FELICITY AND OBJECTIFICATION

IN

THOMAS TRAHERNE

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by

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SCOPE AND CONTENTS: In contradistinction to works which deal
                          with the sources of Traherne's doctrines and
                          those which are psychological studies of
                          the man and his literary output, this thesis
                          will attempt what may be termed an
                          "existential" study of Traherne's work in
                          its historical context.

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Contents

Introduction

Our intention in this introduction is methodological; we will briefly try to explain what the work does and what it does not attempt to carry out.

The essay does _not_ deal with the "philosophy" of Traherne as a set of formal, systematically related doctrines open to us in their historical objectivity. On the one hand we are not concerned with "doctrines" as such, in either the philosophical or theological realm, which are consciously articulated, or even doctrines, as such, which may be implied or which could be derived. On the other hand, we do not take the text as a historical "object" which can be "objectively" analyzed without reference to our own standpoint.

In the first instance then, we wish to consider formal doctrines as they are presented or implied in their significance for the _matter_ of the text. This matter is the working out of the interrelationships of self, God, and world. We cannot assume beforehand any particular meanings for, for example, "God" or "reason" by simply correlating these terms to earlier "sources". Furthermore, the text is not to be taken as an object, but as a horizon of questioning directed towards the matter. We must allow the subject which struggled with this particular matter its full rights if we are to approach the text with true seriousness. This can only be done by directing ourselves towards the matter and thus placing ourselves as well as the standpoint of the text in question.

Traditionally, the text has been approached as an object which can be "objectively" determined. It is said that the "meaning" of the text as given by any interpretation must be measured against the author's _intention_, which is the objective datum realized in the text. The "significance" of the text is then the meaningfulness _for us_, today, of the meaning derived from the text by interpretation.[1] It may be questioned, however, if any "verbal" or "objective" meaning can be ascribed to the text for us. Our perception of the text's significance fore-structures the "objective" textual meaning.

> An interpreter projects for himself a meaning
> of the whole as soon as a first (partial) meaning
> of a text arises. And this first meaning arises
> only because the interpreter reads the text al-
> ready with certain expectations of a definite
> meaning.[2]

We cannot hope to discover the "objective" text through an analysis of the intentions of the author. Suppose we proceed on the basis of intentions which are stated fairly unequivocally. How are we to understand the terms or concepts in terms of which the "intention" is expressed? We could simply refer the ideas and terms of the text back to "sources" and leave it at that. This kind of "explanation" of the text cannot, however, facilitate its _understanding_. Understanding can only come about through contact with the matter itself. Understanding is simultaneously self-understanding. A text becomes truly historical and truly "objective" in that it poses a matter in a certain light of questioning in terms of which the self-understanding of the interpreter is placed in question in the attempt to understand the text. Both horizons of questioning are transformed in this encounter.

In the endeavour, on the other hand, to derive sub-conscious "intention" from the text, the attempt to understand is abandoned and the interpretation moves on the level of psychological explanation.

> It is only in the failure to understand, to see the spoken as true, that interpretive under-standing sees a text simply as the opinion of another person, that is, sees it psychologically or historically.[3]

On this basis we concern ourselves with Traherne's perspective on the matter, not with his psychological interiority. Thus we omit a discussion of the psychological character of Traherne's childlike "stage of innocence" as this does not aid understanding of the matter of the Centuries. This matter centers around the question of "Felicity" and deals, as we have mentioned, with the interrelationships of self, God, and world. The "Infant-Ey" of which Traherne loves to speak cannot serve, as some critics have thought[4], as a psychological key to the Centuries which will unwrap its' meaning. Meaning is for the self-understanding and stands in relation to the matter itself. In its reflection on the matter self-understanding may take a certain recollection of childhood innocence and incorporate it into its thinking and being in relationship to God or the world, but this thinking can hardly understand its being in terms of a psychological explanation of a hypothetical stage of its personal existence. In its being-toward God and the world the past cannot be recap-tured as an "objective" datum.

Thus, "stage one", Traherne's estate of innocence, is to be understood in terms of the matter, how, for example, it provides a project for the appropriation of the world.

Where psychological explanations are not attempted critics have generally been content to unearth Traherne's "sources", while at the same time praising his "originality". Formal correlations between Traherne and Scholastic or Platonic doctrines or the theology of Irenaeus, to choose but a few possibilities, are carefully and usefully noted. Here "formal" means: not to touch the matter itself. This means correlations in doctrines are made without referring these doctrines back to their ontological and existential ground, that is, the nature which calls a certain thinking and questioning into being.

In the course of this work we will develop certain dominant themes - such as "anxiety" and the "abyss" - which are given the status of ontological determinants. What is the relationship between these categories and the text? The text itself reveals these determinants, as such. Simultaneously they are suppressed and left unsaid by the dominant mode of questioning. In re-considering the matter of the text, these categories are brought to light in their essential nature. This re-questioning, on the one hand, reveals alternative possibilities, alternative ways of being toward the matter. At the same time it shows the necessity of the particular structure on the basis of the particular horizon of questioning. The matter with which Traherne is concerned is the relationship of the self to God and to the world.

In Traherne the perfection of this relationship is called "Felicity". The goal or purpose of life is the attainment of Felicity. The "intention" of the Centuries as Traherne states

it, is to aid others to attain Felicity through the description of the path he himself has followed. In opening the text to understanding then, we must know how, or in what form, the question of Felicity is posed in response to the matter. The posing of the question will, in turn, determine the matter. How is the question posed? Essentially in this form: Traherne asks, "How am I to assure my Felicity?" When we say, "Traherne asks", we mean, of course, that the text reflects an openness to the matter which reveals this question as its ground. This questioning should be distinguished from others immediately akin to it.

The text does not represent a struggle with the question of what Felicity _is_. Traherne _knows_ what Felicity is and in fact gives us a formal definition of it[5]. Neither is the relationship of the self to the matter seen in terms of a simple attainment of Felicity in the sense that Felicity is possessed entirely and the will has found its rest. This is never the case. Felicity is possessed yet not _assured_. "How can _I_ assure _my_ Felicity?" The self can assure itself of its Felicity only through its own efforts. The process of this assurance is carried out in the world. The ground, the possibility, of this process, lies with the self as such, in its own _self-assurance_. On the basis of this question therefore, we move in two directions: we determine what ground allows the question to be posed; and we can determine how the matter, to which the question is a response, will be apprehended and appropriated.

Our essay refers to a number of thinkers other than Traherne, particularily Descartes, Ficino, and More. What is the function of these thinkers in the understanding of Traherne, which is the purpose of the work?

In referring to Ficino or More it is not our intention, as such, to record the "sources" of Traherne's ideas. Nor do we wish to discover a new "source" in Descartes, either directly or by transmission through the Platonists. No empirical link between Traherne and Descartes need be postulated at all. On the other hand we can postulate a community of language which, in various degrees, includes all four thinkers, as well as ourselves. This community of language does not hold Descartes as the source or possible source of Traherne, but is itself the "source", the ground of both thinkers. The community of language forms the continuity and discontinuity of the tradition within which each thinker finds himself situated. The tradition both pulls together and holds apart: it allows language its continuity, yet continually allows concepts to arise in the process of interpretation. Understanding is the process of the re-appropriation of what is given in language. For this reason we cannot assume, and in fact, must disallow, the possibility that Traherne could simply rethink the thoughts of Ficino. Historicity determines both language and understanding. If this is ignored a basic misunderstanding results. Traherne is not a seventeenth century Ireneaus. On the basis of the historicity of language and thinking (the two are inseparable) it is necessary to pierce the surface-play of what is merely said.

The thinking of Traherne transforms that of the past;
at the same time it looks towards the future, in which it
equally stands in continuity. In referring a future development
(such as Locke or Wordsworth) back to the past we illuminate
a possibility within the text we are studying. Certain tend-
encies and neglected possibilities in Traherne are at least
partially brought to fruition in Wordsworth. Moving back
from Wordsworth, back from ourselves, we can reveal a possible
understanding of the matter which is ignored by the explicitly
said.

Similarly , analogies can be developed between
roughly contemporary thinkers which will illuminate one or the
other, or both. This is the case with Descartes and Traherne.
We have considered Descartes more extensively than any other
thinker of the time because the essential affinity between
Descartes and Traherne allows us to reveal with precision the
basis of Traherne's thinking. This became apparent once the
horizon of questioning had been determined in Traherne. The
question "How can I assure my Felicity?" is basically Cartesian,
and in a sense one can say Traherne works out the implications
of Cartesian thinking for the World of Value: "Felicity"
almost implies an ethic and religion of Cartesianism. It is
necessary to qualify this statement because Traherne is to some
extent still determined by past thinking (Ficino) and gives
strong anticipations of future developments.

The two major texts we will be using are the
Margoliouth edition of the Centuries, Poems and Thanksgivings,

and the Marks edition of the Christian Ethicks. The Centuries
will be designated in the text of the essay by a "C" followed
by the "century" in Roman numerals and the section in Arabic
numerals. Poems will be given by title and line numbers.
The Ethicks will be referred to as "CE" followed by page numbers.

Part A

(1) Relationship of Stages

In our elucidation of the movement of Traherne's thought we will follow, as a first approximation, a three stage schema. This division, which has been noted elsewhere[1], corresponds to Traherne's self-conscious progression from "Innocence" to "Felicity". Thus he writes in the Third Century:

> I was a little Stranger which at my Enterance
> into the World was Saluted and Surrounded with
> innumerable Joys. My Knowledge was Divine. I
> knew by Intuition those things which since my
> Apostasie, I Collected again, by the Highest
> Reason.
>
> (CIII, 2)

Three "stages" are clearly implied here: pre-"Apostasie", "Apostasie", and post-"Apostasie". The first two stages, moreover, are known only from the perspective of the third stage. This is to say, in the first instance, that we can know the first stage only as Traherne interprets it for us from the third. Secondly, Traherne's self-interpretation is structured by the third stage. For it is as a re-collection of "the Highest Reason" that the first stage and its "Intuitions" continue to be. Yet the text allows us to distinguish a first stage "as such", an objectification of experience distinctive from the categories under which the third stage is expressed. This is because the text itself represents a fusion of horizons, the fusion of the original intuition and its re-collection.

> My very Ignorance was Advantageous. I seemed
> as one Brought into the Estate of Innocence.
> All Things were Spotles and Pure and Glorious:
> yea, and infinitely mine, and Joyful and Precious.
> (CIII, 2)

The interpretation of the first stage as an "Estate of Innocence" is possible only in virtue of the particular self-interpretation which distinguishes the third stage or what for Traherne is the Estate of Glory. Likewise, one should not uncritically assume that the "Eternity" "Manifest in the Light of Day" (CIII, 3) or the transport or Joy of the experience can be identified with the experience articulated under the third stage.

Salter notes[2] the first stage is dominated by the idea of possession:

> ...All the World was mine, and I the only
> Spectator and Enjoyer of it. I knew no
> Churlish Properties, nor Bounds nor Divisions:
> but all Properties and Divisions were mine....

The lack of bounds implies there is neither sense of self nor sense of possession, despite the repeated references to the "I" as "Spectator", which implies the opposite.

For as spectator we see and objectify, separate the thing from ourselves and relate it to ourselves again in some manner. In the original intuition under the first stage Traherne is unaware of the most basic distinctions or limits; he is unaware, in particular, of time and death. This is not to say however, that the original intuition can be described as dominated by the idea of possession. "I knew not" says Traherne, "that they [living creatures] were Born or should Die. But all things abided Eternaly as they were in their Proper Places". (CIII, 3)

The eternity of things here consists in their seeming to stay as they are where they are. They are not possessed, for to be possessed they must be moved from what they first were, from themselves and their proper places.

The importance of this arises in determining the nature of the third stage, which is our ultimate concern. This stage, however, can be understood only in reference to the first two, which brought it about:

> ...I was corrupted; and made to learn the
> Dirty Devices of this World, Which now I
> unlearn, and becom as it were a little
> Child again, that I may enter into the
> Kingdom of GOD (CIII, 3).

This passage culminates a section which deals entirely with the unity manifested to the child in his world, its freedom from death and division. (In fact the "possession" of the child seems to follow from these characteristics). Thus the third stage is the attempt to recapture the unity of the first.

Traherne does not seem to distinguish sufficiently between the unity of the first stage and that of the adult[3], between a unity that is simply given and one that is the result of the soul's activity. The nature of this activity will become clearer below. This activity can be defined precisely as an attempt to regain the initial unity. We must ask, even if Traherne does not, how this is possible, how this can be achieved, for only thereby are we led to an understanding of the third stage and the nature of Felicity in Traherne.

More than this is implied even at this point. For even as the final stage re-structures the first in its re-collection, so the intuitions of the first stage will determine the direction of the "Reason" of the third. Thus the third stage, and Felicity, is characterized not simply by unity, or unity with God, but in particular, by the idea of unity with the world. The original unity cannot be re-constituted, but, as we shall see, a certain idea of it can. Furthermore this idea of the world as much determines the relationship to God in the third stage as the structures of this stage modify the original intuitions in re-collection.

We must oppose this interpretation to that of Grant[4], which is useful and illuminating in many respects, but which is faulted by its formalistic approach to the question of the central movement of Traherne's thought. But before proceeding to a criticism of Grant's method we will outline the basic characteristics of the "Estate of Innocence" which help to distinguish Traherne from much of orthodox Christianity.

We have already noted the innocent ignorance which is characteristic of the child in the first stage. Traherne seems to imply that Adam was of similiar child-like innocence before his fall (CIII, 1). This is in conflict with the traditional Augustinian doctrine that Adam was fully matured and responsible[5]. The consequences of the Fall, moreover, are not a predilection to evil but "merely" sin and death[6], which we have already characterized in a non-theological manner as disunity. The cause of the Fall is society itself. With the

recovery of the soul to itself

> ...Casual and Accidental Riches invented
> since the fall would be gone, and only those
> Things appear, which did to Adam in Paradice,
> in the same Light...Evry Man naturally seeing
> those Things, to the Enjoyment of which Life
> is Naturaly Born (CIII, 5).

How was the "first Light" eclipsed?

> Truly by the Customs and maners of Men which
> like Contary Winds blew it out: by an in-
> numerable company of other objects, rude vulgar
> and Worthless Things that like so many loads of
> Earth and Dung did over whelm and Bury it.
> (CIII, 7)

The powers of the soul must be freed from the prejudices of society, from "the yellow jaudice [which] will not let a Man see those objects truly that are before it" (CIII, 5). Sin - covetousness, fraud, envy, malice - sin in all its manifestations "proceed[s] from the corruption of men and their mistake in the chois of Riches" (CI, 33). Sin is the failure to value true riches - the sun, stars, the beauty and colour of life in all its forms - and to dote instead on rare and artificially created treasures as the supreme value. Sin therefore, appears as misvaluation and arises out of a social context[7].

