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Juvenes ornatissimi: the student writing of George Herbert and John Milton

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'A hard is sacred to the gods and the priest of the gods' — *Dis etenim sacer est vates, divumque sacerdos* (line 77) — declares Milton's speaker in *Elegia Sexa*, written when he had just started his M.A. at Cambridge in 1629. Characterising poetic composition as highly serious, even sacerdotal, Milton apparently was as busy as the most dedicated religious officiant writing verse as a student. As a Cambridge undergraduate two decades earlier, George Herbert sent his mother Magdalen an English sonnet that also aligns poetry with piety:

My God, where is that ancient heat towards thee,  
Where with whole showls of Martyrs once did burn,  
Besides their other names. Doth Poetry  
Wear Venus Livery? only serve her turn?

Herbert was about seventeen when he wrote this sonnet, Milton around twenty-one when he wrote *Elegia Sexa*: for both young men, what the poet should be and what poetry should do were clearly important questions. Through an exploration of their student writing we can learn the answers that these two *juvenes ornatissimi* ('most distinguished young men') formulated at the earliest stages of their literary careers. Precocious talents, Herbert and Milton first meaningfully articulated as students what they perceived to be the poet's responsibilities, arguing for the higher aims of poetry with images of holy bards and martyrs while negotiating their way through academic curricula. Particularly significant for this study, given the humanist emphasis of early seventeenth-century curricula, are the ways in which these two profoundly Christian poets conceptualise the classical past and consequently represent the value of their own training in Greek and Latin for their poetic careers.

Each writer saw youth as a time of action, as a proverb included in Herbert’s posthumously printed collection of English aphorisms *Jacula Prudentium* (1652) suggests — ‘An Idle youth, a needy Age’ — and one of
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Milton's earliest Latin poems tellingly begins with the exhortations *surge, age surge* ('get up, come on, get up!'). Throughout their careers, both authors convey a sense that there is little time to waste; judging by his industry during his short life it is highly unlikely that Herbert's dotage would have been 'needy', while despite his blindness and the privations he faced after the Restoration, Milton kept on writing until his death in 1674. Both poets were supported—and, perhaps, propelled—by parents ambitious for their clever sons, and in their Latin works addressed to parents both authors clearly see a classical education as one of the most important gifts they had received. As well as sending poems home to his mother from Cambridge, after her death Herbert wrote the sequence *Memoriae Matris Sacrum* (1625-89), in which he praises the wonderful congruence between his erudite mother's thoughts and voice (*sententiae came voce mirë comuenit*). Milton's father's involvement was also central to his education: in his 1631-2 poem *Ad Patronem*, written just after he left Cambridge, Milton thanked his father for financing his learning of *Romuleae ... jurandum linguae, Et Latii veneris* (the eloquence of Romulus' language and Latium's beauties*, lines 79-80*).

Both poets attended important humanist schools in London, where they embarked on their first literary experiments, developing their voices as they moved from school to university, shaped, inevitably, as young poets by the places where they studied and the scholars who instructed and encouraged them. Herbert was at Westminster between 1604 and 1609, Milton at St Paul's from around 1620 until 1625. Reading their early Latin work shows us two poets interested in challenging themselves, but we also see how these poems were shaped by authorship conditions at the Stuart university, peopled by academic personnel and underpinned by the pedagogy their authors had experienced. Herbert's earliest published work appeared in official student anthologies of occasional verse, and Milton's first efforts in Latin were apparently classroom exercises written while still a schoolboy at St Paul's. His earliest extant Latin prose works, the student *Prolusions* (1674), were typically delivered in formal institutional contexts, to fulfil the requirements of the B.A. or M.A., the equivalent of modern *viva voce* examinations which test rhetorical agility and confidence as well as familiarity with scholarly content.

Herbert arrived at Cambridge as a student who had already excelled academically. The concerns of his Westminster tutor that he would work too hard accompanied Herbert to Cambridge; praising the industry of Herbert and his contemporary John Hacket, who rose to prominence as Bishop of Lichfield and Coventry, their tutor expressed certainty that 'if they were careful not to impair their health with too much study, they would not fail to arrive at the top of learning in any
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*Art or Science.* Herbert matriculated at Cambridge in 1609, and left in the mid-1620s, permanently moving away in around 1628. He took his B.A. in 1613, M.A. in 1616, won a teaching position at Trinity in 1617 and became University Orator in 1620. He took great pride in his appointment, which he described in a September 1619 letter to his step-father Sir John Danvers (1584/5-1655) as 'the finest place in the University', listing the Orator's prominent seating at academic meetings among 'such like Gwynneses, which will please a young man well'.

