ABSTRACT OF THESIS

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Title of Thesis "The Emergence of Hymnody in England, 1707-1861."

This thesis approaches the emergence of English hymnody from the standpoint of its communicational function in the corporate worship setting (its use in private devotion not here being considered).

The Introduction develops this frame of reference, with associated terminology. Worship is examined as to the direction(s) of communication therein: the God-to-man 'descending' encounter, the man-to-God 'ascending' response, and the 'horizontal' communication between worshippers. Since much of worship, including hymnody, is conducted through the verbal mode of communication, the human and religious scope of language is next considered. But as the hymn is also the work of a literary artist, his mode of communication, qua artist, is integrated with general religious verbal communication through the concept of 'trajectorial' speech, as seen in both Scriptural and artistic uses of language. In worship then, the hymn stands somewhat uniquely at the confluence of all these aspects.

A preliminary chapter traces the career of the Calvin-inspired 'Scriptural Principle' in English congregational song from the Anglican Reformation to c. 1700, as principally embodied in metrical psalmody. The gradual expansion of the Principle to include all Scripture, its bending to include paraphrase thereof, and finally the first stirrings of hymnody in the seventeenth century are all noted. This prepares us to consider the works of three representative hymnodists after 1700.

The first is Isaac Watts (1674-1748). He is the real agent of transition from psalmody to hymnody. His "Psalms of David Imitated" show his efforts to make psalmody more theologically and environmentally communicative to the singer (encounter), in order that the singer's response through the singing of the psalm may be fuller and more personally involved. Watts also wrote "Hymns and Spiritual Songs," and in these we see the beginning of a new communicational focus and content: the singer's feelings, states, and perceptions, contemplated aloud, and perhaps not cognitively communicated in any specific direction.

The subjective focus is seen to be deepening in the "Olney Hymns" of John Newton (1725-1807)(with William Cowper (1731-1800)),who represents the Evangelical Revival of the later eighteenth century. The hymns are examined in this regard, and also (in Newton's case) for a strong didactic/

Use other side if necessary.

didactic element. Both the subjective focus and the didacticism present communicational problems when sung: they are more impressive than expressive, from the singer's standpoint. A detached note to this chapter briefly discusses John Wesley's translations of the subjective, pietistic strain in German hymnody.

The hymns of Reginald Heber (1783-1826) commended hymnody to 'majority' Anglicanism, through his intent to integrate hymnic content with the Gospel lections of the liturgical year. Thus we are partly returned to the objectively-centered/recollective-response function of congregational song which characterized metrical psalmody and most of Watts's work. A new form of subjectivity enters, however, in Heber's use of romantic nature imagery, sometimes so vivid as to possibly divert the singer's attention from the religious content and direction-of-communication, by pleasurable immersion in the verbal imagery surrounding and conveying the content.

These, then, are the major communicational elements in the emergence of English hymnody. In the mid-nineteenth century, hymnody in England gained historical authentication through the translations from the Latin tradition. Simultaneously, German hymnody - both pietistic and pre-pietistic - was being introduced in translation. These endeavors are examined, showing how they reinforced both the objective and subjective communicational elements already present in English hymnody. Finally, it is observed how the indigenous English hymnody and the translations are eclectically united in "Hymns, Ancient and Modern" (1861), the first 'modern' hymnal, and first book with a truly popular acceptance and use in England. Its publication and success signal the completion of English hymnody's emergence, and bring the study to a close on the note of the pluralistic co-existence of both communicational approaches (objective and subjective) from that time to this.

THE EMERGENCE OF HYMNODY IN ENGLAND, 1707 - 1861

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Doctor of Philosophy

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INTRODUCTION

WORSHIP, HYMNODY, AND COMMUNICATION

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> Know ye what a hymn is? It is a song with praise of God. If thou praisest God and singest not, thou utterest no hymn. If thou singest and praisest not God, thou utterest no hymn. A hymn, then, containeth these three things: song (canticum), and praise (laudem), and that of God. Praise, then, of God in song is called a hymn.
>
> -- Saint Augustine[1]

This well-known definition of the Christian (or Judeo-Christian) hymn sets out its basic parameters: "song" implies words set to music; "praise" indicates function or purpose; "of God" specifies the direction of address, and perhaps to some extent content. While one may consider it implicit in the definition, it would be well to state also (especially in view of the post-Reformation context of our present study) that the setting of hymn usage is corporate worship.[2] This (now) four-element definition can well stand at the head of our study,

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1. Augustine, Exposition on the Book of Psalms, Library of the Fathers (Oxford, 1857), exposition of Psalm 148:14, VI, 431.

2. Medieval hymnody was basically corporate only in the context of monasticism, while after the Reformation, at least in England, there was 'hymnody' for private devotional reading (the most famous producer of which was George Herbert); hence our additional qualification.

although one is bound to say that history after Saint Augustine - more particularly, after the Reformation - shows that his understanding of both function and direction-of address were to be expanded, as we shall see.

Christian hymnody, so defined then, can be and has been studied and described within several frames of reference. One of these is of course history, either hymnody's own internal history and development, or that in relation to ecclesiastical or cultural history. Also, one may attempt to survey the whole historical field from the Judaic origins to the present, or to treat a certain period, tradition, or geographic/linguistic group; e.g., Greek/Byzantine, Latin, German or Scandinavian Lutheran, English, or American hymnody.

Since a hymn employs words, it is a species of literature, and therefore its relation to other literature and to literary history may be examined. Substituting "music" for "words" or "literature" yields yet another approach, since a hymn in our definition involves music as well as words.

Then, too, since hymnody uses words in the context of the church's life, its relation to theology (the church's 'God-talk'), and theology's codification in doctrine and dogma may be studied.

Any examination of the bibliography of hymnology will reveal that all these possibilities have been pursued, together with various combinations and permutations thereof. This study is not intended simply to continue in any of these

paths, although elements of history, literature, and theology are inescapably involved. Rather, we are here concerned with the functional relation of hymnody to its setting of corporate worship. Our thesis might thus be phrased, in question form: in the historical emergence of English hymnody in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, what functions in worship came to be served by hymnody, and within what frame of reference might the development of these functions best be comprehended?

Now, the terms 'emergence' and 'development' imply that history and chronology are involved (within the period and ethos specified). That we are concerned with worship will also involve theology, the interrelation of these two being handily expressed by the saying that 'the way Christian people worship is declarative of what they believe'.[1] But underlying these built-in categories is a concept which, while certainly important in almost all human activity, gave major formative impetus to the development of hymnody's functions in worship: the concept of communication. That is to say, we shall be conscious here, that whatever else they are, worship, theology, language/literature (and also music) are all forms of, media of, or settings for communication, and they all combine in the hymn-as-communication. It is, then, to communication in these relevant instances that we must now give some preliminary attention. For this discussion we shall assume a working definition of

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1. Attributed in this form to the theologian Joseph Sittler.

communication as that activity by which meaning or self is conveyed from one being to another.

I. Worship as Communication

Speaking introductorily of worship, Evelyn Underhill says that "whatever its form of expression may be, it is always a subject-object relationship"; more specifically, ". . . worship is an acknowledgement of Transcendance; that is to say, of a Reality independent of the worshipper."[1] We would note that these two sentences begin to focus communication upon the religious sphere: "relationship" implies communication, and one of the communicators is "Transcendant" in relation to the other. So fundamental indeed to human nature is this acknowledgement that Underhill even identifies it as an instinct: "That instinct means the latent recognition of a metaphysical reality, standing over against physical reality, which men are driven to adore, and long to apprehend."[2] The use of the concept of instinct aside (along with the doctrine of original sin), we here move closer to worship, for if we assume a flow of communication from the transcendant metaphysical reality (God, to the Christian) to the physical reality (man), there is also communication in the reverse direction ("adoration"). Communication in the worship situation is thus bi-directional,

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1. Evelyn Underhill, Worship (London, 1936), p.3.
2. Ibid., p.4.

mutual, which means that each being involved is both subject and object. Underhill goes on to speak of this second (reverse) flow as "the response of the creature to the Eternal. . .Here man responds to the impact of Eternity . . .the most profound of man's responses to reality."[1] J.-J. von Allmen also emphasizes the mutuality of communication in worship: "Worship is the moment of encounter and unity between the Lord and his people who give themselves to each other in the joy and liberty of communion."[2] Further articulation of each direction of this communication is found in, for example, R. Will: "In the phenomenon of worship, we see two currents of life meet, one proceding from the Transcendant Reality, the other flowing from the religious life of the subject; one descending, the other ascending."[3]; or W. Hahn: "Worship is the twofold event, or in other words, it is an event with two subjects: God acts toward us, and we answer him through what we do. This means that worship has two sides which, though they can be considered separately, must be seen in relation to one another."[4]

In these statements we find those terms and images which permeate much conversation about worship, and which we shall be adopting as part of our vocabulary in this study;

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1. Ibid., pp. 3-4.
2. J.-J. von Allmen, Worship, Its Theology and Practice (New York, 1965), p. 183.
3. Robert Will, Le Culte (quoted in translation in Underhill, Worship, p. 10.)
4. Wilhelm Hahn, Worship and Congregation, Ecumenical Studies in Worship, No. 12 (Richmond, Virginia, 1963), p. 15.

this mutual communication is 'vertical' in orientation (derived from that venerable (and biblical) cosmology in which God-in-heaven is 'up', and man-on-earth 'below', in the process metaphorically pointing up the qualitative distinction between God and man); the descending flow of communication from God to man is 'encounter', and is prior to (implicit in Underhill's "response" and Hahn's "answer") and evokes the ascending 'response' from worshipping man.

Since, however, there is more than one man in communication with God (generally true, and implicitly so in corporate worship) we must recognize that a social, interhuman situation exists. The resulting flow of communication between men may be styled as a reciprocal, 'horizontal' flow. Hahn calls this a "second dimension of fellowship in worship" (the 'vertical' being the first, of course); and the two are related:

> The vertical dimension is a personal relationship in which the individual is accepted in all the uniqueness of his personality... .
> On the other hand, the individual Christian in all his uniqueness and freedom can understand himself correctly only if he realizes that he is a member of the whole body, and that he is linked to every other member. The vertical relationship with Christ finds its fulfillment in its awareness of the horizontal dimension of worship, that is, in its awareness of the needs of the brethren and of the congregation as a whole.[1]

It should be observed at this point that, despite the use of the term 'worship', nothing has been said or quoted thus far which applies exclusively to worship in the sense of 'cultus' or 'cult'. That is to say, communication

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1. Ibid., pp. 32-34.

(God encountering and men responding and intercommunicating, toward the relationship of fellowship in both planes) need not happen solely in cultic worship. One must then say, either that the whole of the Christian life is characterized as dialogical and, so to speak, cruciform; or, with Saint Paul in the famous passage of Romans 12:1, that all of life is worship (latria).[1] In any case, life is the theater of God's grace and man's celebration of it.

Nevertheless, it is to our purpose here to center our attention upon cultic worship, as the locus of the hymn-in-use. Of the many definitions of cultic worship that have been offered over the centuries, we will here content ourselves with two of contemporary origin:

> . . .so worship is the name proper to the celebration of this new being in Christ by his body, the church. Such a celebration has a scope broad enough to include all the New Testament means by leiturgia, latria, diakonia (the service of God) and has a specificity concrete enough to be verbalized in the liturgical life of the church where it is assembled in public worship.[2]

> In divine service there takes place that which does not take place anywhere else in the community. In divine service the sabbath intervenes between six working days on the one side and six more on the

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1. The English word 'worship' has come to have at least four applications in common usage. From the broadest to the narrowest they are:
   1) the Christian life (related both to latria and leiturgia)
   2) the whole of the cult ("worship at 11:00 Sunday")
   3) the 'response' element only in the cult
   4) the action within response of 'pure' adoration (related to proskuneo)

2. Joseph Sittler, "The Shape of the Church's Response in Worship," an appendix to his The Ecology of Faith (Philadelphia, 1961), p. 100. The appendix was originally a paper read at the North American Faith and Order Conference, Oberlin, Ohio, in September, 1957.

> other. In it it exchanges its working clothes for its festal attire. It is now an event as community. Unpretentiously but distinctly it stands out from the secularity of its environment in which it is for the most part submerged. It now casts off the anonymity of that which is distinctive and common to it; the occasional and haphazard and private character elsewhere assumed by its manifestation. It now exists and acts in concrete actuality and visibility as the congregation to which many individuals - each from his own human and Christian place in dispersion - come together to one place at one time in order that together, occupying the same space and time, they may realize the communio sanctorum in a definite form.[1]

Because the form of cultic worship is structured by men, we shall briefly describe it in functional/theological terms, with an eye to the lines of communication therein, as a prelude to probing the place of hymnody in it.

A. 'Encounter'

The downward flow of communication from God to man, so far entitled 'encounter', is spoken of by the church as 'Word of God' (in the broad sense, as discussed below), and its content is characterized theologically as revelation. God reveals himself (albeit never completely), the truth about ourselves, and his will for us. Borrowing from the terminology of grammar, we may say that this encountering revelation has two modes: the indicative (of which the central content is "I am"), and the imperative ("Follow me").

The major sub-themes of revelation are familiar to all Christians, and so are only listed here: in the

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1. Karl Barth, Church Dogmatics (Edinburgh, 1956), IV, 2, pp. 697-98.

indicative mode, God reveals his own nature - the holy (and wholly other) Lord, creating, preserving, judging, forgiving, caring, loving, delivering. Concerning ourselves in relation to him, we are created in the imago Dei, are sinners, and (after Luther) simul justus et peccator. In the imperative, we are called on to repent, to accept that we are accepted by God (after Tillich), and to love him by loving the world (although in but not of it).

In history, this revelation is disclosed in the life of Israel, the life of Christ, and presently - through the Spirit's indwelling - in the life of the new Israel, the Church. In the setting of worship, revelation is primarily witnessed to or communicated to us in the Scriptures - read, preached, as the basis for liturgical proclamation, and as contributor to the content of hymnody. This singular importance of Scripture in worship, together with the fact that it inhabits the same domain as the hymn; viz., the verbal, requires its own treatment a bit later in our study.

B. 'Response'

Turning to the upward flow of communication as man's response God-ward to revelation, we would first observe generally that it is the human celebration of the nature of God revealed, particularly in history. It is also related to the apprehension of the divine imperatives already mentioned. However, the morphology of this response in worship becomes clearer if we turn to an

explication such as that by Joseph Sittler.[1] Casting his eye over the wide spectrum of worship traditions in Christendom, he detects five omnipresent elements: recollection, thanksgiving, participation, proclamation, and expectation - placed in this order to form a logical progression. These elements we recapitulate below.

1) Recollection. While basically self-explanatory, the impetus to recollect lies in the congregation's consciousness that its present existence is connected with the mighty acts of God in history. The record of these acts (and therefore the source for recollection of them) is partly in Scripture; thus the Scripture reading, Scripture-based preaching, liturgical proclamation, and hymn content which we have previously identified as encounter elements are at the same time response. The other part of the record is the post-biblical life of the church, recollected in the so-called 'liturgical churches' through such devices as the liturgical year, and more diffusely in the known or sensed historical continuity of the liturgy itself (both rite and ceremony); and in all churches in allusions to post-biblical history in preaching and in prayer (as apposition to the initial address, or as antecedent reason to petition).

We should also recognize that recollection can be

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1. Sittler, "Church's Response in Worship", pp. 101-04. What follows is a resume of his analysis.

considered an element in the 'horizontal', interhuman communication in worship, in that it is the congregation recollecting to itself in, so to speak, internal dialogue, preparatory to:

2) Thanksgiving. The 'first fruit' of a recollection that is existentially grasped by faith is thanksgiving. In corporate worship, it is manifested in liturgical formulae (notably in the Preface/proper Preface and Canon of the Eucharist), in the understanding of the bread and wine as a sacrifice of thanksgiving, in prayers with thanksgiving content in varying degree, and, as we shall see, in some psalmody and hymnody.

It is perhaps a weakness in Sittler's analysis that no explicit mention is made of 'praise' as such; but it is so commonly associated with thanksgiving (as in the venerable trilogy 'prayer, praise, and thanksgiving') that we may insert it here. If, for convenience, we consider thanksgiving per se to describe the response to God's saving activity in history (as recollected), praise may be thought of as response to the nature of God himself, as revealed. It is essentially adoring (including thanking, to be sure) God for being God, and for being the kind of God he has revealed himself to be. This may also be styled as 'objective' praise, to distinguish it from a 'subjective' variety wherein the impact of God's revealed nature upon the worshipper is given more expression. The objective praise of God normally includes a recollective description of his nature in order to praise, and that raises the problem of the inadequacy of

human language for this task, so that beyond the use of virtually irreducible words with numinous content such as 'holy', 'glory', 'grace', etc., there is almost invariably a resort to anthropomorphisms to describe God's attributes, e.g., parental love and care, regal majesty, human compassion, etc. However, non-verbal forms of response such as kneeling, and visual aids such as candles and the height of the worship space can be of aid in this area, because they reinforce (through association, to be sure) a sense of mystery appropriate to the contemplation of God's nature, at the same time expressing or symbolizing his lordship and authority, the acknowledgement of which is the etymylogical import of 'worship'.

3) Participation. This describes the congregation's consciousness that it is a part of and involved in all that has been thankfully/praisefully recollected: that it too is the object of God's grace and redemptive deeds in history; it too receives the new being in Christ. Preaching, of course, draws attention to this involvement; but the explicit expression of it in worship, vis-a-vis the implicit in thankful recollection, would be in the celebration of the sacraments (particularly their actual reception - singly in Baptism, corporately in the Eucharist); also, in prayers and congregational song with the same emphasis.

As there is obviously an element of corporate self-awareness and self-consciousness present in this aspect of response, the possibility of a subjective orientation thereto

(as previously mentioned above under 'praise') must be recognized. The extent to which this orientation can devolve into individual introspection and rumination (but still within corporate worship) is a factor with which we shall have to reckon in our study.

4) Proclamation. At first this would seem to be related to the 'encounter' direction of communication in worship; proclamation would be the immediate form of revelation. It thus seems out of place under a discussion of 'response'.

But Sittler would have us here understand that "worship not only includes proclamation of the gospel of salvation; it is proclamation,"[1] somewhat in the sense in which Saint Paul can say that each celebration of the Lord's Supper proclaims the Lord's death. This proclamation-by-worshipping is made by the congregation both to itself for edification, and to the world. Therefore, as in recollection above, we see here an element of 'horizontal' communication.

While Sittler implies that this is less a matter of specific liturgical items than the impact of the whole, it is possible that the church's awareness that in its worship it proclaims, may lead it to reflect upon the world and its condition, its grandeur and misery. If that is explicitly done in worship (and there are differing opinions

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1. Ibid., p. 103.

as to the extent to which it should be done, vis-a-vis such reflection in non-worship Christian assembly), it is often manifested in the content of worship items which fulfill other functions as well, viz., preaching, intercessory prayer, and also hymnody.

Liturgical proclamation also has a relationship to:

5) Expectation. Here the theme of eschatology bears upon worship. As Sittler says:

> But all of this recollection, thanksgiving, participation, and proclamation is the worship, or true service of God, in the body within the theater of this world; a response and a song of praise by the pilgrim people of God. And for that reason Christian worship is always expectation. This expectation is not an element in a richer context, it is rather the pervading mood of the whole of Christian worship.[1]

It is a mood of tautness, as implied by the primitive church's "Maranatha"; a 'not yet, yet even now.' Like proclamation above, specific items in worship are not wholly given over to it, but it may find expression in petitionary prayer and in a class of hymnody allied with the world-reflection mentioned above under proclamation.

It will have become clear that 'response' in worship means not only specific activities engendered by aspects of 'encounter', but indeed nearly everything that the congregation brings to the moment of worship and communicates Godward.

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1. Ibid., p. 104.

C. 'Horizontal' Communication

While remaining mindful of what has already been said and quoted concerning inter-human relationships and communication in worship,[1] it is a de facto reality of corporate worship that the vertical communication, in either direction, is through media which are of human origin or physical production: a human voice or voices speak or sing words humanly ordered into language, and they are inevitably heard (or overheard, in the case of response) by human ears, as well as by God; natural matter such as wood and stone, wheat and grapes are shaped by men into places of worship and the visible signs of a sacrament, and make impact upon human senses. Thus there is a constant 'horizontal' element present, even if secondary to the 'vertical'. In relation to revelationary encounter, it is sine qua non, unless we turn to theophany or a spiritualistic 'inner word'. In relation to response, we have noted it as an ancillary activity in recollection, participation, and proclamation/expectation. In one of these cases, it was suggested that such overhearing had an 'edifying' function, using that term in its root (and Pauline) sense of a mutual-building-up-of-the-body-in-faith, and that would broadly be the case, whether seen functionally as 'edification', theologically as a 'dimension of fellowship', or even psychologically as creating 'solidarity', etc.

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1. Above, p. 6.

It is possible, of course, to deliberately incorporate opportunities in worship for 'horizontal' communication (under any of the above three rubrics), instead of simply according it by-product status. In the form of edification, this was a mark of the English Puritans in their worship; but the resultant tendency to conceive worship in largely didactic or even pedagogical terms, and thus to be an essentially cerebral activity, had its effect on congregational song, as shall be seen.[1]

It now we look back on this brief analysis of worship in terms of communication, two observations can be made which suggest our next topic, and which look forward to a study of hymnody in this context:

1) We have cited hymnody as a potential medium of every direction of communication in worship, and elements thereof. And in point of fact, these potentials have all been realized and employed in the period of English hymnody upon which our study is focussed. Therefore, worship-as-communication forms a relevant frame of reference within

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1. The (intentional) 'horizontal' as fellowship has also been actualized in the history of worship, particularly among groups which might generally be labeled 'enthusiast', who lay less store in fixed rite and ceremonial, stressing rather informality in worship (sometimes to the point of 'folksiness', especially in America). Likewise, in some twentieth-century circles, the psychological element has been recognized, and worship deliberately structured to induce and produce moods and responses deemed desireable in the worshipper(s). This has sometimes been carried to the point of a "calculated assault upon the emotions", or of a "brain-washing conducted under the presumed banner of the Holy Ghost" (Sittler, "Church's Response in Worship," p. 93)

which to trace the emergence of hymnody, especially with regard to the function of hymnody in worship.

2) It will have been noticed in passing that the majority of concrete worship components cited in illustration of aspects of communication share the verbal mode thereof. This is by no means a denigration of other, non-verbal modes of communication; but it is one expectable outcome of the Reformation. It is explained thus by J.S. Whale:

> The Reformation laid primary emphasis on the Word as the basis of faith and worship. Protestant worship recalls the Word-Service of the Synagogue rather than the Mystery-Service of the Temple and of Eastern and Western Catholicism; in it the preaching and hearing of the Word take the central place . . . .
>
> To appreciate this momentous fact we have to see it against the background of its history; and even so, misinterpretation is easy unless we attend to other facts which are often overlooked.
>
> The history of the Christian cultus is the history of a tension between its two great constitutive elements, a rivalry of opposites which dislike reconciliation, and slowly set up a state of unstable equilibrium until choice is made between them. On the one hand something is visibly done (δρώμενον) - a sacred rite, a central act of sacrifice, imitative symbolism or communion. On the other hand something is audibly spoken (λεγόμενον) - a common prayer, reading from a corpus of sacred writings, preaching. In the history of worship these two elements often appear as mutually incompatible, in the sense that one tends either to relegate the other to a position of secondary importance or to displace it almost altogether. The ellipse with two focal centers is always trying to become a circle with only one. Liturgical law is like the mechanical in that it seems to require the cultus to have only one center of gravity. Either the Word is the mere accompaniment of the elaborate Rite, having little independent significance; or the Rite is mere rudimentary survival, the Word being the primary and central reality.[1]

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1. J.S. Whale, "Calvin," in Christian Worship, ed. by Nathaniel Micklem (Oxford, 1936), pp. 165-66.

Whale proceeds to chronicle how the tension was resolved in history:

> In the worship of the primitive church λεγόμενον and δρώμενον - common prayer, mutual edification, and the sacred eucharistic act - stand together in the fullest inward harmony.
>
> In the Catholic liturgies of East and West the Mystery, the complex and precisely regulated cultus act, slowly usurps the central place, while living congregational prayer retires into the background, the λεγόμενον becoming a stereotyped sacred formula uttered by the priest.[1]

At the Reformation, Luther is described as wishing to restore the ancient balance, but encountered the inertia of many years of infrequent reception by the populace, making a 'balanced' mass too idealistic in practice. i.e., Word and Sacrament would <u>both</u> suffer if brought (back) into balance. So Luther retreated to an unbalance in favor of the verbal (λεγόμενον), hoping that education (and time) would eventually right the matter (this being the source of a certain pedagogical motive in Luther's approach to worship).

Zwingli was from the first at that point (the predominance of the verbal) by conviction, negatively witnessed to by his memorial doctrine of the Lord's Supper.

Calvin, like Luther, strenuously advocated the ancient balance, and also ran into popular resistance to frequent Communion (weekly, at least). So Calvin<u>ism</u>, like Lutheran<u>ism</u>, also came to emphasize the verbal in

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1. <u>Ibid</u>., p. 166.

worship, although Calvin himself was never reconciled to the compromise.

While Whale's descriptions of the positions of the Reformers on this matter might be arguable, it is no doubt true that Protestantism generally has found this tension-and-balance a persistent problem; and further that by and large it has favoured verbal communication in worship, whether by positive intention and conviction, or by default of δρώμενον , as it were.; and it is this which is witnessed to in our analysis.[1]

What we must be careful to avoid, in acknowledging this situation, is an automatic equation of emphasis on the verbal mode of communication with an over-intellectualization of worship (although that happened in Puritanism, as noted above, and has been an ever-present danger in Protestant worship practice, even if not intended), because language is surely able to reach or express other centers of human personality, individual or corporate, than the cerebral/cognitive (and language mated with music in the hymn even more so).

In any case, hymnody's heavy investment in the verbal domain does comport with this de facto Protestant emphasis, and this at least partly explains its popularity and variety of application in Protestant worship.

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1. See also in this regard William Nicholls, Jacob's Ladder: The Meaning of Worship, Ecumenical Studies in Worship, No. 4 (Richmond, Virginia, 1958), pp. 43-44.

In the light of these assessments, then, we must next direct some attention to the verbal mode of communication: in general and in worship.

II. The Importance of Verbal Communication

A. The Scope of Language

Just as worship, at least in its root form of acknowledging transcendant reality, is so basic in man's nature that Evelyn Underhill would consider it instinctive, so the phenomenon of language is also seen to be woven into the very core of being:

> . . .for man is that being on earth who does not have language. Man is language.
> It is by virtue of the procreative power of language, which grasps, shakes, and transforms, that man is man. For nothing really human can be so without this meaning, whether the language be uttered or silent. In this way, language as the power of universals is given to man in order that he might transcend his environment, in order that he might have a world. It is the law of language to create the world, and it is therefore as futile to search for the origin of language as it is to search for the origin of reason. Both are given with man; both are part of his essential, his ontological reality.[1]

Such a statement very nearly makes 'language' a synonym for 'communication', and leads at least the above-quoted author to the supernatural as its source:

> It is fortunate that the reasons whereby it is generally proved that language cannot have been invented by man are irrefutable. With the infallibility of the intuitive faculty and with the

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1. Ruth Nanda Anshen, "Language as Idea," in Language: An Enquiry into its Meaning and Function, ed. by Ruth Nanda Anshen, Science of Culture Series, vol. VIII (New York, 1957), p. 3.

> implacability of logic we must concede that if language does not come from empiric man, it must come from Spirit or God. For God created language, even as He created man.[1]

Developing the origin of language in this direction suggests a correlation with the Greek-derived Christian concept of the λόγος . One could therefore compare the thought of a philosophical theologian like Paul Tillich with Anshen:

> Using words, having language, is a basic function of the human mind. Without exaggeration it can be said that language makes man man. With his language are given his reason and his freedom. Through the word man grasps the structures of reality; through the word he expresses and communicates the hidden depths of his personality. The word makes community between men possible, and it is only in community that man creates the word and becomes a man - a rational and free personality.
>
> A god who did not have the word would be less than man. But God as the creative ground of man and his world cannot be less than his creature. He must be the ground of word and reason and freedom and personality. Therefore, the ancient world, Greek, Jewish, and Christian, attributed divine character to the Logos, the debar, the verbum, which belongs to God.[2]

We shall not here pursue the philosophy or ontology of language in depth, but if these brief quotations point to an essential truth about language, it provides us with a more fundamental explanation of the prevalence of the verbal mode of communication in worship (as indeed in all human activity), than the appeal to Reformation church history that has already been made.

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1. Anshen, "Language as Idea," p.4.
2. Paul Tillich, "The Word of God," in Language: An Enquiry, ed. by Anshen, pp. 122-23.

At any rate, the philosopher of language like Anshen proceeds from this premise of the origin of language in God (or perhaps the capacity for and inate need for language in man) to a consideration of the relation of this given to actual human speech (language with a small "l", as it were). Anshen establishes the relation as a "gift,"

> . . .which enables man to communicate with his fellows, to reveal to others the hidden secrets of his being, to raise to God his desires in invocations, his sorrows in grief, or his despair in entreaty, this unique instrument which, entrusted to the written or spoken tradition, defeats the voracity of time . . .[1]

and proceeds to a basic definition of language as the "written and spoken tradition":

> Spoken language may be defined as a system of sound and sound groups, produced by the delicate minimum movements of man's articulatory apparatus, which are made to symbolize thoughts crystallized around certain points. These points may be termed acoustic fixations, which can then achieve a permanent form in writing. Were this impossible man would be compelled to recapitulate at the birth of each new thought the entire mass of thoughts humanity has ever conceived.[2]

Thus the linguistics scholar stands poised for his (or her) studies. But the Christian's approach to language-as-communication, while not necessarily denying any of the above, remains rather more centered upon God's involvement in it, because central to Christianity (including Christian worship, as we have seen) is communi-

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1. Anshen, "Language as Idea," p.4.
2. Anshen, "Language as Communication," in Language: An Enquiry, ed. by Anshen, pp. 341-42.

cation and hence relationship between God and man, continuing beyond initial creation, and also resulting in the truest communication between man and man. Further, it is evident that in communication between Christian men, as for example the 'horizontal' in worship, the content is often God and the God-man relationship.

B. The "Word of God"

Fundamental in the Christian approach to language and verbal communication is the concept and doctrine of the "Word of God." Tillich would always have us bracket this phrase in quotation marks, because

> . . .like everything else man says about God, ["Word of God"] has symbolic character . . . . Man's experience of himself as having the word became the material for the symbol "Word of God." To say the "Word of God" is a symbol does not diminish the truth and the significance of the term. For a genuine symbol, in contrast to a sign, participates in the reality of that which it symbolizes. "Word of God" is reality, but it is not the reality indicated by the literal understanding of the term. God is not a person who speaks to himself and to his creatures in words which grasp and object and reveal a subject. But God manifests himself in ecstatic experiences, and those who have these experiences express them in words which point to the divine self-manifestation. These words, and the divine self-manifestation which they express, are the "Word of God." The ground of our being is not silent, but he does not speak the language of finite beings, even of those who are called his images, namely, men. He does not speak their language, but he speaks to them through their language. He is manifest to them, and they use the word given to them symbolically, in order to grasp and communicate his manifestations. "Word of God" is the necessary and adequate symbol for the self-manifestation of the ground of being to man.[1]

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1. Tillich, "The Word of God," pp. 122-23.

Having thus integrated divine revelation, language-as-communication, and language-as-words under the phrase "Word of God," Tillich proceeds to cite six concrete applications of this symbol in Christian tradition. We briefly recapitulate them here, for in them we shall find two points of contact with the verbal in worship and hymnody. The six applications are in two groups of three each, the first group forming the "transcendant foundation of what is called "Word of God."[1]

1)""Word of God" can be and has been understood as the inner word which God speaks to himself, and in which he becomes manifest to himself." It is "that element in the ground of being which breaks its eternal silence and makes life and history possible."[2] Obviously, Tillich is using the words "word" and "speaks" in the first of these sentences in a highly symbolic way.

2) If the above application could be described as God determining to manifest himself, the second application of "Word of God" is to that fundamental outgoing manifestation underlying existence: creation. "The world is made by the "Word of God"." But Tillich is careful to note:

> It points to the spiritual character of the relation of the ground of being to all beings. This relation does not have the character of a natural emanation of the universe out of a divine or demonic

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1. Ibid., p. 125.
2. Ibid., p. 124.

> substance, or out of both, but it has the character of a spiritual affirmation of the finite by its infinite ground. The symbol "Creation by the Word" guarantees the freedom of man for good and evil, for fall and salvation. It is the basis of the historical thinking of the Christian Occident.[1]

Elsewhere, Tillich also says:

> It is the doctrine of creation through the word which makes especially sharp the distance between the Creator and creation. It was correct and proper when later Jewish and Christian theologians spoke of creation out of nothing. This is an implication of creation through the word. It means that there is no substance, divine or anti-divine, out of which finite beings receive their being. They receive it through the word, the will of God and its creative expression. The doctrine of creation through the word denies any substantial participation of man in God. It replaces identity by personal distance.[2]

This "distance," which corresponds to Underhill's subject-object basis for worship, and which shall reappear later in our study, leads to:

3) The "Word of God" appearing in history, within the creation it first called into being. It appears in two forms, inspiration and incarnation: "It inspires the prophets, whose words express in human language what they have received from the divine Logos, the divine self-affirmation in human history."[3] This is of course the starting point for Scripture, which is taken up as the next use below, opening the second group, and which is to prove one of our points of contact.

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1. Ibid.
2. Paul Tillich, Biblical Religion and the Search for Ultimate Reality (Chicago, 1955), p. 36.
3. Tillich, "The Word of God," p. 124.

The "Word of God" in history as incarnation is, equally obviously, Jesus Christ:

> In contrast to the prophetic experience of inspiration, his being as such is the divine Word. Not the words of Jesus but he himself is the "Word of God." His words are one of the several expressions of his being, which is the bearer of the Word, the principle of the divine self-manifestation.[1]

If now these three applications of "Word of God" are a unity in that they describe the "Word" from God"s 'viewpoint,' so to speak, the remaining three have as their 'viewpoint' man; i.e., the media through which God's self-manifestation is expressed and received in human life, particularly words.

4) Scripture:

> The Biblical words are human words, created by the development of languages under many different influences. The Biblical language is neither a divine language nor a divinely dictated human language. The Biblical language is the human expression of the state of revelatory ecstasy which the Biblical writers have experienced. They express their experience in a human way, each in his own language. And each of these languages is shaped by its history and the innumerable influences which determine every historical reality. God speaks through human words in the books of the Bible. But these words are at the same time "Word of God" in so far as they are received by men as the divine self-manifestation.[2]

This incidentally makes the New Testament outstanding because it is the witness of the inspired "Word" to the incarnate "Word."

5) The church's proclamation, especially preaching.

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1. Ibid., p. 125.
2. Ibid., p. 126.

This has been called "Word of God" in two senses: objectivistically, in that the proclamation or sermon is faithful in content or message to a previously authenticated "Word of God" - for Protestants, Scripture; but also subjectivistically, in that the proclamatory act (such as the sermon) may itself be received as and thus become a "Word of God" for the hearer/worshipper:

> According to this understanding, the objective content of the sermon does not make it "Word of God." It must speak to the listener as God's self-manifestation to him. It must grasp the listener "existentially" in order to become "Word of God" for him. This means that a sermon or any other expression of the Church <u>can</u> become "Word of God" for someone but that this does not necessary happen.[1]

6) Finally, Tillich carries the expanding progression from 4) to 5) to the conclusion, that if a contemporary proclamation can be a "Word of God," then

> . . .the boundary line between the speaking of the Church and any other speaking has disappeared. Every word, and also every event, can become "Word of God" for someone in a special situation. If it is experienced as divine self-manifestation it <u>is</u> "Word of God" for him who experiences it. This makes the whole of nature and culture a possible bearer of the "Word of God." Someone may experience ultimate meaning in a casual conversation, in the encounter with a human being, in a philosophical text, in a piece of art, in a political event. If this happens, he has heard the "Word of God" through these media.[2]

This is our second point of contact with the verbal in worship and hymnody which we shall shortly pursue.

Tillich recognizes that this last application of

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1. <u>Ibid</u>., p. 127.
2. <u>Ibid</u>.

the term is rather radical in its expansion; and indeed we can observe that the organized church has tended to be wary of it, perhaps because it lets matters get a bit beyond its control by becoming too dependent upon the individual's "experience" or subjective reception.

One implication of (6) which Tillich treats is that the person speaking the "Word" in the "casual conversation," et al, or the philosopher or artist, may have grasped the "Word" through a direct, unmediated "experience of the divine presence in the innermost center of the soul";[1] i.e., what is sometimes referred to (again, highly symbolically) as an 'inner Word.' Of this he has a historical note that will be illuminating for our study:

> In the Reformation period especially, the struggle between those who emphasized the "inner Word" and those who rejected it was heated and led first to the suppression of the doctrine of the "inner Word" and its adherents. But slowly the situation changed. The "inner Word" of the enthusiasts of the Reformation period was more and more secularized and became the principles of Reason in the Enlightened philosophy and theology of the eighteenth century. According to the teaching of this time, there is an inner "Word of God" in every man: the rational structure of his mind, in the power of which he can know the ultimate principles of being and develop a rational theology, ethics, and logic.[2]

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1. Ibid., p. 128.

2. Ibid., p. 128. In addition to our observation on the previous page concerning the church's wariness of the 'inner word,' we would at this point note (as Tillich admits) that a considerable body of western Christian thought would or will have become very restless with such an ontologically oriented discussion. In the twentieth century, the reaction (in favour of an objective Word of God, mediated only by Scripture, preaching, and the Sacraments) has been located in neo-orthodoxy, led by Karl Barth. For Tillich's comment, see his "The Word of God," pp. 128-29; and Biblical Religion, pp. 1ff.

Tillich's outline is valuable for us here, for it relates the ontological dimension and importance of language/communication to human verbal language within the framework of Christian concerns, viz., revelation/encounter and the media thereof, especially as employed by the church in her worship. Within the outline, as we have said, we find two points of contact with hymnody in worship: a) Scripture, being the essential content of, or root source for the content of much of the verbal in worship, including hymnody; and b) the possibility of contemporary inspiration (whether or not originating in an 'inner Word') in, for example, the hymnwriter as a Christian literary artist. By either or both of these processes, the hymn may be or become a "Word of God" in worship.

a) Scripture as a "Word of God" in worship and hymnody. In relation to hymnody, Scripture as the human language of the 'prophets and apostles' witnessing to God's revelation in creation and history has both a direct and an indirect bearing. It bears directly in that Scripture is the basis for much of the content of congregational song. In actuality, the connection can run the gamut from a Scripture passage metricized and sung, through a quasi-homiletical or didactic text-cum-commentary/interpretation application, to mere stylistic similarity to a vernacular translation of the Bible.

Despite this relationship of content, it may at first glance seem inconsistent, on functional grounds, to connect Scripture and hymnody in this way; for have we not

aligned hymnody primarily on the 'response' side of communication in worship, while Scripture obviously stands on the 'encounter' side? Yes, but it is evident that in at least three of the five forms of response that we have discussed (à la Sittler), viz., recollection, thanksgiving/praise, and proclamation, there is a large amount of what we might call recital or rehearsal of God's self-manifestation, particularly in history, which brings us full circle to Scripture as witness to God's mighty acts among men. So, both in content and function, Scripture is a direct point of contact between hymnody and language/verbal communication.

The indirect bearing of Scripture is equally significant, and it is really the prior connection from which the direct is derived. It is that Scripture has been made the norm, resource, or guide for all the church's speech, including what is said in worship, the setting of hymnody. The Bible is the church's book, the church's treasure; therefore, how the Bible (or rather, God through it) approaches its communicational task through language is (or should be) influential upon the church's speech generally, in content and mode.

b) The hymn as a "Word of God" through the hymnwriter's inspiration. From the place in time of the churches of the Reformation, Scripture was a given, a part of the church's inheritance. So too were her liturgical forms and formulae, as part of tradition. But vernacular hymnody

(especially in England) largely arose within the post-Reformation period, and the hymnwriters were thus known, living persons in the church's contemporary life. Nevertheless, their hymns were deemed worthy to have a place in worship alongside Scripture and liturgical givens; i.e., they too were a (possible) "Word of God," not only objectively insofar as their content was Scripture-based, but also in that the hymns per se, sung corporately, could be received subjectively as a "Word of God." This implies that the authors of the hymns were inspired.

However, because that inspiration was contemporary, it is distinguished from that of the authors of the Bible (and of tradition, insofar as tradition has identifiable authors), which had already been judged authentic by the weight of history and usage, and was thus generally accepted without question. But the hymnwriter's inspiration takes place in the present, whether through living in the Christian community or possibly through an "inner Word." Thus, his work lacks the 'imprimatur' of history and long usage which gives Scripture its validation as "Word of God." For a hymn to be a "Word of God," therefore, depends more upon its being subjectively received as such a "Word," and to function in worship under that validation, and all this notwithstanding any Scripture-based content it may display.

We are led, then, to ask the same question of the hymn as of Scripture: how does it go about its communicational task, so as to become a "Word of God" to the worshipper? The same basic question it may be, but we may

well ask it from the standpoint indicated by Tillich in his final application analysis of "Word of God": that a "piece of art," within the "whole of nature and culture," can become a "Word of God." This involves not only the hymn as a species of literary art, but the hymnwriter as artist - the artist's approach to communication, his motives and intentions.

Two questions to answer then. But is this the case? With hymnody our concern, we now stand at a series of confluences. The hymn as a "Word of God" in worship (encounter or response) often combines Scriptural content (an objective "Word of God") with artistic form, subjectively received. The hymnwriter is (we must assume) both an inspired Christian and motivated artist. And our questions are really one question of communication bridging these confluences. Is there likewise an integrated and integrative answer? The following is one offering in that direction.

III. The Concept of Trajectory in Christian Communication

A. Predication

From our previous discussion of communication above, two fundamental aspects thereof must be brought forward again: mutuality and distance.

From the beginning, mutuality has been a major constituent behind the communication that takes place in worship: "encounter" and "response," "God acts . . . we answer,"

"fellowship" are terms we have cited, all pointing to the reciprocal nature of the communication between God and man, especially in the setting of worship.

Why this mutuality is 'desirable' to God (to speak anthropomorphically) is put relevantly and succinctly for us by (again) Tillich:

> The word is directed to that in man which makes him a person, his rational, responsible, deciding center. The word mediates meaning which must be understood, judged, accepted, or rejected in a free interpretation and a free decision. All this is performed by man as a person. The word is addressed to the personal center. Revelation through the word respects man's freedom and his personal self-relatedness. Man is asked to listen, but he is left free to decline.[1]

A key word there is "respects": God, having created man as person (and thus in the *imago Dei*), which includes the capacity to freely respond, respects that personality and capacity, and proceeds to communicate with man accordingly. Thus it is this "respect" that lies behind the 'desirability' of mutuality, coupled to the ultimate goal of the closeness of relationship described as 'communion.'

That is the ideal - the situation before the Fall. After the Fall, other conditions complicate the matter. To be sure, to speak of "free response" in the abstract implies, dialectically, the possibility of a response other than free (or no response). This possibility the Christian understands as inbuilt in man's nature even before the Fall,

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1. Tillich, *Biblical Religion*, p. 32.

as part of the freedom of the will, and was tragically realized therein and thereafter.

The complicating factor in man himself is termed "sin." The doctrine of original sin is a subject of immense scope and exhaustive treatment in the history of Christian thought, but for our discussion here it is adequately defined by Erik Routley as "essentially a settled condition of grievance against God, entered into by an act of decision."[1] So defined, sin connotes a negative understanding of the nature of God and his will for man, and a resultant disposition of man to put negative, hostile, constructions upon the "Word" which God addresses to him, so that a "free," joyful, willing response is distorted into a resentful or even rebellious, negative response, and the intended (by God) fruitful, fulfilling relationship is frustrated and fractured.

In the environment of Christian worship, we would recognize that God is largely in communication with redeemed men and women - people who are therefore, in Luther's famous phrase, "Simul justus et peccator," or, in biblical phraseology, people in whom both the "new Adam" and the "old Adam" exist. The "justus" or "new Adam" refers to the possibility to once again freely respond to God's "Word"; it does constant battle with the "peccator," "old Adam" disposition to grievance and resentful response.

With this in mind, the question we have asked

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1. Erik Routley, The Man for Others (New York, 1964), p. 16.

concerning how Scripture and the hymnwriter-as-artist go about the task of communicating a "Word of God" in language must now be qualified by an additional phrase: - in the light of the ways (positive and negative) in which the redeemed worshipper may respond to the hearing of that "Word." Working forms of the question would be: can the linguistic/literary form(s) employed in Scripture and by the hymnwriter affect the response of worshipping man? That is to say, are there ways of addressing a man which tend to provoke the response of the "old Adam" in him? And conversely, are there forms which encourage the "new Adam" possibility of free, willing, and responsible answer - that which God has always desired?

We contend that the answer to all three working forms of the question is "yes"; and further, that Scripture-as-communication approaches the "new Adam" in redeemed man, and so also may the hymnwriter-as-artist. That is to say, both Scripture and (Christian) literary art[1] inherently communicate in such a way as not to hinder the positive response so much desired.[2]

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1. The distinction maintained here is not meant to deny that Scripture too may be approached as literary art, and the Scriptural authors as artists.

2. Concerning our contention, we must note: 1) that the inherent ability cited, in both Scripture and hymnody, has been subject to mitigating influences in church history, the presence of which is part of the pattern of hymnody's emergence, as shall be seen; and 2) this ability is properly to be thought of as being transparent, so to speak, to God's desire and will for the positive response in men; otherwise, we leave ourselves open to the pernicious thought that Scripture and hymnody, in human hands, can be used to manipulate men and contrive their response. Again, church history (especially since the development of the discipline of psychology) records

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Concerning the aspect of distance, this is the term used to express the distinction between two self-related 'persons,' each individual or corporate. Communication bridges this distance, establishing a relationship, or at least making establishment possible. Since "distance" is a spacial term, we might expand the analogy by likening the communicational bridge to a "line," traversing the "distance" between the two persons involved. That line has the quality of shape, which may be either straight or other-than-straight; e.g., curved.

It is at this point that we introduce the term "trajectory" into our study. "Trajectory," says the Shorter Oxford Dictionary,[1] "is the path of any body moving under the action of given forces, especially the curve described by a projectile in its flight through the air." This is a more adequate term than "curved line" as an analogy of interpersonal communication, because it adds dynamic elements of "forces" and "moving," along with a substantial element - "body," "projectile" - to the static import of "line."

If now we would substitute some of our previous terminology for that in the dictionary definition, we may

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that churchmen have so (mis)used both Scripture and hymnody, in application, for more proximate responses than those discussed, which they deem desirable or expedient.

1. The Shorter Oxford English Dictionary (3rd ed., 1944), p. 2228.

hypothesize that trajectory is the linguistic path of revelation, moving under the action of God's will to manifest himself to men, and to elicit in them a positive response to that revelation, to the end of a fruitful relationship. The opposite of "trajectory" we shall here be calling, for want of a better term, "Straight-line" communication. However, that term requires some qualification before use. First of all, gravity in nature does not allow objects in free flight to travel in straight lines. In this sense, all 'flights' have trajectory.[1] Again in corresponding substitution, we would then say that human communication across interpersonal 'distance' is always trajectorial. This in turn means that we should not place any imputation of inherent deviousness or obscurity upon the concept of trajectorial speech, nor upon the communicator who uses it. "Straight-line" communication, therefore means communication which is not 'sent' across a 'distance,' but rather 'passed' in close proximity - from 'hand to hand,' as it were. This distinction will

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1. This would not include objects falling toward the center of the earth, nor such scientific exotica as laser beams (if sub-atomic particles are considered as objects).

become evident in the following pages, where the concept is applied in categories relevant to our study.

The root of the hypothesis, that trajectorial communication is linked to the positive response of men, has been developed and elaborated by Erik Routley.[1] In so doing he applies the concept both to Scripture-as-communication and to the artist-as-communicator; and because of this we recapitulate it here, as an integrated answer to our question of how Scripture and hymn communicate, in light of man's possible responses to the "Word" which is communicated.

B. Trajectory in Scripture

Routley bases his development upon the mission and message of Jesus. Essentially, the mission of Jesus was to change man's feelings of grievance against God by revealing to men in their own flesh; i.e., communicating through human language and actions within history, what

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1. Erik Routley, Into a Far Country (London, 1962). The sub-title is: "Reflections upon the Trajectory of the Divine Word, and upon the Communication, in affairs human and divine, of the Imperative and the Indicative." The book incorporates material from the Congregational Lectures, which the author delivered in 1960.

God is like. The divine premise, so to speak, is that true knowledge (in the Hebrew sense, not simply cognition) of God's nature and will will beget in men the free, positive, humanity-fulfilling response, thus establishing mutuality of communication and the relationship of communion. To that end, says Routley:

> ... our Lord was at pains to avoid any kind of conversation (as he was at pains to avoid any kind of conduct) that, by encouraging [men] to take a certain wrong view of God's manner of communication, would make it impossible for them to see it rightly.[1]

To take the matter of conduct first, Routley cites miracles, particularly those that might have been if Jesus had succumbed to Satan's three suggestions in Matthew 4:

> All these acts would have been popular, and would have drawn huge congregations of admirers. But they would have inevitably led those admirers to take a wrong view of the nature of God. Therefore they would have been a violation of the purpose of God for his Son. Therefore they were set aside.[2]

Instead, we are to see in Jesus' actions a reticence, a withdrawal (but not born of aloofness or timidity). For example, Mary Magdalene is not to touch him after the resurrection, because the message of the latter is not that he has come back to dwell again among men, but that he is to return to the Father, as being more expedient for men than his physical presence (John 20).

It is the same in our Lord's speech. In his public utterances, Jesus preferred parable to direct command,

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1. Ibid., p. 19.
2. Ibid.

general sayings (the 'Sermon on the Mount') to massive, systematized teaching. Here is where the element of "trajectory" begins to emerge; for parable and saying, in their elliptical reticence, are examples of "trajectorial" speech and language; while flat command and systematized instruction, in their direct, connotative precision, are "straight-line" in character.

It is, then, the aspects of symbolization, imagery, obliquity (but not obscurity!), manifested in such a literary device (or rhetorical, as spoken) as parable - a narrated story using analogy and metaphor to communicate truth - that defines "trajectory" in communication. As to sayings like the 'Sermon on the Mount,' surely a great deal of the perennial controversy about them centers upon whether they are to be taken directly or literally ("straight-line"), or as seminal and thus "trajectorial" - 'the kind of thing that happens in the kingdom.'

Referring to his private utterances to individuals, Routley grants that they indeed show less of "trajectory", and more of explicit, "straight-line" indicative or imperative, instruction or command. But even here, for the modern Christian (via Scripture), Routley maintains that these commands and statements are not precisely transferable in application across the centuries and cultures, but must necessarily be interpreted; hence, these too are "trajectorial" - for us.

The relevance of this distinction between "trajectorial" and "straight-line" speech, and Jesus' preference

for the former, is bound up in the content of man's sin-begetting grievance against God. After the Fall, man is 'normally' disposed to view God negatively as a combination of tyrant and schoolmaster, who issues inflexible commands and demands, along with exhaustive instruction, both of which (if true) disrespect man's freedom and responsibility (unique in creation), and spoil the possibility for man to exercise any initiative in his creaturely response to God.

This is why Jesus generally avoided "straight-line" speech: bald imperative like the tyrant, frustrating anticipatory initiative and provoking resentment; and exhaustive indicative like the schoolmaster, keeping man in perpetual status pupillaris, and not allowing the sense of responsibility to mature (also grievance-begetting). Rather, ". . . when he [Jesus] spoke publicly he always left something - sometimes a good deal - for the individual mind to do by way of interpretation, amplification, and application of what he said."[1]

This allowance for an active and positive, rather than a passive and negative reception of the "Word" is the prime attribute of "trajectory" in communication. Referring back to the dictionary definition, Routley compares the mode of Jesus' speech to the "trajectory" of something thrown,[2] which, in order to catch, one must follow, anticipate, and reach out for. None of this activity is necessary if the

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1. Ibid., p. 21.
2. The ingredient of 'throwing' in trajectory finds a correspondence to βάλλω in παραβάλλω, the Greek root for the English 'parable.'

object is simply passed from hand to hand in a "straight-line." But the real significance of it all is that in so responding to God's "trajectorial" revelation, and behind that to the understanding that God intentionally communicates this way and desires man to so respond, man experiences true joy and pleasure - blessedness, in fact: all opposites to grievance and resentment:

> 'Blessedness,' in our Lord's word, comes from being ready to catch the ball, or from being conscious of the trajectory of the Word. Blessedness is a buoyant, voluntary enjoyment of the divine will . . . It is the high exalted pleasure that comes from anticipating, inferring, discovering the divine will, and voluntarily obeying it. And the will is always so communicated as to provide in its acceptance that joy.[1]

Once set (or re-set) in motion, this relationship of loving Creator and responsible creature leads to communion, or, as Routley prefers, 'conversation,' at the heart of which is reciprocal trajectorial communication.

Having developed the concept on the basis of Jesus' speech in the New Testament, Routley imputes trajectory to the Bible generally. Important again is the situation of 'distance' between God and man:

> The Word of God is consistently represented in the Old Testament as coming from one who is 'in a far country,' and as demanding a responsible answer from free men. But at the same time the divine reticence, both in respect of command and of statement, is never lost sight of. To 'see God' is, to the Old Testament mind, virtually denied to mortal men. Moses (Exod. xxxiii. 18-23) is told that he may not see the face of God, and the prohibition is interpreted as part of the divine mercy, because no

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1. Ibid., pp. 29-30.

> man can see God and live. Other figures in the Old Testament - Jacob, Isaiah, Job among others - interpret their experience differently. But invariably, and however interpreted, the 'clouds and darkness are round about him.' The essential mystery of God's being and God's will form the space across which the trajectory of the Word forms itself. The word comes to men, and, where it is received faithfully, 'returns not void' (Isa. lv. 11). In the Old Testament trajectory is self-evident.[1]

This argument from God's otherness and hiddenness (Luther's Deus absconditus) makes trajectory a matter of necessity, whether or not also of divine intention. For in the sense that Scripture communicates revelation about this 'mysterious' God in earth-ordered (and ordinarily earth-limited) human language, then that Scripture is perforce trajectorial as a whole, underneath the specific, technical trajectory of its various aspects - history, poetry, dialogue, myth, narrative, exhortation, satire, vision. Such an approach to trajectory returns us to Tillich's view of the symbolic nature of the "Word of God" (including that term itself).[2] And so to him we turn yet once more for insight:

> The word as a medium of revelation points beyond its ordinary sense both in denotation and in expression. In the situation of revelation, language has a denotative power which points through the ordinary meanings of the words to their relation to us. . . . Ordinary language, on the other hand, even when dealing with matters of ultimate concern, is not a medium of revelation.