The nature of the Fall and of sin itself, determines the possibility and form of redemption. Thus there is a relationship between the lack of severity of the Fall in Traherne and the fact that he appears to favour the redemption of man through his own activity.

> Infinit Wants Satisfied Produce infinit joys...
> The Desire Satisfied is a Tree of Life...I must

> lead you out of this, into another World,
> to learn your Wants. For till you find
> them you will never by Happy. Wants
> themselves being sacred Occasions and Means
> of Felicitie.
>
>   (CI, 43)
>   (Traherne's italics)

Through the projection of Wants, desire, and the satisfaction of them from out of oneself, through one's love, the self will become as a God(CII, 51).

On the laws of the personal tendencies in Traherne's thought Grant develops a correlation with the early church Father Irenaeus[8]. Grant holds that the Irenean theology-anthropology is a fundamental building block of Traherne's theology and the one necessary to explain the unity of his thought. The formal relationship of doctrines is thus held to be the key factor in understanding the work. Thus, working from a similiar structure in Irenaeus Grant wishes to explain the active ethic of self-expansion in the world characteristic of Traherne on the basis of a theory of Adam and the Fall. Perhaps most fundamentally this attempt ignores the historicity of both texts and the philosophic changes which have taken place over this interval[9]. Of this we will have more to say as we proceed. Furthermore, and especially when one assumes their historical homogeneity, the formal relationship of doctrines does not really draw anything into question; it doesn't reopen the question of why Traherne should understand as he did, why his questioning should open the particular horizon it did rather than some other. Thus we should not interpret the ethic of self-expansion on the basis of a theory

of the Fall, where this latter acts as formal cause, but the
relationship of formal doctrines is to be understood in
reference to its non-formal ground. So the theory of the
Fall as it emerges in Traherne, is referred back to the
ethic of self-expansion where this ethic itself has no further
doctrinal basis but must be understood as what emerges out
of the relationship of the self to its ground. This ground
is revealed in the text and through the conflicts within
the text.

Part B

(i) Listening and the Questioning Attitude

The collapse of the unity of the first stage is signalled in Century III, three, by the "discovery" of death and division. Only with this collapse is it possible that the soul should become aware of the other and thus enter into true relationship with it. At first this awareness is simply of a thing unknown:

> ...I hav found, that Things unknown have a
> Secret Influence on the Soul; and like the
> Centre of the Earth unseen, violently Attract
> it. We lov we know not what: and therefore
> evry Thing allures us.
> (CI, 2)

The thing unknown referred to here is undifferentiated: it is simply the other, the unknown totality. Yet it simultaneously manifests itself in individual things, which are likewise unknown. In contrast to the first stage the soul is aware of their division from itself, is aware of them as separate and possibly alien entities. This raises the question of how the relation will be constituted or of what its characteristics will be.

> All things were well in their Proper Places,
> I alone was out of frame and had needed to be
> Mended... I was withdrawn from all Endeavors
> of Altering and Mending Outward Things. They
> lay so well methoughts, they could not be
> Mended: but I must be Mended to Enjoy them.
> (CIII, 60)

What we wish to emphasize here is not the particular content (the doctrine of "being in frame") which we will consider below, but the understanding the passage indicates of the evident need to let things be, of the need to listen to and

adapt oneself to things as they are in themselves. This
letting of things be in their true otherness places the self
in question:

> Being alone in the field, when all things were
> dead and quiet, a certain Want and Horror fell
> upon me, beyond imagination. The unprofitableness
> and Silence of the Place dissatisfied me, its
> Wideness terrified me, from the utmost Ends of
> the Earth fears surrounded me.
>
> (CIII, 23)

This is expressed even more succinctly in the poem "Solitude"

> Ye sullen Things!
> Ye dumb, ye silent Creatures, and unkind!
> How can I call you Pleasant Springs
> Unless ye eas my Mind!
> Will ye not speak
> What 'tis I want, nor Silence break?
>
> ˉ . . . ˉ
>
> They silent stood
> Nor Earth, nor Woods, nor Hills, nor Brooks, nor
> Skies,
> Would tell me where the hidden Good,
> Which I did long for, lies;
> The shady Trees,
> The Ev'ning dark, the humming Bees,
> The chirping Birds, mute Springs and Fords, conspire,
> To give no Answer unto my Desire.
>
> (ll. 41-46; 49-56)

In the poem the reason for the horror the soul experiences
emerges from the "silence" of things. The soul questions
the things, which is to say it tries and tests them in order to
obtain an answer. Their refusal to answer, their withdrawal,
causes the soul to fall back upon itself separated from the
withdrawing and vanishing things by a horror and emptiness.
Yet it is precisely the questioning itself, and the desire of
the soul for an answer, that causes the things to withdraw. In
this instance we see that it is the things that must be "mended"

while the soul defines the nature of the allurement they must
have to answer its questioning. Yet if the things will not
answer of themselves the soul must search a way to make them
answer, it will look

> To Hev'n' from whence som little sense I might
> To help my Mind receiv, and find som Light.
> ("Solitude", ll. 71-72)

Here the image of the listening soul, waiting for an answer
is replaced by the image of a mind illuminating and discovering
things for itself. Thus the refusal of things to answer is
grasped as evidence of their negativity, their "deadness"
(CIII, 60), which must be overcome by the activity of the soul
itself.

(ii) Power and the Abyss

We have been using the terms "soul" and "mind"
interchangeably, but now we shall see how Traherne distinguishes
them and what the significance of this distinction is.

> The Soul of Man is the immutable essence, or
> form of his Nature, unimployed. His power of
> Reasoning is alive even then when it is quiet
> and unactive; and this is his Soul.
> (CE pp. 231-2)

That the form, or the essence,of the soul of man is
reason is, of course, traditional doctrine. Traherne implies
in this passage that the only power of the soul of man is
reason and that this reason may be active or passive. A
possibility we wish to leave open however, is that the power
of the soul of man need not be restricted to reason. How
"reason" is to be defined will emerge below (section C). Our

concern in this section is to show that a sense of "power" is
implied in Traherne which cannot be defined as reason. This
is simply the power of man to listen to things and to let them
appear to him. This sense of power is more fundamental than
the power of reason and is its ground. In Traherne this sense
of power, although present, is suppressed. Thus he immediately
defines the power of the soul in reference to mind:

> So that the mind is the Soul exerting its
> power in such an act [of Good or Evil]...
> A great Soul is Magnanimous in _Effect_, a
> _Mind_ applyed to mighty Objects.
>
> (CE p. 232)
> (Traherne's italics)

The sense in which the mind is an "act" applied to
"objects" will receive close attention below (section C).

In the following passage power, and power in act, are
again closely related:

> I see Nature itself teaching me Religion: And
> by the admirable Contexture of the Powers of
> my Soul, and their fitness for all Objects and
> Ends, by the incomparable Excellency of the
> Laws prescribed, and the worthiness and Beauty
> of all the Objects for which my powers are
> prepared, see plainly, that I am infinitely
> Beloved.
>
> (CE pp. 219)

In this case, in contrast to the poem "Silence", the questioning
which has been put to the world of things has found with success;
the world is answerable to laws and to the idea of beauty.
Having passed the test of these criteria Nature can be referred
to the questioner again who now seizes upon it as a proof of
the validity of his powers. Nature must exhibit a fitness to
respond to the questioner, which is to say, the question will
determine the nature of the response. Thus the question put

assures the questioner he is "Beloved". At the same time
however, in order to receive any response at all, the questioner
must be responsive to the world, must be open to the world
before he can question.

In the poem "My Spirit" this openness appears
literally as a "capacity" or an "abyss" which is nothing it-
self - but which is yet the something, the power which lets
things appear to the soul and which acts as the ground of its
thought.

> My Essence was Capacity.
> That felt all things;
> The thought that springs
> There - from's its Self...
> being Simple, like the Deity
> In its own center is a Sphere,
> Not limited, but evry-where.
> (ll. 8-11; 15-17)

Traherne calls the soul "a pure substantial Light"

> A Deep Abyss
> That sees and is
> The only Proper Place or Bower of Bliss.
> (ll. 77-79)

The soul is both a capacity or abyss and an instrument of
sight and thought. It is both the power of emptiness, the
simple space which allows objects to show themselves and the
activity which illuminates:

> My naked simple Life was I:
>   That Act so strongly shin'd
> Upon the Earth, the Sea, the Sky,
>   It was the Substance of the Mind.
> (ll. 1-4)

The "thought" "springs" from the abyss. The abyss stands open
to the world so that the world may be illuminated by thought.

Traherne's "capacity" is undoubtedly derived from the
Aristotelian "potentiality" and much of his terminology is, in
general, of Scholastic origin[10]. This is not the essential
issue however, for what is at stake is the movement of the
thought itself expressed in conflicts and hesitations revealed
in the text. One cannot assume a continuity of thought merely
on the basis of similiar or even identical terminology[11]. On
the other hand neither can one properly relegate this term-
inology to meaninglessness and seize upon isolated elements as
evidence of a writer's a-historical, eternal "individuality"[12].
For what is unique in an author is revealed precisely in his
response to his historicity, in the manner in which he responds
to the moment of his suspension between past and future.
Traherne's understanding of this moment, and thus the mode of
questioning he imposes is not uniform.

We have seen therefore, that the text opens the
possibility of a recognition of the being of things through
the simple power of the abyss. In the same poem the conflict
between this power and the power, which, in contrast, searches
out and illuminates is articulated as follows:

> I could not tell,
> Whether the Things did there
> Themselvs appear,
> Which in my Spirit _truly_ seemed to dwell;
> Or whether my conforming Mind
> Were not alone even all that shind.
> (ll. 46-51)
> (Traherne's italics)

The tendency in this poem is nonetheless strongly
in favour of the Light of the mind, which causes objects to

conform to it, while the power of receptivity, is in contrast, suppressed. The insight that the abyss is a positive power, and not mere negativity or the deadness of withdrawing things, does not come into its own.

> His [God's] Love moved him to create the World, and the principal End for which it was made, is the Glory of the Creator in the Felicity of his Creatures.
>
> (CE p. 41)

In this passage the positive value of the world is implied, although the precise nature of "world" remains unclear. Can we consider the "world" as the open space which is prior to the activity of the soul and which allows the soul to come to itself? For it is through the world that the creature is to gain his Felicity. Yet does the world in Traherne emerge as an opening which allows things to be in their fullness? Or does the opening lose its sense of a creative power and become simply a "space" which is no more than a vacuity and a void?

(iii) God and the Spatial Characterization of the World

This question must be referred, not merely to things in the world, or even to the world itself, but to the ground of the world. The ground of the world, as Being, is not to be identified with the totality of all beings; likewise if Being is taken as one with God, God must qualitatively transcend the totality of the world. What we have been considering above, as possible modes of relating to the world are, as modes of human being, possibilities of relation to Being, or

God. An elucidation of the relationship to Being, or God, will in turn clarify the relation of the soul to the world and to things.

We have seen that the world may be considered an opening, a positive power, which stands in reciprocal relation to the openness of the soul, expressed as a "capacity" or "abyss". Alternatively the world may only be a void, and the abyss nothing, a space which is only there to be "filled". The world is "filled" in that withdrawing and silent things are illuminated and re-ordered by the light of the questioner as the "thought" which recaptures the receding entities and casts them in their "proper places". This attitude we opposed to a thinking which is a listening reponse to things in themselves, a response to the appearance or self-illumination of things.

A further consideration of the relationship of these two attitudes, therefore, is possible by reference to the way in which God is grasped as the ground of the world. An analysis of some of the central passages of the Centuries will elucidate the relationship of God and the world under the mode of love. What is the nature of this relationship? Is the love of God in the world an expression of his Being, his activity and formal causality in the world? This seems to be the case in a number of passages. For example, in Century II,39, Traherne writes:

> By loving He is what He is Infinite Love. GOD
> is not a mixt and compounded Being, so that
> His Love is one thing and Himself another; but
> the most pure and simple of all Being, all Act,
> and pure Love in the abstract... and all His
> creatures are of Him, in whom they are infinitely
> delighted and Blessed and Glorious.

In this passage the Scholastic senses of the terminology are prominent[13]. The Unity of God in Himself is given as Love. God is the Source and the end of the world: in this manner the doctrine of Being in its traditional sense[14] is expressed under the mode of Love. The Unity and Simplicity which is God is the perfection of Being, towards which all things tend, in which they are "Blessed". The theory of the will implied here, which philosophically justifies man's desire for God, received its consummate expression in the work of Marsilio Ficino. Likewise Ficino offered Traherne one of many traditional sources for a theory of human being which finds man's completion in God.

In the passage above, the word "act" is used in its ontological sense. The act of God upholds the world and He is the intrinsic cause of its being: this is implied by saying "all His creatures are of Him in whom they are infinitely delighted". Through God's act matter, which possesses merely the possibility of being, comes into being. Because God produces all being and because He is the intrinsic cause of all being, it is said God is "infinite act".

In the following passage a number of key questions concerning "infinity" come into focus:

> Few will believe the soul to be infinite: yet
> Infinite [infinity] is the first Thing which
> is naturally Known. Bounds and Limits are
> Discerned only in a Secondary manner...but In-
> finity we know and feel by our Souls: and
> feel it so naturaly, as if it were the very
> Essence and Being of the Soul. The truth of
> it is, It is individualy in the Soul: for
> GOD is there, and more near to us than we to

> our selvs. So that we cannot feel our Souls,
> but we must feel Him, in that first of
> Properties infinit Space.
>
> (CII, 81)

The soul intuitively knows itself as infinite. In so knowing itself it knows God as infinite space. How does the soul know itself as infinite? The soul is infinite in its desire, its will: its "understanding" is an "infinite space" (CII, 82).

Commensurate to the infinite treasures of space is the soul "infinite to see and enjoy them" (CII, 83). The space of the soul itself "when extended through but empty space" is "very dark, and deformed and empty" unless the world is made to "serve" it in beautifying and filling it with amiable ideas" (CII, 84).

In knowing the world, in re-presenting ideas of it to itself, the soul serves God as well as itself.