He wrote the English sonnet to his mother during his first undergraduate year in 1610, and most likely started his long English poem *The Church-porch* – which eventually formed the first section of *The Temple* (1633) – in 1614-15 before he took his M.A. Herbert was even more prolific in Latin. In 1612, he contributed two poems on the death of James VI and I's eldest son Henry, Prince of Wales, to the University anthology *Epicedium Cantabrigiense* (Cambridge, 1612), and in 1619 he wrote another poem on the death of James's wife Anna of Denmark for the collection *Laciniae Cantabrigienses* (Cambridge, 1619). In about 1620, he composed a series of Latin epigrams, *Musae Responsoriae*, written in response to the *Anti-Tomi-Cami-Categoria* by the Scottish Puritan Andrew Melville (1545-1622). Melville's work was printed in 1620, but probably first circulated in manuscript from 1604 onwards. Herbert's response begins with three dedications (to King James, the new Prince of Wales and future King Charles I; and Lancelot Andrews, Bishop of Winchester), which prefix a series of forty short poems. He also wrote the two Latin collections *Passio Discerpta* and *Lucus* in the early 1620s. During his lifetime, only Herbert's Latin works were published: the *Memoriae Matris Sacrum*, some of the occasional Latin verse, and two of his Latin orations delivered at Cambridge. All of his contemporary literary reputation depended, therefore, on Latin works written either while he was a student or soon after leaving Cambridge.

Perhaps the most relevant Latin poems he wrote as a student about poetics and the importance of the classical past are the *Musae Responsoriae* and the two anthology poems on the death of Prince Henry, particularly illuminating examples of how poems generated within the confines of an institution could be both creative and exploratory. The *Musae Responsoriae* foreground a young Protestant moderate's efforts to attack an ideological opponent while working out at the same time what kind of poetry he wants to write. Composed, to some extent, as 'official' counter-attacks by the then University Orator, this sequence nonetheless constitutes something much more interesting than an orthodox defence of a theological *via media*. The three anthology poems, too, soon move from a lament for royal deaths to meditations on poetry.
Conservative contexts apparently stimulated questing poetics. In their early works, and particularly later in their lives, Herbert and Milton represented student experience in ambivalent, even critical terms.

Milton entered Christ’s College in 1625, took his B.A. in 1629 and M.A. in 1632. There is considerable debate about how his first year at Cambridge unfolded; he may not have got on well with his tutor and some scholars have argued that he was rusticated, although the passage in Elégia Prima cited as evidence – in which the speaker refers to hoc exilium (this exile) – could just as easily be referring to the long university vacation. In and after his second year, in any case, Milton was extraordinarily productive, as his output in the single year 1629 illustrates. In Elégia Sexta, he zestfully lists his poetic activities to his friend Charles Diodati, then staying with friends in the countryside. As well as (self-evidently) completing the Elegy, over the last month or so beforehand Milton had finished what he calls the dona quidem dedicata Christi natalibus illa (those gifts in fact I have given for Christ’s birthday, line 87) – otherwise known as the ode ‘On the Morning of Christ’s Nativity’ – and had written some pressa ... patriis meditata cicitis (unadorned things practised on the pipes of your [i.e. Diodati’s] homeland, line 89), presumably the six Italian sonnets ‘Donna leggiadra’, ‘Quel in colle aspro’, ‘Ridondi donne e giovani amorosi’, ‘Diodati, e te l’dirò’, ‘Per certo i bei veerti occhi’ and ‘Giovane piano’. Even when judged against Milton’s rapid compositional habits at Cambridge, ten poems in three different languages is an impressive list. Three months previously, as well, Milton had ghost-written two Latin act verses for an oration delivered by John Forster, a Christ’s Fellow, at the disputations staged for the Cambridge Chancellor Henry Rich, Earl of Holland, one of Charles I’s leading courtiers, poems now known as Naturam non patti seniure and De Idea Platonica.

In 1628-9, Milton wrote to his St Paul’s contemporary, Alexander Gil (1596/7-1642?), to describe/boast about this Fellow’s request, emphasising his youth (and thereby hinting at his own precocity): the Fellow, Milton writes, [eiarnina super quaestionibus pro more annuo compoenenda ... forte mere Puerilitati commisi] (happened to entrust to my boyish self the poems on disputuation questions which need to be composed according to yearly custom). Milton’s self-identification as a puer (boy) is interesting; more typically, he characterises his student self as a iuvenis (youth), as in the poem Ad Patrem, in which he mentions his iuvenilia carmina (youthful poems, line 115). Possibly Milton reasoned that puer more accurately reflected the developmental stage at which he had first met Gil at St Paul’s, or wants to insist on his precocity to an author he admired. In any case, Milton was keenly aware of the kudos associated with being asked to write Latin verse for
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others, which gives us some insight into his desire to build a reputation while at Cambridge.