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1. Ibid., p. 26.
2. Above, p. 23.

> It does not possess the "sound" and "voice" which makes the ultimate perceptible. When speaking of the ultimate, of being and meaning, ordinary language brings it down to the level of the preliminary, the conditioned, the finite, thus muffling its revelatory power. Language as a medium of revelation, on the contrary, has the "sound" and "voice" of the divine mystery in and through the sound and voice of human expression and denotation. Language with this power is the "Word of God." If it is possible to use an optical metaphor for the characterisation of language, one could say that the Word of God as the word of revelation is transparent language. Something shines (more precisely, sounds) through ordinary language which is the self-manifestation of the depth of meaning and being.[1]

We might combine Routley and Tillich by observing that the "pointing through," the "sound and voice," the "transparency" are accomplished linguistically by "trajectory," previously enabled by inspiration.

The relevance of this discussion of trajectory in Scripture to hymnody is, as we have already stated, that Scripture is a prime source for the content of worship and hymnody, including the response function, through recollection, etc., and the model for the church's inter-human discourse, in which hymnody is also involved. If, therefore, Scripture is essentially trajectorial in form, then so is worship and hymnody bound to be.

And insofar as our study deals with history (in England after the Reformation), the impact of the above construct on hymnody depends upon the church's apprehension of it; as Routley says:

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1. Paul Tillich, Systematic Theology (3 vols., Chicago, 1951-53), I, pp. 137-38 in the edition of London: Nisbet & Co. Ltd., 1953.

> There is one authority, however, which Protestants hold to be unchallengeable in the church - that of the Scriptures. But the authority of the Scriptures is above all an authority of trajectory. The controversy between those who hold a 'fundamentalist' position concerning the Scriptures and those who do not may be stated as a controversy between those who reject and those who hold the doctrine of trajectory. It must be asked whether the Bible is to be regarded as a book of instruction, as a book of information, or as a conversation between God and his people conducted through the medium of the written word. Is the Word of God with trajectory, or is it not?[1]

Although Routley is no doubt writing in the context of twentieth-century church life, the matter is equally applicable to the period encompassed by our study, especially seventeenth-century Puritanism.

C. Trajectory in Art

It will be recalled that Tillich offered, that in the final analysis the "whole of nature and culture" could be bearers of the "Word of God," and included in his examples thereof a "piece of art."[2] The context of his offering was the subjective reception of a communication as existentially becoming a "Word of God" for the recipient of the communication. To this we added the note that, at least in re hymnody, there is an objective element also, in that the hymnwriter could be assumed to be inspired by the Spirit. i.e., himself communicated to, through living within the church's life (Scripture, preaching, the Sacraments), or possibly through an "inner Word." Further, that the

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1. Routley, Into a Far Country, p. 152.
2. Above, p. 27.

content of much congregational song has a relationship to Scripture strengthens this objective element, in that the Church had already given Scripture a largely objective status as authority for its life.[1]

However, it is the hymnwriter as an artist, fashioning a "Word of God" for his fellow Christians' reception (as encounter) and use (as response) to which we now attend. How does the hymnwriter approach his communicational task, in the light of man's responses?

In relation to our concern, thus articulated above, Routley defines art quite simply as "a mode of human public conversation."[2] This definition really underlies the usual delineations of art in terms of skill, and aesthetics in terms of sensory perception, by referring to the motive of the artist - he wishes to communicate <u>with</u> (not speak <u>to</u>) other men. This is the import of "conversation." This immediately establishes a correspondence with Scripture-as-communication, for that is also the motive of its (ultimate) Author - to communicate <u>with</u>, implying the desire for a free response, thus initiating conversation or communion.

One may, of course, also equate the artist's motive with that of all inter-human conversation; but what is distinctive about his communication is contained in the adjective "public" above. By this term Routley conveys that the receptor of the artist's communication is unknown

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1. Above. pp. 30-31.
2. Routley, <u>Into a Far Country</u>, p. 40.

to the latter. It is therefore broadcast across a 'distance.' Again there is a correspondence to the situation of the "Word of God," parabolically expressed in Scripture as the sower, seed, and various soils (Luke 8). If we understand the differing soils to be present in every Christian (the "old-" and "new Adams") God aims for the good soil, for a fruitful response. That aim is based on trajectory.

It is not otherwise with the artist. Desiring the same quality of response, he skil[illegible]fully/artistically embodies the substance of his communication in a mode of address which he hopes will furnish points of contact for which his (unknown) audience will be able to reach out, i.e., positively respond. That 'appropriate mode' is therefore also trajectorial in nature. In philosophical terms, the artist engages in symbolization - structuring a physical medium received via the senses to make perceptible that which is otherwise invisible or inaudible (to cite the two most frequently used senses in art).

As indicated just above, the media most chosen in art are the sonic, as ordered by frequency and time (music), the visual, as ordered by dimension, colour, and texture (the plastic arts), and again the sonic, as ordered by words and word groups (literature). Inasmuch as our interest is primarily focussed upon the verbal aspect of hymnody, we shall henceforth concentrate upon the last-named of the media - language/literature.

An immediate observation is that in choosing language,

the artist is dealing in a medium that has been extremely widely used by society. Much of the width is filled by the denotative/cognitive potential of language, its use in this "straight-line" domain (for good or evil), in the basic categories of information and command, rather outweighing in quantity its artistic, trajectorial potential and employment.

This situation is not necessarily surprising, in view of the fundamental importance of language among men already discussed. But a corollary of this importance and wide usage that has relevance to the literary artist has been put thus:

> . . . language is the primary creation and carrier of culture, and it follows the career of man's culture with absolute seriousness. Language, that is to say, in the structure, scope, and content of it, is an obedient transcript of what a people understands itself and its world to be like. When that world-understanding is mono-dimensional, language loses its opulence. When that world-meaning becomes a plane without extension or depth, language becomes designative and thin.[1]

The historical judgment implied by those last two sentences will come into play in the course of the second part of our study. But the earlier sentences concerning the close connection between culture and language is part of the artist's fund from which to communicate trajectorially: that language carries within it all manner of culturally-tuned and -shaped images, both past and present (many of them non-cognitive) upon which the artist can draw

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1. Sittler, "Church's Response in Worship," pp. 93-94.

as symbols, and which may find contact in the collective unconscious within each of the individuals in a culture.

'May find contact,' by which it is intended to convey that use of a given expression or verbal image may not excite exactly the same responses in all members of the artist's audience, and indeed may excite nothing at all in some of them:

> Understanding is then based only on that semantic kernel of the words on which all speakers of a language are agreed, while the semantic fringes are blurred. The founder of modern philosophy of language, Wilhelm von Humboldt, was right in saying that the speaking individual does not offer to his fellow speaker objective signs for the things expressed, nor does he compel him by his verbal utterance to represent to himself exactly the same thing as that meant by him, but is satisfied with, as it were, pressing down the homologous key of the others respective mental keyboard, with establishing only the same link in the chain of associations of things with words, so,that there are elicited corresponding, though not exactly identical, responses.[1]

Such variation, however, does not bother the artist, because it is a necessary concomitant of a free response - of allowing the hearer to bring something to the encounter. And while the above quotation refers to human conversation generally and not just to literary art, we can observe that part of the artist's equipment is a fine sensitivity to and knowledge of the cultural overtones in language, and a high imagination in their employment to communicate.

Another result of the literary artist's trajectorial use of culturally loaded verbal images and expressions is an economy of words, compared with an attempt to convey the

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1. Leo Spitzer, "Language of Poetry," in Language: An Enquiry, ed. by Anshen, pp. 202-03.

same truth in "straight-line"indicative or imperative. Both for him and his audience the images can trigger, through associations born of experience and living in the culture, long (if not identical) chains of thought and meaning that go far beyond the immediate verbal point of contact. "Less is more," to borrow Mies van der Rohe's architectural dictum.

There is, however, a risk in so doing, viz., that if the hearer is not disposed or able to receive and freely respond to the artist's trajectory, then the artist will seem to be obscure. That, as we have seen, is also true of Scripture's trajectory. But conversely, openness on the part of the hearer can result in a fundamental clarity not achievable by "straight-line" statement (in the context of communicating about matters of ultimate concern.)

What now is the relevance of this discussion of trajectorial communication through literary art, to its specific manifestation in the form of the hymn? The application necessarily begins with the assumption that the hymnwriter is a Christian literary artist. As such, he shares in the church's inheritance of Scripture, and all that we have discussed concerning Scripture as a "word of God," how it communicates, and to what end. As a member of the Christian community, he too responds to the "Word," and that response is reflected in his art, offered to the community as part of its response in worship.

From the community's (or worshipping congregation's)

point of view, if the hymn's trajectory has proved to have positive points of contact for it, these are felt to be between God's revelation and itself directly. The artist becomes transparent.[1] The hymn becomes a "Word of God" and part of the congregation's response to it. But if the hymnwriter's contribution may thus go rather unmarked, it is not unimportant, because to Scripture's trajectory (per se, and as the basis of the church's speech) he has added, filtered through his sensitivity, imagination, skill, and experience, the trajectory of a culture- and history-loaded language (with Scripture itself a part of the load). The hymn is the meeting ground, in the verbal of worship, of these two complementary forms of trajectorial communication.

There is a final problem. To speak of "Word of God," however communicated, is to speak of the encounter direction-of-address in worship - from God to man. But no Christian needs to be told that the function of the hymn in worship is rather more likely to be considered as part of the response <u>to</u> that encounter.

To cite the element of recollection (of all God's

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1. Of poetry, W.H. Auden says: "In the earlier stages of composition, the poet has to act like a Greek tyrant; the decision to write this phrase rather than that must be largely his, for the demands of the poem are as yet inarticulate or contradictory. As composition proceeds, the poem begins to take over the job of ruling itself; the transeunt rule of the poet gets weaker and weaker until, in the final stages, he is like the elected representative of a democracy whose duty is to listen to and execute the demands of the poem, which now knows exactly what it wishes to be. On completion, the poem rules itself immanently, and the poet is dismissed into private life." Auden, "Squares and Oblongs," in <u>Language: An Enquiry</u>, ed. by Anshen, p. 177.

revelations) as providing antecedent cause for thanksgiving and participation in the response direction does not fully explain or resolve the matter. We might add that Scripture contains not only revelation, but also (biblical) man's response to it - a response that can be appropriated by the worshipping church as its own, just as it does the hymnwriter's offering (one is reminded here of the honored place of the biblical canticles in the liturgies of the church).

Nevertheless, having said that, room must still be left for a present, original, 'existential' expression of response in worship. That, as we realize, involves hymnody, because it is created by a contemporary (or relatively so, compared with Scripture and tradition) of the congregation: the hymnwriter. This aspect of response, though shaped more by the church's present experience of God's activity than by recollection of his past activity, as antecedent cause can still eventuate in what we might call 'objective' praise of God. The element of expectation in response, where the church looks ahead and not only back, may also find expression in a class of hymnody akin to prayer.

However, in all this there would exist the possibility of the (hymnic) expression of present experience and future expectation becoming introspective, focussing upon the needs and feelings of the worshipper(s) in a very subjective manner (to the point of loss of corporateness in worship). It will be part of our study to distinguish these two types

of present response, and mark their occurrences in the emergence of English hymnody.

IV. Summation

It will be recalled that the thesis to which this study is addressed was initially postulated as a question: in the historical emergence of English hymnody in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, what functions in worship came to be served by hymnody, and within what frame of reference might the development of these functions be best comprehended?

In the part of our study here ending, we have posited communication as the broad frame of reference. Because the setting of hymnody is worship, we first described that Christian activity in communicational terms. Because verbal communication is so pervasive in worship and hymnody (as in all of life), we next approached language as communication, particularly the "Word of God" in language. In that we found Scripture and art as points of contact with our subject, and approached these with an integrative concept of trajectorial communication, which reckons with the nature of human response.

In so doing we have (hopefully) delineated a fuller frame of reference, both concretely and in relevant criteria, within which to functionally locate, and by which to comprehend the emergence of hymnody itself, to which we now turn.

We shall first survey the century-and-a-half between the English Reformation and our nominal starting date of 1700, in order to lay the historical groundwork for the next century-and-a-half to circa 1860. Once within that period, our study will center upon (but not be limited to) three representative hymnists and their works (the hymns themselves, of course, plus whatever else they may have put in writing concerning their understanding of the function(s) of hymnody). The three, in chronological order, will be:

1) Isaac Watts (1674-1748), Independent minister, often eulogized as the 'father of English hymnody.' His hymns were indeed the first in English to achieve anything like widespread use.

2) John Newton (1725-1807), reckoned as one of the 'fathers' of Anglican Evangelicalism, who co-authored the "Olney Hymns" with the poet William Cowper. In the second half of the eighteenth century, he represents what is called the 'Evangelical Revival.' Cowper's contributions will also be considered.

3) Reginald Heber (1783-1826), Anglican clergyman, poet/hymnist, and later missionary bishop to India, who early in the nineteenth century brings literary and liturgical criteria more strongly to bear upon hymnody than theretofore, helping thereby to pave the way for a more general acceptance of hymnody in Anglicanism.

Finally, then, we shall assess the situation at the important, 'watershed' year (for English hymnody) of 1861, when the first edition of "Hymns Ancient and Modern"

was published - the eclectic-content, committee-edited hymnal that in its wide acceptance generally set the style of English hymnody and hymnbooks for nearly a century following. Thus, by 1861 it is possible to say that hymnody had essentially completed its emergence and had 'come of age.'

CHAPTER ONE

CONGREGATIONAL SONG BEFORE 1700: THE SCRIPTURAL PRINCIPLE

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It is a convenient coincidence that, to all intents and purposes, the beginnings-in-earnest of the English hymn tradition and the beginning of the eighteenth century come together; thus the opening date specified for this thesis. But in this chapter we are concerned with the century-and-a-half before 1700, so taking us back to the first years of the Anglican Reformation. Within these space and time referents, a great deal of church history occurred, bound up with an equal amount of English political history. And having in mind our overall referent of congregational song, the period has been thoroughly surveyed and chronicled,[1] a further exercise in which is not to our purpose here.

However, there is a meaningful way in which these preliminary years might be comprehended, and that is as the time of the establishment, maturation, 'peaking', and challenging of a principle which strongly influenced the shape of congregational song in England. That principle

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1. See the Bibliography for works on the history of hymnody.

is here called the Scriptural Principle; its major embodiment during the period is, of course, metrical psalmody. Briefly, the Scriptural Principle as herein referred to, means that the activity under discussion is determined by the letter and/or the spirit of the contents of the Bible. That said contents are always a matter of interpretation (beginning with the process of translation) is the impetus for much of the activity of this period.

I. The Immediate Theological and Functional Bases

If we grant at the outset that the English Channel was far too narrow to isolate the Anglican Reformation from the various movements already afoot on the Continent, we may go on to observe that quite early on it was of these the Calvinist ethos which showed in the development of Anglican worship, including congregational song.

To be sure, Cranmer read in Lutheran works and had visited Germany; and perhaps the relative conservatism of his two drafts and of the first actual Prayer-Book of Edward VI reflect Luther's respect for the Church's liturgical tradition. In the realm of song, there were Coverdale's "Goostly Psalms and Spiritual Songs" (1539), in which a group of hymns have nearly all been traced to German sources, including Luther himself.[1]

But these connections proved transient. The first

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1. Louis F. Benson, The English Hymn (New York, 1915), p. 25. The Parker Society reprinted Coverdale as his Remains (Cambridge, 1846).

Prayer Book of Edward VI appeared in 1549. In the few years that remained before Mary's accession and the interruption of the Reformation in England there was already agitation for revision, resulting in the second Prayer Book of Edward VI, (1552). The pressures for revision came not only from the more radical English churchmen (and Scots such as John Knox), but also from Continental divines of Calvinist persuasion (some of them sojourning in Britain) who delivered themselves of commentary - more or less negative - on the first Prayer Book. This latter group included Calvin himself, Martin Bucer, Peter Martyr, Valerand Pullain, and John a'Lasco.[1]

How successful they were in steering the Book of Common Prayer more markedly away from the Latin mass tradition can be seen in a comparison of the two Edwardian Prayer Books. The revisions include the appending of a Confession and Absolution to the beginning of Morning Prayer, likewise the decalogue to the Communion. The prayers at the Canon were modified toward a more Reformed understanding of the presence of Christ in the Sacrament. There were also arguments over ceremonial; e.g., whether or not the faithful should kneel when communing.[2] Elizabeth's Book of 1559 was fundamentally a reissue of the second Edwardian Book, and while the Jacobean (1604) and Carolingian (1661-2) Prayer Books restored some 'catholic' tone, yet the Book of

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1. Francis Procter and Walter Howard Frere, A New History of The Book of Common Prayer (London, 1901), pp. 66ff.
2. Ibid., pp. 81-85.

Common Prayer and its ambit have ever since betrayed the early Reformed influence. These Prayer Books and changes do not themselves explicitly exhibit the Scriptural Principle, but there is the Preface to the Edwardian Books, which could be said to underly the changes:

> It is more profitable, because here are left out many thynges, whereof some be untrue, some uncertein, some vain and superstitious: and is ordeyned nothyng to be read, but the very pure worde of God, and holy scriptures, or that which is evidently grounded upon the same.[1]

That, in rudimentary form, could be considered the Scriptural Principle in its relevant application. As such, it is a concrete example of Scripture being the norm of the verbal content of worship which we noted in the preceding chapter. But for a fuller statement of the principle and its application to music and congregational song, we must turn to John Calvin. In chapter XX (on prayer) of his 'Institutes of the Christian Religion,' the great reformer speaks of the propriety of the vocal/verbal process in prayer, though beginning with a necessary and understandable warning against lip-service:

> From this, moreover, it is fully evident that unless voice and song, if interposed in prayer, spring from deep feeling of heart, neither has any value or profit in the least with God. But they arouse his wrath against us if they come only from the tip of the lips and from the throat, seeing that this is to abuse his most holy name and to hold his majesty in derision. . . .
>
> Yet we do not here condemn speaking and singing but rather strongly commend them, provided they are associated with the heart's affection. For thus do

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1. There is an edition of facsimile reprints of all the Prayer Books by William Pickering (London, 1844).

> they exercise the mind in thinking of God and keep it attentive - unstable and variable as it is, and readily relaxed and diverted in different directions, unless it be supported by various helps. Moreover, since the glory of God ought, in a measure, to shine in the several parts of our bodies, it is especially fitting that the tongue has been assigned and destined for this task, both through singing and through speaking. For it was peculiarly created to tell and proclaim the praise of God.[1]

One notes here Calvin's ready acceptance of man's physical capacity to make sound as a part of his total, God-given being, and therefore to be used in his creaturely response to encounter with the Creator. On the other side of the coin, he admits that the mind needs such 'helps' as physical speaking and singing to 'keep it attentive.' Thus, both theologically and functionally Calvin generally approves speech and song.

In the preface which he wrote in 1543 for the Genevan psalter (the versification of which had been begun by Marot, but was not to be completed by Beza until 1562), Calvin reveals his opinion of music, without and with words - again, positive but qualified:

> Now among the other things which are proper for recreating man and giving him pleasure, Music is either the first, or one of the principal; and it is necessary for us to think that it is a gift of God deputed for that use. Moreover, because of this, we ought to be the more careful not to abuse it, for fear of soiling it and contaminating it, converting it to our condemnation, where it was dedicated to our profit and use. If there were no other consideration than this alone, it ought indeed to move us to moderate the use of music, to make it serve all honest things. . . there is scarcely in the

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1. John Calvin, The Institutes of the Christian Religion, The Library of Christian Classics, vol. XXI (London, 1961), p. 894.

> world anything which is more able to turn or bend this way and that the morals of men, as Plato prudently considered it. And in fact we find by experience that it has a secret and almost incredible power to move hearts in one way or another . . . . It is true that every bad word (as St. Paul has said) perverts good manners, but when the melody is with it, it pierces the heart much more strongly and enters into it; in a like manner as through a funnel the wine is poured into the vessel, so also the venom and the corruption is distilled to the depths of the heart by the melody.[1]

It is important to note that the danger which gives rise to the pungent qualification is not inherent in the music itself, but in the tendency of (sinful) man to 'soil' and 'contaminate' it (along with the rest of creation). Therefore the Christian man must discipline his use of this powerfully affecting medium and gift. As Calvin is here assuming the use of words with the music (this being from the preface to a psalter for private and public worship), it is the choice of text which can effect the discipline. He continues:

> What is there now to do? It is to have songs not only honest, but also holy, which will be like spurs to incite us to pray to and praise God, and to meditate upon his works in order to love, fear, honor, and glorify him. Moreover, that which St. Augustine has said is true, that no one is able to sing things worthy of God except that which he has received from him. Therefore, when we have looked thoroughly, and searched here and there, we shall not find better songs nor more filling for the purpose, than the psalms of David which the Holy Spirit made and spoke through him. And moreover, when we sing them, we are certain that God puts in our mouths these, as if he himself were singing in us to exalt his glory.[2]

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1. Les Pseaumes de David (Geneva, 1543), Epistre (preface). Transl. by Charles Garside in "Calvin's Preface to the Psalter: a Reappraisal," Musical Quarterly, XXXVII (1951), 570-71.

2. Ibid.

Here, then, is the Scriptural Principle as applied to congregational song; and not only as a guard on the use of music, but (taking a cue from St. Augustine) as the only adequate source of words with which to sing to God. This,of course, implies an essentially objective character for congregational song, as distinguished from 'subjective praise' in the preceding chapter.[1] To be sure, Calvin also drives a distinction between musical styles in reference to appropriateness for worship:

> On the other hand, such songs as have been composed only for sweetness and delight of the ear are unbecoming to the majesty of the church and cannot but displease God in the highest degree.[2]

But this would presumably be secondary to the Scriptural criterion, since appropriateness for worship would largely be appropriateness to the word of God sung to the music, in worship.

In the quotation above from his preface to the psalter, Calvin proceeds from the general Scriptural Principle to specific mention of the psalms, though all he actually says is that there is none better, and that they are the work and medium of the Holy Spirit; this latter feature is, of course, true of the whole of Scripture. He is, however, more expansive on the appropriateness of the psalms for Christian praise in the preface to his commentary on the psalms:

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1. Above, p. 11.
2. Calvin, Institutes, p. 896.

> Besides, there is also here prescribed to us an infallible rule for directing us with respect to the right manner of offering to God the sacrifice of praise, which he declares to be most precious in his sight, and of the sweetest odour. There is no other book in which there is to be found more express and magnificent commendations, both of the unparalleled liberality of God towards his Church, and of all his works; there is no other book in which there is recorded so many deliverances, nor one in which the evidences and experiences of the fatherly solicitude and providence which God exercises towards us, are celebrated with such splendour of diction, and yet with the strictest adherence to truth; in short, there is no other book in which we are more perfectly taught the right manner of praising God, or in which we are more powerfully stirred up to the performance of this religious exercise. Moreover, although the psalms are replete with all the precepts which serve to frame our life to every part of holiness, piety, and righteousness, yet they will principally teach and train us to bear the cross.[1]

One cannot help but note here the entire absence of any thought that the psalms are wanting in explicit Christology, which might be thought desirable in the worship of (New Testament) Christians. It is apparently quite enough, at least for purposes of praise, to celebrate the works and providence of the first person of the Trinity, or else to expect the singer to employ what we might call 'typological trajectory' in transferring Old Testament speech to New Testament reality. But as we shall see, here was one of the dissatisfactions with psalmody that had developed by the eighteenth century in England, most notably in the thought of Isaac Watts, and giving rise to 'free' hymnody.

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1. John Calvin, Commentary on the Book of Psalms (1557), The Calvin Translation Society (Edinburgh, 1845), I, xxxviii-xxxix.

One must also note that these commendatory words on the psalms are from the latest source we have thus far quoted - 1557. Sir Richard R. Terry's researches[1] revealed that the first Reformed liturgy (prepared by Farel in 1533) contained no singing. By 1537, however, Calvin and Farel were advising the (city) Council of Geneva that:

> Further, it is a thing very expedient for the edification of the church, to sing some psalms in the form of public devotions by which one may pray to God, or to sing his praise so that the hearts of all be roused and incited to make like prayers, and render like praise and thanks to God with one accord . . . there are psalms which we desire to be sung in the church, as we have it exemplified in the ancient church and in the evidence of Paul himself who says it is good to sing in the congregation with mouth and heart. We are unable to compute the profit and edification which will arise from this, except after having experimented. Certainly as things are, the prayers of the faithful are so cold, that we ought to be ashamed and dismayed. The psalms can incite us to lift up our hearts to God and move us to ardour in invoking and exalting with praises the glory of his Name. Moreover it will be thus appreciated of what benefit and consolation the pope and those that belong to him have deprived the church, for he has reduced the psalms, which ought to be true spiritual songs, to a murmuring among themselves without any understanding.[2]

But Terry suggests that:

> It seems probable that Calvin's ultimate decision to include singing in the services of his church may be traced up to the period of his 'exile' in Strasbourg - 1538-41. There he found chorale-singing firmly established amongst Lutheran Protestants, and was no doubt influenced by its possibilities as a factor in public worship.[3]

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1. Richard R. Terry, Calvin's First Psalter (London, 1932).
2. John Calvin, Articles Concerning the Organization of the Church and of Worship at Geneva, Proposed by the Ministers at the Council, January 16, 1537. The Library of Christian Classics, vol. XXII (London, 1954), pp. 48-49.
3. Terry, Calvin's First Psalter, p. v.

And indeed it was for the Strasbourg psalter of 1542 that Calvin wrote a preface which was a sort of first draft of the better known Genevan psalter preface of 1542, later expanded, and from which we have already quoted.

II. The Scriptural Principle and English Psalmody

As implemented in the Swiss Reformation, and particularly at Geneva, this then was the milieu in which those English and Scottish churchmen found themselves, when they chose exile on the Continent as Mary Tudor returned England to the Roman fold in 1553. That is, they encountered a system of congregational song using the psalms (plus a few other biblical items, as we shall see), versified in the vernacular, and set to purpose-built or -adapted tunes.

With them they had brought the third edition (1551) of an indigenous English metrical psalter, which had been begun shortly before 1549 by Thomas Sternhold, a groom-of-robes to Edward VI (as also to his father, Henry VIII), and continued by John Hopkins, so that by 1551 the third edition had some forty-four versifications. 'Sternhold and Hopkins' (as it came to be called) had not the conscious theological underpinning of the French psalters - Sternhold was no Calvin. Beyond any intended personal use or delectation, he apparently had only a somewhat naively pious hope that his efforts might supplant the rather risqué ballads

then popular,[1] for he used almost exclusively the familiar 'fourteener' ballad meter for his psalms.[2] But it can be appreciated that the few years between the first Prayer Book of Edward VI in 1549 (and the same year as the first substantial publication (actually the second edition) of Sternhold's psalms) and Mary's accession in 1553 were hardly adequate for Prayer Book worship to really 'settle in,' let alone metrical psalmody as an ancillary to that worship.

The interaction of the (both as yet incomplete) French and English psalters during the Marian exile is a fairly complex story. Suffice to say here that the English psalter was expanded (and the existing versifications of Sternhold and Hopkins revised), notable contributors being William Whittingham and William Kethe.[3] It is also important to note that activity in re an English metrical psalter was largely confined to that group of exiles who were more radical than the main group at Frankfurt, were ejected therefrom, and went on to Geneva. The remainder at Frankfurt were those who favoured Prayer Book worship; but the dissidents (including John Knox) wished more radical revision of the Prayer Book along Calvinist lines, than the

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1. Clement Marot had a similar motive when he first versified the psalms at the French court of Francis I, beginning c. 1533.
2. Now identified as 'Common Meter,' double (eight lines), or single (four lines).
3. These men (especially Kethe) were also responsible for transferring some of the many meters in the French psalter to the English - an attempt which was to survive longer in the Scottish psalter tradition than in England.

second Edwardian book had afforded. In Geneva they published their "Forme of Prayers" (it had been rejected at Frankfurt); it was to be the ancestor of the Scottish Book of Common Order, and the context of the above-mentioned psalter efforts, now referred to as 'Anglo-Genevan.' That a major impetus for this activity was exposure to the French psalter usage can hardly be doubted; and the latter's theological/biblical foundation (the Scriptural Principle) articulated by John Calvin, equally undoubtedly crossed over to the English-speaking refugees.

Thus when, after Elizabeth's accession, the enlarged and amended Sternhold and Hopkins returned (separately) to England and Scotland with the exiles, it was supported by a much more cogent argument for its employment, even though in England its context had once more to be the Book of Common Prayer. Perhaps in rebound and relief from Mary's reimposition of Romanism, England took up metrical psalmody with quick enthusiasm. The historian Strype records instances of psalm-singing in 1559 and 1560 as follows:

> The - day of September, the New Morning Prayers began now first at St. Antholin's in Budge-row, ringing at five in the morning; and then a psalm was sung, as was used among the protestants at Geneva, all men, women and young folks singing together; which custom was about this time brought also into St. Paul's.[1]

> March third, our Bishop preached again at Paul's Cross in his habit; i.e., in his rochet and chimere; and so continued to wear them as often as he preached.

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1. John Strype, The History of the Life and Acts of Edmund Grindal (London, 1710), p. 27.

> There was then a mighty audience; for the people were greedy to hear the gospel. And sermon being ended, a psalm was set, and sung by all the congregation (for now it became commonly practiced in churches) with the organ.[1]

Once complete in 1562, the 'Old Version' (another, later name for the 'Sternhold & Hopkins' psalter) was the basis of numerous musical editions (some of them well-known, such as Day, Damon, Est, Ravenscroft, and Playford) in the nearly century-and-a-half up to the 'New Version' of Tate and Brady in 1696. During the same period, Julian lists some hundred partial or complete versifications of the psalter other than the Old Version[2] - statistical testimony to the popularity (or at least, as time wore on, the settled custom) of metrical psalmody in general, whether in private or public use.

We may now ask the question, how compatible was the Scriptural Principle, as manifested in metrical psalmody, with Anglicanism, as manifested in Prayer Book worship? A major part of the answer lies in the area of formal authorizations. This is because 1) as a national, established church, the Church of England has been subject in some areas of her life to the decisions or opinions of the crown and parliament; and 2) as a church with a definite internal government and polity (episcopacy), authority within is also part of her manner of life.

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1. Ibid., p. 37.
2. John Julian, Dictionary of Hymnology (rev. ed., London, 1915), pp. 926-28.

In the preface to the Edwardian Prayer Books already quoted, we see the church acknowledging the Scriptural Principle as a basic criterion of liturgical content, although the phrase "or that which is evidently grounded on the same [Scripture]", broadly enough interpreted, leaves the way clear for the inclusion of post-biblical tradition, as to liturgical formulae, etc.

Further, in the authorizing act for the first Prayer Book of Edward VI, 1549, we read:

> That it be lawful . . . in churches . . . chapels or oratories or other places to use openly any psalm or prayer taken out of the Bible . . . not letting or omitting thereby the service or any part thereof mentioned in the said book.

Although the singing of "psalms or prayers" is not explicitly mentioned, it has seemingly been generally assumed that the use of metrical psalmody did not run afoul of the authorizing act,[1] so long as its placement in the service did not violate the liturgical integrity of the latter.

After the Marian interruption, Elizabeth cautiously reintroduced Prayer Book worship, the 1559 Book being substantially a reissue of the second Edwardian Book. Her forty-ninth injunction of that year reads:

> For the comforting of such as delight in music it may be permitted that in the beginning or end of Common Prayer either at Morning or Evening there may be sung an hymn or such-like song to the praise of Almighty God in the best sort of melody and music that may be devised, having respect that the sentence of the hymn may be understood and perceived.[2]

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1. Perhaps because of Edward's known liking from boyhood of his groom's efforts.

2. Henry Gee and W.J. Hardy, Documents Illustrative of English Church History (London, 1910; repr. New York, 1966), p. 435.

In contrast to Edward VI's authorizing act, we note here that while singing is indeed the subject of the injunction, it is psalmody which lacks explicit mention. Instead, we have "hymn or such-like song." But again, in the light of the apparent rapid spread of metrical psalm-singing in Elizabeth's reign, it has been assumed that metrical psalmody is implicitly sanctioned. Meanwhile, we note also that the placement of congregational singing in Morning and Evening Prayer is now more closely designated.

Vague as is "hymn or such-like song," this Elizabethan dictum has remained the closest approach to explicit authorization of congregational song which the Church of England has.[1] That very vagueness has ever since been at the root of the occasional controversies over the legality and/or content of hymns in Anglican worship - controversies which will come to light later in our study.

Unfortunately, reference to the title pages of the various Elizabethan editions of the Old Version does not greatly clarify the situation. Julian conveniently tabulates the title page information from nine editions.[2] A pattern of sorts emerges, in that before 1566, it is "veri mete to be used of all sorts of people privatly. . .";

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1. So that, for example, Maurice Frost, writing on the subject in 1958, must base his statements in re the twentieth-century situation upon the Edwardian Act and Elizabethan Injunction from which we have quoted. ("On the Legality of Hymns in the Church of England," Hymn Society of Great Britain and Ireland Bulletin, no. 84 [Autumn, 1958], 168-70).

2. Julian, Dictionary, pp. 1538-40.

then, in the 1566 edition, "Newlye set forth and allowed to bee soong of the people together in churches, before and after Morning and Evening Prayer: as also before and after the sermon, and moreover in private houses"; in 1557, the word "all" is inserted before "churches." In connection with the above, the royal privelege allowing the printing of the book is indicated, with various time limits. Since there is no record of positive authorization, either by Parliament or Convocation, the net interpretation must be that the crown sanctioned, or tolerated, or neutrally suffered what was anyway fast becoming a widespread de facto practice. The vagueness may indeed have been a studied piece of strategy by Elizabeth to keep both the puritan and establishment parties in the church fairly satisfied. A degree of sanction may also be inferred from the fact that for most of its career, the Old Version was printed by the Company of Stationers, and frequently bound in with Prayer Books and Bibles.

In the end, a search for precise authorization for the Old Version is somewhat academic, since, as we have said, metrical psalmody quickly became a de facto, para-liturgical ingredient in Anglican worship, and that for whatever reasons, it was not seriously repressed by the authorities, be they royal, political, or ecclesiastical;[1]

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1. Bishop Jewel, in a visitation to Exeter cathedral in 1559, found that the chapter was attempting to suppress the singing of psalms by the congregation at Morning and Evening Prayers. He instructed the chapter to desist, and thus to allow the psalms. The chapter remonstrated that the practice was an illegal interruption of the liturgies, whereupon Archbishop Parker entered

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and that, indeed, many other authors (including Archbishop Parker and King James I) felt free to try their hand at versifying psalms, subsequently publishing their efforts, if only for private circulation. It is probably fair to say that most people, if they were concerned about authorization at all, were willing to class metrical psalmody as a 'such-like song' of Elizabeth's injunction, and employ it accordingly. There seemed, in sum, to be little problem of essential compatibility between (as we phrased it earlier) the Scriptural Principle, as manifested in metrical psalmody, and Anglicanism, as manifested in Prayer Book worship.

III. The Puritans and Metrical Psalmody

The relationships between the Scriptural Principle, metrical psalmody, and Anglicanism came under scrutiny during the Puritan ascendancy in the mid-seventeenth century. While the Principle in general could never be in doubt among the Puritans, one of its ramifications caused them to take a negative view of the Old Version. Not that everyone had been completely contented with that psalter since its completion in 1562: Julian's list of other versions would implicitly dispel that notion. But the Puritan challenge was massive enough that the hegemony of the Old Version was breached, thus opening the way for a trickle of hymnody that would eventually all but swamp psalmody.

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the dispute and firmly instructed the chapter to follow Jewel's original instruction. The correspondence is contained in David Wilkins, Conciliae Magnae Brittaniae et Hiberniae, vol. IV (London, 1737), pp. 200-01.

The ramification at issue relates to the understanding of the Scriptural Principle as applied to hymnody. Calvin's major concern was the 'vertical' dimension of worship. The prior encounter of man by God yielded, in the Scriptural "Word of God," the content for man's (recollective) response, of which congregational song was a medium. The Puritan mind would have no quarrel with that; but it would be equally concerned (perhaps even more so) that this content, as thus mediated, be intelligible to, and understood by the worshipper, as it first 'descends' in Scripture, and then 'ascends' in congregational song. Since that is the responsibility of men in their employment of verbal communication, it is in effect a heightened emphasis on the 'horizontal' dimension of worship (secondary in Calvin's concept of congregational song, as we have seen).

As the Puritan movement began to gather momentum, we find this item in the proceedings of a commission appointed by the House of Lords in 1641 concerning matters of doctrine and discipline in the Church of England:

> That the musick used in God's holy service in cathedral and collegiate churches be framed with less curiosity that it may be more edifying and more intelligible, and that no hymns or anthems be used where ditties are framed by private men, but such as are contained in the sacred canonical scriptures, or in our liturgy of prayers, or have publick allowance.[1]

More specifically related to metrical psalmody is the relevant section of the (Westminster) Directory of

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1. Edward Cardwell, A History of Conferences and Other Proceedings Connected with the Revision of The Book of Common Prayer (Oxford, 1841), p. 274.

Worship, 1645:

> Of Singing of Psalms
>
> It is the duty of Christians to praise God publicly, by Singing of Psalms together in the Congregation, and also privately in the family.
>
> In Singing of Psalms the voice is to be tunably and gravely ordered, but the chief care must be to sing with understanding, and with grace in the heart, making melody unto the Lord.
>
> That the whole congregation may join herein, every one that can read is to have a Psalm Book; and all others not disabled by age or otherwise are to be exhorted to learn to read. But for the present, where many in the Congregation cannot read, it is convenient that the Minister, or some other fit person appointed by him and the other Ruling Officers, do read the Psalm line by line before the singing thereof.[1]

Lastly, one of the Presbyterian proposals at the Savoy Colloquy of 1661, following the Restoration:

> To omit the repititions and responsals of the clerk and people, and the alternate reading of the Psalm and Hymn, which cause a confused murmur in the congregation . . .[2]

These citations testify to the Puritan concern for clarity and intelligibility in re the manner of worship, including the use of psalmody. This same emphasis pertained also to the matter of worship, an example of which was an increasing dissatisfaction with the Old Version. The bare and unelaborated statement thereof is found in the 1641 Lord's commission record:

> It is very fit that the imperfections of the meter in the singing psalms should be mended, and then lawful authority added unto them, to

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1. George W. Sprott and T. Leishman, The Book of Common Order of the Church of Scotland and The Directory (London & Edinburgh, 1868), pp. 322-23.
2. Procter and Frere, New History, p. 172. This was Proposal Three.

> have them publickly sung before and after sermons, and sometimes instead of the hymns of Morning and Evening Prayer.[1]

and also in that of the Savoy Colloquy (1661):

> Because singing of psalms is a considerable part of public worship, we desire that the version set forth and allowed to be sung in church, may be amended; or that we may have leave to make use of a purer version.[2]

As the Episcopal reply to this last was a brusque reminder that metrical psalmody was not part of the liturgy and therefore not germaine to the Colloquy, the Presbyterian's subsequent optional-liturgy proposal (usually attributed to Richard Baxter) contained this appeal:

> Concerning Psalms for Publick Use
> We desire that instead of the imperfect version of the Psalms in Meeter now in use, Mr. William Barton's version, or that perused and approved [1650] by the Church of Scotland there in use (being the best that we have seen) may be received and corrected by some skillful men, and both allowed (for grateful variety) to bee printed together on several columns or pages and publickly sold; at least until a better than either of them shall be made.[3]

Barton's psalms, to which reference is made, had been published in 1644 and championed by the House of Lords, versus a heavily amended Rous' version by the Commons, both being Puritan candidates to replace the Old Version.[4]

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1. Cardwell, Conferences, p. 277. This was Consideration Thirty-five. The reference to "hymns" in the last phrase is no doubt as a terminus technicus for the canticles after the lessons.

2. Ibid., p. 308.

3. A Petition for Peace, with the Reformation of the Liturgy (London, 1661), p. 41.

4. Neither version was destined to succeed in England, although Rous (again amended) became the basis of the Scottish Psalter of 1650. See Millar Patrick, Four Centuries of Scottish Psalmody (London, 1949), pp. 90-104.

Barton, a friend of Baxter's, had made a tangential reference to the Old Version in the preface to his version:

> Methinks that none should be of that mind to tie us so strictly to the prose and text, as must constrain us to render it in such rugged, ingrateful and misshapen verse, as many judicious men have already much misliked, and such as multitudes of plain people would deem to have neither ryme nor reason.[1]

But these feelings are all pre-echoed, as it were, by George Wither, writing circa 1625. His motive is different - he is deprecating the Old Version in favour of hymnody (especially his own, in relation to which we shall return to him later), but the Puritans would no doubt have agreed with him:

> But sure, no man will grudge the annexing of the Booke of Hymnes to our metricall Psalmes now versed, in regard of any faultinesse in their expression, yf they consider the meannesse of that Translation. For, though some (of no meane degree) are very violent for the mayntenance and continuance of their olde Version, pleading (as the papists do for many of their trumperyes) a long prescription, in steed of better argumentes: yet I know it to be soe much to blame, that no man of understanding can sing many of those Psalmes, but with trouble to his devotion. And I dare undertake to demonstrate, that they are not onely full of absurdityes, scoelocismes, improprietyes, non-sēce, and impertinent circumlocutions (to more than twice the length of their originalles in some places) but that there are in thē many expresiōs also, quite beside if not quite contrary, to the meaning of the Text. Which I would not thus openly have declared, but that even schoole boys perceive it, though some (that would be thought wiser) do ignorantly or wilfully, protest against an alteration of our singing Psalmes. Excuse me I beseech you, if I seeme a little too playne in discovering the faultines of that whereof so many are overweening: for, I doe it not to disparage the pious endeavors of those whoe tooke paynes in that

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1. William Barton, The Psalms in Metre (London, 1644), preface.

> Translation; but rather, commending their labourious and Christian intention, do acknowledg, that (considering the tymes they lived in, and of what quallity they were) they made soe worthye an attempt; as may justly shame us whoe came after, to see it no better seconded during all the flourishing tymes which have followed their troublesome Age: especially, seeing howe curiously our language and expressiones are refined in our triviall Discourses.[1]

Behind these examples of seventeenth century dissatisfaction with the Old Version lies, at least in part, the Scriptural Principle, with its (Puritan) concomitant demand for intelligibility-for-edification; because the alleged awkwardnesses, faults of prosody, and dated language got in the way of communication, and hence of understanding. Hence the need for a contemporary version in the interests of continued biblical fidelity, and in unmuddled versification.

While the Restoration in general, and the Savoy Colloquy in particular dashed immediate hopes for reform or replacement of the Old Version in the established church (with the Clarendon code making risky any singing in a Nonconformity driven underground), the criticism was not stilled. John Patrick, in the preface to his own 1679 (partial) version, furnishes an example:

> Were it not that the singing psalms, commonly used in churches, labour under the prejudice of an ill translation, whose dress is coarse and homely, the meter rugged and unequal, being patched up with

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1. George Wither, The Schollers Purgatory (c. 1625). Reprinted in facsimile by the Spenser Society, issue no. 12, Miscellaneous Works of George Wither, First Collection (London, 1872), pp. 45-46. In this and subsequent quotations, the pagination is that of the Society. The original pagination is reproduced, but is for some reason not consecutive.

> little care, the words many of them out of use and scarce intelligible, without fancy and sometimes which is worse, without any sense; I cannot think that any sober devout person would decry or sleight the singing of them in the church. . .
>
> I confess there are discouragements to undertake such a work, and particularly that, which some others have deservedly complain'd of, viz. the ungracefulness of the Measures of our Common Tunes: which I think happens to have been the worst chosen of any Meter extant in any Language, and scarce admits, when words are fitted to them, of any Elegancy; which therefore the Excellent Poets of our own have balked, and chosen in their Translations, to use Pindaric's or other measures of their own fancying, wherein without being so much straitned, they had more scope for their flights and Elegancies. But since the people cannot be wound up to them, he that intends their benefit, must condescend, and take as he finds it, the Meter they are accustomed to; and fit such words to them as they can understand, and may conveigh naturally and easily into their minds, that pious sense which every where breaths in the Psalms of David. . . . and perhaps this may be a harder task to do well, than he that has not tried it would imagine; especially when he must not take leave to Paraphrase largely in strains of his own, but must keep closely, tho' not to every word, yet to the sense of the text as it lies before him . . . I resolved not to ty up my self strictly to the use of the words of the English text, unless they would fall in naturally, but rather to clear the phrases by a short paraphrase, tho' still keeping to the sense.[1]

Eventually, of course, the 'New Version' of Tate and Brady did come forth in 1696 as the 'official' (insofar as one can use that term in this context) replacement for the Old Version.

In the above quotation from Patrick, there is discernible another plane of criticism of the Old Version: it lacked "elegancy" in regard to the monotonous use of common meter - both text and tunes, and this defect frustrated

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1. John Patrick, A Century of Select Psalms (London, 1679), preface.

poets who might versify psalms (although not a poet, Patrick apparently felt the frustration too). This could be taken as one expression of the tension between the 'trajectorial' and 'straight-line' approaches to communication. Yet Patrick was realistic or pastoral enough to see a Charybdis to this Scylla: "the people cannot be wound up to them [other, more elegant meters]"; i.e., too great poetic freedom runs the risk of removing the whole effort from the realm of the practical - it fails to communicate intelligibly, and so falls under the same Puritan judgement as the Old Version (if for a different reason). So Patrick, for one, will compromise, which he rather ruefully acknowledges is easier said than done, since even a limited freedom in the versification process brings him into tension with literal fidelity to the (prose) text; i.e., with the Scriptural Principle, so understood.

But Patrick was by no means the first in expressing dissatisfaction with the Old Version's overall literary merit, as distinguished from specific technical effects and datedness. On first thought, one would not think this matter to be of much concern to the Puritans earlier in the century, for whom literary grace was suspect as anti-thetic to the communication of Scriptural content and meaning. Yet let us hear again two of that persuasion:

> Lastly, touching the translation itself, since Hebrew must be made English, English must be made verse, and verse ryme, wee must of necessity admit some alteration and amplification of words, although without extravagant excursions of unnecessary paraphrase or frothy flourishes of undivine poetry. But since poetry is a gift of God too, and very notable to kindle, quicken, and enflame affection.

> Since this gift (in the greatest measure) is most necessary for a work such as this, wherein much majestie and gracefulness, together with plainness, sweetness and cleerness suitable to the capacities of vulgar people (and even of so many women) is required . . .
>
> And I trust I may affirm that notwithstanding any alterations of the prose, I have neither omitted any material word, nor inserted anything besides the scope and meaning of the text, but whatsoever I have expressed is included, intended and intimated in that Scripture which I render, Ellipsis and Pleonasmus (so frequent in Hebrew) making much for paraphrase. Yet have I not gone so wide with all my meters, but that others, with very scant meters, have been forc't to paraphrase farre wider. Lastly I affirm constantly, that it is the dutie of a translator in such a work as this, to follow the idiom of his own language, otherwise he doth not keep to his text, but corrupt it rather . . . and some phrases are best understood by metaphrase of other language.[1]

That is William Barton, and one feels sympathy for a writer for whom the aforementioned tension forces such ambivalent feelings as expressed above. Richard Baxter is more analytic:

> Poetry (as all inferior things) hath its conveniences and its inconveniences. The inconveniences are, that matter is oft forc'd too much tostoop to words and syllables and that conciseness keeps the matter from a full perception with any but well prepared understandings. The conveniences are that it spareth words, avoiding the redundancies and repititions which oratory is usually guilty of; and teacheth exactness of expression. And that the delight of Harmony .. . doth make the phantasie helpful to the mind; and as it expresseth affections, so doth it raise them.
>
> I have no hope of reaching the Seraphick strain of Mr. George Sandys. But he hath not filled his Meters to the usual tunes, so that to the Vulgar they are almost useless. Bishop King's are very good, but the unusual way of making the Rhyme of the next verse meet maketh it by disuse unpleasant to the most. Mr. White's, the Scots, and Mr. Row's his second, are an excellent translation of the

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1. Barton, Psalms, preface.

> Hebrew text; But the ear desireth greater melody than their strict versions will allow. Mr. William Barton hath done excellently of whom I have made much use; But his great labour for Rhymes hath made it (the more excellent to some, yet) less grave, and less taking to many others. Mr. Woodford's, and Sandys, and Patrick's and Davision's and some others, that taken a larger paraphrastical liberty than I have done, are much more pleasant and useful to many. But . . . I found none of them wholly answered my expectation. I could not rest in the unpleasant harshness of the strictest versions; seeing psalms lose their end that lose their affecting pleasure. I durst not venture on the Paraphrastical great liberty of others. I durst make hymns of my own, or explain the apocryphal: but I feared adding to God's word, and making my own to pass for God's. Yet I scrupled not giving the sense of the Hebrew text more fully than our strict Translation hath done, by the addition of adjectives and adverbs . . . so that my labour hath been both to avoid the harshness and unpleasantness of the strictest versions and the boldness of copious paraphrases.[1]

Considering how in his 1661 liturgy (proposed to Savoy) Baxter paid so little concern to felicity of expression, it is interesting how much his disposition toward it improved, admittedly over at least twenty years' time. Obviously however, the claim of the Scriptural Principle (strictly applied) was still strong, leading both men to be somewhat defensive about their progressive feelings, and a bit uncomfortable with their resolution of the tension.

That resolution was to paraphrase (but within limits), Barton for the sake of bypassing Hebraisms, Baxter to restore the "affecting pleasure." To be sure, in the versification of a prose translation of Hebrew verse (or

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1. Richard Baxter, Paraphrase on the Psalms of David in Metre (London, 1692), preface.

even without the mediation of the prose) what is and is not paraphrastic is a matter of definition or degrees, with the work of other versifiers (Sandys, Donne, Herbert, et al.) possibly qualifying too. But this would augment, not diminish, the fact that a rigorous, literalistic understanding of the Scriptural Principle as applied to congregational song was yielding to other - if partially conflicting - needs of that song. This evolutionary movement was to be unapologetically championed and matured by Isaac Watts in the next century.

IV. The Stirring of Hymnody

Increasingly free handling of psalm texts was only half of the reaction to the Old Version and/or a too literalistic understanding of the Scriptural Principle; for in the seventeenth century we find the tentative seeds being sown of another approach - hymnody. Its roots lie in an expansion of the Principle to biblical texts other than the psalms, but its direction was toward abandonment of the Principle, both in any rigid interpretation thereof, and as the sole arbiter of the content of congregational song. We shall now concern ourselves with the origins of this second reaction in England, which ultimately was to prevail over the more limited possibilities of psalm selectivity, paraphrasing, or even Wattsian evangelical expansion.

A. Hymnody Connected with the Liturgy

It is an unfortunate fact of English church history that the great tradition of the Latin office hymn was not carried over into the Prayer Book offices. It had, in fact, to wait for the interest of the nineteenth century Tractarians' interest in things medieval to receive attention anything like systematic or sizeable in non-Roman circles.

Cranmer's two drafts, leading to the first Prayer Book of Edward VI, retained some office hymns in Latin, though there was considerable simplification in other ways, notably the reduction of the number of offices to two (Morning and Evening Prayer) in the second draft. But then in the 1549 Prayer Book, which of course was entirely in English, the hymn (which had been placed after the Lord's Prayer and introductory preces) was omitted, supposedly for lack of translations and translators.[1] However, the classic canticles after the lessons (often designated as hymns in a technical, liturgical sense) were translated and kept. Also, the hymn of invocation of the Holy Spirit, 'Veni Creator Spiritus,' was placed (in a common meter translation)

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1. Benson cites a letter of 1544 or 1545 from Cranmer to the King, explaining that he had tried his hand at translating a few hymns, but would really rather the King found someone else for that task. Apparently, nothing happened. However, see below on the primers: that of Henry VIII, with hymn translations, was already in existence. This would suggest that Cranmer was not enthusiastic about hymnody, available translators or not; which in turn suggests that the Calvinist influence (vis-a-vis Lutheran) was already telling on Cranmer (English Hymn, pp. 39-41).

in the rite for the Ordering of Priests, added in 1550 to the first Edwardian book.

While they are outside the context of corporate worship, some mention should be made of the primers, or devotional manuals for the laity in the vernacular. Here there was some attempt at translation of Latin hymnody, basically as follows: in prose (pre-Reformation primers); in irregular versifications, thus not suitable for singing (the Sarum primers of the time of Henry VIII); in more regular versifications (unauthorized primers of Henry VIIIth's time, such as Marshall's of 1535); and those which reproduced Latin meters; e.g., trochaic, and what we call Long Meter (authorized primers from the times of Henry VIII, Edward VI, and Elizabeth, interrupted by the 1553 primer based on the Prayer Book, which contained no hymns). These Anglican primers had no direct influence on the official Anglican attitude (or lack of one) toward Latin or English hymnody, although indirectly they might be said to have, as they were a collective model for the devotional writings of seventeenth century authors such as Cosin, Austin, and Crashaw, some of whose 'hymns' were in later times to be appropriated (sometimes with drastic adaptation) for congregational use. But during and after Elizabeth's reign, metrical psalmody became so dominant that interest in the Latin hymns was left to the Roman Catholics, who produced primers until 1706, the style-in-translation evolving from the Elizabethan to the Drydenesque.

B. Hymns Appended to Metrical Psalters

From the almost-complete Old Version of 1561 to mid-eighteenth century editions, there were appendices of varying content. A composite list of the items therein sorts itself quite readily into biblical, early Christian, and 'otherwise' categories:

Biblical: Ten Commandments, Lord's Prayer (after Luther), Venite (from Psalm 95), Magnificat, Nunc Dimittis, Benedictus, Benedicite.

Early Christian: metrical Kyrie, Te Deum, Athanasian Creed, Twelve Articles-(based on Nicene Creed).

Otherwise: Exhortations to Praise (one each for Morning & Evening Prayer)
-T. Becon

Thanksgiving after Receiving Lord's Supper - anon.
Prayer to Holy Ghost before Sermon - anon.
Veni Creator Spiritus - Hrabanus Maurus (ninth century)
Give Peace in These Our Days, O Lord - Capito/Grindal
Preserve Us, Lord, by Thy Dear Word - Luther/Wisdome
The Humble Suit of a Sinner - J. Marckant
The Lamentation of a Sinner (two texts) - anon.
The Complaint of a Sinner - anon.

