

Herbert of Cherbury before Deism: The Early Reception of the *De veritate*

Perhaps more than any other seventeenth-century philosopher, Edward, Lord Herbert of Cherbury (1582–1648) has become the creature of his posthumous reputation. Since the middle years of the eighteenth century he has been widely known as ‘the father of English Deism’. Despite a recent scholarly effort to question the inevitable association between Herbert and the English deists – an association forged by Charles Blount’s pillaging of his manuscripts thirty years after his death – it has proved a remarkably persistent view, and one that continues to inflect modern perceptions of Herbert’s writings.¹ In particular, the widespread assumption survives that Herbert’s purposes were overwhelmingly theological rather than philosophical, and that Herbert intended his major work, the *De veritate (On Truth)* exclusively as a deliberate charter for deism and natural religion.² Modern scholarship, in short, remains very largely in thrall to the eighteenth-century characterisation of Herbert as the fountainhead of the deistic movement in England. This paper, in contrast, develops recent reassessments of Herbert’s relation to ‘deism’ by examining how early readers of the *De veritate* read and responded to it. It aims to get behind the posthumous reputation Herbert acquired after the emergence of the tendency known as ‘deism’, and to explain the range of responses that his work provoked.

The deist characterisation of Herbert does not adequately represent the perceptions his contemporaries and immediate successors had of him. The suggestion one finds made that Herbert’s early readers ‘had no doubt’ that his purposes were essentially religious rather than ‘epistemological’ by no means tells the full story.³ The eighteenth-century historians of deism who placed Herbert at the front of their books were developing an account of his writings that only arose from the 1670s onwards. Before then, Herbert’s readers were excited, influenced, and often confused by his writings and their purposes. For in his lifetime, Herbert was not universally taken as an unequivocal enemy of Christianity – indeed, his most perceptive modern scholar, D. P. Walker, has already suggested that ‘Herbert’s reputation as an

anti-Christian deist began only twenty years after his death'.⁴ Until 1645, the only published work Herbert's readers had to gauge his purposes was the *De veritate*, which was first printed in Paris in 1624. And even when early readers of this were suspicious of his intentions, as several were, they did not level at him the accusations of 'deism' and 'natural religion' that now sit so heavily upon him. Herbert's reluctance to mention Christ and his ingrained anti-clericalism were indeed suspected by some of those who knew him personally. But they only became widely known after accounts of his behaviour on his deathbed in 1648 began to circulate, and after the publication of his later writings: the *De religione laici* with its *Appendix ad sacerdotes* (1645) and the posthumous *De religione gentilium* (1663). Before then, Herbert's early readers principally understood his *De veritate* in terms of two principal contemporary intellectual preoccupations. The first of these was the search for philosophical concepts of 'method' and of an axiomatic foundation for logic. The second was the elaboration of metaphysical (that is to say, 'natural' or non-revealed) proofs of the existence of God. The responses of early readers of the *De veritate*, in short, were not as unequivocal as those of later readers and modern scholars have tended to be.

I

It has been assumed that Herbert's writings were little read in England in the twenty-five years following his death – although that there was significant continental interest is well enough known.⁵ In fact, however, a good number of early readers of the *De veritate* can be found, in England as well as across Europe. It would be wrong, however, to suggest that the book had a wide circulation, for both bibliographic and external evidence suggests that Herbert himself carefully controlled the distribution of the early manuscripts and printed copies of the book.

The earliest surviving version of the text is a manuscript dated 20 July 1619. It commends itself to Edward Herbert's brother, the poet George Herbert, and to his secretary William Boswell, with the instruction that they expunge anything contrary to good morals or to the true Catholic faith.⁶ It does not contain the chapter on Revelation that is present in later versions of the text (although the bare chapter title 'De Revelatione' is present), nor the chapters after this one on the probable, the possible, and the false (*De verisimili*, *De possibili*, *De falso*). Two further manuscript versions are extant, dated 15 December 1622,⁷ and 20/30 June 1623 respectively.⁸ Both these versions contain all the chapters of the first printed edition. It was possibly one of these manuscripts that Herbert submitted to Hugo Grotius and Daniel Tilenus, both of whom, according to Herbert's later autobiographical *Life* apparently 'exhorted me earnestly to print and publish it'.⁹

The first printed edition of the *De veritate* was made in Paris in 1624. Its circulation was as restricted as its suggestive dedication to 'all humankind' is all-embracing. The work, now rare, may well not have been on public sale, and probably circulated in the manner of a scribally published manuscript. The second edition of the *De veritate* was printed in London in 1633, and it too appears to have been restricted in its circulation: in 1635 Samuel Hartlib recorded William Wats' comment that 'Herbert should suffer his booke to bee more publike'.¹⁰ Herbert also altered the title-page dedication to encompass a more select constituency: readers of 'upright and unimpaired judgement', rather than 'all humankind'.¹¹

It is possible that there were some difficulties over the licensing of this edition. In 1648 – which is some time after the event – Samuel Hartlib recorded that Sir John Coke licensed the book 'with a greate deale of vndervalewing because hee found no mention at all in it of the only and best truth Iesus Christ'.¹² Coke was indeed a licenser, but the imprimatur of the 1633 edition, which in the conventional formula found in it nothing contrary to good morals or the truth of Faith, is in fact signed by William Haywood – who later resigned after being accused of allowing through Popish books.¹³ Nonetheless, the source for Hartlib's comment was the licenser G. R. Weckherlin, who was in the position, at least, to have a reasonably reliable knowledge of the situation.¹⁴ Nearer the time, in 1635, Hartlib had only offered this cryptic comment on the business: 'Something is left out in the preface of Sir Walter Raleigh new-printed History. So in the booke of Downam of Christian Liberty. Then mercke the licencing wie sie gestaltet of Lord Herberts buch [*i.e.* 'note how the licensing of Herbert's book was carried out']'.¹⁵

In 1639 a 'third edition' of the book was published, in the form of a French translation most probably made by Marin Mersenne, and several readers who had struggled with Herbert's Latin reacquainted themselves with the book in this form.¹⁶ The final edition of the *De veritate* published in Herbert's lifetime was printed in London in 1645. For it, Herbert made a number of additions to the text of the 1633 edition, most notably by including historical material in his discussion of repentance, and by expanding the conclusion of the section on the 'common notions concerning religion' (discussed further below).¹⁷ It is probable that Herbert bore the costs of all the lifetime editions: none bears the name of a bookseller, and only one (1633) records its printer.¹⁸ Furthermore, the final seventeenth-century printing, a posthumous edition of 1656, is either a Dutch pirate, or an illicit English printing. That it should have appeared in such a way at a time of considerable freedom of the press suggests that the book may have begun to acquire an irrevocably equivocal reputation.¹⁹

Herbert sent many copies of the 1633 edition of his book to prominent scholars across Europe for their 'jugement et censure',²⁰ and other copies passed from hand to curious hand. It was read by Fortunatio Liceti ('who hase highly approved of it'),²¹ Nicolas-Claude Fabri de Peiresc (who thought

the book well worth buying, if it could be found),²² Johannes de Laet,²³ Marin Mersenne, Pierre Gassendi, and Tomasso Campanella (who disapproved of the condemnation of the book at Rome).²⁴ Gassendi was disturbed at the praises he heard lavished on the book, and reported, remarkably, that Pope Urban VIII thought highly of the work.²⁵ Nonetheless, the Cardinals of the Congregation of the Index apparently ‘made merry with’ it before placing it on the *Index librorum prohibitorum* in September 1633.²⁶ Thomas Hobbes was reading it in June 1635, and found it a ‘high point’; so too was Hobbes’s friend Robert Payne.²⁷ Claude Saumaise and Daniel Heinsius, to whom Herbert had sent copies, both thought little of it, the latter fearing that he could not give Herbert his opinion of it without displeasing him.²⁸ Constantin Huygens, on the other hand, complained of the French translation that he had no time to read ‘quelque grand piece’.²⁹ On the strength of the book Herbert apparently became one of the ‘3. English great Wits’ whom Samuel Hartlib noted that ‘The Italians admire’ (the other two were William Gilbert and Francis Bacon).³⁰ Joachim Hübner, William Boswell, Pierre Gassendi, and one ‘Padre Mostro’, all wrote critiques of the book for Herbert.³¹ Jacob Aretius wrote to Mersenne that ‘we all admire the most excellent Baron of Cherbury’s treatise *De veritate*, and (as is just) adorn it with praise; but scarcely one in a thousand (even of the learned) understand it’.³² Herbert himself sent copies of the *De veritate* in Latin and French to a number of academic libraries, including Cambridge University Library; St John’s College, Cambridge; and Jesus College, Oxford.³³ As we shall see, Franco Burgersdijk conducted a covert refutation of the *De veritate* in his *Institutiones metaphysicae* (1640). Herbert’s book was being read by members of his correspondence circle between 1635 and 1641: Samuel Hartlib assiduously recorded their judgements in his *Ephemerides*, and there are other fleeting records of their engagement with the work.³⁴ From the mid-1640s onwards, Herbert’s ideas were drawn upon by philosophers in Cambridge, notably Nathaniel Culverwell and George Rust. John Locke engaged in a detailed critique of Herbert’s common notions from the second draft of the *Essay Concerning Humane Understanding* (1671) onwards. In short, although early responses were not unequivocally enthusiastic, there is evidence to support Anthony Wood’s judgement that in his day the *De veritate* was ‘much valued by learned men’.³⁵