> For He who Delights not in Lov makes vain
> the Universe, and is of Necessity to Him-
> self the Greatest Burden.
>
> (CII, 65)

The soul sanctifies the universe for God. Unless the soul re-present the world to itself in its inner space, the creation of God becomes a vain thing. Clearly God himself is then already fled from the world. As long as God is the ground of the being of the world and its continuous or intrinsic cause it is necessarily linked to Him and retains in itself a re-flected value[15]. But this is no longer the case. For now God is served in that the soul serves and redeems itself. For we know

>Life without objects is sensible emptiness
>and that is greater misery than Death or
>Nothing.
>
>   (CII, 62)

How is this misery to be avoided? By the activity of the soul,
or rather, as we determined previously, of the mind. Thus one's
soul can escape a dark and deformed world, a sensible emptiness,
only by making the world its object. Furthermore, in this
manner the inner and outer "spaces"[16], the soul and God, are
redemmed simultaneously by a single activity.

Let us return to the passage from Century II, 81,
to see how this relates to the question of "space". In the
same section Traherne continues the argument by stating that
of all things only infinite space is "the first and more
necessarily known". The world can be annihilated in thought
but infinite space remains. Conversely, infinite space is
the presupposition of the world. We have seen that the in-
finity of the soul resides in the infinity of its understanding:
this is its infinite space. The infinity of the understanding,
in turn, is expressed in its objects, or in the process of re-
presenting things to itself in its inner light:

>For the value of the Objects, imputes a Lustre
>and Higher value to the Light [of the Under-
>standing) wherein they are enjoyed... GOD
>himself and his holy Angels are Objects of
>the Understanding.
>
>   (CE p. 38)

Thus the soul's intuition of its infinity is its intuition of
the apriority of the mind's power to objectify as the pre-
supposition of the being of the world. For if the world is
to present itself it can appear to the mind only as object.

When this is not the case, when the world is not objectified
and when things are not subjected to a testing questioning,
they are apprehended merely as withdrawing, and are present
only in their absence. When this occurs the world in its
withdrawal engenders a horror and a deep anxiety. This is
the ultimate meaning of the passages in which Traherne speaks
of the "deadness" or "valuelessness" of the world in this
state. This anxiety is the fundamental phenomenon in Traherne,
the basis of the movement into the dominant third stage, which
he calls his "Felicity"[17].

The two possible attitudes towards the being of
things which we have considered find their ground in the ground-
lessness of existential anxiety. For in the final analysis
anxiety in Traherne is structurally related to the first stage
and comes into being with the collapse of unity and the dis-
covery of division and death. This is to say that anxiety
always exists, as the primary fundamentum for, as we noted,
the structure of the first stage is determined from the third -
it is an idealization.

Anxiety therefore, is the law of both modes of being.
On the one hand it opens the possibility of a true relationship
to the being of things. On the other hand anxiety is the basis
of the constant, unceasing activity of the subject. This
activity is specifically that of objectivizing or categorizing
things for what remains uncategorized is yet present as a
threat to the system. Therefore it must be subsumed if the

abyss, which is closed by unceasing activity, is not to open again.

Anxiety opens the soul itself as the abyss. It reveals the unity of the soul and the world in the abyss, in Being, or as Traherne would say, in God. This unity is the ground of the activity of the soul among beings. Thus reason itself is based on the openness of the abyss. In the activity of objectifying however, awareness of the abyss as ground is lost. The nature of this activity will be defined in section C.

In Century II, 81, we saw that the infinity of the mind's activity is identified with an intuition of the infinity of God in space.

> ...we cannot feel our Souls, but we must
> feel Him, in that first of Properties,
> infinite Space.

The attribute of God which nature exemplifies is infinity as infinite _space_. As _such_ God is the presupposition of the material world. This should be clearly distinguished from the infinity of God as Being, or as the infinite intrinsic cause of all things. God is said in Traherne to be "present" with all objects in infinite space (CII, 84). His infinity is constituted as knowing _subject_, that is on an epistemological rather than an ontological level. In the following passage God acts as subject of an infinite object:

> Infinity of Space is like a Painters Table,
> prepared for the Ground and field of those
> Colours that are to be laid thereon. Look
> how great he intends the Picture, so Great
> doth he make the Table. It would be an
> Absurditie to leave it unfinished, or not
> to fill it.
>
> (CV, 5)

As subject God orders the perfect arrangement of his creatures
to form a perfect "Picture". The construction exists for the
"Ey" for the sake of which it must be full for "to leave any
part of it Naked and bare, and void of Beauty, would render
the whole ungratefull" to the aesthetic sense of the perceiver.
In this case the eye acts as the arranging instrument of the
mind of the subject in which the thing is an idea or picture.
This should not be confused with the Platonic theory however[18].

We will consider the aesthetic metaphor in greater
detail below (Part C. (iii) c) but what I want to consider at
this point is the sense in which "space" appears. Although
the abyss is identified with the soul in Traherne and we have
referred to the withdrawing of things as the opening of the
abyss, it is primarily represented in the space image. As
such space has a dual value: it represents the ground or
presupposition of the world which is itself ungrounded, that
is, Being or God. This sense has been elucidated above.
Secondly space is an image of the void, the nothingness which
must be filled. In this case God is not identified with space
but he stands as a subject over against the void and fills it
with objects. He creates a picture out of the desolation.
The same function accrues to the human subject and it is in
this case, as we have noted, that the sense of the abyss as
ultimate ground is suppressed. As such, however, space serves
as image not only of the ground of world, that is, as it images
the relation to Being, but it also stands for, and in place of,
the world itself. Therefore, as we shall see in greater detail

below, the nature of the world is determined from the nature of space, i.e., as extension. Furthermore, the ground or Being of the world cannot remain undetermined by the nature of the world as such. Since space as it images the world is simply extension and since space also stands for Being or God, the danger arises that God will simply be dissolved into the space of the world, into extension. This danger is greatest where, as in Traherne, God is approached through the activity of the soul in the world. Alternatively, God may be identified with the ground as the ungroundable, that is, the abyss, in opposition to what, as spatial extension is capable of calculation. Although a genuine sense of this possibility exists in Traherne, it represents a road not taken, a future road[19]. But now it is our task to examine in detail the road Traherne did take.

Part C

(1)

a. Introduction

In the history of Western thought the conception of
the relationship between God, or Ultimate Reality, and the
existing world of change and shadows, holds a crucial and
widely influential place. On the one hand, in the tradition
deriving above all from Plato's Timaeus, the realm of becoming
is exhibited as necessarily existing, or as implied in what
truly is - the Ideas themselves. The lower world is thus said
to come into existence through the activity of a God who expresses
his "goodness" in the propagation of being in all its possible
forms. A God who refrained from activity would be "envious"
and deficient in goodness[20]. Therefore the existence of all
possible beings at all times is implicit in the divine order
and every fact of existence has its roots in that order.

On the other hand God is conceived as self-sufficient
and as having no necessary relation to the world. This conception
is present in both Plato and Aristotle. Lovejoy writes in this
respect that the Unmoved Mover of Aristotle

> is no world-ground; his nature and existence do
> not explain why the other things exist, why there
> are just so many of them, why the modes and degrees
> of their declension from the divine perfection are
> so various.[21]

As such the created world becomes a groundless superfluity,
created by an unaccountable exercise of God's freedom. Thus
Milton writes:

- 24 -

> No need that thou
> Shouldst propagate, already infinite;
> And through all numbers absolute, though One.[22]

Generally speaking, in the Middle Ages the concept
of a self-contained unmoved God is dominant - which is not to
say that the other tendency did not co-exist with it - and in
the Renaissance the emanationist God rises ascendent[23]. For
example Robert Fludd (1574 - 1637) holds that in God it is
the property

> of the dark Nothing or deformed abyss...
> naturally to rest, and not to act or
> operate[24]

This property is present in the same God with the property of
light, "heat" and the activity of emanation. As Lovejoy notes,
Fludd in effect unites God and Devil; what is significant
however is that God's self-containment is now the diabolical
principle[25].

We find Traherne to be in agreement with Fludd and
more prominent Renaissance thinkers in this matter:

> Removing his Love we remove all the Properties
> and Effects of his Essence, and are utterly
> unable to conceive any Idea of his Godhead. For
> his Power, tho it be Almighty, yet if it be Dead
> and idle is fruitless and Deformed. Idle Power is
> not the Essence of the Deity, but a meer Privation
> and Vacuity...
>
> (CE p. 51)

Traherne adds that the reason of the world is
"founded in Love", which is to say the world is necessarily
related to God in his essence. Our duty to love God is founded
on the same ground; but were the creation a caprice the world
would be of doubtful value and we exempted from gratitude.

Yet this is not the central issue which concerns us at this point. For why is God, or Being, in itself, as <u>ground</u> of the world, conceived a vacuity? Why must Being be actualized in activity? We cannot investigate these questions by mapping out the abyss itself for Traherne does not enter into it; feeling the gulf open under him he worked to close it, to build as it were, a "sphere" around it. So we must turn to the activity of the spirit, the Divine spirit in its manifestations and the human spirit itself. It is thus pertinent to turn to the Cambridge Platonists, with whom Traherne likely had some peripheral contact[26], because here the central issue, the reconstruction of the traditional relationship of God to the world, is carried out. The <u>basis</u> of this enterprise is the dualism of Descartes and it is to this we will first turn.

b. <u>Spirit and Extension in the Cambridge Platonists</u>

The Cambridge Platonists felt that perhaps the greatest threat to their Christian belief was posed by the atheistic materialism of Hobbes[27]. This forced them, and particularly More, into rather strange alliances. For in order to refute Hobbes, More is willing to grant the primacy of extension. Whatever is must be extended, but this does not imply, More argues, that only or even primarily matter is defined by extension. So More advances the strange notion spirit itself is extended, that in order to be it must <u>be</u> somewhere[28].

The primacy of extension - in regard to matter - derives from Descartes[29]; but the reception of this notion is not uniform

and it is instructive to see how Cudworth differs from More on
the relation of matter and spirit. In the first instance Cud-
worth thinks Descartes has performed a great service against
"atomic atheism" in demonstrating the <u>limitations</u> of matter
and reducing it to motion and extension. For in the same
instance the necessity of mind is demonstrated[30]. This demon-
stration of Descartes' is vastly preferable to

> that other philosophy which brings in a dark
> unintelligible matter that is nothing and
> everything....

and which produces "substantial forms and sensitive souls"
and thus perhaps rational souls as well[31]. Here Cudworth
appears willing to abandon nature - the world - to the realm
of matter and the science of mechanics[32] in order to safeguard
the independence of the spirit. Facilitating this division and
the necessity of spirit is the contention that what is simply
extension can neither move itself or explain the intricate
causal relationships of things in the world[33]. In this respect
Cudworth simply follows Descartes, who wrote More in August,
1649[34] that the amount of motion in the Universe is initially
imparted to it by God and preserved at that level.

Where Cudworth departs importantly from Descartes,
however, is on the nature of spirit itself. In the final
analysis, motivated by strong Plotinean sympathies as well as
the task of establishing a relationship between the Christian
God and his creation, Cudworth cannot abandon the world to the
science of mechanics. To do so would be to grant the Leviathan at
least partial validity. Descartes, we recall, defines the soul

as follows:

> Precisely speaking, I am nothing other than
> a thing which thinks, that is a mind, an
> understanding or a reason.[35]

Cudworth's basic dualism however is not between mind, or

conscious thought and senseless matter but between force

and matter.

Everything that can exert force, to move itself or

something else, is spiritual, but not necessarily mental and

conscious[36]. As we shall see below, this doctrine allows the

world to be unified, in a manner, with spirit through the

activity of a "plastic nature".

Returning now to More we can understand his "extended

spirit" as the activity of spiritual substance in the world

exerting force on matter. As does Traherne, More believes the

power of a spirit is where its action is:

> If a Spirit be somewhere, it necessarily
> follows that it also be extended. And they
> moreover grant, that by its Operation it is
> present to or in Matter, and that the
> Essence of a Spirit is not separated from
> its operations.[37]

Like Cudworth More denies that spirit can be defined simply

and abstractly as thought, for thought, including the thought

or mind of God, always acts on some matter[38]. God is where

his operation is, in matter, and did God not operate he were

no-where. In this way More seems to think of even God's self-

reflection as self-movement on the analogy of material move-

ment[39]. Those who accept the reality of spirit yet place it

"no-where", that is, separate spirit from its necessary action

in the world, More calls "Nullibests" of whom the "chief
author and leader" is that "pleasant Wit" Descartes[40]. In
effect the "Nullibests" make God a nullity.

More's doctrine then, fundamentally parallels
Cudworths . More radicalizes the new thinking, however, in
placing God in inextricable relation to physical extension by
identifying God in his essence with absolute space. This will
be done   below (Section (iii) d).

The doctrine of the Spirit of Nature in More[41] and
that of the "plastic nature" in Cudworth are both attempts to
re-establish the Great Chain of Being and the necessary re-
lation of God and world through a type of emanation theory.
Thus Cudworth holds that if the world were a fortuitous
mechanism God would be an "idle spectator", his "wisdom in-
significant" and "shut up in his own breast"[42]. This is almost
a verbal echo of Traherne. The plastic nature serves as
intermediary between God and Nature. For God to be concerned
in the motion of every atom is demeaning to him; alternatively,
the Cartesian view that the laws of nature should execute them-
selves as a semi-autonomous mechanical system Cudworth finds
"absurd and ridiculous". What is merely material is not even
capable of action at a distance ; it plainly cannot of itself
form a harmonious system[43]. The plastic nature therefore
"drudgingly executes" the regular motions of matter. It does
not act electively. It is supertended by a higher providence[44].

The fact that Cudworth consciously places himself in
the Platonic tradition[45] cannot conceal the fact that his

philosophy (and More's) proceeds from fundamentally different premises. The world being constituted as extension is fundamentally alien both to God and man. The world is an alien substance with no true relation to spirit. In the Platonic philosophy of Marsilio Ficino, for example, the world is constituted and upheld through God's self-reflection on his aspects, or Ideas. In Cudworth in contrast the world is still fundamentally extension despite the fact a hierarchy of spiritual forces _moves_ and _orders_ it. More's "solution" of merging God into the extension of the world only exposes the radical weakness of his position and opens God himself to quantification. In both cases we are faced with an attempt to recover the world for God, and for human beings as godly kings.

The process that the philosophy of the Platonists describes on a cosmic scale takes place in Traherne on an individual scale. For in Traherne the salvation, the Felicity, of the individual can only be achieved in that he "redeems" the world for God. This process of redemption, is, first of all, based on the premise of a fundamental division. Secondly, it assumes the soul, as such, divided and alienated from the world has the _power_ to engage in the activity of redemption.

