband.

a The garden figurith the kingdome of Christ where he prepareth the banquet for his clek.

I am come into my a gardé, my silter, my spouse: I gathered my myrrhe with my

spice: I ate mine honie cobe with mine honie, I dranke my wine with my milke: eat, o friends, drinke, and make you mery, o welbeloued.

I slepe, but mine heart waketh, it is the voyce of my welbeloued that knocketh, saying, Open vnto me, my silter, my loue, my dooue, my vndefiled: for mine head is ful of dewe, and my lockes with the dropes of the c night.

I haue put of my d coate, how shal I put it on: I haue washed my fete, how shal I defile them?

My welbeloued put in his hand by the hole of the dore, & mine heart was affectioned toward him.

I rose vp: to open to my welbeloued, & mine hãds did droppe downe myrrhe, & my e fingers pure myrrhe vpon the handes of the barre.

I opened to my welbeloued: but my welbeloued was gone, & past: mine heart was gone when he did speake: I focht him, but I colde not finde him: I called him, but he answered me not.

The f watchmen that went about the citie, founde me: they smote me & wounded me: the watchmen of the walles toke away my vaile from me.

I charge you, s o daughters of Ierusalém, if you finde my welbeloued, that you tel him that I am sicke of loue.

O the fairest among women, what is thy welbeloued more then other welbeloued? what is thy welbeloued more then another louer, that thou doest so charge vs?

My welbeloued is white and ruddy, the chiefest of ten thousand.

His h head is as fine golde, his lockes curled, & blacke as a rauen.

His eyes are like dooues vpo the riuers of waters, which are washt with milke, & remaine by the ful vessels.

His chekes are as a bed of spices, and as swete flowres, & his lippes like lilies dropping downe pure myrrhe.

His hands as rings of golde set with the chrysolite his bellie like white yuorie covered with saphirs.

His leggs are as pillars of marble, set vpon sockets of fine golde: his countenance as Lebanón, excellent as the cedres.

His mouth is as swete things, and he is wholly delectable: this is my welbeloued, & this is my louer, o daughters of Ierusalém.

O the fairest among womē, whether is thy welbeloued gone? whether is thy welbeloued turned aside, that we may seeke him with thee?

b The spouse saith that she is troubled by the care of worldly things, which is ment by sleeping.

c Declaring y long pines of the Lord to archangels. d The spouse confesseth her nakednes, and that of our selfe she hath nothing, or feare that she is once more cleane, she promiseth not to defile her selfe againe.

e His Myrrors were mind towards him. f The spouse shoulde be announced of Christ, that not onee him if she thinke to appoint him to her good vnto her.

g These are y false teachers, & woulde y conscience & their traditio.

h She sturth of them which are godlie (for a simche as y law & saluati shulde come out of Zion & Ierusalé) that they woulde direct her to Christ.

i Thus say they of Ierusalém.

l She desireth both Christ, o be of perfitte beautie, & comelines.

11r. T. 1. 1. 1. 1.

k Hearing of y excellencie of Christ, y faithful desire to knowe how to finde him.

CHAP. VI.

The Church assureth her selfe of the loue of Christ. 3 The praises of the Church. 1 She is but one and vndefiled.

1 My

The faith of the Church. Salomón. Spiritual loue. 282

MY welbeloued is gone downe into this^a garden to the beds of spices, to fede in the gardens, and to gather lilies.

I am my welbeloueds, and my welbeloued is mine, who fedeth among the lilies.

Thou art beautiful, my loue, as^b Tirzáb, comelie as Ierusalém, terrible as an armie with banners.

Turne away thine eyes fró me: for they^c come me: * thine heere is like a flocke of goats, which loke downe from Gileád.

Thy tethe are like a flocke of shepe, which go vp from the washing, which euerie one brig out twins, & none is bare amög the.

Thy temples are within thy lockes as a piece of a pomegranate.

There are^d thre score Quenes & fore score concubines, & of the damselfs without number.

But my dooue is alone, & my vndefiled, she is the onelie daughter of her mother, and she is deare to hir that bare her: the daughters haue sene her and counted her blessed: euen the Quenes and the concubines, and thei haue praised her.

Who is she that loketh forthe as the morning, faire as the moone, pure as the sunne, terrible as an armie with banners!

I went downe to the^e garden of nuttes, to se the frutes of the valley, to se if the vine budded, and if the pomegranates florished.

I knewe nothing, my soule set me^b as the charrets of my noble people.

Returne, returne, ó^d Shulamite, returne: retutne that we may beholde thee. What shal you se in the Shulamite, but as the cõpanie of an armie?

CHAP. VII.

The beautie of the Church in all her members. 10 She is assured of Christs loue towards her.

HOW beautiful was thy^a goings with shoes, ó princes daughter: the iointes of thy thighs are like iewels: the worke of the hand of a cunning workeman.

Thy nauel is as a rounde cuppe that wansteth not lickour: thy belly is as an heape of wheat compassed about with lilies.

Thy two breastes are as two yong roes that are twinnes.

Thy necke is like a towre of yuorie: thine eyes are like^f y fish'pooles in Heshbón by the gate of Bath-rabbim: thy nose is as the towre of Lebanón, that loketh toward Damasus.

Thine head vpon thee is as skarlet, and the bushe of thine head like purple: the King is tyed in the rafter.

How faire art thou, and how pleasant art thou, ó my loue, in pleasures!

This thy stature is like a palme tree, and thy breastes like clusters.

I said, I wil go vp into the palme tre, I

will take holde of her boughes: thy breastes shal now be like the chusters of the vine: and the suour of thy nose like apples, And the rouse of thy mouth like good wine, which goeth straight to my welbeloued, & causeth the lippes of the ancient to speake.

I am my welbeloueds, and his desire is toward me.

Come, my welbeloued, let vs go forthe into the field: let vs remaine in y villages.

Let vs get vp early to the vines, let vs se if the^e vine florish, whether it hath budded the finale grape, or whether the pomegranates florish: there wil I giue thee my loue.

The mádrakes haue giue a smel, & in our gates are all swete things, newe & olde: my welbeloued, I haue kept them for thee.

CHAP. VIII.

The Church wil be taught by Christ. 3 She is upholdden by him. 6 The vehement loue wherewith Christ loveth her. 11 She is the vine that bringeth forth frute to the spiritual Salomón, which is Iesus Christ.

OH: that thou werest as my brother: I sucked the breastes of my mother: I wolde finde thee without, I wolde kisse thee, then thei shulde not despise thee.

I wil lead thee & bring thee into my mothers house: there thou shalt teache me: & I wil cause thee to drinke spiced wine, & newe wine of the pomegranate.

His left hand shal be vnder mine head, & his right hand shal embrace me.

I charge you, ó daughters of Ierusalém, that you stirre not vp, nor waken my loue, vntil she please.

(Who is this that commeth vp out of the wildernes, leaning vpon her welbeloued?) I raised thee vp vnder an apple tre: there thy mother conceived thee: there she conceived that bare thee.

Set me as a seale on thine heart, & as a signet vpon thine arme: for loue is strong as death: ielouise is cruel as the graue: the coles thereof are fyrie coles, & a vehemēt flame.

Muche water cá not quenche loue, nether can the floods drown: it: if a man shulde giue all the substãce of his house for loue, they wolde greatly contemne it.

We haue a litle sister, and she hath no breastes: what shal we do for our sister who she shalbe spoken for?

If she be a walle, we wil buylde vpõ her a siluer palace: and if she be a dore, we wil kepe her in with bordes of cedre.

I am a walle & my breastes are as towers: then was I in his eyes as one that findeth peace.

Salomón had a vine in Baal-hamón: he gaue the vineyard vnto keepers: cuerie one bringeth for the frute thereof a thousand pieces of siluer. & vi.

^a That is, is congregated here in carn among men.

^b Which was a faire & strong cite, 1. King. 14. 17.

^c This declarerth the exceeding loue of Christ toward his Church. Col. 2. 19.

^d Meaning, y the gifts are innumere which Christ giueth to his Church: or that his faithful are many in number.

^e He sheweth that the beginning of the Church was small, but y it grew up to a great multitude.

^f He wēt downe into y Synagogue to se what signes came of y Lawe, & y Prophets.

^g I founde nothing but rebellion.

^h I ran as swift as the nobles of my people in their charrets.

ⁱ O ye people of Ierusalem: for Ierusalem was called I Shalem, which signifieth peace.

Chap VII. He describeth the comelie beaute of the Church in her members: & is to be vnder stand spiritually. Read Chap. 6.

^e He desireth to come here, and to be in thy company. Ps. 135. 2.

^d This y spouse is Ipeacocke.

^e If the people that are called to Christ, bring forth the same frute.

^f The Church called of the Gentiles, speaketh thus to y Church of Ierusalem. 1. Cor. 12.

^b Read Chap. 6. 6.

^c Read Chap. 15. 5.

^d The spouse desireth Christ to be ioyned in perpetual loue with him.

^e The Jewish Church speaketh this of y Church of the Gentiles: for she be faire & fast, she is meete for the how-band to dwell in.

^g The Church promiseth shee will & conserue.

^h This is the vineyard of y Lord hired out, Mat. 21. 33.

Salomón.

13 But my vineyard which is mine, is before me: to thee, ó Salomón, appertineth a thousand pieces of silver, & two thousand to them that kepe the frute thereof. 14 O thou that dwellest in the gardens, the companions hearken vnto thly voyce: cause me to heare it. 15 O my welbeloued, flee away, and be like vnto the roe, or to the yong hart vpon the mount: aines of spices.

i Christ dwelleth in his Church a hole voyce of faith ful hearts.

t The Church desireth Christ that if he depart from the, yet that he wolde haue he: pe: them in their troubles

ISAIAH.

THE ARGUMENT.