After his arrival at Christ's in 1625, in Latin Milton wrote another six elegies; poems on the death of Dr Nicholas Felton, Bishop of Ely, and that of the University vice-chancellor, Dr John Gostlin; and six poems on the 1605 Gunpowder Plot including In Quintum Novembris. While at Cambridge, Milton did not contribute Latin poems to university anthologies as Herbert had, although one of his most significant early English poems, the threnody Lycidas, was first printed in the anthology Justo Edouardo King naufrago (Cambridge, 1638) to commemorate the death of the young Christ's Fellow Edward King, which occurred half a decade after Milton had received his M.A. The Latin elegies Milton wrote at Cambridge, as well as his two commemorative poems for Felton and Gostlin, show how he was developing his poetic voice within the university context. The elegies were, we assume, optional poems that Milton wrote in his spare time, although for a student seeking to gain recognition and praise, as John Haie has rightly observed of the "option" to write funeral verse for academic dignitaries, "the exact measure of voluntariness would vary." While some of Milton's significant early Latin work was written to fulfil curricular requirements, as in the case of the Prologiae, the poems may have met a more nebulous, but perhaps no less pressing, need to gain attention.

Herbert and Milton were by no means politically radical thinkers or writers while they were at Cambridge; on the contrary, each seems to have been rewarded by a university seeking to avert any kind of seditious thought. The assertion made by Thomas Hobbes in Behemoth (1680), his account of the civil wars, that "the core of rebellion ... are the universities" seems also to have been the Stuart monarchs' fear from the moment James acceded in 1603. During the 1610s and 20s, administration and teaching at the English universities were closely enmeshed with the monarchy and court, and both James and his son Charles in turn monitored Oxford and Cambridge extremely closely, fearful that sedition would be bred there by those they saw as religious extremists, particularly Puritans and Catholic infiltrators. James visited Oxford and Cambridge relatively often on his progresses, controlling the University administration by making sure that his loyal courtiers were placed high in the institutional hierarchy, an approach Charles followed until the ruptures of the 1640s and 50s. In Milton's time at Cambridge, for example, the appointment of Henry Rich as Cambridge's Chancellor in October 1628, immediately after the assassination in August of George Villiers, first duke of Buckingham, clearly showed Charles's campaign to place his favourites in central positions of academic power. Charles's Letter to the University for choice of y'
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Chancellor (28 August 1625) unambiguously recommends Rich to the scholars as 'a person acceptable to us, & daily attending on our person ... [whose] hearty affection to advance Religion & learning generally in our Kingdom and specially in the Fountains, cannot be doubted of.'

Rich's 1628 appointment was typical, for while early Stuart Cambridge contained, as universities have always done, an actual variety of ideological perspectives, in theory - and usually in practice - academic success depended on a certain degree of political and religious conformity. The fact that Herbert was chosen first as a prelector in Rhetoric in 1617, then as University Orator in 1620, suggests that he was seen as an exemplary student, a talented mouthpiece for the University on official occasions. As well as giving formal orations, several of which were printed, the University Orator also had to write Latin letters to various dignitaries on behalf of the University, acting as an institutional voice. Milton did not reach as prominent a position within Cambridge as Herbert. Yet although he would have to wait for the Interregnum and for employment within Cromwell's Secretariat for Foreign Tongues to write official Latin letters, the fact that Milton's ghost-written verses entertained Rich on an important state visit to Cambridge implies that this future Parliamentary civil servant, and defender of regicide, was not already inhabiting these ideological positions as a student.

Within a year of matriculation, Herbert had embarked on a lifelong process of examining the moral force of poetry, as we see in the two English sonnets to his mother. In particular, the sonnet 'My God, where is that ancient heat' cited at the start of this chapter works through a series of questions about love poetry versus religious poetry. Here the speaker expresses some confidence in turning language to fit his rhetorical purpose, and explores the relationship between 'deep' subject and 'smooth' verse in his address to God: 'Or, since thy ways are deep, and still the same, | Will not a verse run smooth that bears thy name!' (lines 10-11). This concern about the straight, smooth running of poetry - and its appropriateness to a godly subject - preoccupied Herbert in The Temple, too, as in Jordan (I): 'Is all good structure in a winding stair?' (line 3). Herbert's concerns in his Latin verse were not the same: he rarely questions the fluency of the medium, which suggests that he is more confident that Latin, or, at least, his own facility in Latin, is more apt for purpose than his use of the vernacular.

