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See table of contents

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Article abstract

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Cestus Responds to Æthiopissa

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*Yale Osborn MS. b 197 includes a neglected witness, one of six, to George Herbert's "Æthiopissa ambit Cestum Diuersi Coloris Virum," followed by the only known copy of a twenty-two-line reply, "Cesti ad Æthiopissam Responsio." This latter cannot be said with any certainty to be Herbert's; it is nevertheless a fascinating rejoinder to perhaps the most un-Herbertian of his poems. This paper provides edited texts, original translations, and apparatus; a description of the manuscript; and consideration of arguments for and against attributing the new poem to Herbert.**

Le manuscrit conservé sous la cote Yale Osborn MS. b 197 contient un témoin peu étudié, l'un de six, de l'« Æthiopissa ambit Cestum Diuersi Coloris Virum » de George Herbert, suivi de la seule copie connue d'une réponse de vingt-deux lignes, « Cesti ad Æthiopissam Responsio ». Si cette dernière ne peut être considérée avec certitude comme étant de Herbert, elle constitue néanmoins une réplique fascinante au poème, peut-être le moins herbertien de cet auteur. Cet article fournit une édition de ces textes et leur traduction, avec apparat critique. Il comprend également une description du manuscrit et une réflexion sur les arguments en faveur et à l'encontre de l'attribution du nouveau poème à Herbert.

Introduction

First mentioned by Robert Ray in the "Herbert Allusion Book" and cited in Peter Beal's extended *Catalogue of English Literary Manuscripts*, Yale Osborn MS. b 197 (*Yo97*) contains otherwise neglected witnesses to George Herbert's canonized Latin poems "Ad Autorem Instaurationis Magnae" (*AP* 5) and "Æthiopissa ambit Cestum Diuersi Coloris Virum" (*AP* 8). Neither of

* A little less than a year after I delivered a version of this paper at the April 2019 meeting of the Renaissance Society of America in Toronto, there appeared an article presenting a transcription of the two poems together with verse translations and extensive critical analysis: V. M. Braganza, "The Shadow Casts a Body: Racial Dialogue in Two Neo-Latin Lyrics Attributed to George Herbert," *Studies in Philology* 117.1 (2020): 108–28, dx.doi.org/10.1353/sip.2020.0003. Contrary to the article's opening claims, and as attested by the Ray, Beal, and Dinshaw notices cited below, "Cestus' Reply" is not "hitherto unknown" (Braganza, 108). Crucially, Braganza's texts are unreliable, with substantial errors in both the Latin original and the translation, including instances that undermine certain features of Braganza's critical argument. Braganza's reading of the "Æthiopissa" poems, however, is in other respects illuminating and thus a valuable contribution to a growing body of scholarship on race and literature in early modern England.

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these is collated in any modern Herbert edition.[1] "Æthiopissa" is followed by a twenty-two-line reply titled "Cesti ad Æthiopissam Responsio" and subscribed "Georg: Herbert." In a note arguing for canonization of the English poem "To My Lord Chancellour Sir Francis Bacon" (now widely accepted together with "Æthiopissa"), Fram Dinshaw mentions "a unique Latin answer also ascribed to Herbert," yet declines to assert its candidacy for inclusion in the Herbert canon, even if his chief purpose in the note is to argue for expansion of the latter.[2] Dinshaw does not explain his reluctance, but it is not difficult to see the poem's appearance in but a single manuscript as sufficient cause. Still, while the "Responsio" cannot be said with certainty to be Herbert's, its structure mirrors that of its companion, Cestus answering Æthiopissa's complaint on her terms and almost precisely in the order she presents them. It is a sustained rejoinder to perhaps the most un-Herbertian of Herbert's poems, meriting critical attention for its part in a fascinating, if minor, literary vogue to which the author of *The Temple* was a pioneering contributor.

Edited texts and notes

The following text and translation, as well as all other references to Herbert's Latin verse, are from the Oxford edition, currently in development.[3] The left-

1. Robert H. Ray, "The Herbert Allusion Book: Allusions to George Herbert in the Seventeenth Century," *Studies in Philology* 83.4 (1986): 1–182, 16. Peter Beal et al., eds., *Catalogue of English Literary Manuscripts 1450–1700* (University of London, 2013), celm-ms.org.uk, an adaptation and extension of Beal's *Index of English Literary Manuscripts 1450–1700*, vols. 1–4 (London: Mansell, 1980–93), HrG 302.8 and HrG 304.5. The relevant Herbert editions are F. E. Hutchinson, ed., *The Works of George Herbert* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1941); John Drury and Victoria Moul, eds., *George Herbert: The Complete Poetry* (London: Penguin, 2015); and Catherine Freis, Richard Freis, and Greg Miller, *George Herbert's Latin Verse*: Musae Responsoriae, Passio Discerpta, Lucus, *and* Alia Poemata Latina, George Herbert Journal: Special Studies & Monographs 39.1–2 (2015/2016). Drury and Moul follow Hutchinson exclusively for all their Latin texts (l). Freis, Freis, and Miller too have "reproduced throughout Hutchinson's Latin and Greek" and compared his "editorial choices with […] available manuscripts" (xxx), though the *Yo97* manuscript is not included among the latter. *AP* (*Alia Poemata* or "Other Poems") refers to Herbert's miscellaneous Latin verse.

2. Fram Dinshaw, "A Lost MS. of George Herbert's Occasional Verse and the Authorship of 'To the L. Chancellor,'" *Notes & Queries* 30.5 (1983): 423–25, 424, dx.doi.org/10.1093/nq/30-5-423.

3. Robert Whalen and Christopher Hodgkins, gen. eds., *George Herbert: Complete Works* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, forthcoming). English translations, by Sarah Kunjummen and Luke Roman, will appear alongside the Latin originals in volume 2, edited by Whalen, Roman, and Hodgkins.

margin letters of the Latin originals foreground thematic correspondences between the two poems. This and other features of the new poem are discussed in the commentary that follows.

Æthiopissa Ambit Cestum Diuersi Coloris Virum

a. Quid mihi si facies nigra est? Hoc, Ceste, colore
    Sunt etiam tenebræ, quas tamen optat Amor.
c. Cernis vt exustâ semper sit fronte viator;
    Ah longum, quæ te deperit, errat iter.
d. Si nigro sit terra solo, quis despicit aruum?
e. Claude oculos, et erunt omnia nigra tibi:
f. Aut aperi, et cernes corpus quas proijcit vmbras;
g. Hoc saltem officio fungar amore tui.
h. Cùm mihi sit facies fumus, quas pectore flammas
    Iamdudum tacitè delituisse putes?
i. Dure, negas? O fata mihi præsaga doloris,
    Quæ mihi lugubres contribuêre genas.