God, according to his promes Deut. 18, 15, that he wolde neuer leave his Church destitute of a Prophet, hath from time to time accomplished the same: whose office was not onely to declare vnto the people the things to come, whereof they had a special reuelation, but also to interpret & declare the Law, and to applie particularly the doctrine, contained briefly therein, to the vtilitie & profit of those, to whome they thought it chiefly to appertine, and as the time and state of things required. And principally in the declaration of the Lawe they had respect to thre things, which were the grounde of their doctrine: First to the doctrine contained briefly in the wordes: secondely to the promises & threatenings of the Law: & thirdely, to the covenant of grace & reconciliation, grounded vpon our Sainour Iesus Christ, who is the end of the Law. Whereunto they neither added nor diminished, but faithfully expounded the sense and meaning thereof. And according as God gaue them vnderstanding of things, they applied the promises particularly for the comfort of the Church and the members thereof, and also denounced the menaces against the enemies of the same: not for anie care or regarde to the enemies, but to assure the Church of their sauegarde by the destruction of their enemies. And as touching the doctrine of reconciliation they haue more clearly intreated it then Moses, and set forth more liuely Iesus Christ, in whome this covenant of reconciliation was made. In all these things Isaiah did excell all the Prophetes, and was moste diligent to set out the same, with moste vehement admonitions, reprehensions, and consolations: euer applying the doctrine, as he sawe that the disease of the people required. He declareth also manie notable prophecies which he had received of God, as touching the promes of the Messiahs, his office, and his kingdome. Also of the fauour of God toward his Church, the vocation of the Gentiles, and their vnion with the Iewes. Which are as moste principal pointes contained in this booke, and a gathering of his sermons that he preached. Which after certeine daies that they had stand vpon the Temple doore (for the maner of the Prophetes was to set vp the summe of their doctrine for certeine daies that the people might the better marke it, as Isa. 8, 1. & Habak. 2, 2.) the Priestes toke it downe and reserued it among their registers: and so by Gods prouidence these booke were preserved as a monument to the Church for euer. As touching his person and time, he was of the Kings stocke: for Amas his father was brother to Azariah King of Iudah, as the best writers agree, and prophesied more then 64 yeres from the time of Vzziah vnto the reigne of Manassah, whose father in lawe he was (as the Ebrwes write) and of whome he was put to death. And in reading of the Prophetes this one thing among other is to be obserued, that they speak of things to come as though they were now past, because of the certaintie thereof, and that they colde not but come to pass, because God had ordeined them in his secret counsel, and so reueiled them to his Prophetes.

INCIPIT LIBER

CANTICA CANTICORUM

- 1:1 Osculetur me osculo oris sui
quia meliora sunt ubera tua vino
- 2 fragrantia unguentis optimis
oleum effusum nomen tuum
ideo adulescentulae dilexerunt te
- 3 trahe me post te curremus
introduxit me rex in cellaria sua
exultabimus et lactabimur in te
memores uberum tuorum super vinum recti diligunt te
- 4 nigra sum sed formosa filiae Hierusalem
sicut tabernacula Cedar
sicut pelles Salomonis
- 5 nolite me considerare quod fusca sim
quia decoloravit me sol
filii matris meae pugnaverunt contra me
posuerunt me custodem in vineis
vineam meam non custodivi
- 6 indica mihi quem diligit anima mea
ubi pascas ubi cubes in meridie
ne vagari incipiam per greges sodalium tuorum
- 7 si ignoras te o pulchra inter mulieres
egredere et abi post vestigia gregum
et pascas hedos tuos iuxta tabernacula pastorum
- 8 equitatus meo in curribus Pharaonis assimilavi te
amica mea
- 9 pulchrae sunt genae tuae sicut turturis
collum tuum sicut monilia
- 10 murenulas aureas faciemus tibi vermiculatas argento
- 11 dum esset rex in accubitu suo nardus mea dedit odorem suum

THE BOOK BEGINS

THE SONG OF SONGS

- 1:1 Let him kiss me with the kiss of his mouth
for your breasts are better than wine
- 2 fragrant with the best ointments
your name oil poured out
therefore the young girls have loved you
- 3 draw me we will run after you
the king led me into his storerooms
we will rejoice and be glad in you
mindful of your breasts better than wine the upright love you
- 4 I am black but beautiful daughters of Jerusalem
like the tents of Cedar
like the skins of Solomon
- 5 do not look at me because I am dark
for the sun has discolored me
the sons of my mother fought against me
they have placed me as a guard in the vineyards
my vineyard I have not kept
- 6 show me you whom my soul loves
where you pasture where you lie at midday
lest I begin to wander after the flocks of your companions
- 7 if you do not know yourself o fairest of women
go out and follow the tracks of the flocks
and pasture your kids beside the tents of the shepherds
- 8 to my cavalry in the Pharaoh's chariots I have likened you
my friend
- 9 your cheeks are fair like the turtle dove's
your neck like necklaces
- 10 we will make you chains of gold inlaid with silver
- 11 while the king was on his couch my nard gave out its fragrance

- 12 fasciculus murrae dilectus meus mihi
inter ubera commorabitur
- 13 botrus cypri dilectus meus mihi
in vineis Engaddi
- 14 ecce tu pulchra es amica mea
ecce tu pulchra oculi tui columbarum
- 15 ecce tu pulcher es dilecte mi et decorus
lectulus noster floridus
- 16 tigna domorum nostrarum cedrina
laquearia nostra cypressina
- 2:1 ego flos campi
et lilium convallium
- 2 sicut lilium inter spinas
sic amica mea inter filias
- 3 sicut malum inter ligna silvarum
sic dilectus meus inter filios
sub umbra illius quam desideraveram sedi
et fructus eius dulcis gutturi meo
- 4 introduxit me in cellam vinariam
ordinavit in me caritatem
- 5 fulcite me floribus stipate me malis
quia amore languo
- 6 leva eius sub capite meo
et dextera illius amplexabitur me
- 7 adiuro vos filiae Hierusalem
per capreas cervosque camporum
ne suscitatis neque evigilare faciatis dilectam
quoadusque ipsa velit
- 8 vox dilecti mei
ecce iste venit saliens in montibus
transiliens colles
- 9 similis est dilectus meus capreae hinculoque cervorum
en ipse stat post parietem nostrum
despiciens per fenestras
prospiciens per cancellos
- 10 et dilectus meus loquitur mihi
surge propra amica mea formosa mea et veni
- 11 iam enim hiems transiit
imber abiit et recessit
- 12 flores apparuerunt in terra
tempus putationis advenit

- 12 a little bundle of myrrh is my beloved to me
between the breasts he shall linger
- 13 a cluster of cypress is my love to me
in the vineyards of Engaddi
- 14 behold you are fair my friend
behold you are fair your eyes of doves
- 15 behold you are fair my beloved and beautiful
our bed is flowery
- 16 the beams of our house are of cedar
our rafters are of cypress
- 2:1 I am the flower of the field
and the lily of the valley
- 2 like a lily among thorns
so my friend among daughters
- 3 like the apple tree among trees of the woods
so my beloved among sons
under the shadow of the one I had loved I sat
and his fruit sweet to my throat
- 4 he brought me into the wine cellar
he has disposed charity in me
- 5 support me with flowers, surround me with apples
for I languish with love
- 6 his left arm under my head and
his right arm will embrace me
- 7 I adjure you, daughters of Jerusalem
by the goats and the stags of the field
neither arouse nor cause to awaken my beloved
until she wishes
- 8 the voice of my beloved
behold, he comes leaping on the mountains
springing across the hills
- 9 my beloved is like a goat and a young of stags
behold, he stands behind our wall
looking in through the windows
watching through the lattices
- 10 and my beloved speaks to me
arise swiftly my friend my beautiful, and come
- 11 for now the winter has passed
the rain has gone and departed
- 12 flowers appear on the earth
the time of pruning has come

- vox turturis audita est in terra nostra
 13 ficus protulit grossos suos
 vineae florent dederunt odorem
 surge amica mea speciosa mea et veni
 14 columba mea in foraminibus petrae
 in caverna maceriae
 ostende mihi faciem tuam
 sonet vox tua in auribus meis
 vox enim tua dulcis
 et facies tua decora
 15 capite nobis vulpes vulpes parvulas
 quae demoliuntur vineas
 nam vinea nostra floruit
 16 dilectus meus mihi et ego illi
 qui pascitur inter lilia
 17 donec aspires dies et inclinentur umbrae
 revertere imilis esto dilecte mi capreae aut hinnulo cervorum
 super montes Bether

 3:1 in lectulo meo per noctes
 quaesivi quem diligit anima mea
 quaesivi illum et non inveni
 2 surgam et circuibo civitatem
 per vicus et plateas
 quaeram quem diligit anima mea
 quaesivi illum et non inveni
 3 invenerunt me vigiles qui custodiunt civitatem
 num quem dilexit anima mea vidistis
 4 paululum cum pertransissem eos
 inveni quem diligit anima mea
 tenui eum nec dimittam
 donec introducam illum in domum matris meae
 et in cubiculum genetricis meae
 5 adiuro vos filiae Hierusalem
 per capreas cervosque camporum
 ne suscitatis neque evigilare faciatis dilectam donec ipsa velit
 6 quae est ista quae ascendit per desertum
 sicut virgula fumi
 ex aromatibus murræ et turis
 et universi pulveris pigmentarii
 7 en lectulum Salomonis
 sexaginta fortes ambiunt ex fortissimis Israhel

- the voice of the turtle dove is heard in our land
 13 the fig tree has put out its thick shoots
 the flowering vines have given off a smell
 arise my friend my lovely one and come
 14 my dove in the clefts of the rock
 in the hollow of the wall
 show me your face
 let your voice sound in my ears
 for your voice is sweet
 and your face is beautiful
 15 catch for us the foxes, the little foxes
 who destroy the vineyards
 for our vineyard is flowering
 16 my beloved is mine and I am his
 who pastures among the lilies
 17 until the day breathes and the shadows lean
 return my beloved, be like the goat or a young of stags
 on the mountains of Bether

 3:1 on my bed through the nights
 I sought him whom my soul loves
 I sought him and I did not find
 2 I will arise and go around the city
 through the streets and the courtyards
 I will seek him whom my soul loves
 I sought him and I did not find
 3 the watchmen found me who guard the city
 have you seen him whom my soul has loved?
 4 when I had hardly passed by them
 I found him whom my soul loves
 I held him nor will I let go
 until I lead him into the house of my mother
 and into the chamber of her who bore me
 5 I adjure you, daughters of Jerusalem
 by the goats and the stags of the field
 neither arouse nor cause to awaken the beloved until she wishes
 6 who is this who comes up through the desert
 like a column of smoke
 from the spices of myrrh and frankincense
 and all the powders of the perfumer?
 7 behold, the bed of Solomon
 sixty strong men surrounding it of the strongest of Israel

- 8 omnes tenentes gladios et ad bella doctissimi
uniuscuiusque ensis super femur suum
propter timores nocturnos
- 9 ferculum fecit sibi rex Salomon
de lignis Libani
- 10 columnas eius fecit argenteas
reclinatorium aureum
ascensum purpureum
media caritate constravit
propter filias Hierusalem
- 1 egredimini et videte filiae Sion
regem Salomonem in diademate
quo coronavit cum mater sua
in die disponsionis illius
et in die laetitiae cordis eius
- 4:1 quam pulchra es amica mea
quam pulchra es
oculi tui columbarum
absque eo quod intrinsecus latet
capilli tui sicut greges caprarum
quae ascenderunt de monte Galaad
- 2 dentes tui sicut greges tonsarum
quae ascenderunt de lavacro
omnes gemellis fetibus
et sterilis non est inter eas
- 3 sicut vitta coccinea labia tua
et eloquium tuum dulce
sicut fragmen mali punici ita genae tuae
absque eo quod intrinsecus latet
- 4 sicut turris David collum tuum
quae aedificata est cum propugnaculis
mille clypei pendant ex ea
omnis armatura fortium
- 5 duo ubera tua sicut duo hinuli
capreae gemelli qui pascuntur in liliis
- 6 donec aspiret dies et inclinentur umbrae
vadam ad montem murræ
et ad collem turis
- 7 tota pulchra es amica mea
et macula non est in te
- 8 veni de Libano sponsa veni de Libano