Herbert often negatively defines poetry by listing what it is not: we see this technique at work in 'The Quiddite', for instance: 'My God, a verse is not a crown, | No point of honour, or gay suit' (lines 1-2). In the poem In Obitum Henrici Principis Walliae (1612), similarly, Herbert itemises what he will not do as a threnodic poet, and the ritual
sources of inspiration he rejects are explicitly pagan: Bacchic, Delphic, Orphic. His speaker will not clothe himself in ivy (hederae velatus amictu, line 2), will not summon the Muses to nocturna ... vota (line 8); he will not draw rivers and mountains to him (lines 5-8). In fact, the poem doubts language's power to ease grief in any way: Cur ideo verbis tristes effundere curas? Expea, taquum haec sit nostri medicina doloris? (So why do I strive to pour forth my sad concerns in words, as though this were medicine for our grief?, lines 45-46). Questions of authentic emotion expressed, always problematic in the interpretation of poetry, become even more challenging in poems written to order, as it were, for an official state occasion like the Prince of Wales's or the Queen's death: we have no reason to assume that Herbert's tristes curae were heartfelt, but the questions he poses in this poem seem to have been sufficiently pressing to remain open throughout his poetic career. Both 'Jordan (I)' and 'The Quidditie' circle back to articulations of simplicity, honesty, after a series of negative definitions of what poetry is: 'Jordan (I)' advocates plain speaking (Nor let them punish me with losse of ryme, | Who plainly say, My God, My King', lines 14-15), while 'The Quidditie' ends with a direct monosyllabic statement of poetry's symbiotic relationship with faith (But it [verse] is that which while I use | I am with thee, and Most take off', lines 10-11). In the poem In Obitum Serenissimae Reginae Annae (1618-19), too, the speaker insists on his unsatisfactory fama ... ingentiumque (reputation and talent', line 4), and while these are fairly common articulations of the modesty topos, at the same time the insistence on the speaker's inadequacy seems here directly related to his sense of his own youth and untried poetic voice.  

Milton also uses the commemorative poem as a means of meditating on poetry. His second elegy, In Obitum Praeconis Academici Cantabrigiensis, written on the death of Richard Ridding, the Cambridge beadle, in September 1626, stresses Ridding's value to the Cambridge community, his remit to draw together the acies ... togaclad (toga-clad lines', line 11) of students; Ridding's reward for his value to the university is to be lamented by the entire 'Academia', by totis ... escolis (all the schools', line 24). A moving image of communal grief, perhaps, but while Milton demonstrates his classical reading, particularly Ovid and Homer, and his facility with ancient analogies (comparing Ridding to Cymelius and Eurybates), the beadle gets somewhat lost amidst the comparisons. Unlike Herbert in In Obitum Henriici Principis Walliae, however, Milton's speaker invokes classical ritual as a means of expressing grief, and does not distance his own voice from these rites, particularly in In Obitum Proconsellarii Medici. Yet at the same time the representation of the classical past becomes ambiguous in his
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student work. He often figures students as under the special protection of Apollo: *Elegia Prima*, for instance, suggests that the university is antipathetic to *Phoebicolis* (the devotees of Apollo, line 14), while *Lycidas* (directly echoing Virgil’s sixth *Eclogue*) imagines Apollo ‘touch[ing] the trembling ears’ of the poet’s (recently graduated) speaker, telling him that ‘[f]ame is no plant that grows on mortal soil’ (lines 77-8), and urging him to move on.  

In his poem for the vice-chancellor John Gostlin, Milton seems at first also to be aligning Gostlin with Apollo to heighten the impression of universal and trans-historical grief (lines 29-32): 

Tuque o alumnus maius Apolline,
Gentes togatas cui regimem datum,
Fronsque quem nunc Cirrha luget,
Et media Helicon in undis ...  

And you, too, greater than Apollo your pupil,
You who were given the leadership of the toga-clad race,
For whom leafy Cirrha now mourns,
And Helicon in the midst of its waters ...  

The speaker does not need to reject classical mourning rituals: Cirrha and Helicon (which Herbert’s speaker explicitly did not need) are involved in the mourning process. But despite the figurative involvement of these classical figures, if we look more closely, the representation of the pagan gods could be seen as somewhat dismissive: Milton figures the (Christian) Cambridge vice-chancellor as *maior* than the (pagan, albeit divine) Apollo. We could either read this as typical threnodic hyperbole, or we could interpret that *maior* as more meaningful, particularly since we see a similar implication in the invocation to *Paradise Lost* (1667), which simultaneously betrays its author’s profound love for Greek and Latin poetry and myth while articulating the conviction that its author’s ‘adventurous song’ will soar ‘Above the Aeolian mount’ (Book 1, lines 14-15).  

Each poet was, of course, influenced by his classical reading, and concordantly allusive in his early writing; at the same time, even in the student poetry we see signs that another authorial model – Christian rather than pagan, in broad terms – is being formed and weighed in Herbert’s and Milton’s minds.  

