

Wilfrid Laurier University

Scholars Commons @ Laurier

---

Theses and Dissertations (Comprehensive)

---

2020

## Holy Estrangement: The Poetics of Estrangement in John Donne's Divine Poems and Sermons

Anton Bergstrom  
berg8010@mylaurier.ca

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholars.wlu.ca/etd>



Part of the [Literature in English, British Isles Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

Bergstrom, Anton, "Holy Estrangement: The Poetics of Estrangement in John Donne's Divine Poems and Sermons" (2020). *Theses and Dissertations (Comprehensive)*. 2250.  
<https://scholars.wlu.ca/etd/2250>

This Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by Scholars Commons @ Laurier. It has been accepted for inclusion in Theses and Dissertations (Comprehensive) by an authorized administrator of Scholars Commons @ Laurier. For more information, please contact [scholarscommons@wlu.ca](mailto:scholarscommons@wlu.ca).

HOLY ESTRANGEMENT:  
THE POETICS OF ESTRANGEMENT  
IN JOHN DONNE'S DIVINE POEMS AND SERMONS

by

Anton Erik Bergstrom

Bachelor of Arts Honours, University of Saskatchewan, 2007

Master of Arts, Queen's University, 2008

DISSERTATION

Submitted to the Department of English and Film Studies

in partial fulfilment of the requirements for

Doctor of Philosophy in English and Film Studies

Wilfrid Laurier University

© Anton Erik Bergstrom 2020



## Abstract

This dissertation examines literary estrangement, that is the act and effect of making the familiar strange in a literary work, in the religious poems and sermons of the poet-preacher John Donne (1572–1631). My study uncovers and explores what Donne “estranges,” how he achieves this, and for what purpose, as well as the practices and modes of thinking that shaped his poetics. In Donne’s religious verse and prose, making the familiar and traditional tropes, images, doctrines, and events of Christianity strange forms active readers and revitalizes those elements, imbuing them with newfound interest, significance, and affective power.

My study offers a reassessment of Donne’s uniqueness as a poet and preacher, as well as of the nature of metaphysical poetry more generally, by emphasizing the strange features of Donne’s writings as the product of specific rhetorical “devices of estrangement.” Although the Russian Formalist Viktor Shklovsky’s concept of “defamiliarization” informs this project, my study breaks new ground by situating Donne’s poetics of estrangement in the literary-rhetorical theory of late Renaissance England. Donne’s writings reflect important features of a tradition advocating the uses and value of figurative strangeness, from Aristotle, Horace, and Augustine in antiquity, to Aquinas and Geoffrey of Vinsauf in the Middle Ages, to the rhetoricians and literary theorists of sixteenth-century England. New readings of George Puttenham’s *The Art of English Poesy*, Henry Peacham’s *The Garden of Eloquence*, and John Hoskins’ *Directions for Speech and Style* reveal the close connection between figurative language and estrangement. My study catalogues and analyzes a number of prominent rhetorical figures which these theorists recognized as producing, or which they indirectly associated with, the estrangement effect, and upon which Donne relied in his writings. The broader cultural “discourse of strangeness” as well as post-Reformation theology and religious culture also shaped Donne’s poetics.

Close analysis of Donne’s religious works—including his emblematic poems, “The Cross” (*Cross*) and “Upon the Annunciation and Passion” (*Annun*); his long liturgical poem, “A

Litany” (*Lit*); his Holy Sonnets, particularly “Spit in my face” (*HSSpit*), “Since she whom I loved” (*HSShe*), “Show me dear Christ” (*HSShow*), and “O to vex me” (*HSVex*);<sup>1</sup> and his sermons, particularly his five on the Book of Job—reveals important features of Donne’s poetics. The estrangement effect plays a significant role in Donne’s rhetorical and devotional strategies. He frequently deploys multiple devices of estrangement in describing the central mysteries of Christianity—such as the Incarnation, Crucifixion, and Resurrection—in order to renew attention to the original strangeness of Christian doctrine. These devices also express important authorial and cultural desires, anxieties, and tensions, pointing to concerns about wit, invention, and originality as well as conformity to literary and biblical tradition and Church of England orthodoxy. Estrangement functions as both technique and theme in Donne’s writings: Donne uses devices of estrangement to articulate themes of divine strangeness as well as to convey fallen humankind’s estrangement from God, others, and self. The estrangement effect is also a means to produce “holy estrangement”: that is, the disruption of the reader’s or auditor’s worldly habits of thought in order to encourage reconciliation with God. My study reveals Donne’s religious poems and sermons to be some of the foremost expressions of the cultural trope of estrangement in early seventeenth-century English literature.

## Acknowledgements

I would like to thank the members of my advisory committee for their years of effort and advice guiding this project to completion: to Anne Russell, my supervisor, for taking on my proposal and patiently helping me to form vague impressions into a rigorous research project; to Robin Waugh, for his many strategic comments encouraging me to think more systematically and to more clearly and carefully prove my claims; to Viviana Comensoli, who served eight years as a consummate editor, vigilant proofreader, and general authority on all things English Renaissance; and to Lynn Shakinovsky, who enthusiastically joined the project and diligently read the manuscript when urgency was required. I also thank my committee for helping me to defamiliarize my original thoughts about Donne and Shklovsky, urging me to historicize Donne's poetics by digging into the rich mines of Renaissance rhetoric handbooks. I extend my appreciation to Jeanne Shami, for her rigorous questions, generous comments, and warm professionalism as the external examiner for my defence. My thanks to the faculty at Laurier, particularly Katherine Spring, Maria DiCenzo, Jing Jing Chang, and Eleanor Ty, for their revivifying encouragement at different stages in the long distance run of writing a dissertation. Thanks to Gwynn Dujardin for suggesting during my Master's program at Queen's that Bertolt Brecht's "alienation effect" might illuminate Donne's "shock tactic" in the Holy Sonnets, which marked the genesis of this project. And my appreciation to Brent Nelson, for sparking my passion for the strange, challenging, and fascinating literature of the seventeenth-century as an undergraduate at the University of Saskatchewan.

This dissertation draws on research supported by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council. My doctoral research was also supported in part by the Ontario Graduate Scholarships Program.

I would like to thank my parents, Donald and Naomi, for their endless support in every way. To my mom, for always bolstering my confidence ever since I was a little boy. To my dad,

for modelling what the hard work of being a professor looks like as well as the rewards of the contemplative life. I thank my older brother, Anders (who achieved his PhD before me) for always leading the way, and my younger brother, Aren, for helping me to keep one foot (or at least one toe) outside of academia, as a means to refresh and reorient. I thank my mother-in-law, Patti Woods, for boarding me several nights a week when I would drive in to Waterloo from Toronto in the early years of the program, and for watching the boys once a week this last year so I could finish revisions to the dissertation.

Above all, I would like to thank my wife, Lauren, for her immense support and help and perseverance in the long-suffering of being a “dissertation widow” (as a good friend once termed it). And to my two boys, Erik and Ben, who were born and have grown up amid my study of Donne. You are always the best figures for revitalization—for reawakening me, amid the repetitions of academic research, to the wonders of the living world.







**Introduction:**  
**Donne's Poetics of Estrangement:**  
**Critical and Historical Contexts**

Figurative speech is a novelty of language evidently (and yet not absurdly) estranged from the ordinary habit and manner of our daily talk and writing.

George Puttenham, *The Art of English Poesy*

Oft from new proofes, and new phrase, new doubts grow,  
 As strange attire aliens the men wee know.

John Donne, "To the Countess of Bedford ['You have refined me']" (*BedfRef*)

This dissertation studies literary estrangement in the religious poems and sermons of the poet-preacher John Donne (1571/72<sup>2</sup>–1631). By "estrangement" I mean specifically the action and effect of making the familiar strange in a literary work—but always with an eye on the ordinary relational meanings, indicating "separation, withdrawal, alienation in feeling or affection."<sup>3</sup> The *Oxford English Dictionary's* (*OED*) definition indicates that estrangement is both an "action" and a "condition." I use the term to refer to the method and process of rendering things strange in a text as well as to the posited impact on the reader. Literary "devices of estrangement" render the language, literary forms, or content of a text strange, producing the "estrangement effect" in the reader—the state, however long, of delayed mental apprehension,<sup>4</sup> of shock or surprise, of unsettlement, when habitual categories of perception or interpretation have been disturbed or dislocated. In the dissertation, "estrangement" thus signifies a distancing of reader from text, the gap formed between the reader's encounter with the (newly) strange thing and the apprehension of it.

In the early modern world, “the strange” was a broad and nebulous category, its application ranging from peoples, places, and objects considered foreign or unnatural to the unfamiliar and even the marvellous; yet, this project suggests, conceptions of strangeness ultimately stemmed from individual and cultural perceptions of difference and distance. Responses to the strange were highly ambivalent; in a variety of texts from the period, strangeness provokes intrigue as well as repulsion, wonder as well as horror. This study asserts, however, that difficulty of comprehension, be it moderate or intense, lies at the heart of all these varied responses. In both his verse and prose works, Donne exploits his anticipated audiences’ responses to the strange, but, paradoxically, what appears most strange in Donne’s works is often the familiar and traditional.

Accordingly, this project does not approach the strange as a static category; rather, I am concerned with the dynamic relationship between the strange and the familiar that estrangement implies. Philippa Kelly and L. E. Semler have called attention to the semantic relations between the adjective “strange” and the verb “estrangle”: “To early modern people ‘strange’ . . . meant, in the broad sense, very much what it means today—alien, foreign, unfamiliar—while the verb ‘estrangle’ . . . had, as with today, a progressive connotation: it referred to something that had once *not* been strange, something that had been separated or *made* strange.”<sup>5</sup> This connotation informs my dissertation’s basic premise: that a “poetics of estrangement” can be found in the theory and practice of late sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century English literary culture. In *The Art of English Poesy* (1589), rhetorician and literary theorist George Puttenham delivers one of the most fundamental descriptions of literary estrangement in the period: “Figurative speech is a novelty of language . . . estranged from the ordinary habit and manner of our daily talk and writing.”<sup>6</sup> The idea that something familiar can be made strange is present in Donne’s poetry, as in *BedfRef*, when the speaker observes, “Oft from new proofes, and new phrase, new doubts grow, / As strange attire aliens the men wee know” (lines 65–66).<sup>7</sup> But if, as the verse indicates, a change of clothing can make a friend a stranger—can estrange him or her from us—then

strangeness is conditional, a matter of perspective, a perceived quality. In literature, the perceived strangeness of a text's language, literary forms, or content can be exploited, manipulated, or even produced for various literary, rhetorical, and thematic purposes. But why make things strange? Building on Kelly and Semler's questions—"How were [early modern] people moved to 'estrangle' aspects of their world? What did such estrangements involve and achieve?"<sup>8</sup>—this dissertation uncovers and explores what Donne estranges, how and for what purpose, and which practices and ways of thinking shaped his activity.

My investigation into Donne's poetics of estrangement is informed by the Russian Formalist Viktor Shklovsky's concept of *ostranenie*, or "making strange," introduced in the early twentieth century.<sup>9</sup> As Tony Bennett has explained: "Far from reflecting reality, the Formalists argued, literary texts tend to 'make it strange,' to dislocate our habitual perceptions of the real world so as to make it the object of renewed attentiveness."<sup>10</sup> More recently, Alexandra Berlina, in her translation of Shklovsky's writings, summarizes *ostranenie* as "making the habitual strange in order to reexperience it."<sup>11</sup> The Russian word transliterated as *ostranenie* is most frequently rendered into English as "defamiliarization."<sup>12</sup> While Shklovsky's Russian coinage is too conspicuously alien for my purposes, I deploy the term "defamiliarization" on occasion,<sup>13</sup> and throughout the dissertation "defamiliarization" remains synonymous with "estrangement" in its literary sense.<sup>14</sup> Overall, however, I favour "estrangement" as my principal term for two reasons. First, "defamiliarization" is modern in origin, and is still largely associated with Russian Formalism. While this project is informed by twentieth- and twenty-first-century understandings of estrangement, I am primarily concerned with locating and examining the concept in the literary-rhetorical theory and practice of early modern England. This leads to my second reason: less overtly technical, the term "estrangement" also has richer connotations—of selfhood, relationship, and community, and of distance, either spatial, temporal, mental, or emotional.<sup>15</sup> Although I recognize that "estrangement" constantly threatens imprecision, and have attempted to address that concern in this introduction, one of the aims of my project is to gather together the

various conceptual threads of literary “making strange” as well as themes and/or representations of relational estrangement under a single unifying term. While I acknowledge my debt to Shklovsky, the project is conceived neither as an extensive comparison between Shklovsky and Donne, nor a strict application of Shklovsky’s theory to Donne’s works; rather, Shklovsky functions as a helpful stepping stone in the exploration of Donne’s own poetics of estrangement.

My preference for “estrangement” over “defamiliarization” also takes its cue from sixteenth- and seventeenth-century usage, especially Puttenham’s characterization of figurative speech as language “estranged from the ordinary.” Although the *OED* cites the first use of the noun “estrangement” as occurring in 1660 (in Jeremy Taylor’s *Ductor Dubitantium*), the verb “strange” was in use since at least the late fifteenth century.<sup>16</sup> While the translators of the sixteenth-century Geneva Bible never employ the verb “strange,” the Authorized Version of 1611 contains five uses of the word. Psalm 58:3 states that “The wicked are estranged from the womb: they go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies.” Job complains that God “hath put my brethren far from me, and mine acquaintance are verily estranged from me” (19:13). The other instances are found in Psalm 78 and the prophetic writings of Jeremiah and Ezekiel, and the five texts converge around issues of sin and apostasy, which are both, in theological terms, states of altered selfhood and forms of alienation from community and God.<sup>17</sup> The presence of “estranged” in the Authorized Version suggests an increased use of the word (and points to the development of English cognates) in the early seventeenth century. To my knowledge, Donne uses the term “strange” on only one occasion—in his Third Sermon on Psalm 38:4, preached at Lincoln’s Inn in 1618, when he says, “Nothing could estrange God from man, but *sin*; and even from this *Son of man*, though he were the *Son of God* too, was God far estranged” (*PS* 2.5.137.224–26)<sup>18</sup>—but on occasion he also uses “alien” as a verb with a similar meaning, such as in *BedfRef* quoted above. Another use occurs in Donne’s Sermon Preached to the King, April 20, 1630, when Donne is discussing distractions at prayer: “Passions and affections sometimes, sometimes bodily infirmities, and sometimes a vain desire of being eloquent in prayer, aliens me,

withdraws me from my self, and then that prayer is not my prayer” (*OESJD* 3.13.215.186–88).<sup>19</sup> With these considerations in mind, “estrangement” provides the appropriate balance between theoretical clarity and everyday usage, between early modern currency and twenty-first century recognition.

Exploring the word’s many shades of meaning calls attention to the interrelations between different representations and themes of estrangement and various estranging forms in early modern English literature. As I noted above, the Authorized Version of Psalm 58 describes “the wicked” as being “estranged” (verse 3). Later on in the psalm, the speaker calls on God to violently punish the wicked, cursing them using comparisons to various demises: “As a snail *which* melteth, let *every one of them* pass away: *like* the untimely birth of a woman, *that* they may not see the sun” (v. 8). Mary Sidney Herbert, Countess of Pembroke, never deploys the word “estranged” in her translation of the psalm; instead, she describes the wicked as “ev’n in birth declined / From truth and right to lies and injuries” (9–10).<sup>20</sup> However, devices of estrangement feature prominently in her detailed amplification of the biblical text:

So make them melt as the dishousèd snail  
Or as the embryo, whose vital band  
Breaks ere it holds, and formless eyes do fail  
To see the sun, though brought to lightful land.

(21–24)<sup>21</sup>

Sidney Herbert<sup>22</sup> uses figures in combination to enhance their effect, adding, for example, the unusual and metaphorically rich adjective “dishousèd” to describe the snail without a shell. Doing so, she crafts an estranging image of a miscarriage in pregnancy that parallels the estrangement—the going awry—involved in moral wrongdoing. I bring up these two versions of Psalm 58 to suggest that estrangement can be both technique and theme, a matter of form as well as content. We might also consider parallels between various kinds of estrangement in different texts across different genres. For instance, in his Third Sermon on Psalm 38:4, Donne states that sin estranges

man from God, while Puttenham, in his rhetoric handbook, describes figurative language as speech estranged from the ordinary. What then is the relation between conceptions of spiritual estrangement and figurative estrangement in the period? This project analyzes instances of estrangement on multiple levels of language and thought—as a technique within literary theory and practice, but also as a condition (represented and discussed in texts) between and within persons, communities, and cultures.

Since estrangement, in its ordinary sense, implies a separation from or tension between people or things once close, familiarity is the necessary prior condition. For this reason, my project takes as its objects of study Donne's religious writings, particularly the "Divine Poems" (as Donne's verse upon religious subject matter was named and grouped in the 1635 edition of Donne's poetry) and his sermons. At various points in the dissertation, I also draw on Donne's *Essayes in Divinity* (composed c. 1614; published posthumously 1651), his work of biblical exegesis on the first chapters of Genesis and Exodus, as a means to elaborate on Donne's views on theology, the Bible, and reading.<sup>23</sup> Religion informed the daily life and important events, customs, patterns of behaviour, and "habits of thought" of most people in England during Donne's lifetime.<sup>24</sup> In early modern England, weekly church attendance was mandatory, the liturgy was repeated often, and sermons were popular and well attended, despite sometimes running on for hours at a time.<sup>25</sup> Over half of the books published in England between 1603 and 1639 concern religion.<sup>26</sup> The traditions of Christianity—its stories, language, imagery, doctrines, and rituals—would have been deeply familiar to the seventeenth-century readers of Donne's poetry and prose, as well as to the original auditors, both literate and illiterate, of the many sermons he delivered.<sup>27</sup> This dissertation re-examines Donne's writings on religious subjects in order to investigate the literary, rhetorical, thematic, and devotional functions of his poetics of estrangement.

My methodological approach is historicized formalism; I situate and analyze estranging language and literary forms within specific historical contexts. My analysis involves three main objectives:

1. *To isolate and examine the various literary devices of estrangement* in Donne's religious poetry and prose, devices which are frequently, but not always, articulated in Renaissance accounts of rhetorical figures.
2. To consider the effect of those devices—that is, *the estrangement effect*—on the reader, keeping in mind the varying occasions for Donne's works and the various genres in which he operates (and with an occasional eye towards his original seventeenth-century audiences, both readers and auditors).
3. To elucidate the relations between these devices, their effects, and *themes of estrangement* in specific Donne texts.

In bringing both Renaissance and modern theories of literary estrangement to Donne studies, this project shifts critical attention to the strangeness of Donne's works away from the traditional debate about metaphysical poetry.<sup>28</sup> I instead situate the strange aspects of Donne's texts within three historical and interrelated cultural contexts:

1. Renaissance rhetoric and poetics
2. The early modern "discourse of strangeness"
3. Post-Reformation theology and religious culture.

Parts 1 and 2 of this introduction will review the existing scholarship on the critical and historical contexts of Donne's poetics of estrangement.

In Donne's religious verse and prose, I argue, making familiar and traditional elements strange—namely the tropes, images, doctrines, and events of Christianity—shapes active readers and revitalizes those elements, that is to say, imbues them with newfound interest, significance, and affective power.<sup>29</sup> Broadly speaking, making the language, forms, or contents of a literary text strange disrupts the reader's habitual perception and automatic interpretation of those



elements.<sup>30</sup> From a critical distance, the reader is able to re-approach the estranged object of the literary text: to experience afresh the words being used, the sentences being constructed, the generic forms and literary conventions being deployed, the themes and motifs being generated, the conceptual or representational subject matter being communicated. The effect of estrangement compels renewed attentiveness and intellectual activity on the part of the reader if she or he is to apprehend the estranged elements of the text. Through the labour of reading and interpretation, the distance created between reader and text is diminished. In the context of sermons delivered orally, a similar dynamic applies between the preacher's spoken words and the auditor, albeit with the important distinction that an auditor cannot easily pause to consider or review an estranging moment in the midst of hearing a sermon. For this reason, the preacher might deploy repetition after devices of estrangement in order to facilitate closing the gap between the auditory and the sermon. Nevertheless, devices of estrangement in sermons encourage active listening and generate the struggle to comprehend. In both the context of reading and listening, the renewed activity that devices of estrangement provoke revitalizes the dull, tired, and familiar elements. In this way, literary estrangement creates the opportunity for enhanced or altered perspectives on a text—as well as the recovery of views long obscured by familiarity and habit. Layers of meaning are exposed, bringing out lost or hidden resonances between familiar elements. Estrangement can lead to critique of culturally established habits of thought as well as the reader's personal assumptions. Furthermore, as this dissertation explores, devices of estrangement in literary texts also express important authorial and cultural desires, anxieties, and tensions.

Devices of estrangement point to concerns about wit, invention, and originality as well as conformity to literary and biblical tradition and Church of England orthodoxy. The dissertation suggests that contemporary English debates about the boundaries of figurative language, the fascination with and anxiety about the many forms of strangeness encountered, as well as the climate of religious controversy and division intensify these concerns in England around the turn of the seventeenth century. Strategies and techniques of estrangement in Donne's works can be

read as efforts to respond productively, if anxiously, to these concerns. A notable technique Donne employs in *Essayes in Divinity* is to draw on the strange materials of the early modern world—its shocks, discoveries, marvels, and curiosities—to convey the bewildering mysteries, miracles, and nature of the Christian God. For instance, the essay “Of God,” which sets up Donne’s contemplations on the first verse of Genesis, begins with an elaborate analogy comparing the invention of the compass, and the improvements in sea navigation that it enabled, to the superiority of faith over reason in the search for the divine:

Men which seek God by reason, and naturall strength, (though we do not deny common notions and general impressions of a sovereign power) are like Mariners which voyaged before the invention of the Compass, which were but Costers, and unwillingly left the sight of land. Such are they which would arrive at God by this world, and contemplate him onely in his Creatures, and seeming Demonstration. Certainly, every Creature shewes God, as a glass, but glimeringly and transitorily, by the frailty both of the receiver, and beholder: Our selves have his Image, as Medals, permanently and preciously delivered. But by these meditations we get no further, then to know what he *doth*, not what he *is*. But as by the use of the Compass, men safely dispatch *Ulysses* dangerous ten years travell in so many dayes, and have found out a new world richer then the old; so doth Faith, as soon as our hearts are touched with it, direct and inform it in that great search of the discovery of Gods Essence, and the new *Hierusalem*, which Reason durst not attempt.<sup>31</sup>

Arguing that the believer who uses faith is like a ship equipped with a compass, whereas individuals who draw only on reason are like the ancient boats that had to travel along the coast, the passage defamiliarizes both the ancient trope of the soul as a ship as well as the traditional Christian affirmation that faith is superior to reason.<sup>32</sup> Anthony Parr highlights the tension between the argument and analogy: how “the voyage metaphor itself resists the abstraction from ‘this world’ that is being urged,” but also how Donne oddly “endorses a ‘geometrical’ or

mathematical geography that can find out new means of navigation, and identifies this, rather than the ancient sailor's trust in skill and providence, with the workings of genuine faith."<sup>33</sup> Indeed, Donne explicitly links the development of the compass with the discovery of the Americas: "But as by the use of the Compass, men . . . have found out a new world richer then the old." Donne is not only drawing on new developments in sea travel, for Angus Fletcher identifies a reference to William Gilbert's pioneering work on magnetism in the passage.<sup>34</sup> The analogy disrupts associations of faith with ancient practices and of reason with modern innovations; the comparison to historical technological progress in sea navigation offers a new perspective on the difference between faith and reason that Christianity has traditionally maintained. Devices of estrangement also evoke the condition of fallen humanity, estranged through sin from God, others, and self according to Christian theology. Following the above passage, Donne immediately addresses the gap between God and the human heart: "And though the faithfullest heart is not ever directly, & constantly upon God, but that it sometimes descends also to Reason; yet it is thereby so departed from him, but that it still looks towards him, though not fully to him: as the Compass is ever Northward, though it decline, and have often variations towards East, and West."<sup>35</sup> Both devotional functions—highlighting the strangeness of God and his ways to the human mind, and underscoring the spiritual estrangement of fallen humanity from God—call attention to the limitations of human understanding, and indicate disconnect between human frames of mind and the divine perspective. Jeanne Shami has noted a similar strategy in the endings of many of Donne's sermons of contrasting the heavenly, eternal point of view with temporal, worldly perspectives in order to inspire "his hearers with desire for that eternity."<sup>36</sup> Contextualizing Donne's poetics of estrangement highlights two important tensions in the wider culture which I will explore throughout the dissertation, namely the tension between the familiar and the strange, and between tradition and innovation. Furthermore, Donne's frequent thematization of estrangement suggests its significance as a state of feeling and as a "cultural trope" expressed in the period's literature.<sup>37</sup> The following chapters will demonstrate how

Donne's devices of estrangement not only participate in a wider poetics embedded in his culture but also indicate his unique position in early modern English literature. Overall, this project will indicate some of the ways in which strangeness was used, in general, as a tool for literary innovation and, in religious writings, to bring about renewed perception of many of the traditional features of Christianity.

Donne's body of writing exhibits tension around the issue of innovation, for it has been widely observed that Donne developed many innovative approaches and techniques in his poetry, yet in several of his prose works he directly chastises innovation in religious matters.<sup>38</sup> For example, in the prose satire *Ignatius His Conclave* (1611) the narrator, upon arriving in Hell, discovers people who "had so attempted any innovation in this life."<sup>39</sup> In several of his sermons, Donne, like other preachers of his day, sets religious orthodoxy in opposition to innovation. In a Sermon Preached before the King at Whitehall on April 1, 1627, Donne declares that "Orthodoxall and fundamentall truths, are established against clamorous and vociferant innovations" (*PS* 7.16.396.122–23). In his Penitential Psalm Sermon on Psalm 32.8, Donne derides what he perceives as the innovations of the Roman Catholic Church since the Council of Trent: "We see in the Romane Church, they are not in their Beads, without *Credoes*, they believe enough; and lest that should not be enough, they have made a new Creed of more Articles then that, in the Councell of Trent" (*PS* 9.16.361.393–96). Both Catholics and Protestants charged their opponents with "innovation," making it a pejorative in Reformation controversy.<sup>40</sup> Nevertheless, Donne's religious lyrics, with their striking tones and provocative imagery, participated in, and influenced, the great flowering of devotional poetry in early seventeenth-century England.<sup>41</sup>

Donne's famously provocative Holy Sonnet that begins "Batter my heart" (*HSBatter*) is a notable example of the entwined nature of strangeness and tradition in Donne's religious poetry. At the end of sonnet, the speaker implores God:

Take mee to you, imprison mee, for I  
 Except you inthrall mee, neuer shalbee free,  
 Nor euer chast except you ravish mee.

(12–14)

These lines have provoked strong emotional and interpretive responses in Donne's readers: M. H. Abrams cites the sonnet as an example of Donne's "shock tactic,"<sup>42</sup> Arthur Marotti has called the poem indecorous,<sup>43</sup> and, in my own experience in the classroom, the ending's language of enslavement and, possibly, rape has startled and repelled many students.<sup>44</sup> In the early seventeenth century, "to ravish" could mean "to rape," but also "to seize or carry away," either physically (with or without the implication of sexual violation) or spiritually, as in the case of religious ecstasy. Common to all meanings is the idea of one will exerting itself over another. While the multiple meanings would seem to inform Donne's use of the word, the explicit contrast made between chastity and ravishment in line 14 suggests a sexual reading of "ravish," but perhaps not exclusively. Which practices and habits of thought moved Donne to estrange the relationship between the human soul and God addressed in the sonnet? Furthermore, if Puttenham is correct in asserting that "a figure is ever used to a purpose either of beauty or of efficacy,"<sup>45</sup> which literary devices are being used to effect the shock, disapproval, and/or bewilderment reported by readers, and to what ends?

In the final lines of the poem, paradox and chiasmus, the "ABBA pattern of mirror inversion," function as devices of estrangement.<sup>46</sup> The reactions of modern critics and students cited above attest to the effects of shock and aversion. However, as Patrides explains, "Man's relations with God have been set forth in terms of marriage or adultery ever since the great Hebrew prophets, beginning with Hosea."<sup>47</sup> In spite of its startling effect, the sonnet adopts the religious-literary convention of employing erotic language to express the soul's desire for relationship with the divine.<sup>48</sup> Donne also draws on the New Testament's use of the language of servitude to describe human submission to God's will; in Romans chapter 6, the Apostle Paul

observes the paradox that freedom from sin is slavery to God.<sup>49</sup> To what extent, then, does the ending's shocking strangeness owe to Christian tradition, and to what extent to Donne's poetic innovations and originality? A tension seems to exist in these lines between their ability to surprise and shock and their conventional and traditional elements. Literary estrangement operates at points of tension in texts along the shifting frontiers between the strange and the familiar. The doctrines and biblical references behind the concluding verses would likely have been familiar to Donne's original seventeenth-century readers; however, the effect of the final lines is as much a matter of style and form as it is of themes and content. The urgent tone, multiple paradoxes, and chiasmic structure of lines 12–14 force the reader to pause and think about the conclusion and its meaning in relation to the entire poem. The repetitive, violent language and strong argumentative forms hammer into the reader in a manner similar to the violent yet reconstructive activity the speaker demands from God in the poem's opening lines: "Batter my heart, three person'd God . . . break, blow, burn, and make me new" (1, 4).<sup>50</sup> The contradictory pattern of violence leading to renewal points to the final paradoxes of freedom in bondage and purity in violation. Donne draws on the literary conventions of Christian tradition, using erotic language for spiritual relations, as well as Pauline paradox, but he defamiliarizes these elements through estranging verbal and rhetorical forms as well as the condensed intensity of their deployment. In *HSBatter*, the speaker's final paradoxical plea to God, with its direct, emphatic wording, compels the reader to reconsider the speaker's desire for God as well as the human will's relation to the divine more generally. In particular, the speaker's desire to be taken against his will forces renewed attention to the vexed issues of free will and predestination that preoccupied early modern theologians and ordinary believers alike; the sonnet exposes a theology that instructs the believer to yearn for a connection to the divine that the believer can never initiate. The example also reveals a notable feature of Donne's poetics, namely the combined use of multiple devices of estrangement, as well as a primary function: the unearthing of the original strangeness of Christian belief.

This is not to say that every reader or auditor of Donne's religious works will be moved to believe anew traditional religious doctrines. Twenty-first-century readers approach Donne's texts from a wide range of religious (or non-religious) and philosophical positions, and even early modern English readers and congregations held a range of beliefs and degrees of scepticism. I acknowledge that, in distancing the reader, the estrangement effect invites a range of responses, including, quite possibly, rejection of the text and its ideas.<sup>51</sup> The startling power dynamic expressed in *HSBatter* might satisfy or repulse different sensibilities. Likewise, the gaps that devices of estrangement produce allow for multiple re-approaches in the reading of Donne's works. The history of Donne's readership and criticism attests to the multiple responses that his strange style elicits.

### 1. Critical Contexts

Art has different ways of de-automatizing things.

Viktor Shklovsky, "Art as Device"

#### Donne's Earliest Critics

The strong reactions to Donne that have come down to us from the seventeenth century indicate that his daring style and the obscurity and intellectual difficulty of his works were qualities recognized by his contemporaries. William Drummond recorded Ben Jonson's ambivalent reactions to Donne. For example, Drummond reports that Jonson thought that Donne "for not being understood, would perish." Likewise, although Jonson "esteemeth Donne the first poet in the world, in some things," he also thought "Donne's *Anniversary* was profane and full of blasphemies," and that "if it had been written of the Virgin Mary it had been something."<sup>52</sup> Jonson's criticism is directed at Donne's most prominent publications in verse during his lifetime, the *First and Second Anniversaries* (*FirAn* and *SecAn*) (1611–12) which received a great deal of

censure for their extravagant eulogizing of the prematurely deceased Elizabeth Drury, the young daughter of one of Donne's patrons, a girl who by all accounts lived a fairly unremarkable life. The poems also display hyperbolic pessimism about the present world. Donne himself was aware of the contemporary criticisms of his anniversary poems. In a letter written to Henry Goodere while travelling on the Continent in 1612, Donne remarks, "I hear from England of many censures of my book, of M<sup>ris</sup>. Drury."<sup>53</sup> On another occasion, Donne is reported to admit to his efforts to achieve obscurity. Drummond relates Jonson's claim that "Donne said to him [Jonson] he wrote that epitaph on Prince Henry, 'Look to me, faith,' to match Sir Ed. Herbert in obscureness."<sup>54</sup> Jonson's comments indicate that intelligence and literary knowledge are no guarantee that a reader will appreciate or even understand Donne's strange and challenging verse.

On the other hand, after his death Donne was memorialized for his powerful poetics and preaching. Thomas Browne's elegy for Donne in the first edition of *Poems, by J. D. With elegies on the authors death* (1633) comments on the "Strange Fire" of Donne's poetry. The elegy of his friend and executor, Henry King, opens with both praise for Donne's heights and recognition of an excess that exceeds praise: Donne "liv'd eminent, in a degree / Beyond our lofty'st flights," but "such excesses finde no Epitaph" (1-2, 4).<sup>55</sup> Likewise, Thomas Carew's elegy describes, in what is perhaps an allusion to the startling ending of *HSBatter*, Donne's forceful sermons as committing "holy rapes upon our will" (17).<sup>56</sup> Thus, some contemporary responses and early critical comments even suggest awareness of aspects of literary estrangement. It would seem that writers such as Carew understand, at least in part, the functioning of Donne's literary excesses and estranging devices, whereas Jonson cannot see past his distaste and disapproval to consider a possible purpose for distancing the reader from the text.

### **The Strangeness of the Metaphysical Conceit**

Donne's difficult, extravagant, and often strange style has been long recognized, but, since the late seventeenth century, the issue has tended to be discussed and debated in terms of



metaphysical poetry rather than rhetorical function. Defining the exact nature of the metaphysical style and identifying the ranks and lineage of its poets were central concerns in studies of Renaissance literature during the first half of the twentieth century, and subsequent revisions and critiques of the label have addressed the question of whether metaphysical poetry is best understood as a classification of authors or a mode that various poets employ.<sup>57</sup> With striking images, surprising arguments, and unusual comparisons generally characterizing metaphysical poetry, strangeness has always been a part of the critical discussion, whether explicitly or implicitly, but strangeness has not been studied as a quality produced and exploited for particular effects.

The term “metaphysical poetry” has its origins in John Dryden’s complaint that Donne “affects the Metaphysicks, not only in his Satires, but in his Amorous Verses, where Nature only shou’d reign.”<sup>58</sup> For Dryden in the late seventeenth century, Donne pulls “nice Speculations of Philosophy” into love poetry, transgressing the boundaries of generic decorum. In the eighteenth century, in his “Life of Cowley,” Samuel Johnson identifies the metaphysical poets as men of learning whose wit consists of “a kind of *discordia concors*; a combination of dissimilar images, or discovery of occult resemblances in things apparently unlike.”<sup>59</sup> He complains that “The most heterogeneous ideas are yoked by violence together; nature and art are ransacked for illustrations, comparisons, and allusions.”<sup>60</sup> According to Johnson, the metaphysical approach (which “ransacks” instead of borrows) is improper, transgressive, and even violent. After cataloguing various examples from Cowley and Donne, he concludes: “In all these examples it is apparent that whatever is improper or vicious is produced by a voluntary deviation from nature in pursuit of something new and strange.”<sup>61</sup> Johnson recognizes strangeness and newness as the aim of metaphysical poetry, and both he and Dryden foreground the apparent indecorousness and unnaturalness of Donne’s poetry, but neither questions the function of strangeness beyond its being a marker of wit and originality.

In the early twentieth century, T. S. Eliot responded to Johnson's definition of metaphysical poetry, in turn defining the subsequent critical discussion (and elevation) of the metaphysical style. His landmark essay, "The Metaphysical Poets," critiques the viewpoint that considers metaphysical poetry to be "a term of abuse."<sup>62</sup> Eliot instead praises the metaphysical poets' style, emphasizing aspects of their technique and the particular sensibility it suggests.<sup>63</sup> His concern, however, is less with whether such a school or movement existed, and more with the devices and effects of the poetry. Some of the devices Eliot describes can be found, under different names, in Renaissance rhetoric handbooks and treatises on poetry.<sup>64</sup> Although Eliot's analysis still has much to offer, it is ultimately rooted in a debate more relevant to the history of literary criticism than to the actual historical context of Donne and other seventeenth-century lyric poets.

That is not to say that an historical awareness in studies of Renaissance literature is only a recent phenomenon.<sup>65</sup> Older historical criticism engaged with the topic of metaphysical poetry, often focusing on the question of decorum.<sup>66</sup> Rosemond Tuve argued that the view of the metaphysical poets as revolutionary literary innovators reflected the sensibilities of modernist poets and critics such as Eliot and William Empson more than the historical context of Renaissance poetics. Tuve sought to locate the metaphysical conceit within Renaissance notions of decorum, arguing that unusual, strange, and extreme moments can indeed be decorous according to Renaissance theory, so long as the style suits the writer's subject matter and aims.<sup>67</sup> In contrast to Tuve's author-oriented approach to decorum, C. S. Lewis, in his literary history of the sixteenth century, emphasized metaphysical poetry's subversion of Renaissance reader expectations through its conscious flouting of decorum.<sup>68</sup> Intriguingly, Lewis questioned the metaphysical label and even suggested that "Catachrestic" would be a better descriptor than "Metaphysical" poetry.<sup>69</sup> "Catachrestic" derives from the name of the rhetorical figure *catachresis*, which Richard Lanham defines as "an extravagant, unexpected, farfetched metaphor."<sup>70</sup> While Lewis never developed his suggestion, in recent years scholars have taken up

the project of situating metaphysical poetry in Renaissance rhetoric and poetics, and not simply twentieth-century critical debates. While some have rejected the category of metaphysical poetry altogether, others have argued for redefinition and expansion of the label as well as reassessment of the fundamental issues.

Michael Morgan Holmes, for example, has presented a politicized reading of metaphysical poetry and prose. Rejecting what he sees as the “persistent detoxification and normalization of literary Metaphysicality” in earlier criticism, Holmes argues for “Metaphysical denaturalization,” which he grounds in “the Metaphysicals’ more general apprehension that what society takes to be natural morality, identity, desire, and perception are instead deep-seated cultural habits.”<sup>71</sup> According to Holmes, metaphysical literature is primarily about unsettling and challenging notions of “the natural” and thus exposing early modern ideology as convention. Seeking to rehabilitate the critically maligned devotional poetry of Richard Crashaw, Richard Rambuss has also addressed the radical nature of metaphysical poetry, but, unlike Holmes, has focused on its radical style and religious content, not its politics.<sup>72</sup> In his comparison of Crashaw to late twentieth-century visual “shock artists,” Rambuss posits that the destabilizing and unsettling effect of the “aversive” metaphysical conceit not only provokes but also offers the opportunity for renewed awareness of the text, its imagery and ideas. In particular, Rambuss highlights the attention Crashaw’s conceits bring to incarnation—that is, the embodiment of divinity in the flesh—which he locates at the heart of metaphysical poetry’s religious concerns.<sup>73</sup> And in a more historical approach, Katrin Ettenhuber has reexamined critical notions of the metaphysical conceit and worked to position the conceit within the Renaissance arts of discourse, arguing that sixteenth- and seventeenth-century understandings of catachresis are comparable to later understandings of the conceit but more historically relevant.<sup>74</sup> Suggesting that it is decorous to use catachresis to express extremes, Ettenhuber argues that Donne’s valedictory love poems “put the lover in a desperate, remote, foreign place—a situation where only the most remote, desperate, ‘foreign’ type of speech will do.”<sup>75</sup> Ettenhuber’s argument recalls Tuve’s

understanding of decorum in relation to a writer's goals and subject matter as well as Lewis's suggestion of the "Catachrestic" label, but her article also exhibits recent approaches to early modern English texts that combine attention to historical contexts with analysis of formal and stylistic elements.

My project follows the lead of critical approaches such as Ettenhuber's, which participate in the recent critical turn towards what has been variously termed "historicized formalism," historical formalism, or the New Formalism.<sup>76</sup> Verena Theile's prologue to the recent collection *New Formalisms and Literary Theory* outlines the emergent critical approach and its relation to previous critical movements: "New Formalism stems from a literary-cultural theory that harkens back to New Criticism, Russian formalism, and structuralism, but that embraces cultural theory and actively draws on New Historicist methodologies. . . . A text does not live sealed off from the historical, cultural, political moments in which it participated; it does not exist in isolation."<sup>77</sup> Above all, Theile argues for the centrality of the critical goal to "re-read form as a primary property of history and culture, one which shapes language into discourse and one without which no critical inquiry can attain the name and status of literary theory."<sup>78</sup> Influenced by such critical aims, my project emphasizes devices of estrangement as forms with function, while at the same time rejecting the separation of literary forms from their cultural, social, and political contexts. The New Criticism that dominated the mid-twentieth century approached the literary text as an isolated object, detached from its historical context.<sup>79</sup> Although Donne is front and centre in the formalist studies of metaphysical poetry that the New Criticism spawned, those studies largely overlook how the strange formations of language in Donne's texts relate to early modern culture and religion. With the rise of the New Historicism, the last four decades have invaluablely increased our understanding of literature as a dynamic product and producer of culture and power. The New Formalism argues for the gaps in both earlier formalisms and historicisms, rejecting the New Critical isolation of the literary object while also guarding against what it views as emphasis on political and cultural contexts that can overshadow the text itself. As the work of scholars such

as Ettenhuber demonstrates, addressing early modern cultural contexts, such as the rhetorical culture, as well as the functions of the surprising and strange metaphysical conceit (and not just its mechanisms in isolation) can move critical inquiry beyond the compasses of Johnson and Eliot and the assumptions about poetry their criticism contains.<sup>80</sup> For this reason, my project embeds its formalist concerns within literary-historical contexts, such as Renaissance rhetorical theory and post-Reformation religious discourse.

An important intersection of literary, rhetorical, and religious concerns in the period was preaching, as sermons were conceived as orations designed to encourage the congregation in their devotion lives and to alter or enhance their understanding of a biblical text. Thus, as Peter McCullough has noted, sermons were also, in part, works of literary criticism, since they involved the interpretation of a text.<sup>81</sup> Preachers brought literary, rhetorical, philological, and theological concerns to bear on their explication. Redefining the literary value of sermons, Thomas O. Sloane argues that the poetry in Donne's sermons lies not in the flashes of wit and metaphysical conceits but rather in Donne's use of the homiletic form: text, doctrine, and application.<sup>82</sup> The analogical link between the Heavenly Maker and poets as makers, such as Puttenham voices at the start of his *Art of English Poesy*,<sup>83</sup> informs Sloane's argument that, for Donne, poetry is "counterfeit creation," as it chiefly involves "giving form to inchoate matter."<sup>84</sup> Drawing on Donne's numerous comments about poetry, rhetoric, and creation in his sermons, Sloane highlights two ideas Donne expresses—that poetry is harmony, and its resemblance to beaten gold—<sup>85</sup>to argue that form *is* poetry for Donne. The work of gathering material, beating it out, and shaping it into a harmonious whole is the true poetic activity according to the terms and concepts Donne himself puts forth in his sermons. Sloane's analysis helps to bridge the distinctions between verse and sermons in my study of Donne's poetics of estrangement. Sloane's work suggests that it is important to consider the overall form of both the sermon and poem being analyzed, investigating where and how Donne deploys rhetorical figures as devices of estrangement within the overall arguments and rhetorical structures of his works. In Renaissance poetry, such as Donne's

religious lyrics, the conventions of rhetoric have been adapted to the less didactic purposes of poetry, whereas sermons more directly embody the canons of rhetoric and nature of oratory. Examining Donne's sermons as examples of literary estrangement also adds significance to my project's scope, as I venture beyond the compass of traditional criticism on metaphysical poetry and the metaphysical conceit, and contribute to the still infrequent efforts to study Donne's sermons and prose alongside his poetry.

### **Theories of Defamiliarization, Alienation, and Estrangement in the Twentieth Century**

In his essay on the metaphysical poet Andrew Marvell, Eliot notes how "in the verses of Marvell . . . there is the making the familiar strange, and the strange familiar, which Coleridge attributed to good poetry."<sup>86</sup> Eliot seems to be referencing Coleridge's discussion of the ideal poet, whose power of imagination reconciles, among other things, "the sense of novelty and freshness, with old and familiar objects."<sup>87</sup> Eliot's comment, however, is made only in passing, and defamiliarization and estrangement have remained largely peripheral to studies of Donne and Renaissance literature over the past century. This project contributes to studies of Donne's style by opening up the terms of discussion and in part by bringing twentieth-century theories of defamiliarization to bear on Donne studies. The concept of estrangement played a significant role in the development of modern literary theory, estrangement being central to the thinking of the Russian Formalists of the early twentieth century and their successors. Viktor Shklovsky's *ostranenie* and Bertolt Brecht's *Verfremdungseffekt* (usually translated as "the alienation effect") bear some striking similarities to Renaissance theories and techniques of estrangement.

A consideration of Shklovsky's understanding of defamiliarization will help to foreground several concepts central to Donne's poetics of estrangement. In his famous essay, "Art as Device," Shklovsky seeks to counteract the force of habitual, automatic perception, for as he observes, "This is how life becomes nothing and disappears. Automatization eats things, clothes, furniture, your wife and the fear of war."<sup>88</sup> Automatization dulls and diminishes the experience of

whatever a person encounters regularly, no matter its extremity (as in the case of war) or significance (as in the case of a spouse). The effect of familiarity on “things” is a process of reduction: “we do not *see* them [things] but recognize them by their initial features. A thing passes us by as if packaged; we know of its existence by the space it takes up, but we only see its surface.”<sup>89</sup> Although the habits and routines of ordinary life are stultifying, according to Shklovsky, recovery of a conscious and deep experience of things is possible, and it comes through art:

what we call art exists in order to give back the sensation of life, in order to make us feel things, in order to make the stone stony. The goal of art is to create the sensation of seeing, and not merely recognizing, things; the device of art is the ‘*ostranenie*’ of things and the complication of the form, which increases the duration and complexity of perception, as the process of perception is its own end in art and must be prolonged. Art is the means to live through the making of a thing; what has been made does not matter in art.<sup>90</sup>

Shklovsky makes an important dichotomy here. Literary art enables the “seeing” of an object, by which he means the sensation of experiencing it for the first time, which stands in contrast to “recognizing” an object, which refers to automatic mental categorization and assessment devoid of sustained, conscious attention.<sup>91</sup> The process of defamiliarization delays recognition, renewing the reader’s attentiveness not only to the object but also to the forms through which it is experienced, thereby moving the reader’s attention past habitual associations of content and superficial features. Shklovsky’s striking phrase, making the “stone stony,” emphasizes the goal of renewing attentiveness to an object’s form, and therefore to its material nature and sensate qualities.<sup>92</sup> In her recent introduction to Shklovsky, Alexandra Berlina equates defamiliarization with “formal renewal,” and summarizes it as Shklovsky’s most influential idea: “*Things (veshchi)* must be given new *forms (formy)* in order to become seen, and not merely automatically recognized.” Equating formal renewal with *ostranenie*, Berlina goes on to note the centrality of

the concept in Shklovsky's writings: "Openly or obliquely, Shklovsky kept returning to the idea of *ostranenie*, of renewing our experience of things by changing their forms, throughout his life" (3).<sup>93</sup>

Although "Art as Device" is the critical touchstone to which literary theorists and critics return when they discuss defamiliarization, Shklovsky's essay is more evocative than comprehensive, and the methods for "the '*ostranenie*' of things" and "the complication of the form" are never systematically laid out nor analyzed in depth. Nevertheless, Shklovsky identifies several common techniques, such as "not calling a thing or event by its name," "seeing things outside of their context," the quality or actual use of foreign and archaic language, a "difficult, laborious" style, and distorted rhythms.<sup>94</sup> In his study of Shklovsky, Douglas Robinson highlights the importance of "belabored form" in Shklovsky's understanding of art and defamiliarization.<sup>95</sup> Bennett explains that defamiliarization can occur on the level of language (such as in the words of a particular sentence), of content (including dominant conceptions or ideologies in society), and of literary mechanism and form.<sup>96</sup>

Pointing out the Formalist link between defamiliarization and poetry, Karen Kukkonen has explained that Shklovsky's concept of defamiliarization "refers to the retardation of understanding as the distinguishing feature of poetic language."<sup>97</sup> Thus, Shklovsky distinguishes poetic language from ordinary discourse (which he associates with prose), and links poetic language with difficulty of mental apprehension. The division of poetic language from ordinary prose was also part of the Russian Formalists' efforts to demarcate the activities of literary criticism and define its objects of inquiry, but in doing so the Russian Formalists resisted critical attention to matters of biography and social contexts. Consequently, they seemed unwilling or unable to explore the larger social implications of defamiliarization.<sup>98</sup> While Shklovsky largely ignored historical contexts, he was nevertheless interested in instances of defamiliarization throughout literary history, such as the novels of Tolstoy and Sterne's *Tristram Shandy*.<sup>99</sup>



Brecht's formulation of the estrangement effect has arguably been the widest reaching, influencing not only drama but also film studies. Brecht derives his alienation effect from Shklovsky.<sup>100</sup> His dramatic device involves "taking the incidents portrayed [in a play] and alienating them from the spectator" with the aim to "make the spectator adopt an attitude of inquiry and criticism in his approach to the incident."<sup>101</sup> Like Shklovsky, Brecht sees the estrangement effect as occurring in past works and other media, and he identifies the effect in the paintings of Brueghel the Elder, such as in his painting *Landscape with the Fall of Icarus* (c. 1560s).<sup>102</sup> As a dramatist, Brecht is less relevant to my formulation of estrangement, yet Brecht's theory is useful in highlighting the functionality of estranging an audience, as well as the relation of literary devices to social dimensions beyond the text.

As Isabel Rivers has pointed out, Renaissance commentators were chiefly concerned with the function of poetry—"its effect on the individual or on society."<sup>103</sup> Brian Vickers has argued that "the Renaissance understood literature as being essentially a form of *rhetoric*, with an explicit or implicit design on its readers."<sup>104</sup> And Corey McEleney and Jacqueline Wernimont have recently argued that "Early modern literary criticism and theory was essentially formalist. Working in an era of literary production that systematized its conceptions of genre and rhetoric, early modern authors obsessed over the forms by which texts produce their effects."<sup>105</sup> The writers and theorists of early modern England believed that literature was a means to a moral and didactic end—as Philip Sidney puts it, "to teach and delight"<sup>106</sup>—and not simply the perception of the aesthetic object, as Shklovsky theorizes. While Shklovsky's and Brecht's understandings of the methods and effects of "making strange" bear resemblance to Donne's, the dissertation will demonstrate how Donne's use of estrangement also differs significantly. Renaissance literary theory was embedded in sociopolitical, religious, and philosophical concerns. Brecht's major innovation was to deploy the alienation effect with a didactic goal in mind, namely to keep his audience at a distance in order to facilitate their critique of bourgeois society. Early modern literature was often didactic, but that is not to say it should be read only for the moral or

devotional message. My emphasis on the period's functional approach to literature helps to illuminate the devices and effects of Donne's writings. In doing so, defamiliarization comes into view as an important concept and practice in the works of Donne.

### **Habitual Perception and Defamiliarization in Donne's Writings**

How did Donne understand the nature and effects of familiarity and strangeness, and to what extent did he think about the process of estrangement? Ideas about repetition and habit and their automatizing effect on experience can be found in various writings from throughout Donne's canon. For example, Donne's verse letter "To Sr. Henry Goodere" (*HG*) (ca. 1608), which tries to counsel Goodere to break his bad habits and reform his character, addresses the power of habit and how to overcome it. Goodere was a close friend of Donne during Donne's years out of regular work as well as his most regular correspondent, but Goodere was known to have weaknesses for extravagance and sporting, especially hawking.<sup>107</sup> The poem begins:

Who makes the Past, a patterne for next yeare,  
 Turnes no new leafe, but still the same things reads,  
 Seene things, he sees againe, heard things doth heare,  
 And makes his life, but like a paire of beads.

(1-4)

Comparison of the patterns and habits of life to praying the rosary equates the Roman Catholic devotional practice with vain repetition. The image also suggests the potential for religious habits in general to become automatic and thus sterile. The reference to "Seene things, he sees againe, heard things doth heare" could just as easily describe Church of England religious services as Catholic ones. Church of England services involved repeated patterns of gesture, call and response, and regular assigned readings from scripture, which conformed to a cyclical calendar of set feasts, each covered in layers of standard topics and associations over the centuries. Later on in the verse letter, Donne counsels the spendthrift Goodere to improve his character by

transplanting himself to “outlandish ground” (22), recognizing that “To be a stranger hath that benefit / Wee can beginnings, but not habits choke” (25–26). Encouraging foreign travel as a possible remedy for Goodere’s bad habits, Donne describes the freedom of the “stranger,” or foreigner, who, being transplanted to a new environment, can start afresh and change his or her behaviour because habits have not yet taken hold. Analogously, literary estrangement can involve placing a familiar object in a new setting, which Shklovsky describes as “This method of seeing things outside of their context.”<sup>108</sup> While the verse letter urges Goodere’s growth and change, in the end Donne recognizes the unoriginality of his counsel: “But why doe I touch / Things, of which none is in your practise new, / And Tables, or fruit-trenchers teach as much” (42–44). Patrides glosses “Tables” as “moralized emblems,” but also notes that many manuscripts read “Fables,” i.e., “moralized tales.” Robbins favours “Fables,” pointing out the morals at the end of Aesop’s stories, and he explains that “The round wooden boards to eat off were commonly inscribed with mottoes.”<sup>109</sup> If, as Mary Silcox has argued, early modern emblem books “rely utterly on the different and the strange, and yet use them in the service of the universalized and the familiar,” then perhaps there is a seed of hope for renewal contained in the image Donne creates. The interpretation of both allegorical stories and symbolic emblems involves mental labour, even if the discovery is an unoriginal motto.<sup>110</sup> While the speaker’s effacing conclusion is, in part, a measure to soften his criticism and avoid holding onto a position of authority (Goodere, after all, was Donne’s social superior), it also raises the question of whether anyone can escape the cycle of pattern and repetition in life, when Donne’s counsel to go abroad and start afresh might itself be nothing new. The conclusion of *HG* exemplifies the irreconcilable tension between the familiar and the strange in many early modern texts.

While Donne occasionally recognizes the power of habit in poems such as *HG*, his sermons, as a group, frequently recognize the stultifying effect of habit and repetition, which is fitting since, as a matter of genre, sermons involve the explication of biblical texts that would have been familiar to most of Donne’s auditors. For instance, in a Sermon Preached at St. Paul’s

upon Christmas Day, 1626, Donne attacks transubstantiation, the Catholic doctrine that the elements of the Eucharist contain Christ's real body and blood, as "the hereticall Riddle of the Roman Church . . . to dishonour miracles, by the assiduity and frequency, and multiplicity of them" (*PS* 7.11.294.560–62). The *OED* cites the passage for its use of "assiduity" in the sense of "Continual recurrence or repetition, frequency."<sup>111</sup> The passage implies that the repetition of phenomena, even extraordinary ones such as sacraments and miracles, conditions automatic responses, which leads to stifled interest and admiration. To put it bluntly, more means less.<sup>112</sup> Conversely, in a Sermon Preached at St. Paul's, on Easter Day, 1627, Donne argues for the admiration and wonder of that which is rare:

There is nothing that God hath established in a constant course of nature, and which therefore is done every day, but would seeme a Miracle, and exercise our admiration, if it were done but once; Nay, the ordinary things in Nature, would be greater miracles, then the extraordinary, which we admire most, if they were done but once; The standing still of the Sun, for Iosuahs use, was not, in it selfe, so wonderful a thing, as that so vast and immense a body as the Sun, should run so many miles, in a minute; The motion of the Sun were a greater wonder then the standing still, if all were to begin againe; And onely the daily doing takes off the admiration.

(*PS* 7.15.373–74.126–36)

Donne is arguing that if the remarkable and extraordinary are made frequent they lose their honour and impact, whereas, conversely, if the mundane and ordinary were made rare, they would generate wonder and admiration. In other words, the frequency of something alters our perception of it. Therein lies a root of estrangement as a means to renew appreciation for, and to revitalize the impact of, the familiar. In a sermon preached at Lincoln's Inn on Job 19.26, probably in Easter Term 1620, Donne more directly considers the processes of familiarization and defamiliarization:

If thou hadst seen the bodies of men rise out of the grave, at Christs Resurrection, could that be a stranger thing to thee, then, (if thou hadst never seen, nor hard, nor imagined it before) to see an Oake that spreads so farre, rise out of an Akorne? Or if Churchyards did vent themselves every spring, and that there were such a Resurrection of bodies every yeare, when thou hadst seen as many Resurrections as years, the Resurrection would be no stranger to thee, then the spring is.

(*PS 3.3.97.239–46*)

Although I examine the whole sermon at greater length in chapter 4, I highlight this particular passage now as one of Donne’s most direct comments about the conditionality of strangeness. Donne explicitly uses the comparative adjective “stranger.” The passage highlights how routine and habitual encounter can make wondrous things, such as resurrection, seem ordinary: “No stranger to thee, then the spring is.” Donne recognizes the diminishing effect of “the daily doing” on natural occurrences (such as sunrises and sunsets, and seasons) as well as supernatural events (such as sacraments and miracles). Many of the foundational doctrines of Christianity, such as the Virgin Birth or the resurrection of the dead, hold paradoxical significance and affirm events that fall outside of “normal” experience. Therefore, religious poetry and sermons often deal with habitualized paradoxes and normalized strangeness. The passage from Donne’s Sermon on Job 19.26 not only demonstrates awareness of the conditionality of strangeness, but also exemplifies methods for overcoming automatized perception. Donne selects and deploys his words carefully in order to make the ordinary growth of an oak tree appear strange to his auditors. He describes seeing an oak tree “rise” from an acorn, using a verb (with obvious associations with resurrection) that compresses the length of the process into a single action and makes the growth seem like one smooth movement upwards, while simultaneously emphasizing the disparity in size from vast oak to initial acorn—“an Oake that spreads so farre, rise out of an Akorne.” The micro-level control over diction and syntax contributes to the macro-level maneuver of flipping the auditor’s or reader’s frame of reference. The natural world is estranged; the miraculous is made ordinary. The

description invests the natural growth of an oak tree with a sense of freshness and marvel, while at the same time the parallels formed between resurrection and natural processes of seasonal growth and transformation make the traditional doctrine concrete and accessible, a felt experience.

Awareness and affirmation of the conditionality of strangeness are evident in Donne's poetry as well. In Donne's early erotic elegy, "The Perfume" (*ElPerf*) (ca. 1593–96), the speaker, a brash young man, describes sneaking past the sleeping household in order to visit his young lover only to be suddenly discovered:

But Oh, too common ill, I brought with mee  
That, which betray'd mee to my enimie:  
A loud perfume, which at my entrance cryed  
Even at thy fathers nose, so were wee spied.  
When, like a tyran King, that in his bed  
Smelt gunpowder, the pale wretch shivered;  
Had it beene some bad smell, he would have thought  
That his owne feet, or breath, that smell had wrought.  
But as wee in our Ile emprisoned,  
Where cattell onely, and diverse dogs are bred,  
The pretious Unicornes, strange monsters, call,  
So thought he good, strange, that had none at all.

(47–50)

Donne compares the old, decrepit father, who is familiar only with smells and has therefore been aroused by the "strange" aroma of the speaker's perfume, to the English, who being familiar with only ordinary domesticated animals such as cows and dogs (the poem exaggerates) would therefore think a unicorn a "strange monster" if they encountered one. The comparison involves a shift from the domestic sphere to the national, and the speaker's claims about England's isolation



would also function humorously and critically, for it was widely assumed at the time that Somerset and his wife-to-be, Frances Howard, then Lady Essex, were not strangers to one another. It was gossiped that they were in fact having an affair before the annulment of her previous marriage (on the grounds of lack of consummation).<sup>115</sup> The estranging effect of the image of quivering jelly generates humour, while at the same time the awkward comparison of a notorious bride to a fallen star (which surely would have evoked negative connotations) suggests the awkward situation for Donne of having to write a poem praising the scandalous couple.<sup>116</sup> The examples above indicate that Donne recognizes the negative effects of familiarization and exploits the sense of freshness, newness, and fascination associated with the strange.

### **Estrangement in Studies of Early Modern Literature**

Just as this project draws on twenty-first century historical-contextual approaches to metaphysical poetry, it builds on recent historical studies of strangeness and estrangements (thematic and formal). Literary estrangement, particularly in the well-known formulations of Brecht and Shklovsky, has been typically studied as a modern concept that describes various twentieth-century literary and dramatic techniques. The rhetorical handbooks of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries do not often discuss literary estrangement in terms familiar to modern literary concerns. Nevertheless, just as Donne's writings exhibit concern for the familiar and the strange, the process of "making strange" is conceptually present as a discernible strategy and desired effect that underpins aspects of Renaissance rhetorical and literary theory, especially in general discussions of figurative language and specific figures of speech.<sup>117</sup> George Gascoigne's conception of invention, for example, encourages avoiding the familiar.<sup>118</sup> Gascoigne recommends revealing one's love in poetry through making "a strange discourse of some intolerable passion."<sup>119</sup> Just as Puttenham defines figurative language as language "estranged" from ordinary discourse, Henry Peacham, in the 1593 second edition of *The Garden of Eloquence*, defines a figure as "a forme of words, oration, or sentence, made new by art, differing



from the vulgar maner and custome of writing or speaking.”<sup>120</sup> For Puttenham, all figurative language involves estrangement, and Peacham acknowledges the inherent newness and difference of figures of speech. In Renaissance theory, figurative language is strange in comparison to ordinary speech.

In her consideration of the relationship between the familiar and the strange in early modern English emblem books, Silcox argues that “the boundaries between known and unknown are more *porous* and *fluid* than modernists often admit.”<sup>121</sup> The examples from Gascoigne, Puttenham, and Peacham point to a similar porousness and fluidity between the familiar and the strange in English Renaissance rhetorical and literary theory. Nevertheless, scholars frequently touch upon the topic only to set it aside.<sup>122</sup> And, while there does exist a growing body of scholarship on estrangements in the literature of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century England, “estrangement” is variously, and often vaguely, defined. For example, to return to Holmes’s study of metaphysical literature, on several occasions Holmes postulates “Metaphysical estrangement,” but the term is vaguely linked to the unsettling of conceptions of naturalness, and its formal operations in texts are unclear.<sup>123</sup> Critical efforts have recently been made to approach estrangement as technique as well as theme, and to locate those estranging techniques in the contexts of Renaissance rhetoric and poetics. Catherine Nicholson has focused on the work of sixteenth-century English theorists and writers to create an eloquent vernacular, a project that inherently involves the estrangement of classical cultural elements in their adaptation to early modern English contexts. Nicholson argues that the consequent tensions present in English Renaissance pedagogy and poetics gave rise to a body of literature in the 1570s and 1580s that exhibited eccentricity—a quality she links with the strange, foreign, and archaic—as a sign of literary value.<sup>124</sup> Focusing on the decades before Donne’s earliest poems were written (which date to the early 1590s), Nicholson bases her analysis of eloquence and eccentricity on John Lyly’s *Euphues: The Anatomy of Wit* (1578), Edmund Spenser’s *The Shepheardes Calender* (1579), and Christopher Marlowe’s *Tamburlaine the Great* (1587).<sup>125</sup> While Nicholson’s focus on the 1570s

and 1580s explains why Donne does not appear in her study, Donne's absence is more conspicuous in Kelly and Semler's *Word and Self Estranged in English Texts* (2010), since the studies included in that collection extend well into the seventeenth century.

This is not to say that studies of Donne have heretofore ignored the strangeness in Donne's oeuvre. The problem is that Donne's characteristic strangeness is all too familiar. This project attempts to renew attention to the strangeness of Donne's texts by defamiliarizing our critical approach to that aspect. Estrangement, not metaphysical poetry, becomes the line of approach. Just as comments on familiarity and strangeness can be found throughout Donne's works, estrangement and its equivalents can be found in fragmentary comments scattered across the scholarship on Donne. For instance, the idea that the familiar is made strange in Donne's poetry is latent in foundational studies such as those of Johnson and Eliot. In more recent decades, Heather Dubrow, in a chapter on Donne's *Eclog*, has described Donne's "distancing strategies," and Carey has described moments when Donne likens the body to dead or inanimate things as "some of Donne's most strangely involving effects."<sup>126</sup>

Estrangement has also been considered on occasion in the scholarship on Donne's sermons. Using estrangement in its social and theological senses, Brent Nelson's study of the rhetoric of courtship in Donne's sermons points out how Donne sets the condition of estrangement from God as a step in his rhetorical strategy of using worldly desires and ambitions to incline his congregation towards God.<sup>127</sup> Most explicitly, Shami, in her discussion of how Donne's sermons typically move and affect his auditory, notes how Donne offsets familiarizing strategies with defamiliarizing techniques. Shami writes: "While Donne uses many rhetorical means to achieve nearness by making abstract theological doctrines familiar to his audiences, all of Donne's familiarizing strategies are offset by defamiliarizing techniques that make his audience see differently, by wearing spectacles, or hear differently, by using two ears, or speak differently by rethinking controversial labels. Doing so rouses them from their spiritual lethargy, their deadness towards God's grace."<sup>128</sup> Shami notes some of the different ways that Donne

describes a sermon's effect on an auditory: each involves an alteration in a person's senses or faculties, e.g., to "see differently" or "hear differently" or "speak differently."<sup>129</sup> This change in sensual perception and ability can be equated with the effects of estrangement on Donne's auditory, for, as will be elaborated in the next chapter, the alteration of the audience's perception is one of the functions of literary estrangement.

More generally, however, in spite of the recent critical attention to rhetoric in Donne and the emergence of New Formalisms in early modern studies, there continues to be limited research on how and why Donne uses specific literary devices to render the familiar strange. My dissertation addresses that gap, arguing that literary estrangement is central to Donne's aesthetic. This is the first study of Donne to focus on his poetics of estrangement, but I also cover new ground in the field of early modern literary studies more generally. My systematic approach to the concept of estrangement is unique not only for the degree to which I emphasize estrangement in my readings of Donne, but also, more importantly, for how I situate defamiliarization in the rhetorical theory and practice of the early modern period, in particular the various rhetorical figures I categorize as devices of estrangement.

## 2. Historical Contexts

If thou be'st born to strange sights,  
 Things invisible to see,  
 Ride ten thousand days and nights,  
 Till age snow white hairs on thee,  
 Thou, when thou return'st, wilt tell me,  
 All strange wonders that befell thee . . .

Donne, "Song ['Go and catch a falling star']" (*SGO*)

### Ambivalence and Anxiety in the Early Modern Discourse of Strangeness

Although both Renaissance and modern theories of literary estrangement reveal strangeness to be in the eye of the beholder, what one considers to be strange is nonetheless conditioned by the culture one inhabits and its assumptions. During the early modern period, events such as the European discovery of the Americas, the development of the heliocentric conception of the universe, and the inventions of the telescope and the microscope challenged European culture with new ways of perceiving the world and unsettled traditional systems of knowledge.<sup>130</sup> Donne's poetics of estrangement arose in a society deeply disturbed and intensely fascinated by the many forms of the strange it was encountering. The strange was sometimes experienced directly, such as on voyages to new and distant lands and foreign cultures, or in the objects and sometimes even people whom travelers, merchants, and explorers brought back to England. Donne was both involved in and on the periphery of many travels and colonial ventures abroad. As a young man, he served with the Earl of Essex on the Cadiz expedition of 1596, and with Essex and Sir Walter Raleigh during the failed "Islands Expedition" of 1597 to the Azores. In the following decade, he applied unsuccessfully for both state employment in Ireland and a colonial posting with the Virginia Company, and he travelled to the Continent several times

throughout his life. The majority of people in England did not travel abroad, but they could still encounter the strange through not only travel narratives but also in an immense variety of texts, from plays to verse letters, from rhetorical handbooks to devotional writings. Donne himself was an insatiable reader, as evidenced by the learning, much of it erudite and esoteric, on display in his political treatise, *Pseudo-Martyr* (1610), and in his work of biblical exegesis, *Essayes in Divinity*. Debora Shuger has called attention to “the humanist interpretation of the past as simultaneously authoritative and alien.”<sup>131</sup> Donne’s works, in both prose and verse, exhibit the simultaneously expansive and introspective curiosity for the strange that characterizes the period. As the numerous studies of strangeness in the period suggest, there existed in the early modern world a “discourse of strangeness,” a vast network of ideas, expressions, and texts, each of which is in some way preoccupied with the strange.<sup>132</sup> The “discourse of strangeness” refers not only to the classification, description, and cataloguing of the strange in cultural texts, but also to the assumptions, attitudes, values, and beliefs that undergird the culture’s perceptions of difference and distance.

A passage from Donne’s Satire 4 (*Sat4*) encapsulates much of this vast discourse, suggesting the many meanings of the strange and the range of responses to it. In the poem, Donne’s speaker encounters

A thing more strange, then on Niles slime, the Sunne  
E’r bred, or all which into Noahs Arke came:  
A thing, which would have pos’d Adam to name,  
Stranger then seaven Antiquaries studies,  
Then Africks Monsters, Guianaes rarities  
Stranger then strangers; One, who for a Dane,  
In the Danes Massacre had sure been slaine,  
If he had liv’d then; And without helpe dies,  
When next the Prentises ’gainst Strangers rise.

One, whom the watch at noone lets scarce goe by,  
 One, to whom, the examining Justice sure would cry,  
 Sir, by your priesthood tell me what your are.  
 His cloths were strange, though coarse; and black, though bare.