In the case of the Platonists as well as Traherne, therefore, the activity of God is necessarily postulated, not only in the world's creation, but preeminently in the world's recovery. The creation itself, that is, the world as extension - is merely a dead thing which must be retrieved. As such what is

of concern is not God's founding power, this power of Being,
but his moving and ordering power. Similarly man, who
stands in the image of God must re-represent the lost, dead
world to himself in order to recover it. But before we turn
to an examination of the basis of the soul's activity we will
complete those reflections on the general characteristics of
human and Divine activity which began this Part.

c. Human Activity and God

That "Negative Contentment" Traherne writes, "is not
at all conducive to Felicity, but is a real Vice . It shuts
up the Soul in a Grave, and makes it to lead a living Death,
and robs it of all its objects"(CE p. 217). Here Traherne
turns against the traditional ideal of separation from the
world which mirrored the conception of a self-sufficient
God[46]. "True contentment" writes Traherne "is the full satis-
faction of a knowing Mind".

> Without his Treasures no man's Soul can be,
> Nor rest content Uncrown'd!
>> (CE pp. 217; 218)

Our treasures are in the world which we must learn
to value if God's plan and will is to be fulfilled. God

> does desire Love from us because his Wisdom very
> well knows that without Love the World would be
> in vain, and the End of the Creation frustrated.
>> (CE p. 56)

This makes God in a measure dependent upon man.
In fact God can be himself in his fullness, as creator, only
through man; and as man becomes fully himself by learning to
value the world so God is fulfilled in his purposes as Creator.

For insofar as the world is unvalued it is a dead and alien
thing in no essential relation to God. This view should be
contrasted to that of Aquinas, who holds the creation is not
made solely for man nor is it dependent upon him[47]. The
traditional doctrine that man is made in the image of God is
transformed on this basis.

> You must Want like a GOD, that you may be
> Satisfied like GoD. Were you not made in
> His Image?
>
> (CI, 44)

> But the End of all is, that Thou mightest be
> as GoD is: a Joy and Blessing by being Lov.
> (CII, 51)

Man is, indeed, a joy and blessing to God himself
and both together, man and God, cause the world to fully be.

> The Power of God is its own End
>
> because it did all that it might not be Idle,
> but Power exerting itself.
> (CE p. 58)

Were God to be "idle" he would, in any case, no longer be God.
Man, in the image of God must likewise act to be; but what of
man - is his power for the sake of power, that he might not
be idle? What draws man into the void and impels him to fill
it: the desire to become God or the fear of being man? Or
does man project God into nothing and then seek to become
what he projects in order to close the abyss at his feet?
Perhaps the abyss opens when "God" is projected and yet closes
simultaneously as the projection of God is also the attempt
to become God.

According to Descartes it is principally because of the infinite will which is in us that we can say we are made in God's image[48]. In what follows we will investigate the laws of man's activity in the world in his will and his desire.

(iii)

a. Introduction

Our perfection, Traherne writes, lies in our Power of knowing being transformed into act, such that all objects "appear in the interior light of our own understanding" (CE p. 37). By our act things appear and it is only by appearing that things are. A perfect act of knowledge is "Power exerted". In this formulation it is the power of the mind which makes things appear or come to be. This recalls, on the one hand, Traherne's distinction from Marsilio Ficino, where "act" is still used in its ontological sense as God's power to make things be. For Traherne, "act" is the activity of a knowing subject, and things are only in reference to that subject. On the other hand, Traherne is in essential agreement with Descartes that the soul and the mind are identical (See above Part B (ii)).

In reference to the soul, which always thinks[49], (in the broad sense which Descartes assigns to this term to include sensing, imagining, etcetera), Descartes distinguishes between "two sorts of thoughts"

> (Of which the first is its actions, i.e., its
> volitions, the other its passions...which com-
> prise all kinds of perceptions), the former
> are absolutely in its power and can be changed

only indirectly by the body, while the latter,
on the contrary, depend absolutely on the
actions which produce them, and they can be
changed only indirectly by the soul.[50]

Descartes distinguishes between active and passive
as the difference between volition and the passivity of the mind
under the action of the physical system. Volition, as active,
is further opposed to perception or understanding.[51] In refer-
ence to the essential affinity of Descartes and Traherne,
however, we do not take "action" in this sense but as the sub-
ject's activity in the world, as grounded in the subject. For
Descartes things are known "in themselves" through the under-
standing, by reflection on innate ideas.[52] The activity of
the subject in the world is carried out on the basis of the ideas[53]
attained through critical self-reflection. The method of such
acts is analysis. Method, then, involves reducing

> obscure proportions step by step to those that
> are simpler, and then starting with the in-
> tuitive apprehension of all those that are
> absolutely simple, ...to ascend to the know-
> ledge of all others by precisely similar steps.[54]

What I wish to suggest is that the sense of act or
activity in Traherne is essentially Cartesian. This is not to
suggest, which is absurd, that Traherne is consciously following
the method of Descartes or that he has a method similar to
Descartes. Rather, the nature of the world in Traherne is
determined by a mode of mental activity which, by subjecting it

to "analysis" in a broad sense, reduces the world to a set of relations present and actual only as a "value" and an aesthetic object for the subject. This will be examined in greater detail below (Sec.iii.C). First however, we must consider the nature of the enabling basis of "act"; in Traherne this basis is articulated under the primacy of "self-love".

b. The Basis of Activity in Self-Love

"If we desire to glorifie God" Traherne writes,

or to please the Angels, or be grateful to men, it is because we love our selves and delight in our own Happiness, and conceit all those actions whereby we do so, either a Means, or a part of it.

(CE p. 28)

How is this to be understood in its fundamental sense? What structural or logical relations are implied here as relations between the self and the world? In posing the question in this way it should be clear we are not concerned with psychological complexes, or with explainations of how the ego rationalizes its perceptions. Rather, we wish to uncover the structural presuppositions of self-reflection in the particular historical case with which we are dealing, as it stands in essential unity with the fundamental movement of its time.

Traherne regards self-love as the "Basis of all Lov." "Had we not loved our selvs at all we could never hav been obliged to lov any thing."

But when we do lov our selvs, and self Lov is satisfied infinitely in all its Desires and possible Demands, then it is easily led to regard the Benefactor more than it self, and for his sake overflows abundantly to all others.

(C. IV, 55)

First of all, Traherne writes, self-love is the <u>basis</u>
of the love of all other things. "Love" in the Platonic tra-
dition in which Traherne is working refers to a unity of will
for the <u>good</u> and the desire for the <u>beautiful</u>.

> Love is not satisfied with human knowledge,
> because this knowledge is created and finite.
> The will rests only in the first and infinite
> good.[55]

In this passage from Marsilio Ficino "love" is the
unitary power which is the basis of the soul's upward striving
toward God as this is expressed in acts of knowledge. The will
is not independent of the intellect and the intellect is guided
by objective Ideas in its ascending contemplation toward God[56].
"Love" no longer has this sense in Traherne. This is evident
from our exposition of the sense of "Act" insofar as an act of
love (or knowledge) in Traherne is the <u>exerted</u> <u>power</u> by which we
make things appear to our own inner light (Part C ii a). Yet
"love" nevertheless retains its sense of "power" as the basis
of particular acts. Where "love" is the movement of act to the
"world" (whether defined as a hierarchy of Ideas or as that
which is made to appear in the inner light) "<u>self</u>-love" is the
movement of act toward the self, is therefore, self-apprehension.
The world is made dependent on the prior "basis" of self-love.
The world can come to be only on the basis of the subject and
<u>for</u> the subject, for the return of the self to itself - in
self-love - produces the "subject" as that which is the pre-
requisite for the appearance of a thing - more precisely, for
the appearance of an "object".

We have referred to "love" both as the basis, the enabling power, of particular acts and those acts, of apprehension and knowledge, themselves. "Self lov is the Basis of all Lov". In the second sense love refers to acts in the world. In practice these two moments cannot be distinguished for self-love must be "satisfied infinitly in all its Desires and possible Demands" and this satisfaction can only by obtained through Act, or extended power. For as we saw above a power which is not in act is not at all[57]. On the other hand self-love cannot be "satisfied infinitly" through "a due Employment of our Faculties"[58] without first being "satisfied" in its self-knowledge of itself as ground. In this sense self-love, where the subject and object of apprehension fall together, provides the ground of certainty for the world, that is, for the apprehension, or "enjoyment" of objects.

According to this "principle" of self-love, Traherne holds, God himself is to be "enjoyed" as "the fountain of infinit Treasures" (C IV, 49). The meaning of "enjoyment" will be considered more closely below but it is clear from what has been said thus far that "enjoyment" through the "power of act" refers to the self-realization of the soul through the apprehension of objects. God, on the one hand, facilitates this self-realization by being the "source" of objects. On the other hand "God himself and his holy Angels are Objects of the Understanding" (CE p. 38). By the principle of self-love, "infused" by God, we are able to love and enjoy the world and

God himself; and in recognizing God as the source of the
principle, as well as of the world, we are able to love him
"more than our selvs" (C IV, 49). Thus self-love, Traherne
argues, is overcome by self-love in the process of its
activity. In this process, as we hinted above (Sec. (i) c)
the self, or rather the principle of self love, which is
simply an enabling power, is the foundation of both "man" and
"God".

> But now there is an infinit Union between Him
> and us, He being infinitly Delightful to us
> and we to Him. For he infinitly Delighteth to
> see Creatures Act upon such Illustrious and
> Eternal Principles, in a maner so Divine Heroick,
> and most truly Blessed, and we delight in seeing
> Him giving us the Power.
>
> (C IV, 49)

The traditional language of this passage (Creatures,
"Eternal Principles") should not be allowed to obscure its
central movement. For the only "principle" with which Traherne
is concerned here is the principle of self-love, a principle
of infinite activity which requires the world and God himself
for its satisfaction. To say the principle is "infused" is
merely to say it is an innate power; on the other hand the
"union" of the self with God does not abrogate the principle
but is its "infinite" expression and triumph[59]. The union
of the principle or power of self-love with God unites the two
as the ground of the appearance of the world; and simultaneously
"God" becomes simply the infinite object, or an infinite limit
(see below sec. (iii) d).

c. The Cogito as Basis

The movement we have examined above can be explicated more precisely by reference to the cogito in Descartes. The cogito is the basis of the Cartesian "act" or analysis even as self-love is the basis in Traherne. The cogito ergo sum (I think, therefore I am) is the basis, the foundation on which Descartes seeks to re-erect the world after all other certainties have been stripped away by a process of methodical doubt. The cogito itself is absolutely certain. It should not be taken as a deduction but as a simple, immediate intuition, in which the "therefore" is given no force. As such it says "I think, I am"; the existence of the subject - the "thing which thinks", or ego - is "disclosed through its activity"[60]. As the foundation of thought or apprehension the cogito accompanies all other activity. Movement towards the world is simultaneously grounded in movement towards the self, in self-apprehension. The Cartesian theology, on the other hand, is less concerned with God as such, than God as a means of re-establishing the reality of the world. The existence of God is necessary if "ideas are to be capable of representing things, or of having objective reality."[61] In this sense God acts as the ground of the world together with the cogito, and will likewise determine how the world will appear or become present.

First let us consider, briefly, how Descartes derives
God from the cogito. Descartes distinguishes between "formal"
and what he terms "objective" reality in reference to ideas,
or concepts, and that which they represent, the thing itself.
Ideas have both formal and objective reality: their formal
reality consists in the fact that an act of apprehension is
itself something real and occurs at a particular time;
"objective" reality applies only to ideas and consists in their
representing some thing, possible or actual, to the mind. On
the other hand everything that exists has formal reality. How-
ever, since we must begin with the idea in its objective reality
(its formal reality being self-evident) the problem is to
determine whether this re-presentative reality does indeed
represent something existent, something possessing formal
reality, and not merely a fiction[62].

The objective reality of the idea is related causally
to that which it represents (even if it represents a fiction):

> But in order that an idea should contain some one
> certain objective reality rather than another, it
> must without doubt derive it from some cause in
> which there is at least as much formal reality as
> this idea contains of objective reality.[63]

The cogito is a special case for the reason that the
objective reality of the idea in self-reflection and the formal
reality which is its cause "are both disclosed to intuition
within the same specious present"[64]. As such the cogito reveals
not only that this idea is real rather than fictitious, but also
provides a criterion for what an idea in itself is as a rep-
resentation.

In the cogito the objective reality of the idea and its formal cause fall together; this is not the case however, in reference to God as the world, with the consequence their formal reality can only be determined indirectly. God is the means to knowledge of the world for with the existence of God the fear of an all powerful deceiver is allayed[65] and the inferences the memory must make in constructing its world-system are guaranteed by God's veracity. This dependency upon God causes Descartes to hold that the atheist does not have true knowledge, but mere opinion[66].

The existence of God, on the other hand, is proven from what is certain, the cogito. Descartes proceeds from what he regards as the undeniable truth that we have an idea of God. This idea requires a cause, and what is more "a cause in which the same reality is contained, not merely objectively, but formally or eminently"[67]. This means, Descartes argues, "that the capacity to form such an idea could not exist in me unless I were created by God"[68].

The assumptions concerning causality and degrees of reality in this argument need not concern us as such. Rather, we return to the cogito as that foundation which allows us to project God, and thus, in turn, subject the world to analysis. The significance of the cogito in this respect is that it universalizes the test of clarity and distinctness and makes it the criteria of what is true. "By intuition I understand" Descartes writes[69],

the conception which an unclouded and attentive
mind gives us so readily and distinctly that we
are wholly freed from doubt about that which we
understand.

But where other existents are mediated by the idea,
the cogito, as we have seen, provides its own proof and its
own ground in its clarity and distinctness. Things are only
as they are mediated through the idea; as such clarity and
distinctness become the ground of things in general, they
become the measure by which their reality is decided[70].
In this way the certainty of judgement and the certainty or
"knowledge" of the world which is derived through analysis,
that is, through the construction of a system of clear and
distinct ideas describing the world, is ultimately founded
on self-certitude.