Title. Ambit … Diuersi Coloris Virum] ambit … diuersi coloris virum ·:· *Yo97*
1. Hoc, Ceste,] Hoc Ceste *Yo97*
2. tenebræ,] tenebræ *Yo97* *3*. exustâ] exustà *Yo97* *4*. longum,] longum *Yo97* iter] Iter *Yo97*
5. aruum] aurum *Yo97* *6*. oculos,] oculos *Yo97* tibi:] tibi. *Yo97*
7. aperi, et cernes] aperi et cernes, *Yo97* vmbras;] vmbras *Yo97*
9. Cùm] Cum *Yo97*
11. Dure,] Dure *Yo97* O … mihi … doloris,] o … mei … doloris *Yo97* *12*. contribuêre] contribuere *Yo97*

An Ethiopian Woman Woos Cestus, a Man of a Different Colour

What though my face be black? This is the colour, Cestus,
    That shadows have; yet Love does these prefer.
You perceive that the traveller always has a sunburnt brow;
    Ah! long is the road she wanders who perishes for you.
Though the land's soil be black, does anyone despise the field?
    Close your eyes, and all will be black to you;
Or open them, and see the shadows that a body casts:

That office at least would I do for love of you.
Since my face is smoke, what flames do you suppose
Have long within my breast hid silently?
Harsh one, you reject me? O fates, you were portents
Of my sorrow, who gave me mournful cheeks.

Cesti ad Æthiopissam Responsio

a. Vota precésque tuas nigro signabo lapillo,
Conuenit Æthiopum vultibus iste color.
b. Optat an odit Amor tenebras? cui matris habetur
Candidulae mater candida spuma maris:
d. Aut si non odit, nullo discrimine agentur
(Sat scio) cœcigeno lux tenebræque deo.
d. Si quod amoris iter carpsisti æstate, nigrescas,
Amissam formam reddit amoris hyems.
d. Si nigro ceu terra solo vis ipsa placere
Calce tero terram; vis tibi fiat idem?
e. Lumina clausa velis? age, portus amoris ocellus,
Hoc clauso nullus cor penetrabit amor.
f. Lumina aperta velis, quo spectem corporis vmbram?
Nigra sed illustris corporis vmbra placet.
g. Vmbram hanc esse cupis? nimias o pix mera Cesto
Offendes tenebras, albus an ater ero.
g. Vmbram hanc sume tamen, modo possis demere; nolo
Invidiosa comes sis, velut vmbra mei.
h. Vende alijs multos flammarum e pectore fumos,
Sæpe quidem fumi plus minor ignis habet.
i. Nigra rogas? pudeat; fatum et fortuna reclamant,
Alba solent albis iungere, nigra nigris.

Title. Responsio] responsio *Yo97* *3.* Amor] amor *Yo97* matris] Martis *Yo97* *5.* odit,] odit *Yo97*
6. (Sat scio)] *no parentheses Yo97* *7.* æstate,] ætate; *Yo97* *9.* ceu] seu *Yo97*

12. clauso] clausas corr. to clauso *Yo97* *14*. placet.] placet *Yo97* *17*. demere;] demere, *Yo97*

21. marginal i] İ *Yo97* reclamant] rectamant *Yo97*

Cestus's Reply to the Ethiopian Woman

I will mark your vows and prayers with this, a dark pebble;
That colour befits the faces of Ethiopians.
Does Love desire darkness, or despise it—the mother
Whose gleaming mother was the glittering foam of the sea?
Or, if the blind-born god (I know too well) hates not
The darkness, he will not distinguish light from dark.
If you grow dark in summer traveling the road of love,
Love's winter will restore your lost appearance.
Like earth with its black soil you would be deemed fair?
I tread the earth with my heel. You crave the same?
That my eyes be closed? Come now, the eye is love's harbour;
When this is closed, no love will penetrate the heart.
Open them? That I may espy the body's shadow? Indeed,
A radiant body's sable shadow pleases.
You'd be that shadow? O, total pitch, you'd Cestus strike
With too much darkness—be I white or black.
Yet, inhabit that shadow, provided you can withdraw: I'd not
Have you be an envious companion, as if really my shadow.
Proclaim, cry up to others, the flaming smoke from your breast:
For often indeed small fires have greater smoke.
Black, you court me? For shame! fate and fortune protest—
Are wont to join white with white, and black with black.

Textual commentary

Though touching on both poems, the following commentary, notes on translation, and remainder of the article are concerned primarily with the "Responsio." The edited text, notes, and translation pertaining to the canonical "Æthiopissa" are provided for convenience and to enter the *Yo97* variants into the textual record.

The left-margin letters in the two poems appear to indicate thematic correspondences that interested the scribe. The layout in "Æthiopissa" is as follows: a. (line 1); c. (line 3); d. (line 5); e. (line 6); f. (line 7); g. (line 8); h. (line 9); i. (line 11). Where in the "Responsio" each letter marks one of the poem's eleven couplets, the twelve-line "Æthiopissa" is less consistent, with lines 5–8 each assigned its own letter (respectively d. through g.). That alignment, however, appears to make sense: lines 11–12 in the "Responsio" (e.) answer Æthiopissa's invitation to Cestus that he close his eyes so that her dark appearance would be indistinguishable ("Claude oculos, et erunt omnia nigra tibi" [line 6]); lines 13–14 in the "Responsio" (f.) answer the alternative proposal, that Cestus open his eyes to behold those "shadows which a body casts" ("Aut aperi, et cernes corpus quas proijcit vmbras" [line 7]); and lines 15–18 in the "Responsio" (g. and g.) address more fully Æthiopissa's desire to perform the office of Cestus's shadow ("Hoc saltem officio fungar amore tui" [line 8]). Even more expansive are the three couplets designated "d." in the "Responsio" (lines 5–10), Cestus answering at length Æthiopissa's single-line assertion (posed as *erotema*, the rhetorical question) that no one despises a field for its black soil ("Si nigro sit terra solo, quis despicit aruum?" [line 5]). The middle two of these six lines in the "Responsio" also answer Æthiopissa's complaint that she suffers sunburn as a traveller on the road of love (lines 3–4)—labelled "c." in her poem, a letter missing from the "Responsio" scheme but whose lines correspond to Cestus's answer in the couplet marked by the second "d." (lines 7–8). Of the remaining letters, h. and i. in the "Responsio" (the final two couplets, lines 19–22) correspond clearly to their counterparts in "Æthiopissa" (lines 9–12). The first couplet in the "Responsio," designated "a.," includes a conceit absent altogether from "Æthiopissa" (more on which below); but these lines otherwise correspond to Æthiopissa's defiant opening declaration—that her face is black, the colour of shadows that Love prefers.