(18–30)

In his sweeping comparisons, Donne describes many of the varieties of strangeness perceived in the period, such as unnaturally spawned creatures, unusual artifacts, and foreigners in London. The strange exists “out there,” in the regions of the marvellous or the fabled past, but it also interrupts the mundane, everyday present. It is the wonders of the wide world but also the odd person the local watchman stops at noon. It can be excess and extravagance (“Stranger then seaven Antiquaries studies”), but also scarcity and austerity (“cloths . . . strange, though coarse”). In each example, strangeness stems from distance and difference, whether geographical (the Nile, Africa, Guiana), temporal (old artifacts), regional/national (strangers), religious (Catholics), or in terms of general appearance. Strangeness can provoke fear and even violence, as in the case of fearsome “Monsters” and the “Danes Massacre.” It also denotes desirable “rarities.” Strangeness would seem to defy categorization, confusing even Adam’s mythic ability to name creatures;<sup>133</sup> yet, as Satire 4 indicates, the ability to describe varying kinds of strangeness means that strangeness is difference regarded and, in the case of literary works, difference represented. Strangeness, then, involves the material and mental worlds, life experienced and life represented in (and encountered through) texts, the object perceived and the inward processes of emotional response and intellectual apprehension.<sup>134</sup> The strange occupies a nebulous space between knowing and unknowing—known to some extent, but escaping confident and comfortable understanding.

In literary texts, strangeness is a quality produced not only through representations of that which is considered strange in the material world, but also through surprising and unusual linguistic and syntactic forms, known in Renaissance discourse as the figures of rhetoric, and

today as figures of speech.<sup>135</sup> Donne's devices of estrangement are always as much a result of *verba* as *res*, of estranged language and literary forms and not simply unusual content. While estrangement is associated with the very essence of figurative language in Renaissance rhetoric and poetics handbooks, the strangeness of figures also provokes ambivalences and anxieties. For example, while Puttenham admits that all figures of speech are "in a sort abuses, or rather trespasses, in speech, because they pass the ordinary limits of common utterance," he cautions against making comparisons "neither natural nor proper," which he calls "plain Abuse."<sup>136</sup> The lawyer, writer, and friend of Donne, John Hoskins, similarly warns that "the rule of a metaphor is that it be not too bold nor too far-fetched," and he complains that the abuse of extreme forms of metaphor "is now grown in fashion—as most abuses are."<sup>137</sup> In general, then, producing strangeness through various rhetorical figures is considered a poetical abuse, an unnatural technique and undesired effect that is explicitly cautioned against. Calling attention to the "cultural anxiety about the figurative uses of language," Kirsten Tranter has argued that "Donne's preoccupation with figures of disproportion, excess and disfigurement suggests a sustained reflection on the failing adequacy of those old models [of poetic correspondence]."<sup>138</sup> I would connect the emphasis on disjunction that Tranter recognizes to the anxiety and fascination that the difference and distance inherent to strangeness generate.

Early modern conceptions of the strange, whether figurative or material, overlap with contemporaneous accounts of wonder. Wonder was held to be the powerful reaction to the marvellous. Influenced by classical accounts, such as Aristotle's *Metaphysics*, *Rhetoric*, and *Poetics* and Pliny's *Natural History*, Renaissance discourses not only theorized wonder as an emotional and intellectual response, but also catalogued and contemplated the many marvels and wonders of the world, both natural and supernatural.<sup>139</sup> The Renaissance discourse of wonders and marvels has been the subject of a great deal of scholarship.<sup>140</sup> In an influential early account of the marvellous in Renaissance literary criticism, Baxter Hathaway has argued for the unresolved opposition between the insistence on verisimilitude and realism and the desire for the

marvellous.<sup>141</sup> However, Hathaway's focus is on Italian literary criticism, and when he considers England he continually identifies the marvellous with Sidney's desire for a "golden" world better than "brazen" reality.<sup>142</sup> The marvellous, for Hathaway, involves heightened representation. However, as Donne's lines from *Sat4* indicate, although the strange can evoke wonder and admiration and can be drawn from the realms of fantasy, the difference that defines the strange is not always a matter of enhancement, nor is the strange always removed from workaday reality. In fact, the strange can also designate the ugly and disfigured, as well as the surprising and unusual in more mundane contexts. That which is considered strange might be all too real for the perceiver (and the perceived), such as in the case of hostility to foreigners. The strange might seem unnatural or foreign, as well as simply unique or new. While it is difficult to distinguish between the wondrous and the strange, mainly because Renaissance writers do not make clear distinctions between the two, the strange seems to be the broader category encompassing the wondrous and marvellous. In short, wonder is one of the emotions the estrangement effect can generate.

Stephen Greenblatt has discussed the role of the marvellous in producing wonder in the European accounts of the exploration, conquest, and colonization of the New World:

The marvellous is a central feature . . . in the whole complex system of representation, verbal and visual, philosophical and aesthetic, intellectual and emotional, through which people in the late Middle Ages and the Renaissance apprehended, and thence possessed or discarded, the unfamiliar, the alien, the terrible, the desirable, and the hateful.<sup>143</sup>

Like the marvellous, the grotesque also has an established presence in scholarship. In his recent reappraisal of the grotesque in the early modern period, L. E. Semler has argued that the grotesque concerns foreignness:

Not utter foreignness, but foreignness perceived, which is to say, received and inflected by that which is not itself. This response preserves and familiarizes the other, and does so



by fabricating and delivering an aesthetically domesticated strangeness to the mind of the viewer and reader.<sup>144</sup>

Like Greenblatt in his account of the Renaissance discourse of wonder, Semler sees early modern Europeans as possessing and controlling various Others through the discourse of the grotesque. This dynamic—of wonder, or grotesqueness, or strangeness being used to represent and therefore possess, or contain, or mentally apprehend, the Other—is now well established in scholarship. While Greenblatt’s and Semler’s studies addressing the possession and appropriation of the strange have contributed to our understanding of how discourses have been used to exert control over Others, my approach places emphasis not on the dynamic of possessing or taming, but rather on the opposite process. I emphasize how devices of estrangement—such as the traditional features in Donne’s religious writings—can, in effect, dispossess the reader of familiar, habitualized aspects of their lives, worlds, and cultures, charging these well-known and well-used elements with new energy, and revitalizing their power to affect us. Donne’s poetics of estrangement can be understood as recovery, not in the sense of regaining possession of something, but rather of recovering a clear view of something, recovering our first experience of it, recovering, perhaps, the original strangeness.

### **Donne’s Readership and the Estranging Effects of Obscurity and Difficulty**

Understanding who Donne wrote for, as well as who actually read his works, sheds light on the motivations behind, and the effects of, his poetics of estrangement. Marotti has influentially argued that Donne was primarily a coterie poet, writing for small groups of familiar, intellectual men (and some women) who were part of the circles of power; thus, Donne expected cultured, intelligent, elite readers.<sup>145</sup> In recent years, this critical picture of Donne’s readership has started to change. While Ernest Sullivan II explains that “Donne himself, in his verse and prose, recognized the intellectual complexity of his work, the difficulty of reading it, and the kind of reader he hoped for,” Sullivan’s calculation of Donne’s seventeenth-century audience, based on

criteria such as the fact that writers borrowing lines from Donne must also have been reading Donne, reaches two conclusions: “(1) Donne’s readers during his lifetime were not limited to those with access to manuscripts (Donne’s friends and the elite); and (2) Donne’s audience had not disappeared by the time of the Restoration, suggesting a wider and more enduring appeal of his poetry.”<sup>146</sup> Strangeness and the difficulty of mental apprehension it generates could appeal to the educated, witty social circles Donne chose to share his manuscript poetry with, but it was also on display in his *FirAn* and *SecAn*, the most prominent publications of his poetry during his lifetime. Donne’s comments about reading, some of which I will turn to shortly, presume a certain level of intellectual capability to fully engage with his difficult verse and prose, and that consideration supports my argument that Donne’s devices of estrangement are functional. Nevertheless, Donne’s poetics of estrangement was not simply the result of his intentions and expectations; it was also conditioned by the strong responses to strangeness embedded in early modern English culture. Therefore, understanding Donne’s expectations about his different audiences helps us to analyze the function of his devices of estrangement, but this does not restrict the functioning of those devices to the scope of Donne’s expectations. Sullivan concludes “that Donne’s writings had commercial, social, and personal value for a great diversity of readers during the entire century,” and that his religious poems were among his least read.<sup>147</sup> Donne’s enduring popularity can also be read as further evidence of the power that strangeness held for many different kinds of readers.

The devices of estrangement Donne employs not only cultivate qualities that might have appealed to his anticipated readers, but they also actively shape the readers and auditors of his works. Donne’s youthful verse letters describe an intimate and interactive relationship with his readers. In “To Mr. R. W. [Kindly I envy thy song’s’]” (*RWEnvy*), for example, the speaker proclaims, “Oh, I was dead; but since thy song new Life did give, / I recreated, even by thy creature, live” (13–14). In his study of collaboration between author and reader in early modern

England, Stephen Dobranski borrows Donne's famous metaphysical conceit of the "stiffe twin compasses" (25) in "A Valediction Forbidding Mourning" (*ValMourn*)<sup>148</sup> to argue for

the interdependent relationship that authors and readers formed. Like the hinged feet of a rotating compass (which Donne uses to depict the lovers' coactive souls), so Renaissance authors and readers exerted a mutual, though not equal force on each other: one foot enabled motion, the other ran obliquely; when one foot leaned, the other hearkened after it. This complementary motion neatly captures the interactive processes of writing and reading during the seventeenth century, and suggests how authors and readers remained simultaneously separated and connected.<sup>149</sup>

Emphasizing the work involved in reading, Dobranski describes seventeenth-century readers as "active" or "collaborative," explaining, "the act of reading was literally a *co-laboring*: writers invoked readers who had to participate in various ways to determine a text's meaning."<sup>150</sup>

Donne's compass image, as well as Dobranski's adaptation of it to illustrate his theory of readership, help to elucidate Donne's interconnection with his readers through his texts, and the interaction the estrangement effect prompts. Devices of estrangement distance the reader, but reader and text are not divorced—they are estranged. In my conceptualization of literary estrangement, the relational connotations of "estrangement" point to the possibility of a renewed relationship between reader and text, of reconciliation; the twin feet of the compasses may be moved to a distance from one another, but they are still joined. Through the acts of reading and interpretation, the reader may labour to return, to understand the text made strange. In this way, the feet of the compass can move back closer together. As Donne leans on his readers with the strangeness and difficulty of his texts, the resultant estrangement effect may ultimately shape more active, intellectually engaged readers who endeavour to lean back into Donne's texts in order to understand them.

Donne's conceptualization of reading as labour and his partiality for difficult texts are apparent in *Essays in Divinity*. In book 2, Donne attempts to explain and defend contradictions

in the Bible, namely why God “admits some such diversities in his book” in regard to numbers.<sup>151</sup>

The first reason Donne provides is that labouring to read produces pleasure for certain types of readers:

For naturally great wits affect the reading of obscure books, wrestle and sweat in the explication of prophecies, digg and thresh out the words of unlegible hands, resuscitate and bring to life again the mangled, and lame fragmentary images and characters in Marbles and Medals, because they have a joy and complacency in the victory and atchievement thereof.<sup>152</sup>

Donne’s frequently stated admiration for the style of the Bible means that it is an example to imitate.<sup>153</sup> Donne’s analysis of the function of the Bible’s contradictory and difficult aspects in books offers a blueprint for achieving similar effects. Two important characteristics of Donne’s aesthetic related to estrangement can be inferred from his comments in book 2. Indeed, the habits of reading and restorative achievement Donne describes sound like the great wit’s own habits of reading and learning, as well as the habits his witty verse and prose expect from and cultivate in his readers. Reading obscure books is described in terms of physical activity: wrestling, sweating, digging, threshing. Similarly, old coins, statues, and medals are not simply restored—they are resurrected. Reading is labour, and labour is revitalizing and rewarding.<sup>154</sup> The second reason Donne provides in *Essayes* for the contradictions in the Bible is that God “is pleased that his word should endure and undergo the opinion of contradiction, or other infirmities, . . . that after all such dissections, & cribrations, and examinings of Hereticall adventures upon it, it might return from the furnace more refin’d, and gain luster and clearness by the vexation.”<sup>155</sup> According to Donne, confusing and vexing matters can actually be part of the process of refining and clarifying them, which evinces the dialectic behind Donne’s devices of estrangement. Donne’s own difficult poems often provide knotted arguments to vex the reader, only to arrive at a forceful and emphatic conclusion. In this passage, “vexation” can result in “luster” and “clearness.”<sup>156</sup> In the context of reading, the results Donne mentions suggest new light being thrown on a text and a

clear understanding being gained; in either case, the reader's perception has been enhanced. The figurative sense of lustre also suggests "Brilliance or splendour of renown; glory," which points to the value and distinction that figurative strangeness was thought to add to literary works.<sup>157</sup>

Donne's comments in *Essays in Divinity* on reading the Bible also imply the fundamental ambivalence towards strangeness in the period. Donne is arguing for purpose behind the obscurity and inconsistencies of the Bible, but in order to do so, he has to admit to "the opinion of contradiction, or other infirmities" about scripture. In the case of the Bible as well as other texts, strangeness can function as both an attractive quality, luring the reader with its promise of mental challenge or pleasure in the unusual, or it can repel and confound with obscurity and difficulty.

### **Estrangement as Religious Trope**

Donne's comments about reading the contradictions in the Bible reveal important features of his own aesthetic. Examining such intersections between literature and religion, my project takes part in the recent "turn to religion" in Renaissance studies, a scholarly approach which recognizes religion as a primary element in the cultural matrix of the period.<sup>158</sup> I follow Shuger's use of "religion" as "a catchall term for belief, exegesis, systematic theology, devotional lyrics, biblical poetry, religious art, ascetic practices, ritual, inquisitions, canon law, etc."<sup>159</sup> My critical approach is also influenced by Shuger's conception of "habits of thought," by which she means "a culture's interpretive categories and their internal relations, which underline specific beliefs, ideas, and values," as well as her claim that "Renaissance habits of thought were by and large religious."<sup>160</sup> Religion was not only a matter of ritual and liturgy, ecclesiastical structure, or abstract theological premise, but rather religion helped to define the categories of interpretation, and thus shaped the possibilities for understanding in the early modern world.<sup>161</sup> In England, the period's most important work of literary theory—Sidney's *The Defence of Poesy* (composed ca. 1582)—includes an analogy between the poet as maker and God as Maker.<sup>162</sup> Connections between literature and religion have proved fertile ground for recent scholarship, especially for

historical formalist approaches. Critics have articulated a number of poetic modes conditioned by religion, including the poetics of sacrament, sacrifice, and incarnation.<sup>163</sup> Likewise, scholars such as Gary Kuchar and Ceri Sullivan have explored the relations between religious conception and rhetorical form not simply as an issue of reflection but as interaction, each shaping the other.<sup>164</sup>

Religion conditions works of literature at the same time that literary forms shape religious belief, discourse, and practice. Donne's poetics of estrangement was significantly shaped by post-Reformation religious culture, in particular the trope of estrangement.

In ordinary discourse, estrangement is normally used to describe tense or strained relations between people. Addressing religious discourse, Shuger explains: "In the Judeo-Christian tradition, the sacred is a person. . . . The habits of thought in the high culture of the English Renaissance remain personalist."<sup>165</sup> Since people during the Renaissance were "eager to situate the self in relation to community and divinity,"<sup>166</sup> early modern conceptions of fallen humanity's spiritual estrangement from God are essential for understanding devices of estrangement in the religious literature and vice versa. According to Christian theology, because of the Fall, human beings are estranged from God, and consequently from each other and even themselves. Thus, human estrangement from God as a result of sin affects not only the individual's spiritual state, but also the moral, psychological, familial, social, and political spheres. Estrangement suggests the separation between God and humankind that sin causes, but also the original closeness that was thought to have been lost. That estrangement was a significant state of feeling and articulation of selfhood in early modern English society is not a novel claim; nevertheless, studies of the period's culture and literature rarely explore the topic at length. Anthony Raspa, for example, in his groundbreaking discussion of Donne's *Essays in Divinity*, briefly sums up human estrangement when he addresses Donne's view of the Hebrew sojourn in Egypt as a type of the human condition: "People are alienated from themselves, from their eternal home and from their Creator."<sup>167</sup> Although Raspa's introduction and commentary deal with Donne's typological views, he does not greatly emphasize the trope of estrangement in *Essays*,

but as I have shown in the examples discussed earlier in the chapter, thematic as well as literary estrangement is present in the work. Raspa's brief discussion of estrangement is not uncommon, however; indeed, this project is the first to examine at length how literary devices of estrangement in early modern English texts are shaped by and articulate feelings and conceptions of spiritual estrangement.

The trope of estrangement that Donne draws on has its origins in the Hebrew Scriptures and the New Testament as well as the writings of the Church Fathers, and was later redeveloped by the Protestant reformers and other religious thinkers of the sixteenth century. In the early modern Christian worldview, the fall separates humankind from God. Therefore, the common condition of sinful humanity is estrangement, which plays out as estrangement from a paternal God, in tension and separation between people, and, inwardly, in the divided and alienated state of each person. The Christian articulation of estrangement draws on the trope of estrangement first expressed in the Hebrew Bible. The obvious starting point is the narrative of the Fall in Genesis, which ends with Adam and Eve banished from the Garden of Eden and sent into exile: "So he [God] drove out the man" (3:24). Adam and Eve's literal estrangement from their Creator, who formerly walked close by "in the garden in the cool of the day" (3:8), becomes a metaphor for spiritual distance from God in the prophetic writings. For example, Isaiah 59:2 states: "But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid *his* face from you, that he will not hear."<sup>168</sup> The writers of the New Testament continue to figure human sin as inward estrangement from God. For instance, the author of Ephesians outlines the relational and inward estrangements of sin using spatial and visual language: "This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind, Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart" (4:17–18). Colossians similarly describes members of the church in Colossae as formerly "alienated and enemies in *your* mind by wicked works," though they have now been "reconciled" to God through Christ (1:21). Donne draws on such

antecedents, particularly the language of Isaiah in the Authorized Version, in his description of sin as separation in his First Sermon Preached at Lincoln's Inn on Psalm 38:4. Emphasizing David's "*many sins*" (PS 2.3.96.52) in the psalm, Donne combines metaphor and hyperbole to express, and magnify, the distance between God and humankind due to sin: "they are sins in the *plurall* . . . they are over his head, as a roofe, as a ceiling, as an Arch, they have made a wall of separation, betwixt God and us, so they are above our head" (PS 2.3.96.59; 97.64–66). Turning to the metaphor of sin as a burden, Donne explains, "It crookens us, it deprives us of our *rectitude*; it tires us, extinguishes our alacrity; It slackens us, enfeebles and intepidates our zeale; It occasions our stumbling, opens and submits us, to every emergent tentation" (PS 2.3.97.88–91).<sup>169</sup> For Donne, estrangement from God deforms human behaviour, dulls desire for God, and impairs inward faculties. Donne's portrayal of spiritual estrangement in the sermon owes not only to the biblical authors but also to early modern exegetes and theologians such as John Calvin. Calvin figures humanity's condition after the fall as one of alienation from God in Book 1 of his *Institutes of the Christian Religion* (1559), explaining that "when *Adam* fell from his estate, he was by that departure estranged from God. Wherefore although we graunt that the Image of God was not altogether defaced and blotted out in him, yet was it so corrupted, that all that remaineth, is but uglie deformitie."<sup>170</sup> In Book 2, Calvin repeats the trope of estrangement, and links it to sin and its consequence, death: "As the spirituall life of *Adam* was, to abide joynd and bounde to his Creator, so his alienation from him was the death of his soule."<sup>171</sup> Calvin even describes the fallen condition as a state of self-alienation: "Nothing is more inconstant than man, bicause contrarie motions to tosse and diversly drowne his soule, oftentimes he is blind by ignorance, oft he yeeldeth as vanquished even to small tentations."<sup>172</sup> Donne's First Sermon on Psalm 38:4 seems to echo in particular Calvin's connection between self-estrangement and "tentations" (temptation). In another example recalling Calvin, Donne associates the language of estrangement with humanity's deformed image of God in his Second Sermon Preached before King Charles, upon the XXVI verse of the first Chapter of Genesis: "For from them that set themselves against



him, God shall with- draw his image in all the persons and all the attributes: the Father shall withdraw his power, and we shall be enfeebled in our forces” (*OESJD* 3.11.196.743–45). As we have seen, “to withdraw” often features in the discourse of estrangement. Various biblical texts and theological treatises inform Donne’s use of the trope of estrangement.

Donne makes the trope his own, however, through his combination of the trope with devices of estrangement. For example, in *Satire 3* (*Sat3*) Donne explores the context of estrangement between the churches:

doubt wisely, in strange way  
 To stand inquiring right, is not to stray;  
 To sleepe, or runne wrong, is: on a huge hill,  
 Cragg’d, and steep, Truth stands, and hee that will  
 Reach her, about must, and about must goe;  
 And what the hills suddenness resists, winne so.

(77–82)

The speaker’s urging to inquire and strive in the search for truth resembles Donne’s approach to his readers in many of his works. Through strange lines and sudden turns of language or form, Donne arrests his readers’ progress, distancing them from the text, and necessitating struggle and activity on their part in the pursuit of textual meaning. Later in the satire, the speaker asks, “Will it then boot thee / To say a Philip, or a Gregory, / A Harry, or a Martin taught thee this?” (95–97), questioning the importance of individual conscience in a new religious landscape of competing authorities. The use of first names to designate various religious leaders in sixteenth-century Europe personalizes the ecclesiastical divisions of the Reformation—an act of defamiliarization that links the estrangements within the Western Church to the speaker’s own feelings of alienation. Donne’s *Sat3* highlights how estrangement, as both technique and theme, forms a nexus between literature and religion in the period. The poem’s account of the search for “true religion” (43) enacts what Gale H. Carrithers Jr. and James D. Hardy Jr. understand as the

cultural trope of journey.<sup>173</sup> The trope of journey is informed by the doctrine of the Fall: separated from God, humanity is consequently removed from direct access to Truth. Augustine, the Church Father to whom Donne was most indebted, figures the purification of the mind as a journey home to God, using spatial terms to figure the relationship between soul and deity.<sup>174</sup> For Donne, humankind's alienated habits of thought must be disrupted before return to God is possible. We must be estranged from our alienation.

At times, the speaker's longing for conversion or turning back to God is also framed in terms of estrangement, as a separation or withdrawal from the world, the flesh, and/or the Devil, to name the three "traditional enemies of the soul."<sup>175</sup> This can be seen, for example, in the Holy Sonnets. At the end of "This is my play's last scene" (*HSScene*), the speaker combines purgation with estrangement: "Impute mee righteous thus purg'd of evill. / For thus I leaue, the world, the fleash, and Deuill" (13–14). The speaker envisions his return to God in heaven as a form of separation. The trope is inverted at the end of *HSShe*, when the speaker imagines God's concern for his soul in terms of estrangement: "Least the World, fleshe, yea Deuill putt thee out" (14).<sup>176</sup> God worries that the speaker will become estranged. And in *HSBatter*, the speaker begs God to "Divorce mee, vnty, or breake that knott againe" (11), which is to say separate him from the "enemye," the Devil, to whom he has been "betroath'd" (10).

As estrangement often denotes a turn away from God in the period's religious discourse, a second turn, away from the world, flesh, and devil and *back to God*, might usefully be distinguished as "holy estrangement." As I will discuss in the catalogue of rhetorical figures in chapter 1, Donne is fond of using "holy" to create an oxymoron, modifying seemingly negative things or conditions, and so my coinage, "holy estrangement," imitates Donne's own articulation of concepts. As a concept, holy estrangement is closely related to reconciliation with God. Margret Fetzer has called attention to Donne's discussion of reconciliation, and what it suggests about his conception of humankind's relations with God, in his Sermon Preached at St. Paul's on 2 Cor. 5:20 ("We pray yee in Christs stead, be ye reconciled to God").<sup>177</sup> In the sermon, Donne

explains that “Reconciliation is a redintegration, a renewing of a former friendship, that hath been interrupted and broken. So that this implyeth a present enmity, and hostility with God; and then a former friendship with God, and also a possibility of returning to that former friendship” (*PS* 10.5.134.565–69). Donne’s progressive understanding of reconciliation, that it implies a series of contingent phases, is based in his understanding of strangeness as being something conditional. The term “holy estrangement,” although close in meaning to religious concepts of conversion, or turning to God, or reconciliation, foregrounds the disruptive nature of the transformative action, which is necessary to overcome the powerful habitual conditions of sin and spiritual alienation. Thus, holy estrangement suggests not only Donne’s belief that people need to be shaken in order to recognize (or remember) their sin and God’s grace, but also the means and methods Donne uses in his religious writings to prompt such recognitions and (re-)awakenings.

### **John Donne: Iconoclast or Conformist?**

Donne’s use of literary estrangement to articulate the trope of spiritual estrangement underscores another paradox central to my argument: that devices of estrangement can be tools for both literary innovation and the revitalization of traditional artistic and theological approaches to God. Shuger’s seminal studies, *Habits of Thought in the English Renaissance* (1990) and *The Renaissance Bible* (1994), did much to direct attention to the strangeness of mainstream, orthodox Christian beliefs in the late Renaissance world. In *Habits of Thought*, Shuger defines orthodoxy as “the beliefs and values held by members of the dominant culture in the middle years of the English Renaissance.”<sup>178</sup> Shuger writes that “In some respects, the dominant culture was more radical, probing, and self-critical than has often been assumed, in others it seems more primitive, more alien from our own habits of thought, closer perhaps to those of traditional [i.e., pre-modern] societies.”<sup>179</sup> *The Renaissance Bible* traces the shocking, alien, and unsettling aspects of early modern English religious culture, such as “the paradox of sacrifice—its double character as a loving self-oblation and barbaric ritual,” or how Mary Magdalene’s “passionate and erotic love

for Christ . . . was an immensely popular topos of medieval and Renaissance devotional literature.”<sup>180</sup> Much of what seems strange to readers today about Donne’s religious works would have been familiar to Donne’s contemporaries as part of the beliefs and assumptions of Christianity embedded in their culture. The readings in the following chapters reveal that estrangement in Donne’s religious works is not only about producing strangeness in texts but also about recovering the original strangeness of many Christian beliefs.

Donne’s religious writings also demonstrate that religious “orthodoxy” need not be synonymous with literary conventionality and conservatism. Labels such as Peter Lake’s “avant-garde conformity” gesture toward the problem of equating artistic innovation with radical politics in the period.<sup>181</sup> My project agrees with Carrithers and Hardy that aspects of Christianity have always been radical,<sup>182</sup> or contained radical elements, even if those radical dimensions are often suppressed by the ecclesiastical and political authorities of the age. Rambuss considers the effect of aversive strangeness in religious literature in a moment connecting Crashaw back to Donne: “both poets sensationalize the most fundamental tenets of the Incarnational Christianity they espoused to such palpable effect that we are jolted into experiencing anew (or perhaps even for the first time) the expressive strangeness of the religion’s conventions. Such an effect, I would further say, is nothing short of the very aim of metaphysical wit.”<sup>183</sup> This project builds on Rambuss’s suggestion that metaphysical poetry effects a (re)experience of Christianity’s strangeness. I follow Shuger in exposing the strangeness of Christian orthodoxy in late Tudor and early Stuart England, in both its traditional features maintained over the centuries, principally the belief in the Incarnation, Crucifixion, and Resurrection of Jesus Christ, and in its particular formulations in the doctrines, practices, and rituals of the Church of England, from Donne’s birth during of the reign of Elizabeth I to his death in the early years of the reign of Charles I.

The religious conflicts of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries revolved around the question of which church possessed “authentic” tradition, which was deemed the guardian of orthodoxy.<sup>184</sup> Yet, as John Locke observed late in the century, after decades of religious

controversy, crisis, and war: “every one is Orthodox to himself.”<sup>185</sup> Orthodoxy, it would seem, is a matter of perspective. Donne’s own opinions about correct religious belief must have changed over the course of his life, since Donne was born into a persecuted Roman Catholic family but later converted to Protestantism and eventually became a minister in the Church of England. Despite the bluster of his youthful satirical voice in *Sat4*, the Elizabethan political establishment’s designation of Catholic priests as dangerous foreigners must have stung him profoundly, as he was all too aware of the consequences of religious difference in the society in which he grew up. When Donne was in his twenties, his brother died of the plague in prison having been arrested for harboring a Catholic priest (which was a capital offence); likewise, his uncle, Jasper Heywood, who headed the Jesuit mission in England for some years, was banished for life.<sup>186</sup> Though Donne abandoned Catholicism at some point as an adult, his mature attitude to Catholicism is notoriously ambiguous, and has continued to be a source of scholarly controversy. In the public pulpit he denounces Rome and the Pope, but in a letter to Goodere, he describes the Roman and Reformed churches as “sister teats of His [God’s] graces.”<sup>187</sup> In his Holy Sonnets, Donne at times seems to foreground Calvinist aspects, such as double predestination, estranging them to such a degree that the reader might ultimately reject them. He cared for his Catholic mother in her final years; she died only a few months before him. Strangeness and estrangement were not just expressions of thought and feeling present in the culture around him; they were qualities, ideas, and states of feeling he understood and engaged with personally.

How does one interpret the tensions in Donne’s life and works? Is he a man of desperate ambition or deep conviction?<sup>188</sup> Is he a beacon of Anglo-Catholicism, a conformist, a radical?<sup>189</sup> Donne has been called an iconoclast,<sup>190</sup> yet, in my opinion, the word is too suggestive of the destruction of material to fully describe Donne’s poetic activities, which strike me as being fueled, perhaps above all, by an intense creativity. This project asserts that Donne’s writings do not simply dismantle literary and cultural conventions; rather, they refine and rectify them, albeit often through force. Relatedly, in terms of Donne’s politics and beliefs, his texts frequently

challenge conventional beliefs and institutions, yet he came to be a supporter of the kingly prerogative and the established church. Donne is a figure of paradox and tensions. Accordingly, this project is not preoccupied with rigidly defining the extent of Donne's lingering Catholic tendencies, or in exactly positioning his political allegiance within the controversies of the Caroline Church. In broad strokes, I recognize the lasting influence of Donne's Catholic upbringing, while also recognizing that he came to identify himself with, and to preach and profess, the Reformed doctrines of the Church of England.<sup>191</sup> The development of Donne's theology and his own personal religious identification are important issues, and ones that have already been the subject of a great deal of scholarly activity. I am more interested in how Donne seems to assert a fundamental core of belief, and then allow for some debate about matters he considers inessential to salvation. In more private works, such as his letters and *Essayes in Divinity*, which he never published, Donne displays an ecumenism and irenicism that would have been dangerous to advertise. However, a belief in common ground beneath the estranged churches, alongside a criticism of extreme positions, would seem to characterize his public writings as well as his navigations of the political and religious controversies of Jacobean and Stuart England.<sup>192</sup> To once again invoke Donne's famous image of the pair of compasses from *ValMourn*, if the one end is firmly planted in fundamental beliefs, he seems to allow for some roaming with the other. To this end, my project asks, is there an irreconcilable contradiction between Donne the daring poet and Donne the preacher? Donne's dislike of complacent, lazy convention does not contradict his mature affirmation of the prevailing orthodoxy, as defined by the Church of England. Donne came to his position through years of debate and discernment, a development which Shami's understanding of Donne's expression of "active conformity" underscores. She argues for the possibility and likelihood that "conscience rather than fear or political expediency alone persuaded many of these preachers [in the late Jacobean pulpit] to support existing structures of authority." Furthermore, she claims that "Donne's rhetoric of moderation was tactically *inclusive* rather than *exclusive*, and that his goal was to expand rather

than limit the grounds of conformity to the Church of England.”<sup>193</sup> There are tensions in Donne between, on the one hand, individual conscience and intellectual activity, and, on the other, political conformity and obedience, but for Donne at least these approaches are not mutually exclusive. As a literary effect, estrangement proved central to Donne’s literary activities because it seemed to offer a way to reconcile the new and the old, tradition and innovation, as well as conformity to a pattern with room for individual modification.

### III. Chapter Summary

Modern formalist conceptions of defamiliarization have anticipations in classical, medieval, and Renaissance literary-rhetorical theory and practice, and in Donne’s writings in particular. Chapter 1, “Strange Conveyances: English Renaissance Literary-Rhetorical Theory and Donne’s Devices of Estrangement,” investigates the theoretical foundations of estrangement and provides a survey of Donne’s primary devices. Delving further into the context of Renaissance rhetoric and poetics, I uncover historical motivations and methods for literary estrangement in Donne’s poetry and prose works and in several rhetoric handbooks of the period. In addition to Donne, the chapter provides new and significant readings of George Puttenham’s *The Art of English Poesy*, Henry Peacham’s *The Garden of Eloquence*, and John Hoskins’ *Directions for Speech and Style*, handbooks I have selected for their cultural currency in early modern England, for the possibility that Donne encountered them, and for their continued presence in modern scholarship. While critics frequently, if often selectively, quote from the handbooks of Hoskins, Peacham, and especially Puttenham, I investigate each theorist’s attitude toward “the strange” and his conception of figurative language in general, offering close readings of key rhetorical figures. The chapter calls attention to early modern notions of “making it strange,” which are particularly discernible in the theorists’ ambivalent statements about the boundaries of figurative language. The formal inventions and linguistic modifications involved in

literary estrangement satisfied, and also stoked, the desires of early modern readers for novelty, rarity, and obscurity, and often took the form of rhetorical figures. The chapter presents a catalogue of Donne's primary "devices of estrangement," providing significant examples of each rhetorical figure from a wide range of Donne's works. I consider the far-fetched similitude, estranging metaphor, and catachresis; figures that elicit doubt and wonder related to notions of paradox, chiefly paradoxon, aporia, enigma, and synoeciosis; the set of Renaissance figures related to wordplay and punning, namely syllepsis, antanaclasis, paronomasia, and polyptoton; and hyperbole as an exemplary figure of altered representation. Such devices proved useful for Donne in cultivating active, intellectual readers who must labour to generate meaning in texts, and contributed to his re-creative poetics.

Chapters 2 through 4 present analyses of estrangement in groups of Donne's works. Donne's religious writings provide a body of literature framed around an established set of topics, concepts, vocabulary, and images, making them ideal works in which to analyze techniques for rendering the familiar strange. The texts I have chosen allow for a view of literary estrangement in a range of genres and verse forms on a variety of religious themes. Chapter 2 focuses on Donne's emblematic and liturgical religious poems, chapter 3 his Holy Sonnets, and chapter 4 his sermons. Throughout all four chapters, however, I discuss other religious lyrics by Donne—most notably "La Corona" (*Corona*) and "To Mr. Tilman after He Had Taken Holy Orders" (*Tilman*)—various love poems and epithalamia, the Anniversaries, his prose and verse letters, his biblical commentary (*Essayes in Divinity*), and his prose devotion (*Devotions upon Emergent Occasions*), with some attention to contexts of audience, production, and dissemination, including manuscript, print, and oral delivery.

Donne's Divine Poems display fidelity to literary and religious traditions alongside extravagant individual articulation and poetic innovation. Chapter 2, "'Strange harmony': Devices of Estrangement in Donne's Emblematic and Liturgical Religious Poems," explores how Donne deploys devices of estrangement as tools for poetic innovation and the revitalization of



Christian doctrine and expression, charging traditional symbols, events, concepts, and tropes with the attraction of novelty as well as intellectual and emotional power. The dislocations of literary estrangement open up the religious elements in Donne's poetic texts to different and multiple points of view. The chapter examines two of Donne's occasional, emblematic religious lyrics, *Cross* and *Annun*. Although rarely studied, both poems are significant sites for examining how devices of estrangement function within the rhetorical and devotional structures of Donne's poems. My analysis of *Lit*, Donne's personal rendering of the kaleidoscopic liturgical prayer of supplication, demonstrates his desire to locate a personal voice within communal traditions and to achieve literary originality as well as to cultivate devotion.

Dramatically compelling, psychologically probing, and theologically complex, the Holy Sonnets are Donne's most daring and challenging religious poems. Chapter 3, "His strange love still admire': The Estrangement Effect in the Holy Sonnets," highlights Donne's use of genre, the sonnet form, and religious tropes in the sequence, before turning to close readings of four sonnets: *HSSpit*, *HSShe*, *HSShow*, and *HSVex*. These four sonnets use numerous devices of estrangement, including metaphors, paradoxes, and puns, to potently express themes of divine strangeness and spiritual estrangement. *HSSpit* exploits the push/pull, repulsion/attraction of strangeness in order to conjure admiration for God's love for humanity expressed in the Incarnation and Atonement. *HSShe* provocatively dramatizes God's feelings and actions towards the speaker and his beloved as a response to the interpersonal estrangement of death. *HSShow* allegorizes and investigates communal estrangement, the separation of the Church into many denominations after the Reformation. *HSVex* probes the self-estrangement of the speaker, who wonders how to overcome his perplexed inward state and devotional habits. The four sonnets defamiliarize descriptions of religious experience as framed through conventional tropes, such as the imitation of Christ in *HSSpit*, God as lover in *HSShe*, the Church as spouse in *HSShow*, and the divided fallen self in *HSVex*. Devices of estrangement present in Donne's religious poetry express tensions between

tradition and innovation, the communal voice and individual articulation, familiarity and strangeness, change and constancy, the old and the new.

Chapter 4, “‘I am not always I’: Estrangement as Technique and Theme in Donne’s Sermons,” examines the complex interactions of formal and thematic estrangement in Donne’s sermons. Devices operate on both micro and macro levels, in startling phrases and strange dilations that are part of the overall form and devotional movement of the sermon. The first half of the chapter surveys Donne’s sermons in order to highlight his primary devices of estrangement, such as rhetorical figures like metaphor, synoeciosis, syllepsis, as well as strategies unique to preaching, namely Donne’s selection of the biblical text, his approach to the occasion, and the tactics behind his opening images and addresses to the audience. Donne’s *Sermon Preached at the Hague, December 19, 1619* illuminates his rhetorical aims in preaching, while his *Third Lincoln’s Inn Sermon on Ps. 38:4, from 1618*, illustrates the devotional function of devices of estrangement in relation to the topic of sin. Two Christmas sermons—one *Preached at St. Paul’s upon Christmas Day, 1626* and the other *Preached at St. Paul’s, upon Christmas Day, 1628*—are good examples of Donne’s opening tactics in the pulpit. As in his *Divine Poems*, in Donne’s sermons devices of estrangement frequently accrue around the central mysteries of Christianity—such as original sin, the Incarnation, and Resurrection—as a means to convey the strangeness of God’s methods from our fallen human perspectives. Since as a genre sermons aim to incline their audiences in devotion, estrangement is the preacher’s tool to disrupt the auditors’ points of view in order to more closely align their views with the divine perspective. Estrangement often functions as part of Donne’s overall rhetorical and devotional strategies in sermons. The second half of chapter 4 focuses on Donne’s five sermons on the Book of Job: (1) Donne’s *Lincoln’s Inn Sermon on Job 19:26*; (2) his *Sermon Preached to the Countess of Bedford, at Harrington House, January 7, 1620/1, on Job 13:15*; (3) his *Sermon Preached at Hanworth, August 25, 1622, on Job 36:25*; (4) his *Sermon Preached upon Easter Day, 1629, on Job 4:18*; and (5) his *Sermon Preached to the King, April 20, 1630, on Job 16:17–19*. Job, a biblical text dominated by themes

of interpersonal, social, spiritual, and self-estrangement, serves as an ideal site to explore how Donne uses devices of estrangement to evoke and explore themes of estrangement. Donne's religious poetry is often directed towards expressing the speaker's spiritual anxieties and alienated state, whereas Donne's sermons have more consistently devotional designs on the audience. Donne harnesses devices of estrangement to effect holy estrangement in his congregations, disrupting their current, fallen, and alienated habits of thought in an effort to stimulate and encourage mental and spiritual return to God. The chapter concludes with a comparison of Donne's first sermon, *Preached at Greenwich, April 30, 1615* with his last, *Death's Duell, or, a Consolation to the Soule, against the dying Life, and living Death of the Body* (preached in 1631 and published posthumously in 1632); together they demonstrate the complex interactions between devices and themes of estrangement in Donne's works.

**Chapter 1:**  
**Strange Conveyances:**  
**English Renaissance Literary-Rhetorical Theory and**  
**Donne's Devices of Estrangement**

This chapter is concerned with discovering historical motivations and methods for literary estrangement in John Donne's verse and prose, and within the wider discourse of strangeness in the literary and rhetorical theory of late sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century England. The chapter unpacks the underlying principles, guiding strategies, component techniques, and possible aims of Donne's poetics of estrangement. Although Donne never composed a treatise on poetry and poetics, a fragmentary poetics of estrangement can be deduced from the evidence that exists, in various and scattered comments by Donne on poetry, rhetoric, and the Bible expressed in his sacred and secular verse, his prose *Devotions Upon Emergent Occasions* and *Essayes in Divinity*, and his sermons. Exploring the connection between figurative language and estrangement in the period's literary-rhetorical theory, I isolate and investigate which particular rhetorical figures were recognized and used to produce, or were indirectly associated with, the estrangement effect. Examples from Donne's poetry and prose demonstrate how he employed the figures as devices of estrangement.

I compare Donne's fragmentary poetics to conceptions of estrangement (both latent and explicit) and instructions regarding figurative language in the handbooks of English theorists. Peter Mack has argued for the limited influence in the period of English rhetoric handbooks in comparison to Latin ones.<sup>194</sup> Nevertheless, the three English handbooks which I select—George Puttenham's *The Art of English Poesy* (published anonymously in 1589), Henry Peacham's *The Garden of Eloquence* (first edition 1577, second edition 1593) and John Hoskins' *Directions for Speech and Style* (composed and circulated in manuscript around 1599)<sup>195</sup>—are demonstrably influential on poetic texts of their day, and it is likely Donne had encountered them. Puttenham's

*Art of English Poesy*, an amalgam of poetics treatise, rhetorical style manual, and courtesy book, is a foundational work of Renaissance literary theory. With Puttenham's emphasis on using poetry to climb "from the cart to the school, and from thence to the court," *The Art of English Poesy* would likely have appealed to Donne as a young law student at the Inns of Court in the early 1590s. Donne's verse letters to male friends from that period are absorbed in discussions of poetry, and the Elizabethan court was the most sought-after source of professional advancement for young men at the London law schools.<sup>196</sup> Peacham's *Garden of Eloquence* was enlarged for the second edition of 1593, which suggests the general popularity of what is essentially a catalogue of rhetorical figures. His frequent recourse to the Bible for examples of figures calls to mind Donne's attested belief in the great eloquence of the biblical texts, which shaped his approach to religious poetry, as I discuss below. Hoskins probably composed his *Directions for Speech and Style*, which focuses on letter and prose writing, for the benefit of young law students, and he inhabited many of the same literary circles as Donne in the early 1600s. Both attended the informal clubs that met at the Mitre and the Mermaid Tavern, gatherings which included Ben Jonson and other significant writers of the period.<sup>197</sup> Hoskins and Donne were also both friends of Henry Wotton, and, earlier in life, they had attended Oxford and the Inns of Court at around the same times.<sup>198</sup> Although it circulated only in manuscript, Hoskins' style manual proved popular, based on the frequency with which other writers borrowed from it.<sup>199</sup> It is therefore likely that Donne knew Hoskins' manual, and it is possible that he encountered Puttenham's and Peacham's texts as well.

My argument is not that Donne's poetics of estrangement was directly shaped by the works of Puttenham, Peacham, or Hoskins. Rather, this chapter points out similar preoccupations in Donne and the wider literary and rhetorical culture, as exemplified by the works of the three theorists I have introduced. I argue that the tension between the familiar and the strange, whether latent or manifest, is an important dynamic in both the handbooks and Donne's writings. Donne's aesthetic exemplifies an early modern habit of thought that considers strangeness to be

conditional, a matter of perspective, and therefore poised for exploitation for various rhetorical, aesthetic, thematic, and devotional purposes. The production of strangeness in Donne's texts also capitalizes on the early modern cultural economy of strangeness, which values rarity, novelty, and obscurity. Figurative strangeness becomes a marker of value in the culture and a source of intellectual and emotional energy in the literature of the period. On the authorial level, Donne's poetics of estrangement illustrates paradoxical desire for both change and constancy, for fidelity to tradition with room for personal articulation and innovation—a yearning most clearly visible within the defined compass of his writings upon religious subject matter. However, while Donne's poetics of estrangement reflects many of his contemporaries' concerns, assumptions, attitudes, and beliefs about strangeness, his devices of estrangement often transgress the boundaries of figurative language that the handbooks establish.

In discussions of Donne's extravagant aesthetic, critics frequently turn to his famous description of God in Expostulation 19 of *Devotions Upon Emergent Occasions* (composed 1623; published 1624) as “a *figurative*, a *metaphoricall* God,” particularly when those discussions treat his devotional poetry. Nevertheless, what has not been recognized is the extent to which Expostulation 19 participates in the Renaissance discourse of strangeness and discovery. After affirming God to be “a *literall* God,” Donne ventures:

thou art a *figurative*, a *metaphoricall* God too: A *God* in whose words there is such a height of *figures*, such *voyages*, such *peregrinations* to fetch remote and precious *metaphors*, such *extensions*, such *spreadings*, such *Curtaines* of *Allegories*, such *third Heavens* of *Hyperboles*, so *harmonious eloquutions*, so *retired* and so *reserved expressions*, so *commanding perswasions*, so *perswading commandements*, such *sinewes* even in thy *milke*, and such *things* in thy *words*, as all *prophane Authors*, seeme of the seed of the *Serpent*, that creepes; thou art the *dove*, that flies.<sup>200</sup>

Donne conveys his belief in the special eloquence of the Bible using the language of the foreign and distant—key aspects of the strange—particularly referencing the early modern voyages of

discovery, which fueled and helped shape the discourse of strangeness.<sup>201</sup> Donne's treatment of figurative language in the passage from *Devotions* demonstrates knowledge of particular figures of speech and points to the roles of strangeness, difference, and distance in the rhetorical and poetic theory of his day. Anthony Raspa has noted Donne's allusions in the passage above to Puttenham's *Art of English Poesy* and Thomas Wilson's *The Art of Rhetoric* (1553).<sup>202</sup> For instance, Puttenham describes the persuasive effects of figures as "inwardly working a stir to the mind," and he calls metaphor the "Figure of Transport." An allegory is "a duplicity of meaning or dissimulation under covert and dark intendments" and an hyperbole is an "incredible comparison giving credit."<sup>203</sup> In Expostulation 19, Donne describes "such *Curtaines of Allegories*, such *third Heavens of Hyperboles*," and he develops Puttenham's association of metaphor with transportation into an image of voyages of exploration and trade to acquire "remote and precious" objects for comparison, evoking the wealth foreign trade and mercantile transportation generated for European nations in the period.<sup>204</sup> Highlighting the "precious" nature of biblical metaphors also suggests their richness of meaning, while the spatial descriptor "remote" indicates their withdrawal from easy apprehension. Furthermore, both Donne's and Puttenham's descriptions of figurative language display what Katrin Ettenhuber describes as the "multilayered language of place and poetic topography" used to talk about rhetorical comparison in the theory of the period.<sup>205</sup> The topographical conceptualization of figurative language means that distance becomes the way to measure the appropriateness of figuration, which by definition is also the use of language that differs from the ordinary. In Puttenham's words, rhetorical figures "pass the ordinary limits of common utterance."<sup>206</sup> With its allusions to Puttenham and voyages of trade and discovery, the passage's description of the literary style of the Bible calls attention to the intersection of figurative language, the discourse of strangeness, and scripture.

The extravagance, remoteness, and far-fetched nature of the Bible's language is what makes God's Word rhetorically powerful in Expostulation 19. Such comments accord with

Donne's sermon at Whitehall five years earlier, during Lent, on February 12, 1618, in which he emphasizes the elevated and effective eloquence of the Bible's tropes and figures:

Religious preaching is a grave exercise, but not a sordid, not a barbarous, not a negligent. There are not so eloquent books in the world, as the Scriptures: Accept those names of Tropes and Figures, which the Grammarians and Rhetoricians put upon us, and we may be bold to say, that in all their Authors, Greek and Latin, we cannot finde so high, and so lively examples, of those Tropes, and those Figures, as we may in the Scriptures.

(PS 2.7.170–71.239–46)

Distinguishing Christian scripture from the classical writing favoured by contemporary “Grammarians and Rhetoricians,” Donne argues for the exemplary rhetorical and literary nature of the Bible. In both his sermon of 12 February 1618 and his *Devotions* of 1624, Donne participates in what William Poole has identified as “a decisive factor in the reworking of classical rhetorical standards: the application of rhetorical analysis to biblical text.”<sup>207</sup> Donne's distinction in the earlier sermon between “high” and “lively” sacred scripture and profane classical literature anticipates the harsher contrast he makes in the later *Devotions* between the profane author “that creepes” and the Holy Author “that flies,”<sup>208</sup> which suggests that Donne's appreciation for the Bible only increased as his clerical career developed.<sup>209</sup> In his commendatory verses “Upon the Translation of the Psalms by Sir Philip Sidney, and the Countess of Pembroke his Sister” (*Sidney*) (perhaps composed 1621; first printed 1635), Donne praises the magnificence of the biblical collection of devotional poems, calling them “The highest matter in the noblest forme” (11).<sup>210</sup> For Donne, the sacred content and admirable style of the Bible stand above the matter and form of all other literary works. The most eloquent book is most worthy of imitation. As Barbara Lewalski argues, for Donne, “The divine poet's model is therefore the Bible, but the nature of that book is such that it stimulates, rather than restricts, his highest flights.”<sup>211</sup> Donne's view that God's eloquence surpasses the style of all other authors and his linking of eloquence with extravagance, excess, remoteness, and obscurity—qualities I associate with the difference



and distance of the strange—illustrate that Donne’s religious literature is ideally suited for an examination of his poetics of estrangement. However, Donne’s interest in and admiration for the strange also generate tensions within and between his literary works. For example, despite his consistent praise for the rhetorical and literary qualities of the Bible, his 1618 statement against a “barbarous” style in preaching stands in tension with his figuration in *Devotions* of the Bible’s style as voyages to foreign and remote regions, for the barbarous was associated with the foreign in classical theory. Donne’s understanding of the mutable, porous border between the familiar and the strange was the foundation of his poetics of estrangement.

### **Renaissance Poetics and the Classical and Medieval Traditions**

Recognition of the dynamic relationship between familiarity and strangeness was embedded in the wider literary-rhetorical culture of early modern England, with its foundations in classical and medieval theory. Like the ancient Greek and Roman writers they read and studied, sixteenth-century English theorists often blurred distinctions between rhetoric and poetry, particularly in discussions of the figures of speech. Rhetoric and dialectic were the arts of discourse, and poetry was often treated as a branch of the art of rhetoric. As C. S. Lewis explains, “Nearly all our older poetry was written and read by men to whom the distinction between poetry and rhetoric, in its modern form, would have been meaningless.”<sup>212</sup> The period’s abiding concern with modes of persuasion meant that Renaissance literary theorists were interested in the purposes of a literary work and its effects on the reader. I shall demonstrate how the novelty and obscurity of that which has been rendered strange also functioned as a source of pleasure for many readers.

Wayne Rebhorn has demonstrated that the tension between the familiar and the strange in Renaissance rhetoric goes back to its foundations in the classical rhetorical tradition.<sup>213</sup> Rebhorn highlights the tension in classical and Renaissance discussions of decorum, but it is also present in discussions of style. For instance, in *Poetics* Aristotle states that “The perfection of Diction is for it to be at once clear and mean,” yet he goes on to add that “Diction becomes distinguished

and non-prosaic by the use of unfamiliar terms, i.e., strange words, metaphors, lengthened forms, and everything that deviates from the ordinary modes of speech.”<sup>214</sup> He recognizes the distinction that strangeness can bestow upon poetry. In his *Rhetoric*, Aristotle indirectly addresses one of the uses of strangeness in a literary work when he discusses the value of rarity: “And to change is also pleasant: change means an approach to nature, whereas invariable repetition of anything causes the excessive prolongation of a settled condition . . . Learning things and wondering at things are also pleasant as a rule.”<sup>215</sup> Strangeness characterizes that which disrupts a prolonged and settled state of things, and so the production and exploitation of the quality of strangeness in a text can be used to overcome the sterility of habit and repetition and to generate pleasure—pleasure for the reader in experiencing change and encountering the strange and new.

While scholars debate the extent of the influence of Aristotle’s *Poetics* on sixteenth-century England,<sup>216</sup> Horace’s *The Art of Poetry* is widely recognized as the most influential classical poetics text during the period, as it helped to complete the appropriation of rhetorical principles in poetry.<sup>217</sup> Like Aristotle, Horace advocates balance in his approach to defamiliarizing language, whether through strange syntax or the use of new words:

you will make an excellent impression if you use care and subtlety in placing your words and, by the skilful choice of setting, give fresh meaning to a familiar word. If it happens that you have to invent new terms for the discussion of abstruse topics, you will have a chance to coin words that were unknown to earlier generations of Romans, and no one will object to your doing this, as long as you do it with discretion.”<sup>218</sup>

Decorum, the appropriate relationship between things, guides everything for Horace, as T. S. Dorsch explains: “Every part and every aspect of the work must be appropriate to the nature of the work as a whole: the choice of subject in relation to the chosen genre, the characterization, the form, the expression, the metre, the style, and tone.”<sup>219</sup> Both language and decorum were topics of debate in the classical and Renaissance periods, particularly about what counts as an appropriate comparison and over the relationship between decorum and nature. Metaphors were not supposed

to be too far-fetched or artificial and were considered part of the “ornament” of language. Then as now, the implied comparison inherent to metaphor necessarily involved a degree of difference. This is being used to talk about that. Aware of these issues, both Horace and Aristotle advocate for a limited use of strangeness in writing and oration, and their views in turn influenced literary theorists over the following centuries.

An interest in the strange persisted in medieval rhetoric and poetics, in both religious and secular contexts. In *De Doctrina Christiana*, a work of late antiquity that was very influential during the Middle Ages, Augustine adapts classical rhetoric for the purposes of Christian exegesis and preaching. Doing so, he defends the obscurity of certain passages in the Bible:

In some passages they [readers] find no meaning at all that they can grasp at, even falsely, so thick is the fog created by some obscure phrases. I have no doubt that this is all divinely predetermined, so that pride may be subdued by hard work and intellects which tend to despise things that are easily discovered may be rescued from boredom and reinvigorated.<sup>220</sup>

Donne would have been familiar with Augustine’s comments on biblical style, and they likely influenced his own comments in *Devotions Upon Emergent Occasions* discussed in the previous section. Thomas Aquinas, in his *Summa Theologica*, defends the Bible’s figurative language and consequent obscurity. In his answers to Question 1, Article 9, “Whether Holy Scripture Should Use Metaphors?” Aquinas argues, “The very hiding of truth in figures is useful for the exercise of thoughtful minds.”<sup>221</sup> Furthermore, “similitudes drawn from things farthest away from God form within us a truer estimate that God is above whatsoever we may say or think of Him.”<sup>222</sup> In the secular literary tradition, Geoffrey of Vinsauf’s *Poetria Nova* values strangeness in poetry, and affirms the inherent connection between strangeness and figurative language.<sup>223</sup> In a passage recalling Horace’s dictum about how to make the familiar seem fresh, Geoffrey prefaces his discussion of the ornaments of style by urging the poet to revive old language:

In order that meaning may wear a precious garment, if a word is old, be its physician and give to the old a new vigor. Do not let the word invariably reside on its native soil—such residence dishonors it. Let it avoid its natural location, travel about elsewhere, and take up a pleasant abode on the estate of another. There let it stay as a novel guest, and give pleasure by its very strangeness. If you provide this remedy, you will give to the word's face a new youth.<sup>224</sup>

Geoffrey's comparison to the revivifying effects of travel resembles Donne's comments in the verse letter *HG* that I discussed in the introduction. Donne's poem urges his friend Goodere to "transplant" himself to "outlandish ground" (21–22) in order to escape the power of habit: "To be a stranger hath that benefit, / Wee can beginnings, but not habits choke" (25–26). In both works, spatial difference can effect a transformation—in signification in the former, in behaviour in the latter. After cataloguing the ornaments of style, Geoffrey observes: "In the figures given above there is a common element of adornment and weightiness, arising from the fact that an object does not come before us with unveiled face, and accompanied by its natural voice; rather, an alien voice attends it, and so it shrouds itself in mist, as it were, but in a luminous mist."<sup>225</sup>

While the strangeness of figurative language and its uses were certainly recognized and discussed in the Middle Ages, scholars of the early modern period have argued that Renaissance literature's obsessive yet estranged relationship with the classical rhetorical tradition intensified the interest in the strange of both theorists and writers. Sylvia Adamson, Gavin Alexander, and Katrin Ettenhuber point out that classical rhetoric was about public speaking, not private writing, and the ancient political and legal cultures in which rhetoric originally developed were "a world away" from Renaissance literary culture.<sup>226</sup> Likewise, Nicholson has called attention to how English vernacular rhetorical handbooks, in their adaptations of Greek and Latin terms and concepts, expose tensions between the familiar and the strange, between the classical culture they valorize and their own vernacular nature, which exacerbates the tension in English Renaissance texts.<sup>227</sup> For example, the word "scheme" derives from the Greek *schemata*, and "figure" from the

Latin *figurae*, and these terms would have initially been strangers to the very language they were being used to enrich. Moreover, the exact definition of the terms “figure,” “trope,” and “scheme” differs from theorist to theorist. Some use “figure” as the overall term, and then subdivide figures into tropes, which affect meaning, and schemes, which involve syntax and arrangement. Other theorists separate tropes from figures and schemes.<sup>228</sup> Richard Sherry’s *A Treatise of Schemes and Tropes* (1550) was the first rhetoric in English, and his preface warns the reader: “Doubt not but that the title of this treatise all straunge unto our Englyshe eares, wil cause some men at the fyrst syghte to marvayle what the matter of it should meane.”<sup>229</sup> As the mid-sixteenth century in England saw the wresting of the terms “scheme” and “trope” from their ancient Greek and Latin contexts into a new vernacular one, the Renaissance adaptation of classical rhetoric involved many cultural and linguistic acts of estrangement and familiarization. Sherry’s own marginal glosses would seem to chart the conceptual progress of strangeness in the century’s rhetorical theory: “The tytyle of thys worcke straunge. / Sheme [sic] and Trope. / Use maketh straunge thinges familier.”<sup>230</sup> Sherry expects some readers to reject his “new fangle” title, with its (then) foreign terms, but he speculates that others might be “moved with the noveltye thereof.”<sup>231</sup> In contrast, by the 1580s, emblem-book writer Geoffrey Whitney assumes the appeal of novelty and strangeness, even if he does not approve: “For the nature of man is alwaies delighted in novelties, & too much corrupte with curiousnes and newfangelnes.”<sup>232</sup> According to Whitney, the attraction of strangeness is an established truth, being a symptom of a “corrupte” human nature. Whether we agree with Whitney or not, as the sixteenth century drew to a close, an interest in strangeness became a norm in English literary culture.

Later theorists of the English Renaissance similarly engaged with the classical issues surrounding metaphor, decorum, and the value of the strange, but their adaptations also introduced new issues and new emphases, such as style and the figures of speech.<sup>233</sup> The two editions of Peacham’s *Garden of Eloquence* illustrate the changing approaches to rhetorical figures in the late sixteenth century. *The Garden of Eloquence*, first published in 1577, is almost

entirely a catalogue of rhetorical figures, and it swelled to some 200 in the second edition of 1593. Perhaps due to the growing emphasis on the figures, as the century progressed theorists cautioned more and more against their misuse. In the 1577 edition of *The Garden of Eloquence*, Peacham lumps a definition and various examples together for each figure; in contrast, the 1593 edition provides clearly identified subsections for each figure explaining “The use of this figure” followed by “The Caution.” As Peacham advertises in the dedicatory epistle to the 1593 edition: “I have gathered . . . varietie of fit examples for everie figure by it selfe: which figures or formes of speech, I have . . . added certain Cautions to compasse them for feare of abuse.”<sup>234</sup> Peacham’s extensive catalogue of “Tropes” and “Schemates” explicitly states what to do and what not to do with each figure, as in the case of enigma, which, “being a figure of deepe obscuritie, is opposed to perspecuitie.” Nevertheless, he cautions: “In this figure regard ought to be had, that the similitudes be not unfit, strange, or unchast.”<sup>235</sup> William G. Crane has read the cautions added to Peacham’s second edition as a reaction to the extravagant flights of “euphuism” which Lyly’s popular romance inspired, as well as as part of the widespread English adoption of Ramist principles in the arts of discourse.<sup>236</sup> Peacham’s revisions reveal deep anxiety about the uses and abuses of rhetorical figures. Hoskins, writing in *Directions for Speech and Style* at the turn of the seventeenth century, expresses derision for the abuses of rhetoric he now sees widely practiced. For example, Hoskins introduces the figure of catachresis, or an extreme metaphor (a figure I discuss in detail later in this chapter), by complaining that catachresis is a “usual figure with the fine conversants of our time, when they strain for an extraordinary phrase,” and “is now grown in fashion—as most abuses are.”<sup>237</sup> William Poole has suggested, however, that in general “early modern writers grew more tolerant of certain vices than were the theorists of antiquity,” and he observes a particular “interest in the dark and the difficult” during the period.<sup>238</sup> These new attitudes and interests shaped the literary environment in which Donne’s poetics of estrangement developed.

### **Figurative Strangeness and Literary Estrangement in the Handbooks of Puttenham, Peacham, and Hoskins**

Examination of Puttenham's, Peacham's, and Hoskins' handbooks reveals the importance of figurative strangeness and literary estrangement to their texts. My readings of the handbooks uncover notions of "making it strange" in the ambivalence towards the strangeness of figurative language, in the ambiguous accounts of decorum, and in the descriptions of (and restrictions on) various figures of speech and their different effects and purposes. Although critics such as Nicholson have noted the tensions around the familiar and the strange in *The Art of English Poesy*, Puttenham's poetics of estrangement has not been analyzed at length, and literary estrangement has received scant mention in the limited scholarship on Peacham and Hoskins.<sup>239</sup> I argue that more than any other English Renaissance literary theorist the characteristically ambivalent Puttenham realizes the transgressive potential of figures of speech, and theorizes the relations between poetry, figurative language, and estrangement. Peacham's handbook suggests the power of figurative strangeness to move an audience, and implicates certain rhetorical figures as devices of estrangement, particularly in writings on religious subject matter. Of the three theorists, Hoskins is the most perceptive of the psychological motivations behind a writer's choice of devices of estrangement in literature, and his treatise considers the conceptual movements such figurative transformations and transportations involve.

While Puttenham never develops a clear-cut theory of "making it strange" in poetry, it is evident that he values the disruptive power of strangeness, as his introduction to "ornament poetical" makes plain:

So is there yet requisite to the perfection of this art [i.e., poesy] another manner of exornation, which resteth in the fashioning of our maker's [the poet's] language and style to such purpose as it may delight and allure as well the mind as the ear of the hearers with a certain novelty and strange manner of conveyance, disguising it no little from the ordinary and accustomed.<sup>240</sup>

Puttenham's emphasis on "fashioning" a "strange manner of conveyance" that both produces pleasure and attracts attention firmly embeds his approach to poetic art in the contemporary discourse of strangeness. The quality of fascinating and delightful "novelty" that he encourages calls to mind the reports of strange things as well as the new and rich commodities that colonial enterprises and trading ventures brought back to England, while the striking fashion he recommends resembles the courtier's interest in and employment of fashionable clothing in the jostles for power and prestige at court. For Puttenham, strangeness is a marker of newness and potential riches. Furthermore, Puttenham's sartorial language connects his understanding of figurative language back to theorists such as Geoffrey of Vinsauf and the "precious garment" of strange form, while pointing forward to Donne's slightly later description of "strange attire" producing estrangement (66).<sup>241</sup> Aware of these currents in the culture around him, and writing with a court-based poet in mind, Puttenham suggests the usefulness and attractive novelty of literary estrangement in cultivating the impression of distinction and originality.

In Book 3 of *The Art of English Poesy*, Puttenham promotes his approach to the rhetorical figures as "a new and strange model of this art," presenting his book as an estrangement of the poetics treatise genre.<sup>242</sup> If Sherry, in his *Treatise of Schemes and Tropes* published in the middle of the sixteenth century, was aware of incorporating "straunge" rhetorical terms into English, by the later decades of the century the usage of such rhetorical terms had become sufficiently common for Puttenham to feel the need to defend his rendering them into English: "And in case any of these new English names given by me to any figure shall happen to offend, I pray that the learned will bear with me and to think the strangeness thereof proceeds but of novelty and disaquietance with our ears, which in process of time and by custom will frame very well."<sup>243</sup> In this revealing moment, Puttenham makes clear the conditionality of strangeness, exposing decorum as a process of familiarization more than anything. His "Englishing" also embodies the tensions in rhetoric between the familiar and the strange, for Puttenham's new names are simultaneously acts of familiarization (in his translation of foreign words into the English



vernacular) and defamiliarization (in his introduction of completely new English names for established, if technical, terms). Likewise, in his final chapters, when Puttenham addresses decorum he vacillates between upholding it as a universal principle and recognizing its contingency.<sup>244</sup>

Strangeness, for Puttenham, is more than just a superficial quality to adorn a literary work and stoke interest. His understanding of figurative language hinges on the idea that language itself can be rendered strange. As he explains in his notable statement on literary estrangement:

“figurative speech is a novelty of language . . . estranged from the ordinary habit and manner of our daily talk and writing.”<sup>245</sup> Puttenham’s understanding of figurative language as estranged language is also part of his larger system of estrangements in *The Art of English Poesy*.

Conceptually, Puttenham builds up a series of parallel divisions: figurative language from ordinary speech; poetry from prose; the “court” from the “cart” of the lower classes.<sup>246</sup> Since the publication of Puttenham’s *Art of English Poesy*, at least one reader has recognized aspects of the treatise’s system of conceptual estrangements. An unknown reader wrote in the margins of a copy of the 1589 edition: “Poesie than / Prose more / pleasing / compendious / rhetoricall / efficacious.”<sup>247</sup> The reader recognizes some of the key ways Puttenham distinguishes poetry from prose. However, Puttenham’s approach to poetic art contains deep-set tensions around these divisions. Noting Puttenham’s belief that poets have always been “the best persuaders,” Nicholson argues that “The division between poetry and ‘ordinarie prose’ thus becomes another boundary to be trespassed in the pursuit of eloquence.”<sup>248</sup> In other words, Nicholson seems to be arguing that since Puttenham believes poetry can be used to enhance the persuasiveness of ordinary utterances, the division between poetry and prose can and will be trespassed. I would argue that the very conditionality of strangeness, the idea that something familiar can be *made* strange (which is the anxious, tantalizing force behind so many of Puttenham’s theorizations) renders his system of estrangements unstable. If ordinary speech can be distinguished from figurative language—can be defamiliarized—then the converse is also possible. Poetry can

become prosaic, figurative speech familiar. At the same time, the instability of the familiar and the strange as categories would seem to motivate Puttenham's anxious concern for borders in *The Art of English Poesy*, such as those of propriety, decency, and familiarity. The instability also reveals his awareness of figurative language's movements across those boundaries, through the trespass, abuse, and estrangement of words and their significations. For Puttenham all language is artificial: "Speech is not natural to man saving for his only ability to speak."<sup>249</sup> His theory that language is artificial ultimately means that language can be fashioned for any purpose, in spite of his apparent desire for decency and proper usage.<sup>250</sup> Puttenham's *Art of English Poesy* exposes the tensions inherent to early modern rhetoric, as well as the value of figurative strangeness in early modern English society.

In comparison to Puttenham's slippery *Art of English Poesy*, Peacham's *Garden of Eloquence* tries to maintain more rigid categories for figures and their applications, and generally censures the production of strangeness; yet, the rhetorical power of the strange, and its possible uses, are revealed in the handbook's internal tensions. For example, Peacham defines a figure as "a forme of words, oration, or sentence, made new by art, differing from the vulgar maner and custome of writing or speaking."<sup>251</sup> A trope, which is one of the two main divisions of rhetorical figures in Peacham's system (the other being a scheme), is "an artificiall alteration of a word, or a sentence, from the proper and natural signification to another not proper, but yet nigh, and likely."<sup>252</sup> In spite of Peacham's acknowledgement of the inherent newness and difference of figures and of the artificiality and impropriety of tropes (a trope is not the "natural" signifier), he actively tries to regulate and restrict their use. Peacham's *Garden of Eloquence*, on the other hand, embodies tensions between admiration for the power of persuasion and the need for the regulation of its effects.

In his dedicatory epistle, Peacham discusses the power of rhetoric to affect the mind and emotions:

so mightie is the power of this happie union. (I meane of wisdom & eloquence) that by the one the Orator forceth, and by the other he allureth, . . . so that he is in a maner the emperour of mens minds & affections, and next to the omnipotent God in the power of perswasion, by grace, & divine assistance.<sup>253</sup>

God has granted the wise orator the power, through eloquent speech, to move his auditory. Peacham's linking of the orator's power to God's recalls both Sidney's and Puttenham's descriptions of poets as makers who imitate the heavenly maker.<sup>254</sup> Furthermore, Peacham's association of eloquence with the divine opens up the possibility of "unnatural" uses, for the supernatural by definition operates beyond the bounds of nature. Following his account of "the emperor of men's minds," Peacham explains that "The principal instruments of mans help in this wonderfull effect, are those figures and formes of speech contained in this booke, which are the frutefull branches of eloquution, and the mightie streames of eloquence."<sup>255</sup> Figures thus produce "a wonderfull effect." He goes on to describe the figures in terms of their "orient colours," and as weapons. Beauty and force, two means by which to exert power over the mind, are the methods of eloquence according to Peacham—methods which point to the pull/push, attraction/repulsion of strangeness. However, in spite of its power to draw readers, beauty is described in the terms of the "orient" other.<sup>256</sup> Thus, Peacham describes figurative language in the spatial/geographical terms that were prominent in the period. But if Peacham goes further afield to describe the beauty of figures, he places boundaries around the figures to prevent misuse; as I mentioned earlier, the description of each figure concludes with "The Caution," in which Peacham circumscribes the figure with uses to avoid, and the reasons why. This again exposes the tension between Peacham's belief in the great powers of persuasion and his desire to regulate its use. Evidently, "the emperour of mens minds" should still work within certain limits.

