Modern Library College Editions

JOHN DONNE
Poetry and Prose

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attention to many of these forms, stressing particularly
the symbolic figure of Sophia, or Divine Wisdom in
Christian tradition, and mentioning among other things
the relevance of C. G. Jung's concept of the anima, the
image of the soul as experienced in the male unconscious.
Other forms emphasized by recent critics include Astraea,
the classical Goddess of Justice; Aphrodite Urania, or
Heavenly Love; the Virgin Mary; and even the recently
deceased Queen Elizabeth I. The conventions employed by
Dante, Petrarch, and other Italian poets of the dolce stil
novò, in terms of which the beloved woman is the spirit-
ual guide, are also influential in Donne's practice.

Manley's edition is of central importance to any serious
study of these complex poems. Other important treat-
ments are provided by L. L. Marz, who demonstrates
their meditative structure; M. H. Nicolson, who specu-
lates instructively on their true subject; C. M. Coffin and
V. H. Harris, who relate the poems to the philosophical
and scientific currents of the age; and R. C. Bald, who
investigates Donne's relations with the Drurys. Modern
scholarship has distinguished itself in making the "An-
niversaries" accessible to the modern reader, and it is
largely because of this scholarship that we can now see
the poems as one of the great achievements of seventeenth-
century literature.

THE FIRST ANNIVERSARIE
AN ANATOMY OF THE WORLD

WHEREIN, BY OCCASION OF THE
UNTIMELY DEATH OF MISTRIS
ELIZABETH DRURY THE FRAILTY
AND THE DECAY OF THIS WHOLE
WORLD IS REPRESENTED

When that rich soule which to her Heaven is gone,
Whom all they celebrate, who know they have one,
(For who is sure he hath a soule, unless
It see, and judge, and follow worthiness,
And by Deedes praise it? He who doth not this,
May lodge an In-mate soule, but tis not his.
When that Queene ended here her progress time,
And, as t'her standing house, to heaven did climbe,
Where, loth to make the Saints attend her long,
She's now a part both of the Quire, and Song,
This world, in that great earth-quake languished;
For in a common Bath of teares it bled,
Which drew the strongest vitall spirits out:
But succour'd then with a perplexed doubt,
Whether the world did lose or gaine in this,
(Because since now no other way there is
But goodnes, to see her, whom all would see,
All must endeouer to be good as shee,)  
This great consumption to a fever turn'd,
And so the world had fits; it joy'd, it mourn'd.
And, as men thinke, that Agues physicke are,
And th'Ague being spent, give over care,
So thou, sickle world, mistak'st thy selfe to bee
Well, when alas, thou're in a Letargee.
Her death did wound, and tame thee than, and than
Thou mightst have better spair'd the Sunne, or Man;
That wound was deepe, but 'tis more misery,
That thou hast lost thy sense and memory.
'Twas heavy then to heare thy voyce of mone,
But this is worse, that thou art speechlesse grown.
Thou hast forgot thy name, thou hastd; thou wast
Nothing but she, and her thou hast o'repast.
For as a child kept from the Font, untill
A Prince, expected long, come to fullfill
The Ceremonies, thou unnam'd hast laid,
Had not her comming, thee her Palace made:
Her name defin'd thee, gave thee forme and frame,
And thou forgettest to celebrate thy name.
Some moneths she hath beene dead (but being dead,
Measures of times are all determined)
But long shee'ath beene away, long, long, yet none

Offers to tell us who it is that's gone.
But as in states doubtfull of future heyres,
When sickenes without remedy, empayres
The present Prince, they're loth it should be said,
The Prince doth languish, or the Prince is dead:
So mankind feeling now a generall thaw,
A strong example gone equall to law,
The Cyment which did faithfully compact
And glue all vertues, now resolv'd, and slack'd,
Thought it some blasphemy to say sh'was dead;
Or that our weakenes was discovered
In that confession; therefore spoke no more
Then tongues, the soule being gone, the losse deplore.
But though it be too late to succour thee,
Sicke world, yea dead, yea purified, since shee
Thy'trinisme Balme, and thy preservative,
Can never be renew'd, thou never live,
I (since no man can make thee live) will trie,
What we may gaine by thy Anatomy.
Her death hath taught us dearly, that thou art
Corrupt and mortall in thy purest part.
Let no man say, the world it selfe being dead,
'Tis labour lost to have discovered
The worlds infirmities, since there is none
Alive to study this dissection;
For there's a kind of world remaining still,
Though shee which did inanimate and fill
The world, be gone, yet in this last long night,
Her Ghost doth walke; that is, a glimmering light,
A faint weake love of vertue and of good
Reflects from her, on them which understood
Her worth; And though she have shut in all day,
The twi-light of her memory doth stay;
Which, from the carcasse of the old world, free,
Creates a new world; and new creatures be
Produc'd: The matter and the stuffe of this,
Her vertue, and the forme our practise is.
And though to be thus Elemented, arme
These Creatures, from hom-borne intrinisme harme. 

What lift the world hath still.