Turning to editorial emendations, it seems likely that the scribe is neither the author nor a skilled Latinist. Especially glaring are "ætate" (line 7) and "rectament" (line 21). The first should be "æstate"—"summer" rather than "life" or "time of life"—a reading consistent with the full conceit, which juxtaposes "æstate" against "hyems" ("winter") in the following line. As for "rectament": this is not a word in Latin. Even more troubling is "Martis" (line 3), which is emended here to "matris." "Martis" cannot be salvaged. Nor is it difficult to imagine scribal error in transmission—"matris" mistakenly transcribed

as "martis," then deliberately capitalized, the scribe perhaps misled by the appearance of Mars's son, the "blind-born god" ("cœcigeno […] deo" [line 6]). A related awkwardness is the seemingly redundant "Candidulæ" and "candida" (line 4) applied twice to Venus's mother (i.e., "maris"), perhaps for metre's sake. Finally, "seu terra" ("or if earth") is emended to "ceu terra" ("like" or "as earth") to clarify the comparison (line 9).

One instance in *Yo97*, "nigrescas" (line 7), seems at first glance to call for correction to the indicative, "nigrescis." Verbal mood in Latin conditions, however, is not as "regular" as grammar books sometimes suggest; so even if we think of the second-person singular here as pertaining specifically to Æthiopissa, there is no strong reason to emend to "nigrescis." The subjunctive, moreover, is used in general conditions particularly when the second-person singular is generic (i.e., where "you" = "one")—as seems applicable here given the proverbial quality of the couplet (lines 7–8).

Not every punctuation emendation in the "Responsio" is strictly necessary (e.g., the comma added to "odit" at line 5). But the parentheses for "Sat scio" (line 6), full stop following "placet" (line 14), and semicolon rather than comma after "demere" (line 17) all seem unavoidable. Two silent emendations are the acute accents on the second syllables of "precésque" (line 1) and "tenebræque" (line 6), which appear in the manuscript as grave accents over the abbreviated enclitic. Other diacritic interventions are documented in the notes (albeit cognizant of inconsistencies in seventeenth-century neo-Latin scribal practice).[4]

Notes on the "Responsio" translation

1. *Vota precésque* ("vows […] prayers"): religious and erotic devotion are frequent metaphorical companions in Renaissance love lyric, so the plaintive aspect of the phrase seems clear enough. The votive appears to refer to Æthiopissa's proposal to assume the office of Cestus's shadow (lines 7–8), a theme that is addressed more explicitly at lines 13–18 in the "Responsio."

4. Given scant notice of the "Responsio," I wish also to correct an error in Dinshaw, who misreads the phrase "precésque tuas nigro signabo" in the opening line as "precesq. tuas nigro signata" (Dinshaw, 424). His period following "precesq" is perhaps added to signify the abbreviated enclitic *que*. But there is no period in the text, and Dinshaw clearly mistakes "signata" for "signabo" (though both derive from the verb *signo*).

3. *Amor* ("Love"): though in *Yo97* this word appears throughout to have a miniscule initial, the personification in this instance seems strong enough to warrant capitalization. *[T]enebras* ("darkness"): some Latin plurals must be rendered singular in English. Though "shadows" would be literally correct, that more specific imagery becomes explicit only at lines 13–18, where forms of Latin *vmbra* occur five times.

4. *Candidulae […] candida* ("gleaming […] glittering"): This seems redundant especially in translation, though it is possible that the diminutive form *candidulae* expresses some minor distinction—perhaps between sea foam and the sea itself?

14. *Nigra sed illustris corporis vmbra placet* ("Indeed, / A radiant body's sable shadow pleases"): "illustris" seems to be the emphatic word here, but the sense of the line overall is difficult to determine. Taking "sed" as simply "but" would suggest an illogical opposition to rather than agreement with the previous line. (It would make no sense for Cestus to counter Æthiopissa's proposal by acknowledging the potential for a black shadow to please or be pleasing.) Our "indeed," then, is intended to suggest "not only, but also" rather than "but on the contrary."[5]

15–16. *nimias […] ero* ("O, total pitch, you'd Cestus strike / With too much darkness—be I white or black"): a challenging sentence, defective even. Our translation does not strictly retain dative "Cesto" following "pix mera" (i.e., "total pitch to" or "in the eyes of" Cestus); but it captures what appears to be the essential point: that Æthiopissa is far too dark for him, even were Cestus himself some liminal either-or: i.e., "be I white or black" ("albus an ater ero").

18. *Invidiosa* ("envious"): though "invidious" (or "odious") would be accurate, it would fail fully to capture what the context suggests: that shadows long to be more than shadows. Compare with Donne's "ordinary nothing" or "shadow"

5. See "sed" conj. II.C in Charles T. Lewis and Charles Short, *A Latin Dictionary (1889)*, *Perseus Digital Library*, accessed 29 March 2021, perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/; and "but" C.III.11.b.b in *Oxford English Dictionary (OED) Online,* s.v. "but, prep., adv., conj., and n.2," Oxford University Press, accessed 29 March 2021, oed.com.

who eyes with longing/envy the proximate and more substantial "light, and body."[6] It is difficult to determine, however, whether the target of Æthiopissa's perceived envy/hostility/desire is Cestus or Cestus's shadow. That she herself seeks to perform the office of shadow ("Æthiopissa," lines 7–8) suggests the latter, one shade presuming to take the place of a rival other. More literally, however, "Invidiosa" pertains to the relationship between the shadow and the body (Cestus) that casts it.

Authorship: Yale MS. Osborn b 197

Whether the "Responsio" scribe miscopied or reproduced errors already present in his source is impossible to determine, for *Yo97* is the poem's only known witness. Notwithstanding the evidence for and against Herbert's authorship as discussed below, the numerous errors, awkward syntax, and general carelessness of the *Yo97* transcription cast considerable doubt on the scribal attribution to "Georg: Herbert" (fol. 168). For the poem to be his, we would have to assume either that the only surviving copy is of a very early draft never intended for circulation, or that it is a substantial corruption of some lost original. This latter possibility is supported by the marginal letters, in the same hand as that of the poems, for they suggest the scribe's attempt to make sense of a pair of verses copied from another source and whose author presumably introduced neither the marginal indicators nor the several errors documented above.

A flyleaf indicates that *Yo97*—a 250-page miscellany that includes, in addition to the three poems attributed to Herbert, several by or attributed to Robert Herrick—belonged originally to Tobias Alston (1620–39), whose half-brother Edward was Herrick's contemporary at Trinity Hall, Cambridge. This Edward Alston (not the siblings' cousin of the same name who became a president of the College of Physicians) graduated from Trinity Hall in 1619, Herrick in 1617 (after migrating there from St. John's College at which he had matriculated several years earlier)—the same year that Herbert was awarded the sublectorship of the Fourth Class at Trinity College. An additional Cambridge-related name on the flyleaf is James Tavor (Tabor), the university registrar from

6. "A Nocturnal upon S. Lucy's Day," lines 35–36 in *Complete Poems*, ed. A. J. Smith (London: Penguin, 1996), 72. See Lewis & Short, *invidiosus*: "Full of envy, envious, invidious, hostile." This dual valence obtains also for seventeenth-century English "envious" (*OED* adj. 1–2, 5).