- 8 all holding swords and most learned in warfare
each one's sword on his thigh
because of nocturnal fears
- 9 King Solomon made a litter for himself
from the wood of Lebanon
- 10 its columns he made of silver
the pillow of gold
the ascent of purple
the middle he has piled up with charity
for the daughters of Jerusalem
- 11 go forth and see, daughters of Sion
King Solomon in the diadem
with which his mother crowned him
on the day of his betrothal
and on the day of his heart's rejoicing
- 4:1 how fair you are, my friend
how fair you are
your eyes of doves
besides that which lies within
your hair like a flock of goats
which have come up from Mount Galaad
- 2 your teeth like a flock of shearlings
that have come up from a washing
all pregnant with twins
and no barren one among them
- 3 your lips like a band of scarlet
and your speech is sweet
like grains of pomegranates so your cheeks
besides that which lies within
- 4 like a tower of David your neck
which is built with bulwarks
a thousand shields hang from it
all the armor of strong men
- 5 your two breasts like two kids
twin goats who pasture among the lilies
- 6 until the day breathes and the shadows lean
I will go to the mountain of myrrh
and to the hill of frankincense
- 7 you are all fair, my friend
and there is no spot in you
- 8 come from Lebanon, bride come from Lebanon

- veni coronaberis
 de capite Amana
 de vertice Sanir et Hermon
 de cubilibus leonum
 de montibus pardorum
 9 vulnerasti cor meum soror mea
 sponsa vulnerasti cor meum
 in uno oculorum tuorum
 et in uno crine colli tui
 10 quam pulchrae sunt mammae tuae
 soror mea sponsa
 pulchriora ubera tua vino
 et odor unguentorum tuorum super omnia aromata
 11 favus distillans labia tua sponsa
 mel et lac sub lingua tua
 et odor vestimentorum tuorum
 sicut odor turis
 12 hortus conclusus soror mea sponsa
 hortus conclusus fons signatus
 13 emissiones tuae paradisi malorum puniceorum
 cum pomorum fructibus
 cypri cum nardo
 14 nardus et crocus
 fistula et cinnamomum
 cum universis lignis Libani
 murra et aloë
 cum omnibus primis unguentis
 15 fons hortorum
 puteus aqua viventium
 quae fluunt impetu de Libano
 16 surge aquilo et veni auster
 perfla hortum meum et fluant aromata illius
 5:1 veniat dilectus meus in hortum suum
 et comedat fructum pomorum suorum
 veni in hortum meum soror mea sponsa
 messui murrā meam cum aromatibus meis
 comedi favum cum melle meo
 bibi vinum meum cum lacte meo
 comedite amici bibite
 et inebriamini carissimi
 2 ego dormio et cor meum vigilat
 vox dilecti mei pulsantis
 aperi mihi soror mea amica mea

- come, you will be crowned
 from the peak of Amana
 from the top of Sanir and Hermon
 from the lions' dens
 from the leopards' mountains
 9 you have wounded my heart, my sister
 bride, you have wounded my heart
 by one of your eyes
 and in one hair of your neck
 10 how fair are your breasts
 sister my bride
 your breasts fairer than wine
 and the fragrance of your unguents above all spices
 11 your lips drip honeycomb, bride
 honey and milk under your tongue
 and the fragrance of your garments
 like the fragrance of frankincense
 12 a garden enclosed, sister my bride
 a garden enclosed, a fountain sealed
 13 your emissions a paradise of pomegranates
 with the fruits of the fruit trees
 cyprus with nard
 14 nard and saffron
 cane and cinnamon
 with all the trees of Lebanon
 myrrh and aloë
 with all prime spices
 15 the fountain of the gardens
 a well of living waters
 which flow rushing from Lebanon
 16 arise, north wind and come, south wind
 blow through my garden that its spices may flow
 5:1 let my beloved come into his garden
 and eat the fruit of his apples
 come into my garden, my sister bride
 I gathered my myrrh with my spices
 I ate honeycomb with my honey
 I drank my wine with my milk
 eat friends, drink
 and be drunk, dearest ones
 2 I sleep and my soul keeps watch
 the voice of my beloved knocking
 open to me, my sister my friend

- columba mea immaculata mea
 quia caput meum plenum est rore
 et cinicinni mei guttis noctium
- 3 expoliavi me tunica mea quomodo induar illa
 lavi pedes meos quomodo iniquinabo illos
- 4 dilectus meus misit manum suam per foramen
 et venter meus intremuit ad tactum eius
- 5 surrexi ut aprerirem dilecto meo
 manus meae stillaverunt murra
 digiti mei pleni murra probatissima
- 6 pessulum ostii aperui dilecto meo
 at ille declinaverat atque transierat
 anima mea liquifecta est ut locutus est
 quaesivi et non inveni illum
 vocavi et non respondit mihi
- 7 invenerunt me custodes qui circumeunt civitatem
 percusserunt me vulneraverunt me
 tulerunt pallium meum mihi custodes murorum
- 8 adiuro vos filiae Hierusalem
 si inveneritis dilectum meum
 ut nuntietis ei quia amore languo
- 9 qualis est dilectus tuus ex dilecto o pulcherrima mulierum
 qualis est dilectus tuus ex dilecto quia sic adiurasti nos
- 10 dilectus meus candidus et rubicundus
 electus ex milibus
- 11 caput eius aurum optimum
 comae eius sicut elatae palmarum
 nigrae quasi corvus
- 12 oculi eius sicut columbae super rivulos aquarum
 quae lacte sunt lotae
 et resident iuxta fluentia plenissima
- 13 genae illius sicut areolae aromatum consitae a pigmentariis
 labia eius lilia distillantia murrā primam
- 14 manus illius tornatiles aureae plenae hyacinthis
 venter eius eburneus distinctus sapphyris
- 15 crura illius columnae marmoreae
 quae fundatae sunt super bases aureas
 species eius ut Libani electus ut cedri
- 16 guttur eius suavissimum
 et totus desiderabilis
 talis est dilectus meus
 et iste est amicus meus filiae Hierusalem

- my dove, my spotless one
 for my head is full of dew
 and my hair of the drops of the nights
- 3 I have taken off my garment how should I put it on again?
 I have washed my feet how should I soil them?
- 4 my beloved put forth his hand through the hole
 and my belly trembled at his touch
- 5 I rose to open to my beloved
 my hands dripped myrrh
 my fingers full of the finest myrrh
- 6 I opened the bolt of the door to my love
 but he had turned away and gone over
 my soul melted as he spoke
 I sought him and I did not find him
 I called and he did not answer me
- 7 the watchmen found me who go around the city
 they beat me, they wounded me
 they took my cloak from me the guardians of the walls
- 8 I adjure you, daughters of Jerusalem
 if you find my beloved
 tell him that I languish of love
- 9 of what sort is your beloved of beloved o fairest of women
 of what sort is your beloved of beloved that you so adjure us?
- 10 my beloved is white and ruddy
 chosen from thousands
- 11 his head finest gold
 his hair exalted like of palms
 black as the raven
- 12 his eyes like doves on streams of waters
 which are washed with milk
 and sit down beside the brimming streams
- 13 his cheeks like gardens of spices planted by the perfumers
 his lips lilies dripping finest myrrh
- 14 his hands crafted of gold full of hyacinths
 his belly ivory garnished with sapphires
- 15 his legs columns of marble
 which are set upon golden bases
 his appearance as Lebanon chosen as the cedar
- 16 his throat very soft
 and all desirable
 such is my beloved
 and he is my friend, daughters of Jerusalem

- 17 quo abiit dilectus tuus o pulcherrima mulierum
 quo declinavit dilectus tuus
 et quaeremus eum tecum
- 6:1 dilectus meus descendit in hortum suum ad arcolum aromatis
 ut pascitur in hortis et lilia colligat
 2 ego dilecto meo et dilectus meus mihi
 qui pascitur inter lilia
 3 pulchra es amica mea suavis
 et decora sicut Hierusalem
 terribilis ut castrorum acies ordinata
 4 averte oculos tuos a me
 quia ipsi me avolare fecerunt
 capilli tui sicut grex caprarum
 quae apparuerunt de Galaad
 5 dentes tui sicut grex ovium
 quae ascenderunt de lavacro
 omnes gemellis fetibus et sterilis non est in eis
 6 sicut cortex mali punici genae tuae
 absque occultis tuis
 7 sexaginta sunt reginae et octoginta concubinae
 et adulescentularum non est numerus
 8 una est columba mea perfecta mea
 una est matris suae electa generatrici suae
 viderunt illam filiae et beatissimam praedicaverunt
 reginae et concubinae et laudaverunt eam
 9 quae est ista quae progreditur quasi aurora consurgens
 pulchra ut luna electa ut sol
 terribilis ut acies ordinata
 10 descendi ad hortum nucum ut viderem poma convallis
 ut inspicerem si floruisset vinea
 et germinassent mala punica
 11 nescivi anima mea conturbavit me
 propter quadrigas Aminadab
 12 revertere revertere Sulamitis
 revertere revertere ut intueamur te
- 7:1 quid videbis in Sulamiten
 nisi choros castrorum
 quam pulchri sunt gressus tui in calciamentis filia principis
 iunctura feminum tuorum sicut monilia
 quae fabricata sunt manu artificis

- 17 where is your beloved gone o fairest of women?
 where has your beloved turned aside
 and we will seek him with you
- 6:1 my beloved went down into his garden to the garden of spices
 to graze in the gardens and gather lilies
 2 I am my beloved's and my beloved is mine
 who grazes among the lilies
 3 you are fair my friend, sweet
 and beautiful like Jerusalem
 terrible as a battle line drawn up from camps
 4 turn away your eyes from me
 for they make me flee
 your hair like a flock of goats
 which appear from Galaad
 5 your teeth like a flock of sheep
 that have come up from a washing
 all pregnant with twins and no barren one among them
 6 like the skin of a pomegranate your cheeks
 besides your hidden things
 7 sixty are the queens and eighty the concubines
 and of the young girls there is no number
 8 one is my dove, my perfect one
 she is one of her mother the elect of her who bore her
 the daughters saw her and they proclaimed her most blessed
 the queens and concubines praised her
 9 who is this who comes forth like the rising dawn
 beautiful as the moon, chosen as the sun
 terrible as the battle line drawn up?
 10 I went down to the nut grove to see the apples of the valley
 to see whether the vineyards had flowered
 and the pomegranates had budded
 11 I did not know my soul disturbed me
 because of the four-wheeled cart of Aminadab
 12 return return, Sulamite
 return return, that we may behold you
- 7:1 what will you see in the Sulamite
 but companies from the camps?
 how fair are your steps in sandals, daughter of princes
 the joints of your thighs like jewels
 which are made by the hand of a craftsman