1.6 but ... his: it belongs to the devil.
1.7 progress: carries the sense of royal journey.
1.8 standing house: permanent residence of royalty.
1.25 then: then.
1.57 Balme: the vital essence assumed by Paracelsian medicine to exist in all created things and to operate as a preservative.
1.60 Anatomy: dissection.
(For all assum'd unto this Dignitee,
So many weedelesse Paradises bee,
Which of themselves produce no venemous sinne,
Except some forraine Serpent bring it in)
Yet, because outward storms the strongest breake,
And strength it selfe by confidence growes weake,
This new world may be safer, being told
The dangers and diseases of the old:
For with due temper men do then forgoe,
Or covet things, when they their true worth know.
There is no health; Physicians say that we
At best, enjoy, but a neutralitee.
Impossiblity of health.
That we are never well, nor can be so?
We are borne ruinous: poore mothers crie,
That children come not right, nor orderly,
Except they headlong come, and fall upon
An ominous precipitation.
How wittys ruine? how importunate
Upon mankinde! It labour'd to frustrate
Even Gods purpose; and made woman, sent
For mans relieve, cause of his languishment.
They were to good ends, and they are so still,
But accessory, and principall in ill.
For that first marriage was our funerall:
One woman at one blow, then kill'd us all,
And singly, one by one, they kill us now.
We doe delightfully our selves allow
To that consumption; and profusely blinde,
We kill our selves, to propagare our kinde.
And yet we doe not that; we are not men:
There is not now that mankinde, which was then
When as the Sunne, and man, did seeme to strive,
(_JOYNT TENANTS OF THE WORLD_) who should survive.
When Stag, and Raven, and the long-liv'd tree,
COMPAR'd with man, dy'de in minoritee.
When, if a slow-pac' starre had stolne away
1.95 ruinous: tending toward ruin.
1.106-107 then . . . now: Donne plays with the contemporary colloquial
meaning of kill—to induce sexual climax.
1.110 We . . . kinde: a reference to the popular belief that each sexual
act shortened life by a day.

From the observers marking, he might stay.
Two or three hundred yeares to see't againe,
And then make up his observation plains.
When, as the age was long, the site was great:
Mans growth confess'd, and recompence the meat:
So spacious and large, that every soule
Did a faire Kingdome, and large Realme controule.
And when the very stature thus erect,
Did that soule a good way towards Heaven direct.
Where is this mankind now? who lives to age,
Fit to be made Methusaleh his page?
Alas, we scarce live long enough to trie
Whether a new made clocke runne right, or lie.
Old Grandisires talke of yesterday with sorrow,
And for our children we reserve to morrow.
That short life, that every peasant strives,
In a towe house, or field, to have three lives.
And as in lasting, so in length is man
Contracted to an inch, who was a span.
For had a man at first, in Forrests strayd,
Or shipwrack'd in the Sea, one would have laid
A wager that an Elephant, or Whale
That met him, would not hastily assaile
A thing so equall to him: now alas,
The Fayries, and the Pigmies well may passe.
As credible; mankind decayes so soone,
We're scarce our Fathers shadowes cast at noone.
Onely death addes to our length: nor are we gowne
In stature to be men, till we are none.
But this was light, did our lesse volume hold
All the old Text; or had we chang'd to gold
Their silver; or dispos'd into lesse glas.
Spirits of vertrue, which then scaterred was.
But 'tis not so: 'ware not retir'd, but damp;
And as our bodies, so our mindees are crampt:
'Tis shrinking, not close-weaving, that hath thus,
In mind and body both bedwarfed us.
We seeme ambitious, Gods whole worke t'undoe;
Of nothing he made us, and we strive too,
To bring our selves to nothing backe; and we
Do what we can, to do't so soon as hee.
With new diseases on our selves we warre,
And with new phisick, a worse Engin farre.
Thus man, this works Vice-Emperor, in whom
All faculties, all graces are at home;
And if in other Creatures they appeare,
They're but mans ministers, and Legats there,
To worke on their rebellions, and reduce
Them to Civillity, and to mans use.
This man, whom God did wooe, and loth t'attend
Till man came up, did downe to man descend,
This man, so great, that all that is, is his,
Oh what a trifle, and poore thing he is!
If man were anything, he's nothing now:
Helpe, or at least some time to wast, allow
This other wants, yet when he did depart
With her, whom we lament, he lost his hart.
She, of whom th'Auncients seem'd to prophesie,
When they call'd vertues by the name of shee,
She in whom vertue was so much refin'd,
That for Allay unto so pure a minde
Shee tooke the weaker Sex, she that could drive
The poysonous tineture, and the stayne of Eve,
Out of her thoughts, and deeds; and purifie
All, by a true religious Alchimy;
Shee, shee is dead; shee's dead: when thou knowest this,
Thou knowest how poore a trifling thing man is.
And learn'st thus much by our Anatoome,
The heart being perish'd, no part can be free.
And that except thou feed (not banquet) on
The supernatuall food, Religion,
Thy better Growth grows withered, and scant;

1.159 new diseases: primarily syphilis, which made its appearance in Europe in the fifteenth century.
1.160 new phisick: the mineral remedies used by Paracelsian physicians.
1.160 Engin: instrument.
1.160 tineture: a technical term in alchemy.
1.167 banquet: snack.
Anniversaries and A Funerall Elegie § 208

She whom wise nature had invented then
When she observ'd that every sort of men
Did in their voyage in this worlds Sea stray,
And needed a new compass for their way;
Shee that was best, and first originall
Of all faire copies; and the generall
Steward to Fate: shee whose rich eyes, and breast,
Guilte the West Indies, and perfum'd the East;
Whose having breath'd in this world, did bestow
Spice on those Isles, and bad them still smell so,
And that rich Indie which doth gold interre,
Is but as single money, coyn'd from her;
She to whom this world must it selfe refer,
As Suburbs, or the Microcosme of her,
Shee, shee is dead; shee's dead: when thou knowst this,
Thou knowst how lame a cripple this world is.
And leaernst thus much by our Anatomy,
That this worlds general sickenes doth not lie
In any humour, or one certaine part;
But, as thou sawest it rotten at the hart,
Thou seest a Hectique fever hath got hold
Of the whole substance, not to be contrould,
And that thou hast but one way, not t'admit
The worlds infection, to be none of it.
For the worlds subtleti immateriall parts
Feele this consuming wound, and ages darts.
For the worlds beauty is decay'd, or gone,
Beauty, that's colour, and proportion.
Disformity of parts.
We thynke the heavens enjoy their Sphericall
Their round proportion embracing all.
But yet their various and perplexed course,
Observ'd in divers ages doth enforce
Men to finde out so many Eccentrique parts,
Such divers downe-right lines, such overthrowns,
As disproportion that pure forme. It tearcs
The Firmament in eight and fortie sheeres,
And in those constellations there arise