1600 to 1645.[7] Excepting the final eight pages (fols. 243–50), which contain unrelated poems and prose in two later hands, the manuscript is in a single italic hand and dated "1639" (fol. 241)—nearly two decades after "Æthiopissa" is thought to have been written. Beal's observation—that "Æthiopissa" is "subscribed 'Georg: Herbert'" and that the "Responsio" is "also ascribed to 'Georg: Herbert'"—is misleading. The subscription follows the response poem only, on the verso side of the leaf (fol. 168), the canonical "Æthiopissa" appearing in its entirety on the recto page and followed by the first sixteen lines of the response poem (fol. 167). No subscription appears between the first and second poems; only the second is subscribed at all: "Finis. Georg: Herbert." That the subscription, accompanied by the boundary-signifying *finis*, follows the second poem only, together with the fact that the pair is framed by verses subscribed with the names of other authors, reinforces the connection indicated by the poems' corresponding titles, contents, and marginal lettering. These details also suggest that the two were regarded, at least by the scribe, as companion poems authored by Herbert—unless the placement of the subscription was a slip or deliberately misleading.

Gary Taylor has suggested that *Yo97* is closely related to a Rawlinson miscellany that is the source of two attributions to Shakespeare. Observing that Bod. MS. Rawl. poet. 160 shares more than a third of its contents with *Yo97*, Taylor concludes that a "comprehensive description and analysis of [*Yo97*], and its relationship to [the Rawlinson manuscript], would be useful" (though we observe that the contents common to both artifacts do not include either of the "Æthiopissa" poems). Taylor argues too that attributional accuracy in manuscript miscellanies is generally more reliable than in printed works, whose commercial interests make them more prone to misattribution.[8] And as Lara Crowley points out in her study of the rich trove of manuscript witnesses to the poetry and prose of John Donne, "many, probably most, scribes attempted merely to copy accurately what they were given, without

7. A newly discovered autograph letter by Herbert is addressed to "Mr Tabour" and dated "24 Apr. 1620." Jeffrey P. Beck, "A Herbert Letter in Records of the Vice Chancellor's Court: George Herbert's Servants at Cambridge" in *Modern Philology* 118.3 (2021): 432–46, 433.

8. Gary Taylor, "Rawlinson Poetry 160: The Manuscript Source of Two Attributions to Shakespeare," in *The New Oxford Shakespeare: Authorship Companion*, ed. Gary Taylor and Gabriel Egan (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 218–30, 223–24.

taking creative license."[9] We should bear in mind, however, that numerous attributions of poems to specific authors (among them Herrick, Jonson, Henry Wotton, Thomas Carew, and Richard Corbett) also suggest that *Yo97* belongs to that group of manuscripts whose scribes were conscious of what we might call literary celebrity. It would not be surprising, then, to discover that not all attributions are accurate. William Davenant's "To ye wife of Mr Endemion Porter," for example, is subscribed "Tho: Carewe" (fol. 23).[10] Still, the only other instance of what might be construed as mistaken attribution in *Yo97* is a copy of "King Oberon his Cloathing," a poem attributed to Robert Herrick by modern editors, but which in *Yo97* is subscribed "Sr. Simmion Steward" (fols. 1–2)—an ascription supported, moreover, by other contemporary sources.[11] As recorded by Beal, there appears to be no other positive instance of misattribution in *Yo97*. (It is worth noting in this context that *Yo97*'s copy of "Ad Autorem Instaurationis Magnae" [*AP* 5] is accurately ascribed to "Geo: Herbert" [fols. 26–27].) The rate of accuracy in *Yo97* is consistent with Scott Michael Nixon's study, which observes that upwards of 95 percent of manuscript attributions during the decade prior to that of *Yo97* are valid and therefore "unjustly stigmatized."[12]

On the whole, however, these observations provide scant bibliographical warrant for approaching the question of authorship, as it pertains to the "Responsio," with other than great caution. In his pioneering study of the complex relationships among authors' works, scribal copies, early print editions, and audiences, Arthur Marotti cites the "foregrounding of authorship in print culture" as the primary reason for a marked increase in ascription of verses in miscellanies to specific poets. This is especially evident in manuscripts produced after 1630, where prior to this time ascriptions tended to consist of initials only or were lacking altogether.[13] One can easily imagine the *Yo97*

9. Lara Crowley, *Manuscript Matters: Reading John Donne's Poetry and Prose in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), 10.

10. See Beal, DaW 29, accessed 29 March 2021, celm-ms.org.uk/authors/davenantsirwilliam.html.

11. See Beal, HeR 335, accessed 29 March 2021, celm-ms.org.uk/authors/herrickrobert.html, and T. G. S. Cain, "Robert Herrick, Mildmay Fane, and Sir Simeon Steward," *ELR* 15 (1985): 312–17, dx.doi.org/10.1111/j.1475-6757.1985.tb00890.x.

12. Scott Nixon, "A Reading of Thomas Carew in Manuscript" (PhD dissertation, Oxford: St. John's College, 1996), 2.

13. Arthur F. Marotti, *Manuscript, Print, and the English Renaissance Lyric* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1995), 329, dx.doi.org/10.7591/9781501728501.

miscellanist, eager in 1639 to bolster his manuscript's literary bona fides, claiming with little certainty that the author of the "Responsio" is the poet whose "Æthiopissa" began circulating some two decades earlier.[14]

Authorship: Herbert and Latin epigram

G. P. Meyer observed long ago that Herbert appears to have been responsible for initiating an unusual, if minor, literary current that flourished for several decades.[15] Composed probably in the early 1620s as a youthful academic exercise announcing his "ability […] to fabricate a reasonable argument on what was considered a questionable topic,"[16] "Æthiopissa" also displays Herbert's classical learning, notably his awareness of scattered references to the erotics of skin colour.[17] Even more precocious is his appropriation of the obscure name of Cestus, a figure who, as Nicholas Fenech has recently discovered, appears in three of Martial's epigrams—none of them, apparently, cited by John Owen, a writer otherwise celebrated in Herbert's day as "the English Martial" and whose original verses frequently adapt lines from those of his Roman model.[18]

14. I hasten to note, however, that of the six known manuscript witnesses to "Æthiopissa" (see n33 below for details), only two in addition to *Yo97* (*Bla41* and *Or26*) are dated prior to 1639.

15. G. P. Meyer, "The Blackamoor and Her Love," *Philological Quarterly* 17 (1938): 371–76, 375.

16. Cristina Malcolmson, *George Herbert: A Literary Life* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 15, dx.doi.org/10.1057/9780230535732. Braganza similarly observes that "Æthiopissa" and its companion in *Yo97* "experiment with rhetoric through an imagined argument" and "rhetorical performativity" (128), elsewhere "the performance of rhetorical versatility" and "an eristic socio-poetic dialogue" (109–10).