Such a practice of additions to the psalter could have had its roots in either or both of two precedents: previous Latin psalters, which often included the canticles; and the continental Reformed psalters, both Strasbourg and Geneva, which appended smaller selections of the first two categories above, plus, in the case of the 1545 Strasbourg book, a 'Salutation à Jesus-Christ'.

But apart from the source of inspiration, the aforementioned list suggests 1) a versification of the basic liturgical contents of Morning and Evening Prayer (preces, Venite, canticles, Creed) in a way reminiscent of Luther's paraphrases of the Ordinary of the mass (Kyrie, Gott Vater;

Allein Gott in der Höh', etc.), although in Anglican worship there was no possibility of substitution for the Prayer Book texts proper;[1] nevertheless, it was an at least nominal link between the metrical psalter and the Prayer Book, rather than to the Forme of Prayers in Geneva; and 2) the remaining items suggest a trace of German Lutheran piety (most likely by way of Strasbourg through the Marian exiles) in the form of human composures set to music but generally confined to private/family use, save for, possibly, the two 'Exhortations' and the 'Thanksgiving after Receiving the Lord's Supper.'[2]

Yet, one should not put any great weight on these psalter appendices relative to post-1700 hymnody, for that development seems motivated more from a negative reaction to the inadequacies of metrical psalmody than to a conscious, positive extension of this small corpus of hymns, if indeed they qualify as such.

Thus the rather meager, desultory non-psalmic tradition which the seventeenth century inherited: barely more than an extension of the Scriptural Principle to include in metrical form the New Testament canticles, Lord's Prayer, etc., plus a few early Christian liturgical items. Any subsequent development along contemporary, non-Scriptural

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1. Metrical versions of the canticles were substituted for the prose versions by the Puritans, however. See Julian, Dictionary, p. 345.

2. The Elizabethan injunction would allow the Exhortations before the beginning of the offices. On hymns at Communion, see the citation below from George Wither (P.101).

lines had only for precedent such few offerings as the "Preserve us, Lord" and the "_____of a Sinner" trio. They were a very thin end of the wedge, indeed.

C. Three Pioneer Hymnodists

Of the small number who broadened this wedge in the seventeenth century by writing and publishing hymns for corporate use (as distinguished from the devotional poets active in the same period), three have been selected for consideration here as representative, both chronologically and environmentally. They are George Wither (1588-1667), William Barton (1603-1678), and Benjamin Keach (1640-1704). At the time they published their respective hymns, they lived in the early-, middle-, and late-seventeenth century. More importantly, Wither was an Anglican, Barton a Presbyterian (when this was the form of the established church, in the Commonwealth), and Keach a non-conforming Baptist (in that harsh period after the Restoration). That they were transitional figures (perhaps better to say pre-transitional) is shown in that both Wither and Barton published metrical psalters as well as hymns; and, like many transitional persons in history, their own works are not remembered as much as their venturesome spirit.

1. George Wither

We turn then to George Wither, whose disparagement of the Old Version we have already noted. As his dates indicate, his life began in Elizabethan times and continued

well into the post-Restoration period. A perusal of that life reveals varied and high enthusiasms, one of which was writing, including the composition of hymns. Most of the latter are not now (nor seemingly were they ever) in common use, although some of the tunes he persuaded Orlando Gibbons to compose for him do survive. Still, he might have been what Isaac Watts in fact became - the effective initiator of the hymn tradition in England. This supposition is grounded in the fact that Wither got a patent from King James I in 1622/3, in which his "Hymns and Songs of the Church" were "esteemed worthy and profitable to be inserted in convenient manner and due place into every English Psalm book in metre."[1] Wither, a life-long Anglican (even if he did take arms for Parliament instead of for King during the Rebellion), expresses his intent for the hymns:

> Thus with a good purpose, I began and finished those Hymns and Songes, which make up the Booke, called the HYMNES and SONGS OF THE CHURCH. So named, not for that I would have them accounted part of our Lyturgie (as I have delivered to his Maiestie in my Epistle) but because they do for the most part, treate of such particuers, as concerne y whole Church of God.[2]

He would, however (as the seeking of the patent infers), have liked the hymns to be used wherever metrical psalms were allowed; i.e., before and after the offices and/or sermons. Unfortunately, the patent coup (and thus

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1. George Wither, Hymns and Songs of the Church, with an introduction by Edward Farr (London, 1856), p. xii.
2. Wither, Schollers Purgatory, pp. 23-24.

the whole project) was frustrated by the Company of Stationers, who were upset at Wither's circumventing of their presumed prerogatives, as publishers of the Old Version. The same fate awaited Wither's own psalter in 1632. In both cases the royal patents were withdrawn.

Wither poured out his frustration (which had not only scholarly, but monetary causes) in "The Schollers Purgatory" of c. 1625, an extensive tract addressed to the bishops in convocation. In defense of his labours, we have already cited his view of the Old Version, and yet his disavowal of any intent for patterns of usage beyond those already established for metrical psalmody in the Prayer Book offices. This would seem to indicate that he was mentally still well within the ambit of metrical psalmody, and that his intended contribution was more towards an expansion of content, rather than of form or function of song in worship.

The collection itself has ninety items, in two parts, the first of which is mostly Scripture-derived (Old Testament canticles, the Song of Solomon, prayers and lamentations of the prophets, and the familiar New Testament canticles). The Scriptural Principle is still dominant, but Wither claims the freedom to select from the whole of the Bible. He refers to Scripture sources as a defense against his critics, in "The Schollers Purgatory":

> And first, whereas they give out, that my Hymnes are needles; they doe not only thereby contemne, and slight my paynes but lay an imputation of vanity upon the wisedome of the Holy Ghost also. For a greate part of them are

> parcells of the Canonicall Scriptures: originally songe. And, to say any fragment thereof, were needles, is in effect, to deminish from Gods words, upon which followes a heavie curse.
>
> God deserves every day to be praysed of us for delivering his Church, by the overthrow of Pharoah in the redd Sea, as much as he did in the very moment of their deliverance. And the song of Moses then used doth in each particular, as properly concerne every christiā Congregation, as it did the Iewes themselves upon that occasion. For, Gods mercy shewed to us in our haptisme, (and the spirituall overthrowe of the devill, pursuing us with an host of sinnes, and temptations,) is in myne opinion more effectually exprest to a spirituall understanding, by apprehending the actions and circumstances of that temporall deliverance, thē it could be by y power of any words, or by any other ordinary means except by contēplating of that most excellēt material obiect, the Sacrament of Baptisme it selfe, of which the other was but a type.
>
> In like manner, all the other Canonicall Hymnes do admyrablie help towards Gods everlasting mercies, and for illustrating those particular Misteries of our christian fayth, which they did typically and prophetically foreshew. Yea, they are part of the propheticall witnes, as the Hymnes of the newe Testament are part of the Evangelicall witnes, of our interest in Christ Iesus.[1]

He brings this to the Practical level, vis-a-vis the Old Version:

> I know not what it is which should make my booke of Hymnes appeare soe ridiculus unto them, or so unworthy to be annexed to the English Psalmbook, as they pretend. In respect of the matter it cannot justly be excepted against: for, a great part thereof, is canonicall Scripture; and the rest also, is both agreeable thereunto in every particuler, and consonant to the most approved Discipline of the Church of England. Soe that (how squemishly soever some of their stomackes brooke it) they being allowed by Authority, are as fitt, I trust, to keepe company with Davids Psalmes, as Robert Wisdomes TURKE and POPE; and those other apocryphall Songs and praises, which, the stationers add to the Psalme booke for their more

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1. Ibid., pp. 27-28.

> advantage: Sure I am, that if their additions shalbe allowed of by the most voices, yet mine shalbe approoued of before those, by the best Iudgments.[1]

The "rest" above would be a reference to part two of his collection,[2] wherein he breaks new ground (within our given context) with a set of hymns for the major feasts/seasons of the liturgical year, for the saints' days in the Anglican calendar, and ending with eleven hymns for national days or needs; e.g., St. George's Day, for peace, for the king. So the "approved Discipline" is, in effect, the Christian Year. To be sure, insofar as the majority of calendar events and saints are in the Scripture, this portion of Wither's work could be said to be within the Scriptural Principle also. His explanation of this direction of his work is worth recording:

> And, because I had heard some Teachers in Israel professe themselves ignorant concerning the use of the Holy-days observed in our Church, I tooke the more paines (though not presuming to teach them) to expresses before y proper Song of every observable Time or other occasion, their religious use; briefly, & in such a manner, as I hope every reasonable capacity may thereby understand, our Churches discipline in that poynt, to be farr from a needles, popish, or superstitious Tradition.[3]

Later in the tract, he already claims fulfillment of this educational design:

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1. Ibid., pp. 42-43.
2. It should be stated at this point that the mostly-Scriptural first part closes with a group that includes the Athanasian and Apostles' Creeds, the 'Veni Creator,' a hymn of St. Ambrose, and a funeral song.
3. Wither, Schollers Purgatory, p. 23.

> . . . Many have confessed unto me that my Hymnes for the Observable Times and their Prefaces, have made them more reverently affected towards that Discipline then formerly they were; And have professed, that yt shall for ever hereafter, teach them to be more conscionable in condemning and slighting the observatiō of that which is established in our Church: Yea, some Divines have modestly acknowledged, that they did not so well consider the piety and usefulnes of thos observations as they have since done.[1]

Relative to this work generally, "The Schollers Purgatory" has scattered through its pages a variety of declared purposes, some of them broad and unelaborated, because shared with the existing metrical psalmody; e.g., helpful to devotion, tending to Christian obedience, for edification, an instrument of God's glory, etc. But a couple are more original in concept:

1) the function of variety:

> But, were not those Hymnes necessary in respect of the variety of their arguments, yet the variety of expression, were somwhat needful, although the matter were the same. For, as the severall dressings of one sorte of meate, maks it diversly agreeable to the pallats, and stomackes of men: so the various manner of things delivered in Holy Scriptures, makes them applicable to our understandings; and what in one kind of delivery seems harsh, or obscure, in another kind is acceptable, and more easily apprehended. That which is easy to you, is hard perhapps to me: and what may be thought an impropriety to some great iudgements, doth many times most properly insinuate the speakers meaning unto them of weaker capacityes.[2]
>
> If it be but to awaken our dullnes, and take away our wearisomenesse in holy duties, variety is needful. For, flesh and bloud (as we finde by daily experience) loaths those things, wherwithal they are naturally best pleased, if they be to frequēt: how much more tedious then will those things be unto us, which are

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1. Ibid., pp. 75-76.
2. Ibid., pp. 28-29.

> perpetually iterated in the same words, being naturally unpleasing to a carnall eare? Since god in mercie hath provided and permitted us meanes to assist our weaknesses, let not such as are strong enough to be without them, condemne the use of such helpes in those, whoe being not so able, must have their affections weaned by degrees from their childish inclynations.[1]

2) to distinguish Anglican worship from Roman:

> . . .and likely to be a meanes of delivering our Solemnities from being so much traduced and misunderstood, for reliques of Popery, as heretofore.[2]

Later, in 1641, Wither published his "Hallelujah, or Britain's Second Remembrancer," a large collection incorporating the second part of "Hymns and Songs of the Church," but with most of the new material for personal/private use. However, in its opening address 'to the Reader,' there occurs this paragraph which gives additional insight into Wither's understanding of hymnody:

> Songs were adjudged, even by the wisdom of the Holy Ghost, the fittest means to convey to many persons, and through many generations, those caveats, counsels, and considerations which ought seriously to be minded, as appears by the Song of Moses, and many others dispersed in both Testaments, as also by the Psalms of David: yea, our own experience assures us, that by song matters of moment may not only be committed to memory with more ease, but be more delightfully preserved unforgotten than by any other means.[3]

Wither's use here of the term "convey," taken together with "illustrating" and "teach" in earlier quotations, reveals a certain element of encounter - of the hymns as

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1. Ibid., pp. 30-31.
2. Ibid., p. 75.
3. George Wither, Hallelujah, or Britain's Second Remembrancer, with an introduction by Edward Farr (London, 1857), p. xxix.

addressed to the singer - in his understanding. This is of course comparable to the Puritan concern for intelligible communication.

Finally, we would note how well this pioneering figure grasped some of the problems and pitfalls in versifying Scripture or writing hymns:

> Now, as for the manner of expression which I have used, I hope it is such as no iust exception cann be taken thereunto; seeing as I have (aswel in that which is of my owne Invention, as in the Translations) used that simplicity of speech which (best) becommeth y subiect, without affectatiō to those poetical phrases and fancies, which (being commendable in other thingd) would have obscured the maiesty of those inventions. To this I had so much regard (especially in my translations of the Canonicall Hymnes) that, if I mistake not, I have as naturally, and as playnely exprest the senceof them, as most prose Translations have done. And if those indifferent men, who know the Poesy and power of the English tongue may be my Iudges, they will censure my expressions to be such, as shall neither be obscure to the meanest capacityes, nor contemptible to the best Iudgments, but (observing a middle way) best becoming that purpose, for which they were intended.[1]

> For if it be well weighted, how full of short sentences, and suddaine breakings off, those scriptures are; how frequently, these Particles, FOR, BUT, & such lik, (which are graceful in the Originall Text) will seem to obscure the dependancy of Sense, in the English phrase, if the power of their signification be not heedfully observed in those places: How harsh the musicke will be, if the chiefe Pauses be not carefully reduced unto the same place in the lyne throughout the whole Hymne, which they have in the first Stanza; how many differences must be observed betweene Lyricke-verse and that which is composed for reading only: Howe the Translator is tyed, not to make choice of those fashion Stanzaes which are easiest, to expres the matter in, but to keep that with which he first begā: how he is bound, not only to the sense

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1. Wither, Schollers Purgatory, pp. 43-44.

> (according to the liberty used in other Translationes) but to the very words, or words of the same power with those used in our allowed Interpretations: Lastly, how precise he must be, when he is forced to expresse any sentence by circumlocution, to labor stil to retayne a relish of the holy phrase in his expressions: I say, if all these circumstances be well considered, (and how difficult they make it to close up every Stanza with a period, or some such point that the voice may decently pause there) I am perswaded a worke of this nature coulde not have been persisted in, to this conclusion, by a man haveing so many weaknesses, and discouragements as I have had; unlesse the Almighty had beene with mee.[1]

While it is nowhere explicit, one hears overtones in the above of the concern expressed later by Baxter and Patrick (as we have already cited), that too great poetic flight or elegance can effectively remove the hymn (or psalm, or paraphrase) from the realm of practical use by untutored Christian folk.

The contribution of George Wither to the preparation of the way for hymnody might be summed up under those convenient headings 'matter' and 'manner.' In re the 'matter,' he made a significant departure from the ambit of Scripture, strictly speaking (whether Old or New Testament), with his hymns related to the liturgical calendar; this was the beginning of the end of the application of the letter - though surely not the spirit - of the Scriptural Principle to congregational song. In re the 'manner,' when he employed such defenses for his work as the appeal to the need for variety (of matter and manner) in worship song, Wither showed the beginnings of

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1. Ibid., pp. 44-45.

insight into human needs in the corporate worship situation - insights which were later to be expanded by others.

2. William Barton

Like Wither, we have met William Barton earlier in this chapter, giving vent to negative feelings about the Old Version - affirming the Scriptural Principle while claiming enough freedom to use respectable English in his versified psalms.

We now re-encounter him as an author of hymns. These appeared after his 1641 psalter, in collections of one hundred, or "centuries." There were eventually (with revisions) five of these "centuries," plus a final miscellaneous group (published posthumously with the five as "six centuries"); but of the five, three were entitled "chapter hymns," two "psalm hymns." In re the latter, except that he did not treat the psalms in numerical order, nor always versify the whole of a psalm, there is little to distinguish these versions from those in an ordinary metrical psalter, including his own.

In the "chapter hymns," however, Barton displays the same readiness as Wither to expand the Scriptural Principle to include the whole of the Bible; for these are hymns which versify both Old and New Testament passages in much the same fashion as the psalm version.

Considering the Puritan ethos and its ecclesiastical and political dominance in the mid-seventeenth century, within

which he lived and was active (he was a clergyman and personal friend of Richard Baxter), it is undoubtedly too much to expect that Barton would have followed Wither's lead in departing from direct versifications of Scripture. To be sure, there would not have been open to him much in the way of an indirect relation to Scripture (as Wither had in the liturgical year of the Anglicans). Rather, with characteristic Puritan devotion to Scripture, it was purpose enough to communicate the biblical content. This concept of hymnody as fundamentally addressed to the singer (even if subsequently converted by him into a response) becomes quite explicit in the dedicatory epistle to the "four centuries" edition:

> These Hymns are plainer than psalms and more suitable to our condition, and more pertinent to Gospel occasions; such as wherein Christians may truly say, that they do teach and admonish one another. Such as inculcate our Duties, and reprove our vices out of the most piercing passages of holy Scripture; such as may answer all sermons, and accommodate all occurrences and may competently serve instead of psalms, till a better translation than the old comes in: Finally, they are such as do excellently instruct a Christian unto prayer, and minister both hints and helps abundantly thereunto and are no innovation or induction, but a reduction to primitive use and order.[1]

The "primitive use and order" (coupled here to a disclaimer as an innovator) is his justification earlier in the epistle, both for using Scripture other than the psalms, and for rejecting the idea of "apocryphal hymns"; i.e. non-Scriptural.[2] Notwithstanding this stringency on

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1. William Barton, Four Centuries of Select Hymns (London, 1668), epistle dedicatory.

2. He appeals, with some direct quotation, to Justin, Tertullian, and Eusebius.

sources, we must remember his earlier claims (in connection with his metrical psalms) to freedom of technique, for the sake of the language and the poet/versifier's artistic integrity.

It is no doubt possible to dispute whether the term 'hymn' should be applied to such straightforward versifications of Scripture as Barton's, with no incorporation of the believer's response nor application to his life (beyond a motto placed over the hymn). Since the items in part two of Wither's 'Hymns and Songs of the Church' did include such features,[1] and recalling that 'hymn' is a liturgical terminus technicus for the canticles,[2] and further that the private-devotional poetry of the seventeenth-century

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1. E.g., the first two stanzas of his hymn for St. Andrew's Day:

   1. As blessed Andrew, on a day,
      By fishing did his living earn,
      Christ came, and called him away,
      That he to fish for men might learn
      And no delay thereat he made,
      Nor questions fram'd of his intent,
      But quite forsaking all he had,
      Along with him that call'd he went.

   2. Oh, that we could so ready be,
      To follow Christ when he doth call!
      And that we could forsake, as he,
      Those nets that we are snar'd withal:
      Or would this fisherman of men,
      (who set by all he had so light)
      By his obedience shewed then
      (And his example) win us might.

   (Wither, Hymns and Songs, song LXI, pp.218-19).

2. Cardwell, Conferences, p. 277.

'metaphysical' poets were also called hymns, what can be seen here is an increasing use of the term but without any consensus, as yet, on a reasonably precise meaning. In view of this, one does not know quite how to interpret a paragraph at the end of Baxter's preface to his (posthumously published) "Paraphrase on the Psalms of David in Metre":

> Those that publish the old Church Psalms, added many useful hymns, that are still printed with the Psalms in Metre. And doubtless Paul meaneth not only David's Psalms when he bids men sing with grace in their hearts, Psalms, Hymns, and Spiritual Songs. Yea, it is past doubt, that hymns more suitable to Gospel-times may and ought to be now used. . .[1]

More suitable than what, exactly? To what extent was he pronouncing his own psalm versions that followed to be already somewhat obsolete or inadequate?

3. Benjamin Keach

But by the time Baxter wrote those words, hopes for a non-Anglican ecclesiastical establishment were in ruins; and convinced Presbyterians and Separatists alike faced the retribution of the Restoration, embodied in the rigors of the Clarendon Code of restrictive legislation on Nonconformity. As that code included restriction on assembly for worship, this activity was continued in private homes, accompanied by considerable secrecy and discretion. Such a distressing state of affairs rather put a damper on

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1. Baxter, Paraphrase, preface.

as relatively audible and therefore attention-attracting a practice as congregational singing. Typical is the situation recorded by Ivimey concerning Benjamin Keach's (Baptist) flock in London, 1673:

> At another time they met together at the widow Colfe's house at Kennington, to celebrate the Lord's Supper. At the conclusion they sung a hymn, which soon brought the officers of the parish to them; but from the conveniency of a back door they all escaped except one _____.[1]

The use of the term 'hymn' here is no doubt the result of this particular congregation's leader, and to Keach himself we shall shortly turn.

On the other hand, Goadby, another and later Baptist historian, describes the Broadmead (Bristol) congregation,[2] which, upon the approach of arresting officers, intentionally sang a psalm, so that their leader could not be singled out - a curious testimony to at least the external corporateness of congregational song![3] Resourceful subterfuge apart, the reference to a "psalm" better reveals the majority situation, for by and large Nonconformist song existed on the same diet of metrical psalmody as the Anglican, when and/or where Nonconformists felt secure enough to sing at all. Certainly, in the light of their physical distresses, it is understandable if attention to

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1. Joseph Ivimey, History of the English Baptists (London, 1811), p. 384.
2. This congregation was a union (for mutual strength in time of crisis) of four groups: Independent, Presbyterian, and one of each type of Baptists. See Goadby, below, p.318.
3. J.J. Goadby, Byepaths in Baptist History (London, 1871), p. 320.

improving congregational song did not lie at the top of their list of priorities during this period, even given the generally sour feeling toward the Old Version (and Barton's psalms, favored by some, were not that much better).

Still, there was at least one man actively pursuing this matter, and that was Benjamin Keach. At first, as a minister in his home county of Buckinghamshire, he was associated with Baptists of Arminian tendency (General Baptists), but upon moving to London in 1668, his conviction shifted and settled in the Calvinist direction, and he emerged as one of the more leading clergy among the Particular Baptists. From the standpoint of his interest in hymn-writing and -singing, this was well, for the General Baptists remained opposed to congregational singing into the eighteenth century.[1]

Keach introduced hymns of his own composition into the worship of his Horsley-down(London) congregation, and while there was opposition to it (the dissidents eventually splitting off to form their own non-singing congregation), and the matter became the subject of an intense tract battle that upset the Particular Baptists as a whole, yet it would seem that Keach employed a reasonable amount of discretion and patience in the introduction of singing. In the dedicatory epistle in his polemic tract "The Breach Repaired," he records the process:

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1. One of the most verbal of their number being Thomas Grantham (1634-92), whose magnum opus, Christianismus Primitivus of 1678 includes an attack on corporate singing in worship as unbiblical!

> Hath not the Church sung at breaking of Bread always for sixteen or eighteen years past, and could not, nor would omit it in the time of the late persecution? . . . and have we not for this twelve or fourteen years sung in mixt assemblies, on Days of Thanksgiving, and never any offended at it, as ever I heard? What is done more now? Tis only practiced oftener.[1]

So, a hymn at Communion from circa 1673 (with the Clarendon Code in full career): this would have been as good a way as any to begin, recalling the 'Thanksgiving after the Receiving of the Lord's Supper' in the Old Version hymn appendix, and the apparent common use of a hymn so placed, as alluded to by George Wither, in a note to his own Communion hymn:

> We have a custom among us, that, during the time of administering the blessed Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, there is some Psalm or Hymn sung, the better to keep the thoughts of the Communicants from wandering after vain objects . . .[2]

Only after four years does Keach expand to include "Days of Thanksgiving"; and finally, as confirmed by his son-in-law Thomas Crosby, on every Lord's Day.[3] It all seems quite gradual, but obviously not enough so for some, as the debate testifies.

Returning to "The Breach Repaired," we find in Keach's defense some guides to his understanding of hymns:

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1. Benjamin Keach, The Breach Repaired (London, 1691), epistle dedicatory, p. viii.
2. Wither, Hymns and Songs, note to song LXXXIII, p. 271.
3. Thomas Crosby, The History of the English Baptists (4 vols.; London, 1740), IV, 299.

1) the justification of singing:

> . . .That to sing David's Psalms and Scripture hymns and sacred songs taken out of the Word of Christ, together in the public worship of God, is an holy ordinance of Christ, and not in the least to mingle Law and Gospel together any otherwise than the Holy Ghost hath done it; for the moral duties are the same in Law and Gospel.[1]

2) the role of song:

> . . .By singing of Psalms, Hymns, and Spiritual Songs, therefore, we understand a musical, melodious modulation, or tuning of the voice, expressing our spiritual joy for edifying one another, and for glorifying of God.[2]

More significant, however, is his answer to the objection that "you add words to your hymns that are not in the text you refer to":

> So we do in preaching, but if those words agree with the text, tis still the same word, and may be opened thereby and better to the understandings of the people.[3]

He goes on to observe that, in any case, the biblical text, in translation, is itself already an interpretation (by the translators). This line of argument in defense of the 'human composure' element in his hymns is important; for not only is Keach putting hymn-writing on the same plane as preaching and Bible translating (both unimpeachable activities per se) but he is here opening the Scriptural Principle - as applied to song - wider than the Puritan willingness to limitedly paraphrase, into the vast field (and sometimes wilderness) of interpretation,

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1. Keach, Breach Repaired, p. 186.
2. Ibid., p. 15.
3. Ibid., ch. xiii.

with the inevitable concomitants of commentary and contemporary application; and, sooner or later, into the believer's/singer's more subjective response to the proclaimed and interpreted Word.

This piece of logical defensive argument may not seem very startling, but behind it is the presupposition that interpretation of Scripture or the Faith is as valid a function of hymnody as it is of preaching. If so, is that function reconcilable with the older (and admittedly broad) descriptions of psalmody and hymnody as 'objective praise,' or, citing Keach's own definition, as "expressing our spiritual joy for edifying one another and for glorifying of God"?

It is a form of the same potential tension we have already seen between John Calvin's understanding of psalmody as fundamentally Godward praise, and the Puritans' concern to intelligibly communicate the Word manward.

Keach may have realized what he was advocating when he said (perhaps at the risk of putting too fine a point on it):

> " . . . for though all right singing to God is a praising of him. . .yet all praisings of God are not singings of his Praise."[1]

If we take that last phrase to mean the strictly objective 'pure' praise of God, then Keach includes more than that in "all praisings of God," and hence his rationale for

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1. Ibid., p. 18.

radical expansion of the Scriptural Principle. Others might be content to simply let the function of edification be a suitable half-way house, accomodating both proclamation and interpretation.

However, such semantics did not in fact resolve the tension that Keach freshly brought to light, for it continued as an important thread in the development of hymnody and its role in worship during the next two centuries, weaving one way or the other, depending on the weaving hymnwriters and the religio-cultural loom.

V. Summation

The period between the onset of the English Reformation and the beginning of the eighteenth century has here been treated as the locus of the evolution of the application of the Scriptural Principle to congregational song.

The initial application by John Calvin - the most important of the Continental Reformers for the English Reformation - meant a near-exclusive use of the psalms for congregational song, made practicable by metrification and versification in the French language. From the standpoint of communicational function, he saw metrical psalmody primarily as recollective response, and secondarily as edification (which, as we found in Section I, is anyway an almost inevitable accompaniment to recollection). That Christians should or could be thus content with Old Testament-only recollection implied either an overriding biblicism,

or a fair degree of what we might call 'typological trajectory,' the sensitivity to which would be the singers' responsibility.

The seventeenth-century Puritan attitude was to add the qualification of 'intelligibility' to all that was done in worship, the implication thereof being an increased emphasis upon the edifying function (backed by 'downward' encounter and with didactic overtones), coupled with a concern for unambiguous communication, whatever the direction. The combination of this emphasis and concern might also be described as a tendency toward 'straight-line' communication, vis-a-vis 'trajectory.'

While there was no real argument with metrical psalmody per se, the Scriptural Principle was expanded in application to permit New Testament versifications and paraphrases, thus partially obviating the typological trajectory referred to above. The same concerns also caused the Puritans to take negative views both of the Old Version's literary failings, and of too much elegance in alternate versions being published.

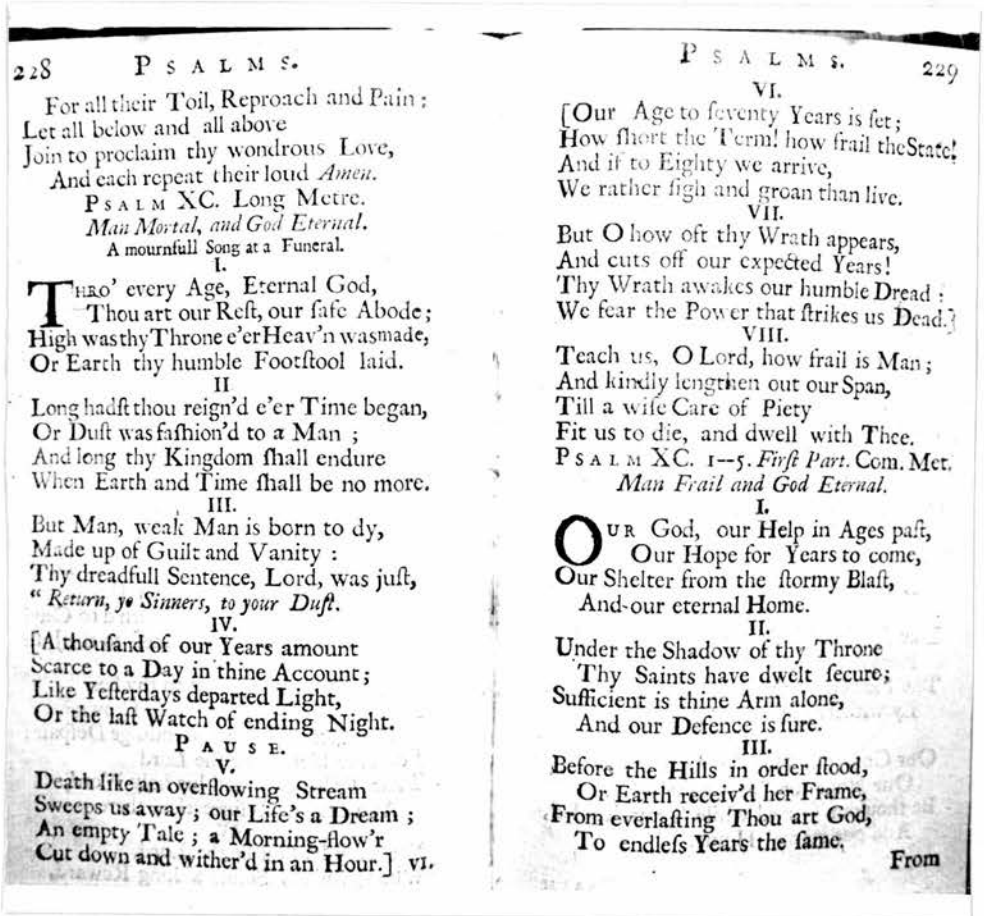
During this same Puritan century, we have seen the tentative stirrings of hymnody, a new kind of congregational song which, while it might retain biblical theology and imagery, and certainly communicated the essential Christian message, was not to be bound by a Scriptural Principle which permitted only the versification or at most a limited paraphrase of the actual Scriptural content.

It was for Isaac Watts, however, to consolidate these stirrings into a definite challenge to the status quo of versified or paraphrased Scripture. It is to him, then, that we turn in the next chapter.

CHAPTER TWO

FROM PSALMODY TO HYMNODY: ISAAC WATTS

PLATE I



228 PSALMS.

For all their Toil, Reproach and Pain;
Let all below and all above
Join to proclaim thy wondrous Love,
And each repeat their loud *Amen.*

PSALM XC. Long Metre.
Man Mortal, and God Eternal.
A mournfull Song at a Funeral.

I.

THRO' every Age, Eternal God,
Thou art our Reſt, our ſafe Abode;
High was thy Throne e'er Heav'n was made,
Or Earth thy humble Footſtool laid.

II.

Long hadſt thou reign'd e'er Time began,
Or Duſt was faſhion'd to a Man;
And long thy Kingdom ſhall endure
When Earth and Time ſhall be no more.

III.

But Man, weak Man is born to dy,
Made up of Guilt and Vanity:
Thy dreadfull Sentence, Lord, was juſt,
"*Return, ye Sinners, to your Duſt.*

IV.

[A thouſand of our Years amount
Scarce to a Day in thine Account;
Like Yeſterdays departed Light,
Or the laſt Watch of ending Night.

PAUSE.

V.

Death like an overflowing Stream
Sweeps us away; our Life's a Dream;
An empty Tale; a Morning-flow'r
Cut down and wither'd in an Hour.] VI.

PSALMS. 229

VI.

[Our Age to ſeventy Years is ſet;
How ſhort the Term! how frail the State!
And if to Eighty we arrive,
We rather ſigh and groan than live.

VII.

But O how oft thy Wrath appears,
And cuts off our expected Years!
Thy Wrath awakes our humble Dread:
We fear the Power that ſtrikes us Dead.]

VIII.

Teach us, O Lord, how frail is Man;
And kindly lengthen out our Span,
Till a wiſe Care of Piety
Fit us to die, and dwell with Thee.

PSALM XC. 1--5. *Firſt Part.* Com. Met.
Man Frail and God Eternal.

I.

OUR God, our Help in Ages paſt,
Our Hope for Years to come,
Our Shelter from the ſtormy Blaſt,
And our eternal Home.

II.

Under the Shadow of thy Throne
Thy Saints have dwelt ſecure;
Sufficient is thine Arm alone,
And our Defence is ſure.

III.

Before the Hills in order ſtood,
Or Earth receiv'd her Frame,
From everlaſting Thou art God,
To endleſs Years the ſame.

From

ISAAC WATTS'S "PSALMS OF DAVID IMITATED"
First Edition, 1719

(Opened at the famed common meter
version of Psalm Ninety)

CHAPTER TWO

FROM PSALMODY TO HYMNODY: ISAAC WATTS

I. Personal and Cultural Background

Isaac Watts was a true son of Independency; that is, he was born of Independent parents,[1] educated at a Dissenting academy, and served an Independent congregation in London as minister. By the time of his death, he was one of Independency's most revered personalities.[2]

Independency as a form of English dissenting Christianity had its roots in the Brownist separatist movement of the sixteenth century, more radical in its congregational polity than the (Anglican) Puritans, who hoped to reform the established church along presbyterian lines. In exile in Holland, these separatists became polarized into Independents (still basically Calvinist in complexion) and Baptists (leaning towards left-wing Anabaptism). Returning in 1640 in opposition to both Puritans and Anglicans - there had been that polarization also - they endured persecution with the former when the Commonwealth and then the Savoy

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1. Watts's father was a convinced-enough Independent to be imprisoned for a time in Southampton when his son was an infant. His mother was of Hugenot ancestry.
2. See the Bibliography for biographies of Watts.

conference failed. It was not until 1688-9, with the Glorious Revolution and Toleration, that some measure of relief and freedom arrived. By this time Isaac Watts was already an adolescent, born early enough to know some of the drama of the past, but late enough to experience and participate in Independency's maturity in the eighteenth century.

However, this ecclesiastical history is complicated by the onset of a whole new milieu which affected philosophy and the world-view, church life and thought, human knowledge, society, and culture. In retrospect, one can see it as the beginning of secularization, begotten in the European Renaissance, but somewhat delayed in Britain by the religious trauma of the seventeenth century. The vast shifts it caused in all the aforementioned areas of life stem basically from an interlocking 'trinity' of rationalism, nature, and new scientific knowledge.

While a full review of this new milieu is beyond the scope of this study, what is most directly relevant at this point is to observe that both Anglicanism and Puritanism, after their conflict, were rather vulnerable to the 'trinity's' religious manifestation, Natural Religion. Anglicanism was weary of sectarian 'enthusiasm' and hostile to Puritan Calvinism; thus, except for the Non-Jurors, it drifted into an arminian, mildly moralizing, 'Latitudinarianism,' of which Archbishop Tillotson became the quintessential exemplar. The vagueness of this posture comported quite well with Natural Religion. Somewhat similarly, an

exhausted and demoralized Presbyterianism went even farther than Anglicanism (at least clerical Anglicanism), for by mid-eighteenth-century it was nearly unitarian in outlook. There was often in practice little to distinguish either of these stances from the infamous Deism which rose and waned in the same century.

Thus it was left to Independency to maintain some measure of Calvinistic confessional presence on the English scene. Compared with Anglicanism and Presbyterianism, it did that, although the shifting environment made its marks on the Independents too. For example, Isaac Watts' theological writing (after his hymnographic period, and well into the eighteenth century) displays the typically mixed effects on Independency of the new milieu: on the one hand, rationalism moderated his view of reprobation in the Calvinistic doctrine of election into a conditional election for all men; but on the other hand, natural science provided him with proofs of original sin.[1] Another tempering influence can be recognized, in that once Toleration arrived, Independency became increasingly bourgeois in an increasingly bourgeois century (the latter due to an expanding trade and economy - the beginning of the Industrial Revolution).[2]

II. Watts's View of Congregational Song

This eighteenth-century scene was just taking shape during Watts's hymnographic period, roughly 1695-1720, or

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1. The latter effect is demonstrated in his essay, "The Ruin and Recovery of Mankind" (1740), in his Works (7 vols.; Leeds, n.d.), III.

2. See the Bibliography for works concerning the eighteenth-century milieu.

the first half of his adult life. At the beginning of the period, all three traditions - Anglican, Presbyterian, and Independent - were still largely committed to metrical psalmody - chiefly the Old Version but with some use of Barton's and Patrick's psalm versions. Moreover, there was continuing activity in this field, with John Playford publishing new musical editions of the Old Version (1671, 1677), and with the officially-sanctioned New Version of Tate and Brady just issued in 1696.[1] Private collections, initially assembled by or for individual parishes, were also circulating during the period.

Considering what has been said above about the decline of Calvinism among Anglicans and Presbyterians, one would think that this maintenance of psalmody was less a matter of conviction than of custom or outright habit. Yet there were at the time vigorous defenses of the old psalmody in Anglicanism,[2] and a group of Presbyterian divines in London gave a series of lectures towards the improvement of its practice;[3] and anyway, there was as yet little available as alternatives.[4]

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1. The New Version, did not replace the Old Version however, nor did it seriously challenge it except in the cities, principally London.
2. E.g., William Beveridge (Bishop), A Defense of the Book of Psalms, Collected into English Metre, by Thomas Sternhold, John Hopkins, and Others. With Critical Observations on the Late New Version, Compar'd with the Old (London, 1710).
3. Practical Discourses on Singing in the Worship of God. Preach'd at the Friday Lecture in Eastcheap (London, 1708).
4. A hint of things to come, however, lies in the increased appendix of hymns (followed later by a Supplement) to the New Version, compared with that of the Old Version.

Watts published two collections for congregational use: the "Hymns and Spiritual Songs" in 1707 (enlarged 1709), and the "Psalms of David Imitated in the Language of the New Testament" in 1719. These were preceded in 1705 by "Horae Lyricae"; but while it did contain some hymns, it was mostly given over to devotional poetry more suitable for private reading. In "Hymns and Spiritual Songs" we have for the first time a really substantial collection of hymns -351 in the enlarged edition - both Scripture-based and original ('of human composure'), and explicitly intended for use in corporate worship.[1] In the "Psalms of David Imitated . . ." we have an attempted aggiornamento of the psalter content, going rather farther in his treatment than the seventeenth-century paraphrases of men like Patrick.

What motivated Watts to thus break with the existing majority tradition, and to set out on these two new paths? What particularly concerning communication and communicational function-in-worship might there be in his understanding that represents an evolutionary emergence from metrical psalmody? Our most important source for the answering of these queries is Watts's "Short Essay toward the Improvement of Psalmody," which was included in the first edition (only) of "Hymns and Spiritual Songs" in 1707. In addition, there are the prefaces to the two works cited above, although these derive

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1. One indication of his intention is that all the hymns in the first edition of 1707 were in the three basic psalter meters (Common, Long, and Short), to which was added in 1709 only one other, that of the 148th psalm, as in the Old Version. Thus, the tunes used with metrical psalmody could be appropriated.

their essential argument from the Essay.

Much of the Essay is a defense-in-advance of the "Hymns and Spiritual Songs," directed to presumed critics whose posture - as deduced from Watts's approach - would be of the sternest and narrowest interpretation of the Scriptural Principle. He first meets them on their own ground, quoting biblical chapter and verse to defend relevance and contemporaneity and 'human composure' in congregational song. But he also rises above this plane of argument, appealing to the spirit and implications of Scripture's record of the use of song, and to the church fathers such as Tertullian and Origen. Much of his argument strikes the current reader as both obvious and eminently reasonable; indeed, the logic of his presentation is no doubt another reflection of that new milieu forming around him.[1]

Within his defense, however, there occur passages which provide some insight into his motivation as a hymn-writer (and thus as a communicator), and it is to these that we now turn.

We would first cite his underlying theological reservation concerning the adequacy of the Old Testament psalms for the worship of New Testament Christians:

> Now, how is it possible all these ends should be attained by a christian, if he confines his meditations, his joys, and his praises, to the Hebrew book of Psalms? Have we nothing more of the nature of

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1. In 1724, Watts published a treatise on logic which was used as a text on the subject in English higher education well into the nineteenth century.

> God revealed to us than David had? Is not the mystery of the ever-blessed Trinity brought out of darkness into open light? Where can you find a Psalm that speaks the miracles of wisdom and power as they are discovered in a crucified Christ? And how do we rob God the Son of the glory of his dying love, if we speak of it only in the gloomy language of "smoke and sacrifices, bullocks and goats, and the fat of lambs?" Is not the ascent of Christ into heaven, and his triumph over principalities and powers of darkness, a nobler entertainment for our tuneful meditations, than the removing of the ark up to the city of David, to the hill of God, which is high as the hill of Bashan? Is not our heart often warmed with holy delight in the contemplation of the Son of God our dear Redeemer, whose love was stronger than death? Are not our souls possessed with a variety of divine affections, when we behold him who is our chief beloved hanging on the cursed tree, with the load of all our sins upon him, and giving up his soul to the sword of divine justice in the stead of rebels and enemies? And must these affections be confined only to our own bosoms, or never break forth but in Jewish language, and words which were not made to express the devotion of the gospel? . . .The apostle bids us, "Exhort or comfort one another with these words;" I Thess. iv. 17, 18. Now when the same apostle requires that "the word of Christ must dwell richly in us in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and spiritual songs;" can we think he restrains us only to the Psalms of David, which speak very little of all these glories or terrors, and that in very obscure terms and dark hints of prophecy? Or shall it be supposed, that we must admonish one another of the old Jewish affairs and ceremonies in verse, and make melody with those weak and beggarly elements, and the yoke of bondage, and yet never dare to speak of the wonders of new discovery except in the plain and simple language of prose?[1]

To this protest might be added lines from the preface to "Hymns and Spiritual Songs":

> I have been long convinc'd, that one great Occasion of this Evil arises from the Matter

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1. Isaac Watts, "A Short Essay toward the Improvement of Psalmody," Works, VII, 11-12.

> and Words to which we confine all our Songs. Some of 'em are almost opposite to the Spirit of the Gospel: Many of them foreign to the State of the New-Testament, and widely different from the present Circumstances of Christians. Hence it comes to pass, that when spiritual Affections are excited within us, and our Souls are raised a little above this Earth in the beginning of a Psalm, we are check'd on a sudden in our Ascent toward Heaven by some Expressions that are more suited to the Days of Carnal Ordinances, and fit only to be sung in the Worldly Sanctuary. When we are just entring into an Evangelic Frame by some of the Glories of the Gospel presented in the brightest Figures of Judaism, yet the very next Line perhaps which the Clerk parcels out unto us, hath something in it so extremely Jewish and cloudy, that darkens our Sight of God the Saviour: Thus by keeping too close to David in the House of God, the Vail of Moses is thrown over our Hearts.[1]

This is a problem in the Christian use of the psalms which has already been noted under John Calvin's concept of congregational song.[2] To Watts it is an inbuilt inadequacy, and therefore no amount of Puritan attention to the form and felicity of English versifications can really solve the problem. There must be a fundamentally new approach if there is to be theological relevance (trajectorial points of contact) in Christian congregational song. That there must be such relevance/contact is for Watts at the very least a matter of rational consistency in Christian worship:

> Why should every part of divine worship under the gospel be expressed in language suited to that

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1. Isaac Watts, "Hymns and Spiritual Songs," preface; in Selma Bishop, Isaac Watts, Hymns and Spiritual Songs, 1707-1748 (London, 1962), pp. li-lii. Bishop's work incorporates a complete reproduction of the second edition of 1709, as the basis of comparison for a philological study of all variants in the first fourteen editions.

2. Above, p. 62.

> gospel, namely, praying, preaching, baptism and the Lord's supper; and yet when we perform that part of worship which brings us nearest to the heavenly state, we must run back again to the law to borrow materials for this service; And when we are employed in the work of angels, we talk the language of the infant-church, and speak in types and shadows?[1]

"Types and shadows"; here Watts gets to the communicational core of the matter: the implied form of trajectory in which the singer provides the necessary typological (or other) transference from Old Testament to New Testament, as he sings. This would perhaps be theoretically compatible with the educated Puritan's thorough mastery of Scripture and its interpretation. But if this approach were presented to Watts as an example of trajectorial communication, one feels that he would have responded that it was a trajectory too high for the average Christian to 'catch' - it was too much to expect of the 'man in the pew':

> The patrons of another opinion, will say we must sing the words of David, and apply them in our meditation to the things of the New Testament: But can we believe this to be the best method of worshipping God, to sing one thing and mean another? Besides that, the very literal sense of many of these expressions is exceedingly deep and difficult, and not one in twenty of a religious assembly can possibly understand them at this distance from the Jewish days; therefore to keep close to the language of David, we must break the commands of God by David, who requires that we "sing his praises with understanding;" Ps. xlvii.7. And I am persuaded that St. Paul, if he lived in our age and nation, would no more advise us to sing unintelligible sentences in London, than himself would sing in an unknown tongue at Corinth; 1 Cor. xiv. 15, 19. After all, if the literal sense were known, yet the application of many verses of David to our state and circumstances was never designed, and is utterly impossible; and

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1. Watts, Essay, p. 12.

> even where it is possible, yet it is so exceedingly difficult, that very few persons in an assembly are capable of it; and when they attempt it, if their thoughts should be enquired one by one, you would find very various, wretched, and contradictory meanings put upon the words of the Hebrew Psalmist, and all for want of an evangelical translation of him.[1]

What, then, is Watts's solution to this theological/communicational problem?

> First, They ought to be translated in such a manner as we have reason to believe David would have composed them if he had lived in our day: And therefore his poems are given as a pattern to be imitated in our composures, rather than as the precise and invariable matter of our psalmody. It is one of the excellencies of scripture-songs, that they are exactly suited to the very purpose and design for which they were written, and that both in the matter and in the style, and in all their ornaments: This gives life and strength to the expression, it presents objects to the ears and to the eyes, and touches the heart in the most affecting manner.[2]

Watts proceeds to delineate how 'David' would have written circa 1700 A.D., which is in effect a declaration of how he, Watts, will go about it, as we shall see in the "Psalms of David Imitated." However, this approach suggests to him another solution:

> The first argument I shall borrow from all the foregoing discourse concerning the translation of the Psalms of David: For by that time they are fitted for christian Psalmody, and have all the particularities of circumstance that related to David's person, and times altered and suited to our present case; and the language of Judaism is changed into the style of the gospel; the form or composure of the psalm can hardly be called inspired or divine: only the materials or the sense contained therein may in a large sense be called the word of God,

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1. Ibid., p. 8.
2. Ibid., p. 9.

> as it is borrowed from that word. Why then may it not be esteemed as lawful to take some divine sense and materials agreeable to the word of God, and suited to the present case and experience of christians, and compose them into a spiritual song? especially when we cannot find one ready penned in the bible, whose subject is near a-kin to our present condition, or whose form is adapted to our present purpose.[1]

Thus with smooth logic has Watts brought the argument around to the introduction of hymnody. But there is another and allied argument in these latter quotations of which note must also be taken: the psalms are not only deficient in explicit New Testament theology, they are often irrelevant to the present singer's experience and environment; i.e., no trajectorial points of contact here either. This is a rather deeper problem than the obvious presence of Hebraisms in the text:

> If I were to render the Reasons of it [the dull rendition of the psalter in churches], I would give this for one of the chief, (viz.) that the Royal Psalmist here expresses his own Concerns in Words exactly suited to his own Thoughts, agreeable to his own personal Character, and in the Language of his own Religion: This keeps all the Springs of pious Passion awake, when every Line and Syllable so nearly affects himself. This naturally raises in a devout Mind a more transporting and sublime Worship. But when we sing the same Lines, we express nothing but the Character, the Concerns, and the Religion of the Jewish King, while our own Circumstance and our own Religion (which are so widely different from his) have little to do in the sacred Song; and our Affections want something of Property or Interest in the Words, to awaken them at first, and to keep them lively.[2]

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1. Ibid., p. 10.
2. Isaac Watts, The Psalms of David Imitated in the Language of the New Testament (1st ed.; London, 1719), preface, pp. iii-iv.

> For while our Lips and our Hearts run on sweetly together, applying the Words to our own Case, there is something of Divine Delight in it: But at once are forced to turn off the Application abruptly, and our Lips speak nothing but the Heart of David: Thus our own Hearts are as it were forbid the Pursuit of the Song, and then the Harmony and the Worship grow dull of meer necessity.[1]

> There is almost an infinite number of different occasions for praise and thanksgiving, as well as for prayer, in the life of a christian; and there is not a set of psalms already prepared that can answer all the varieties of the providence and the grace of God. Now if God will be praised for all his mercies, and singing be one method of praise, we have some reason to believe that God doth not utterly confine us even to the forms of his own composing. . . .However I can see nothing in the inspired book of praises that should persuade me that the Spirit of God designed it as an universal Psalm-book; nor that he intended these to include or provide for all the occasions of thanksgiving that ever should befall Jews or christians in a single or social capacity. We find in the history of Scripture, that new favours received from God were continually the subject of new songs, and the very minute circumstances of the present providence are described in the verse. The destruction of Pharaoh in the Red-sea; the victory of Barak over Sisera; the various deliverances, escapes and successes of the son of Jesse are described in the songs of Moses, Deborah, and David. The Jews in a land of captivity sat by the rivers of Babylon, and remembered Sion; they could find none of the ancient songs of Sion fit to express their present sorrow and devotion, though some of them are mournful enough.[2]

So once again Watts can justify the use of contemporary human composures, for the correction of this situation is a major premise of the "Hymns and Spiritual Songs":

> The greatest Part of 'em are suited to the general State of the Gospel, and the most common Affairs of Christians: I hope there will be very

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1. Watts, Hymns, p. lii.
2. Watts, Essay, pp. 12-13.

> few found but what may properly be used in a religious Assembly, and not one of 'em but may well be adapted to some Seasons, either of private or public Worship. The most frequent Tempers and Changes of our Spirit, and Conditions of our Life are here copied, and the Breathings of our Piety exprest according to the variety of our Passions, our Love, our Fear, our Hope, our Desire, our Sorrow, our Wonder and our Joy, as they are refin'd into Devotion, and act under the Influence and Conduct of the Blessed Spirit; all conversing with God the Father by the new and living Way of Access to the Throne, even the Person and Mediation of our Lord Jesus Christ.[1]

It is also, expectably, a motive for the "Psalms of David Imitated":

> I come therefore to the Third thing I proposed, and that is to explain my own Design; which in short is this: (viz.) To accomodate the Book of Psalms to Christian Worship: And in order to this 'tis necessary to divest David and Asaph, &c. of every other Character but that of a Psalmist and a Saint, and to make them always speak the common Sense and Language of a Christian.[2]

It is in the articulation of this plea for relevance to, or points of contact with, the singer's sitz-im-leben that Watts becomes necessarily more involved in the question of the communicational function of congregational song in worship; for if it is important that the psalmody or hymnody have direct points of contact in it for the singer's life (as well as his faith), then it is clear that Watts sees congregational song as primarily response[3] - not only the recollective praise and thanksgiving of God's mighty acts in both

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1. Watts, Hymns, preface, p. liii.
2. Watts, Psalms, preface, p. xvi.
3. The next quotation from the Essay shows that Scripture as a mode of divine encounter comes through reading, not singing, in Watts's view.

Old Testament and New Testament history, but also a more immediate recollection of God's being, presence, and activity in the life of the singer or the Christian community collectively, making for a more personally-related response of the singer.

All through these quotations from the essay and the prefaces, however, there has been the background suggestion of another plane of function for congregational song in Watt's thought. It comes closest to the surface in certain phrases: "Is not our heart often warmed . . . in the contemplation of . . . our Redeemer?"; "Are not our souls possessed with a variety of divine affections, when we behold him . . .". It also emerges in some further passages from the essay:

> By reading we learn what God speaks to us in his word; but when we sing, especially unto God, our chief design is, or should be, to speak our own hearts and our words to God. By reading we are instructed what have been the dealings of God with men in all ages, and how their hearts have been exercised in their wanderings from God, and temptations, or in their returns and breathings towards God again; but songs are generally expressions of our own experiences, or of his glories; we acquaint him what sense we have of his greatness and goodness, and that chiefly in those instances which have some relations to us: We breathe out our souls to him, and make our addresses of praise and acknowledgement to him.[1]

> The first and chief intent of this part of worship, is to express unto God what sense and apprehensions we have of his essential glories . . . it is to vent the inward devotion of our spirits in words and melody, to speak our own experience of divine things . . .[2]

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1. Watts, Essay, p. 5. Emphasis mine.
2. Ibid., pp. 10-11. Emphasis mine.

What we have here, in as yet only mild contrast to a basically objective, recollective (of past or present) response, are the beginnings of an emphasis on the subjective effect of the divine encounter upon the singer, with his song a reflection of, and even a centering upon, his interior perceptions, moods, feelings, and personal states, to be communicated either Godwards as subjective response, or 'horizontally' to the self or to fellow Christians.

In Watts, this interest is distinctly secondary to the objective focus inherited from both the psalms and Calvinism; but it is there, as it sometimes had been in English Puritan preaching and praying, and as it certainly already was in the hymnody of Lutheran pietism on the Continent. This placing of the self as a second focus in the content of the hymn increases in eighteenth-century English hymnody, due to the likewise increasing influence of Enlightenment individualism, and to Methodist/Evangelical pietism. It is therefore a factor of major importance in hymnody's functional emergence, for it is a substantial shift of emphasis from the relative theocentrism of the psalter, which up to the eighteenth century had been the root determinant of the communicational functions of congregational song in England, and which had kept the focus of response generally outward-turned on God and his activity, even when that activity deeply involved the singer's state and person. Now, though still for Watts in the nominal category of 'response,' there is this new possibility of subjective expression, inward-turned and -centered; and with it the hymnwriter as literary

artist is in a position of providing not only theological or circumstantial points of contact through trajectorial language (with which the singers can more personally, though still objectively identify), but also psychological ones (as we would term them), with which the singers can subjectively identify. A new field for trajectorial communication is thus opened up.