It is predictable that these early poems should be dense with classical allusions, considering the education that both authors received, and while each perpetually reaches for Greek and Roman analogies, at the same time he often seems sharply conscious of the value of having learned Greek and Latin to such a high level as an Anglophone student. A mediating layer of classical study lying between ancient author and
seventeenth-century learner is acknowledged, making a discussion of pedagogical access to the classical languages often as prominent in these poems as an exploration of those languages' literary fruits. In Ad Patrem, as we have seen, Milton acknowledges his father's investment in language-learning, not just Romuleae ... facundia linguæ, | Et Latii veneres (lines 78-80) but also the [grandia magniloquís elato vocabula Craius (the lofty words of the grand-sounding Greeks', line 81): these gifts prompt him to call his father pater optime. "Unambiguously, here, the speaker articulates gratitude for the learning he has received. In the Musae Responsoriae sequence, too, Herbert's speaker defends Latin and Greek against the imaginary Puritan's objections, asking Cur Latiam linguam reris nimis esse profanam ("Why do you think that the Latin language is too profane?", XVI: In Catharum, line 1.

The speaker also initially appears to be claiming the rhetorical and poetic force of facility in Greek and Latin for himself in the poem Ad Melènum (XXXVII), claiming that he could invoke ignis Camœnis ('fiery [Latin] Muses') and a Musé crepitante ('crackling [Greek] Muse', lines 19-20) for himself if he wanted to.14 I interpret Herbert's use of the term Camœnis as referring to Latin Muses, and Musé as deliberately transliterated Greek, implying poetic antecedents from each of the classical languages. But he uses a subjunctive to show that the invocation of Latin and Greek Muses was only over a hypothetical possibility — te funditus ... subruitasse ('I could have completely demolished you', lines 19-20) — not the approach he eventually chooses, and again, further implying that he will forge a poetic mode less dependent on ancient precedents, the speaker again figures pagan ritual — this time, the rites of Cybele in Thessaly — as a poetic mode he rejects, arguing that he is [(jux)itius Berecynthios omittens ("leaving aside Cybele's cymbals", line 39) to write his poem." Here, perhaps, we see an anticipation of the speaker of 'Jordan (I)' and his strongly stated wish to be among those who 'plainly say', not those who ritually, mystically invoke. Herbert's associative relationship with Greek and Latin precedents is tangled, certainly — admiring, like Milton's, but also ambivalent — and even in poems as early as the Musae Responsoriae we can detect an effort to step away from the tangle and move towards 'plain' saying.

Weaving together youthful poetries, emerging theological consciousness and deference towards one of the best-known scholars of the day, Herbert's and Milton's markedly different poems for the famous high church preacher and Bishop of Winchester, Lancelot Andrews (1555-1626), offer a useful point of comparison. An alumnus of Merchant Taylors' School, where he was taught by the influential humanist schoolmaster Richard Mulcaster (1531/2-1611), Andrews had enjoyed a distinguished career at late Elizabethan Cambridge, where his lin-
guistic gifts not only in Greek and Latin, but also in Hebrew, Chaldee, Syriac and Arabic, singled him out. A remarkable preacher, in 1597 Andrews became twelfth prebend of Westminster Abbey, and went on to become Dean in 1601, the same year Herbert entered Westminster School. In the *Musaes Responsiones*, Herbert addressed a six-line dedicatory poem to him, and just before he became University Orator, he wrote Andrews a letter written in Latin, which makes clear Herbert's regard. Even if we take the necessarily complimentary rhetorical register of both works into account, Herbert's modes of address still seem uncommonly warm: *sancte Pater* ('holy father') in the poem; *sanctissime pater* ('most holy father') and *Iesus illustissime* ('most distinguished hero') in the letter.

In the dedicatory poem, Herbert juxtaposes his own poetic inexperience against Andrews' learning and sanctity (lines 1-4): 

Sancte Pater, coeli custos, qua docit vae
Terra nihil, nec quo sanctius estra vident;
Cùm mea fallibilis numeris se verba viderent
Claudi, penes tuos praeterière foras.

Holy father, guardian of heaven; earth witnesses nothing more learned,
nor the stars anything more holy; when my words saw that they were enclosed by worthless metre, they could hardly get past your doors.

The tone here is of the schoolboy still wanting to impress the erudite teacher, and while *pater* is of course the appropriate ecclesiastical mode of address, Herbert may also have had the familiar meaning in mind, conveying the impression of a clever son seeking to impress an academic father. The speaker offers 'worthless' quantitive poetry to the most learned man on earth: is he apologising for writing poetry, rather than translating the words of scripture? Andrews had been centrally involved in the preparation of the new authorised 'King James Version' of the Bible for the best part of a decade, and was a well-known linguistic scholar. The letter certainly defers to the excellence of Andrews' prose style and classical learning, particularly in what Peter McCullough has aptly called its 'self-conscious postscript':

Quare malui seruere auribus Tuis, creberrimâ Antiquitatis lectione tarsis atque exploitis, quin luxuriarum saeciul, ambitionisque stranæ, non adeò sanctae ab optimo Rege nostro quin turbescat indies, atque offerat se, indulgere.