17. See for, example, Virgil *Eclogues* 10.38–39, "quid tum, si fuscus Amyntas? / et nigrae violae sunt et vaccinia nigra" ("and what if Amyntas be dark? Violets, too, are black and black are hyacinths"); and 2.14–18, "nonne fuit satius, tristis Amaryllidis iras / atque superba pati fastidia? nonne Menalcan, / quamvis ille niger, quamvis tu candidus esses? / o formose puer, nimium ne crede colori: / alba ligustra cadunt, vaccinia nigra leguntur" ("Was it not better to brook Amaryllis' sullen rage and scornful disdain? Or Menalcas, though he was dark and you are fair? Ah, lovely boy, trust not too much to your bloom! The white privets fall, the dark hyacinths are culled!"). Virgil, *Eclogues*, *Georgics*, *Aeneid 1–VI,* ed. and trans. H. Rushton Fairclough (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999), 91–93, 32–33.

18. See 1.92, 8.46, and 8.51 in Martial, *Epigrams*, *Volume II*, ed. and trans. D. R. Shackleton Bailey (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993), 106–07, 190–91, 196–97. I am grateful to Nicholas Fenech for alerting me to these poems in his unpublished paper, "Herbert and the Hellespont." See also J. P. Sullivan, "Martial and English Poetry," *Classical Antiquity* 9.1 (1990): 149–74, 154, dx.doi.org/10.2307/25010924. Originally published as ten books across four volumes, Owen's *Epigrammata*

Combining classical references to race and to homoeroticism—Martial *Epigrams* 8.46 describes Cestus as a boy more chaste than Hippolytus ("puero castior Hippolyto") and worthy of Ganymede's bed ("Tu Ganymedeo poteras succedere lecto")—Herbert demonstrates a skill, comparable to Owen's, for adapting classical materials to novel uses (in Herbert's case his courtship of Francis Bacon, more on which below). Like Owen's epigrams generally, "Æthiopissa" spawned several imitators and accelerated a vogue for fascination with "black beauty" in works by numerous authors, including Shakespeare, Jonson, John Collop, Henry King, and Herbert's brother Edward.[19] As an undergraduate at Cambridge, Herbert would have participated in university prolusion exercises wherein students were expected to argue both sides of an issue. It would not be surprising, then, to discover that he wrote an answer to "Æthiopissa." But if he did, he was not alone. "The Boyes Answer to the Blackmoor," Henry King's response to what Hutchinson called a "free translation" of "Æthiopissa" attributed by King to Henry Rainolds ("A Black-moor Maid wooing a fair Boy"), though not a version of the *Yo97* "Responsio," was one of several replies to "Æthiopissa" by authors other than Herbert.[20]

Like its companion poem in *Yo97*, the "Responsio" is both epigram and love elegy. Victoria Moul has observed that the boundary separating such genres in the Latin verse of early modern England is often "porous,"[21] and these poems are good examples. Composed in elegiac couplets (alternating hexameter and pentameter lines), they are tonally and stylistically epigrammatic:

(1606, 1607, 1612, 1613) were widely known, anthologized, and imitated throughout the seventeenth century.

19. See K. F. Hall, *Things of Darkness: Economies of Race and Gender in Early Modern England* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1995), 116–22; and Christopher Hodgkins, *Reforming Empire: Protestant Colonialism and Conscience in British Literature* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2002), 116–19.

20. Hutchinson, 597. Henry King, *Poems, Elegies, Paradoxes, and Sonnets* (London, 1657), 6–7. For King's and other seventeenth-century poems addressing the "Æthiopissa" theme, see Werner Sollors, ed., *An Anthology of Interracial Literature: Black-White Contacts in the Old World and the New* (New York: New York University Press, 2004), 99–111. Of these (poems by John Cleveland, Eldred Revett, James de la Cour, and Herbert's older brother, Edward of Cherbury), only King's and George Herbert's are sustained monologues directly addressing their absent interlocutor.

21. Victoria Moul, "Neo-Latin Poetry, 1500–1700: An English Perspective," in *Oxford Handbooks Online* (2 June 2016), 1–23, 8, oxfordhandbooks.com/view/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199935338.001.0001/oxfordhb-9780199935338-e-16.

concise, somewhat didactic, and, in the case of the "Responsio," satirical and even mocking, Cestus blithely and systematically dismantling the edifice of Æthiopissa's complaint. Herbert demonstrates his own capacity for mocking rebuttal and generic sophistication in his sustained polemic, *Musæ Responsoriæ* (*The Muses' Reply*), a series of forty poems, all labelled "epigrams" yet composed in a variety of Latin metres, including several that are associated more often with genres other than epigram. Responding to the Scottish reformer Andrew Melville's *Anti-Tami-Cami-Categoria*, the sheer metrical variety of the series is an urbane rebuke to Melville's suspicion of church music, while its most direct objection to the same, *Musæ* 23 "De Musicâ Sacrâ," is in alcaics, the metre of Horatian ode. That form is fitting for a poem of praise; yet it concludes with mock-panegyric—a take-down of puritan extremism as scathing as that directed at the figure of Death in Herbert's mock-epyllion "Triumphus Mortis," written in stately hexameters. The systematic quality of the "Responsio," highlighted by the marginal letters documented above, is also a feature of *Musæ*, where the titles of individual epigrams announce their correspondence to specific passages in Melville's *ATCC*, and where early in the series Herbert offers a *partitio*, a standard feature of classical oratory wherein the author/speaker lays out the elements of his address.[22] That both *Musæ* and the "Responsio" feature such schematic clarity, however, proves only that Herbert received the same training in rhetorical methods and analysis enjoyed by virtually all his Cambridge contemporaries. Though such similarities are interesting, they do not of themselves warrant attributing the "Responsio" to Herbert.

The King pairing cited above mirrors in print a feature common to seventeenth-century Latin verse in manuscript—namely, the appearance of a well-known classical or contemporary poem alongside poems that imitate or respond to it. Nor was it unusual for miscellanies in the hand of a single scribe to include poems by other authors. A pertinent instance is *Lucus* 26,

22. "Tres video partes, quo re distinctius vtar, / Anticategoriæ (Scoto-Britanne) tuæ. / Ritibus vna Sacris opponitur; altera Sanctos / Prædicat authores; tertia plena Deo est. / Postremis ambabus idem sentimus vterque: / Ipse pios laudo; numen et ipse colo. / Non nisi prima suas patiuntur prælia lites: / O bene quod dubium possideamus agrum"; "To treat of the matter more distinctly: I see three parts / (O English Gael) in your Anticategoria. / One opposes the Sacred rites; a second praises / The holy authors; the third is filled with God. / On the two last points, you and I think alike: / I also praise the pious; I too serve God. / Upon the first matter alone lies the terrain of our dispute: / How fine it is to have contested ground" (*Musæ* 4, "Partitio," lines 1–8).