Hoskins' concern for the abuse of rhetoric manifests itself in his *Directions for Speech and Style* in his frequent laments about the prevalence of extreme and extravagant figures in the fashions of the literary culture around him. In a sardonic discussion of the wordplay of

agnomination (a kind of pun that relies on the sounds of words), Hoskins quips, “See to what preferment a figure may aspire if it once get in credit in a world that hath not much true rhetoric!”<sup>257</sup> In spite of his disapproval for the literary extravagance of his age, Hoskins is especially perceptive and probing of the psychological motivations for making things strange as well as the conceptual movements such linguistic operations involve.<sup>258</sup> Hoskins ambivalently recognizes the challenges, uses, and appeal of strangeness. For example, he observes: “It cannot be but if either the meaning or the words be obscure or unfamiliar unto a man’s mind, that the speech so consisting should be much accepted; and yet it is impossible that there should be an extraordinary delight in ordinary words and plain meaning. How then shall we determine?”<sup>259</sup> A lawyer, an MP, and eventually a judge, Hoskins is the most practical-minded of the three theorists this chapter has considered. Hoskins fears that the obscurity and difficulty of estranging figures of speech might prevent persuasiveness in ordinary, practical situations, yet at the same time he acknowledges that an unusual or “extraordinary” effect on one’s audience seems to require strange means. As each handbook attests, albeit in different ways and to different degrees, desirable qualities and effects such as novelty, distinction, and rhetorical power are all connected to figurative strangeness.

### **Rhetorical Figures as Devices of Estrangement**

Although figurative language is conceived of as language estranged from ordinary speech in the texts of Puttenham, Peacham, and Hoskins, there is no single Figure of Estrangement—no “Estranger,” as Puttenham might have termed it. Rather, a variety of rhetorical figures can be employed as devices of estrangement. I focus on comparisons implied and explicit, namely the forms of simile, metaphor, and catachresis; on figures that elicit doubt and wonder related to modern notions of paradox, chiefly aporia, enigma, and synoeciosis; on the set of Renaissance figures related to modern notions of wordplay and punning; and on hyperbole as an exemplary figure of altered representation. Admittedly, the list is far from comprehensive. Nevertheless, the

figures selected are revealing, as they provoke theorists to confront “the strange” in their handbooks, and they are all used by Donne as devices of estrangement in his verse and prose.

As I approach the figures, it is worth bearing in mind that Donne’s techniques of estrangement include rhetorical figures as well as strategies and tactics of argumentation, organization, and structure. Although, following the late Renaissance disposition, my analysis tends to deal mostly with the third canon of rhetoric, namely *elocutio* or style (which generally involves word choice, sentence structure, and figures of speech), the estrangement effect can involve artistic choices related to *inventio* or invention (the finding and discovery of suitable materials for one’s argument), and arrangement or *dispositio*.<sup>260</sup> The rhetorical canons help to demarcate different stages in the composition, all of which have some impact on the production of the estrangement effect. In consideration of the rhetorical system, Adamson, Alexander, and Ettenhuber use analogy as a means to map and analyze different structural levels of rhetorical forms:

One of the sources of energy of the rhetorical system is the way the smallest matrices can function, by analogy, as metaphors for the largest, but are also intimately (and metonymically) connected to them. The very technique of likening one thing to another is, indeed, an example of this: comparison is a school exercise, analogy is a topic, simile is a figure of thought, and compar (the figure of parallel syntax) is a figure of speech.<sup>261</sup>

Like the interconnected structures of rhetoric that Adamson, Alexander, and Ettenhuber propose, devices of estrangement not only resemble but are also linked with one another on various conceptual and formal levels. The following examples, as well as later close readings of Donne’s poetry and sermons, demonstrate how the particular figures that Donne most often draws on, such as synoeciosis (paradox) and syllepsis (pun), parallel larger characteristics of his hermeneutic and aesthetic. This is evident, for example, in his recurrent concern for the reconciliation of apparent contradictions and his frequent excavation of the layers of meaning a single word or thing can conceal.

*The Likeness of Other Things: The Far-Fetched Similitude*

English Renaissance theorists affirmed the central importance and broad application of simile. This rhetorical figure of “explicit comparison”<sup>262</sup> often went by the name “similitude” in early modern England, but the word “similitude” was also used more generally to refer to “A person or thing resembling, or having the likeness *of*, some other person or thing.”<sup>263</sup> Peacham calls the figure “Similitudo,” and explains that it “compareth one thing with the other by a similitude fit to his purpose.”<sup>264</sup> He emphasizes that similitudes “serve to many and sundry endes,” and “of all formes of speech, they are best conceived, most praised, and longest rememberd.”<sup>265</sup> Puttenham gives similitude the English name “Resemblance,” and explains how “very necessary” it is, “by which we not only beautify our tale but also very much enforce and enlarge it.”<sup>266</sup> Both Puttenham and Peacham attest to the strong and far-reaching effects of the figure. While Hoskins employs the word “similitude” in its general sense throughout his discussion of the comparisons involved in metaphor and of related figures and generic forms involving resemblance, he only briefly discusses the figure of similitude proper, explaining that it “hath two sentences, of several proper terms compared.”<sup>267</sup> In spite of the wide range of uses recommended for similitude (Puttenham provides eleven examples for “general Resemblance” alone),<sup>268</sup> the theorists place restrictions on its use. For example, Peacham cautions: “The principal care in making similitudes ought to be in foreseeing that the things compared, be not unlike in that part wherein they be compared. Secondly, that they be not straunge and unknowne, by the one there is an absurditie, by the other obscuritie.”<sup>269</sup> If all comparisons necessarily involve degrees of difference and unlikeness between the things being compared, where does one draw the line? Indeed, Peacham’s cautions inversely suggest possible uses for “straunge” and “unkowne” objects of comparison, such as, for instance, for the very purposes of arresting the reader and delaying recognition.

Donne is not one to shy away from bold, far-fetched, or base similitudes. This can be seen in the eighth and final stanza of Donne's "Epithalamion Made at Lincoln's Inn" (*EpLin*), in which the speaker describes the bride as she waits for the groom:

Even like a faithfull man content,  
That this life for a better should be spent,  
So, shee a mothers rich stile doth preferre,  
And at the Bridegroomes wish'd approach doth lye,  
Like an appointed lambe, when tenderly  
The priest comes on his knees t'embowell her.

(85–90)

Comparison to the violent act of animal sacrifice dislocates the sexual consummation of the wedding night from the celebration and festivity typical of epithalamia, making the bride's encounter with the groom seem strange.<sup>270</sup> Loaded with sexual associations, the climactic stanzas of the poems are well-primed to elicit responses from readers. Indeed, the reactions of modern literary critics testify to the lasting emotional power of the strange similitude comparing the waiting bride to "an appointed lambe." Camille Wells Slight calls the image "grotesque," and Janel Mueller describes it as a "bold touch of erotic sadism," saying that Donne "skirts blasphemy" with the passage's suggestion that the bride resembles Christ, the Lamb of God.<sup>271</sup> Critics have debated whether the poem is a serious epithalamion, as Heather Dubrow suggests, or a parody, possibly for a mock-wedding put on by the young law students at the Inns of Court, as David Novarr contends.<sup>272</sup> Furthermore, Dubrow reads the passage I highlighted as "the nexus of the most disturbing elements in the poem, the core fantasy that shapes its darker vision."<sup>273</sup> Donne's estranging comparison would seem to be a fitting evocation, then, of the "contradictions, ambivalences, and flux" that Dubrow has identified as characterizing attitudes to marriage in Tudor and Stuart England.<sup>274</sup> The diverse reactions and interpretations of critics indicate how the estrangement effect can generate multiple approaches to a text. The estranging bride/lamb

similitude creates critical distance between reader and text, allowing the reader to see the events of the wedding night with fresh eyes, renewing attention to key features and revealing new significances. For instance, describing the priest “on his knees,” Donne draws striking parallels between priestly sacrifice and a sexual position, as Carey notes.<sup>275</sup> In the possible context of reveling young men performing a mock-wedding at Lincoln’s Inn, one could easily imagine Donne’s phrasing generating laughter from his audience. While the prostrate bride is described as longing for her groom’s arrival “t’embowell her,” the language of violent penetration reveals dark undercurrents in the male fantasy of taking a bride. The diction rivets attention to the physical consequences traditionally associated with the loss of female virginity, namely the breaking of the hymen and the subsequent bleeding. The comparison to animal sacrifice evokes pagan, Jewish, and Christian religious rituals of oblation, most significantly the Christian interpretations of Jesus’s death as the sacrifice of the Lamb of God, an act of divine atonement for humanity’s sins.

The similitude between sexual consummation and religious sacrifice also intensifies the less arresting comparison that immediately precedes it:

Even like a faithfull man content,  
That this life for a better should be spent,  
So, shee a mothers rich stile doth preferre.

(85–87)

Donne compares the bride’s imagined social transformation from maidenhood to motherhood to a faithful man practicing sacrificial resignation in this life in expectation of heavenly reward in the next. In both contexts, something is given up in order to receive a new and “improved” status: in the former, virginity, and in the latter, worldly prosperity. The critical distance effected by the subsequent shocking simile, however, enables the reader to question the nature, extent, and value of the sacrifices marriage demands from women, especially if a marriage were forced. In many of Donne’s poems, technique and theme complement each other; in *EpLin*, the estrangement effect facilitates the transformation of the reader’s perception of the consummation of the marriage,



which parallels the transformation the poem describes in the slightly variable refrain ending each stanza. The final two lines of the poem declare: “Wonders are wrought, for shee which had no maime, / *To night puts on perfection, and a womans name*” (95–96; italics in original). The passage would seem to be suggesting that a woman is made complete through the “sacrifices” involved in marriage, particularly the loss of virginity and subsequent motherhood, which was the conventional patriarchal view of women at the time.<sup>276</sup>

With such negative views on display, Slights argues, “The bride receives unusual emphasis but conspicuously little praise” in the poem. Slights continues: “Apparently the best that can be said for the bride is that she is not maimed.”<sup>277</sup> While Slights reads the poem as wholly negative towards the bride, I would counter that the poem’s association of the bride as lamb with Christ as Lamb functions as a positive comparison, and as more than the shock tactic Mueller assumes.<sup>278</sup> Examining the parallel between bride as lamb and Christ as Lamb reveals, however, that Donne is estranging the equation of comparison: in Christian tradition, the Bride is the Church, while Christ, the Lamb, is the Bridegroom. Therefore, the religious allusions are crossed, reversing the traditional gender roles of the trope in a chiasmic pattern. The effect is praise for the sacrifices of the young bride. This is reinforced by the initial similitude: if the bride’s sacrifice and transformation are being linked with Christ’s, they are also linked with the faithful man’s sacrifice in order to achieve heavenly glory. In this light, the strange similitude not only shocks for its violent imagery and possibly blasphemous resonances, but its religious resonances also suggest that the bride’s sacrifice is heroic and worthy of praise, in a manner similar to Christ’s. Moreover, the bride without “maime” can be read as an object of praise strengthening the associations with Christ, the man without sin, the lamb without blemish. The estranging similitude forces the reader to consider its religious implications, but if those implications are also read alongside the social and gender issues the epithalamion engages, then the connection between bride and Lamb of God may be seen even to throw judgement on societies that would demand such prices to be paid by youthful innocents. Thus, the estrangement effect produced by

the far-fetched similitude forces the reader to reevaluate and reappraise the associations he or she has brought to the text, encouraging a new or altered point of view on what was a traditional genre and deep-rooted social event.

*Trespasses in Speech: Metaphor and Catachresis*

In metaphor, a word or phrase is used to signify something which it literally is not, forming an implicit comparison. Puttenham's first description of metaphor arises during a general discussion of the function of figurative speech: figures "be occupied of purpose to deceive the ear and also the mind, drawing it from plainness and simplicity to a certain doubleness . . . . For what else is your *metaphor* but an inversion of sense by transport . . . ?"<sup>279</sup> Figures such as metaphor alter thought by altering the sense of a word. Puttenham goes on to define metaphor as "a kind of wresting of a single word from his own right signification to another not so natural, but yet of some affinity or conveniency with it."<sup>280</sup> Peacham defines metaphor as "artificial translation of one word, from the proper signification, to another not proper, but yet nigh and like."<sup>281</sup> And Hoskins defines metaphor as "the friendly and neighbourly borrowing of one word to express a thing with more light and better note, though not so directly and properly as the natural name of the thing meant would signify."<sup>282</sup> More than either Peacham or Hoskins, Puttenham recognizes the forceful operations of metaphor. Puttenham's use of the word "wresting" suggests strenuous effort on the part of both writer and reader to transgress "natural" borders of signification, while his use of "inversion" indicates a significant change of meaning, yet he simultaneously seeks to contain the verbal transportations within the boundaries of "affinity or conveniency." Peacham admits metaphor is "artificial" and "not proper," and tries to restrict the movements involved. Hoskins acknowledges an amount of necessary distance between tenor and vehicle, but still recommends that the comparison be to a neighbouring word or term, and not to a foreign or strange one, thus eschewing violent language in favour of transactional diction to describe the

metaphoric process.<sup>283</sup> Each theorist's definition of metaphor traverses boundaries based on recognized characteristics and customary use.

Peacham's subsequent lengthy account of metaphor includes descriptions of various exchanges across interpretive categories, such as, for example, "From things without life to things having life."<sup>284</sup> Peacham also treats the matter of borrowing words used for animals and applying them to humans, "by which forme of speech mens qualities & conditions are described by the properties of dumbe beasts."<sup>285</sup> Peacham warns against "1. Unlikenesse," "2. [the] Far fetcht or strange," "3. Unchast signification," and "4. Excesse, or defect in the similitude."<sup>286</sup> Donne's yoking of the vocabulary of animal sacrifice to human sexual relations in *EpLin* defies all four of Peacham's cautions glossing metaphoric comparison.

Peacham also provides reasons for borrowing words "From men" and applying them "to God," namely that God is "infinite and incomprehensible" and the human mind is "of so small a compasse." Likewise, human understanding is unable "to apprehend the incomprehensible wisdom" of God.<sup>287</sup> Peacham's ascription of incomprehensibility to the deity would agree with Aquinas's argument concerning the use of metaphors to approximate, but not apprehend divinity, and it intriguingly implies that if God is beyond human mental apprehension, generating disruption and delay of apprehension in a literary work might be a means of negatively conveying the transcendent.<sup>288</sup> Peacham's accounts also reinforce the early modern conception of firm limits to human understanding, a belief that perhaps helps to explain the coexistent strong desire in the handbooks to reach or to be transported beyond those limits. Donne, in *Essayes in Divinity*, similarly affirms the deficiencies of human expression and knowledge to apprehend a transcendent deity: "I beleeeve he is somewhat which no man can say or know. . . . God is impartible, and only faith which can receive it all at once, can comprehend him."<sup>289</sup> Later in *Essayes*, Donne writes, "So that God will be glorified both in our searching these Mysteries, because it testifies our liveliness towards him, and in our not finding them."<sup>290</sup> Donne believes in the necessity of an active faith that labours to know God as well as in God's ultimate

transcendence. Hoskins, in his caution about metaphor, does not engage directly with matters of divinity and transcendence. Nevertheless, in comparison to Peacham, Hoskins is more sensitive to deep-set human motivations to reach beyond the compass of our limits. The images Hoskins selects to describe how metaphoric language parallels the wandering and overreaching aims of the human mind suggests a “beyond” more attainable than the mystical aspirations of Donne:

The rule of a metaphor is that it be not too bold nor too far-fetched. And though all metaphors go beyond the signification of things, yet are they requisite to match the compassing sweetness of men’s minds, that are not content to fix themselves upon one thing but they must wander into the confines; like the eye, that cannot choose but view the whole knot when it beholds but one flower in a garden of purpose; or like an archer that, knowing his bow will overcast or carry too short, takes aim on this side or beyond his mark.<sup>291</sup>

Hoskins’ ambivalence—cautioning against excessive transgression, while acknowledging and even delighting in human desires for variety and to trespass boundaries of thought—reflects the fundamental difficulty of defining metaphor as an exchange of meaning between words, and then trying to regulate the economy of comparison.

These theorists’ accounts of metaphor betray the difficulty of trying to define a “normal” amount of difference between vehicle and tenor. In Donne’s poem, “The Ecstasy” (*Ecst*), the speaker describes how he and his lover’s “eye-beames twisted, and did thred / Our eyes, upon one double string” (7–8). Is Donne’s metaphor here too bold or too far-fetched? Are lovers’ gazing eyes too unlike beads being threaded on a string? Indeed, the bold metaphor estranges not only the perhaps familiar experience of two lovers gazing into each other’s eyes, but also the conventional language of Renaissance love poetry, with its frequent talk of eye beams and love at first sight.<sup>292</sup> The estrangement effect conveys not only the ultimate difference of the other person that love might lay bare (yet also seek to overcome), but estrangement also directs attention to the subject of *Ecst*, the self-estrangement of ecstasy, of one’s soul leaving one’s body—or, even

stranger, how “Love, these mixt soules, doth mixe againe, / And makes both one, each this and that” (35–36): a soul both two and one. The striking image is also a potent analogy for metaphoric comparison. First of all, the image of twisted eye-beams looking at each other before being combined brings to mind the “inversions of sense” involved in metaphor, according to Puttenham. Second, the image also resembles the subtle linguistic violence of metaphor, which threads together views of two different things, creating “a certain doubleness,” to echo Puttenham’s words.<sup>293</sup>

The arresting example also raises the spectre of catachresis. Lanham defines catachresis as “Implied metaphor, using words wrenched from common usage” or “an extravagant, unexpected, farfetched metaphor.”<sup>294</sup> Violence and extremity, disruption and distance, characterize catachresis according to Lanham. Understanding catachresis as an extreme form of metaphor points to the critical issue, in my mind: where does one draw the line of acceptable comparison? Puttenham’s account, for instance, is deeply ambivalent, for although he admits that all figures are “in a sort abuses, or rather trespasses, in speech,” he nevertheless cautions against catachresis, which he dubs the “Figure of Abuse.”<sup>295</sup> He defines catachresis as the taking of a word “neither natural nor proper” and trying to “apply it to the thing which we would seem to express, and without any just inconvenience.”<sup>296</sup> Peacham, although he notes that catachresis “in Latine is called Abusio,” restricts his definition to “a forme of speech wherby the speaker or writer wanting a proper word, borroweth the next or the likest to the thing that he would signifie,” setting aside all hints of violence or extremity.<sup>297</sup> Hoskins also notes that catachresis means “in English, abuse,” and he defines it as “the expressing of one matter by the name of another which is incompatible with it, and sometimes clean contrary.”<sup>298</sup> Hoskins further distinguishes catachresis from metaphor based on extremity of feeling, catachresis being “somewhat more desperate than a metaphor.”<sup>299</sup> Importantly, what exactly is considered natural, or proper, or compatible in these definitions remains ambiguous. Puttenham’s phrase “just inconvenience” encapsulates his awareness of the potential for poetic “abuses” alongside his desire to justify

these literary trespasses. For Puttenham, catachresis is “neither natural nor proper,” while Peacham emphasizes that catachresis fills the need for “a proper word,” and he limits the range of word selection to “the next or the likest.”<sup>300</sup> In Hoskins’ definition, the difference between incompatibility and “clean” contrariness is unclear. In general, catachresis seems to be a metaphor that has gone too far, but the limits demarcating “too far” are indefinite. Thus, in my view, instances of catachresis are a matter of perspective.

Donne’s sequence of seven sonnets, *Corona*, meditating on the events of Christ’s life, utilizes various of these devices of estrangement in order to elicit wonder and admiration in the reader for the miraculous events, and I consider several of those devices in the subsequent sections. For now, I will focus on the seventh sonnet from *Corona* as an example illustrating the issues surrounding metaphor and catachresis as well as the functioning of both as devices of estrangement.

The last in the interlinked sequence, the seventh sonnet (*Cor7*) considers the Ascension of Christ into heaven. Donne creates a multifaceted image of the Son that utilizes commonplace religious tropes and paradoxes as well as more atypical metaphors. As the sonnet begins, Donne employs the conventional sun/Son pun (line 2), and develops an image of Christ as ascending light, leading the way to heaven (5–8). In lines 9 to 12, the speaker apostrophizes:

O strong Ramme, which hast batter’d heaven for mee,  
Mild lambe, which with thy blood, hast mark’d the path;  
Bright torch, which shin’st, that I the way may see,  
Oh, with thy owne blood quench thy owne just wrath, . . .

While the image of a sacrificial lamb in *EpLin* startles because that poem is about a wedding night, in this religious sonnet sacrificial imagery is comfortably rooted in the traditions of devotional writing and Christian exegesis. The estranging response that the image of a sacrificial lamb elicits in an epithalamion versus its familiarity in a religious lyric indicates the importance of context in any analysis of the function of strangeness.

The association of Christ with “Mild lambe” derives from the New Testament: John the Baptist twice declares Jesus the Lamb of God in the Gospel of John, and the Lamb is a frequent designation for the Son in the Apocalypse.<sup>301</sup> A “torch” as a signification of Christ is not found in the biblical texts, but the image functions as an extension of the traditional designation of Christ as the Light of the World, which is one of the metaphors that Jesus uses for himself in the Gospel of John.<sup>302</sup> In *Cor7* Donne defamiliarizes Christ as the Light of the World by changing the metaphor to make it more concrete and specific, yet retaining its essential attributes. Donne’s sources for his image of Christ as a “strong Ramme” are more difficult to trace, and probably derive from Christian typological interpretations of the Hebrew Bible. Both Helen Gardner and Donald Dickson, in their editions of Donne, point to Genesis 22:13, which relates how Abraham finds a ram in a thicket and sacrifices the animal instead of his son Isaac.<sup>303</sup> The ram is typologically associated with Christ, who, according to substitutionary theories of the Atonement, takes the rightful fate of humanity upon himself by dying on the Cross. In her commentary, Gardner also glosses Micah 2:13, which Christian exegetes have long interpreted as a prophecy about the Messiah: “The breaker is come up before them: they have broken up, and have passed through the gate . . . and their king shall pass before them, and the LORD on the head of them.”<sup>304</sup> While Donne’s choice of “strong Ramme” elicits associations with Christian interpretations of the Old Testament familiar to a seventeenth-century reader steeped in biblical exegetical traditions, the ram is a far more estranging metaphor for Christ than the lamb.

Paired—and rhymed—with the image of Christ as a “mild lambe,” “strong Ramme” suggests a different yet related aspect of Christ as Saviour. A ram, of course, is another kind of sheep, an adult un-castrated male, which suggests a more active and even aggressive figure than the passive young sheep that is sacrificially bled. Gardner locates the notion that “rams lead the flock and break down what bars the way” in Patristic allegorical exegesis. These traditions might have influenced Donne’s image of the ram “which hast batter’d heaven” on the speaker’s behalf.<sup>305</sup> However, Donne’s language suggests not only a horned animal but also a siege weapon,

a battering ram, which strengthens connections to Micah. The *OED* states that “ram,” in the sense of “A heavy beam used for breaching walls or doors, by striking them forcefully and repeatedly,” derives from Old English and was active in Donne’s lifetime, while the word “battering ram” can be dated to 1611, in the King James Bible.<sup>306</sup> *Corona* dates to around 1607, within a few years of the *OED*’s first example, and the battering and siege imagery has parallels with Donne’s Holy Sonnet that begins “Batter my heart, three person’d God” (1) (*HSBatter*), and which goes on to compare the speaker to “an vsurp’d towne” (5).<sup>307</sup> What is most strange about *Cor7*, whether one reads “strong Ramme” as an adult male sheep or a siege weapon, is that, instead of describing Christ the Victor breaking down the gates of hell, as we might expect—or battering the sinner, “an vsurp’d towne,” as in *HSBatter*—Donne describes Christ smashing the doorway to heaven, presumably to open up access to heaven for all those saved through his death and resurrection. Extending the metaphor, Christ the battering ram makes heaven a tower being besieged, which also raises the question of why the gate has been barred.<sup>308</sup> Heaven as a castle is a common enough image, but Christ as the siege weaponry outside is highly unusual. The battering ram metaphor targets Christ’s powerful redemptive force against neither sin nor death nor the Devil but rather the Father’s heavenly city. The suggestion that Christ violently opens up the gates of salvation also indicates the exclusionary nature of God’s administration of salvation and damnation, a binary judgement perhaps most vividly expressed in the New Testament in Christ’s sermon about estranging humankind into two groups, the sheep and the goats: “When the Son of man shall come in his glory, . . . he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth *his* sheep from the goats.”<sup>309</sup> Alongside the lamb and his blood, and even the torch that shines, the ram that batters, or the battering ram, seem like strange images to apply to Christ’s ascension.

How appropriate are the ram and battering ram metaphors? Are they too bold as images, too unlike the conventional characteristics of Christ, too far-fetched or strange a choice, transgressing the boundaries of metaphor outlined by Renaissance theorists? Donne’s devices of estrangement foreground the debate about the borders of figurative language in the period’s



literary-rhetorical theory. Donne's unusual double image of Christ—recalling the “certain doubleness” Puttenham ascribes to figurative language<sup>310</sup>—forces the reader into a new consideration of the traditional subject matter of the sonnet, distancing the reader that she or he may consider whether Christ's ascension is in any way an assault on heaven. Through the mental dissonance of the estrangement effect, the reader is compelled to consider to what extent Christ's atonement is active, like the ram, or passive, like the lamb. The reader's mental effort to reconcile the opposing qualities parallels the strange satisfaction of the subsequent lines, which describe God's “owne blood” quenching his “owne just wrath” (12). The metonymic connection between “lambe” and “Ramme” (given that one sheep might be both lamb and ram over the course of its life) demands a dual vision of Christ—as if our stereoscopic vision has been blurred for a moment, and, in the mental delay, we see two images. The real discovery is that Christ is not simply passive or active. He is both—at different times in the temporal world, and at once in eternity.<sup>311</sup> The violence Christ the ram inflicts is equaled by the violence the lamb himself receives. The narrow compass and rigid categories of human perception—which wants to register Christ as either active or passive—are unable to contain the significance of the strange event the poem attempts to describe, and so Donne must rely on the transports and trespasses of metaphor and catachresis to convey the incomprehensible vision of a man/god ascending to the infinite.

*Doubt and Wonder: Paradoxon, Aporia, Enigma, Synoeciosis*

As the above examples of the bride as sacrificial lamb and Christ as lamb/ram illustrate, impeded comprehension is a side-effect of the crossing of interpretive categories in the comparisons of similitude, metaphor, and, especially, catachresis. We could form another loose grouping of figures—namely, paradoxon, aporia, enigma, and synoeciosis—around delayed mental apprehension as a primary effect, with attendant feelings of doubt and/or wonder. Paradox, which Gideon Burton defines as a “statement that is self-contradictory on the surface, yet seems to evoke a truth nonetheless,” has long been identified with Donne and early modern

aesthetics and the traditions of Christian theology and literature.<sup>312</sup> Although no Renaissance figure of speech encapsulates the range of either Renaissance or modern understandings of paradox, the following section groups a number of figures around their relation to notions of paradox and the evocation of doubt and wonder.

Burton describes paradoxon as “a type of faux wondering,” and he notes its similarity to aporia, which, as Lanham observes, involves “True or feigned doubt or deliberation about an issue.”<sup>313</sup> Puttenham calls paradoxon “the Wonderer,” for it occurs when “our poet is carried by some occasion to report of a thing that is marvelous, and then he will seem not to speak it simply but with some sign of admiration.”<sup>314</sup> Similarly, aporia, as Peacham relates, is “a forme of speech by which the speaker sheweth that he doubteth, either where to begin for the multitude of matters, or what to do or say, in some strange and doubtfull thing”; aporia can signal “perplexitie of the minde” or the “ambiguitie of things.”<sup>315</sup> Thus, both paradoxon and aporia involve the speaker’s direct expression of a state of affect, of wonder in the former and doubt in the latter. Moreover, both figures not only display the speaker’s state of feeling or mind, but they also suggest the strangeness of the object or event provoking wonder or doubt, for paradoxon indicates “a thing that is marvelous,” and aporia something “strange and doubtfull.” Of course, in spite of his discerning account of the uses of aporia, Peacham still cautions against its frequent use: “We ought in the use of this figure to take heed that we put not too many doubts or to doubt where there is litle need, or none at all.”<sup>316</sup>

Donne deploys feigned doubt in the “Temple” sonnet of *Corona (Cor4)* in order to invite wonder and admiration for the Christ-child:

The Word but lately could not speake, and loe  
 It soddenly speakes wonders, whence comes it,  
 That all which was, and all, which should be writ,  
 A shallow seeming child, should deeply know?

(5–8)

Donne's speaker knows the answer to the question of why a "shallow seeming child" knows everything—because the child is God—but the speaker expresses doubt in order to elicit wonder from his reader. The passage also demonstrates how Donne often combines the use of various rhetorical figures, in this case expressing doubt about a paradox (namely that an ignorant child should know all things), in order to evoke even greater wonder. Although Donne's poetic works involve some notable examples of paradoxon and aporia, with various speakers expressing wonder and doubt, his general strategy is equally if not more concerned with provoking doubt, wonder, and admiration in the reader, which is the function of the next figure to be discussed: enigma.

Enigma compels strong feelings of bewilderment from the reader. Burton defines it as "Obscuring one's meaning by presenting it within a riddle or by means of metaphors that purposefully challenge the reader or hearer to understand." Burton gestures towards the estranging effect of multiplying the use of a figure. In his words, "Enigma also occurs when tropes are used in series, each of which is fairly clear, but their combined effect teases with its obscurity."<sup>317</sup> Puttenham dubs it "the Riddle": "We dissemble again under covert and dark speeches when we speak by way of riddle (*enigma*), of which the sense can hardly be picked out but by the party's own assoil."<sup>318</sup> Peacham defines enigma as "a sentence or forme of speech, which for the darknesse, the sense may hardly be gathered."<sup>319</sup> According to Peacham, it is a figure "more agreeable to high and heavenly visions, then to the forme of familiar and proper speech," and one of "deepe obscuritie."<sup>320</sup> Puttenham emphasizes the reader's "own assoil," that is to say, the reader's own "solution or explanation" of the riddle,<sup>321</sup> but the diction also evokes the labour and difficulty of "assailing" something. Peacham thinks enigma is more suitable for a poet than an orator due to its lack of "perspicuitie," or lucid expression, which is "the principall vertue of an Orator."<sup>322</sup> Perhaps Peacham believes auditors are less able to unpack a riddle than are readers, who can return to the text in front of them. In any case, Peacham recognizes enigma's potential pleasures for witty, active readers, using similes to describe enigma's offer of rich

reward for the interpretive activity it demands: “this figure is like a deepe mine, the obtaining of whose mettall requireth deepe digging, or to a darke night, whose stars be hid with thicke cloudes.”<sup>323</sup>

Donne’s works contain both descriptions of the enigmatic quality of religious faith and mystery as well as deployments of enigma (the figure) to cultivate mystery for the reader. Donne’s Sermon Preached at St. Paul’s, for Easter-Day, 1628, is on 1 Corinthians 13:12: “For now we see through a glasse darkly, but then face to face; now I know in part, but then I shall know, even as also I am knowne.” This famous passage from Paul’s letter is often cited in theological discussions about the limitations of human perception and intellect in the present temporal world. The biblical text for the sermon prompts Donne to refer to the figure enigma in his effort to convey to his auditory the mystery involved in knowing God: “The knowing of God . . . whilst we are in this World, it is but *In ænigmatē*, in an obscure Riddle, a representation, *darkly*, and *in part*, as we translate it” (PS 8.9.225.235–36, 238–39). Donne continues, more directly connecting his discussion to specific rhetorical terminology: “This *ænigma* that is spoken of now, this darke similitude, and comparison, is proposed to our faith, and so far we *know* God, that is, Beleeve in God in this life, but by *ænigmas*, by darke representations, and allusions” (PS 8.9.225.241–44). God’s remove from clear apprehension in this life indicates not only the necessity of faith but also the figurative nature of temporal reality. In the “Annunciation” sonnet from *Corona (Cor2)*, written two decades before his Easter sermon, Donne crafts the thick clouds of enigma into his poetry in order to obscure Christian doctrines on the Virgin Mary, the birth of Jesus, and the Son of God’s relationship to the Father. The speaker addresses Mary in the sestet:

Ere by the spheares time was created, thout  
Wast in his minde, who is thy Sonne, and Brother,  
Whom thou conceiv’st, conceiv’d; yea thou art now  
Thy Makers maker, and thy Fathers mother, . . .

(9–12)

The passage not only seeks to confuse, but its confusions also present a bewildering relationship between the central figures of Christianity. The description of Jesus as both “Sonne, and Brother” to Mary (10) seems contradictory and bizarre, demanding an unpacking of the sense of the words, which suggests a common father for both Mary and Jesus. Renewed attention to the relationships between Jesus, Mary, and God the Father recovers their original strangeness—a son said to be without a human father, the product of God and a young maid. The difficulty of trying to reconcile the relational tangle evokes the gap between human perception and intellect and God’s nature and ways, a gap Donne considers in his sermon preached some 20 years later. However, the enigma in *Cor2* also generates the disturbing taint of incest, not only calling to mind the charges of wrongdoing that likely would have been levelled at the young, pregnant, unmarried Mary by the community around her, but also daringly touching on the basic paradox and absurdity of a virgin giving birth. At the same time, calling Mary “Thy Makers maker, and thy Fathers mother” (12) charges the poem with a Catholic reverence for Mary that would have shocked most Protestants, because it directs attention to the traditional title for Mary of *Theotokos*, Mother of God, a statement of praise vexed and suppressed in post-Reformation England. The example reveals two important aspects of devices of estrangement. First, the estrangement effect is most potently produced through the confluence of several devices of estrangement. In this particular case, Donne creates an enigma, using metaphors, paradoxes, and punning repetitions (what is called polyptoton, discussed below)—e.g., “Whom thou conceiv’st, conceiv’d” (11). Second, the estrangement effect, which enigma produces in this example, reveals the range of responses that human apprehensions and representations of God, which are “*darkly*, and *in part*,” generate. In the poem, the estrangement effect can, on the one hand, possibly provoke the reader to reject the absurdity of the Virgin Birth, or, on the other hand, possibly renew and deepen understanding of the traditionally held relationships between God, Mary, and Jesus. Like the tangled web of Jesus’s relations that Donne constructs in *Cor2*, enigma connects multiple figures into a dense cloud of potential interpretations.

Troubling interpretive categories in a manner similar to enigma, synoeciosis, which Lanham defines as “an expanded oxymoron; a paradox,”<sup>324</sup> involves both contrast and overlap, and seems to come in both expanded and compressed forms according to Renaissance theorists. Puttenham calls synoeciosis “the Cross-Couple.” As he observes, the figure “takes me two contrary words and tieth them as it were in a pair of couples, and so makes them agree like good fellows, as I saw once in France a wolf coupled with a mastiff, and a fox with a hound.”<sup>325</sup> Puttenham’s emphasis on “two contrary words” calls to mind oxymoron, “Placing two ordinarily opposing terms adjacent to one another. A compressed paradox.”<sup>326</sup> Hoskins’ conception seems more expansive, as he describes synoeciosis as “a composition of contraries,” which “is a fine course to stir admiration in the hearer, and make them think it strange harmony which must be expressed in such discords.”<sup>327</sup> Puttenham’s definition emphasizes the force of the figure binding together the oppositional energies, making them concur, whereas Hoskins emphasizes the stirring effect on the reader, which makes him or her feel admiration and think the paradoxical composition a “strange harmony.” Hoskins’ emphasis on the “harmony” of the “contraries” foregrounds a crucial aspect of synoeciosis, which Burton explicitly addresses in his definition: “A coupling or bringing together of contraries, but not in order to oppose them to one another.”<sup>328</sup> Burton is specifically contrasting synoeciosis with antithesis, which is simply a “Juxtaposition of contrasting words or ideas.”<sup>329</sup> Synoeciosis is not simply a juxtaposition of contraries but rather a paradoxical harmonization of them.

This paradoxical, harmonizing quality makes the “composition of contraries” a frequent device of estrangement in Donne’s verse and prose. In the example from *Cor7* analyzed above, Donne uses the contrary words “strong” and “Mild” to evoke the strange harmony revealed in Christ, who, the sonnet asserts, is both the “Ramme” and the “lambe.” Likewise, in *Expostulation 19*, from *Devotions upon Emergent Occasions* (which I discussed earlier in the chapter), Donne praises God for the eloquence of the Bible, noting “such *sinewes* even in thy *milke*, and such *things* in thy *words*.”<sup>330</sup> The image of sinewy milk is incongruous, and hence strange, combining

a kind of tough bodily tissue with a liquid product of the mammalian body, which harmonizes the antithetical qualities ascribed to the Bible by different readers and exegetes. The biblical texts are both difficult and easy to understand, both troubling matter to chew on and ready nourishment. Donne's use of synoeciosis in Expostulation 19 contributes to the entire passage's effort to evoke wonder for the divine hand in the metaphorical language of scripture and in the world.

The final lines of Donne's Divine Poem *Tilman* exhibit many forms of synoeciosis. The poem, grouped by editors among the Divine Poems but also a verse letter thought to be addressed to Edward Tilman, questions the effects, benefits, and functions of a religious vocation. Not much is known about Tilman. He wrote a poem that survives in two manuscripts explaining why he had decided against taking orders—the reason, in short, was that Tilman thought himself unfit—only to change his mind and become a deacon on 20 December 1618.<sup>331</sup> Donne himself was ordained only a few years earlier, on 23 January 1615. Donne's own ordination, then, was an event of recent memory, which also might help explain why Donne wrote the poem.<sup>332</sup> The final lines of *Tilman* describe the Christian minister as a strange combination of the heavenly and the earthly, the sacred and the secular:

These are thy titles and preheminences,  
 In whom must meet Gods graces, mens offences,  
 And so the heavens which beget all things here,  
 And the earth our mother, which these things doth beare,  
 Both these in thee, are in thy Calling knit,  
 And make thee now a blest Hermaphrodite.

(49–54)

The poem argues that the “Calling” expressed in taking holy orders can “knit” together the seeming contradictions of religious matters and worldly affairs, and the interactions of grace and sin. The compressed instance of synoeciosis in line 54, the priest being made a “blest Hermaphrodite,” summarizes the more expansive usage of the figure that precedes it. The richly

resonant word “Hermaphrodite” signifies, in the strictest sense, a person or animal combining male and female sex organs and physical characteristics, and, more broadly, a joining of complementary halves.<sup>333</sup> Drawing on both senses of the word, the poem’s “blest Hermaphrodite” also evokes the grand-scale combination of a masculine heaven and a feminine earth that come together in primordial myth, extending the resonances of the strange passage outward: from Church of England ordination, to early modern medical discourse, to the long tradition cataloguing natural “marvels,” to ancient creation myth.

Donne’s poetry and prose abound with instances of compressed synoeciosis (or oxymoron), exploiting the intellectual energy and multiple interpretive resonances that yoking two seemingly contrary words together can generate. In his discussion of “Humility, and Studiousnesse” in *Essayes in Divinity*, Donne links the quality of strangeness with an example of the figure. Donne writes that “It is then humility to study God, and a strange miraculous one; for it is an ascending humility,” which he contrasts with the Devil’s “descending pride, to forsake God, for the study and love of things worse then our selves.”<sup>334</sup> The synoeciosis disrupts the habitual associations of humility with lowliness and of pride with a desire to ascend, which functions to renew attention to traditional Christian valuations of humility and pride. Nelson comments on Donne’s frequent use of the adjective “holy” to modify a seemingly negative or, in Nelson’s words, “dubious” noun.<sup>335</sup> In one sermon, for example, Donne describes “a holy ambition, a sacred covetousnesse, and a wholesome Dropsie” (*PS* 5.14.275.280–81).<sup>336</sup> Donne modifies three typically negative nouns using three descriptors signifying divine positivity. *HSShe* similarly describes a “holy thirsty dropsy” (8). Nelson describes such examples as “grammatical sanctification” involving “a purification strategy.”<sup>337</sup> The combination of seemingly contrary adjectives and nouns modifies the reader’s perception of the noun. When the noun denotes a worldly desire, such as “ambition,” the estrangement effect actually works to forestall typical Christian judgement towards worldly values and vices, showing that sometimes the



habitual view to disrupt with the estrangement effect is one rooted not in sin but rather in religiosity.<sup>338</sup>

*Wordplay: Syllepsis, Antanaclasis, Paronomasia, Polyptoton*

Few figures of speech today have the potential to alienate a reader or listener as puns do, but as Hoskins' complaint about agnomination, mentioned above, suggests, excessive wordplay also raised concerns in early modern England.<sup>339</sup> While the notion of "the pun" cannot be identified with any single rhetorical figure, Sophie Read has located modern understandings of wordplay in a set of three Renaissance figures, making clear that wordplay had widespread appeal and even credibility in the period. The first figure she identifies is syllepsis, which is "the single word that conceals multiple meanings," and the second is antanaclasis, which is "the figure in which a word occurs and is then repeated in a different sense." Thirdly, paronomasia is "perhaps the most contrived of all; it depends not on the diversity of meanings to be mined from one word, as syllepsis and antanaclasis do, but on finding a likeness of sound between two different words."<sup>340</sup> I would add a fourth, polyptoton, which Burton defines as "Repeating a word, but in a different form. Using a cognate of a given word in close proximity."<sup>341</sup> Puttenham uses the Latin "*traductio*," which he Englishes as "the Tranlacer," to describe "when ye turn and tranlace a word into many sundry shapes, as the tailor doth his garment."<sup>342</sup> Hoskins explains polyptoton as "a repetition of words of the same lineage, that differ only in termination."<sup>343</sup> Puttenham's sartorial similitude comparing *traductio* to a tailor cutting cloth depicts language as workable material that the poet is able to alter into whatever form is required. Hoskins' description of the "lineage" of words suggests natural generation producing slow change over time, a kind of exploiting of the evolutionary transformation of words in contrast to the instant (re)fashioning of language that Puttenham's definition implies.<sup>344</sup>

Donne's use of punning figures draws on the evolutionary change of verbal forms, and his condensed deployment of the figures demonstrates an active poet reworking and refashioning

the material of language. In *Cor7*, Donne pairs the image of Christ as a “strong Ramme” with that of a “mild lambe.” “Ramme” rhymes with “lambe,” which is an example of paronomasia, especially given the closeness of “r” and “l” sounds.<sup>345</sup> Donne’s play on the coincidental affinity of the sounds of the words underscores the natural connection of ram and lamb, further emphasizing the both/and nature of Christ argued for in the poem.

Several other examples of wordplay can be found in the first sonnet of *Corona* (*Cor1*):

*Deigne at my hands this crowne of prayer and praise,  
Weav'd in my low devout melancholie,  
Thou which of good, hast, yea art treasury,  
All changing unchang'd Antient of dayes  
But doe not, with a vile crowne of fraile bayes,  
Reward my muses white sincerity,  
But what thy thorny crowne gain'd, that give mee,  
A crowne of Glory, which doth flower alwayes;  
The ends crowne our workes, but thou crown'st our ends,  
For, at our end begins our endlesse rest,  
The first last end, now zealously possest,  
With a strong sober thirst, my soul attends.  
'Tis time that heart and voice be lifted high,  
*Salvation to all that will is nigh.**

(1–14; italics in original)

In an example of polyptoton, the linguistic turns of “All changing” to “unchang'd” underline the paradox of an unvarying deity that can transform all things (4). The micro-estrangement of the “Antient of dayes” anticipates the argumentative reversal in the next quatrain, when the speaker strangely asks not for the crown of bay leaves traditionally awarded to poets, but rather for a “thorny crowne,” following the example of the suffering Jesus. “Crown” is repeated throughout

the poem, but as the sonnet moves from octave to sestet, the meaning changes, in an example of antanaclasis. For instance, the “crowne of Glory” in line 8 is followed by a repetition-laden line 9: “The ends crowne our workes, but thou crown’st our ends.” The function of “crown” shifts from noun to verb as the meaning changes from honorary headgear to the figurative sense of a “triumphant culmination.”<sup>346</sup> However, the final use of “crown” (“thou crown’st our ends”) is also an example of syllepsis, as it additionally contains the more literal sense of God rewarding people with crowns for their good works, which connects to the crown the speaker desires. In the same line (9), Donne begins to weave in wordplay using “ends.” The interweaving of words (using chiasmus) as well as meanings (using puns) suggests the poem itself is a woven work, recalling the speaker’s initial desire to offer up the poem as “this crowne of prayer and praise, / Weav’d” for God (1–2). The repetition of crown also points to the generic structure of “La Corona,” which is Italian for “the Crown.” The initial sonnet is one part of a crown of sonnets, a short sonnet sequence interwoven through the repetition of the last line of one sonnet in the first line of the next. Furthermore, the repetition of each final line (either a dependent or independent clause) in the context of a different sonnet functions as antanaclasis on the level of stanza structure and argument, revealing a new meaning behind the repetition of the same collection and organization of words. This is evident in the last line of the first sonnet, “*Salvation to all that will is nigh*” (14), which begins the second sonnet (1). The repetitions estrange the lines of poetry by placing them in the new context of the next sonnet.

### *Exaggeration, Extravagance, Excess: Hyperbole*

Hyperbole involves “Exaggerated or extravagant terms used for emphasis and not intended to be understood literally.”<sup>347</sup> In Puttenham’s words, hyperbole is speaking “in the superlative and beyond the limits of credit,” and he famously dubs the figure “for his immoderate excess . . . the Overreacher, . . . or Loud Liar.”<sup>348</sup> For Peacham, hyperbole involves “surmounting the truth.”<sup>349</sup> In contrast to Peacham, Hoskins is more ready to recognize the extent to which

hyperbole can be pushed. He writes that hyperbole expresses “a thing in the highest degree of possibility” or even “flat impossibility.”<sup>350</sup> For Hoskins, hyperbole gestures towards that which is beyond language, and as such its uses for theological and spiritual matters are apparent. Peacham recognizes the usefulness of amplifying the orator’s subject matter, yet he is still as cautious as ever. After describing hyperbole, Peacham warns the reader: “albeit matters require (and that worthily) to be amplified, that yet there be not too great an excesse in the comparison: but that it may be discreetly moderated.”<sup>351</sup>

Perhaps no work of Donne’s more daringly tests the limits of hyperbole than the funeral elegy, *FirAn*, which mourns the death of an ordinary young girl, Elizabeth Drury (whom Donne might never have met), as the loss of the world’s soul. Emphasizing the entire world’s decline, Donne’s speaker laments:

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 stray’d,  
 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.

(135–43)

Not content simply to say that each human generation lives a shorter lifespan and grows smaller than the previous one, Donne amplifies his description of modern “man” as being “contracted to an inch,” whereas “man at first” was the equal of elephants and whales. Smallness of stature has become so normalized in this diminished world that woodland fairies and African pygmies are now “credible,” namely nothing out of the ordinary. The poem’s anatomy of the state of the world

reflects the commonplace early modern notion that the world is in a state of decline as a result of humanity's primordial Fall. When read within the context of Christian theology, the hyperboles of the passage call extravagant attention to the notion that the present human condition has been drastically estranged and reduced from humanity's former glory in Eden.

### **The Poetics of Estrangement as Re-Creation**

Donne's preoccupation with the forceful process of rendering the familiar strange in literary works stems from his belief in the value of activity and labour, in reading as in other activities. In his verse letter "To the Lady Magdalen Herbert, of St. Mary Magdalen" (*MHMary*), Donne compliments Herbert through comparison to Mary Magdalene, who "An active faith so highly did advance, / That she once knew, more than the Church did know, / The *Resurrection*" (3–5). The compliment characterizes Mary's "active faith" as one that works to accumulate knowledge of the divine. Labour and force also undergird Donne's conception and ideal of poetic creation. In *Sidney*, Donne describes the Sidney Psalter as "their sweet learned labours" (54). Early in a sermon on the Penitential Psalms, from 1623, Donne states: "in all Metricall compositions, of which kinde the booke of Psalmes is, the force of the whole piece, is for the most part left to the shutting up; the whole frame of the Poem is a beating out of a piece of gold, but the last clause is as the impression of the stamp, and that is it that makes it currant" (6.1.41). Albert C. Labriola notes the echo of Donne's *ValMourn*, with its similitude comparing the expansion of the lovers' parting souls to "gold to ayery thinnesse beate" (24).<sup>352</sup> Comparing Donne's comments in the sermon to the aesthetic structure of many of his poems, Labriola argues that Donne's statement indicates his belief that poetry involves "painstaking craftsmanship." Labriola's phrase aptly suggests the centrality of both labour and creation in Donne's understanding of poetic invention. Labriola further argues that Donne emphasizes the importance of "the final verse(s) stamping the significance of the contents," which Labriola points out is evident in many of Donne's last lines that "emphasize, retract, modify, or undercut what preceded

them.”<sup>353</sup> Donne’s poems are full of twists and reversals, and the final “shutting up” often alters, or renders strange, what has come before. In such cases, the estranged reader must go back and reconsider the poem. In Donne’s thinking, effort is required for the process of making poetry, and effort should also be a part of the process of reading, which can result in a more significant or new impression in the reader. In Donne’s description of the creation of poetry, in his 1623 Penitential Psalms sermon, a particular substance—gold—is re-formed through the poet’s efforts.<sup>354</sup> In his Hague sermon preached in 1619, the auditor’s mind is melted, poured into molds, softened, and stamped. The imagery suggests molten wax or metalwork, such as coining. In both sermons, the substance (e.g., gold) remains the same if altered in form and value. Pre-existing material is being disfigured, estranged, made into a new form, which ultimately stamps it with a new worth. Poetry, for Donne, is not creation from nothing, from the sheer imagination of the poet, but rather it involves a laborious re-making of pre-existing matter. Making it strange is a vital part of the process of making it new. As the following chapters will demonstrate, Donne, like many writers and thinkers of antiquity and the Renaissance, is preoccupied with the paradox of formal renewal—of something changing yet staying the same.

As Christian writers over the centuries shared the common metaphor of Christ the Lamb, classical and Renaissance writers shared common metaphors to talk about poetic invention, such as, for example, bees gathering pollen from flowers to make honey or the human processes of eating and digestion.<sup>355</sup> These common metaphors indicate that poetry is not creation out of nothing. The poet’s generic forms, arguments, images, and vocabulary are gathered and reworked, not fabricated from scratch. Aristotle’s understanding of poetry as a mimetic art, one that imitates reality, was widely influential during the Renaissance. Vickers describes poetic *imitatio* in the period as an “organic, transforming or metabolizing power.”<sup>356</sup> *Aemulatio* was variously understood as imitation to aspire towards and match an exemplar, or to surpass.<sup>357</sup> In *Cor7*, the battering-ram metaphor is offered alongside the commonplace lamb, suggesting the tension between imitation and emulation, between following tradition and originality.

Renaissance writers relied on collections of common arguments, familiar *topoi*, and standard rhetorical figures, such as the catalogue of rhetorical figures that comprises Peacham's *Garden of Eloquence*. Even Peacham's title plays into the idea of gathering useful flowers, or poetic ornaments, from a garden, a common and shared space for both productive ends and pleasure. The young Donne takes part in the contemporary discourse on imitation and originality in Satire 2 (*Sat2*), when he defamiliarizes conventional understandings of poetic metabolism in a passage mocking plagiarists:

But hee is worst, who (beggarly) doth chaw  
Others wits fruits, and in his ravenous maw  
Rankly digested, doth those things out-spue,  
As his owne things; and they are his owne, 'tis true,  
For if one eate my meate, though it be knowne  
The meate was mine, th'excrement is his owne. . .

(25–30)

The problematic material distinction between the original “meate” and the final product, “excrement,” is unpleasant, but it suggests the difficulty in distinguishing between the familiar and the strange, the imitation and the original, one's own and another's artistic product. As I indicated above, this grotesque passage also functions as yet another example of the estrangement effect in Donne's works. Following the metaphor of digestion to its logical conclusion and shocking the reader with reference to “excrement” renews attention to the bodily nature of the conventional trope, and makes Renaissance notions of poetry as the conversion and refashioning of preexisting material appear strange. The estrangement effect also renews the reader's attentiveness to the tensions between originality and imitation those debates address. The poem's description of poetic meat and feces actually bears resemblance to the description of poetry as gold in Donne's sermon, which is not created of out thin air, but rather beat out, shaped, extended, and stamped with new value. Gold and excrement were often connected in the

Renaissance, and both are associated with processes of transformation and purification. The joke in *Sat2* is that although the plagiarist's act of transforming and reforming makes the material his own, his poetry has no value. In either case, the process of estrangement "distinguishes," in the sense that it "sets apart," the literary product, but it is impossible to fully conceal the interconnections between the primary and re-formed materials.

In the Dedicatory Epistle ("The Author to his Loving Cousin") from *Saint Peter's Complaint, with Other Poems* (1595), Robert Southwell describes his process of converting the conventions of love poetry to religious purposes. He explains: "And because the best course to let them see the error of their works is to weave a new web in their own loom, I have here laid a few coarse threads together to invite some skilfuller wits to go forward in the same, or to begin some finer piece wherein it may be seen how well verse and virtue suit together."<sup>358</sup> The process of spinning a new, coarse religious cloth out of the old threads of love poetry is an act of defamiliarization, and one, Southwell hopes, that will make religious poetry more attractive and captivating, as well as inspire new imitators. Like Donne, Southwell describes a process of refashioning material, not of making entirely new material, and both authors are known for repurposing the conventions and contents of profane love poetry for devotional verse.

Donne held ambivalent views about change and constancy, innovation and tradition—tensions pushed to the foreground in his writings created within the relatively narrow compass of the genre of religious literature. Estrangement, for Donne, is a means to, an effort towards, reconciling the conflicting and oppositional forces of his world: the old and the new, constancy and change, tradition and innovation. By beating out existing gold, and estranging its form, one can make new coins; likewise, vexing a text can make it more lustrous and clear. As my readings of Donne's devices of estrangement in his religious poetry and prose suggest, the long-established yet valuable materials of tradition can be reshaped for new uses, moving us towards new points of view. Thus, devices of estrangement are not only a reflection or condition of the cultural



ambivalence about strangeness; they are also literary tools for achieving refined and revitalized images and ideas.

### **Conclusion**

Donne's writings exhibit a complex use of both the familiar and the strange, and a sophisticated exploitation of the mutable border between the two. His devices of estrangement were born out of the rhetorical-literary culture of late sixteenth-century England, even if his techniques sometimes violated the prevailing aesthetic norms, most notably in his frequent recourse to far-fetched similitudes, strange metaphors and catachresis, paradox, puns, and hyperbole. In the texts of Puttenham, Peacham, and Hoskins, general theories about figurative language, normative guidelines for decorum, and accounts of particular tropes and schemes—especially ones that emphasize difference and involve movements across mental distances—demonstrate ambivalence towards strangeness and the perceived boundaries of figurative language, providing further evidence of the pervasive ambivalence towards strangeness in early modern English culture. These texts often suggest, whether implicitly or momentarily, the potential rhetorical power and literary value of strangeness, even as they caution against it. Likewise, they reveal that strangeness is conditional, a matter of perspective, and therefore its affective power and sense of newness might be produced and utilized towards particular poetic, rhetorical, thematic, and devotional aims.

The widespread cultural preoccupation with strangeness, and the ambivalent responses it elicited, are reflected in the emphasis on the strange in Donne's writings, whether primarily oriented towards secular or religious topics. Recent scholarship on rhetoric in Renaissance literature—such as Adam et al.'s collection *Renaissance Figures of Speech* (2007), Ettenhuber's "Revisiting the Metaphysical Conceit in Donne" (2011), and Nicholson's *Uncommon Tongues* (2014)—consider the strangeness of rhetorical figures, but the value of recent studies for understanding literary estrangement is limited for two reasons. First, strangeness and

defamiliarization are rarely the primary concerns. Second, studies tend to focus on a single (or occasionally a few) rhetorical figures. Donne's poetics of estrangement encompasses more than just one or two figures. How exactly individual devices of estrangement function within different poetic and prose genres, often as a part of the text's overall rhetorical strategy, will be illustrated when I turn, in the following chapters, to detailed analyses of Donne's emblematic and liturgical religious poems (chapter 2), his Holy Sonnets (chapter 3), and his sermons (chapter 4). Donne's startling aesthetic is ultimately an extension of the theory, most explicitly laid out in Puttenham's *Art of English Poesy*, that all figurative speech is language estranged from the ordinary. Donne exploits the strangeness latent in all figurative uses of language: through the intensified combination of various techniques and strategies for achieving the estrangement effect, Donne takes the micro-estrangements involved, as it were, in all uses of rhetorical figures and multiplies them to an unusual degree. The language, forms, and themes of Donne's literary works are made strange in order to surprise, challenge, and ultimately spur on the reader's active engagement with his texts. As the labour involved in Donne's poetic creations parallels, and prompts, the labour of reading them, so Donne's poetic re-creation of traditional materials in his religious writings encourages a re-formation of the reader's perception and interpretation of them.

## Chapter 2:

### “Strange harmony”:

#### Devices of Estrangement in Donne’s Emblematic and Liturgical Religious Poems

This chapter offers close readings of two of Donne’s emblematic religious lyrics, *Cross* and *Annun*, and the long liturgical poem *Lit*. These poems share a common emphasis on central, standard features of Christianity—e.g., symbols such as the cross; events such as the Annunciation and Passion; and doctrines such as the Trinity. My readings emphasize how each poem’s formal, rhetorical, and devotional structures rely on devices of estrangement to provoke feelings of bewilderment and wonder in the reader, delaying mental apprehension and encouraging attentiveness. Although there are similarities between the three poems, emphasizing the emblematic and occasional features of *Cross* and *Annun* and the liturgical language and forms in *Lit* helps to elucidate the devices of estrangement in each work. *Cross* overwhelms the reader with striking visual and verbal correspondences in order to unsettle narrow definitions, and possessive interpretations, of the central Christian symbol. *Annun* exploits a strange occasion, the concurrence of the Feast of the Annunciation and Good Friday, in order to enhance the reader’s perspective on both holy days commemorating events in the life of Christ. In *Lit*, Donne utilizes a varying series of devices of estrangement in order to position the reader to re-experience the familiar elements of an ancient, and repetitive, liturgical prayer. *Lit* also highlights estrangement as a powerful tool for individualizing traditional subject matter. In these texts, I argue, devices of estrangement revitalize the reader’s experience of familiar, traditional elements, amplifying their emotional impact, strengthening their intellectual pull, and multiplying their interpretive possibilities.

My analysis of Donne’s emblematic and liturgical religious lyrics reveals three significant strategies:

1. The estrangement effect is an integral move in Donne's rhetorical and devotional strategies.
2. Donne frequently utilizes multiple devices in order to capitalize on and intensify the estrangement inherent to all figurative language.
3. Donne's religious poems regularly estrange the central mysteries of Christianity, calling attention to their nature as strange events disturbing ordinary experience and defying comprehension.

Making the familiar strange becomes an attempt to reconcile poetic innovation with tradition, individual expression with communal unity, and language with transcendent meaning.

### **Emblematic Religious Lyrics: “The Cross” (*Cross*) and “Upon the Annunciation and Passion” (*Annun*)**

In her influential study of “Protestant poetics” in the seventeenth-century English religious lyric, Barbara Lewalski classifies *Corona* alongside *Cross* and *Annun* as Donne's emblematic religious lyrics.<sup>359</sup> She argues that in these poems “the speaker does not approach his material as a mediator striving to understand and respond emotionally to his subject, but with the emblemist's wit and concern for formal design.”<sup>360</sup> Although both *Cross* and *Annun* seem emotionally distant in comparison to the Holy Sonnets, lacking their striving, dramatic speakers and shock tactics, the rhetorical and devotional strategies of each lyric stimulate in the reader a striving to understand the text.<sup>361</sup> In his pioneering study of the influence of emblems on English Renaissance poetry, Josef Lederer notes that “Emblems became a field for the play of intellectual fancy springing from a powerful source of emotion,” which he identifies as “longing for the spiritual.”<sup>362</sup> Lederer also identifies the writer's desire for rarity of thought and novelty of expression as motivations for emblematic poetry in general: “For a poet striving to say what is seldom said and, moreover, to say it in a new way, witty but at the same time scholarly, . . . emblems must have been a welcome addition to the body of this bookish knowledge.”<sup>363</sup> My

examination of the dense displays of rhetorical figures in *Cross* and *Annun* calls attention to the intellectually playful yet devotionally serious nature of both poems.

My extended readings of *Cross* and *Annun* are also intended to counter the continued marginalization of both poems in scholarship. Lewalski's brief readings of *Cross* and *Annun* remain significant explications.<sup>364</sup> Raymond-Jean Frontain's study of Donne's use of closure surveys many of Donne's poems, but he turns to *Annun* for his analysis of circular closure stimulating "recognition of the sacrality of a world."<sup>365</sup> Although Helen Gardner scarcely mentions *Cross* and *Annun* in her substantial introduction to the *Divine Poems*,<sup>366</sup> her classification of the two lyrics as "Occasional Poems" points to a gap in Lewalski's analyses, namely the occasional nature of each poem.<sup>367</sup> The following analyses of *Cross* and *Annun* consider the occasions Donne engages as well as the rhetorical figures and larger strategies (including beginnings and endings) he deploys as part of each text's poetics of estrangement. Both poems are significant examples of the complex interaction of formal and devotional concerns in Donne's religious poetry.

#### "The Cross" (*Cross*)

*Cross*, usually dated to around 1604, is possibly Donne's earliest poem about a religious subject, and a striking example of literary estrangement utilizing visual and verbal similarities. The figures icon, antanaclasis, and polyptoton feature prominently in the poem. Perhaps due to its emphasis on intellectual play and formal concerns, there are few comprehensive readings of *Cross*. Ann H. Hurley offers one of the richer and more extensive recent discussions of *Cross*, analyzing the poem within the contexts of early modern visual culture and the religious images debate.<sup>368</sup> Contextual readings of the poem tend to privilege its visual aspects over the linguistic, namely the puns, while engagement with the wordplay is limited and often dismissive. A notable exception is Kirsten Stirling, who describes the poem as "a tour de force of wordplay—and image-play," but whose analysis is brief.<sup>369</sup> My analysis explores how the poem's witty

exploitation of multiple images and meanings of the word “cross” shapes, and is fueled by, its argument and devotional concerns.<sup>370</sup> In the following analysis, “cross” refers to the general intersection of two lines as well as to the specific structure Christ was crucified on. I use “crucifix” to refer to a cross with an image of Christ fixed to it, because it would seem that this is Donne’s approach as well.<sup>371</sup> In *Cross*, Donne draws on the strange materials of contemporary emblem books and rhetorical theory to dislocate the central symbol of Christianity from his speaker’s, as well as the reader’s, possession.

In the poem’s first twelve lines, the speaker questions and challenges attempts to remove the cross from sites of public worship and personal veneration:

Since Christ embrac’d the Crosse it selfe, dare I  
 His image, th’image of his Crosse deny?  
 Would I have profit by the sacrifice,  
 And dare the chosen Altar to despise?  
 It bore all other sinnes, but is it fit  
 That it should beare the sinne of scorning it?  
 Who from the picture would avert his eye,  
 How would he flye his paines, who there did dye?  
 From mee, no Pulpit, nor misgrounded law,  
 Nor scandall taken, shall this Crosse withdraw,  
 It shall not, for it cannot; for, the losse  
 Of this Crosse, were to mee another Crosse.

(1–12)

With references to aversion (line 7) and withdrawal (line 10), the passage characterizes attempts to remove the cross as estrangement. The speaker’s rejection of calls for removal of the cross coming from the “Pulpit,” “misgrounded law,” and “scandall” (that is, personal offense) situates

the poem amid the iconoclasms of the sixteenth century and the ongoing debates about religious imagery and ritual in the seventeenth century.

The standard dating of *Cross*, with a *terminus post quem* of 1604, frames the poem as a response, if not directly then by occasion, to the Puritan demands made in the Millenary Petition before the Hampton Court Conference of 1604.<sup>372</sup> In response to Puritan demands to remove the sign of the cross from various services, such as baptism, James I, according to William Barlow, observed that “the materiall *Crosses*, which in the time of Popery were made, for men to fall down before them . . . are demolished as you desire.”<sup>373</sup> James is probably referring to the large crucifixes, or roods, that once adorned English churches.<sup>374</sup> It was the conviction of many reformers that the crucifix was an idolatrous image, and, over the course of the sixteenth century, crucifixes were removed from churches across England. James, generally satisfied with the ecclesiastical status quo, refused the demands in the Millenary Petition to eliminate the sign of the cross from baptism. Gardner suggests that “Donne is defending the cross as a pious and proper personal possession,” not making an argument for its restoration in public worship.<sup>375</sup> However, while the poem does not directly make an argument for restoring crucifixes to church settings, it does address public religious services, when the speaker challenges, “Who can blot out the Crosse, which th’Instrument / Of God, dew’d on mee in the Sacrament?” (15–16). The “Crosse . . . dew’d” on the speaker refers to both the water used in baptism but also the signing with the cross. In “The ministracion of Baptism to be used in the Churche” in the 1559 text of the *Book of Common Prayer*, the priest is instructed to “make a Crosse upon the Childes forehead, saying: We . . . do sygne him with the signe of the crosse.”<sup>376</sup> Lines 15 and 16 seem to be a clear response to demands to remove the sign of the cross from baptism, extending the poem’s argument beyond the realm of private devotion into ecclesiastical affairs and liturgical controversy. While it appears that the poem is engaged in specific controversies generated by the Hampton Court Conference, it is also embedded in the history of iconoclasm that had rocked the English Church in the sixteenth century. Donne, raised as a Catholic, would have had personal experience with

religious images, such as the crucifix, in his family's private devotional life, and it is possible that he retained some attachment to such devotional forms.

Whatever the specific occasion, the argument of *Cross* moves beyond the confines of church interiors and Christian ceremony to consider the significance of the cross on the levels of symbolism and analogy. Donne makes the cross strange in the poem by removing it from customary religious associations and locating it in mundane, non-religious settings. Using the rhetorical figure icon, which Puttenham calls "Resemblance by Portrait or Imagery" and classifies as a subset of similitude,<sup>377</sup> the poem locates the visual pattern of the cross—the intersection of two lines—in various phenomena of the physical world. The poem argues:

Who can deny mee power, and liberty  
 To stretch mine armes, and mine owne Crosse to be?  
 Swimme, and at every stroake, thou art thy Crosse,  
 The Mast and yard make one, where seas do tosse.  
 Looke downe, thou spiest out Crosses in small things;  
 Looke up, thou seest birds rais'd on crossed wings;  
 All the Globes frame, and spheares, is nothing else  
 But the Meridians crossing Parallels.

(17–24)

The similitudes are far-reaching, ranging from the position of the speaker's own body to that of birds above, to ships venturing across oceans, and to the earth itself and its hemispheres. The icon paints a picture of not only global exploration, but also the individual discoveries that a small change in one's perspective can effect, such as the act of looking down at "small things" (21).<sup>378</sup> Lewalski points out that the visual correspondences to nature—such as the globe's meridians, the bird viewed in the sky above, etc.—can be found in Justus Lipsius's *De Cruce* (1594), "which portrays most of these same natural crosses."<sup>379</sup> Commenting on this fact, Kirsten Stirling argues that "Donne's wit [in the poem] is traditional, and not original to him."<sup>380</sup> I agree that Donne's



poetic wit here involves the exploitation of traditional materials, such as that found in emblem books. However, in discussions of the poem's traditional elements, most critics have emphasized Donne's wit in the realm of visual imagery. Wilcox, on the other hand, observes that the poem conveys "an alert awareness of the spiritual dimension of each detail of the creation." I would extend her description to the speaker's awareness of the spiritual dimension and depths of words in addition to things.<sup>381</sup>

After constructing the elaborate icon, Donne's speaker observes, "Materiall Crosses then, good physicke bee, / But yet spirituall have chiefe dignity" (25–26). The lines signal a shift in the poem from the physical/visual dimensions of the cross to the word's many linguistic and spiritual meanings. Before the most elaborate wordplay begins, the poem bridges the visual and linguistic dimensions of the cross with a striking image of the reader as a crucifix:

Then are you your own physicke, or need none,  
When still'd, or purg'd by tribulation.  
For when that Crosse ungrudg'd, unto you stickes,  
Then are you to your selfe, a Crucifixe.

(29–32)

The phrase, "that Crosse" (31), certainly calls to mind the object of Christ's crucifixion as well as physical representations of that event, but within the grammar of the lines it most likely refers back to "tribulation." Donne has introduced into the text different yet related meanings of "cross," as "A trial or affliction viewed in its Christian aspect" or more generally "A trouble" or "misfortune, adversity."<sup>382</sup> The image of the believer as a crucifix emblemizes the idea that people's "crosses," or tribulations and sufferings, make them more Christ-like. At the same time, the speaker presents a challenging picture to those Protestants opposed to religious images such as a physical crucifix. The next reference to "Crosses," in the plural, continues the dislocation and enlargement of the word's meaning beyond specific reference to Christ's cross or the crucifix:

As perchance, Carvers do not faces make:

But that away, which hid them there, do take.  
 Let Crosses, soe, take what hid Christ in there,  
 And be his image, or not his, but hee.

(33–36)

The similitude that describes carving away material to reveal a hidden yet always present image also suggests that the word “cross” contains a further richness of hidden significances yet to be uncovered.