- 2 umbilicus tuus crater tornatilis numquam indigens poculis
 venter tuus sicut acervus tritici vallatus liliis
- 3 duo ubera tua sicut duo hinuli gemelli capreae
- 4 collum tuum sicut turris eburnea
 oculi tui sicut piscinae in Esebron
 quae sunt in porta filiae multitudinis
 nasus tuus sicut turris Libani
 quae respicit contra Damascum
- 5 caput tuum ut Carmelus
 et comae capitis tui sicut purpura regis
 vincta canalibus
- 6 quam pulchra es et quam decora carissima in deliciis
- 7 statura tua adsimilata est palmae
 et ubera tua botris
- 8 dixi ascendam in palmam
 apprehendam fructus eius
 et erunt ubera tua sicut botri vineae
 et odor oris tui sicut malorum
- 9 guttur tuum sicut vinum optimum
 dignum dilecto meo ad potandum
 labiisque et dentibus illius ruminandum
- 10 ego dilecto meo et ad me conversio eius
- 11 veni dilecte mi egrediamur in agrum
 commoremur in villis
- 12 mane surgamus ad vineas
 videamus si floruit vinea
 si flores fructus parturiunt
 si floruerunt mala punica
 ibi dabo tibi ubera mea
- 13 mandragorae dederunt odorem in portis nostris
 omnia poma nova et vetera dilecte mi servavi tibi
- 8:1 quis mihi det te fratrem meum
 sugentem ubera matris meae
 ut inveniam te foris et deosculer
 et iam me nemo despiciat
- 2 apprehendam te et ducam
 in domum matris meae
 ibi me docebis
 et dabo tibi poculum ex vino condito
 et mustum malorum granatorum meorum

- 2 your navel is a finely wrought bowl never lacking drink
 your belly like a heap of wheat fortified with lilies
- 3 your two breasts like two kids twins of a goat
- 4 your neck like a tower of ivory
 your eyes like pools in Hesbon
 which are in the gate of the daughter of multitudes
 your nose like a tower of Lebanon
 which looks toward Damascus
- 5 your head as Carmel
 and the hair of your head like purple of a king
 bound in canals
- 6 how fair you are and how beautiful, dearest in delights
- 7 your stature is likened to a palm
 and your breasts to clusters of grapes
- 8 I said I will go up into the palm
 I will gather its fruit
 and your breasts will be like clusters of grapes of the vine
 and the fragrance of your mouth like apples
- 9 your throat like the best wine
 worthy for my beloved to drink
 and for his lips and teeth to chew
- 10 I am my beloved's and to me his turning
- 11 come my beloved, let us go out into the field
 let us linger in the villages
- 12 early let us go up to the vineyards
 let us see if the vineyards flower
 if the flowers bear fruit
 if the pomegranates flower
 there I will give you my breasts
- 13 the mandrakes give out fragrance in our gates
 all fruits new and old, my beloved, I have saved for you
- 8:1 who will give you to me for my brother
 sucking the breasts of my mother
 that I may find you outside and kiss you
 and yet no one will despise me?
- 2 I will seize you and lead you
 into the house of my mother
 there you will teach me
 and I will give you a cup of spiced wine
 and the new wine of my pomegranates

- 3 leva eius sub capite meo
et dextera eius amplexabitur me
- 4 adiuro vos filiae Hierusalem
ne suscitatis et evigilare faciatis dilectam donec ipsa velit
- 5 quae est ista quae ascendit de deserto
deliciis affluens et nixa super dilectum suum
sub arbore malo suscitavi te
ibi corrupta est mater rua
ibi violata est genetrix tua
- 6 pone me ut signaculum super cor tuum
ut signaculum super brachium tuum
quia fortis est ut mors dilectio
dura sicut inferus aemulatio
lampades eius lampades ignis
atque flammaram
- 7 aquae multae non poterunt extinguere caritatem
nec flumina obruent illam
si dederit homo omnem substantiam domus suae pro dilectione
quasi nihil despicient eum
- 8 soror nostra parva et ubera non habet
quid faciemus sorori nostrae in die quando alloquenda est
- 9 si murus est aedificemus super eum propugnacula argentea
si ostium est conpingamus illud tabulis cedrinis
- 10 ego murus et ubera mea sicut turris
ex quo facta sum coram eo quasi pacem reperiens
- 11 vinea fuit Pacifico
in ea quae habet populos
tradidit eam custodibus
vir affert pro fructu eius mille argenteos
- 12 vinea mea coram me est
mille tui Pacifico
et ducenti his qui custodiunt fructus eius
- 13 quae habitas in hortis
amici ascultant
fac me audire vocem tuam
- 14 fuge dilecte mi et assimilare capreae
hinuloque cervorum
super montes aromatum

- 3 his left arm under my head
and his right arm will embrace me
- 4 I adjure you, daughters of Jerusalem
neither arouse nor cause to awaken the beloved until she wishes
- 5 who is this who comes up from the desert
flowing with delights and leaning on her beloved?
under the apple tree I aroused you
there your mother was corrupted
there she who bore you was violated
- 6 place me as a seal upon your heart
as a seal upon your arm
because love is as strong as death
jealousy hard like hell
its lamps, lamps of fire
and of flames
- 7 many waters cannot extinguish charity
nor rivers drown it
if a man were to give all the fortune of his house for love
they would disdain him as nothing
- 8 our sister is small and she has no breasts
what shall we do with our sister on the day she is spoken for?
- 9 if she is a wall, let us build on it bulwarks of silver
if she is a door, let us seal it with boards of cedar
- 10 I am a wall and my breasts like towers
since I am made in his presence as if finding peace
- 11 The vineyard of the Peaceful One
in it there are people
he gave it over to the watchmen
a man brings for its fruit a thousand silver pieces
- 12 my vineyard is before me
a thousand to you, Peaceful One
and two hundred to those who guard its fruit
- 13 you who live in the gardens
the friends listen
make me hear your voice
- 14 flee, my beloved, and be like a goat
and a young of stags
on the mountains of spices

Commentary on the Text

The Latin is adapted from the critical Vulgate edition of R. Weber,¹ with some changes of spelling to reflect medieval forms more closely, and some changes of phrasing to emphasize parallelisms. As anyone who has used this Stuttgart text is aware, one of its great strengths is the critical apparatus, which shows so clearly that there never was just one Vulgate version of the Bible. The Stuttgart edition is a composite, not a medieval copy of the Song of Songs; the many variant readings it preserves testify to a number of textual traditions, some regional, which may have presented commentators with some different words or phrasings. In my discussions of individual commentaries, I have quoted the Song of Songs text presented by each author, making no effort to bring them into agreement with this version.

The parallel English translation is my own. It attempts to be somewhat literal in order to capture the vocabulary and syntax of the Latin. In deference to medieval orthographic customs, punctuation is minimal and limited to those spots at which it is necessary for sense.

It is important to realize, however, that not all medieval Latin Song of Songs texts were Vulgate versions. Recognition and identification of other Bible versions is a necessary challenge, for several of the commentaries I have examined are based on such texts. In the Middle Ages, non-Vulgate biblical quotations come mostly from the liturgy, a very conservative form of textual transmission. Some authors, while using an essentially Vulgate version of the Song of Songs, will cite an occasional verse from “another version” to make or strengthen a point. Unfortunately, these pre- (or extra-) Vulgate versions of the Song of Songs are as elusive as they are common.

There is as yet no critical edition of the Song of Songs in the Beuron *Vetus Latina* series,² but a few non-Vulgate versions of the Song of Songs can be traced through a number of important studies, showing a variety of critical methodologies. The oldest, the “Vetus Italica” of Sabatier, is a collection of non-Vulgate readings taken from one manuscript and numerous citations in early Christian authors and liturgies.³ In 1926, de Bruyne identified two non-Vulgate versions, which he called the pre-Jerominian version (= VET) and Jerome’s revision of Origen’s *Hexapla* (= REV).⁴ Vaccari’s edition of 1959 makes use of all of these versions, but is based on a sixth-century Vatican manuscript, a copy of Jerome’s

hexaplaric revision.⁵ More recently, the complex question of this welter of ancient versions has been studied by Sagot, who demonstrates that Ambrose of Milan used a variety of Song of Songs texts, depending on his sources, the date of composition of each treatise, and the use to which he wished to put a given verse.⁶ This formula holds generally for the medieval authors with which this book is concerned, but it is compounded by the reverence for Jerome which gave both the Vulgate and his hexaplaric revision special authority. Although nowhere in this book have I attempted a detailed analysis of these other Latin Song of Songs versions, I have tried to identify the source and to suggest the function of each non-Vulgate passage cited.

Notes

1. *Biblia sacra iuxta Vulgatam versionem*, ed. R. Weber (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft 1969, 1983) vol. 2, pp. 997–1002.
2. The *Vetus Latina* Institute is based at the Archabbey of Beuron, Germany. Its mission is a complete critical edition of the old Latin versions of each book of the Bible. In print to date are Genesis, a number of the Pauline epistles, and Wisdom.
3. Sabatier, vol. 2, pp. 374–388. Part of this text was redone by André Wilmart, “L’ Ancienne version latine du Cantique I–III.4,” RB 28 (1911) 11–36. Sabatier’s preface describes a double-columned manuscript of the Song of Songs headed “Vulgatus” and “LXX.” Wilmart has identified this as the twelfth-century manuscript Saint-Thierry 24, today Reims, B. M. 142 (E.225); a contemporary copy is Paris, B. N. lat. 2647, ff. 31v–37.
4. D. de Bruyne, “Les Anciennes versions latines du Cantique des Cantiques,” RB 38 (1926) 97–122. VET is based on two manuscripts: Salzburg, Sankt Peter IX.16 (c. 8–9), and Graz, University fol. 167 (c. 12). REV is found in Sankt Gallen 11 (c. 8), and in works by Jerome, Cassian, Eucherius of Lyons, Bede, and Augustine.
5. The base text is Vatican lat. 5704, a manuscript from the library of Cassiodorus. See also J. W. Halporn, “Cassiodorus’ Citations from the Canticum Canticorum and the Composition of the *Expositio Psalmorum*,” RB 95 (1985) 169–184.
6. Solange Sagot, “Le ‘Cantique des Cantiques’ dans le ‘De Isaac’ d’Ambroise de Milan. Étude textuelle et recherche sur les anciennes versions latines,” RAug 16 (1981) 3–57.

