# CONSTRUCTING AN IDENTITY:
## THE SIGNIFICANCE OF SUI-REFERENTIAL MARKERS IN BRADSTREET'S "THE FLESH AND THE SPIRIT"

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According to a widely accepted interpretation, Bradstreet's poem "The Flesh and the Spirit" (see Appendix) reflects the clash of feeling and dogma in her poetry (Rosenfeld, 1983), or it constitutes the "most definite statement of Christian hope" while at the same time it is "probably her strongest assertion of doubt of the reality of the insubstantial" (Stanford, 1974: 85). In an earlier paper (Kitis and Mehler, forthcoming) we argued that this interpretation is sustained and borne out by the discourse of the poem. In that paper we offered a linguistic analysis of the poem that substantiated the literary critic's interpretation of the poem concentrating on the context constructed by the deixis of the discourse. It was also noted there that the use of deictic sui-referential markers generating subject positions is consequential for the same level of interpretation of the poem. However, we did not take up the point in that paper as such a consideration would entail a completely different perspective. In this paper, I propose to examine the logomachia between the two sisters, the two sides of a self – the Flesh and the Spirit – through the subject positions generated by the use of deictic self-referential pronouns.

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### The Poem as a Question [1]

I f Stanford's (and many other literary critics') reading, critique or interpretation of the poem reflects the feeling generated from it, then the question of the Flesh over the Spirit, or of the Spirit over the Flesh, remains an unresolved issue. From this point of view the whole discourse of the poem is ambiguous in the sense that it is far from clear; it is itself a question. This ambiguity, the discourse perceived as an unresolved issue, as a process of questioning, calls for an analytic response.

The ambiguity does not, however, necessarily reside in the discourse of the poem; in other words, it can be located in the poem's effect on the reader. As Felman (1977: 97) would say, what is significant in the text is not simply "that of *which* the text is speaking, but that which makes it speak to *us.*" So, in the case at issue, what is important is not the debate between the two sisters but rather the debate between the two sides of a/our self and us. Likewise, Flesh's rhetoric is not addressed to Spirit as is not Spirit's to Flesh. Rather, their rhetoric is addressed to us, the readers, or to the poet herself.[2] Indeed, the questioning in

the poem is itself an answer in disguise (Kitis and Mehler), and Spirit does not really answer Flesh's questions. Both Flesh and Spirit issue monologues.

Henry James' *The Turn of the Screw* generated a great deal of outraged agitation when it was first suggested that the governess was neurotic, and just as John Silver stated that if the ghosts of *The Turn of the Screw* are not real, certainly the controversy over them is, so it can be stated that even if the controversy between Flesh and Spirit is not real, it was, nevertheless, very real in the Puritans' time and society.

What is more significant for the impact of the poem is the reality of the debate outside the discourse of the poem rather than the debate between the two sisters. But what are the elements of the poetic discourse that contribute in one way or another to this controversy? In the previous paper we concentrated on a binary dichotomization of both the temporal and the spatial dimensions which are presented in the poem as metaphors representing distinct worlds. In this paper, I will focus on referential pronouns as identity-constructing and subject-generating elements.

### Pronominal Reference

Sui-referential markers abound in the poem. However, it is noteworthy that, apart from one such marker in Flesh's speech, all others are piled in Spirit's part. The paucity of sui-referential markers constituting the speaking subject in Flesh's speech is partly due, one might say, to the fact that her part consists mainly of questions in which such markers are not expected to be frequent, as we do not usually ask questions about ourselves. However, the conjunction of this form of contribution to the discourse (questioning mode), whose significance has already been analysed in Kitis and Mehler, with the absence of sui-referential pronouns is conducive to vindicating Stanford's interpretation of the poem as an implicit statement of the doubt of the reality of the insubstantial, as I will argue.

In linguistics the subject is introduced only as a purely formal marker. The personal pronouns used in the poem signify the referent and the existence of the referent is mostly assumed or presupposed (Strawson, 1971a,b). Personal pronouns tend to be seen in the literature almost exclusively as referential expressions, i.e., as expressions that identify a particular referent or class of referents in the on-going discourse or surrounding world (Duranti, 1984). As we will be here concerned with non-third-person pronouns, i.e., with the *I* and the *thou* signifiers, it must be noted that the primary semantic function of these pronouns is deixis and indexicality (Mühlhäusler and Harré, 1990).