New starres, and old do vanish from our eyes:
As though heav'n suffred earth-quakees, peace or war,
When new Townes rise, and olde demolish'd are.
They have employd within a Zodiacke
The free-borne Sunne, and keepe twelve signes awake
To watch his steps; the Goat and Crabbe contreole,
And fright him backe, who els to eyther Pole,
(Did not these Tropiques fetter him) might runne:
For his course is not round; nor can the Sunne
Perfit a Circle, or maintaine his way
One inche direct; but where he rose to day
He comes no more, but with a cousing line,
Steales by that point, and so is Serpentine:
And seeming weary with his reeling thus,
He meanes to sleepe, being now false nearer us.
So, of the stars which boast that they do runne
In Circle still, none ends where he begunne.
All their proportion's lame, it sinks, it swells.
For of Meridians, and Parallels,
Man hath weav'd our a net, and this net throwne
Upon the Heavens, and now they are his owne.
Loth to goe up the hill, or labor thus
To goe to heaven, we make heaven come to us.
We spurr, we raine the stars, and in their race
They're diversely content t'obey our pace.
But keeps the earth her round proportion still?
Doth not a Tenarif, or higher Hill
Rise so high like a Roccet, that one might thinke
The floating Moone would shipwracke there, and sink?
Seas are so deepe, that Whales being strooke to day,
Perehance to morrow, scarce at middle way
Of their wish'd journeys end, the bottom, dye.
And men, to sound depths, so much line untie,
As one might justly thinke, that there would rise

1.234 single money: small change.
1.241 any humour: The four humours, in the old physiology, were the bodily fluids which determined health and temperament.
1.258 sheeres: shares, parts, or, possibly, shires.
At end thereof, one of th' Antipodies:
If under all, a Vault infernal be,
(Which sure is spacious, except that we
Invent another torment, that there must
Millions into a strait hole roome be thrust)
Then solinques, and roundnes have no place.
Are these but warts, and pock-holes in the face
Of th'earth? Thine so; But yet confesse, in this
The worlds proportion disfigured is,
That those two legges whereon it doth relie,
Reward and punishment are bent awrie.
And, Oh, it can no more be questioned,
That beatues best, proportion, is dead,
Since even griefe it selfe, which now alone
Is left us, is without proportion.
Shee by whose lines proportion should bee
Examin'd, measure of all Symmetree,
Whom had that Ancient seen, who thought soules made
Of Harmony, he would at next have said
That Harmony was shee, and thence infer,
That soules were but Resurances from her,
And did from her into our bodies go,
As to our eyes, the forms from objects flow:
Shee, who if those great Doctors truly said
That th'Arke to mans proportions was made,
Had bee ne a type for that, as that might be
A type of her in this, that contrary
Both Elements, and Passions liv'd at peace
In her, who caus'd all Civill warre to cease.
Shee, after whom, what forme soe're we see,
Is discord, and rude incongruete.
Shee, shee is dead, she's dead; when thou knowst this,
Thou knowst how ugly a monster this world is:
And learnst thus much by our Anatomeue,
That here is nothing to enamor thee:
And that, not onely faults in inward parts,
Corruptions in our braines, or in our harts,
Poysoning the fountaines, whence our actions spring,
Endanger us: but that if every thing
Be not done fitly'nd in proportion,

1.311 Ancient: probably Pythagoras.
Anniversaries and A Funerall Elegie § 212

And learnt thus much by our Anatome,
That it should more affright, then pleasure thee.
And that, since all faire color then did sink,
Tis now but wicked vanity to thinke,
To color virtuous deeds with good pretence,
Or with bought colors to illude mens sense.
Nor in outhought more this worlds decay appears,
Then that her influence the heav'n forbeares,
Or that the Elements doe not feele this,
The father, or the mother barren is.
The clouds conceive not raine, or doe not powre
In the due birth-time, downe the balmy showere.
Th'Ayre doth not motherly sit on the earth,
To hatch her seasons, and give all things birth.
Spring-times were common cradles, but are toombes;
And false-conceptions fill the generall wombs.
Th'Ayre showes such Meteors, as none can see,
Not onely what they meante, but what they bee.
Earth such new wormes, as would have troubled much,
Th'Egyptian Mages to have made more such.
What Artist now dares boast that he can bring
Heaven hither, or constellare any thing,
So as the influence of those starres may bee
Imprison in an Herbe, or Charme, or Tree,
And doe by touch, all which those starres could do?
The art is lost, and correspondence too.
For heaven gives little, and the earth takes lesse,
And man least knowes their trade, and purposes.
If this commerce twixt heaven and earth were not
Embarred, and all this trafique quite forgot,
Shee, for whose losse we have lamented thus,
Would worke more fully and pow'rfully on us.
Since herbes, and roots by dying, lose not all,
But they, yea Ashes too, are medicinall.