So I preferred to render service to your ears, which are smoothed and polished by most frequent reading of antiquity, rather than to indulge in the voluptuousness of the age, and the swelling of ambition which is not
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so remedied by our excellent King that it does not become more engorged daily, and gets carried away.

McCullough argues that Herbert's emphasis on the polished 'could hardly have been better chosen to compliment - and complement - Andrews's style', but this postscript also calls attention to Herbert's style, his insistence on avoiding luxuria, pre-empting The Temple's emphasis on plainness, which we have already explored. Metaphors of servitude pervade The Temple, most famously, the baroque form poem 'The Altar', which begins 'A broken ALTAR, Lord, thy servant reares' (line 1)." Herbert's phrase servire auribus Tuis (to render service to your ears) captures the former pupil's deference to the master, suggests the embryonic preacher's invocation of aural power as well as linguistic skill, and anticipates the speaker of The Temple's stance of humility and service. At the same time, Herbert, the University Orator, establishes his own strong, if somewhat imitative, voice echoing his teacher.

Milton's poem to Andrews is very different. We have no evidence that Milton ever met Andrews or heard him speak as a student, so the poem is inevitably less personal than Herbert's. John Hale reads Milton's individual commemorative poems as a form of 'self-display, a means to attract notice and reputation, even preferment.' He notes, too, the fact that Elegia Tertia is 'syncretistic' in its 'scope', with an absence of 'local rituals';" this lack of local Cambridge colour might be explained by the fact that though he had once been a Cambridge scholar, by the mid-1620s Andrews was far more strongly associated with London. Milton's poem starts with its speaker's declaration of sorrow - Mosstus eram (I was grieving, line 1) - and his identification of the animo tristia plura meo (many sad things in my mind, line 2)." The poet's animus is central to this poem, which charts the vivid appearance of two visions in that mind: the first is a terrifying funesta clavis imago (image of mortal disaster, line 3), a series of Protestant deaths which occurred in the early stages of the Thirty Years War (1618-48); the second is a dream-vision of Andrews in apparent apotheosis: sedereum nitido fulsit in ore iubat (a starry brightness shone on his radiant face', line 64).

As we saw, in his Latin letter Herbert addressed Andrews as Hecos illustrissime, but Milton represents the clergyman in somewhat different terms: the 'heroes', for him, are the ones who have fallen in battle - Et memini heroum ... ad aethera raptos (And I remember the heroes snatched up to heaven', line 11) - and although his speaker insists that his priority in mourning is for the bishop - At te praecipue luxi dignissime praesul (But chiefly I grieved for you, most worthy bishop', line
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13) — the poem still foregrounds the multiple military dead rather than the single dead bishop. The speaker then harangues Death itself, falls asleep and imagines Andrewes in a highly exotic, lush environment suffused by purpurea ..., luce ("ruddy light", 39), carpeted by the [esitū multicolore ("multi-coloured covering", 42) of many flowers, scented by [arma sub innumeris humida uata rosa ("the warm breath born from countless roses", line 48). The brilliant linguist, biblical translator and fitted preacher Andrewes floats into this sensuous world somewhat incongruously and quickly: Ecce mihi subito præsul Winchonius astat ("Behold, suddenly the Bishop of Winchester stands by me", 53). Within the dream, Andrewes the senex ... venerandus ("revered old man", 57) is rendered due homage by aqna ... caelestia ("the heavenly hosts", 69). But this veneration is undercut by the speaker's irritation at his sleep being disturbed by the dream: the poem for Nicholas Felton begins with the speaker's description of his modentes roe ... genae ("cheeks dripping with moisture", line 1) for Andrewes' death, but by the time he comes to comment on that same death more fully in Elegia Tertia, the speaker ends by stating that fœbem ("I was weeping") because of turbatos ... somnos ("disturbed sleep", line 67), not for grief at Andrewes' death.

Finally, exemplifying the hardly fluent progressions that characterise Milton's poem, the last line — Talia contingant somnias saepe mihi ("May such dreams often befall me", line 69) — twists together lines from two Roman elegists in another strikingly incongruous evocation. In Anores 1.5, Ovid's speaker has just spent a sultry afternoon with his mistress, and ends with a heartfelt wish præveniat mediis sic mihi saepe dedit ("May many mid-days happen like this!", 1.5.26). In Tibullus' Elegiae 1.1.48, the speaker also expresses a wish for sleep — hoc mihi contingat — when in bed or sleeping while a storm rages outside. The final line of Elegia Tertia is a well-balanced union of Ovid and Tibullus, but for such a sophisticated reader of Roman love elegy as Milton undoubtedly was, these allusions seem extraordinarily odd choices with which to end a threnody on the death of a clergymen, and we have seen how harrowing the two somnia of death in battle and sleep-disturbing apophasis have been — why does the speaker wish for more? I do not think that Milton deliberately intended the poem to jar; but compared with other defter and decorous poems on similar subjects, particularly his more adept threnody for Felton and 1639's Epitaphium Damonis, the extended Latin lament for Milton's friend Charles Diodati, Elegia Tertia seems tonally uneven. We could attribute its unsatisfactoriness to a gap between tone and subject, and an effort to cram too much — references to the Thirty Years War; two visions; a rosy-tinted evocation of Andrewes' apophasis — into too few lines and a fixed form (the institutional threnody), which will not quite take the weight.