Pope Urban VIII's reply to Herbert's notorious "Roma" anagram. Together with two others, these poems constitute a mini-sequence in the autograph portion of Williams MS. Jones B62 (*Lucus* 25–28). Edmund Miller's claim that Herbert in *Lucus* 26 "writes in the voice of Pope Urban VIII" (i.e., Maffeo Barberini) has always seemed doubtful.[23] Even Hutchinson, who included the poem in his 1941 edition, remarks that "[i]f it is Herbert who invents the reply of the newly elected Pope to the anagram 'Roma,' he allows the Pope to have the better of the exchange in XXV and XXVI, and makes amends for the petulant rejoinder of XXVII by the courteous and conciliatory tone of XXVIII."[24] Herbert demonstrates here his involvement in a manuscript culture that was accustomed to copying, imitating, and responding to works by others, and doing so without necessarily distinguishing one author from another. In an interesting variation of the practice, it seems likely that he was citing and copying *himself*—in a manner he might have regarded as differing little, if at all, from the Barberini instance—when he concluded *Musæ* 30 "De Lupa Lustri Vaticani" with the promise to "Confirm this saying with an Anagram" ("Dicti Fidem firmabimus Anagrammate" ([line 7]) and followed with a copy of his own "canonical" (i.e., widely circulated) *Lucus* 25.[25]

23. Edmund Miller, *Drudgerie Divine: The Rhetoric of God and Man in George Herbert* (Salzburg: Institution fuer Anglistik u. Amerikanistik, 1979), 26.

24. Hutchinson, 592. For the case against Herbert's authorship, see W. Hilton Kelliher, "The Latin Poetry of George Herbert," *The Latin Poetry of English Poets*, ed. J. W. Binns (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1974), 26–57, 37–40; Malcolmson, 48–51; and James Doelman, "Herbert's *Lucus* and Pope Urban VIII," *George Herbert Journal* 32.1 (2008): 43–53. Doelman identifies a published poem, identical to *Lucus* 16 and titled "In Maledicum, Qui in Nomen Romae Impie Lusit," in Pope Urban's 1623 *Poemata* (45).

25. James Duport, *Ecclesiastes Solomonis* (London, 1662), fol. 14r–v. This feature of the series as presented in Duport's edition, until recently the only known source of *Musæ*, is confirmed by two early seventeenth-century manuscripts apparently unknown to Herbert's modern editors (including Freis, Freis, and Miller and Drury and Moul). Both are dated around the probable time of composition, 1619–22, and are assessed at greater length in the forthcoming Oxford edition. A few remarks here are apropos: first, both manuscripts, as in Duport, include an unnumbered copy of the "Roma" anagram between epigrams 30 and 31. Moreover, one of them, BL Add. MS. 73541 (*Bla41*), includes the same five *AP* poems included in Duport, and in the same order, suggesting that this manuscript either served as Duport's copy or was very close to it in the transmission of Herbert's sole polemical work. The other *Musae* manuscript, Folger Ja.1.1 (*Fj1*), does not include the *AP* poems and omits the Andrewes dedicatory, but is otherwise a complete copy. This latter is also far closer than the other to being something like fair copy: liberally punctuated where the other lacks punctuation, agreeing in multiple

Aside from its obvious connection to "Æthiopissa," there is very little internal evidence that would support attribution of the "Responsio" to Herbert. The same, of course, might be said of "Æthiopissa"—even if this poem is a considerably more polished and elegant example of Latin epigram typical of Herbert. One echo in the "Responsio" worth exploring, however, is Cestus's threatening "to tread" with his "heel" the "black soil" of Æthiopissa's complexion ("Si nigro ceu terra solo vis ipsa placer / Calce tero terram; vis tibi fiat idem?" [lines 9–10])—a "field" she had implored Cestus not to "despise" ("Æthiopissa," line 5). This resembles the violent gesture, ascribed to Melville in *Musæ* 8, of "lay[ing] low with a kick from your heels" the "double throne of the Muses" ("sternis calcitro […] duplicem […] Camœnarum thronum" [lines 3–6]), i.e., Cambridge and Oxford. This meaning of "calcitro," "to strike with the heels," which as a noun can connote "blusterer," is fairly rare in classical usage—just the kind of learned display we might expect of a young Herbert eager to impress his Cambridge mentors and fellows. It is at least possible that the "Responsio" ironically targets Cestus by assigning him the same pedal petulance that Herbert applies to Melville in *Musæ*.[26] Still, the only other (loosely) related image in Herbert, the opening line of *Lucus* 19 "Afflictio," is far from mocking: "Quos tu calcasti fluctus, me, Christe, lacessunt" ("The waves you trampled on, O Christ, do me assault" [line 1]).[27]

A more suggestive, if conventional, echo is found in *Musæ* 14 "De Superpelliceo": that which is "drawn from a better urn" ("vrnâ meliore ductum" [line 5]) is perhaps the same stone of the tradition alluded to in the "dark pebble" conceit of the "Responsio" (line 1). Cestus's gesture of recording or otherwise marking Æthiopissa's devotion with a "nigro […] lapillo" (line 1) recalls, for example, Pliny's *Natural History*, which refers to the Thracian custom of marking a fortunate or unfortunate day by placing a white or black pebble

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instances with Hutchinson's corrections of Duport, and in other cases providing readings superior to both.

26. See Plautus, *Asinaria* 2.3.391[11], where the slave Libanus calls Mercator (the titular "ass-dealer") "calcitronum," a "kicker of doors." Plautus, *Asinaria*, ed. J. H. Gray (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1894), 54.

27. Braganza in her translation of the "Responsio" appears to have been misled by Latin *calx*, a homonym signifying either "limestone" or "heel/foot." A normal idiomatic meaning of the verb *tero* ("wear down") is "to tread," so that "to tread the earth with [my] foot/heel" is the obvious sense, not "erode the earth with limestone" (Braganza, 113, 117).

into an urn, a development of the earlier practice of noting a happy day with a white chalk mark on the calendar, and a day of misfortune with a dark/charcoal mark.[28] Ben Jonson alludes to this custom when writing of his hope that a celebrated peer might mark one of his poems "with the better stone"—echoing Herbert's "vrnâ meliore" in *Musæ* 14—and thereby "seal" his reputation.[29] In noting Æthiopissa's suit ("signabo lapillo"), Cestus rues the day they met, so to speak, anticipating disaster and thereby establishing the tone of the sustained rejection that follows. Alternatively, the dark pebble might allude to the ancient legal practice of signifying acquittal or conviction with a white or black stone,[30] in which case Cestus would be convicting Æthiopissa of the crime of miscegenation—of defying the Fates' determination in the final lines that white must keep with white, black with black ("fatum et fortuna reclamant, / Alba solent albis iungere, nigra nigris" [lines 21–22]). The stone implied by *Musæ* 14's "vrnâ meliore" is associated in that poem with the "eminent form / Of the colour white" ("insigni specie coloris / Concipit albi" [lines 5–8]) and with the "chaste colour" ("castum […] colorem" [line 3]) of the bishop's "sacred garments" ("sacræ […] vestes" [line 1]). This latter is assailed in the poem by