However, this new function of hymnody receives its earnest development later in the century; as has already been stated, in Watts it exists only 'in embryo,' as it were. Nonetheless, we shall be tracing it in Watts's hymnography (along with other aspects), and to it we now turn.

III. "The Psalms of David Imitated"

How, in fact, did Isaac Watts actually implement the designs and correctives which he outlined in the essay and prefaces? Despite the fact that it is the later publication, we turn first to the "Psalms of David Imitated," because it represents an intermediate stage between the existing metrical -psalm tradition, and the hymnody to come. In actual point of fact, Watts was working on both the "Psalms of David Imitated" and "Hymns and Spiritual Songs" more-or-less concurrently from circa 1695.

"Psalms of David Imitated" was a prodigious endeavor. The 150 biblical psalms (minus twelve total omissions) form the basis for some 332 separate items, and many of the lengthier of these are further sub-divided by the insertion

of the word "pause" between groups of verses. Part of the reason for this multiplication lies in his provision for various meters; there are often three versions of a psalm, one each in Common Meter, Long Meter and Short Meter.[1] Another contributor to this expansion was the frequent breaking down of a psalm into topical (and more practical-lengthed) "parts," although this technique often necessitated considerable rearrangement of verses. Watts sometimes appended a note at the end of an item, explaining what he has done, and perhaps why.

From the standpoint of communicational function, his theological adjustments, sometimes labeled 'Christianizing,' can be viewed as an aid to communication by a reduction-by-realization of the typological trajectory implied in much Christian use of the psalter; or by the actual replacement of Old Testament concepts with those of the New. In either case, as we stated earlier, the goal could be thought of as increasing or clarifying the trajectorial points of contact between psalm and singer. Watts's means to accomplish this resolve into four basic techniques or devices:

1) Substitution or addition of terms:

> Where the Psalmist describes Religion by the Fear of God, I have often joyn'd Faith and Love to it. Where he speaks of the Pardon of Sin thro' the Mercies of God, I have added the Merits of a Saviour. Where he talks of sacrificing Goats or Bullocks, I rather chuse to mention the Sacrifice of Christ the Lamb of God . . . And I am fully

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1. Watts lists his meters in Psalms, preface, p. xxxii. In addition to CM, LM, and SM, he also employs sparingly six other meters from metrical psalmody.

> satisfied that more Honour is done to our blessed Saviour by speaking his Name, his Graces and Actions in his own Language, according to the brighter Discoveries he hath now made, than by going back again to the Jewish Forms of Worship, and the Language of Types and Figures.[1]

This is a fairly consistent practice of Watts, and it occurs in many psalms whose essential substance he does not otherwise revise. Compared with some of the following devices, this straight substitution has the character of a 'background' adjustment, as is apparent in the following examples:

(Biblical) Psalm 19: 7-9
7 The law of the Lord is perfect,
converting the soul;
the testimony of the Lord is sure,
making wise the simple;
8 the statutes of the Lord are right,
rejoicing the heart;
the commandment of the Lord is pure,
enlightening the eyes;
9 the fear of the Lord is clean,
enduring for ever;
the judgments of the Lord are true
and righteous altogether.

(Watts) Psalm XIX, First Part (Short Meter)
V His Statutes and Commands
Are set before our Eyes,
He puts his Gospel in our Hands
Where our Salvation lies.

(Biblical) Psalm 4:5
5 Offer the sacrifices of righteousness,
and put your trust in the Lord.

(Watts) Psalm IV (Common Meter)
III I pay this Evening Sacrifice;
And when my Work is done,
Great God, My Faith and Hope relies
Upon thy Grace alone.

This pair of examples incidentally shows Watts's way of condensing or expanding the original text.

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1. Watts, Psalms, preface, pp. xvii-xviii.

2) Evangelical additions or interpolations. In this first example note particularly Watts's sixth verse:

(Biblical) Psalm 29

1 Give unto the Lord, O ye mighty,
give unto the Lord glory and strength.
2 Give unto the Lord the glory due unto his name;
worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness.
3 The voice of the Lord is upon the waters:
the God of glory thundereth:
the Lord is upon many waters.
4 The voice of the Lord is powerful;
the voice of the Lord is full of majesty.
5 The voice of the Lord breaketh the cedars;
yea, the Lord breaketh the cedars of Lebanon.
6 He maketh them also to skip like a calf;
Lebanon and Sirion like a young unicorn.
7 The voice of the Lord divideth the flames of fire.
8 The voice of the Lord shaketh the wilderness;
the Lord shaketh the wilderness of Kadesh.
9 The voice of the Lord maketh the hinds to calve,
and discovereth the forests:
and in his temple doth every one speak of his glroy.
10 The Lord sitteth upon the flood;
yea, the Lord sitteth King for ever.
11 The Lord will give strength unto his people;
the Lord will bless his people with peace.

(Watts) Psalm XXIX

I GIVE to the Lord, ye Sons of Fame,
Give to the Lord renown and Power,
Ascribe due Honours to his Name,
And his Eternal Might adore.

II The Lord proclaims his Power aloud
Over the Ocean and the Land;
His Voice divides the Watry Cloud,
And Lightnings blaze at his Command.

III He speaks, and Tempest, Hail and Wind
Lay the wide Forests bare around;
The fearful Hart, and frighted Hind
Leap at the Terror of the sound.

IV To Lebanon he turns his Voice,
And Lo, the stately Cedars break;
The Mountains tremble at the Noise,
The Valleys roar, the Desarts quake.

V The Lord sets Sovereign on the Flood,
The Thunder reigns for ever King;
But makes his Church his blest abode,
Where we his awful Glories sing.

VI In gentler Language there the Lord
The Counsels of his Grace imparts;
Amidst the raging Storm his Word
Speaks Peace and Courage to our Hearts.

While the word "peace" is common to both final lines, Watts's last verse is not really based on the biblical verse eleven, for the latter shows a definite shift in address Godward ("May the Lord . ."), while Watts maintains the indicative mood to the end, so that the last verse in his version is linked to the previous verses.

In a second comparison, it is Watts's fifth verse which is to be noted:

(Biblical) Psalm 63
1 O God, thou art my God; early will I seek thee:
my soul thirsteth for thee,
my flesh longeth for thee
in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is;
2 To see thy power and thy glory,
so as I have seen thee in the sanctuary.
3 Because thy lovingkindness is better than life,
my lips shall praise thee.
4 Thus will I bless thee while I live:
I will lift up my hands in thy name.
5 My soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness;
and my mouth shall praise thee with joyful lips:
6 When I remember thee upon my bed,
and meditate on thee in the night watches.
7 Because thou hast been my help,
therefore in the shadow of thy wings will I rejoice.
8 My soul followeth hard after thee:
thy right hand upholdeth me.
9 But those that seek my soul, to destroy it,
shall go into the lower parts of the earth.
10 They shall fall by the sword:
they shall be a portion for foxes.
11 But the king shall rejoice in God;
every one that sweareth by him shall glory:
but the mouth of them that speak lies shall be stopped.

(Watts) Psalm LXIII, First Part (Common Meter)
I EARLY my God without Delay
I haste to seek thy Face;
My thirsty Spirit faints away
Without thy chearing Grace.

II So Pilgrims on the scorching Sand
Beneath a burning Sky
Long for a cooling Stream at hand,
And they must drink or dye.

III I've seen thy Glory and thy Pow'r
Thro' all thy Temple shine;
My God repeat that heavenly Hour,
That Vision so divine.

IV Not all the Blessings of a Feast
Can please my Soul so well
As when thy richer Grace I taste
And in thy Presence dwell.

V Not life itself with all her Joys
Can my best Passions move,
Or raise so high my chearful Voice
As thy forgiving Love.

VI Thus till my last expiring Day
I'll bless my God and King;
Thus will I lift my Hands to pray,
And tune my Lips to sing.
(There is also a Second Part to this version)

In Psalm XXIX Watts's intent may have been to temper a rather awesome and majestic image of God (not, of course, an objectionable image per se to a mind informed by Calvinism) with one more intimate and benevolent. In Psalm LXIII he perhaps felt that the element of forgiveness in the love of God was a necessary addition to the stimulus to praise already marked in the psalm. As with the terms in (1), such additions or revisions are fairly frequently found in Watts's 'imitations'.

3) Deliberate omissions. Given his declaration that the biblical psalms were to be "patterns" for his work, Watts frequently leaves out verses which he considers repetitive, or because, as he says in a note to his Psalm CL,

they "suit not my chief design."[1] Theological scruples were of course, a factor in the "design." In a note to Psalm XLI he says: "The Ten last Verses of this Psalm are of quite another Subject, relating to David's personal Enemies, which being frequently repeated I have often omitted." As (biblical) Psalm XLI is but thirteen verses long, this did not leave him a great deal from which to work! Similarly, in a note to Psalm LXIX he observes:

> In both the Metres of this Psalm I have apply'd it to the Sufferings of Christ, as the N.T. gives sufficient Reason by several Citations of this Psalm: From which Places I have borrowed the Particulars of his Suffering for our Sins, his Scourging the Buyers and Sellers out of the Temple, his Crucifixion, &c. But I have omitted the dreadfull Imprecations on his Enemies, except what is incerted in this last Stanza in the Way of a Prediction or Threatning.

This would be a reference to verses twenty-two to twenty-eight of a thirty-six verse psalm, not so drastic an excision. Finally, in a note to Psalm LV he explains the entire omission of Psalms LII and LIV:

> I have left out some whole Psalms, and several parts of others that tend to fill the Mind with overwhelming Sorrows, or sharp Resentment; neither of which are so well suited to the Spirit of the Gospel, and therefore the particular complaints of David against Achitophel here are entirely omitted.

4) Explicit references to the name, work, or life of Christ. In at least one line or version of over sixty of

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1. Some statistics of omissions appear in Harry Escott, Isaac Watts, Hymnographer (London, 1962), p. 148: "Of the 2,461 verses in the Book of Psalms he includes no fewer than 2,050. The 411 verses omitted represent twelve whole psalms (126 verses) and 285 verses of others."

Watts's psalms, there are such references, ranging from simple insertions of "Son," "Saviour," and "Redeemer" (all possible in Old Testament thought but here with unambiguously New Testament connotations, for the most part), to such as Psalm LXIX, almost wholly given over to a description of Christ's Passion in some detail, as the note quoted above has already informed us. In addition, the names of Christ appear in a number of the headings Watts puts over his psalms, even though there is sometimes no significant 'Christianizing' in the verses themselves.[1]

Watts's approaches to this form of theological updating are revealed in his notes to some of the psalms which received this treatment:

a) His general intent to Christianize 'David':

> If David had written this Psalm in the Days of the Gospel surely he would have given a much more express and particular account of the Sacrifice of Christ, as he hath done of his Preaching, v. 9,10. and enlarged as Paul does in Heb. 10.4. &c. where this Psalm is cited. I have done no more therefore in this Paraphrase than what I'm perswaded the Psalmist himself would have done in the time of Christianity.
> (Note to Psalm XL)

b) Realizing typology:

> This Psalm is a description of the Personal Glories of Christ and the Success of his Gospel; and probably it refers to the Gentile Church, because she is bid to forget her Father's house; All under the Type of Solomon's Marriage to Pharoah's Daughter. (Note to Psalm XLV)

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1. For example, Psalm LXXII, First Part: "The Kingdom of Christ"; and Psalm XII, Common Meter: "Complaint of a general Corruption of Manners; or, The Promise and Signs of Christ's coming to Judgement."

c) Making messianic references more explicit:

> In this and the two following Psalms the first coming of Christ into the World is represented in a Prophetic Style, as tho' he were coming the second time to the last Judgement: But that Christ's Incarnation, his setting up his Gospel-Kingdom to judge or rule the Gentiles, and the Judgement and Destruction of the Heathen Idols, is the true Design of these three Psalms, is evident from several expressions in them; and particularly because the Earth, the Fields, the Sea, &c. are call'd to rejoice; whereas the final Judgement of the World is represented dreadfull to all Nature, and to the Nations of the Earth . . . (From note to Psalm XCVI)

d) 'Christianizing' a psalm quoted or paraphrased in the New Testament:

> St. 4. If the Citation of part of this Psalm by the Apostle, Heb. 2.5. &c. be but a meer Allusion, yet it affords Ground enough for the Turn I have given it in this Version, and the Application of it to Christ . . . (From note to Psalm VIII)

e) Drawing his own parallels:

> If this Psalm was written at the ascent of the Ark of God into Zion the city of David, It is not unnatural to apply it to the presence of Christ with his Church in Worship, as in the Common Metre; or, to the ascension of Christ to Heaven as in this Metre. In this and other parts of the Psalm I have endeavour'd to make the Connexion plain and Easie, which is very obscure in the Text. (Note to Psalm XXIV)

It is difficult to estimate just how much aid to communication and identification all these theological changes effected for the typical eighteenth-century worshipper. Those of the types illustrated in categories (1) and (2), and even single references to Christ in any terms other than the actual "Jesus" or "Christ," may have gone almost unnoticed in corporate singing, especially after any novelty effect had worn off. Then too, there was the long-

established practice of metrical psalmody by that time, making it pretty much a settled habit for most, with the implied consequence of general inattentiveness to points of content.[1]

On the other hand, those (Wattsian) psalms with a more obvious reference to Christ; e.g., the aforementioned Psalm LXIX, may actually have struck the singer as being more hymn than psalm; and indeed, those psalms in this category which have remained in common use down to the present are now usually classed and thought of as hymns; e.g., "Jesus shall reign" (Psalm LXXII, second part); "Joy to the World" (Psalm XCVIII, second part); "Give to our God immortal praise" (Psalm CXXXVI, Long Meter); and "This is the day the Lord hath made" (Psalm CXVIII, fourth part).

Still, at least on paper and in parallel reading with the biblical psalms, the theological revision and emendation is considerable and obvious; and, as Watts promised in his preface, far more thorough-going than Patrick's version in the previous century.[2]

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1. That Watts recognized this problem is clear from a sentence in the opening paragraph of his preface to Hymns, p. li.

> To see the dull Indifference, the negligent and the thoughtless Air that sits upon the Faces of a whole Assembly, while the Psalm is on their Lips, might tempt even a charitable Observer to suspect the Fervency of inward Religion; and 'tis much to be fear'd that the Minds of most of the Worshippers are absent or unconcern'd.

2. I confess Mr. Milbourn and Mr. Darby in very different Verse have now and then given an Evangelic Turn to the Hebrew Sense; and Dr. Patrick hath gone much beyond them in this Respect, that he hath made use of the present Language of Christians in several Psalms, and left out many of the Judaisms. This is the Thing that hath introduced him into the Favour

(Contd.

Turning to Watts's parallel concern to make the psalms more relevant to the singer's own experience and sitz-im-leben, and thereby to increase the personal involvement in the hymned response, one should first observe that the above theological alterations are closely associated with this concern, insofar as the content of one's faith is (or should be) operative in one's life, whether as basic motivation, or in ethical terms.

Beyond that, however, Watts made other alterations, which seem to divide themselves in a fashion akin to that of the theological changes: relatively unobtrusive adjustments of a 'background' nature; and an obvious device similar to the explicit references to Christ, which receives most of the attention of modern readers and critics.

As examples of Watts's approach in the former category, we first cite his note to Psalm VI, Common Meter version:

> Vexation by personal Enemies is not a constant Attendant of Sickness; therefor in this Version I have ommitted it as a peculiar Circumstance of David's. In the next Version I have changed these Enemies for Temptations and despairing Thoughts.

Contd)

> of so many religious Assemblies. Even those Persons that have an Aversion to sing any thing in Worship but David's Psalms have been led insensibly to fall in with Dr. Patrick's Performance by a Relish of pious Pleasure; never considering that his Work is by no means a just Translation, but a Paraphrase; and there are scarce any that have departed farther from the inspired Words of Scripture than he hath often done, in order to suit his Thoughts to the State and Worship of Christianity. This I esteem his peculiar Excellency in those Psalms wherein he has practis'd it. This I have made my chief Care and Business in every Psalm, and have attempted at least to exceed him in this as well as in the Art of Verse; and yet I have often kept nearer to the Test.
>
> - Watts, Psalms, preface, p. vi.

This is a reference to verses 7-10 of the biblical psalm:

7 Mine eye is consumed because of grief;
it waxeth old because of all mine enemies.
8 Depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity;
for the Lord hath heard the voice of my weeping.
9 The Lord hath heard my supplication;
The Lord will receive my prayer.
10 Let all mine enemies be ashamed and sore vexed:
let them return and be ashamed suddenly.

The note to Psalm CXII discloses another example;

> Many of the Blessings of Wealth, and Grandeur and Temporal good Things that were the Portion of a Good Man and his Children under the O.T. I have here abridged agreeable to the New, which foretells rather Temporal Afflictions, and Promises everlasting Rewards.

This would be in apparent reference to the following phrases in the biblical psalm which have no parallel in Watts's version: "His descendants will be mighty in the land" (v.2); "Wealth and riches are in his house" (v.3); and "he will be remembered for ever" (v.6b). Watts supplies instead a final verse:

V His Works of Piety and Love
Remain before the Lord;
Honour on Earth and Joys above
Shall be his sure Reward.

Theological justification for such emendations aside, they were no doubt appropriate to the still hard conditions of life of a people (the Independents) just emerging from persecution as Watts laboured on the psalms; but one wonders how this note struck worshippers later in the century (if they read such 'fine print'), with increasing numbers of Dissenters becoming 'mighty in the land,' and with 'wealth and riches in their houses.'

In a similar reflection of his environment, Watts's

note to his Psalm XV is interesting (this psalm describes a righteous man as one who refrains from certain activities);

> I thought it necessary also to leave out the Mention of Usury, v.5. which tho' politically forbidden to the Jews among themselves, was never unlawful to the Gentiles, nor to any Christians since the Jewish Polity expired.

Notice has already been taken of the headings which Watts supplies for each psalm version. A perusal of these yields a short list of functional titles more-or-less peculiar to Christians and/or the times (not included here are headings equally applicable to Jewish and Christian occasions, or biblical and contemporary times:

Psalm V: For the Lord's Day Morning
XV: The Qualifications of a Christian
XX: Prayer and Hope of Victory: For a Day of Prayer in time of War
LX: On a Day of Humiliation for Disappointments in War
LXXV: Power and Government from God Alone: Apply'd to the Glorious Revolution by King William, or the Happy Accession of King George to the Throne.
XCV: A Psalm before Sermon
CI: A Psalm for a Master of a Family
CVII: Colonies Planted; or, Nations blest and punish'd: A Psalm for New-England.
CXV: Popish Idolatry reproved: A Psalm for the Fifth of November.
CXXII: Going to Church
CXXXIV: Daily and Nightly Devotion

Despite the headings, the psalm versions listed are fairly straightforward versifications of the biblical content, so Watts was apparently satisfied that the trajectory of the biblical imagery and setting needed little reduction, once the heading's suggestion oriented the singer's mind to the function the psalm was to serve.

Among other changes we find these examples, in Psalm

XCV, he alters (biblical) verses eight and nine, which reflect upon the Jews in the wilderness, into a reflection on Judaism generally:

> V But if your Ears refuse
> The Language of his Grace,
> And Hearts grow hard like stubborn Jews,
> That unbelieving Race.

In Psalm CI, the first-person "I" of 'David' becomes the "I" of a paterfamilias, Watts thereby changing the venue from nation to household. Psalm CXV's condemnation of idolatry undoubtedly needed little assistance in the transfer to anti-popery, but Watts does have lines therein such as: "the kneeling Crowd with Looks devout behold/ Their Silver Saviours, and their Saints of Gold" (v. II); and "People and Priest drive on the Solemn Trade/ And trust the Gods that Saws and Hammers made" (v. IV).

We have reserved for last, however, Watts's treatment of, for example, Psalms 20, 60, and 75, for in them he employs that contemporization which has earned "Psalms of David Imitated" a measure of notoriety: the specific use of "Britain," "Great Britain," "Britons," and associated references to "Island" or "Northern Sea," and mention of "Troops," "Armies," and "Navies." These terms are used in some fifteen of Watts's Psalms.

In some cases the uses are patriotic and/or rather belligerent in nature, but that would be quite in tune with the hubris of a nation emerging as a world power. In Psalm XX, headed, as noted above, for wartime use, verse IV is to be compared with verse five in the biblical text:

We will rejoice in thy salvation,
  and in the name of our God we will set up our banners:
The Lord fulfill all thy counsel.

In his Salvation is our Hope,
And in the name of Israel's God
Our Troops shall lift their Banners up,
Our Navys spread their Flags abroad.

In Psalm LXXV, which Watts applies to the Glorious Revolution and the Hanoverian establishment (see the heading quoted above), his first two verses read:

I TO Thee, most Holy, and most High,
  To Thee we bring our thankfull Praise;
  Thy Works declare thy Name is nigh,
  Thy Works of Wonder and of Grace.

II Britain was doom'd to be a Slave,
  Her Frame dissolv'd; her Fears were great
  When God a new Supporter gave
  To bear the Pillars of the State.

Other uses are contained in calls to the nation to repent (Psalm LX); to trust in God instead of popes (CXV); and to serve God (CXXXV). But the largest number are found within the general functional setting of praise, rejoicing, or injunctions to the same. The following are some examples:

Psalm XCVII, Common Meter, verse I:
YE Islands of the Northern Sea
  Rejoice, the Saviour reigns:
His Word like Fire prepares his Way,
  And Mountains melt to Plains.

Psalm CXLVII, Long Meter, second part, verse I:
O Britain, praise thy mighty God,
And make his Honours known abroad;
He bid the Ocean round thee flow;
Not Bars of Brass could guard thee so.
(This part is subtitled, "A Song for Great Britain")

Psalm C, second Long Meter version, verse I:
SING to the Lord with joyfull Voice;
Let every Lane his Name adore;
The British Isles shall send the Noise
A-cross the Ocean to the Shore.

In the case of Psalm C, while this has remained in common use (albeit not as popular as Kethe's version "All People that on Earth do Dwell"), the verse quoted is no longer heard, having been replaced by John Wesley's alternate verse beginning, "Before Jehovah's aweful Throne."

Taken together with the theological changes, and exchanging the biblical/numerical order for a topical arrangement (assisted by Watts's headings and topical index in many editions), one can discern what Escott calls a "liturgical structure" in the "Psalms of David Imitated"; i.e., a functional correspondence to the needs and themes of eighteenth-century Independent worship.[1] The categories in this scheme are all familiar to users of modern hymnbooks, and include the work of God - Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, Doctrine, the Life and Worship of the Church; the individual Christian Life; and specific Times and Seasons. As Escott notes, allusions to the Christian sacraments and to the ministry and teaching of Jesus (vis-a-vis his redemptive mission and passion) are lacking, but to include these as well would have taken Watts farther afield from the psalmic base than he was apparently prepared to go, remembering that "Hymns and Spiritual Songs" gave more potential freedom in this regard.

But such functional applications of congregational song did not of course originate with Isaac Watts; both the 'matter' of worship and the relating of the psalter thereto

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1. Escott, Watts, pp. 154ff.

had long existed in Christendom. Watts's mission with the "Psalms of David Imitated" was to make the relationship more explicit for the average singer of his day and ethos; i.e. increase the points of contact for communication. It was a worthy goal; nevertheless, too much should not be made of his success in accomplishing that goal with "Psalms of David Imitated," for despite the theological/sitz-im-leben alterations and any underlying liturgical structure perceived, a yet large amount of Old Testament theology and biblical-period imagery remains. Undoubtedly it had to remain, if it was still to be recognized that the psalms were the basis of the 'imitation.' The strategic necessity of this recognition was realized by Watts:

> I must say that I imitated David's Psalms, not as the fittest book that could be made for Christian worship, but as the best which the churches would yet hearken to.[1]

The matter of popular acceptance aside, this quotation recalls our attention to Watts's feeling, expressed also in the Essay, that if one really thoroughly 'Christianized' a psalm, one might as well write an original hymn; the psalter was indeed not the "fittest." Therefore in this work, with its inbuilt limitations, Watts was in effect still relying to a considerable extent on typological trajectory, and the singer's own interpretive and adaptive

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1. From a letter of Watts to a Dr. Colman of Boston, U.S.A., circa 1740, held by the Massachusetts Historical Society, and quoted in Robert M. Stevenson, Patterns of Protestant Church Music, (Durham, North Carolina, 1953), p. 100.

ability to bridge the gaps between Old Testament and New Testament, between biblical-period and eighteenth-century life, toward the end of more personal involvement in the sung response to the divine encounter in worship.

Watts's general adherence to the psalmic form also has implications for the possibility of subjective response, to which we alluded earlier.[1] First of all, Watts was scholar enough (and Calvinist enough) to realize the overwhelmingly theocentric thrust of the biblical psalms. As the contemporary Old Testament scholar J. Coert Rylaarsdam summarizes it:

> The psalms are intensely theocentric; everything depends on God. Almost without exception, every psalm is a cry to God whether it be a cry of praise or thanksgiving, or a cry of need or complaint. The psalms begin with God. There are a few psalms, indeed, that deal primarily in human experience and in the possibilities of a man's life under God . . . But such psalms are exceptions, and usually manifestly late additions to the total book. The subject of the psalms is not man's religious experience, but God. . . . For the Christian the term "prayer" is almost a synonym for "request"; this is definitely not the case in the Psalter or in Judaism though requests figure in both in a subsidiary way. The Hebrew title for the Psalter is Tehillim ("Praises"); it is a book in which ascriptions far outnumber requests.[2]

A comparison of the "psalms of David Imitated" with the biblical psalms shows that, through all his changes, Watts does not essentially violate this theocentrism; that is, he does not insert the self, its feelings or states, as a second center of reflection with any greater emphasis than the psalmist did, even in his treatment of the

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1. Above, pp. 121-22.

2. J. Coert Rylaarsdam, "The Theology of the Psalms in their Old Testament Setting." Address to the Lutheran Liturgical Institute at Valparaiso, Indiano, U.S.A., February 7, 1966.

personal laments, such as Psalms 6, 22, 30, 32, 38, 39, and 41. God remains the essential focus.

Furthermore, Watts maintains quite closely the grammatical singular or plural subject - the 'I' or 'We' - of the biblical psalms. Long before the time of Sigmund Mowinckel, Watts perhaps felt as he did that the singular 'I' was actually a corporate 'I' in Jewish liturgical worship, through the king's vocal leading part in the liturgy:

> According to this view of the king and his relation to the deity and to the people and of his position in the divine service, there is no sharp distinction between public and private psalms - those of the congregation, and those of a separate individual. From one point of view the king is a single person who, for instance in a lament, may speak of his ('my') sickness, or of other distress and danger; but still he is something more. It is really the congregation's, the people's fate that is involved when the king, 'our shield' is in distress or danger.[1]

Corporate personality concept or not, Watts did not take the presence of the singular 'I' in a psalm as a signal to engage in subjective-oriented tendencies. Watts also generally retains the impersonal mode in which about one-third of the psalms are written. Of the portion of these which are basically narrative in content, he observes:

> I own that it is not always necessary our songs should be direct addresses to God; some of them may be mere meditations of the history of divine providences, or the experiences of former saints; but even then if those providences or experiences cannot be assumed by us as parallel to our own, nor spoken in our own names, yet still there ought to be some turns of expression that

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1. Sigmund Mowinckel, The Psalms in Israel's Worship, transl. by D.R. Ap-Thomas (2 vols.; Oxford, 1962), I, 76.

> may make it look at least like our own present meditation, and that may represent it as a history which we ourselves are at that time recollecting.[1]

In summation, bearing in mind all that has here been observed and quoted concerning Watts's understandings and intentions, and their manifestation in "Psalms of David Imitated," and viewing that latter work as a whole, the truth of Watts's surmise (expressed particularly in the essay) seems to be borne out; viz., that the real solution to the problems of communication and communicational function, especially in relation to the singer's personal involvement in the content and action of his singing, lies not in the direction of psalter emendations, but in the direction of original hymnody. For Watts, this means primarily "Hymns and Spiritual Songs," and to that work we next turn.

IV. "Hymns and Spiritual Songs"

The "Hymns and Spiritual Songs" were first published in 1707, and then numbered 222 items divided into three "books," plus twelve doxologies. In 1709 a second edition appeared, expanded to 351 items; at the same time, fourteen psalm paraphrases that had been included in Book One of the first edition were deleted (to reappear in altered form in "Psalms of David Imitated").[2] In this form then, the work passed through many editions - it was in the sixth when

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1. Watts, Essay, p. 5.
2. As previously noted, the "Short Essay toward the Improvement of Psalmody" was also eliminated after the first edition.

"Psalms of David Imitated" was published in 1719, and in the sixteenth by 1748, the year of its author's death. In later years the two works were often combined under one cover.

Book One was subtitled "Collected from the Scriptures"; as that indicates, the 136 items therein were based on specified biblical texts, with slightly over half (73) from the New Testament; many items conflated several passages, in a few cases chosen from both testaments.

Book Two Watts subtitled "Compos'd on Divine Subjects," and Book Three, "Prepar'd for the Lord's Supper" (170 and 25 items, respectively). These are the true hymns, for while Watts was obviously not about to abandon the substance of biblical faith, the choice of subject was now his, with no prior commitment to a certain biblical text. The closing doxologies are there because "I cannot perswade myself to put a full Period to these Divine Hymns, till I have addressed a special Song of Glory to God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit."[1]

A. Book One

The Scripture-related Book One might well be compared with the "Psalms of David Imitated," especially within the frame of reference of communication, and Watts's attention to some of its ramifications. Any such comparison, however, must be done in the light of their differing status:

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1. Watts, Hymns, p. 376. The quotation is part of a note after the last hymn in Book III, just before the doxologies.

"Psalms of David Imitated" was theoretically meant to be a manual of congregational song sufficient for all uses and needs in worship (just as had been the Old Version). Book One of "Hymns and Spiritual Songs," however, is but one part of a larger, albeit similarly comprehensive work. It does not therefore bear all the responsibility for the comprehensiveness. This is to suggest that Watts may not have felt as much pressure to make the hymns of Book One as explicitly theologically- and environmentally-communicative to eighteenth-century Christians as he did those in "Psalms of David Imitated." He could, one might say, afford to depend more on Scriptural and trans-cultural trajectory to carry the load (though, as we have observed, they were still doing a good deal of it in the psalm 'imitations').

This factor, coupled to Watts's freedom to select the biblical texts himself (no doubt with an eye to the avoidance of obscure or difficult passages), resulted in an apparently greater willingness to allow the texts to 'stand on their own feet,' with less of the obvious verbal adjustments we found in "Psalms of David Imitated." That, of course, does not rule out some poetic license in the versification process; and, as we shall see, it does not exclude the possibility of adding lines and verses of his own, for interpretive or applicatory purposes.

In any event, theological updating à la "Psalms of David Imitated" would ipso facto be largely confined to those hymns based on Old Testament texts. Insofar as he felt it necessary, Watts sometimes accomplishes it with those

relatively straightforward means used in the former work. There is the substitution/insertion of New Testament themes, as for example in Hymn XXX, based on Isaiah 26: 8-20, from which we excise the first verse for illustration:

> IN thine own Ways, O God of Love,
> We wait the Visits of thy Grace,
> Our Souls Desire is to thy Name,
> And the Remembrance of thy Face.

Watts has here inserted the elements of "love" and "grace," while the theme of judgment in the Isaiah text is almost absent from the hymn. There are the explicit references to "Jesus" and "Saviour" as in Hymn LXXI (from a set of thirteen based on Song of Solomon texts), in place of the image of the lover:

> LXXI. Christ found in the Street, and brought to the Church; Sol. Song 3. 1,2,3,4,5.
>
> 1 OFten I seek my Lord by Night,
> Jesus, my Love, my Soul's delight;
> With warm Desire and restless Thought
> I seek him oft, but find him not.
>
> 2 Then I arise and search the Street,
> Till I my Lord, my Saviour meet;
> I ask the Watchmen of the Night,
> Where did you see my Sou' Delight?
>
> 3 Sometimes I find him in my Way,
> Directed by a Heavenly Ray;
> I leap for Joy to see his Face,
> And hold him fast in mine Embrace.
>
> 4 I bring him to my Mother's home,
> Nor does my Lord refuse to come,
> To Sion's sacred Chambers, where
> My Soul first drew the vital Air.
>
> 5 He gives me there his bleeding Heart,
> Pierc'd for my sake with deadly Smart;
> I give my Soul to him, and there
> Our Loves their mutual Tokens share.
>
> 6 I charge you all, ye Earthly Toys,
> Approach not to disturb my Joys;
> Not Sin, nor Hell come near my Heart,
> Nor cause my Saviour to depart.

To be sure, there remains much of the amorous vocabulary from the biblical text, but there are enough suggestions now to realize the typology. Occasionally, his freedom of the entire Bible led to pairings of Old and New Testament passages:

CXIII. Abraham's Blessing on the Gentiles;
Gen. 17. 7.Rom. 15. 8. Mark 10. 14.

1 HOW large the Promise! How divine,
To Abraham and his Seed!
I'll be a God to Thee and Thine,
Supplying all their Need.

2 The Words of his extensive Love
From Age to Age indure;
The Angle of the Cov'nant proves,
And seals the Blessing sure.

3 Jesus the antient Faith confirms
To our great Fathers giv'n;
He takes young Children to his Arms,
And calls them Heirs of Heav'n.

4 Our God, how faithful are his Ways!
His Love endures the same;
Nor from the Promise of his Grace
Blots out the Childrens Name.

In Hymn CXXI, such a mixture is supported by an integrating theme:

CXXI. Children devoted to God; Gen. 17. 7,10.
Acts 16. 14,15,33.
(For those who practice Infant-Baptism.)

1 THus saith the Mercy of the Lord,
I'll be a God to thee,
I'll bless thy num'rous Race, and they
Shall be a Seed for me.

2 Abraham believ'd the promis'd Grace
And give his Sons to God;
But Water seals the Blessing now,
That once was seal'd with Blood.

3 Thus Lydia sanctify'd her House
When she receiv'd the Word;
Thus the believing Jaylor gave
His Household to the Lord.

4 Thus later Saints, Eternal King,
Thine antient Truth embrace;
To thee their Infant-Offspring bring,
And humbly claim the Grace.

But on the whole these adjustments are not as pervasive as in "Psalms of David Imitated." Many are the Old Testament passages chosen, for which the theological frame of reference is common enough to Old Testament Jew and New Testament Christian, or else in which theological content is secondary to ethical or moral emphasis; and so Watts left them relatively alone. A case in point is Hymn XCIII, based on Proverbs 8:34-6:

> XCIII. Christ or Wisdom obey'd or resisted;
> Proverbs 8. 34-36.
>
> 1 THus saith the Wisdom of the Lord,
> "Blest is the man that hears my Word;
> "Keeps dayly Watch before my Gates,
> "And at my Feet for Mercy waits.
>
> 2 "The Soul that seeks me shall obtain
> "Immortal Wealth and heavenly Gain;
> "Immortal Life is his Reward,
> "Life, and the Favour of the Lord.
>
> 3 "But the vile Wretch that flies from me
> "Doth his own Soul an Injury;
> "Fools that against my Grace rebel
> "Seek Death, and love the Road to Hell.

Here incidentally is shown another device which Watts applied to some dozen Old Testament and New Testament text choices: direct quotation (with some poetic allowances, to be sure), indicated by the bracketing of the lines. In such instances, the continuation of the evolutionary line we have traced from metrical psalmody through paraphrased Scripture à la Barton reveals itself quite clearly.

As to accommodation to changed sitz-im-leben, whether of Old or New Testament texts, we encounter similar restraint. We have noted[1] how some of the headings in "Psalms of David

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1. Above, p. 134.

Imitated" suggested a functional application of the psalm content to the singer's situation (even though the versified text itself was often not much accomodated to suit). This functionally-designative titling is almost wholly absent from Book One.[1] Rather, the headings tend to be descriptive of the content itself (as also occured in "Psalms of David Imitated," to be sure): Hymn VI, "Triumph over Death" (Job 19: 25-7); Hymn XCIV, "Justification by Faith not by Works; or, the Law Condemns, Grace Justifies" (Romans 3: 19-22). As already inferred, however, the biblical content of the hymn itself often goes largely unaltered, whether or not in brackets.

Occasionally, Watts rewords a text so that it speaks of historical biblical events from a present viewpoint:

> Hymn CXLI. The Humiliation and Exaltation of Christ; Isa. 53. 1-5, 10-12.
>
> 1 WHO has believ'd thy Word,
> Or thy Salvation known?
> Reveal thine Arm, Almighty Lord,
> And glorify thy Son.
>
> 2 The Jews esteem'd him here
> Too mean for their Belief:
> Sorrows his chief Acquaintance were,
> And his Companion, Grief.
>
> 3 They turn'd their Eyes away,
> And treated him with scorn;
> But 'twas their Grief upon him lay,
> Their Sorrows he has born.
>
> 4 'Twas for the stubborn Jews
> And Gentiles then unknown,
> The God of Justice pleas'd to bruise
> His best-beloved Son.
> (The hymn has a total of eight verses).

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1. Exceptions, however, are Hymns LXXIX, LXXX, and LXXXI, being hymns for morning and evening.

In Hymn V, based on Job 1. 21, in which Job is speaking in the first-person singular, Watts contemporizes by shifting to the plural:

Hymn V. Submission to Afflictive Providences, Job 1.21.

1 NAked as from the Earth we came,
And crept to Life at first,
We to the Earth return again,
And mingle with our Dust.

2 The dear Delights we here enjoy,
And fondly call our own,
Are but short Favours borrow'd Now,
To be repay'd Anon.

3 'Tis God that lifts our Comforts high,
Or sinks 'em in the Grave.
He gives, and (blessed be his Name)
He takes but what he gave.
(The hymn has a total of five verses).

This same provision of historical perspective-cum-contemporary grammatical subject may be seen in Watts's treatment of New Testament texts, as exampled in two of the well-known New Testament canticles - Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis:

Hymn LX. The Virgin Mary's Song: or, the promised Messiah Born; Luke 1. 46, &c.

1 OUR Souls shall magnify the Lord,
In God the Saviour we rejoyce:
While we repeat the Virgin's Song,
May the same Spirit tune our Voice.

2 The Highest saw her low Estate,
And mighty Things his Hand hath done:
His over-shadowing Power and Grace
Makes her the Mother of his Son.

3 Let every Nation call her Blest,
And endless Years prolong her Fame;
But God alone must be ador'd:
Holy and Reverend is his Name.
(The hymn has a total of six verses).

Hymn XIX. The Song of Simeon; or, Death made desirable, Luke 1. 27, &c.

1 LOrd, at thy Temple we appear,
As happy Simeon came
And hope to meet our Saviour here;
O make our Joys the same!

2 With what Divine and vast Delight
The good old Man was fill'd,
When fondly in his wither'd Arms
He clasp'd the Holy Child.
(The hymn has a total of six verses).

Finally, we reproduce one of the but two instances in Book One (Hymns LII and LIII) of the notorious 'naturalizing' in "Psalms of David Imitated"; i.e. the insertion of references to Great Britain:

Hymn LIII. The Holy Scripture; Heb. 1. 1. 2 Tim. 3. 15,16. Psal. 147. 19,20.

1 GOD who in various Methods told
His Mind and Will to Saints of Old,
Sent his own Son with Truth and Grace,
To teach us in these latter Days.

2 Our Nation reads the written Word,
That Book of Life, that sure Record:
The bright Inheritance of Heav'n,
Is by the sweet Conveyance giv'n.

3 God's kindest Thoughts are here exprest,
Able to make us Wise and Blest;
The Doctrines are divinely true,
Fit for Reproof, and Comfort too.

4 Ye British Isles who read his Love
In long Epistles from above;
(He hath not sent his Sacred Word
To every Land) Praise ye the Lord.

But if this kind of direct alteration in biblical matter or manner was only modestly employed here by Watts, vis-a-vis "Psalms of David Imitated" (where he was not all that extravagant with it either), he does resort considerably to a technique which the parameters of the "Psalms of David Imitated" did not easily accomodate: the addition of

original verses at the beginning or end of the song, by which relevance could be amplified, and/or some immediately functional thrust supplied. Since this technique has some communicative significance, its various applications are here reviewed and exemplified.

1) A concluding ascription. In Hymn XCIV, after three verses based on Romans 3: 19-22 (on justification by faith), there is this fourth verse:

> 4 Jesus, how glorious is thy Grace
> When in thy Name we trust!
> Our Faith receives a Righteousness
> That makes the Sinner just.

2) A concluding petition. In Hymn CXXXI, condensing the parable of the Pharisee and the Publican (Luke 18) into three verses, there is this conclusion:

> 4 Dear Father, let me never be
> Joyn'd with the boasting Pharisee;
> I have no Merits of my own,
> But plead the Sufferings of thy Son.

3) A declaration of intent. Hymn CXXVII has three verses enclosed in brackets, being a versification of Christ's utterance in Matthew 11: 28-30 (offering to share man's burdens). Following is this unbracketed verse:

> 4 Jesus, we come at thy Command,
> With Faith and Hope and humble Zeal
> Resign our Spirits to thy Hand,
> To mould and guide us at thy Will.

4) An aspiration. Hymn XLV, another bracketed song versifying Revelation 21: 5ff. ("I am Alpha and Omega," etc.), ends with these two verses:

> 7 O may I stand before the Lamb,
> When Earth and Seas are fled!
> And hear the Judge pronounce my Name
> With Blessings on my Head!

8 May I with those for ever dwell
Who here were my Delight,
While Sinners banish'd down to Hell
No more offend my Sight.

5) An introduction to a Scripture passage. Hymn LV is Hezekiah's song in Isaih 38. Watts introduces it thusly:

1 WHen we are rais'd from deep Distress,
Our God deserves a Song;
We take the pattern of our Praise
From Hezekiah's Tongue.

6) A concluding commentary. Hymn CXIII is a collection of Genesis 17:7, Romans 15:8, and Mark 10:14, with a concluding verse. As this hymn has already been cited in another regard (p.145), we repeat only the final verse:

4 Our God, how faithful are his Ways!
His love endures the same;
Nor from the Promise of his Grace
Blots out the Childrens Name.

7) A homiletical application. In Hymn XCV, an initial verse suggests a contemporary application of the text:

Hymn XCV. Regeneration; John 1. 13. & 3.3, &c.

1 NOT all the outward Forms on Earth,
Nor Rites that God has giv'n,
Nor Will of Man, nor Blood, nor Birth,
Can raise a Soul to Heav'n.

2 The Sovereign Will of God alone
Creates us Heirs of Grace;
Born in the Image of his Son
A new peculiar Race.

3 The Spirit like some heavenly Wind
Blows on the Sons of Flesh,
New-models all the carnal Mind,
And forms the Man afresh.

4 Our quickend Souls awake, and rise
From the long Sleep of Death;
On heavenly things we fix our Eyes,
And Praise imploys our Breath.

8) An imperative call. Preceding a treatment of Isaiah 40: 28-31 in Hymn XLVIII ("Have ye not known? Have ye not

heard?" etc.), Watts begins:

1 AWake our Souls, (away our Fears,
Let every trembling Thought be gone)
Awake and run the heavenly Race,
And put a chearful Courage on.

9) Exhortations, slightly less forceful than the imperative. We give two examples - at the beginning and at the end of a song.

a) in Hymn VII, preceding a treatment of Isaiah 55:1ff. ("Ho, everyone who thirsts," etc.), there is this verse:

1 LET ev'ry mortal Ear attend,
And ev'ry Heart rejoice,
The Trumpet of the Gospel sounds
With an inviting Voice.

b) In Hymn XI, after five bracketed verses containing Christ's prayer in Luke 10, Watts concludes:

6 Then let our Souls adore our God
That deals his Graces as he please,
Nor gives to Mortals an Account
Or of his Actions, or Decrees.

In relation to these Wattsian additions, it might initially be observed that they have the general effect of providing, as it were, needed practical 'frames' for the Scriptural 'pictures.' This need was not so evident in "Psalms of David Imitated," for there the inbuilt theocentrism and the predominance of Godward address in the psalms provided inbuilt 'frames' of recollective purpose or direction-of-communication for the specific content or 'pictures.'

The question is, what sort of 'frames' was Watts here attempting to provide for the wider variety of Scriptural

'pictures' in Book One of "Hymns and Spiritual Songs"? A preliminary answer lies in the recognition that all the categories just exampled above are normal constituents or accompaniments of protestant worship (or at least not usually thought incompatible therewith). Watts was thus placing these Book One songs in the setting for which he intended them: corporate worship. A Scripture passage, even if versified and sung, does not automatically become integrated into the communicational patterns of worship, instructional function as a read 'lesson' excepted. But if the singer can be supplied with a 'frame' of address to God, or be directed or motivated to some sort of responsive action within or even beyond corporate worship, then the singing of a particular text gains both in purpose and meaning. It gains in functional purpose because it is now related to the singer's responses, especially in worship. It gains in communicative meaning because it can be seen as the (biblical) message which authenticates the suggested contemporary response; all providing that the singer is sensitive to the level of trajectory in Scripture (whether or not 'lowered' by Watts's treatments), so that the connection can be seen between its content and Watts' supplementary purposive or interpretive commentary.

If Watts has here abetted communication and communicational function with this device of added verses, their presence raises a question and problem, having to do with the direction and focus of the communication in these songs of Book One.

The question concerns the direction of address implied in the various types of added verses described above. Of the nine types, the first three - ascription, petition, and declaration of intent - all serve to direct the song and its singing Godward; so that even though the Scriptural body of the song may be in the impersonal mode grammatically, or seem to be communication between men, when the song is completed the singer sees that its underlying import (its 'frame') is a responsive address to God, of which ascription, petition, and declaration are modes (along with, of course, a recollective component through the recitation of the Scripture 'picture'). There is here no intrinsic difficulty in Watts's address to God (as the author of the additional verse) becoming the singer's or congregation's address to God.

When we consider the remaining types, however, the communicational lines become more complicated. The difficulty lies in the fact that these six remaining types are not directing address to God, but to men. Who are the communicating participants in the examples we have quoted, as condensed below?

5) Introduction to a passage: "When we are raised . . . we take the pattern."
6) Concluding commentary: "Our God, how faithful are his ways."
7) Homiletical application: "Not all the outward forms . . . can raise a soul to heaven."
8) Imperative call: "Awake our souls . . . Awake and run."
9) Exhortation: "Let ev'ry mortal ear attend . . ."
"Then let our souls adore our God . . ."

At least when reading the songs on paper, the initial address is technically from the author (Watts) to the singer-

as-reader/recipient. The author may be an impersonal voice from without, as in the example from (7), or he may speak as one of the congregation, using first-person plural (5,6, 8,9), but it is still an address to the reader/singer. A possible exception is (4) - aspiration, which could be construed as having an implicit (but tacit) address to God: "O [Lord], may I stand before the Lamb" (XLV); but this may not always be the case - the singer may not so construe.

When, however, the songs are lifted from the printed page and issue from the individual mouth of the worshipper, or the corporate mouth of the congregation, what then? It is reasonably certain that the average singer would not be understanding the situation as Watts addressing him. He the singer is now obviously the communicator. But to whom is the singer or congregation singing in introduction to, or concluding commentary upon a Scripture passage, or in the impersonal-mode observation of the example of (7)? To whom are the imperatives or exhortations issued? There are several approaches to an answer.

First, if we conceive the situation as an individual singing (or as a number of individuals simultaneously singing under the same roof), the theoretical options are that he is either singing to himself, or to his fellow worshippers (who of course are doing the same). In the latter option, since there would be a number of individuals mutually addressing each other, it could be considered a form of edification - mutual building-up - to which the biblical content of the song might well contribute, either by supporting

the address through Scripture's assumed authority, or in a more specifically educative/instructive aspect of edification.

Concerning the first option of singing to oneself, in a kind of audible internal dialogue, or perhaps in individual 'meditation', it would be theoretically possible for all the types of address to be so employed, except the impersonal-mode in (7) - homiletical application. But to do so, all the pronouns in the examples quoted above would logically need to be in the first-person singular, if it is to be entirely an individual exercise. In private reading, plural pronouns could perhaps be read without disturbing the essential individualism; but the situation of corporate singing in worship would almost certainly combine with any plural pronouns to override self-address for the average singer.

At this point some relevant statistics may be introduced. Watts uses the first-person singular pronouns exclusively in only twenty-six of the 136 songs in Book One. In nineteen more he mixes singular and plural. Twenty-five are in the impersonal mode. The remainder are in the first-person plural exclusively (pronouns in the obviously biblical-based lines and verses are not included here). With some eighty per cent of the Book One songs thus avoiding the exclusive singular, one can surmise to what extent Watts had self-address in mind, at least in this Book of "Hymns and Spiritual Songs."

If, however, the individual singer is considered in

relation to the social environment of corporate worship and singing, the possibility of his addressing those around him exists. Reading again the excerpts exampling the forms of manward address, one can conceive of them being directed to others, whether singular or plural pronouns are used (although singular imperatives and exhortations are not so likely to be addressed to others). The difference in the choice of pronouns would be that, in using the singular, the singer seems to be calling attention to something in relation to himself; whereas, using the plural, the singer would be identifying himself with his fellows, even if he is addressing them as distinct from himself - he is calling attention to something common to all present.

Here we are approaching the domain of another answer to the question of direction-of-address: that of the congregation singing as a corporate personality, rather than as an assembly of individual believers. The basic factor in the situation would then be that the singer is aware that others are singing exactly the same words - including the address - as he is. He can therefore participate with them in singing as one voice and person. There are thus both singular and plural components present, making the choice of singular or plural pronouns not quite so significant as in the former possibilities and options. If singular, the congregation is the "I"-"me"-"my"; if it is the plural "we"-"us"-"our", it is still the congregation speaking, although more conscious that it is indeed a corporate personality - that individual identity is not destroyed entirely by participation in corporate personality.

There is the question now of who remains to be addressable by this corporate personality. Recalling the first option above, it is possible to understand the corporate personality to be addressing itself, in statement, call, or aspiration. However, there would still be a need for the individual as part of the corporate personality-as-recipient-of-its-own-address to interiorize the truth stated or to respond to the imperative or exhortation. That is to say, in corporate self-address there is an element of corporate address to the individual.

We must acknowledge here, however, that to discuss the effective direction-of-communication in these or other hymns solely on the basis of the pronouns and grammatical modes in their texts, is to place the matter on a plane of cognitive analysis whose conclusions are not entirely adequate in the end. That is to say, there are undoubtedly non-cognitive dimensions in corporate hymn-singing, as in worship generally.

This study cannot attempt to be a treatise on the psychology of religion, but it is no doubt only stating the obvious to observe that for the average worshipper there is certainly as much (if not more) communicative significance in the action of singing together, as there is in cognitive apprehension of the particular text being sung, even if the apprehension is lubricated by relevant theological/environmental changes or purposive/interpretive additions, as in the case of Watts's Scripture-based output.

This is the realm of such matters as group dynamics, of psychological moods and attitudes, of emotions, and of the suggestive and auto-suggestive impressions made by rhythmic

speech and music, helping to induce such feelings as awareness of the numinous, awe, solidarity, confidence, dependence, resolve, etc. And too, the edifying function of secondary mutual address probably depends as much on these non-cognitive elements as on the cognitive/instructive aspect.

As one action in worship, there is no doubt that hymn-singing (as distinguished from hymnody on the action/content plane) is deeply involved in the whole non-cognitive dimension. This has communicative overtones, because hymns can thus be seen to have both impressive and expressive communicative roles to play. J.B. Pratt, in his now classic study "The Religious Consciousness," has this to say of the psychological place of the hymn in worship:

> The hymn has two great advantages. In the first place all can take part in it; the emotions which have been swelling up in the hearts of the individuals can thus be given vent. The man can sing as loud as he likes and thus express himself. Thus it comes that the hymn is especially valuable for both suggestion and auto-suggestion. By singing out at the top of his voice the sentiments and ideas which the revivalist desires to instill in him, each member of the audience suggests them to himself, in the technical meaning of that phrase. And he also at the same time passes on the suggestion to his neighbor. The whole audience thus acts upon each individual in the audience and so acts and reacts upon itself, thus spreading the desired suggestion by geometrical progression. Each individual also feels the strength and power of the whole back of him, reinforcing his good resolves and his religious faith, and inhibiting all that opposes them. And secondly, the fact that the hymn involves music makes it a peculiarly fit tool for producing and communicating emotion. Music is essentially emotional and may often bring one into a mood which no amount of preaching could induce.[1]

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1. James Bissett Pratt, The Religious Consciousness (New York, 1921), pp. 176-77.

But Pratt's use of the term "revivalist" must not go unmarked, for it shows that he is here speaking in the context of the revival-type of service. This is a phenomenon which, in its modern definition, had its genesis in the Methodism of the later eighteenth century. Then, the importance of the non-cognitive dimension was something more-or-less intuitively sensed; its systematic and almost scientific exploitation came later, along with the advent of the behavioral sciences. Therefore, our inclusion of this aspect in a discussion of Isaac Watts's work is slightly premature, if we were to impute conscious awareness and use of it to Watts and his time. Nonetheless, it is not necessarily wrong to retrospectively see it operative then, when we consider the direction-of-address and communicational relationships implied by some of Watts's additional verses in Book One. And the contribution of the non-cognitive realm at that point may be to posit that in congregational singing there need not always be discernable a concrete and explicit direction- or object-of-address by the corporate personality in action, whatever grammatical analyses may theoretically determine.

However, our consideration of this feature of the songs in Book One of "Hymns and Spiritual Songs" need not end on such an indeterminate note. Again in retrospect, the very presence of these various manward addresses in Watt's additions (whether functioning at the cognitive and/or non-cognitive levels) betrays that which we have already noted:[1]

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1. Above, p. 121-22.

the beginning of a shift of center or focus from an outward-turned response to God and his activity (the psalmic inheritance), toward the subjective effect upon the believer/worshipper/singer, the effect upon him of the divine encounter in the hymn's content, and the effect upon him of the action of corporate singing. Together, these constitute a new kind of emphasis on the impressive possibility of the hymn. Of course, insofar as the hymn is at the same time able to be the medium of the believer/worshipper/singer's expression of these effects, there can still be said to be a responsive component present.

This shift accelerates during the eighteenth century, and so it shall continue to be a major factor in our study of the emergence of hymnody. But as was said earlier, in Watts it is as yet an extremely modest shift, thus far to be seen mostly as implicit in his changes and additional verses. But in the original hymns of Books Two and Three it becomes more explicit; and the tracing of it there is our principal task now.