What concerns us in this account is the essential
similarity of the relationship of the self to the world in
Traherne and Descartes. In Traherne, as we have seen, self-
love forms the self-reflective basis in virtue of which alone
the world appears and which specifies the manner in which it
will appear, that is to say as an object for a subject. The
subject realizes itself by appropriating the world. This
appropriation by which the self becomes fully itself can only
be carried out by projecting "God". In Descartes God provides
the guarantee of certainty which allows the subject to system-
atically conquer the world. Traherne, standing within tra-
ditional Christianity (although not in fundamental agreement
with it), and using its language, speaks of God both as the

source and the end. Yet this conception is restructured and subordinated to the primacy of the self's activity which is the determining principle moving both God and man. In the traditional manner God is seen as Creator of the world, as present in it, and thus implicitly justifying it. In this manner God "guarantees" the value or intrinsic worth of the world. As such the self is enabled to recover itself in the world, that is, become completely for itself by subsuming the alien "other" to itself, in this process simultaneously closing the opening abyss. Insofar as the world is for itself in its otherness it opens as the abyss. Thus insofar as the self "closes" the abyss and becomes completely for itself it approaches God as its own infinite projection. Likewise, in the final analysis, the world is "justified" by God only as God is the project by which man justifies himself, his own activity. Moreover, not only does this entail, as we have seen, that the world is a value only for man, for his "enjoyment", but that man must will this value as the means to his self-fulfillment.

d. Cartesian Reason and Moral Sense in More

We will now turn to a modification of the basic Cartesian formula as this is articulated in the Cambridge Platonists. (We will concentrate on More). This will help to reveal certain tendencies in Traherne and allow us to define his position more closely.

The danger of Hobbes as perceived by the Platonists lay in his method of reason as well as his doctrines[71]. Yet

the Platonist's first - but not pre-eminent - use of the word
"reason" corresponds to its use in Hobbes and Descartes insofar
as both are concerned with "analysis" in a general sense. This
is not to obscure the radical difference of Hobbes' conception
from that of Descartes[72]; likewise the following passage from
More indicates a basically Cartesian but hardly Hobbesian con-
ception. Reason, More writes, tests fancy

> by the known Faculties of the Soul, which are
> either the common notions that all men in their
> wits agree upon, or the Evidence of outward
> Sense, or else a clear and distinct Deduction
> from these (More's italtics)[73].

The Cartesian echo is distinctly audible in this passage.

In oppostion to this sense of "reason", which will
be elucidated further as we proceed, the Platonists defined
reason as an inner knowledge or illumination of the soul. This
sense, and its relation to reason as analysis emerges with the
greatest clarity in Henry More. More holds a theory of "act"
derived from Descartes[74]. Virtue is the intellectual power by
which animal passions, which are motions of the body which
obtrude violently on the soul, are overruled. The intellectual
power acts, as opposed to being passive, upon the good upon
deliberation[75].

What More calls "right reason" is the means of appre-
hension of the good; it is the copy of the divine law in man[76].
Right reason, however, is itself "measured" by the "boniform
faculty", which is to say its final and determining ground is
this faculty[77].

> ...tho it be easie to agree that this Best
> [the good] to be that which to Right Reason
> is consonant, yet what this Right Reason is,
> or what the measure of it, seems a most
> difficult matter truly to resolve... So that
> in short the final Judgment upon this matter,
> is all referred to inward Sense, which I con-
> fese, I should rather have called, The Boni-
> form Faculty of the Soul (More's italics) [78].

This "inner sense" is the "most divine" thing in

man[79]. This Faculty, More writes,

> much resembles that part of the Will which
> moves towards that which we judge to be
> absolutely the best, when, as it were with
> an unquenchable thirst and affection it is
> hurried on towards so pleasing an object.... [80]

From this passage we are made aware that the Boniform

Faculty is at least historically related to the "Intellectual

Love" of the Neo-platonic tradition, as we find it for example,

in Ficino's Commentary on the Symposium[81]. Similarly, virtue

emerges as the unity of intellect as such, and purified will.

Although More at times describes the Boniform Faculty as

Intellectual Love[82], in general the intellectual aspect of

this final determining power is allowed to fall into the back-

ground. Absolute good is

> Judged by Right Reason: but that the relish
> and delectation thereof is to be taken in
> by the Boniform Faculty[83].

The Faculty takes on the aspect of an inner moral

sense or feeling which is the ungrounded basis of reason; it

is a "more inward, compendious, and comprehensive Presentation

of Truth" which is "antecedaneous" to logical reasoning[84]. As

a moral sense the Faculty grants moral certainty upon self-

reflection or immediate self-apprehension[85]. Yet, as the

accompanying self-relection of reason in general it is the
basis, not only of moral reflection, but of all activity and
all certainty as such. Thus insofar as it is the grounding
and accompanying self-apprehension it performs a function
similiar to the Cartesian _cogito_, yet insofar as it is articulated
as a "sense" it remains fundamentally different from it.

Despite the fact that this "sense" is the basis of
reason and its activity as self-certitude, More has no theory
by which the limitations of reason as such, as deriving from a
basis which is itself not determinable by reason, can be
defined. On the other hand, he is determined that sense, or
"enthusiasium", be subject to the judgements of reason. In
this respect analysis, or clear and distinct perception,
provides the criteria of what is true and is reapplied to its
own basis - felt experience. Genuine illumination, writes
More, is "a Principle of the purest Reason" and there is nothing
"the holy Spirit did ever suggest to any man but it wasagree-
able to, if not demonstrable from, what we call Reason"[86].
In the final analysis "reason" or "purest Reason" has no true
content in More other than the Cartesian and his attempts to
recapture the Platonic sense of the word are doomed to failure
by the fact he begins from Cartesian presuppositions. By
demanding that the original felt experience is not to be
"argued" but merely felt or sensed[87], and by allowing the
criteria of reason to circumscribe what _true_ felt experience is
or can be, More reduces the original experience to intellectual
poverty. Yet this is inevitable insofar as More is under the

domination of a rationalistic or Cartesian conception of reason.
In Locke and the eighteenth century this tendency is absolu-
tized: Locke eliminates the boniform Faculty completely (and
with it all Platonic residues) and emphasizes the need for con-
crete evidence for religious affirmations[88]. Concurrently, with
moralism and pietism, the felt experience has neither in-
tellectual content nor theoretical basis.

As More's Enthusiasmus indicates, his tendency towards
a rationalistic religion can be ascribed to his fear of the
"enthusiasts" or (More felt) religious and political fanatics.
The cause of enthusiasm, More ascribed to imagination, which
he held to be only partly in our power[89]. Other than political
fanatics, More held, poets were particularly prone to the
affliction of enthusiasm, for as he writes "a Poet is a
enthusiast in jest"[90]. Our suspicions that the connection of
"imagination" and poetry may have some significance are con-
firmed, in reference to natural forces, when More describes
the essence of what is later known as the "sublime":

> men are prone to suspect some special presence
> of God or of a Supernatural power in whatever
> is Great or Vehement.[91]

Thus this opening, or possible line of questioning,
appears in More as well as Traherne and is, in the same measure,
closed[92]. This closing attempts to conceal an awareness which
is nevertheless revealed in More's analysis of imagination.
Imagination is recognized as a power revealing a power. The
first power is to be controlled or suppressed; the second power,
insofar as it cannot be analyzed by reason, is simple "nothing".

Simultaneously the "inner sense" is pushed into the foreground as the means of communication with God. In More this "innerness" still retains, in large measure, the sense of an immediate apprehension of the truth. Yet insofar as innerness is subjected to analysis and its criteria of the truth it is alienated from itself. The true becomes what can be thought clearly, what can be re-presented, and thus the immediate givenness of experience, the openness of man to the world which allows its power to be apprehended, is suppressed, and "sense" comes to mean the presented ideas of the sensed world as it is apprehended in the mind. The "outer world" is the "space" of sense activity. In More the emphasis which Traherne places on activity is suppressed; in contrast, the world as space is the container of sense-reality and the basis of the unity of God and the world. (This will be examined further below, sec. iii.d). In Traherne on the other hand the activity of "sensing" is explicitly developed as the means to Felicity, or God-likeness. This activity, however, is not related to and does not realize itself in the world simply as the extended; rather, within the framework of this thinking it re-values the world:

> Infinite worth shut up in the limits of a
> material being, is the only way to real
> infinity (CIII, 20).

To this question of value we will now turn.

(iii)

a. "Being-in-Frame" in Traherne

What Traherne refers to as "Being-in-Frame" may be
interpreted as the conscious articulation of the relation of
self and world which thus far has been considered in its
logical structure in the cogito, which is the determining
ground. The struggle to achieve in-frameness, or the state
of Being-in-Frame, are attempts to achieve a particular
attitude toward the world. This attitude is the means to
Felicity or self-realization.

Thus, as we learned before, things in themselves,
are worthless and without reality:

> Thoughts are alone by Men the Objects found
> That heal or wound
> Things are but dead: they can't dispense
> Or joy or Grief....

and for this reason

> and since as Things are known
> Or thought, they please or kill: What Care
>   ought I (Since Thoughts apply
> Things to my Mind) those thoughts aright to frame,
> That Hev'nly Thoughts me Hev'nly Things may gain.
> ("The Inference" 11, 16-19, 24-28) (Traherne's italics)

The thing comes into being as an object of thought;
in particular moreover, it is as a value-object, an object
which comes into being in virtue of the value it holds and
the existential meaning it dispenses, that it presences.
What value the thing has, however, it gains as object, for
outside the subject-object relation it is nothing, a "dead"
thing. The particular attitude however, which is the means to
Being-in-Frame and Felicity, is the conscious struggle to give

things value. In Traherne this struggle is usually identified with a process of objectification. For Traherne objectification is value-objectification, by which a system of value is created. The necessary basis of this particular objectification however, is the subject-object structure of the self-world relation itself, as we found it exemplified in the cogito. On the basis of this structure, the fact the world exists only as object, it becomes necessary to retrieve the world, to recover it from its object deadness, and thus it is appropriated as object-value.

In this manner we distinguish the structural basis - the fact the self relates to the world only as subject to object - and the conscious articulation it necessitates if the world is to be recovered. Yet the recovery is still the appropriation of an object, to be specific, a value-object.

At the end of the last section we noted that Traherne appears to carry out a re-valuation of the world and referred to the following passage:

> Infinite Worth shut up in the Limits of a
> Material Being, is the only way to Real
> Infinity.
>
> (C III, 20)

How are we to understand this? What is the essential relation of self and world which forms the background to this saying? And what is revealed by it? If we refer back to the traditional conception of the interrelationship of things which we still find in Marsilio Ficino, Traherne's thinking will be clarified for us.

In Ficino the hierarchy, or "Great Chain of Being",
is an ontological space mapping out the distances of things
from each other; it is a systematic principle by which the
corporeal and incorporeal worlds are divided and by which each
thing is given a rank or a determinate relation to all the rest.
God is the upper limit and highest member of the hierarchy.
Ficino writes:

> If there is no first and no last degree among
> things, each middle degree will depend on
> infinite higher degrees and produce infinite
> lower degrees... Consequently, it will be of
> immense power and full of infinite perfections.
> Thus all things will be equally infinite. One
> thing will not be more excellent than another,
> the cause would not be better than its effect.[93]

In the first instance then, we take the "infinity"
of the "material being" in Traherne to be the product of its
severance from an objective hierarchy of being and its ex-
clusive relation to the subject. This has been enunciated
above. Since the thing is in virtue of the subject alone, its
value or grade of being is determined exclusively by the sub-
ject. Things are, so to speak, levelled to one plane - the
object plane; Yet even the most negligible of things, being
an object, can become a center of infinity. How does this
come about? This is not to be understood purely, or even
primarily, in terms of the inherent being of the thing. For
this being is lost insofar as the thing becomes an object.
In Century III, 20 we find the infinity of the thing deriving
from its spatial limitation. Here and in the following section
we find Traherne concerned to show that a single (spatially)
infinite thing would be less excellent than a world composed

of many finite things:

> He bounding all, did all most usefull make:
> And which is best, in Profit and Delight
> Tho not in Bulk, they all are infinit.
>   (CIII, 21)

The infinity of the thing then, emerges in its relation to other objects. Even a grain of sand or a "Mote in the Air" can be related infinitely to the totality of things. To be in-frame is to know objects in their relations and to value them accordingly.

> A Mind in frame is a Soul clothed with Right
> Apprehensions: Thoughts and affections well
> ordered, Principles and Contrivances well pro-
> posed, Means and Ends rationally consulted, all
> considered, and the Best chosen.
>   (CE p. 26)

Being-in-Frame is a means to Felicity and Felicity is the realization not only of man, but also of God for in Felicity the world is valued and returned to God. The activity of the subject, as we know, is crucial to this process. Things are held in the mind as ideas and the "Thought of the World Whereby it is Enjoyed is Better then the World" (C II, 90) itself. In the same manner as the thing derives its reality as object from the subject so too the world - as the totality of things - derives its unity and interrelationship from the activity of the subject. Thus a mind in frame will apprehend things rightly: the test of "rightness" is the usefulness of the thing to the end of the mind's Felicity. Felicity, in turn, is possible only through the knowledge of interrelation- ships, or through the knowledge of the relation-system:

> Som little Piece in a Kingly Monument severed
> from the rest hath no Beauty at all. It enjoys
> its valu in its Place, by the Ornament it gives
> to, and recieves from all the Parts. By this
> I discerned, that even a little knowledge could
> not be had in the Mystere of Felicity, without
> a great deal.
>
> (C III, 55)

The system of relations is created by the subject
to whom the thing is subordinated as object. In the final
analysis what will determine the grade of value (or "Estem")
of a thing is its "usefulness" within the system constructed
by the soul in search of its salvation.

b. Being-in-Frame and Sin

Before we proceed further it is necessary to relate
the notion of being-in-frame to the traditional concept of
sin. In contrast to the Augustinian doctrine that sin is
inherited from Adam and passed on from generation to generation,
Traherne appears to regard sin as a misvaluation of goods
brought about by adverse social influences. Men

> Study a thousand New fangled Teasures, which
> God never made: and then Griev and Repine they
> be not Happy.
>
> (C I, 32)

They refuse Gods treasures and "Dote" on "invented" treasures,
"scarce and Rare, Insufficient, Hard to be Gotten litle movable
and useless Treasures" by which they feed their own greed and
avarice and bring corruption and violence into the world
(C I, 33). "Invented" treasures have the qualities of being
false values or objectifications - they are instruments of
alienation or self-estrangement.