To exploit the different meanings of “cross,” Donne uses various punning devices of estrangement, such as antanaclasis and polyptoton. When earlier the speaker argues against removal of the cross from worship, explaining, “the losse / Of this Crosse, were to mee another Crosse” (11-12), he uses “cross” first to refer to the Christian symbol and next to mean an instance of suffering. Donne uses antanaclasis, which, according to Lanham, involves “one word used in two contrasting, usually comic, senses.”<sup>383</sup> Donne’s use of antanaclasis here, however, contributes to a serious devotional argument rather than a jest. Later in the poem he utilizes the verbal meaning of “cross,” that is, “To thwart, oppose, go counter to,” when he writes: “therefore Crosse / Your joy in crosses” (41-42).<sup>384</sup> All of these different uses of “cross” in the poem do not diminish the significance of the word, so central to Christian writing, but rather indicate the word’s versatility and efficacy as an example of syllepsis, that is to say, a word containing great depths and riches of meaning.

*Cross* traverses different categories of perception and interpretation, forging connections between the religious/spiritual, the material/physical, and the literary/linguistic, in order to encourage the reader to recognize that the cross cuts across mental borders. In the larger cultural debate about the proper devotional uses of the cross, the poem argues that it would be impossible and spiritually harmful to completely remove the cross, because it is present in life in so many symbolic forms, whether visually or linguistically. The poem renders the Puritans’ concerns about the use of the cross as absurd and overly precise in the face of the sheer abundance of cross

imagery in the world and the many meanings of the word.<sup>385</sup> The poem's participation in the emblematic tradition also enacts its own recommendation to "Crosse and correct concupiscence of witt" (58). Donne's reliance on traditional "discoveries" of cross imagery in the natural world undercuts his own authorial invention. The poem uncovers the cross's abundant meaning not only in the physical world but also over time, through engagement with inherited tradition. The imaginative force of the poem expands outwards, searching the physical world for outlying visual correspondences and exploring language for peripheral meanings, in an effort to build a network of associations. The ubiquity of the cross overwhelms the reader, reinforcing the poem's polemical proposition that because the cross can be discovered in so many different contexts, it cannot really be taken away. The poem argues that the cross is an inherent feature of the material world and of the linguistic forms that structure comprehension.

The poem's argument also demonstrates the dialectical reading habits that Donne's strategies of estrangement encourage. The definition of the cross is unsettled only to be expanded and enlarged. While the poem's exploration of the different meanings of the word "cross" might suggest the speaker's expansive grasp of the term and its significance, the speaker, in the end, recommends one "Crosse and correct concupiscence of witt" (58), which undercuts his own intellectual grasp of the cross. The poem therefore frustrates the reader's grasp of the cross by using devices of estrangement (such as far-fetched similitudes, antanaclasis, and polyptoton) to uncover new significance. The reader's efforts to apprehend the meaning of the cross are checked with devices of estrangement. This dynamic in the poem suggests sustained tension between stable understanding and intellectual and devotional humility—humility in the form of a willingness to embrace the strangeness of the cross and its attendant potentiality. Ironically, restraint and self-correction are linked to the cross and its uses in the poem, not to Puritan precision and iconoclasm. Donne goes on:

So may a self-dispising, get selfe-love.  
 And then as worst surfets, of best meates bee,  
 Soe is pride, issued from humility,  
 For, 'tis no child, but monster.

(38–41)

The true aberration is not a humble use of the cross, whether as image or sign, but rather the pride issuing from a rigid rejection of a symbol so profuse that it should be familiar.

The strategy of *Cross* is to blur interpretive categories, especially *res* with *verba*, things with words, in order to challenge not only notions of idolatry that are particularly suspicious of material things, but also the intellectual idolatry of wit. Traversing interpretive borders, the poem depicts the created material world and the world of human language as both layered with analogous patterns and mirrored meanings, inviting the reader's attention to range between the things around us and the words we use to describe those things. The speaker interprets both things and words as reflecting their divine creator rather than directing the human mind away from God. Nevertheless, the poem cautions against idolatry, specifically in the form of adoration for the human intellect and its ability to perceive a wide variety of patterns and nuances. Through devices of estrangement, *Cross* both displays wit and checks its excess.

*“Upon the Annunciation and Passion” (Annun)*

Both *Cross* and *Annun* use devices of estrangement as important strategies in their emblematic readings of Christian subjects: a central symbol, the cross, in the former poem, and two holy days in the latter. The strange concurrence of the fixed Feast of the Annunciation on March 25 with the moveable date of Good Friday provides the occasion for *Annun*, which exploits the unusual calendrical conjunction as a means to juxtapose, defamiliarize, and contemplate the two important events in the Christ story. The Feast of the Annunciation—or “Lady Day,” as it was known in England—celebrates the angel Gabriel's announcement to Mary,

a young virgin, that she would “conceive and give birth to a son,” Jesus, who would be “the Son of the Most High,”<sup>386</sup> while Good Friday commemorates Jesus’s trial, crucifixion, and death. In *Annun*, the speaker describes the concurrence of the two holy days commemorating these events as “this doubtfull day / Of feast or fast, [when] Christ came, and went away” (5–6). In Donne’s lifetime, Good Friday coincided only twice with the Feast of the Annunciation: in 1597 and in 1608.<sup>387</sup> Following scribal headings, most editors favour the latter date for the poem.<sup>388</sup> Although the double holy day was a rare occurrence, its significance did not go unexplored in either patristic or medieval theology and art. Many held March 25 to be the actual date of Jesus’s conception and thus of the Incarnation, and some even suggested that his crucifixion fell on the same day.<sup>389</sup> In Renaissance England, the connection between the Annunciation and Passion is highlighted in the Collect for the Feast of the Annunciation in the *Book of Common Prayer*.<sup>390</sup> In the words of the 1559 Prayer Book: “WE beseche thee, Lorde, powre thy grace into our heartes; that, as we have knowen Christ, thy sonnes incarnation, by the message of an Angell; so by hys crosse and passion, we maye be brought unto the glory of his resurreccion; Through the same Christe our Lorde.”<sup>391</sup> The collect describes both events as conveyances, the former revealing knowledge of Christ, the latter transporting believers into their next spiritual state. In contrast to the collect’s emphasis on similarity, Roberta Albrecht has noted the “jarring” effect of Donne’s poem on the two holy days, which, in her words, “superimposes two images”; her analysis emphasizes “the dialectical process that creates a third meaning out of the original two meanings of adjacent images or ideas.”<sup>392</sup> What Donne brings to the unusual, but not unprecedented, theme of Annunciation and Passion, I suggest, is an emphasis on the incongruity of the two very different events. In the poem, Donne employs rhetorical figures such as aporia, enigma, and synoeciosis to create doubt about the double nature of the day and defamiliarize the subject matter of the Annunciation and Passion. Building on Albrecht’s view that the poem exhibits a dialectical structure, I argue that the estranging emphasis on incongruity functions as an initial phase in the poem’s overall argument for the dissimilar events’ circular unity and ultimate agreement. Donne

structures *Annun* to facilitate renewed wonder for God's composition of contraries, in both the life of Christ and that of the individual believer.

The joining together of contrasting objects and perspectives occurs throughout the poem, and while this synthesis can be understood as a dialectical process, Donne supplies a visual emblem, the circle, for the coming together of opposites to form a whole. The poem begins with the speaker addressing his soul<sup>393</sup>:

Tameely, fraile body, 'abstaine to day; to day  
My soule eates twice, Christ hither and away.  
She sees him man, so like God made in this,  
That of them both a circle emblem is,  
Whose first and last concurre . . .

(3–5)

Carey explains the lines thus: "Christ's beginning and end as man, coming together, suggest circularity."<sup>394</sup> Other critics have called attention to the importance of the circle emblem for the entire poem. Lewalski has argued that it exemplifies the work's governing theme; because the circle's "first and last concurre" it represents the unity of beginnings and endings from the eternal perspective.<sup>395</sup> In Stirling's words, the poem indicates "that the beginning and the end of man's life, as on the circumference of a circle, are one and the same point."<sup>396</sup> The occasion for the poem also suggests a circle, for Lady Day was also New Year's Day in the "Old Style" Julian Calendar still in use in England during the seventeenth century, the end of one year and the start of a new one indicating the circularity of human measurements of time.

Circularity is also important to the poem's structure, which can be divided into three sections. The first section of the poem introduces the circle emblem and theme, and creates doubt and perplexity in the reader. In the middle section, Donne briefly uses two analogies to describe the relation of the Church to God. Finally, in the third and last section, the poem offers four readings of the strange double holy day it has presented as an ambiguous circular emblem. In

lines 5 and 6, the speaker signals the contradictory nature of the strange double holy day using the rhetorical figure of *aporia*. In the words of Peacham, *aporia* is “a forme of speech by which the speaker sheweth that he doubteth,”<sup>397</sup> and Donne uses the figure in a direct way, announcing “this doubtfull day / Of feast or fast” (5–6). However, the poem also works to provoke doubt and confusion in the reader. The alliterative contrast “Of feast or fast” sets up the seemingly antithetical natures of the days—one a celebration of conception, the other a commemoration of death—which Donne follows with a mysteriously stark summation of events: “Christ came, and went away” (6). The poem’s devices enact the mental struggle of trying to see—and comprehend—two distinct events at the same time.<sup>398</sup>

The initial *aporia* signals the perplexity that the devices of estrangement concentrated in lines 7 to 18 effect in the reader’s mind. The twelve lines form a description of the adjacent images the speaker’s soul sees on this doubled day:

She sees him nothing twice at once, who’is all;  
 Shee sees a Cedar plant it selfe, and fall,  
 Her Maker put to making, and the head  
 Of life, at once, not yet alive, yet dead;  
 She sees at once the virgin mother stay  
 Reclus’d at home, Publique at Golgotha.  
 Sad and rejoyc’d shee’s seen at once, and seen  
 At almost fiftie, and at scarce fifteen.  
 At once a Sonne is promis’d her, and gone,  
 Gabrielle gives Christ to her, He her to John;  
 Not fully a mother, Shee’s in Orbitie,  
 At once receiver and the legacie . . .

(7–18)

Donne crafts dense, contradictory lines that conceal aspects of their meaning in order to delay the reader's apprehension. The obscuring effect is a result of his use of the figure enigma, a riddle.<sup>399</sup> Peacham's opinion that enigma is "agreeable to high and heavenly visions" illuminates Donne's choice,<sup>400</sup> since the poem constructs an elaborate spiritual vision in these lines. The speaker describes how his soul "sees him nothing twice at once, who's all" (7). Jesus, who is fully human, according to orthodox Christian doctrine, is "nothing twice" both before his conception and after his death, and these two events are remembered "at once" on this double holy day; however, Jesus, as the Son of God and part of the Trinity, is also "all," that is everywhere at all times.

In another riddle, Donne describes the soul's "Maker put to making, and the head / Of life, at once, not yet alive, yet dead" (9–10). The repetition of "Her Maker put to making" involves the punning figure polyptoton, the use of "a cognate of a given word in close proximity."<sup>401</sup> The root of both the noun "Maker" and the verb "making" is the verb "to make." The two cognates Donne employs suggest differences in agency in a possible allusion to the first chapter of John's Gospel: "All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made" (1:3). Verse 3 repeats "made" three times, but each time the Word is the one doing the making. Verse 10 repeats that "the world was made by him," but in verse 14 the gospel writer reverses the Word's agency in an act of making: "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us." Donne draws on John's repetition of "made" and the inversion of the Word's agency, yet Donne drastically compresses the proximity of the repetition. In line 9, Christ is "Maker" of "Her," that is, the speaker's soul, but he is also "put to making," which inverts Christ's agency, recalling "the Word . . . made flesh." The repetition of cognates presents a double vision of the Son, as creating agent and object of conception, calling attention to the strangeness of the divine Creator of all things being created as a human being in a virgin's womb.

Donne also utilizes the paradoxical figure synoeciosis, which Hoskins describes as "a composition of contraries," as it "is a fine course to stir admiration in the hearer, and make them



think it strange harmony which must be expressed in such discords.”<sup>402</sup> Donne pulls together contrary words pertaining to life and death in order to disrupt perceptions of the familiar religious events. The passage reveals a notable feature of Donne’s poetics: the intensified combination of estranging devices. For instance, the speaker’s soul sees “a Cedar plant it selfe, and fall” (8). The line features both allegoria, which is a “continued Metaphore,”<sup>403</sup> and synoeciosis: Donne combines the mini-story of the cedar that represents Christ with the seemingly logical impossibility of a tree planting itself, which is then abruptly followed by the contrary images of the tree falling.<sup>404</sup> The combination of estranging figures evokes the strange causality of God being born, underscoring the mystery of Christ’s full divinity and humanity according to orthodox Christianity. Donne’s repetition of “once” six times in the poem’s first twelve lines emphasizes that the two events are not seen merely one after the other in quick succession, but viewed at the same time, evoking a doubled vision that a person cannot take in all at once. The poem suggests that it is not just difficult to see the Annunciation and Passion together, but impossible. The figures create a strange picture, an emblem of sorts, which is then analyzed by the speaker in the remainder of the text.

The first section of the poem evokes the theme of spiritual estrangement, that is, the alienated state of fallen humankind, who exist in a temporal, mutable world of disunity, discord, and disjunction. The poem continually delays mental apprehension until the conclusion of the first section, which reiterates the emblem of the circle (mentioned in line 4):

All this, and all betweene, this day hath showne,  
Th’Abridgement of Christs story, which makes one  
(As in plaine Maps, the furthest West is East)  
Of the’ Angels *Ave*,’and *Consummatum est*.

(19–22)

In “A Hymn to God My God, in My Sickness” (*Sickness*), Donne presents a similar image to the opposite ends of maps becoming one because the earth is a globe: “As West and East / In all flatt

Maps (and I am one) are one, / So death doth touch the Resurrection” (13–15). In the hymn, Donne reads the map image as an emblem of death touching life through resurrection. In *Annun*, the specific meaning is that Christ’s conception touches his death through the concurrence of holy days; however, Donne extends the circular reading of life and death to each individual believer at the end of the poem, as I discuss below. In order for the poem’s structure to facilitate the reader’s “discovery” of the hidden unity behind events, Donne has to first convey the difference between the two events, and the difficulty of reconciling them. Lines 7 to 18 evoke that discordance and difficulty. The result of the doubtful, enigmatic, paradoxical vision is the defamiliarization of the Christ narrative: March 25, 1608 becomes the abridged version.

In the middle section of the poem, Donne shifts his focus from the past events marked by the holy days to the contemporary Christian’s experience, deploying two similitudes to describe the relations between Christians, the Church, and God. The first similitude refers to the use of the North Star to direct one’s course (25–28), and the second to the pillars of fire and cloud which led the children of Israel through the wilderness of the Red Sea and eventually through the desert to the Promised Land (31–32). Both similitudes involve travel and journey, evoking the religious tropes of pilgrimage, exile, and estrangement in this world. The poem describes the North Star as a visible approximation of a guiding yet invisible object, the North Pole; similarly, the Church points to God, but not exactly. The poem admits a disjunction between the Church’s directions and God’s will for humanity. The speaker continues:

So God by his Church, nearest to him, wee know  
 And stand firme, if we by her motion goe;  
 His Spirit, as his fiery Pillar doth  
 Leade, and his Church, as cloud, to one end both . . .

(29–32)

While the allusion is to the pillars of cloud and fire described in the Book of Exodus,<sup>405</sup> the image of a cloud also contains several ambiguous connotations. The more common metaphor for the

Church, then as now, is the body of Christ. In comparison to the human body, clouds are matter, but of a different kind: something real, but less tangible and more fleeting. Viewing the context of post-Reformation debate about the nature of the church as a spectrum, the Church as a cloud fits somewhere between Reformed conceptions of the invisible Church, on the one extreme, and the Roman Catholic assertion of a historically continuous human institution invested with divine authority on the other.<sup>406</sup> The strange similitude of the cloud suggests that the Church is only partly visible, present on earth but not as a permanent, unquestionable establishment.

Furthermore, unlike fire, clouds obscure light. Thus, the similitude even casts some doubt on the institution of the Church as an instrument for God's revelation. Donne's estranging choice of comparison yields a range of possible perspectives on what was a deeply familiar institution and concept in seventeenth-century England. Comparing the Church to both the North Star and a cloud, the poem indicates that the Church can reveal God only imperfectly and ambiguously. The estranging event of the two holy days coinciding becomes a means by which to gesture beyond the limitations of human perception.

In the third and last section, the poem offers four readings of the strange emblem of the Christ story it has constructed out of the double holy day. Excavating the riddle of the occasion, this final section recalls Peacham's understanding of *aporia* as signaling the "ambiguitie of things," for Donne offers up multiple interpretations. For instance, the double holy day reveals that

Death and conception in mankinde is one,  
Or'twas in him the same humility,  
That he would be a man, and leave to be . . .

(34–36)

Donne signals the different interpretations of the poem's strange emblem using "Or," offering four complementary readings: first, that the extreme ends of human life, conception and death are bound together in eternity (34); second, that the Son of God demonstrated humility at both the

start and the end of his earthly life (35–36). The third and fourth readings continue to add varying perspectives, building on the common theme of unity in disjunction:

Or as creation he hath made, as God,  
 With the last judgement, but one period,  
 His imitating Spouse would joyne in one  
 Manhoods extremes: He shall come, he is gone:  
 Or as though one blood drop, which thence did fall,  
 Accepted, would have serv'd, he yet shed all;  
 So though the least of his paines, deeds, or words,  
 Would busie a life, she all this day affords . . .

(37–44)

The third reading builds on the first and second: just as the beginning and end of the universe are one in eternity, so too are the extreme ends of a human life, so too are Christ's coming to and going from earth (37–40). The fourth reading emphasizes that the conjunction of events on this double holy day, as well as the multiple interpretations the day generates, are examples of richness and generosity comparable to Christ's willingness to give his all, even though just a drop of blood would have been sufficient (41–44). For Donne, the ambiguous meaning of the strange day suggests not an absence of meaning, but rather a multiplicity and richness of significance.

The hidden containment of such riches recalls Peacham's similitude describing enigma as "like a deepe mine, the obtaining of whose mettall requireth deepe digging, or to a darke night, whose stars be hid with thicke cloudes."<sup>407</sup> Compacted with strange figures and dense with meanings, the poem demands active reading and labour in its interpretation, but estrangement also creates the space for multiple re-approaches. As the speaker concludes: "This treasure then, in grosse, my Soule uplay / And in my life retaile it every day" (45–46).

Hoskins' description in *Directions for Speech and Style* of the "strange harmony" of synoeciosis beautifully suggests a particular Renaissance mode of perception shared by many

including Donne: that the mutable, diverse, and discordant world, with its many strange variances, still points towards a transcendent harmony. Mary Silcox argues that emblems “rely utterly on the different and the strange, and yet use them in the service of the universalized and the familiar.”<sup>408</sup> In *Annun*, Donne exploits the strange in an argument that ultimately invokes a traditional faith in the transcendent unity of God, while the poem’s strange vision also compresses and combines many traditional Christian paradoxes in order to renew attention to their very strangeness. *Annun* creates the conditions for renewed awe for God’s composition of contraries, in the life of Christ and in that of the individual believer. In a similar way, the poem’s pattern of estrangement and reconciliation shows that Donne’s devices of estrangement are not random, but rather part of his overall literary, rhetorical, and devotional strategies.

Of course, paradoxes can be read in different ways. One might read the final paradoxes of *Annun* as holding the extremes and oppositions in tension. However, the poem is better read as an expression of Donne’s frequent desire to reconcile oppositions: the body and the soul, Christ’s conception and death, his humanity and divinity, human conception and death, the Holy Spirit and the earthly Church, flame and cloud. This latter reading of the poem recalls Samuel Johnson’s famous statement that metaphysical poets are interested in the “discovery of occult resemblances in things apparently unlike.”<sup>409</sup> Donne’s devices of estrangement, in particular his use of synoeciosis, seem attempts to not only yoke together but also to reconcile and make harmonious the extremes and oppositions. *Annun* invokes a transcendent unity behind the apparent discordances and opposites of life. Frontain groups *Annun* with, among others, *Cross*, *Corona*, and *Sidney* as poems displaying the pattern “of first and last concurring and sealing the poem as a circle.” In these poems, Frontain argues, “Salvation . . . proves a state of mind or act of vision: the ability to perceive the underlying integrity of seemingly disparate experiences.”<sup>410</sup> The circular closure of these poems encourages a salvific mode of viewing the discordances of the world, while the devotional poet’s use of paradox and other estranging devices copies the style of the divine Author. With his creation of *Annun*, Donne offers up a composition of contraries in

emulation of God's approach. The poem suggests that the many seeming incongruences in poems, narratives, and lived experience can be held together in the imaginative circles of belief in a transcendent unity. *Annun* is arguably the best illustration of Donne's use of estrangement as an opening tactic in his overall rhetorical strategy for a poem, initially distancing the reader in order to facilitate his or her arrival, by the final section, at altered and enhanced points of view on the subject matter.

*Cross* similarly moves the reader along a circular trajectory, but one that is not quite as neat. The opening of the poem questions whether to embrace images of the Cross, while the conclusion affirms the value of not only such images but also "That Crosses children, which our crosses are" (64). Donne combines the metaphor of children with the antanaclasis of Christ's cross and "our crosses" to suggest that our tribulations are the offspring of Christ's suffering. Although *Cross* clearly affirms the image of the cross, it closes with yet another disruption, and multiplication, of interpretations of the cross's significance. The poem's ending reinforces its message that no one should presume to know the full significance of the cross.

Both *Cross* and *Annun* are about multiplicity: the cross symbol is loaded with meaning, as is the concurrent holy day, as indicated in the figuring of the Church as cloud. Donne's approach in each poem is dialectical, provoking puzzlement and destabilizing the subject in order to emphasize its vital significance, which is directly linked to its multiplicity of meaning. For Donne in these poems, multiplicity and diversity of meaning do not suggest an ultimate absence of meaning, a vault of nothingness beneath the various significations of things, but rather a deep source of unity behind everything. Emblem books were known to contain a hidden meaning behind their strange pictures, revealing their status as the conscious works of a human maker. In these poems, Donne approaches the world of religious experience in a similar manner, interpreting the strange elements of life as being fundamentally ordered by a divine maker.

### Liturgical Poetry: “A Litany” (*Lit*)

First and foremost, *Lit* is Donne’s version of the great liturgical penitential service that developed as part of the medieval Catholic processional. Thomas Cranmer put together the first English version (first published separately in 1544 and later as part of the *Book of Common Prayer*) using the Latin Sarum rite as his main source. Assessing Cranmer’s excision of the cult of the saints and his concentration on “public, communal worship,” Brian Cummings calls Cranmer’s version a “patchwork of derivation,”<sup>411</sup> and the same could be said of Donne’s poem. Cranmer’s litany serves as the basis for all later versions in the Prayer Book. Annabel Patterson argues, however, that Donne did not base his *Lit* on Cranmer’s version: “Instead [Donne] began with the Catholic litany of the saints and its authorized list of petitions.”<sup>412</sup> Although Patterson’s analysis of *Lit* as a rewriting of the Latin Litany of the Saints is attentive and largely persuasive, Donne’s engagement with Catholic sources does not preclude his engagement with the *Book of Common Prayer*, the language and forms of which had, by the early seventeenth century, suffused the culture in which Donne lived and wrote. Daniel Gibbons persuasively argues that Donne’s religious lyrics, including *Lit* and the Holy Sonnets, engage with the *Book of Common Prayer*: “Donne often writes about religion in ways that recall the Prayerbook’s rhetorical openness, especially on matters of communal religious identity.”<sup>413</sup> In *Lit*, Donne reframes and reshapes the materials of earlier versions of the Great Litany, engaging both Catholic and Protestant versions and features. For example, stanza 1 follows the Prayer Book by beginning with a petition to God the Father. The 1559 edition begins, “O GOD the father of heaven: have mercy upon us miserable synners,” and continues with the congregation’s echo: “*O God the father of heaven: have mercy upon us miserable synners.*”<sup>414</sup> In stanza 1, Donne noticeably retains the emphasis on the miserable condition of sinful humanity and the need for God’s mercy, and *Lit* follows the Prayer Book’s general outline. Patterson calls attention to “Donne’s most daring innovation in the sphere of litany-rewriting. What he has done, by writing stanzas in which the ‘I’ and the ‘we’ enter and depart, is to challenge the basic distinction between clergy and laity, between minister and

congregation, that is so emphatically displayed in the antiphonal structure of the Catholic litany, and preserved in the Protestant one.”<sup>415</sup> Donne jettisons the pattern of communal repetition in favour of the voice of one alone, emphasizing the more individual and inventive approach he brings to what is still a highly formulaic structure. Unlike Cranmer’s earlier revision, *Lit* also retains references to many of the “blessed Triumphers in heaven” (as Donne, in a letter to Goodere from winter 1608/9, calls the groups of Old Testament and Christian figures that the poem addresses<sup>416</sup>), while removing the Catholic emphasis on particular saints, with the exception of Mary. But unlike the medieval and Catholic versions, Donne, while he addresses figures in heaven, always directs his prayers to God.

In *Lit* (and in many of the Holy Sonnets, the subject of chapter 3) the self and its dialogue with God as represented in the poem becomes the nexus of the poem’s thematic and formal estrangements. Although, like *Cross* and *Annun*, *Lit* engages with traditional Christian doctrines, figures, and events, it is also a written form of prayer. The same could be said for *Corona*, which, as we have seen in chapter 1, presents itself in *Cor1* as “this crown of prayer and praise” (1), and considers key events in the Christ story: the Annunciation to Mary, the Nativity, the presentation of the young Jesus in the Temple, and the Crucifixion, Resurrection, and Ascension of Christ.<sup>417</sup> *Lit* petitions the figures of the Trinity, addresses various Old Testament and Christian figures, from the Hebrew Patriarchs to the Doctors of the Church, and then asks God for help in a variety of avenues of life, such as anxiety, temptation, war, and sickness. In his revealing letter to Goodere noted above, Donne describes the composition of *Lit* during an illness: “Since my imprisonment in my bed, I have made a meditation in verse, which I call a Litany; the word you know imports no other then supplication, but all Churches have one forme of supplication, by that name. . . . mine is for lesser Chappels, which are my friends.”<sup>418</sup> While Michael Schoenfeldt has argued for the intertwining of social and spiritual supplication in Donne’s religious poems, his analysis, limited chiefly to Donne’s Holy Sonnets, sets aside the commonality of supplication in religious language for an emphasis on particular social forms of supplication.<sup>419</sup> In the case of *Lit*,



Donne's comments on the poem suggest that a critical emphasis on the devotional, rather than the social, is appropriate. Donne's description of friends as "lesser Chappels" in his letter to Goodere suggests that although Donne did not approach *Lit* as a formal, corporate liturgical prayer, he nevertheless wrote with the hope that the poem might contribute to his friends' devotional lives. In a subsequent passage in the letter marked by an ecumenism uncommon in the period, Donne tells Goodere, "That by which it [*Lit*] will deserve best acceptance, is, That neither the Roman Church need call it defective, because it abhors not the particular mention of the blessed Triumphers in heaven; nor the Reformed can discreetly accuse it, of attributing more than a rectified devotion ought to doe."<sup>420</sup> Dayton Haskin argues that *Lit* strikingly articulates deep longings for "human solidarity across time as well as space."<sup>421</sup> Certainly the letter reveals Donne's intention to avoid doctrinal controversy in the poem and instead attempt to set his work on the common ground between the Roman and Reformed churches.

Unusually irenic for its time in its approach to doctrine, *Lit* is also an odd work among Donne's Divine Poems in terms of both genre and verse form. Composed of twenty-eight stanzas (rhyming ABABCDCDD), each numbering nine lines for a total of 252, it is far longer than Donne's individual sonnets, hymns, and occasional religious verse, and therefore does not share the condensed form of most lyrics. Yet, if we accept Wilcox's persuasive account of the seventeenth-century religious lyric as a genre characterized by its "verbal sense of God," by its experimentation and interest in the limits of human expression, its understanding of the created world as a kind of emblem book, and its transcendent aspirations, then *Lit* has affinities with the lyric genre.<sup>422</sup> Surveying the limited critical attention that has been given to the literary forms of *Lit*, Haskin notes that the stanza-form is unique.<sup>423</sup> In his comparison of Donne's stanza-form to the nine-line Spenserian stanza (rhyming ABABBCBCC), Haskin describes "the mental reciprocity between writer and reader" that the poem invites: "The poem makes syntactic and conceptual demands as a means of inviting participation. . . . Often a demanding idea or a surprising twist requires us to reinterpret what the earlier lines of the stanza had led us to suppose

we were praying for.”<sup>424</sup> Haskin’s account of the formal demands Donne places on the readers of his *Lit* stands in contrast to Patterson’s overview of the litany genre as “a form of responsive petition” that led to “the consequent passivity and mindlessness of the ritual in so far as the congregation was concerned.”<sup>425</sup> As my analysis will make clear, Donne’s *Lit* converts the audience passivity common to litanies into a more strenuous, interactive exercise of reading and devotion.

If Donne’s work is obviously drawing on parts of the Christian liturgy, does that make *Lit* a liturgical poem? P. G. Stanwood defines the genre loosely, “for *liturgy*,” as he explains, “should inevitably suggest shape, form, repetition, order, the regulation of private feelings into normalized, public expression,”<sup>426</sup> patterns certainly evident, although also challenged, in Donne’s *Lit*. On the other hand, Ramie Targoff has argued that Donne’s poems based on liturgical events or prayers do not genuinely achieve the communal voice: she maintains that one could never imagine believers in the seventeenth century actually using Donne’s prayers in their own devotions.<sup>427</sup> In his letter to Goodere Donne hoped his litany would be used by friends, those “lesser Chappels,” suggesting a more intimate devotional setting for the poem in contrast to a public one, but a devotional setting nonetheless.<sup>428</sup> Patterson argues that, based on the letter, *Lit* was not written solely for Donne’s private devotion, but rather “The idea of a group audience . . . is itself something of a middle ground between the public and the private.”<sup>429</sup> Stirling’s recent consideration of Donne’s liturgical poetry rejects the loose metaphorical application of “liturgical,” but also Targoff’s strict emphasis on practical, communal use in prayer, and she sees *Lit* as embodying Donne’s characteristic desire to harmonize opposing forces, namely more personal and literary concerns with more public and liturgical ones.<sup>430</sup> These tensions recall Wilcox’s understanding of the self-conscious and insistent tensions in seventeenth-century religious lyrics. Wilcox further argues that the religious lyric is a genre “not so much by birth . . . but by baptism . . . the lyric was converted and born again.”<sup>431</sup> Donne’s emphasis on the creation and renewal of liturgical language, forms, and themes in *Lit* fits the “curious frame” of the

seventeenth-century religious lyric,<sup>432</sup> the poem achieving a strange harmony of the communal and individual voices.

Targoff's brief dismissal of *Lit* is also indicative of the poem's marginal position in scholarship. As a lengthy, repetitive religious poem that addresses a wide range of important theological subjects, it shows up in glosses and as proof-texts for positioning Donne's religious opinions, but it is infrequently assessed as an individual and whole work. Rarely are its goals considered, its full structure taken into account, or its different poetic devices and subjects analyzed in depth. Notable exceptions include Patterson, who describes *Lit* as "an absurdly neglected poem" while demonstrating the poem's innovations in the litany genre, and Haskin, who argues that common frameworks for reading Donne's biography, namely emphasis on Donne's conversion and narrow categorizations of his confessional allegiances, have contributed to the poem's "critical neglect."<sup>433</sup> In spite of their persuasive arguments, Patterson's and Haskin's analyses remain some of the few sustained engagements with the poem. Building on Patterson's and Haskin's insights into Donne's innovations and the poem's forms and structure, my reading of *Lit* sheds important light on Donne's authorial struggle to reconcile active, critical thought and individual expression with the conformity and demands of religious orthodoxy, both in his creative works and devotional life. I argue that the poem's continual frustration of the reader's familiarity with the traditional subject matter, through the frequent and targeted deployment of devices of estrangement, parallels the speaker's self-corrections and the humbling of his wit before God as expressed at important points in the poem. For the "lesser Chappels" towards whom Donne directs his poem, or for devotionally oriented readers of *Lit* more generally, the estranging rhetorical figures function as devices for inward renovation, breaking down preconceptions and habitual mental approaches in order to create the conditions for a renewed understanding of many of the central features of the Christian faith.

*Lit* conceives of spiritual renovation as a dialectical process. The speaker, broken down and brought low, longs to rise from his present condition reformed and renewed. The poem works

to position the devotional reader, through devices of estrangement, in a similarly humble state, creating the mental conditions for inward renewal. To begin, the speaker petitions God:

Father of Heaven, and him, by whom  
It, and us for it, and all else, for us  
Thou madest, and govern'st ever, come  
And re-create mee, now growne ruinous.

(1–4)

Presenting himself as wholly miserable, the speaker implores God to “re-create” him. At the same time, the stanza refashions the traditional doctrine of original sin through the combined deployment of devices of estrangement. After affirming God as maker of all things, the speaker describes himself as “growne ruinous” (4), utilizing the figure of synoeciosis in its condensed form (oxymoron) to combine two words from different interpretive categories: the past participle “growne” suggests positive development (i.e., growth), while the adjective “ruinous” signifies an opposing negative state of decay. “Growne” figures the self as a garden, an organic thing, while “ruinous” suggests the deteriorated state of an inanimate human-built structure, such as a building. The speaker’s development has strangely led only to disintegration, suggesting the inevitable breakdown of human efforts. Given the futility of such unproductive action, the speaker has fallen into a sad and lowly state from which he desires relief. The first stanza continues:

My heart is by dejection, clay,  
And by selfe-murder, red.  
From this red earth, O Father, purge away  
All vicious tinctures, that new fashioned  
I may rise up from death, before I'm dead.

(5–9)

The images in the second half of the stanza utilize *enargia*, or “visually powerful, vivid description,”<sup>434</sup> to direct the reader’s attention to the estranged condition of fallen humanity. Clay, dust, and earth are common biblical tropes for human materiality and mortality; in Genesis 2, God fashions Adam out of “the dust of the ground,” and, in Genesis 3, when God curses Adam after the Fall, God uses the imagery of earth and dust to vividly emphasize Adam’s new mortality.<sup>435</sup>

Although the Reformation ignited debates about the extent and effects of original sin, both Catholics and Protestants held to the idea that, in this life, humanity is inherently marred and in need of repair. Deploying the estranging metaphor of “selfe-murder,” Donne encourages an altered view of the orthodox understanding of original sin, framing the behaviour of the speaker’s heart as conscious action producing harm. The commonplace description of the speaker’s heart as clay in line 5 is made strange in conjunction with line 6, which describes the heart as also being “by selfe-murder, red.” Donne uses a synonym for suicide to metaphorically describe the speaker’s sinful nature, the compound noun made even more arresting in combination with the colour red. Donne uses “self-murder” metaphorically in other works. One of his youthful prose Paradoxes, likely written in the early 1590s, is titled “That all things kill themselves,” and it begins: “To affect yea to effect their owne deaths, all living are importun’d.” Later in the Paradox, Donne describes a person not defending himself in a fight as “heinous selfe murder,” extending the meaning of the compound noun to indirect actions leading to one’s death.<sup>436</sup> The stanza suggests that the state of sin humanity exists in, according to Christian doctrine, is not one of passive, inherited suffering, but rather of suffering self-produced. The estranging metaphor invites blame for the heart’s particular actions. In other words, the estrangement effect shifts emphasis from humanity’s sinful nature to what that nature produces, i.e., death, thereby reworking Paul’s well-known declaration in Romans that “the wages of sin *is* death.”<sup>437</sup> As in the youthful Paradox, stanza 1 of *Lit* encourages the reader to question whether all living is an act of dying. The estranging metaphor of line 6 (“by selfe-murder, red”) also parallels the earlier synoeciosis of line 4 (the speaker “now growne ruinous”), as both rhetorical figures suggest that

the direction of the speaker's life is one of self-destruction. Furthermore, the metaphoric descriptions of the human heart, as "clay" (5) and as "red" (6), are both metonymically connected to their causes—that is to say, to dejection and suicide, respectively—indicating that both feelings and actions produce the heart's present condition. Together, the metaphors are transformed in line 7, when the speaker describes his person as "red earth," suggesting clay soaked in red blood, further estranging the commonplace metaphor of human clay. Further attention to the traditional metaphor, however, reveals that the negative state can still produce something new, for wet clay is pliable and able to be "new fashioned" (11).

In *Lit*, the speaker's suppliant desire to be remade in the hands of God is linked to Donne's creative efforts to revitalize tradition in his religious poetry, just as clay ready to be "new fashioned" holds double significance, as both corrupt human materiality and an artistic medium. As discussed above, Wilcox argues that wit and devotion both "function primarily by taking the ordinary and transforming it."<sup>438</sup> In chapter 1, I argued that, for Donne, poetry does not involve creation from the sheer imagination of the poet, but rather laborious re-making and refashioning of pre-existing matter, the materials of tradition. Throughout his writings Donne is preoccupied with matter, such as gold, wax, and clay, that can be refined, reformed, and refashioned while retaining its essential consistency, exemplifying the paradox of formal renewal—of something changing yet staying the same. Clay imagery occurs elsewhere in Donne's poetry. For example, in "Elegy on the Lady Markham" (*Mark*), Donne compares the Christian belief in the resurrection of the body to how the "men of China, 'after an ages stay, / Do take up Porcelane, where they buried Clay" (21–22). Donne's reference to the assumed Chinese practice of burying clay in order to make porcelain associates a central doctrine of orthodox Christianity with the strangeness and curiousness of a traveler's tale. The elegy figures resurrection as a process of refinement, from the base material of clay to a purer form: porcelain. In *Lit*, the speaker begs, "From this red earth, O Father, purge away / All vicious tinctures" (7–8). Donne mixes metaphors, bringing alchemical language describing the purgation of "tinctures" or trace amounts to the central image of molding

wet clay. Both images emphasize not God's creation, but rather his power to purify and re-create. Analogously, literary estrangement is a key method for reshaping, reframing, and thereby reanimating the inert materials of tradition.

As *Lit* reworks traditional liturgical materials, the poem conducts a kaleidoscopic vision, rotating the reader through 28 stanzas addressing the key figures, groupings, and teachings of Christianity as well as many experiences common to religious life.<sup>439</sup> The constant rotation of each new stanza onto another focal point forces the reader to continually re-approach the shifting subject matter. Stanza 10, on the Martyrs, exemplifies the poem's techniques to encourage new perspectives on the traditional groupings of Hebrew and Christian figures, such as the Prophets or Apostles. The stanza concludes with a Donnean paradox:

To begge for us, a discreet patience  
Of death, or worse of life: for Oh, to some  
Not to be Martyrs, is a martyrdome.

(88–90)

The short passage contains three different devices of estrangement functioning in tandem. After the speaker states that the blood of the martyrs begs, on the behalf of living Christians, the gift of patience from God, Donne introduces the figure of antithesis, the “Juxtaposition of contrasting words or ideas,”<sup>440</sup> to oppose two different kinds of patience, one “Of death,” and one “of life” (88). In the subsequent line, Donne deploys polyptoton, referencing “Martyrs” in close proximity to the cognate word “martyrdome.” The use of cognates to express a contradiction—here arguing that not to be a particular something (a martyr) is in fact the state of being the very thing (martyrdom)—creates an enigma or riddle for the reader to try to understand. How is not being a martyr a kind of martyrdom? The answer to the riddle brings together the two senses of patience that the speaker identifies: both patience in death and patience in life can be forms of martyrdom, the former in the literal sense of dying for the faith, and the latter in the metaphorical sense of living for the faith under hardships, in the midst of which death might appear to be an escape. The

estranging effect of the combination of antithesis, polyptoton, and enigma dislocates martyrdom from the strictest sense of the word, allowing the reader to discover other forms of self-denial and patient suffering.<sup>441</sup> Donne's approach throughout *Lit* is, oddly, to both individualize and universalize: the poem is framed around a single speaker, but the traditional categories for the Church Triumphant are each extended to a wider variety of Christians, and the final petitions for deliverance are both specific and widely applicable. The repetition of devices of estrangement, present in most stanzas to some extent, slowly wears down the reader's mental powers, humbling his or her ability to quickly apprehend each new subject made strange.

In spite of the poem's numerous estranging rhetorical figures and its undeniable technical wit, on several occasions Donne's speaker disparages his own wittiness. For example, stanza 8, which addresses the Prophets, reveals the speaker's awareness of the potentially prideful aims of his literary devices and strategies. He admits,

Those heavenly Poëts which did see  
 Thy will, and it expresse  
 In rhythmique feet, in common pray for mee,  
 That I by them excuse not my excesse  
 In seeking secrets, or Poëtiquenesse.

(68–72)

The passage is ambivalent about poetic expression, as the examples of the prophetic writings were often used to defend religious verse in the early modern period. Donne calls the prophets "heavenly Poëts," thereby linking his poetic activities with theirs, but he also explicitly asks God to help him avoid using them as an excuse for "excesse / In seeking secrets, or Poëtiquenesse" (68, 71–72). In regards to the word "Poëtiquenesse," Haskin observes that Donne "seems to have coined the term," a fact which adds another layer of tension between the speaker's displays of wit and his desire for humility.<sup>442</sup> In the penultimate stanza (number 27) Donne similarly asks God for direction in the proper use of his intellect and artistic abilities: "That wit, borne apt, high good



to doe, / By dwelling lazily / On Natures noting, be not nothing too” (239–41). Here, as earlier, Donne is ambivalent about limiting the activities of wit. He shows an awareness of the witty poet’s potential for good, and of the divine origins of literary talent. At the same time, he associates writing on “Natures” subjects with laziness, which would suggest that the writing of the religious poet is more active in Donne’s eyes because it requires more effort to try to apprehend the divine.

Devices of estrangement in *Lit* engage with the tension between individual wit and communal tradition, his awareness of this tension coming through in his letter to Goodere about the poem. Donne writes that he is encouraged by the example of two earlier monks who wrote their own litanies: “I have met two Letanies in Latin verse, which gave me not the reason of my meditations, for in good faith I thought not upon them then, but they give me a defence, if any man; to a Lay man, and a private, impute it as a fault, to take such divine and publique names, to his own little thoughts.”<sup>443</sup> Donne defends his personal appropriation and adaptation of the public prayer. His claims of originality are at odds with his keen awareness of the demands of conformity to the traditions of Christian art and doctrine. In the poem, devices of estrangement function as checks on the individual’s possession of the meaning of the elements of Christian tradition. Yet, at the same time, the re-articulations of various elements in newly figured ways are acts of personal expression that help to overcome the habit and rote associated with litanies.<sup>444</sup>

The speaker of *Lit* asserts his individual voice through unique expression of the standard topics drawn from earlier versions as well as deep awareness of his personal failings. In stanza 3, on the Holy Ghost, Donne uses an estranging metaphor to oddly describe the flesh as a “glasse lanthorne” (26), defamiliarizing the traditional trope of Christians being lights to the world through reference to a specific material (glass) comprising a contemporary form of lighting (a lantern). The metaphor’s emphasis on outward form implicates the need to let the inner light shine out, which also reminds the reader that people can exercise control only over the vehicle for the Holy Spirit (their person) and not the Spirit itself.<sup>445</sup>

In stanza 25, the speaker prays that “our eares sicknesse wee may cure, / And rectifie those Labyrinths aright” (217–18). Donne exploits the similarities and differences between an ear and a labyrinth, thereby blurring interpretive categories, in order to construct an estranging metaphor. If we imagine the ridges (the pinna or auricle) of the outer ear alongside a circular maze, the metaphor exploits the visual likeness of each object as a series of concentric circles. But the ear is a natural body part, whereas labyrinths are constructed. Donne combines the metaphor with syllepsis, the figure of a word holding multiple significances, growing the mental connections. A labyrinth refers not only to a “physical structure” such as a “network of tunnels, paths, etc.,” but also to the inner ear in anatomy.<sup>446</sup> With the suggestion of the inner ear, the maze takes on the visualization of a network of tunnels, blurring the lines between the body and constructed structures. “Rectifie” also holds multiple significances. Donne seems to be using the word in the specific (and now obsolete) sense, “To restore (an organ or part of the body) to a normal or healthy condition,” as well as the broader sense, “To make straight, straighten out (anything crooked); to bring into line.” But within the devotional context of the poem, “rectifie” also has moral significance: “To reform (a person, his or her nature, mind, etc.).”<sup>447</sup> The tension between the objects’ strong likeness and their equally strong unlikeness invites the reader to critically examine the connection between the two and assess the implications. Human senses are confused and confusing. People do not hear what others say “aright” (218). Furthermore, the image of the ear as both sick and perplexed estranges the speaker’s sense of selfhood, and explains his desire for “cure” and “rectification”—for the purification and constructive renewal of his person through God’s mercy. At several points in *Lit*, devices of estrangement render the human body and the human condition strange. This is necessary, according to the poem’s dialectical logic, for recognition of one’s state of estrangement is a necessary condition for the correction and repair of one’s faculties and senses, and an important phase in the devotional process directed towards reconciliation with God.

Figurative estrangement contributes to the motif of spiritual estrangement throughout the poem, converging, for instance, in both stanza 2 and stanza 20. In the second stanza, the speaker admits to Christ that his heart bends away from him:

O be thou nail'd unto my heart,  
 And crucified againe,  
 Part not from it, though it from thee would part.

(14–16)

The speaker embodies contradiction: his fallen human heart is estranged from God, though it desires to be reunited with him. In asking the Son not just to be close but to be “nail’d” onto his heart, the speaker compares himself to the inanimate object Jesus’s body was violently fixed to, figuring the orthodox interpretation of the Crucifixion, that Christ died for humanity’s sins, in an intensely personal and physical way. This recalls Donne’s image in *Cross* of the believer as a crucifix: “For when that Crosse ungrudg’d, unto you stickes, / Then are you to your selfe, a Crucifixe” (31–32). *Cross* urges the believer to eagerly hold fast to his or her tribulations; the image implies that the believer is in the position of Christ. In *Lit*, the speaker, fearing his nature, desires action on God’s part: “be thou nail’d unto my heart.” The subsequent development and bold personal application of the metaphor border on blasphemy and are possibly catachrestical, for the speaker not only asks Christ to be “crucified againe,” for himself personally, but goes on: “But let it be by applying so thy paine, / Drown’d in they blood, and in they passion slaine” (17–18). Donne utilizes hyperbole to exaggerate two common Christian paradoxical metaphors: that Christ’s blood cleanses the believer and that his suffering heals. In fact, the speaker wants to be drowned by Christ’s blood, and he wants Christ’s passion to slay him, expressions which estrange the traditional Christian paradox of life through death. The idea of true life coming through death is repeated in stanza 20, when Donne’s speaker asks God for assistance and renewal: “Deliver us from death, by dying so, / To this world, ere this world doe bid us goe” (179–80). The speaker

desires to die “To this world,” to be estranged from the world, before the death of his physical body.

In stanza 28, the last in the poem, the speaker leaves off still desiring freedom from sin:

O Lamb of God, which took'st our sinne  
Which could not stick to thee,  
O let it not returne to us againe,  
But Patient and Physician being free,  
As sinne is nothing, let it no where be.

(248–52)

The final request, “let it [sin] no where be,” stands in tension with the preceding declaration that “sinne is nothing.” The speaker seems to partially apprehend a sense of deliverance in the moment that sin’s nothingness is exposed, but the poem still closes with the speaker in a state of supplication in anticipation of deliverance. The reader has experienced twenty-eight intellectually challenging stanzas, after which the poem closes off abruptly, in a gesture of hope for the eventual purgation of his soul. Donne’s vision of sin as “nothing,” as privation of righteousness, is also revealing in terms of Donne’s repeated emphasis on processes of “new fashioning,” such as renovation or purgation, both in *Lit* and elsewhere. Newness of the devotional subject, like newness in literary works, comes not through making something new from scratch. The spiritual refashioning that Donne’s speaker longs for is unrealized within the constraints of the poem, but the text itself fulfills its reworking. Donne’s last stanza in particular adapts and refashions the ending of the liturgical prayer, the *Agnus Dei*, as follows:

Sonne of God: we beseche thee to heare us.

*Sonne of God: we beseche thee to heare us.*

O Lambe of God that takest away the synnes of the worlde.

*Graunt us thy peace.*

O Lambe of God that takest awaye the synnes of the worlde.

*Have mercy upon us.*<sup>448</sup>

Donne jettisons the formal prayers that come after the Litany proper (the service, for example, continues through a series of prayers for the royal family and specific prayer situations, which can be applied in times of need, such as “In the tyme of dearth and famyne.”).<sup>449</sup> Instead, he trims, revises, and incorporates portions of the liturgical prayer for forgiveness into the opening lines of the final stanza (“O Lamb of God, which took’st our sinne”); the *Agnus Dei* also suggests the themes of stanza 28, namely sin and mercy. In contrast to the Prayer Book version, Donne’s version foregrounds the conditional nature of its desired end: “As sinne is nothing, let it no where be.” The verb “let” suggests that the speaker’s deliverance through the extinguishing of his sin is forever anticipated within the confines of the poem. In stanza 2, the speaker had begged Christ to be “nail’d” (14) onto his heart; in stanza 28, sin cannot “stick” to Christ. Does the juxtaposition suggest that Christ and the speaker are now joined together? There is no clear answer. The speaker recognizes his need for salvation, but he cannot effect it, and neither can his poem, a mere literary work.

*Lit* nevertheless aims to purify and correct the reader’s perceptions of traditional Christian subject matter, enabling a clearer view not through wit but rather through humility. The humbling weight of each supplication directed to God functions together with the poem’s devices of estrangement to undercut the reader’s possessive comprehension of the subject matter. However, the devices also display the poet’s witty use of rhetorical figures, underscoring the poem’s individual expression of a communal liturgical prayer. The work therefore remains in tension between the individual and the communal, and between innovation and tradition.

## Conclusion

Can the devotional poet say anything new, and if so, how? As religious subject matter seems to necessitate at least some constraints on originality of expression, how can the devotional poet avoid sterility in his or her writing and generate interest from the reader? Donne's poetics of estrangement in his emblematic lyrics and liturgical poems can be read as an attempt to resolve, or hold in tension, the competing literary impulses of constancy and change. Donne renders the familiar materials of Christian literary tradition strange in order to renovate them, thereby generating the feeling of first encounter in his readers—exposing new angles on standard aspects of Christianity, new significances in the layers of tradition.

In *Cross* and *Annun*, Donne exploits strange occurrences that cross his path—the cross symbol or the concurrence of two holy days. The two poems are full of perplexity, troubling and estranging the reader, as an initial phase in the discovery of hidden or hitherto unrealized meanings enacted in each poem. Critics have been correct in calling the occasional religious lyrics deeply emblematic, for in them Donne approaches the occasions of life as intriguing riddles to be unpacked. However, Donne's emblematic poems are less unsettling than many of his other religious poems, because the effect of estrangement is overcome within the context of reading the poem. Donne's *Lit* ends with yearning rather than resolution. Throughout the long poem, Donne shifts through a wide variety of devices of estrangement to individualize the traditional elements the poem features, rendering a corporate liturgical prayer in a highly personal way. Donne's *Lit* takes the materials of Christianity recited through the ages in the Great Litany and renders them strange, refreshing the traditional elements and renovating the devotionally oriented reader through the mental effort of re-apprehension. Nevertheless, salvation is only anticipated at the close of *Lit*, which points towards the lack of resolution in many of the Holy Sonnets. How estrangement functions within Donne's frequently surprising and shocking sonnets is the subject of the next chapter.

### Chapter 3:

#### “His strange love still admire”:

#### The Estrangement Effect in the Holy Sonnets

The Holy Sonnets are the most frequently published, studied, and taught of Donne’s religious poems and therefore far more familiar than either his emblematic lyrics or liturgical poems. Estrangement theory is a useful way to foreground and rethink important aspects and qualities about the sonnets that critics have long observed and variously described. Scholars generally agree that the Holy Sonnets centre on the speaker’s thoughts about and feelings towards sin, death, salvation, and spiritual love.<sup>450</sup> As we have seen with other Donne texts, when critics observe what I describe as estrangement, they tend to do so using other terms. For example, in the mid-twentieth century, Donald Stauffer considered the *HSBatter* and *HSShow* as examples of Donne’s penchant for riddles and the paradox that “shocks us into attention”; in Stauffer’s view, the reader’s attempt to comprehend such poetry can produce a “deeper realization of religious faith.”<sup>451</sup> David Marno’s recent study of the art of “holy attention” is, in part, an examination of how exactly a “deeper realization” of religious doctrines might come about through reading devotional poetry. Marno holds up the Holy Sonnet “Death be not proud” (*HSDeath*) as a supreme example of poetry that generates attentiveness in the reader in order to arrive at a personal, experiential understanding of doctrine. Marno argues: “Donne’s poems represent the process of seeking faith by making the reader experience what it feels like to think a thought. . . . While the occurrence of the thought in the poems must feel like an unexpected event for the speaker, the poem itself is a careful preparation for this occurrence.”<sup>452</sup> Marno’s contention that poetry can induce a novel experience of an idea recalls Berlina’s summary of Shklovsky’s *ostranenie* as “making the habitual strange in order to reexperience it.”<sup>453</sup> Daniel Gibbons’ recent study of liturgical poetics also obliquely addresses aspects of estrangement. Gibbons argues that “Donne’s religious poems unsettle audiences’ doctrinal securities” and that “Donne’s strange

techniques of multivocality make it possible for his poems to engage and shape theologically diverse audiences,” noting *HSShow* as a good example of this sort of poetics.<sup>454</sup> As these critical observations indicate, the entwining of literary technique and devotional concerns is a significant feature of the Holy Sonnets. In an effort to engage with the vast existing commentary on the Holy Sonnets while also breaking new ground on the formal and thematic roles of estrangement in the sonnets, I have chosen to focus my investigation on four sonnets notable for their sophisticated interaction of devices and themes of estrangement: *HSSpit*, *HSShe*, *HSShow*, and *HSVex*.

In contrast to their modern prominence in Donne’s canon, the Holy Sonnets were neither as widely known nor as highly regarded during his lifetime as, for example, his Songs and Sonnets or sermons. The Holy Sonnets could be read only in manuscript until the publication of 12 sonnets after Donne’s death in the first edition of his poetry, *Poems, by J. D.* (1633). The 1635 edition of Donne’s *Poems* added four more sonnets, bringing the total number to 16.<sup>455</sup> In 1899, Edmund Gosse brought three more Holy Sonnets into print and to modern scholarly attention—*HSShe*, *HSShow*, and *HSVex*. These three sonnets are only extant in one textual source, the Westmoreland manuscript, which is written in the hand of Donne’s friend Rowland Woodward.<sup>456</sup> Although poetry could circulate widely in manuscript, the editors of the *Donne Variorum* have concluded that, “In comparison to such popular genres as the Songs and Sonnets, the love elegies, and even the Epigrams, Donne’s Holy Sonnets had only a limited circulation in the seventeenth century.”<sup>457</sup> The manuscript evidence may suggest that Donne recognized his sonnets’ potential to shock and offend readers and therefore attempted to restrict access to them. We know that Donne closely guarded other controversial works, such as his treatise on suicide, *Biathanatos* (c. 1608), of which Donne kept only a single manuscript, and which he shared only amongst close friends.<sup>458</sup> Ramie Targoff asserts that the Holy Sonnets “show no signs of having been intended for broad readership.”<sup>459</sup> This seems especially likely for the three sonnets unique to the Westmoreland manuscript in that, as far as the evidence indicates, only a close friend was able to copy them, and, as R. V. Young argues, two seem highly personal while the other touches on



controversial subject matter:<sup>460</sup> *HSShe* was most likely occasioned by the death of Donne's wife, Anne (née More), in 1617; *HSVex* offers a penetrating view of individual shortcomings and contradictions; *HSShow* voices irenic opinions on the Church that would have been controversial and possibly dangerous to air publicly.<sup>461</sup> If Donne was restricting access to his Holy Sonnets, it may also indicate that he composed them for a small elite audience, namely the kind of intellectual, active, labouring readers he favoured for his poetry.<sup>462</sup>

While the manuscript evidence relating to the evolution of the Holy Sonnets informs my analysis of Donne's poetics of estrangement, it also complicates previous accounts of the order and plan of the sequence. The Westmoreland Sequence is one of three versions of the Holy Sonnets that the editors of the definitive *Donne Variorum* present, along with the Original Sequence and the Revised Sequence (which was the basis for the 1633 publication of 12 sonnets).<sup>463</sup> Each sequence represents a stage in the evolution of the group. However, as the editors explain, only the Original Sequence and the Revised Sequence can be assigned authorial status, for the evidence suggests that the order of the Westmoreland Sequence is scribal, having been put together over time, probably in three distinct phases.<sup>464</sup> Calling attention to Donne's processes of revision as well as the persistence of textual uncertainties, the *Variorum* edition complicates previous influential theories of the order and plan of the group. For instance, both Helen Gardner and Louis Martz linked Donne's sonnets to the program and three-part structure of Ignatian meditation, and Gardner put forward hypotheses grouping the sonnets around particular themes, namely the Last Things, spiritual love, and penitence.<sup>465</sup> Barbara Lewalski's study of Protestant biblical poetics was an important counterbalance to scholarly emphases on Jesuit and earlier traditions of meditation. Lewalski argued that the Holy Sonnets are examples of the Protestant application of biblical typology to the individual believer's spiritual life, particularly "the Protestant paradigm of salvation in its stark, dramatic, Pauline terms," and she read the sequence as having a general thrust but not a tight, necessary progression.<sup>466</sup> While my reading of the Holy Sonnets does not claim a comprehensive plan for the entire arrangement, I am

influenced by Young's recent efforts to nevertheless observe connections between sonnets and to interpret, however tentatively, the evolution of the sequence.<sup>467</sup> Being attentive to Donne's poetics of estrangement reveals particular dynamics in the evolving sequence, which leads me to make two arguments about select portions of the sequence. First, close analysis of *HSSpit*, one of a group of four sonnets added to the sequence, reveals an emphasis on the discourse of strangeness, particularly the strangeness of God. Second, the three Westmoreland sonnets are linked by their complementary variations on themes of estrangement, namely interpersonal, communal, and self-estrangement.

*HSSpit*, *HSShe*, *HSShow*, and *HSVex* are particularly suitable for close reading in that all four display a representative range of devices of estrangement, including estranging metaphors, paradoxes, and puns, which closely complement the four sonnets' themes of strangeness and estrangement. Featuring enargia, antithesis, synoeciosis, and metaphor, *HSSpit* illustrates Donne's skillful manipulation of the duality of strangeness, exploiting the distancing effect before reversing his approach to draw the reader back into the text with attraction to God's "strange loue" (9). Each of the three Westmoreland sonnets renders a common religious trope strange. *HSShe* uses estranging devices such as syllepsis and aporia to explore the estrangement of death as well as to bring renewed vigor and troubling complexity to the traditional figuration of God as a lover of humankind. *HSShow* uses the figure allegoria to estrange the common metaphor of the Church as Spouse of Christ in order to question the basis of church authority and the limits of ecclesiastical inclusion. *HSVex* compounds synoeciosis, enigma, and other devices of estrangement to convey the speaker's self-criticism of his contradictory devotional habits. Each of the four sonnets features numerous estranging rhetorical figures, at the same time that a character in the poem, such as the speaker or the beloved, is self-reflexively highlighted as an estranging figure.

### **Estrangement in the Holy Sonnets: Genre, Form, Trope**

Analysis of Donne's Holy Sonnets reveals estrangement not only on the levels of language and form but also in terms of genre.<sup>468</sup> Donne takes up the formal, thematic, and stylistic conventions of the sonnet—a verse form closely aligned with the Petrarchan tradition and its emphasis on a specific configuration of erotic love—in order to alter the forms through which the reader encounters the familiar religious subject matter.<sup>469</sup> Heather Dubrow has argued that Donne's approach to Petrarchism, particularly in the verse letters and Songs and Sonnets, is more complicated than is often recognized, for Donne both participates in and criticizes Petrarchan conventions over the course of his career.<sup>470</sup> In the Holy Sonnets, Donne translates what Maurice Evans identifies as “the basic Petrarchan situation of the adoring lover and the unresponsive mistress”<sup>471</sup> into a relationship between a spiritually anxious and importunate speaker and a seemingly unresponsive God. Gary Kuchar argues that “the speaker's appropriations of Petrarchism” and their relationship to the sonnets' theological concerns have not received due explanation.<sup>472</sup> As Donne's God resembles the cold and aloof Petrarchan lady, intensely desired yet silent and absent, the sonnets portray, in broad strokes, a male divine beloved and a feminized human lover.<sup>473</sup> Donne's inversion of the basic Petrarchan lovers' genders resembles the figure chiasmus, the “ABBA pattern of mirror inversion,”<sup>474</sup> on the scale of genre. Although the gender inversion is uncommon within the English Petrarchan sonnet tradition, it is simultaneously traditional, for Donne is following the conventional gendering of the human-divine relationship in Christian devotional writing. Donne's casting of traditional devotional forms of expression in the sonnet genre helps to render them strange.

Donne's exploration of the speaker's religious experience appropriates the extreme and paradoxical emotional states of the Petrarchan lover, frequently relying on figures such as synoeciosis to express them. For example, in “Thou hast made me” (*HSMade*), the speaker feels trapped between two dire states: “Dispaire behind, and death before” (6). *HSSighs* begins with the speaker asking, “O might those sighes and teares returne again” (1). The speaker soon frames his

odd request for expressions of sorrow to return as a desire to re-experience “holy discontent” (3), a phrase exemplifying Donne’s use of synoeciosis in its most compressed form—the oxymoron. The request is paradoxical, strengthening the sonnet’s initial estrangement effect. Instead of longing for his lady’s attention and affection, the speaker of the Holy Sonnets agonizes over the state of his soul and his relationship with God.

The Holy Sonnets acutely dramatize several of the central theological controversies of the Reformation, exploring, for example, the extent of human free will, the value of good works, and the nature and means of divine grace. The speaker’s struggles with these issues have generated a great deal of scholarly interpretation. Many critics have read the sonnets as primarily reflective of Donne’s anguished theological investigations or the career setbacks and dejection he experienced in the years following his scandalous marriage.<sup>475</sup> Scholars have also concentrated on debating the confessional identity of the sonnets’ theological concerns.<sup>476</sup> However, in recent years, some scholars have moved beyond attempts at strict religious identification, focusing instead on more complex or highly specific source investigations. In a pioneering study emphasizing the nuances of Donne’s religious thought, Richard Strier suggests that Donne’s complicated theological development engendered complicated, even unsuccessful sonnets.<sup>477</sup> Kuchar argues that “the fundamental drama of the Holy Sonnets is characterized by the speaker’s terrifying recognition that repentance requires him to experience his lack of autonomy”; although Kuchar situates the sonnets’ theological dialectic, which could be described as involving self-estrangement, in relation to Lutheran and Calvinist traditions, he is adamant that Donne’s engagement with Petrarchism is equally important to understanding the spiritual drama of the poems.<sup>478</sup> Gibbons persuasively argues for the engagement of various Holy Sonnets with particular liturgical texts in the 1559 edition of the *Book of Common Prayer*.<sup>479</sup> Gibbons further argues that in the sonnets “the provocation of similar struggles in his audiences is essential to Donne’s liturgical poetics, the representation of seemingly insurmountable theological paradoxes and agonies drawing readers from opposed theological camps into a unified devotional activity.”<sup>480</sup> Gibbons’ readings

complement Young's important argument against a strict dichotomization of the Holy Sonnets as either Catholic or Protestant in orientation. Rather, Young suggests, "the persona of the Holy Sonnets seems to be trying out different versions of grace in order to arrive at a theologically moderate position. We know from his letters that Donne inclined this way."<sup>481</sup> Donne casts his speaker into many devotional roles in a manner similar to that in his Songs and Sonnets, which present a variety of changing roles for the lovers.<sup>482</sup> In each group of poems, there is a frantic undertone—and estranging effect—to the speaker's frequent shifting of roles, which disrupts a settled view of the poems' erotic/devotional situations.<sup>483</sup> Helen Wilcox considers Jacob wrestling with God to be a "major biblical precedent" for the speaker's "determination, both emotional and rhetorical."<sup>484</sup> Extending Wilcox's emphasis on the speaker's wrestling with God, as well as Gibbon's argument about the sonnets generating struggle in the reader, I argue that devices of estrangement in the Holy Sonnets not only evoke the speaker's dramatic grappling with religious themes but also demand equal agility and intensity from their readers.

My analysis focuses on the role of specific rhetorical figures in the creation of the Holy Sonnets' challenging arguments and unsettling tone. Donne's anxious speaker turns from trope to trope in an attempt to understand his spiritual state and to assuage his feelings of guilt. The shifting prevents the reader from forming a settled understanding of the speaker and text. A brief comparison of two sonnets, "O my black soul" (*HSBlack*) and *HSScene*, illustrates how sudden and frequent transmutations of the speaker's figurative role and accompanying imagery contribute to the estranging effect of the poems. Gibbons reads *HSBlack* as an expression of "struggle . . . with the Christian mystery of grace. . . . The speaker recognizes that he must repent in order to obtain grace (of forgiveness), but at the same time knows that he cannot repent unless God has already granted him the grace to do so."<sup>485</sup> The speaker combines bold, symbolic uses of colour with two different metaphors for the soul. In the first quatrain, his "black Soule" is "like a Pilgrim, which abroad had don / Treason" (1, 3–4); the criminal and foreign background Donne provides for the pilgrim-soul adds specificity, defamiliarizing the commonplace devotional

metaphor. In the next quatrain, the speaker's soul is "as a thiefe which till death's doome be red"

(5). The thief

Wisheth himselfe delivered from prison  
 But damn'd and haled to execution  
 Wisheth that still he might be' imprisoned.

(6–8)

Donne's elaboration of the metaphor, using allegoria (a "continued Metaphore"<sup>486</sup>), evokes in the thief desires that appear felt in response to changing circumstances. The touches of narrative and emotional complexity grant a degree of individuality to the thief and uncommonness to the metaphor.

The motif of shifting and transformation continues through to the poem's conclusion:

Oh make thy selfe with holy mourning blacke,  
 And red with blushing as thou art with Sin.  
 Or washe thee in Christs blood, which hath this might  
 That beeing red, it dyes red Soules to whight.

(11–14)

The speaker proposes two self-transformations in order to try to assuage his feelings of guilt, each involving the relocation of a symbolic colour from the first quatrain's negative context to the ending's new, positive context: a soul black with guilt becomes black with "holy mourning"; a soul red with sin becomes "red with blushing." The conspicuously unchanging quality of the colour-based metaphors—i.e., black stays black, red stays red—indicates the insufficiency of the speaker's efforts. But the speaker goes on to consider his surrender to God's grace by letting Christ "washe" him in his blood. Continuing the poem's use of colour, the speaker imagines the blood bath as being paradoxical in method, yet more effective than either of his contemplated self-transformations. The red blood "dyes red Soules to whight." In the paradox of sanctification, the speaker sees, perhaps, a resolution to his original situation.

An emphasis on instability and insufficiency marks the subsequent sonnet, *HSScene*, in which the speaker oscillates between three common Renaissance tropes for life—namely a play, a pilgrimage, and a race—in the matter of a few lines:

This is my Playes last Scene, here heauens appoint  
 My Pilgrimages last Mile, and my race,  
 Idely, yet quickly run, hath this last pace.

(1–3)

The constant turning evokes the speaker’s unsettled spiritual state and exposes the conventionality of the tropes the poem employs, so easily used and then discarded. In both the Original Sequence and the Revised Sequence, *HSScene* follows *HSBlack*, indicating that Donne likely saw significance in the two poems’ connection.<sup>487</sup> The speaker remains anxious, suggesting that the paradoxical resolutions of *HSBlack* do not have the power to imbue the speaker with feelings of confirmation.

The speaker’s frequent shifts through tropes and roles in various sonnets augments the condensed argumentative turns inherent to the sonnet form, a feature of the genre that Donne exploits. Targoff notes that the sonnet form allows Donne to both “unleash and then rein in his imaginative reach.”<sup>488</sup> The compressed form of the sonnet also seems to intensify the speaker’s religious feelings, causing the poems to almost burst with energy at both ends. Many of the sonnets begin with dramatic statements and daring questions, while others end with arresting paradoxes and shocking argumentative turns that refuse easy resolution or tidy reaffirmation of Christian doctrine. Sometimes, Donne uses the inherent strangeness of metaphor to pique his reader’s interest in how the bold image and sharply defined scenario of the first lines will be developed and complicated: e.g., “Oh my black Soule, now thou art summoned” (*HSBlack* 1); “This is my Playes last Scene” (*HSScene* 1); “I ame a litle World, made cunningly” (*HSLittle* 1). At other times, Donne crafts an estranging question that is not easily answerable in its initial presentation to the reader: e.g., “Thou hast made me, and shall thy worke decay?” (*HSMade* 1);

“If poysonous Minerals . . . Cannot be damn’d, alas why should I bee?” (*HSMin* 1, 4). The demand, “Batter my hart, three-persond God” (*HSBatter* 1), shocks for both its content—the strange request to be assaulted—as well as its form—a direct command to God, using an unusual modifier (“three-persond”) to describe and defamiliarize the triune Godhead.<sup>489</sup>

The estrangement effect occurs at the end of many of the sonnets. For example, the end of “As due by many titles” (*HSDue*) surprises the reader with a direct and churlish lover’s complaint to God: “I doe see / That thou lov’st mankind well, yet wilt’not chuse me, / And Satan hates mee, yet is loth to lose mee” (12–14). At other times, tensions generated by paradox produce the estrangement effect. In *HSLittle*, the speaker implores God to “burne” him “with a fiery Zeal . . . which doth in eating heale” (13–14). This ending is a good example of Donne’s use of synoeciosis as well as his interest in the theme of re-creative violence, an act of destruction that creates the conditions for renewal. At the end of *HSDeath* the speaker famously declares, “Death thou shalt die” (14), which can be read as an estrangement of Paul’s boast in 1 Corinthians 15:54–55: “Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where *is* thy sting? O grave, where *is* thy victory?” The final four words in the poem are a dense conjunction of estranging rhetorical figures: Donne uses polyptoton, which is the use of “a cognate of a given word in close proximity,”<sup>490</sup> to augment the prosopopoeia (the personification of Death) that governs the poem. The line could even be considered an example of enigma, since, like a riddle, it requires mental effort to unpack the layers of meaning contained in the contradictory statement. Endings such as that of *HSDeath* allow the estranged reader to review the implications of the final lines for the sonnet as a whole. Marno notes that early critical traditions which viewed the poem as a triumphant declaration of the end of mortality have given way, particularly in the latter half of the twentieth century, to scepticism about the speaker’s claims about death.<sup>491</sup> I suggest that the poem’s conspicuous deployment of paradox, prosopopoeia, polyptoton, and enigma puts the reader into a position of critical distance in relation to the poem’s rhetorical features and themes. Donne personifies an abstract state in order to declare the eventual death of that personified



figure. The conspicuous repetition of cognates throughout the poem reminds the reader that Donne has made death into Death, a human-like character and therefore one capable of dying. But the end of Death has not yet occurred: “Death thou shalt die.” The event is an anticipated, future one. The estrangement effect foregrounds the figurative artificiality of the poem’s claims, prompting the question of how death will be overcome. The suspended resolution of *HSDeath* allows for different responses, ranging from outright rejection of the argument to recognition that victory over death is not the speaker’s to claim (and be proud of) but rather the product of Christ’s victory.