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Milton would return to Andrews again a decade after he left Cambridge, and his characterisation of Andrews in 1642's English tract *The Reason of Church Government* differs strongly from how the bishop appears in *Elegia Tertia*. The tract is an attack on apologists for episcopacy, including Andrews; Milton's fifth chapter deals with the *Arguments of B. Andrews and the Primat*, i.e. the Primate of Armagh, James Ussher (1581-1656). The *venerandus senex* from *Elegia Tertia* is now criticised for his ideological stance, as Milton attacks the compendium *Certain Briefe Treatises ... Concerning the Ancient and Modern Government of the Church* (Oxford, 1641), part of which was, Milton states, 'in the title said to be out of the rude draughts of Bishop Andrews'.

And surely they bee rude draughts indeed, in so much that it is marvell
to think what his friends meant to let come abroad such shallow reasenings with the name of a man so much bruited for learning.

Campbell and Corns argue that Milton's 'engagement [with Andrews] ... is neither close nor vehement', and it is true that in comparison with his next anti-prelatical treatise, *An Apology against a Pamphlet*, printed in April 1642, Milton's criticism of Andrews in the earlier work does not seem personal. *An Apology* attacks Joseph Hall, who had suggested — among other calumnies — that Milton was rumoured 'after an inordinat and riotous youth spent at the Varsity, to have bin at length comited out thence', and even a decade after he had left Cambridge, Milton was clearly furious at Hall's assertion that he had been a bad student. But while *An Apology*'s attack on Hall is undoubtedly more concertedly *ad hominem* than the critique of Andrews in *The Reason of Church Government*, the latter still engages much more specifically with Andrews intellectually and personally than *Elegia Tertia* does, especially when we compare Milton's Latin elegance with Herbert's dedication and letter. Milton's odd poem does not convince his reader that he had a particularly detailed idea of Andrews' scholarship and beliefs; both came later as an adult polemicist, but as a student Latinist he was perhaps more eager to exercise his threnodic voice and make a literary mark commemorating such a high-profile death.

Milton's two anti-prelatical tracts offer some autobiographical insight into his years at Cambridge, as does his 1644 pedagogical work *Of Education*. Herbert, similarly, considers his student career in vernacular retrospect as parish vicar at Bemerton, Wiltshire, where he ended his life. In the English poem 'Affliction', Herbert weaves his Cambridge years into an account of the tribulations the speaker has faced as he moves towards mature faith; in the prose narrative *A Priest
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to the Temple, or The Countrey Parson (1632) two chapters on 'Knowledg' make scant provision for poetic composition or classical learning. We remember the 1619 letter to John Danvers in which Herbert wrote of the 'Gaynes', which will please a young man well' associated with the University Oratorship, and Milton's letter to Alexander Gill, boasting of his growing university reputation as a Latinist. By the time they came to reflect on student life as more mature men, each had changed his attitudes. For Herbert, especially, most of the classical allusions we see in his student Latin verse have disappeared, and although the undertow pulling Milton towards Greek and Latin authors would always remain strong, in Of Education, at least, he prioritises other forms of learning over classical study.

Herbert probably wrote 'Affliction' before 1626, when he was ordained as a deacon and became a canon of Lincoln Cathedral. In the poem, his Cambridge career is represented as a kind of temporary cushion against spiritual strife, and he sees his success at the University as part of a divine plan for him: 'Thou didst betray me to a lingering book, | And wrap me in a gown' (lines 39-40); 'Thou often didst with Academick praise | Melt and dissolve my rage' (45-46). Yet these are just early stages in a lifelong process: the speaker characterises 'Academick praise' as a 'sweetned pill', restorative yet artificially enhanced, distinct from the simplicity of faith, which cannot be taught by reading ('Now I am here, what thou wilt do with me! None of my books will show', 55-56). Education, therefore, is shown to be formatively significant but secondary to faith. When he came to write A Priest to the Temple a few years later in the early 1630s, the Greek and Latin Muses marshalled in the Musae Reponsoriae are nowhere to be found in the parson's library: Chapter Four, which details 'The Parson's Knowledge', only mentions one book, 'the book of books, the storehouse and magazine of life and comfort, the holy Scriptures'. The following chapter, 'The Parson's Accessory Knowledge', recommends a determinedly post-classical reading list:

The Countrey Parson hath read the Fathers also, and the Schoolmen, and all the later Writers, or a good proportion of all, out of all which he hath compiled a book, and body of Divinity ...

