

Echo Restored:

A Reading of George Herbert's "Heaven"¹

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The history of this talk began with Matthias Bauer telling me, some time ago, about a lecture of his on the discovery of childhood in English seventeenth-century literature. The question that most intrigued him was (as it seemed to me), did the poets attribute to young children a special re-view of the eternity they have only just left to live in the world of space and time? This theme made me think of the complementary one: do the poets attribute a special pre-view of eternity to old men who are soon to leave the world of space and time?

While I was still discussing this question with myself I was asked to give a lecture on Herbert, and thus I had found a text in which death and spiritual insight go together. Herbert did not live to have an old man's outlook on death, but he suffered from a mortal disease and knew that he had not long to live. An awareness of death is clearly displayed in *The Temple*. While the whole cycle of poems is not a progress from childhood through life to old age but a grown man's Augustinian monologue, the last part is dominated by the nearness of death. This is clearly shown by titles like "The Forerunners," "Death," "Dooms-day," "Judgement," and "Heaven."

When we began to discuss the theme of the *Connotations* Symposium, "Restored from Death," I again felt drawn to my old cluster of questions and to that last sequence of poems in *The Temple*. It now appeared in the widened perspective of death and being restored from death, which is exactly Herbert's perspective. "The Forerunners" of death have come, but "The Rose" follows at once. The speaker's "answer" to physical decay is "a rose," for Christ the Lord is arisen, and in "The Banquet" death and resurrection are blended with each

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other and with the transformation of blindness into seeing: “[...] I wipe mine eyes, and see [...].”

But that is not all. Focusing, in this final sequence, on death, resurrection, and spiritual vision, the poet weaves into this religious triad of themes a fourth, to which he has confessed from the very first stanza of “The Church-porch,” i.e., the art of poetry and its devotional value. Nearing death, he refers to the poet’s art in titles like “The Posie” and “A Parodie,” and when he reaches “Death” and “Doomsday” he urges us to realize that, thanks to Christ’s crucifixion, death has learned to sing, and he urges God to “Come away” and restore the dust of mortality to its pristine condition of *musica humana*: “Lord, thy broken consort raise, / And the musick shall be praise.”

In Herbert the three themes of death, being restored from death, and spiritual vision are closely bound up with music and poetry (which to Herbert are one and the same).² Like many another baroque conceit, this combination of themes, which may seem highly individual and abstruse, is in fact traditional and typical. Death, restoration from death, spiritual vision, and the music of poetry are personally united in the iconographical pattern of Christ crucified regarded as a stringed instrument.³ This is clearly expressed, for instance, in Herbert’s most rigorously formalized poem, “Aaron,” where Christ is apostrophized as “My onely musick, striking me ev’n dead.” Herbert obviously takes up Sir Philip Sidney’s aesthetic formula “music, the most divine striker of the senses”⁴ and transforms it into a religious confession, which does not cease, however, to be a confession to poetry and music. Christ crucified is Herbert’s divine Orpheus, his poetry and music. Thanks to his cross that teaches “all wood to resound his name” (“Easter”), the music heard in this world, too, restores the hearer to life by making him die. Herbert said so, very early in *The Temple*, in “Church-musick”:

Comfort, I’le die: for if you poste from me,
 Sure I shall do so, and much more:
 But if I travell in your companie,
 You know the way to heavens doore.

In "Heaven," the last poem in *The Temple* spoken by a man living on this earth, it is again the music of poetry that keeps him company on "the way to heavens doore."

The initial question, "O who will show me those delights on high?", points out a deficit that has been discussed before in "To all Angels and Saints." There Herbert, the Anglican pastor, expressed his regrets that he must not appeal to either Angels or Saints or the Virgin Mary. Jesus Christ is the only mediator between him and God, and he has asked him, for instance, in "Home,"

O show thyself to me,
Or take me up to thee!