### “Spit in my face” (*HSSpit*)

Holy Sonnet *HSSpit* potently addresses themes of spiritual estrangement and divine strangeness. In the octave, the speaker attempts to imitate and then contemplates Christ’s self-sacrifice enacted on the Cross, while the sestet praises the Son of God’s strange ways, fashioning the Crucifixion and Incarnation as acts of disfigurement. The poem uses the figures enargia, antithesis, synoeciosis, and metaphor, among other devices of estrangement, to defamiliarize traditional Pauline identification with Christ—that is to say, the trope of *being in* or *like* Christ.

The sonnet begins with a notable example of Donne’s penchant for opening shock tactics:

Spitt in my face yee Iewes, and peirce my side,  
 Buffett, and scoff, scourge, and crucifie mee:  
 For I haue sinn’d, and sinn’d: and only hee  
 Who could doe none iniquitie hath dyed.

(3–4)

The quatrain demonstrates how Donne’s sentence construction, his selection of nouns and pronouns, and his engagement with a charged cultural issue, namely anti-Semitism, amplify the estranging effect of enargia, the figure of “visually powerful, vivid description.”<sup>492</sup> Lines 1 and 2 catalogue violent actions drawn from the Passion narrative in the Gospels using strong, blunt,

visual verbs that are linked by their harsh consonant sounds. While the anti-Semitic attitude of the speaker's confrontational opening demand ("Spitt in my face yee Iewes") is likely to disturb modern readers, it probably functioned somewhat differently for Donne's original readers. The speaker's use of the second-person pronoun ("yee") aligns the reader and the Jews. The alignment might have intensified the estranging effect of the opening's confrontational tone and violent language for many of Donne's original Christian readers, given the anti-Semitic prejudices deeply embedded in early modern English culture. Matthew Biberman argues that the sonnet expresses intense anti-Semitism, while Achsah Guibbory observes that in general Donne's views on Jews and Judaism were more complex than those of many of his contemporaries.<sup>493</sup> While scholars debate the nature and extent of Donne's anti-Semitic prejudices,<sup>494</sup> *HSSpit* undeniably draws on the anti-Semitic trope denouncing Jews collectively as the killers of Christ, as well as cultural perceptions of Jews as aliens in the midst of Christian society.<sup>495</sup> Donne exploits the intersection of the discourse of strangeness and English anti-Semitism to intensify the estrangement effect of the sonnet's opening. I suggest, however, that Donne's use of anti-Semitic tropes and assumptions in this poem seems to be primarily (though not exclusively) rhetorical in that the focus of the speaker's violent desires and malice is himself. As I discuss below, Donne exploits the anti-Semitic trope to structure and heighten the juxtapositions made in the first and second quatrains.

Donne uses antithesis, which Burton defines as "Juxtaposition of contrasting words or ideas,"<sup>496</sup> to set up an explicit contrast between "I," the speaker who has "sinn'd, and sinn'd," and "hee / Who could doo none iniquitie." Any initial expectations the reader has that lines 1 and 2 are from the point of view of the Crucified One are undone in lines 3 and 4, for the one who can do no sin would have quickly registered as Christ in the minds of seventeenth-century English readers familiar with the language of the Bible and the *Book of Common Prayer*. The contrast confirms that it is the speaker imagining his own crucifixion, which not only unsettles the reader's preliminary interpretation but is also tinged with blasphemous presumption.

Nevertheless, the close identification of believer and Christ has biblical and devotional precedents. In Galatians 2:20, Paul exclaims, “I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live.” Likewise, the poem invokes *The Imitation of Christ*, both Thomas à Kempis’s popular devotional manual as well as the general Christian ideal, which the octave works to defamiliarize and render afresh. Donne explores personal connection to the Cross, both literally and metaphorically, in other poems as well, such as the discovery of the metaphorical crucifix within the human person in *Cross*. In Holy Sonnet “What if this present” (*HSWhat*), Donne examines “The picture of Christ crucifyde” (3) in his heart. In the first quatrain of *HSSpit*, Donne’s speaker locates himself within the historical event in order to probe the significance of Christ’s actions and bodily sufferings.

The second quatrain develops the two sets of antitheses, one contrasting the speaker and the Jews, the other the speaker and Christ. The speaker’s efforts to imitate Christ are revealed to be insufficient:

But by my Death cannot bee satisfied  
 My sinnes which pass the Iewes impietie;  
 They kill’d once an inglorious man, but I  
 Crucifie him daily, being nowe glorified.

(5–8)

Using hyperbole, the juxtapositions are magnified and complicated in lines 7 and 8, which contrast the Jews, who killed Christ only “once,” with the speaker, whose sins reenact the event “daily.” The lines not only implicate the Jews but also assert that the speaker, who continues to sin, does even worse: his sins re-crucify Christ. Donne uses Jews in the poem as exemplars of “impietie,” activating anti-Semitic prejudice in the reader in order to magnify the speaker’s own impiety by means of comparison. Biberman argues that “The ensuing sadomasochistic fantasy clearly figures Donne as the heroic Christian knight, a man who can respond to the Jews’ violence with even greater violence of his own.” Biberman reads the poem within a framework

emphasizing various anti-Semitic tropes, such as the “Jew-Devil,” and rightly notes the speaker’s incitement to violence; however, he seems to overlook who the speaker directs violence towards—in the first quatrain, himself, and in the second, Christ, not the Jews.<sup>497</sup> Furthermore, the Jews’ violence against Christ is portrayed as a singular past event: Christ “dyed” (4); “They kill’d” him (7). In contrast, the speaker’s figurative violence against Christ is a present and frequent act: “I / Crucifie him daily” (7–8). The speaker’s subsequent admiration for Christ’s passive suffering is also hard to reconcile with Biberman’s portrait of a “heroic Christian knight” wielding the threat of violence. It is important to note that the lines are also comparing and contrasting the speaker with Christ. This second juxtaposition uses cognates to bewilder the reader. Christ is called “an inglorious man” (Patrides glosses “inglorious” as “devoid of glory; obscure, humble”<sup>498</sup>), while the subject “being nowe glorified” remains ambiguous. Grammatically, “being nowe glorified” could refer to either Christ in his glory after his Resurrection and Ascension, or to “I,” the speaker, who enjoys the new standing of Christians through Christ’s death and resurrection. The figures and cryptic syntax increase the ambiguity. Together, the first and second quatrains (forming the octave) expose tensions between the Christian injunction to be like Christ and the stark reality that believers cannot expunge sin in a manner parallel to Christ.

As the poem shifts to expose distance between the speaker and Christ, the effect of the poem’s strangeness pivots from cultivating shock in the reader to admiration for Christ’s strange methods of salvation. Martz considers *HSSpit* to be an exemplar of the meditative tradition’s influences on Donne’s poetic form, the 4-4-6 structure of the Petrarchan sonnet paralleling the three-fold movement of Ignatian meditation.<sup>499</sup> If the poem is participating in the meditative tradition, Donne’s manipulation of devices of estrangement function, in part, to orient the reader in the necessary devotional direction. At the sestet’s turn, the frustrated speaker cries, “Oh lett mee then his strange loue still admire, / Kings pardon, but hee bore our punnishment” (9–10). What motivates Jesus’s death is a “strange love,” a love very different from the speaker’s own, or

the norms of humankind. The estranging effect of the lines involves antithesis combined with synoeciosis, which Hoskins describes as “a composition of contraries, . . . a fine course to stir admiration in the hearer, and make them think it strange harmony which must be expressed in such discords.”<sup>500</sup> Antithesis juxtaposes the earthly kings with the heavenly King, while Christ paradoxically combines kingship with the unusual and intensely humble act of taking on, rather than dispensing, punishment. This is the “strange love” in action that the speaker admires. In the early seventeenth century, the verb “admire” held both the more modern meaning, “To consider praiseworthy or excellent,” and the older meaning, “To feel or express wonder, astonishment, or surprise.”<sup>501</sup> Donne seems to be evoking both senses of the word in line 9, suggesting not only the speaker’s wonder at Christ’s death on the cross for humanity’s sake, but also at the Son of God born into human flesh in a humble manger. Both the Atonement and the Incarnation wondrously express God’s difference from worldly standards. We might compare Donne’s use of “strange” here with his deployment of the significant word in *Lit*, which describes Mary’s womb as “a strange heav’n” (41), the word “strange” reminding the reader of the bizarre mystery of God being conceived as a human embryo without procreation. In *HSSpit*, the initial confrontational distancing turns to strange attraction; the poem places the reader in a position to admire God’s “strange love,” which confounds but also captivates.

The final lines of the sonnet address the Son of God’s strange ways with specific ties to the discourse of strangeness in literary-rhetorical theory:

And Iacob came cloathed in vile harsh attire,  
     But to supplant, and with gainfull intent;  
 God cloth’d himselfe in vile mans fleash that soe  
     Hee might bee weake enough to suffer woe.

(11–14)

The emphasis on clothing and transformation recalls the similar intertwining of clothing and estrangement in Donne’s description of “strange attire [that] aliens the men wee know” in

*BedfRef*, as well as the discourse of strangeness in the poetics and rhetoric handbooks. As Geoffrey of Vinsauf encourages his readers: “that meaning may wear a precious garment, . . . give to the old [word] a new vigor” using the figures of speech.<sup>502</sup> Similarly, Puttenham recommends “the fashioning of our maker’s language . . . with a certain novelty and strange manner of conveyance.”<sup>503</sup> Containing the words “strange” (9), “admire” (9), “cloathed/cloth’d” (11, 13), and “attire” (11), *HSSpit* shows a seemingly deliberate verbal emphasis on the discourse of strangeness.

The discourse is similarly prominent in the three other “additional” or “replacement” sonnets (as the *Variorum* editors term them)—“Why are we by all creatures” (*HSWhy*), *HSWhat*, and *HSBatter*. Together with *HSSpit*, the four sonnets, which do not appear in the Original Sequence, replace four other sonnets in the Revised Sequence.<sup>504</sup> In the different manuscript arrangements, the four “replacement” sonnets are always grouped together and in the same order, which may suggest that Donne and/or his early editors thought the four sonnets held some significance as a unit. The four sonnets contain many words linked to the discourse of strangeness, and each shows notable interest in the themes of spiritual estrangement stemming from sin and the strangeness of God and his ways. The speaker’s famous demand that God “ravish” (14) him, at the end of *HSBatter*, renders conceptions of God’s irresistible grace strange. The speaker’s insistent demands elsewhere in the poem draw more directly on the language of estrangement. Using enargia and alliteration, *HSBatter* vividly expresses the speaker’s desire for violent divine re-creation: “bend / Your force to break, blowe, burne and make mee newe” (4); the speaker also desires separation from the devil, asking God to “Divorce” them (11). Fittingly for a poem that contemplates a “Picture of Christ crucified” (3) in the speaker’s “hart” (2), *HSWhat* contains words related to images—“Picture” (3), “signe” (12), “forme” (14)—and their estranging qualities and effects: “affright” (4), “amazeing” (5), “Beauty” (11), “foulness” (11), “horrid” (13), “beauteous” (14). In *HSWhy*, the speaker of the poem is specifically in awe of God dying for his creatures:

But wonder at a greater wonder, for to vs  
 Created Nature doth these things subdue.  
 But their Creatour, whom sinne, nor nature tied  
 For vs his Creatures, and his foes hath died.

(11–14)

*HSWhy* expresses, and seeks to engender in the reader, a wonder for God's difference similar to that of *HSSpit*, but, in *HSWhy*, the speaker is also alienated from other creatures, namely animals, who display a humility the human creature lacks. In the sestet, God's difference from humanity is emphasized, particularly God's status as creator as well as his humble act of death for those deemed lesser in status. Might Donne have been trying to inject more estrangement into the Holy Sonnets? To fully address the nature of the "replacement" sonnets to each other and to the rest of the sequence is beyond the scope of my argument here. Nevertheless, the addition of these four sonnets to the sequence is further evidence that Donne recognized and exploited the literary value of strangeness in his religious poetry.

Although Donne's use in *HSSpit* of "cloth'd" as a metaphor for Christ's "taking on" humanity is a common practice in religious discourse,<sup>505</sup> Labriola observes that Donne also constructs "a typological contrast with the self-serving Jacob and self-sacrificing Jesus."<sup>506</sup> To cast Labriola's observation in rhetorical terms, Donne combines the rather conventional metaphor of clothing with both antithesis and (typological) analogy. The final lines of the sonnet are an inversion of Geoffrey's "precious garment" of strange form, for Donne repeats "vile" when comparing Jacob's "vile harsh attire" (alluding to the goatskins Jacob uses to disguise himself as his brother Esau) to God's incarnation "in vile mans fleash."<sup>507</sup> While both are "vile," the difference between the transformations of Jacob and the Son lies in their goals and motivations: Jacob disguised himself "to supplant and with gainfull intent," stealing his brother's blessing, whereas God became a human being to "be weake inough to suffer wo." The Incarnation is made to appear as a kind of disfigurement, making the typically celebratory event strangely harrowing

through direct comparison to the disfigurements of violence that Christ will experience as an adult on the Cross, which are visualized earlier in the poem. As he does in *Annun*, Donne fuses distinct events in *HSSpit* in order to achieve a new perspective on each. As disfigurements, the Incarnation and the Crucifixion are rooted in Christ's abject humility and total lack of personal interest or gain, which is thrown into stark relief next to not only the examples of earthly kings and Hebrew Patriarchs, but also to the speaker's own motivation to free himself of sin. Fetzer similarly notes the "self-interest" of the speaker, and she links his efforts with the "gainfull intent" (12) of Jacob.<sup>508</sup> Even the believer's desire for salvation is sullied with selfishness in contrast to Christ's selfless "strange love."

To what extent does the estranged figure on the cross in *HSSpit* resemble the rhetorical figure of catachresis, the figure of abuse? Although the kingly Son of God as humble, woe-suffering "inglorious" and clothed in "vile mans fleash" might be counted too bold or too far-fetched an image, ultimately, for Christians, Christ's transformations are literal. The Word is *made* flesh, not merely *like* flesh. Rather, the improper comparison is the speaker's placement of himself upon the cross. *HSSpit* exposes difference and disconnect between the speaker and Christ at the point of the speaker's intense desire to identify with Christ. Fetzer's emphasis on the speaker's self-interest looks past how that self-interest functions in the argument of the poem, specifically as a phase in the speaker's development and discovery of his own inadequacy in comparison to Christ.<sup>509</sup> The poem uses devices of estrangement to repel readers from the speaker's "re-enactment of Christ's passion"<sup>510</sup> and to direct them towards admiration for Christ's love. The estrangement effect provokes the reader to confront the extremity of human inadequacy to assuage the guilt of sin, as well as the radical strangeness of God's salvific efforts through Christ, exposing the disconnect between Christian identification with Christ and recognition of God's ultimate difference.



### The Three Westmoreland Sonnets

Estrangement theory both adds to our understanding of *HSSpit* and offers a way to rethink the relation of the three sonnets unique to the Westmoreland manuscript—*HSShe*, *HSShow*, and *HSVex*—not only to each other but also to the rest of the Holy Sonnets. Since the publication of Grierson’s edition in the early twentieth century, these three sonnets have been numbered 17–19 in most editions, and are often read as individual sonnets not connected to the thematic developments of the rest of the sequence. Gardner asserts that the three are “entirely unconnected with each other.”<sup>511</sup> Young argues that they were written later than the other sonnets, and frames the key interpretive question about the Westmoreland sonnets around why the three seem to have been withheld from wider circulation.<sup>512</sup> In the commentary in her new edition of Donne, Mueller repeats the critical commonplace that the three are individual sonnets; however, she also intriguingly raises the idea of two thematic pairings within the trio, speculating that *HSShe* and *HSShow* are about the Church Triumphant and Church Militant respectively, and that *HSVex* is “a subjective counterpart to the objective perplexities” of *HSShow*.<sup>513</sup> The perplexity Mueller reads in *HSShow* and *HSVex* might also be usefully conceptualized as pertaining to themes of estrangement—church division and inward division respectively—evoked by various devices of estrangement. The prominence of devices and themes of estrangement in all three sonnets, I argue, allows us to read them as functioning as a trio, rather than as either individual poems or two sets of pairs, whatever the authorial or editorial intentions were for placing the three sonnets at the end of the arrangement in the Westmoreland manuscript. Thematically, estrangement figures in each poem in a different way: *HSShe* is about interpersonal estrangement, about separation from those whom the speaker loves—his wife and God; *HSShow* is about communal estrangement, namely the discord and divisions of the Western Church in the aftermath of the Reformation, to which the speaker responds with a startling image of oneness through openness (lines 13–14); and *HSVex* vividly depicts self-estrangement, the speaker’s own feelings of inward discord and contradiction.

**“Since she whom I loved” (*HSShe*)**

In *HSShe*, the speaker’s grief at the passing of his beloved is framed as an affirmation of his love for God and of God’s jealous love for him in return. Three contexts—Renaissance conventions of love poetry, Donne’s biography, and contemporaneous usage of the terms “estrangle” and “ravish”—inform my reading. The sonnet’s blending of sacred and profane love together with its estranging rhetorical figures, including syllepsis, synoeciosis, and aporia, makes strange the personhood of God expressed in the trope of God as lover.

Donne’s use of devices of estrangement to convey the oppositional yet fluidly interchangeable relations of sacred and profane love in the sonnet contributes to its tone of fraught yet contemplative longing:

Since She whome I lovd, hath payd her last debt  
 To Nature, and to hers, and my good is dead  
 And her Soule early into heauen rauished,  
 Wholy in heauenly things my Mind is sett.

(1–4)

“Since” the speaker’s beloved has gone to heaven, his mind has been “Wholy” occupied with “heauenly things.” The argument seems at first causal, her death leading to his reorientation heavenward, but a pun complicates smooth readings of the speaker’s turn to God. Donne uses polyptoton, the repetition of cognates, to link “heauen,” where his beloved has gone, with “heauenly things,” where his “Mind” is now “sett.” The linkage troubles the speaker’s claim of being “Wholy” occupied with otherworldly things, the relocation of his beloved to heaven redirecting his earthly desire for her heavenward.

With the speaker directed towards heaven, the second quatrain develops the sonnet’s Petrarchan Neoplatonism. Scholars have explored the poem’s engagement with Petrarchism, pointing out the octave’s Neoplatonic conception of the ladder of love, which imagines earthly love as a lower stage in an ascension towards the divine One:<sup>514</sup>

Here the admyring her my Mind did whett  
 To seeke thee God; so streames do shew the head,  
 But though I haue found thee, and thou my thirst hast fed,  
 A holy thirsty dropsy melts mee yett.

(5–8)

Using the metaphor of “streames” flowing from their source, “the head” (6), the speaker suggests that his admiration for his beloved has stimulated his search for God. “Since she whom I love” embodies participation in and criticism of Petrarchism and Neoplatonism. Stachniewski suggests that the octave’s “Neoplatonism in which God is ineffable, to be yearned for, and to be understood partly through the finest human qualities, is replaced by a stiffly Protestant conception of God as jealously intrusive in Donne’s life.”<sup>515</sup> Although the speaker’s restlessness and fraught desires, vividly expressed through puns and paradoxes, place him firmly in the vein of the torn Petrarchan lover, Donne complicates the speaker’s progressive line of ascension in the ladder of love. In lines 5–8 (cited above) synoeciosis, the coupling of contraries, disrupts the speaker’s account of his devotional reorientation. Although the speaker claims that since the passing of his beloved his mind can now wholly focus on God, he is still not satisfied, and the diction and imagery of fluidity—including “whett,” “streames,” “thirst,” and “thirsty dropsy melts”—underscore the slippage in his affections. Likewise, the contradictory terms Donne deploys express the contradictions in the speaker’s longings. The phrase, his “thirst hast fed,” is an example of synoeciosis, combining desire for liquid nourishment (“thirsty”) with the action of taking in solids (“fed”), and pointing to his lack of satisfaction expressed in the paradoxical line that follows: “A holy thirsty dropsy melts mee yett.” As noted in chapter 1, Donne frequently modifies earthly or profane objects or conditions with the word “holy”; in the above example, he estranges “dropsy,” “a condition of abnormal thirst caused by water retention in the tissues due to liver or kidney failure.”<sup>516</sup> “Holy” makes the ailment something presumably good, or at least directed towards God, while “thirsty” intensifies the naturally contradictory aspect of the

condition, which causes a desire for liquid due to excess liquid retention. The physical ailment becomes a metaphor for the speaker's spiritual condition, namely his insatiable desire for God. Although the example of synoeciosis transmutes the speaker's physical condition into a spiritual one, coming at the end of the quatrain, the bodily imagery also challenges the speaker's Neoplatonic aspirations, grounding their unearthliness.

The argumentative turn at the beginning of the sestet introduces the primary reference to Donne's wife and develops the central conceit of competing loves into a kind of love triangle between the speaker, his beloved, and God. With these changes, the speaker's voice becomes more petulant and his conception of God as a demanding lover more explicit:

But why should I begg more Love, when as thou  
     Dost woe my Soule, for hers offering all thine:  
 And dost not only feare least I allow  
     My Love to Saints and Angels, things diuine,  
 But in thy tender iealosity dost doubt  
     Least the World, fleshe, yea Deuill putt thee out.

(9–14)

Although Mueller cautions that “there are no certain textual indicators” to link *HSShe* to Donne's wife,<sup>517</sup> the sonnet is generally interpreted as a response to the death of his wife Anne on 15 August 1617. The speaker's question in line 9, “why should I begg more Love,” is read as a pun on Anne Donne's family name of More.<sup>518</sup> It seems unlikely that Donne, who appears to have closely revised his sonnets, would accidentally include a pun on his wife's family name in a poem about a speaker grieving for the death of his beloved. While most of my readings of Donne's poems eschew close identification between Donne and his speakers, here I believe some identification is in order, for it is not only plausible, but it also provides a psychological explanation for the poem's unease with any settled formulation of the speaker's relationships with his human and divine beloveds. The argument in the octave runs from the speaker's initial claim

that the removal of his earthly beloved enables his love for heaven (1–4), to an account of earthly love being downstream of love for God (5–6), to the revelation that finding God has not satisfied him (7–8). Mueller reads the God as lover trope as providing some rationale to Donne for his wife’s death: “The best sense that Donne can make of this turn in his life experience is to view God himself in the guise of a lover—actively wooing Donne’s soul and offering himself in return, showing himself at once tender and jealously mistrustful of any rival for Donne’s love.”<sup>519</sup> Mueller’s argument recognizes how dominant the frameworks of love poetry are in Donne’s poetic imagination; however, the God as lover trope seems to introduce as much anxiety as ease. Young describes the relation between the speaker’s bereavement and his spiritual development as Donne’s “most tender feelings for his deceased wife and his struggle to sacrifice them to his devotion to the heavenly Master who had ‘rauished’ her away.”<sup>520</sup> Young’s characterization better recognizes the speaker’s struggle between the frameworks of spiritual and profane love, and his quotation of “rauished” (from line 3) calls attention to the significance of this word in understanding the tensions within the sonnet.

Wordplay functions prominently in *HSShe*. Donne deploys syllepsis using the term “more” and polyptoton using “heaven,” but there are also the paronomasia of “wholly” and “holy” and the syllepsis of “whett.” However, I want to focus on Donne’s use of “rauished” in line 3 (“her Soule early into heauen rauished”) as an example of syllepsis, for the word’s meaning deepens and potentially changes over the course of reading the poem, laying bare the word’s different applications in the period as well as its conceptual link to the trope of estrangement. Mueller notes: “The image of Christ as wooer had been sanctioned by traditional allegorical interpretation of the biblical Song of Solomon—a series of lyrical, passionate addresses to a beloved, read as figuring the love of Christ for his Church.”<sup>521</sup> However, because “to ravish” could mean ecstatic rapture as well as sexual kidnapping and rape in the early seventeenth century, Donne’s use of “rauished” in *HSShe* implies, on one level, that God has stolen his wife away, boldly pushing the traditional trope of God as an active lover into the realm of catachresis.

Do the contrary reverberations in the word's meaning hint at the speaker's concealed anger with God for her death? Donne's use of "rauished" seems related to broader notions of death as a form of estrangement between people in early modern England. For example, William Drummond uses the trope of estrangement in his meditation on death, *A Cyprus Grove* (1623): "Death is the violent estranger of acquaintance, the eternal divorcer of marriage, the ravisher of the children from the parents."<sup>522</sup> Drummond personifies death, using the figure prosopopoeia, as a forceful "estranger" of human relationships. Drummond also sets up death as a form of estrangement paralleling ravishment, in the sense of kidnapping or forcible removal. In the references to "her Soule" and "heauen" in the first quatrain of the sonnet, the reader is likely to initially read "rauished" in its ecstatic sense, as a spiritual removal to another place. However, the sestet's characterization of God as a jealous lover unsettles initial interpretations, encouraging the reader to reevaluate the implications of the word. Stachniewski argues: "The God of the octave and the God of the sestet are different from one another, or, if the same, then exhibiting greatly differing aspects of one Deity."<sup>523</sup> While I agree with Stachniewski's general portrayal of the sonnet's shift from an impersonal, transcendent God to a strikingly personal, anthropomorphic God, my reading of "rauished" as an example of syllepsis suggests that aspects of the jealous divine lover are already present in the octave.

With its striking anthropomorphizing of God, the sestet also involves a representational shift from the speaker's feelings and desires to the ascription of feelings and motivations to God, drawing out the reverberations in "rauished" in order to estrange the trope of God as lover: God "dost woe" his soul (10). The speaker ascribes "feare" to God that he, the speaker, will show love to saints and angels instead of to God (11–12). Likewise, God is jealous, feeling "doubt / Least the World, fleshe, yea Deuill putt thee out" (13–14), alienating the speaker from God's affections. In a startling use of aporia, the speaker projects his own doubts and fears of loss, hinted at in the octave, onto the transcendent, making God the one who doubts and is anxious about the speaker's loyalties. Adding emotional instability to the trope of God as lover heightens the representation of

a jealous God who brooks no rivals, exposing the strangeness of the jealous God frequently depicted in the Old Testament.<sup>524</sup> The potent desires and feelings the speaker ascribes to God estranges orthodox Christian conceptions of a personal deity, opening up typical representations of God's manners and motivations to questioning, yet also revealing the speaker's, and perhaps Donne's own, vexed affections and aspirations.

Donne's use of "ravish" in *HSShe* links the poem to others in the sequence. As noted above, for many critics the poem functions independently. However, the trope of ravishment also appears in *HSDue* and, as we have seen, in *HSBatter*.<sup>525</sup> *HSDue* is the second sonnet in both the Original Sequence and the middle Westmoreland Sequence, while it is placed first in the Revised Sequence; thus, as far as we can tell, at each stage in Donne's revisions and the evolution of the Holy Sonnets, the use of the word "ravish" in *HSDue* sets up Donne's later uses of the word. In *HSDue*, the speaker characterizes the Devil as ravishing his soul: "Why doth he steale, nay ravish that's the right?" (10). The aporia introduces early in the sonnet sequence the question of why God allows the Devil to hold sway over people. The speaker first describes the Devil's relation to him in terms of property ("The right"), as theft ("Why doth he steale"), only to revise the metaphorical relationship using "ravish," which in the poem describes the Devil's possession in more erotic, intimate, and affective terms. Highlighting some of the different conceptual categories (e.g., property, law, erotic relationships) humans use to apprehend spiritual things calls attention to the intellect's attempts to contain the divine.

The second use of "ravish" in the sequence appears in *HSBatter*, which culminates with the speaker's longing for God's total domination in expressions that challenge conventional tropes for God's relations with humankind:

Yet dearly I love you, and would be loved faine:

But ame betroth'd vnto your enemy:

Diurce me, vnty or breake that knott agayne,

Take me to you, emprison me, for I

Except you enthrall me neuer shalbe free,  
Nor ever chast except you ravishe mee.

(9–14)

The longing expressed in the passage above is intensified when it is read as the culmination of not only that particular sonnet's situation but also that of earlier poems in the sequence, such as the petulant desire for God expressed in *HSDue*. As discussed above, *HSShe* appears only in the Westmoreland Sequence. In that version, *HSBatter* appears just before *HSShe*. When the two sonnets are read in close proximity, the ending of *HSBatter* seems less resolved; the phrasing "lest you ravish me" becomes strikingly conditional. In *HSShe*, when the speaker mourns, "my good is dead / And her Soule early into heauen rauished" (2–3), the past tense of the verb ("ravished") becomes even more final in comparison to the preceding sonnet's conditional use: "lest you ravish." In *HSBatter*, Donne's speaker demands that God ravish and totally dominate him. In the next sonnet, God instead takes away his beloved wife. If the Holy Sonnets are, in part, about a speaker longing for God to act, then the highly personalized and anthropomorphized God in *HSShe* functions as a kind of frustrated (and frustrating) wish fulfillment, for the poem features a God who has feelings for the speaker and who does act upon human beings—but in this case upon the speaker's wife, not the speaker. The speaker's frustration, however, underscores the very point the poem is making: that the active, powerful God the speaker longs for implies that God can act in ways beyond the speaker's control.

In all three sonnets the range of meanings for "ravish" intensifies the dramatization of the speaker's emotions and injects the old trope with new vigor, while also adding a potentially scandalous quality to the poems. Stachniewski, for example, reads the ending of *HSShe* as containing "a tentative suggestion of the monstrousness of God's love."<sup>526</sup> *HSBatter* and *HSShe* are particularly good reminders that the estrangement effect may repel readers. Imagining a God who acts and feels very much like an unpredictable human being estranges the biblical description of a personal God in the Old Testament, and of a God who became a particular person



in the New, opening up new aspects of the divine for readers to freshly respond to, whether with concern, scepticism, embrace, or awe. For the personhood of God, the poems suggest, strangely indicates a divine agency at work in ways beyond the confines of human intellect.

**“Show me dear Christ” (*HSShow*)**

In *HSShow*, Donne continues to manipulate the conventions of love poetry, as he does throughout the sequence, in order to defamiliarize the relational structures of Christian devotion. *HSShe* imagines a lover-God’s pursuit of the speaker after ravishing his beloved. *HSShow* reorients and redirects the love triangle: the speaker now pursues Christ’s beloved “Spouse” (1), but not to steal her away, rather asking the divine-husband to open up “thy Spouse” (11) to other men. Patrides glosses the sonnet as “possibly the boldest erotic image in Donne’s sacred poetry,”<sup>527</sup> and Guibbory calls Donne’s use of the Spouse trope “near-blasphemous.”<sup>528</sup> Using allegoria, Donne develops the common metaphor of the Church as the Spouse of Christ to a shocking conclusion in *HSShow*, illustrating how Donne’s poetics of estrangement can make a deeply familiar trope appear strange in order to vest it with new, and potentially challenging, significance. In *HSShow*, the unfolding of the Spouse metaphor parallels the final vision of an open Church.

The sonnet’s conceit, namely the speaker’s pursuit of the Church as the Spouse of Christ, is introduced in the first lines:

Show me deare Christ, thy Spouse, so bright and cleare.

What is it She, which on the other Shore

Goes richly painted? Or which rob’d and tore

Laments and mournes in Germany and here?

(1–4)

The metaphor of the Church as Spouse, ubiquitous in Christian literary tradition, has biblical origins and antecedents. The nation of Israel is often figured as an unfaithful spouse of God in the

prophetic books of the Hebrew Bible, while the Christian Church is figured as a pure bride or spouse in the New Testament.<sup>529</sup> In both cases, the spouse is a metaphor describing the relation of a particular body of people to God. In the first line of the sonnet, the metaphor's lack of specificity, "Spouse" being a common noun, contrasts with the speaker's request that she be made "so bright and cleare," which gives rise to the speaker's investigation into the identity of the Church (and thus its boundaries) throughout the rest of the poem. With continued references to "Spouse" (twice) and "She" (eight times), the poem utilizes the figure of allegoria, which Puttenham understands as "a long and perpetual *metaphor*."<sup>530</sup> The frequent use of interrogative sentences (the speaker asks seven direct questions in the sonnet) augments the estranging effects of allegoria, so that the elaboration of the metaphor remains unstable, further delaying mental apprehension of the identity and nature of the Spouse.

Donne extends the metaphor into a quest for Christ's Spouse in order to investigate how one is to judge the "true" Church, tapping into root issues of post-Reformation religious controversy and ecclesiastical division. Mueller describes the sonnet as "a frank, impassioned series of questions about the lack of congruence between the true (by implication, universal) Church promised in Scripture and the Church as it has appeared in manifold institutional forms throughout its history."<sup>531</sup> Most critics have assigned *HSShow* to Donne's later years; however, a few have suggested it could date to the 1590s, when Donne was writing his satires, since it bears some resemblance to his thought in Satire 3, which also addresses the contemporary divisions in Christendom in the wake of the Protestant Reformation and assesses the competing claims for orthodoxy and "true religion."<sup>532</sup> Whether or not the poem was written in the late sixteenth or early seventeenth century, an English reader would easily decipher "She . . . on the other Shore" who "Goes richly painted" (2–3) as a reference to the Roman Catholic Church, for the description alludes to the Continental territorial holdings of Catholicism as well as common Protestant attacks on the Catholic Church as the Whore of Babylon and the preoccupation with what Protestants

considered to be vain and idolatrous practices.<sup>533</sup> Likewise, She “in Germany and here” (4) would have readily suggested German Lutheranism and English Protestantism.

The second quatrain continues to present and interrogate different possible identities for the Spouse, albeit in more enigmatic fashion than in the first:

Sleepes She a thousand, then peepes vp one yeare?

Is She selfe truth and errs? now new, now'outwore?

Doth She,'and did She, and shall She evermore

On one, on Seauen, or on no hill appeare?

(5–8)

The quatrain sets up many of the competing claims about the Church that were active in the period's religious controversies, “under covert and dark terms,” as Puttenham describes the writing of allegoria.<sup>534</sup> In dissimulated manner, the speaker asks whether the true Church is confined to a particular position in space (Rome, Geneva, Germany, or England). He also interrogates the Church's presence in time. Protestantism claimed to be the only pure church, being a revival of “primitive” Christianity, while the Roman Catholic Church claimed to have always held authority over the centuries. Puttenham also connects allegoria to enigma, explaining, “We dissemble again under covert and dark speeches when we speak by way of riddle.”<sup>535</sup> Donne augments the estranging effect of the allegoria using enigma, particularly in the dense question about hills: “Doth She,'and did She, and shall She evermore / On one, on Seauen, or on no hill appeare?” (7–8). Donne's verbal formulation (using present, past, and future tenses) echoes the formulation about the eternity of God: who is and was and ever shall be. By implication, the Church's continuity and immortality are being questioned in contrast to God's. Rome was proverbially associated with seven hills, but the allusions to “one” and “no hill” are less clear. The critical investigations the line has generated attest to the interpretive riddle Donne constructs. “On one” has been glossed as Mt. Moriah in Jerusalem, where Solomon built the Temple, and “on no hill” as Geneva, which is a flat city on a lake.<sup>536</sup> The greater ambiguity of the allusions to the

English and the Continental Reformed churches might indicate that Rome is the more readily apparent answer to the identity of the “Spouse.” This reading would not only align with Donne’s origins in the Catholic Church, but also Catholicism’s claims of visible continuity. “One” and “no hill” give the reader more pause, which might suggest that Donne is less ready to affirm those churches. On the other hand, “One” and “no hill” generate greater effort on the reader’s part to seek the “Spouse.” Donne’s known valorization of mental labour might therefore indicate that the more apparent answer is the wrong one. No matter the interpretation, the estrangements effected in the sonnet suggest that truth is not readily apparent, and so one must venture to recover it.<sup>537</sup>

The poem’s investigation of the nature of the Church modulates between communal questioning and the individualized situation of the conceit, casting the search for the true church as a one-for-one quest, the speaker’s to achieve the Spouse. This tension between the communal and individual becomes apparent in the sestet:

Dwells She with vs, or like adventuring knights  
 First trauaile we to seeke and then make Love?  
 Betray, kind husband thy Spouse to our Sights,  
 And let myne amorous Soule court thy mild Dove,  
 Who is most trew, and most pleasing to thee, then  
 When She’is embrac’d and open to most Men.

(9–14)

The speaker questions on behalf of “us” and “we,” but the situation of the conceit is that of a particular speaker petitioning God and pursuing his one Spouse. The sestet is also where the poem moves from an intriguing handling of a familiar metaphor to a truly estranging inversion. Continuing the metaphor of Church as Spouse, the speaker asks God, the husband to “Betray . . . thy Spouse to our Sights, / And let myne amorous Soule court thy mild Dove” (11–12). Donne is asking God to “betray” his spouse, to permit adultery, since she “is most trew, and most pleasing to thee, then / When She’is embrac’d and open to most Men” (13–14). The poem’s turn also

inverts the biblical figuring of devotional infidelity with sexual promiscuity. In the Book of Judges when Israel disobeys God, “they went a whoring after other gods” (2:17), and this entwining of the languages of sex and devotion influenced subsequent Christian expression. Donne draws on this tradition of eroticized spiritual love, and he makes it newly strange by applying it to a central biblical metaphor, one marked by the purity of the metaphorical figure, the Spouse. The true Church is the one that behaves in a way that would not be socially acceptable for a wife in seventeenth-century England: being sexually “open” to many men (14). Donne’s final image also provocatively conflates the openness of the “great whore . . . with whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk” (Rev. 17:1) and “holy Jerusalem” (Rev. 21:10). The angel says to John, “Come hither, I will shew thee the bride, the Lamb’s wife,” and she is revealed to be “clear as crystal,” yet she has “a wall great and high” (Rev. 21:9, 11–12). The conflation of normally contrasting values in the figure of the Spouse exposes the tension between human perceptions of the church in time and history and the idea of one true Church.

The ending of the sonnet also reveals how the estrangement effect can open up a familiar metaphor to a range of significances. The speaker’s earlier questions are veiled yet still limited in their range of possible interpretations. “She . . . on the other Shore” and She who “Laments and mournes in Germany and here” are more specific and narrow in their interpretation than She who shall “On one, on Seauen, or on no hill appeare.” The poem’s final statement (not a question) on the nature of the Church as Christ’s Spouse is less historically and geographically specific. The Spouse’s ecclesiastical identity remains ambiguous, opening the trope up to multiple possible interpretations. Gardner, somewhat anachronistically, sees the poem as an image of *via media* Anglicanism.<sup>538</sup> The Spouse’s promiscuity could also be linked to the “richly painted” Roman church; Protestant polemicists frequently derided the Catholic Church as the Whore of Babylon, whose luxurious clothes and makeup were meant to evoke Catholic ritual. Perhaps the poem’s insistent ambiguity, its refusal to confirm the identity of the church beyond the open metaphor, is

the point. Robert Jackson, in a highly original interpretation, emphasizes the ambiguous grammar of the final two lines in order to challenge most readings of the ending, arguing that “Who” (13) and “She” (14) might actually refer to the speaker’s “Soule,” as the soul is conventionally figured as feminine in devotional literature. Jackson recognizes the metaphorical instability Donne seems to be seeking, and his novel argument gives support to my own.<sup>539</sup> My analysis of the Church as cloud in *Annun* similarly noted the ambiguity that the similitude generates. The persistent ambiguity of the final two lines of *HSShow* suggests that the poem ultimately envisions a widely inclusive Church, “Who is most trew, and most pleasing . . . When She’is embrac’d and open” (13–14). While various critics have read the poem as putting forward an inclusive vision of the Church,<sup>540</sup> I want to emphasize how the poem’s thematic interest in openness stems, in part, from its figurative and metaphoric concerns. Analogously, the sonnet suggests that the most pleasing way to talk about the Church is by using the estranging riches of figurative language, which free the meaning of Christ’s Spouse from the possession of one specific church (or person) existing at particular points in space and time. Donne disrupts his reader’s habitual interpretations of, and entrenched opinions about, this highly controversial and much debated issue, and in the process dispossesses the reader of his or her claims on the identity of the true church. Through the strange ambiguity of figurative language, *HSShow* opens up the meaning of “thy Spouse, so bright and cleare.”

### “O to vex me” (*HSVex*)

The two Westmoreland sonnets so far considered present strange triangulations of love and desire in order to defamiliarize central tropes of Christian devotion. Although the speaker of *HSVex* says, “I court God” (10), and Donne draws on Petrarchan conventions in the sonnet, namely the contrary states of the torn lover,<sup>541</sup> the poem primarily turns away from the various beloveds—wife, God, or Church—to focus on the speaker-lover himself, particularly his contradictory behaviour and divided self. Doing so, the poem considers two frequent motifs in

Donne's writings: the union of contraries and the tension between change and constancy.<sup>542</sup> The speaker complains:

Oh, to vex me, contraries meete in one:  
 Inconstancy vnnaturally hath begott  
 A constant habit; that when I would not  
 I change in vowes, and in devotione.

(1–4)

Guibbory rightly observes that the sonnet “expresses Donne’s worry that his very changeableness may be the sin that damns him,”<sup>543</sup> but the poem also expresses these worries in the form of a paradox, namely that the speaker’s “very changeableness” has formed “A constant habit.” It is his strange nature, portrayed as a riddle of constant inconstancy, that the speaker documents and seeks to remedy. While critics have noted the tensions, paradoxes, and allusions in the text, my reading highlights these aspects as devices of estrangement that convey the self-estrangement the speaker perceives in himself. Rendering the speaker’s feelings and behaviour as strange, the poem can be read as an estrangement and revitalization of Christian conceptions of the divided inward self.

The first quatrain utilizes several rhetorical figures as devices of estrangement to bring new vitality to timeworn features of Christian theology and devotional writing. *HSVex* is about devotional introspection and self-criticism—in Young’s words, a “common penitential theme, backsliding.”<sup>544</sup> The intimate window onto a contradictory inward state presented in the octave has precedent in Christian tradition. As in his other Holy Sonnets, Donne is taking a familiar Christian trope for articulating religious experience and rendering it strange. The most important antecedent comes from Galatians, when Paul describes the internal conflict of the Christian self: “For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that you would” (5:17). The Authorized Version contains “contrary,” which is echoed in the first line of Donne’s sonnet. The speaker’s restless

state also recalls Augustine's famous paradoxical expostulation to God in *Confessions*: "our heart is restless until it rests in you."<sup>545</sup> For the speaker of Donne's sonnet, the paradox is that his only "constant habit" is his "Inconstancy," which means that his inward person "unnaturally" joins together the antithetical states of constancy and inconstancy. Calvin describes the fallen condition of humanity as a state of internal division: "Nothing is more inconstant than man, because contrarie motions do trosse and diversly drowne his soule, oftentimes he is blind by ignorance, oft he yeeldeth as vanquished even to small tentations."<sup>546</sup> Inwardly, human beings are distracted and estranged even from themselves, an unstable collection of desires and passions.

The poem draws not only on biblical, patristic, and Reformation theological accounts of inner struggle and spiritual estrangement, but also on the traditions of love poetry:

As humorous is my contritione  
 As my prophane love, and as soone forgott:  
 As ridlingly distemperd, cold and hott,  
 As praying, as mute; as infinite, as none.

(5–8)

With reference to the speaker's "prophane love," the second quatrain casts the speaker's bizarre vacillations and extremes in the form of the inwardly divided Petrarchan lover. The speaker's state of constant inconstancy enacts a sacred parody of the Petrarchan lover's paradoxical state of lovesickness. The speaker is "ridlingly distemperd, cold and hott." Enigmatic grammatical structures express the bewildering mix of extremes. The quatrain repeats "as" eight times, confusing the comparisons between distinct emotional states (e.g., "contritione" and "prophane love") and actions (e.g., "praying" and being "mute"). The speaker's constant shifting further estranges the forms through which we observe the speaker's devotional life.

The intensified usage of synoeciosis and antithesis in the self-descriptions of the speaker make him appear absurd and paradoxical, a portrait that fully emerges in line 13 with the similitude describing the speaker's state "Like a fantastique Ague." The speaker's self-



descriptions draw on the discourse of strangeness. The choice of “ridlingly” (7), for instance, calls to mind enigma. The speaker is specifically describing himself using the terms of figurative language, which, by Puttenham’s definition, is estranged language,<sup>547</sup> linking the figurative strangeness of rhetorical figures with the fraught yet contemplative figure of the anxiously devotional speaker. Similarly, the poem’s foregrounding of the speaker’s contrary habits recalls discussions of paradox in rhetoric handbooks. As Wilcox observes, the phrase from line 1, “contraryes meete in one,” is “a succinct definition of a paradox” in language and thought.<sup>548</sup> Donne applies language associated with synoeciosis to the speaker, suggesting that, like a rhetorical figure, the speaker is estranged from the ordinary. The devices of estrangement are functioning thematically, as we have seen they also do in *Tilman*. Marotti points out that both *HSVex* and *Tilman* express “the combination of secular and religious desires” that Marotti sees as competing within Donne.<sup>549</sup> Novarr similarly notes links between *Tilman* and *HSVex* in regards to their respective interrogations of whether the priest—Tilman or Donne—has in fact changed.<sup>550</sup> While these critical insights rightly see thematic connections between the two poems, I read similar uses of the discourse of strangeness and rhetorical figures. *Tilman* demonstrates the coupling of opposites in the figure of the preacher. Like the preacher in *Tilman*, the speaker in *HSVex* is portrayed in likeness to the rhetorical figure synoeciosis. Paradoxically, his self-estrangement has become habit; it does not produce the distant, critical view of estrangement. It does not remove him from himself. It has become all too familiar and automatic. However, if the speaker of the sonnet is like a rhetorical figure, the vexed state of selfhood which Donne describes ultimately does seem to produce the kind of refining or clarifying that the speaker desires.

The sonnet’s conclusion is, in Mueller’s estimation, “unforeseen and arresting.”<sup>551</sup> The poem argues that the speaker’s shivering state is actually good:

I durst not view heauen yesterday; and to day  
In prayers, and flattering Speeches I court God:

To morrow I quake with true feare of his rod.  
 So my deuout fitts come and go away  
 Like a fantastique Ague: Save that here  
 Those are my best dayes, when I shake with feare.

(9–14)

The speaker is “Like a fantastique Ague,” experiencing an extraordinary feverish, shivering state. In order to convey the “fantastique” spiritual sickness he experiences, the speaker repositions himself in relation to God three times: “yesterday” he avoided God; “to day” he prays to “court God”; and “To morrow” he experiences “true feare of his rod.” However, in the face of the riddle of the speaker’s state, the poem ultimately rejects the frenzied, frantic fits of activity that come and go.

To explicate the poem’s ending, I want to return to its beginning, where the poem embodies yet another recurrent theme in Donne’s writings: that beginnings and endings can form a circular connection.<sup>552</sup> In *Annun*, the speaker argues that the concurrence of the holy days, the Annunciation and Good Friday, suggests that “Death and conception in mankinde is one” (34). In *HSVex*, the opening line parallels the final line. Donne writes at the beginning: “Oh, to vex me, contraries meete in one” (1). The ending surprises with the speaker’s observation: “Save that here / Those are my best dayes, when I shake with feare” (13–14). The seeming contradiction that occurs when equating one’s most positive points in time with an adverse and involuntary bodily reaction (shaking) and an unpleasant emotional state (fear) is presented as a resolution to the previous vexations and contrary states. Functioning as a conjunction, the term “Save” signals an exception, something other than the “fitts” that “come and go away” (11). In the first line of the poem, contraries are said to meet in “one,” meaning the speaker. As the poem concludes, the seeming contraries, “my best dayes” and “when I shake with feare,” meet “here,” in the final line of the poem as well as in the speaker’s inward reaches. The Book of Proverbs instructs the reader to seek counsel in order “To understand a proverb, and the interpretation; the words of the wise

and their dark sayings” (1:6). However, according to Proverbs, the seeker of wisdom should not begin in a state of active seeking. Rather, the proper start involves recognizing one’s initial position and its deficiencies: “The fear of the LORD *is* the beginning of knowledge” (1:7). At the end of the sonnet, which is slotted last in the sequence in the Westmoreland manuscript as well as in most editions, Donne’s speaker admits he is best when he fears God: “Save that here / Those are my best dayes, when I shake with feare” (13–14). The final reversal estranges the reader in a manner analogous to the speaker’s efforts to rivet his own attention away from his own strange self and shift it to God. However, it is arguable that the speaker is unable to withdraw himself from the central position of the poem, for his extravagant self-estrangements throughout perplex and beguile the reader. Therefore, the poem itself enacts the multiple contradictions and self-estrangements of the speaker.

*HSVex* exhibits remarkable parallels between its literary and devotional concerns. The poem’s suggestion, that out of the vexation over the contrary states and aims of the estranged self a rectified devotional state might arise, gives potent expression to the dialectical pattern I have highlighted in various Donne texts. As Donne explains in *Essayes in Divinity*, one of the reasons for the estranging style and contents of the biblical text is that “it might return from the furnace more refin’d, and gain luster and cleareness by the vexation.”<sup>553</sup> Similarly, the vexations of literary estrangement in the sonnet give new luster—a newfound clarity or newly emergent illumination—to an old maxim of biblical wisdom: that fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. The vexations of the speaker reveal the state of his soul, while the vexing poem illuminates significant Donnean formal and thematic concerns, namely that the vexations they produce in the reader may lead to an enhanced view of the text. Mueller notes that the speaker’s expression, “I quake with true feare of his rod” (11), echoes the “vocabulary for the afflictions that God permits to fall on [Job],” citing Job 9:34: “Let him take his rod away from me, and let not his fear terrify me.” The strangeness of God’s methods of grace in the poem as well as the

allusions to Job point to chapter 4, which argues that devices of estrangement play an important role in Donne's sermons on the Book of Job.

### **Conclusion**

The Holy Sonnets are the foremost conjunction of estrangement as form and content in Donne's religious poetry. In *HSSVex*, I have argued that the speaker's contrary state takes on the manner of the figure synoeciosis, the coupling of contraries. In fact, all four sonnets I have chosen to focus on foreground a particular estranging rhetorical figure, which holds a special connection to the central themes. In *HSSpit*, the central conceit of the speaker placing himself in the position of Christ raises the spectre of catachresis, that the speaker is too unlike Christ to assume his place. Readings of *HSShe* often hinge on identification of the beloved via a pun, "more," with Ann More, but my reading highlights God's act of "ravishment" as a form of syllepsis. And *HSShow* is concerned with the pursuit of the Spouse, a metaphor, closely linking metaphoric significances with the openness of the church. In all four sonnets, devices of estrangement are prominent, with particular devices vital to the poem's themes.

Although many of Donne's Holy Sonnets are less resolved than his religious lyrics, they still often deploy the estrangement effect as an integral move in their dialectical rhetorical and devotional strategies. Likewise, in the sonnets, Donne uses multiple devices of estrangement together in order to intensify the estrangement inherent to all figurative language. Devices render central mysteries of Christianity strange, as well as important relational tropes that structure devotional experience. However, to a greater extent than in his religious lyrics, Donne uses the estrangement effect in the sonnets to communicate states of religious feeling, which accords with the Holy Sonnets' noticeably dramatic tone. The experience of the reader of Donne's Holy Sonnets resembles the estranged state of the speaker, who expresses feelings of alienation from the divine Author, while the reader of the sonnets is distanced in response to the poet's devices of

estrangement. The constant desire of Donne's speaker for reconciliation with his God is not unlike the fascination and frustration the sonnets have produced in generations of readers.

The Divine Poems frequently express desire for unity while recognizing the discordance and ambiguity of this world. The poetic re-creation involved in literary estrangement is connected to thematic concerns about the renewal of the devotional subject/reader through God's re-creative power. The sense of newness that estrangement can generate fuels Donne's reworking of the materials of tradition, at the same time that the rhetorical power of the strange helps to convey Donne's devotional aim of conveying God's otherness and human estrangement in a fallen world. For the devotional poet, freshness of expression is desired to not only avoid sterility but also to vividly and forcefully express the effects of God's grace, and the desires and hopes of the individual Christian.

#### Chapter 4:

#### “I am not alwayes I”:

#### Estrangement as Technique and Theme in Donne’s Sermons

Donne’s contemporaries recognized the poetic quality of his preaching as well as its affective and persuasive power. In a letter to Sir Dudley Carleton dated November 17, 1621, John Chamberlain remarked on Donne’s likely appointment to the Deanery of St. Paul’s Cathedral: “a pleasant companion saide that yf Ben Johnson might be made deane of Westminster, that place, Paules, and Christchurch, shold be furnished with three very pleasant poetically deanes.”<sup>554</sup>

Donne’s friend and biographer Izaak Walton describes Donne’s power to alter his audience’s perceptions of vices and virtues: “here picturing a vice so as to make it ugly to those that practised it; and a virtue so as to make it beloved, even by those that loved it not.”<sup>555</sup> By the end of his life, Donne’s sermons were the pillar of his fame.<sup>556</sup> The earliest modern literary studies of Donne’s sermons typically focused on the style of his prose, with scholars such as, for example, Evelyn Simpson, singling out notably “poetic” passages for critical attention.<sup>557</sup> Throughout the twentieth century, scholars also mined Donne’s sermons for his views on numerous topics including theology.<sup>558</sup> Over the past three decades, scholarship on the early modern sermon has undergone a renaissance.<sup>559</sup> Recent critical perspectives seek to better situate sermons in the political and religious contexts of the period, and to more fully appreciate sermons as formal orations following the canons of rhetoric, recognizing that what we typically have today are the textual remains of an oral genre delivered on a specific date at a specific location for a specific audience and purpose. New developments in studies of Donne’s sermons, pioneered by scholars such as Peter McCullough and Jeanne Shami, have emphasized Donne’s engagement with the political, ecclesiastical, and theological controversies of his age as well as his status as court preacher.<sup>560</sup> This is not to suggest that either McCullough or Shami has overlooked rhetorical aspects of Donne’s sermons. Indeed, McCullough argues that Donne’s sermons “are predicated on

inspiring actions and feelings rather than dictating them—they persuade by commending the auditors’ or readers’ emotional, interpretive, and finally active engagement with eloquently presented examples.<sup>561</sup> Likewise, Shami’s discovery and elaboration of Donne’s concern for “nearness” in his preaching, that is, on penetrating the personal lives and consciences of members of his congregations, remains a touchstone in the scholarship.<sup>562</sup> David Colclough’s recent introduction to his volume on Donne’s Caroline court sermons, in the ongoing *Oxford Edition of the Sermons of John Donne*, digs into Donne’s political and religious contexts, while also arguing that perhaps the critical pendulum has swung too far towards contextual analysis to the exclusion of form.<sup>563</sup> My study takes up this invitation to re-emphasize and investigate the formal strategies and techniques Donne deploys in his sermons.

I am also indebted to Brent Nelson’s important study of Donne’s rhetoric of courtship, which informs my understanding of the intertwined rhetorical and devotional aims of the preacher.<sup>564</sup> Nelson argues for the importance of not only a sermon’s *elocutio*, its stylistic elements and rhetorical figures, but also strategies related to *inventio*, the search for and selection of ideas, topoi, and other material, as well as the arrangement of the argument, that is, *dispositio*.<sup>565</sup> The preacher works to bring all aspects of his composition into alignment with his interest in “persuading his congregation toward a life of religious devotion.”<sup>566</sup> Emphasizing the interpersonal dimension of devotion, Margret Fetzer describes “humankind’s reconciliation with God” as a “central concern” of Donne’s sermons. She observes that “The relationship between God and humankind is imagined as one of mutuality, even interdependence,” which, she notes, corresponds to the relationship between preacher and auditor, for “the preacher’s task is to encourage such consent [i.e. to be converted] in his hearers.”<sup>567</sup> I have noted a similar interdependence between writer and reader in my analyses of estrangement in Donne’s poetry. Fetzer’s recognition of parallels between the conceptual frameworks of, on the one hand, religious devotion, and on the other, the act of preaching points to my own interest in the close and complex interactions between themes and forms of estrangement in Donne’s sermons.

The chapter highlights two aspects of the devotional function of Donne's sermons related to estrangement. First, that Donne uses devices of estrangement to disrupt his congregation's alienated habits of thought, as a means to facilitate their conversion. Second, that we might usefully think of the reconciliation, or conversion, or devotional reorientation of the auditor as a kind of self-estrangement. As I discussed in the introduction, the trope of estrangement in the period's religious discourse involves a paradox: fallen humanity must be estranged from our state of alienation. As Donne comments in his *Sermon Preached to the King*, April 20, 1630, even at prayer, "I am not always I" (*OESJD* 3.13.215.184); whether it is his passions, desires, pride, or illness, Donne explains, life "aliens me, withdraws me from my self" (*OESJD* 3.13.215.186). Donne's personal confession forges a connection with his audience at the same time that it describes a moment of alienation. Donne's very first sermon, *Preached at Greenwich*, April 30, 1615, contrasts the self-estrangements of sin with the holy estrangement of Christ's salvation, presenting "a short view, of the miserable condition of man, wherein he enwrapp'd himself, and of the abundant mercy of Christ Jesus in withdrawing him from that universal calamity" (*PS* 1.1.152.39–41). As the chapter contends, Donne's sermons frequently assert that in this world we are not our whole selves, and in order to be made whole, we must be transformed by the activity of the Divine Other—a change Donne strives to convey through his exposition of the biblical text.

Estrangement theory allows us to rethink the links between formal and thematic aspects of Donne's sermons, as well as how they function together within particular contexts of delivery. Part 1 of the chapter quotes from a broad variety of Donne's sermons in order to survey prominent devices of estrangement in the sermons, such as far-fetched similitudes, synoeciosis, and antanaclasis. I also highlight strategies more particular to preaching, such as Donne's arrangement of his argument, his initial framing of the occasion, and his methods to arrest and direct his audience by his choice of biblical text and opening imagery, with particular attention to several sermons notable for their themes and occasions. These sermons include two that directly address preaching, the first delivered at the Hague on December 19, 1619, and the second on



Trinity Sunday, 1620, as well as Donne's Third Lincoln's Inn Sermon on Psalm 38:4, which engages the nature of familiarity and strangeness and describes sin as estrangement from God. The beginnings of Donne's sermons merit close attention since the *exordium* typically introduces the occasion and sets up the terms of estrangement upon which the sermon operates. Donne's sermons on major occasions, such as important political events and church feasts, were events laden with expectations. They help to illuminate Donne's strategies for coordinating biblical texts with his opening words and imagery in such a way that they produce the estrangement effect. Part 1 therefore closes in consideration of two sermons Donne delivered at St. Paul's on Christmas Day, the first in 1626 and the second in 1628.

The estrangement effect is an important tool in Donne's rhetorical arsenal, particularly in his sermons that specifically consider themes of estrangement. For this reason, part 2 involves a close reading of Donne's five extant sermons on the Book of Job. Job, a "perfect and upright" man (1:1) whose lands, family, and body are laid waste, and who undergoes various forms of spiritual, social, and self-estrangement.<sup>568</sup> The five sermons are, in chronological order: (1) Donne's Lincoln's Inn Sermon on Job 19:26, probably delivered during Easter Term 1620<sup>569</sup>; (2) the Sermon Preached to the Countess of Bedford, at Harrington House, January 7, 1620/1, on Job 13:15; (3) the Sermon Preached at Hanworth, August 25, 1622, on Job 36:25; (4) the Sermon Preached upon Easter Day, 1629, very likely delivered at St. Paul's,<sup>570</sup> on Job 4:18; and (5) the Sermon Preached to the King, April 20, 1630, on Job 16:17–19. As a group, the five sermons reflect Donne's most significant roles as a clergyman: reader at Lincoln's Inn; preacher to aristocratic households; Dean of St. Paul's; and Court preacher.<sup>571</sup> The group also contains representative examples of Donne's strategies and techniques of estrangement as Donne responds to themes of estrangement in the biblical texts. In the introduction, I noted Donne's Lincoln's Inn Sermon and his Sermon Preached to the King, which feature some of Donne's most explicit discussions of, respectively, the conditionality of strangeness and the causes and effects of self-estrangement. In his Lincoln's Inn Sermon on Job 19:26 ("And though, after my skin, wormes

destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God”), Donne frequently revels in the dissolution of the body as he expounds on the resurrection of the dead. In comparison, the remaining four sermons are, overall, less grotesque. Nevertheless, they are revealing sites for exploring Donne’s devices of estrangement, not least of all because they do so to differing degrees, indicating that devices of estrangement can disrupt and delay the audience’s mental apprehension in both conspicuous and subtle ways. Donne’s *Sermon Preached to the Countess of Bedford* considers Job 13:15: “Loe, though he slay me, yet will I trust in him.” The paradoxical expression of the biblical text prompts Donne’s interpretive strategy of finding meaning in contradiction, and frames the sermon’s vision of hope and faith in spite of present darkness and suffering. Donne’s *Sermon Preached at Hanworth on Job 36:25* (“Every man may see it, man may behold it afar off”) concerns human perceptions of the divine. At various points in the sermon, devices of estrangement prompt the audience to reposition themselves in such a way that they might discover God’s immanence in creation, marvel at his transcendence, and align with the special viewpoint that suffering affords humankind. In his *Sermon Preached upon Easter Day, 1629*, on Job 4:18 (“Behold, he put no trust in his servants, and his angels he charged with folly”), Donne uses an obscure verse about the nature of angels to exhort his congregation to greater humility, whereby they might achieve renewed wonder for the functioning of God’s grace as a force alien to themselves. Finally, Donne’s *Sermon Preached to the King, April 20, 1630* is on Job 16:17–19: “Not for any injustice in my hands: Also my prayer is pure. O earth cover not thou my blood; and let my cry have no place. Also now behold; my Witsnesse is in heaven, and my Record is on high.” The longest and most complex text of the five prompts the most elaborate sermon, in which Donne brings together many of the characteristics of the other four. Donne’s sermon attempts to disturb and transform the inward lives of his auditors in an effort to align their points of view with the strange double-vision that Donne imagines God to hold. My analysis in part 2 allows for a deeper reading of the interpretive methods and homiletic forms Donne employs,

indicating how estrangement functions as part of his overall rhetorical and devotional aims in sermons.

I conclude the chapter with a discussion of Donne's first and last sermons—the Sermon Preached at Greenwich, 1615, and *Death's Duell*, preached before the court of Charles I on 25 February 1630/1—which exhibit formal and thematic motifs important throughout his preaching and poetics careers. In the two sermons, estranging rhetorical figures are used to revitalize the familiar religious topics of human corruption and the nature of life and death as well as to convey both the estrangement of sin and the holy estrangement of salvation through Christ.

### 1. The Poetics of Estrangement in Donne's Sermons

#### Devices of Estrangement and the Sermon Genre

The role of estrangement in Donne's art of preaching can be better understood against the established patterns of preaching in his age. The sermon was not only central to religious life in late sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century England,<sup>572</sup> but was also a popular form of mass media in the culture, holding a prominent position in the public imagination.<sup>573</sup> After his ordination in 1615, Donne rose quickly through the ranks of the church, and was arguably the most famous preacher in England upon his death.<sup>574</sup> Although other English preachers were regarded for their verbal pyrotechnics and estranging techniques, such as Thomas Playfere and Lancelot Andrewes,<sup>575</sup> Donne's combination of an elaborate, engaging, estranging style, which borrows widely from established traditions, with a strong pastoral sensibility makes his sermons unique.

McCullough argues that “sermons as Donne wrote them, and as his auditories experienced them, are best understood as full-scale classical orations adapted through centuries of tradition to a Christian purpose”; Shami, in response, emphasizes Donne's debt to the “rich and complex network of traditions of preaching, homiletic theorizing, and biblical interpretation.”<sup>576</sup>

Similar to Donne's idiosyncratic use of verse forms, Donne draws on different aspects of the various established sermon forms.<sup>577</sup> Greg Kneidel explains that "four basic sermon forms—the homily, the thematic sermon, the classical oration, and the doctrine-use scheme—had been theorized, taught to, and practised by English preachers" by the seventeenth century.<sup>578</sup> These categories are not mutually exclusive. For example, Donne participates in the general movement from thematic sermons to sermons focusing on exegetical analysis of epigraph-like verses from the Bible.<sup>579</sup> I also concur with Nelson's argument that Donne's sermons are generally classical in form, "almost always including an *exordium* and *divisio*, a point-by-point elaboration . . . and a *peroratio* [or peroration], as well as digressions along the way."<sup>580</sup> Donne typically selects a brief passage of scripture, usually a single verse. The text obviously suggests the themes Donne wishes to explore for the occasion, albeit not always in a direct way, while the text's diction and syntax often influence the arrangement of the sermon. As Nelson explains, Donne's exegesis (ultimately a concern of *inventio*) generally structures his arrangement of points in the *divisio* (which is to say, his exegesis guides his *dispositio*).<sup>581</sup> After Donne reads the text to his auditory, the *exordium* provides context for the passage, highlights important aspects, introduces relevant exegetical commentary and debates, and/or raises questions about the text that the sermon will answer. The fact that biblical texts were taken from an established canon generally familiar to early modern audiences underlines one of Donne's basic motivations for using devices of estrangement in his sermons: to encourage an altered, enhanced perspective on the text.<sup>582</sup> Broadly speaking, Donne's sermons tend to explicate a text and then apply that explication to an edification of his congregation.<sup>583</sup> Thomas O. Sloane emphasizes Donne's use of *dispositio*, summarizing the "schematic shape" of Donne's homiletic form as "text-doctrine-application," and Nelson notes the affinities of many Donne sermons to the Puritan doctrine-use method,<sup>584</sup> which might be surprising given Donne's status as a church conformist throughout his years as a clergyman.<sup>585</sup> It would seem that Donne's appropriation of the doctrine-use method is less a reflection of his

ecclesiastical allegiances and more related to his concerns as a preacher with achieving nearness, as well as his life-long affinity for dialectical argumentation.

Ernest Sullivan II, in his discussion of Donne's treatise on suicide, *Biathanatos*, observes that "Donne considered debate and comparison of contradictions important tools in the search for truth."<sup>586</sup> I would argue that those tools, in the form of devices of estrangement, are very often used to search out the meaning of scripture in Donne's sermons. The fascination with dialectical processes of purification and reunion evident in his poetry—such as vexing in order to clarify, purging in order to remove impurities, and estranging in order to reconcile—extends into Donne's handling of the sermon genre. Making the biblical text appear strange plays a role in the early parts of many of Donne's sermons.

Donne's Sermon Preached at Lincoln's Inn upon Trinity Sunday, 1620, for example, frames part 1 of the sermon as an inquiry into "whether these three that appeared to Abraham, were men or no," referencing the three strangers who visit Abraham in Genesis 18.<sup>587</sup> Donne continues, "Now, between *Abrahams* apprehension, who saw this done, and ours, who know it was done, because we read it here in *Moses* relation, there is great difference" (*PS* 3.5.136.73–75). To convey the ambiguous nature of the three visitors, Donne estranges his congregation's point of view from Abraham's, emphasizing their position as readers of a history that Abraham lived. At the end of the *divisio*, Donne summarizes the sermon's argument: "Our parts then are but two: but two such, as are high parts, and yet growing rich, and yet emproving, so far, as that the first is above Man, and the extent of his Reason, The Mystery of the Trinity; And the other is above God so, as that it is above all his works, The infinitenes of his Mercy" (*PS* 3.5.136.66–70). Donne's initial estrangement of the text helps to convey "The Mystery of the Trinity." The sermon demonstrates the two-part doctrine-application structure, Donne's investigation of the Trinity revealing the scope and power of God's mercy.

Like his poems, Donne's sermons often involve complex arguments, which he usually structures into two or three main parts, each typically containing various dilations and subparts. In

his 1620 Trinity Sunday sermon, for example, Donne references “the severall branches of these two maine parts” (*PS* 3.5.136.71). Mirroring the order of key words, ideas, or verses from the biblical text, the *divisio* provides a mental map for the auditory. As Kneidel explains, aiding the audience’s memory could be done in a number of ways, including using various figures of speech.<sup>588</sup> Donne’s sermons also frequently contain a *sum*, that is, a summarizing statement of the main theme of the sermon, typically appearing at the start or end of the *divisio*. The last section of his sermons is a *peroratio* or peroration, which generally involves a sustained flight of rhetorical figures in order to imprint a final message on the auditory. Donne’s sermons, in my view, put into practice Puttenham’s theories about rhetorical figures “inwardly working a stir to the mind.”<sup>589</sup> Sloane, on the other hand, contrasts the aims of rhetoric with those of poetry in his analysis of Donne’s sermon form: “it is through harmony or contemplation that poetry achieves its goal, unlike rhetoric’s procedures which can often trouble the understanding.”<sup>590</sup> For Sloane, Donne’s sermons do not achieve their aims simply by deploying rhetorical figures in the conclusion, but rather through the total effect of his rhetorical devices within the arranged argument. Thus, although Kneidel is correct that Donne provides aids to memory, it is also important to note how Donne often aims to trouble the auditor’s apprehension early and midway in his sermons, as part of the total effect that Sloane underscores. Using estranging rhetorical figures such as *aporia*, the argumentative progression of Donne’s sermons tends to respond to the doubts raised, in an attempt to harmonize the vexing, contrary interpretations of the biblical text, before applying the application of the text’s doctrine to the congregation.