Seen from the psychoanalytic perspective, however, the occurrence of these markers yields a different problematic. The signifier for Lacan represents a subject for another signifier; the sign for Lacan does not represent the signified, it does not represent or point to reality, but rather constitutes the signified, it produces it.

A reasonable question to ask, therefore, might be what this introduction of the *thou* subject in Flesh's speech (ll. 9, 16, 18, 23, 29, 33, 35) signifies in the discourse of the poem. *Thou* is a sign and as a sign it is addressed to someone, since the analytic experience is one of speech: someone speaks to someone, to an "addressee." But who are the "someone" and this "addressee"?

### The Significance of Flesh's Speaking: Her Construction in the Mode of Speaking

According to Lacan all speech supposes and presupposes a subject. More so here in the case of Flesh, since, not only is it speech that Flesh produces, but mostly questions, which is a distinctly human activity (Ricoeur, 1974, Struyker-Boudier, 1988). The one who speaks, and in this case Flesh, is instantly designated as the 'subject'; "what constitutes me as subject is my question" (Lacan, 1977: 80). At the time Lacan does not distinguish between the "subject" and the 'ego.' So Lacan connects the subject with the speaking subject and indeed the only subject is the speaking one.

Therefore, we can be led to the supposition that the fact that Bradstreet places Flesh's speech right at the outset is not a random phenomenon or choice. Flesh is the speaking subject right at the beginning of the poem and as such it is the only one. So the subjectivity of Flesh is not constituted in speech but in speaking, it is not created in the discursive process of the poem as Spirit's is. Flesh's subjectivity, her ego and ultimately her existence, are assumed to transcend the dialectic of the poem; on this view Flesh is not constituted by or in speech, but rather is located outside the constructed reality of the poem, in our assumed experiences. As such, Flesh is part of others' subjectivity and hence a familiar commodity.

Why is this so? Because to speak, and in this case more specifically to ask a question, signifies an intention, a "vouloir-dire," as Lacan (1966: 83) would say. In the discourse of this poem, which can be likened to a fantastic discourse or an imaginary situation bearing no relation to reality as this is experienced by subjects outside the discourse of the poem, the subjectivity of Flesh is determined at the very moment she addresses her so-called sister. "Language," says Lacan (1966: 82-83), "before signifying some thing, signifies for someone." This sense of the sign, of language which is constituted, not in speech, but in interlocutive speech, is equated to the subject.

### The Reality or Truth of the Flesh

In "The Flesh and the Spirit" we are not concerned with reality. Because neither Flesh nor Spirit is real. They are both figments of our imagination. They are projections of a mind's problematic. As such, they cannot reflect or constuct reality. In any problematic we are concerned with notions such as truth or falsity. Bradstreet is not concerned with what is real or not. This may be Flesh's

problem. It certainly is not Bradstreet's. Bradstreet is pondering on what is true or false, on what is right or wrong insofar as it is true or false. In our quest of the solution to our dilemma, we are pondering on what is true or false, or on what is real or imaginary.

For Lacan speech does not reflect reality. Rather, it is a matter of truth. In this sense the speaking subject is grasped in the mode of certainty (Gewissheit). "It is a matter of the realization of the subject's truth, as a proper dimension that should be detached in its originality from the very notion of reality" (Lacan, 1966: 29). This "proper dimension" is none other than the Cartesian *cogito*. Only this *cogito* is reformulated by Lacan in terms of 'speech' (Lacan, 1979: sem. 3). The subject of speech is realised in its truth by representing itself, it is "vor-gestellt." Therefore "cogito, ergo sum" is replaced by "dico, ergo sum."

Flesh's reality, therefore, is actuated by her rhetoric, it is grasped in the mode of Vorstellung and thus Flesh's truth is grasped by auto-representing herself in her enunciation, in her speech, in this rhetoric. The Lacanian *cogito* is certainly linguistic, social and intersubjective; it is a performative *cogito* (Lacan, 1977: 85) in the sense that it involves a first person, but also an interlocutor, even if this interlocutor is the other, i.e., an addressee, that is, it involves a point at which it is targeted even if it is deflected back to its source (Lacan, 1977: 86).

However, why have Flesh speak to her sister, Spirit, if Flesh is true? Because Flesh cannot be true outside the discourse. Precisely because by making Flesh the subject of speech in the discourse of the poem at issue, Flesh speaks herself in the other to whom she addresses her énoncés, but it is through that mode that she makes herself recognized – and therefore true – by recognizing herself in the Spirit and ultimately in us. In short word, Flesh is subjectified in a true dimension simultaneously by speaking herself in the Spirit.