Appendix Four: Selected List of Renaissance Texts on Canticles and its Exegesis

While this list of fifty-five texts is by no means exhaustive, I've included it to indicate the breadth and variety of influence inspired by exegesis generally, and on Canticles particularly, in the English Renaissance. Included here are verse, prose, and musical paraphrases, sermons, emblem books, conduct books, translations, and meditations. I've arranged this list in chronological order, and compiled it mainly from Stanley Stewart's *The Enclosed Garden: The Tradition and the Image in Seventeenth-Century Poetry* (Madison WI: U of Wisconsin P, 1966).

William Baldwin, *The Canticles or Balades of Solomon* (1549)

Jude Smith, *A misticall devise of the ... love betwene Christ ... and the Church* (1575)

T[homas] W[ilcox], *An exposition uppon the Booke of the Canticles, otherwise called Schelomons Song* (1585)

Theodore Beza, *Sermons Upon the First Three Chapters of the Canticle of Canticles*, trans. John Harmar (Oxford, 1587)

Michael Drayton, *The Harmony of the Church* (1591)

Barnaby Barnes, *A Divine Centurie of Spirituall Sonnets* (1595)

Gervase Markham, *The Poem of Poems* (1596)

Luis de Granada, *A Memoriall of a Christian Life*, trans. Richard Hopkins (1599)

George Gifford, *Fifteen Sermons Upon the Song of Solomon* (1600)

Richard Rowlands, *Odes. In Imitation of the Seaven Penitential Psalmes* (Antwerp, 1601)

Henoch Clapham, *Three Partes of Salomon his Song of Songs, expounded* (1603)

Robert Allen, *The Doctrine of the Gospel*, Book III (1606)

Thomas Walkington, *Salomons Sweete Harpe* (1608)

Daniel Price, *The Spring* (1609)

Joseph Hall, "An Open and Plaine Paraphrase, upon the Song of Songs, Which is Salomons," in *Salomons Divine Arts* (1609)

J. Healy's translation of Augustine's *Of the Citie of God*, with commentary by John Vives (1610)

John Davies, *The Muses Sacrifice* (1612)

John Dove, *The Conversion of Salomon* (1613)

William Gouge, *An Exposition of the Song of Solomon: called Canticles* (1615)

St. John of the Cross, *Spiritual Works which lead a soul to perfect union with God* (*The Spiritual Canticle* not included in this 1618 edition)

Louis Richeome, *Holy Pictures of the mysticall Figures of the most holy Sacrifice ... of the Eucharist*, trans. C.A. (1619)

Luis de la Puente, *Meditations upon the Mysteries of our Holie Faith*, trans. John Heigham (St. Omers, 1619)

Sabin Chambers, *The Garden Of Our B. Lady* (St. Omers, 1619)

William Loe, "The Song of Songs," in *Songs of Sion* (Hamburg, 1620)

John Hagthorpe, *Divine Meditations* (1622)

Nehemiah Rogers, [*A*] *Strange Vineyard In Palestina* (1623)

George Wither, "The Song of Songs," in *The Hymnes and Songs of the Church* (1623)

John Rawlinson, "The Bridegrome and his Bride," in *Quadriga Salutis* (Oxford, 1625)

Francis Quarles, *Sions Sonets* (1625)

Alonso Roderigues, *A Treatise of Mentall Prayer*, trans. I.W. (St. Omers, 1627)

Henry Ainsworth, *Solomons Song of Songs in English Metre* (1623), bound with *Annotations Upon the Five Books of Moses, the Booke of Psalmes, and the Song of Songs* (1627)

Simon Wastell, "A Dialogue Between the Church and her Daughters," in *Microbiblion* (1629)

Nathaniel Richards, *The Celestiall Publican* (1630)

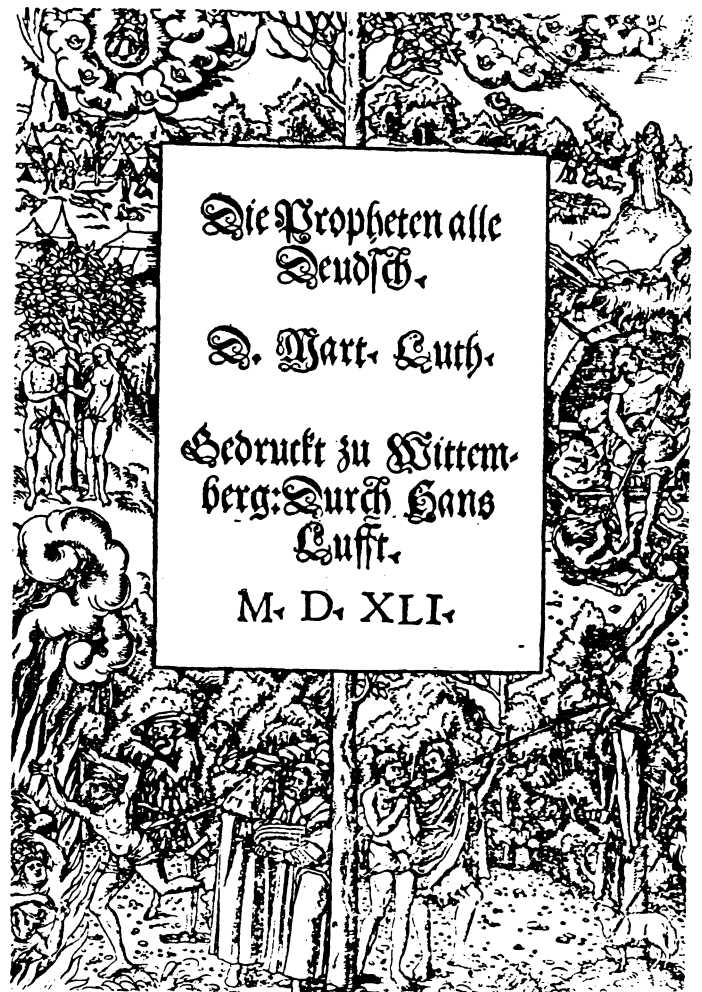
William Gouge, *The Saints Sacrifice* (1632)

Henry Hawkins, *Parthenia Sacra* (1633)

- William Evans, *A Translation of the Booke of Nature, into the Use of Grace* (Oxford, 1633)
- John Weemes, *Exercitations Divine*, bound in *The Workes of Mr. J. Weemes* (1634)
- Alice Sutcliffe, *Meditations of Man's Mortalitie* (1634)
- Francis Quarles, *Emblemes [Divine and Moral]* (1635)
- Francis Rous, *The Mysticall Marriage* (1635)
- John Saltmarsh, *Poemata Sacra* (Cambridge, 1636)
- Robert Wilkinson, *The Merchant Royall* (1607)
- Richard Sibbes, *Bowels Opened* (1639)
- George Sandys, *A Paraphrase Upon the Song of Solomon* (1641)
- William Prynne, "A Christian Paradise," in *Mount-Orgueil* (1641)
- Casimire Sarbiewski, *The Odes of Casimire*, trans. G. Hils (1646)
- Alexander Grosse, *The Happiness of Enjoying, And Making A True use ... of Christ* (1647)
- Christopher Harvey, *The School of the Heart* (1647)
- Walter Montagu, *Miscellanea Spiritualia* (1648)
- John Cotton, *A Brief Exposition With Practical Observations Upon the whole Book of Canticles* (1655)
- Ralph Austen, *The Spiritual Use of a Garden*, bound with *A Treatise of Fruit-Trees* (1657)
- Otto van Veen, *Amoris Divini Emblemata* (1660)
- R.K., *The Canticles, or Song of Solomon, Reduced into a Decasyllable ...* (1662)
- T.S., *The Book of the Song of Solomon in Meeter* (1676)
- Robert Whitehall, *Sive Iconum* (Oxford, 1677)



Title-page to the Luther Bible of 1533



Title-page to the Luther Bible of 1541

Figure 1 – “The Law and the Gospel”