### **Rhetoric, Nearness, and the Estrangement Effect**

The critical lens of estrangement theory also offers a way to refocus Donne’s use of specific rhetorical figures in his sermons. It is widely recognized that Donne uses rhetorical figures, such as metaphor and analogy, to make abstract concepts of divinity concrete and comprehensible. For example, Fetzer considers Donne’s sermons “dramatic (re-)enactments” that

“strongly depend on the rhetorical concepts of *enargia* and *energia*, in order to make present that which is otherwise non-presentable, the divine.”<sup>591</sup> Although Shami has noted Donne’s defamiliarizing strategies in the sermons, she characterizes Donne’s preaching as his work to make God’s presence closely and keenly felt by each individual auditor.<sup>592</sup> Shami defines Donne’s goal of “nearness” as “a dramatic and highly charged encounter with his congregation which will bring the significance of the history recorded in Scriptures home to each one of them by dramatically imposing the presence of God upon his congregation.”<sup>593</sup>

Shami’s account of “nearness” stems directly from a digression Donne makes in his 1620 Trinity Sunday sermon, in which he argues that Abraham’s special response to one of the three angels who visit him in Genesis 18 suggests that “it is no error, no weakness” for audiences to respond more to one of God’s ministers than others (*PS* 3.5.142.287–88).<sup>594</sup> Donne describes what sets some preachers apart: “It is not the depth, nor the wit, nor the eloquence of the Preacher that pierces us, but his nearness; that he speaks to my conscience, as though he had been behind the hangings when I sinned, and as though he had read the book of the day of Judgement already” (*PS* 3.5.142.295–99). Although the passage certainly privileges the preacher’s immediacy and personal application, it is also estranging. The creepy, voyeuristic similitude—“as though he had been behind the hangings when I sinned”—brings the preacher into the hidden space and private life of the auditor in a vivid visual image utilizing *enargia*. Donne also uses the first-person pronoun “I” to separate himself from “the Preacher” (now a noun) and insert himself into his audience’s vocal position (“when I sinned”), emphasizing his closeness to his audience by estranging himself from the role of preacher. The arresting similitude, in combination with Donne’s grammatical shift in point of view, brings the preacher too close for comfort. However, the second similitude—“as though he had read the book of the day of Judgement already”—locates the Preacher (“he,” not “I,” in Donne’s words) in the remote region of divine foreknowledge. The inverse directions of the similitudes and grammatical shifts add to the disorienting effect.

Building on Shami's work, Gary Kuchar defines the "nearness effect" in Donne's sermons and letters as the "shock of surprise attendant upon an encounter with one's conscience as God's witness within the soul."<sup>595</sup> Kuchar's formulation of nearness recognizes the attendant estrangement effect. Kuchar situates this alienating experience—of perceiving one's own conscience as other, although within one's soul—within the development of Reformed conceptions of the conscience as something aligned with God within the self rather than a subordinate part of the individual's will.<sup>596</sup> Shami and Kuchar's studies of nearness in Donne's sermons point to the tangled, transposable relationship between the familiar and the strange that my dissertation underlines. As I argue, the authorial push of an estranging device can generate pull in the auditor/reader and vice versa. Donne and his contemporaries would likely have conceived of strangeness in a sermon as directly engaging the passions.<sup>597</sup> Katrin Ettenhuber, in the introduction to her recent edition of Donne's later Lincoln's Inn sermons, notes the competing aims of figuration, observing Donne's "challenge of illuminating a doctrinal conundrum while simultaneously preserving its sense of numinous mystery"; nevertheless, she also describes how in Donne's sermons metaphor "is pressed into service to bring home eternal truths."<sup>598</sup> Although scholarship on Donne's rhetorical efforts to "bring home" the divine for his auditory occasionally acknowledges the close, dynamic relationship familiarization has with estrangement, distancing the auditor is a more frequent and more important tool in Donne's art of preaching than has been fully recognized.

In various poems and sermons, Donne describes effective preaching as a dynamic force working upon the audience. His poem on the nature and functions of the clergy, *Tilman*, emphasizes the clergyman's preaching office, and within that office the preacher's ability to move members of the congregation. It is the "Engines" of "brave" preachers—their rhetorical invention and devices—that "can / Bring man to heaven, and heaven againe to man" (47–48). The inverse rhetorical strategies of the preacher—transporting his auditory into a heavenly point of view, and, at the same time, conveying God's message of salvation to believers in diverse



circumstances on earth—resembles the inverse similitudes in the passage from Donne’s 1620 Trinity Sunday sermon discussed above: the preacher is reading “the book of the day of Judgement” above while also seemingly hiding “behinde the hangings when I sinned.” The strategies also recall Puttenham’s description of metaphor as the “Figure of Transport,” and corroborate Shami’s observation that Donne contrasts heavenly and worldly perspectives as a tactic in his sermons.<sup>599</sup> The preacher’s power to “convey” (42) Christ in “To Mr. Tilman” recalls Peacham’s concept of the orator: “the emperour of mens minds & affections, and next to the omnipotent God in the power of perswasion, by grace, & divine assistance.”<sup>600</sup> Peacham likens the orator’s methods to those of God. Donne considers the oral delivery of sermons to be a central function of the clergy, and his statements on preaching as well as his practice in the pulpit show estrangement to play an important role in that function, particularly as a tool for breaking down his congregations’ complacent habits of thought. As Shami observes, Donne regularly describes preaching as God’s “ordinance”: “The word ‘Ordinance’ is congenial to Donne for its dual meaning (both something ordained by God and an army in battle order or ranks).”<sup>601</sup> Donne’s use of syllepsis to exploit the multiple meanings of “ordinance” not only conveys different aspects of preaching that are important to him, but, as a rhetorical figure, it also exemplifies Donne’s methods of (re)directing attention to God’s word.

The comparative powers of God’s word and human rhetoric on the mind are explored in the pair of sermons Donne preached at the Hague on December 19, 1619, when he was part of the embassy, led by James Hay, Viscount Doncaster, who was sent by King James to the Continent to try to prevent war between Catholic and Protestant Europe.<sup>602</sup> Donne’s Hague sermons, preached on an important continental trip early in his career and revised at a later date, offer a window onto Donne’s understanding of rhetoric and persuasion in his preaching.<sup>603</sup> Donne preached on Matthew 4:18–20: “And Jesus walking by the Sea of Galile saw two brethren, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea, (for they were fishers,) and he saith unto them, follow me, and I will make you fishers of men; and they straightway left their nets, and followed

him.” The two sermons explore the nature of God’s calling, the first considering the importance of Peter and Andrew’s work as “fishers” before their calling, the second plumbing the significance of Christ’s turning them into “fishers of men.” In the text from Matthew, “fishers” is repeated twice, the first in a literal sense, and the second in a metaphorical: the “fishers,” Peter and Andrew, will become “*fishers* of men” (emphasis mine).<sup>604</sup> The combined usage of two estranging figures, antanaclasis and metaphor, conveys the transformative power of Jesus’s words. The blunt effect of Jesus’s command—their “straightway” following him—prompts Donne to consider Christ’s function as preacher in the sermons.

In his first Hague Sermon, Donne provides a forceful image of coining to contrast Jesus’s simple, effective persuasion of the first disciples with the ways of human rhetoric:

The way of Rhetorique in working upon weake men, is first to trouble the understanding, to displace, and to discompose, and disorder the judgement, to smother and bury in it, or to empty it of former apprehensions and opinions, and to shake that beliefe, with which it had possessed it self before, and then when it is thus melted, to powre it into new molds, when it is thus mollified, to stamp and imprint new formes, new images, new opinions in it. But here in our case, there was none of this fire, none of this practise, none of this battery of eloquence, none of this verball violence, onely a bare *Sequere me, Follow me,* and *they followed.*

(PS 2.13.282.483–92)

Within the argument of the sermon, Donne’s extravagant description of the process of rhetoric affecting the mind is meant to call attention to how Jesus could do so much with so little.<sup>605</sup> As Donne’s religious writings often do, the passage expresses regard for human communicative arts alongside scepticism towards them, since Jesus is able to persuade with “bare” language while mere orators and preachers must rely on the “battery of eloquence” and “verbal violence.” The plain language of the Son of God in Matthew 4:19 (“follow me, and I will make you fishers of men”) contrasts, however, with Donne’s reflections on the eloquent language of the Holy Spirit in

the Bible, according to Expostulation 19 of *Devotions Upon Emergent Occasions*, when Donne describes God as “a *figurative, a metaphorical God*.”<sup>606</sup> Indeed, the gospel writer’s figurative use of “fisherman” discussed above testifies to the Bible’s eloquence. Donne argues in Book 2 of *Essays in Divinity* that the Bible’s difficult style serves a purpose: “For naturally great wits affect the reading of obscure books, wrestle and sweat in the explication of prophecies.”<sup>607</sup> These comments from a variety of Donne’s writings, taken together, suggest that the Bible’s style, which goads the lazy and challenges the witty, is meant to exploit both human weakness and ability.

The passage from Donne’s Hague sermon also lays out the orator’s design “to displace, and to discompose, and disorder the judgement” with rhetoric. First, efforts to trouble the understanding are connected to efforts “to empty it of former apprehensions and opinions, and to shake that believe, with which it had possessed it self before.” Donne is describing the process of dislocating the mind from habitual perceptions and interpretations—of dispossessing auditors of their opinions and habits of mind—but this process is not simply about breaking down habits of thought. The violence is part of the renovation. It is about pouring the same mind into “new molds,” and impressing upon it “new formes, new images, new opinions.” Donne’s vivid description of rhetoric using *enargia* and metaphor characterizes a general strategy in his sermons: to trouble the understanding of a biblical text before making it clear and stamping it onto the hearts of the congregation. This strategy parallels his rhetorical strategies in poems such as *Annun*, and evokes Donne’s thematic interest in the dynamic relationships between familiarity and strangeness and between constancy and change—themes frequently expressed in metaphors of forging, coining, and sealing with wax. Donne’s Sermon Preached at Saint Paul’s on reconciliation with God ends with an evocative summary of the preacher’s interaction with the auditory: “God sends humble and laborious Pastors, to souple and appliable Congregations” that humankind might enjoy rest, joy, and glory with God in eternity (*PS* 10.5.139.751–52).

### **Sin, Habit, and Estrangement in Donne's Third Sermon On Psalm 38:4**

Donne uses devices of estrangement in his sermons not only to manipulate the perspectives of his auditory towards his ultimate goal of stirring religious devotion, but also to further the particular argument being made about the biblical text. Donne's series of six sermons on Psalm 38, one of the Penitential Psalms, which he preached at Lincoln's Inn in 1618, explores the topic of sin. Ettenhuber notes that Donne's method of using sermon series to compare competing views on a particular text is unique to his time at Lincoln's Inn, and she speculates that methods of legal interpretation and adversarial argument may have influenced Donne's approach.<sup>608</sup> Simpson notes that the series on Psalm 38 demonstrates Donne's method involving "the consideration of the text from each of the three different interpretations," that is, the literal, moral, and figurative.<sup>609</sup> Donne's Third Lincoln's Inn Sermon on Psalm 38:4, the sixth in the series, considers figurative interpretation, focusing on the metaphor of sin as a burden. Paralleling the sermon's concern for habitual sin are Donne's strategies for disrupting his Lincoln's Inn congregation's habitual, automatic interpretations.

Donne presents the *sum* of his argument in his compressed *divisio*: "The *passion* of Christ Jesus is rather an amazement, an astonishment, an extasie, a consternation, then an instruction. Therefore, though something we shall say of that anone, first, we pursue that which lies upon our selves, the Burden, in those four mischievous inconveniences wrapped up in that Metaphor" (*PS* 2.5.132.32–37). Donne's *sum* relies on several figures. Paradoxon, or "the Wonderer" according to Puttenham,<sup>610</sup> expresses the disruptive "amazement" of the Passion, while the guiding metaphor for sin, a "Burden," also functions as syllepsis, "the single word that conceals multiple meanings."<sup>611</sup> Furthermore, the passage suggests Donne's rhetorical strategy for the sermon: devices of estrangement help the auditory unwrap the layered burden of their fallen habits of thought and behaviour, which allows for their renewed wonder at Christ's atoning Passion.

The Psalms presented a storehouse of themes and imagery that Donne returned to again and again in his poetry and sermons. In the *exordium* of his Third Sermon on Psalm 38:4, Donne addresses the effects of repetition and familiarity using the analogy of a torch:

As a *Torch* that hath been lighted, and used *before*, is easier lighted then a new torch, so are the branches, and parts of this Text, the easier reduced to our memory, by having heard former distributions thereof. But as a *Torch* that hath been lighted and us'd before, will not last long as a new one, so perchance your *patience* which hath already been twice exercised with the handling of these words, may be too near the bottom to afford much.

(PS 2.5.131.1–8)

Donne recognizes the benefits of familiarity (how it makes it quicker to connect to the audience), as well as familiarity's deficiencies (how attention to the familiar tends to quickly expire). Donne must have been keenly aware of how common repetition was to church services and private devotion.<sup>612</sup> Repetition becomes a part of Donne's larger strategies in the sermon, his initial discussion of how familiarity tries our patience and diminishes our ability to pay attention anticipating his discussion of the theme of habitual sin: "Though a man can stand under a burden, that he doe not sink, but be able to make some steps, yet his burden slackens his pace, and he goes not so fast, as without that burden he could have gone. So it is in *habituell sinnes*" (PS 2.5.135.139–42). According to the sermon, the habitual sinner does not recognize how much everyday sins debilitate spiritual progress. Analogously, an auditor or reader might not realize how familiarity with a biblical text or topic constricts understanding of it until one has been estranged from it.

Donne's Third Sermon on Psalm 38:4 offers several intriguing points of connection between literary estrangement and the conception of sin as a kind of estranged manner and habit out of which one must be disrupted and removed. Indeed, as I highlighted in the introduction, the sermon utilizes the word "estrangle" twice, in the only recorded instance of Donne's use of the word. Donne assures his auditory: "Nothing could estrange God from man, but *sin*; and even

from this *Son of man*, though he were the *Son of God* too, was God far estranged” (*PS* 2.5.137.224–26). In becoming man, Donne explains, even Christ experienced estrangement from God in his final moments on the cross.<sup>613</sup> Throughout the sermon, devices of estrangement complement Donne’s analysis of sin as burden. Part 1 addresses Augustine’s definition of sin: “It is one of Saint *Augustines* definitions of sinne, *Conversio ad creaturam*, that it is a turning, a withdrawing of man to the creature” (*PS* 2.5.132.39–41). The verb “to withdraw” is relevant to my study of estrangement, for as I noted in the introduction, estrangement refers to “separation, *withdrawal*, alienation in feeling or affection.”<sup>614</sup> Donne follows the definition with verbal variations on the theme—e.g., “this *declination*, this incurvation, this descent of man” (*PS* 2.5.132.60)—only to break from his metaphorical discussion of human sin as “crookedness” to include a highly literal illustration: “And then, as we have seen some grow crooked, by a long sitting, a lying in one posture, so, by an easie resting in these descents and declinations of the soule, it comes to bee a fashion to stoop, and it seemes a comely thing to be crooked” (*PS* 2.5.133.66–70). The similitude compares physical crookedness as a consequence of physical immobility to spiritual “crookedness” as a consequence of habitual sin. In a similarly parallel relationship, the rapid variations between verbal and visual meaning, and between different senses of the word “crooked,” emphasize the alterations of sin that the sermon expounds. The rapid deployment of micro-devices of estrangement provokes mental activity in Donne’s auditory, while his preaching strives to help his auditory overcome the stifling effects of repetition and habit on their moral and spiritual growth.

### **The Estrangement Effect as Opening Strategy: Occasion, Text Selection, Imagery**

It is a critical commonplace to observe that many of Donne’s poems begin with arresting questions and provocative commands. Scholars such as Shami and Colclough have noted estranging opening tactics in Donne’s sermons. Bringing their insights together alongside new examples reveals the estrangement effect to be an important opening strategy in Donne’s

sermons. The discussion below highlights a few important techniques that Donne relies on to achieve the effect. For instance, Donne often exploits his choice of biblical text as well as the imagery he first presents to his audience in order to either distance them or arouse their curiosity, positioning them in such a way to facilitate a particular approach to the sermon's text and themes. As a sermon's occasion shapes the context of delivery as well as the audience's expectations, the biblical text and opening imagery appear either familiar or strange in relation to the occasion.

Shami observes that "Donne continually uses his chosen text . . . to provoke, surprise, and engage his audiences," and she points to Donne's Sermon Preached at St. Paul's Cross on September 15, 1622 as an example of Donne selecting "an ambiguous text, one in which the application was not transparent or preordained."<sup>615</sup> Donne's Paul's Cross Sermon of September 1622 was one of his most important public sermons,<sup>616</sup> and some background on the occasion and its political and religious contexts will help to explain why Donne's selection was so strange. Paul's Cross was a large outdoor venue for the delivery of civic sermons in London, in the courtyard of the cathedral.<sup>617</sup> Donne's sermon was composed at the behest of James I to defend his *Directions for Preachers*, a royal directive issued on 4 August 1622 aimed at keeping politics and other controversial topics, including predestination, out of the pulpit.<sup>618</sup> Delivered over a month after the *Directions* were issued, Donne's sermon was anticipated as the official interpretation of the document, and members of the clergy and public awaited the sermon to understand the practical implications of James's *Directions*.<sup>619</sup> For the anxious occasion, Donne selected Judges 5:20 as the basis of the sermon: "They fought from heaven; the stars in their courses fought against Sisera." The passage is from Deborah's song about the Israelite tribes of Zebulun and Naphtali and their defeat of the Canaanite forces under the command of Sisera, whom Jael kills by hammering a tent peg into his temple.<sup>620</sup> Donne chooses an obscure biblical text with no clear relation to the occasion. The verse involves a highly figurative description of "the stars" resisting the Canaanite commander, the use of metaphor obscuring interpretation. Are we meant to read Sisera as James? Who are the stars that resist Sisera? Furthermore, the verse

bears no obvious connection to matters of preaching, which members of his audience would have anticipated as the subject of the sermon. It is almost certain that few in the large and diverse Paul's Cross audience, no matter how educated, would have found the passage readily applicable to the anticipated occasion. Shami notes that at least one contemporary witness, John Chamberlain, considered the choice a strange one: "On the 15<sup>th</sup> of this present the Dean of Paules preached at the Crosse to certifie the Kings goode intention in the late orders concerning preachers and preaching, . . . his text was the 20<sup>th</sup> verse of the 5<sup>th</sup> chapter of the booke of Judges, somewhat a straunge text for such a busines."<sup>621</sup> Shami wonders whether Chamberlain was "perhaps voicing a popular impression regarding the fitness of the text to the much-anticipated occasion of defending pulpit censorship."<sup>622</sup> Chamberlain's comment is evidence that what Shami describes as Donne's "contrarian notion of how a text could be suited to its occasion" was recognized by his contemporaries.<sup>623</sup> Different parties within and outside of the Church of England would have had different expectations for the sermon, and Donne's obscure choice of text helped to forestall assumptions and disrupt entrenched viewpoints, encouraging his auditory to actively listen to his interpretation of the *Directions*.

Although Colclough notes that Donne's opening tactics are diverse, he describes one approach that I consider a device of estrangement: how Donne's opening lines in a sermon might appear obscure in relation to the biblical text Donne has just read. As an example, Colclough notes the image Donne creates at the beginning of his Lent-Sermon Preached to the King, at White-Hall, February 12, 1629/30.<sup>624</sup> The sermon's text is Matthew 6:21: "For, where your Treasure is, there will your Heart be also." Donne follows the text by observing, "I have seen Minute-glasses; Glasses so short-liv'd" (*OESJD* 3.12.197.6). Hourglasses were common fixtures in the pulpit, preachers using them to measure the duration of their sermon. Donne's remarks to his auditory alter the length of time the glass measures, estranging the common object. "Minute-glasses" have no discernible connection to the text, and would have likely provoked his auditors'



curiosity as they tried to discern how the Gospel passage about the heart's treasure relates to a strange kind of hourglass.<sup>625</sup>

In his Sermon Preached at St. Paul's on Psalm 90:14, Donne uses devices of estrangement in the *exordium* to generate initial doubts about the biblical text in his auditory, creating the conditions of estrangement that the rest of the sermon seeks to reconcile. Donne immediately pivots from the psalm's hopeful petition to God—"O satisfie us early with thy mercy, that we may rejoyce and be glad all our dayes"—to a reminder of religious opposition and contradiction in the contemporary present: "They have made a Rule in the Council of Trent, that no Scripture shall be expounded, but according to the unanime consent of the Fathers: But in this Book of the Psalms, it would trouble them to give many examples of that Rule, that is, of an unanime conset of the Fathers, in the interpretation thereof" (*PS* 5.14.268.1–5). For an illustration, Donne turns to the Italian Jesuit cardinal, Robert Bellarmine, who, according to Donne, "finds himselfe perplexed" at the "diverse constancy" of two authoritative commentators on the passage: "S. *Hierome* doth confidently and constantly affirme, and S. *Augustine* with as much confidence, and constancy deny, that this Psalme, and all that follow to the hundreth Psalme, are *Moses* Psalms, and written by him" (*PS* 5.14.268.6–7, 11–12, 8–11). In an example of synoeciosis, Donne uses the oxymoronic phrase "diverse constancy" to suggest the perplexity he imagines Bellarmine to experience, encouraging similar perplexity in his auditory. Donne's transition from a major voice of the Counter-Reformation back in time to the disagreements of Church Fathers underscores the "constancy" of "diverse" views on the Bible. Soon after, Donne foregrounds the ambiguous authorship of Psalm 90 in order to destabilize the title of the psalm and thus its genre status as a prayer: "That the whole Psalme being in the Title thereof called a Prayer, A Prayer of Moses the man of God . . . That though the whole Psalme be not a Prayer, yet because there is a Prayer in the Psalme, that denominates the whole Psalme, the whole Psalme is a Prayer" (*PS* 5.14.269.40–42, 44–46). This enlivens Donne's discussion of the nature of prayer, making it an active argument in the immediate context of Psalm 90, rather than a collection of

generalities on the topic. Just as not all interpreters have to strictly agree about the text for it to hold meaning, prayer absorbs many contradictory aspects, the primary reason being “That Prayer is so essentially a part of God’s worship, as that all is called Prayer” (*PS* 5.14.269.54–55).

According to Donne’s interpretive and imaginative mindsets, consistency and uniformity are not necessary for wholeness.

Two additional examples from Donne’s sermons delivered on Christmas Day will illuminate his use of the estrangement effect as part of his opening strategies in sermons. In her discussion of Donne’s “contrarian” text selection, Shami notes Donne’s “deliberately avoiding in his Christmas sermons, for example, reference to the babe of Bethlehem and opting, instead, for texts that allowed him to convey his more equivocal attitudes to this festival than his contemporaries—and certainly his modern readers—might expect, and that take these hearers on a circuitous journey of reading that needs to be plotted out in relation to the map of the entire Bible.”<sup>626</sup> Christmas would have prompted particular expectations in regards to the sermon’s subject matter and tone. In the first Christmas sermon I address, Donne begins with a strange description of a familiar Christian event. The second sermon involves deliberate obfuscation of the biblical text.

Donne uses the estrangement effect as an opening strategy in his *Sermon Preached at St. Paul’s upon Christmas Day, 1626*. Donne draws his biblical text from the Nativity story in Luke 2:29–30, where the old man Simeon rejoices at the sight of the Christ child: “Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: for mine eyes have seen thy salvation.” The passage comes from what is known as the Song of Simeon and the *Nunc Dimittis* in Christian liturgy, being a canticle in both the Catholic mass and the *Book of Common Prayer’s* Evening Prayer service. Thus, the biblical text would have been highly familiar to Donne’s auditory. Obviously, the events of the Nativity would also have been well known, and so, in order to disrupt his audience’s habitualized view of the occasion and text, Donne begins his sermon by presenting the Christ story in an unusual way:

The whole life of Christ was a continuall Passion; others die Martyrs, but Christ was born a Martyr. He found a *Golgotha*, (where he was crucified) even in Bethlem, where he was born; For, to his tendernesse then, the strawes were almost as sharp as the thornes after; and the Manger as uneasie at first, as his Crosse at last. His birth and his death were but one continuall act, and his Christmas-day and his Good Friday, are but evening and morning of one and the same day. And even as his birth, is his death, so every action and passage that manifests Christ to us, is his birth; for, *Epiphany* is *manifestation*.

(PS 7.11.279.1–10)

Although the biblical text is not about the babe, Donne does depict the babe of Bethlehem in the *exordium* in an estranged fashion, emphasizing the unique suffering of Jesus’s life. The highly complex *exordium* combines multiple rhetorical figures—synoeciosis, antithesis, metaphor, similtude, hyperbole, and syllepsis—to make the initial event, Christ’s birth, into a strange mirror of his suffering and death. For instance, Donne uses antithesis to contrast Christ with normal “Martyrs,” yet what distinguishes Christ’s martyrdom is explained using synoeciosis, that is, by joining Christ’s birth and the death of martyrdom: “Christ was born a Martyr.” Likewise, thin “strawes” resemble sharp “thornes.” Building on the connection between Christ’s Nativity and Passion, Donne makes Christ’s suffering the defining feature of Christ’s entire life, the characteristic that unifies the different elements. Although Donne’s choice of biblical text is highly appropriate for Christmas, his opening description of Christ’s Nativity would have struck a discordant note in a Christmas sermon, describing a scene of suffering more suitable for Good Friday than the typically celebratory feast of Christmas Day. Donne uses synoeciosis and metaphor to harmonize the discordance: “His birth and his death were but one continuall act, and his Christmas-day and his Good Friday, are but evening and morning of one and the same day.” The last word of the biblical text, “salvation,” indicates the unified meaning behind Donne’s estranged vision of the Nativity; the suffering of Christ is the essence of his story. The circular reading of Christ’s life recalls Donne’s earlier poem, *Annun* and its “abridgement of Christ’s

story” (20), but while that poem initially emphasizes the discordance between the events of the Annunciation and Passion before uncovering their hidden unity, the sermon’s *exordium* emphasizes the mirrored connection between the Nativity and Passion. Building on the connection he establishes between the two events, Donne argues that not just one event is similar to Christmas, but multiple events are Christmas. Epiphany, the feast day, which comes two weeks after Christmas, celebrates Christ’s manifestation to the Gentiles. Donne uses the word “Epiphany” in the above passage in its broad sense: “for, *Epiphany* is *manifestation*.” Donne uses the word as an example of syllepsis, the figure containing multiple meanings. For example, part 2 of the sermon considers the Eucharist as a visible sign of Epiphany, that is, Christ’s manifestation, in each believer. The early reminder of the essence of the Christ story marks the beginning of the sermon’s preparation of the congregation for the celebration of the Eucharist, a standard feature of Christmas services at the time. Donne’s estranging similitude connecting Christ’s birth in a manger to Christ’s eventual torture and death is developed into a web of threads connecting Christian doctrine, feasts, services, and rituals back to one event: Christmas.

In his Sermon Preached at St. Paul’s, upon Christmas Day, 1628, Donne once again estranges his auditory with an unusual and bewildering approach to the biblical text. Thematically, Donne’s Christmas 1628 sermon is about hardness of heart, which is a metaphor for an inward turn away from God, or a refusal to recognize or accept his grace, and Donne’s estrangement of the biblical text functions to break down the auditory’s hardness of heart. After reading from the text, “Lord, who hath beleevved our report? *Domine, Quis Credidit Auditui Nostro?*,” Donne says to his auditory: “I have named to you no booke, no chapter, no verse, where these words are written: But I forbore not out of forgetfulnesse, nor out of singularity, but out of perplexity rather, because these words are written, in more than one, in more then two places of the Bible” (*PS* 8.13.292.1–4). Donne goes on to defy convention and withholds its identification, “out of perplexity.” Taking his cue from the open question expressed in the biblical verse, Donne uses aporia to signal his own perplexity, and then creates the state in members of his

congregation. He soon reveals his reasoning: these “words” are repeated throughout the Bible. By the end of his *exordium* he has identified three passages, with three different meanings, that contain a phrase that is the focus of his sermon. The first is Isaiah 53:1, in which “the Prophet is in holy throws, and pangs, and agonies, till he be delivered of that prophecy, the coming of the Messiah” (*PS* 8.13.293.58–59). The second is John 12:38, in which “the Evangelist exhibits Christ in person, actually, really, visibly” (*PS* 8.13.294.63–64). And the third is Romans 10:16: “an application of that whole Christ to every soule” (*PS* 8.13.294.69–70). Donne’s initial withholding of information is a device of estrangement, rendering a familiar biblical turn of phrase unusual and worthy of inspection. Indeed, the three different uses of the text reveal its layers of meaning accrued over the course of biblical history, indicating Donne’s general view of the Bible as a text containing multiple significances: prophetic, historical/literal, and spiritual. Colclough argues that Donne’s exegesis tends to open up a multitude of meanings of the biblical text, following Augustine’s approach to the multiplicity and ambiguous nature of the Bible, Donne’s frequent purpose being “to draw attention to the widest possible range of appropriate senses to be found in any given passage of Scripture.”<sup>627</sup> McCullough likewise argues that Donne’s final strategy in his sermons is “to open-out, to expand the range of meaning towards universals, but with the added immediacy of the first person, toward consolation and joy.”<sup>628</sup> Donne’s hermeneutic approach is most explicit in his sermon series (such as that on Psalm 38), which, as Simpson points out, considers one text from different exegetical viewpoints. This hermeneutic, also vividly embodied in Donne’s Christmas 1628 sermon, suggests affinities between the biblical text and various figures of wordplay, such as syllepsis and antanaclasis. Like the figure antanaclasis, which repeats a word, but in a different sense, the sermon’s repetition and rediscovery of the text in different parts of the Bible estranges it, opening the concealed layers of meaning to new points of view and enabling auditors to break free of their assumptions about the text and see all that the text encapsulates. Donne explains in his peroration: “This then is the summe of this whole Catechisme, which these words, in these three places doe constitute” (*PS*

8.13.310.684–85). This sermon, and in other sermons such as those on the Book of Job, Donne uses devices of estrangement as means to fracture the auditory's hardened complacency and habits of thought, softening them up to make them more receptive to God's word.

## 2. Donne's Five Sermons on the Book of Job

### The Strangeness of the Book of Job

The Book of Job holds a position of significance in Donne's imaginative world. As noted in chapter 3, *HSVex* alludes to Job in its portrayal of the speaker's fear of God. Ramie Targoff claims that Job 19.26 "may have been the single verse of scripture Donne embraced most passionately in his writings."<sup>629</sup> Simpson supplies a more measured account of Job's significance for Donne: referring to the five sermon texts from Job and numerous references to the book in Donne's 160 extant sermons, Simpson notes that, after the Gospels and St. Paul's Epistles, Job is one of Donne's favourite books—together with Psalms, Genesis, Isaiah, and Revelation—and observes that the last five are books "notable for their poetical or symbolic character."<sup>630</sup> Donne begins his Sermon Preached at Lincoln's Inn on Psalm 38:2, however, by observing that his "spirituall appetite carries" him regularly to the Psalms and Paul's Epistles, since they are written in forms he has "been most accustomed to; Saint *Pauls* being Letters, and *Davids* being Poems" (*PS* 2.1.49.6, 22). Although Donne does not emphasize Job in this particular sermon, his observation of the connection between biblical generic forms and his own writings points to how estranging aspects of the Book of Job's style influence Donne's own estranging sermons upon the text.

The Book of Job is a strange text, from both poetic and exegetical points of view. In her recent study of Job in early modern English literature, Kimberly Hedlin calls the Hebrew poetry of Job "difficult," pointing out "The gaps, puns, turns of phrase, and figurative language in the Hebrew text [that] leave its meaning fluid." She explains: "Since Jerome's first influential

commentary in the fourth century, commentators on Job have acknowledged its unique slipperiness of meaning.”<sup>631</sup> In the *exordium* of his Sermon Preached to the Countess of Bedford, Donne tells his auditory: “as no History is more various, then *Iobs fortune*, so is no phrase, no style, more ambiguous, then that in which *Iobs history* is written; very many words so expressed, very many phrases so conceived, as that they admit a diverse, a *contrary* sense” (PS 3.8.189.64–67). Donne seems to be using the word “various” in two senses, of “Turning different ways” as well as “exhibiting or possessing (several) different characters or qualities.”<sup>632</sup> The first sense suggests how, in the prose-narrative that frames the poetry, Job’s fortune turns from lavish wealth and prosperity, to terrible loss, destitution, and despair, and ultimately to the final happy ending, when God provides new health, wealth, and family for Job. Donne also describes the Book of Job as possessing qualities associated with strangeness, such as difference, difficulty, and ambiguity. In his Job sermon to Bedford, Donne turns to the words of Job’s wife for an example of ambiguity: “for such an ambiguity in a *single word*, there is an example in the beginning, in *Iobs wife*; we know not (from the word it selfe) whether it be *Benedicas*, or *maledicas*, whether she sayd *Blesse God, and die* or *Curse God*” (PS 3.8.189.67–71). Donne is referring to Job chapter 2, which is part of the prose frame-narrative. After Satan, with God’s permission, afflicts Job’s body with “sore boils” (v.7), Job’s wife says to her husband: “Dost thou still retain thine integrity? Curse God, and die” (v.9).<sup>633</sup> Donne uses the difficult-to-translate words of Job’s wife to create an aporia for his auditory, to signal “ambiguitie of things,”<sup>634</sup> as a means to lead into his sermon’s text—Job 13:15, “Loe, though he slay me, yet will I trust in him”—a verse that Donne describes as “an ambiguity, in an *intire sentence*” (PS 3.8.189.71). As I argue below, the contradictory senses of Job 13:15 shape both the style and interpretive approach of Donne’s sermon to Bedford. A few months later, in the *exordium* of his Sermon Preached at Whitehall, April 8, 1621, Donne once again uses the words of Job’s wife as a condensed example of ambiguity: “as in *Iobs Wife*, in the same mouth, the same word was ambiguous, (whether it were *blesse God*, or *curse God*, out of the word we cannot tell)” (PS 3.10.225–26.21–23). In his Whitehall sermon, Donne uses

the example of Job's wife to assert general human inconstancy as well as the increased ambiguity of actions in the contemporary world: "There hath alwaies beene ambiguity and equivocation in words, but now in actions, and almost every action will admit a diverse sense" (*PS* 3.10.226.28–29). For Donne, ambiguity denotes diverse and possibly contrary significances. This sort of blurring of conceptual categories produces the estrangement effect, and so the "various," "ambiguous" Book of Job provides a fitting stylistic foundation for some of Donne's most estranging sermons.

The Book of Job is also preoccupied with themes of estrangement. It is notably one of the four biblical books that contain the word "strange" in the Authorized Version of 1611.<sup>635</sup> In Job 19:13, Job complains, "He [God] hath put my brethren far from me, and mine acquaintance are verily estranged from me," and throughout the book, characters, including Job, read his trials as experiences of alienation from God and society. Job's estrangement is vividly embodied in the "sore boils from the sole of his foot unto his crown" (2:7). Hedlin describes how early modern theologians, such as Luther and Calvin, directed new attention to the literal text, particularly Job's angry complaints to his friends and God, as opposed to the medieval emphasis on Job as an exemplum of patience and a type foreshadowing Christ's suffering.<sup>636</sup> Renaissance historical criticism also recognized the book's strangeness. The authorship of Job was the subject of much debate, although the book was sometimes assigned to Moses. However, Job's narrative was not seen as fitting clearly into the biblical chronologies focusing on Israel.<sup>637</sup> In Donne's essay "Of Moses" from *Essayes in Divinity*, Donne briefly comments on the Book of Job in relation to the Pentateuch, which at the time was assumed to be written by Moses: "*Moses* had the primacy. So that the Divine and learned book of *Job*, must be content to be disposed to a later rank, (as indeed it hath somewhat a Greek taste) or to accept *Moses* for Author."<sup>638</sup> Donne draws on the background of stylistic and interpretive ambiguity for his sermons on Job.

Donne's five Job sermons share many significant features. Three of the five likely date to April and the Easter season, with its traditional associations of resurrection and renewal (the other



two are from January and August).<sup>639</sup> Donne saw in the book an emphasis on resurrection, particularly in its metaphorical senses as repentance or spiritual regeneration. Three of the five texts are spoken by Job, but unlike many Reformation commentators, Donne noticeably avoids the passages in which Job complains to God, instead focusing on those that hold particular significance for Christian interpretations of the Hebrew book. Donne also draws on passages in which Job complains about his friends, while affirming his faith in God, emphasizing Job's feelings of social alienation. The other two texts are spoken by, respectively, Job's friend, Eliphaz the Temanite, one of the three individuals who offer scant comfort and much criticism, and Elihu, a strange figure who attacks Job and his friends with an elaborate defence of God. Donne makes much of the "alien" status of these two speakers, whom he yokes to serve his characterization of God's grace as an alien force working upon human nature. Donne's five Job sermons demonstrate how the language, context, and themes of his biblical text as well as the sermon's occasion shape his deployment of devices of estrangement and their effects on his auditors.

### **The Body Estranged: Donne's Lincoln's Inn Sermon on Job 19:26 [1620]**

Taking his cue from the biblical text, Donne often relies in his Job sermons on imagery related to bodies, books, medicine, and clothing, all metaphors easily adapted to discussions of spiritual perspective and estrangement. Strange images of the body mark Donne's Lincoln's Inn Sermon on Job 19:26. In one especially repulsive example, Donne exclaims: "Between that excrementall jelly that thy body is made of at first, and that jelly which thy body dissolves to at last; there is not so noysome, so putrid a thing in nature" (*PS* 3.3.105.521–24). Such passages, often appearing in anthologized selections of Donne's prose, have been treated as symptoms of his obsession with death, the body, and its dissolution.<sup>640</sup> I argue that these strange passages should be read as devices of estrangement contributing to the rhetorical, thematic, and devotional aims of the sermon.

Showing an entwining of form and theme typical of Donne's writings, the whole body of Donne's Sermon on Job 19:26 works to revitalize the doctrine of the resurrection of the body in the minds of the congregation. In the grotesque image noted above, Donne uses hyperbole and the repetition of "jelly" to characterize the human body, from "first" to "last," as something uniquely repulsive "in nature." With its vivid depiction of human beginnings and endings forming a circle of jelly, the passage renders the body as something alien and only semi-animate. Coming from part 2 of the sermon, which treats "the particular handling of the words" of Job 19:26 (*PS* 3.3.91.24), the image contributes to Donne's rhetorical efforts to render the temporal earthly body strange (and susceptible to sin, corruption, and dissolution) in order to familiarize for his auditors, and with them claim full possession over, the anticipated glorified resurrected body. The devices of estrangement Donne employs in the sermon expose the mutable line between the familiar and the strange, as well as the fragmented nature of earthly existence. As the sermon illustrates how estrangement involves not only a few arresting passages but also the whole movement of the work, Donne argues that we are more than just our strange bits, for although the earthly body is estranged and fragmented, believers will be whole and one with Christ in the glory of their resurrected bodies.

Preached from the pulpit of Lincoln's Inn chapel, probably during Lent or Easter 1620, Donne's Sermon on Job 19.26 exploits Donne's choice of biblical text in order to set up an *aporia* in the *exordium*, casting doubt on how to interpret the biblical text. Job 19:26 reads: "And though, after my skin, *wormes* destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God" (*PS* 3.3.91).<sup>641</sup> Donne's congregation at Lincoln's Inn was highly educated, consisting of benchers, barristers, and law students. His congregation would have expected an intellectually rigorous sermon from Donne, their Reader in Divinity, who also had attended Lincoln's Inn as a young law student, and their curiosity might have been aroused by Donne's choice of an indirect textual conduit to the topic of the resurrection of the dead. Some might have recalled that (as Donne himself points out later in the sermon) almost all biblical interpreters read Job 19:26 as being about the resurrection of the

body (*PS* 3.3.101.393).<sup>642</sup> An Easter season setting would only have contributed to contemporary expectations that the sermon was about resurrection. However, in the *exordium* Donne calls into question the common interpretation. Discussing the Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion, Donne explains that when commentators “come to cite those places of Scripture, which prove the Article of the Resurrection, I observe that amongst those places they forbear this text” (*PS* 3.3.91.18–20). Donne draws on authoritative doctrinal documents to challenge the common interpretation. Donne’s arrival at this aporia in the brief *exordium* displays a number of complex interactions between the familiar and the strange, which Donne manipulates in order to disorient and distance his auditory. The sermon opens with a comparison of the three canonical creeds, the Nicene, the Athanasian, and the Apostles’, Donne noting their lack of uniform articles.<sup>643</sup> Donne’s move to trouble the familiar and established in his discussion of the creeds anticipates his move to dispute the commentary on Job 19:26. The aporia and its resolution determine the whole first *divisio* of the sermon, which addresses why the doctrine of resurrection can be read in Job 19:26. The second part interprets the text. The aporia estranges the doctrine of resurrection from the biblical text, allowing Donne to approach the resurrection of the body not as a familiar doctrine but rather as a notion that must be proven.

Although Donne frequently compares available translations in his sermons’ exegesis, Donne usually draws on the Authorized Version of 1611 for his scriptural texts.<sup>644</sup> His reliance on this translation of Job 19:26—“And though, after my skin, *wormes* destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God” (*PS* 3.3.91)—holds particular significance. As Donne explains, “In the Originall there is no mention of *wormes*,” but “It makes the destruction the more contemptible” (*PS* 3.3.106.567, 576–77).<sup>645</sup> Knight investigates Donne’s sermon on Job 19:26 as an example of Donne’s strategy of using deliberate misquotation as a means to paradoxically clarify and “manifest” or “incarnate” difficult biblical passages for his auditory.<sup>646</sup> As discussed above, Job was a famously difficult text, and Knight discusses the important differences between various translations. Most English versions add “worms,” while the Hebrew, according to Knight, “reads

‘they have peeled/struck off,’ in reference to no apparent agents.’<sup>647</sup> Rather than allow his auditory to lose part of the text’s significance, Donne emphasizes the AV translation that displays *enargia*, altering the literal Hebrew text in order to create a more vivid, impactful image of bodily dissolution. In his sermon on Job 16:17–19, Donne similarly uses worms as a dehumanizing metaphor for humanity in order to reinforce his point about God’s extreme condescension in aiding us: “and yet he beholds, considers, studies us, wormes of the earth, and no men” (*OESJD* 3.13.221.484–85). Knight reads Donne’s purposeful use of misquotation in his sermons as “highlighting the innately broken status of human works and words,” including “the human linguistic forms given to scripture.” Paradoxically, Donne’s emphasis on “the fallen status of the material” points to the need for the word to be repaired, to be incarnated and resurrected: “Donne highlights God’s ability to work through brokenness and counters humanity’s tendency to idolize its own creations (in this case, its scriptural translations).”<sup>648</sup> Knight’s argument about Donne’s use of misquotation to counter bibliolatry complements my own about Donne’s estrangement of the temporal body in the sermon. Donne continually asserts the body’s broken and fragmented status on earth. In Donne’s Job 19:26 sermon, worms become discomfitting reminders of the fragmentation and brokenness of both human and linguistic materiality, human mortality and degeneracy, adding figurative and visceral power to Donne’s theological discussions.

Turning our attention to Job chapter 19 as a whole, the author of Job explicitly links the theme of estrangement with descriptions of brokenness, which might have prompted Donne’s selection of the text. In verse 1 and 2, Job declares to his inconsiderate friends: “How long will ye vex my soul, and break me in pieces with words? These ten times have ye reproached me: ye are not ashamed *that* ye make yourselves strange to me.” Chapter 19 contains one of the five uses of “*estrangle*” in the Authorized Version.<sup>649</sup> Job laments that God

hath put my brethren far from me, and mine acquaintance are verily estranged  
from me.

My kinsfolk have failed, and my familiar friends have forgotten me.

They that dwell in mine house, and my maids, count me for a stranger: I am an alien in their sight.

.....

My breath is strange to my wife, though I intreated for the children's *sake* of mine own body.

(Job 19:13–15, 17)

The theme of estrangement in the biblical text fuels Donne's bursts of figurative estrangement in the sermon. Donne draws on the bodily estrangement of Job, especially the image of Job breaking into pieces, in order to convey the fragmented nature of bodily existence and relations to others. As the following analysis will demonstrate, the language of the biblical text also shapes the structure of the sermon and influences some of Donne's thematic digressions.

After estranging the doctrine of resurrection from the biblical text in the *exordium*, Donne proceeds step by step to a reconciliation of doctrine to text by the end of part 1. But the route back is "circuitous," to borrow Shami's phrase.<sup>650</sup> Donne firstly considers Jewish understandings of resurrection, and, secondly, arguments derived from nature, and, thirdly, evidence in scripture. As Donne argues for the presence of the doctrine of resurrection in Job 19.26, he includes an observation of renewal in the natural world:

If thou hadst seen the bodies of men rise out of the grave, at Christs Resurrection, could that be a stranger thing to thee, then, (if thou hadst never seen, nor hard, nor imagined it before) to see an Oake that spreads so farre, rise out of an Akorne? Or if Churchyards did vent themselves every spring, and that there were such a Resurrection of bodies every yeare, when thou hadst seen as many Resurrections as years, the Resurrection would be no stranger to thee, then the spring is.

(PS 3.3.97.239–42)

Donne's efforts to argue for the actuality of the resurrection of the dead—and to make that traditional doctrine a felt experience—expose, and exploit, the conditional relationship between

the familiar and the strange.<sup>651</sup> When read in the context of the whole sermon, we see that dilations such as the passage above contribute to Donne's familiarization of the resurrected body, which in contrast renders the temporal, earthly body strange.

Part 2 of the sermon emphasizes self-estrangement first generally and then personally. Donne describes how all people experience death and corruption, before elaborating on specific descriptions of human skin and bodies. This movement, from general to personal (which is duplicated in each sub-point of the second part), emphasizes the final confirmation that our most personal selves are our resurrected bodies. In order to arrive at this conclusion, Donne's method is to consistently make the present earthly body appear strange, and corporeal selfhood here on earth seem divided and unstable.

Taking his cue in the sermon from the bodily fragmentation of Job in chapter 19, Donne divorces the body from the skin in the sermon. The specific separation of "skin" from "body" is found in the scriptural text: "and though, after my *skin*, wormes destroy this *body*, yet in my flesh I see God" (emphasis mine). Donne weaves the biblical texts, in parts or as a whole, throughout his sermons.<sup>652</sup> He explains in his *divisio*: "Corruption upon skin, says the text, (our outward beauty;) corruption upon our body, (our whole strength and constitution)" (*PS* 3.3.92.40–42). Both the text and Donne's interpretation express the estrangement of the material self, and he builds on the sense of division present in the Book of Job. Here on earth, the physical self is skin as well as body—already multiple, already divided. Donne continues the process of estrangement, amplifying it throughout the sermon. For Donne, the skin signifies outward beauty and appearances, the superficial level of the body that can deceive us. He also discusses cosmetics and clothing, external items that people often identify with. Thus, self-estrangement is related to the imperfections of human perspective, for, as Donne explains using the image of a book, "in this velim, in this parchmin, in this skin of ours, we neglect book, and image, and character, and seal, and all for the covering" (*PS* 3.3.103-104.469–71).

Donne frequently uses imagery associated with books and reading to address the issue of human perspective, since, for Donne, reading is a deeply intellectual and affective process. This is perhaps an outgrowth of Donne's adoption of the three Books of Life as a way of conceiving the universe. The three books are the Register of the Elect, a book which is entirely hidden from humanity's view; the Book of Creatures or Nature, in which humans can partially discern God; and the Word of God or the Bible, which is a divinely inspired text, according to Donne, but also one containing complexities and discordances. Knight argues that Donne's book image relates to his concerns about translation and mistranslation. According to Knight, Donne links "corrupt citation" with the corruption of material reality, "Conflating the skins of human bodies with the skins of Bibles."<sup>653</sup> Corruption indicates that both human words and human beings are in need of the wholeness that comes through resurrection. In Donne's view, influenced by the conception of the three books, fallen human identity is unstable and therefore it is misguided to place too much confidence in one's ability to control one's person, circumstances, and fate. The divided self on earth is symptomatic of humanity's spiritual estrangement from God, which results finally in the separation of body and soul in death.

Donne's understanding of the estranged self corresponds to the physical body as well as mental instabilities and divisions. Donne, for example, builds up a physical description of a decomposed body as "this Eastern, and Western, and Northern, and Southern body" (*PS* 3.3.109.686). Donne touches on contemporary anxieties about how exactly God could gather together various pieces of a decomposed body spread across the globe in order to magnify the divisions of the self after death. Soon after, Donne makes a startling detour to his mental state. In a famous passage, he states: "I am not all here. I am at home in my Library considering whether *S. Gregory*, or *S. Hierome*, have said best of this text, before" (*PS* 3.3.110.693–95). He goes on to implicate his auditors in similar mental instability: "you are here, and yet you think you could have heard some other doctrine of downright *Predestination*, and *Reprobation* roundly delivered somewhere else with more edification to you" (*PS* 3.3.110.699–702). The sermon jars auditors

with a shift from the physical body, decomposed and scattered, to wandering thoughts at church. Simpson describes the above passage as “an interesting aside, to arrest his hearers’ attention.”<sup>654</sup> Although the aside is certainly meant to grab the congregation’s attention, it is also has significance as a rhetorical maneuver meant to underscore the sermon’s message about inward estrangement. The abrupt shift from one topic and conceptual sphere to another indicates just how easily one’s thoughts can wander. Donne’s shift from bodily division to mental instability suggests the total fragmentation of the self, both body and mind.

In the concluding peroration, Donne pulls together the pieces of his argument with a final image of the estranged body:

Here a bullet will aske a man, where’s your arme; and a Wolf wil aske a woman, where’s your breast? A sentence in the Star-chamber will aske him, where’s your ear, and a months close prison will aske him, where’s your flesh? a fever will aske him, where’s your Red, and a morpew will aske him, where’s your white?

(PS 3.3.113.814–18)

Donne utilizes prosopopeia, commonly called personification, which Puttenham dubs the “Counterfeit Impersonation.”<sup>655</sup> The passage personifies things that humankind is subject to in this life: violence, government oppression, punishment, illness. With images such as a bullet interrogating its target, the personifications are absurd, but the estrangement they generate also owes to the conflation of time. Each cause of dismemberment, in the form of a personification, interrogates the victim about the consequences. Together, the five personifications of body parts construct a parody of the blazon from love poetry.<sup>656</sup> While the blazon typically praises features of the beloved’s beauty, Donne the preacher divides the earthly body into parts—an arm, a breast, an ear, flesh, blood. Each question includes a possessive pronoun before each part, for example, “where’s *your* arme” (emphasis mine). If the blazon in love poetry frequently displays male control over a female body reduced to a collection of objects, in the sermon the accumulated loss of body parts suggests that people do not have ultimate control or possession over their bodies, as



they are subject to the vagaries of earthly existence. In the peroration, Donne balances defamiliarization with familiarization, the image of the mutable body preparing the auditory for Donne's final hopeful vision of repossessing his resurrected body:

But when after all this, when *after my skinne worms shall destroy my body, I shall see God*, I shall see him in my flesh, which shall be mine as inseparably, (in the *effect*, though not in the *manner*) as the *Hypostaticall union* of God, and man, in Christ, makes our nature and the Godhead one person in him. (PS 3.3.113.819–23)

Donne shifts direction following the estranging blazon, striving for nearness by placing emphasis on himself and his possession of the future resurrected body: “I shall, . . . I shall . . . in my flesh . . . shall be mine. . .” Although Donne has worked to shake his auditors from their sense of control over their bodily selfhood—to dispossess them—at the end Donne emphasizes a new possession of one's body in heaven. Donne maintains that human possession over the resurrected body is as sure as Christ is both God and man. The overcoming of self-alienation is directly related to the closing of gaps; for Donne, the resurrection of the body will effect a closeness between both the body and the soul, and between the glorified self and God.

Although Donne, in his peroration, claims possession over his anticipated resurrected body, Donne's final words are difficult to comprehend. He states: “My flesh shall no more be none of mine, then Christ shall not be man, as well as God” (PS 3.3.113.823–24). Drawing on the traditional paradoxical doctrine of Christ's full humanity and full divinity, Donne's knotted phrasing, combined with the repetition of negatives, creates an enigma, an obscuring riddle. The auditory is left hanging with the bizarrely worded description of the believer's connection to Christ, which defies easy apprehension. The lines expose the murky reasoning of Donne's argument, which turns on the remarkable idea that the physical bodies of his present auditory are not really their bodies when held in comparison to our anticipated resurrected body. In spite of arguments based on natural reason and observations of nature advanced in part 1 of the sermon, the knotted words suggest that belief in resurrection is ultimately a leap of faith, which accords

with Donne's conception of resurrection in other sermons. For instance, in a Sermon Preached at St. Paul's, in the Evening, upon Easter-day, 1626, Donne asserts: "the Resurrection is not a conclusion out of naturall Reason, but it is an article of supernaturall Faith" (*PS* 7.3.95.37–38). In other sermons, Donne also stakes his message on a central doctrine of Christianity accessible by faith. At the end of *Death's Duell*, for example, Donne urges his auditory to "*hang vpon him that hangs vpon the Crosse*" (*OESJD* 3.14.246.614), asserting that the necessary spiritual foundation for each Christian is Christ's atonement on the Cross. In his Job 19:26 sermon, Donne hangs the future wholeness of the self on the orthodox doctrine of the hypostatic union of Christ.

Donne's Sermon on Job 19:26 was very likely one of a pair of sermons on the topic of resurrection, the other being his Sermon Preached at Lincoln's Inn, on 1 Cor. 15:50: "Not this I say brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdome of God."<sup>657</sup> This passage would seem to contradict the text of Job 19:26: "And though, after my skin, wormes destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God." The former denies the presence of "flesh and blood" in God's future kingdom, while the latter emphasizes the continuity of one's resurrected body in spite of death and dissolution. The sermon series illustrates two of Donne's habits of thought that inform his use of estrangement: first, that contradictions may often conceal hidden unity, and second (as exemplified in his *Essayes in Divinity*) that vexation can produce "luster and clearness."<sup>658</sup> When Donne read the biblical text for the second sermon, on 1 Cor. 15:50, members of the congregation might have experienced the estrangement effect, sensing the contradiction between the texts and wondering how Donne was going to reconcile the two claims. At the beginning of part 2's division of the earthly body in Donne's sermon on Job 19:26, Donne describes Christ's sacrifice on the cross as an action tying the universe together, reconciling opposites: Donne encourages his auditors to "consider the effusion of his precious blood, the contusion of his sacred flesh, the extension of his sinews, and ligaments which tyed heaven, and earth together, in a reconciliation" (*PS* 3.3.103.451–54). Just as in the poem "To Mr. Tilman" the preacher functions as mediator between heaven and earth, Donne in the sermon constructs a sacred blazon, and estranging

metaphor, of Christ's body on the cross, taking Jesus's body apart in order to "tie" together heaven and earth with the "ligaments" and pointing to the sermon's efforts towards the reconciliation of "heaven, and earth." It is Christ who enables the reconciliation of God and humankind in the resurrected self, envisioned in the peroration of Donne's sermon on Job 19:26. Targoff describes Donne as "hard at work in reconciling the two seemingly contradictory positions" in his Lincoln's Inn sermon series.<sup>659</sup> The initial relationship between the two biblical texts, Job 19:26 and 1 Cor. 15:50, could thus be described as one of estrangement. The themes, form, and serial context of Donne's Sermon on Job 19:26 reveals the dialectical structure of both estrangement and reconciliation.

**Trust in Spite of the Contrary: Donne's Sermon Preached to the Countess of Bedford, 1620/1, on Job 13:15**

The style of the Book of Job influenced Donne's style in his sermons on the book. I have drawn attention to a passage from the *exordium* to Donne's Sermon Preached to the Countess of Bedford, at Harrington House, January 7, 1620/1, in which Donne maintains that "no phrase, no style, [is] more ambiguous" than that of Job, so much of the book's language admitting "a diverse, a *contrary* sense" (*PS* 3.8.189.64–65, 67). Donne's account of the book's frequently ambiguous and contrary meanings sets up his choice of text, a paradoxical verse, Job 13:15: "Loe, though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." Addressing the problem of suffering, Donne seeks to persuade his auditors to trust and hope in God in spite of present difficulties. Although this theme is a Christian commonplace, when verse 15 is read alone, its starkly contradictory expression (an example of *synoeciosis*, the figure of joining opposites), calls attention to the strangeness of faith—affirming trust in spite of the contrary. My analysis focuses on how Job 13:15 influences and entwines the style, form, and themes of the sermon. Devices of estrangement magnify the apparent contradictions of faith as a means to revitalize the audience's trust in God's deliverance. Donne's guiding figures are *synoeciosis* and *syllipsis*, but Donne's arrangement of his argument

also relies on the estrangement effect, for the *divisio* explicates verse 15 in reverse order.

Explicating “yet will I trust in him” before “though he slay me,” that is to say, inverting the order of the clauses, Donne suggests that faith requires an inversion and transformation in how individuals read the circumstances of life.

In the sermon, Donne tries to reconcile trust in God with the miseries and darkness of present experience. Simpson detects “a melancholy tinge” in the sermon, and she suggests the context as the defeat of the Elector Palatine, the news of which had reached London in November 1620.<sup>660</sup> As the sermon’s heading indicates, Donne’s former patron, Lucy Russell, Countess of Bedford was in the audience, and aspects of the sermon suggest it might have been preached with her specific concerns in mind. Bedford was a Protestant with strong Reformed convictions, and she would likely have been deeply concerned about the routing of Protestants on the Continent. Furthermore, Anne of Denmark, the Queen consort, had died the year previous, and Bedford had worked in the lady’s service for many years until her death. Recent events in the Thirty Year’s War as well as Bedford’s personal circumstances demonstrate Donne’s pastoral awareness and inform the sermon’s message that trust in God must not be contingent on present experiences, however dark.

The structure of the *exordium* demonstrates a compressed example of estrangement before reconciliation. Donne begins by setting up two ideas that are important for his approach to reorienting his auditors’ spiritual perspectives. Donne contrasts two names for God, the “spacious and extensive . . . *I am*” of the Father, with the “*Alpha and Omega*” of Christ, “when God contracts himselfe into a narrower consideration” for the Church (*PS* 3.8.187.12–13, 13, 7–8). Within his analysis of “*Alpha and Omega, first and last,*” Donne discusses the unity of discordant ends: “Our whole life is but a parenthesis, our receiving of our soule, and delivering it back again, makes up the perfect sentence” (*PS* 3.8.187.18; 188.24–25). Donne reiterates a common theme in his writing, evident in *Annun* and his Sermon on Christmas Day 1626, that transcendent unity often lies behind apparent discord. Donne introduces this point of view because he considers it an

important response to the contradictions of life in a fallen world. After setting up God's different names and the theme of transcendent unity, Donne turns to the Book of Job's famous ambiguity (discussed above), noting first, "such an ambiguity in a *single word*" (in the Hebrew of Job's wife comment in Job 2:9); and second, the sermon's text as being "a pregnant, and evident example" of "such an ambiguity, in an *intire sentence*" (PS 3.8.189.72, 71). In chapter 13, Job replies angrily to his friends in defiance of their false comfort and worthless proverbs, declaring his desire to address God directly: "Surely I would speak to the Almighty, and I desire to reason with God" (verse 3). The passage Donne selects (verse 15) from Job's speech against the critics around him ostensibly expresses a paradoxical trust in spite of suffering, circumstances Job hyperbolizes as death ("though he slay me"). The *exordium* addresses the textual ambiguities. As Donne explains, the sentence "may be directly, and properly thus rendered out of the Hebrew, *Behold he will kill me, I will not hope*; and this seemes to differ much from our reading" (PS 3.8.189.72–75). The Authorized Version, Donne notes, involves the second clause being "supplied, or rectified rather, with an *Interrogation*, which that language wants" (PS 3.8.189.81–82). After describing these interpretive contortions and varied translations, Donne strangely asserts the theme he had introduced beforehand: "the Originall, and our translation will constitute one and the same thing" (PS 3.8.189.84–85).

Derrin's recent study of Donne's engagement of the passions helps to clarify Donne's bizarre line of argument. Derrin argues that Donne constructs in the sermon a "set of interlocking contextual frames . . . in the largest of which hope will become possible," the largest frame being God's eternity.<sup>661</sup> Although Derrin analyzes how Donne uses rhetorical devices to engage the passions and thereby shift his auditory's mental frames, estrangement theory offers another lens by which to analyze the disruptive effects of those devices. Furthermore, as my analysis of Donne's Job sermon to Bedford demonstrates, Donne's sometimes strange interpretations of suffering and ambiguity in this world (such as his approach to the strange text of Job 13:15) are not only accounted for by pointing to an eternal framework, but they are also better understood

through a favourite motif in Donne's writings: dialectical processes of purification, purgation, and renovation. Estrangement theory helps to bridge two of Donne's prominent habits of thought.

The connection between different ways of seeing God and spiritual purgation is expressed in the *divisio*, where Donne separates his sermon into two parts:

first, the purpose, the resolution of a godly man, which is, to rely upon God; and then the consideration, the inducement, the debatement of this beforehand. That no Danger can present it selfe, which he had not thought of before, He hath carried his thoughts to the last period, he hath stirred the *potion* to the last scruple of *Rheubarb*, and *Wormewod*, which is in it, he hath digested the worst, he hath considered *Death* it selfe, and therefore his resolution stands unshak'd, *Though he dy for it, yet he will trust in God.*

(PS 3.8.189–190.94–102)

Donne's *divisio* estranges the biblical text by interpreting its clauses in reverse order. Donne begins his sermon with discussion of "the purpose, the resolution" of Job ("I will trust in him"), and then examines "the consideration, the inducement, the debatement" of Job ("though he slay me"). Inverting the clauses of the biblical text flips the audience's mental framework, establishing a foundation of trust in God before probing the circumstances in which one must consider holding such trust. While this inversion can be explained in terms of the larger frame, God's eternity—containing all circumstances, and so one should trust in him—the division also includes an estranging metaphor for fully confronting "the worst" of life and contemplating one's mortality: drinking down the last drops of a "potion . . . of Rheubarb, and Wormewod," however bitter. The taking of medicine and digestion are both linear processes, and so is, Donne suggests, how we perceive the events of life. Donne's sermon will argue and illustrate to his auditory that out of the bitterness of medicine or the suffering of sickness can come renewed health. Suffering can be understood as a process of vexation leading to clearness and revitalization, particularly if the horizon for interpretation is extended beyond the cycle of a human life and into eternity.

The sermon's message is most vividly addressed when Donne discusses the text's use of a particular name for God, namely *Shaddai*. The paradoxical description occurs in part 1, where Donne addresses who the godly man should trust: "So that, (recollecting all these heavy significations of the word) *Dishonor* and *Disreputation*, *force* and *Depredation*, *Ruine* and *Devestation*, *Error* and *Illusion*, the *Devill* and his *Tentations*, are presented to us, in the same word, as the name and power of God" (*PS* 3.8.191.151–55). Although the Hebrew *Shaddai* would not have been familiar to all, the learned members of Donne's audience likely would have encountered it before, as the names of God would have been the most familiar Hebrew words. Derrin analyzes Donne's description of the contrary nature of *Shaddai* as an example of synoeciosis, but he does not consider how the single word also functions as a figure in its own right.<sup>662</sup> I am referring to syllepsis, the word containing multiple significances. The sermon's message is that God's created order functions analogously to both synoeciosis and syllepsis. Negative events might mean something beyond the immediate misfortune they present.

God's ability to bring renewal out of destruction is a theme Donne would return to in his Job sermon of 1630, discussed below. For now, I want to highlight how the dialectical methods Donne ascribes to God parallel his own rhetorical approaches to his readers and auditors. Two images, the first of a sculpture, and the second from tennis, emblemize God's methods in Donne's Job sermon to Bedford. The first occurs in part 1, in Donne's explanation about how the name of God can denote spiritual afflictions. Donne says, "So then the children of God, are the *Marble*, and the *Ivory*, upon which he workes; In them his purpose is, to re-engrave, and restore his Image; and affliction, and the *malignity of man*, and the *deceits of Heretiques*, and the *tentations of the Devill* him selfe, are but his instruments, his tools, to make his Image more discernible, and more durable in us" (*PS* 3.8.193.216–221). God, operating like a sculptor, uses suffering and temptations as tools. The dynamic is a dialectical process, of antithesis, or oppositional forces, working against each other before the synthesis, or renovation. The sculptor image evokes Donne's interest in purgation before purification, in vexation creating lustre. The

sufferings of life operate akin to the rhetorical maneuvers of unsettlement and distortion, of estrangement, which are necessary tools to revitalize the message. The second image, from the same section, reveals Donne's views on God's intentions, and perhaps reveals aspects of his own: "as he that flings a *ball* to the ground, or to a wall, intends in that action, that that ball should returne back, so even now, when God does throw me down, it is the way that he hath chosen to returne me to himselfe" (*PS* 3.8.193.239–42). The imagery of a ball bouncing back recalls my accounts of how estrangement functions across the relations between author and reader, and between preacher and auditor. Donne's belief in this intention and method in God helps to elucidate his imitative impulse to estrange his readers and auditors before reconciling or restoring them to a new or recovered viewpoint.

Synoeciosis and syllepsis, Donne's guiding devices of estrangement in his Job sermon to Bedford, express and enact the sermon's themes perhaps most vividly in the brief peroration:

whether God kill by *sickness*, by *age*, by the hand of the *law*, by the malice of *man*, . . .  
 as long as we can see that it is he, he that is *Shaddai*, *Vastator*, & *Restaurator*, the  
*destroyer*, and the *repairer*, howsoever *he kill*, yet *he gives us life too*, howsoever he  
*wound*, yet he *heales too*, howsoever he lock us into our graves now, yet he hath the keys  
 of hell, and death, and shall in his time, extend that voyce to us all, *Lazare veni foras*,  
 come forth of your putrefaction, to incorruptible glory.

(*PS* 3.8.205.654–61)

God is both "destroyer" and "repairer." Donne combines syllepsis and synoeciosis to enumerate and harmonize the different, opposed meanings of *Shaddai*. Donne's affirmation that God does things "in his time" also suggests the difference, and strangeness, of God's view of time. The sermon argues that expanding one's spiritual vision through concentric frames or linearly beyond the bounds of "our graves" is necessary in order to better align with the divine perspective and, accordingly, revive trust in God's deliverances.



### **“Spectacles” for Seeing God’s Work: Donne’s Sermon Preached at Hanworth, 1622, on Job 36:25**

With its emphasis on sight, Donne’s Sermon Preached at Hanworth on August 25, 1622 foregrounds the effect of estrangement as alteration of the auditor’s perspective. The sermon, specifically addressed in the extant heading “to my Lord of Carlile, and his company, being the Earles of Northumberland, and Buckingham, etc.,” considers Job 36:25: “Every man may see it, man may behold it afar off” (*PS* 4.6.163). The “it” of verse 25, ambiguous without contextualization, refers to God’s works, as the preceding verse makes clear: “Remember that thou magnify his work, which men behold” (36:24). Containing the verbs “magnify” once and “behold” twice, verses 24 and 25 address sight and vision. Schleiner discusses the eyes of the soul as a field of imagery in Donne’s sermons, “in which insight is presented as sight,” and which Donne elaborates in two ways: first, “our vision can be obstructed,” and, second, “spiritual vision may be concentrated.”<sup>663</sup> Shami comments on Donne’s interest (expressed in various sermons) in altering the senses of his auditory, which “rouses them from their spiritual lethargy, their deadness towards God’s grace,” and she associates the alteration with techniques of defamiliarization.<sup>664</sup> Focusing on the context of patronage in Donne’s Hanworth sermon, Johnson suggests that it is a notable example of Donne’s interest in “the theological significance of sight and its preeminence among the human senses,” arguing specifically that “Donne uses the occasion of his 1622 sermon at Hanworth to correct and dilate, through biblical exegesis and allusion, the spiritual vision of his chief auditors so that they might attain the right and godly use of vision discovered in the spectacle of Christ crucified.”<sup>665</sup> Donne’s use of estrangement allows us to thread together his imagery of sight, rhetorical effects, and devotional concerns, tying his interest in sense alteration to his pastoral commitment to reorient the devotional lives of his congregation back to the God from whom they are estranged.

In the *exordium*, Donne introduces the conceptual divisions that will structure the sermon. With an emphasis on sight, the sermon compares two kinds of people, the natural man

and the godly man, as distinguished by their different ways of seeing God. Framing the context for Job 36:25, Donne identifies the speaker of the verse with the natural man:

*Elihu* was one of *Jobs* friends, and a meer *naturall* man: a man not captivated, not fettered, not enthralled, in any *particular forme* of *Religion*, as the *Jewes* were; a man not macerated with the *feare of God*; not infatuated with any preconceptions, which *Nurses*, or *Godfathers*, or *Parents*, or *Church*, or *State* had infused into him; not dejected, not suppld, not matured, not entredred, with *crosses* in this world, and so made apt to receive any impressions, or follow any *opinions* of *other men*, a *meer naturall man*; and in the meer use of meer *naturall* reason, this man says of God in his works, *Every man may see it, May may behold it afar off*. It is the word of a *naturall man*; and the *holy Ghost* having canonized it, sanctified it, by inserting it into the booke of *God*, it is the word of *God* too.