II

The *De veritate*, like several other works of philosophy of the first half of the seventeenth century, presents itself as a response to scepticism.³⁶ It begins by defining different kinds of truth and the conditions under which they can be perceived. It goes on to argue that these truths are only attainable through one of four ‘faculties’: natural instinct, internal sense, external sense, and

discourse (i.e. mental ratiocination, not speech). The most basic kind of truths are 'truths of the intellect'. These are defined as what Herbert calls, explicitly drawing on Stoic terminology, 'common notions' (*notitiae communes; koinai ennoiai*).³⁷ These are 'derived from universal wisdom and imprinted on the soul by the dictates of nature itself'.³⁸ Herbert asserts that the common notions can only be proved by universal consent. This consent is universal because it arises from the promptings of the primary faculty of perception: natural instinct. And the common notions also provide the means by which to judge perceptions arising from the further faculties: internal sense, external sense, and ratiocination. For all four faculties, truth consists in 'the proper conformity of the faculties with their objects'.³⁹

The abstract exposition of the nature of truth and its faculties takes up the bulk of the *De veritate*. Towards the end of the book, however, Herbert applies his theories to religion and revelation. As examples of the common notions in practice, he offers five 'common notions concerning religion' (*notitiae communes circa religionem*). He took the opportunity to repeat these – making slight modifications between the 1633 and 1645 editions – in every one of his subsequent major works, even his *History of Henry VIII*.⁴⁰ The common notions are:

- 1 There is a supreme being (*esse supremum aliquod Numen*).
- 2 The supreme being ought to be worshipped (*supremum istud Numen debere coli*).
- 3 The proven conformity of the faculties is and has always been held to be the most important part of divine worship (*cultus divini*).
- 4 Whatever is vicious and evil ought to be expiated by repentance (*vitia et scelera quaecunque expiari debere ex poenitentia*).
- 5 There is reward and punishment after this life (*esse praemium, vel poenam post hanc vitam*).⁴¹

Herbert distinguishes the truth of these common notions, which are available to everyone, from the truth of revelation. Whereas, he states, the truth of these common notions derives from the proper application of the four faculties, the truth of revelation can only depend upon authority.⁴² It is, Herbert goes on, a difficult matter to distinguish authority from probability, possibility, or falsity, all of which he ends his book by expounding.⁴³

This brief outline of the content of *De veritate* provides the bones upon which to hang the flesh of its early reception history. The point to emphasise is that early responses to it differed widely. In part this is because the *De veritate* is a generic hybrid. It has elements of works in a number of different genres: logic and method; the faculties of the soul; metaphysics; and religious apologetic. The principal obstacle to any straightforward early judgement of Herbert's purposes, however, was the difficulty of understanding his work. Many early readers complained about the obscurity of the *De veritate*, some in very strong terms.⁴⁴ Even Herbert himself apparently agreed with Descartes that the French version of 1639 was easier to understand than the

original Latin.⁴⁵ These factors militated against early readers passing the kind of over-arching judgement on Herbert's motives that subsequent scholars have often sought. A further reason for the diversity of judgements passed upon the book was that early readers used Herbert's ideas for their own different purposes. The later-seventeenth-century English deist Charles Blount's emphasis on the libertine implications of the 'common notions concerning religion' was only one of the many available uses of Herbert's book, but it is the one that has subsequently become the dominant lens through which it has been interpreted.

III

The *De veritate* shares many of the interests of early modern works of logic, for it lays down principles of reasoning from established truths, a process Herbert called his '*Zetetica*'.⁴⁶ A number of early readers were interested in this aspect of the book. Among members of the Hartlib circle, in particular, the *De veritate* was read for the contribution its 'common notions' might make to a universal method of inquiry into man and the world.⁴⁷ Herbert's work helped inform Samuel Hartlib and Joachim Hübner's project of synthesising the findings of a number of logicians and metaphysicians to produce a 'true logick'.⁴⁸

As we have seen, at the heart of the *De veritate* is the doctrine of 'common notions'. Nonetheless, the idea that 'common notions' were the basis of reasoning was not original to Herbert. The term ultimately derives from Euclid's *Elements*, in which *koinai ennoiai* are the axiomatic foundations of geometry. The demonstrative prestige of this discipline led to the concept being taken up and applied more widely in early modern logic and the sciences.⁴⁹ Francis Bacon alluded to this widespread understanding when he spoke in the 1590s of 'common notions, which we call reason, and the knitting of them together, which we call logic, or the art of reason'.⁵⁰ Samuel Hartlib praised Herbert's book, along with Jacopo Aconcio's *De methodo* (1558), for having made 'Common Notions to bee the foundation of Logick, which no body has done so cleerly heretofore'.⁵¹ He also compared Herbert's philosophy to that of Francis Bacon, Francisco Sanchez, René Descartes, and Ramon Lull. In his *Orthographia* (1645), Jan Amos Comenius also praised Herbert for his search for 'common notions'. Comenius took these to be analogous to the axioms that he himself sought for his scheme of pansophic knowledge; that is, 'rules already regulated, not to be regulated still'.⁵² Hartlib's correspondent Joachim Hübner thought that Herbert made a better job of this than Comenius.⁵³ But Hübner and Hartlib agreed that Herbert dealt too much with 'Notions which wee have and may find within ourselves' and too little with the 'Res extra Nos' (things outside us) that really 'advance[d] knowledge'.⁵⁴ Other readers, too, understood Herbert to have written a treatise on method.

James Howell later published a letter purporting to have been written to Herbert from Paris, in which he noted that 'Divers of the scientificall'st, and most famous wits here, have spoken of your Lordship with admiration, and of your great work *De veritate*'; they wished, apparently, that his 'excellent notions and theoretical precepts' might be 'actually apply'd to any particular Science'.⁵⁵

These wits probably included Marin Mersenne, Pierre Gassendi, and René Descartes. All took a close interest in Herbert's book, and read it principally as a work of metaphysics. All, to a greater or lesser extent, disagreed with its conclusions. In particular, they objected to Herbert's emphasis on innate common notions. According to Herbert, these were guaranteed by their 'marks' of universality and independence – their appeal to the universal consent of all humankind (*consensus omnium*). The historical, anthropological and philosophical appeal to universal consent characterises many works of this period, but by the middle years of the seventeenth century it was coming under increasingly strong post-sceptical attack. The fiercest assaults stemmed from writers concerned to undermine religious orthodoxy, such as François de la Mothe le Vayer.⁵⁶ But others, who lacked or who indeed were actively combating a libertine agenda, also rejected the appeal to *consensus omnium* and common notions, and such readers criticised the *De veritate* on these grounds.