1.378 influence: the influence of the stars on earthly things.
1.380 The . . . is: Traditionally, the heavens were conceived of as paternal, the earth as maternal.
1.387 Meteors: The term was applied in Donne's time to any atmospheric phenomena.
1.389 wormes: serpents.
1.390 Mages: magicians.
1.391 Artist: astrologer.

Anniversaries and A Funerall Elegie § 213

Death could not quench her vertue so, but that
It would be (if not follow'd) wondred at:
And all the world would be one dying Swan,
To sing her funerall praysie, and vanish than.
But as some Serpents poison hurceth not,
Except it be from the live Serpent shot,
So doth her vertue need her here, to fit
That unto us; she working more then it.
But she, in whom, to such maturity,
Vertue was grown, past growth, that it must die,
She from whose influence all Impressions came,
But, by Receivers impotencies, lame,
Who, though she could not transubstantiate
All states to gold, yet guided every state,
So that some Princes have some temperance;
Some Counsellors some purpose to advance
The common profit; and some people have
Some stay, no more then Kings should give, to crave;
Some women have some tacitrurnity;
Some Nunneries, some graines of chastity.
She that did thus much, and much more could doe,
But that our age was Iron, and rusty too,
Shee, shee is dead; shee's dead: when thou knowest this,
Thou knowest how drie a Cinder this world is.
And learnt thus much by our Anatomy,
That 'tis in vaine to dew, or mollifie
It with thy Teares, or Sweat, or Blond: no thing
Is worth our travaile, grieve, or perishing,
But those rich joyes, which did possess her hart,
Of which shee's now partaker, and a part.
But as in cutting up a man that's dead,
The body will not last out to have read
On every part, and therefore men direct
Their speech to parts, that are of most effect;
So the worldes carcasse would not last, if I
Were punctual in this Anatomy.

1.408 than: then.
1.422 stay: restraint.
1.426 But . . . too: Recurring in the entire poem are references to the ancient idea of the four ages of history—gold, silver, bronze, and iron—with the concomitant belief in history as degeneration.
1.440 punctual: detailed.
Anniversaries and A Funerall Elegie § 214

Nor smels it well to hearers, if one tell
Them their disease, who faine would think they're wel.
Here therefore be the end: And, blessed maid,
Of whom is meant what ever hath beene said,
Or shall be spoken well by any tongue,
Whose name refines course lines, and makes prose song,
Accept this tribute, and his first yeares rent,
Who till his darke short tapers end be spent,
As oft as thy feast sees this widowed earth,
Will yearely celebrate thy second birth,
That is, thy death. For though the soule of man
Be got when man is made, 'tis borne but then
When man doth die. Our body's as the wombe,
And as a mid-wife death directs it home.
And you her creatures, whom she works upon
And have your last, and best concoction
From her example, and her veriue, if you
In reverence to her, doe thinke it due,
That no one should her prayses thus reherse,
As matter fit for Chronicle, not verse. 450
Vouchsafe to call to minde, that God did make
A last, and lastingst psecue, a song. He spake
To Moses, to deliver unto 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.
Such an opinion (in due measure) made
Me this great Office boldly to invade.
Nor could incomprehensiblenesse deterre
Me, from thus trying to emprison her.
Which when I saw that a strict grave could do,
I saw not why verse might not doe so too.
Verse hath a middle nature: heaven keepes soules,
The grave keeps bodys, verse the fame enroules. 460

A FUNERALL ELEGIE

Tis lost, to trust a Tombe with such a ghost,
Or to confine her in a Marble chest.
Alas, what's Marble, Jeat, or Porphiry,
Priz'd with the Chrysolyte of eyther eye,
Or with those Pearles, and Rubies which shee was?
Joyne the two Indies in one Tombe, 'tis glas;
And so is all to her materials,
Though every inche were ten escuirals.
Yet shee's demolish'd: Can we keepe her then
In worke of hands, or of the wits of men?
Can these memorials, ragges of paper, give
Life to that name, by which name they must live?
Sickly, alas, short-liv'd, aborted bee
Those Carkas verses, whose soule is not shee.
And can shee, who no longer would be shee,
Being such a Tabernacle, stoope to bee
In paper wrapt'; Or, when she would not lie
In such a house, dwell in an Elegie;
But 'tis no matter; we may well allow
Verse to live so long as the world will now.
For her death wounded it. The world contains
Princes for armes, and Counsellors for brains,
Lawyers for tongues, Divines for hearts, and more,
The Rich for stomachs, and for backes the Pore;
The Officers for hands, Merchants for feet
By which remote and distant Countries meet.
But those fine spirits, which doe tune and set
This Organ, are those peeces which heget;
Wonder and love; And these were shee; and shee
Being spent, the world must needs decrepit bee.
For since death will proceed to triumph still,
He can finde nothing, after her, to kill.
Except the world it selfe, so great as shee.
Thus brave and confident may Nature bee,
Death cannot give her such another blow,
Because shee cannot such another show.

1.466 course: coarse.
1.469 feast: religious holiday.
1.472 them: then.
1.476 concoction: purification.
1.461-462 that . . . song: see Deuteronomy 32, the song of Moses.