(PS 4.6.163.1–3)

The godly man is described in negative terms of comparison to the natural. Contrary to the likely expectations of his congregation, Donne's diction in the passage suggests aversion to the path of religion, characterizing the religious Jew—to whom Elihu is set in contrast—as “captivated,” “fettered,” “enthralled” in religion, and “macerated with the *feare of God*,” the last clause creating an image of God chewing up believers. However, the passage also suggests that the border between the two divisions of humankind is permeable, for although Elihu, a natural man, speaks the verse, “the *holy Ghost* having canonized it, sanctified it, . . . it is the word of *God* too.” The estranging imagery describing the religious man precedes a description of God's power to transform, linking the two for the auditory, and setting literary estrangement and God's ability to spiritually alter humankind as dual emphases in the sermon.

Part 1 argues that this world and everything in it is a work of God. Donne references Hermes Trismegistus when he declares: “that as there is nothing so dark, so there is nothing so cleare, nothing so remote, nothing so neare us, as God” (PS 4.6.166.130–32). The combination of

synoeciosis and hyperbole, balancing the opposites of “dark” and “cleare,” “remote” and “neare” with affirmation of each quality’s extremity (“nothing so . . .”), conveys the bewildering breadth and variety of God. The description of God’s paradoxical nature prepares the auditory for Donne’s elaborate depiction of God’s works that follows. Describing the world as “the volumes of this Author,” Donne urges his auditors:

take but the *Georgiques*, the consideration of the *Earth*, a farme, a garden, nay seven foot of earth, a grave, and that will be book enough. Goe lower; every *worme* in the grave, lower, every *weed* upon the grave, is an abridgement of all; nay lock up all doores and windowes, see nothing but *thy selfe*; nay let thy selfe be locked up in a close prison, that thou canst not see thy selfe, and doe but feel thy *pulse*; let thy pulse be intermitted, or stupefied, that thou feel not that, and doe but thinke, and a *worme*, a *weed*, thy *selfe*, thy *pulse*, thy *thought*, are all testimonies, that *All*, this *All*, and all the parts thereof, are *Opus*, a *work made*, and *opus ejus*, *his work*, made by *God*.

(PS 4.6.167.149–50, 154–64)

The passage is excerpted and subtitled “Creation Self-Evident” in Carey’s edition of Donne’s *Major Works*,<sup>666</sup> indicating how the kaleidoscopic description involves an estranging presentation of a commonplace in natural theology: that God is revealed in the natural world he has made, for all to read. This doctrine is expressed in Romans 1:20: “For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made.” Donne’s engagement with this text is made explicit as he references and paraphrases Romans 1:20 twice in part 1’s exposition of “Every man may see it”: “*The invisible things of God, are seen by things which are made*; and thereby man is made *inexcuseable*” (PS 4.6.167.137–38); “Because they would not see invisible things in visible, they are inexcusable, *all*” (PS 4.6.169.226–27). In Romans, as well as Donne’s paraphrase, sight is a metaphor for intellectual recognition of God’s presence in creation. In *Cross*, we have seen that Donne uses alterations in scales of perspective to discover the cross shape in the physical world around the reader, eventually discovering the

cross within the self. Donne creates a similar effect in his Hanworth sermon. Moving through a series of metonymically connected images, Donne rapidly scales down his auditory's vision, finally moving inward to the roots of sensation and thought. To intensify the estrangement effect, Donne modulates between images of life/generation and death/dissolution: for example, in one stretch he moves from the Earth, to a farm, to a garden, to a grave, to a worm, to a weed. The estrangement effect conveys the discovery of God's immanent impression on his works, the rapid display of modulating images overwhelming the auditor.

Part 2 of the sermon considers the second part of the verse, providing, as Donne explains in the *divisio*, "a tacite answer, to a likely objection, is not God *far off*, and can man see at that distance? yes, he may" (PS 4.6.164.41–42). However, before arriving at the "answer," Donne magnifies the distance between God's ways and humankind's: "How different are the wayes of God, from the ways of man? The eyes of God from the eyes of man? And the wayes, and eyes of a godly man, from the eyes, and wayes of a man of this world?" (PS 4.6.171). The emphasis on far-off views in the second half of the sermon makes explicit the distant aspect of divine strangeness.

As the sermon nears the peroration, the links between suffering and estranged sight are solidified: "but mans infirmity requires *spectacles*; and affliction does that office" (PS 4.6.171.307–308). If God is strange from human points of view, to see in a "godly" way implies taking on an estranged perspective. Looking through a particular kind of glass expresses the change in view Donne believes God can effect, and to which Donne is trying to prepare his congregation: "that man, who through his owne *red glasse*, can see Christ, in that colour too, through his own miseries, can see Christ Jesus in his blood" (PS 4.6.174.426–28). Donne continues, working to incline his auditors towards devotion: "Being established in my foundation upon God, being built up by faith, . . . being made like unto him, in suffering, as he suffered, I can see round about me, even to the Horizon, and beyond it, I can see *both Hemispheres* at once, God in this, and God in the next world too" (PS 4.6.175.438–39, 441–44). Puttenham's first

description of metaphor describes it as “drawing [the mind] from plainness and simplicity to a certain doubleness . . . . For what else is your *metaphor* but an inversion of sense by transport?”<sup>667</sup> As Donne does in *Cor7* with its double vision of Christ as ram and lamb, his estranging metaphors convey the insight of the godly man, who is able to see in an impossible way. As Donne’s description in the *exordium* anticipates, the “red glasse” of godly sight also links the godly man, who is “dejected” and “suppled . . . with *crosses*,” to Christ through blood. The strange descriptions of godly sight, as well as the *exordium*’s description of God “inserting” the natural man’s word “into the booke of *God*,” also anticipate Donne’s sermon on Job 4:18, with its descriptions of assimilation and the alien quality of God’s grace.

#### **Alien Grace: Donne’s Sermon Preached upon Easter Day, 1629, on Job 4:18**

My analysis of Donne’s Sermon Preached upon Easter Day, 1629 highlights two devices of estrangement: first, Donne’s choice of an obscure biblical text for the occasion, and second, the repetition of that verse, with alteration, throughout the sermon, in a manner recalling figures of wordplay such as antanaclasis and polyptoton. The scripture text is Job 4:18: “Behold, he put no trust in his servants, and his angels he charged with folly.” The “he” of verse 18 refers to God, and “his servants” is typically read to mean God’s angels. Through fascinating discussions about the nature of angels, Donne’s contrasts angels with humankind in order to argue that because even angels cannot stand in a state of grace on their own, neither can fallen human beings. Simpson explains that the sermon is based on “a highly poetical passage of the Book of Job, that describing the vision of Eliphaz the Temanite,” and adds that “At first sight no text could seem less suitable for an Easter meditation than this Hebrew vision.”<sup>668</sup> Although no place of delivery is given in the extant text, Simpson maintains that it was “almost certainly preached at St. Paul’s.”<sup>669</sup> Thus, for his Easter sermon at the cathedral, Donne selects an ambiguous line about the limitations of angels, using the text as an indirect conduit to exhort his auditory to greater humility, whereby they might achieve renewed wonder for the functioning of God’s grace on the

day of Christ's Resurrection. The first part is framed as an effort to "Problematically inquire" (PS 8.16.356.26) what the text says about the nature of angels in relation to God's grace, while the second part, which begins with a discussion of the "Alien" speaker of the biblical text (PS 8.16.365.377), argues that, since even angels are held up by God's grace, human beings should not view their status as due to their nature, but rather God's grace. Hence, humility allows one to see that salvation through grace is strange, that is, not natural to humanity.

Although Donne, in the *exordium*, raises a familiar topic for Easter, namely resurrection, he does so only briefly to frustrate his auditory's expectations and to reposition them in relation to the text and the occasion. Citing Luke 20:36, "In the Resurrection, we shall be as Angels," Donne chides his congregation that he only brings up resurrection "that we might not flatter our selves in a dreame of a better estate, then the Angels have" (PS 8.16.355.14–15, 15–16). These are tough, humbling words for an occasion that typically celebrates the new and better estate of humanity as the result of Christ's victory over death. Simpson observes: "Donne evidently intended to shake his hearers out of the complacency with which they anticipated an eloquent sermon on somewhat conventional lines. For several years in succession he had given them his finest discourses on the resurrection of the dead."<sup>670</sup> We might compare this approach with Donne's Sermon Preached at St. Paul's, in the Evening, upon Easter-day, 1626, when the topic of Resurrection is raised in the *exordium* and carried through the whole sermon. In contrast to the turn away from the holiday on Easter 1629, Easter 1626 opens by magnifying the importance of the occasion: "God hates that man that thinks any of his Holy dayes last but one day" (PS 7.3.94.2–3). That sermon's opening may be harsh and arresting but it is also conventionally reverential towards the feast. On a devotional level, Donne's 1629 sermon is primarily about trying to revitalize the congregation's faith in God's grace, and to accomplish this Donne first diminishes his auditory's sense of individual merit.

Donne's rhetorical strategy is, in the first part of the sermon, to redirect the auditory away from the common topic of grace, to "problematically inquire" rather than "dogmatically

establish” what the obscure biblical text is saying about angels (*PS* 8.16.356.26, 27). By framing part 1 as an investigation into the nature of angels, Donne not only entices his auditors’ curiosity, but he also implies that the nature of angels is not a fundamental doctrine. Getting his congregation to let their guard down, Donne, in part 2, extracts an applicable doctrine from the strange verse and work to vigorously apply it to his congregation. As in Donne’s Hanworth sermon, the alien status of the biblical speaker is an issue of importance in Donne’s Easter 1629 sermon. At the beginning of part 2, Donne reminds his auditory that the speaker in the passage, Eliphaz the Temanite, one of Job’s friends, was “an Alien, a stranger to the Covenant, and the Church of God” (*PS* 8.16.365.376–77). As in the Hanworth sermon, Donne places attention on the alien status of the speaker in order to expand the borders of grace. The suggestion is that if this man’s word could become revelation, that is, be transformed into something sacred, then Donne’s auditors may be transformed by the preaching of God’s word.

Simpson highlights the sermon as being a particularly good example of Donne’s most poetic sermons: “their structure is fundamentally that of a poem.”<sup>671</sup> On two separate occasions, Simpson examines how Donne repeats the biblical text at the conclusion of the sermon’s “paragraphs,” structuring the progression of the sermon.<sup>672</sup> The repetition and variation of the biblical text in Donne’s Easter 1629 sermon accords with Knight’s argument that Donne feels free to rewrite his biblical texts in order to better apply their message to his congregation, since the words of the text are mutable, as all things are in this world.<sup>673</sup> For example, Donne concludes an erudite exploration of the immortality of angels in part 1 by rewriting the biblical text into his conclusion: “But how this Immortality, and Infallibility accrues to them, and works in them, is still under our disquisition, since *In these his servants God puts no trust, but charges these Angels with folly*” (*PS* 8.16.362.263–66). Donne removes the ambiguities related to pronouns and clarifies that the “servants” are the “Angels.” Donne’s view of universal imperfection expressed in many of his writings also accords with his sermon’s message that angels are not perfect in and of themselves.

As I noted about Donne's repetitions of whole verses in *Corona*, the repetition of the biblical text at the end of each paragraph, now in a new context, subjects the text to multiple estrangements. The structural repetition on the level of sentence and paragraph has parallels with the rhetorical figure antanaclasis, which involves the repetition of a word in a different sense, and polyptoton, which repeats cognates.<sup>674</sup> Each of the 13 times Donne repeats the text, the auditors are forced to re-apprehend it in relation to the argument. However, the total effect is paradoxical. The repetition (with modification) of the biblical text over the course of the sermon's delivery makes what was a strange text familiar. By the time Donne presents his final repetition before the peroration, the originally obscure text's application to the devotional lives of his auditory is clear: "our assurance of salvation by perseverance, is necessary, and yet voluntary . . . For we are no better than those Angels, and, *In those servants he put no trust, and those Angels he charged with folly*" (*PS* 7.16.370.547–48, 549–51). Simpson observes that, in the peroration, Donne turns from the Job text to the Book of Revelation and the liturgy, echoing lines of the *Te Deum* (see, e.g., *PS* 7.16.372.621; 371.602).<sup>675</sup> Donne's repetition of more familiar biblical texts as well as elements from the *Book of Common Prayer* emphasizes the sermon's message that the alienated can become naturalized and made a part of the communal whole.

**To "read my leafes on both sides": Donne's Sermon Preached to the King, 1630, on Job 16:17–19**

Donne's last sermon on the Book of Job that we possess, that Preached to the King, April 20, 1630, is a fitting summation of the devices and themes present in his other Job sermons. It is also one of Donne's final sermons, and, as far as we know, the second-last that he preached before the court of Charles I (*Death's Duell* being the last). Originally labeled a Lent sermon in *LXXX Sermons* (1651), Colclough convincingly argues that the association with Lent is probably erroneous, but that the title and identification with April 20, 1630 are correct.<sup>676</sup> With striking imagery figuring God's insight into human lives, the sermon's message and rhetorical strategies



aim to more closely align the auditor's point of view with the strange sight of the Divine Witness. The sermon portrays earthly existence as involving self-estrangement, yet paradoxically it indicates that conversion to God also relies on the estrangement of the present self and its attachments. The sermon not only shows an interest in suffering fitting for a discussion of Job, but its structure also reflects God's strange method of estranging and breaking down in order to reconcile and build up.

Donne considers three verses from Job chapter 16: "*Not for any injustice in my hands: Also my prayer is pure. O earth cover not thou my blood; and let my cry have no place. Also now behold, my Witnesse is in heaven, and my Record is on high*" (OESJD 3.13.211.3–6). The passage comes from Job's bitter reply to his friends which involves elaborately figurative descriptions of his decline. The three verses Donne selects repeat "Also" twice, generating an uncertain sequential logic between the clauses and rendering the passage ambiguous. In the *exordium*, Donne emphasizes that the text is Job's answer to his friends, and Donne describes it as "a middle way" between self-justification and self-condemnation. Donne frames his interpretive strategy as a focus on "the senses, and doctrines of the Booke" (OESJD 3.13.211.28–29), distancing his approach from historical-contextual speculations and mystical readings. The ambiguous, stilted text allows Donne to address three distinct aspects about the godly man.

The *exordium* also emphasizes the grotesque bodily state of Job in chapter 16: "In this Chapter, and before this text, we have *Iobs Anatomy*, *Iobs Skeleton*, the ruins to which he was reduced" (OESJD 3.13.211.37–38). Donne piles up images of Job's degraded bodily state, noting, for example, his "*leannesse and wrinckles*," and pointing out "*That God himselfe had shaked him in peeces, and set him up as a marke to shoote at*" (OESJD 3.13.212.39, 41–42). Donne then states, "Now, let me aske in *Iobs* behalfe Gods question to *Ezekiel*, . . . *Doest thou beleeeve that these bones can live? Can this Anatomy, this Skeleton, these ruines, this rubbidge of Iob speake?*" (OESJD 3.13.212.47–50). With mention of Ezekiel's dry bones, Donne follows the decayed descriptions of Job under God's treatment with a reference to a well-known passage from the Old

Testament prophet frequently identified by Christian exegetes as foreshadowing the resurrection from the dead. If the sermon does indeed date to the third Tuesday after Easter, the reference to Ezekiel would also certainly activate associations with the general resurrection. However, Donne follows the reference to Ezekiel with a series of metaphors that reduce Job—to a dissected corpse, to mere bones, to the inorganic remains of buildings, and to worthless waste matter. Setting Christian hope alongside the four-fold weight of material decay and human mortality, Donne divides the mental and emotional orientations of his auditors, contrasting the human condition with the divine promise in a manner recalling the contrast between worldly and heavenly perspectives that Shami has noted in Donne's sermons.<sup>677</sup> The mental and emotional division the contrast stirs up serves the point of underscoring the themes of the sermon. The quadruple effect of estranging metaphors not only produces a moment of bewilderment at Donne's subsequent reminder of life being manifested in the speech of one so in decline and near death, but the pattern also connects to Donne's later discussion of God's strange methods of acting in the world.

Soon after, Donne states: "*Job* felt the hand of destruction upon him, and he felt the hand of preservation too; and it was all one hand; This is God's Method, and his alone, to preserve by destroying" (*OESJD* 3.13.213.122–23). Utilizing the rhetorical figure of synoeciosis to couple preservation with destruction ("to preserve by destroying"), Donne evokes bewilderment and wonder at the strange and paradoxical ways of the divine. Donne's account of "God's Method" in the sermon, a method which preserves by destroying, recalls the purifying and re-creative violence of God that Donne articulates in the Holy Sonnets. In *HSBatter*, we have seen that Donne uses synoeciosis to express God's ways in a violent paradox: "That I may rise and stand, oerthrowe mee, and bend / Your force to breake, blowe, burne, and make mee newe" (1–4). Donne's also describes God's ways as being paradoxical and dialectical in their pattern in his *Job Sermon to the Countess Bedford*. In his *Sermon Preached to the King*, Donne continues to elaborate on God's method:

Men of this world do sometimes repaire, and recompence those men whom they have oppressed before, but this is an after recompence; Gods first intention even when he destroys is to preserve, as a Physitians first intention, in the most distastfull physick, is health; even Gods demolitions are super-edifications, his Anatomies, his dissections, are so many re-compactings, so many resurrections; God windes us off the Skein, that he may weave us up into the whole peece, and he cuts out of the whole peece into peeces, that he may make us up into a whole garment.

(*OESJD* 3.13.213-214.123–30)

Donne's discussion of God's "Anatomies" as "so many resurrections" occurs shortly after the initial discussion of "*Iobs* Anatomy, *Iobs* Skeleton," which, as I argued above, works to generate wonder in Donne's auditory at God's reviving power. Both examples highlight a habit of mind very typical of Donne, and one that shapes, and is shaped by, his approach to estranging readers and auditors before "resurrecting" their understanding.

Donne's Sermon on Job 16:17–19 is divided into three main parts, each part focusing on a verse. In contrast, the Sermon on Job 19:26 addresses one biblical verse, and Donne divides that sermon, which is preoccupied with the body and the soul, into, appropriately, two parts. Using a division of three parts in the Sermon on Job 16:17–19 allows Donne in the second part, discussed below, to cast doubt on various figurative interpretations of verse 18. The doubt Donne expresses (and generates in his auditory) midway through the sermon brings clarity and luster to the text through vexation, to purify and distill the understanding of the members of the auditory through difficult mental labour, giving way to the final message of the sermon, that God is humanity's witness.

Donne summarizes verse 19 as Job's "Establishment," addressing it in the third section of the sermon (*OESJD* 3.13.212.67). As Colclough points out, "establishment" can mean not only a "stable condition" but also a "settled condition of mind, calmness, confidence."<sup>678</sup> This is a mental state very different from the unsettled and perplexed mental state produced by the

estrangement effect. An analysis of the whole sermon's rhetorical structure and the role of devices of estrangement in that structure reveals that this "Establishment"—which is also a "consolidation," according to Donne—is a bringing back together, of not only Job, but also the mental understanding of the auditory with their renewed or enhanced, and newly established, understanding of the biblical text. In the *exordium* as in the Sermon on Job 19:26, established doctrine has been reasserted.

Before I consider the troubling of the biblical text in the middle section of the sermon, I want to highlight some of the devices of estrangement that Donne utilizes in part 1, which is about "The confidence of a godly man." The passage I have highlighted from the *exordium* demonstrates how technique and theme converge for Donne. In part 1 of the sermon, in the section addressing the meaning of "hands" in the text from Job, Donne uses devices of estrangement to shock his reader into a recognition of the danger of sin. Donne says, "Thy lying down is a valediction, a parting, a taking leave, (shall I say so?) a shaking hands with God" (*OESJD* 3.13.214.138–39). Donne first uses a homely metaphor of hand shaking that startles in its extremely personal depiction of God. Colclough notes how Donne frequently performs a series of amplifications and extensions on a single idea. The image startles for its casual, friendly, personal depiction of God, and Donne even questions whether he might reverently say as much about God: "shall I say so?" It is as if God has reached out of Donne's exegetical discussion of the biblical text into the realm of lived experience. However, Donne redirects his auditor's feelings of nearness to God, using the energy generated to bounce them further away: "and, when thou shakest hands with God, let those hands be clean." Continuing to build metonymic connections, Donne turns to sins involving the hands, and, before the court, in a gradually shocking moment, he brings up masturbation:

Thy flesh is thy clothes; and to this mischievous purpose of fouling thy hands with thine own clothes, thou hast most clothes on when thou art naked; Then, in that nakednesse, thou art in danger of fouling thy hands with thine own clothes. Miserable man! that

couldst have no use of hands, nor any other organ of sense, if there were no other creature but thy self, & yet, if there were no other creature but thy self, couldst sin upon thy self, and foule thy hands with thine own hands.

(*OESJD* 3.13.214.147–53)

Donne's broaching of the subject before the court is mischievous. The metaphoric substitution of "clothes" for "flesh" not only alludes to a common vice among courtiers (fashion), but it also slows down the auditor's apprehension of what exactly Donne is saying, creating a moment of uncomfortable "nearness" that is equally estranging. Donne's implicit warning—"God and I know what you might be up to before bed"—is shocking and discomfiting precisely because it forces itself into the personal lives of the congregation, which includes the monarch of the realm. Who is Donne to presume to know what the king does before bed? This example, equally impish and morally rigorous, also showcases Donne's high estimation of the preacher's office, if he thinks he can mention such sins before the king.

Donne's frankness continues with an exposure of the self-estrangements a Christian might experience during the most devotional of activities. In a passage that recalls the wandering thoughts discussed in his Sermon on Job 19.26, Donne argues: "In sudden and unpremeditate prayer, I am not alwayes I; and when I am not my self, my prayer is not my prayer. Passions and affections sometimes, sometimes bodily infirmities, and sometimes a vain desire of being eloquent in prayer, aliens me, withdraws me from my self, and then that prayer is not my prayer" (*OESJD* 3.13.215.184–88). Various aspects of human existence, from emotions, to desires, to physical conditions, affect the inward state and can estrange a person from him or herself. Donne's argument seems counterintuitive. When one prays using spontaneous expression one is not actually praying one's own prayers. Donne offers a paradoxical argument for rejecting extemporaneous prayer, a view endorsed by the more ritualistic wing of the Church of England at the time: that a Christian's most personal prayer to God is their repetition of those dictated by the established Church. The conflict in the passage between spontaneous expression and the

authenticity of the self recalls the tensions found in Donne's religious poems, which attempt to reconcile individual innovation and originality with conformity to tradition.

In part 2 of the sermon, which focuses on verse 17 ("O earth, cover not thou my blood, and let my cry have no place"), Donne turns from his discussion of prayer to consider Job's cry. Importantly, Donne analyzes the style of Job's cry, summarizing, "But because continuing under so great afflictions, men would not believe this, he proceeds, perchance to some excesse, and inconsideratenesse, in desiring a manifestation of all his actions" (*OESJD* 3.13.216.253–55). Donne's general interest in "excesse" and "inconsiderateness" influences his favouring of certain biblical commentators, for he adds that one commentator's interpretation "may have good use, but yet it is too narrow, and too shallow, to bee the sense of this phrase, this elegancy, this vehemency of the Holy Ghost, in the mouth of *Iob*" (*OESJD* 3.13.217.278–81). The passage reiterates Donne's belief in the eloquence of the Bible, while once again affirming that the grand style of scripture sometimes crosses into excess.

Donne's preoccupation with the style of the Bible influences his comparison of diverse biblical interpretations in part 2. In this middle section of the sermon, Donne utilizes aporia in order to generate doubt in his auditors: "Difference of Expositions makes us stop here, upon this inquisition, in what affection *Iob* spake" (*OESJD* 3.13.216.257–58). After repeating verse 17, he deploys another aporia, directly asking, "What meanes *Iob* in this [verse]? Doubtfull Expositors make us doubt too" (*OESJD* 3.13.219.373). Confronted with the conflicting interpretations of biblical commentators, Donne stops to inquire about the correct approach. Donne the youthful poet admonishes his reader in Satire 3 that "in strange way / To stand inquiring right, is not to stray" (77–78). Donne the mature preacher incorporates a similar reaction of halting to inquire in regards to the perplexing claims of different interpretive authorities into the structure of his sermon. Donne's pause in the sermon is not a straying, not a diversion or tangent, but is rather an essential part of the preacher's rhetorical strategy for guiding his auditory along the winding path to Truth. While Donne lays out a mental map for his auditory in the *divisio*, some of his

discussions of specific passages seem designed just as much *not* to clarify matters as to clarify them. His discussion of issues of translation and the etymology of the biblical words is particularly vexing. However, the entire section is prefaced with a familiar proverb that gives a visible image to Donne's rhetorical habit of bringing clarity and renewed understanding through vexation and even violence: "We must doe in this last, as we have done in our former two parts, crack a shell, to tast the kernell, cleare the words, to gaine the Doctrine" (*OESJD* 3.13.220.426–27). The related dialectical pattern of destruction before growth, or vexation before clarity, is discernible in Donne's thinking both on literary composition as well as on spiritual reformation.

In Donne's discussion of Job's foundation of confidence expressed in verse 19, which forms the third and final division of his Sermon on Job 16:17–19, Donne not only argues that God is witness to the many facets of human life but he also tries to express the strangeness of holding multiple views at the same time. This is yet another example of Donne's interest in the double vision of spiritual perception, a belief of his typically conveyed by devices of estrangement. Earlier, Donne had described his wish for other people to be able to read both sides of his page, to see both the consequences and nature of his sins: "And truly, so may I, so may every soule say, that is rectified, refreshed, restored, re-established by seales of Gods pardon, and his mercy, so the world would take knowledge of the consequences of my sins, as well as of the sins themselves, and read my leafes on both sides" (*OESJD* 3.13.218.349–52). I called attention to how in the previous Sermon on Job 19.26 Donne compares the human person to a book. Here, Donne brings up the image of reading a leaf of a bound manuscript, from the recto to the verso; analogously, if people are like books, each of us needs to read both sides to have a better knowledge of sin and its consequences. To adapt Donne's analogy for my own analysis, in the final section of the sermon Donne contends that God not only reads both sides of the page, but God also knows both sides at once, since every leaf is part of the divine book. In Donne's final discussion of the nature of God's keeping of records, as both witness and judge, seeing all, and filling humanity with the divine person, Donne emphasizes the strangeness and distinction of

divine vision as opposed to human. God reads both sides of the page—not in time, linearly, as a reader who must take in one side before the other, or as an auditor who takes in the words a preacher delivers aloud sequentially—but all at once.

According to Donne, the limited and isolated viewpoints of fallen humanity—in other words, our alienated point of view, emblemized as a single page in the book of life—hinder the alignment of a Christian’s perspective with the heavenly perspective, that is, the view of the whole book. To return to an image of sewing that Donne presented in the *exordium*, God “cuts us out of the whole peece into peeces, that he may make us up into a whole garment” (*OESJD* 3.13.214.129–30). A careful rereading of Donne’s choice of words reveals that although people might appear to be whole, each is just a “whole peece.” Only after God has cut one into “peeces” can one become part of the “whole garment.” A garment is raw cloth transformed into clothing, an object with a clear purpose, created by labour. Thus, the wholeness the self might presume is actually a false or limited perception. Although the individual might appear intact, she or he is still a separate piece, existing in a state of alienation. According to Donne, we are not ourselves, except when part of the “whole garment,” through and in God. Through the operations of divine grace, the human, soul and body, is cut from the basic fabric and made into useful clothing. This image helps to clarify not only Donne’s belief in how one’s true prayers are actually the communal prayers of the Church, but also how the dissection of the biblical text (and consequent estrangement of the auditor or reader) can facilitate greater understanding of it.

Another example from Donne’s Sermon on Job 16:17–19 will help to clarify my argument. In part 2 of the sermon, following Donne’s metaphor of reading both sides of the leaf, Donne amplifies his message by extending the conceit expressing two very different views of a single thing, in this case, a sea of blood. Donne encourages his auditory to hold both points of view: “Me in my earnest Confessions, God in his powerfull Absolutions, Me drawne out of one Sea of blood, the blood of mine owne soule, and cast into another Sea, the bottomelesse Sea of the blood of Christ Jesus” (*OESJD* 3.13.219.360–62). As the sermon instructs the auditory, the



sea of blood (already a metaphor) holds multiple meanings, both in the negative sense of personal sin as well as the positive sense of Christ's sacrifice. And yet, shortly afterwards in the sermon, the sea figures the Holy See and its influence on the Continent in the Thirty Year's War (*OESJD* 3.13.220.408–14). As I mentioned above, Colclough has called attention to Donne's emphasis on the multiplicity of meanings and senses of language, especially biblical language, in his sermons,<sup>679</sup> an approach that Donne takes up in certain religious lyrics, such as *Annun*, which reads its strange picture of the two overlapping religious events for multiple significances. Sometimes Donne uses not a "far-fetched" but rather a "far-stretched" metaphor, or metonymy, to estrange his auditor or reader, not reaching for a remote object for comparison but rather mining an object for further significance.

Multiplicity and oneness converge in the person of Christ at the end of the sermon, in the final application, as they do in the Sermon on Job 19.26 when Donne asserts both the individual self and its fulfillment in the person of Christ. In the final movement of his sermons Donne typically labours to reinforce the new or altered perspective put forward on the biblical text and to increase the personal affective power of the message he has extrapolated. Donne does so in this sermon before the court by bringing in the legal and administrative machinery of justice and government, before his final flight beyond the auditory's apprehension. Donne applies the message, "*Jobs* end and purpose; That he need not care though all men knew his faults, he need not care though God passed over his prayers, because God is his Witsnesse" (*OESJD* 3.13.222.530–32), directly to himself and to his audience, in the strategy of nearness. I quote at length to show the full rhetorical movement of the passage. Donne takes consolation that

He that is my Witsnesse, is my Judge too. I shall not be tried by an arbitrary Court, where it may be wisdom enough, to follow a wise leader, and think as he thinks. I shall not be tried by a Jury, that had rather I suffered, then they fasted, rather I lost my life, then they lost a meale. Nor tried by Peeres, where Honour shall be the Bible. But I shall be tried by the King himselfe, the which no man can propose a Nobler tryall, and that King shall be

the King of Kings too; for, He, who in the first of the Revelation, is called *The faithfull Witnesse*, is, in the same place, called *The Prince of the Kings of the earth*; and, as he is there produced as a *Witnesse*, so, He is ordained to be the *Iudge of the quick and dead*, and so, *All Iudgement is committed to him*. He that is my *Witnesse*, is my *Judge*, and the same person is my *Jesus*, my *Saviour*, my *Redeemer*; He that hath taken my nature, He that hath give me his blood. So that he is my *Witnesse*, in his owne cause, and my *Judge*, but of his owne Title, and will, in me, preserve himselfe; He will not let that nature, that he hath invested, perish, nor that treasure, which he hath poured out for me, his blood, be ineffectual. My *Witnesse* is in Heaven, my *Judge* is in Heaven, my *Redeemer* is in Heaven, and in them, who are but One, I have not onely a constant hope, that I shall be there too, but an evident assurance, that I am there already, in his Person.

(*OESJD* 3.13.223.536–55)

The picture of the court that Donne paints in the peroration is not entirely flattering at first. There is a nod to the king, but there are also jabs to stir contrition and self-reflection, about how the workings of the world and the court do not conform to the heavenly example. Colclough notes that “Donne habitually brings his courtly auditory to their lowest point, to a state of humiliation, only to build them up again by holding out the promise of eternal salvation in heaven.”<sup>680</sup> Colclough sees this strategy as part of Donne’s general interest in the “humiliation-exaltation dynamic.”<sup>681</sup> Donne’s other Job sermons suggest that it is a general strategy, and reflects Donne’s habits of thought: that God’s bringing down is often a means to bring us up, that troubling and vexing an issue can ultimately clarify it, that difficulty and suffering can help purify a soul. It is difficult not to discern biographical reasons for Donne’s beliefs, and, indeed, it should come as no surprise that Donne’s professional and personal lives, which involved his movement through great difficulties to a sense of place and position later in life, shaped his thinking. By the final lines of the passage quoted above, Donne has so disordered and unsettled the basic interpretive categories of his auditory, particularly the categories of spatial and temporal order, that he can

pour in the new mold of belief. According to the ending of the sermon, all of the different characters of Christ are one, and believers not only hope in Christ but are also present in his person. Time and space are conflated and reduced through Donne's estranging devices.

Donne's Sermon on Job 16 seeks to effect recognition in his auditors of their own limited perspectives, which shapes Donne's use of religious controversies to strike at the moral and devotional lives of his auditory. In both the opening and closing of his Sermon on Job 16, Donne addresses vexing theological issues, the resolution of which he ultimately locates beyond the grasp of the human mind. The *exordium* touches on the debate around the origin of the soul: "They wrangle, whether it comes in by Infusion from God, or by Propagation from parents, and never consider, whether it shall returne to Him that made it, or to him that marr'd it, to Him that gavve it, or to him that corrupted it" (*OESJD* 3.13.211.21–25). Donne argues that the perspective of those who worry more about arcane academic debates about the origins of the soul than about the eternal state of their own particular soul after death are misaligned. Soon after, in his discussion of the danger of misinterpretation and of appearances, Donne addresses conflicts in the English Church:

This man is affected when he heares a blasphemous oath; and when he lookes upon the generall liberty of sinning; therefore he is a Puritan; That man loves the ancient formes, and Doctrines, and Disciplines of the Church, and retaines, and delights in the reverend names of Priest, and Altar, and Sacrifice, therefore he is a Papist, are hastie conclusions in Church affaires.

(*OESJD* 3.13.213.89–94)

In the passage, Donne draws on common categories of derision ("Puritan," "Papist") to expose the moral flaw of hasty judgement. In the peroration, Donne brings up the highly charged debate about sanctification and whether the elect are preserved in a state of grace, as Calvinism held (*OESJD* 3.13.223–24.556–94). Donne urges personal moral introspection and correction over political solutions, reminding his congregation that the human view is limited, and therefore

matters of abstract theology should not unduly influence interactions with real, actual neighbours. In poems such as *Cross* and in numerous sermons, Donne attacks the Catholic Church as well as English Puritans; as a clergyman, he viewed both groups as problematic deviations from the Church of England orthodoxy he came to embrace. Donne's frequent insistence that Christians should focus on their shared fundamentals rather than the polar extremes of controversy, as well as his irenic desires for church unity amid division, would seem to parallel Donne's recurrent thematic interest in the transcendent unity behind apparent discordances.

### Conclusion: Holy Estrangement in Donne's First and Last Sermons

Two images, one from the beginning and the other from the end of Donne's career as a preacher, highlight not only Donne's prominent use of rhetorical figures as devices of estrangement in his sermons, but also his preoccupation with different kinds of thematic estrangement. The image of humankind "enwrapped" in sin in Donne's first sermon preserved in writing, Preached at Greenwich, April 30, 1615 (*PS* 1.1.152.40), forms a striking point of comparison with the image of humankind "wound vp" in death from the womb in his final and most famous sermon, published posthumously in 1632 as *Death's Duell* (*OESJD* 3.14.233.153).<sup>682</sup> Schleiner, in his study of Donne's imagery in the sermons, describes a "field of imagery" as being "constituted by the analogical link between two areas of meaning," and uses the example of love and sickness as two such areas: "their combination can be expressed by the word *lovesickness*," which would be the field of imagery.<sup>683</sup> Within that field, different kinds of love can be compared to different kinds of sickness in innumerable ways. Donne's first and last sermons exemplify important intersections between his use of themes and forms, particularly the analogical link between literary estrangement and themes of spiritual estrangement. Donne's thematic interest in the Christian commonplace paradoxes of "life in death" and "death in life" in both sermons also shapes the figures he selects, such that "life in death" and "death in life" become fields of imagery, their combination instigating the figurative choices Donne makes in the sermons, which in turn revitalize the power of the commonplace.<sup>684</sup> Furthermore, the two sermons not only demonstrate his thematic fascination with how beginnings and endings can form a circle, but they also form that circle themselves within Donne's chronology as a preacher.

Donne's view of the general condition of fallen humanity is grim in many of his sermons, beginning with his Sermon Preached at Greenwich, April 30, 1615. In the *exordium*, Donne concocts "a short view, of the miserable condition of man, wherin he enwrapped himself, and of the abundant mercy of Christ Jesus in withdrawing him from that universal calamity" (*PS* 1.1.152.39–41). Donne describes "the miserable condition of man," the consequence of original

sin, as something in which a man has “enwrapped himself,” in order to present “a short view,” that is to say, an altered (and abridged) perspective on the idea of sin. We have seen, in chapter 2, how *Annun* offers an estranged view via abridgement, not of sin but of God’s ways: “All this, and all betweene, this day hath showne, / Th’Abridgement of Christs story” (19–20). The vivid physical movement of the metaphor jars with the static theological commonplace about humankind’s “condition.” The condensed structure of Donne’s “short view” links the general “miserable” state of humankind to the particular movement of one man. The emphasis on sin as individual action that the estrangement effect generates complements the portrayal of personal sin in the sermon’s biblical text. Donne’s Greenwich sermon is on Isaiah 52:3: “Ye have sold your selves for nought, and yet shall be redeemed without money.” The text from Isaiah portrays sin as individual profligacy. It also describes a form of redemption, redemption “without money,” that demands unpacking.

The second clause in the Isaiah text forms the second part of Donne’s sermon, but the strangeness of redemption as described in the text is already addressed in the second half of the image highlighted: “the abundant mercy of Christ Jesus in withdrawing him from that universal calamity.” As we have seen, “withdrawing” is a word associated with the discourse of estrangement,<sup>685</sup> and I have described above the estranging image of a man enwrapped in sin as a device of estrangement. Thus, Donne’s “short view” contains two different references to the trope of estrangement: Donne follows his condensed depiction of the estrangements of sin with a description of holy estrangement, that is, the estrangement from the sin and the world that Christ’s salvation effects. The centripetal force of man enwrapping himself contrasts with the centrifugal action of Christ “withdrawing” or unwinding him from his own constrictive behaviour and habits. The use of the word “withdrawing” in the sermon to describe Christ’s liberating action casts salvation itself as a kind of estrangement. This accords with the sermon’s text, which discusses a kind of strange redemption, one “without money.” While the general fallen state of humankind, separated from God and others and inwardly disturbed, is often expressed in Donne’s

sermons through devices of estrangement, the inward transformation involved in spiritual conversion, in the turning away from sin and worldly ways and back to God, is also conveyed through estranging devices. Holy estrangement is the means to escape the estrangements of sin.

In *Death's Duell*, delivered in 1631, Donne preaches on Psalm 68:20, "And unto God the (LORD) belong the issues of death. i.e. From death," the print version adding immediate commentary to the text. Taking his cue from the text's linking of God to the (plural) "*issues* of death," Donne pummels his congregation with copious imagery of death. Striking a sombre tone early on in the Lent sermon, Donne declares that "all our *periods* and *transitions* in this life, are so many passages *from death to death*," and soon follows with an estranging metaphor for death's grip on humankind even before birth: "wee haue a winding sheete in our Mothers wombe, which growes with vs from our conception, and wee come into the world, wound vp in that *winding sheet*, for wee come to *seeke a graue*" (*OESJD* 3.14.232.101–2, 151–53). Colclough identifies the "winding sheete," the shroud a corpse was wrapped in before burial, as a metaphor for the placenta, the organ attached to the fetus in the womb.<sup>686</sup> Donne's image of the winding sheet, "which growes with vs from our conception," also suggests the amniotic sac, the membrane encasing the fetus as it grows in the womb. Because the mother nourishes and feeds the fetus through the placenta while the amniotic sac insulates and protects the fetus, in either reading Donne's image for death is grimly ironic. The metaphor is also far-fetched enough to be considered an example of catachresis, in that Donne wrenches a word ("winding sheet") from the context of burials and death and relocates it to the womb, which is typically associated with fertility, creation, and new life. Although operating within the field of imagery of *death in life*, the vivid particularity of the catachresis heightens the distance between the areas of meaning, defamiliarizing conventional notions of death's omnipresence in life as well as Christian valuations of earthly existence below heavenly, giving new weight to both of these themes commonly preached during Lent. The sermon's thematic emphasis on intertwining and inverting life and death is presented to the courtly auditory in powerful visual form. Donne's emphasis on

every person's eventual death, which by implication includes the king and courtiers before him, functions to level all humanity before God. The images of a fetus in a winding sheet and man enwrapped in sin like a fly in a web bring renewed attention to the altered states (and abstract concepts) of death and sin, respectively.

Donne's last sermon involves three main parts: "our deliuerance . . . *from death, in death, & by death*" (OESJD 3.14.232.94–95). Thus, the sermon presents three different views on death, using devices of estrangement to reframe death for the auditor. In part 3, Donne extends the sermon's themes of intertwining and inverting life and death in his expression of daunting wonder at the death of Christ:

That *God*, this *Lord*, the *Lord of life could dye*, is a strange contemplation; That the *red Sea* could bee *drie*, That the *Sun* could *stand still*, That an *Oven* could be *seauen times heat and not burne*, That *Lions* could be *hungry & not bite*, is strange, *miraculously strange*, but *supermiraculous* that *God could dye*; but that *God would dye* is an *exaltation* of that.

(OESJD 3.14.242.459–64)

Donne is using the figure of Paradoxon. In order to generate admiration in his auditory for Jesus's voluntary death on the cross, Donne compares the strange act of the Son of God choosing to die to various miracles recorded in the Old Testament. Donne equates the miraculous with the strange, using antanaclasis for "strange," and polyptoton for "miraculous," to modify the meaning of each word with each repetition. The repetitions work in tandem with hyperbole in order to create a rhetorical ascension in wonder to the "exaltation" of the "supermiraculous" event, "that God would dye." Other miracles described in the Bible, such as Moses parting the Red Sea and Joshua stopping the sun's movement, are "strange, *miraculously strange*." That God "*could*" potentially die is "*supermiraculous*" and extremely strange, but that God "*would*" choose to die in the person of Jesus is even a step above the "*supermiraculous*" and is therefore supremely strange, "an *exaltation* of that." The biblical text describes "the issues of death" as belonging to



God, so it follows that God controls death, and therefore could have spared himself. Donne states, “And wold he *not spare himself*? he would not” (OESJD 3.14.242.470). Hyperbole magnifies the merits of Jesus’s sacrifice: “There was nothing more free, more voluntary, more spontaneous than the death of *Christ*” (OESJD 3.14.242.480–81). The estrangement effect in the passage helps to stir the affections of Donne’s auditory, encouraging them to refresh their gratitude that God would not spare himself from death, and underscoring God’s wondrous difference from normal human self-interest and self-preservation.

The final estrangement of Christ’s passion in the peroration of *Death’s Duell* intensifies the application of the doctrine by bringing to bear on the congregation all three aspects of death treated in the text—from, in, and by death: “*hang vpon him that hangs vpon the Crosse, . . . and lye downe in peace in his graue, till hee vouchsafe you a resurrection*” (OESJD 3.14.246.614–16). Donne uses antanaclasis to defamiliarize Christian identification with Christ’s death: the first reference to “hang” is metaphorical and spiritual, suggesting that through faith we must rely upon Christ, who is the proper support; the second is literal, emphasizing Christ’s actual bodily suffering on the cross, which supplies the spiritual pillar on which we can “hang.” The ending also circles back to the opening of *Death’s Duell*, as Donne creates extensions of and modifications to his initial images. Donne opens his sermon with a famous statement: “*Bvildings stand by the benefit of their foundations that susteine and support them*” (OESJD 3.14.231.46–47). The final image of hanging upon Christ transforms the architectural metaphor’s suggestion of reliance upon God, personalizing how Christ “sustains” and “supports” while emphasizing the believer’s proper active response with the verb “to hang.” Likewise, Donne’s instruction to his auditory to “*lye downe in peace in his graue, till hee vouchsafe you a resurrection*” transforms the earlier image of the “*winding sheet*” they wear in the womb, “for wee come to *seeke a graue*” (OESJD 3.14.232. 153), imprinting upon his auditory the true nature of the grave they seek: identification with Christ’s death.

Because sermons as a genre are arguably less about imparting new information and more about encouraging an enhanced perspective on established religious texts, Donne's sermons prove to be highly illuminating sites in which to examine the operations of literary estrangement in his works. In Donne's sermons, the familiar thing to be made strange is not just an image or trope or doctrine or theme, but the point of view that the congregant inhabits. That is why self-estrangement is not only a recurrent theme in the sermons; it may also be enacted in the event of the sermon's performance. The sermons I have studied, particularly those on the Book of Job, encourage a change in the auditor's sense of self-possession in this life, an alteration in how he or she reads the sufferings he or she experiences, and a renewed sense of hope in God's grace, understood as an alien yet familiar force. Thus, Donne, in his sermons, uses the estrangement effect to facilitate holy estrangement in his congregations, encouraging their turn away from the bonds of sin and the world and back towards God, renewal of their appreciation for the strange ways of God's works and grace, and reorientation in their devotional lives towards love of God and their neighbours.



## Notes

<sup>1</sup> We do not possess authoritative titles for Donne's poems. The traditional titles were drawn from the headings ascribed to them by early readers and editors of Donne. Furthermore, the titles of many Donne poems vary across manuscripts and across both early and modern editions. For the sake of simplicity and consistency, the dissertation follows the *Donne Variorum*'s list of short forms of reference for Donne's poetic works. A common heading will be provided alongside the short form for the first reference to a poem in the text in order to aid readers unfamiliar with the *Variorum* short form titles. Citations use the title provided in the edition cited.

For a list of the short forms of reference for Donne's poems cited in this dissertation, see the appendix. For the complete list, consult any volume of the *Donne Variorum* or visit the *DigitalDonne* website: <http://digitaldonne.tamu.edu/index.html>.

### Notes to Introduction: Donne's Poetics of Estrangement: Critical and Historical Contexts

<sup>2</sup> According to Bald, *Donne: A Life*, 35, Donne was born between 24 January 1571/72 and 19 June 1572. In the Old Style Calendar, the new year did not start until March, so, if Donne was born in January or February, he was born in 1571 according to his contemporaries. According to the New Style, in use today, he was born in 1572 no matter the date. Where applicable, I provide dates using the Old Style/New Style format.

<sup>3</sup> "Estrangement, *n.* The action of estranging; the condition of being estranged." *OED Online*, s.v. "estrangement."

<sup>4</sup> When discussing the operations of literary estrangement, I often use "apprehend" to denote the action of mental comprehension or understanding since Donne himself often uses the word. For example, in his Sermon Preached at Hanworth, August 25, 1622, Donne discusses "the *faculty* that apprehends, *seeing*, that is *knowing*" (*PS* 4.6.170.266–67, italics in original).

<sup>5</sup> Kelly and Semler, "Word and Self Estranged," 1 (emphasis theirs).

<sup>6</sup> Puttenham, *Art of English Poesy*, 243.

<sup>7</sup> All references to Donne's poetry, unless otherwise stated, are from *Complete English Poems*, ed. Patrides. Line numbers for all poems are cited in text.

In line 66, "aliens" is "alters" in some manuscripts and print editions. Patrides, 270n. Even if one takes "alters" as the correct reading, the idea of a change in form making something strange is still implicit.

<sup>8</sup> Kelly and Semler, "Word and Self Estranged," 3.

<sup>9</sup> Shklovsky, "Art as Device," 73–96.

<sup>10</sup> Bennett, *Formalism and Marxism*, 17. I am indebted to Bennett throughout the dissertation for the phrasing of his summation of literary estrangement.

<sup>11</sup> Berlina, Translator's introduction to *Viktor Shklovsky: A Reader*, 24.

<sup>12</sup> In her introductory material, Berlina provides a chart of current usage, which suggests that *ostranenie* is the most common term for the concept in scholarly studies in conjunction with Shklovsky, followed by "defamiliarization" and, fairly closely, "estrangement," with "making strange" and the neologism "enstrangement" in distant fourth and fifth positions, respectively. Berlina, introduction to part 1 of *Viktor Shklovsky: A Reader*, 58 (emphasis hers).

<sup>13</sup> Berlina explains that *ostranenie* is itself "an unintentional neologism, an orthographical mistake on Shklovsky's part: derived from *strannyi* (strange), it should feature a double 'n.'" In her view, "the word's incorrectness refreshes language and stimulates associations connected to strangeness"; thus, the original word for the concept is itself an instance of defamiliarization. Berlina, introduction to Part 1 of *Viktor Shklovsky: A Reader*, 56.

<sup>14</sup> I further specify the literary/textual sense using the phrase "literary estrangement," as in the first sentence of the first paragraph of this introduction.

<sup>15</sup> My choice to use “estrangement” because of the word’s interpersonal connotations contrasts sharply with Berlina’s rejection of “estrangement” to describe the literary concept because of the word’s ambiguities. See Berlina, introduction to Part 1 of *Viktor Shklovsky: A Reader*, 56.

<sup>16</sup> It is important to note that the *OED* entry on “estrangement, n.” has not yet been fully updated, and it is possible that some earlier uses will come to light. “Estrange” derives from the Latin *extraneus* through the Old French *estranger*. In *Ductor Dubitantium*, Taylor writes: “Thus if excommunication be incurred . . . he that is guilty . . . is not onely bound to submit to those estrangements and separations, those alienations of society . . .” (63–64). In *Queen Anna’s New World of Words, or Dictionarie of the Italian and English tongues* . . . (1611), John Florio defines the Italian verb *estraniare* as meaning “to estrange, to aliene” (175).

<sup>17</sup> Psalm 78:30: “They were not estranged from their lust”; Jeremiah 19:4: “Because they have foresaken me, and have estranged this place, and have burned incense in it unto other gods”; and Ezekiel 14:5: “That I may take the house of Israel in their own heart, because they are all estranged from me through their idols.” All biblical quotations, unless otherwise stated, are from *The Bible: Authorized King James Version*, ed. Carroll and Prickett. The significance of estrangement as a theme in Job will be further addressed in chapter 4 on Donne’s sermons.

<sup>18</sup> *PS* refers to the Potter and Simpson edition of Donne’s sermons. *OESJD* stands for the recent yet currently incomplete *Oxford Edition of the Sermons of John Donne*. Only volumes 1, 3, 5 and 12 have been published to date. All references to Donne’s sermons will be cited in text and will indicate the edition consulted as well as provide the volume, sermon, page, and line numbers for that edition.

<sup>19</sup> Both this sermon passage and the previous one are discussed at length in chapter 4.

<sup>20</sup> Mary Sidney, “Psalm 58,” in *The Sidney Psalter*, 107–8.

<sup>21</sup> Mary Sidney, “Psalm 58,” in *The Sidney Psalter*, 107–8.

<sup>22</sup> In the text, I will refer to Mary Sidney Herbert, Countess of Pembroke, as Sidney Herbert, in order to acknowledge her married name and to distinguish her from her brother, Philip Sidney, while also recognizing the importance of her Sidney heritage to her literary life.

<sup>23</sup> *Essayes in Divinity*, a work that has received comparatively little scholarly attention despite its important disclosure of Donne’s mature thought, is a revealing work for understanding Donne’s sense of strangeness and estrangement. *Essayes* interrogates Donne’s sense of God’s plan both for him and world. *Essayes* reveals Donne’s concern for both his personal position in the world, just before taking holy orders, and the unsettling of traditional systems of knowledge in the face of post-Reformation religious controversy and geographical and historical discoveries. In the contemporary estrangements of knowledge, Donne finds the materials to evoke and convey his sense of God’s strangeness and human estrangement, perceived conditions paradoxically intensified by those very shocks to Renaissance habits of thought.

<sup>24</sup> On religion as “the basis for general cultural habits of thought” (8), see Carrithers and Hardy, *Age of Iron*, xi, 1–3, 8–11. As Carrithers and Hardy note (1n1), their understanding of “habits of thought” is influenced by Debora Shuger’s account in *Habits of Thought*. Shuger defines “habits of thought” as “a culture’s interpretive categories and their relations” (9). Both Shuger and Carrithers and Hardy are responding to and revising the older conception of an “Elizabethan World Picture.” For the influential but outdated account of the English Renaissance worldview, see Tillyard, *The Elizabethan World Picture*. For a more thorough discussion of my debt to Shuger, see Part II of the introduction.

<sup>25</sup> Noting the “copious reiterativeness” of the *Book of Common Prayer*, Carrithers and Hardy describe England from 1559 to 1674 as “the corporate reader, speaker, and auditor” of the Prayer Book. *Age of Iron*, 13.

<sup>26</sup> The estimate comes from Shuger, in her introduction to *Religion in Early Stuart England*, xi.

<sup>27</sup> “Auditor” is a standard term in scholarship for the individual in the congregation listening to a sermon. In the dissertation, following current practices in sermons studies, I privilege the term

“auditors” over “readers” when discussing sermons, since “auditor” better indicates the original medium for a sermon: oral delivery. I also sometimes use “hearer,” “auditory,” “audience,” and “congregation.” When analyzing the potential effect a particular rhetorical figure could have had, whether in sermons or poetry, I tend to emphasize early seventeenth-century audiences and their possible responses, unless otherwise stated. Of course, sermons were often written down and published (as many of Donne’s were), and some auditors even took notes for later reference, so reading played an important role in the consumption of sermons in Donne’s day. Thus, there is overlap between auditory and readerly audiences when examining sermons.

<sup>28</sup> For an overview of the metaphysical-poetry debate, see part II of the introduction.

<sup>29</sup> In the following section and throughout the dissertation, when discussing the operations of estrangement in an abstract and theoretical sense, I tend to privilege the context of reading, the relationship between an individual reader and a text, for the sake of clarity and concision. Of course, literary texts might be read aloud to groups of people, and Donne’s sermons, while intact today as prose texts, were originally delivered as oral compositions. When I think it is important to also note the oral-aural medium, I make mention of auditors.

<sup>30</sup> I am suggesting the possibility, and perhaps probability, that the rhetorical figures Donne deploys will produce an estranging effect, rather than assuming or necessitating that they always do. See note 50 for further discussion of reader responses and audience reception.

<sup>31</sup> Donne, *Essayes in Divinity*, 24.

<sup>32</sup> Fletcher does not spend time with the reference to Gilbert in *Essayes*, but his article overall is concerned with issues of defamiliarization and revitalization (if not in those words), as he argues that Gilbert’s observations “aided his [Donne’s] efforts to revive an ancient theology of grace that had been obscured by the recent wrangling between Catholics and Calvinists over the role of human agency in salvation.” “Living Magnets,” 3.

<sup>33</sup> Parr, “John Donne, Travel Writer,” 80. Parr essentially argues that Donne finds meaning in travel beyond either the ancient view of travel as pilgrimage or the modern view of travel as cultural tourism; rather, new developments stretch “his imagination to revitalize the old trope of Christian journey” (84).

<sup>34</sup> Fletcher, “Living Magnets,” 8. Fletcher informs us that Donne owned a copy of Gilbert’s *De Magnete* (1600).

<sup>35</sup> Donne, *Essayes in Divinity*, 24.

<sup>36</sup> Shami, “The Sermon,” 336–37.

<sup>37</sup> I am using the term “cultural trope” in Carrithers and Hardy’s sense of the word. See Carrithers and Hardy, *Age of Iron*, 1–20. In their preface, they define their use of trope as such: “We have settled on *trope*, as opposed, say, to *theme* or *motif*, as the proper name for the four dominant parsings of divinely ordained but fallen human reality, transcendantly conceived but immanently recognized. When we employ the term trope, it will always be in this general sense of language turned by and with regard to transcendence rather than as a specific, rhetorical term” (xiii).

<sup>38</sup> Edmund Gosse described Donne as embodying “the scornful indifference of the innovator, the temperament of the man born to inaugurate a new order of taste.” *Life and Letters of Donne*, vol. 2, 330. In consideration of Donne’s “Dream,” Mario Praz writes, “One has only to think that even poets like Sidney and Shakespeare paid tribute to that time-hallowed recipe of the love-dream, to realize to what extent Donne’s poem meant a new departure.” “Donne’s Relation to the Poetry of His Time,” 64. Leishman sees similarities between some of Jonson’s and Donne’s innovations: “Both Jonson and Donne seem to have set a new fashion of writing short but often very concentrated poems.” Yet Leishman concludes that “Donne’s style and manner are not only individual, but, in comparison with Horace’s or Jonson’s, eccentrically and unclassically individual.” “Donne and Seventeenth Century Poetry,” 113, 122. In the last half-century, perhaps no critic has argued as intensely for Donne’s originality and daring as John Carey in *Donne: Life, Mind and Art*, which opens with the words: “Donne’s contemporaries recognized him as a totally

original and matchless poet,” ix. See also Carey, introduction to *The Major Works*, esp. xix. For more examples of critical commentary on Donne’s innovations, especially the views of his contemporaries, see part 1 of this chapter, “Critical Contexts.”

<sup>39</sup> As Donne relates: “I saw a secret place, where there were not many, beside *Lucifer* himself; to which, onely they had title, which had so attempted any innovation in this life, that they gave an affront to all antiquitie, and induced doubts, and anxieties, and scruples, and after, a libertie of beleiving what they would; at length established opinions, directly contrary to all established before.” Donne, *Ignatius His Conclave*, 9.

<sup>40</sup> A notable example is the valediction that ends the Puritan Millenary Petition delivered to King James before the Hampton Court Conference of 1604, which distances its requests from charges of innovation: “Your majesty’s most humble subjects, the ministers of the Gospel that desire not a disorderly innovation, but a due and godly reformation.” Fuller’s *Church History*, 511, Hanover Historical Texts Project. Cf. James’s opening speech at the Conference of January 1604. James begins: “It is no novel device, but according to the example of all Christian Princes, for Kings to take the first course for the establishing of the Church, both in Doctrine and Policy. . . . King *Henry* the 8. towards the end of his Reign, altered much, King *Edward* the 6. more, Queen *Mary* reversed all, and lastly, Queen *Elizabeth* . . . sealed Religion as now it standeth. Herein I am happier than they, because they were faine to alter all things they found established, whereas I see yet no such cause to change, as confirm what I finde well settled already.” James’s recitation of the broad strokes of the English Reformation calls attention to the alterations made to religion in England, and emphasizes the monarchical role in such changes. Nevertheless, James goes on to distance the proceedings of the current conference from “innovation” while characterizing any necessary changes as slight improvements or correctives: “And I assure you, we have not called this *Assembly* for any *Innovation*, . . . Yet because nothing can be so absolutely ordered, but that something may be added thereunto, and corruption in any State . . . will insensibly grow either through Time or Persons. . . .” Here, as in most sixteenth- and seventeenth-century self-characterizations of the Protestant project, the changes to be made “restore” religion rather than make it something new and different. Fuller, *Church-history of Britain*, 7–8.

<sup>41</sup> The development of the seventeenth-century religious lyric has been the subject of a long and varied critical investigation. I will try to suggest the broad strokes here. A good starting point is Louis Martz, *The Poetry of Meditation*. Martz, whose work revitalized interest in devotional poetry, argues that the nature of metaphysical poetry is bound up with the development of the seventeenth-century religious lyric; he understands both as primarily meditative and chiefly influenced by Jesuit meditative practices. The most significant counterblast came with Barbara Kiefer Lewalski’s *Protestant Poetics*. Lewalski argues for the primary influence of Protestant approaches to the Bible on the English religious verse of the early seventeenth century. Lewalski’s idea of “Protestant poetics” dominated critical approaches for a long time, although the recent two decades have seen a resurgence of interest in Catholic and Continental sources. An important example is R. V. Young, *Doctrine and Devotion*. See also Anthony Low, *Love’s Architecture*, for an earlier yet still influential outline of devotional poetics. As can be seen, much of the scholarship has been overly concerned locating the development of the religious lyric in either Catholic *or* Protestant sources of religious practice and thought. While Donne has usually been seen as the primary shaper of the metaphysical mode, since at least the mid-1980s studies of devotional poetry have emphasized the central importance and influence of Herbert on seventeenth-century religious verse.

<sup>42</sup> Abrams, “Metaphysical Poets,” in *Glossary of Literary Terms*, 159. Abrams refers specifically to the beginning of the sonnet (“Batter my heart, three person’d God”) but the ending is arguably more shocking.

<sup>43</sup> Marotti, *John Donne, Coterie Poet*, 259.

<sup>44</sup> *OED Online*, s.v. “ravish.” For evidence of the ending’s power to alienate even familiar readers, see Barbara Newman’s account of rereading the poem, in which she asks herself, “as a twenty-first century Christian feminist, do I really want to pray in terms that evoke the ostensible pleasure of a rape victim?” “Rereading John Donne’s Holy Sonnet 14,” 86.

<sup>45</sup> Puttenham, *Art of English Poesy*, 286.

<sup>46</sup> Lanham, “Chiasmus,” in *Handlist of Rhetorical Terms*, 33. In the sonnet, the formula expressed in line 13, “except A (God’s forceful act) then never B (the speaker’s desired state),” is inverted in the next line, “never B, except A.” To further complicate the lines, each formula is also a paradox (AB, enthralled to be free; BA, chaste if ravished).

<sup>47</sup> Patrides, *Complete English Poems*, 443n.

<sup>48</sup> R. V. Young contextualizes Donne’s portrayal in the sonnet of the speaker’s feminine soul in relation to a masculine God, in *Doctrine and Devotion*, 17n38.

<sup>49</sup> “Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness? . . . Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness . . . being made free from sin, and become servants to God.” Romans 6:16, 18, 22. The modern New Revised Standard Version translates “servants” in Romans chapter 6 as “slaves,” and in general the NRSV’s wording in the chapter comes across as more forceful and startling than the Authorized Version’s. For example, verse 22 reads, “But now that you have been freed from sin and enslaved to God.” Romans, in *Harper Collins Study Bible*, 2124.

<sup>50</sup> Lanham observes that *chiasmus* “seems to set up a natural internal dynamic that draws the parts closer together, as if the second element wanted to flip over and back over the first, condensing the assertion back toward the compression of oxymoron and pun. The ABBA form seems to exhaust the possibilities of argument.” *A Handlist of Rhetorical Terms*, 33.

<sup>51</sup> Donne’s diverse readers and auditors, then as now, do not respond in uniform ways to his works. Reader-response theory and reception theory have given scholars more nuanced ways of reading the reader’s or audience’s engagement with a text. Todd Davis and Kenneth Womack observe the emphasis in reader-response criticism on “the many different ways in which readers respond to literary texts. . . . Reader-response criticism also provides us with models for understanding the reading process itself, as well as with mechanisms for exploring the ways in which the construction of literary works shares in the production of meaning.” Davis and Womack, *Formalist Criticism and Reader-Response Theory*, 51. For major works in the field, see Wolfgang Iser, *The Implied Reader*, and Hans Robert Jauss, *Aesthetic Experience and Literary Hermeneutics*. My approach to Donne’s poetics of estrangement is interested in how audiences navigate and negotiate with the elements of a text. A reader will not automatically respond in a particular way to a rhetorical figure. Nevertheless, I consider certain effects, namely the estrangement effect, as being possible and even likely in response to particular literary devices. My approach does involve some interest in authorial intentions and expectations about readers. What I mean by this is that I do not think it is unreasonable to assume that Donne chose specific rhetoric figures with the expectation that they might work in a particular way. Rhetorical figures were thought to function in particular ways, as the handbooks of Puttenham and others make clear. At the same time, that expectation does not encapsulate the range of meaning a rhetorical figure or other literary element holds. For a recent discussion of audience reception and evolving expectations about the impact of a text’s effects on readers, see Rebecca Wiseman, “Reading and Reception in Early Modern England.” Wiseman argues that sixteenth-century theorists such as Puttenham conceived the text as wielding an absolute power over the reader/audience, whereas as the seventeenth-century developed, many theorists and authors came to imagine more resistance and independence in their audiences.

<sup>52</sup> Drummond, “Ben Jonson’s Literary Table-Talk,” 533, 531, 530.



<sup>53</sup> In the letter to Goodere (dated 14 April 1612), Donne also expresses some regret about printing his poetry: “if any of those censures do but pardon me my descent in Printing any things in verse, (which if they do, they are more charitable then my self; for I do not pardon my self, but confesse that I did it against my conscience, that is, against my own opinion, that I should not have done so) I doubt not but they will soon give over that other part of the indictment, which is that I have said so much.” Donne, *Letters to Severall Persons*, 75.

<sup>54</sup> Drummond, “Ben Jonson’s Literary Table-Talk,” 531. The poem being addressed is Donne’s “Elegy on the Untimely Death of . . . Prince Henry [‘Look to me, Faith’]” (*Henry*). Edward Herbert, a contemporary of Donne and Jonson, was a notoriously obscure poet. Donne wrote a poem to him, “To Sir Edward Herbert [‘Man is a lump’]” (*EdHerb*).

<sup>55</sup> Smith, “The first collected edition of Donne’s poems,” 86.

<sup>56</sup> A. J. Smith identifies the elegy as probably by the author Sir Thomas Browne. In any case, the author is especially commenting on the unusual blending of sacred and profane in Donne’s works. “The first collected edition of Donne’s poems, 1633,” in *Donne: The Critical Heritage*, 88; Thomas Carew, “Donne the Renewer of English Poetry (1633),” in *English Renaissance Literary Criticism*, 555.

<sup>57</sup> While there have been many definitions of metaphysical poetry, generally it denotes a poetic style or mode employing an argumentative approach and the use of the metaphysical conceit, a striking, elaborately developed comparison. Alongside Donne, the poets typically included have been George Herbert, Henry Vaughan, Richard Crashaw, Andrew Marvell, and Abraham Cowley. Anthologies of metaphysical poetry often also include certain poems by Robert Southwell, Sir Walter Raleigh, Henry King, and Katherine Philips, to name just a few of the additions. Whether the metaphysical poets should be considered a “School of Donne” has also been variously argued. For a classic account, see Gardner, introduction to *The Metaphysical Poets*; for a recent evaluation and defence of the term, see Colin Burrow, introduction to *Metaphysical Poetry*.

<sup>58</sup> Dryden, “John Dryden,” 151.

<sup>59</sup> Johnson, “Samuel Johnson,” 218.

<sup>60</sup> Johnson, “Samuel Johnson,” 218.

<sup>61</sup> Johnson, “Samuel Johnson,” 231.

<sup>62</sup> Eliot, “The Metaphysical Poets,” 281. Eliot’s essay originally appeared as a review of Herbert J. C. Grierson’s landmark collection *Metaphysical Lyrics and Poems of the Seventeenth Century* in the *Times Literary Supplement*, October 1921.

<sup>63</sup> Much has been said about Eliot’s famous “dissociation of sensibility,” his theory about a separation of thought and feeling that he claims set in at some point during the seventeenth century. See “The Metaphysical Poets,” 281–91.

<sup>64</sup> For example, his description of condensed verse resembles the Renaissance conception of “strong lines,” and the metaphysical conceit bears similarities to the Renaissance figure of catachresis. Eliot never considers this point, however. For a recent discussion of catachresis and the metaphysical conceit, which I consider later in the introduction, see Ettenhuber, “Revisiting the Metaphysical Conceit.”

<sup>65</sup> As the name itself implies, there were older historicisms before New Historicism. In many ways, New Historicism is more of a response to the self-consciously ahistorical readings of New Criticism than an emergence of historical criticism. The difference between older historicisms and the newer lies primarily with how they approach history and the objects of primary attention (namely, power for New Historicism).

<sup>66</sup> Winfried Schleiner outlines the two dominant mid-century positions on how the metaphysical poets engage with decorum: “According to one the Metaphysicals adhered to essentially the same rhetoric and poetic as the Spenserians, but exploited them for new effects; the other position contends that they boldly rebelled against the traditional rules of propriety and drew their effects

from a deliberate breach of decorum.” Schleiner points to Rosemund Tuve as an example of the former, and C. S. Lewis the latter. Schleiner, *Imagery of Donne’s Sermons*, 13.

<sup>67</sup> Tuve, *Elizabethan and Metaphysical Imagery*.

<sup>68</sup> Lewis, *English Literature in the Sixteenth Century*.

<sup>69</sup> Lewis, *English Literature in the Sixteenth Century*, 539.

<sup>70</sup> Lanham, *Handlist of Rhetorical Terms*, 31. Catachresis has played a role in twentieth-century literary and critical theory, notably in Derrida’s discussion of metaphor in “White Mythology.” I am primarily interested in Renaissance notions of catachresis, and as such use the term in its specifically rhetorical-figurative sense.

<sup>71</sup> Holmes, *Early Modern Metaphysical Literature*, 28, 4. Holmes’s book is an explicit challenge to the conservatism behind many New Critical readings of Donne.

<sup>72</sup> Rambuss, “The Aversive Metaphysical Conceit.”

<sup>73</sup> Rambuss, “The Aversive Metaphysical Conceit,” 507, 521–23. Rambuss’s focus on incarnation recalls the New Critical “universal concrete.”

<sup>74</sup> Ettenhuber, “Revisiting the Metaphysical Conceit.”

<sup>75</sup> Ettenhuber, “Revisiting the Metaphysical Conceit,” 410.

<sup>76</sup> For important formulations of “historicized formalism” and New Formalism, see Dubrow, “Recent Studies in the English Renaissance,” 192; Levinson’s oft-cited article, “What Is New Formalism?,”; and Dubrow’s new consideration of the critical turn (or return) to formal interests, in her foreword to the recent collection edited by Theile and Tredennick, *New Formalisms and Literary Theory*.

<sup>77</sup> As Theile explains, “Contributors to *New Formalisms and Literary Theory* recognize that form signifies as much about the milieu in which literature is composed as it does about the manner in which literature is consumed (and, perhaps, is meant to be consumed) by an audience. . . . Form is perceived as a social construct; society imposes form on literature, but this passage of form is never passive, neither for the society nor the literature.” “New Formalism(s): A Prologue,” 7. The collection outlines a theory, methodology, and pedagogy for a new formalism, addressing the new critical approach’s relationship to earlier formalisms (particularly the New Criticism) as well as historical and cultural approaches such as the New Historicism. While the collection exhibits a relative diversity of interests within the movement, the collection as a whole equates any viable New Formalism with historical formalism.

<sup>78</sup> Theile, “New Formalism(s): A Prologue,” 16.