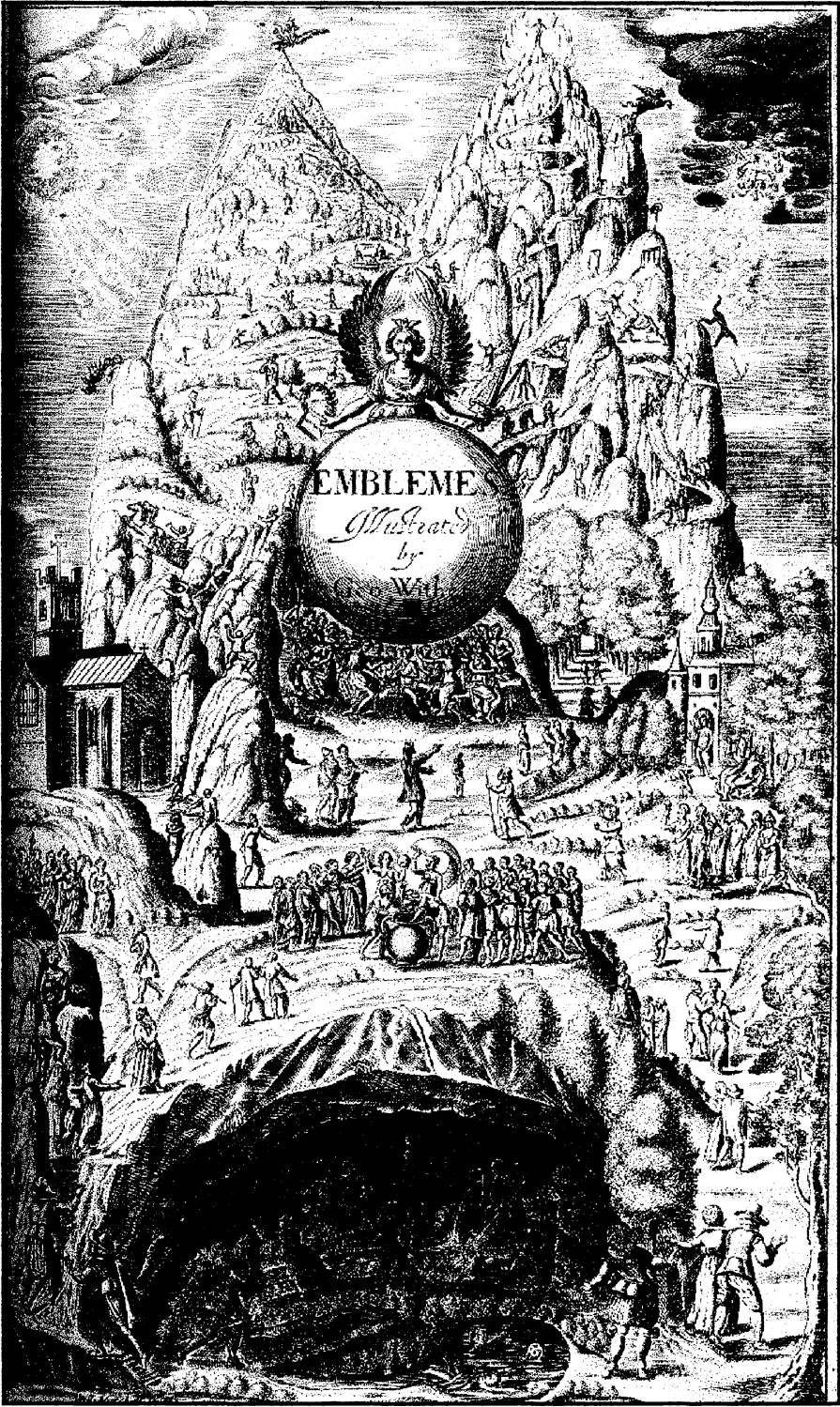


Figure 2
Frontispiece



Figure 3, 1.14



Figure 4, 4.23



Figure 5, 4.41



Figure 6, 3.5



Figure 7, 1.40



Figure 8, 1.34



Figure 9, 1.33



Figure 10, 1.21



Figure 11, 1.31



Figure 12, 1.47

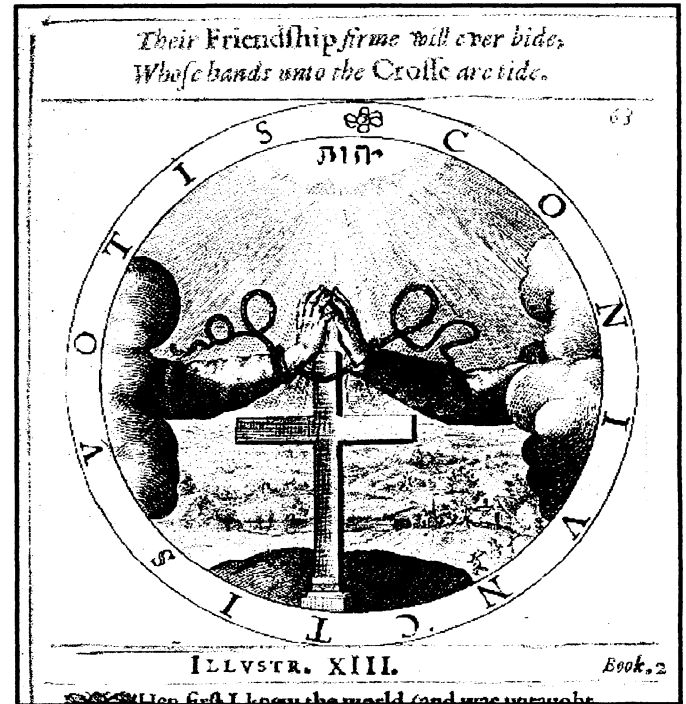


Figure 13, 2.13



Figure 14, 2.19



Figure 15, 3.20



Figure 16, 4.8



Figure 17, 4.9



Figure 18, IV.7



Figure 19, "The Invocation"



Figure 20, "The Entertainment"



Figure 21, "The Farewell"



Figure 22, V.14



Figure 23, V.15



Figure 24, V.3



Figure 25, V.8



Figure 26, I.2



Figure 27, II.2



Figure 28, II.6



Figure 29, I.11



Figure 30, V.4



Figure 31, IV.2



Figure 32, IV.9



Figure 33, II.8

Bibliography of Works Consulted

- Astell, Ann W. *The Song of Songs in the Middle Ages*. Ithaca NY: Cornell UP, 1990.
- Bacon, Francis. *The New Organon and Related Writings*, ed. Fulton H. Anderson. New York: Macmillan, 1960.
- Baroway, Israel. "The Imagery of Spenser and the Song of Songs." *Journal of English and Germanic Philology* 33 (1934): 23-45.
- , "The Bible as Poetry in the English Renaissance: An Introduction." *Journal of English and Germanic Philology* 32 (1933): 447-480.
- Bath, Michael. *Speaking Pictures: English Emblem Books and Renaissance Culture*. New York: Longman, 1994.
- Bauschatz, Cathleen M. "Montaigne's Conception of Reading in the Context of Renaissance Poetics and Modern Criticism" in *The Reader in the Text: Essays on Audience Reception and Interpretation*, eds. Susan R. Suleiman and Inge Crosman. Princeton NJ: Princeton UP, 1980. 264-292.
- Beilin, Elaine V. "'The Onely Perfect Vertue': Constancy in Mary Wroth's *Pamphilia to Amphilanthus*," in *Spenser Studies* 2, eds. Patrick Cullen and Thomas P. Roche Jr. Pittsburgh: U of Pennsylvania P, 1981. 229-245.
- Benet, Diana Treviño. "Crashaw, Teresa, and the Word" in *New Perspectives on the Life and Art of Richard Crashaw*, ed. by John R. Roberts. Columbia: U of Missouri P, 1990. 140-156.
- Benton, John F. "Clio and Venus: An Historical View of Medieval Love," in *The Meaning of Courty Love*, ed. F.X. Newman. Albany: State U of New York P, 1968. 19-42.
- Bertonasco, Marc F. "A Jungian Reading of Crashaw's 'The Flaming Heart'" in *Essays on Richard Crashaw*, ed. Robert M. Cooper. Salzburg: Institut für Anglistik und Amerikanistik, 1979. 224-264.
- The Bible and Culture Collective. *The Postmodern Bible*. New Haven CT: Yale University Press, 1995.
- Bloch, Chana. *Spelling the Word: George Herbert and the Bible*. Berkeley CA: U of California P, 1985.

- The Booke of Common Prayer: 1623*. Facsim. ed. Columbus OH: Lazarus Ministry Press, 1998.
- Buick, Stephen. "In imitation of Mr. George Herbert?: Christopher Harvey's *The Synagogue* and the fashioning of George Herbert's identity during the revolutionary decades." *George Herbert at Kalamazoo: Herbert and the History and Politics of His Time*. 37th International Congress on Medieval Studies. Western Michigan University, May 2nd 2002.
- Burton, Robert. *The Anatomy of Melancholy in Three Volumes*, ed. Holbrook Jackson. New York: Dutton, 1968.
- Campbell, Marion. "Unending Desire: Sidney's Reinvention of Petrarchan Form in *Astrophil and Stella*?" in *Sir Philip Sidney and the Interpretation of Renaissance Culture: The Poet in his Time and in Ours*, ed. Gary F. Waller and Michael D. Moore. New Jersey: Barnes & Noble, 1984. 84-94.
- Capellanus, Andreas. *The Art of Courtly Love*, trans. by John Jay Parry. New York: Norton, 1969.
- Chinitz, David. "The poem as sacrament: Spenser's *Epithalamion* and the golden section." *Journal of Medieval and Renaissance Studies* 21 (Fall 1991): 251-268.
- Colie, Rosalie L. *My Echoing Song: Andrew Marvell's Poetry of Criticism*. Princeton: Princeton UP, 1970.
- . *The Resources of Kind: Genre-Theory in the Renaissance*. Berkeley: U of California P, 1973.
- . *Paradoxia Epidemica: The Renaissance Tradition of Paradox*. Princeton NJ: Princeton UP, 1966.
- Crashaw, Richard. *The Poems, English, Latin, and Greek, of Richard Crashaw*, ed. L.C. Martin. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1927.
- Culler, Jonathan. "Prolegomena to a Theory of Reading" (orig. pub. 1976) in *The Reader in the Text: Essays on Audience Reception and Interpretation*, eds. Susan R. Suleiman and Inge Crosman. Princeton NJ: Princeton UP, 1980. 46-66.
- Cunnar, Eugene R. "Crashaw's 'Sancta Maria Dolorum'" in *New Perspectives on the Life and Art of Richard Crashaw*, ed. John R. Roberts. Columbia MO: U of Missouri P, 1990. 99-126.

- Curtius, Ernst Robert. *European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages*, trans. Willard R. Trask. New York: Harper and Row, 1963.
- Daly, Peter M. and Mary V. Silcox. *The Modern Critical Reception of the English Emblem*. New York: K.G. Saur, 1991.
- Daly, Peter M. *Literature in the Light of the Emblem*, 2nd ed. Toronto: U of Toronto P, 1998.
- . "The Arbitrariness of George Wither's Emblems: A Reconsideration," in *The Art of the Emblem*, eds. Michael Bath, John Manning, and Alan Young. New York: AMS Press, 1993. 201-234.
- . "George Wither's Use of Emblem Terminology" in *Aspects of Renaissance and Baroque Symbol Theory*, eds. Peter M. Daly and John Manning. New York: AMS Press, 1999. 27-38.
- Dasenbrock, Reed Way. "The Petrarchan Context of Spenser's *Amoretti*." *PMLA: Publications of the Modern Language Association of America* 100.1 (January 1985): 38-50.
- Davis, Walter R. "The Meditative Hymnody of Richard Crashaw." *ELH* 50.1 (Spring 1983): 107-129.
- de Certeau, Michel. *The Practice of Everyday Life*, trans. by Steven F. Rendall. Berkeley: U of California P, 1984.
- Derrida, Jacques. "How to Avoid Speaking: Denials," trans. by Ken Frieden, in *Languages of the Unsayable: The Play of Negativity in Literature and Literary Theory*, eds. Sanford Budick and Wolfgang Iser. Stanford CA: Stanford UP, 1987. 3-70.
- Diehl, Huston. "Into the maze of self: the Protestant transformation of the image of the labyrinth." *Journal of Medieval and Renaissance Studies* 16.2 (1986): 281-301.
- Doelman, James. "George Wither, the Stationers Company and the English Psalter." *Studies in Philology* 90 (Winter 1993): 74-82.
- . "Song of Songs" in *A Dictionary of Biblical Tradition in English Literature*, ed. David Lyle Jeffrey. Grand Rapids MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1992. 727-730.
- . "Biblical Verse Paraphrase of the English Renaissance: A Study in Literary and Social Contexts." Diss. McMaster University, 1990.
- Dubrow, Heather. *Echoes of Desire: English Petrarchism and its Counterdiscourses*. Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1995.