1.8 escuirals: The Escorial was the great palace of the Spanish kings.
1.27 spirits: the delicate vapours supposed to arise from the blood and
link body and soul. See notes to "The Extasie."
But must we say she低端's dead? May't not be said
   That as a sundred Clocke is piece-meale laid,
Not to be lose, but by the makers hand
   Repolish'd, without error then to stand,
Or as the Affrique Niger streame enwombs
   It selfe into the earth, and after comes,
(Having first made a naturall bridge, to passe
   For many leagues,) farre greater then it was,
May't not be said, that her grave shall restore
   Her, greater, purer, firmer, then before?
Heaven may say this, and joy in't; but can wee
   Who live, and lacke her, here this vantage see?
What is't to us, alas, if there have beene
   An Angell made a Throne, or Cherubin?
We lose by't: And as aged men are glad
   Being tastelesse growne, to joy in joyes they had,
So now the sicke starv'd world must feed upone
   This joy, that we had her, who now is gone.
Rejoyce then nature, and this world, that you
   Fearing the last fires hastning to subdue
Your force and vigor, ere it were neere gone,
   Wisely bestow'd, and layd it all on one.
One, whose cleare body was so pure, and thin
   Because it neede dispise no thought within.
T'was but a through-light scarfè, her minde t'encroule,
   Or exhalation breath'd out from her soule.
One, whom all men who durst no more, admir'd;
   And whom, who ere had worth enough, desir'd;
As when a Temple's built, Saints emulare
   To which of them, it shall be consecrate.
But as when Heav'n lookes on us with new eyes,
   Those new starres ev'ry Artist exercise,

141 Afrique Niger: It was formerly believed that the Niger and the Nile were parts of the same river and that it ran underground for part of its course.
150. As ... Cherubin: Thrones and Cherubim are ranks in the angelic hierarchy.
168 Artist: astronomer. References to the new stars observed by Renaissance astronomers are obsessive throughout the "Anniversaries" and the "Funerall Elegie."
192 infer: entrust.
THE SECOND ANNIVERSARIE
OF THE PROGRES OF THE SOULE

WHEREIN, BY OCCASION OF THE
RELIGIOUS DEATH OF MISTRES
ELIZABETH DRURY THE INCOMMODITIES
OF THE SOULE IN THIS LIFE AND
HER EXALTATION IN THE NEXT,
ARE CONTEMPLATED

Nothing could make mee sooner to confesse
That this world had an everlastingness,
Then to consider, that a yeare is runne,
Since both this lower worlds, and the Sunnes Sunne,
The Lustre, and the vigor of this All,
Did set; t'were Blasphemy, to say, did fall.
But as a ship which hath strooke saile, doth runne,
By force of that force which before, it wonne,
Or as sometimes in a beheaded man,
Though at those two Red seas, which freely ran,
One from the Trunke, another from the Head,
His soule be said, to her eternall hed,
His eyes will twinkel, and his tongue will roll,
As though he beckned, and cal'd backe his Soul,
He grasps his hands, and he pul's up his feet,
And seems to reach, and to step forth to meet
His soule; when all these motions which we saw,
Are but as Ice, which crackles at a thaw:
Or as a Lute, which in moist weather, rings
Her knell alone, by cracking at her strings.
So struelles this dead world, now shee is gone;
For there is motion in corruption.
As some Daies are, at the Creation nam'd,
Before the sunne, the which fram'd Daies, was fram'd,
So after this sunnes set, some show appeares,
And orderly vicisitude of yeares.
Yet a new Deluge, and of Lethic flood,

The Second Anniversarie: Progres means royal journey.
1.2 That . . . everlastingness: an idea which was rejected by virtually all Renaissance thinkers.
1.3 Then: than.
Looke upward; that’s towards her, whose happy state
We now lament not, but congratulate.
Shee, to whom all this world was but a stage,
Where all sat harkning how her youthfull age
Should be emploied, because in all, shee did,
Some Figure of the Golden times, was hid.
Who could not lacke, what cre this world could give,
Because shee was the forme, that made it live;
Nor could complaine, that this world was unfruit,
To be staid in, then when shee was in it;
Shee that first tried indifferent desires
By vertue, and vertue by religious fires,
Shee to whose person Paradise adheard,
As Courts to Princes; shee whose eies enspird
Star-light enough, c’have made the South controll,
(Had shee beene there) the Star-full Northern Pole,
Shee, shee is gone; shee is gone; when thou knowest
What fragmentary rubridge this world is
Thou knowest, and that it is nor worth a thought; He honors it too much that thinks it nought.
Think thee then, My soule, that death is but a Groome,
Which brings a Taper to the outward roomes,
Whence thou spiest first a little glimmering light,
And after bringes it nearer to thy sight:
For such approaches doth Heaven make in death.
Think thy selfe laboring now with broken breath,
And think those broken and soft Notes to bee
Division, and thy happiest Harmonie.
Think thee laid on thy death bed, loose and slacke;
And think that but unbinding of a packe,
To take one precious thing, thy soule, from thence.
Think thy selfe parch’d with fevers violence,
Anger thine Ague more, by calling it
Thy Physicke; chide the slacknesse of the fit.
Think that thou hearst thy knell, and thinke no more,
But that, as Bels cal’d thee to Church before,
So this, to the Triumphant Church, calst thee.

Contemplation of our state in our deathbed.

