

Christopher Hodgkins, eds. *George Herbert's Travels: International Print and Cultural Legacies*.

Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2011. xxviii + 272 pp. \$75. ISBN: 978-1-61149-338-2.

This collection grew out of the second conference on George Herbert sponsored by the nebulous George Herbert Society, and held at the University of North Carolina, Greensboro in October of 2008. UNCG boasts one of the world's great collections of Herbert materials, most of which were first gathered and then donated by the late Amy M. Charles, Herbert's biographer and a faculty member at UNCG for almost thirty years. (Full disclosure: your reviewer was a participant in the conference and is thanked in the book's acknowledgements, along with ten others, for his part in developing these conferences.) The volume contains an introduction and fourteen essays treating aspects of Herbert's metaphorical travels. The most obvious of such journeys across the centuries is Herbert's influence on later poets, and nine of the fourteen essays are oriented toward this legacy.

The editor's introduction is more than just an overture for the collected essays. Instead, it illuminates the idea of Herbert's internal, spiritual travel of the heart, and his detachment from more literal journeys, which paradoxically helped his metaphorical travels through the centuries.

The first essay, "What Makes Him So Great?" is by Richard Strier, who answers the question by doing what he does best: giving us close and careful readings

of Herbert's poetry, in this case "Affliction" (1), "The Flower," and "Love" (3). While no simple conclusion emerges, Strier sees Herbert as both a great religious poet and a great poet; a poet who can "humanize theology without losing any of its content" (22), and a poet who can surprise us again and again.

The essays on Herbert's influence on later poets are universally educational and sometimes surprising. Greg Miller notes that Herbert's "Mattens" was copied out in Emily Dickinson's own hand and was at one time thought to be her poem. Kinereth Meyer helpfully examines Herbert, Lancelot Andrewes, and T. S. Eliot, while Adele Davidson introduces the concept of "poetic co-inherence" between "Little Gidding" and *The Temple*. Nicholas Crawford has an essay on Herbert and Seamus Heaney that illuminates both. Paul Dyck's essay on a very minor poet, Dallas Wiebe, shows how extensive Herbert's influence can be. Stephen Yenser has a detailed examination of Herbert and the poetry of Elizabeth Bishop and James Merrill. Christopher Hodges has a well-developed essay on Herbert and Philip Larkin that creates valuable insights into both. Jonathan Post's piece on Herbert and Anthony Hecht shows Herbert's deep and extensive influence on Hecht. Helen Wilcox's well-written piece on Herbert and recent British poetry reassures us that his influence has not waned.

Michelle Dowd writes on Herbert and Lady Anne Clifford, and includes a triptych showing Herbert's *The Temple* among Lady Anne's books. Miriam Jacobson's essay on Renaissance posies supplies us with a great deal of pertinent information. The essay by Kenichiro Watanabe on the slow spread of Herbert's poetry in Japan includes the wonderful observation by Sadajiro Kohinata in 1923 that Herbert is "hid deep in the sacred mountain" (136), while for those of us who have struggled with Herbert's simultaneous transparency and difficulty his inclusion in a Japanese volume called *Selected Works of English Mysterious Poets* (138) in 1922 seems remarkably perceptive.

Judith Maltby's essay, "'Neither too mean, nor yet too gay?' The Historians, 'Anglicanism,' and George Herbert's Church," is superb. The author not only sorts out the deeply felt historical complexities of the English Reformation, but boldly summarizes and categorizes the equally tendentious historiography that has grown up around the subject. To have done this at all is quite a feat; to have made her account of these often-dark historical events and sometime hotly argumentative historical writings crystal clear and brightly entertaining is remarkable.

The presentation of this volume is disappointing. The typeface is small; the page crowded. The sole illustration is so poorly reproduced as to be of no use. While there is a general index and an index of citations of Herbert's writings, there is no bibliography and no list of contributors. Let us hope for better in the next volume in this fine series.

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