This is, to use Herbert's own categories, clearly the refrain of a *sacred poem*, whereas the first line of "Heaven" sounds more like a *private ejaculation*.⁵ The question "O who will show me those delights on high?" is not a Christian's earnest prayer for the presence of his Saviour but rather a modern man's, and a Protestant's, appeal for some personal guidance across the enormous gulf between man and God, of which the speaker of *The Temple* complained so bitterly in "The Search." Now he is nearing death and his heavenly home, and yet, for all his trust in the good tidings of the New Testament,⁶ heaven still is to him an "undiscovered country." This seemed different when, in the two sonnets on "The H. Scriptures," he apostrophized the Bible as the Christian's sure guide to the delights of heaven, "Thou art joyes hand-sell; heav'n lies flat in thee," and when he assured himself and his readers that "This book of starres lights to eternal blisse." But now, using the same words as in "The H. Scriptures" (*joy, heaven, light, bliss*), he does not reach for the Bible but asks for an eye-witness; his question makes a decidedly personal demand: "O who will show me [...]?"

What kind of a personage could he have in mind? Someone roughly like Bunyan's Interpreter?⁷ Critics have gone so far as to subsume "Heaven" under the catechistical endeavours of *The Temple*.⁸ But notwithstanding the pseudo-etymological relation between *echo* and

catechism⁹ I beg to disagree. In *The Country Parson*, Herbert speaks favourably of the parson's catechising, but *The Priest to the Temple* and *The Temple* are two essentially different things. In the poems the words *catechism* or *catechise* simply do not occur, nor do catechists specialize in showing "delights on high."

Milton's Urania would be a more likely addressee; there are good reasons for expecting enlightenment about "those delights on high" from the Muse of astrology exalted as a poet's "heavenly Muse."¹⁰ But if we join the poet in that kind of sublime expectation we are in for a disappointment. Not Urania but Echo answers the speaker's question. And of all the possible Echoes in the history of world literature the "Echo" of "Heaven" is clearly Ovid's poor little wood-nymph, who was condemned by Juno to keep silent except for repeating the last syllables of people's words, and who suffered "the pangs of disprize'd love" for Narcissus.¹¹

The speaker of "Heaven" is indeed disappointed when he is answered by Echo, and he tells her so quite openly or even brutally: "Thou Echo, thou art mortall, all men know." But she very rightly rejects that half-truth, answering "No." No, indeed. Echo does of course die, and her bones are turned to stones,¹² but when Narcissus dies it is Echo's voice that, thrice, laments his death.¹³ Her mortality is only a part of her immortality. She is metamorphosed and survives. Not as a tree like Daphne, or as a flower like Adonis, or as a bird like Philomela, but as a sound:

sonus est, qui vivit in illa.¹⁴

I wonder whether that lovely phrase did not sound like an Anglo-Latin paronomasia on *Son* to George Herbert, and I also think it most likely that he had musical associations when he made Echo answer his speaker's questions concerning the "delights on high." The echo effect had become very popular in sixteenth-century music. It was used in madrigals as well as in purely instrumental music, and there also was the echo organ, a subsidiary chest encased within the main organ.¹⁵ An outstanding example of a musical composition including some

echo effects is Emilio de' Cavalieri's *Rappresentatione di Anima, et di Corpo*, performed in Rome in the Holy Year 1600 in the Oratorio of Filippo Neri, as a substitute for the usual masquerades of carnival (in the same February when Giordano Bruno was burned as a heretic on the nearby Campo dei Fiori).¹⁶ *Anima e Corpo* was not performed in England in Herbert's time, but it was published already in 1600, and why should not a rumor of it have reached Herbert and his Salisbury musical friends?