B. Books Two and Three

Book Two of "Hymns and Spiritual Songs" is entitled "Composed on Divine Subjects." In the first edition, there was this additional phrase, "..., Conformable to the Word of God." This fuller title gives a clue to the nature of the book's 170 hymns, vis-a-vis that of those in Book One (and behind them, "Psalms of David Imitated"): the distinction

can be likened to that between topical and expository sermons. The topical sermon is based on a theme of the preacher's choosing, but which (one trusts) is always "conformable" to biblical faith, and thus to Scripture. The expository sermon begins with the biblical text, although the choice of text is also by the preacher, at least in 'non-liturgical' churches without fixed lectionaries or pericopes.

Thus the hymns in Book Two are thematic in approach; nevertheless, in a great many of them Scripture is never far away, whether in content or style; a few of the hymns have footnoted biblical references. The much smaller Book Three (twenty-five hymns; the twenty doxologies following are really an appendix to the whole work) shares this approach, but one theme - the Lord's Supper - is common to all the hymns therein; as such it is therefore a functional theme and book, in relation to worship.

Having isolated some of the features which distinguish the Book One Scriptural hymns from "Psalms of David Imitated" in relation to our communicational interest, the same procedure might be assayed between the hymns of Books Two-Three and Book One.

To state that the hymns of Books Two-Three are thematic in conception is not to imply that the themes are necessarily different from those derived from specific texts in Book One. One can,for example, place side by side one hymn each from Book One and Books Two-Three which speak to a common theme. In the first such pairing below, the theme

is an aspect of faith:

Book One, Hymn CXX. Faith of Things unseen;
Heb, 11. 1,3,8,10.

1 FAith is the brightest Evidence
Of Things beyond our sight,
Breaks thro' the Clouds of Flesh and Sense,
And dwells in heavenly Light.

2 It sets Times past in present View,
Brings distant Prospects home,
Of Things a Thousand Years ago,
Or Thousand Years to come.

3 By Faith we know the Worlds were made
By God's Almighty Word;
Abraham to unknown Countrys led
By Faith obey'd the Lord.

4 He sought a City fair and high,
Built by th' Eternal Hands;
And Faith assures us, tho' we dye,
That heavenly Building stands.

Book Two. Hymn CXXIX. We walk by Faith not by Sight.

1 'TIS by the Faith of Joys to come
We walk thro' Desarts dark as Night;
Till we arrive at Heav'n our Home
Faith is our Guide, and Faith our Light.

2 The want of Sight she well supplys,
She makes the Pearly Gates appear;
Far into distant Worlds she prys,
And brings Eternal Glories near.

3 Chearful we tread the Desart thro',
While Faith inspires a heav'nly Ray,
Tho Lions roar, and Tempests blow,
And Rocks and Dangers fill the Way.

4 So Abraham by divine Command
Left his own House to walk with God;
His Faith beheld the Promis'd Land,
And fir'd his Zeal along the Road.

In the Book One treatment, verses 1a,3, and 4a constitute the biblical material from Hebrews, the remainder being Watts's poetic expansion and some homiletical application. But throughout, the attention is objectively centered

upon the chosen subject - faith and its functions, coupled to its exemplification in Abraham's obedience. Furthermore, while there are a few first-person plural pronouns, the general impression is one of impersonal-mode declaration; there being no Godward address, the declaration is by the congregation to itself (whether received individually and/or corporately); that is, if it is declared to any specific 'ear' at all.

At first glance, the Book Two version strikes one as basically similar to the foregoing, especially because there is the same citation of Abraham as exemplar (v.4). However, though slight, there is a shift in emphasis: the virtues of faith for the present (and singing) congregation receive more attention. Note the heading: it is now a complete sentence, and the subject and verb point up the shift - "We walk." The emphasis is continued in verses one and three (the latter with some colourful imagery redolent of Scripture, but which Watts apparently assumes can successfully traject across time and a changed sitz-im-leben). Verse two corresponds to the (Wattsian) verse two in the Book One version, and we have already noted the shared reference to Abraham.

This same shift in attention becomes clearer in another pair of hymns, both being treatments of an aspect of one of Watts's favourite themes in "Hymns and Spiritual Songs": death.

Book One. Hymn XVIII. Blessed are the Dead that die in the Lord. Rev. 14. 13.

1 HEar what the Voice from Heav'n proclaims
For all the pious Dead,
Sweet is the savour of their Names,
And soft their sleeping Bed.

2 They die in Jesus, and are blest;
How kind their Slumbers are!
From Suff'rings and from Sins releast,
And freed from every Snare.

3 Far from this World of Toyl and Strife,
They're present with the Lord
The Labours of their Mortal Life
End in a large Reward.

Book Two. Hymn III. The Death and Burial of a Saint.

1 WHY do we mourn departing Friends?
Or shake at Death's Alarms?
'Tis but the Voice that Jesus sends
To call them to his Arms.

2 Are we not tending upward too
As fast as Time can move?
Nor would we wish the Hours more slow
To keep us from our Love.

3 Why should we tremble to convey
Their Bodies to the Tomb?
There the dear Flesh of Jesus lay,
And left a long Perfume.

4 The Graves of all his Saints he blest,
And softened every Bed;
Where should the dying Members rest,
But with the dying Head?

5 Thence he arose ascending high
And shew'd our Feet the way;
Up to the Lord our Flesh shall fly
At the great Rising Day.

6 Then let the last loud Trumpet sound,
And bid our Kindred rise,
Awake ye Nations under Ground,
Ye Saints, ascend the Skies.

In the Book One version, Watts keeps strictly (and impersonally, in grammar) to the subject, as well as to the biblical text (save for a typically stereotyped reference to "this World of Toyl and Strife"). But notice in Book Two's treatment how the primary focus is now upon the singers - the living - and their approach to death (vv.1-3,5). That which corresponds to the Book One version is pretty much

confined to verses four and six.

While all possible comparisons of treatments of similar themes between Book One and Books Two-Three would not document the same movement of center, these examples do fairly point to a basic direction in which Watts went, albeit modestly, once free of the involvements with specific biblical texts; viz., toward seeking more subjective or inward points of trajectorial contact in his hymns for the singer(s), whose response through singing the hymn then tends to be expressive of the subjective effect of the hymned theme upon him. All this is in contrast to a recollective response to the objective reality in the hymn's content.

As was done in our consideration of "Psalms of David Imitated," one may scan the headings over the hymns. Doing so in Book Two, one finds some reflection of the subjective tendency, as revealed by the following list, the suggestion of subjective reference being underlined:

V. Longing to Praise Christ better.
IX. Godly Sorrow arising from the Sufferings of Christ.
XIV. The Lord's Day; or, Delight in Ordinances.
XV. The Enjoyment of Christ; or, Delight in Worship.
XXXIV. Breathing after the Holy Spirit; or, Fervency of Devotion desir'd.
XL. Our Comfort in the Covenant made with Christ.
LVI. The Misery of being without God in this World; or, Vain Prosperity.
LVII. The Pleasures of a Good Conscience.
XCIV. God my only Happiness.
XCVIII. Hardness of Heart Complain'd.
CXXII. Retirement and Meditation.
CLVI. Presumption and Despair; or, Satan's various Temptations.

Such references to personal states (even though the objects of the prepositions are objective, biblical realities) are almost totally absent from the titles in Book One.

Watts's freedom from controlling biblical texts also contributes to the subjective tendency in a more indirect fashion. Because of the absence of more-or-less versified texts, the distinction often visible in Book One between what we there referred to as 'picture' and 'frame' (biblical core and Wattsian additions) tends to become blurred in Books Two and Three, since both theme and application are now Wattsian, certainly in manner, but also in matter. Even if the distinction can still be traced, the two are usually well mixed and distributed throughout the structure of the hymn, compared with the opening and closing placement of additions so frequent in Book One. In any case, the net effect is of better integration of the hymn, both in form and content, with the resultant probability of increasing the hymn's communicative impact upon the singer(s), and also its communicative expressiveness for the singer(s). This attribute would be especially relevant to subjective focus, insofar as it may be present in a hymn. The two hymns quoted above from Book Two demonstrate this tighter organization.

It might be thought that a comparison of Watts's uses of singular-plural-impersonal mode, and of the presence or absence of Godward address in the grammatical structure of the Book Two hymns, might show again the subjective tendency; e.g., more use of first-person singular, in conjunction perhaps with non-Godward address. But such a comparison with his Book One usages is somewhat inconclusive, as the following tabulation shows:

	Book I	Books II-III
In first-person singular exclusively	19%	26%
Mixed, but predominantly singular	14	9
In first-person plural exclusively	48	47
Mixed, but predominantly plural	14	12
In impersonal mode predominantly	18	6
Godward address: present	44	54
absent	56	46

The only noteworthy changes here revealed are a mild increase in the proportion of hymns in which Watts uses first-person singular exclusively (but total uses of singular about the same), and an increase in the use of personal pronouns generally, seen in the decrease of impersonal-mode usage. In the matter of direction-of-address, the amount of Godward address increases in Books Two and Three, but only to the extent of reversing the slight imbalance of presence/absence in Book One. Of course, subjective expression is not limited to self- or 'horizontal' address; it may very well be addressed to God, in petitionary or declarative contexts.

The sizeable amounts of mixed singular-plural hymns shown in the table serve as a caution, however, not to place too much weight on this factor in Watts's style. Hymn XXXVII shows how he can move back and forth between singular and plural:

1 LIft up your Eyes to th' heavenly Seats
  Where your Redeemer stays;
Kind Intercessor, there he sits,
  And loves, and pleads, and prays.

2 'Twas well, my Soul, he dy'd for thee,
  And shed his vital Blood,
Appeas'd stern Justice on the Tree,
  And then arose to God.

3 Petitions now and Praise may rise,
And Saints their Offerings bring,
The Priest with his own Sacrifice
Presents them to the King.

4 Let Papists trust what Names they please,
Their Saints and Angels boast;
We've no such Advocates as these,
Nor pray to th' Heavenly Host.

5 Jesus alone shall bear my Crys
Up to his Father's Throne,
He (dearest Lord) perfumes my Sighs,
And sweetens every Groan.

6 Ten thousand Praises to the King,
Hosanna in the high'st;
Ten thousand Thanks our Spirits bring
To God and to his Christ.

Very much the same caveat must be sounded for the direction-of-address aspect. At least two-thirds of the fifty-four percent of Books Two-Three hymns containing Godward address do not maintain that address consistently through the hymn; i.e., it is mixed with various 'horizontal' addresses. Hymn CXXVI shows this clearly, even changing within a verse (verse four):

1 THE Lord descending from Above
Invites his Children near,
While Power and Truth and boundless Love
Display their Glories here.

2 Here in thy Gospels wond'rous Frame
Fresh Wonders we pursue;
A thousand Angels learn they Name
Beyond what e're they knew.

3 Thy Name is writ in fairest Lines,
Thy Wisdom here we trace;
Wisdom thro' all the Mystery shines,
And shines in Jesus Face.

4 The Law its best Obedience owes
To our Incarnate God;
And thy revenging Justice shows
Its Honours in his Blood.

5 But still the Lustre of thy Grace
Our warmer Thoughts imploys,
Gilds the whole Scene with brighter Rays,
And more exalts our Joys.

But having surveyed Books Two and Three in terms of some of the communicational features previously traced in Book One, and having found evidence, in comparison, of a somewhat diffuse but yet identifiable trend in the direction of a subjective focus, there yet remains to seek out some specific examples thereof in the Book Two and Three hymns. While it is a bit difficult at times to draw the line, there are some thirty-five hymns in which it is fair to say that the subjective interest is both clear and significant in the hymn.

Before citing some of these, however, it is advisable to repeat some caveats. First, we are speaking of but thirty-five out of 215 hymns in Books Two and Three - about sixteen per cent. This leaves a vast majority in which said subjectivity is either absent, or very secondary to objective praise or description - hymns more similar, in fact, to those in Book One. And it is largely in this majority group (and not in those we are about to examine) that are found those hymns whose theological character have become Watts's claim to fame in the history of hymnody. Bernard L. Manning has described that character thus:

> But Watts sees the Cross, as Milton had seen it, planted on a globe hung in space, surrounded by the vast distances of the universe. He sees the drama in Palestine prepared before the beginning of time and still decisive when time has ceased to be. There is a sense of the spaciousness of nature, of the vastness of time, of the dreadfulness of

> eternity, in Watts which is missing or less felt in Wesley . . . You constantly find Watts 'surveying' the whole realm of Nature and finding at the centre of it its crucified and dying Creator.[1]

Another aspect of that character is assessed by Erik Routley:

> Watts was the father, and also the liberator, of English hymnody, and the manner in which he used his new freedom was characteristic. He used it in order to express wonder . . . The quality which is common to all Watts's work . . . is this wonder, which is the essence of John Calvin's message. Let a man wonder and share his wonder with his fellows in the church - thus said Watts, and where did he get this but from the Psalms themselves? Where is there such cosmic vision, such pure and self-denying wonder as there?[2]

Second, we would reiterate what is meant by 'subjective focus'; it is when the true center of attention in the hymn is the singer himself (whether an individual or corporate personality): his feelings, perceptions, reactions, mood, personal states, in relation to the impact to a given reality or aspect of Christian faith which may also be sounded in the hymn and which may superficially seem to be its theme. Not only is that distinction to be made, but also one between this center and any direction-of-address in the form of the hymn; for the singer may express himself in either a 'vertical' or 'horizontal' direction (the latter including self-address, which is more a possibility in a subjective orientation than when discussed previously in relation to Book One).

This definition means that a hymn whose center of

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1. Bernard L. Manning, The Hymns of Wesley and Watts (London, 1942), p. 83.
2. Erik Routley, Hymns and Human Life (London, 1952), pp. 64-65.

attention remains outside the personality, even though Watts may have the singer(s) respond to that center in quite a personally intense manner, is not here regarded as an essentially subjective-focus hymn. As inferred in our discussion thus far of Books Two and Three, these objective-though-personal hymns are a large part of the 'vast majority' alluded to above.

We begin our sampling of hymns with a strong - for Watts - subjective focus, by referring once again to Book Two, Hymn III, which was quoted above on page 165 in comparison with a hymn on the same theme in Book One. The subjective content here is relatively modest, compared with some to follow below; yet note now a few details: 1) the center of attention is hardly upon the work of Christ, although it is present in minor references to him (vv. 1,3,4 and 5); it is not even upon the dead saint as a third-person entity, although one would assume from the title that this hymn was intended for use when the death of such a person was in the forefront of the congregation's consciousness; it is, in fact, upon the singer's response to the death, and it is a response of critical self-interrogation: "Why do we mourn?" (v.1); "Are we not tending upward too?" (v.2); "Why should we tremble?" (v.3); "Where should [they] rest, but with . . .?" (v.4). The point of the questioning seems to be for the congregation to call itself out of its grief to a positive, Christian apprehension of death, but it is the internal response of apprehending - and not just intellectually - which is the important matter here.

There follow below a trio of hymns which have in common the effect of Christ - his presence, absence, and cross - upon the state of the singer/subject:

Hymn L. Comfort under Sorrows and Pains

1 NOW let the Lord my Saviour smile,
And show my Name upon his Heart,
I would forget my Pains a while,
And in the Pleasure lose the Smart.

2 But Oh! it swells my Sorrows high
To see my blessed Jesus frown,
My Spirits sink, my Comforts die,
And all the Springs of Life are down.

3 Yet why, my Soul, why these Complaints?
Still while he frowns his Bowels move;
Still on his Heart he bears his Saints,
And feels their Sorrows and his Love.

4 My Name is printed on his Breast;
His Book of Life contains my Name;
I'd rather have it there imprest
Than in the bright Records of Fame.

5 When the last Fire burns all things here
Those letters shall securely stand,
And in the Lamb's fair Book appear
Writ by th' Eternal Father's Hand.

6 Now shall my Minutes smoothly run,
While here I wait my Father's Will;
My Rising and my Setting Sun
Roll gently up and down the Hill.

In verse three there is an address to the singer's own soul - a fairly common occurrence in Watts's subjective group of hymns. Here it must serve as a clue to the direction of the hymn's address generally, since otherwise it lacks specific address. The hymn is rather in the genre of a soliloquy or meditation, in this case on the immediate effect of Christ's smile or frown upon the singer's attitude and pre-occupation. This leads then to recollection of Christ's promises (vv. 3-5), and is concluded by an

expression of renewed confidence which overmasters the moods revealed in the first verses. One notes also that the soliloquy is occasioned by Christ's present "smile" or "frown": certainly mental perceptions by the singer.

Hymn CVII. The everlasting Absence of God intolerable.

1 THat awful Day will surely come,
Th' appointed Hour makes haste,
When I must stand before my Judge,
And pass the solemn Test.

2 Thou lovely Chief of all my Joys,
Thou Sovereign of my Heart,
How could I bear to hear thy Voice
Pronounce the sound, Depart?

3 The Thunder of that dismal Word
Would so torment my Ear,
'Twould tear my Soul asunder, Lord,
With most tormenting Fear.

4 What to be banish'd from my Life,
And yet forbid to die?
To linger in Eternal Pain,
Yet Death for ever fly?

5 O wretched State of deep Despair,
To see my God remove,
And fix my doleful Station where
I must not taste his Love?

6 Jesus, I throw my Arms around
And hang upon thy Breast;
Without a gracious Smile from thee
My Spirit cannot rest.

7 O tell me that my worthless Name
Is graven on thy Hands,
Show me some Promise in thy Book
Where my Salvation stands.

8 Give me one kind assuring Word
To sink my Fears again;
And chearfully my Soul shall wait
Her threescore Years and ten.

In this hymn the psychological scene is anticipation of judgment, and the hymn an expression of its

results on the singer's personal state. The latter is well exhibited through such words and phrases as "awful" (v.1); "How could I bear to hear . . .?"(v.2); "torment" and "tear my soul asunder" (v.3); "O wretched state of deep Despair" and "doleful" (v. 5). Up to this point, the hymn is in the form of singular address to God in declaration (of these feelings). It now culminates in petition - "tell me," "show me," "give me" (vv. 7-8). However, Godward address notwithstanding, there is really little doubt where the focus of the hymn is fixed.

Hymn CVI. Repentance at the Cross.

1 O If my Soul was form'd for Woe,
How would I vent my Sigh!
Repentance should like Rivers flow
From both my streaming Eyes.

2 'Twas for my Sins my dearest Lord
Hung on the cursed Tree,
And groan'd away a dying Life
For Thee, my Soul, for Thee.

3 O how I hate those Lusts of mine
That crucify'd my God,
Those Sins that pierc'd and nail'd his Flesh
Fast to the fatal Wood.

4 Yes, my Redeemer, they shall die,
My Heart has so decreed,
Nor will I spare the guilty Things
That made my Saviour bleed.

5 Whilst with a melting broken Heart
My murther'd Lord I view,
I'll raise Revenge against my Sins,
And slay the Murtherers too.

Like Hymn L, this hymn contains an address to the self ("For Thee, my Soul, for Thee" - v.2), but in this case it is replaced in verse four by an address (of declaration of intent) to Jesus ("My Redeemer"). After a vivid

contemplation of the structure of the soul in verse one, there is an objective statement of Christ's sacrifice encased in routine individual piety (v.2). Verse three is an angry expression of consequent self-indictment, leading to the firm resolve declared in verses four and five, though with "a melting broken Heart." But even with the objective, recollective element present (the meaning of the Cross), the true center of attention is its effect upon the believer/singer's determination to conquer sin.

The hymns numbered XV and XVI are actually one twelve-verse hymn divided in half, probably for practical convenience. Its overall title is "The Enjoyment of Christ; or, Delight in Worship." Rather than reproduce the entire hymn we quote those verses which dwell particularly on the subjective effects of the contemplation of Christ (whose attributes are the content of much of the remainder of the hymn(s)):

1 FAR from my Thoughts, vain World, be gone,
Let my Religious Hours alone:
Fain would my Eyes my Saviour see,
I wait a Visit, Lord, from thee.

2 My Heart grows warm with Holy Fire,
And kindles with a pure Desire:
Come my dear Jesus from above,
And feed my Soul with Heavenly Love.

7 LOrd, what a Heaven of Saving Grace
Shines thro' the Beauties of thy Face,
And lights our Passions to a Flame!
Lord, how we love thy charming Name!

8 When I can say, My God is mine,
When I can feel thy Glories shine,
I tread the World beneath my Feet,
And all that Earth calls Good, or Great.

10 Well, we shall quickly pass the Night,
To the fair Coasts of perfect Light;
Then shall our joyful Senses rove
O'er the dear Object of our Love.

Our final example is a short hymn which is nevertheless filled to the brim with subjective references. The direction-of-address is at first to "sad Thoughts," but then becomes a general declaration which is given an upward thrust at the very end:

Hymn LXXIII. Doubts scatter'd; or, Spiritual Joy restor'd.

1 HEnce from my Soul, sad Thoughts, be gone,
And leave me to my Joys,
My Tongue shall triumph in my God,
And make a joyful Noise.

2 Darkness and Doubts had vail'd my Mind,
And drown'd my Head in Tears,
Till Sovereign Grace with shining Rays
Dispell'd my gloomy Fears.

3 O what Immortal Joys I felt,
And Raptures all Divine,
When Jesus told me, I was his,
And my Beloved, mine.

4 In vain the Tempter frights my Soul,
And breaks my Peace in vain,
One Glimpse, dear Saviour, of thy Face
Revives my Joys again.

It will have been noticed that none of the examples given are from the Book Three hymns (the final doxologies being almost by definition objective). In these hymns for the Lord's Supper, Watts has chosen to remain basically objective, recollecting the presence of Christ in the celebration, and of his sacrifice behind it. Almost all are in the first-person plural or impersonal mode, although two of Watts's acknowledged masterpieces - "When I survey the wond'rous Cross" (VII) and "Nature with open Volume

stands"(X) - are the only two in Book Three to use the first-person singular exclusively. About two-thirds of the twenty-five hymns include some Godward address. Watts perhaps comes closest to a subjective focus in Hymn XIV, which combines Simeon's song, death, and the Lord's Supper themes into a post-Communion response as follows:

1 NOW have our Hearts embrac'd our God,
We would forget all earthly Charms,
And wish to die as Simeon wou'd
With his young Saviour in his Arms.

2 Our Lips should learn that joyful Song,
Were but our Hearts prepar'd like his,
Our Souls still willing to be gone,
And at thy Word depart in Peace.

3 Here we have seen thy Face, O Lord,
And view'd Salvation with our Eyes,
Tasted and felt the living Word,
The Bread descending from the Skies.

4 Thou hast prepar'd this dying Lamb,
Hast set his Blood before our Face,
To teach the Terrors of thy Name,
And show the Wonders of thy Grace.

5 His is our Light; our Morning Star
Shall shine on Nations yet unknown:
The Glory of thin Israel here,
And Joy of Spirits near the Throne.

When, however, one has examined examples such as these of the relatively modest subjective orientation in Watts's output, the question arises as to how such hymns functionally relate to corporate worship, for which "Hymns and Spiritual Songs" as a whole was intended.[1]

It will be recalled that in establishing the terms

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1. Watts does make an oblique reference to possible private use in a passage from the preface to "Hymns and Spiritual Songs" quoted above on pages 118-19. See also below, p.254.

and frame of reference for our study in the first section, the hymn was aligned primarily with 'outward' response; i.e., both 'upward' and 'horizontal' response. It was response to the 'downward' encountering action of God, and took the form of recollection, thanksgiving/praise, worship-as-proclamation, or existential participation in the content of recollection.[1]

This scheme has implied what up to this last group of hymns has been borne out: that the focus of the content of the hymned response has been outside the worshipper; that is, upon God and his work (past or present) as objective reality, though the worshipper's personal involvement and identification with the reality is not precluded - indeed, that was what Watts was attempting to further with his various alterations and additions in both "Psalms of David Imitated" and "Hymns and Spiritual Songs," as we have demonstrated. Furthermore, whether the actual address of the response is the (ascending) 'vertical' or the 'horizontal' does not necessarily determine or change the locus of the responsive center; e.g., the Puritan concern for instruction/edification was still focussed on a reality outside the personality.

But now, in this small minority of hymns in "Hymns and Spiritual Songs," along with the secondary features noted in relation to the Book One songs, we encounter the beginnings of a shift in that locus; or, more accurately, the establish-

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1. Above, pp. 10-14.

ment of a second locus beside the first: the feelings and personal states of the singer(s), not only as forces in the personality (along with the intellect) upon which the divine encounter makes its impact and by the agency of which some form of response is initiated, but also as subjects in themselves, to be analyzed, contemplated, and articulated, whether or not eventuating in some outward-centered response, as previously described (in Watts's case, it did so eventuate most of the time).

Is, then, such a subjective center of attention to be considered 'response' at all? Theoretically, one could say that any feeling or personal state - and especially one expressed, verbally or otherwise - is a response to some stimulus from without the personality, though the stimulus may be intangible, as with an 'inner Word.' However, in view of the fact that our concern is the communicational function of a hymn with such content, as sung in corporate worship, we must ask whether it is a response in that situation.

From the standpoint of liturgical development in England up to Watts's time, worship did not as a rule include this element of dwelling on the makeup of feelings and personal states.[1] One might of course cite the Quaker meeting, with

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1. On the Continent, however, it had become another matter, with the rise of pietism among Lutherans and Moravians. Davis notes that Watts was acquainted with Zinzendorf and the German court chaplain in London, Ziegenhagen (and through him, presumably, to the Lutheran pietist center at Halle); but all this was in Watts's mature years, after the writing of the hymns. See Arthur Paul Davis, Isaac Watts (London, 1948), p. 41.

its element of personal testimony to the Spirit's indwelling, but even that is still essentially centered on God's workings. Certainly the essentially austere and objective character of Calvinist worship was yet manifest in Independency around 1700, and particularly in a middle-class congregation such as Watts served in London. But if the subjective focus was not historically associated with English worship patterns, could it become so? The answer involves both communicational and theological considerations.

A re-reading of the subjective-tendency examples quoted reveals all directions of address - Godward, to the self, to others - both exclusively and in combination. Insofar as the subjective focus is associated with Godward address (in about two-thirds of the thirty-five hymns in the group), then it would seem that Watts was willing to consider the worshipper's feelings and states as a possible proper hymnic content to communicate Godward, as a part of general response, or as background to ascription, petition, or declaration. The phrases in the essay such as "breathing out our souls towards him" and "vent[ing] the inward devotion of our Spirits"[1] could be interpreted as his recognition of the possibility.

In the remainder of the group, there are addresses to the self (commonly "my soul") or to others, sometimes with no admixture of Godward address (in Hymn III of Book Two,

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1. Watts, Essay, pp. 5, 11.

however, there is a rhetorical address to the "nations"). In regard to self-address, while it may still technically be a response to encounter, and appropriate to private prayer, is it a response compatible with corporate worship, with its normally Godward direction-of-communication in response? If it is addressed to others, in a manner of sharing feelings, is that a 'horizontal' communicational traffic which qualifies as edification?

If we set beside these doubts the matter of the grammatical subject, we find that about two-thirds of the group, including all those with self-address, are in the first-person singular, half of them exclusively so;[1] the remainder are of course plural. Singular subject combined with self-address is altogether logical and expectable.[2] There are no examples of a singular/horizontal-address combination, except rhetorically to the "world" (X,XV) and "my Days"(XX). There is only one example of the combination of first-person plural with 'horizontal' address (hymn LXXXV - "ye humble Souls"). The remaining plurals are therefore connected with Godward address, though half have some singular admixture.

These incidences, both of direction-of-address and grammatical subject, suggest two things about Watts,vis-a-vis

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1. As with the incidences of Godward address in the group, this proportion is substantially higher than in Books Two-Three as a whole. See the tabulation above, p. 168.
2. See the Book Two hymns L, LXXIII, and CVI quoted above.

the subjective-focus possibility: 1) in that he did incorporate it, he apparently thought of it more as individual than corporate self-expression; the possibility we advanced earlier of the corporate-personality 'I', suggesting in this context a commonality of feelings and states in response to an awareness of a given content of encounter, seems a rather remote one, when one studies the hymns themselves - the corporateness would be in tension with the intimacy; there is, of course, the potential of the hymn to suggest (in a psychological sense) a feeling or state to an assembled congregation, which would be either a reversion to the initial author-to-singer(s) communication, or, in the singing, auto-suggestion, but that is another matter altogether;[1] and 2) that by mostly retaining a Godward address as an at least nominal or formal direction-of-communication for the subjective reflection, Watts was showing his basic faithfulness to the traditional lines of corporate worship (not forgetting, once again, how small a proportion of his total output we are here discussing).

Yet, having said all this, one is bound to recognize the advent, however modest and qualified at first, of two associated elements in congregational song: 1) a singular 'I-me-my' usage which is almost certainly individual in reference; and 2) the subjective center or focus, as yet side-by-side with the traditional objective focus of English

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1. See, inter alia, Pratt, Religious Consciousness; also, though dealing with a later period, S.G. Dimond, The Psychology of the Methodist Revival (London, 1926) pp. 118ff.

corporate worship.

That Watts was educated and lived in an increasingly rationalistic milieu, with its attendant individualistic emphasis, may be the fundamental cause of the first element's appearance, even in the setting of corporate worship.

As to the second element - the subjective center or focus - this may be of a piece with Watts's involvement in another area of worship:preaching. A.P. Davis, in his biography of Watts, discusses the similarities of Watts's preaching to that of the Puritans, which was "affectionate in that it appealed in the final analysis to a man's emotions" and "above all, Puritan preaching was experimental, that is, it tended to probe the individual conscience through the preacher's experimental knowledge of his own doubts, fears and hopes." Of Watts' relationship to this tradition he observes:

> Watts not only preached in the Puritan manner; he also preached Puritan subject-matter. "The Christian Sabbath," "The Knowledge of God by the Light of Nature," "God's Election," "Death a Blessing to the Saints," "Faith the Way to Salvation," "The Difference between the Law and the Gospel" - all typical seventeenth century subjects - were often touched on at Bury Street. And the evangelicalism inherent in the Puritan "applications" and "uses" assumed an even larger significance in Watts's sermons, for he showed to a great degree the tendency of Puritanism to soften in the eighteenth century into an emotional Protestantism which luxuriated in feeling.[1]

Insofar as this was the case, there is some obvious correspondence to a shift in the direction of subjective

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1. Davis, pp. 133-35.

focus in the hymns, for that is what Davis's somewhat pejorative word "luxuriated" conveys; the line between an appeal to and expression of a man's total response - including the emotions - to the Gospel, and an actual dwelling upon one's own emotional state, can be extremely fine indeed, and hence easily crossed. The hymns are an indication that Watts did so, however tentatively. The reference to preaching in this connection corresponds also to the concept of trajectory in communication, since both are at root concerned with communication to men - 'encounter,' whether (descending) vertical, 'horizontal,' or a combination thereof (as in preaching). Our consideration of the subjective element and focus in the hymnody of Watts has shown that it too can participate (even if only secondarily) in this aspect of Christian communication, through a potential impressive/suggestive role in relation to the feelings and states of the singer (vis-a-vis its traditional expressive/responsive role).

It is possible to understand Watts's 'crossing of the line' above as an evidence of trajectorial communication. That is to say, that his centering of the singer's attention upon his own feelings and states through poetic or descriptive allusion thereto - his appeal through an essentially cognitive medium (language) to an essentially non-cognitive area of the personality, toward a goal of a positive response of the singer to the divine activity and nature of which he has (cognitively) been made aware in worship - constitutes a form and example of trajectorial communication, both in its

overall conception and motive, and in the artistic employment of the language medium to impress the suggested feeling and state, and to express, as Tillich has said, "the hidden depths of the personality."[1]

The danger in such a communicational employment of hymnody (or of any other component of worship, for that matter, including preaching) is that the goal of a positive, Godward response may be lost sight of; the self-contemplation and -expression may become the true goal. In that case, the trajectory would have gone awry, from a theological point of view.

This, of course, was not the whole Watts. He was a figure-in-transition in a period-of-transition, a man with one foot in the seventeenth century and the other in the eighteenth. Davis summarizes this underlying ambivalence:

> Watts . . . was often inconsistent in his various beliefs, for he was an ingrained compromiser. He confided too often in the pragmatic explanation to rescuse him from a philosophical dilemma. But his impulses were usually right even if he failed on occasion to justify them rationally. Watts accepted Locke's philosophy, but he also clung to the theory of "innate ideas"; he wrote a Guide to Prayer to tone down dissenter enthusiasm in prayer, but he published An Exhortation to Ministers to arouse more warmth in nonconformist preaching; he rejected the Trinity of the Athanasian Creed because it was illogical; yet he refused to be classed with the Unitarians; he exalted reason in his non-religious essays and depreciated the sufficiency of reason in the religious he had the usual Neoclassic horror of enthusiasm, but he spent a lifetime trying to infuse it into the religion of his age; he believed in the certain election of a chosen few, but at the same time he insisted that all men have free will.[2]

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1. Above, p. 21.

2. Davis, p. 222.

That tells us that there is a potential risk of imbalance in placing too much weight on these few of Watts's hymns which dwell on the worshipper/singer's feelings and personal states. But, as the remainder of our study will show, it was undoubtedly the 'thin end of the wedge.'

To right any possible imbalance here, we close this chapter with one of Watts's many objectively-focussed hymns.

Book II. Hymn LXXII. The Lord's Day; or, The Resurrection of Christ.

1 BLest Morning, whose young dawning Rays
  Behold our rising God,
That saw him triumph o're the Dust,
  And leave his dark Abode.

2 In the cold Prison of a Tomb
  The dead Redeemer lay,
Till the revolving Skies had brought
  The third, th' appointed Day.

3 Hell and the Grave unite their Force
  To hold our God in vain,
The sleeping Conqueror arose,
  And burst their feeble Chain.

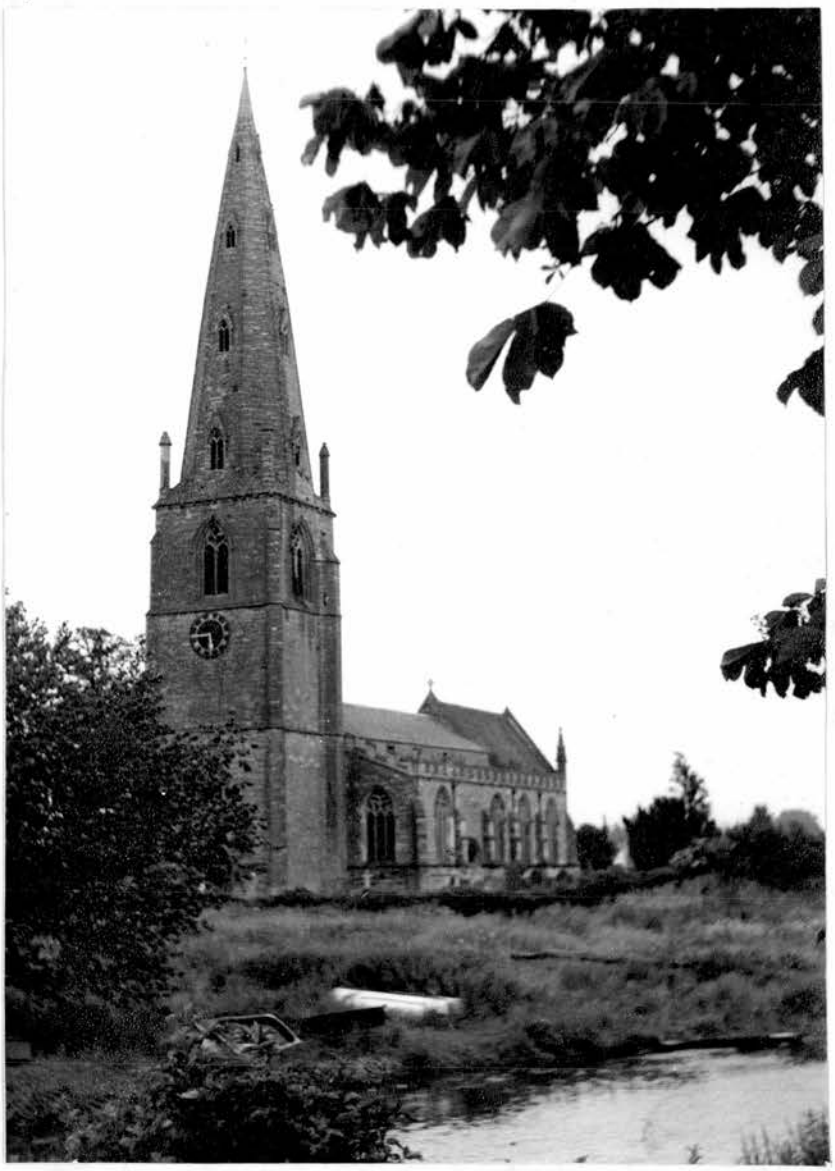
4 To thy great Name, Almighty Lord,
  These Sacred Hours we pay,
And loud Hosannas shall proclaim
  The Triumph of the Day.

5 Salvation and Immortal Praise
  To our Victorious King,
Let Heaven, and Earth, and Rocks, and Seas,
  With glad Hosannas ring.

CHAPTER THREE

DIDACTICISM AND SUBJECTIVITY: THE "OLNEY HYMNS"

PLATE II



THE PARISH CHURCH OF SS. PETER & PAUL
OLNEY, BUCKINGHAMSHIRE

John Newton was Curate here,
1764-1779

(The church is fourteenth century,
and is situated by the River Ouse)

CHAPTER THREE

DIDACTICISM AND SUBJECTIVITY: THE "OLNEY HYMNS"

I. The Historical Background.

A. The Evangelical Revival

In English church history, the second half of the eighteenth century was dominated by what is now termed the 'Evangelical Revival.' It is an 'umbrella' title for three inter-related yet distinguishable movements. All of them had their origins within the Anglican ethos, although Dissenters also became involved. Eventually, two of the groups formally entered the ranks of Dissent, though that was not the desire of their leading figures.

The motivation for this movement (or, these movements) was a determination to revitalize British Christianity in both head and heart, but more the latter. That in turn stemmed from a generally negative assessment of the state of the Church of England (as indeed, of the nation generally) by and at mid-century.

While we cannot here enter into a detailed account of that state, a few summary comments are in order.[1] In relation to the content of the church's faith, the Church of England had had to weather the rise of 'Natural Religion'

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1. See the Bibliography for works treating the Evangelical Revival.

and Enlightenment deism, already mentioned in connection with the milieu of Isaac Watts.[1] Superficially, the church was the victor in this theological/intellectual battle, but it left her spiritually depleted (as Puritanism had been left half-a-century previous), tired of controversy, and with her own confessional consciousness somewhat diluted. As a result, the Hanoverian church tended to 'play safe' by preaching morality, informed by rational common sense. Institutionally, the church was plagued by such problems as absentee clergy, multiple livings, clerical status-seeking, inequitable distribution of funds, and a parochial system no longer adequate to the growing urban concentration of a nation undergoing a profound industrial and social revolution. Along with much of Dissent, she was largely a church of the rising middle class, and not particularly desirous of ministering to a new, urban type of working class, also rising. There was much spiritual laxity and aridity in her life. The Puritan/Calvinist prophetic vitality of the past century had been quite thoroughly exorcised.

That, at least, was how the 'Evangelicals' saw the situation. Basically, they proposed to counter these failings by an injection of that emphasis on personal or individual faith and commitment broadly labelled 'pietism.'[2]

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1. Above, pp. 108-09.

2. One uses the term 'pietism' with slight trepidation, because nowadays it carries some opprobrium in certain circles, as a result of over-generalizing on the basis of later, decadent forms thereof. That opinion is not behind our use of the term here, pertinent to the Evangelical Revival.

It was not unrelated to the pietism already in full spate on the Continent, particularly among Lutherans and Moravians. One could, in fact, trace a line beginning at Halle, the famed center of Francke's Lutheran pietism; through the Moravianism of Herrnhut (Zinzendorf was educated at Halle);[1] to London's Fetter Lane, where a Moravian-related 'meeting' numbered among its early members (for a time) John and Charles Wesley; Selina, Countess of Huntingdon; and other Englishmen who were to become 'Evangelicals' or 'Methodists.'

To be sure, theirs was a pietism adapted to the English scene and temperament, and generally eschewing certain accompaniments of Continental pietism, such as quietism and mysticism. But it did share a fundamental tenet of the Continental pietists, at least in theory; viz., that it would work within the existing institutional church, on the '<u>ecclesiola in ecclesia</u>' principle, rather than organize as a new church body, in dissent. They would reform or revitalize from the 'inside out,' as it were. That, of course, was the original non-separatist Puritan design a century before, and is what distinguishes the Evangelical Revival from the Quakers and sects of illuministic bent.

We must now enumerate and briefly describe the three groups which constituted the English Evangelical Revival.

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1. Ronald Knox, in his study <u>Enthusiasm</u> (Oxford, 1950; pp. 403-08.), maintains, that despite the geographical inference of their name, the Moravians owe most of their origins, theologically, to Halle and the Lutheran pietists, and very little to the Hussite strain in Moravia and Bohemia.

They were: 1) the Methodists of John Wesley; 2) the so-called 'Calvinistic Methodists' of George Whitefield and Lady Huntingdon; and 3) the Anglican Evangelicals.

1) John Wesley (1703-1791) was an Anglican who sincerely intended to remain within the established church. His followers were to form 'societies,' not congregations; they were to continue active (or become so) in their local parishes. But his movement's outreach to and acceptance of non-Anglicans (including the unchurched), plus trouble with the establishment over ordination and lay-preaching, eventually forced separation in 1784. Practical doctrine, vis-a-vis 'speculative' or theoretical doctrine, was important in Wesley's understanding of his task, and while he was generally orthodox theologically, he was strongly Arminian in regard to election (but by this time the Church of England was mildly so anyway). To this he added the characteristically pietistic emphasis on a dateable conversion experience, personal Christianity, and subjective feeling; but he was no friend of sentimentalism, mysticism,[1] or antinomian forms of 'enthusiasm.' The fruits of faith were in the realms both of personal holiness and discipline, and social action, the latter characterized by charitable work and by an explicit mission to the often-unchurched working class.

2) The 'Calvinistic Methodists' (a retrospective title) differed theologically from John Wesley at the point

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1. In relation to mysticism, however, our statement must be qualified. The matter is taken up in the detached note to this chapter, in a further consideration of the subjective focus in the hymnody of the Evangelical Revival.

of his Arminianism. Yet their own supposedly Calvin-adhering doctrine of election was so modified (as it was in Isaac Watts a generation earlier) that one could easily wonder what the argument was about. George Whitefield (1714-1770) was the most prominent figure and preacher in this group, but its guiding personality was Selina, Countess of Huntingdon (1707-1791), a rather domineering woman who appointed like-minded Anglican clergy as her personal chaplains, ministering mainly to the aristocratic class in her proprietary chapels. This loophole in the polity of the established church was closed to her in 1779, after which time her Anglican clergy largely deserted her, and her chapels entered Dissent as "The Countess of Huntingdon's Connexion." Because of its nominally Calvinistic theology (albeit Methodist in most other respects), this group was the most open of the three to Dissent collectively. The Countess's theological college in Trevecca, Wales, was willing to train men for Dissenting as well as Anglican ministries. But this interest was only mildly reciprocated, though certainly many individual Dissenters became Evangelicals of one type or another.

3) The Anglican Evangelicals were not unlike the above groups in motivation and orientation, but they retained to a greater degree than the others an appreciation of, and attachment to, the Anglican tradition and institutional polity. As a result, Anglican Evangelical clergy remained identified with the established church as parochial clergy, and did not generally itinerate (and frowned on those

who did, such as the Methodists). Their concern was thus more local in scope, and there was little by way of organization as a movement, nor was there any one acknowledged leader until perhaps the great Charles Simeon of Cambridge (1759-1836), who came on the scene somewhat later.[1] It is from this group that we have selected a pair of hymnodists as fairly representative of the Evangelical Revival in regard to hymnody.

It is important to note that these three groups not only had much in common in both 'matter' and 'manner,' but also shared personnel and frequently conferred together as fellow workers in common cause; e.g., some Anglican Evangelicals were also Lady Huntingdon's chaplains; and, at least in early days, George Whitefield and the Wesley brothers were quite close personally (it was Whitefield who apparently suggested open-air preaching to John Wesley); also, John Wesley once paid an appreciative visit to the Dissenting academy of Philip Doddridge at Northampton. In this light, definitions and descriptions of these groups in the movement run the risk of being too neat for historical reality.

B. The Evangelical Revival and Hymnody

We next need to ask after the use of hymnody by each of the afore-mentioned groups. Certainly the hymnody of

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1. John Newton, one of the Anglican Evangelical 'fathers,' in his later years as rector of St. Mary Woolnoth, London, did apparently have the status of 'elder statesman.'

the Methodists, chiefly written by Charles Wesley (1707-1788), was one of the great trademarks of that movement. It was used in the open-air meetings, in the society meetings, and, like all eighteenth-century hymnody, as a resource for private devotion. John Wesley also wrote a few hymns and translated a fair number from the German tradition;[1] together the brothers edited and published many different collections of their work.

The 'Calvinistic Methodists' contributed the least of the groups to the enduring corpus of eighteenth-century hymnody, seemingly content to combine the Dissenting use of Watts, et al, (George Whitefield was an especial admirer of Watts) with the developing Wesleyan tradition. Later on, however, the Huntingdon Connexion published official hymn-books which were commended to all their meetings.

Because they remained more strictly within the Anglican ambit, the Anglican Evangelicals at first tended to maintain that church's steadfast reliance on metrical psalmody (Old or New Versions) for congregational song in stated worship. But it was an Anglican Evangelical, John Newton, who became to Anglicanism what Watts was to Independency: his "Olney Hymns" (written with William Cowper) first seriously challenged the hegemony of psalmody, although the air was not effectively cleared on the issue until the Cotterill test-case in 1819-20.[2] It is in fact

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1. Concerning the translations, see the Detached Note at the end of this chapter.

2. Thomas Cotterill was an Anglican clergyman who had published several editions of his hymn/psalm collection while

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these Newton-Cowper "Olney Hymns" which we shall be examining later in this chapter.

In the course of the descriptions above, mention has been made of two fundamental ingredients in the Evangelical Revival's makeup: doctrinal concern (with strong biblical backing), and pietism. It was these ingredients and their implications which informed the movement's understanding of the communicational functions of hymnody.

A concern for practical doctrine on the part of a leader implies, inter alia, a body of cognitive knowledge to be taught and learned by the people whom he would lead. This need to teach was reinforced by the fact that many of the people being sought out by the Revival could not be assumed to have any thorough knowledge of either the Bible or doctrine, unlike the urban Independents whom Watts served. If and when this didactic function is assigned to hymnody (though not exclusively thereto), we have in some measure returned to the seventeenth-century Puritan concern to make the psalter (and later, all Scripture) intelligible to the singer/layman. In either historical case, the hymn is seen then as being addressed to the singer by the leader. It is essentially an impressive communicative function.

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serving in Staffordshire. He then removed to St. Paul's, Sheffield, where in 1819 the eighth edition was published, and its legality challenged by some parishioners. The case came before the consistory court of the Archbishop of York. The upshot was that, with the Archbishop's (Vernon Harcourt) sympathetic mediation, hymnody's de facto status in Anglicanism virtually became de jure. For details, see the more comprehensive histories of hymnody; e.g., Benson, English Hymn, pp. 355-56.

The communication is from the leader to the singer; or possibly, if the language and content are sufficiently biblical, from God to the singer; i.e., encounter, whether technically 'horizontal' or descending 'vertical.'

To be sure, what was noted in the previous chapter about suggestion/auto-suggestion - when it is realized that it is actually the singer or congregation singing to him- or itself - applies here as well. But it is not at this point the suggestion of a non-cognitive feeling or state, as noted with Watts.[1] It is, as already stated, more akin to the Puritan cognitive approach. Of course, an expressive component - the celebration of doctrine by singing it corporately - may also be secondarily present.

On the other hand, the pietistic element in the Evangelical Revival contributed to a subjective interest and individualistic emphasis, both of which we saw in embryo in Watts's hymns. The conversion experience important to the pietistic view represents a spiritual/psychological struggle and subsequent elation and peace which are intensely felt and often emotion-producing. The employment of hymnody here would be, as in Watts, essentially responsive-expressive, though the psychological suggestion or auto-suggestion of feelings and states to the singer, especially in the social context of either a mass revival or an intimate prayer meeting, would also be present.

Thus could hymnody find itself potentially involved in

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1. Above, pp. 158-59.

both the content and the form of the Revival movement; and in point of fact this potential and dual communicational function were realized in both the Methodist and Anglican Evangelical employments of hymnody.

The Methodist movement and its hymnody is a subject of vast proportions. Charles Wesley wrote upward of 8000 hymns, depending somewhat upon where one makes the distinction between hymn and verse. Because of its size and historical importance, it has attracted considerable scholarly attention,as a subject complete in itself.[1] For these reasons it was felt advisable, for our present purpose, to turn for illustration to a more modest example of the Revival's hymnody - to, in fact, the "Olney Hymns" mentioned above. In doing so, we are convinced that, while Wesleyan hymnody clearly dominates the scene (in retrospect), and while Charles Wesley is surely entitled to the high place he shares with Isaac Watts in the history and appreciation of English hymnody, yet the "Olney Hymns" can adequately exhibit the communicational functions of hymnody in the Revival which we have adumbrated. We shall, however, be making some relevant allusions to the Wesleyan understandings and uses of hymnody, at appropriate places in the discussion.

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1. See the Bibliography for studies of Methodist hymnody.

II. The "Olney Hymns"

In early 1779 there was published a collection of hymns entitled "Olney Hymns." The prime mover in this project (and the author of eighty per cent of the hymns in it) was the Rev. John Newton (1725-1807), curate of the Anglican parish at Olney, Buckinghamshire from 1764-1779. He was assisted in the writing aspect of the enterprise by the poet William Cowper (1731-1800), who had come to live at Olney because of Newton's reputation. It was the latter's intention that the former's contribution be a greater share of the total than the twenty per cent that actually resulted. But the return of the outward manifestations of Cowper's mental illness forced the reduction (and consequent increase of Newton's share). In any case, the basic concepts of the purpose and function of the hymns in the parish life at Olney would be Newton's, for it was in this quite local situation that the hymns were intended to be used.

A. Newton's Contributions

John Newton came into the ministry out of a sordid past,[1] relatively late in life (he was thirty-nine), and without a university or even a theological education. He was nonetheless an articulate and prolific writer, with

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1. For Newton's pre-Olney years, one may refer to his autobiography (included in several editions of the "Olney Hymns"), and Bernard Martin, John Newton (London, 1950).

published autobiography, private letters, counselling correspondence, tracts, sermons, and discourses.[1] But the fact that in all his published work there is very little that deals with hymnody generally or the "Olney Hymns" specifically, suggests that hymnwriting was not a continuing major interest in his ministry, to be analyzed, commented upon,and commended to others, at least in print. Rather, it is likely that he saw hymns in the less abstract context of parish life, with the need for functional tools and techniques therein, since he was first and foremost an active, conscientious, practical parish pastor. Still, in this context, hymns were apparently useful enough that he continued to compose them over a period of at least a decade, from 1769 almost to their publication as a collection in 1779.[2]

Therefore, with this absence of explicit writing concerning his or any hymns and their function, we must turn to the larger category of Newton's concept of the ministry as a whole. We might well begin by referring to the brief and non-technical preface which he wrote for the

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1. James Stephen, in his Ecclesiastical Biography (London, 1872, p. 407), undoubtedly states a truth when he observes that Newton's problem was that he did not sufficiently discriminate between private and public utterance. This is epitomized in his publishing of letters to his wife while both were yet alive.

2. Josiah Bull states that Newton and Cowper each wrote a hymn for the first meeting at the Great House of the Sunday evening prayer meeting. This was in 1769, and is the first mention of the hymns in his work. As it is assumed that Cowper was to be in on the project from the beginning, it could not have begun before his arrival in Olney in 1767. At the other end, chronologically, Hymn LXVII, Book Two, bears the date of 10 February, 1779, the year of publication (John Newton [London, c. 1868], p. 166).

"Olney Hymns." There we find these two statements:

> A desire of promoting the faith and comfort of sincere Christians . . . was . . . [a] motive to this undertaking.
>
> . . . and while my hand can write, and the tongue speak, it will be the business and pleasure of my life, to aim at promoting their growth and establishment in the grace of our God and Saviour.[1]

The common word is the verb 'promote,' used first in relation to the hymns, and then as descriptive of his ministry in general. The objects of this verb (that which is being 'promoted') are, respectively, "faith and comfort" and "growth and establishment in grace." This dual reference from the preface could be supplemented by a line from an apparently early sermon at Olney, where he observes that a minister is "to promote the knowledge of grace and practice of holiness."[2]

This verb and its various objects could be taken as a guide to Newton's concept of the ministry, and especially the basic relationship of minister to congregation, viz., that he sees himself as a promoter, furthering faith, comfort, growth, establishment, knowledge, and holiness. What is meant here is not the modern connotation of hucksterism and the 'hard sell,' but rather the sense of earnestly and diligently advancing and commending a faith to others. For Newton then, hymns have a function in this 'promotional' design. Already implicit here is a basic direction of

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1. Olney Hymns (2d ed., London, 1781), preface, pp. vi and viii.
2. John Newton, Collected Works (7 vols; London, 1824), II, 363.

communication from himself to his congregation in exhortation and/or instruction.