### The Reality or Truth of the Spirit

On the other hand, Spirit is constituted in Flesh's rhetoric, not only because Flesh renders her an addressee and supposedly the only addressee, but mainly because Flesh constructs Spirit in the vocative she uses (l. 9). Lacan (1977: 86-87) writes "...if I call the person to whom I am speaking by whatever name I choose to give him, I intimate to him the subjective function that he will take on again in order to reply to me, even if it is to repudiate this function." But, most importantly, Spirit is constructed and recognized as a subject in the many occurrences of the pronominal markers "thou" and "thee," which Flesh uses abundantly in her speech.[3]

Since such markers are arbitrary signs as potent armoury for creating their *designata ex nihilo*, Spirit is created in Flesh's rhetoric and, therefore, in Flesh's problematic. What seems interesting is that Flesh does not seem to try to affirm herself in her rhetoric inasmuch as there are no signs of self-referential and therefore sui-representational activity in her rhetoric other than the fact that

she is the source of this rhetoric, of an activity of enunciation. In other words, there are no pronominal markers to constitute Flesh in her speech. Flesh, thus, places herself in a way outside the scope of the dialectic of this problematic, and, carrying the argument further, it can be claimed that she renders her truth less vulnerable, as it is not alienated by and in speech.

On the other hand, there is an abundance of pronominal markers in Spirit's rhetoric and one question that springs to mind is whether there is any specific significance attached to this phenomenon.

### The Construction of the Spirit in Sui-referential Markers

Considered from the psychoanalytic angle, the subject, and in this case Spirit, that speaks itself or herself in language, by referring to herself primarily ("I") (twenty times) and also to her sister, Flesh, as well as to the two of them ("we"), is in effect negating her presence and therefore any sense of truth, inasmuch as the moment the subject represents itself in speech it in effect negates itself. This process is, I argue, epitomised in the case of pronominal reference. To say *I* is basically tantamount to abolishing this *I*, to negating it, to actually murdering it. "I identify myself in language," writes Lacan (1977: 86), "but only by losing myself in it like an object."

### Comparison of the two Subject Positions

So one could argue that, whereas Flesh, too, is constituted in speech, she is so constructed in the mode not of reality but of truth, and that by the total absence of any linguistic self-referential cues Flesh at least manages not to abolish or negate herself, not to absent her subjectivity, not to kill herself, despite the claim that discourse in the Lacanian conception is perceived as the presence of the absence of a reality.

Although Flesh is the subject of the enunciation, by not appearing as the subject of her énoncés in her rhetoric, she manages to elude disappearance, to float in readers' consciousness. On the other hand, Spirit, by the massive occurrence of sui-referential lexical cues, manages to suffocate the subject of the enunciation as it assumes the subject role of the énoncés.

### The Flesh and the Spirit as Proper Names

Proper names identify the subject and place him/her within a symbolic structure. But proper names are rigid designators (Kripke, 1980), and in fictional settings, although they designate rigidly, we do not know whom they designate. In fictional settings the act of naming is private and not public, known to the author but not to the reader (Schneidermann, 1991). However, in the poem under consideration, the naming of the Flesh is rather public than private, because the reader knows the subject thus named, as it is part of the reader, too,

and thus public experience and knowledge. "Flesh" is a metaphor that conceptualises what is a well known experience shared by all readers. Not so with "Spirit." "Spirit" is a metaphor that attempts to encapsulate an undefined, undelimited, un-experienced, non-referential, abstract, fuzzy, fudgy world, that can be as varied as subjects signifying it.

Moreover, the absence of sui-referential pronouns in Flesh's part allows the reader to be more readily identified with the linguistically unidentified subject issuing the questions in the poem, as if the source of all the questioning were the reader her/himself.

Furthermore, "Flesh," as a rigid designator, a proper name, appears first in the poem, and, as is well understood, proper names identify the subject and place it within a symbolic order. According to the hypothesis that a fictional proper name "seeks a person to designate, and that the reader, while he is reading the story, allows himself to be identified by that name" (Schneiderman, 1991: 160), it can be assumed that indeed the reader tends to identify with the first appearing subject conducting the questioning.[4] In this way the fictional world of the poem is subverted and the reader is called upon to partake in the act of question-answering conducted by Flesh alone.