Thus Descartes noted to Mersenne that whereas Herbert took 'consentement universel' as the rule of his truths, the only rule that he, Descartes, took was that of 'la lumiere naturelle'. Truth was a 'notion si transcendentement claire, qu'il est impossible de l'ignorer'; universal consent could lead to a consensus of error.⁵⁷ (This distinction notwithstanding, Richard Burthogge later compared Herbert's view of truth to that of Descartes.)⁵⁸ Nevertheless, Descartes went on to praise Herbert's religious common notions apparently without reservation, finding them 'si pieuses et si conformes au sens commun, que je souhaite qu'elles puissent estre approuvées par la theologie orthodoxe'.⁵⁹

Pierre Gassendi held a diametrically opposed position to Descartes on the nature of truth: 'La Vérité' he noted, 'est très cachée aux yeux des hommes', and he criticised Herbert strongly for condemning 'si destroussément' (*i.e.* out of hand) sceptical arguments against universal consent.⁶⁰ If one takes that line of argument, continued Gassendi, 'quelle raison pourrait-on rendre de la grande contrariété des jugements qui se rencontrent presque sur chaque sujet?' Natural instinct, the basis of the common notions, may help in moral questions – although even then it is formed by laws, customs, and education – but in the pursuit of natural truths it is 'un garend bien foible, et un tesmoing bien inconstant'.⁶¹ Where, Gassendi asked Herbert himself, is the universal consensus that you say is the alpha and omega of theology and philosophy to be found? Not among men. Gassendi alludes to Herbert's common notions concerning religion only to deny that they are universally held – although he is careful to note that we know their truth by other means.⁶² Richard Baxter,

finally, generally approved the ‘very considerable things, in order to the disquisition of truth’ he found in Herbert’s book, but he too wondered whether ‘this consent of all mankind’ should be the test of religious truth, if for ‘Lawyers, Statesmen, Physicians, [and] Philosophers’ it is not.⁶³

IV

The responses examined above pick up upon the ambition suggested by the *De veritate*’s title: to investigate and distinguish the nature of truth. Other readers took up Herbert’s application of this inquiry to truths of religion. They treated the *De veritate* as an inquiry into the natural – that is, non-revealed – knowledge of God. Read in this way, Herbert’s use of the *notitiae communes* became a contribution to the long-standing metaphysical search for natural proofs of the existence of a supreme deity.

The first of these responses is to be found in the *Institutiones metaphysicae* (published posthumously in 1640) of the Dutch university philosopher and textbook writer, Franco Burgersdijk (1590–1635).⁶⁴ It occurs in the course of Burgersdijk’s proof of the existence of God. H. A. Krop has recently discussed this aspect of Burgersdijk’s metaphysics, and notes that at a central point in his argument, Burgersdijk departs from his source, the *Disputationes metaphysicae* (1597) of Francisco Suárez.⁶⁵ These departures, I should like to suggest, are explicable as the ‘Anonymous’ refutation of Herbert’s *De veritate* which Sir William Boswell claimed that Burgersdijk undertook in his book.⁶⁶

As Locke’s would later on, Burgersdijk’s objection to Herbert turns on the purported innateness of the common notions. Burgersdijk argues that there is no universal consensus about the existence of God, and therefore that the newborn soul is a *tabula rasa*. *Pace* Herbert, who emphasises metaphors of writing,⁶⁷ Burgersdijk asserted that nothing was inscribed on the soul: the *koinai ennoiai* of the Stoics, he said, do not exist. The existence of God can be known from demonstration of the necessary perfection of the first cause, but he cannot be known innately. According to Burgersdijk, we do often encounter the opinion that there is a God, that he is to be worshipped religiously, and that he will punish the most hidden sins and repay good deeds with rewards. These points are remarkably similar to Herbert’s religious common notions. But Burgersdijk is at pains to emphasise that whilst knowledge of them renders those who deny the existence of God inexcusable, they are nonetheless not sufficient for salvation.⁶⁸

The textbooks of Burgersdijk and his Leiden successor Adriaan Heerebord soon became staples of undergraduate education in Cambridge, and it was in that university that Herbert found some of his most serious English readers. His works were studied there by a loosely-affiliated group of intellectuals that included Nathaniel Culverwell, George Rust, Benjamin Whichcote,

Ralph Cudworth, and Henry More.⁶⁹ (There are also connections between several of these writers and Hartlib, and a 'lost' work of Rust's survives in the Hartlib papers.)⁷⁰ These scholars are often referred to as the 'Cambridge Platonists', but in his *Learned and Elegant Discourse of the Light of Nature* (written 1646; published 1652), Nathaniel Culverwell in fact explicitly preferred Herbert's account of innate natural instinct to what he called the Platonic 'phansy' on the question.⁷¹ Culverwell treated Herbert as a proponent of the thesis that *notitiae communes* should be the basis of ethics.⁷² And like Hartlib, Culverwell was interested in Herbert's critique of logical 'discourse' – a point on which Herbert was, thought Culverwell, unduly harsh.⁷³

Culverwell's most extensive engagement with Herbert comes, like Burgersdijk's, during a discussion of the natural knowledge of God. Culverwell presents Herbert as a proponent of an intermediate position between, on the one hand, the 'Platonical' view that the soul is born stamped with 'connate *Species*', and the opposite Burgersdijkian argument that God is known 'in a discursive way', rather than innately. It was the latter view that Culverwell preferred. In this regard, Herbert interested Culverwell as a theorist of the faculties by which the soul perceives divine and spiritual *species*.⁷⁴ Despite a single moment of suspicion of Herbert's denigration of revelation,⁷⁵ Culverwell was happy to draw upon his writings for the purposes of advanced post-Calvinist Protestant apologetic.

A similar position obtains in the case of Culverwell's younger contemporary George Rust (c. 1630–1670). Rust co-opted Herbert as a contributor to what now tends to be known as the 'rational religion' of Restoration England (although Rust was writing during the Interregnum).⁷⁶ Remarkably, Rust – who was tangentially linked to the Hartlib circle through John Worthington – drew on Herbert's book for his *Discourse of the Use of Reason in Matters of Religion: Shewing that Christianity Contains nothing Repugnant to Right Reason; Against Enthusiasts and Deists* (written at some point before 1655, but only published in 1683). The work was given this title by its editor, Rust's quondam student Henry Hallywell. But the title takes its authority, including the reference to 'deists', from Rust's text.⁷⁷ This apparent paradox – a treatise written against deists employing the ideas of a writer who has become known as a 'deist' – has been the source of some confusion.⁷⁸

Rust, however, perceived no paradox. The explicit association of Herbert with 'deism' was some time in the future. By the time of Dryden's *Religio laici* (1682), 'deists' were associated with a rejection of revealed religion and a denial of God's intervention in the world. But Rust seems to be using the word in the 1650s in an opposite sense: to characterise theological voluntarists who assert the arbitrary power of God over morality and nature. This position was associated with counter-Remonstrant Calvinism, but also, and more pressingly after 1651 in England, with Thomas Hobbes and, to a lesser extent, with Descartes. Rust asserts more than once that right reason depends upon the 'Common Notions' of 'Natural Instinct' to operate correctly.⁷⁹

These statements appear to have a direct origin in Herbert's theories. Rust also broadly endorses Herbert's work in a reference to the 'Notion or Idea of God which we have implanted in our Minds'.⁸⁰ But he principally treated the *De veritate* as a work on the faculties of the soul. In this respect Rust's understanding of the *De veritate* develops Culverwell's. He cites approvingly Herbert's account of the *facultates* of natural instinct, internal sense, external sense, and discourse.⁸¹ This approbation, however, is at the cost of tacit infidelity to Herbert's theories: whereas Herbert had repeatedly emphasised the fallibility of mental discourse, Rust discreetly alters his framework to make internal sense the faculty most prone to err.

Rust's rearrangement allows him to bring Herbert to bear on his real targets: not Blountian 'deists' but, on the one hand the divine voluntarists he apparently calls *deistae*, and on the other, 'Enthusiasts'. It is the Polish Socinian Szdlovius and Hobbes in first camp, and those who laid claim to the 'Testimony of the Spirit' in the other, that the *Discourse* attacks.⁸² Herbert served Rust as an useful alternative philosophical authority to the unacceptably voluntarist Hobbes and to neo-scholastic accounts of the faculties of the soul. Unlike Burgersdijk, Rust in fact found Herbert a useful ally in his defence of Christianity. Herbert played this part because his account of the faculties proved the best weapon Rust could find to wield against those who claimed the inspiration of the inner light.