In broad strokes, Newton enlarges on both the promoting methods and the content of the faith itself in his first sermon at St. Mary Woolnoth, London, to which he went as rector, from Olney, at the very end of 1779. It can be assumed to be broadly applicable to his Olney ministry as well:

> The Bible is the grand repository of the truths which it will be the business and the pleasure of my life to set before you. It is the complete system of divine truth, to which nothing can be added, and from which nothing can be taken, with impunity. Every attempt to disguise or soften any branch of this truth, in order to accommodate it to the prevailing taste around us, either to avoid the displeasure, or to court the favor, of our fellow mortals, must be an affront to the majesty of God, and an act of treachery to men. My conscience bears me witness, that I mean to speak the truth among you. . . . I am to enlarge on the declarations of Scripture, and of the Articles concerning the depravity of fallen man, the evil of sin, the method of salvation by grace through faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. I am to bear testimony to the dignity and excellency of the Redeemer's person and characters, the suitableness of his offices, the efficacy of his blood, and obedience to death on behalf of sinners, and his glory as Head of the Church, and Lord of heaven and earth. I am to set before you the characters, obligations, and privileges of those who believe in his name; and to prove that the doctrines of the grace of God are doctrines according to godliness, which, though they may be abused by men of corrupt minds, have in themselves, when rightly understood, a direct and powerful tendency to enforce universal obedience to the commands of God and to promote the peace and welfare of civil society. I am likewise to warn all who hear me, of the sin and danger of rejecting the great salvation revealed by the Gospel. These will be the subjects of my ministry . . . But the cause of truth itself may be discredited by improper management; and therefore, the Scripture, which furnishes us with subject-matter for our ministry, and teaches us what we are to say, is equally explicit as to the temper and spirit in which we are to speak. Though I had the knowledge of all mysteries, and the tongue of an angel

> to declare them, I could hope for little acceptance or usefulness, unless I was to speak "in love" . . . This love which my heart bears, I offer as a plea for that earnestness and importunity which I must use. I came not to amuse you with subjects of opinion or uncertainty, or even with truths of a cold, speculative, uninteresting nature . . . but to speak the truths of God, truths of the utmost importance to the welfare of your souls in time and in eternity.[1]

To "set before," "enlarge on," "bear testimony," "prove," "warn": the implied approach here is one of firm certainty of faith, imparting same by instruction and witness to those who lack it, whether entirely, or in degree insufficient for conversion. The situation is saved from a patronizing, superior-inferior polarity by a) Newton's lack of self-conscious pride in his own certainty of faith; and b) by the caveat to himself; he must always speak "in love." The tenor of his writings and the testimony of others to his character bear out these qualifications. Nevertheless,the image here projected is essentially that of promotion-by-instruction, however sincerely or lovingly meted. Certainly the doctrinal concern of the Evangelical Revival as discussed above, is plainly evident in this statement, as is also a distinct preference for applied vis-a-vis speculative truth (a preference also evident in John Wesley, and to a lesser extent in Charles).

A final quotation confirms this basically didactic and hortatory understanding of the ministry, but at the same time surrounds it with some characteristically pietistic concerns of the Evangelical Revival:

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1. Ibid., V, 130 ff.

> A parochial minister, who lives among his people, who sees and converses with them frequently, and exemplifies his doctrine in their view by his practice, having knowledge of their states, trials, growths, and dangers, suits himself to their various occasions, and, by the blessing of God, builds them up, and brings them forward in truth and holiness. He is instrumental in forming their experience: he leads them to a solid, orderly, scriptural knowledge of divine things . . . He lives with them as father with his children.[1]

A reading of Newton's published sermons shows his normal preaching to be expository in format, breaking down and examining a text in some detail, and often concluding with a relatively brief hortatory application of the text. His style, at least in print, is fairly calm and objective. Judgment and warning are not wanting, but neither are they couched in excessively minatory style.

Turning now to Newton's hymns, we find this didactic, promotional motif borne out. The 348 hymns in the Olney collection are divided into three 'books.' Book One of 141 items (118 by Newton), is headed "On Select Passages of Scripture," and is arranged according to the biblical organization, with fifty-seven per cent from the Old Testament (considerably higher than the thirty-eight per cent in Book One of Watts's "Hymns and Spiritual Songs"). Book Two, of 100 items (90 by Newton), is entitled "Occasional Subjects," further categorized as "Seasons," "Ordinances," "Providences," and "Creation." Book Three, of 107 items (75 by Newton) has the title "On the Rise, Progress, Changes

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1. John Newton, Cardiphonia (Edinburgh, 1839), pp. 406-07.

and Comforts of the Spiritual Life," with eight categories: "Solemn Addresses to Sinners," "Seeking, Pleading, and Hoping," "Conflict," "Comfort," "Dedication and Surrender," "Cautions," "Praise," and "Short Hymns."

Book One

On the whole, the hymns in Book One combine narrative and exhortation in varying proportions. Depending on the latter, these hymns may be gathered into three categories. In the first, a biblical event or passage is recited, frequently with expository additions; a final hortatory verse or two makes the practical application:

Hymn V - Lot in Sodom. (Gen. xiii. 10)[1]

1 HOW hurtful was the choice of Lot,
Who took up his abode
(Because it was a fruitful spot)
With them who fear'd not GOD!

2 A prisoner he was quickly made,
Bereav'd of all his store;
And, but for Abraham's timely aid,
He had return'd no more.

3 Yet still he seem'd resolv'd to stay,
As if it were his rest;
Altho'gh their sins from day to day
His righteous soul distress'd.

4 While he stray'd with anxious mind,
Expos'd to scorn and strife;
At last he left his all behind,
And fled to save his life.

5 In vain his sons-in-law he warn'd,
They thought he told his dreams;
His daughters, too, of them had learn'd,
And perish'd in the flames.

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1. This and all subsequent quotations of the "Olney Hymns" are according to the second edition (London, 1781).

6 His wife escap'd a little way,
But dy'd for looking back:
Does not her case to pilgrims say
"Beware of growing slack?"

7 Yea, Lot himself could ling'ring stand,
Tho' vengeance was in view;
'Twas mercy pluck'd him by the hand,
Or he had perish'd too.

8 The doom of Sodom will be ours,
If to the earth we cleave:
LORD, quicken all our drowsy pow'rs,
To flee to thee and live.

Hymn LXXXVIII - Woman of Canaan. (Matt. xv. 22-28)

1 Pray'r an answer will obtain,
Tho' the LORD a while delay;
None shall seek his face in vain,
None be empty sent away.

2 When the woman come[1] from Tyre,
And for help to JESUS sought;
Tho' he granted her desire,
Yet at first he answer'd not.

3 Could she guess at his intent,
When he to his follow'rs said,
"I to Israel's sheep am sent,
Dogs must not have childrens' bread."

4 She was not of Israel's seed,
But of Canaan's wretched race,
Thought herself a dog indeed;
Was not this a hopeless case?

5 Yet altho' from Canaan sprung,
Tho' a dog herself she stil'd;
She had Israel's faith and tongue,
And was own'd for Abraham's child.

6 From his words she draws a plea;
Tho' unworthy children's bread,
'Tis enough for one like me,
If with crumbs I may be fed.

7 JESUS then his heart reveal'd,
"Woman canst thou thus believe
I to thy petition yield,
All that thou canst wish, receive."

8 'Tis a pattern set for us,
How we ought to wait and pray;
None who plead and wrestle thus
Shall be empty sent away.

1. Sic!

In a second category the elements of narrative and exhortation/application are more equally represented, and often intermixed throughout the hymn; both in structure and parallelism of thought.

Hymn XI - Plenty in time of dearth. (Gen. xli. 56)

1 MY soul once had its plenteous years,
And throve, with peace and comfort fill'd,
Like the fat kine and ripen'd ears,
Which Pharaoh in his dream beheld.

2 With pleasing frames and grace receiv'd,
With means and ordinances fed;
How happy for a while I liv'd,
And little fear'd the want of bread.

3 But famine came and left no sign,
Of all the plenty I had seen;
Like the dry ears and half-starv'd kine,
I then look'd wither'd, faint and lean.

4 To Joseph the Egyptians went,
To JESUS I made known my case;
He, when my little stock was spent,
Open'd his magazine of grace.

5 For he the time of dearth foresaw,
And made provision long before;
That famish'd souls, like me, might draw,
Supplies from his unbounded store.

6 Now on his bounty I depend,
And live from fear of dearth secure;
Maintain'd by such a mighty friend,
I cannot want till he is poor.

7 O sinners hear his gracious call!
His mercy's door stands open wide;
He has enough to feed you all,
And none who come shall be deny'd.

Hymn CVI - The importunate widow. (Luke xviii. 1-7)

1 OUR LORD, who knows full well
The heart of ev'ry saint,
Invites us, by a parable,
To pray and never faint.

2 He bows his gracious ear,
We never plead in vain;
Yet we must wait, till he appear,
And pray, and pray, again.

3 Tho' unbelief suggest,
  Why should we longer wait?
He bids us never give him rest,
  But be importunate.

4 'Twas thus a widow poor,
  Without support or friend,
Beset the unjust judge's door,
  And gain'd, at last, her end.

5 For her he little car'd,
  As little for the laws;
Nor GOD, nor man, did he regard,
  Yet he espous'd her cause.

6 She urg'd him day and night,
  Would no denial take;
At length he said, "I'll do her right,
  For my own quiet sake."

7 And shall not JESUS hear
  His chosen, when they cry?
Yes, tho' he may awhile forbear,
  He'll help them from on high.

8 His nature, truth, and love,
  Engage him on their side;
When they are griev'd, his bowels move,
  And can they be deny'd?

9 Then let us earnest be,
  And never faint in pray'r;
He loves our importunity,
  And makes our cause his care.

In the third category, the hortatory/applicatory material becomes dominant, and the Scripture text/narrative recedes, sometimes to little more than the motto over the printed text:

Hymn X - My name is JACOB. (Gen. xxxii. 27)

1 NAY, I cannot let Thee go,
Till a blessing thou bestow;
Do not turn away thy face,
Mine's an urgent pressing case.

2 Dost thou ask me, who I am?
Ah, my LORD, thou know'st my name!
Yet the question gives a plea,
To support my suit with thee.

3 Thou didst once a wretch behold,
In rebellion blindly bold;
Scorn thy grace, thy pow'r defy,
That poor rebel, LORD, was I.

4 Once a sinner near despair,
Sought thy mercy-seat by pray'r;
Mercy heard and set him free,
LORD, that mercy came to me.

5 Many years have pass'd since then
Many changes I have seen;
Yet have been upheld till now,
Who could hold me up but thou?

6 Thou hast help'd in ev'ry need,
This emboldens me to plead;
After so much mercy past,
Canst thou let me sink at last?

7 No--I must maintain my hold,
'Tis thy goodness makes me bold;
I can no denial take,
When I plead for JESU'S sake.

Hymn LXXIX - What think ye of CHRIST? (Matt. xxii. 42)

1 What think you of CHRIST? is the test
To try both your state and your scheme;
You cannot be right in the rest,
Unless you think rightly of him.
As JESUS appears in your view,
As he is beloved or not;
So GOD is disposed to you,
And mercy or wrath are your lot.

2 Some take him a creature to be,
A man, or an angel at most;
Sure these have not feelings like me,
Nor know themselves wretched and lost:
So guilty, or helpless, am I,
I durst not confide in his blood,
Nor on his protection rely,
Unless I were sure he is GOD.

3 Some stile him a Saviour, in word,
But mix their own works with his plan;
And hope he his help will afford,
When they have done all that they can:
If doings prove rather too light
(A little, they own, they may fail)
They purpose to make up full weight,
By casting his name in the scale.

4 Some stile him the pearl of great price,
And say he's the fountain of joys;
Yet feed upon folly and vice,
And cleave to the world and its toys:
Like Judas, the Saviour they kiss,
And, while they salute him, betray;
Ah! what will profession like this
Avail in his terrible day?

5 If ask'd, what of JESUS I think?
Tho' still my best thoughts are but poor;
I say, he's my meat and my drink,
My life, and my strength, and my store,
My Shepherd, my Husband, my Friend,
My Saviour from sin and from thrall;
My hope from beginning to end,
My Portion, my LORD, and my All.

Parenthetically, one might note the basically simple vocabulary used in the examples above. In his preface, Newton states that "Perspicuity, simplicity, and ease, should be chiefly attended to." The hymns, after all, were "designed . . . for the use of plain people."[1] For Newton himself, at least, this was no doubt wise self-counsel, for Olney was rather a cultural backwater, populated by lace-makers and farmers in chronic economic straits.[2] One would not imagine, for example, that the residents of Olney could readily identify with the style of Charles Wesley's later period, with its Latin-based vocabulary and poetic allusions and figures.

One might also note the lack of careful poetic constructions. This also was deliberate: "There is a style

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1. Olney Hymns, Preface, p. vii.
2. Cowper's well-known description: "Olney is a populous place, inhabited chiefly by the half-starved and the ragged of the Earth. . ." (Letters of Cowper [London, 1827], p. 164).

and manner suited to the composition of hymns, which may be more successfully, or at least more easily attained by a versifier than a poet . . . the imagery and colouring of poetry, if admitted at all, should be indulged very sparingly, and with great judgement."[1] As would be expected, Cowper's contributions show more attention to this matter. However, Newton was not averse to letting the biblical imagery shine through, as in his well-known "Glorious things of thee are spoken" (Book One, Hymn LX).[2]

Here, then in these biblical-narrative-cum-hortatory-application hymns of Book One we see the manifestation in Newton of the Evangelical Revival's broad concern for practical doctrine as something to be taught and learned.

This function of hymnody was shared by John Wesley. In the preface to the 1780 'Large Hymnbook' ("A Collection of Hymns for the Use of the People called Methodists") he says:

> . . .It is large enough to contain all the scriptural truths of our most holy religion, whether speculative or practical: yea, to illustrate them all, and to prove them both by Scripture and reason. And this is done in a regular order. The Hymns are not carelessly jumbled together, but carefully ranged under proper heads, according to the experience of real Christians. So that this book is in effect a little body of experimental and practical divinity.[3]

J. Ernest Rattenbury considers John Wesley's use

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1. Olney Hymns, preface, pp. vii-viii.
2. Below, p. 238.
3. Collection of Hymns for the use of the People called Methodists (London, 1780), John Wesley's preface, p. iv.

of the term "speculative" to be equivalent to 'theoretical' (doctrine), for which Wesley had little use. He concludes:

> But does this mean that he thought Speculative Divinity was of no account? Well, he gave his people as much as he thought good for them; hymns, he thought, were the best means of teaching it; while he used the Trinitarian hymns of Charles for the purpose of filling up a notable gap in his own teaching, he cared most for practical experimental hymns which implied the great doctrines they did not directly teach. The practical doctrines of salvation were taught clearly and definitely. Charles was rarely speculative unless at the same time he was practical. The Wesleys stood for experimental religion, but they believed the doctrines in which they had been trained, and vivified them by their own experience. The hymns they wrote and used, even when not directly theological, were so weighted with doctrine that theology filtered through them into the minds of the people.[1]

and further, of Charles Wesley, Erik Routley notes:

> . . . his purpose in writing them was threefold; to provide a body of Christian teaching, to provide material for public praise, and to objectify his rich personal faith. The didactic purpose is, in his own time, as great as the poetic or devotional purpose. . . . Charles Wesley filtered high culture through to ordinary people by way of scripture. His mind was stored with all the best in the literature of the English, Latin and Greek languages. By associating this culture with scripture and using it to illuminate scripture he produced the amazing spate of lyrics by which his people were taught. But the small fraction of his work that most Christians now sing largely hides from them the fact that their author was primarily a teacher, and that his hymns were a body of divinity designed to illuminate not only scripture, but also the Prayer Book.[2]

To return to Newton, we must now ask after the practical implementation of this didactic function, before considering the communicational implication of the hymns.

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1. J. Ernest Rattenbury, The Evangelical Doctrines of Charles Wesley's Hymns (London, 1941), p. 106.
2. Erik Routley, The Musical Wesleys (London, 1968), pp. 30, 32.

Here we must reckon with some of the particulars of parish life at Olney. Our principal source of information is Newton's unpublished diary, which is, however, quoted *in extenso* by Josiah Bull in his biography of Newton. As would be expected in an Anglican parish, there was Sunday liturgical worship in the church (morning and afternoon, in Olney's case), presumably according to Prayer Book usage. But as was also true in the vast majority of parishes by this time, the requirement of daily worship was largely honored in the breach, being reduced to a Thursday evening service at Olney. These services in the church were apparently well-attended at the beginning of Newton's ministry, for they necessitated the addition, in 1765, of a gallery in the nave, increasing the seating capacity to circa 2000.[1]

But to supplement this (typical) schedule, Newton introduced in 1765 an evening prayer meeting on Tuesdays. This was held, not in the church, but in the 'Great House,' an unoccupied mansion on the edge of town, whose parlor could accommodate circa 130 people.[2] He also established a Sunday evening prayer meeting, using the vicarage. But for reasons of space, this too was held in the Great House

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1. Bull, *John Newton*, p. 139. This is probably an exaggeration. From a conversation with the present (1968) vicar of Olney parish, together with an examination of the church, the writer doubts whether it ever could have accommodated so many people, even with the two galleries (rear, and north aisle) it had in Newton's time. Beyond this, there is almost no mention of the church and its services in Bull's diary quotations.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 166.

from 1769, and in early 1779 had to be moved to the church itself.

Evidence as to the format and content of these prayer meetings is limited and vague. What mentions there are in Newton's diary and letters use the terms "prayer," "singing," "expositions of Scripture," and "preaching." Apparently, lay members often led the (extempore) prayers, and visiting clergy sometimes preached or spoke, instead of (or perhaps in addition to) Newton. But despite a lack of detailed information, one gathers the general impression that an Evangelical like Newton would have valued the prayer meeting concept, because with it the propriety and 'distance' of liturgical worship, the relatively formal character of church sermons, and the restrictions on spontaneity of expression and relevant address to personal needs, were all able to be mitigated to a greater or lesser extent. Too, meeting in a parlor would physically point up a more intimate format.

The question of hymns in relation to the prayer meetings, however, returns us to firmer ground. There are five diary entries quoted by Bull which connect Newton's hymns and hymnwriting with the prayer meetings; and all but one of these specifies the Sunday evening meeting (but, chronologically, the entries all come after the 1769 removal of this meeting from the vicarage to the Great House). In one of these entries, Newton states that he usually wrote one hymn per week for the meeting.[1] This functional

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1. Ibid., p. 199.

procedure is also referred to in a letter from Newton to the Earl of Dartmouth (a patron of Newton, friend of Lady Huntingdon, and owner of the Great House), dated 13 August, 1779:

> It was my custom for several years to compose a new hymn weekly for our evening public service on Lord's Day. I seldom attempt more except at the entrance of New Year's, and there in a course of time amounted to a number sufficient to make a sizeable volume, including the few which my dear friend had prepared before his illness.[1]

The expression "evening public service" is not confusing if we recall that by then (later 1779) the Sunday evening meeting had moved a second time, from the Great House to the church, where its character may well have changed because of its new physical environment. But by this time the hymns had been written, and Newton was shortly to leave Olney for London.

If these references clearly connect the hymns with the Sunday evening prayer meeting, one might also reflect that the seeming lack of a connection with the liturgical services may have been due to a complex of factors: 1) the continuing prohibition of such usage in the Church of England; 2) in consequence of (1), the prevailing use of metrical psalmody; and 3) in any case, the seemingly greater interest by Newton in the prayer meetings, with their relative freedom and greater effectiveness towards Evangelical goals.

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1. The letter is in the Historical MSS Commission, Report XV, appendix I (1896), volume III, p. 248.

Nothing that has been said here concerning the prayer meetings would necessarily restrict the didactic/hortatory element we have described concerning Newton's ministry and have seen in Book One (at least) of the "Olney Hymns." Indeed, the prayer meeting environment may have permitted more thorough-going instruction than feasible from the pulpit in a liturgical service (didactic though many of his printed pulpit sermons are). This possibility is illuminated by three of the aforementioned diary entries on hymns and the prayer meetings, in which Newton says, "Expounded my new hymn at the Great House on the subject of a burdened sinner"; and, "Finished a hymn on the barren fig tree" (Book One, CIII). "I usually make one hymn a week to expound at the Great House." Elsewhere, under date of Sunday, 2 November, 1777, he observes, "Spoke on the subject of the fire in the evening from a hymn I composed on the occasion" (Book Two, LXIX).[1] In all three instances - two biblical texts and a local, contemporary event - Newton composes a hymn to recollect or narrate the matter, and then apparently preaches or discourses ("expounded," "spoke") with said hymn as his 'text.' This may well have been the procedure with most of his portion of the "Olney Hymns," especially the biblically-based Book One. Actually, as we have seen, the hymns would be more than 'text,' for they include varying

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1. Bull, John Newton, pp. 183, 199, 226. In the latter case, the reference is to a fire which destroyed part of Olney while Newton was visiting in London.

amounts of derivative hortatory/applicatory material as well. They could thus be, in effect, the outlines for whatever Newton would subsequently say, by way of 'expounding.'[1]

This close relationship of the hymns to the ongoing, weekly progress of the prayer meeting means that 1) for Newton, the impetus to write was a steady, 'practical' one, as distinguished from, say, an occasionally-felt, abstract desire or need to compose hymns or verse; and 2) the whole aspect of hymns as material for private devotion seems entirely absent in Newton's scheme - at least until their collection and publication, by which time their intended function had already been served.

If, then, the "Olney Hymns," at least in large part, had the function of being an element in the instructional aspect of the Sunday prayer meetings (in turn part of Newton's basic 'promotional' concept of the ministry) what about the mechanics of such a usage? How for example would a hymn be used in announcing the content of a sermon or talk to follow? We are not told, but some possibilities may be suggested.

From a technical standpoint, the "Olney Hymns" were theoretically singable. Seventy per cent of them are in the major psalm-tune meters - common, short, long and their doubles (but no SMD). Of the fifteen other meters used,

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1. This is the conclusion to which James Montgomery comes, in his introductory essay to an edition of the "Olney Hymns": ". . . appear to be little skeletons of sermons, which he may have actually preached." (Olney Hymns [Glasgow, 1829], p. xxxvi).

most were also used by Charles Wesley, and could thus be sung to tunes in use among the Methodists.[1] The number of stanzas is most commonly six, seven, or eight - not excessive, at least by comparison with the metrical psalms.

Since, however, they were apparently written one-at-a-time for each week's meeting, it is highly unlikely that they were available on paper, in quantity for the congregation (and anyway, it is equally unlikely that any save a few Olney parishioners could read). Thus, if they were sung, it was presumably by the laborious, imitative 'lining-out' technique (as was usual with the metrical psalms in church and with Watts's hymns in Independency), with either Newton himself or a clerk giving out the lines, to familiar tunes. Awkward as this sounds to us, it is yet a more viable conjecture than, say, that Newton simply read the hymn aloud before 'expounding.' In that event, one might agree with James Montgomery, who thought it would then be better to quote the text directly from the Bible.[2] But if we grant that these hymns could be and were corporately sung, we face the problem of their direction-of-communication.

In our consideration of Watts's hymns, it was apparent that, for him, the end function of even the Scripture-based hymns (Book One, "Hymns and Spiritual Songs") was toward

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1. Only two meters, involving but three hymns (all by Newton), cannot be traced in Charles Wesley's verse: 888 (Hymn XLVI, Book III); and 98.88.88.98 (Hymns XXV and XXX, Book III).

2. Montgomery, essay to Olney Hymns, p. xxxiii.

a meaningful response to the Scriptural encounter. The theological and environmental adjustments were there to permit more personal identification of the singer with his song.

On the basis of the six hymns thus far cited, it is difficult to say the same of Newton. In two of them, to be sure, (Hymns V and X) there is Godward address in petition, always a possible response to encounter. Yet, with the address embodied in otherwise didactic material, it could be suspicioned that Newton was here yielding to the preacher's temptation to be hortatory under the guise of prayer. However, of the three in which Newton uses first-person plural, only one is exhortative (Hymn CVI - "Let us earnest be,/ And never faint in prayer"); the others are declarative, thus tending to maintain the Newton-to-listener direction of communication. This direction is quite unmistakable in Hymns XI and LXXXIX, where he speaks in first-person singular, and addresses the congregation as "you" and "your."

In our analysis of Watts's biblical hymns, we also considered the communicational transition from the author's pen to the singer's mouth, recognizing both the grammatical and psychological factors.[1] When we attempt the same impressive-to-expressive shift with Newton's didactic hymns, we again encounter resistance. For if these hymns were

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1. Above, pp. 154 ff.

written with the intent of being received by the singer - he is their goal - then there is no purpose in his singing them away from himself. Yet that is what he seems to be doing.

Insofar as the 'matter' in these hymns is essentially cognitive and conceptual, the singer could theoretically be singing them back to Newton, in an almost catechetical situation; but that is obviously far-fetched unless the 'lining-out' rendition is interpreted in this way. More likely is the possibility that singing to oneself (or the prayer-meeting group to itself corporately) is part of a learning process. This would be aided in the first category of biblical hymns, in which uninterrupted narrative is often in the impersonal mode (see Hymns V and LXXXVIII above), thus leaving the grammatical subject open, able to be either Newton addressing the congregation or the congregation narrating to itself. On the other hand, this does not hold at all well for the other categories, where the narrative is interrupted and recedes in importance, relative to the hortatory material.

From a communicational standpoint, there is an awkwardness here that must be acknowledged. Newton's didactic intentions stand in a certain tension with the reality of hymnsinging.

We should at this point recognize another possible impetus behind these Book One hymns, existing alongside

Newton's didactic intent; viz., that in these hymns he is offering a personal testimony and witness to his people. It is a witness to the truth of the Scriptural message for him, and to the validity in his own life of the applications sounded in the hortatory verses of these hymns. Such an impetus would correspond to a similar element which we noted in Newton's concept of his ministry as a whole.[1] More broadly still, the pietistic ingredient in the Evangelical Revival generally tended to exalt such personal testimony, given the always-important and often-intense prior conversion experience (and Newton's was undoubtedly intense). If we admit this possibility, it may well have aided acceptance by the Olney parishioners of the didactic intent of the hymns, insofar as they knew Newton as a person, in the daily round of town life. However, the presence of this testimonial impetus hardly resolves the communicational awkwardness which we have already observed in these hymns.

The judgment of history seems to confirm the existence of the difficulty. In a survey undertaken of twelve British and American hymnbooks in present use,

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1. Above, pp. 201-03.

twenty-one of John Newton's hymns were found. Of these, eight are represented once only. Two ("How sweet the Name of Jesus sounds" (Hymn LVII) and "Glorious things of thee are spoken" (Hymn LX) were in all twelve books. But none of the twenty-one are representative of the heavily didactic type which has been the subject of our discussion thus far. About one-third are of the largely hortatory kind; another third are from those hymns which include considerable address to God in petition. The remainder are praises and benedictions conforming more easily to the responsive function of hymnody. The conclusion would seem to be that the strongly didactic hymns have not stood the test of time, quite possibly because of the difficulties here discussed. To be sure, literary and theological factors may also be present in this judgment of history.

On the other hand, the fact that twenty-one (plus twelve by Cowper) of the "Olney Hymns" do survive in present books (whether frequently sung or not) is noteworthy. This suggests an inquiry into that part of Newton's work not so far involved under the didactic/hortatory rubric; viz., Books Two and Three.

Book Two

Immediately it must be observed that the biblical narrative-cum-hortatory application is not confined to Book One. For example, in a group of hymns "Before annual sermons to young people on New Year's evenings" (Hymns CXVII - CXIX, of which three are by Cowper), there are six on Old Testament

passages. The non-narrative lines (and this is why these hymns are in Book Two instead of Book One) are directed to the occasion at hand in interesting ways:

Hymn XVI - The Rod of MOSES.

1 WHEN Moses wav'd his mystic rod
What wonders follow'd while he spoke?
Firm as a wall the waters stood,
Or gush'd in rivers from the rock!

2 At his command the thunders roll'd,
Light'ning and hail his voice obey'd
And Pharaoh trembled, to behold
His land in desolation laid.

3 But what could Moses's rod have done
Had he not been divinely sent?
The pow'r was from the LORD alone,
And Moses but the instrument.

4 O LORD, regard thy peoples pray'rs!
Assist a worm to preach aright;
And since thy gospel-rod he bears,
Display thy wonder in our fight.

5 Proclaim the thunders of thy law,
Like light'ning let thine arrows fly,
That careless sinners, struck with awe,
For refuge may to JESUS cry!

6 Make streams of godly sorrow flow
From rocky hearts, unus'd to feel;
And let the poor in spirit know
That thou art near, their griefs to heal.

7 But chiefly, we would now look up
To ask a blessing for our youth,
The rising generations hope,
That they may know and love thy truth.

8 Arise, O LORD, afford a sign,
Now shall our pray'rs success obtain;
Since both the means and pow'r are thine,
How can the rod be rais'd in vain!

Hymn XIX - ELIJAH'S mantle. (2 Kings ii. 11-14)

1 ELISHA, struck with grief and awe,
Cry'd, "Ah! where now is Israel's stay?"
When he his honour'd master saw
Born by a fiery car away.

2 But while he look'd a last adieu,
His mantle, as it fell, he caught;
The Spirit rested on him too,
And equal miracles he wrought.

3 "Where is Elijah's GOD," he cry'd,
And with the mantle smote the flood;
His word controll'd the swelling tide,
Th' obedient waters upright stood.

4 The wonder-working gospel, thus
From hand to hand, has been convey'd;
We have the mantle still with us,
But where, O where, the Spirit's aid.

5 When Peter first this mantle wav'd,
How soon it melted hearts of steel!
Sinners, by thousands, then were sav'd,
But now how few its virtues feel?

6 Where is Elijah's GOD, the LORD,
Thine Israel's hope, and joy, and boast!
Reveal thine arm, confirm thy word,
Give us another Pentecost!

7 Assist thy messenger to speak,
And while he aims to lisp thy truth,
The bonds of sin and Satan break,
And pour thy blessing on our youth.

8 For them we now approach thy throne,
Teach them to know and love thy name;
Then shall thy thankful people own
Elijah's GOD is still the same.

Again, the directions of communication in these examples seem awkward. In both examples, the congregation (or at least its contingent of youth) sings <u>about</u> itself, as distinguished from singing <u>to</u> itself for edification. Also in both, the preacher's contemplation of his task is on the lips of those to whom he is to preach! A further group of hymns to be used <u>after</u> such sermons has much the same characteristics.

All these occur in the category "Seasons," which begins Book Two (itself subtitled "On Occasional Subjects").

The remaining hymns in the category show that for Newton, the seasons so marked with hymns (and, presumably, prayer meeting sermons to go with them) were not those of the liturgical year, but those of nature: winter, hay-time, etc. The Anglican historian J.H. Overton, for one, sees in this the Anglican Evangelicals' relative indifference to such traditions as the liturgical year.[1] Indifference may indeed have been there, but it could also be another witness to the prayer-meeting (and therefore non-liturgical) setting of the "Olney Hymns." In any case, this group (Book Two, Hymns XXX-XL, only one by Cowper) demonstrates a less didactic and more gracious side to Newton's muse. The natural and agricultural seasons are part of everyone's experience in a rural place like Olney, and Newton connects their general moods with conditions of the believer's spirit in a good example of artistic trajectory (all the more noticeable after the 'straight-line' tendencies of Book One):

Hymn XXXIII - Spring.

1 PLeasing spring again is here!
Trees and fields in bloom appear;
Hark! the birds, with artless lays,
Warble their Creator's praise!
Where, in winter, all was snow,
Now the flow'rs in clusters grow;
And the corn, in green array,
Promises a harvest-day.

2 What a change has taken place!
Emblem of the spring of grace;
How the soul, in winter, mourns
Till the LORD, the Sun, returns;
Till the Spirit's gentle rain,
Bids the heart revive again;
Then the stone is turn'd to flesh,
And each grace springs forth afresh.

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1. J.H. Overton, The Evangelical Revival (London, 1886), p. 150.

3 LORD, afford a spring to me!
Let me feel like what I see;
Ah! my winter has been long,
Chill'd my hopes, and stopp'd my song!
Winter threat'ned to destroy
Faith, and love, and ev'ry joy;
If thy life was in the root,
Still I could not yield thee fruit.

4 Speak, and by thy gracious voice
Make my drooping soul rejoice;
O beloved Saviour, haste,
Tell me all the storms are past:
On thy garden deign to smile,
Raise the plants, enrich the soil;
Soon thy presence will restore
Life, to what seem'd dead before.

5 LORD, I long to be at home,
Where these changes never come!
Where the saints no winter fear,
Where 'tis spring throughout the year:
How unlike this state below!
There the flow'rs unwith'ring blow;
There no chilling blasts annoy,
All is love, and bloom, and joy.

Newton in his preface says: "I hope most of these hymns, being the fruit and expression of my own experience, will coincide with the views of real Christians of all denominations."[1] That seems better fulfilled here than in his more didactic efforts. It is perhaps significant that three of these hymns on the seasons are among the twenty-one in present books.

Book Two continues with a section for "Ordinances," opening with the well-known pair (one by each author) composed for the first meeting of the Sunday evening prayer meeting in the Great House (1769).[2] Both are addressed to

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1. Olney Hymns, preface, p. ix.
2. Hymn XLIII, Book II - "O Lord, our languid souls inspire" (Newton); and Hymn XLIV, Book II - "Jesus, where'er thy people meet" (Cowper).

God in petition, and consistently use the plural pronouns 'we,' 'us,' and 'our' throughout.[1] The remainder of this section continues in the less-obviously hortatory/more lyrical vain, but there are recurrences of the above-noted self-contemplation by the author as preacher and minister vis-a-vis the congregation.[2]

There are also a few sacramental hymns in the section. Their presence raises a minor question: assuming the Holy Communion to be celebrated only within the liturgical context of Sunday morning worship in the church, what is the functional relevance of these hymns to the Sunday evening prayer meeting? Perhaps Newton spoke on the Sacrament in the evening when it had been celebrated that morning. By and large, the actual content of these hymns does not imply the immediate celebration of the Sacrament, but yet there do occur lines like:

> "This is the feast of heavenly wine" (Book Two, LIII, v.1, Cowper)
> "Approach, ye poor, nor dare refuse
> the banquet spread for you" (Book Two, LIII, v.4, Cowper)
> "Come, sinners, view the Lamb of God (Book Two, LIV, v.3)
> "Refresh'd by the bread and wine . . .
> Now let our hearts and voices join"
> (Book Two, LIX, v.1)

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1. The mixing of singular and plural pronouns in the collection as a whole, within individual hymns, and even occasionally within a single verse suggests that Newton felt both to be suitable for corporate use, depending on the content of the hymn. It parallels the situation in Watts's hymns.

2. In fact, Hymn XXVI, Book II, entitled "Travailing in Birth for Souls - Gal. iv, 19", is entirely given over to such a contemplation of the vicissitudes of the ministry and preaching.

It is, of course, not impossible that these particular hymns were meant for church use; sacramental hymns were among the first additions to metrical psalmody.

A third section in Book Two, "Providence," continues the application of hymns to life in the world, whether in relatively ordinary frames of reference (fast-day hymns, funeral hymns, both with the same church-use possibility as the sacramental hymns), or in relation to specific, non-repeatable occasions (the beginning of the American revolution, the Olney fire, etc.). The element common to most of these is crisis, which is what may have caused in these hymns a recurrence of Newton's didactic/hortatory mode. Typical is this hymn:

Hymn LXVIII - On the Earthquake. (September 8, 1775)

1 ALTHO' on massy pillars built,
The earth has lately shook;
It trembled under Britain's guilt,
Before its Maker's look.

2 Swift as the shock amazement spreads,
And sinners tremble too;
What flight can screen their guilty heads,
If earth itself pursue.

3 But mercy spar'd us while it warn'd,
The shock is felt no more;
And mercy, now, alas! is scorn'd
By sinners, as before.

4 But if these warnings prove in vain,
Say, sinner, can'st thou tell,
How soon the earth may quake again,
And open wide to hell.

5 Repent before the Judge draws nigh;
Or else when he comes down,
Thou wilt in vain for earthquakes cry,
To hide thee from his frown.

6 But happy they who love the LORD
And his salvation know;
The hope that's founded on his word,
No change can overthrow.

7 Should the deep-rooted hills be hurl'd,
And plung'd beneath the seas;
And strong convulsions shake the world,
Your hearts may rest in peace.

8 JESUS, your Shepherd, LORD, and Chief,
Shall shelter you from ill;
And not a worm or shaking leaf
Can move, but at his will.

The fourth and final section is entitled "Creation" (Book Two, Hymns LXXX-C, all by Newton). This is a series of hymns on natural phenomena (rainbow, thunder, lunar eclipse, etc.) and on flora-and-fauna. As in the hymns on the seasons, Newton makes these suggestive of some theological truth which he proceeds to drive home. A typical example was occasioned by the visit of a tamed-lion act to Olney:

Hymn XCIII - The tamed lion.

1 A lion, tho' by nature wild,
The art of man can tame;
He stands before his keeper, mild,
And gentle as a lamb.

2 He watches, with submissive eye,
The hand that gives him food;
As if he meant to testify
A sense of gratitude.

3 But man himself, who thus subdues,
The fiercest beasts of prey;
A nature, more unfeeling shews,
And far more fierce than they.

4 Tho' by the LORD preserv'd and fed,
He proves rebellious still;
And while he eats his Maker's bread,
Resists his holy will.

5 Alike in vain, of grace that saves,
Or threat'ning law he hears;
The savage scorns, blasphemes, and raves,
But neither loves nor fears.

6 O Saviour! how thy wond'rous pow'r
By angels is proclaim'd!
When in thine own appointed hour,
They see this lion tam'd.

7 The love thy bleeding cross displays,
  The hardest heart subdues;
Here furious lions while they gaze,
  Their rage and fierceness lose.

8 Yet we are but renew'd in part
  The lion still remains;
LORD, drive him wholly from my heart,
  Or keep him fast in chains.

In general then, Book Two shows that Newton was able to relax somewhat from the strong didacticism of the biblical hymns of Book One. He allows himself to be relatively more contemplative and lyrical, though the vocabulary remains fairly plain and the allusions simple. The origin of the hymns in contemporary experiences, events, or phenomena would seem to make it easier for the singer to identify with the theological content, and thus become more fully involved in the singing (and, in turn, in the total prayer meeting experience). Yet the hortatory element is never very far away, and the line of communication, with a few exceptions, remains essentially from Newton to the congregation.

Book Three

When the reader proceeds from Book Two to Book Three, he is at first liable to be perplexed. The title of Book Three, "On the Rise, Progress, Changes, and Comforts of the Spiritual Life,"[1] leads one to expect a shift in the direction of more introspective content in the hymns. Yet

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1. Is Newton's phraseology here a conscious or unconscious adaptation of the title of Philip Doddridge's well-known work, "The Rise and Progress of Religion in the Soul"?

the first group of hymns themselves, under the subtitle "Solemn Addresses," are every bit as didactic and hortatory in style as the hymns in Book One.

However, once past these, Newton's overall title is better borne out, with subtitled sections such as "Seeking, Pleading and Hoping," "Conflict," "Comfort," and "Dedication and Surrender." It is in the hymns of Newton in these categories that we find a reflection of the pietistic side of the Evangelical Revival, which we noted earlier as the second ingredient shaping the movement's hymnody.[1] More specifically - and from the standpoint of our present study - we find herein a continuation and deepening of the subjective focus on feelings and personal states which we detected in a few of Watts's hymns earlier in the century.

While we shall be attending to his contributions a bit later, we should note that the proportion of Cowper's hymns to Newton's in Book Three is much higher than in the "Olney Hymns" as a whole (thirty-two per cent versus twenty per cent). Considering Book Three's title and Cowper's personality, this is somewhat to be expected.

Returning to Newton, our first example is from the group "Seeking, Pleading and Hoping":

Hymn VII - Behold, I am vile!

1 O LORD, how vile am I,
  Unholy, and unclean!
How can I dare to venture nigh
  With such a load of sin?

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1. Above, p.196.

2 Is this polluted heart
A dwelling fit for thee?
Swarming, alass! in ev'ry part.
What evils do I see!

3 If I attempt to pray,
And lisp thy holy name;
My thoughts are hurry'd soon away,
I know not where I am.

4 If in thy word I look,
Such darkness fills my mind,
I only read a sealed book,
But no relief can find.

5 Thy gospel oft I hear,
But hear it still in vain;
Without desire, or love, or fear,
I like a stone remain.

6 Myself can hardly bear
This wretched heart of mine;
How hateful then must it appear
To those pure eyes of thine?

7 And must I then indeed
Sink in despair and die?
Fain would I hope that thou didst bleed
For such a wretch as I.

8 That blood which thou hast spilt,
That grace which is thine own;
Can cleanse the vilest sinners guilt,
And soften hearts of stone.

9 Low at thy Feet I bow,
Oh pity and forgive;
Here will I lie and wait, till thou
Shalt bid me rise and live.

An initial observation is that the grammatical subject is first-person singular. Of Newton's hymns in Book Three that can definitely be termed subjective in focus, almost all use the singular, whereas in Watts's subjective group only about two-thirds did so (and one-half of those were mixed with first-person plural). The increase may well be a reflection of the individualistic element in pietism.

Furthermore, the subjective focus is couched in Godward declarative address. Again, compared with Watts the incidence of this direction-of-communication is about the same - about two-thirds. But, at least in the example above, one gets the impression that it is hardly more than a 'framing' device, and not vital to the real content and focus, except as a point of reference and departure for the critical self-analysis. If this is in fact the case, the address 'frame' could be reckoned a form of trajectorial communication in that its use avoids an absolutely open baring of oneself that might be unacceptably embarrassing. It is better as confession. Relative to Newton's intentions, however, that is purely conjectural.

As to the subjective focus itself in the hymn, it is obvious enough: within the declarative/confessional statement of his sinful state, the singer refers to his "thoughts" (v.3) specified as "darkness" (v.4), "despair" (v.7), and "guilt" (v.8). The hymn closes with a brief petitionary address, "Oh pity and forgive" (v.9).

We continue with a hymn drawn from the "Conflict" group:

Hymn XXVII - Bitter and sweet.

1 KINDLE, Saviour, in my heart
A flame of love divine;
Hear, for mine I trust thou art,
And sure I would be thine:
If my soul has felt thy grace,
If to me thy name is known;
Why should trifles fill the place,
Due to thyself alone.

2 'Tis a strange mysterious life
I live from day to day;

Light and darkness, peace and strife,
  Bear an alternate sway:
When I think the battle won
I have to fight it o'er again;
When I say I'm overthrown,
  Relief I soon obtain.

3 Often at the mercy-seat
  While calling on thy name;
Swarms of evil thoughts I meet,
  Which fill my soul with shame.
Agitated in my mind,
Like a feather in the air;
Can I thus a blessing find?
  My soul, can this be pray'r?

4 But when CHRIST, my LORD and Friend,
  Is pleas'd to show this pow'r;
All at once my troubles end,
  And I've a golden hour;
Then I see his smiling face,
Feel the pledge of joys to come;
Often, LORD, repeat this grace
  Till thou shalt call me home.

Once again, there is a singular subject combined with a 'frame' of Godward address, both petitionary (vv. 1, 4) and declarative. But note a passing address at the end of verse three to the self ("my soul"), a direction of communication also found in Watts. This will recur more significantly in another hymn, quoted below.

This hymn has a more contemplative tone than the preceding example, conveyed in the questions (vv. 1, 3) and the slightly detached musings on the singer's state in verses two and three. Twice there are references to 'feeling' as the criterion of the divine activity (vv. 1, 4).

Another hymn in this subsection employs the interesting (and trajectorial) image of prisoner-and-prison to describe the singer's feeling of captivity to sin:

Hymn XXXIV - The prisoner.

1 WHEN the poor pris'ner thro' a grate
  Sees others walk at large;
How does he mourn his lonely state,
  And long for a discharge?

2 Thus I, confin'd in unbelief,
  My loss of freedom mourn;
And spend my hours in fruitless grief,
  Untill my LORD return.

3 The beam of day which pierces thro'
  The gloom in which I dwell,
Only discloses to my view
  The horrors of my cell.

4 Ah! how my pensive spirit faints,
  To think of former days!
When I could triumph with the saints,
  And join their songs of praise.

5 But now my joys are all cut off,
  In prison I am cast;
And Satan, with a cruel scoff,
  Says, "Where's your GOD at last?"

6 Dear Saviour, for thy mercy's sake,
  My strong, my only plea,
These gates and bars in pieces break,
  And set the pris'ner free!

7 Surely my soul shall sing to thee,
  For liberty restor'd;
And all thy saints admire to see
  The mercies of the LORD.

Finally, under "Conflict" (the largest number of Newton's subjective-focus hymns are in this subsection), we quote the hymn alluded to above as using extensive self-address:

Hymn XL - Why art thou cast down?

1 BE still my heart! these anxious cares
  To thee are burdens, thorns, and snares,
They cast dishonor on thy LORD,
  And contradict his gracious word!

2 Brought safely by his hand thus far,
  Why wilt thou now give place to fear?
How canst thou want if he provide,
  Or lose thy way with such a guide?

3 When first before thy mercy-seat,
Thou didst to him thy all commit;
He gave thee warrant, from that hour,
To trust his wisdom, love, and pow'r.

4 Did ever trouble yet befall,
And he refuse to hear thy call?
And has he not his promise past,
That thou shalt overcome at last?

5 Like David, thou may'st comfort draw,
Sav'd from the bear's and lion's paw,
Goliath's rage I may defy,
For GOD, my Saviour, still is nigh.

6 He who has help'd me hitherto,
Will help me all my journey thro';
And give me daily cause to raise
New Ebenezers to his praise.

7 Tho' rough and thorny be the road,
It leads thee home, apace, to GOD;
Then count thy present trials small,
For heav'n will make amends for all.

If Hymn XXVII above made only a single passing reference to "My soul," this hymn uses self-address much more frequently - moreso than Watts. The analogy for the self is "my heart"; all the pronouns refer back to it except in verse six. Only in verse six is there a brief, direct reference to the self. Note also the interrogation of the "heart" in verses two and four. Finally, one observes that there is no Godward address anywhere in the hymn; it is entirely inward-turned, even in its outward form.

Our last example is drawn from the subsection entitled "Comfort":

Hymn LV - Freedom from care.

1 WHILE I liv'd without the LORD,
(If I might be said to live)
Nothing could relief afford,
Nothing satisfaction give.

2 Empty hopes and groundless fear,
Mov'd by turns my anxious mind;
Like a feather in the air,
Made the sport of ev'ry wind.

3 Now, I see, whate'er betide,
All is well if CHRIST be mine;
He has promis'd to provide,
I have only to resign.

4 When a sense of sin and thrall,
Forc'd me to the sinner's Friend;
He engag'd to manage all,
By the way, and to the end.

5 "Cast, he said, on me thy care,
'Tis enough that I am nigh;
I will all thy burdens bear,
I will all thy wants supply.

6 Simply follow as I lead,
Do not reason but believe;
Call on me in time of need,
Thou shalt surely help receive."

7 LORD I would, I do, submit,
Gladly yield my all to thee;
What thy wisdom sees most fit,
Must be, surely, best for me.

8 Only when the way is rough,
And the coward flesh would start,
Let thy promise and thy love,
Cheer and animate my heart.

This hymn is in three parts: 1) a description in rather bleak terms ("nothing," "empty," "anxious") coupled to a realization of what could be (vv. 1-4); 2) a bracketed pair of verses (5 and 6) reminiscent of Watts, and being the divine Word; and 3) a closing petitionary address to God, in response to the Word.

When we attempt to evaluate such hymns as these, relative to their communicational possibilities in corporate worship, we face much the same situation as with Watts's subjective-focus group; only with Newton's it is still more problematic.

There is the near-exclusive use of the singular grammatical subject. Considering the deeper intimacy and introspection in the above examples, the singular as denoting a corporate personality is even less likely than in Watts. The allusions to the spiritual state outside worship and the self-interrogations seem simply too personal. More likely is the situation of individuals singing at the same time under the same roof - a fundamentally non-corporate action perhaps accompanied by some non-cognitive 'horizontal' cross-currents. But even that can be highly problematic, when a hymn becomes so self-addressing, as in Hymn XL above. Of course, the possibility of such hymns being used as private devotional material cannot be ruled out; Book Three as a whole may not be a part of the collection of prayer-meeting hymns, better exemplified in the biblical- and occasional-based Books One and Two. But private use is not our concern here.

As to direction-of-communication, the fact may be noted that Godward addresses (or no overt address at all) are not per se incompatible with corporate worship, but in the end this must be only a secondary criterion, (as implied in our discussion in regard to Hymn VII above), considering the high degree of subjective content and singular subject.

Insofar as the problem of reconciliation between the fundamental communicational lines in corporate worship, and the centering of attention on personal feelings and states, seems a more intense problem here than in Watts,

to that extent it may be a reflection of the heightened emphasis on subjectivity and 'personal religion' that is a part of pietism, in turn an ingredient of the Evangelical Revival. This is a matter we shall be looking at again in our consideration of Cowper's contribution below.

Newton, then, has presented us with both sides of a basic duality in the Evangelical Revival and in his own Evangelicalism. We have seen him as concerned to teach the faith in practical terms: the non-trajectorial didactic-cum-hortatory application in the biblical hymns of Book One; and the occasionally more lyrical occasional hymns of Book Two.

But in Book Three (whatever the originally intended use of its contents) we have found the other emphasis: introspection, self-examination and -criticism, with expression of it all in hymns with which he apparently assumes his readers/singers/congregation can identify, out of their own spiritual experience.

There is, one could maintain, a third aspect to Newton's hymnographic character - the occasional ability to voice praise and adoration so spaciously, and/or with so many trajectorial overtones, that any didactic intent ceases to be its most apparent or obvious feature, although it may still be present. Such a hymn is the following; it is also one of his finest and best-known:

Book One, Hymn LX - Zion, or the city of GOD.
(Isaiah XXXIII. 20,21)

1 GLorious things of thee are spoken
Zion city of our GOD!
He, whose word cannot be broken,
Form'd thee for his own abode:
On the rock of ages founded,
What can shake thy sure repose?
With salvation's walls surrounded
Thou may'st smile at all thy foes.

2 See! the streams of living waters
Springing from eternal love;
Well supply thy sons and daughters,
And all fear of want remove:
Who can faint while such a river
Ever flows their thirst t' assuage?
Grace, which like the LORD, the giver,
Never fails from age to age.

3 Round each habitation hov'ring
See the cloud and fire appear!
For a glory and a cov'ring,
Shewing that the LORD is near:
Thus deriving from their banner
Light by night and shade by day;
Safe they feed upon the Manna
Which he gives them when they pray.

4 Blest inhabitants of Zion,
Wash'd in the Redeemer's blood!
JESUS, whom their souls rely on,
Makes them kings and priests to GOD:
'Tis his love his people raises
Over self to reign as kings
And as priests, his solemn praises
Each for a thank-off'ring brings.

5 Saviour, if of Zion's city
I thro' grace a member am;
Let the world deride or pity,
I will glory in thy name:
Fading is the worldling's pleasure,
All his boasted pomp and show;
Solid joys and lasting treasure,
None but Zion's children know.

B. Cowper's Hymns

In William Cowper, we encounter a figure who receives the attention not only of the hymnological world, but of the literary world as well. His is a name of acknowledged standing as an English poet; and, as Erik Routley reminds us, he is one of only two such poets whose contribution to English hymnology is important and substantial - the other being Robert Bridges, at the end of the nineteenth century.

> The combination of gifts which allows a man to be able to write good poetry in general and also good hymns is exceedingly rare; it is not that the great poets are not religious men or that the great hymnwriters are men of small sensitiveness and slow wit, but simply that the required discipline is exceedingly difficult of achievement.[1]

In biography and literary analysis, the treatment of Cowper is inevitably drawn to his mental illness. The possible cause-and-effect relation between it and his Evangelicalism (to which he was 'converted' in a home for the mentally ill, after previous attempts thereat by Martin Madan and Thomas Haweis) has been probed, both directions being suggested. Furthermore, his association with and exposure to Newton at Olney has also been subjected to both positive and negative scrutiny.[2]

Valid as they certainly are in the total picture of Cowper, such investigations and concerns are the back-

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1. Erik Routley, I'll Praise my Maker (London, 1951), p. 61.
2. See Bibliography.

ground to, and not the focus of the present study. Our question will be, how do Cowper's contributions to the "Olney Hymns" compare with Newton's, relative to communicational function? Without prejudging the issue, however, Cowper's personal/Evangelical background might fairly lead us to expect a considerable element of subjective focus in his hymns.

As we have already noted, Cowper's hymns account for only about one-fifth of the 348 "Olney Hymns" - sixty-six items; but they are distributed somewhat unevenly among the three "Books." There are twenty-one hymns in the (Scriptural) Book One, but only ten in the (occasional) Book Two. Book Three receives the lion's share of thirty-five - over one-half of his total. Superficially at least, our expectation of subjective focus is thus borne out, for the subsections of Book Three (already detailed in our discussion of Newton's hymns) reveal it as the most introspectively-oriented of the three books. In point of fact, the subsection "Conflict" has the larger number of Cowper's hymns (eleven), with "Comfort" (eight), and "Cautions" (seven) next in order.

But turning first to Book One, we find that Cowper could write every bit as narratively or didactically as Newton could do:

> Hymn VI - The LORD will provide. (Gen. xxii. 14)
>
> 1 THE saints should never be dismay'd,
> Nor sink in hopeless fears;
> For when they least expect his aid,
> The Saviour will appear.

2 This Abraham found, he rais'd the knife,
GOD saw, and said, "Forbear;"
Yon ram shall yield his meaner life,
Behold the victim there.

3 Once David seem'd Saul's certain prey;
But hark! the foe's at hand;
Saul turns his arms another way,
To save th' invaded land.

4 When Jonah sunk beneath the wave
He thought to rise no more;
But GOD prepar'd a fish to save,
And bear him to the shore.

5 Blest proofs of pow'r and grace divine,
That meet us in his word!
May ev'ry deep-felt care of mine
Be trusted with the LORD.

6 Wait for his seasonable aid,
And tho' it tarry wait:
The promise may be long delay'd,
But cannot come too late.

Hymn LV - Vanity of the world. (Ecclesiastes)

1 GOD gives his mercies to be spent;
Your hoard will do your soul no good,
Gold is a blessing only lent,
Repaid by giving others food.

2 The world's esteem is but a bribe,
To buy their peace you sell your own;
The slave of a vain-glorious tribe,
Who hate you while they make you known.

3 The joy that vain amusements give,
Oh! sad conclusion that it brings!
The honey of a crowded hive,
Defended by a thousand stings.

4 'Tis thus the world rewards the fools
That live upon her treach'rous smiles;
She leads them blindfold, by her rules,
And ruins all whom she beguiles.

5 GOD knows the thousands who go down,
From pleasure, into endless woe;
And with a long despairing grone
Blapheme their maker as they go.

6 O fearful thought! be timely wise;
Delight but in a Saviour's charms,
and GOD shall take you to the skies,
Embrac'd in everlasting arms.

In the first example, one notes the initial third-person subject, "The saints . . .," communicationally slightly awkward in the congregation's mouth. And in verse five we encounter both plural and singular pronouns; again, a bit confusing if corporately sung. The imperative "wait" in the final verse would have to be a form of self-address, whether individual or corporate.

The outstanding communicational feature of the second example is the relatively extensive use of the second person "you" and "your." That also creates problems in the transfer from author's pen to singer's mouth. Is it a corporate imperative to each individual singer, or vice-versa? It is at any rate far from the Godward response aspect of congregational song, both in form and content.