Humanist learning is replaced by religious learning: the student's pride in his facility in the Greek and Latin languages has become simply an adjunct to scriptural hermeneutic expertise.

Herbert is not sharply critical of his Cambridge education, although he does imply that 'Academick praise' perhaps mattered more to him as a young man than it should have done, and towards the end of his
4. Juvenes ornatusi

life he prioritises knowledge that has no space for classical authors. In Of Education, written on the suggestion of the educational reformer Samuel Hartlib, Milton adopts a related but distinctive perspective on contemporary higher education. Like Herbert, he posits religious knowledge as the most important element of any educational process:

The end then of learning is to repair the ruins of our first parents by regaining to know God aright, and out of that knowledge to love him to imitate him, to be like him, as we may the nearest by possessing our souls of true virtue, which being united to the heavenly grace of faith makes up the highest perfection.

Imitation here becomes imitation not of Ovid or Virgil but of God; 'knowledge' - as in The Country Parson - becomes knowledge of God rather than secular knowledge. Having stated what he now thinks 'the end of learning' should be, in terms that mirror the subject of Paradise Lost (to repair the ruins of our first parents), Milton goes on to propose various practical means of how the young male mind should properly be shaped.

Tellingly, he suggests that the pedagogical training he had himself received is not the best way to educate young men. When we think back to the fulsome thanks he extended to John Milton the elder in Ad Patrem for investing so heavily in his classical training, Milton's educational about-turn, his identification of 'the many mistakes which have made learning generally so unpleasing and so unsuccesful', is particularly surprising. 'Too much time is spent on the classical languages: we do amisse to spend seven or eight yeares meerly in scraping together so much miserable Latin, and Greek, as might be learnt otherwise easily and delightfully in one year.' Too much time is spent on holiday: 'And that which casts our proficiency therein so much behinde, is our time lost partly in too oft idle vacancies given both to schools and Universities.' We might contrast this sentiment with the hectic social delights detailed in Elegia Prima, in which the student speaker lists everything he is enjoying about London life during the Cambridge vacation, and his reluctance to return to university: Iam nec arundiferum mihi cura revisere Camum ('I am not now concerned about revisiting the reedy River Cam', line 11). Youth regards the span of the vacation very differently from age.

Of Education also argues against the use of getting the young to work on literary exercises - we think of Milton's Latin poems, his boast to Gil that an older scholar has trusted his puerilitas, the Prolixiones he delivered as an undergraduate and postgraduate - and laments 'forcing the empty wits of children to compose Theems, verses, and Orations, which are the sets of ripest judgement and the final work
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fill'd by long reading, and observing, with elegant maxims, and copious invention'. Ultimately, the pedagogue concludes that 'these are not matters to be wrung from poor striplings, like blood out of the nose, or the plucking of untimely fruit'. By the 1630s and 40s, we are in a very different place from where we began this study, but there are still some continuities between student and adult poets. The postgraduate Milton could declare in 1629's *Elegiae Sexta* that a poet (vates) is *divinique sacerdos*, and the undergraduate Herbert in 1610 could write of expressing towards God in poetry 'that ancient heat towards thee j Wherewith whole shows of *Martyrs* once did burn', and both writers continued to insist on the interrelation of theology and poetics. As mature writers, both Herbert and Milton continued to think about verse composition, humanist pedagogy and, particularly, classical learning, even though their perspectives diverged from how they had perceived those topics as precocious student poets, rejoicing in the intellectual approval of a university that each would later go on to question.

Notes

1. Carey 1997: 116-22. All translations are my own unless another translator is named.
2. Wilcox 2011: 3-4, lines 1-4. Wilcox states that these sonnets are 'probably H.'s earliest poems' (p. 3).
5. Carey 1997: 10. Carey dates the poem to '1624?', Milton's last year at St Paul's; see also Campbell and Corne 2010: 24.
19. See the introduction to this volume.
22. Charles I's letter is contained in the collection of manuscripts bequeathed to the British Library and Cambridge University Library by the
4. Juvenes ornatissimi

antiquary Thomas Baker (1636-1749). This letter can be found in British Library Harley 7837 (the re-catalogued reference for Baker Manuscript X), p. 362.

37. For a detailed chronology of Andrews' life and a useful introduction to his career and writings, see McCullough 2005: xi-lx.
42. Hale 2005: 144.
44. I would like to thank Gordon Campbell for bringing the Tibullus elegy to my attention.
45. Haug 1953: 768.
49. Wilcox 2011: 163.

Bibliography

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