Among later writers of the Cambridge school, the 'common notions' become divorced from any explicit association with Herbert. In his notes to Rust's so-called *Discourse of Truth*, published in incomplete form by Rust's friend Joseph Glanvill in 1677, Henry More alluded to the Euclidean sense of *koinai ennoiai* and wrote: 'it is our Impatience, Carelessness or Prejudices that we have not more conclusions of such certitude than we have in other studies also.'⁸³ This could be read as an endorsement of Herbert's broad project, but it is certainly not a ringing endorsement of the 'common notions concerning religion'. Rust's friend Joseph Glanvill also gave the common notions an orthodox afterlife in his apologetic essays. His *Reason and Religion* (1676) defines 'Fundamentals of Religion' that are reminiscent of Herbert's religious common notions. Glanvill also defends a conception of reason explicitly predicated on the 'Fundamental Notices, that God hath implanted in our Souls'. Several of the examples that Glanvill gives of these are identical to the those that were cited as *notitiae communes* in logic and philosophy more generally: for instance, that a whole is greater than its parts.⁸⁴ These endorsements of the 'common notions' are perhaps as much a reminder that Herbert's own use of them was not unique to him as of any direct influence of his ideas.⁸⁵

Herbert's Cambridge readers generally evinced an interest in the ethical consequences of his ideas. This emphasis was taken up by their critic John Locke, who treated the *De veritate* above all as a contribution to ethics. In the second draft of what became the *Essay concerning Humane Understanding*, Locke recorded that Herbert had been mentioned to him as a theorist of

the *koinai ennoiai* or 'Innate principles' that Locke had by then set out systematically to 'call in question'. Locke (who read the illicit 1656 printing of the *De veritate* and *De religione laici*) was concerned, like Burgersdijk, to deny any innate universal acknowledgement of God or of moral precepts. Unlike Burgersdijk, however, Locke criticised Herbert by name. Indeed, he quotes in full the 'common notions concerning religion'. But he does not appear to find in them an implicit threat to revealed religion. Instead, Locke discusses their claims as innate precepts of practical morality; he read Herbert as a potential contributor to his project for a demonstrative ethics.⁸⁶ He did not reject Herbert's common notions because he thought they were irreligious, but because they assert the necessity of virtue whilst offering no means of discovering what it is.⁸⁷ And despite Herbert's steadily declining reputation in the latter years of the seventeenth century, Locke still felt able to discuss his common notions in these terms openly in print when he finally published the *Essay* in 1690.⁸⁸

V

Herbert's religious motives in writing the *De veritate* were not, however, entirely unsuspected. In Italy the book was placed on the Index. In France, Descartes strongly dissociated himself from Herbert's mixing of 'la religion avec la philosophie' – something that was, he said, 'entierement contre mon sens'.⁸⁹ In England Henry Gellibrand commented that, 'Herbert de Veritate is judged to bee a good booke if the divinity of it were left out'. William Wats thought Herbert 'one of the rarest philosophers et so his booke De Veritate', but noted 'a feare it will leade to Atheisme'. The basis for this fear – which Richard Baxter shared – was that Herbert had made faith in the Scriptures merely a function of probability, by discussing them in the chapter 'De verisimili' of the *De veritate*.⁹⁰ Samuel Hartlib, too, was suspicious of Herbert's religious motivation. He thought Herbert's argument that the Ten Commandments derive their authority from being common notions rather than as scriptural Revelation implied a 'secret atheism'. He mistrusted Herbert's separation of truth derived through the *facultates* from the authoritative truth of Revelation. And he questioned Herbert's argument that all claims to Revelation should be tested against the common notions, which, he feared, 'Dose much embase the dignity of the Scriptures'. A similar point worried Nathaniel Culverwell: he noted seriously that it was not Herbert's 'common notions ... upon which the Church is built', but scripture.⁹¹

Thus it was only after Herbert's death that his principal motive in writing the *De veritate* came to be seen as attacking revealed religion. There seem to be two main reasons for this. The first was the circulation of accounts of his behaviour on his deathbed. When Archbishop Ussher, who was attending Herbert, 'asked him about Christ' he was told 'I beleeve so much as I can'.

For this and other ‘atheistic’ reasons Ussher refused him the sacrament.⁹² The second reason for the sharp decline in Herbert’s reputation was the publication of the late works for which the *De veritate*, which had left its readers uncertain, was a preparation. These were the *De religione laici* and the *Appendix ad Sacerdotes* that were published with the 1645 *De veritate*, and the posthumously-published *De religione gentilium*, edited by Isaac Vossius in Amsterdam in 1663.

After these works appeared, attacks on Herbert’s religious principles gathered strength. In 1664 Meric Casaubon exposed what he identified as the central purpose of the *De veritate*: ‘The design was to shew, that there is no need of a Christ: (though he durst not openly profess it;) and what opinion he had of the Gospel, is not unknown to them that knew him.’⁹³ Casaubon returned to his theme in 1669:

It is well known that before the late troubles, a *Noble-man* of this Realm wrote a book intituled *De Veritate*: the end and drift whereof was, out of the Religions of mankind to extract a Religion that should need no Christ.⁹⁴ And though they that licensed it did not apprehend it so, it seems; (I did at first sight) yet himself afterwards during the troubles in his *Epistola [sic] ad Sacerdotes*, printed with the rest of his works, did pretty well unmask himself and openly shewed what opinion he had of Christianity.⁹⁵

The English nonconformist Richard Baxter published his ‘Animadversions on a Tractate De Veritate’ as the second part of *More Reasons for the Christian Religion* (London, 1672). Baxter had received his copy of the *De veritate* from the dedicatee of *More Reasons*, Edward Herbert’s brother Sir Henry Herbert, and his criticisms of the *De veritate* turn on the necessity of belief in revelation and the saving power of Christ.⁹⁶ But Herbert only became irrevocably associated with deism in England through the use Charles Blount (1654–1693) made of his *Nachlass*.⁹⁷ It was this aspect of his reputation that was confirmed in the eighteenth century by Thomas Halyburton and John Leland.⁹⁸

A further distinct phase in Herbert’s later reception, which there is no scope to discuss here, began in Lutheran Europe in 1666. From this date onwards Herbert’s work came under attack in a number of dissertations and refutations published in Denmark and northern Germany.⁹⁹ The best-known of these, Christian Korthold’s *De tribus impostoribus magnis*, published in Cologne in 1680, ranked Herbert as an atheistic ‘impostor’ alongside Hobbes and Spinoza.¹⁰⁰ It was from Korthold that the author of the libertine *De tribus impostoribus* manuscript derived his knowledge of Herbert.¹⁰¹ But it was in large part only their knowledge of the *De religione gentilium* and the ancillary material published with the 1645 *De veritate* that allowed Herbert’s German critics to attack the *De veritate* itself, and to concentrate their fire on the ‘common notions concerning religion’.¹⁰²

VI

We still await thorough studies of Herbert's theories in relation to the ideas of Philip Melanchthon, Jacopo Aconcio, Sebastian Castellio, and Fausto Sozzino;¹⁰³ to theories of 'common notions' in later sixteenth-century logic and metaphysics; and to accounts of the faculties of the soul in *De anima* commentaries and related writings. There is also scope for a reassessment of the genesis (rather than the reception) of the *De veritate* in the light of Herbert's surviving correspondence of c. 1619 with his kinsman Sir Robert Harley, a source not yet tapped by Herbert scholars.¹⁰⁴ Nevertheless, the evidence presented here about readers and editions of the *De veritate* presents a more detailed picture of the work's early reception than has hitherto been offered.¹⁰⁵ It is evidence, furthermore, that casts doubt on the assertion that Herbert's writings were little read in England in the years following his death.

Several readers, we may conclude, found Herbert's silence about Christian orthodoxy suspicious. Only Franco Burgersdijk, however, seems to have engaged in a deliberate refutation of him on this point, but Burgersdijk did little to alert his readers to the fact that he had Herbert in mind. Few among Herbert's earliest readers thought that his central purpose in writing the *De veritate* was to attack revealed religion. Although they found aspects of its treatment of religion problematic or even threatening, they did not find the book the manifesto for natural religion that it later became. The comments scattered throughout Samuel Hartlib's *Ephemerides* portray Herbert as a man whose motives were suspected and whose orthodoxy was questionable. But all of the readers whose responses I have discussed here found other things in the work besides an attack on revealed Christianity. These readers included Roman Catholics such as Descartes, Gassendi, Mersenne, and Protestants such as George Rust, Samuel Hartlib, and his circle. Rust read Herbert as a treatise on the faculties of the soul and ignored the denigration of Revelation that others noticed in order to take over Herbert's ideas for his own attack on religious 'enthusiasm' – a phenomenon that perhaps appeared a more dangerous threat in 1650s England than French-influenced *libertinisme*. Hartlib, like Hübner and Comenius, principally read Herbert's book as a treatise on philosophical method.