It is not outside our communicational interest to note in the first example how Cowper gathers several complementary passages of Scripture together into one hymn - Abraham, David, and Jonah all in one breath, as it were. Cowper's command of Scripture was evidently of a high order (as Newton acknowledged) - an attribute shared with Charles Wesley. Such an ability to creatively summon and juxtapose Scriptural images could be considered a kind of artistic trajectory, if it increases the potential points of contact of communication, and if, in a biblically-literate singer, it enhances the pleasure of making the "catch" by making several rapid "catches" possible. To be sure, heavily didactic accompaniments could again dilute the pleasure.

However scholars such as Routley and Hartley feel, no doubt correctly, that in these hymns Cowper was not really in his own element.[1] That is, he may have here been writing "to order" for Newton. The quintessential Cowper is to be found elsewhere; viz., in Book Three.

Before leaving this category, however, we would note that Cowper, in three hymns of Book One, resorts to the technique of Watts in Book One of "Hymns and Spirutual Songs," wherein almost the entire body of the hymn is enclosed in brackets, so close a paraphrase is it of Scripture. With the exception of his contributions to a set of hymns at the end of Book One based on the messages to the Asia-Minor churches in Revelation, Newton does not use the device. Both he and Cowper do frequently employ inverted commas for dialogue in their Scripture narrative hymns, a technique probably more effective when read rather than sung.

What neither quoted example happens to show is that Cowper, like Newton, depends heavily on the first-person singular as grammatical subject. In Cowper it appears in forty-four of his sixty-six hymns, exclusively so in thirty-seven of them. In contrast, plural subject is used in only seventeen. This is a much higher incidence of the singular than occurs in Watts's "Hymns and Spiritual Songs";[2]

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1. Routley, I'll Praise my Maker, p. 140, and Lodwick Hartley, "The Worm and the Thorn: A Study of Cowper's Olney Hymns," The Journal of Religion, XXIX, No. 3 (1949), 226.
2. See the table on p. 168.

and while it is an indirect testimony to the advancing individualism of the century, and the fundamental pietism of the Evangelical Revival, it is also, in Cowper's case, a reflection of his own introspective orientation, which stands in tension with a corporate sense of the church (including the singing church). As with Watts's first-person hymns, we are returned to the fundamental communicational complexities of "I-me-my" in corporate singing.

But with observations such as these, we are already moving away from Cowper's Newton-like (and perhaps Newton-inspired) narrative/didactic efforts, and toward his hymns of manifestly subjective focus. For a representative selection of these, we look into Book Three of the "Olney Hymns,"[1] from each of whose subsections a hymn will be quoted (excluding the open "Solemn Addresses to Sinners," all of whose five hymns are by Newton).

Subsection II then ("Seeking, Pleading, and Hoping"), contains among its nine offerings two by Cowper (VIII and XIII). Here is number VIII:

Hymn VIII - The shining Light.

1 MY former hopes are fled,
My terror now begins;
I feel, alass! that I am dead
In trespasses and sins.

2 Ah, whither shall I fly?
I hear the thunder roar;
The law proclaims destruction nigh
And vengeance at the door.

---

1. The 'Books' are of course not mutually exclusive in this regard: there are subjective-focus hymns in Book I, didactic in Book III.

3 When I review my ways,
I dread impending doom;
But sure, a friendly whisper says
"Flee from the wrath to come."

4 I see, or think I see,
A glim'ring from afar;
A beam of day that shines for me,
To save me from despair.

5 Fore-runner of the sun,
It marks the Pilgrim's way;
I'll gaze upon it while I run,
And watch the rising day.

Only the last of our selections below finds Cowper speaking in first-person plural; but considering the content, the singular in the above hymn (as in seventy per cent of all Cowper's "Olney Hymns") is expectable. Indeed, if the reader were to pluralize all the pronouns in this hymn and then imagine it corporately sung, he would undoubtedly feel an extreme disparity between "matter" and "manner" - content and form. For here Cowper is sounding a sense of sin and feeling of despair too deep and explicit for corporate identification. Even in the singular it seems barely possible for use, although the Olney prayer-meeting setting may have been more amenable to such individualized introspection than was church worship.

Note too the lack of any direction of address in any verse. On the whole, this is not typical of Cowper, for seventy-five per cent of his "Olney Hymns" contain some Godward address, whether petitionary or declarative. As we remarked in discussing Watts's subjective-focus group, an outward-turning address to God can help to maintain some

response perspective in a basically inward-centered hymn.[1] In the present example, any 'rescue' must come from the more optimistic final pair of verses; but they too are subjective in orientation, even to Cowper's self-doubt of spiritual insight at the beginning of verse five.

As to the hymn's content per se, its dwelling upon the singer's feelings (v.1), spiritual state (vv. 2 and 3), and perceptions (v.4) is carried to a degree which, compared with our examples from Watts, show the eighteenth century's direction in this regard.

In the subsection "Conflict," largest in Book Three and locus of many of both Newton's and Cowper's most profound introspective efforts, Hymn XX has been chosen:

Hymn XX - The valley of the shadow of death.

1 MY soul is sad and much dismay'd;
See, LORD, what legions of my foes,
With fierce Apollyon at their head,
My heav'nly pilgrimage oppose!

2 See, from the ever-burning lake,
How like a smoky cloud they rise!
With horrid blasts my soul they shake,
With storms of blasphemies and lies.

3 Their fiery arrows reach the mark,
My throbbing heart with anguish tear;
Each lights upon a kindred spark,
And finds abundant fuel there.

4 I hate the thought that wrongs the LORD;
Oh, I would drive it from my breast,
With thy own sharp two-edged sword,
Far as the east is from the west.

5 Come then, and chase the cruel host,
Heal the deep wounds I have receiv'd!
Nor let the pow'rs of darkness boast
That I am foil'd, and thou art griev'd!

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1. Above, pp. 182-83.

This hymn differs communicationally from number VIII above in that it does contain Godward address, in what might be called 'imperative petition' ("See, Lord . . .," v.1), and in a bit less demanding in tone ("Come, then . . .," v.5).

Whether that goes very far to 'neutralize' any of the near-self-pity in the hymn, intensified by apocalyptic and Bunyanesque imagery, is debatable. At best, the petition in the final verse is still within the frame of self-interest, rather than acknowledgement of God's power and appeal to his love.

At the same time, it is faintly possible that Cowper's use of apocalyptic imagery as a trajectorial description of spiritual embattlement may make this hymn, vis-a-vis Hymn VIII, more useful to others, insofar as they might have known their Bunyan and been able to identify with it rather than with Cowper himself.

We would not leave "Conflict" without a reference to Cowper's well-known (but much less subjective) "God moves in a mysterious Way" (Hymn XV). A comparison of his opening verse with the fourth verse of Watts's hymn "Heavenly Joy on Earth" ("Hymns and Spiritual Songs," Book Two, Hymn XXX) is of interest:

Cowper:

GOD moves in a mysterious way
  His wonders to perform;
He plants his footsteps in the sea,
  And rides upon the storm.

Watts:

The God that rules on high,
And thunders when he please,
That rides upon the stormy Sky,
And manages the Seas.

In Hymn XLVII (we have now moved on to the subsection "Comfort") we find Cowper in an altogether sunnier mood:

Hymn XLVII - The hidden life.

1 TO tell the Saviour all my wants,
How pleasing is the talk!
Nor less to praise him when he grants
Beyond what I can ask.

2 My lab'ring spirit vainly seeks
To tell but half the joy;
With how much tenderness he speaks,
And helps me to reply.

3 Nor were it wise, nor should I choose
Such secrets to declare;
Like precious wines their taste they lose
Expos'd to open air.

4 But this with boldness I proclaim,
Nor care if thousands hear;
Sweet is the ointment of his name,
Not life is half so dear.

5 And can you frown, my former friends,
Who knew what once I was;
And blame the song that thus commends
The man who bore the cross.

6 Trust me, I draw the likeness true,
And not as fancy paints;
Such honour may he give to you,
For such have all his saints.

At first there seems no specific direction-of-communication, but when one gets to verse five it becomes clear that all along Cowper has been 'horizontally' addressing his "friends." The use of the grammatical second-person in a hymn, not including Godward address, can be very awkward. We have seen it in Watts' work,[1] but there it

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1. Above, pp. 181-82.

has an exhortative, rhetorical tone which helps to keep it within the range of possible corporate usage.[1] In Cowper, however, it becomes almost an element of conversation. Verses five and six, in their gentle interrogation, the plea to "Trust me," and the devout wish "Such honour may he give to you" create an impression of intimacy, reminding one of the mutual confession and criticism which characterized the early Methodist society meetings. This impression is not discouraged by the first part of the hymn, in which the content is not really the telling of ones wants to the Saviour, but rather savouring the action of telling; i.e., its pleasurable effect on the teller. Only verse four, with its firm declaration of the goodness of God, does not seem a part of the subjective focus. But one cannot avoid the conclusion that here is a hymn in which, communicationally, pietism (along with Cowper's nature, of course) has rather overwhelmed corporate feasibility.

Under the heading of "Dedication and Surrender" in Book Three, Cowper has four hymns, of which this is the third:

Hymn LXIII - The heart healed and changed by mercy.

1 SIN enslav'd me many years,
  And led me bound and blind;
Till at length a thousand fears
  Came swarming o'er my mind.
Where, I said in deep distress,
Will these sinful pleasures end?
How shall I secure my peace,
  And make the LORD my friend?

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1. Also, Watts usually used the first-person plural, making the transition easier.

2 Friends and ministers said much
  The gospel to enforce;
But my blindness still was such,
  I chose a legal course:
Much I fasted, watch'd and strove,
Scarce would shew my face abroad,
Fear'd, almost, to speak or move,
  A stranger still to GOD.

3 Thus afraid to trust his grace,
  Long time did I rebel;
Till, despairing of my case,
  Down at his feet I fell:
Then my stubborn heart he broke,
And subdu'd me to his sway;
By a simple word he spoke,
"Thy sins are done away."

This hymn, like so many others of Cowper, contains elements of self-examination and spiritual biography, in this case simply "aired" or declared to no specific "ear." Subjectively-oriented as it thus is, it could conceivably be used congregationally, providing the congregation was attuned to and could identify with the progress toward the conversion experience in the last verse. Congregations in the ambit of the Evangelical Revival may well have been so attuned. Only the second verse may be slightly too specific for identification.

In our last example, from the subsection "Cautions," the conversion motif is continued:

Hymn LXVIII - The new convert.

1 THE new-born child of gospel-grace,
  Like some fair tree when summer's nigh,
Beneath EMMANUEL'S shining face,
  Lifts up his blooming branch on high.

2 No fears he feels, he sees no foes,
  No conflict yet his faith employs,
Nor has he learnt to whom he owes,
  The strength and peace his soul enjoys.

3 But sin soon darts its cruel sting,
And comforts sinking day by day;
What seem'd his own, a self-fed spring,
Proves but a brook that glides away.

4 When Gideon arm'd his num'rous host,
The LORD soon made his numbers less;
And said, lest Israel vainly boast,
"My arm procur'd me this success."

5 Thus will he bring our spirits down,
And draw our ebbing comforts low;
That sav'd by grace, but not our own,
We may not claim the praise we owe.

This hymn betrays Cowper's paralyzing insecurity, even in his faith - his feeling that the least challenge will find him vulnerable. As such, it too is primarily concerned with the state of the singer.

Note in verse four the quotation of the Lord (also found at the very end of the preceding example). As we noted earlier, the usual voice inflections which would set off such a quoted voice (whether spoken or heard mentally when reading) are nearly impossible of achievement when sung corporately to a repeated tune.

Note also, in the last-verse 'application,' Cowper for once uses the plural, identifying himself with the congregation, albeit in a rather negative context.

If, then, these five Book Three examples of Cowper's subjective contribution to the "Olney Hymns" have shown, along with Newton's efforts of similar character, the difference between the first and second halves of the eighteenth century in this matter, how may we summarily express the implication of this shift, in applying such hymns to corporate worship?

What has happened is that, as the introspection has deepened, the hymn has become more and more a self-expression of its author. We observed earlier, in the words of Routley, that art is a "mode of human public conversation."[1] It is the key word "public" in that definition which is at issue here; for, to speak to a public in hope of a response by that public, the artist engages in trajectorial communication to provide "catchable" points of contact with which the public can identify. The hymn-writer is a literary artist, communicating trajectorially in verbal images. But in this deepening subjective focus, the trajectory is in effect being steadily reduced as the individual self-expression and description increases. That means thatthe hymn (in our area of concern) is becoming less and less public in its communication, more and more intimate. The 'distance' provided by trajectorial allusions and images (even Scriptural ones) is steadily being whittled away, and thus also the opportunities for broad identification, so necessary to the response of a corporate, "public" party to the "conversation." The transition of the direction-of-communication from writer-to-singer to singer-to-? becomes difficult and/or awkward. The hymn may indeed be very good at impression (from the singer's viewpoint) but its problem is that it can no longer easily become (his) expression or response.

At the same time, we should recognize the existence

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1. Above, p. 45.

of another possibility, brought into being by the situation described above. If a hymn, in its intimate subjective focus, has rather removed itself as a medium of the singer's expression, the impressive potential remaining may make the hymn into a "Word of God" in the singer's experience, as he receives the hymn's content.

This is the possibility discussed in the Introduction as a concomitant of Tillich's fifth and sixth delineations of the meaning of the term "Word of God."[1] Whether it could be operative in a given situation depends on environment, both in the general cultural and local senses. In the case of the Evangelical Revival, the disposition of pietism to personal witness and testimony and sometimes public self-examination might create the condition wherein a hymn so oriented could be heard/read as a manifestation of the Spirit's work among men - in the hymnwriter certainly, and thus possibly so in the hearer/reader. In the local environment of Olney, the apparently low general intelligence of the populace could also be supportive of this possibility. Thus, in the ambit of the Evangelical Revival, these hymns may have been received as a "Word of God" by the people of Olney (and later, when the "Olney Hymns" were published, by anyone of similar disposition who used them).

All this stands in considerable contrast to the responsive/expressive/from-the-singer function which underlies psalmody and hymnody up to this period, and which is

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1. Above, pp. 26-27.

predicated on corporate use of song, in worship. However, these two concepts of function need not be entirely mutually exclusive, in tension though they are to us. James Montgomery, writing about the "Olney Hymns" in the early nineteenth century, has this to say:

> Are such compositions fit to be sung in great congregations, consisting of all classes of saints and sinners?- It must be frankly answered, with respect to the far greater proportion - No! - except upon the principle, that whatever may be read by such an assembly may also be sung.[1]

And Erik Routley, writing in the twentieth century concerning the same problem, but in relation to the subjective element in Charles Wesley's hymns, says:

> When writing, he must have often been hardly conscious of any need to decide whether he was writing for a singing congregation or not. We must recall . . . that hymn books, from the time of Watts onwards, were designed as much for reading as for congregational singing. It is still true that people, seniors at least, in the Dissenting tradition use their hymnbooks as those of the Catholic tradition use their spiritual literature and their breviaries. Most certainly they were expected to do so in the eighteenth-century evangelical tradition. Hence the number of "pocket hymn books" that appeared in those days. The assumption must have been that any instructed Christian would possess a hymnal, would be personally familiar with it, would bring it to church, and would be prepared to sing whatever the minister called for. The distinction we make nowadays between what is "congregational" and what is "devotional", which excises from modern hymnals even such matchless works as Charles Wesley's "Come, O thou traveller," was unknown then. The personal acquaintance of the singer with the contents of his book removed any sense of incongruity when he was called on to sing some of the devotional profundities which embarrass modern singers.[2]

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1. Montgomery, essay to Olney Hymns, p. xxxvii.
2. Routley, Musical Wesleys, pp. 32-33.

Insofar as what Routley says above is true about the lack of tension between the two functions to eighteenth-century users of the hymns, this must finally be our justification for having considered, in this chapter, the deepening subjective focus in hymnody under the influence of the pietistic side of the Evangelical Revival. It is an influence which has never been absent in English hymnody since that time.

Detached Note

John Wesley's Translations of German Pietistic Hymnody

In tracing the career of the subjective focus in English hymnology in Watts, Newton, and Cowper, we have been dealing, so to speak, with an indigenous development, from the strictly hymnological stand-point. Yet, at the beginning of the present chapter, we stated that the pietistic ingredient in the Evangelical Revival generally was related to the Lutheran and Moravian pietism already well-developed on the Continent.[1] Its influence crossed the Channel principally through Wesley, by way of his direct contact with the Moravians at Herrnhut, and his involvement in the Moravian-style Fetter Lane meeting in London. The context of our statement, however, was the basic theological sources of the Evangelical Revival, and not hymnody specifically.

There was, though, another connection which was much more directly related to the hymns of the Evangelical Revival. That was that John Wesley, having begun to learn German with the Moravians en route to Georgia in 1735, eventually translated some thirty-two German-language hymns into English, which were then incorporated in the Wesleyan hymnbooks.[2]

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1. Above, p.190.

2. Henry Bett states: "The translations from the German were all published between 1737 and 1742. They were probably all written by 1739." (The Hymns of Methodism in their Literary Relations [London, 1913], p. 11).

His source for texts was the 1735 Moravian Das Gesang-Buch der Gemeine in Herrn-Huth. He also owned J.A. Freylinghausen's Geistreiches Gesang-Buch, first published in 1704 and the chief repository of Lutheran pietistic hymnody at the time; but he apparently used this only as a source for tunes.[1]

What is of obvious importance is that the kind of German hymn Wesley was exposed to here was not so much the early, objective 'chorale' strain inspired by Luther himself, but the hymns of subjective tendency inspired by Halle (remembering that the Moravians also owed much to that German center of pietism).

In the hymns he chose to translate, Wesley may be said to have dipped into three streams of German hymnody:

1) that brief period in mid-seventeenth century, between the Thirty Years War and the onset of pietism, reckoned as the 'Golden Age' of the Lutheran chorale; from this 'age' he translated four hymns each by the revered Paul Gerhardt and Johann Scheffler.

2) the tradition of Lutheran pietism proper: J.A. Freylinghausen and C.F. Richter (two each); G. Arnold, M.M. Bohmer, W.C. Dessler, S. Gmelin, L.A. Gotter, E. Lange, J. Lange, and J.J. Winckler (one each).

3) the Moravian tradition: seven hymns by Count Zinzendorf, and one each by A. Dober, J.A. Rothe, and A.G. Spangenberg.

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1. Ibid., pp. 9-10.

Not really fitting into any of these groups was the ex-German Reformed Gerhard Tersteegen, two of whose hymns Wesley translated. Together with the earlier, Roman Catholic Scheffler, a mystical strain in pietism is also represented.

Thus it was that German pre-pietistic, pietistic, and mystical hymnody was added to the indigenous subjective focus development on the English scene (and was never to leave).

For purposes of brief illustration and for comparison with Watts, Newton, and Cowper, we quote, in Wesley's translation, only a single verse of a hymn from each group, cautioning the reader that other verses in these and the remaining hymns are frequently less subjective in orientation.

1) Lutheran pre-pietism (Gerhardt):

O that my heart, which open stands,
May catch each drop, that torturing pain,
Arm'd by my sins, wrung from Thy hands,
Thy feet, Thy head, Thy every vein:
That still my breast may heave with sighs,
Still tears of love o'erflow my eyes.[1]

2) Lutheran pietism proper (Freylinghausen):

Renew Thy image, Lord, in me,
Lowly and gentle may I be;
No charms but these to Thee are dear:
No anger mayst Thou ever find,
No pride in my unruffled mind,
But faith and heaven-born peace be there.[2]

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1. "Living by Christ" (v.7), in "Hymns and Sacred Poems" (London, 1739). This and subsequent quotations are from the 1739 or 1740 editions, as contained in The Poetical Works of John and Charles Wesley, coll. and arr. by G. Osborn (13 vols.; London, 1868), I. The above verse on p. 139.

2. Ibid., "Christ Protecting and Sanctifying" (v.5), p.162.

3) Moravianism (Rothe):

With faith I plunge me in this sea;
  Here is my hope, my joy, my rest:
Hither, when hell assails, I flee,
  I look into my Saviour's breast!
Away, sad doubt, and anxious fear![1]
Mercy is all that's written there.

Wesley's translation of mystics such as Scheffler and Tersteegen raises the complex question of his attitude toward mysticism generally, compounded by the many forms of mysticism in the history of Christian thought. Ronald Knox has sorted it out quite succinctly,[2] showing that Wesley (along with his brother) was disposed toward the mystical approach while at Oxford, reading there men like Law, Kempis, and Tauler, and continuing through his translation period until he parted with the Moravians, and thus the presence of Scheffler and Tersteegen. The mysticism is fully compatible with the subjective focus in the other examples:

Scheffler:

O GOD, of good the' unfathom'd Sea,
Who would not give his heart to Thee?
  Who would not love Thee with his might?
O Jesu, Lover of mankind,
Who would not his whole soul and mind
  With all his strength to Thee unite?[3]

Tersteegen:

THOU hidden love of God, whose height,
  Whose depth unfathom'd no man knows,
I see from far Thy beauteous light,
  Inly I sigh for Thy repose.
My heart is pain'd, nor can it be
At rest, till it finds rest in Thee.[4]

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1. Ibid., "Redemption Found (v.4), p. 280.
2. Knox, Enthusiasm, pp. 478-82.
3. J. Wesley and C. Wesley, Poetical Works, "God's Love to Mankind" (v.1), I, 141-42.
4. Ibid., "Divine Love" (v.1), p. 71.

It is of this movement toward the subjective in Germanic hymnody that Karl Barth has written in an extensive note in his discussion of "The Holy Spirit as the Subjective Possibility of Revelation" under the doctrine of the Word of God in his Church Dogmatics. We include it here (in considerably condensed form) because in it he traces in German hymnody that which has been a major aspect of our tracing of the functional emergence of English hymnody. As we noted earlier, twentieth-century neo-orthodoxy, of which Karl Barth was a leader, stands in reaction and opposition to subjective approaches to faith, including the unmediated 'inner word' concept, and to pietism generally.[1] This position is plain in his writing, but does not affect its correspondence to our study at this point:

> Luther's hymns are completely lacking in all lyrical quality, i.e., in all emphasis upon the emotion of the subject. The one who speaks in them is neither giving to himself all kinds of accusatory, heartening, instructive and hortatory advice, nor is he constraining others with the challenge or invitation or demand to lay this or that upon their hearts. What these hymns contain is adoration and solid communication, confession of faith, confession of sins, proclamation. It would have to be a very strange reading that did not find in them the language of the Christian heart and its experience, or rather - no matter whether "I" or "we" is in the forefront as the subject of the hymn - of the community of God's children. It was in its name and on its behalf that Luther composed his hymns. But in these hymns we never find either God's child or God's Church preoccupied with themselves, but always turning to the recognition and praise of God

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1. Above, n. 2, p. 28.

and His acts, with the greatest concentration upon the second article as understood in all its biblical simplicity. It is in this way that there speaks the life, love, experience and actuality of subjective reality in revelation. . . . But by the end of the 16th century, when academic orthodoxy had reached its peak, there had already been a remarkable change in the sphere of hymnology. It was not always equally radical, but its effects were felt at every point. In the first instance, of course, the object of faith is retained in spite of the change. But there is now a new preoccupation, and whole stanzas are devoted, not to this first theme, but to what is obviously a second centre of reflection, the heart, the soul, the I, the We, in all the problem of its relation to the former object. . . . On the one hand there is an intensifying of interest in the depths of the believing subject, his sin, his pardon, his sanctification, and in the perceptions, moods and feelings accompanying these processes. On the other hand, there is a widening of the element of religious meditation and reflection on the many aspects of the external existence of the subject in the various divisions of day and year, in calling, in good times and more particularly in bad, in life and especially in the expectation of death. In place of the drama of creation, reconciliation and redemption, which is the work of the triune God, another drama is staged. We hear a monologue of the soul, or a dualogue between the soul and God, or even at this early date of one soul with another. It is a serious and depressed and almost melancholy voice which we hear, and one which corresponds to the gloomy character of the history of the century. We must believe of these men that they struggled and strove and despaired and were comforted and established in faith. Sometimes they found unforgettable words to express it. But overlooking the change in the Reformation content of their hymns, it is in them and their self-confessions that we are forced to believe. And it is as self-confessions that their hymns harmonise remarkably well and not unnaturally with those of their contemporary, the convert and mystic J. Scheffler, alias Angelus Silesius. . . . And then at the very peak of the century, there arise the two last great Evangelical hymn-writers, Gerhard Tersteegen and Christian Fürchtegott Gellert. The objective substance of the hymn has still not been abandoned: indeed it has hardly been touched. A fairly complete compendium of biblical and Church Christology could still be compiled from these hymns. But in both Tersteegen and Gellert is it not quite evident that that second epicentre has finally settled and hardened? . . . What really happened at the peak

of the development of the Evangelical hymn as it was reached in Tersteegen and Gellert was this. Not in a distorted form, but in its twofold classical form, the confession of Christ remains, but in the last resort, in relation to what those poets intend and the congregation really sing and chant, it has become superfluous. Because it is no longer the one and all, because it has now become (unmistakably and irrevocably) a first side by side with a second, it is clear that it could be taken away altogether and nothing essential would be deducted from what was really intended to be sung and chanted. In the generation which followed Tersteegen and Gellert the Evangelical Church acquired a purely subjective hymnody. This was the age when 16th- and 17th-century hymns, including those of Luther and Paul Gerhardt, were allowed to disappear entirely or almost entirely from the hymn-books, or were subjected to such a lengthy transformation that they too came to say the only thing which people now wanted to say and to hear.[1]

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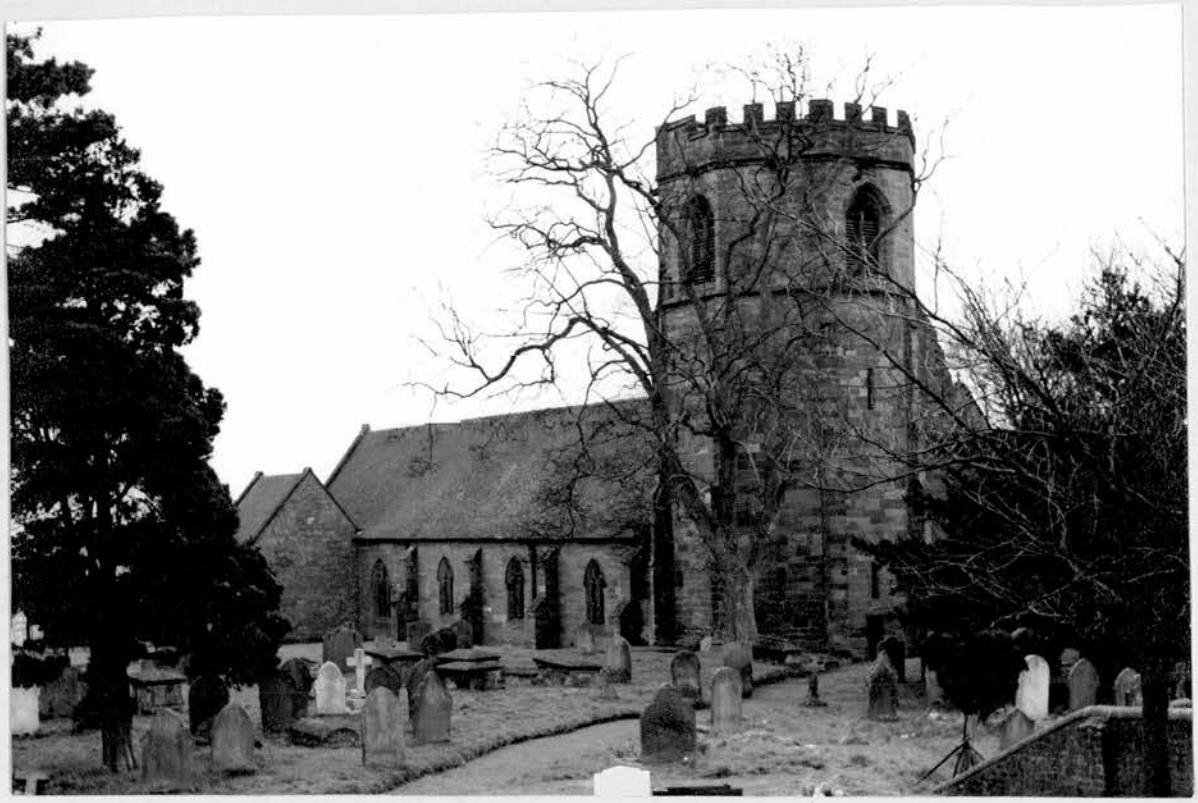
1. Karl Barth, Church Dogmatics, I, 2, pp. 253-55.

CHAPTER FOUR

LITURGICAL INTEGRATION: REGINALD HEBER

PLATE III



THE PARISH CHURCH OF SAINT LUKE

HODNET, SHROPSHIRE

Reginald Heber was Rector here,
1807-1823

(The fabric is largely fourteenth century,
but there are remains of an earlier Norman church)

CHAPTER FOUR

LITURGICAL INTEGRATION: REGINALD HEBER

In February, 1809, a young 'squarson'[1] in Shropshire wrote in a letter to his best friend:

> My Psalm-singing continues bad. Can you tell me where I can purchase Cowper's Olney hymns, with the music, and in a smaller size without the music, to put in the seats? Some of them I admire much. Any novelty is likely to become a favourite, and to draw more people to join in the singing.[2]

The writer was Reginald Heber (1783-1826), ordained two years previously, and rector (in succession to his father) of Hodnet, Shropshire. Before that he had had a brilliant student career at Oxford, marked particularly by the writing and delivery of the prize poem "Palestine" in 1803.[3] At about that time he also was host to Walter Scott, who afterwards wrote that he "spent some merry days" with Heber.[4]

But it was during the Hodnet years (1807-23) that

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1. That is, a parson whose personal circumstances afford the possibility of leading to some extent the life of a country squire.
2. The Life of Reginald Heber, D.D., ed. by his wife (2 vols.; London, 1830), I, 352.
3. Afterwards set to music as an oratorio in 1812 by William Crotch.
4. Walter Scott's Journal, 12 March, 1829; quoted in George Smith, Bishop Heber (London, 1895), pp. 20-21.

Heber matured in letters, producing his own poetry and hymns, in contact with such literati as Robert Southey, and functioning as literary critic for the Quarterly Review.

In the course of his ministry he had become interested in overseas missions through participation in the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, the British and Foreign Bible Society, and the Church Missionary Society. In 1823 he was called to be the second Bishop of Calcutta.[1] By all accounts, he served his Lord and church there with great administrative skill and pastoral devotion. But only for three years: he had had periods of illness in England, and his new post seemed literally to wear him out. He was buried in Trichinopoly, India, and was profoundly mourned, there and in his native land - not only for his zeal, but because he seemed to have been a most attractive Christian person. Thackeray expressed the general affection for his memory thus:

> The charming poet, the happy possessor of all sorts of gifts and accomplishments, birth, wit, fame, high character, competence - he was the beloved parish priest in his own home of Hodnet . . . So does his own country still tend with a heart's regard the memory of the gentle Heber.[2]

We have already noted his interest in the "Olney Hymns," his literary bent showing in his reference to them as "Cowper's." That, however, is not to infer that Heber was an avowed Anglican Evangelical of the second generation.

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1. This metropolitan see included Asia, Africa, and Australasia!
2. William Makepeace Thackeray, The Four Georges (London, 1861), pp. 219, 221.

He was apparently not a 'party man' in the ecclesiastical sense. However, as Smith observes:

> The term "evangelical" in his day bore so Antinomian a tinge, that he disliked the abuse of so good a word, but if we were to rank him now with any school in particular, we should describe him as broadly evangelical. Heber will be found growing in his theological sympathies, manifesting the best features of cultured evangelicalism, and mellowing in charity towards Dissenters and all good men till his missionary experience carries him outside of sect and party.[1]

That seems a fair assessment, as Heber had met the Evangelical William Wilberforce, admiring him for his stand on the slavery issue; and to the famed 'Clapham Sect' (composed of lay Anglican Evangelicals like Wilberforce) he was a favourite poet. His interest in the bible and missionary societies also drew him into contact with Anglican Evangelicals. Yet he identified himself with 'majority' Anglicanism in this extract from a letter criticizing Thomas Scott's (Calvinistic) Force of Truth.

> Thus he tells us, that 'the doctrines of the Church are diametrically opposed' to 'the Arminians;' and in the note, that 'numbers of the Arminians hold doctrine of justification by works' in part, at least, and verge, in some degree, to the Pelagian system. Now, when he made the first of these assertions, he must have known that five-sixths of the English clergy, many of them as holy men as himself, and as sincere in their subscription of the articles as any men could be, were avowed Arminians. He must have known that Hales of Eton, Jeremy Taylor, Bishop Bull, Bishop Burnet, Barrow, Tillotson, and, in later times, and of those whom he most admires, Wesley and Fletcher, had all signed these articles in the Arminian sense; . . . I am myself an Arminian from conviction.[2]

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1. Smith, Bishop Heber, p. 55.
2. Heber, Life, letter to Miss Dod, 1819, I, 538-39.

From the same letter we obtain insight into his perspective on both theology and conduct:

> Excepting incidentally I have never written or preached on [points in controversy between Calvinists and Arminians], because I regard it as the great misfortune of our times, that men have been squabbling and calling names about doctrines not essential, and differences which only exist in words, to the neglect of the real interests of the souls committed to their charge. But the course of my studies has often brought them under my attention; my reading has been extensive among the elder divines of all sects and parties; and though I will not deny that I have been always under some degree of prejudice against the peculiarities of Calvinism, I do not think I have read the works of its advocates with an uncandid or uncharitable spirit.[1]

> Avoid needless singularity of all kinds, the clergyman who dresses in a shovel-hat, at an age when most of his profession wear a round one; the high Churchman who snuffles in a pompous tone through his nose; and the Evangelical minister who preaches extempore, or affects a particular manner of administering the Sacrament - all lose more than they gain, by shocking the prejudices of the weak, or attracting the ridicule of the worldly.[2]

But even if non-partisan, Heber was still loyally Anglican. In another letter he says, "the Methodists in Hodnet are, thank God, not very numerous, and I hope to diminish them still more; they are, however, sufficiently numerous to serve as a spur to my emulation."[3] He also experienced some tension with Rowland Hill, the 'independent' Anglican/Huntingdonian, who apparently itinerated fairly often in Shropshire, since his family's estate was within

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1. Ibid., I, 534.
2. Ibid., I, 550-51.
3. Ibid., I, 349.

Hodnet parish (The Hill family disapproved of Rowland's activities, however, and were loyal to Heber as their rector).[1]

It might seem, all told, that Heber's most radical desire was to import the "Olney Hymns" to Hodnet. But two years of attempted reformation were adjudged "fruitless."[2] By this time, however, he had already begun the writing of his own hymns, the first group of which appeared in the Christian Observer in 1811-12, together with a prefatory notice. Over the years his collection grew, and in 1819 he confessed to having "scruples":

> I have been for some time engaged in correcting, collecting, and arranging all my hymns, which, now that I have got them together, I begin to have some high Church scruples against using in public. Otherwise, I have a promise of many fine old tunes, not Scotch, as I once dreamed of having, but genuine Church melodies.[3]

But his reservations were temporary, for in 1820 he took two steps furthering his projected hymnbook. He enlisted Henry Hart Milman (1791-1868)[4] and others to contribute some hymns. So much to Heber's satisfaction did Milman respond that the former wrote (in 1821):

> You have indeed sent me a most powerful reinforcement to my projected hymn-book. A few more such hymns and I shall neither need nor wait for the aid of Scott and Southey. Most sincerely, I have not seen any lines of the kind which more

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1. Smith, Bishop Heber, pp. 56-57.
2. Heber, Life, letter to R.J. Wilmot (May 18, 1811), I, 369.
3. Ibid., letter to R.J. Wilmot (June 12, 1819), I, 514.
4. In 1821 Milman was to become Poetry Professor at Oxford, and in 1849 Dean of St. Paul's, London.

> completely correspond to my ideas of what such compositions ought to be, or to the plan, the outline of which it has been my wish to fill up.[1]

More significantly, in 1820 Heber wrote a long letter to Bishop Howley of London (he felt his own diocesan at Lichfield too ill to be thus bothered) seeking some form of episcopal authorization (or at least encouragement) for the project. Together with the Bishop's replies, this is the key document by which we may comprehend Heber's motivation and practical intentions.

After an opening paragraph, he immediately outlines his plan:

> I have for several years back been from time to time, and during the intervals of more serious study, engaged in forming a collection of hymns for the different Sundays in the year, as well as for the principal festivals and Saints' days, connected, for the most part, with the history or doctrine contained in the Gospel for each day. I began this work with the intention of using it in my own Church, a liberty which, I need not tell your Lordship, has been, for many years back, pretty generally taken by the clergy, and which, if custom alone were to be our guide, would seem already sufficiently authorised.[2]

These two sentences reveal much. To take the last first, Heber is here witnessing to the spread of hymnsinging in Anglican churches since Newton's breaching action forty years before. Actually, he goes back farther (in another sentence) to the long-time use of Ken's morning and evening hymns among Anglicans. In any case, it is by now, he says, a liberty "generally taken," "sufficiently authorized" by

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1. Heber, Life, II, 49.
2. Ibid., II, 23.

"custom." Heber does not mention the Cotterill affair in the North, which had only recently been decided, but no doubt the resolution went the clerical rounds, and that positive resolution (for hymns) was partially based on the assertion that hymnsinging was already a widespread de facto custom.[1] This may therefore be the concrete historical basis for Heber's practical justification for his petition.

The first sentence, however, is of real moment. It is Heber who at last revives the relation of hymnody to English liturgical worship which George Wither had envisaged two hundred years before: hymns whose content reflects the cycle of the liturgical year, Advent to Advent. Heber goes farther in his specification: they are to reflect the Gospel lections according to that cycle. In the aforementioned prefatory notice to the hymns published initially in the Christian Observer, he is more specific yet: "The following hymns are part of an intended series, appropriate to the Sundays and principal holydays of the year, connected in some degree with their particular Collects and Gospels, and designed to be sung between the Nicene Creed and the sermon."[2] This makes clear that Heber has in mind not only the Offices, but the Holy Communion liturgy itself. It is thus a fairly bold proposal, for while the Edwardian Act

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1. Above, n.2, pp. 194f.
2. Heber, Life, I, 371.

of 1549 is broad enough to admit congregational song at Communion, the Elizabethan Injunction of 1559 specifies only Morning and Evening Prayer.[1]

In any event, Heber's move was portentous; the Anglican Evangelicals like Newton broke the ground (or re-broke it, if we count Wither) for hymnody in Anglicanism, but Heber took it where they would not likely have gone (at least, not nearly so early); viz., into companionship with the liturgy, and in so doing paved the way for the broad establishment of hymnody in the Church of England. Furthermore, it opened up new variations for both the impressive and expressive (encounter and response) communicational functions of hymnody, as shall be seen.

Heber continues his letter to the bishop with a reasoned, documented defence of hymnsinging in worship, summarized as follows:

1) People like hymns. The Dissenters, and Evangelicals, and "our enemies"[2] (the Methodists ?) recognize this fondness,and attract people with hymns. Why should not mainstream Anglicanism? While the people ("lower classes") are essentially undiscriminating in their taste, they do like such unexceptionable hymns as Ken's pair; so therefore their taste should be educable.

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1. Above, p. 68.
2. Heber, Life, II, 25.

A bit lost in his argument is a brief Watts-like comment on the Psalms as hymnic material for Christians: ". . . and I have found, in conversing with the lower classes, that they really do not understand or appreciate the prophetic allusions of the Psalms of David, and require, besides the glorious moral and devotional lessons which these last contain, something more directly applicable to Christ, and the Trinity, and the different holydays which the Christian Church observes."[1] As we might say, the Psalms *per se* do not find points of contact in the singers' theology or practice.

2) There is extensive precedent in church history for hymnody (not just for psalmody). Here he refers to, or quotes, Pliny's Letters, St. Ignatius, Tertullian, St. Hilary, St. Ambrose, Prudentius, Synesius, and the practice of the Greek and Lutheran Churches: ". . .so that if such aids to devotion were refused by the English Church, she would act in opposition to the great body of Christians in all ages."[2]

He acknowledges the prohibition of the council of Laodicea (c. 350 A.D.) but claims this applies to unauthorized hymnody; Heber is writing to get his authorized.

3) There are already hymns in the English liturgy. Heber is here referring to the canticles of the Offices,

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1. *Ibid.*, II, 24-25.
2. *Ibid.*, II, 25-26.

the 'Veni Creator' at Ordination, and the hymn appendices to the Old Version: "And the license afterwards given to the version of the Psalms by Tate and Brady, seems to prove that there has always been a disposition on the part of our rulers to accommodate their laws in such matters to the taste and temper of the age."[1]

All this constitutes, for Heber, such an extensive de facto practice that suppression would be well-nigh impossible. Better to regulate than suppress - regulate by authorizing specific books, just as with Tate and Brady: "Under these circumstances, my Lord, I feel I am taking a great liberty, but one for which I hope I shall be pardoned, in requesting to know whether you think it possible or advisable for me to obtain the same kind of permission for the use of my hymns in Churches which was given to Tate?"[2] Note the plural "churches"; Heber is thinking beyond Hodnet to the whole Church of England. (Again, so much for his "scruples" noted earlier!) However, if such authorization is not "possible or advisable," he would settle for permission to use them at Hodnet alone.

Finally, he closes his letter on a practical note that "most of my hymns are applicable to the psalm tunes in common use. The few which vary from this rule are adapted to different ancient melodies of approved composers."[3]

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1. Ibid., II, 27.
2. Ibid., II, 28.
3. Ibid.

The bishop replied twice (immediately, and eight months later, in June, 1821), both times to the effect that "things are hardly yet ripe" for an authorized book, and that it would be better to go ahead and publish them privately; their popular acceptance would then increase the pressure for the general authorization of hymnody. The bishop appears to have been a sympathetic realist in the matter. But Heber also shows himself a realist, in a letter to a friend, after the episcopal correspondence:

> I am rather inclined to believe that when this is done it will be best to lay the MS. once before him and some other bishops, whose opinion, once secured, will have most weight with their brethren. If the object is answered of obtaining a well-selected and sanctioned book of hymns for the Church of England, to supersede the unauthorised and often very improper compositions now in use, I can truly say that I am extremely indifferent whether I myself or anybody else has the credit of the business, and I think it probable that many of my superiors would concur in the measure more heartily if it appeared to proceed from themselves, and at their own suggestion, than if it appeared first as the work of a private clergyman.[1]

The project and strategy were interrupted by Heber's call to the overseas bishopric. As a result, the hymns were not published until 1827, under his widow's guidance, as "Hymns written and adapted to the Weekly Church Service of the Year."[2] It is perhaps a tribute to Heber's person, as well as a sign of the hymnological times, that it could bear this dedication: "To his Grace, The Archbishop of Canterbury, these Hymns . . . are, with

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1. Smith, Bishop Heber, p. 89.
2. London, 1827.

permission, respectfully and humbly dedicated by his widow, Amelia Heber." This publication, however, was not initially as a hymnbook in the usual 12mo size, but as an octavo, uniform with the publisher's (J. Murray) presentation of the poems of Byron, et al. Benson, however, notes that some later editions were in a size more suitable for the pew.[1]

As published, the collection contained ninety-nine items distributed among seventy-two liturgical and paraliturgical days or occasions, there being twenty of these for which more than one hymn is provided. The ordinary Sundays are complete, as of course are the major feasts and Good Friday. The holydays are incomplete, however, there being hymns only for the post-Christmas trilogy (St. Stephen, St. John, Innocents), St. James, John the Baptist, and St. Michael and All Angels. At the end of the collection are thirteen hymns for occasions, including public thanksgiving, distress and danger, missions, morning and evening (Ken), funeral, etc.

Of the ninety-eight items (Heber uses one of his twice, albeit with different final verses), Heber supplied fifty-six, Milman twelve. There are four by Addison, three by William Drummond, three from the Old Version, two by Jeremy Taylor, and one each by Cowper, Dryden, Logan, Pope, Scott, Watts and Charles Wesley. The remainder are from miscellaneous or anonymous sources.

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1. Benson, English Hymn, p. 439.

We have noted that Heber's intention was that the hymns reflect the liturgical Gospels for their respective days,[1] and also the collects.[2] A survey of his 'calendar' hymns in the collection show that about two-thirds have a recognizable correspondence with the Gospel lessons, of which a few seem also to reflect the respective collects. Four others relate to the Epistle lessons. The remaining one-fourth seem to have little relation to their position in the calendar, and occasionally appear to be placed simply to fill in gaps; e.g., Trinity IV - "I praised the Earth, in beauty seen," and Trinity VII, "When Spring unlocks the flowers." Nonetheless it was a worthy beginning toward a liturgically-integrated hymnody.

Since this inter-relation was important in Heber's concept, any examination of his hymns, especially from the standpoint of communicational function, should place them in the verbal context he indicated: collect and/or Gospel, and possibly sermon. Fortunately, some of Heber's Hodnet sermons were published posthumously,[3] and while his choice of preaching text in these selected sermons is not always the same as the text-basis of the hymn for the same Sunday, there are enough coincidences to yield a fair sample.[4]

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1. Above, p. 268.
2. Above, p. 269.
3. As Parish Sermons for Every Sunday in the Year (3 vol; London, 1837).
4. The intentional relation of hymn to sermon was not original with Heber, however. There are the didactic hymns of John Newton, and before him, the hymns of Philip Doddridge (1702-51), although in the latter's plan the hymn followed the sermon. See his Hymns Founded on Various Texts in the Holy Scriptures (1st ed.; Salop., 1755), Job Orton's preface, pp. iv-v.

We begin at the beginning - Advent Sunday. Heber's hymn (he also offers one by Jeremy Taylor) is the familiar "Hosanna to the Living Lord"; but first the collect:

> Almighty God, give us grace that we may cast away the works of darkness, and put upon us the armour of light, now in the time of this mortal life, in which thy Son Jesus Christ came to visit us in great humility; that in the last day, when he shall come again in his glorious Majesty to judge both the quick and the dead, we may rise to the life immortal, through him who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghost, now and ever.

Note here 1) the present emphasis - "cast away" - "put upon"; and 2) the future - the second coming of Christ.

The Gospel is St. Matthew 21: 1-13, being the 'Palm Sunday' entry into Jerusalem, and the cleansing of the temple.

Now comes the hymn:

1 HOSANNA to the living Lord!
Hosanna to the incarnate Word!
To Christ, Creator, Saviour, King,
Let earth, let heaven, Hosanna sing!
Hosanna! Lord! Hosanna in the highest!

2 Hosanna, Lord! thine angels cry;
Hosanna, Lord! thy saints reply;
Above, beneath us, and around,
The dead and living swell the sound;
Hosanna! Lord! Hosanna in the highest!

3 Oh, Saviour! with protecting care,
Return to this thy house of prayer!
Assembled in thy sacred name,
Where we thy parting promise claim!
Hosanna! Lord! Hosanna in the highest!

4 But, chiefest, in our cleansed breast,
Eternal! bid they spirit rest,
And make our secret soul to be
A temple pure, and worthy thee!
Hosanna! Lord! Hosanna in the highest!

5 So, in the last and dreadful day,
When earth and heaven shall melt away,
Thy flock, redeem'd from sinful stain,
Shall swell the sound of praise again.
Hosanna! Lord! Hosanna in the highest![1]

In verse three the use of the verb "return" blends the second coming of Christ in the collect with his purifying return to the temple in the Gospel, all contemporized, and with the slightly extraneous incorporation of the promise, "where two or three are gathered together . . .".

Verse four leads from the purifying of the temple to a petition for inner purity. The last verse returns to the coming-in-judgement motif of the collect (and indeed of the Advent season as a whole). All of the last three verses are addressed Godward; and, as with the majority of Heber's hymns, are in the first-person plural.

Thus we have a hymn which simply but carefully integrates two of the propria for the day, and at the same time transforms their impressive/encountering/instructive function (the collect can be so, as 'overheard' by the congregation) into an expressive/responsive communication, largely Godward in direction.

The published sermon for this Sunday, which would immediately follow the hymn in Heber's plan, deals only with the temple-cleansing passage in the Gospel lection. Heber opens by describing the Passover tradition in the

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1. Reginald Heber, Hymns Written and Adapted to the Weekly Church Service of the Year (London, 1827), pp. 1-2.

temple, and how its mechanics were corrupted, quoting Malachi's prophecy (3. 1-3) of the sudden appearance of the Messiah to purify the sons of Levi like a refiner's fire, etc.

He then proceeds to "several other more minute and practical observations" on the text: Christ's faithfulness in going to the temple for worship (a warning not to neglect the outward tokens of respect for the church); inattentiveness in church (Christ will judge accordingly at his return); and a warning against defiling the temple of one's body. Here is the only close connexion with the hymn, as he concludes, "May He give us grace, that these earthly tabernacles, which he hath purified, may be cleansed [v.4], indeed, from all sinful stain [v.5]; and that we may rejoice with Him [v.5], in body and soul, and with our elder brethren and angels [v.2], in the day, when this corruptible must put on incorruption; and this mortal, immortality."[1]

Thus here Heber has re-used some of the phrases and images already sung in the hymn, toward a strengthened impressive function. All told, it would certainly appear that the hymn has in this case served as a 'binder' to the components of worship; and whether consciously or unconsciously apprehended, the resulting more-unified thrust should be an improvement in the encountering and edifying modes of communication.

The same integrative effect on collect and lesson (in

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1. Heber, Sermons, I, 9. Emphasis mine.

this case the Epistle) is observable in Heber's famous hymn for Trinity Sunday, "Holy, Holy, Holy." First, the rather doctrinaire collect:

> Almighty and everlasting God, who hast given unto us thy servants grace by the confession of a true faith to acknowledge the glory of the eternal Trinity, and in the power of the Divine Majesty to worship the Unity; We beseech thee, that thou wouldest keep us stedfast in this faith, and evermore defend us from all adversities, who livest and reignest, one God, world without end.

The Epistle for the Day in Revelation 4. We shall not reproduce the entire chapter here, but here are the sections which Heber takes up in the hymn:

> And round about the throne were four and twenty seats; and upon the seats I saw four and twenty elders sitting, clothed in white raiment; and they had on their heads crowns of gold: And out of the throne proceeded lightnings, and thunderings, and voices. And there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven spirits of God. And before the throne there was a sea of glass like unto crystal: . . . and they rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come. And when those living creatures give glory, and honour, and thanks, to him that sat on the throne, who liveth for ever and ever, the four and twenty elders fall down before him that sat on the throne, and worship him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying, Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honour, and power; for thou hast created all things, for thy pleasure they are, and were created.

Thirdly, the hymn itself:

1 HOLY, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty!
Early in the morning our song shall rise to Thee;
Holy, holy, holy! merciful and mighty!
God in three persons, blessed Trinity!

2 Holy, holy, holy! all the saints adore Thee,
Casting down their golden crowns around the glassy sea;
Cherubim and seraphim falling down before Thee,
Which wert and art and evermore shalt be!

3 Holy, holy, holy! Though the darkness hide Thee,
Though the eye of sinful man Thy glory may not see,
Only Thou art holy, there is none beside Thee,
Perfect in power, in love, and purity!

4 Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty!
All Thy works shall praise Thy name in earth and sky and sea.
Holy, holy, holy! merciful and mighty!
God in three persons, blessed Trinity![1]

Fundamentally, the hymn reflects the vivid imagery of Revelation, but the doctrinal emphasis of the collect comes through both in the closing line of the first and last verses, and in the general tone of high adoration.

After the opening verse of broad adoration, with the environmental reference to morning, verses two and three plunge headlong into the Epistle, with almost every line a direct or paraphrastic borrowing from the sections we have quoted. And of course the opening line of the first and last verses is a direct quotation of the biblical verse eight.

In effect, we have here Scripture turned into adoration, with the Trinity theme incorporated, whereas in the liturgy it is separately sounded in the collect. It is a pity that Heber's two published sermons for this Day are neither of them based on the Epistle. How would he have followed up this imagery homiletically?

One is tempted to say that at this point we go from the sublime to the ridiculous, for the next example is much less successful as a hymn, however faithful it may be to the associated liturgical text.

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1. Heber, Hymns, p. 84.

The Day is Trinity XXII, and the Gospel is St. Matthew 18. 21-35 - the familiar passage beginning with the inquiry of how often one should forgive another, proceeding to the parable of the forgiven but unforgiving servant, and ending with Christ's warning, "So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses." The related hymn:

1 OH God! my sins are manifold, against my life they cry,
And all my guilty deeds foregone, up to Thy temple fly;
Wilt Thou release my trembling soul, that to despair is driven?
"Forgive!" a blessed voice replied, "and thou shalt be forgiven!"

2 My foemen, Lord! are fierce and fell, they spurn me in their pride,
They render evil for my good, my patience they deride;
Arise, oh King! and be the proud to righteous ruin driven!
"Forgive!" an awful answer came, "as thou would'st be forgiven!"

3 Seven times, oh Lord! I pardon'd them, seven times they sinn'd again:
They practise still to work me woe, they triumph in my pain;
But let them dread my vengeance now, to just resentment driven!
"Forgive!" the voice of thunder spake, "or never be forgiven!"[1]

The overall impression of the hymn is its basic similarity to Newton's didactic/hortatory efforts in Book One of the "Olney Hymns," complete with the problem of quoted voices. Yet one notes how Heber has contemporized the matter, seemingly by placing the singer in the position

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1. Ibid., pp. 125-26.

of servant in the parable. This is identified by the reference to the "King" in verse two. Heber invents justifications for the servant/singer's unforgiving attitude: his "foemen" deride his patience (v.2); he has already forgiven them seven times (v.3, thus combining biblical setting and parable); and he has been "driven" to "just resentment." In verse two, the King is asked to punish the foes, and in verse three the servant/singer promises his own vengeance; but always, the minatory voice at the end of the verse.

It is difficult to estimate whether this attempt at something akin to 'realized typological trajectory' would be successful in congregational worship. Heber's sermon on the text[1] spells out homiletically the meaning of both setting and parable in terms of contemporary life; for the hymn's sake, one wishes it might precede the hymn, as an aid to identification by the singer with the first-person singular therein. However, we must accept that it was vice versa, and that the hymn prepared the congregation for the sermon. In any event, there seems little responsive/expressive function for the hymn. We would finally note that Trinity XXII is not the only example of its type. A hymn for Trinity I, commenting on the story of Dives and Lazarus, with its judgmental tone and insistent make-way call "Room for the Proud!"; i.e., for Dives'

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1. Heber, Sermons, II, 331-42.

funeral procession, is in the same category, along with the related sermon.[1]

For Lent IV, Heber turns again to the Gospel, being St. John's account of the miraculous feeding of the five thousand (6. 1-14). The hymn is as follows:

1 OH King of earth and air and sea!
The hungry ravens cry to Thee;
To Thee the scaly tribes that sweep
The bosom of the boundless deep;

2 To Thee the lions roaring call,
The common Father, kind to all!
Then grant Thy servants, Lord! we pray,
Our daily bread from day to day!