Being Swallowed up therefore in the Miserable
Gulph of idle talk and worthless vanities,
thenceforth I lived among Shadows, like a
Prodigal Son feeding upon Husks with Swine.
                                    (C III, 14)

Conversely those free of corrupting social influences
though "Barbarous" and naked "com nearer to Adam, God, and
Angels in the Simplicity of the Wealth, though not in know-
ledge." (C III, 12)

In this context of corruption and self-alienation
through external influences, or implosions upon the original
purity of the self, the act of recovery becomes an intellectual
act of will by which the individual violently and systematically
tears himself loose and gradually reorientates himself to and
for himself. We have already referred to this struggle for
in-frameness as the attempt to achieve a particular attitude
by which the world may be re-gained. The activity of retrieval
which is carried out by this attitude is grounded, as we have
seen, in the self-certainty of the _cogito_, as it appears in
Traherne. Upon this basis, then, "sin" appears in the self-
understanding as "error" which brings about the estrangement
of the self from itself, that is, from its true and authentic
possibilities of self-realization. This "error" can be
corrected by replacing a false attitude or point of view by a
"correct" one, by shifting and adjusting the "frame", so to
speak, to focus it properly and precisely upon the object.
Sin is an intellectual error in the sense it can be overcome
and eliminated by intellectual acts, that is to say, by the
willing of judgments where these follw upon clear understanding.

For Traherne this understanding, of the mutual and "natural"
interrelationships of things, is attained by a retreat to the
"original" self, unspotted by common social attitudes and per-
ceptions. This basis or fundamentum allows sinful or evil
perceptions to be avoided since evil is merely the willing of
erroneous judgements on the basis of unclear ideas.

Sin, as we have seen, is misvaluation; misvaluation
appears as the failure to relate a thing to the totality of
things correctly, which is a failure to value or "estem" a
thing. This failure is basically an intellectual error which
follows from clouded and perverted perceptions. Inversely,
valuation or estem is correct valuation. What gives the criterion
of correctness? We have already seen that an objective grade
of being no longer exists in Traherne: all things are "infinite"
and means to infinity. "Dead" as objects, things receive value
and become value-objects in reference to a subject. This re-
lation however, does not constitute the relation of the self
to a world as a objective hierarchy of being; rather the self
constructs a hierarchy and a system of relations in reference to
its own project - its quest for self-realization and completion.
The soul of man Traherne writes, made the "world become useful
in a moment, which before was unprofitable, dead, and useless"[94].
Things are arranged on the criterion of the infinite goal of
infinite self-realization, or God-likeness.

> The Soul is made for Action, and cannot rest, till
> it is employed. Idleness is its Rust. Unless it
> will up and Think and Taste and See, all is in vain...
> your Life must be as full of Operation as God of
> Treasure. Your Operation shall be Treasure to Him,
> as His Operation is Delightfull to you.
> (C IV, 95)

We have seen that all things serve the subject as value objects, and all objects, insofar as they are elements of an infinite relation system, are themselves, in their narrow "material being" infinite. The process by which the subject becomes an infinite subject, by which it becomes God-like through its constructive activity in the world, is the way of valuing and esteeming objects. Where there are no objects no man would believe the powers of the soul to be everywhere;

> But by their Objects [your thoughts] are dis-
> cerned to be present: being illuminated by
> them for they are Present with them and Activ
> about them. They recover and feel them selvs, and
> by those Objects live in Employment.
> (C II, 73)

c. The World in Frame

Let us consider more closely some of the salient characteristics of the world-object by which the soul is to achieve its salvation.

For Traherne the existing world is one of innumerable possible worlds which has been put into being by God. "Possibilities are innumerable, so that nothing less than infinite Wisdome can find out that which is absolutely the Best" (CE p. 65). Among these infinite possibilities God created "the Best of all possible Works for our Enjoyment" (C II, 10). In respect to these doctrines we find strong parallels between Traherne and one of the most important of the immediate philosophic successors of Descartes, Leibnitz:

> Contingent possibles can be considered either
> separately or as all correlated in an infinity
> of entire possible worlds each of which is

perfectly known to God, though only one among
them has been produced into existence.[95]

Since the divine providence manifests itself in the
"total series" of the universe it follows God selected the
best and "that consequently this best universe is that which
actually exists"[96]. Like Leibnitz Traherne attempts to uphold
both the free choice of God and his necessary selection of the
best world:[97]

> because had [God] in any one perticular pre-
> ferred the Worse above the better he had
> contracted a Blot upon his own Wisdome and
> Goodness, and made the whole Creation
> deformed.
> (CE p. 74)

What concerns us here however, is how the world and
in particular the "best possible world", relates to the soul
in its quest for salvation. "Felicity is rightly defined"
writes Traherne

> to be the Perfect fruition of a Perfect Soul,
> acting in a perfect Life by Perfect Virtue.
> (Traherne's italics)
> (CE p. 19)

"Perfect Fruition implies the Perfection of all its Objects"
(CE p. 20) where the Laws of God and God himself, as well as
the world, are "objects".

> Unless all these [objects] be perfect in their
> Nature, Variety, Number, Extent, Relation, Use
> and Value, our fruition cannot be simply perfect,
> because a Greater and more perfect fruition might
> upon the production of better Objects, be con-
> trived... The more Beautiful the Object is, the
> more pleasant is the enjoyment.
> (CE p. 20)

The "world" appears here as the totality of things;
its "infinity" is the infinitely extended system of relations

which may be constructed between objects. This is to exclude
the possibility that things have "natures" which are infinite
in a qualitative sense. That this is so becomes clear when
Traherne refers to the infinity of our "pleasure" in the
world as grounded in "the nature and extent of space, which is
illimited and Endless" (my italics) (CE p. 67). The "best
possible world", then, is defined as the quantitative relation-
system of things in spatial infinity which the subject makes
its own to gain its infinity. This system is produced by the
subject himself as his self-production, his salvation. It is
insufficient however to describe the relation-system as simply
quantitative - Traherne is not, after all, a physicist. We
have already described the objects, the parts or things which
make up the world as value-objects, and shown how the infinity
of the individual thing is derived from its relations. How
does this relate to the best possible world? The best world
is characterized by the number and variety of things. Traherne
is concerned to show that a single infinite thing is less
perfect than a great variety, indeed, the greatest possible
variety, of finite things.[98] Where there is only one thing -
for example, only one sun - Traherne demonstrates that two are
not possible without causing more harm than good, that is, with-
out reducing the perfection of the world as a whole. In this
thinking Traherne recalls the traditional principle of plenti-
tude but at the same time he re-constitutes it on a new sub-
jective basis.[99]

The subject, as we have seen, relates the world to itself
as a system of interrelationships. Where the individual thing

receives its value from the system, the system as a whole is ordered or arranged on the basis of esthetic principles. The world, essentially, is to be a picture and our work of art.

> Infinity of space is like a Painters Table
> prepared for the Ground and field of those
> Colours that are to be laid theron... To
> leav any part of it Naked and bare, and void
> of Beauty, would render the whole ungratefull
> to the Ey, and argue a Defect of Time or
> Materials, or Wit in the Limmer.
>
> (C V, 5)

Man distinguishes himself from the beasts, Traherne writes, "in being able to note and admire the Workmanship of God in the decent Order of Symmetry and Proportion" (CE p. 46) in those he loves, and in the World as such. Variety and plentitude are explicitly related to these esthetic criteria:

> All things by a kind of Temperance are made and
> ordered in Number, Weight and Measure, so that
> they give and recieve a Beauty and Perfection,
> every thing to and from all the residue....
>
> (CE pp. 179-80)

Here the quantitative relation of things in their number, measure, and so forth, are explicitly ordered esthetically and their perfection arises from this "beauty".

The individual thing takes its infinity from its relations to the whole. The whole in turn takes its beauty, its esthetic perfection, from the perfect relationship of its parts. Where the idea the subject has of a relation is less harmonious than might be conceived, the relationship and the picutre is distorted. Since it is assumed God created the best possible world the fault of this distortion resides with the subject and the "Life" of the soul is less than perfect (cf.

definition above p. 56), is "Blemished". The perfect life,
to be itself, must will itself to be commensurate to its
perfect object, the best possible world. The perfect life

> implies two things, Perfection of Vigour, and
> perfection of intelligence, an activity of life,
> reaching through all Immensity, to all Objects
> whatsoever; and a freedome from all Dulness in
> apprehending: An exquisite Tenderness of per-
> ception in feeling the least Object, and a
> Sphere of Activity that runs parallel with the
> Omnipresence of the Godhead.
>
> (CE p. 20)
> (Traherne's italics)

Here the essential incompleteness of the "whole" is revealed.
There is an "infinite" discrepancy, an infinite abyss, between
the state of knowledge of the individual, the "whole" which
he grasps at any particular time, and God, the infinite subject
whom the individual soul must attempt to approximate and equal.
The soul must become God-like to become itself. On the basis
of this infinite project of the self the whole emerges as the
evolving system of relations as they are systematically con-
stituted by the subject. In his discussion of the question
of whether or not the perfection of the Universe will allow
two suns (for our Earth) Traherne shows he is not concerned
merely with generalities. "And perhaps when the Nature of
the Sun is Known", he writes, "it is impossible there should
be Two" (C II, 10). Implicit here is the proposition that
natural science - which investigates the quantitative "natures"
or relations of things - will serve as handmaiden to theology,
or more precisely, to the "science of Felicity"[100]. Thus it is
a logical extension of Traherne's system, rather than an extra-

vagance which causes us to say that the incumbency upon the
soul to know the world ever more perfectly, ever more "infinitely",
will lead the subject to probe and control the atom and explore
intergalactic space. For only in this manner will the "picture"
which mirrors the soul's own state of perfection come nearer to
"completion".

d. God as Object

In this movement towards the absolute, God himself,
as we have noted several times, becomes an object. The higher
the value of what is made object, the higher the value of the
enjoying soul. God is object of the highest value[101]. Know-
ledge of God as creator is necessary to the knowledge of the
world as the "best possible" world.[102] The "world" as we have
seen, holds the sense of a interrelated system of individual
objects which are ordered so as to form a beautiful picture.
How does God relate to this picture? As the ground, or creator
of all things he cannot simply be another object. We are given
a clue to the answer to this question in the way in which
Traherne and his contemporaries bring God and space into
relation.

Descartes distinguishes clearly between the indefinite
and the infinite; the world is not infinite but merely indefinite
since we do not positively understand its parts to be unlimited;
in respect to the parts of the world we "merely negatively admit
that their limits, if they exist, cannot be discovered by us."[103]
Where the idea of infinity is included in the idea of God in his

perfection, rather than his extent[104], in the case of a thing,
on the other hand, we say it is indefinite because we cannot
show it has limits.[105] In Descartes the world is not, of
course, distinct from "space" and space is purely extended
matter.[106] As such, too, space is created by God in his
creation of the world and has no independent existence.

When we turn to More, who developed his idea of
extension in opposition to Descartes,[107] we find, in contrast,
that space is a necessary substance conjoined with God, which
confusedly represents his essence. More recites a list of
attributes which God and space have in common: each is

> one, simple, unmobile, eternal, perfect,
> independent, existing by itself, subsisting
> through itself, incorruptible, necessary,
> immense, uncreated, uncircumscribed, ...
> omnipresent....[108]

More distinguishes between divine or "immaternal"
extension and material extension, and as such denies that the
former is divisible, in contrast to the latter, which is re-
vealed as matter in the sense of the impenetrable.[109] These
impenetrable atoms find themselves "within" the absolute and
indivisible space.

In Newton this thinking is taken over and modified[110];
at the same time the relationship between the absolute and the
finite or measurable is clarified. In a verbal echo of More[111],
Newton declares that "since every particle of space is always"
certainly God cannot be "nowhere". God "endures forever, and
is everywhere present and by existing always and everywhere, he
constitutes duration and space."[112] Here God, the Absolute,

functions essentially as he does in Descartes as the absolute
guarantee which allows the finite world to be measured. As
such the absolute "constitutes" duration and space. This
is not to say, as Newton holds, that absolute space can provide
a reference system for relative motion.[113] The nature of
absolute, homogenous space where no part is distinguishable
from any other, precludes this. Rather the absolute - God as
absolute space - constitutes space in that he allows the world
to appear in the place he clears and he measured. God is the
opening in which the world comes to stand and in which our
activity can take place. Yet insofar as the absolute is itself
conceived spatially it too becomes measureable. "Relative
space" Newton writes "is some movable dimension or measure of
the absolute space."[114] Likewise, "relative, apparent, and
common time, is some sensible and external (whether accurate
or unequable) measure of duration by the means of motion".[115]
Thus it can be said of Newton even as of Barrow (from whom
Newton largely inherited his notion of time[116]) that

> There is a suggestion [in Barrow] that through
> an increasingly accurate procedure, either of
> mathematics or science, our measures may reveal
> to us the nature of that which is measured.[117]

In this case - although neither Newton or Barrow
would be able to admit this - God's attributes become mathe-
matical limits of the "indefinite" or quantitatively infinite
world.[118] God becomes the infinite subject who is capable of
contemplating this infinite system of relations which constitutes
the world in its measurability. Conversely, as an object,
we may consider "God" as the project

and infinite end of the finite subject. "God" in this sense, as subject, is clearly to be distinguished from the sense of "God" as the power of Being which lets the world appear.

There is a second, related movement of thought in which we find Newton in correspondence with Traherne. This emerges in Newton when he speaks of space as the sensorium of God:

> Does it not appear from phenomena that there is a Being incorporeal, living, intelligent, omnipresent, who in infinite space, as it were in his sensory, sees the things themselves intimately, and thoroughly perceives them, and comprehends them wholly by their immediate presence to himself.
> (Newton's italics)[119]

Things being in infinite space are by the same measure "in" God. Being thus in him they are immediately present to him and subject to his will. The "images" of things only are

> carried through the organs of sense into our little sensoriums, are there seen and beheld by that which in us perceives and thinks.[120]

Here the mind perceives ideas which present themselves to it in "our little sensoriums", or our inner "space". In Traherne the outer unity of God and space is apprehended intuitively as the infinity of the soul:

> ...Infinity we know and feel by our Souls: and feel it so Naturaly, as if it were the very Essence and Being of the Soul... So we cannot feel our Souls, but we must feel [God] in that first of Properties infinit Space.
> (C II, 81)

Infinite space Traherne continues, in a argument reminiscent of More, cannot be annihilated in thought, it remains and stands after we have "unsupposed" everything else.

This space which is of all things the first and most necessarily know is

> without us... the Chamber of our Infinit
> Treasures, and within us the Repositore, and
> Recipient of them.
>
> (C II, 81)

The outer space is the model of the inner and ideas are "in" the mind even as things are in absolute space.