Here is the sequence of Anima asking heaven for an answer to Corpo's doubts concerning worldly pleasure:

Vo dimandarne al Cielo, Ch'il ver mai non asconde; Vediam cuel, che risponde. Ama il mondan piacer l'huom' saggio, ò fugge?	
	<i>Risposta.</i> <i>fugge.</i>
Che cosa è l'huom, che'l cerca, e cerca i vano?	
	<i>Risposta.</i> <i>vano.</i>
Chi da la morte al cor con dispiacere?	
	<i>Risposta.</i> <i>piacere.</i>
Come la vita ottien, chi cita brama?	
	<i>Risp.</i> <i>ama.</i>
Ama del mondo le bellezze, ò Dio?	
	<i>Risp.</i> <i>Dio.</i>
Dunque morrà ch'il piacer brama è vero?	
	<i>Risp.</i> <i>vero.</i>
Hor quel, ch'il Ciel t'ha detto, Ecc io raccolgo intiero: Fuggi vano piacer, ama Dio vero. ¹⁷	

Herbert's "Heaven" resembles this sequence not only in the echo effect but in nearly every respect of poetic invention¹⁸; some of the questions and answers are identical, and in the end Herbert's speaker, like Cavalieri's Anima, summarizes Echo's answers.¹⁹ But the strongest link between the two dialogues is their musicality; an explicit, vocal and instrumental one in the *Rappresentatione*, and an implicit, metaphorical and spiritual one in the poem.

Echo was born "among the trees and leaves" of the forest. She was a wood-nymph. And when her answers to Narcissus remained unan-

swered by him she felt ashamed and covered her face with leaves²⁰; furthermore, Echo's metamorphosis is a story about leaving. Narcissus leaves her alone and she leaves life, as the speaker of "Heaven" is about to leave this world. In the poem, the word "leaves" is repeated five times:

Wert thou not born among the trees and leaves?	
<i>Echo.</i>	Leaves.
And are there any leaves, that still abide?	
<i>Echo.</i>	Bide.
What leaves are they? impart the matter wholly.	
<i>Echo.</i>	Holy.
Are holy leaves the Echo then of blisse?	
<i>Echo.</i>	Yes.

Echo was restored from death the moment she died. Her metamorphosis is her birth. And her covering her face with leaves for shame is the climax of her tragedy. Herbert seems to have been deeply moved by the idea of those shame-covering leaves.

"Leaves" is the keyword of "Heaven," and it is also the word which links "Heaven" to the poem that precedes it, "Judgement." Here the "leaves" belong to "ev'ry mans peculiar book" that must be presented on the day of judgment. Very shortly before "Judgement," in "The Banquet," the speaker used the word "lines" instead of "leaves" to describe the single entries in his book of life:

Let the wonder of his pitie
 Be my dittie,
 And take up my lines and life. (49-51)

The speaker's "dittie" is his "song," his "music," his "posie," his "verse," his "rhyme", his "lines." If the speaker's "lines" are coupled with his "life," they connote the author's *Sacred Poems and Priuate Ejaculations*, his "peculiar book" with its many different leaves, his spiritual autobiography, and, indeed, his life.

In "Heaven" the speaker first seems to refer to the leaves of trees, which are so notoriously prone to wither and fade, and which are, therefore, emblems of mortality. But, since it is Echo who gives the

answers, the poetological meaning of the question "Wert thou not born among the trees and leaves?" is obvious. Ben Jonson's poems entitled *The Forrest* and *Vnder-VVood* come to mind, and perhaps even his short preface to the latter, which begins with a pun on "leave": "With the same leave, the Ancients call'd that kind of body Sylva [...]." ²¹We moderns think of Whitman's *Leaves of Grass* and of the *Album Leaves* written by Schubert, Beethoven, Dvorak, and many others. ²² Surely, the "leaves" among which Echo was born (or rather reborn) belong to Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, and the leaves of that book "still abide."