28. Pliny the Elder, 7.41 in *The Natural History Book VII (with Book VIII 1–34)*, ed. Tyler T. Travillian (London and New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2015), 55. See also Horace, *Odes* 1.36.10, in *Epodes and Odes: A New Annotated Latin Edition*, ed. Daniel H. Garrison (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1991), 67; Horace *Satires* 2.3.246, in *The Satires*, ed. Edward P. Norris (New York and Chicago: American Book Company, 1909), 193; Persius *Satires* 5.108, in *The Satires*, trans. John Conington, ed. H. Nettleship (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1893), 106; and Catullus 68(a).148 and 107.6, in *Poems*, 2nd ed., ed. H. V. MacNaghten and A. B. Ramsay (London: Duckworth & Co., 1908), 81 and 88. The verbal echoes closest to the language of the "Responsio" are in Martial *Epigrams* 9.52.4–5 (272–73)—"felix utraque lux diesque nobis / Signandi melioribus lapillis ['both are happy days, days to be marked by us with better pebbles']"—and Statius *Silvae* 4.6.18—"nox et Erythraeis Thetidis signanda lapillis ['a night to be marked with the Erythraean gems of Thetis']," the latter cleverly substituting night for day, and replacing the usual white stone with pearls, as befits the sea-nymph Thetis. *Statius*, vol. 1, trans. J. H. Mozley (London and New York: William Heinemann and G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1928), 244–45. Erasmus calls the practice "superstition" (1.5.54) in *Adages*, vol. 1, ed. R. A. B. Mynors, trans. Margaret Mann Phillips (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1982), 431.

29. "To John Donne," lines 7–9, in Ben Jonson, *Complete Poems*, ed. George Parfitt (New York: Penguin, 1988), 68.

30. See, for example, Orestes's trial, *Eumenides* lines 566ff., in *Oresteia*, trans. Christopher Collard (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 100ff. See also Ovid, 15.46–47 in *Metamorphoses*, trans. A. D. Melville (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 353. It is notable that the black pebbles in Ovid's story are magically transformed into white ones.

the "black tooth" ("Dentibus atris" [line 4]) of Andrew Melville's invective, the same "dente nigro" said to be tormenting the bishops in *Musæ* 8 (line 2).[31] This juxtaposition of a small black object against a white background in *Musæ* 14—"Dentibus atris" against the white of the priestly surplice—is aesthetically and racially similar to the fate of "nigro […] lapillo" in the "Responsio." The latter marks Cestus's unfortunate encounter with an Æthiopissa whose dark desire is destined to perish in the annihilating blizzard of "Love's winter" ("amoris hyems" [line 8])—an image complementing his assertions of white dominance, and similar in that respect to *Musæ* 14's nationalist vision of a "black tooth" and dark "sons of night" ("Filij noctis" [line 18]) who torment but are overcome finally by Albion, who "triumphs in white" ("triumphat / Albion albo" [lines 19–20]).

The "Responsio" and Francis Bacon

Finally, how might the new poem be understood in relation not only to its companion in *Yo97*, but also to the Herbert-Bacon correspondence in which "Æthiopissa" is now widely accepted to have played a role? Of the six extant manuscript witnesses to that poem, four are preceded by a copy of Herbert's English poem "To My Lord Chancellour Sir Francis Bacon," which begins, "My Lord a Diamond to mee you sent, / And I to you a Blackamore present" (lines 1–2).[32] It is likely that the "Diamond" refers to Bacon's *Instauratio Magna*

31. Both instances echo the satirical "atro dente" of Horace *Epodes* 6.15, in Garrison, ed., 11. As recalled by Thomas Fuller, the Millenary Petition's list of objectionable Church of England liturgical practices and features included, for example, signing of the cross at Baptism, priestly vestments such as the surplice and cap, and excessive reliance on church music for spiritual edification. See Thomas Fuller, *The Church History of Britain, The Tenth Book, Containing the Reigne of King James* (London, 1655), 21–23. The persistence of these traditions was evidence for Puritans that the Reformation in England had not gone far enough to distance itself from the "popish" practices of Catholic Rome.

32. Of the six, Hutchinson (437) and Freis, Freis, and Miller (274) collate two (in addition to Duport or *D*): BL Add. MS. 22602 (*Bla02*) and Bodleian MS. Rawl. poet. 246 (*Or46*). In these witnesses, as well as in BL Add. MS. 73541 (*Bla41*) and Bodleian MS. Rawl. poet. 26 (*Or26*), "Æthiopissa" is accompanied by a copy of the English poem addressed to Bacon, a work that Hutchinson includes among "Doubtful Poems" (209) and Helen Wilcox among those she deems "Miscellaneous." Helen Wilcox, *George Herbert's English Poems* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 20. Wilcox, unlike Hutchinson and Freis, Freis, and Miller, cites *Or26* as among those witnesses containing both the English and Latin poems (though she neglects to mention *Bla41*); follows this witness for her text because it is "the MS that

(1620), which Herbert celebrates in three Latin poems (*AP* 5–7), and that he sent to Bacon a copy of "To My Lord Chancellour" together with one of "Æthiopissa" upon publication of the *Instauratio*. It also seems reasonable to read "Blackamore" as referring both to the poet and, as Helen Wilcox observes, to the Latin poem itself: "Gifts," writes Herbert, "speake their Giuers,"

> For as those Refractions
> Shining, and sharp, point out your rare Perfections;
> So by the Other you may read in mee
> (Whom Schollers Habitt & Obscurity
> Hath soil'd with Blacks) the colour of my state,
> Till your bright gift my darknes did abate.
> (Lines 3–8)[33]

Though the chief contrast here is between two works (Herbert's "black" poem and Bacon's "bright gift"), it is perhaps not incidental that the lord chancellor, like Herbert a graduate of Trinity College, has also been "soil'd" by the "Schollers Habitt" and therefore is not to be seen as entirely free of its taint. Indeed, where "Blackamore" is applied to gift and giver both, the "bright[ness]" of line 8 pertains exclusively to Bacon's "Diamond"—through which its author's personal qualities or "rare Perfections" are "Refract[ed]," their "Shining, and sharp[ness]" perceived through the lens (or loupe) of his work. The logic of this epistolary context, moreover, makes Bacon the Cestus of the poem's title, a "man of a different colour" or "diversi coloris virum"—not *vir albus* as might be expected were sharp differentiation the point.