- . *Captive Victors: Shakespeare's Narrative Poems and Sonnets*. Ithaca NY: Cornell UP, 1987.
- The English Emblem Book Project*. Penn State University Libraries Electronic Text Center. May 27, 2001; February 2, 2003. <http://emblem.libraries.psu.edu/home.htm>
- Ferry, Anne. *The "Inward" Language: Sonnets of Wyatt, Sidney, Shakespeare, Donne*. Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1983.
- Fienberg, Nona. "The Emergence of Stella in *Astrophil and Stella*." *SEL: Studies in English Literature 1500-1900* 25.1 (Winter 1985): 5-19.
- Fish, Stanley E. "Literature in the Reader: Affective Stylistics" (orig. pub. 1970) in *Reader-Response Criticism: From Formalism to Post-Structuralism*, ed. Jane P. Tompkins. Baltimore MD: Johns Hopkins UP, 1980. 70-100.
- Flinker, Noam. *The Song of Songs in the English Renaissance: Kisses of their Mouths*. Rochester NY: D.S. Brewer, 2000.
- Foucault, Michel. *A History of Sexuality, Volume 1: An Introduction*. Trans. by Robert Hurley. New York: Vintage Books, 1978.
- Freeman, Rosemary. *English Emblem Books*. New York: Octagon Books, 1966.
- Frye, Northrop. *The Secular Scripture: A Study of the Structure of Romance*. Cambridge MS: Harvard UP, 1976.
- . *The Great Code: The Bible and Literature*. New York: Penguin, 1982.
- . *Words with Power, Being a Second Study of the Bible and Literature*. New York: Viking Penguin, 1990.
- Gascoigne, George. "Certayne notes of Instruction concerning the making of verse or ryme in English" in *English Sixteenth-Century Verse: An Anthology*, ed. Richard S. Sylvester. New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1974. 317-328.
- Gil, Daniel Juan. "The Currency of the Beloved and the Authority of Lady Mary Wroth." *Modern Language Studies* 29.2 (Fall 1999): 73-92.
- Gilman, Ernest B. "Word and Image in Quarles' *Emblemes*." *Critical Inquiry* 6 (1980): 385-410.
- Goffman, Erving. *Forms of Talk*. Philadelphia: U of Pennsylvania P, 1981.
- Grant, Robert M. with David Tracy. *A Short History of the Interpretation of the Bible*, 2nd ed. Philadelphia PA: Fortress Press, 1984.

- Hammill, Graham. "Stepping to the Temple." *South Atlantic Quarterly* 88 (Fall 1989): 933-959.
- Hanson, Elizabeth. "Boredom and Whoredom: Reading Renaissance Women's Sonnet Sequences." *The Yale Journal of Criticism* 10.1 (1997): 165-191.
- Heninger, S.K., Jr. "Sequences, Systems, Models: Sidney and the Secularization of Sonnets," in *Poems in Their Place: The Intertextuality and Order of Poetic Collections*, ed. Neil Fraistat. Chapel Hill, NC: U of North Carolina P, 1986. 66-94.
- . "Speaking Pictures: Sidney's Rapprochement between Poetry and Painting" in *Sir Philip Sidney and the Interpretation of Renaissance Culture: The Poet in his Time and in Ours*, ed. Gary F. Waller and Michael D. Moore. New Jersey: Barnes & Noble, 1984. 3-16.
- Herbert, George. *The Works of George Herbert*, ed. F.E. Hutchinson. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1953.
- Hester, M. Thomas. "If thou regard the same?: Spenser's Emblematic Centerfold." *American Notes and Queries* 6.4 (October 1993): 183-189.
- Higman, Francis. "'Without great effort, and with pleasure': Sixteenth-Century Genevan Bibles and Reading Practices" in *The Bible as Book: The Reformation*, ed. Orlaith O'Sullivan. London: The British Library & Oak Knoll Press, 2000. 115-122.
- Hill, Elizabeth K. "Quarles as Dramatist." *Comparative Drama* 29.1 (Spring 1995): 168-182.
- Hugh of St. Victor. "Introductory Notes on the Scriptures and on the Scriptural Writers." Ed. and trans. Denys Turner. *Eros and Allegory: Medieval Exegesis of the Song of Songs*. Kalamazoo MI: Cistercian Publications, 1995. 265-274.
- Hull, Elizabeth M. "All My Deed But Copying Is: The Erotics of Identity in *Astrophil and Stella*." *Texas Studies in Literature and Language* 38.2 (Summer 1996): 175-190.
- Huttar, Charles A. "Herbert and Emblematic Tradition," in *Like Season'd Timber: New Essays on George Herbert*, eds. Edmund Miller and Robert Di Yanni. New York: Peter Lang, 1987. 59-87.
- Irigaray, Luce. "The Sex Which is Not One" in *Feminisms: An Anthology of Literary Theory and Criticism*, ed. R. Warhol and D. Herndl [rpt. "Ce Sexe qui n'en est pas un," in *Cahier du Griff*, no. 5; English translation by Claudia Reeder, in *New French Feminisms*, New York: 1981] Rutgers UP, 1991. 350-356.

- Iser, Wolfgang. "The Play of the Text" in *Languages of the Unsayable: The Play of Negativity in Literature and Literary Theory*, eds. Sanford Budick and Wolfgang Iser. Stanford CA: Stanford UP, 1987. 325-339.
- . *The Act of Reading: A Theory of Aesthetic Response*. London: Routledge and Keegan Paul, 1978.
- Johns, Adrian. "The physiology of reading in Restoration England" in *The Practice and Representation of Reading in England*, eds. James Raven, Helen Small, and Naomi Tadmor. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1996. 138-161.
- Johnson, William Clarence. *Spenser's Amoretti: Analogies of Love*. Lewisburg: Buckness UP, 1990.
- Jones, Alison. *The Wordsworth Dictionary of Saints*. Hertfordshire: Wordsworth Editions, 1994.
- Kahn, Coppélia. "Whores and Wives in Jacobean Drama" in *In Another Country: Feminist Perspectives on Renaissance Drama*, eds. Dorothea Kehler and Susan Baker. Metuchen NJ: Scarecrow Press, 1991. 246-260.
- Kaske, Carol. *Spenser and Biblical Poetics*. Ithaca NY: Cornell UP, 1999.
- Kintgen, Eugene R. *Reading in Tudor England*. Pittsburgh PA: U of Pittsburgh P, 1996.
- Klein, Lisa M. *The Exemplary Sidney and the Elizabethan Sonneteer*. Newark: U of Delaware P, 1998.
- . "Let us love, dear love, lyke as we ought": Protestant Marriage and the Revision of Petrarchan Loving in Spenser's *Amoretti*," in *Spenser Studies: A Renaissance Poetry Annual* X, ed. Patrick Cullen and Thomas P. Roche, Jr. New York: AMS Press, 1992. 109-138.
- Krier, Theresa M. "Generations of Blazons: Psychoanalysis and the Song of Songs in the *Amoretti*." *Texas Studies of Literature and Language* 40.3 (Fall 1998): 293-327.
- Leach, Elsie. "The Popularity of Quarles' *Emblemes*: Images of Misogyny." *Studies in Iconography* 9 (1983): 83-97.
- Lewalski, Barbara K. *Protestant Poetics and the Seventeenth-Century Religious Lyric*. Princeton: Princeton UP, 1979.

- Linden, Stanton J. "Alchemical Art and the Renaissance Emblem" in *Sacred Texts: The literature of Secret Societies*, eds. Marie Mulvey Roberts and Hugh Ormsby-Lennon. New York: AMS Press, 1995. 7-23.
- Low, Anthony. *The Reinvention of Love: Poetry, Politics and Culture from Sidney to Milton*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1993.
- , "Metaphysical Poets and Devotional Poets," in *George Herbert and the Seventeenth-Century Religious Poets*, ed. Mario A. Di Cesare. New York: Norton, 1978, 229.
- Lubac, Henri de. *Exégèse médiévale: les quatre sense de l'écriture*, vol. 1, pt. 2. Lyons: Aubier, 1961.
- Maclean, Ian. *The Renaissance Notion of Woman: A Study in the Fortunes of Scholasticism and Medical Science in European Intellectual Life*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1980.
- Manganaro, Elise Salem. "Songs and Sonnets in *Astrophil and Stella*: A Reading of Sidney's Poetics." *Explorations in Renaissance Culture* 15 (1989): 121-136.
- Martin, Anthony. "George Herbert and Sacred 'Parodie.'" *Studies in Philology* 93.4 (Fall 1996): 443-470.
- Matter, E. Ann. *The Voice of My Beloved: The Song of Songs in Western Medieval Christianity*. Philadelphia PA: U of Pennsylvania P, 1990.
- Mazzola, Elizabeth. "Marrying Medusa: Spenser's *Epithalamion* and Renaissance Reconstructions of Female Privacy." *Genre: Forms of Discourse and Culture* 25.1 (Spring 1992): 193-210.
- McLuhan, Marshall. *The Gutenberg Galaxy: The Making of Typographic Man*. Toronto: UTP, 1962.
- Miller, Paul Allen. "Sidney, Petrarch, and Ovid, or Imitation as Subversion." *ELH* 58.3 (Fall 1991): 499-522.
- Montaigne, Michel de. *Complete Essays of Montaigne*, trans. Donald M. Frame. Stanford CA: Stanford UP, 1957.
- Montgomery, Robert L. "Astrophil's Stella and Stella's Astrophil" in *Sir Philip Sidney and the Interpretation of Renaissance Culture: The Poet in his Time and in Ours*, ed. Gary F. Waller and Michael D. Moore. New Jersey: Barnes & Noble, 1984. 44-55.
- Moore, Mary. "The Labyrinth as Style in *Pamphilia to Amphilanthus*." *Studies in English Literature 1500-1900* 38.1 (Winter 1998): 109-125.

- Newman, Karen. "Directing Traffic: Subjects, Objects and the Politics of Exchange." *Differences* 2.2 (1990): 41-54.
- Nicholas, David. *The Evolution of the Medieval World: Society, Government and Thought in Europe, 312-1500*. New York: Longman, 1992.
- Okerlund, Arlene N. "The Rhetoric of Love: Voice in the *Amoretti* and the *Songs and Sonets*." *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 68.1 (February 1982): 37-46.
- O'Sullivan, Orlaith. "The Bible Translations of George Joye" in *The Bible as Book: The Reformation*, ed. Orlaith O'Sullivan. London: The British Library & Oak Knoll Press, 2000. 25-38.
- Ovid. *Ovid's Metamorphosis, Englished, Mythologized, and Represented in Figures (1632)*, trans. George Sandys. Eds. Karl K. Hulley and Stanley T. Vandersall. Lincoln: U of Nebraska P, 1970.
- . *Ovid's Metamorphoses: The Arthur Golding Translation (1567)*, ed. John Frederick Nims. New York: Macmillan Co., 1965.
- Parrish, Paul A. "'O Sweet Contest': Gender and Value in 'The Weeper'" in *New Perspectives on the Life and Art of Richard Crashaw*, ed. John R. Roberts. Columbia MO: U of Missouri P, 1990. 127-139.
- Parry, Graham. *The Seventeenth Century: The Intellectual and Cultural Context of English Literature, 1603-1700*. London: Longman, 1989.
- Patterson, Annabel. *Censorship and Interpretation: The Conditions of Writing and Reading in Early Modern England*. Madison WI: U of Wisconsin P, 1984.
- Pettegree, Andrew. "'The Law and the Gospel': the Evolution of an Evangelical Pictorial Theme in the Bibles of the Reformation" in *The Bible as Book: The Reformation*, ed. Orlaith O'Sullivan. London: The British Library & Oak Knoll Press, 2000. 123-144.
- The Prayer-Book of Queen Elizabeth, 1559*. Edinburgh: John Grant, 1909.
- Puttenham, George. *The Arte of English Poesie*, ed. Gladys Doidge Willcock and Alice Walker. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1970.
- Quarles, Francis. "Sion's Sonets Sung by Solomon the King" in *The Complete Works in Prose and Verse of Francis Quarles*, Vol. II, ed. Rev. Alexander B. Grosart. New York: AMS Press, 1967. 119-132.