### The Referential Dimension

As the text is subverted, the reader can decide for her/himself whether the statements made in the poem[5] are true or false in relation to one's own experience. The entity designated or identified by "Flesh" is not a cluster of recongnizable or verifiable characteristics of a person. The entity designated by "Flesh" is not a person at all. It is a metaphor as is "Spirit," but in the case of Flesh we are not called to determine the truth value of statements made about her, because Flesh does not display herself in the I of the subject. Flesh's speech is not about herself. It is not about her subject. It is about the worldly world, the reader's experience as s/he knows it, as the uncanny, the unworldly, the weird and the alien are negated and subverted in her speech:

| | |
|---|---|
| Doth Contemplation feed thee so | 9 |
| Regardlesly to let earth goe? | |
| Can speculation satisfy | |
| Notion without Reality? | |
| Dost dream of things beyond the Moon | 15 |
| And dost thou hope to dwell there soon? | |
| Hast treasures there laid up in store | |
| That all in th' world thou count'st but poor? | |
| Art fancy sick, or turn'd a Sot | |
| To catch at shadowes which are not? | 20 |

The truth-value of the unworldly and the uncanny and, therefore, the unbeknown and non-referential, cannot be determined by the reader but it need

not be determined anyway, as it is structurally subverted by means of rhetorical (propositional, see Kitis and Mehler) questions to the worldly, the known, the referential, the so-called publicly shared as real or true.

But is the naming of "Spirit" referential? It is to the extent that metaphors are referential. "Spirit" is an ontological metaphor as is "Flesh." Metaphors, however, are conceptual schemes which are employed as vehicles for understanding the world around us (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980), and as such, they are not different from any other linguistic constructions.

Obviously, determining truth value depends on what is said, whether there is a referential dimension to what is stated. As far as Flesh is concerned, one can claim that indeed there is a referential dimension which is identified in common experience. Why has it been claimed that the author and the reader identify readily with Flesh but not with Spirit? Why should the reader take her/himself to be designated by the subject issuing the questioning, by the name of the Flesh, and not by the name of the Spirit? How, phrased differently, does the reader know what his/her desire is?

Spirit, that is manifested in the *thou* markers in Flesh's part eight times,

| | |
|---|---|
| ..............what liv'st *thou* on | 9 |
| And dost *thou* hope to dwell there soon? | 16 |
| That all in th' world *thou* count'st but poor? | 18 |
| What canst desire, but *thou* maist see | 23 |
| For riches dost *thou* long full sore? | 29 |
| Affect's *thou* pleasure? take thy fill, | 33 |
| Earth hath enough of what *you* will. | |
| Then let not goe, what *thou* maist find, | 35 |

and in the second singular person -*st* marker of the verb form eleven times,

| | |
|---|---|
| ...........what liv'*st* thou on | 9 |
| Do*st* dream of things beyond the Moon | 15 |
| And do*st* thou hope to dwell there soon? | |
| Ha*st* treasures there laid up in store | |
| That all in th' world thou count'*st* but poor? | 18 |
| What canst desire, but thou mai*st* see | 23 |
| Do*st* honour like? acquire the same, | 25 |
| For riches do*st* thou long full sore? | 29 |
| Affec*t*'s thou pleasure? take thy fill, | 33 |
| Then let not goe, what thou mai*st* find, | 35 |

is Flesh's linguistic construction, seeking in vain a referential dimension on which to anchor both the conceptual structure that supports it and the unbeknown, uncanny, non-referential fictitious world that Spirit strives to construct in her turn.

To refuse to identify with the uncanny, the non-referential, the abstract (see Kitis and Mehler), the incomprehensible, and, therefore, not to find your desire in it, is all too obvious and understandable for the reader or the poet. While Flesh does not have to construct a being from which she issues her part— since her structure is the structure of the comprehensible and the referential— Spirit has to define a being to which the reader/poet must find a way to relate. But Spirit seeks to do that in a conceptual world, that is unbeknown and lacks structure, a fictional or possible, if not fictitious, world that is destined to remain unbeknown but that also has, in order to be comprehended, to be structured in terms of the known world, as the following extract shows:

My garments are not silk nor gold,
Nor such like trash which Earth doth hold,                    80
But Royal Robes I shall have on,
More glorious than the glistring Sun;
My Crown not Diamonds, Pearls, and gold,
But such as Angels heads infold.
The City where I hope to dwell,                               85
There's none on Earth can paralel;
The stately Walls both high and strong,
are made of pretious *Jasper* stone;
The Gates of Pearl, both rich and clear,
And Angels are for Porters there;                            90
The Streets thereof transparent gold,
Such as no Eye did e're behold,
A Chrystal River there doth run,
Which shall remain for ever pure,
Nor Sun, nor Moon, they have no need,                        95
For glory doth from God proceed:

In other words, how can the reader be lured by Spirit into her world or her being, if her world is a remodelling of the known world and if her being, Spirit, is a renaming of Flesh?