Thus Walker's suggestion that Herbert's anti-Christian reputation arose only after his death has, with some modification, much to recommend it. It is for this reason that defining Herbert's philosophy exclusively in terms of 'deism' may be as misleading as it is convenient.¹⁰⁶ Herbert certainly became identified with deism. But it is doubtful whether he would have done so on the basis of the *De veritate* alone, or perhaps indeed without the help of Charles Blount. No early reader of the *De veritate* explicitly identified it as a 'deist' work; and one, George Rust, used it to attack the divine voluntarists he called 'deists'.

There is a further reason why the ascription of ‘deism’ to Herbert is misleading. As we have seen, the *De veritate* was written, and read by its early audience, in the context of a philosophical theology that sought metaphysical proofs for the existence of God and the immortality of the soul.¹⁰⁷ Several early readers of the *De veritate* published works that addressed, in whole or in part, these two questions: Burgersdijk; Descartes (in the *Meditationes*); and Culverwell.¹⁰⁸ This tradition had coexisted with orthodox theology without presenting the threat of supplanting it, and the *De veritate* could be accommodated within it. By the later seventeenth century in England, however, the Renaissance ambition of seeking natural proofs for the immortality of the soul and the existence of God was in decline, and the emergence of early Enlightenment free-thought meant that Herbert could no longer safely be co-opted for orthodoxy.

One way in which Herbert should be seen, in fact, is as a religious apologist who did not apologise quite enough. Herbert was by way of being an evangelist for the common notions he repeated so often, and in his correspondence with Harley he couches his ideas as a return to a pure primitive religious unity. Herbert’s readers certainly recognised this apologetic tendency in his writings. Richard Baxter acknowledged it when he wished that those who had since gone much farther than Herbert might at least recognise the force of his religious common notions.¹⁰⁹ This was the way in which Herbert was understood, too, by the author of the libertine *Cymbalum mundi* manuscript.¹¹⁰ In short, we can see Herbert both as the ‘father of English deism’, and as a philosopher with other, and broader purposes. Indeed, Samuel Hartlib’s note that Herbert himself wished ‘to speake with Aristotle et Plato to know of them what they would have judged of his De Veritate’, suggests that we may be underestimating the depth of Herbert’s own philosophical vanity if we restrict his ambitions exclusively to articulating a deism *avant la lettre*.¹¹¹

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Notes

I am grateful to Nicholas Dew, Kristine Haugen, Winfried Schröder, and to audiences at the Universities of London and of Cambridge for valuable help and advice concerning this article.

- 1 For efforts to distance Herbert from his deist heritage, see R. D. Bedford, *The Defence of Truth: Herbert of Cherbury and the seventeenth century* (Manchester, 1979), pp. 239–60, and R. A. Johnson, ‘Natural Religion, Common Notions, and the Study of Religions: Edward, Lord Herbert of Cherbury (1583–1648)’, *Religion*, 24 (1994), 213–24. The association between Herbert and the later English deists was forged by Thomas Halyburton, *Natural Religion Insufficient* (Edinburgh, 1714) and John Leland, *A View of the Principal Deistical Writers that have*

- appeared in England*, 3 vols (London, 1754–56), I, 4–39. I follow Herbert's own title-pages in my spelling of 'Cherbury' (cf. J. A. Butler, *Lord Herbert of Chirbury: An Intellectual Biography* (Lewiston, 1990), p. 43 n. 1).
- 2 Johnson, 'Natural Religion', p. 215; D. P. Walker, *The Ancient Theology: Studies in Christian Platonism from the Fifteenth to the Eighteenth Centuries* (Ithaca, 1972), p. 165; C. de Rémusat, *Lord Herbert de Cherbury, sa vie et ses œuvres* (Paris, 1874), p. 181; Butler, *Herbert of Chirbury*, p. 173.
 - 3 E. D. Hill, *Edward, Lord Herbert of Cherbury* (Boston, 1987), p. 19. See also J. A. Butler, 'Introduction', in *Pagan Religion: A Translation of 'De religione gentilium' by Edward Herbert* (Ottawa, 1996), p. 15.
 - 4 Walker, *Ancient Theology*, p. 164.
 - 5 See Bedford, *Defence*, pp. 248–9.
 - 6 BL, MS Add. 7081 (Beal, *Index*, HrE 110), fol. 1r: 'Dilectiss: Lectiss: Fratris Ge. Herbert[.] Amico Gul. Boswell. Hunc Librum[m] suu[m] com[m]endatu[m] voluit Ed. Herbert[.] ea lege Vt siquid contra bonos mores, vel quod Fidei vere Cathol. aduersetur expungant.' Boswell was Herbert's secretary during his two embassies to Paris between 1619 and 1624.
 - 7 BL, MS Sloane 3957 (Beal, *Index*, HrE 111).
 - 8 Cambridge, St John's College, MSS I.5–6 (Beal, *Index*, HrE 112). Four leaves have been lost from the end of MS I.5.
 - 9 *The Life of Edward, First Lord Herbert of Cherbury, written by himself*, ed. by J. M. Shuttleworth (London, 1976), p. 120. For an account of the religious context in which Grotius read Herbert's treatise, see P. N. Miller, *Peiresc's Europe: Learning and Virtue in the Seventeenth Century* (New Haven, 2000), chapter 4.
 - 10 *The Hartlib Papers*, ed. by Judith Crawford *et al.*, 2 CD-ROMS (Ann Arbor, MI, 1995) (henceforth HP), 29/3/13A (Hartlib, *Ephemerides*, 1634). See also HP, 29/2/11A (*ibid.*): 'My Lord Herbert Librum de Veritate quatenus distinguitur etc. keeps them all to himselfe et sends them abroad to great Scollars'.
 - 11 Herbert, *De veritate, prout distinguitur a revelatione, a verisimili, a possibili, et a falso* (London, 1633) (henceforth 1633), title-page: 'lectori cuiuis, integri & illibati iudicii dicavit'.
 - 12 HP, 31/22/37A (*Ephemerides*, 1648). The remark is in the context of Hartlib's note of Herbert's notorious deathbed behaviour.
 - 13 1633, sig. a1v: 'nihil reperio bonis moribus, aut veritati Fidei contrarium'. W. W. Greg, *Licensers for the Press, &c. to 1640: A Biographical Index based mainly on Arber's Transcript of the Registers of the Company of Stationers* (Oxford, 1962), p. 46.
 - 14 On Weckherlin, see A. B. Thompson, 'Licensing the Press: The Career of G. R. Weckherlin during the personal rule of Charles I', *Historical Journal*, 41 (1998), 653–78.
 - 15 HP, 29/3/48A (*Ephemerides*, 1635). The lapse into German is perhaps symptomatic of a certain anxiety on Hartlib's part, although German is common in the early years of the *Ephemerides*. On licensing and censorship for religious purposes in the period generally see Anthony Milton, 'Licensing, Censorship, and Religious Orthodoxy in Early Stuart England', *Historical Journal*, 41 (1998), 625–51.
 - 16 On the authorship of the translation, see M. M. Rossi, *La vita, le opere, i tempi di Edoardo Herbert di Chirbury*, 3 vols (Florence, 1947), II, 531–5.