God is with things, they being "in" him and he apprehends them immediately. Similiarly Traherne insists we free ourselves of clouded and perverted perception of things that we might "sense" them immediately and clearly in our inner space: "Felicity/Appears to none but them that purely see" for

> ....simple sense
> Is Lord of all created Excellence.
>
> ("Praeparative", ll.59-60;
> 39-40)

How are we to understand this emphasis on "sensing"? At times Traherne seems to give only the ideas of things in the mind reality and a number of commentators have interpreted Traherne's thinking as a kind of anticipation of Berkeley[121]. To what extent is this the essential movement in Traherne?

In Locke we find the "inner world" schema intimated in Newton and Traherne fully developed[122]. Ideas alone are immediately known and through them we gain knowledge of the things to which they refer. In Descartes' late conception "ideas" is synonymous with "concept", but in the empiricists thought is about "ideas" which have the status of physical objects in the "internal world".[123] The self is a homunculus

not only in the body - but in the mind as well.[124] Thus the

self can, under certain circumstances, be "possessed" by its

ideas like alien forces. Normally the self contemplates its

inner world of ideas, identifies ideas, and connects them to

the "external world." Knowledge is made a process of perception

as ideas are identified and ordered in the interior world. By

the same measure the differences of right and wrong become

perceptible by a kind of sensation. Thus "conscience" became

transformed from a conscious reasoning from principles to a

"sense".[125] This movement toward moral sense knowledge is

characteristic of developments in England after Henry More and

in fact uses his "Boniform Faculty", stripped of its Platonic

residues, to carry it out.[126]

In Traherne too, there is a strong emphasis on the

appearance of things in the inner life

> What were the Skie,
> What were the Sun, or Stars, did ye not lie
> In me! and represent them there
> Where els they never could appear!
> ("Thoughts" I, 11. 43-36)

"Enjoyment" and "pleasure" follow from the indwelling of things

as the soul "senses" and contemplates them. Yet this aspect

of the _passivity_ of the soul's enjoyment in quiet contemplation

is throughout subordinated to the soul's activity, as we examined

it above.

The sense-contemplation of the soul in its inner

space is dependent on the ordering and illuminating activity of

the mind in the outer space of the world.

> The Soul is made for Action, and cannot rest,
> till it be employd.   Idleness is its Rust.
> Unless it will up and Think and Taste and See,
> all is in vain.
>   (C IV, 95)

The "Light" of thought searches out things in the darkness;
the mind is not simply a container which is filled by material
impressions from outside. Rather, the task of the mind is to
fill _itself_, to bring itself to full realization. In this
movement the outer world as the world of space is real and
independent.

We feel its "Endless Extent" "realy and palpably",
whether as "Blind men" in which case it is a world of darkness
and oppressing horror or as reborn men, when we have come to
know its glory, "Extent and Treasure" (C V, 3) and made it our
own. Likewise, things are never _merely_ ideas in Traherne. As
objects which are valued they first gain meaningful existence,
but even prior to this they have a kind of being as "dead" and
"vain" things. As such, it is clear, the priority of the sub-
ject is self-evident: things never come into their own. Yet
the "dead" things and the darkness of space, in their own way
determine the self. The mind is consistently and everlastingly
drawn into the world in an attempt to dominate and order it,
to destroy the alienness of the thing and make it the mind's own.
Just as consistently, things resist, hold to themselves. In
great measure the urgency and intensity of tone in Traherne
arises out of this tension.

Thus the tendency towards a empiricist use of "idea"
in the Lockean manner, as well as the sensationalism of Berkeley,

is evident in Traherne yet it remains subordinate. At the
same time it remains in conflict with the dominant ethic. As
we have seen the empiricist tendency, with its emphasis on an
inner moral "sense" emerges in Traherne through the parallelism
of inner and outer "spaces". Insofar as the inner space becomes,
so to say, a "pleasure-chamber" of sensuous "enjoyment" in which
ideas are contemplated, the impetus for unceasing analysis and
categorization of the "extended world" is undermined. By and
large, however, Traherne succeeds in holding these two moments
simultaneously in a creative tension which fuels the soul's
design for self-realization in the world as it is returned
by the mind.

(iv) Time and Eternity in Traherne

In this section we will consider how Traherne deals
with the concept of time. We will begin by distinguishing
Traherne's conception from the tradition as it is epitomized
in Augustine and Aquinas. According to   Aquinas eternity is
essentially timeless; it "is entire all at once without any
successiveness"[127]. It is outside of time and in a different
dimension than the phenomenal world. The seventeenth century
saw a reaction against this conception, motivated by the new
science[128]. Thus, Hobbes attacks the old metaphysics:
"...but they will teach us, that eternity is the standing still
of the present time...which neither they, nor any else under-
stand...."[129]. The old formulation, according to Hobbes, was
necessitated by efforts to explain God's "incomprehensible"

nature. In opposition to it, Hobbes proposes simply that eternity be an "endless sucession of time".[130]

In the traditional conception, it is characteristic of time that its moments, or parts, in suceeding each other successively _pass away_, that is, pass out of existence. Augustine writes on the existence of past and future:

> I know that wherever they are, they are not there as future or past, but as present. For if they are there as future they are there as "not yet"; if they are there as past, they are there as "no longer"... Although we tell of past things as true, they are drawn out of the memory - not the things themselves....[131]

Now let us turn to Traherne. In Centuries V, 7, he writes:

> Eternity is a mysterious absence of times and ages: an endless _length_ of ages always present, and for ever perfect. For as there is an immovable space wherein all finite spaces are enclosed, and all motions carved on and per- formed, so there is an immovable duration, that contains all moving durations.... All ages being but successions correspondent to those _parts_ of the Eternity wherein they abide....
>   (my italics)

The conception of eternity presented here is clearly distinct from Aquinas' Timelss moment; it is akin to Hobbes' conception of eternity as infinite succession, that is, as everlastingness, with the important exception that the "parts" of an infinite succession cannot be present all at once in a "stable manner". Neither Augustine nor Hobbes will grant the continuing existence of passing successions.

From the passage above it is clear Traherne conceives time on a spatial metaphor. Eternity is, in fact, spatialized:

it does not transcend time or appear changed but stablizes, contains and measures appearances. There is a "space" writes Traherne, "wherein all Moments are infinitely Exhibited".

> Wherein all Ages appear together, all Occurrences
> stand up at once, and the innumerable and Endless
> Myreads of years that were before the Creation,
> and will be after the World is ended are Objected
> as a Clear and Stable Object....
>   (C V, 6)

Traherne's revulsion against time, against the finite and fleeting is expressed in the preservation of temporal events:

> Eternitie magnifies our Joys exceedingly...
> Eternity retains the Moments of their Beginning
> and Ending within itself: and from Everlasting
> to Everlasting those Things were in their Times
> and Places before God...
>   (C V, 8)

The Eternal raises the finite out of time and preserves it, yet the temporal is not transcended, nor is the Eternal qualitatively different from the temporal. To transcend time would be to lose time and objects, things, and events in time, objects, that is, in the world, objects which in turn compose the world. Traherne does not want temporal events to get lost, he wants to "enjoy" them infinitely. Not only does "eternity" retain or "stabilize" particular moments, so that each action "is admitted into Eternity" where it will "remain in its Place, and be visible forever" (CE p. 77), but the eternal viewpoint allows the soul to contemplate all the works of time simultaneously in one moment. "All ages appear" and are "objected as a Clear and Stable Object". The "spatialization" of time and eternity then, is in fact the objectification of

temporal, worldly succession or finite <u>existence</u> from a stand-
point outside of time. There is of course no such standpoint
in the world, in human worldly existence. Nor does Traherne,
as such, wish to give up the world: rather, he wants to retain
it eternally, as God does. Here God is conceived however,
not as world transcendent, but as the infinite subject who holds
the world as his object. Time offers the potentiality of
objects: like space it too can be empty or full:

> ...it is very Displeasing to Humane Reason, that
> <u>Time</u> should be horrid, and Dark, and empty...
> and vain, and innumerable Bright and Delightful
> Objects, which were possible to be desired,
> denied to the Soul, and the better half of GODS
> Love removed.
>
> (CE p. 111)

Like space time is empty and dead until it is objectified and
its successions, as clear objects, are related to one another.

"<u>Faith</u> is prepared in the Soul on purpose, that all
the Things in Time may be admitted into the Eye of the Soul",
"may be Objected to the Eye of Knowledge altogether" (CE p.111)
(my italics). Time is the special preserve of this virtue,
one of the holy Christian triad.

> ...if GODS Will and Pleasure be Uniform in his
> Operations, and Time it self Beautified by this
> Wisdome, Goodness, and Power, as well as the
> World, our <u>Faith</u> will have a peculiar Excellency
> because, it is that by which all the Beauties in
> <u>Time</u> and <u>Providence</u> are enjoyed.
>
> (CE pp. 111-112)
> (Traherne's italics)

Through faith an eternity of time is enjoyed and con-
templated. Through faith time is objectivized as if it could
be contemplated by a subject outside of time. It is precisely

by these means, by making time an object, that the subject
attempts to eternalize the moment, to leap out of time while
still in time.

"The smallest Thing by the Influence of Eternity, is
made infinite and Eternal" (C V, 8). The contemplated time
which becomes eternity is not simply the life span of the
individual or even the succession of historical events, but the
concrete history in which God has revealed himself and through
which God comes to man. We cannot say that history, as history,
is recognized in Traherne. The events of Christian history
from the Fall to the Resurrection as well as the graces and
virtues which are specifically Christian form the context of
a Christian action and thereby distinguish it from the heathen.
The heathen action is limited and finite, the Christian infinite
(CE pp. 62-63). The infinity of the historical context how-
ever, is not experienced as the presencing of God in history,
but through its objectification. Christian history - which
includes not only past revelations of God but also the promise
of the Resurrection - is appropriated by the knowing subject as
an object even as the subject appropriates the world. Thus history
becomes a "standing" and "stable object for the eye". As an
object, it has, in fact, similiar characteristics to the world-
object we examined above.

> If any man be disposed to cavil further, and
> to urge that GOD might at the very first have
> placed Angels and Men in the state of Glory,
> the Reply is at hand: that GOD very well
> understandeth the beauty of Proportion, that
> Harmony and Symmetry springs from a variety of
> excellent Things in several places, fitly
> answering to, and perfecting each other....
> (CE p. 134)

History receives its justification through the beauty
of proportion; this is Traherne's peculiar version of the
"fortunate fall". The "history" Traherne is concerned with
in this passage is both personal history as he schematizes it
as a passage from "innocence" to "glory" and Christian history
from Adam to the Second coming; the two movements mirror each
other.

It is clear, in the final analysis, that the appropr-
iation of history as an object to be contemplated from an "eternal"
viewpoint cannot be successful. The subject is inescapably
within history. In what manner then, is Traherne's thinking to
be understood? In our consideration of the "second stage" of
Traherne's development, as he himself sees it, we noted that
anxiety is the fundamental reality and primary impetus under-
lying the subject's attempt to recover the source. This process
and activity of recovery, which is carried out in the objecti-
fication of the world, is simultaneously an endeavour to over-
come anxiety; although the consciousness of this may be sup-
pressed. The peculiar relationship in which faith stands to
time in Traherne likewise points to anxiety as the basis of
his thinking. Faith is seen as the means of redeeming the
soul from history and from the tension, the uncertainty, of
its simultaneous being in two realms. On the one hand faith
allows the subject to become one with its own project, the
infinite subject. On the other hand faith is actualized in
history, not as history, but as a sucession of objects in a
timeless space. Thus eternity comes to have "parts" which

"stand" and are in harmony with one another. This betrays the subject to be in the temporal realm and subject to the openness of this realm toward the future. "Eternity" then, remains time-riden, and the everlasting field of action of a boundless subjectivity. For Traherne subjectivity, self-love and self-willing is synonymous with being itself. Paradoxically, the sustaining activity of subjectivity, objectification, is directed against time itself in the effort to overcome time. This effort can never be successful in virtue of its starting point: time cannot be transcended through time, through everlasting objectification of everything that comes into the purview of the subject.

Conclusion

The significance of Traherne, as it has revealed itself here, was to work out systematically and fairly consistently a new world view. Between Donne and Traherne there stands, in more ways than one, a deep abyss. In this essay we have tried to show what called Traherne's thinking into being and how this thinking responds to the matter. Like that of More and the Cambridge Platonists, Traherne's thought is basically Cartesian, even though, like his contemporaries, his goal is to overcome Cartesianism. For Traherne this is not, of course, openly stated; nevertheless it remains the case that even as the cogito-situation is the ground of Traherne's questioning so the alienation of the world and the necessity of its recovery is the horizon toward which this questioning is directed. The recovery of the world is not solely, or even primarily a theological problem, although Traherne expresses this thematic in the language of theology, in large measure in fact, in the Platonic theology of the tradition. What is essential however, is not this language, but the attempt to restore value and human significance to the alien and alienated world of extension. This is done however, not by questioning the standpoint of the isolated subject but by radicalizing this position for the realm of values. The world of extension becomes not simply an object of calculation but an infinite value-object for an infinite subject. The subject can achieve its infinity only by postulating the quantitative infinity of the world, as object for a subject.

By this measure God becomes the ideal infinite subject, and the project of the finite subject.

Traherne attempts to supply a positive criterion for human action in the world. This criterion is basically articulated as an esthetic of beauty. The beautiful is the criterion both for authentic judging and for authentic action. Society has a perverted sense of beauty because it values certain elements of the whole to the detriment of the whole as such. The world as picture and esthetic object is one with the world as relation-system, as object of knowledge. Traherne retains, so to speak, the old unity of the True and the Beautiful. On the one hand however, this unity is based on radical subjectivity; on the other it is literally contructed by subjectivity to the end of Felicity. The Felicity of the individual is inextricable from the objectification of everything existing, to infinity.

The unending activity of the self in the world prevents a union with God. We cannot say Traherne carries out a "mystic" movement in any traditional sense. Neither the will nor the world is denied. There is no union with God and no transcendence of time. This "time-rideness" of eternity itself distinguishes Traherne from traditional mysticism. Essentially time is seen as the eternal mode of the self. Contemplation of eternity preserves the activity of the subject in its faculty as a distinction-making power which holds eternity together by contemplating the esthetic unity of its parts - time. Eternity as held together in advance of the subject is its project - its self-realization through time.