### Conclusion

In this paper, I have tried to further substantiate a certain level of interpretation of Bradstreet's poem "The Flesh and the Spirit" (see also Kitis and Mehler, forthcoming) by considering the significance of pronominal reference in the discourse of the poem. It was found that, whereas in Flesh's part there are no sui-referential pronouns (except one at line 21) referencing Flesh, such markers abound in Spirit's turn (about twenty occurrences of the *I* signifier alone).

While Flesh manifests herself in the discourse of the poem as the speaking subject, by not referencing herself by means of sui-referential markers,

she manages to generate a subject position for herself that is not negated in the manifestation of the *I* signifier and that can, thus, be fused with the reader's consciousness. The absence of the *I* signifier in Flesh's speech helps the reader to identify with Flesh and seek his/her desire in her world that is being yielded by the structural subversion of Spirit's world and being in Flesh's rhetoric.

Spirit, on the other hand, is the subject that is actuated and involved in the question-answer game as it is articulated in the symbolic order of the signifier, not only in Flesh's discourse *via* the employment of the *thou* signifier, but, primarily, in her own speech by the use of the self-referential signifier *I*. Spirit is thus in a sense, not just subjectified, but also objectified, alienated and nullified, as she lexically, syntactically and semantically becomes the subject defined, not only in her articulation by the signifier, but in Flesh's, too. Her overt manifestation in the signifier, in the symbolic order of the other, is conducive to negating her very reality and subjectivity, as her articulation is effected, not merely in the *I* of the discourse, but as a metonymy of its signification.

Moreover, the referential dimension (truth-valuation) in the discourse is examined and it is concluded that, whereas Flesh's world is a referential one by subversion, Spirit's world and being lack any reference as they are a world and a being that she tries to construct by remodelling Flesh herself and her world. This referential parameter, too, incites the reader to identify with Flesh and find his/her desire in Flesh's world, as reference to the world is tantamount to showing of a world (Ricoeur, 1974).

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# NOTES

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2. Levin, (1962 : 59), amongst many others, notes that a writer addresses herself to writing a poem.

3. It must be noted that the occurrences of *thou* in Spirit's part have anaphoric function, as they refer back to the subject of Flesh as constituted in her speaking turn, whereas the function of all *thou* occurrences in Flesh's turn have indexical function insofar as they *construct* the subject of Spirit *ex nihilo*. Having noted that, we will not be concerned with such markers in Spirit's part.

4.  The first sui-referential marker encountered in the poem is that of the narrator. But the narrator is unnamed and, therefore, anonymous. As Schneiderman (1991: 159) writes, "The narrator is a fictional device, a pretense, an invention of the author...The position of the narrator seems to provide for the reader an entry into the story, but this entry is a ruse." The narrator's I does not designate him/her, does not identify him/her, but is an indexical which in fact could be used by any one engaged in the activity of telling the story or writing the text.

5.  It was argued in Kitis and Mehler that all the questions issued by Flesh have propositional status.


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Σύμφωνα με επικρατούσα ερμηνεία, το ποίημα της Bradstreet "The Flesh and the Spirit" (βλ. παράρτημα) αντικατοπτρίζει τη σύγκρουση του αισθήματος και του δόγματος στην ποίησή της (Rosenfeld, 1983), ή αποτελεί την "πιο ουσιαστική δήλωση της Χριστιανικής ελπίδας," ενώ ταυτόχρονα συνιστά επιβεβαίωση της αμφιβολίας για την ύπαρξη του άϋλου κόσμου (Stanford, 1974: 85). Σε προηγούμενο άρθρο (Kitis and Mehler, υπό δημοσίευση) υποστηρίξαμε ότι αυτή η ερμηνεία βασίζεται και συγκροτείται από το κείμενο του ποιήματος. Σε κείνο το άρθρο προσφέραμε μια γλωσσολογική ανάλυση του ποιήματος, που επικεντρωνόταν στον κόσμο που δημιουργείται από τη δείξη του όγκου και η οποία υποστήριξε την ερμηνεία του λογοτεχνικού κριτικού. Εκεί σημειώναμε ότι η χρήση των δεικτικών αυτό-αναφορικών σημείων που δημιουργούσαν θέσεις υποκειμένων συνέτεινε στο να υποστηρίζει το ίδιο επίπεδο ερμηνείας του ποιήματος. Σε αυτό το άρθρο εξετάζω τη λογομαχία μεταξύ των δύο αδελφών, των δύο πλευρών ενός εαυτού – της Σάρκας και του Πνεύματος – μέσω των θέσεων του υποκειμένου που δημιουργούνται με τη χρήση των δεικτικών αντωνυμιών.