- 17 Herbert, *De veritate* (London, 1645) (henceforth 1645), pp. 217–19, 222–6. 1645 is a page-for-page reprint of 1633 until p. 217, at which point the two diverge, although modifications are made before then to the wording of some of the *notitiae communes circa religionem*.
- 18 More work is needed on the bibliography of the *De veritate*, but see Rossi, *La vita*, III, 412–27 and the findings of Peter Blaney recorded in Butler, *Herbert of Chirbury*, pp. 176–7. The 1645 *De causis errorum* was printed by both Joanna Raworth and – perhaps after Raworth’s death in that year – Philemon Stephens (see H. R. Plomer, *A Dictionary of ... Booksellers and Printers* (London, 1907), p. 152).
- 19 Herbert, *De veritate* ([no place], 1656). H. R. Hutcheson, *Lord Herbert of Cherbury’s ‘De religione laici’* (New Haven, 1944), p. 155 and D. G. Wing, *Short-title Catalogue*, 4 vols (1982–1998), H1502, both suggest that the place of publication is ‘London?’; Rossi, *La vita*, III, 426–27, thinks the book looks Dutch. *The Diary and Correspondence of John Worthington*, ed. J. Crossley, 2 vols (Manchester, 1847), I, 56, suggests that there was considerable press freedom in 1656.
- 20 Peiresc to Dupuy, 6 July 1633, in Mersenne, *Correspondance*, III, 473.
- 21 HP, 29/2/11A (*Ephemerides*, 1634). See also Rossi, *La vita*, II, 524–8.
- 22 Mersenne, *Correspondance*, III, 472–3.
- 23 De Laet to William Boswell, 1 Aug. 1640 N/S, BL, MS Add. 6395, fol. 63r.
- 24 Mersenne, *Correspondance*, III, 473. Walker, *Ancient Theology*, p. 168.
- 25 Pierre Gassendi to Elie Diodati, 29 August 1634, extract in *Actes du congrès du tricentenaire de Pierre Gassendi* (Paris, 1957), p. 288. The letter is also printed in Mersenne, *Correspondance*, IV, 336.
- 26 HP, 29/3/20B (*Ephemerides*, 1635); Rossi, *La vita*, III, 497.
- 27 Hobbes to William Cavendish, 13/23 June 1636; Payne to Hobbes, 26 Oct. O/S; both in *The Correspondence of Thomas Hobbes*, ed. N. Malcolm, 2 vols (Oxford, 1994), I, 32, 40. On Payne, see M. Feingold, ‘A Friend of Hobbes and an Early Translator of Galileo: Robert Payne of Oxford’, in *The Light of Nature: Essays in the History and Philosophy of Science presented to A. C. Crombie*, ed. J. D. North and J. J. Roche (Dordrecht, 1985), pp. 265–80.
- 28 HP, 29/2/44B (*Ephemerides*, 1634). Saumaise, Liceti and Descartes reciprocated Herbert’s gifts by sending him their own books: see C. J. Fordyce and T. M. Knox, ‘The Library of Jesus College, Oxford: With an Appendix on the Books Bequeathed thereto by Lord Herbert of Cherbury’, *Oxford Bibliographical Society, Proceedings and Papers*, 5 (1937), p. 73.
- 29 Huygens to Mersenne, 26 Aug. 1639, in Mersenne, *Correspondance*, VIII, 493.
- 30 HP, 29/3/20B (*Ephemerides*, 1635).
- 31 See HP, 30/4/20A (*Ephemerides*, 1635). Hübner’s critique is at BL, MS Sloane 639, fols 125–31 (with a duplicate copy at fols 133–41). Gassendi’s was printed as ‘Ad Librum D. Edoardi Herberti Angli, De Veritate, Epistola’, in his *Opera omnia*, 6 vols (Lyon, 1658), III, 411–19 (there is a French translation of this letter in *Actes du congrès du tricentenaire de Pierre Gassendi*, pp. 249–87).
- 32 Aretius to Mersenne, 25 April 1639, in Mersenne, *Correspondance*, VIII, 404: ‘Excellentissⁱ Baronis de Cherbury tractatum *de Veritate* amamus omnes, atque (ut par est) elogijs ornamus, sed vix millesimus quisque (vel eruditorum) intelligit. Heroica ingenia vere sunt Aquilae (In nubibus).’
- 33 Cambridge University Library (CUL), Rel.c.63.4; T. Baker, *History of the College of St. John the Evangelist, Cambridge*, ed. J. E. B. Mayor, 2 vols (Cambridge,

- 1869), I, 529; Fordyce and Knox, 'Library of Jesus College', p. 74. CUL, Bb*.4.13 is also 'Ex dono authoris', but the identity of the recipient is uncertain.
- 34 See Robert Greville, Lord Brooke, *The Nature of Truth* (London, 1640), p. 40, who borrowed a copy from Herbert. See also the undated letter from John Sadler (the editor of Greville's *The Nature of Truth*) to Hartlib (HP, 46/9/7A), and compare Rossi, *La vita*, III, 72.
- 35 Anthony Wood, *Athenae Oxonienses*, ed. by P. Bliss, 4 vols (London, 1813–20), III, 240.
- 36 1633, p. 8; there is a reliable English translation in Herbert, *De veritate*, trans. M. H. Carré (Bristol, 1937), p. 83 (hereafter Carré). See further R. H. Popkin, *The History of Scepticism from Erasmus to Spinoza* (Berkeley, 1979), pp. 151–61, and Johnson, 'Natural Religion', p. 215.
- 37 1633, pp. 36–63 / Carré, pp. 116–42.
- 38 1633, p. 29: '*Communes quaedam notitiae, in omni homine sano & integro existentes, quae, tanquam partes scientiarum, ab ipsa universali sapientia depromptae, in foro interiore, ex dictamine naturae describuntur*' / Carré, p. 106.
- 39 1633, p. 111: 'legitimam facultatem cum objectis conformationem' / Carré, p. 191.
- 40 Herbert, 'De religione laici', in *De causis errorum una cum tractatu de religione laici, et appendice ad sacerdotes* (London, 1645); trans. Hutcheson (1944), p. 128. On the common notions in *Henry VIII*, see M. M. Rossi, 'Herbert of Cherbury's *Religio Laici*: A Bibliographical Note', *Edinburgh Bibliographical Society Transactions*, 4 (1962), p. 49. Herbert, *De religione gentilium* (Amsterdam, 1663), p. 2; *Pagan Religion*, p. 52. Herbert, *Life*, pp. 29–30 (on the presence of the common notions in the autobiography, see further R. I. Aaron, 'The *Autobiography* of Edward, First Lord Herbert of Cherbury: The original manuscript material', *Modern Language Review*, 36 (1941), 184–94; Rossi, 'A Bibliographical Note', p. 49; and the review of the Shuttleworth *Life* by G. Guffey, *Journal of English and Germanic Philology*, 78 (1979), 258–61).
- 41 1633, pp. 210, 212, 215, 217, 219. The third and fourth are modified in 1645, pp. 215, 217.
- 42 1633, p. 224 / Carré, p. 308.
- 43 1633, pp. 229–44 / Carré, pp. 314–34.
- 44 See Butler, *Herbert of Chirbury*, p. 183 (Sir William Dugdale); *Correspondence of Hobbes*, I, 40 (Robert Payne); Mersenne, *Correspondance*, ed. C. de Waard, 11 vols (Paris, 1932–88), VIII, 551 (Descartes); HP, 30/4/49B (*Ephemerides*, 1641) (Joachim Hübner); Nathaniel Culverwell, *An Elegant and Learned Discourse of the Light of Nature*, eds R. A. Greene and H. MacCallum (Toronto, 1971), p. 83; HP, 62/21/2A (William Rand).
- 45 Herbert, *De causis errorum*, sig. A1r; HP, 30/4/42B (*Ephemerides*, 1640): 'Gallica versio is more perspicuous in many places then the Latin. Id ex Authore'. Descartes to Mersenne, 16 Oct. 1639, Mersenne, *Correspondance*, VIII, 551: 'j'y ay trouvé beaucoup moins de difficulté en le lisant en françois, que je n'avois fait cy devant en le parcourant en latin'.
- 46 1633, p. 159; Carré, p. 239.
- 47 On the integrity of the Hartlib 'circle', see the editors' 'Introduction' to *Samuel Hartlib and Universal Reformation: Studies in Intellectual Communication*, ed. M. Greengrass, M. Leslie, and T. Raylor (Cambridge, 1994), p. 2. On the