Rather than "mystic" Traherne could better be called a religious thinker concerned with the problem of the world insofar as he attempts to restore human value to the world while simultaneously assuring the salvation of the soul. "Salvation" however, is not worldly, but comes of God. Despite superficial appearances God is not adequately thought in Traherne. Like More, Traherne implicitly accepts the scientific measure of reason and determines God by it insofar as he determines him within the world of extension. Allowance is not made for a non-rational apprehension of God. The fact that the world-transcendent, as such, is subjected to rationalization leaves the world of value, based on subjectivism, in a precarious position even within the realm of its success.

Footnotes

Introduction

1. See E. D. Hirsch, <u>Validity in Interpretation</u> for a extensive development of this position, especially chapter 4.

2. Gadamer in V. P. Branick, <u>An Ontology of Understanding</u>, p. 79.

3. Gadamer in Branick, p. 70.

4. Cf. A. L. Clements, "On the Mode and Meaning of Traherne's Mystical Poetry", <u>Studies in Philology</u>, LXI (1964) 500-521.

5. Traherne, <u>Christian Ethicks</u>, pp. 19 ff.

1. See K. W. Salter, Thomas Traherne: Mystic and Poet, Chapter III.

2. Ibid., p. 24.

3. See Patrick Grant, The Transformation of Sin, p. 191. For Traherne the first stage or the "Estate of Innocence" functions not as a mythical realm or purely as an ideal but as a personal and historical reality. When we speak of the "discovery" of sin, death or division it should be remembered this is the mythological language of Traherne. As we shall see this language is one with the fundamental self-concealment which transforms Traherne's ontic anxiety into the activity of world "recovery". Cf. Arapura Religion as Anxiety and Tranquillity, chapter 7.

4. See Grant, chapter 6.

5. See Grant, chapter 6.

6. See C III 2, and the poem "Silence".

7. The ignorance of the stage of innocence leaves critics in agreement that it is not a genuine mystic stage; cf. Salter Chapter II; and Itrat-Husain, The Mystical Element in the Metaphysical Poets of the Seventeenth Century, p. 292.

8. Grant, chapter 6.

9. E. L. Tuveson, The Imagination as a Means of Grace, offers an instructive counter-example when he argues that the idea of the social origin of sin in the late seventeenth century is based on empiricist premises. (pp. 45 ff.). A correlation between Traherne and the empiricists would have greater justification insofar as one would expect a certain historical unity to obtain between them. On the other hand fundamental differences in ontology between Ireneaus and Traherne - writing in the wake of the Cartesian revolution - make similarities between them merely formal. By the same measure a correlation between Traherne and later world views still has to be developed immanently out of his own thinking.

10. See Carol Marks's Introduction to the Christian Ethicks.

11. Salter, among others, pp. 88 ff.

12. This concept, would, in any case, be foreign to Traherne himself. Traherne's individuality emerges in his existential appropriation of a historically given matter; yet at the same time he is appropriated by the matter.

13. Marsilio Ficino, among other, made this thinking available to Traherne. Marks, Introduction to the Christian Ethicks pp. xxxvii - xxxviii. For an account of Ficino's attempt to synthesize the Platonic and Scholastic tendencies of his time see Ardes B. Collins, The Secular is Sacred, Platonism and Thomism in Marsilio Ficino's Platonic Theology.

14. Collins writes of Ficino's philosophy: "God is infinite because he receives no limit from without... Although he receives nothing from without, he gives a definite character and determination to all things. Out of himself alone he brings forth the positive perfections of the world." (p. 45.). The "traditional" account of Being to which we refer to here, and in opposition to which we find Traherne, centers around the hierarchy of being which God produces out of himself in self-contemplation. God is infinite as the source and upholder of all being; he is the limit of the formless and in him movement, including the willing of man, comes to Rest. This infinity of Being which God is and which determines the world is to be distinguished from the quantitative infinity of the world and God through space, as it develops in the seventeenth century.

15. This is expressed in the Platonic doctrine of Ideas as we find it in Ficino. God produces the world in his self-contemplation and his being is thus communicated in many modes; cf. Ficino, Commentary, pp. 126 f.

16. See below Part C. iii d.

17. An investigation of Pascal would be helpful in delineating the nature of anxiety in the seventeenth century.

18. In both cases the mind acts as copula which restores the world to God. In Ficino, however, the world is of itself a reflection of God; in Traherne it is a "dead" world utterly alien to God.

19. Wordsworth's Prelude represents a powerful attempt to think these same relationships under the priority of the abyss as the granting Power.

    Imagination - here - the Power so called
    Through sad incompetence of human speech,
    That awful Power arose from the mind's Abyss.
                                    (Prelude VI 524-6 (1850))

    Here "imagination" does not simply refer to the conscious synthesizing activity of the mind but to the ground or possibility of the self's activity in the world. This Power "usurps" the normal functions of the mind as it is seized by what appears to be an external force.

Imagination! lifting up itself
before the eye and progress of my Song
Like an unfather'd vapour; here that Power,
In all the might of its endowments, came
Athwart me; I was lost as in a cloud,
Halted, without a struggle to break through.
And now recovering, to my Soul I say
I recognize the glory....

(Prelude VI. 525-32
(1805))

The glory the conscious mind recognizes is that of the power
itself. This vision leaves the mind "empty" of ideas or conscious
willing; it is a simple openness in its unity with the "Imagin-
ation". This openness allows the world to be apprehended in
its power (VIII. 101-2, 705-7. (1805)); the unity of the mind and
the world is represented in the abyss, as such.

In this manner Wordsworth brings to partial fulfillment what is
hesitant and suppressed in Traherne, notwithstanding the essential
nature of the suppressed in Traherne. (In Wordsworth too, the
abyss is lost in favour of the activity of the imagination, but
this is something we cannot enter into here).

20. See A. O. Lovejoy, The Great Chain of Being, chapter II.

21. Aristotle, Metaphysics XI 1071-13, in Lovejoy, p. 55.

22. Milton, Paradise Lost, VIII, 419-21.

23. Lovejoy, pp. 81 ff.

24. Ibid., p. 94.

25. Ibid., p. 95.

26. See Carol Marks, "Thomas Traherne and Cambridge Platonism",
     pp. 521-534.

27. See Samuel I. Mintz, The Hunting of Leviathan, Chapter V.
     See J. A. Passmore, Ralph Cudworth: An Interpretation, for
     an account of Cudworth's close relation to Descartes, Chapter 1.

28. Henry More, "Enchiridion Metaphysicum" XXXIV, hereafter EM,
     in Philosophical Writings.

29. Rene Descartes, "Principles of Philosophy", Part II, sec.
     x ff. in Philosophical Works, Vol. I. ed. Haldane and
     Ross. Hereafter HR.

30. Ralph Cudworth, "A Treatise Concerning Eternal and Immutable
     Morality", in G. R. Cragg, ed., The Cambridge Platonists,
     pp. 288-9.

31. Ibid.

32. Descartes, Letter to Villebressieu, Summer 1631 in Philosophical Letters, hereafter PL.

33. Cudworth, "On Plastic Nature" in Cragg, pp. 245 f.

34. Descartes, Letter to More, August 1649, in PL.

35. Second Meditation, in HR I, p. 152.

36. Cudworth, "On Plastic Nature" in Cragg, pp. 243 ff.

37. More, EM, XXXIV.

38. More, EM, III.

39. More, EM, V.

40. More, EM, II.

41. More, "Immortality of the Soul" C X, 2-3, in Philosophical Writings.

42. Cudworth, "On Plastic Nature", in Cragg, p. 237.

43. Ibid., pp. 239 ff.

44. Ibid., p. 239.

45. Ibid., p. 247.

46. The negative way of Augustine, De Trin., vii 4, 7, noted in Itrait-Husain, p. 267.

47. See Lovejoy, pp. 75-77.

48. Descartes, Passions III, CLII, HR, I.

49. Descartes, Letter to Gibieuf, 19 January 1642, in PL.

50. Descartes, "The Passions of the Soul", xli, in HR I.

51. Descartes, Principles I, XXXII, HR I.

52. Descartes, Principles II, 3, HR I.

53. The esthetic of the early seventeenth century valued metaphor and conceit as the means by which the Intellectual or Platonic Idea could be expressed in sensuous form. (see Rosemund Tuve, Elizabethan and Metaphysical Imagery, for an extended and through-going analysis). Traherne distances himself from this ideal and insists on a simplicity of language which directly mirrors thingly or worldly reality.

The naked Truth in many faces shown,
... A Simple Light, transparent Words, a Strain
That lowly creeps, yet maketh Mountains plain,
Brings down the highest Mysteries to sense
and keeps them there; that is Our Excellence...
(The Author to the Critical Peruser
ll. i, 3-6).

In this report Traherne shows some affinity with both Hobbes and the new language ideal proclaimed by Thomas Sprat in The History of the Royal Society, Second Part, XX. In Traherne however, "Sight" and "Light" still retain the Platonic sense of intellectual activity in the world with the important exception the "world" is now a Cartesian world of extension which the isolated subject must retrieve. The emphasis on "objects" as the means to Felicity signifies the essentially Cartesian basis of Traherne's demand for clear and "naked Truth", which brings the "ideas" of things to sense.

54. Descartes, "Rules for Direction of the Mind", V, in HR I.

55. Ficino in P. O. Kristeller, The Philosophy of Marsilio Ficino, p. 269.

56. Ibid., pp. 269-71.

57. Contrast Augustine, cf. note 46 above.

58. See poem "The Estate" l. 42.

59. Contrast Ficino, where God is Rest, the end of willing, cf. note 14 above.

60. S. V. Keeling, Descartes, p. 106. The existence of the self "is disclosed through its activity: if we could never be aware of our activity, we could never be certain of our existence." See Anthony Kenny, Descartes, Chap. 3, for a discussion of the cogito as an inference.

61. Jonathan Ree, Descartes, p. 139.

62. Keeling, pp. 113-4.

63. Descartes, HR I, 163.

64. Keeling, p. 115.

65. Keeling, p. 121; Descartes, HR I. Principles V.

66. Descartes, Principles V. HR I.

67. See Keeling, p. 118.

68. Descartes, HR II. 33.

69. Descartes, Rules III, <u>HR</u> I.

70. "For when I affirm it to be <u>the clarity and distinctness</u> of the single Judgement 'my deception necessitates my existence', that confers the certainty of its truth, I am tacitly universalizing. For I am tacitly maintaining <u>any other</u> judgement of mine <u>of like clarity and distinctness</u> would be certainly true....
    (author's italics) Keeling, p. 99.

71. Mintz, pp. 81-2.

72. Hobbes on reason; see <u>Leviathan</u>, Part I, Chapter 5.

73. More, <u>Enthusiasmus Triumphatus</u>, p. 38. Hereafter <u>ET</u>.

74. See John Tullock, <u>Rational Theology and Christian Philosophy in England in the Seventeenth Century</u>, Vol. II, pp. 391-2.

75. More, <u>Enchiridion Ethicum</u>, Bk. I, Chapter 3, Sec. I - II.

76. More, <u>EE</u> I, 3, IV - V.

77. More, <u>EE</u> I, 3, VII.

78. Ibid.

79. Ibid.

80. More, <u>EE</u> I, 2, III.

81. Ficino, <u>Commentary</u>, p. 159.

82. More, <u>EE</u> II, 9, XV.

83. More, <u>EE</u> I, 6, I.

84. In Aharon Lichtenstein, <u>Henry More: The Rational Theology of a Cambridge Platonist</u>, p. 64.

85. More, <u>EE</u> I, 3, VII.

86. More, <u>ET</u>, p. 39.

87. More, "A Brief Discourse of the True Ground of the Certainty of Faith in Points of Religion", Noema 23, in Cragg.

88. John Locke, <u>An Essay Concerning Human Understanding</u>, IV, XIX, 4-6.

89. More, <u>ET</u>, p. 4.

90. More, <u>ET</u>, p. 14.

91. More, _ET_ sec XII.

92. See M. H. Nicolson, _The Breaking of the Circle_, conclusion.

93. Ficino in Kristeller, p. 83.

94. Traherne, _Meditations on the Six Days of the Creation_, p. 82.

95. Gottfried Wilhelm Leibnitz, _Monadology and Other Philosophical Essays_, p. 116.

96. Leibnitz, p. 96. see Lovejoy, Chapter V.

97. See Traherne, _CE_ pp. 74-5.

98. See _CE_ pp. 179-81.

99. See Lovejoy, Chapter V, for an account of Leibnitz' transformation of the principle.

100. Cf., Traherne _C_ III 41, 44.

101. Traherne _CE_ p. 41.

102. Ibid.

103. Descartes, Principles XXVII, _HR_ I.

104. Descartes, Letter to More, April 15, 1649, in _PL_.

105. Descartes, Letter to Chanut, June 6, 1647, in _PL_.

106. Descartes, Principles II, 4-21, _HR_ I.

107. More, _EM_ XXXIV.

108. More, "Antidote against Atheism, Appendix", Chapter 7, in Burtt, _The Metaphysical Foundation of Modern Science_, p. 147.

109. More, _EM_ XXIV.

110. Newton was unwilling to go as far as More did towards the identification of God and space. Space is "infinite" not as a substance or as an attribute of God but as a mode of existence consequent upon God. see Margula R. Perl, "Physics and Metaphysics in Newton, Leibnitz and Clarke", _JHI_ XXX, 507-526.
     As such, moreover, Newton's characterization of space as God's sensorium should be taken as a metaphorical approximation.

111. More, _EM_ XXXIV.

112. Isaac Newton, _Principia_, I, pp. 6 ff.

113. See Burtt, pp. 156 ff.

114. Newton, _Principia_, I, pp. 6 ff.

115. Ibid.

116. Burtt, pp. 256-7.

117. T. J. Baker, _An Historical and Critical Examination of English Space and Time Theories from Henry More to Bishop Berkeley_, p. 18.

118. Baker, pp. 18-19.

119. Newton in Burtt, p. 260.

120. Ibid.

121. See W. L. Doughty, _Studies in the Religious Poetry of the Seventeenth Century_, pp. 161 ff.

122. See Baker, Introduction.

123. See Ree, pp. 83 ff.

124. Locke, _An Essay Concerning Human Understanding_, 2 XIX, 3, 4; 2, VI.

125. See Tuveson, pp. 47-9.

126. Tuveson, p. 51.

127. St. Thomas Aquinas, Ia, X. 1.

128. Burtt, pp. 132-3.

129. Hobbes, _Leviathan_, Part 4, chapter 18.

130. Ibid.

131. Augustine, _Confessions_, Bk. XI, Chapter 18.

132. See Jürgen Moltmann, _The Experiment Hope_, pp. 46-53 for a discussion of Christian hope and the God who _comes_ out of the future.

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