- . *Emblems, Divine and Moral; The School of the Heart; and Hieroglyphics of the Life of Man* (1635). London: William Tegg and Co., 1866.
- Rainolds, John. *John Rainolds's Oxford Lectures on Aristotle's Rhetoric* (1570). Ed. and trans. by Lawrence D. Green. Toronto: Associated University Presses, 1986.
- Rambuss, Richard. "Pleasure and Devotion: The Body of Jesus and Seventeenth-Century Religious Lyric," in *Queering the Renaissance*, ed. Jonathan Goldberg. Durham: Duke UP, 1994. 253-279.
- Randall, Dale B.J. "Phosphore Redde Diem: Ancient Starlight in Quarles' *Emblemes* I.14." *John Donne Journal* 6.1 (1987): 91-103.
- Revard, Stella P. "Crashaw and the Diva: The Tradition of the Neo-Latin Hymn to the Goddess" in *New Perspectives on the Life and Art of Richard Crashaw*, ed. John R. Roberts. Columbia MO: U of Missouri P, 1990. 80-98.
- Richey, Esther Gilman. "The Political Design of Herbert's *Temple*." *Studies in English Literature 1500-1900* 37 (Winter 1997): 73-96.
- Roberts, Lorraine M. "Crashaw's Sacred Voice: 'A Commerce of Contrary Powers'" in *New Perspectives on the Life and Art of Richard Crashaw*, ed. John R. Roberts. Columbia MO: U of Missouri P, 1990. 66-79.
- Roche, Thomas P., Jr. *Petrarch and the English Sonnet Sequences*. New York: AMS Press, 1989.
- Roebuck, Graham. "Godolphin" in *Dictionary of Literary Biography, Second Series, Seventeenth-Century British Non-Dramatic Poets*, vol. 126, ed. M. Thomas Hester. Detroit: Brucoli Clark Layman, 1993. 122-132.
- Rudrum, Alan. "The Problem of Sexual Reference in George Herbert's Verse." *George Herbert Journal* 21.1-2 (Fall 1997-Spring 1998): 19-32.
- Sabine, Maureen. "Crashaw and the Feminine Animus: Patterns of Self-Sacrifice in Two of his Devotional Poems." *John Donne Journal* 4.1 (1985): 69-94.
- Sandys, George. "A Paraphrase upon ye Songe of Solomon" in MS Landsdowne 489, pp. 121-127. British Library, London UK.
- . *The Poetical Works*, ed. Richard Hooper (1872). 2 Vols. Münster: Georg Olms, 1968.
- Schaar, Claes, ed. *Marino and Crashaw: Sospetto d'Herode*. Berlingska Boktryckeriet: C.W.K. Gleerup Lund, 1971.

- Scheper, George L. "Reformation Attitudes toward Allegory and the Song of Songs." *Publications of the Modern Languages Association* 89 (1974): 551-562.
- Schoenfeldt, Michael C. *Prayer and Power: George Herbert and Renaissance Courtship*. Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1991.
- Sedgwick, Eve Kosofsky. "Gender Criticism" in *Redrawing the Boundaries*, eds S. Greenblatt and G. Gunn. *PMLA*, 1992. 271-302.
- . *Between Men: English Literature and Male Homosexual Desire*. New York: Columbia UP, 1985.
- Sidney, Philip. "The Defense of Poesy," in *The Renaissance in England*, ed. Hyder E. Rollins and Herschel Baker. Boston: D.C. Heath, 1954.
- Silcox, Mary V. "'The Shadow of a Shade': Death and the Emblem in George Wither's *A Collection of Emblemes* (1635)." Unpublished paper, 1999.
- Silverstein, Theodore. "Guenevere, or the Uses of Courtly Love," in *The Meaning of Courtly Love*, ed. F.X. Newman. Albany: State U of New York P, 1968. 77-90.
- Singleton, Charles S. "Dante: Within Courtly Love and Beyond," in *The Meaning of Courtly Love*, ed. F.X. Newman. Albany: State U of New York P, 1968. 43-54.
- Smith, Bruce R. *Homosexual Desire in Shakespeare's England: A Cultural Poetics*. Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1991.
- Smith, Rosalind. "Lady Mary Wroth's *Pamphilia to Amphilanthus*: The Politics of Withdrawal." *ELR* 30.3 (Autumn 2000): 408-431.
- Spenser, Edmund. *The Works of Edmund Spenser*. Hertfordshire: Wordsworth Poetry Library, 1995.
- Steinmetz, David C. "Divided by a Common Past: The Reshaping of the Christian Exegetical Tradition in the Sixteenth Century." *Journal of Medieval and Renaissance Studies* 27.2 (Spring 1997): 245-264.
- Stewart, Stanley. *"Renaissance" Talk: Ordinary Language and the Mystique of Critical Problems*. Pittsburgh PA: Duquesne UP, 1997.
- . *The Enclosed Garden: The Tradition and the Image in Seventeenth-Century Poetry*. Madison WI: U of Wisconsin P, 1966.

- String, Tatiana C. "Politics and Polemics in English and German Bible Illustrations" in *The Bible as Book: The Reformation*, ed. Orlaith O'Sullivan. London: The British Library & Oak Knoll Press, 2000. 145-156.
- Summers, Claude J. "The Bride of the Apocalypse and the Quest for True Religion: Donne, Herbert, and Spenser" in "*Bright Shootes of Everlastingnesse*": *The Seventeenth-Century Religious Lyric*, eds. Claude J. Summers and Ted-Larry Pebworth. Columbia MO: U of Missouri P, 1987. 72-95.
- Sylvester, Richard S., ed. *English Sixteenth-Century Verse: An Anthology*. New York: W.W. Norton, 1984.
- Thompson, Charlotte. "Love in an Orderly Universe: A Unification of Spenser's *Amoretti*, 'Anacreontics,' and *Epithalamion*." *Viator: Medieval and Renaissance Studies* 16 (1985): 277-335.
- Tilley, Morris Palmer. *A Dictionary of the Proverbs in England in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries: A Collection of the Proverbs Found in English Literature and the Dictionaries of the Period*. Ann Arbor: U of Michigan P, 1950.
- Todorov, Tzvetan. "Reading as Construction" in *The Reader in the Text: Essays on Audience Reception and Interpretation*, eds. Susan R. Suleiman and Inge Crosman. Princeton NJ: Princeton UP, 1980. 67-82.
- Tufte, Virginia. *The Poetry of Marriage: The Epithalamium in Europe and Its Development in England*. Los Angeles: Tinnon-Brown, 1970.
- Turner, Denys. *Eros and Allegory: Medieval Exegesis of the Song of Songs*. Kalamazoo MI: Cistercian Publications, 1995.
- Turner, James Grantham. *One Flesh: Paradisal Marriage and Sexual Relations in the Age of Milton*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987.
- Tuve, Rosemond. "Sacred 'Parody' of Love Poetry, and Herbert," in *Essays by Rosemond Tuve: Spenser, Herbert, Milton*, ed. Thomas P. Roche, Jr. Princeton: Princeton UP, 1970. 207-251.
- Vicary, Thomas. *Profitable Treatise of the Anatomie of Mans Body* (1577). Facsim. ed. New York: Da Capo Press, 1973.
- Vickers, Brian. *In Defence of Rhetoric*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988.

- Villepontaux, Mary A. "‘With her own will beguyl’d’: The Captive Lady in Spenser’s *Amoretti*." *Explorations in Renaissance Culture* 14 (1988): 29-39.
- Walby, Celestin John. "‘Quick-ey’d Love’: Regenerate Eyes and Spiritual Body in Herbert’s ‘Love’ (III)." *George Herbert Journal* 21.1-2 (Fall 1997-Spring 1998): 58-72.
- Wall, John N. *Transformations of the Word: Spenser, Herbert, Vaughan*. Athens GA: U of Georgia P, 1988.
- Waller, Gary F. "The Rewriting of Petrarch: Sidney and the Languages of Sixteenth-Century Poetry" in *Sir Philip Sidney and the Interpretation of Renaissance Culture: The Poet in his Time and in Ours*, ed. Gary F. Waller and Michael D. Moore. New Jersey: Barnes & Noble, 1984. 69-83.
- Webster, John. "‘The Methode of a Poete’: An Inquiry Into Tudor Conceptions of Poetic Sequence." *ELR* 11.1 (Winter 1981): 22-43.
- Wilcox, Helen. "‘Curious Frame’: The Seventeenth-Century Religious Lyric as Genre," in *New Perspectives on the Seventeenth-Century English Religious Lyric*, ed. John R. Roberts. Columbia and London: U of Missouri P, 1994. 9-27.
- Wither, George. "The Song of Songs" in *The Hymnes and Songs of the Church* (1623). STC 25909.5, p. 9-17.
- . *A Collection of Emblemes* (1635): *A Scholar Press Facsimile*, 2nd ed. London: Scholar Press, 1973.
- Wood, A. Skevington. *The principles of Biblical interpretation as enunciated by Irenaeus, Origen, Augustine, Luther, and Calvin*. Grand Rapids : Zondervan, 1967.
- Wright, Thomas. *The Passions of the Minde* (1601). New York: Georg Olms, 1973.
- Wroth, Lady Mary. *Pamphilia to Amphilanthus*, ed. G.F. Waller. Salzburg: Institut für Englische Sprache und Literatur, 1977.
- Young, R.V. *Doctrine and Devotion in Seventeenth-Century Poetry: Studies in Donne, Herbert, Crashaw, and Vaughan*. Cambridge UK: D. S Brewer, 2000.
- . "Crashaw and Biblical Poetics" in *New Perspectives on the Life and Art of Richard Crashaw*, ed. John R. Roberts. Columbia MO: U of Missouri P, 1990. 30-48.