But the speaker wants to hear more about this strange phenomenon, leaves that do not wither but abide. "What leaves are they? impart the matter wholly" he says, turning out an oxymoron and getting the ambiguous answer he deserves. Echo replies: "Holy." "Holy" can be a noun denoting *holly* (meaning the plant, the spelling was still identical) ²³ as well as an adjective denoting *holy* (meaning sacred). And both meanings fit perfectly well into the context. Holly leaves are evergreen and, therefore, abiding, ²⁴ and they are indeed an "Echo [...] of blisse" in the echo-like refrain of an old Christmas carol: "The holly and the ivy, / When they are both full grown, / Of all the trees that are in the wood, / The holly bears the crown." Bliss is echoed, too, by the identical third line of all the four stanzas of the carol: "And Mary bore sweet Jesus Christ" (I associate "sonus est, qui vivit in illa"). Thus the "holy" leaves of "Heaven" suggest some of the oldest and most enduring and best loved leaves in the book of carols. ²⁵

Last but not least, the *holy leaves* which *abide* for ever, and which, indeed, *impart all matters wholly* and are the echo of *heavenly bliss* denote the leaves of the Holy Bible. This has been noted by some critics, but the musical or poetic implications of this relation have not been referred to. ²⁶ The trees and leaves of the forest are metaphors in God's book of nature, and the words of the Bible resound with the music of his poetry. Clearly the Psalms do, and so does the Song of Songs, and the Song of Moses, ²⁷ quoted by Shakespeare as proof that "The quality of mercy is not strain'd," ²⁸ and quoted by John Donne as proof for the preferment of verse (meaning *song*) to all other forms of writing:

Vouchsafe to call to minde, that God did make
 A last, and lastingst peece, a song. He spake
 To *Moses*, to deliuer vnto all,
 That song: because he knew they would let fall,
 The Law, the Prophets, and the History,
 But keepe the song still in their memory.²⁹

“And are there any leaves that still abide?” asks the speaker of “Heaven,” and Echo could not be more right when she answers “Bide,” for this does not only mean “endure” but also “[t]o remain in expectation.”³⁰ Herbert has told us in “Hope” that abiding in expectation is not his strong point. And what he wants now is not to be referred to hope again but to get a glimpse of the “delights on high,” here and now: “O who will show me [...]?” But he is not shown them. He only sees a voice, and if he rightly sees or hears it, “[he has his] answer home.”³¹

It does not matter much whether the words “I see a voice” are quoted from the Book of Revelation or from *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*,³² for the two works, however different, have a common denominator, poetry. The borderline between sacred and profane is fluid, and Herbert frequently crossed it. In “A Parodie” he did not satirize secular love poetry.³³ He only borrowed its form and with it the warmth of its passion. In “Clasping of hands” he adopted an old pattern of love poetry throughout: “thou art mine, and I am thine.”³⁴ Herbert never ever said a word against great love poetry; he only criticized the mediocre kind for its lasciviousness, or triviality, or over-ornamentation.³⁵ His own objective was to write a kind of religious poetry at least as beautiful and formally perfect and, what is more, at least as sincere and passionate as the very best love poetry. When he felt near the end of his life and work, he confessed to poetry (no matter whether sacred or profane) in “The Flower,” in what is perhaps the most undisguisedly personal remark he ever made in a poem or elsewhere:

After so many deaths I live and write;
 I once more smell the dew and rain,
 And relish versing: O my onely light,³⁶

"relish versing" is the most striking phrase in these lines. Versing goes together with dew and rain and light and the poet *relishes* it. To Herbert "relish" could still mean *to sing*. Shakespeare used it in that way: "to relish a love-song, like a robin-redbreast."³⁷ But "relish" also means *to taste a flavour*; it is a nourishment, "lawful as eating."³⁸ Having quoted from *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* and from *The Winter's Tale*, we may proceed as well to *Henry VIII* where Queen Catherine listens to some very musical words concerning music:

In sweet music is such art,
Killing care and grief of heart
Fall asleep, or hearing die. (3.1.12-14)

Shakespeare here treats the biblical dictum "music rejoice[s] the heart"³⁹ in a manner faintly foreshadowing Herbert's frequent coupling of music and death.⁴⁰ Sacred and secular poetry participate in an age-old exchange of forms and themes. In the Gospel of John Jesus says, "In my father's house are many mansions" (14:2), and Herbert paraphrases these words when he thanks "Church-musick" for having assigned him "A daintie lodging" in her "house of pleasure"; surely he was not the less enchanted with some especially lovely piece of church music because a sacred text had been adapted to the melody of a love song.