- traditions of method to which Herbert's book is in this respect heir, see N. W. Gilbert, *Renaissance Concepts of Method* (New York, 1960), esp. p. 155.
- 48 See further S. Clucas, 'In search of "The true logic": Methodological Eclecticism among the "Baconian reformers"', in *Hartlib and Universal Reformation*, esp. pp. 61–2.
- 49 See e.g. Pierre Du Moulin, *Elementa logica* ([Leiden], 1613), pp. 58–59 (i.ii.2).
- 50 Francis Bacon, 'Of Tribute; or, giving that which is due', in *Francis Bacon*, ed. B. Vickers (Oxford, 1996), p. 35.
- 51 HP, 30/4/23B (*Ephemerides*, 1639).
- 52 J. A. Comenius, *Pansophiae diatyposis* (Amsterdam, 1645), p. 162; English trans. by Jeremy Collier, *A Patterne of Universall Knowledge* (London, 1651), p. 136. An undated note in the Hartlib papers records that 'The New Comenian Booke [was] given away' to 'Lord Herbert per Godman'; this is probably the *Pansophiae prodromus* (London, 1639) that is still among Herbert's books (HP 23/13/2A, printed in M. Greengrass, 'Two manuscripts from the Hartlib Papers', *Acta Comeniana*, 11 (1995), 141–57 (p. 144); Fordyce and Knox, 'Library of Jesus College', p. 87).
- 53 HP, 30/4/24B (*Ephemerides*, 1639). See further HP, 30/4/24A; J. T. Young, *Faith, Medical Alchemy and Natural Philosophy: Johann Moriaen, Reformed Intelligencer and the Hartlib Circle* (Aldershot, 1998), pp. 78–9.
- 54 HP, 30/4/42A (*Ephemerides*, 1640); see also HP, 30/4/23B (*Ephemerides*, 1639).
- 55 Howell to Herbert, 1 Apr. 1641, in James Howell, *Epistolae Ho-elianae*, 3rd edn (London, 1655), p. 290. See also Rossi, *La vita*, II, 529.
- 56 T. Gregory, 'Libertinisme érudit in Seventeenth-Century France and Italy: The Critique of Ethics and Religion', *British Journal for the History of Philosophy*, 6 (1998), 338–9. W. Schröder, *Ursprünge des Atheismus: Untersuchungen zur Metaphysik- und Religionskritik des 17. und 18. Jahrhunderts* (Stuttgart, 1998), pp. 203–08.
- 57 Descartes to Mersenne, 16 Oct. 1639 N/S, Mersenne, *Correspondance*, VIII, 550.
- 58 'Organum vetus et novum' [1678], in *The Philosophical Writings of Richard Burthogge*, ed. M. W. Landes (Chicago, 1921), pp. 34–35 (§§67–70).
- 59 Descartes to Mersenne, 16 Oct. 1639 N/S, in Mersenne, *Correspondance*, VIII, 551–2.
- 60 Gassendi to Diodati, in *Actes du congrès*, p. 289. The transcription of the same letter in Mersenne, *Correspondance*, IV, 337, reads 'deshonnestement' for 'destroussément'. Compare Sextus Empiricus, *Outlines of Pyrrhonism*, I.xiv.145–62.
- 61 Gassendi to Diodati, in *Actes du congrès*, pp. 289–90. Cf. Mersenne, *Correspondance*, IV, 337–8.
- 62 Gassendi, 'Epistola', p. 417.
- 63 Richard Baxter, *More Reasons for the Christian Religion, and no reason against it ... being ... II. Some animadversions on a tractate De veritate* (London, 1672), p. 129.
- 64 On Burgersdijk, see *Franco Burgersdijk (1590–1635): Neo-Aristotelianism in Leiden*, ed. E. P. Bos and H. A. Krop (Amsterdam, 1993).
- 65 H. A. Krop, 'Natural Knowledge of God in Neo-Aristotelianism: The Reception of Suarez's version of the ontological argument in early seventeenth-century Leiden,' in *Franco Burgersdijk*, p. 77.

- 66 HP, 30/4/27B (*Ephemerides*, 1639): 'Burgersdici Metaphysica hase had sparse mentione a special aime to refute Herbert's booke De Veritate Anonymous, as himself told Sir W. Boswell.' The reason Burgersdijk's book may have been sparsely mentioned is that it was not published until 1640.
- 67 See also Johnson, 'Natural Religion', p. 216.
- 68 Franco Burgersdijk, *Institutionum metaphysicarum lib. II*, ed. A. Heereboord (London, 1653), pp. 254–55 (II.iv.11).
- 69 The claims of A. Carlini, 'Herbert di Cherbury e la Scuola di Cambridge', *Atti della Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei, Rediconti della Classe di scienze morali storiche e filologiche*, ser. IV, 26 (1917), 273–357, are excessive, and mostly derived from texts in E. T. Campagnac, ed., *The Cambridge Platonists: Being Selections from the Writings of Benjamin Whichcote, John Smith and Nathaniel Culverwel* (Oxford, 1901). See further: M. Micheletti, *Il Pensiero religioso di John Smith Platonico di Cambridge* (Padua, 1976), p. 87 (Smith); R. A. Greene, 'Whichcote, The Candle of the Lord, and Synderesis', *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 52 (1991), p. 641 (Whichcote); Rossi, *La vita*, III, 302 (Cudworth); Henry More held that there were innate in the soul 'many *Logicall, Metaphysicall, Mathematical*, and some *Morall* Notions' (*An Antidote against Atheism*, 2nd edn. (London, 1655), p. 299); S. P. Lamprecht, 'Innate Ideas in the Cambridge Platonists', *The Philosophical Review*, 35 (1926), 553–73.
- 70 See G. H. Turnbull, 'John Hall's Letters to Samuel Hartlib', *Review of English Studies*, 4 (1953), 221–7. Rust's 'Fore Resurrectionem Corporis suadet Scriptura, nec refragatur Ratio' (1658) is at HP, 27/24/1A–14B and also at 55/18. See further George Rust, *Remains* (London, 1686), sig. a4v.
- 71 See Culverwell, *Discourse*, p. 83. See also Greene and MacCallum, 'Introduction', to Culverwell, *Discourse*, p. xlvi, and Rossi, *La vita*, III, 307 n. 30.
- 72 Culverwell, *Discourse*, p. 55: 'as a noble Author of our own does well observe, *Tota fere Ethica est Notitia communis*'; cf. 1633, pp. 112–13: 'ideo de morali Philosophia, summus consensus; tota enim est notitia communis'; also 1633, p. 122: 'est igitur notitia communis, & summum instinctus naturalis opus, tota moralis Philosophia'. John Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* [1690], ed. P. H. Nidditch (Oxford, 1975), pp. 77–80 (I.iii.15–19). See also I. Rivers, *Reason, Grace and Sentiment: A Study of the Language of Religion and Ethics in England 1660–1780*, 2 vols (Cambridge, 1991–2000), I, 61. Compare also *Aubrey on Education: A Hitherto Unpublished Manuscript by the Author of 'Brief Lives'*, ed. J. E. Stephens (London, 1972), p. 116.
- 73 Culverwell, *Discourse*, p. 56; 1633, p. 152.
- 74 Culverwell, *Discourse*, pp. 82–4; see also Greene and MacCallum, 'Introduction', pp. xxxii–xxxiii. On early-modern theories of *species* see L. Spruit, *Species intelligibilis: From Perception to Knowledge*, 2 vols, vol. II: *Renaissance Controversies, Later Scholasticism, and the Elimination of the Intelligible Species in Modern Philosophy* (Leiden, 1995).
- 75 Culverwell, *Discourse*, p. 132.
- 76 See J. Spurr, "'Rational Religion" in Restoration England', *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 49 (1988), 563–85.
- 77 Rust, *A Discourse of the Use of Reason in Matters of Religion* (London, 1683). Unless Hallywell's disclaimer is mendacious (sig. a1r), Rust explicitly directed the work 'contra Enthusiastas & Deistas' (p. 2). On Hallywell, see *The Dictionary of Seventeenth-century British Philosophers*, ed. A. Pyle (Bristol, 2000), p. 393.