These ambiguities are complemented by Cestus's reference in the "Responsio" to his own skin colour: "O, total pitch, you'd Cestus strike / With too much darkness—be I white or black" ("nimias o pix mera cesto / Offendes tenebras, albus an ater ero" [lines 15–16]). These lines, at the centre of a descant on umbral imagery initiated by Æthiopissa, would neutralize the Neoplatonic discourse that complicates the relation of shadow to substance. Despite his

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attributes the work to H[erbert]" (though *Bla02* also includes the attribution, which appears at the foot of the page on which "Æthiopissa" follows the Bacon poem); and agrees with Dinshaw that the English poem should be counted along with the Latin as Herbert's. (The sixth known copy of "Æthiopissa" is in BL Harley MS. 6918 [*Blh18*].)

33. Wilcox, 21 and n2.

absolutism, Cestus is compelled to contemplate the spectre of a quasi-black self, even if only a mockery—an impossibility conjured to fortify as equally monstrous the notion of union with Æthiopissa. This utter differentiation of white from black is as stark as the previous line's "total pitch" ("pix mera"), the only difference being that while the one is applied literally to Æthiopissa, the other "strike[s]" Cestus only hypothetically, as a kind of pure negation—like a negative-image chromotype in pre-digital photography.[34] The means by which Cestus exclaims against Æthiopissa's affront suggest the liminal possibility of a *quasi pix*—a difference of degree, neither "pix mera" nor purely white. As mentioned above in relation to the English Bacon poem, the title of the poem to which Cestus responds calls him a "man of a *different* colour" ("diversi coloris verum"), not a "white man" as he might have preferred.

Reading "Æthiopissa" in the context of courtly deference, Michael Schoenfeldt has argued that Herbert "imagines sympathetically the discourse of a cultural other, transforming but not endorsing the negative connotations his culture placed on blackness."[35] This transformation makes Æthiopissa a stand-in for Herbert himself, his poem a gift of courtship to Francis Bacon in celebration of the latter's recently published *Instauratio Magna*. "The poem's emphasis on darkness," writes Schoenfeldt, "can be read as a kind of erotic deference, in which the speaker, by calling attention to traits likely to be viewed unfavorably, hopes to win favor," so that "[b]lackness and femininity, both disparaged by Herbert's culture, come to stand for the scholar's impoverished state, and to function as the vehicle of an ingratiating humility."[36] It is tantalizing to imagine the manuscript Herbert sent to Bacon as including a copy of the "Responsio"—the plural "Gifts" and "Blacks" in lines 3 and 7 of the English poem signifying something more specific than gifts and "Schollers" in general (i.e., two Latin poems rather than one); or that the companion poem, if in fact Herbert's, followed sometime later. We do not know how the lord chancellor (would have) responded to Herbert's suit for an admired peer's approval. It is at least possible that Bacon failed to heed Herbert's request that he (Bacon)

34. "You know what blood looks like in a black and white video?" asks John Prine, and answers, "Shadows, shadows […]." John Prine, "Lake Marie," *Lost Dogs and Mixed Blessings* (Los Angeles: Oh Boy, 1995).

35. Michael C. Schoenfeldt, *Prayer and Power: George Herbert and Renaissance Courtship* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), 235.

36. Schoenfeldt, 235.

"shutt not the dore" against his (Herbert's) "Blackamore" (lines 9–10), even if only by neglecting to respond; and that the "Responsio," if Herbert's, indicates a failed suit—represented not as the melancholy response of a spurned lover to the absent beloved's rejection, but as the rejection itself. On this reading, the darkness of Cestus's skin relative to Æthiopissa's would place Herbert's poetic gift(s) on a continuum alongside the "Diamond" he would otherwise elevate as utterly distinctive in merit.

This is entirely speculative, of course, and should be seen in light of the fact that Herbert and Bacon appear to have remained on good terms until the latter's death in 1626.[37] Nor is it easy to imagine Herbert posing as Bacon in this way, rejecting Herbert (i.e., Æthiopissa) in such cruel fashion. The author of *The Temple* was not unfamiliar with self-recrimination in the wake of failed courtship: "Shall I be still [i.e., always] in suit?" asks the impatient speaker in "The Collar" (line 6). But here and in other of the *Temple*'s many dialogue poems, the divine interlocutor is always accommodating and merciful (if mostly silent), the recrimination originating in the suitor rather than the object of his affection, whereas the opposite is true of the two "Æthiopissa" poems. Moreover, none of the known witnesses pairing the English Bacon poem and "Æthiopissa" includes the "Responsio." Yes, the latter is consistent with the internal logic of eroticized courtly deference established by Herbert's canonical gifts to the lord chancellor, Cestus acknowledging the suitor's plaint even while embracing social, literary, and (figuratively) racial norms that would keep her (him) forever in the shadows. And though harsh throughout, especially at the conclusion, the "Responsio" admits fleetingly of Cestus's attraction—"Nigra sed illustris corporis vmbra placet" ("Indeed / A radiant body's sable shadow pleases" [line 14])—and allows that Æthiopissa might continue "in suit"—"Vmbram hanc sume tamen, modo possis demere" ("Yet, inhabit that shadow, provided you can withdraw" [line 17]). But the clear lines of connection between the English poem and "Æthiopissa" cannot be said to extend to the "Responsio"

37. In addition to Herbert's Latin *encomia* (*AP* 5–7), there is, for example, the 1625 dedication in Bacon's *Translation of Certaine Psalmes into English Verse*, signed "Your affectionate Frend" and thanking Herbert for "pains" taken "about some of my writings"—referring most likely to Herbert's contribution to the Latin translation of The Advancement of Learning published two years earlier. Francis Bacon, *The Translation of Certaine Psalmes into English Verse* (London, 1625), A3r–v. See also John Drury, *Music at Midnight: The Life and Poetry of George Herbert* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2014), 133, dx.doi.org/10.7208/chicago/9780226134581.001.0001.

other than by way of its companion in *Yo97*, the only possible exception being the correspondence of blackness and soil in the "Responsio" ("nigro […] terra" [line 9]) to a single phrase in the English poem, "soil'd with Blacks" (line 7).

The new poem is certain to complicate our understanding of the Æthiopissa phenomenon. But the evidence for attribution, both material and intellectual, remains inconclusive. "Cesti ad Æthiopissam Responsio" must remain for now among *poemata incerti auctoris*.[38]

38. I am grateful to Luke Roman, Michael Schoenfeldt, and two readers at *Renaissance & Reformation / Renaissance et Réforme* for their feedback on earlier versions of this essay. Roman in particular was indispensable in helping me to establish and refine the poem texts, both Latin and English. I am also grateful to Sarah Kunjummen for her initial translation, and for helping me to see more clearly Cestus's deep aversion to interracial desire.