# Appendix

### The Flesh and the Spirit

In secret place where once I stood
Close by the Banks of *Lacrim* flood
I heard two sisters reason on
Things that are past, and things to come;
One flesh was call'd, who had her eye          5
On worldly wealth and vanity;
The other spirit, who did rear

Her thoughts unto a higher sphere:
Sister, quoth Flesh, what liv'st thou on
Nothing but Meditation?                                    10
Doth Contemplation feed thee so
Regardlesly to let earth goe?
Can speculation satisfy
Notion without Reality?
Dost dream of things beyond the Moon            15
And dost thou hope to dwell there soon?
Hast treasures there laid up in store
That all in th' world thou count'st but poor?
Art fancy sick, or turn'd a Sot
To catch at shadowes which are not?               20
Come, come, Ile shew unto thy sence,
Industry hath its recompence,
What canst desire, but thou maist see
True substance in variety?
Dost honour like? acquire the same,                25
As some to their immortal fame:
And trophyes to thy name erect
Which wearing time shall ne're deject.
For riches dost thou long full sore?
Behold enough of precious store.                     30
Earth hath more silver, pearls and gold,
Than eyes can see, or hands can hold.
Affect's thou pleasure? take thy fill,
Earth hath enough of what you will.
Then let not goe, what thou maist find,            35
For things unknown, only in mind.
*Spir.* Be still thou unregenerate part,
Disturb no more my setled heart,
For I have vow'd, (and so will doe)
Thee as a foe, still to pursue.                          40
And combate with thee will and must,
Untill I see thee laid in th' dust.
Sisters we are, ye twins we be,
Yet deadly feud 'twixt thee and me;
For from one father are we not,                      45
Thou by old Adam wast begot.
But my arise is from above,
Whence my dear father I do love.
Thou speak'st me fair, but hat'st me sore,
Thy flatt'ring shews Ile trust no more.           50

How oft thy slave, hast thou me made,
when I believ'd, what thou hast said,
And never had more cause of woe
Than when I did what thou bad'st doe.
Ile stop mine ears at these thy charms,                          55
And count them for my deadly harms.
Thy sinfull pleasures I doe hate,
Thy riches are to me no bait,
Thine honours doe, nor will I love;
For my ambition lyes above.                                      60
My greatest honour it shall be
When I am victor over thee,
And triumph shall, with laurel head,
When thou my Captive shalt be led,
How I do live, thou need'st not scoff,                           65
For I have meat thou know'st not off;
The hidden Manna I doe eat,
The word of life it is my meat.
My thoughts do yield me more content
Than can thy hours in pleasure spent.                            70
Nor are they shadows which I catch,
Nor fancies vain at which I snatch,
But reach at things that are so high,
Beyond thy dull capacity;
Eternal substance I do see,                                      75
With which inriched I would be:
Mine Eye doth pierce the heavens, and see
What is Invisible to thee.
My garments are not silk nor gold,
Nor such like trash which Earth doth hold,                       80
But Royal Robes I shall have on,
More glorious than the glistring Sun;
My Crown not Diamonds, Pearls, and gold,
But such as Angels heads infold.
The City where I hope to dwell,                                  85
There's none on Earth can paralel;
The stately Walls both high and strong,
are made of pretious Jasper stone;
The Gates of Pearl, both rich and clear,
And Angels are for Porters there;                                90
The Streets thereof transparent gold,
Such as no Eye did e're behold,
A Chrystal River there doth run,

Which shall remain for ever pure,
Nor Sun, nor Moon, they have no need,                    95
For glory doth from God proceed:
No Candle there, nor yet Torch light,
For there shall be no darksome night.                    100
From sickness and infirmity,
For evermore they shall be free,
For withering age shall e're come there,
But beauty shall be bright and clear;
This City pure is not for thee,                          105
For things unclean there shall not be:
If I of Heaven may have my fill,
Take thou the world, and all that will.

*(from Hutchinson, 1969)*