3 The fishes may for food complain;
The ravens spread their wings in vain;
The roaring lions lack and pine;
But, God! Thou carest still for thine!

4 Thy bounteous hand with food can bless
The bleak and lonely wilderness;
And Thou hast taught us, Lord! to pray
For daily bread from day to day!

5 And oh, when through the wilds we roam
That part us from our heavenly home;
When, lost in danger, want, and woe,
Our faithless tears begin to flow;

6 Do Thou Thy gracious comfort give,
By which alone the soul may live;
And grant Thy servants, Lord! we pray,
The bread of life from day to day![2]

The hymn is essentially a response of trust to the gospel message of God's providence and care. Going beyond the miracle, Heber cites the provision of God for the needs of the animal kingdom (vv. 1-3). The mention of ravens (vv. 1, 3) is repeated in the related sermon (in

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1. Heber, Hymns, pp. 85-86; Heber, Sermons, II, 27-40.
2. Heber, Hymns, pp. 55-56.

the same context),[1] and was probably derived from Psalm 147:9.

With the entry of the "wilderness" in verse four, developed in verse five, we have a correlation not only with the text, but also with the sermon; for in Heber's first application of the text, he contemporizes the physical wilderness of the miracle setting into a desert of toil and anxiety in securing a daily living.[2] The point, of course, remains: trust.

The verse five development seems, however, to connect at another place in the sermon, where Heber calls for devotion "to tread, with Christ for our leader, the rugged and desolate paths of repentance."[3] It is perhaps to be regretted that the hymn does not follow the sermon to its last point, that Christ's generosity should be a spur to the congregation's provision for the relief of the poor in the parish.

A final observation is the repeated echo of the fourth petition of the Lord's Prayer - an especially obvious trajectorial point of contact in this setting.

In sum, this hymn is a fairly ordinary example of Heber's overall intentions - 1) to augment the impressive function of the liturgical propria, and at the same time 2) to provide a related expressive/responsive vehicle.

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1. Heber, Sermons, I, 213.
2. Ibid., I, 214.
3. Ibid., I, 212.

It is distinguished from hymns such as "Holy, Holy, Holy," however, in that it does not borrow much of its imagery from the biblical text for the Day. The relationship is thematic rather than literal.

Our final example shows the relationship between text and hymn becoming more subtle and more commentative. It is the hymn for Lent V, based on the Gospel from St. John 8 - "Before Abraham was, I am."

1 OH Thou whom neither time nor space
Can circle in, unseen, unknown
Nor faith in boldest flight can trace,
Save through Thy Spirit and Thy Son!

2 And Thou that from Thy bright abode,
To us in mortal weakness shown,
Didst graft the manhood into God,
Eternal, co-eternal Son!

3 And Thou, whose unction from on high
By comfort, light, and love is known!
Who, with the Parent Deity,
Dread Spirit! art for ever one!

4 Great First and Last! Thy blessing give!
And grant us faith, Thy gift alone,
To love and praise Thee while we live,
And do whate'er Thou would'st have done![1]

There is little question that this text is homiletically more difficult than a parable or miracle, but Heber in his sermon struggles gamely with the trans-historical problem of such phrases as "Abraham rejoiced to see my day," and "he saw it, and was glad."[2] And it is this note which the hymn expands both into a cosmic dimension and into a trinitarian setting for Christ's assertion.

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1. Heber, Hymns, p. 57.
2. Heber, Sermons, I, 220-32.

In the process, however, the relationship to the Gospel text has become so loose that the hymn can stand on its own 'feet' perfectly well. Yet, in the liturgical setting of Lent V, it still has a definite expository place, at the same time being Godward ascription and, in the last verse, petition.

Inevitably, much has been made of the connection with Scripture observable in these examples of Heber's hymnody; and in truth he could be seen to stand in that line of hymnodists in whose work the content of Scripture and/or allusions thereto and images therefrom loom large - Watts, Newton, Charles Wesley, and many others. Yet with Heber it was different, in that the choice of texts as hymnic sources was not his own (as a preacher); it had already been made for him, as he intentionally made his hymnody the handmaiden of his church's liturgical tradition.

The implications of the difference were at least twofold. In the first place, as we have already mentioned (and shall be carrying further in the next chapter), Heber's effort helped to legitimize hymnody in the eyes of mainstream Anglicanism. For Anglican Evangelicalism it was already fairly widely accepted; for the soon-to-arise Tractarian Anglicanism, it would need further legitimization. But to the 'non-partisan' majority, Heber showed that hymns could function as validly in their ethos as in Dissent and Methodism, of which many of them (including Heber) wished no part.

Secondly, it could be asserted that hymnody benefit-

ted Anglican worship practice. While the Anglican rite nominally afforded a measure of liturgical participation by the congregation (Lord's Prayer, Creeds, Confession, litany and versicle responses, etc.), the musical aspect of participation in the parishes (vis-a-vis the cathedrals) had long been at low ebb, held there in large part by a tired, awkwardly-handled and therefore uninspiringly rendered metrical psalmody. Hymnody offered a fresh idiom and opportunity for participation, and at its best provided a truly popular, yet relevant and para-liturgical medium of response (and edification) within Anglican worship. Reginald Heber deserves a large share of the credit for announcing and realizing this opportunity among his fellow churchmen-of-the-middle.

One could not leave Heber without taking note of another aspect of his importance in the evolution of English hymnody. He is reckoned not only as the modern father of the English liturgical hymn, but also of the 'literary' hymn.[1] What is meant here is that Heber, being an acknowledged man of letters, brought to hymnwriting a greater attention than heretofore to literary style and felicity (though such an assertion seems a bit unfair, especially to Charles Wesley). That is no doubt true, but it should be remembered that the particular literary style which influenced Heber was a vivid one, in comparison to eighteenth-century Augustan style and criteria; viz.,

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1. Benson, English Hymn, pp. 435ff.

romantic naturalism, in the vein of the 'Lake poets,' especially Wordsworth.

While the hymns we have so far quoted do not on the whole employ the imagery of nature, one need only cast back in one's memory to such other well-known Heberian phrases as "By cool Siloam's shady rill" [1] (however inaccurate geologically!); or,

> Say, shall we yield him, in costly devotion,
> Odours of Edom and offerings divine?
> Gems of the mountain and pearls of the ocean,
> Myrrh from the forest or gold from the mine?[2]

or

> When Spring unlocks the flowers to paint the laughing soil;
> When Summer's balmy showers refresh the mower's toil;
> When Winter binds in frosty chains the fallow and the flood,
> In God the earth rejoiceth still, and owns his Maker good.[3]

or best known of all:

> From Greenland's icy mountains,
> From India's coral strand,
> Where Afric's sunny fountains
> Roll down their golden sand,
> From many an ancient river,
> From many a palmy plain,
> They call us to deliver
> Their land from error's chain.[4]

This use of language is a long way from Watts, with his relatively sparing use of adjectives and essentially

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1. Heber, Hymns, v.1, no. 2 for Epiphany I, pp. 29-30.
2. Ibid., v.3, no. 2 for Epiphany, pp. 25-26.
3. Ibid., v.1, Trinity VII, pp. 96-97.
4. Ibid., v.1, before a collection for the SPG, pp. 139-40. In v. 2, Heber's nature rapture carries him into suspect theology in the lines, "Though every prospect pleases,/ And only man is vile."

seventeenth-century style, and is in a sense a combination of Charles Wesley's eighteenth-century delight in language per se with the romanticist's imagination, relishing in natural images especially, here verbally communicated.

It is in relation to this approach to verbal communication that we can pick up the thread of subjective focus in hymnody, which we have traced from Watts to Newton and Cowper (with an aside concerning Continental pietism, mysticism, and subjectivity).

That kind of subjectivity seems largely absent from Heber's work. His focus is essentially outward-turned to God and his works, and the resultant implications for men's lives. Much of his hymnody is robust and virile in tone. He may have admired Cowper's "Olney Hymns," but he did not really imitate that poet's intensely subjective, inward focus.[1]

No, if there is a subjective tendency in Heber, it is on a plane other than the theologically introspective. It comes through the heightened sensitivity to language, to the word-picture-painting that we have identified - in short, through a new accentuation on the 'manner' vis-a-vis the 'matter,' the form instead of the content.

For, given that vivid verbal imagery is still language, and is therefore still communicative, it is trajectorial communication which is not only very 'high,'

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1. His one selection from Cowper is the reserved (for Cowper) "God moves in a mysterious way," appointed for Easter III.

but which is received or 'caught' not only cognitively by the mind, but non-cognitively by the senses, through the suggestive and associative power of the verbal pictures. This is especially true of the naturalistic romanticist vocabulary and idiom.

The risk of this approach to trajectorial communication is that the sensual pleasure of the 'manner' may become more important to the recipient/singer than the 'matter' or content it is meant to help communicate. Certain kinds of pulpit rhetoric can similarly scramble priorities. To borrow from Marshall McLuhan, the medium can become the message. In extremis the medium can become the massage, verbally lulling or even seducing the singers into bad faith, fugitive religion being the form thereof which romanticism seems most often to excite.

All this, if and when it happens, is really a form of subjectivism, in its appeal to the singer's sensory pleasure over the content of faith, whether that appeal is innocently intended or otherwise.

With the "gentle Heber," it could not be otherwise than innocent (given the manifestly high level of his own discipleship); but, for all that he brought to English hymnody in the area of liturgical integration, one must acknowledge that the seeds of this new subjectivity were also planted.

CHAPTER FIVE

HISTORICITY AND ECLECTICISM: THE TRANSLATIONS AND "HYMNS, ANCIENT & MODERN"

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HISTORICITY AND ECLECTICISM: THE TRANSLATIONS AND "HYMNS, ANCIENT AND MODERN"

I. The Latin Translations

In the same year (1827) as Bishop Heber's hymns were posthumously published, another book relating to the liturgical year appeared. While it was essentially a volume of verse for private reading, some items have since made their way into hymnals. Its title was "The Christian Year," and its author - a "gentle" man like Heber - was John Keble (1792-1866).

Six years later in 1833, this man stood in the pulpit of St. Mary the Virgin, Oxford, and preached a sermon which, in retrospect, symbolically launched the Oxford Movement (in this respect, the sermon was not unlike Martin Luther's posting of the Ninety-Five Theses in 1517, seen retrospectively as ushering in the Protestant Reformation). This movement, also called the Tractarian Movement, was to internally preoccupy Anglicanism until well past mid-century, when our present study terminates.

Tractarianism has been the subject of an immense amount of discussion, critique, and scholarly inquiry ever

since, which we cannot enter into here, except as it relates to hymnody after Heber.[1]

The relationship of the Oxford Movement to hymnody is not a simple matter, largely because the Oxford Movement was not a simple movement. For example, its 'fathers' came from varying backgrounds. Men like Keble, Hurrell Froude, Isaac Williams, and Dean Church were committed Anglicans of non-juror, via media cast. Others, like Newman, Oakeley, and the Wilberforces came from Evangelical backgrounds, but reacted thereto with a pendulum-swing well past center. Pusey remained closer to his Evangelical heritage, though his pietism was somewhat 'objectivised' by exposure to its German and Scandinavian forms.[2]

The confluence of such men in one movement yields part of its complexity. The historian Owen Chadwick has attempted to summarize its character thus:

> Like its predecessor the Evangelical Movement, it was more a movement of the heart than of the head. If the generalization be allowed, it was primarily concerned with the law of prayer, and only secondarily with the law of belief. It was aware that creed and prayer are inseparable. It was not concerned for religious "experience" while being unconcerned about relative language - on the contrary, it was earnestly dogmatic. But the movement, though dogmatic, was not dogmatic simply because it possessed or shared a particular theory of dogma. It always saw dogma in relation to worship, to the numinous, to the movement of the heart, to the conscience and the moral need, to the immediate experience of the hidden hand of God - so that without this attention to worship or the moral need, dogma could not be apprehended rightly.[3]

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1. See the Bibliography.

2. Yngve Brilioth, Evangelicalism and the Oxford Movement (London, 1934), pp. 37-38.

3. Owen Chadwick, The Mind of the Oxford Movement (London, 1960), p. 11.

But if a certain fundamental correspondence to Evangelicalism was there, it was also true that the Tractarian 'fathers' gave priority to matters other than worship. In the face of the Whig plan to reorganize the Church of England institutionally, the Tractarians were calling the church to re-appropriate and re-assert its authority over its own life. This they defended by arousing a dormant sense of catholicity, and by appealing to the early church fathers.[1] In the meantime, a close adherence to the letter and spirit of the Prayer Book rubrics and rites was recommended in the area of worship.[2]

This meant that they did not follow the Evangelicals in the use of the developing English hymn tradition. They had no great love for the Old and New Versions either; in fact, Keble even (and somewhat anachronistically) produced his own metrical psalter. What did happen was that in their own re-appreciation of the early and medieval church, some early Tractarians discovered the vast corpus of Latin hymnody (both medieval and later). As we pointed out earlier,[3] this tradition had not crossed into Anglicanism at the Reformation, so it came as something of a revelation.

At first, a few men like Newman and Williams trans-

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1. The political factor in the origins of the Oxford Movement are treated in Owen Chadwick, The Victorian Church (London, 1966), I, ch. 1-3.
2. See Tracts for the Times (5 Vols.; London, 1834-40), I, Tract 3.
3. Above, p. 82.

Latin hymnody as a devotional, literary, and slightly romantic sideline, with little thought for use in corporate worship. Indeed, Williams deliberately translated his 1839 selection from the eighteenth-century Parisian breviary into "unrhythmical, harsh metres" to prevent such use.[1]

Despite this somewhat desultory beginning, the idea and practice of importation (by translation) from essentially non-English hymnic traditions grew rapidly, in popularity and extent, and became the final emerging factor in English hymnody before "Hymns, Ancient and Modern" in 1861.

In the 'thirties and 'forties there were other translators and compilers after Williams, notably John Chandler[2] and Bishop Mant.[3] But these men could not summon the necessary scholarship to protect themselves from using corrupted sources (Mant) or from confusing seventeenth- and eighteenth-century hymns from the French diocesan breviaries with the truly medieval (Chandler). A sound implementation of the whole ideal had to await the mind and temperament of a man like John Mason Neale (1818 - 66).

Like some of the Tractarians, Neale was reared in an Evangelical household, and knew Watts's hymns from memory (as a result, his later appreciation of Watts was

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1. Isaac Williams, The Autobiography of Isaac Williams, ed. by Sir George Prevost (London, 1892), n. 1, pp. 36-37.
2. "Hymns of the Primitive Church" (1837); "The Hymns of the Church, mostly Primitive" (1841).
3. "Ancient Hymns from the Roman Breviary, for Domestick Use" (1837).

extremely limited). At Cambridge in 1836, he came into contact with Tractarianism, and with Benjamin Webb founded what eventually came to be called "The Cambridge Camden Society." While basically high-church in orientation, the society's energies were more specifically directed toward church architecture and restorations, including as concomitants ceremonial, symbolism, church music, etc. - in fact, the things to which the Tractarian 'fathers' in Oxford paid little heed in the first years of the movement, and which have been the standard caricature of high-church concern ever since.

Meanwhile, Neale was ordained a priest in 1842, and after some years of ill-health, went in 1846 to East Grinstead, Sussex, to be warden of Sackville College, an almshouse. Here he served until his death twenty years later; here he founded the Society of St. Margaret, whose sisters are still at work in the world; and from here he poured forth his many writings, hymns, and hymn-translations.

> He died worn out with incessant work at the early age of forty-eight, leaving behind him the reputation of being one of the most learned theologians, one of the most erudite scholars, one of the best linguists, and one of the sweetest hymnodists, and perhaps the foremost liturgicist of his time.[1]

Bearing in mind the Tractarian milieu, Neale was somewhat a man in the middle, hymnologically. That is, he thoroughly disliked and condemned the vast majority of

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1. The Ecclesiologist, XXVIII (October, 1866), 265.

indigenous English hymns, partly in reaction to his Evangelical upbringing, but mostly on high-church theological grounds. In a long article in The Christian Remembrancer, he reviews twenty-six works, from Watts through Doddridge, Whitefield, Newton/Cowper, Toplady, Kelly, Montgomery, Heber, et al., to Mant and Williams. On the basis of theological or literary criteria, he is generally negative about them all, although he might admit a few hymns, such as Watts's "When I survey the wondrous Cross" and Toplady's "Rock of Ages." Of the latter he opined, "[it] is undoubtedly the best original hymn in the English language." On the other hand: "Probably the worst original collection of hymns ever put forth is the Olney Book. In some of Cowper's there may be beauty: but Newton's are the very essence of doggerel."[1]

At the same time he was opposed to those who were so 'high and dry' (as he put it) as to admit no hymns whatsoever into (proper) Anglican worship, or at least no hymns in English. In a letter to Webb, he takes a pragmatic line of defense:

> This comes, worse from you, because you used to be in favour of a vernacular Liturgy and Offices, or Offices, at least. Now, for my part I am not; but, while we have prayers in English, why are we not to have hymns? Did ever any Church, or any body of religious whatever, do without them? Surely the language that can

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1. [Neale], "English Hymnology: its History and Prospects," The Christian Remembrancer, XVIII (October, 1849), pp. 302-43.

> bear to be used in the prayers, can be sufficient for the hymns of the Church.[1]

In the Remembrancer article, however, he claims that all the books reviewed would yield only a dozen or so worthy and usable hymns. Yet he tries to be fair:

> All we urge is, that the hymns of Dissenters will be accepted or rejected by Convocation on their own merit or demerit, and not on the bare simple ground that their authors did not hold the Catholic faith.[2]

As to the earlier translations we have noted above, they are criticized by Neale either for their use of late Latin sources or for their unusable meters, as translated.

For a perfectionist like Neale, there seemed to be nothing for it but to do the work himself. First to appear was a small annotated collection of "Medieval Hymns and Sequences" (1851), all taken from what he called the 'middle' period of Latin hymnody; i.e., the medieval, from Gregory the Great to Leo X. He makes a point of retaining the original meter. The following year saw the publication of the first part of his hymnological magnum opus, "The Hymnal Noted" (second part, 1854). There were 105 items, ninety-four being Neale's translations. The music was plainsong, set by Thomas Helmore. Of this project Neale wrote:

> We profess to give the only hymns which we believe the English Church, without the act of a general Synod, to have a right to, those namely of the older English office books, and

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1. Letters of John Mason Neale, sel. and ed. by his daughter (London, 1910), p. 125.
2. Neale, "English Hymnology," p. 335.

> principally that of Sarum. Now, to say nothing of the many translations afloat from the Paris Breviary with which we, as English churchmen, can have nothing to do, except as a matter of curiosity, the hymns that have been translated into English are from the modern Roman Breviary. But the hymns contained in this are-- it can never be too often repeated--a mere revision of the older compositions, common for the most part both to Rome and to Sarum, made by the literati of the court of Urban VIII. These men bound themselves down to those classical chains, which the Church had deliberately flung away, and sacrificed beauty, piety, fervour, poetry, to cramp the grand old hymns into the rules of prosody.[1]

This statement not only shows Neale's fastidiousness about ecclesiastical propriety and authority, but also points indirectly to our communicational interest. This is found in his disparaging aside on the Parisian breviary hymns. In his Remembrancer articles, he referred to that tradition in a significant way: "It is prettier, more flowing, more classical, than even the Roman reform; it is far more subjective."[2] There, for us, is the central point. In the introduction of the medieval Latin office hymn into the English scene, we have a thoroughly objective emphasis out of the past encountering the subjective focus that had been growing in extent and intensity through the eighteenth century and into the nineteenth.

This basic objectivity is borne out by an investigation of "The Hymnal Noted." First of all, the central focus is almost always outward-turned upon God, though

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1. The Ecclesiologist, IX (February, 1851), pp. 11-12.
2. Neale, "English Hymnology," p. 322. (Emphasis mine)

there are of course accompanying references to man's state under God. This focus is very often manifested in Godward address - petitionary or declarative; and even when the direction of communication is 'horizontal' in describing God's activity or nature, there is usually a concluding ascription or doxology, as in "Vexilla regis" below.

Secondly, with the exception of Bernard of Clairvaux's "Jesu, dulcis memoria" ("Jesu! - The very thought is sweet!"), the hymns are all in first-person plural, or are in the impersonal mode. This characteristic within the overall objectivity of the Latin hymnody must have specially reached Neale's high-church sensibilities, for in the Remembrancer article he says, concerning the seventeenth-century writers like Herbert: "Undoubtedly there is much of the old spirit here; but there is also much of that individualizing tendency which makes modern hymns as carefully employ, as the ancient scrupulously avoided, the singular number."[1]

Thus we are essentially returned, in communicational terms, to the functions of recollective response and 'objective' praise which characterized congregational song at the beginning of our period; viz., psalmody, and Watts (in part). But whereas psalmody (we suggested) communicated somewhat through 'typological trajectory' (from Old Testament to New), the trajectorial arc may well have been - for the nineteenth-century high-churchman - historical,

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1. Ibid., p. 305.

and perhaps romantic. That is to say, the ethos and aura of Latin hymnody and its original setting would find points of contact in the singer's catholic consciousness, and so encourage his response through the hymn. Such a trajectorial path would probably be as much non-cognitive as cognitive, given the undeniable passion and longing of the Tractarian or Anglo-catholic for a Church which would practise what she supposedly understood herself to be. This is not meant to say, however, that Christians other than Anglican high-churchmen could not appreciate and use the Latin tradition, both for its history and intrinsic theological or literary merit.

Finally, it is obvious that hymns from a breviary are ipso facto geared to the liturgy and to the cycle of the liturgical year; thus Reginald Heber's ideal of hymnody as handmaiden to the Prayer Book was here reinforced.[1]

As an example of the objective, historical, catholic emphasis that Neale felt so necessary and desirable in Anglican hymnody, we here quote one of his own favourites, by the sixth-century Venantius Fortunatus, "Vexilla regis prodeunt":

> 1 The Royal Banners forward go;
> The Cross shines forth in mystic glow;
> Where He in flesh, our flesh Who made,
> Our sentence bore, our ransom paid.

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1. In indigenous English hymnody, this connection was to be further made in such works as Bishop Christopher Wordsworth's "The Holy Year" (1862).

2 Where deep for us the spear was dy'd,
Life's torrent rushing from His side,
To wash us in that precious flood
Where mingled Water flow'd, and Blood.

3 Fulfill'd is all that David told
In true Prophetic song of old;
Amidst the nations GOD, saith he,
Hath reign'd and triumph'd from the Tree.

4 O Tree of beauty, Tree of light!
O Tree with royal purple dight!
Elect on whose triumphal breast
Those holy limbs should find their rest.

5 On whose dear arms, so widely flung,
The weight of this world's ransom hung:
The price of human kind to pay,
And spoil the Spoiler of his prey.

6 O Cross, our one reliance hail!
This holy Passion-tide, avail
To give fresh merit to the saint,
And pardon to the penitent.

7 To Thee, Eternal THREE in ONE,
Let homage meet by all be done:
Whom by the Cross Thou dost restore,
Preserve and govern evermore![1]

"The Hymnal Noted" was no great success as a practical parish hymnbook because of its self-limitation of sources, but Neale's translations therein have proved very enduring, and played a significant role in the eclectic content of "Hymns, Ancient and Modern." His book also encouraged others to try their hand at translation.[2]

Two further observations may be made concerning this discovery and translation of Latin hymnody:

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1. The Hymnal Noted, No. 22.
2. Neale was also interested in Eastern Christianity, which led him to translate some Greek hymns in "Hymns of the Eastern Church" (1862).

1) it served to help legitimize hymnody and its use to the Tractarians or (later) the high-church wing of Anglicanism. If it was medieval, it was all right, in principle at least. However, the approval did not for some necessarily and/or immediately include the native English hymnody from Watts onward: that still bore too many stigmata of Dissent or Methodism.

2) it served to make hymnody a fully historical phenomenon for the English; it was now seen to be a part of the church's trans-national tradition. Certainly there had already appeared hymnbooks which were eclectic in selection, within the limits of the English indigenous development. But the arrival on the scene of the Latin tradition, in conjunction with a now quite sizeable and varied English corpus of hymnody, shifted the conception of hymnbook composition into a broader dimension altogether in the second half of the nineteenth century, and into the twentieth.

II. The German Translations

Paralleling the activity described above, there arose at the same time (circa 1840 - 65) an interest in making available the German hymn tradition, in translation. It was not, however, of particularly Tractarian inspiration. Here was a corpus of hymnody comparable in magnitude to the Latin, and heretofore almost as little tapped by the English; indeed, the only serious previous attempt was

that of the young John Wesley, as we have noted.[1]

Catherine Winkworth (1827 - 78) is the name which stands out in this picking up of Wesley's lead almost a century later. Her pre-eminence compares with that of Neale in the Latin field; and indeed, there are a number of similarities between them, though her inspiration was Evangelical rather than Tractarian. She too had predecessors of lesser stature: Frances Cox,[2] Jane Borthwick in Scotland,[3] Richard Massie,[4] and Arthur Russell.[5] In her work she, like Neale, observed the liturgical year and maintained the original meters in translation (thus necessitating the importation and adaptation of German tunes, just as Helmore fitted plainsong to Neale's translations). Finally, just as Neale's "Hymnal Noted" appeared in two parts, so Winkworth's "Lyra Germanica" was published in a first and second "series" (1855 - 1858), each with slightly over 100 items. The first volume goes straight through the liturgical year, including eight minor feasts and saints' days, and closing with some hymns for morning and evening, the sick, and burial. The second volume is slightly more complex in organization. It begins with groups of hymns for the liturgical seasons, services,

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1. See the Detached Note to Chapter Three, pp. 256 - 62.
2. "Sacred Hymns from the German" (1841).
3. "Hymns from the Land of Luther" (1854).
4. "Luther's Spiritual Songs" (1854).
5. "Hymns for Public Worship" (1848).

sacraments, "Travellers," and again burial. Then comes a section called "The Inner Life" with sub-groups "Penitence," "Praise and Thanksgiving," "The Life of Christ," "Songs of the Cross," and "The Final Conflict and Heaven." If one combines the two outlines, one can see the basic organization of a typical modern hymnal.

"Lyra Germanica," however, was more a literary endeavor than a book for the pew. Thus in 1863 she published "The Chorale Book for England." About sixty per cent of its 200 items came from "Lyra Germanica," many revised in the interim. The remainder were new translations. All were set to German tunes by William Sterndale Bennett, generally employing the iso-rhythmic versions thereof.

What is different from Neale and his Latin translations is that the German tradition is not nearly as homogeneous as the Latin (at least, as selected by Neale). That is, we have seen above how the Latin translations were basically objective and God-centered in their communicative focus. But with the German, we encounter variety, beginning with a similarly objective strain in the hymns of Luther and his contemporaries up to circa 1600, but then beginning to shade off into a more personal focus in the seventeenth-century 'golden age of the chorale,' and finally leading to the pietistic and mystic strain which John Wesley translated.[1] Later still come rationalistic

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1. These are discussed by Karl Barth in our quotation from his Church Dogmatics, n. 1, pp. 260 - 62.

and romantic periods, bringing one to the time of Winkworth herself.

Thus there was not likely to be as uniform an emphasis, from the subjective/objective standpoint, as with the Latin translations. If one categorizes Winkworth's selections according to the aforementioned periods, one can see not only their relative representation, but also how her own judgment changed from one work to the next. The following table is by per cent representation.

	"Lyra Germanica" I (1855)	"Lyra Germanica" II (1858)	"Chorale Book for England" (1863)
Reformation--30 Years War (1500-1618)	8%	20%	26%
'The Golden Age' (1618-1680)	36	30	33
Pietism (1660-1750)	31	18	24
Mysticism (1650-1760)	10	9	5
18th and 19th c. 'moderns' (1750-1850)	8	18	9
Otherwise	7	5	3

As might be expected, the largest category is the 'golden age,' including Gerhardt, Rist, Heermann and Frank. In their hymns there is still much 'objective' praise and adoration, but in them can already be observed the new subjective focus making progress. But if we add together the pietistic school and the mystics (chiefly Scheffler and Tersteegen), we see how they are almost as well represented as the previous group. These would be hymns similar

to those we illustrated above, as translated by John Wesley.[1] Otherwise, the only observation of any moment is that Miss Winkworth must have obtained considerably more material from the early period, sometime between the first and second series of "Lyra Germanica."

In her subsequent book on the subject, "Christian Singers of Germany" (1869), Miss Winkworth shows herself to be a thorough and competent historian, but one who did not choose to sit in judgment on the periods from which she drew for translation. Thus, while she is personally sympathetic to pietism, and devotes a goodly number of pages to an account of its origins and orientation, she is acute enough to see its subjectivity coming as far back as Philipp Nicolai, circa 1600:

> Hitherto the hymns of the Reformation had been distinguished by their simplicity and appropriateness to church use; their models had been found in the earlier Latin hymns, or in the Psalms of the Old Testament and the hymns handed down to us by St. Luke. Now, however, for the first time we encounter a new style, afterwards very prevalent, which reminds us of some of the later mediaeval hymns addressed to the Virgin and saints, and finds its scriptural ground in the Song of Solomon and the Apocalypse. As yet most hymns were addressed to God the Father through our Lord Jesus Christ, or to the Holy Trinity, or in the case of hymns of sorrow and penitence to the Saviour. But afterwards the mystical union of Christ with the soul became a favourite subject; more secular illusions and similes were admitted, and a class of hymns begins to grow up, called in Germany "Hymns of the Love of Jesus." Some of these are extremely beautiful, and express most vividly that sense of fellowship with Christ, of His presence and tender sympathy, of personal love and gratitude to Him, which are

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1. Above, pp. 258-59.

> among the deepest and truest experiences of the Christian life; but it is a style which needs to be guarded, for it easily degenerates into sentimentality of a kind very injurious alike to true religion and poetical beauty.[1]

Fifty or so years later, she sees Gerhardt as transitional:

> From this time onwards a more personal and individual tone is to be remarked even on congregational hymns, and with it a tendency to reproduce special forms of Christian experience, often of a mystical character. Gerhardt stands precisely on the culminating point between the two schools. His whole tone and style of thought belong to the elder school, but the distinct individuality and expression of personal sentiment which are impressed on his poems already point to the newer.[2]

And after her description of pietism, she concludes:

> Pietism in its original shape had done its work. Its defects had become much more apparent in the second and third generation than they were at first; its tendency to fix the attention of the Christian within, on his own states of feeling and chances of salvation, produced in some cases, when Pietism had become fashionable and profitable, a hypocritical simulation of such feelings; in others a timid anxious tone of mind, inclined to morbid self-scrutiny and religious melancholy. . . . for a time it seemed swept aside, but it had in it a germ of true and deep spiritual life, and this never died out; . . . in our own days it is blossoming again in vast works of Christian charity, which can spring only from a life rooted through Christ in God.[3]

The relevance of all this to our communicational interest is that, as the Latin tradition through Neale's translations reinforced the objective, God-centered earlier tradition of English congregational song, so the German tradition reinforced not only that (through Winkworth's

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1. Catherine Winkworth, Christian Singers of Germany (London, 1869), pp. 158-59.
2. Ibid., p. 227.
3. Ibid., p. 312.

translations from the early Reformation period), but also the subjective focus which we saw in the Evangelical Revival of the eighteenth century. Seen in toto, we might say that this new international dimension in English hymnody served to 'aid and abet' both of its own indigenously-developed approaches to the function of congregational song in worship: an essentially, objective, 'vertical,' God-centered recollective/proclamatory response; and the essentially subjective, inward-turned, 'horizontally-' or self -addressed contemplation.

III. "Hymns, Ancient and Modern"

But while we may thus, in retrospect, be able to functionally integrate these various hymnodic streams that were afoot in England in the mid-century, the actual situation was by no means so well ordered. Hymnbooks for the various Dissenting traditions and for all the shades of Anglicanism were appearing everywhere. Most were compiled by individuals and promulgated independently. One, the "Congregational Hymn Book" of 1836, edited by Josiah Conder, could be styled the first denominational hymnal, for it was commissioned by the just-organized Congregational Union of England and Wales (1832).[1] But while it included authors from Doddridge to Heber, Montgomery, and Lyte, it

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1. See Albert Peel, These Hundred Years, A History of the Congregational Union of England and Wales, 1831-1931 (London, 1931), pp. 92-93.

was still conceived as "a supplement to Dr. Watts's Psalms and Hymns," and not complete in itself. Furthermore, it was two decades too early to be able to use the Latin and German translations described above (assuming a positive disposition towards them by the Congregationalists of that time).

In an Anglicanism beginning to be affected by Tractarian principles, "the typical high Anglican hymn book . . . was a combination of hymns drawn from Latin and Greek sources, in which the dogmatic and traditional elements predominated, together with modern hymns of a more subjective nature but which were dear to the people and also spiritually effective."[1] In other words, having been reconciled to hymnody in principle through Neale's translations, higher Anglicans were beginning to use the 'home product' which the Evangelicals had brought into Anglicanism some time before. But there were still many competing collections.

Directly and indirectly, Tractarian concern for worship was affecting parish music as well. Church musicians such as Crotch, Goss, Elvey, S.S. Wesley, Havergal, Gauntlett, and Monk, aided by Hullah's music education efforts and Novello's facilitation of music publishing, were rejuvenating church music. The gallery bands and 'minstrels,' and the barrel organs were fading.

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1. Cyril E. Pocknee, "Hymnody since the Oxford Movement - II," The Hymn Society of Great Britain and Ireland Bulletin, No. 60 (Summer, 1952), 42.

True organs and more disciplined choirs were coming in.

Into this somewhat riding-off-in-all-directions-at-once situation came some order and consolidation, in the form of "Hymns, Ancient and Modern, For Use in the Services of the Church," in the year 1861. The story of its birth and continuing career may be found elsewhere;[1] suffice to say here that some Anglican clergy of fairly high-church leanings and hymnological interests formed a committee, chaired by Sir H.W. Baker, procured a musical editor in W.H. Monk, and advertised to the Church what they were about, soliciting suggestions. That the time was right is attested by the book's great success - 350,000 copies were sold in its first three years.

It would be too much to expect that one book could serve all the 'parties' in the Church of England. Yet the book was eclectic enough (and this is its significance) to appeal to many, especially in its later (and expanded) revisions. It is interesting that in the course of its career, it has come to be regarded more as 'middle-church,' its old high-church status now being filled by the "English Hymnal" of 1906. This shift is no doubt due to changes both in its content, and in Anglican attitudes to worship generally.

How eclectic, in fact, was the first edition? In descending order of proportion of the 273 numbered items,

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1. E.g., Historical Companion to Hymns, Ancient and Modern, ed. by Maurice Frost (London, 1962).

the major categories are as follows: Latin translations (130, including some forty from the French diocesan period); nineteenth-century authors (93); eighteenth-century authors and sources (34); German translations (11); and pre-eighteenth-century English sources (5).

The strength of the Latin tradition, medieval and later, is perhaps understandable in the light of rather high-church disposition of Baker and his committee. Neale and Caswall are the principal translators of the medieval, Chandler and Williams of the French diocesan hymns.

On the other hand, their Anglican attitude to Dissent is equally obvious, when we note that nineteenth-century authors outrank eighteenth-century sources by a ratio of nearly three to one. Within the eighteenth century, Independent Calvinism is represented by some eleven items (mostly Watts and Doddridge), while the Evangelical Revival as a whole contributes about fourteen items, of which nine are by Wesley.

The eleven German translations of Cox, Winkworth, and Baker are evenly spread across the sub-categories of that tradition discussed earlier.

In the nineteenth-century group, Baker himself has a dozen, followed by Keble (nine), Heber (five), and Faber, Lyte, Montgomery, and Neale (four each).

Thus far described, one would tend to a judgment of the book as fundamentally objective in character, since the notably subjective-focus categories (German pietism and Evangelical Revival) are rather sparsely represented.

However, an investigation of some of the nineteenth-century contributions by authors other than those named above changes the balance slightly. For here we re-encounter subjectivism, acquiring in some cases a sentimental mode of expression that was to figure larger as the century wore on, and was what Miss Winkworth warned about in relation to German pietism. The following, by the Evangelical Charlotte Elliott in 1834, is an example of the tendency:

MY GOD, my FATHER, while I stray,
Far from my home, in life's rough way,
O teach me from my heart to say,
"Thy will be done."

Though dark my path, and sad my lot,
Let me be still and murmur not,
Or breathe the prayer divinely taught,
"Thy will be done."

What though in lonely grief I sigh
For friends beloved no longer nigh,
Submissive would I still reply,
"Thy will be done."

If Thou should'st call me to resign
What most I prize, it ne'er was mine;
I only yield Thee what is Thine;
"Thy will be done."

Let but my fainting heart be blest
With Thy sweet Spirit for its guest,
My GOD,to Thee I leave the rest;
"Thy will be done."

Renew my will from day to day,
Blend it with Thine, and take away
All that now makes it hard to say,
"Thy will be done."[1]

One could also, of course, cite the Unitarian Sarah Adams' "Nearer, my God, to Thee," which appears at

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1. "Hymns, Ancient and Modern," (1st ed., 1861), Hymn 170.

number 200.

The presence of such hymns side-by-side with, say, Latin translations in a modern hymnal does not surprise today, but how is one to explain it in 1861? Brilioth suggests one explanation:

> That the High Church movement took a leading part in the production of hymn-collections seems evident. But with these collections an inundation of genuine Evangelical piety has swept over the Anglican Church: the number of genuinely Evangelical hymns in all these collections is very great. Their religious temper, and the tunes to which they were set, often stand in a strange contrast to the forms of worship into which they were introduced. It might be discussed how far the adaptation of the hymns of Isaac Watts, Charles Wesley, Toplady, Cowper, Lyte, and others was encouraged by the Oxford Movement. But it is undeniable that in the sphere of hymnology a strange blending of influences, Nonconformist, Evangelical, and High-Anglican, has taken place. And to some extent this indicates that there was more in common between them than would appear from a doctrinal analysis of their teaching.[1]

Nonetheless, it was this willingness to be at least mildly eclectic - historically, denominationally, functionally (liturgical and thematic), and communicationally (objective/subjective focus) - that was the novelty and genius of "Hymns, Ancient and Modern." And its commercial success served to make eclectic selection the pattern for hymnal compilation thereafter (though proportional variations continued to reveal denominational or partisan bias). More importantly, the eclectic concept helped to make hymnody an ecumenical phenomenon in England; so that if, for example, a Watts hymn was rejected, it was generally

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1. Brilioth, Evangelicalism and the Oxford Movement, p. 47.

not because Watts was a Dissenter, or because eighteenth-century hymns were all bad; a hymn was more liable to be judged on its own merits. Finally, although "Hymns, Ancient and Modern" was not an official hymnal of the Church of England, it emphasized the trend toward fewer hymnals, more widely used. Outside Anglicanism, denominationally-authorized hymnals did develop.

Yet, and in conclusion, we would return to the eclectic concept; because, as manifested in "Hymns, Ancient and Modern" and books to follow, it signified the end of the emergence phase of English hymnody. At least from the communicational standpoint, English hymnody had matured and come of age. All its basic elements were present, though changes might be rung on them in the century between 1861 and our own time. That, however, is another story, another phase, and takes place in a vastly different milieu.

CHAPTER SIX:

CONCLUSION

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I. SUMMARY REVIEW

"Communicational function" and "emergence" have been the operating parameters of this study. We have attempted to trace the latter in terms of the former, in respect to congregational song from the Reformation to the mid-nineteenth century.

In the Introduction we developed the concept of communication in worship partly in terms of directionality, identifying the essential traffic as in the 'vertical' plane between God and man, both as descending encounter and ascending response. In later chapters we also used the terms 'impressive' and 'expressive' to speak of these same movements more strictly from the standpoint of the worshipper. Secondarily, there was 'horizontal' communication between the participants in corporate worship.

Having now explored congregational song, and particularly hymnody, as it evolved within English Christianity after the Reformation, it is apparent that the two-way 'vertical' directionality is always significant, either in its presence or absence, by explaining or raising questions about what we have observed in the actual historical emergence.

Whatever else may be happening in the use of a metrical

psalm or hymn, the singer is being encountered or impressed by the song itself, qua song, simply because it is not initially his; it is external to him. He may not be aware of this encounter; indeed, one could make his unawareness of the process a criterion of hymnic success in communication; i.e., that he instantaneously and unconsciously makes what is received his own, identifying completely with it. But in any case, this fundamental encounter is inevitable and sine qua non.

It is, then, what follows or accompanies this process that is subject to variation and analysis. In metrical psalmody, it was the Scriptural "Word of God" which descendingly encountered the singer within the encounter of the psalmody per se. As "Word of God," of course, it wielded its own religious authority in the situation, aiding acceptance.

But at this point we must note the second 'constant' in the situation, and that is that the singer or congregation is always singing this song, by definition. It is not sung to him; he sings it - it is his overt action. It is therefore a contradictory condition if the only direction of communication present is the aforementioned encountering one, song per se and/or content. A person may indeed encounter himself (through conscience, for example), but not usually in this manner.

In metrical psalmody, then, the (encountering) "Word" as the substance of the (encountering) metrical psalm was

followed or accompanied by a responsive/expressive action; the "Word" of praise, of description of God's mighty acts, or of psalmic prayer was re-directed by the singer as a responsive address to God, a part of his worship. His singing action thus had a concrete, rational, expressive function.

That which enabled the transition from impressive to expressive - encounter to response - we identified largely as the recollective element in the Church's worship, because Scripture (including the psalms) can be understood as the record of God's activity in (past) human history. To use Scripture is therefore almost always to recollect that activity in some measure, directly or indirectly.

Isaac Watts attempted to refine this fundamental two-way pattern of communication by attending to the encounter aspect of it in metrical psalmody. If the points of contact could be improved between psalmic theology and sitz-im-leben on the one hand, and the Christian singer's theology and experience on the other, then the identification would be closer, and hence the response more full and personally involving. To that end, as we saw, he in effect reduced the 'typological trajectory' inherent in the Christian use of the Old Testament by various devices, some of them artistically trajectorial. But in the end the psalms were too limiting to Watts, and he turned to hymnody as a medium with wider scope, wherein he as a literary artist could better assist his fellow Christians in their worship.

What was also evident in Watts's work was the individualizing influence of the Enlightenment, just beginning to make itself felt in England. In him we saw a foretaste of the subjective focus which was to assume much larger proportions in the Evangelical Revival, with its element of pietism inherited from the Continent.

The "Olney Hymns" of Newton and Cowper further illustrated this focus of attention upon the singer's own states, feelings, and perceptions. Expressed outwardly, it had more of a reflective, contemplative, or musing tone than one of an evoked response of praise or Godward declaration; there was often a kind of detachment by the singer from himself in order to describe the effect upon himself of the divine encounter, especially as experienced in conversion.

We must leave an analysis of the impact of all this upon the corporateness of public worship to the student of worship. What is to be noted by us here is that the earlier, two-part communicational pattern is now altered, and that raises questions; viz., considering the subjective focus of the hymnic content, from whom is the encounter/impression now coming, and to whom is this (now) reflection really addressed (despite any nominal address in the hymn)? The best answer probably lies in the non-cognitive/psychological realm of suggestion and auto-suggestion, compounded by group dynamics (the 'horizontal') when a number of individuals are simultaneously involved under one roof. If this is true, the point would be that the two-way 'vertical'

communication has been supplemented by, or even given way to a 'circular' direction of communication, revolving about the singer, and interacting with other such 'circles' in the corporate context. If one were inclined to make a value judgment on this shift, one might be tempted to compare it with Luther's '*curvatus in se*' description of the essential human condition. That is to say, it becomes a theological matter.

On the other hand, if one wishes to remain with the former, reciprocal description of communication, there is still a problem, relating now to the artist/hymnwriter's communication to the singer; viz., that as the hymn becomes more and more the former's self-expression, it risks its 'public' nature (enabled by trajectorial allusions, associations, and images in language) in the encounter of the latter. The content can become too specific for broad identification: again a question of corporateness versus individualism in worship. A hymn may indeed almost become a (Tillichian) "Word of God" *to* the singer when in such an intimate relation to the hymnwriter and his experience. But is it then any longer a hymn, at least according to Saint Augustine's basic definition, when it is so much (to the singer) *im*pression, and *ex*pression (as sung) becomes either indeterminate in direction, or else 'circling' in to the self?

The same fundamental questions might also be asked concerning Newton's didactic type of hymnody. There is

certainly cognitive, impressive encounter therein, but how does it become expressive or responsive, when on the singer's lips?

If the subjective focus in hymnody under the Revival and pietism tended to set it off functionally from much of the rest of the action of public worship (becoming somewhat analagous to the reflective function of an aria within the ongoing narrative of a Bach 'passion'), we saw in the conception of a hymnist like Reginald Heber the desire to re-integrate congregational song with the liturgical shape and structures of worship. Based upon Scripture according to the lectionary cycle of the liturgical year, we are with his hymns returned to the recollective-response, two-way 'vertical' pattern of communication in psalmody. But the intervening years of hymnological development and emergence gave more scope for commentary and application, coupled in Heber's case to the artistic trajectory of imagery from nature, under the influence of the romanticism in literature at the time. Nevertheless, the fundamental point for us here is that the re-integration of hymnody with corporate worship was potentially beneficial to the communicative ability of both hymn and liturgy. Each supported the other in both encounter and response.

One could say that we have now arrived at the end of the description of English hymnody's communicational emergence, for the subsequent insertion of the Latin and German traditions only reinforced the objective and subjective

elements already present, albeit doing so in their own distinctive ways and with their own forms of trajectory. Yet to stop here might imply that the emergence of hymnody took place in a vacuum, which is patently false. Of the many environmental factors in the history of the period in England, we would here single out only one: ecclesiastical history.

Our study has been involved, seriatim, with early Calvinistic Anglicanism, Puritanism, mildly Calvinistic Independency, the Anglican and Methodist forms of the Evangelical Revival, 'majority' (and mildly Arminian) Anglicanism, and Tractarianism. The fact that they more-or-less followed one another in our study might suggest that they simply and exclusively succeeded one another in actual history. What actually happened was that the English were gradually becoming a religiously pluralistic people, established church notwithstanding. The pluralism is both theological and institutional; e.g., the Puritan outlook has never ceased, there are still the well-known shades of theological conviction in Anglicanism, Methodism and the various Dissenting traditions all continue in English life. And they have all come to coexist, if at times somewhat uneasily; all of which means that the different communicational functions of hymnody which we observed within these traditions also continue side-by-side: the Wattsian style, didactic hymnody, the subjective focus, liturgically integrated hymnody, even metrical psalmody (in Scotland).

Of course, the pluralism does not eliminate periodic shifts of balance in the overall situation, and it has meant 'leakage' between the traditions: borrowings, reciprocal influences, etc., resulting in modifications and evolution of stance within the traditions. One example is the way in which Tractarianism eventually helped to increase the consciousness of, and concern for, worship in many groups.

English hymnody was involved in this pluralizing process, because (as we saw) its own variety was 'aided and abetted' at mid-nineteenth century by a newly-acquired ecumenical/historical status (the advent of the Latin and German translations), and by eclecticism in hymnbook compilation (initiated by "Hymns, Ancient and Modern"). Thus it came to pass that the various hymnological types (along with their communicational functions and problems) not only merely <u>existed</u> side-by-side in this pluralistic scene, but were <u>used</u> side-by-side, though relative proportions in use might be varied by scruples of one sort or another. Thus an Anglo-catholic could sing Charles Wesley, and a Congregationalist the 'Veni Creator' (in translation, of course), and both 'with feeling.' In short, hymnody - for all its internal variety - emerged as the common heritage of all the churches. And as in 1861 English hymnody stood on the brink of achieving such a status, this is why we have terminated our study at that point in history.

II. CONCLUDING REMARKS

Much could be and has been said (and very well, in some cases) concerning the relation between the corpus of English hymnody we have discussed, and English-speaking Christianity in the last third of the twentieth century. This is a many-faceted matter, and a thesis subject in itself. The author will therefore content himself with some limited observations that correspond to our communicational concern.

For some in our day - Christians who have fine historical and literary sensitivity and openness - the above relationship continues happily. Hymns from all periods find some points of contact in these people, and thus serve a vital communicative function in their worship. But for others, who may be no less committed Christians than the former, the relationship is more problematic. The root problem or factor seems to be, that what for a hymnsinger in 1750, 1800, or even 1850 was the use of a contemporary idiom (or not relatively very old) is for us the use of a historical idiom. Hymnwriting has never entirely ceased, but it has certainly diminished quite sharply in the twentieth century, at least in terms of hymns actually used on Sunday mornings. Thus we are dealing very much with a past, historical phenomenon when we sing hymns.

The communicational problems this situation creates come under several rubrics, which we would only briefly review here.

1) Particular problems with vocabulary and verbal imagery. By this is meant that certain words and images no longer 'traject,' or if they do, they find the wrong points of contact. Watts could use the word "worm" for man, with no embarrassment to anybody and clear communication. But, to use Manning's phrase, that word so used has now "lost caste" through changes in language and culture. It is difficult, if not impossible, to think, speak, or sing of oneself or others as a "worm" or "worms." Slightly different is the use of a phrase such as "vale of tears" as a description of life in the world. For Watts, as for Luther before him, this was a standard religious (and trajectorial) expression. Nowadays, if taken literally it becomes theologically offensive, and if allowed to remain may be a communicator of bad faith to the singer - a 'hidden persuader.' A multitude of other examples could be cited, in the areas both of theology and of environment. What was once acceptable theology becomes suspect; what was once relevant reference to life becomes irrelevant; e.g., agrarian imagery to city-dwellers. But to adjust the vocabulary and imagery runs the risk of violating the hymnwriter's integrity, though it is often done.

This problem is compounded by the fact that it is precisely the historicity and associated irrelevance that some Christians desire in their hymns. Hymnsinging is for them an exercise in nostalgia for a supposedly less-turbulent, bygone era. In that case, hymnody would run the risk of fostering fugitive religion.

2) Changes in the role of language itself. It may be recalled that Joseph Sittler, in one of our quotations, mentioned the possibility of language "losing its opulence," becoming "designative and thin."[1] We could perhaps re-word this as 'abandoning trajectory for 'straight-line' communication.' It could be maintained that, in the time between historic English hymnody and ourselves, science and scientific discourse have done just that to language. John Macquarrie, in reference to Heidegger, puts it this way:

> [He] is not glorifying primeval language nor is he decrying the language of modern science and philosophy. He would readily admit that this language has its own field, but what he deplores is that it has become so predominant that it is fast on the way to becoming the only kind of language that 'makes sense' for a modern man, and that we are losing the power to understand any other kind of language. For language will indeed have undergone an impoverishment if we are left with nothing but the languages of science and factual description, of logic and mathematics. . . . It would soon happen that convictions which are not in the least scientific would express themselves in scientific language.[2]

To the extent that this has indeed happened in our day, insidiously or otherwise, it creates an impatience with the trajectorial use of language in much hymnody, and in poetry and verse generally. The trajectory is dismissed, or (mis)taken as 'straight-line,' as we showed in (1). The demand goes up, "Tell it like it is!"

However, that expression not only reflects a science-inspired preference for precise, 'straight-line' communication,

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1. Above, p. 47.
2. John Macquarrie, The Scope of Demythologizing (London, 1960), p. 196.

but also the plea of a people who are flooded with words, from advertising to political double-talk, from the New York Times to the paperback explosion. Words are now seen as cheap, manipulative, and hence to be distrusted. That too can be productive of impatience with even honest and artistic trajectory (as opposed to obscurity or verbosity). And that creates a grave tension in the Christian communicator, including hymnwriters and hymnsingers, because, as we noted earlier, aspects of the content of the Christian faith are quite beyond human language, and can verbally only be pointed to - trajectorially.[1]

3) Impatience with history in general. Our pace of life seems so rapid, event piling upon event, crisis on crisis, and all in apparently radically different patterns than in the past, that many people are as impatient with history, in principle and content, as with language. The felt need is for relevance in human discourse, to aid one's comprehension of the present and to facilitate resolution of its tensions and problems. History is no longer seen by many to have as much guiding relevance as heretofore. Nowhere is the demand for relevance more clamantly made than in the Church. It is made of its theology, its institutional life, its worship, and its hymnody.

The author would presume to think that a majority of reasonably sensitive Christians would agree that, given

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1. Above, pp. 41-43.

the exercise of judicious selection, the hymnody of the past remains quite viable for what we have called 'objective' praise and adoration, ascription, and general thanksgiving: indeed, it would in many instances be difficult to excel. But for a hymnody that embodies our contemporary situation and needs, expressing them either 'horizontally' (for edification or sensitizing) or 'vertically' (in Godward petition), we must usually turn elsewhere. For if past hymnody was specifically relevant to its own time when written, it is probably irrelevant now; e.g., hymns for Guy Fawkes' Day; but much past hymnody was not meant to be relevant in a social way, as would often be true of subjective-focus hymnody.

But where else to turn? Chesterton's towering "O God of earth and altar" stands at the head of the all-too-brief list, and its phrases still cut where cutting is needed, even though it is over sixty years "old." But the feeling is that many more are needed, although in the last few years, more have been forthcoming.

If the relevance is to be specific, however, the Church must then be reconciled to a dispensable, "throw-away," "loose-leaf" approach to at least a portion of its hymnody. The Christian church is of course famous (or infamous) for its reluctance to dispense with anything it has once acquired, and in hymnody this means not only the hymns themselves, but the post-1861 concept of the authorized, denominational hymnal, into whose preparation so much work is poured that it not only may be irrelevant before it finally

appears from the press, but the denomination may feel that its cost and effort must be amortized over at least two generations. This presumes the availability of relevant material - and that is the prior problem of either published hymnal or hymn broadsheet. Another problem of a fluid hymnody is human nature's emotional resistance to change, even when rationally it knows the need for it: "Not another new hymn!"

Manifestly, a great deal more could be said concerning the present problems and prospects for hymnody in English-speaking western Christendom. We have here simply attempted to point out in but three of many possible categories its problematic relationship to the historic period of English hymnody encompassed by our study. Nevertheless, the writer is convinced that as long as Christians worship corporately, congregational song in one form or another will continue to be one of their modes of communication - with their God, and with each other. That is why it is an area of church life needing continuous dialogue, experiment, and work.

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NOTE: Since the organization of this study corresponds to fairly distinct historical, ecclesiastical, and hymnological periods, it was thought that for convenience the Bibliography should be similarly arranged. Some works cited are relevant to more than one category; these have been placed where found most useful in the preparation of the study. There is also an initial category of general hymnological works.

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