When the speaker of *The Temple* is nearing death and the promised resurrection but still seeing "in a glass darkly"⁴¹ and eagerly wanting to be shown a glimpse of heaven, he writes a poem that contains a homage to the music of poetry. He has given the holy Eucharist its due in "The Banquet," and he will do so, finally, in "Love (III)," but now transubstantiation is reflected in poetic metamorphosis, and for some moments *The Temple* reverberates with the voice of the poet who wrote the words "sonus est, qui vivit in illa," and who also said of poets "Est deus in nobis, et sunt commercia caeli."⁴² Thanks to this commerce, the speaker's question "O who will show me those delights on high?" does not remain unanswered. From far away and in a voice that is "soft, / Gentle and low,"⁴³ Echo reminds him of what he already knows. As long as he lives in this world, death and being

restored from death will remain a mystery to him. But there is a secret code, the music of poetry, which, mysterious itself, metaphrases life's mysteries into an idiom which human beings can understand.

In "Love (III)" Christ, inviting redeemed man to the heavenly Eucharist, says: "you must sit down [...] and taste my meat." In "The Flower" the poet says: "I relish versing." The literal meaning of *sapere* is not *to know* but *to taste*. As soon as bread and wine are tasted they are changed, and so is the taster.⁴⁴ Similarly, as soon as the music of poetry is relished, its sounds and signs, denoting various kinds of metamorphoses, effect a metamorphosis in the hearer.⁴⁵ Then the commonplace that Echo is mortal falls to pieces. The leaves by which she is covered are evergreen and, in their own way, holy. "Est deus in nobis, et sunt commercia caeli," says the poet, and Echo is an agent in his commerce with heaven. In the poem she does not "show [...] those delights on high" to the speaker, but she *tells* him what they are like, and he obediently summarizes her answers and finally gives her the cue for a last one. For Echo, of course, must have the last word. By this she assures him that the "Light, joy, and leisure" of heavenly bliss will endure for "ever." They are eternal. But so are the lines and life of poetry, for, in the music of poetry, time, meaning *tempus edax*, is metamorphosed into *time* meaning musical *rhythm*,⁴⁶ and it is only one step from that to *thyme* meaning the name of a medicinal herb that derives from Greek θυσία, to burn sacrifice.⁴⁷ Thus the commerce of poetry and music works like an alchemy that, thanks to its great elixir,⁴⁸ can distil eternity from time, "And turn delight into a sacrifice."⁴⁹

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NOTES

¹All quotations from George Herbert's poetry and prose will be from F. E. Hutchinson's edition, *The Works of George Herbert* (Oxford: Clarendon P, 1945).

²For Herbert's identification of his poetry with music cf., e.g., "Thanksgiving" 39, "My music shall finde thee [...]," "Christmas" 34, "Till ev'n his [the sun's] beams sing, and my music shine," and "Vertue" 11, "My music shows [...]" Cf. Helen Wilcox, "Countrey-Aires to Angels Musick," *Like Season'd Timber: New Essays on George Herbert* (New York: Lang, 1987) 37-58, especially 49: "The music of Herbert's verse is what Sidney termed the 'secret musicke' of poetry." This statement is substantiated in Wilcox's note 29. In a further essay, "'Heaven's Lidger Here': Herbert's Temple and Seventeenth Century Devotion," *Images of Belief in Literature*, ed. David Jasper (London: Macmillan, 1984) 153-68, Wilcox quotes several instances of Herbert having been called a "sweet singer" (157) by admiring readers during the seventeenth century. As to this appellation as well as to the attribute "Holy" (154), I share William Empson's opinion that "Herbert would not have meant that he himself expected the halo of a saint, and would have thought it very bad taste in an interpreter to say that he did." *Seven Types of Ambiguity* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1953) 119n1.