Anniversaries and A Funerall Elegie § 220

Thinke Satans Sergeants round about thee bee,
And thinke that but for Legacies they thrust;
Give one thy Pride, to’another give thy Lust;
Give them those sinnes which they gave thee before,
And trust th’immaculate blood to wash thy score.
Thinke thy frinds weeping round, and thinke that thy
Weepe but because they goe not yet thy way.
Thinke that they close thine eyes, and thinke in this,
That they confess much in the world, amisse,
Who dare not trust a dead mans eye with that,
Which they from God, and Angels cover not.
Thinke that they shroud thee up, and thinke from thence
They reinvest thee in white innocence.
Thinke that thy body rots, and (if so lowe,
Thy soule exalted so, thy thoughts can goe.)
Thinke the a Prince, who of themselves create
Wormes which insensibly devour their state.
Thinke that they bury thee, and thinke that rite
Lai’es thee to sleepe but a saint Lucies night.
Thinke these things cheerfully: and if thou bee
Drowsie or slacke, remember then that shee,
Shew whose Complexion was so even made,
That which of her Ingredients should invade
The other three, no Fear, no Art could guesse:
So far were all remov’d from more or lesse.
But as in Mithridate, or just perfumes,
Where all good things being met, no one presumes
To governe, or to triumph on the res,
Only because all were, no part was best.
And as, though all doe know, that quantities
Are made of lines, and lines from Points arise,
None can these lines or quantities unjoynt,
And say this is a line, or this a point,

1.102 Sergeants: bailiffs.
1.117 the: thee.
1.120 saint Lucies night: the longest night of the year. See “A Nocturnall upon S. Lucies Day.”
1.123 Complexion: temperament.
1.124 Ingredients: the humours, or elements, which determine her temperament.
1.127 Mithridate: antidote.
My body, could, beyond escape, or helpe,  
Infected with original sinne, and thou  
Couldst neither then refuse, nor leave it now.  
Thinke that no stubborn sullen Anchorit,  
Which fixt to a Pillar, or a Grave doth sit  
Bathed and Bath'd in all his Ordur'd dwells  
So fowly as our soules, in their first-built Cel's.  
Thinke in how poore a prison thou didst lie  
After, enabled but to sucke, and crie.  
Thinke, when t'was growne to most, t'was a poore  
Inne,  
A Province Pack'd up in two yards of skinne,  
And that usurped, or threatened with the rage  
Of siccneses, or their true mother, Age.  
But thinke that Death hath now enfranchis'd thee,  
 Thou hast thy expansion now and libertee;  
Thinke that a rusty Peece, discharg'd, is flown  
In pieces, and the bullet is his owne,  
And freely flies: This to thy soule allow,  
Thinke thy shelle broke, think thy Soule hatch'd but now.  
And thinke this slow-pac'd soule, which late did cleave,  
To'a body, and went but by the bodies leave,  
Twenty, perchance, or thirty mile a day,  
Dispatches in a minute all the way,  
Twixt Heaven, and Earth: shee staies not in the Ayre,  
To looke what Meremos there themselves prepare;  
Shee carries no desire to know, nor sense,  
Whether th'Ayrs middle Region be intense,  
For th'Element of fire, shee doth not know,  
Whether shee pass by such a place or no;  
Shee haits nor at the Moone, nor cares to trie,  
Whether in that new world, men live, and die.  
Venus retards her not, to'enquire, how shee  
Can, (being one Star) Hesper, and Vesper bee;
Anniversaries and A Funerall Elegie

To Nations, Cities, and to Companies,
To Functions, Offices, and Dignities,
And to each sev'ral man, to him, and him,
They would have given her one for everylimme;
Shee, of whose soule, if we may say, 'twas Gold,
Her body was th'Electrum, and did hold
Many degrees of that; we understood
Her by her sight, her pure and eloquent blood
Spoke in her cheeks, and so distinchly wrought,
That one might almost say, her bodie thought,
Shee, shee, thus richly, and largely hous'd, is gone:
And chides us slow-pac'd snailies, who crawle upon
Our prisons earth, nor thinke us well
Longer, then whils't we bear our brittle shell.
But 'twere but little to have chang'd our roome,
If, as we were in this our living Tombe
Oppress'd with ignorance, we still were so.
Poore soule in this thy flesh what do'st thou know.
Thou know'st thy selfe so little, as thou know'st not,
How thou did'st die, nor how thou wast begot.
Thou neither knowest, how thou at first camest in,
Nor how thou took'st the poysen of mans sin.
Nor dost thou, (though thou knowest, that thou art so)
By what way thou art made immortall, know.
Thou art to narrow, wretch, to comprehend
Even thy selfe: yea though thou wouldst but bende
to know thy body. Have not all soules thought
For many ages, that our body's is wrought
Of Ayre, and Fire, and other Elements?
And now they think of new ingredients.
And one soule thinkes one, and another way
Another thinkes, and ty's an even lay.
Knowest thou but how the stone doth enter in
The bladder Cave, and never breake the skin?
Knowest thou how blood, which to the hart doth flow,
Doth from one ventrice to th'other go?
And for the putrid stuffe, which thou dost spit,

lines 226-240 and . . . limme: Donne is satirising the detail of Roman Catholic teaching concerning guardian angels.

l.232 Electrum: an alloy of gold and silver.

l.236 hi father: Saturn.

l.256 prefer: promote.

l.257 Tutelar: guardian.

l.261 ty's: 'twas.
Anniversaries and A Funerall Elegie § 226

Knowst thou how thy lungs have attracted it?
There are no passages so that there is
(For ought thou knowst,) piercing of substances.
And of those many opinions which men raise
Of Nailes and Haires, dost thou know which to praise?
What hope have we to know our selves, when wee
Know not the least things, which for our use bee?
We see in Authors, too stiffe to recant,
A hundred controversys of an Ant.
And yet one watches, starves, freeses, and sweats,
To know but Catechisms and Alphabets
Of unconcerning things, matters of fact;
How others on our stage their parts did Act;
What Caesar did, yea, and what Cicero said.
Why grasse is greene, or why our blood is red,
Are mysteries which none have reach’d unto.
In this low forme, poore soule what wilt thou doe?
When wilt thou shake off this Pedantry,
Of being taught by sense, and Fantasy?
Thou look’st through spectacles; small things seeme great,
Below; But up unto the watch-towre get,
And see all things despyd of fallacies:
Thou shalt not peep through lattices of cies,
Nor heare through Laberinths of eares, nor learne
By circuit, or collections to discerne.
In Heaven thou straight know’st all, concerning it,
And what concerns it not, shall straight forget.
There thou (but in no other schoole) maist bee
Perchance, as learned, and as full, as shee,
Shee who all Libraries had thoroughly read
At home, in her owne thoughts, and practised
So much good as would make as many more:
Shee whose example they must all implore,
Who would or doe, or thinke well, and confesse
That are the veruexous Actions they expresse,
Are but a new, and worse edition,
Of her some one thought, or one action:

L.283 watch: stays awake.
L.292 Fantasy: that part of the mind which receives and interprets sense impressions.
L.308 cle: say.

Anniversaries and A Funerall Elegie § 227

Shee, who in th’Art of knowing Heaven, was grown
Here upon Earth, to such perfection,
That shee hath, ever since to Heaven shee came,
(In a far fairer Print.) but read the same:
Shee, shee, not satisfied with all this waite,
(For so much knowledge, as would over-fratie
Another, did but Ballast her) is gone,
As well t’enjoy, as get perfectione.
And calls us after her, in that shee tooke,
(Taking herselfe) our best, and worthiest booke.
Returne not, my soule, from this extasee,
And meditation of what thou shalt bee,
To earthly thoughts, till it to thee appeare,
With whom thy conversation must be there.
With whom wilt thou Converse? what station
Canst thou choose out, free from infection,
That wilt nor give thee theirs, nor drinke in thine?
Shalt thou not finde a spangy slack Divine
Drinke and sucke in th’Instructions of Great men,
And for the word of God, vent them agen?
Are there not some Courts, (And then, no things bee
So like as Courts) which, in this let us see,
That wits and tongues of Libellars are weake,
Because they doe more ill, then these can speake?
The poysone is gone through all, poysons affect
Chiefly the cheaste parts, but some effect
In Nailes, and Haires, yea excrements, will show;
So will the poysone of sinne, in the most low.
Up up, my drowsie soule, where thy new eare
Shall in the Angels songs no discord hear:
Where thou shalt see the blessed Mother-maid
Joy in not being that, which men have said.
Where shee’s exalted more for being good,
Then for her interest, of mother-hood.
Up to those Patriarches, which did longer sit
Expecting Christ, then they have enjoy’d him yet.
Up to those Prophets, which now gladly see
Their Prophecies grown to be Historee.

ll.337−342 That . . . speake: It is impossible for even libelers to speak sufficient evil of courts.
ll.343−346 Where . . . said: a reference to the Roman Catholic doctrine that the Virgin Mary was born free from original sin.
Anniversaries and A Funerall Elegie § 228

Up to th’Apostles, who did bravely runne,
All the Sunnes course, with more light then the Sunne.
Up to those Martyrs, who did calmly bleed
Oyle to th’Apostles lamps, dew to their seed.
Up to those Virgins, who thought that almost
They made joynentans with the Holy Ghost,
If they to any should his Temple give.
Up, up, for in that squadron there doth live
Shee, who hath carri’d thether, new degrees
(As to their number) to their dignitaries.
Shee, who beeing to herselfe a state, enjoyed
All royalties which any state emploied,
For she made wars, and triumph’d; reson still
Did not overthrow, but rectifie her will:
And shee made peace, for no peace is like this,
That beauty and chastity together kisse.
Shee did high justice; for shee crucified
Every first motion of rebellious pride:
And shee gave pardons, and was liberall,
For, onely herselfe except, shee pardond all:
Shee coynd, in this, that her impressions gave
To all our actions all the worth they have:
Shee gave protections; the thoughts of her brest
Satan’s rude Officers could nere arrest.
As these prerogatives being met in one,
Made her a soveraigne state, religion
Made her a Church; and these two made her all.
Shee who was all this All, and could not fall
To worse, by company; (for shee was still
More Antidore, then all the world was ill.)
Shee, shee doth leave it, and by Death, survive
All this, in Heaven, whiter who doth not strive
The more, because shee’s there, he doth not know
That accidental joyes in Heaven doe grow.
But pause, My soul, and study ere thou fall
On accidentall joyes, th’essential.
Still before Accessories doe abide
A triall, must the principal be trie.

1.354 joynentans: joint-tenants.
1.356 royalties: prerogatives.
1.382 accidental: non-essential. The essential joy of the blessed consists in the beatific vision; all other joys are, therefore, accidental.

Anniversaries and A Funerall Elegie § 229

And what essential joy canst thou expect
Here upon earth? what permanent effect
Of transitory causes? Dost thou love
Beauty? (And Beauty worthiest is to move)
Poore cause’d not, that she, and that thou,
Which did begin to love, are neither now.
You are both fluid, chang’d since yesterday;
Next day repairs, (but ill) last daies decay.
Nor are, (Although the river keep the name)
Yesterdaies waters, and to daies the same.
So flowes her face, and thine eies, neither now
That saint, nor Pilgrime, which your loving vow
Concern’d, remains; but whils’t you thinke you bee
Constant, you are hourly in inconstance.
Honour may have pretense unto our love,
Because that God did live so long above
Without this Honour, and then lov’d it so,
That he at last made Creatures to bestow
Honor on him; not that he needed it,
But that, to his hands, man might grow more fit.
But since all honors from inferiors flow,
(For they doe give it, Princes doe but show
Whom they would have so honor’d) and that this
On such opinions, and capacities
Is built, as rise, and fall, to more and lesse,
Alas, tis but a casuall happiness.
Hath ever any man to himselfe assigned
This or that happinesse, to arrest his minde,
But that another man, which takes a worse,
Thinks him a foole for having taken that course?
They who did labour Babels tower t’erect,
Might have consider’d, that for that effect,
All this whole solid Earth could not allow
Nor furnish forth Materials enow;
And that this Center, to raise such a place
Was far to little, to have beene the base;
No more afooters this world, foundacione