- 78 See Bedford, *Defence*, p. 251.
- 79 Rust, *Discourse*, p. 29/p. 6.
- 80 Rust, *Discourse*, p. 27/p. 4.
- 81 Rust, *Discourse*, p. 31/p. 8, quoting 1645, p. 37. See further Rust, *Remains*, pp. 42–3.
- 82 Rust, *Discourse*, p. 32. In his notes (p. 51), Hallywell (who had been Rust's student) identifies Szydlovius as Rust's target at this point. However, a contemporary reader of one copy has also plausibly added in the margin: 'Hobbes' (Trinity College, Cambridge, pressmark I.3.9¹³).
- 83 [Henry More], 'Annotations upon the Discourse of Truth' in Joseph Glanvill and Geoge Rust, *Two Choice and Useful Treatises* (London, 1682), p. 258. These annotations are attributed to More by Richard Ward, *The Life of ... Dr Henry More [1710]*, ed. M. F. Howard (London, 1911), p. 146.
- 84 Joseph Glanvill, 'The Agreement of Reason and Religion', in *Essays on Several Important Subjects in Philosophy and Religion* (London, 1676), pp. 3–4, 5–6. Compare Du Moulin, *Elementa logica*, p. 58. See also Rivers, *Reason, Grace and Sentiment*, I, 68 n. 194.
- 85 Ralph Cudworth also uses 'common notions' in this general sense: see e.g. *The True Intellectual System of the Universe* (London, 1678), p. 738 (I.iv.2).
- 86 On this ambition, see Locke, *Essay*, p. 549 (IV.iii.18); I. Harris, *The Mind of John Locke: A Study of Political Theory in its Intellectual Setting* (Cambridge, 1994), pp. 146–8; J. Marshall, *John Locke: Resistance, Religion and Responsibility* (Cambridge, 1994), pp. 384–8; also W. Youngren, 'Founding English Ethics: Locke, Mathematics, and the Innateness Question', *Eighteenth Century Life*, 16 (1992), 12–45, who does not discuss Herbert.
- 87 John Locke, 'Draft B,' in *Drafts for the Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, ed. P. H. Nidditch and G. A. J. Rogers, vol. I: *Drafts A and B* (Oxford, 1990), pp. 103, 111, 114–16. Oddly, Herbert is not considered among Locke's innatist targets by J. Barnes, 'Mr. Locke's Darling Notion', *Philosophical Quarterly*, 22 (1972), 194–95.
- 88 Locke, *Essay*, pp. 77–80 (I.iii.15–19).
- 89 Descartes to Mersenne, 27 August 1639, in Mersenne, *Correspondance*, VIII, 496. For Descartes's further (and generally more positive) reactions, see Descartes to Mersenne, 19 June 1639, in Mersenne, *Correspondance*, VIII, 455; Descartes to Mersenne, 27 August 1639, in *ibid.*, VIII, 496; Descartes to J. W. Eding for Samuel Hartlib, Apr. or May 1638, in *ibid.*, IV, 337; Descartes to Mersenne, 16 October 1639, in *ibid.*, VIII, 549; Descartes to Mersenne, 16 October 1639, in *ibid.*, VIII, 549. See also Rossi, *La vita*, II, 474, and S. Gaukroger, *Descartes: An Intellectual Biography* (Oxford, 1995), pp. 326–7.
- 90 HP, 29/3/48A (*Ephemerides*, 1635). HP, 29/3/12B–13A (*Ephemerides*, 1635): 'Hee places Divinity inter verisimile'. 1633, pp. 230–1 / *Carré*, pp. 315–16. Baxter, *More Reasons*, sig. A2r. See also S. Clucas, 'Samuel Hartlib's Ephemerides, 1635–59, and the Pursuit of Scientific and Philosophical Manuscripts: The Religious Ethos of an Intelligencer', *The Seventeenth Century*, 6 (1991), p. 43.
- 91 HP, 30/4/34A (*Ephemerides*, 1639). 1633, p. 208 / *Carré*, p. 289. HP, 30/4/35B (*Ephemerides*, 1639). Culverwell, *Discourse*, p. 132.
- 92 HP, 31/22/3A; see also the more familiar account in HP, 31/22/37A and John Aubrey, *Brief Lives*, ed. A. Clark (Oxford, 1898), s.v. 'Herbert'.

- 93 Meric Casaubon, *Of the Necessity of Reformation* (London, 1664), p. 16. Herbert stayed with Meric's father Isaac Casaubon in Paris in 1608, and they later had mutual acquaintances in Archbishop Ussher and the physician Theodore de Mayerne (see further HP, 1/22/37A).
- 94 This description in fact fits the *De religione gentilium* much better than it does the *De veritate*.
- 95 Meric Casaubon, *A Letter to Peter du Moulin* (Cambridge, 1669), p. 17.
- 96 Baxter, *More Reasons*, sig. A1v, pp. 77–172.
- 97 On the open question of the circumstances and nature of Blount's use of Herbert's work see J. A. I. Champion, *The Pillars of Priestcraft Shaken* (Cambridge, 1992), pp. 142–8, and J. B. Griffin, 'Edward Lord Herbert of Cherbury's *A Dialogue between a Tutor and his Pupil*: Some New Questions', *English Manuscript Studies 1100–1700*, 7 (1998), 165, 184–91.
- 98 See n. 1, above.
- 99 See J. Lagrée, *Le salut du laïc: Edward Herbert de Cherbury: étude et traduction du De religione laïci* (Paris, 1989), pp. 15–16.
- 100 See further J. B. Griffin, 'Studies in the Literary Life of Edward, Lord Herbert of Cherbury' (unpublished D.Phil. thesis, Oxford, 1993), p. 243.
- 101 Johann Joachim Müller, *De imposturis religionum (De tribus impostoribus): von den Betrugereyen der Religionen*, ed. W. Schröder (Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt, 1999). W. Schröder, 'Le *De tribus imposturibus (De imposturis religionum)*: sa date et son auteur', *La lettre clandestine*, 7 (1997), 27–8.
- 102 Christian Korthold, *De tribus impostoribus* (Hamburg, 1700; first publ. Cologne 1680), p. 8 (§4). Johann Musaeus, *Dissertatio de luminis naturæ insufficientiæ ad salutem ... contra E. Herbertum de Cherbury* (Cologne, 1669; Jena, 1675). See further D. C. Allen, *Doubt's Boundless Sea: Skepticism and Faith in the Renaissance* (Baltimore, 1964), p. 135.
- 103 See also Butler, *Herbert of Chirbury*, pp. 29–31. L. I. Bredvold, 'Deism before Lord Herbert', *Papers of the Michigan Academy of Science, Art and Letters*, 4 (1924), 431–42, is confessedly fragmentary.
- 104 Herbert to Harley, four letters, BL, MS Add. 70,001 (was MS Loan 29/202), fols 162, two unnumbered sheets between 164 and 165, 165. Harley to Herbert, five letters, BL, MS Add. 70,105 (was MS Loan 29/119), unbound. The existence of Herbert's side of the correspondence is noted in P. Beal, *Index of English Literary Manuscripts, Vol. 1: 1450–1625*, 2 parts (London, 1980), II, 168. The significance of this correspondence has not hitherto been discussed by Herbert specialists, but see further J. Eales, *Puritans and Roundheads: The Harleys of Brampton Bryan and the Outbreak of the English Civil War* (Cambridge, 1990), pp. 39–40. Harley was later among the Members of the House of Commons who were 'to assist' Herbert's case against the sequestration of his property in 1646: see *Herbert Correspondence*, ed. W. J. Smith (Cardiff, 1968), p. 124.
- 105 The case for Herbert's presence in the writings of Sir William Davenant presented by A. A. Tadie, 'The Popularization of English Deism: Lord Herbert of Cherbury's *De Veritate* and Sir William Davenant's *The Siege of Rhodes*', in *Acta conventus neo-latini Bononiensis*, ed. R. J. Schoeck (Binghamton, 1985), pp. 621–9, is questionable. See also Tadie, 'Herbert of Cherbury's Idea of "Ultimate Reality and Meaning" and a Note on the Popularisation of Deism', *Ultimate Reality and Meaning*, 18 (1995), 264–74.

- 106 On this point see also D. A. Pailin, 'Herbert of Cherbury and the Deists', *Expository Times*, 94 (1983), 196–200, and Bedford, *Defence*, p. 253.
- 107 On the longer-term tradition of this kind of enquiry, see C. H. Lohr, 'Latin Aristotelianism and the Seventeenth-Century Calvinist Theory of Scientific Method', in *Method and Order in Renaissance Philosophy of Nature: The Aristotle Commentary Tradition*, ed. D. Di Liscia *et al.* (Aldershot, 1997), pp. 369–80. However, in Michael Robert's contemporary catalogue the *De veritate* was apparently classed among the 'libri philologici et humanioris literaturae', and not among the 'physici, [et] metaph[ysici]' (Fordyce and Knox, *Library of Jesus College*, p. 111).
- 108 For the response of one English reader to Descartes's proof, see Meric Casaubon, '*Generall Learning*': *A Seventeenth-century Treatise on the Formation of the General Scholar*, ed. R. W. Serjeantson (Cambridge, 1999), pp. 154–5.
- 109 Baxter, *More Reasons*, sig. A3r–v.
- 110 Schröder, *Ursprünge des Atheismus*, pp. 207, 413.
- 111 HP, 30/4/42B (*Ephemerides*, 1640). See also HP, 30/4/31A (*Ephemerides*, 1639): 'Of the whole Booke hee said Hee had rather bee the Author of it if hee were put to his choice then to bee King of Poland'.

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