³Rosemond Tuve discussed the idea of "crucified Christ as a lyre, Love as music" in her study *A Reading of George Herbert* (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1969); see 145 and plates. See also H. Neville Davies, "Sweet Music in Herbert's 'Easter,'" *Notes and Queries* 15.3 (1968): 95-96. John Donne combined the ideas of Christianity, death and music in his "Sermon of Commemoration of the Lady Danvers [...] 1 July 1627," which George Herbert, Lady Danvers' devoted son, is most likely to have heard: "She expected this, that she hath received; *God's Physicke*, and *God's Musicke*; a *Christianly death*." *The Sermons of John Donne*, ed. Evelyn M. Simpson and George R. Potter, 10 vols. (Berkeley: U of California P, 1984) 8: 91.1028-29.

⁴Sir Philip Sidney, *An Apology for Poetry*, ed. Geoffrey Shepherd (London: Nelson, 1965) 122.7-8.

⁵I refer to the subtitle of *The Temple*, i.e., *Sacred Poems and Priuate Ejaculations*.

⁶Cf. "Judgement" where the speaker gives the NT to God instead of his own book of life, saying: "There thou shalt finde my faults are thine."

⁷Cf. John Bunyan, *The Pilgrim's Progress*, ed. James Blanton Wharey, 2nd ed. Roger Sharrock (Oxford: Clarendon P, 1967) e.g., "Then said the *Interpreter*, come in, I will shew thee that which will be profitable to thee" (28).

⁸See Stanley Fish, *The Living Temple: George Herbert and Catechising* (Berkeley: U of California P, 1978); Janis Lull, *The Poem in Time: Reading George Herbert's Revisions of The Church* (Newark: U of Delaware P, 1990) 133-36, and Glenn Klopfenstein, "Herbert's 'Heaven,'" *Explicator* 51.1 (1992): 10-12.

⁹Fish, *The Living Temple* 17 and n34, mentions the pseudo-etymology. I only object to catechising as a kind of master key to *The Temple*; used as one category among others it can be very helpful.

¹⁰See John Milton, *Complete Poems and Major Prose*, ed. Merrit Y. Hughes (New York: Odyssey P, 1967) *Paradise Lost* 1.6, and the editor's note to 1.6-17 with reference to 54-57 of the Introduction.

¹¹Publius Ovidius Naso, *Metamorphosen*, ed. and trans. Erich Rösch (München: Heimeran, 1968) 3.359-510. The quotation is from *Hamlet*, ed. Harold Jenkins (London: Methuen, 1982) 3.1.72.

¹²Cf. Golding's translation of *Metamorphoses* 3.399: "Hir bones they say were turnde to stones [...]," *Ovid's Metamorphoses: The Arthur Golding Translation*. 1567, ed., intr. and notes John Frederick Nims (New York: Macmillan, 1965) 3.497.

¹³Cf. *Metamorphosen* 3.493-510.

¹⁴*Metamorphosen* 3.401. See Cooper's definition of *sonus*, which supports the identity of poetry and music: "A sowne: a voyce: a noyse: a word: a tune." Thomas Cooper, *Thesaurus Linguae Latinae et Britannicae* (1578; repr. Hildesheim: Olms, 1975).

¹⁵See Murray Campbell and Mary Terey-Smith, "Echo," *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, ed. Stanley Sadie, 20 vols. (London: Macmillan, 2001) 7: 860-62.

¹⁶See Warren Kirkendale, *Emilio de' Cavalieri "Gentiluomo Romano": His Life, and Letters, His Role as Superintendent of All the Arts at the Medici Court, and His Musical Compositions* (Firenze: Olschki, 2001) ch. 9, 233-94.