1.391 cause’d not: cheated cheater.
1.401 pretense: claim.
1.416 tane: taken.
1.420 enow: enough.
1.421 Center: the earth.
To erect true joye, were all the meanes in one.  
But as the Heathen made them several gods,  
Of all Gods Benefitt, and all his Rods,  
(For as the Wine, and Corne, and Onions are  
Gods unto them, so Agues bee, and war)  
And as by changing that whole precious Gold  
To such small copper coynes, they lost the old,  
And lost their onely God, who ever must  
Be sought alone, and not in such a thrust,  
So much mankind true happinnesse mistakes;  
No Joye enjoyes that man, that many makes.  
Then, soule, to thy first pitch worke up againe;  
Know that all lines which circles doe containe,  
For once that they the center touch, do touch  
Twice the circumference; and be thou such.  
Double on Heaven, thy thoughts on Earth emploied;  
All will not serve; Oneley who have enjoyd  
The sight of God, in fulnesse, can thinke it;  
For it is both the object, and the wit.  
This is essentiaLL joye, where neither hee  
Can suffer Diminution, nor wee;  
Tis such a full, and such a filling good;  
Had th'Angels once look'd on him, they had stood.  
To fill the place of one of them, or more,  
Shee whom we celebrate, is gone before.  
Shee, who had Here so much essentiaLL joye,  
As no chance could distract, much lesse destroy;  
Who with Gods presence was acquainted so,  
(Hearing, and speaking to him) as to know  
His face, in any naturall Stone, or Tree,  
Better then when in Images they bee:  
Who kept, by diligent devotion,  
Gods Image, in such reparation,  
Within her heart, that what decay was growen,  
Was her first Parents fault, and not her own:  
Who being solicited to any Act,  
Still heard God pleading his safe precontract;  
Who by a faithfull confidence, was here

430

440

450

460

1.432 thrust: crowd.  
1.435 pitch: peak.  
1.460 Still: always.

Betrothed to God, and now is married there,  
Whose twilights were more cleare, then our mid day,  
Who dreame devoutly, then most use to pray;  
Who being heare fild with grace, yet strove to bee,  
Both where more grace, and more capacitie  
At once is given: shee to Heaven is gone,  
Who made this world in some proportion  
A heaven, and here, became unto us all,  
Joye, (as our joyes admit) essentiaLL.  
But this low world joyes essentiaLL touch,  
Heavens acciden
tial joyes would passe them much.  
How poore and lame, must then our casualL bee?  
If thy Prince will his subjects to call thee  
My Lord, and this doe swell thee, thou art than,  
By being a greater, growen to be lesse Man.  
When no Physician of Redresse can speake,  
A joyfull casualL violence may breake  
A dangerous Apostem in thy brest;  
And whilst thou joyest in this, the dangerous rest,  
The bag may rise up, and so strangule thee.  
What eie was casualL, may ever bee.  
What should the Nature change? Or make the same  
Certaine, which was but casualL, when it came?  
All casualL joye doth loud and plainly say,  
Onely by comings, that it can away.  
Onely in Heaven joies strength is never spent;  
And acciden
tial things are permanent.  
Joy of a soules arrivall neere decays;  
For that soule ever joyes, and ever staises.  
Joy that their last great Consummation  
Approches in the resurrection;  
When earthy bodies more celestiall  
Shulbe, then Angels were, for they could fall;  
This kind of joye doth every day admit  
Degrees of growth, but none of lossing it.  
In this fresh joy, tis no small part, that shee,  
Shee, in whose goodnesse, he that names degree,  
Doth injure her; (Tis lesse to be calld best,  
There where the sufffe is not such as the rest)
Shee, who left such a body, as even shee
Onely in Heaven could learn, how it can bee
Made better; for shee rather was two soules,
Or like to full, on both sides written Rolls,
Where cies might read upon the outward skin,
As strong Records for God, as mindes within.
Shee, who by making full perfection grow,
Peece a Circle, and still keeps it so,
Long'd for; and longing for't, to heaven is gone,
Where shee receives, and gives addition.

Conduct.
Here in a place, where mis-devotion frames
A thousand prayers to saints, whose very names
The ancient Church knew not, Heaven knowes not
yet,
And where, what laws of poetry admit,
Lawes of religion, have at least the same;
Immortal Maid, I might invoke thy name.
Could any Saint provoke that appeare,
Thou here shouldst make mee a french convertite.
But thou wouldst not; nor wouldst thou be content,
To take this, for my second yeeres true Kent,
Did this Coine beare any other stamphe, then his,
That gave thee power to doe, me, to say this.
Since his will is, that to posteritee,
Thou shouldst for life, and death, a pattern bee,
And that the world should notice have of this,
The purpose, and th' Authority is his;
Thou art the Proclamation; and I ame
The Trumpet, at whose voice the people came.

1.512 Here: in France, where Donne was visiting the Deurys. The reference is to the Catholic practice of appealing to the saints for intercession.
1.518 convertite: a convert to Roman Catholicism.