¹⁷The quotation is from the facsimile ed.: Emilio del Cavalliere, *Rappresentatione di Anima, et di Corpo* (Rome, 1600; repr. Farnborough: Gregg, 1967) xvii-xviii. Prof. Christoph Miething was kind enough to provide a translation of the quotation: "I will ask heaven / Who never covers up anything. / Let us see what he answers. / Does a wise man love worldly pleasures or flee? / Flee. / What is a man who seeks and seeks in vain? / Vain. / What kills the heart by displeasure? / Pleasure. / How can he get life who speaks of longing? / Love. / What does one care for? For worldly beauties or for God? / God. / Then he who longs for life's beauties will die verily? / Verily. / Well, what heaven has told you / I will now fully summarize: / Flee vain pleasure, love the true God." For the musical demonstration at the symposium I used the live recording of Ernst Maerzendorfer's interpretation of the *Rappresentazione* at the Salzburg Festival of 1973, Orfeo C 5179921, Munich 1999.

¹⁸See, e.g., *The Institutio Oratoria of Quintilian*, ed. H. E. Butler, 4 vols. (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard UP, 1960) 4.2.55: "[...] personam, causam, locum, tempus, instrumentum, occasionem [...]" ("persons, cause, place, time, the instrument and occasion").

¹⁹For summation as a traditional rhetorical device see Ernst Robert Curtius, *Europäische Literatur und Lateinisches Mittelalter* (München: Francke, 1963) 293-94.

²⁰*Metamorphosen* 3.393-94: "Spreta latet silvis, pudibundaque frondibus ora/ protegit [...]" ("The rejected one hides in the forest; deeply ashamed she covers her face with leaves [...]" ; my translation).

²¹*Ben Jonson*, ed. C. H. Herford, Percy and Evelyn Simpson, 11 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon P, 1965) 8: 91 and 125-27.

²²See Maurice J. E. Brown and Kenneth L. Hamilton, "Albumleaf," *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* 1: 326-27.

²³See *OED* "holly": "Forms: [...] 5-6 holy."

²⁴See John Gerard, *The Herbal*, ed. Thomas Johnson (New York: Dover Publications, 1975): "Agrifolium. The Holly tree [...] the leaves are of a beautiful green colour [...]. It groweth green both winter and sommer" (1338-39).

²⁵See the note to "The holly and the ivy," *The Shorter New Oxford Book of Carols*, ed. Hugh Keyte and Andrew Parrott (Oxford: OUP, 1993) 207: "The (identical) text for verses 1 and 6 is probably the original refrain for a four-verse carol comprising the present verses 2-5 and sung in the old pattern of refrain-verse-refrain, etc." For the affinity of echo and refrain see John Hollander's seminal study *The Figure of Echo* (Berkeley: U of California P, 1981) 34: "The most important scheme of echo [...] is the refrain" etc.

²⁶Cf., e.g., Klopfenstein, "Herbert's 'Heaven,'" Lull, *The Poem in Time*, and P. S. Weibly, "George Herbert's 'Heaven': The Eloquence of Silence," *George Herbert Journal* 4.2 (1981): 1-9. Within his own rhetorical context, John Hollander has, of course, done justice to the musical connections of echo; see *The Figure of Echo* 30-31. Dianne McColley in "The Poem as Hierophon: Musical Configurations in George Herbert's 'The Church,'" *A Fine Tuning: Studies of the Religious Poetry of Herbert and Milton*, ed. Mary A. Maleski (Binghamton, NY: Center for Medieval and Early Renaissance Studies, 1989) 117-43, alludes to "Heaven" on 118.

²⁷Deuteronomy 32.

²⁸Cf. *The Merchant of Venice* 4.1.180-82 "Por. The quality of mercy is not strain'd / It droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven / Upon the place beneath" and Deut. 32:2 "My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distill as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb [...]"; ed. John Russell Brown (London: Methuen, 1955).

²⁹John Donne, "The First Anniversary," *John Donne: The Anniversaries*, ed. Frank Manley (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins P, 1968) 460-66.

³⁰See *OED* "bide," v. 10. and 1.

³¹"The Quip" 24.

³²Rev 1:12, and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, ed. Harold F. Brooks (London: Methuen, 1979) 5.1.190.

³³See Rosemond Tuve, "Sacred Love Poetry, and Herbert," *Studies in the Renaissance* 8 (1961): 249-90.

³⁴See Hutchinson's note to "Clasping of hands."

³⁵"Jordan (I)" and "Jordan (II)" are the classic examples; cf. also "Love (I)."

³⁶There is an exact German parallel to the phrase "O my onely light," the first line of an exquisite song from Heinrich Albert's *Arien* of 1648, "Du mein einzig

Licht." The text (of the first stanza) is by Simon Dach, who lived from 1605-59 and might have seen *The Temple*. See *Chorbuch für gleiche Stimmen, Ars Musica*, vol. 5, ed. Gottfried Wolters (Wolfenbüttel: Mösseler, 1967) 110.

³⁷*The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, ed. William Carroll (London: Arden Shakespeare, 2004) 2.1.19-20; see editor's note to 19.

³⁸*The Winter's Tale*, ed. J. H. P. Pafford (London: Methuen, 1963) 5.3.111.

³⁹See Robert Burton, *The Anatomy of Melancholy*, ed. Holbrook Jackson, 3 vols. (London: Dent, 1961) 2: 2.6.3.

⁴⁰See "Aaron" *passim*, and see also, e.g., "Mortification" 17-18, and "The Flower" 18.

⁴¹1 Cor 13:12.

⁴²Publius Ovidius Naso, *Liebeskunst: Ars Amatoria*, ed. and trans. Niklas Holzberg (Düsseldorf: Artemis und Winkler, 1999) 3.549: "A god lives in us and we trade with heaven" (my translation). Cf. Plato, *Menon* 81.b.

⁴³*King Lear*, ed. Reginald A. Foakes (Walton-on-Thames: Nelson, 1997) 5.3.270-71.

⁴⁴Apart from all theological controversies on the subject, Herbert has let us know his personal ideas of the working of the Holy Eucharist in "The H. Communion," especially in lines 7 and 8, "But by the way of nourishment and strength / Thou creep'st into my breast," and 19-21, "Onely thy grace, which with these elements comes, / Knoweth the ready way, / And hath the privie key, / [...]." Martin Luther, in a little book in which he speaks very much as the pastor of his flock, preaches the same direct kind of participation. Christ's invitation to his banquet is to be taken absolutely literally. I am particularly struck by Luther's use of the word "kriecht," which is the exact German equivalent of Herbert's "creep'st": "Wer aber den rechten glauben schöpffft auß den worten/ der glaubt also, Got gebe Christus krieche ynss brodt oder kelch" ("But he who draws the true belief from the words believes that God makes it possible for Christ to creep into the bread or the wine"). *Ein seer gut vnd nützlichs Bettbüchleyn: ym 1527. Jar.*, ed. Elfriede Starke (Leipzig: Edition Leipzig, 1983).

⁴⁵Cf. "Church-musick", especially lines 5 and 6: "Now I in you without a bodie move, / Rising and falling with your wings" and "The Banquet": "Wine becomes a wing at last" (42).

⁴⁶See *OED* "time," *n.* 10 and 12. Shakespeare uses time meaning rhythm in, e.g., *Richard II* 5.5.41-4 and in *The Sonnets* 18.12.

⁴⁷See *OED* "thyme," *n.* "Forms [...] 6-8 time [...] [... f. θυειν...]" 1.a. A plant of the genus *Thymus*." The idea that "we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ" (2 Cor 2.15) is very dear to George Herbert. He uses it, e.g., in "The Odour" with strong musical overtones; see note to "Der Duft. 2 Kor 2," *George Herbert, The Temple: Mit einer deutschen Versübersetzung von Inge Leimberg* (Münster: Waxmann, 2002) 436-37.

⁴⁸Alchemy is a favourite metaphor of Herbert's for giving expression to the mysterious workings of, to use another favourite metaphor of his, the *sacrum commercium*. Cf., e.g., "The Elixer" and "The Answer."

⁴⁹"The Church-porch" 6.