<sup>79</sup> See Fredric V. Bogel’s recent article for a re-examination of the New Critical era using the terms of contemporary literary theory. “Toward a New Formalism,” 29–53.

<sup>80</sup> “Compass” is an interesting word to consider in the period, and some of the less familiar meanings today inform my use throughout this dissertation. Definition 2 in the OED cites Johnson: “‘Moderate space, moderation, due limits’ (Johnson); esp. in within or out of compass: i.e., within or beyond the bounds of moderation.” *OED Online*, s.v. “compass,” definition A.I.1.

<sup>81</sup> McCullough, introduction to *Lancelot Andrewes*, xxxiv.

<sup>82</sup> Sloane, “Poetry in Donne’s Sermons,” 403, 411.

<sup>83</sup> Puttenham, *Art of English Poesy*, 93: “A poet is as much to say as a maker. And our English name well conforms with the Greek word, for . . . they call a maker *poeta*. Such as (by way of resemblance and reverently) we may say of God.”

<sup>84</sup> Sloane, “Poetry in Donne’s Sermons,” 404. See also 405, 408, 411. In the peroration of his Sermon Preached upon Easter-day, 1622, Donne says “How empty a thing is Rhetorique? (and yet Rhetorique will make absent and remote things present to your understanding) How weak a thing is Poetry? (and yet Poetry is a counterfeit Creation, and makes things that are not, as though they were) How infirme, how impotent are all assistances, if they be put to expresse this Eternity” (*PS* 4.2.87.899–904). Donne simultaneously conveys the weakness of rhetoric and poetry in the face of God’s eternity, and their power within their limited spheres of influence. The peroration

tries to persuade the auditory that, since humans have no power over divine matters, they should focus on their “owne Eternity; as S. *Gregory* calls our whole course of this life (*PS* 4.2.87.905–906).

<sup>85</sup> Sloane, “Poetry in Donne’s Sermons,” 403.

<sup>86</sup> Eliot, “Andrew Marvell,” 301.

<sup>87</sup> Coleridge, *Biographia Literaria*, 173–74. Enlarging the quotation reveals interesting connections to Horace’s *concordia discors* and Johnson’s (defamiliarizing) inversion, *discordia concors*, as well as to aesthetic idealism, Hegel, and the “concrete universals” of New Criticism: “The poet, described in ideal perfection, brings the whole soul of man into activity, with the subordination of its faculties to each other, according to their relative worth and dignity. He diffuses a tone, and spirit of unity, that blends, and (as it were) fuses, each into each, by that synthetic and magical power, to which we have exclusively appropriated the name of imagination. This power, first put in action by the will and understanding, and retained under their irremissive, though gentle and unnoticed, control (*laxis effertur habenis*) reveals itself in the balance or reconciliation of opposite or discordant qualities: of sameness, with difference; of the general, with the concrete; the idea, with the image; the individual, with the representative; the sense of novelty and freshness, with old and familiar objects; a more than usual state of emotion, with more than usual order; judgement ever awake and steady self-possession, with enthusiasm and feeling profound or vehement; and while it blends and harmonizes the natural and the artificial, still subordinates art to nature; the manner to the matter; and our admiration of the poet to our sympathy with the poetry.” Cf. Eliot, “The Metaphysical Poets.” Eliot, no great admirer of the Romantics, describes in his essay the ideal poet (represented by Donne) who, before the “dissociation of sensibility” (64), was able to fuse the disparate faculties of humankind.

In a discussion of formalism, Abrams compares Coleridge’s ideas with formalist estrangement and defamiliarization, distinguishing the Romantic stress on “the author’s ability to express a fresh mode of experiencing the world” from the formalist emphasis on “the function of purely literary devices.” *A Glossary of Literary Terms*, 103.

<sup>88</sup> Shklovsky, “Art as Device,” 80. The earlier translation is more evocative: “Habitualization devours work, clothes, furniture, one’s wife, and the fear of war.” Shklovsky, “Art as Technique,” 16.

<sup>89</sup> Shklovsky specifically likens the automatizing effect of familiarity to algebra, “which replaces things with symbols,” and to words being reduced to initial sounds or series of letters. Shklovsky, “Art as Device,” 79 (emphasis his).

<sup>90</sup> Shklovsky, “Art as Device,” 80. Cf. the translation under the title “Art as Technique” in *Literary Theory: An Anthology*:

The purpose of art is to impart the sensation of things as they are perceived and not as they are known. The technique of art is to make objects ‘unfamiliar,’ to make forms difficult, to increase the difficulty and length of perception because the process of perception is an aesthetic end in itself and must be prolonged. *Art is a way of experiencing the artfulness of an object: the object is not important . . .* (16)

While Berlina’s translation will certainly become the new standard, I quote this passage a second time because this particular translation, available to me for some years, has influenced my own thinking and use of language throughout the duration of this project.

<sup>91</sup> The earlier translation contrasts “perceiving” with “knowing”: “The purpose of art is to impart the sensation of things as they are perceived and not as they are known.” Shklovsky, “Art as Technique,” 16.

<sup>92</sup> For a discussion of the importance of experience and sensation in New Critical formalism, see Davis and Womack, *Formalist Criticism*, 26–29.

<sup>93</sup> Berlina, Translator’s introduction to *Viktor Shklovsky: A Reader*, 3 (emphasis hers).

<sup>94</sup> Shklovsky, “Art as Device,” 81, 87, 93–96.

<sup>95</sup> Robinson argues that, for Shklovsky, “art’s device . . . is a device of estranging things and a device of belabored form, which he paraphrases . . . as the enhancement of the difficulty or laboriousness and duration of perception. Shklovsky wants to make the audience *work harder and longer* to perceive things so as to enhance the intensity and therefore the sensuousness and vividness of their perception.” *Estrangement and the Somatics of Literature*, 115.

<sup>96</sup> Bennett points out that, content-wise, devices can make strange or challenge “ideologies,” although he points out that the formalists did not use the word. Tony Bennett, *Formalism and Marxism*, 17–19.

<sup>97</sup> Karin Kukkonen, “Form as Pattern of Thinking,” 161.

<sup>98</sup> This deficiency or inability of Russian Formalism is a recurrent topic in Bennett, *Formalism and Marxism*.

<sup>99</sup> See Shklovsky, “Literature beyond Plot,” 97–103.

<sup>100</sup> As John Willet explains, *Verfremdungseffekt* “is a translation of the Russian critic Viktor Shklovskij’s phrase ‘Priem Ostranneniija,’ or ‘device for making strange,’ and it can hardly be a coincidence that it should have entered Brecht’s vocabulary after his Moscow visit.” *Brecht on Theatre*, 99

<sup>101</sup> Bertolt Brecht, *Brecht on Theatre*, 136.

<sup>102</sup> Brecht, *Brecht on Theatre*, 157–58. In a passage that bears similarities to Renaissance manuals on the use of contraries, Brecht states that Brueghel “deals in contradictions,” and he notes the disjunction between idyll and catastrophe contained in *Landscape with the Fall of Icarus*. Brueghel’s painting shows, in the left foreground, a farmer pushing a plough; the field gives way to a harbour and ships in the background. In the bottom right one can see a pair of legs kicking up out of the water—Icarus has fallen into the sea, and no one seems to notice.

<sup>103</sup> Rivers, *Classical and Christian Ideas*, 150.

<sup>104</sup> Vickers, introduction, 1.

<sup>105</sup> McEleney and Wernimont, “Forms in Sidney’s *Defence*,” 116.

<sup>106</sup> Sidney, *Defence of Poesy*, 217, line 221.

<sup>107</sup> For a discussion of Goodere’s character, his relationship with Donne, and the verse epistle to him, see Bald, *Donne: A Life*, 163–70. See also Bald’s previous discussion of Donne’s regular correspondence with Goodere, which includes an interesting, albeit brief, analysis of the automatizing effect of Donne’s frequent rides between Mitcham and London, and how he used the time to compose letters in his head. Bald writes: “Donne himself could reach London Bridge with less than two hours’ riding in any weather. He rode back and forth so often that the journey lost all novelty for him; it became his habit to give the horse its head and withdraw his mind altogether from his surroundings” (158). Bald references both Donne’s comments in a prose letter to Goodere as well as the following lines from the verse letter to Goodere (*HG*):

Riding I had you, though you still staid there,  
And in these thoughts, although you never stirre,  
You came with mee to Micham, and are here. (46–48)

In the prose letter, Donne tells Goodere about writing letters “from the high way, where I am contracted, and inverted into my self.” Donne, *Letters to Severall Persons*, 137.

<sup>108</sup> Shklovsky, “Art as Device,” 87.

<sup>109</sup> Patrides also glosses “trenchers” as “platters, often decorated with moral maxims.” Patrides, *Complete English Poems*, 261n; Robbins, *Complete Poems*, 99.

<sup>110</sup> Silcox, “Strangely Familiar,” 281.

<sup>111</sup> *OED Online*, s.v. “assiduity,” definition 3.

<sup>112</sup> Similarly, in a Sermon Preached at White-Hall in April 1627, Donne criticizes the Catholic Church for (as he claims) elevating canon law and papal bulls as sources of authority equal to the status of scripture. He complains, “Certainly, as in natural things, the assiduity takes off the admiration, (The rising, and the setting of the sunne, would be a miracle to him, that should see it

but once) and as in civill things, the profusenesse, and the communication, and the indifferency takes off the Dignity, (for, as gold is gold still, the heaviest metall of all, yet if it be beat into leaf gold, I can blow it away; so Honour is honour still, . . . yet the more have it, the lesse every one hath of it). So in the Roman Church, they have not found a better way to justify their blasphemy of the insufficiency of the Scriptures, then by making contemptible writings, as sufficient as Scriptures, equall to Scripture” (*PS* 7.16.402–3.354–65). Donne therefore asserts that the effect of the proliferation of documents with scriptural status is a diminishing of the Bible’s dignity and honour as well as of the admiration it should rightly generate.

<sup>113</sup> Patrides, *Complete English Poems*, 207n.

<sup>114</sup> Carey, *Donne: Life, Mind and Art*, 130. Carey goes on to say that the comparisons produce “an alienation effect comparable . . . to that of meeting friends in new clothes or unfamiliar fashions.”

<sup>115</sup> For further discussion of the context of the scandal, see Dubrow, “The Sun in Water.”

<sup>116</sup> Dubrow argues that the poem uses “distancing strategies” in order to dissociated itself from the events it relates, such as by framing the wedding poem within an eclogue, and giving each stanza a title to disrupt the flow of the work. “The Sun in Water,” 206–7, 211.

<sup>117</sup> As Sylvia Adamson, Gavin Alexander, and Katrin Ettenhuber have pointed out, “It can be hard to draw the line between literary and rhetorical theory in the classical and Renaissance periods.” This dissertation recognizes and explores the overlapping of literature and rhetoric in the period, and does not seek to strictly separate the one from the other. “The Figures in Renaissance Theory and Practice,” 4.

<sup>118</sup> This is pointed out by Lewis, in *English Literature in the Sixteenth Century*, 538.

<sup>119</sup> Gascoigne, “A Primer of English Poetry,” 163.

<sup>120</sup> Puttenham, *Art of English Poesy*, 243; Peacham, *Garden of Eloquence*, 1.

<sup>121</sup> Silcox, “Strangely Familiar,” 296 (emphasis mine). My discussion of the familiar and the strange throughout this dissertation is indebted to Silcox’s particular phrasing here.

<sup>122</sup> I have often found it to be the case that when activities of making the familiar strange are identified in early modern literary studies, they are either subsumed into other interests, or soon passed over. For example, Helen Wilcox comes close to describing estrangement in her work on the seventeenth-century religious lyric when she writes: “Language, form, and image in the poems are devices of human wit to discover spiritual perspectives, often through a startling reworking of the familiar.” Wilcox, “Curious Frame,” 19.

<sup>123</sup> Holmes is correct in asserting that “much of Metaphysical literature is deliberately, strategically, and wonderfully strange,” but the functioning of “Metaphysical estrangement” in the texts he considers, and its relation to “Metaphysical denaturalization,” are not entirely clear. *Early Modern Metaphysical Literature*, 2, 5, 4.

<sup>124</sup> Catherine Nicholson, *Uncommon Tongues*. Nicholson’s book contributes to a body of scholarship preoccupied with the tensions, anxieties, and ambivalences present in English vernacular rhetoric in the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, as English humanist rhetoricians sought to imitate the classical past they so greatly valued. Yet their works in the vernacular necessarily involved negotiations and adaptations of those ideals, just as the classical treatises ambiguously demarcated the line between the civilized/Greek and the barbaric/foreign. See also Rebhorn, *The Emperor of Men’s Minds*; Rebhorn, “Outlandish Fears”; and more recently, Mann, *Outlaw Rhetoric*.

<sup>125</sup> It seems likely that Donne (and thus the seventeenth-century poets he in turn influenced) would have been shaped by these strange and new works that so dominated the late Elizabethan literary scene. A study specifically on the influence of the dramatists (especially Marlowe) on Donne, who was reported to be “a great frequenter of plays,” also seems largely absent in our understanding of Donne’s formation.

<sup>126</sup> Dubrow, “The Sun in Water,” 207; Carey, *Donne: Life, Mind and Art*, 124.

<sup>127</sup> Nelson, *Holy Ambition*, 3–5. Nelson’s study draws heavily on the rhetorical theory of Kenneth Burke, and more concerned with the rhetorical phases of invention (*inventio*) and arrangement (*dispositio*) than with style (*elocutio*).

<sup>128</sup> Shami, “The Sermon,” 336. Shami links familiarizing strategies with the quality of “nearness” that Donne works to achieve in his sermons.

<sup>129</sup> Shami, “The Sermon,” 336.

<sup>130</sup> For the relation between traditional knowledge and these epistemological shocks, see, for example, Grafton, *New Worlds, Ancient Texts*.

<sup>131</sup> Shuger, *The Renaissance Bible*, 9.

<sup>132</sup> The phrase “discourse of strangeness” draws on the sense of the word “discourse,” which Julie Rivkin and Michael Ryan summarize as “transpersonal systems of language that embody the ideas, values, and shared vocabularies of communities of knowledge.” Rivkin and Ryan, introduction to “The Archaeology of Knowledge,” 90.

<sup>133</sup> For Adam’s naming of the creatures, see Genesis 2:19–20.

<sup>134</sup> The dual nature of the strange is suggested by the *New Oxford American Dictionary*’s definition, which notes two senses, the first more internal, the second more external: (1) “unusual or surprising in a way that is unsettling or hard to understand,” and (2) “not previously visited, seen, or encountered; unfamiliar or alien.” *New Oxford American Dictionary*, s.v. “strange.”

<sup>135</sup> Adamson, Alexander, and Ettenhuber use “figure of speech” as their catchall term. As they explain, their volume “follows modern practice in using the term ‘figures of speech’ to mean the rhetorical figures generally, and not just certain schemes.” I use “figures of speech” and “rhetorical figures” interchangeably as the general terms, since Renaissance theorists offer competing systems of classification. See “Introduction,” 7.

<sup>136</sup> Puttenham, *Art of English Poesy*, 238, 264.

<sup>137</sup> Hoskins, *Directions for Speech and Style*, 8, 11.

<sup>138</sup> Tranter, “The World Disfigured,” 4, 74. Tranter sees the emphasis on disjunction in the period’s figurative language as a product of the major social and political changes affecting early modern England, most notably for Donne the breakdown of the pre-modern system of correspondences—the way of seeing the world as a collection of similarities. She argues that Donne’s hyperboles and strained metaphors in *The Anniversaries*, devices which expose the disjunction between tenor and vehicle through their extravagance and extremity, challenge the conventions of certain poetic genres, especially the funeral elegy.

<sup>139</sup> For an overview of the marvellous in Renaissance thought and art, including the traditions inherited from the classical world, see Mirollo, “The Aesthetic of the Marvelous.”

<sup>140</sup> Many of the pioneering works on the effect of wonder in literature have come from studies of drama and travel narratives. See, for example, Cunningham, *Woe or Wonder*; Bishop, *Shakespeare and the Theatre of Wonder*; and Cohen, *Wonder in Shakespeare*. Emily Bartels, in *Spectacles of Strangeness*, reads Marlowe’s construction of the alien in his plays as subversions of the emerging English imperialist ideology. Greenblatt’s *Marvelous Possessions* offers a crucial account of the role of wonder in Europe’s exploration and exploitation of the Americas. For a range of approaches to the topic, see Platt, ed., *Wonders, Marvels, and Monsters*, and, for a recent survey essay, see Sievers, “Literatures of Wonder.”

<sup>141</sup> Hathaway, *Marvels and Commonplaces*.

<sup>142</sup> Sidney, *The Defence of Poesy*, 217.

<sup>143</sup> Greenblatt, *Marvelous Possessions*, 22–23.

<sup>144</sup> Semler, “The Ruins of Persepolis,” 33.

<sup>145</sup> Marotti, *Donne, Coterie Poet*.

<sup>146</sup> Sullivan, “Donne’s Seventeenth-Century Readers,” 26, 27, 29; see also Mueller, introduction to *John Donne*.

<sup>147</sup> Sullivan, “Donne’s Seventeenth-Century Readers,” 33.

<sup>148</sup> In *ValMourn*, the speaker tries to assure the beloved whom he is leaving that they will still be connected despite his absence:

If they be two, they are two so  
 As stiffe twin compasses are two,  
 Thy soule the fixt foot, makes no show  
 To move, but doth, if the'other doe.  
 And though it in the center sit,  
 Yet when the other far doth rome,  
 It leanes, and hearkens after it,  
 And growes erect, as that comes home. (25–32)

Dobranski also references Montaigne's fascinating "metaphor of two tennis players to depict the writer's and reader's mutual participation" in his essay "Of Experience." Dobranski, *Readership and Authorship*, 14.

<sup>149</sup> Dobranski, *Readership and Authorship*, 13.

<sup>150</sup> Dobranski, *Readership and Authorship*, 17. Dobranski's study sets up the active, collaborative nature of readership in the period in his introduction in order to explore how early modern readers fill in omissions in various texts, such as the unfinished and censored poems in Donne's first printed collection, *Poems, By J. D.* (1633). Dobranski's assertion of the reader's participation in the creation of meaning in a text accords with Wiseman's recent argument that recognition of the reader's ability to actively respond increased in the seventeenth century. Wiseman, "Reading and Reception in Early Modern England."

<sup>151</sup> Donne, *Essayes in Divinity*, 63. God is the Author of the Bible, according to Donne. See, e.g., his Sermon Preached at St. Paul's on Psalm 90:14: "If we require exactly an unanime consent, that all agree in the Author of this Psalme, we can get no farther, then that the holy Ghost is Author. All agree the words to be Canonically Scripture, and so from the holy Ghost" (*PS* 5.14.269.36–39).

<sup>152</sup> Donne, *Essayes in Divinity*, 63.

<sup>153</sup> For a detailed discussion of Donne's belief in the eloquence and strangeness of the Bible, see chapter 1.

<sup>154</sup> Cf. Augustine's comment in *On Christian Teaching*, 106: "The fusion of obscurity with such eloquence in the salutary words of God was necessary in order that our minds could develop not just by making discoveries but also by undergoing exertion."

<sup>155</sup> Donne, *Essayes in Divinity*, 63–64. The final reason he provides is "that we might ever have occasion to accustome our selves, to that best way of expounding Scriptures, by comparing one place with another." The idea of the value of vexing also recalls *Biathanatos*, in which Donne defends himself: "yet because I thought, that as in the Poole of Bethsaida, there was no health till the Water was troubled, so the best way to finde the truth in this matter [i.e., suicide] was to debate and vex it, I abstaynd not for feare of misinterpretation, from this vndertaking." Donne, *Biathanatos*, 30. The idea of the value in vexing and debating indicates Donne's more general belief in the need for purgatives before health (metaphorically and literally).

<sup>156</sup> Donne, *Essayes in Divinity*, 64.

<sup>157</sup> *OED Online*, s.v. "lustre," definition 4.

<sup>158</sup> For a discussion of the critical trend, see Jackson and Marotti, "The Turn to Religion."

<sup>159</sup> Shuger, *The Renaissance Bible*, 206n8.

<sup>160</sup> Shuger, *Habits of Thought*, 9. Throughout her career, Shuger has argued for the importance of religion in early modern English society, politics, and culture. Her concept of "habits of thought" has been a critical touchstone for studies of early modern culture and religion over the subsequent decades. Though a work of the New Historicism in many respects, *Habits of Thought* challenges the critical practice of equating Renaissance religion with ideology, meaning false consciousness in the Marxist sense, and instead suggests a more nuanced approach to how religious ideology or

habits of thought shape and are shaped by material conditions and human agency. See especially pp. 8–9.

<sup>161</sup> Work on Renaissance cultural tropes has extended Shuger's concept of habits of thought. See, for example, Carrithers and Hardy, *Age of Iron*; and Shami, *Renaissance Tropologies*.

<sup>162</sup> Sidney, *The Defence of Poesy*, 217. See also Puttenham on poets as "creating gods," *Art of English Poesy*, 93–94, and my discussion of Sloane's treatment of poetry as creation in part 1.

<sup>163</sup> For studies of the respective poetic modes, see Theresa DiPasquale, *Literature & Sacrament*; Michael Carl Schoenfeldt, "The Poetics of Sacrifice"; and Frances Cruickshank, *Verse and Poetics in Herbert and Donne*.

<sup>164</sup> Gary Kuchar, *Divine Subjection: The Rhetoric of Sacramental Devotion*; Ceri Sullivan, *The Rhetoric of the Conscience*.

<sup>165</sup> Shuger, *Habits of Thought*, 263.

<sup>166</sup> Carrithers and Hardy, *Age of Iron*, 11.

<sup>167</sup> Raspa, introduction to *Essayes in Divinity*, p. xlv. Raspa's summary of spiritual alienation has influenced my phrasing throughout the dissertation. See also Susanne Woods, who eloquently explains: "Separation from God became the inherited condition called sin, which in turn prompted people to create a world of misery." Introduction to *The Poems of Aemilia Lanyer*, xxxvii. The passage quoted is from Woods's discussion of the religious context for Lanyer's poem, but the theme of separation is left undeveloped in her introduction.

<sup>168</sup> Chapter 59 goes to suggest how sins breed (metaphorical) monsters, how estrangement produces strangeness: "None calleth for justice, nor *any* pleadeth for truth; they trust in vanity, and speak lies; they conceive mischief, and bring forth iniquity. They hatch cockatrice' eggs, and weave the spider's web; he that eateth of their eggs dieth, and that which is crushed breaketh out into a viper" (vv. 4-5, AV). The cockatrice is a mythic beast, a two-legged dragon with a rooster's head. Cf. the story about two adulterous sisters in Ezekiel, chapter 23, in which the prophet describes the speaker's alienation from the sisters: "then my mind was alienated from her, like as my mind was alienated from her sister" (v.18). The sexual infidelity is a metaphor for Israel's unfaithfulness to God. Note that the Authorized Version describes the alienation as an inward state.

<sup>169</sup> Donne dives deeper into the metaphor of sin as burden in his Third Sermon on Psalm 38:4. For a discussion of that sermon, and the Lincoln's Inn series it appeared in, see chapter 4.

<sup>170</sup> Calvin, *The Institution*, trans. Norton, bk. 1, ch. 15, par. 4, p. 43. Cf. the same passage in Ford Lewis Battles's seminal modern translation of Calvin's *Institutes*, 189: "There is no doubt that Adam, when he fell from his state, was by this defection alienated from God. Therefore, even though we grant that God's image was not totally annihilated and destroyed in him, yet it was so corrupted that whatever remains is frightful deformity." Henry Beveridge's classic 1845 English translation of Calvin's *Institutes* similarly uses "alienated" as opposed to Norton's "estranged": "It cannot be doubted that when Adam lost his first estate he became alienated from God. Wherefore, although we grant that the image of God was not utterly effaced and destroyed in him, it was, however, so corrupted, that any thing which remains is fearful deformity" (107). I rely on Norton's sixteenth-century translation in the text here because he is a near-contemporary of Donne and his translation contains significant examples of the trope of estrangement in early modern English religious discourse.

<sup>171</sup> Calvin, *The Institution*, trans. Norton, 2.1.5, p. 59. Cf. Battles' translation: "As it was the spiritual life of Adam to remain united and bound to his Maker, so estrangement from him was the death of his soul." Calvin, *Institutes*, 246. Note that the first recorded use of "estrangement" in English dates to the mid-seventeenth century, which explains Norton's use of "alienation" in this passage and "estranged" in the one I quote earlier. See n15 and n170 above.

<sup>172</sup> Calvin, *The Institution*, trans. Norton, 1.15.5, p. 44. Again, cf. Battles' translation: "Nothing is more inconstant than man. Contrary motions stir up and variously distract his soul. Repeatedly he



is led astray by ignorance. He yields, overcome by the slightest temptation.” Calvin, *Institutes*, 191. This recalls the speaker’s self-assessment of his own self-alienation and contradictory nature in Donne’s *HSVex*, which I discuss in chapter 3, pp. 173–79:

Oh, to vex me, contraries meet in one:  
Inconstancy unnaturally hath begott  
A constant habit; that when I would not  
I change in vowes, and in devotione. (1–4)

<sup>173</sup> Carrithers and Hardy observe that they “find the organizing nexuses of English thought in four cultural tropes of religious expression and existential understanding during the period” (1–2), which, in short, are the tropes of moment, *theatrum mundi*, journey, and ambassadorship. They explain the four tropes as “defining (ideally the salvific) moment of illumination or choice; the world as God’s theatre, with humanity as actors, scriptors, or presumptuous directors; the world as way and life as journey, wherein one travels willfully, if vicissitudinally, toward God, or perhaps away; and, finally, life as ambassadorship, in which one exhibits virtue (or vice) to mediate, advocate, and foster a transcendent (or merely absolutist) reign” (3). Carrithers and Hardy’s trope of journey incorporates aspects of spiritual estrangement. For my purposes, I emphasize journey as part of the trope of estrangement.

<sup>174</sup> Augustine, *On Christian Teaching*, 12–13.

<sup>175</sup> Young, “Religious Sonnet,” 229.

<sup>176</sup> See my discussion of *HSShe* for a fuller analysis of these examples.

<sup>177</sup> Fetzer calls attention to this passage in her discussion of reconciliation in the sermons in *John Donne’s Performances*, 33, noting that Donne’s speaker is “So appalled” he turns to figurative language in order to convey surprise and astonishment that God would allow humanity’s turn from God: “God who is not onely a multiplied Elephant, millions of Elephants multiplied into one, but a multiplied World, a multiplied All, . . . shall this man be an enemy to this God?” (*PS* 10.5.135.580–82, 585). Fetzer argues that “his metaphors begin to become slightly confused” (33), but I would point out that Donne is using another figure in addition, hyperbole, in order to overwhelm the reader with wonder.

<sup>178</sup> In *Habits of Thought*, 14,

<sup>179</sup> Shuger, *Habits of Thought*, 14–15. Shuger’s work conceives of a distinction between pre-modern and modern habits of thought, and suggests that the early modern period exhibited both. Fascinated by the new philosophy yet ready to adapt new developments to his traditional interests, Donne exemplifies what Shuger calls “the sacramental/analogical character of premodern thought,” 11. It is helpful to try to distinguish the strangeness of early modern English literature for modern readers from the strangeness of Donne’s texts for readers in his own time. Admittedly, this can at best be only imperfectly achieved.

<sup>180</sup> Shuger, *Renaissance Bible*, 9, 168–69.

<sup>181</sup> Peter Lake, “Avant-garde Conformity at the Court of James I.”

<sup>182</sup> Carrithers and Hardy, *Age of Iron*, 11n8. They cite Luke 1:52: “He hath put down the mighty from their seats and exalted them of low degree.”

<sup>183</sup> Rambuss, “The Aversive Metaphysical Conceit,” 507. The comparison between Crashaw and Donne comes only in Rambuss’s conclusion, but the article is concerned with bringing Crashaw back into the fold of the English metaphysical tradition. In other words, Rambuss connects Crashaw to Donne in order to suggest the centrality of shock and repulsion against metaphysical devotional poetics. His suggestion that the metaphysical poets “sensationalize” their subjects recalls Johnson’s recognition of the exhibitionism of metaphysical wit, but, unlike Johnson, Rambuss drives at the purpose of extravagant figurative displays: “to transume this linguistic excess into religious ecstasy” (507).

<sup>184</sup> The Protestant Reformation of the sixteenth century can itself be understood as fundamentally an issue of perspective, for whether Luther actually said something new about God and the

operations of grace is much debated by scholars. As Patrick Collinson summarizes the matter: “Luther claimed to have discovered, or rediscovered, something called the Gospel.” The issue hinges on that ambiguity—that is, whether discovery or rediscovery. If the gospel was discovered, justification by faith alone is an alteration, an innovation, and if rediscovered, a restoration of the “authentic” Christianity of the primitive church. Collinson, *The Reformation*, 49.

<sup>185</sup> Locke, *A Letter Concerning Toleration*, 23.

<sup>186</sup> R. C. Bald, *Donne: A Life*, 58. Recent years have seen a substantial body of work on Catholics and Catholicism in post-Reformation England, and it has become one of the more prominent junctures of religion and otherness addressed in current scholarship.

<sup>187</sup> In a letter to Sir Henry Goodyer (possibly dating to 1610), Donne is equally concerned that Goodyer has come under Catholic and Puritan influences: “This I have feared, because heretofore the inobedient Puritans, and the now over-obedient Papists, attempt you.” He goes on to write in the letter: “I will not, nor need to you, compare the religions. The channels of God’s mercies run through both fields; and they are sister teats of His graces, yet both diseased and infected, but both not alike.” According to Donne, human imperfection limits every church, yet he recognizes their diversity at the same time as he asserts their fundamental unity. Donne, *The Major Works*, 197.

<sup>188</sup> Carey, *Donne: Life, Mind and Art* is the most famous and influential account of Donne’s ambition, but see also Jonathan Goldberg, *James I and the Politics of Literature*; and Arthur Marotti, *Donne: Coterie Poet*. Bald’s biography has also been credited with shaping impressions of Donne’s ambition, but its presentation pales in comparison to Carey’s forceful, persistent view. For the view holding Donne’s conviction, see, for an emphasis on Donne’s Catholicism, Dennis Flynn, *Ancient Catholic Nobility*; and, for a Protestant emphasis, the recent biography, Jonathan Stubbs, *John Donne: Reformed Soul*.

<sup>189</sup> Izaak Walton, in *The Lives of Dr. John Donne, Sir Henry Wotton, Mr. Richard Hooker, Mr. George Herbert*, has been charged with painting Donne in a hagiographic light. Carey’s and other accounts of Donne as a careerist also see him as a conformist. Richard Strier argues for Donne’s early radicalism. “Radical Donne: ‘Satire III,’” *ELH* 60, no. 2 (1993): 283–323.

<sup>190</sup> See, for example, Albert C. Labriola, “Style, Wit, Prosody.”

<sup>191</sup> I would suggest that at times the crises and controversies that preoccupied Christians in the early modern world, and the attendant modern scholarly emphasis on the anxieties such divisions produced, can obscure the large areas of agreement among Christian churches, be they Catholic, Reformed, Lutheran, or Anglican. Important issues, such as grace vs. free will, were being debated and fought over, but the polemical lines that were being rigidly drawn then (and examined now) often obscure the common ground.

To put it another way, Shuger has recently argued in “Note on Nomenclature” that “Early Stuart religion, like early Stuart politics, was not, on the whole, conceived in terms of parties (Democrat, Republican) or ideological groupings (blue-collar Democrat, free-market conservative). Parties do form around a few controverted issues, parties involving some number of persons with strong commitments to one or another position on these issues, but alongside this (to us) familiar way of structuring political and religious identity, one finds a quite different model, which seems to have been the normative one, since it goes unnoticed. This model assumes (in fact, requires) that everyone affirm a common core of beliefs or principles—thus from 1583 on, all clergy had to accept the royal supremacy, the *Book of Common Prayer*, and the Thirty-Nine Articles—but this was, and was meant to be, a small core that left wide latitude for *individual* inflection and reflection.” In terms of the larger category, Shuger simply says Donne is one of the “conformists or churchmen.” *Religion in Early Stuart England*, xxvi.

<sup>192</sup> For a discussion of Donne and the topic of irenicism, see Annette Deschner, “Reforming Baptism: John Donne and Continental Irenicism.”

<sup>193</sup> Shami, *John Donne and Conformity in Crisis in the Late Jacobean Pulpit*, 18, 19; emphasis hers.

### Notes to Chapter 1: Strange Conveyances: English Renaissance Literary-Rhetorical Theory and Donne's Devices of Estrangement

<sup>194</sup> Mack, *Elizabethan Rhetoric*, 76. Latin handbooks were used in the grammar-school and university curricula, and Donne's knowledge of Latin and its influence on his work are undeniable.

<sup>195</sup> Puttenham's *Art of English Poesy* was printed in 1589, but probably written earlier. It borrows heavily from earlier sixteenth-century rhetorical theory, while pointing towards later developments in seventeenth-century English literature. According to Whigham and Rebhorn, one of the main sources for Puttenham is Susenbrotus, who wrote an influential early rhetoric handbook in Latin, *Epitome troporum* (1541), which lists 132 tropes and figures and provides examples mostly from classical literature. Most of Puttenham's quotations come from mid-Tudor poetry, although there are several quotations from Sidney's *Certain Sonnets* (ca. 1582). See Whigham and Rebhorn, introduction, 41–43, 54–55.

<sup>196</sup> Puttenham, *Art of English Poesy*, 378. Ben Jonson owned a copy, which he annotated (Whigham and Rebhorn, introduction, 42, 71). For examples of the young Donne's discussions of poetry in verse letters, see "To Mr. T. W. ['All hail sweet poet']" (*TWHail*), "To Mr. T. W. ['Haste thee harsh verse']" (*TWHarsh*), and "To Mr. S. B. ['O thou which to search']" (*SB*).

<sup>197</sup> Bald, *Donne: A Life*, 190–95. Ettenhuber speculates that Donne and Hoskins might have conversed about catachresis during such literary social events. "Revisiting the Metaphysical Conceit," 401n24. Jonson was a friend of Donne, moved in some of the same circles of patronage, and even wrote a few poems about him. Jonson also left behind an annotated copy of Puttenham's *Art of English Poesy*. Given the fact that Jonson and Donne's relationship revolved around literature, it seems possible that Donne may have encountered Puttenham through Jonson.

<sup>198</sup> Bald, *Donne: A Life*, 43.

<sup>199</sup> Vickers argues for the popularity of Hoskins' style manual because of "the frequency with which it was used, (without acknowledgement)." Jonson (in *Timber: Or, Discoveries*) is among those whom Vickers identifies as having lifted from Hoskins' text. *English Renaissance Literary Criticism*, 399.

<sup>200</sup> Donne, *Devotions upon Emergent Occasions*, 99.

<sup>201</sup> This is Donne's strategy in other works as well. E.g., in *Tilman*, the speaker tries to articulate the inward, invisible effects of religious ordination using a comparison to international trading ventures:

as a Ship after much paine and care,  
For Iron and Cloth brings home rich Indian ware,  
Hast thou thus traffiqu'd, but with farre more gaine  
Of noble goods, and with lesse time and paine?

(9–12)

<sup>202</sup> Raspa, commentary on *Devotions upon Emergent Occasions*, 178. The variety of figures that Donne describes also recalls Erasmus's ideal of *copia*, that "expansive richness of utterance" that humanists valued. Lanham, *Handlist of Rhetorical Terms*, 42.

<sup>203</sup> Puttenham, *Art of English Poesy*, 227, 262, 238.

<sup>204</sup> Donne, *Devotions upon Emergent Occasions*, 99.

<sup>205</sup> Ettenhuber, "Revisiting the Metaphysical Conceit," 395–396. Cf. Kelly and Semler, "Word and Self Estranged," and Hodge, "Topographies of Space, Time, and Disciplinarity." All three works use the word "topography" metaphorically, conceptualizing language and thought as spatial categories. In the early modern period, an age of geographical discovery and new

international trade, this has fascinating implications for talking about the “remoteness” or “strangeness” of texts and figures. Accordingly, words such as “transport” and “compass” prove to be rich centres of meaning.

<sup>206</sup> Puttenham, *Art of English Poesy*, 238.

<sup>207</sup> Poole, “The Vices of Style,” 250.

<sup>208</sup> Donne, *Devotions upon Emergent Occasions*, 99.

<sup>209</sup> Cf. Donne’s statements in a later sermon, Preached at St. Paul’s on Psalm 90:14: “The Holy Ghost is an eloquent Author, a vehement, and an abundant Author, but yet no luxuriant” (*PS* 5.14.287.720–21).

<sup>210</sup> The poem first appears in print in the 1635 edition of Donne’s poetry. Carey suggests that Donne’s poem was composed shortly after the death of Mary Sidney Herbert, Countess of Pembroke, on 25 September 1621. The Sidneys’ translation of the psalms circulated in manuscript, but was not published until 1823. See Carey, *The Major Works*, 475.

<sup>211</sup> Lewalski, *Protestant Poetics*, 282. Lewalski’s main arguments remain compelling, even if the partisan emphasis on “Protestant” poetics seems overstated. Her summary of Donne’s “biblical, Protestant poetics” would seem to hinge on Donne’s comments in Expostulation 19 of *Devotions*.

<sup>212</sup> Lewis, *English Literature in the Sixteenth Century*, 61.

<sup>213</sup> Rebhorn, “Outlandish Fears,” 3–24.

<sup>214</sup> Aristotle, *De Poetica*, 1478; Ch. 22. 1458<sup>a</sup>18–19, 21–24. Shklovsky was aware of Aristotle’s assessment of the qualities of familiarity and strangeness in poetic style. He notes that, “According to Aristotle, ‘poetic language’ must have the character of the foreign, the surprising. It is often quite literally a foreign language—Sumerian for Assyrians, Old Bulgarian as the basis of literary Russian—or else, it might be elevated language, like the almost literary language of folk songs.” “Art as Device,” 93.

<sup>215</sup> Aristotle, *Rhetorica*, 1365.

<sup>216</sup> Micha Lazarus, “Aristotelian Criticism in Sixteenth-Century England,” n.p.

<sup>217</sup> Horace, *Art of Poetry*. Horace’s dictum about poetry’s purpose, “to teach and delight,” was frequently repeated. The enormous influence of Horace helped to ensure that rhetorical persuasion and poetry were entwined in the literary theory of the period.

<sup>218</sup> Horace, *Art of Poetry*, 80.

<sup>219</sup> Dorsch, introduction to *Classical Literary Criticism*, 23.

<sup>220</sup> Augustine, *On Christian Teaching*, 32; Book 2.10. III 4–VI 7.

<sup>221</sup> Aquinas, “From *Summa Theologica*,” 244.

<sup>222</sup> Aquinas, “From *Summa Theologica*,” 244.

<sup>223</sup> With the title “New Poetics,” Geoffrey’s treatise “announces itself as a work rooted in the tradition of Horace, but carrying Horatian poetics forward.” Leitch et al., headnote to Geoffrey of Vinsauf, 227.

<sup>224</sup> Geoffrey, “From *Poetria Nova*,” 236. The translator notes: “The word’s ‘native soil’ (*proprium locum*) refers to its literal meaning rather than to its position in the sentence” (236n5). Thus, Geoffrey is likening travel to a trope (an alteration of meaning) rather than a scheme (a change in word order or sentence structure). Cf. Puttenham’s treatment of metaphor as the “Figure of Transport,” which similarly uses spatial language to describe a change in signification.

<sup>225</sup> Geoffrey, “From *Poetria Nova*,” 239.

<sup>226</sup> Adamson, Alexander, and Ettenhuber, “Figures in Renaissance Theory and Practice,” 1.

<sup>227</sup> See Nicholson, *Uncommon Tongues*, 45–71.

<sup>228</sup> See Whigham and Rebhorn, who maintain that in general a trope involves a change in meaning of words, whereas schemes and figures involve changes in form and arrangement but not meaning. Introduction, 53.

<sup>229</sup> Sherry continues, noting the expected ambivalent responses to strangeness: “yea, and peradventure if they be rashe of judgement, to cal it some newe fangle, and so casting it hastily

from them, wil not once vouchsafe to reade it . . . . But of thys sorte as I doubt not to fynde manye, so perhaps there wyll be other, whiche moved with the noveltye thereof, wyll thynke it worthy to be looked upon, and se what is contained therin. These words, Scheme and Trope, are not used in our Englyshe tongue, neither bene they Englyshe wordes. No more be manye whiche nowe in oure tyme be made by continual use, very familiar to most men, and come so often in speaking, that aswel is knowen amongst us the meaning of them, as if they had bene of oure owne natiue broode.” Sherry, *Schemes and Tropes*, A.i–A.ii. In quoting from Sherry, I have retained the original spelling while silently modernizing u/v and i/j and expanding most abbreviations and contractions.

<sup>230</sup> Sherry, *Schemes and Tropes*, A.i–A.ii.

<sup>231</sup> Sherry, *Schemes and Tropes*, A.i–A.ii.

<sup>232</sup> Whitney’s disapproval does not stop him from exploiting human curiosity about the strange for his emblems. *Choice of Emblemes*, n.p.

<sup>233</sup> Nicholson, *Uncommon Tongues*, 65; and Adamson, Alexander, and Ettenhuber, “Figures in Renaissance Theory and Practice.”

<sup>234</sup> Peacham, *Garden of Eloquence*, A.B.iv.v.

<sup>235</sup> Peacham, *Garden of Eloquence*, 29.

<sup>236</sup> Crane, introduction to *The Garden of Eloquence*. John Lyly’s prose romances, *Euphues: the Anatomy of Wit* (1586) and its sequel *Euphues and His England* (1580), ignited a literary fad emulating Lyly’s highly witty, ornately balanced prose, full of copious elaborations and antitheses. The influential French humanist and Huguenot Petrus Ramus (1515–1572) revised the “canons” or categories of the arts of discourse. Ramus confined rhetoric to style and delivery, removing invention and arrangement to the art of dialectic or logic. Memory, which he considered a matter of psychology, was removed from the arts of discourse altogether.

<sup>237</sup> Hoskins, *Directions for Speech and Style*, 11. Hoskins’ editor, Hoyt Hudson, notes that *Directions for Speech and Style* reflects the Ramist scaling back of the sphere of rhetoric, although Hoyt acknowledges that Hoskins is not purely Ramist. In his discussions of figurative language and devices of estrangement, Hoskins is also acutely aware of an emphasis on appearing witty and distinguishing oneself, but Hoskins is writing around 1600 and so he is probably not thinking about the earlier literary fad of euphuism. Hudson, *Directions for Speech and Style*, xxviii.

<sup>238</sup> Poole, “The Vices of Style,” 238, 249. Poole is essentially talking about the cultivation of obscure and challenging literary qualities and figures. He sees the shift in values as accompanying the move from rhetoric’s original oral/aural context to one of reading literary texts.

<sup>239</sup> Nicholson, *Uncommon Tongues*, 66–67. Rebhorn discusses the tension in Puttenham (and other classical and Renaissance theorists) between the admitted use of “outlandish” terms and the concern that such outlandishness makes one indecorous. Rebhorn, “Outlandish Fears,” especially p. 9.

<sup>240</sup> Puttenham, *Art of English Poesy*, 221. Puttenham’s treatise is divided into three books, the first focusing on the nature of poets and poetry, the second on prosody, and the third on “Ornament” or the rhetorical figures. This quotation is taken from the beginning of the third book.

<sup>241</sup> Geoffrey, “From *Poetria Nova*,” 236; Donne, *BedfRef* (1608 or 1609). Whigham and Rebhorn highlight the sartorial metaphors Puttenham uses for figurative language. Introduction, 1.

<sup>242</sup> Puttenham, *Art of English Poesy*, 243. As Whigham and Rebhorn explain, however, the originality of Puttenham’s approach to the figures, which he advertises as a kind of estrangement, is itself somewhat misleading. They argue that Puttenham, for his list of figures, draws heavily on Susenbrotus and rearranges the order. Introduction, 54–55.

<sup>243</sup> Puttenham, *Art of English Poesy*, 242. In the passage, Puttenham seems to expect a direct response in his reader to perceived strangeness. He describes a reaction of offense—hence, estrangement—a distancing of the reader which can then be overcome through the reader’s

*thinking* about the matter. It appears that Puttenham expects responses to strangeness to be automatic and that sustained attention and mental effort is the way to overcome the effect of estrangement.

<sup>244</sup> See especially Puttenham, *Art of English Poesy*, 347, 359, 360, 369, 370, 371, 378.

<sup>245</sup> Puttenham, *Art of English Poesy*, 243.

<sup>246</sup> Puttenham, *Art of English Poesy*, 378. Puttenham's estrangement of poetry from prose anticipates Shklovsky's "definition of poetry as decelerated, contorted speech. Poetic speech is constructed speech. Prose, on the other hand, is ordinary speech: economical, easy, correct." Shklovsky, "Art as Device," 95. Just as Puttenham associates literary estrangement with poesy, Shklovsky associates defamiliarization with poetic language.

<sup>247</sup> I discovered the annotation in the National Library of Scotland's copy, shelfmark H.26.b.33. Though it is uncertain, the hand could date to the seventeenth century.

<sup>248</sup> Puttenham, *Art of English Poesy*, 98; Nicholson, *Uncommon Tongues*, 67.

<sup>249</sup> Puttenham, *Art of English Poesy*, 228. A reader, possibly the same mentioned above, underlined Puttenham's line, "speech it selfe is artificiall," in National Library of Scotland H.26.b.33.

<sup>250</sup> Puttenham's understanding of the artificiality of language would also seem to anticipate certain modern theories of language that embrace, as Jonathan Culler explains, "the paradoxical conclusion that language is fundamentally figurative and that what we call literal language consists of figures whose figurative nature has been forgotten." Culler, *Literary Theory*, 71.

<sup>251</sup> Peacham, *Garden of Eloquence*, 1.

<sup>252</sup> Peacham, *Garden of Eloquence*, 1.

<sup>253</sup> Peacham, *Garden of Eloquence*, A.B.iii.r.

<sup>254</sup> Defending his praise of humanity's wit and imagination, Sidney writes: "but rather give right honour to the heavenly Maker of that maker, who having made man to His own likeness, set him beyond and over all the works of that second nature." Sidney, *Defence of Poesy*, 217. Puttenham begins his work with the explanation: "A poet is as much to say as a maker. . . . Such as (by way of resemblance and reverently) we may say of God, who without any travail to his divine imagination made all the world of naught." Puttenham, *Art of English Poesy*, 93.

<sup>255</sup> Peacham, *Garden of Eloquence*, A.B.iii.r.

<sup>256</sup> Cf. Puttenham's description: "This ornament we speak of is given to it by figures and figurative speeches, which be the flowers, as it were, and colors that a poet setteth upon his language by art, as the embroiderer doth his stone and pearl or passements of gold upon the stuff of a princely garment, or as the excellent painter bestoweth the rich orient colors upon his table of portrait." *Art of English Poesy*, 222.

<sup>257</sup> Hoskins, *Directions for Speech and Style*, 16. Hoskins does not clearly define agnomination, and describes it only as "that kind of breaking words into another meaning" (16). For more on agnomination, see the discussion of figures involving word play in the next section. Hoskins' criticism of agnomination satirizes the rhetorical "figure" as a kind of aspiring courtier-poet, one who bears similarity to the "figure" of the poet and his art put forward by the ambitious, court-minded Puttenham. In another memorable phrase, Hoskins complains of "such schisms of eloquence" (38).

<sup>258</sup> Nevertheless, like Peacham, Hoskins dedicates most of his manual to explaining various figures of speech, outlining what he considers to be their proper use, and providing and commenting on examples. The bulk of the examples come from Sidney's *Arcadia*. As Vickers reports: "Hoskins gave his young protégé a copy of the 1590 edition of *Arcadia*, which he had profusely annotated: an *M* in the margin indicated a metaphor, *des* marked notable descriptions, and *dc* passages demonstrating poetic decorum." *English Renaissance Literary Criticism*, 398. Such annotations using rhetorical terminology are evidence of the shift to using rhetoric for reading as well as speaking and writing.

<sup>259</sup> Hoskins, *Directions for Speech and Style*, 46.

<sup>260</sup> For instance, my discussion of *Annun* in Chapter 2 addresses the structure of the poem. Chapter 3 treats the importance of arrangement to Donne's strategies of estrangement in his sermons.

<sup>261</sup> Adamson, Alexander, and Ettenhuber, "Figures in Renaissance Theory and Practice," 11. "Compar," from the Latin for "like, equal," is synonymous with isocolon, from the Greek for "of equal members or clauses." Lanham, *Handlist of Rhetorical Terms*, 38, 93.

<sup>262</sup> Burton, *Silva Rhetoricae*, s.v. "simile." Burton notes that simile is a comparison "often (but not necessarily) employing 'like' or 'as.'" Donne often uses "as . . . so" for his similes. See, for example, the first two stanzas of "A Valediction Forbidding Mourning": "As virtuous men passe mildly away, / . . . So let us melt, and make no noise, . . ." (1, 5; emphasis mine).

<sup>263</sup> *OED Online*, s.v. "similitude," definition 1.

<sup>264</sup> Peacham, *Garden of Eloquence*, 158. Lanham explains that *similitudo* "was a general term for similitude of various kinds" in Latin rhetoric. *Handlist of Rhetorical Terms*, 140.

<sup>265</sup> Peacham, *Garden of Eloquence*, 159.

<sup>266</sup> Puttenham, *Art of English Poesy*, 326.

<sup>267</sup> Hoskins, *Directions for Speech and Style*, 9–10. Despite the meager definition he provides, Hoskins considers similitude to be foundational, for "an EMBLEM is but the one part of the similitude, the other part (viz., the application) expressed indifferently and jointly in one sentence, with words some proper to the one part, some to the other; a SIMILITUDE hath two sentences, of several proper terms compared; a FABLE is a similitude acted by fiction in beasts; a POET'S TAKE, for the most part, by gods and men." Therefore, similitude is "the ground of all emblems, allegories, fables, and fictions" (10). Emblems, meaning the picture portion in particular and thus understood as partial similitudes, demand the reader's activity in order to fill in the gaps and to be interpreted.

<sup>268</sup> Puttenham goes on to subdivide similitude, or "the general Resemblance," into three particular figures: "Resemblance by Portrait or Imagery, which the Greeks call *icon*; Resemblance Moral or Mystical, which they call *parabola*; and Resemblance by Example, which they call *paradigma*." He elaborates on each particular figure. Icon is "when we liken a human person to another in countenance, stature, speech, or other quality," as well as "likening of lively creatures one to another" and "of any other natural thing bearing a proportion of similitude" (329). Lanham defines icon as "Painting resemblance by imagery." Parable, or parabola according to Puttenham, is "whensoever by your similitude ye will seem to teach any morality or good lesson by speeches mystical and dark, or far-fetched, under a sense metaphorical, applying one natural thing to another or one case to another, inferring by them a like consequence in other cases" (330). Lanham defines parable as "Teaching a moral by means of an extended metaphor." Lastly, Puttenham explains that paradigm "liken one case to another, such as pass ordinarily in man's affairs, and do compare the past with the present" (330). Lanham equates paradigm with the figure of *exemplum*, which is "An example cited, either true or mythical; an illustrative story or anecdote." *Handlist of Rhetorical Terms*, 89, 106–7, 74. Parables in particular can be estranging forms of similitude.

<sup>269</sup> Peacham, *Garden of Eloquence*, 159.

<sup>270</sup> An arresting similitude likening the bride to quivering "gellie" (205) occurs similarly late in Donne's Somerset epithalamion, in the penultimate stanza describing the bridegroom's sexual encounter with his bride.

<sup>271</sup> Slights, "Epithalamion," 301; Mueller, *John Donne*, 374.

<sup>272</sup> Dubrow, *A Happier Eden*, 2; Novarr, "Donne's 'Epithalamion': Context and Date," 65–84.

<sup>273</sup> Dubrow, *A Happier Eden*, 162.

<sup>274</sup> Dubrow, *A Happier Eden*, 14.

<sup>275</sup> Carey, *Donne: Life, Mind and Art*, 129.

<sup>276</sup> Slights states that it was widely believed that “a woman becomes truly a woman only through heterosexual sex and motherhood.” “Epithalamion,” 300.

<sup>277</sup> Slights, “Epithalamion,” 300.

<sup>278</sup> Mueller, *John Donne*, 374.

<sup>279</sup> Puttenham, *Art of English Poesy*, 238 (emphasis his).

<sup>280</sup> Puttenham, *Art of English Poesy*, 262–63.

<sup>281</sup> Peacham, *Garden of Eloquence*, 3. Peacham’s definition of metaphor closely resembles his general definition of trope, quoted earlier. This similarity, together with the extensive length of his account of metaphor, indicate the primary position of metaphor in Peacham’s treatment of the figures.

<sup>282</sup> Hoskins, *Directions for Speech and Style*, 8.

<sup>283</sup> It is interesting that Hoskins uses the friendly word “borrowing.” Cf. Johnson’s comment that the metaphysical poets “ransacked” nature and art “for illustrations, comparisons, and allusions.” Samuel Johnson, “Samuel Johnson,” 218.

<sup>284</sup> Peacham, *Garden of Eloquence*, 9.

<sup>285</sup> Peacham, *Garden of Eloquence*, 8.

<sup>286</sup> Peacham, *Garden of Eloquence*, 14. Peacham’s understanding of metaphor and his cautions about its use will be discussed in greater detail in Part II.

<sup>287</sup> Peacham, *Garden of Eloquence*, 12. Peacham uses “compass” to mean “The circumference, boundary, enclosing line or limits of any space or area,” here defining the limits of the human mind. *OED Online*, s.v. “compass,” definition 7a. His choice of words informs my own throughout the dissertation. His use of “apprehend,” a fairly normal practice in the period, is itself a buried dead metaphor, borrowing the language of physical grasping to signify intellectual understanding, while “compass” also forges associations between the mental and physical/spatial.

<sup>288</sup> Delayed mental apprehension, rather than permanent prevention of understanding, is the key to conveying transcendence, because transcendence implies that there is something beyond normal experience.

<sup>289</sup> Donne, *Essayes in Divinity*, 24–25. Similarly, in Donne’s discussion of Genesis in *Essayes*, 22, he writes that the competing attempts to reconcile the various chronologies with the biblical account cannot “afford us line enough to fathom this bottom.” For Donne, the origin of all things described in Genesis is ultimately a matter of faith. Using spatial terms, he metaphorically describes the beginning as a vast depth, a remote and extreme region that cannot even be accessed by the fathoming line of contemporary ships.

<sup>290</sup> Donne, *Essayes in Divinity*, 32.

<sup>291</sup> Hoskins, *Directions for Speech and Style*, 8.

<sup>292</sup> Dubrow, “The Sun in Water,” 205 notes “the Renaissance notion that the eye-beams of lovers become entangled when they fall in love,” in a discussion of Donne’s refrain referencing the couple’s “inflaming eyes” in the last line of each stanza of his Somerset epithalamion.

<sup>293</sup> Puttenham, *Art of English Poesy*, 238.

<sup>294</sup> Lanham, *Handlist of Rhetorical Terms*, 31.

<sup>295</sup> Puttenham, *Art of English Poesy*, 238, 264. The degree of likeness and difficulty implied in Puttenham’s conception of metaphor contrasts with his understanding of catachresis, which essentially passes those bounds, but not far enough for Puttenham to banish catachresis to his discussion of the vices of style. As he dubs catachresis the “Figure of Abuse,” though, Puttenham still enters the debate about whether catachresis is a worthy figure or a stylistic vice, and the new name, “Abuse,” suggests his ambivalence about the figure. See Lanham for a discussion of whether catachresis is figure or vice. *Handlist of Rhetorical Terms*, 31, 157–59.

<sup>296</sup> Puttenham, *Art of English Poesy*, 264.

<sup>297</sup> Peacham’s notion that catachresis gives “names to many things which lacke names” reflects a larger ambiguity in the treatment of the figure throughout the history of rhetoric. Some theorists



seek to temper the figure by arguing that the word being wrenched must fill a lack in language, while others consider catachresis to be essentially an extreme metaphor. *Garden of Eloquence*, 16.

<sup>298</sup> Hoskins, *Directions for Speech and Style*, 11.

<sup>299</sup> Hoskins, *Directions for Speech and Style*, 11.

<sup>300</sup> Peacham, *Garden of Eloquence*, 16. “The Caution” basically reiterates the restriction contained in the definition, while adding another restriction on its frequency of use: “This observation is to be regarded, that we fetch not the translation too farre off, or that which is much unlike. Secondly that we use it not oft.”

<sup>301</sup> John 1, v. 29: “The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world”; and v. 36: “And looking upon Jesus as he walketh, he saith, Behold the Lamb of God!” In Revelation 5:6, John sees the Lamb in his vision of the heavenly throne room: “And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth.” See also Rev. 7:17, 14:10, 15:3, 19:9, and chapters 21 and 22.

<sup>302</sup> See, for example, John 8:12: “Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.”

<sup>303</sup> Genesis 22:13: “And Abraham lifted up his eyes, and looked, and behold behind *him* a ram caught in a thicket by his horns: and Abraham went up and took the ram, and offered him up for a burnt offering in the stead of his son.” Gardner, *Divine Poems*, 64; Dickson, *John Donne’s Poetry*, 136n9.

<sup>304</sup> Gardner notes that Donne cites Micah 2:13 during a discussion of the Resurrection in his Sermon Preached at St. Paul’s, in the Evening, upon Easter-day, 1623 (*PS* 4.14.357.338–41). Gardner also notes that “ram” in the Pentateuch is sometimes glossed as “priest” in Nicholas of Lyra’s commentary, and so “Christ enters Heaven as Victor and Victim, Priest and Offering: the ‘strong Ramme,’ and the ‘mild lambe.’” *Divine Poems*, 64. My subsequent reading is influenced by Gardner’s note here suggesting the duality of the Christ imagery.

<sup>305</sup> Gardner, *Divine Poems*, 54, 64.

<sup>306</sup> The *OED* cites Ezekiel 4:2: “set *battering* rams against it [Jerusalem] round about.” *OED Online*, s.v. “battering-ram.”

<sup>307</sup> This parallel was suggested to me by a paraphrase of Donne’s startling imagery in the introductory headnote to Donne in *The Norton Anthology of English Literature*, 9<sup>th</sup> ed.: “A god who assaults the human heart with a battering ram.” Maus and Lewalski, *The Early Seventeenth Century*, 1370.

<sup>308</sup> In the same paragraph of the sermon in which Donne cites Mic. 2:13 (see note 107 above), he also describes Christ’s Resurrection as opening the doors of the grave: “How hard soever my grave be locked, yet with that key, with the application of the Resurrection of Christ Jesus, it will open” (*PS* 4.14.357.430–32). Strangely, Donne renders the door being thrown open as heaven’s gate, not the grave’s.

<sup>309</sup> Matthew 25:31–32. Note that Donne’s choice of metaphors for Christ in “La Corona: Ascension,” namely the ram and the lamb, align Christ with the sheep.

<sup>310</sup> Puttenham, *Art of English Poesy*, 238.

<sup>311</sup> For an example of Christ’s passivity and activity present together in eternity, see Rev. 5:5–6. The elders in the heavenly throne room proclaim, “behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah,” to John, but what does he behold? He sees not a Lion, but “a Lamb as it had been slain.”

<sup>312</sup> Burton, *Silva Rhetoricae*, s.v. “paradox.” Of course, paradox also has roots in classical philosophy, rhetoric, and literature and the Hebrew Bible.

<sup>313</sup> Burton, *Silva Rhetoricae*, s.v. “paradox”; Lanham, *Handlist of Rhetorical Terms*, 19.

<sup>314</sup> Puttenham, *Art of English Poesy*, 311.

<sup>315</sup> Peacham, *Garden of Eloquence*, 109.

<sup>316</sup> Peacham, *Garden of Eloquence*, 110.

<sup>317</sup> Burton, *Silva Rhetoricae*, s.v. “enigma.” Cf. Lanham’s brief account, which simply sums up enigma as “A riddle.” *Handlist of Rhetorical Terms*, 65.

<sup>318</sup> Puttenham, *Art of English Poesy*, 272 (emphasis his). Puttenham’s mention of dissembling in his definition of enigma is a reference to his account of allegoria, which he dubs the “Figure of False Semblant” (271). His description of allegoria as “a long and perpetual *metaphor*” is common in the Renaissance (271; emphasis his). More notable is his definition’s emphasis on the disjunction between expression and meaning, for he describes allegoria as “when we speak one thing and think another, and that our words and our meanings meet not” (270). Peacham also describes enigma as “a kind of Allegorie, differing onely in obscuritie.” *Garden of Eloquence*, 27.

<sup>319</sup> Peacham, *Garden of Eloquence*, 27.

<sup>320</sup> Peacham, *Garden of Eloquence*, 29.

<sup>321</sup> Whigham and Rebhorn, *Art of English Poesy*, 272n18.

<sup>322</sup> Peacham, *Garden of Eloquence*, 29.

<sup>323</sup> Peacham, *Garden of Eloquence*, 29.

<sup>324</sup> Lanham, *Handlist of Rhetorical Terms*, 148.

<sup>325</sup> Puttenham, *Art of English Poesy*, 291. Puttenham seems to compare the figure to the breeding of unlikely crossbreeds, such as a wolf-mastiff or a fox-hound. Whigham and Rebhorn, however, say it is unclear “whether Puttenham is thinking of two animals sharing a leash or interbreeding.” Whigham and Reborn, *Art of English Poesy*, 291n70. Whether he is describing a prodigious breed combining natural enemies, or merely an interesting marvel seen on a trip abroad, Puttenham’s handling of the figure is firmly entrenched in the wider discourse on strangeness in the culture.

<sup>326</sup> Burton, *Silva Rhetoricae*, s.v. “oxymoron.”

<sup>327</sup> Hoskins, *Directions for Speech and Style*, 36.

<sup>328</sup> Burton, *Silva Rhetoricae*, s.v. “synoeciosis.”

<sup>329</sup> Burton, *Silva Rhetoricae*, s.v. “antithesis.”

<sup>330</sup> Donne, *Devotions upon Emergent Occasions*, 99.

<sup>331</sup> Gardner, “Donne and Tilman,” 128-29; Harvey H. Wood, “A Seventeenth-Century Manuscript of Poems by Donne and Others,” *Essays and Studies by Members of the English Association*, vol. XVI, collected by H. J. C. Grierson (Oxford: Clarendon P, 1931), 184-86. The date of Tilman’s ordination makes 1619 the earliest date of composition for Donne’s poem. Despite the fact that there is no evidence that Donne knew or met Tilman, internal evidence, such as verbal echoes and parallel imagery, suggests that Donne was likely familiar with Tilman’s poem.

<sup>332</sup> Thus, “To Mr. Tilman” is a poem about a man taking holy orders, written by a man who has recently taken orders himself.

<sup>333</sup> Scholarship on the figure of the hermaphrodite in early modern culture indicates that hermaphrodites were considered significant for more than their sexual duality. E.g., Leah DeVun explains that premodern alchemical and religious texts identify the hermaphrodite as a figure embodying contradiction and mixed states. DeVun, “The Jesus Hermaphrodite.” Jenny Mann notes that while early modern medical texts are preoccupied with viewing the perceived strangeness of hermaphrodites, there exists alongside an Ovidian tradition that considers the hermaphrodite as “a figure that exceeds representation.” Mann, “How to Look at a Hermaphrodite in Early Modern England,” 68.

<sup>334</sup> Donne, *Essayes*, 7-8.

<sup>335</sup> Nelson, *Holy Ambition*, 123.

<sup>336</sup> From a Sermon Preached at St. Paul’s on Psalm 90:14: “O satisfie us early with they mercy, that we may rejoyce and be glad all our dayes.”

<sup>337</sup> Nelson, *Holy Ambition*, 123. Nelson ties “grammatical sanctification” back to his thesis (and the title of his book) using Kenneth Burke’s understanding of “perspective by incongruity.”

Donne modifies “dubious” nouns using “holy,” and conducts similar grammatical modifications, in order “to transform social terms so that they signify within a higher moral order.”

<sup>338</sup> This frequent technique of Donne’s has influenced my own use of the phrase “holy estrangement,” which I outline in the introduction as expressing the inward, spiritual separation from the world that is part of conversion or turning back to God.

<sup>339</sup> Consider the near-obligation today to cover any perceived wordplay with the defence, “no pun intended,” or the considerable groans puns used in public speaking typically generate.

<sup>340</sup> Sophie Read, “Puns: Serious Wordplay,” 83–84. Hoskins seems to understand agnomination as a kind of play on the sound of a word. He provides the examples: “Who went away, *repining* but not *repenting*. His *mind*, and her *merit*” (16; emphasis mine). Lanham explains that adnominatio (which is the more common name for the figure) is sometimes considered “mainly a play on sounds of words” and not their meaning, which seems to accord with Hoskins’ use. Lanham identifies polyptoton and paronomasia as synonymous figures. *Handlist of Rhetorical Terms*, 3.

<sup>341</sup> Burton, *Silva Rhetoricae*, s.v. “polyptoton.”

<sup>342</sup> Puttenham, *Art of English Poesy*, 288.

<sup>343</sup> Hoskins, *Directions for Speech and Style*, 17.

<sup>344</sup> Hoskins cautions that polyptoton “may be used with or without passion,” but the decision to deploy the figure should “come from some choice and not from barrenness.” In other words, sufficient reasoning and an appropriate context are needed. *Directions for Speech and Style*, 17.

<sup>345</sup> I am indebted to John Lepage, of Vancouver Island University, for the observation on paronomasia in the context of the lines from “La Corona: Ascension,” which he made in response to my paper, “‘Estranged from the ordinary’: The Estranging Effect of Metaphor in Puttenham and Donne” (paper presented at the Canadian Society for Renaissance Studies conference at Congress 2017, Ryerson University, Toronto, ON, May 27, 2017).

<sup>346</sup> *New Oxford American Dictionary*, s.v. “crown,” verb, sense 2.

<sup>347</sup> Lanham, *Handlist of Rhetorical Terms*, 86.

<sup>348</sup> Puttenham, *Art of English Poesy*, 276.

<sup>349</sup> Peacham, *Garden of Eloquence*, 33.

<sup>350</sup> Hoskins, *Directions for Speech and Style*, 29.

<sup>351</sup> Peacham, *Garden of Eloquence*, 33.

<sup>352</sup> Labriola, “Style, Wit, Prosody, 704. Sloane, “The Poetry in Donne’s Sermons,” makes much of Donne’s interest in the image of beaten gold as well.

<sup>353</sup> Labriola, “Style, Wit, Prosody,” 704, 705.

<sup>354</sup> Cf. Donne’s Sermon Preached to the Hague, in which the auditor’s mind is melted, poured into molds, softened, and stamped. See Chapter 3 for a discussion of the image in the sermon.

<sup>355</sup> See Vickers, introduction to *English Renaissance Literary Criticism*, 24–25. Cf. Bacon on reading, in “Of Studies” (1597): “Some books are to be tasted, others to be swallowed, and some few to be chewed and digested.” *Essays (1597)*, 81.

<sup>356</sup> Vickers, introduction, 25.

<sup>357</sup> Vickers, introduction, 28–9.

<sup>358</sup> Southwell, “In Praise of Religious Poetry (1595),” 396.

---

## Notes to Chapter 2: “Strange harmony”: Devices of Estrangement in Donne’s Emblematic and Liturgical Religious Poems

<sup>359</sup> The group, according to Lewalski, “shows the strong impress of Donne’s emblematic imagination. . . . Donne superimposes upon the meditative matter of these poems an overriding concern with the creation of or analysis of a controlling emblem.” *Protestant Poetics*, 254. Wilcox echoes the importance of the emblematic dimension of the occasional religious lyrics. “Devotional Writing,” 155. Chapter 1, pp. 85–88, consider Donne’s striking image of Christ as a battering ram in *Cor7* as an example of Donne’s poetics of estrangement.

<sup>360</sup> Lewalski, *Protestant Poetics*, 254.

<sup>361</sup> Cf. Young, “Religious Sonnets,” who contrasts the “formality” of “La Corona” to the Holy Sonnets, which, he suggests, “makes [“*Corona*”] seem less original and personal,” 223.

<sup>362</sup> Lederer, “The Emblematic Practice,” 182.

<sup>363</sup> Lederer highlights the commonalities between Donne’s aesthetic and the emblematic practice: “For their compositions they [emblem makers] drew on the vast stock of Renaissance, medieval and ancient knowledge: poetry, science, real or otherwise, ancient historians, theological works, fanciful natural history, animal lore of the bestiaries, proverbs in current use—in other words, the same sources which the poets could and did exploit quite independently.” “The Emblematic Practice,” 184. While Lederer reflects an earlier critical view about Donne’s bookishness, his analysis points toward a tension inherent to the poetics of estrangement: that one draws on a wide variety of traditional materials to render one aspect strange and seemingly new. For an example of the strangeness of many emblems, see Whitney’s *Choice of Emblemes* (1586), particularly the image of a woman standing on a wheel in the sea (181). In chapter 1, I discuss the desire for rarity and novelty as an important influence on Donne’s poetics of estrangement.

<sup>364</sup> *Cross* and *Annun* are typically considered in passing as parts of a larger argument, and are rarely the primary object of study. Lewalski’s observation that, in *Cross*, Donne borrows from Justus Lipsius’s *De Cruce* (which I discuss), is something of a touchstone in the scant criticism. For other brief yet substantive analyses, see Stirling, “Liturgical Poems,” 236–37; Frances Cruickshank, *Verse and Poetics*, 57–58, 105–107; Wilcox, “Devotional Writing,” 155–56; Fetzer, *Donne’s Performances*, 157–58. In comparison to *Cross* and *Annun*, *Corona* has received more substantial attention, perhaps because it is frequently compared to Donne’s Holy Sonnets. For a comparison between the two groups of sonnets, see Strier, “Awry and Squint,” 367–68.

<sup>365</sup> Frontain, “When First and Last Concur,” 177. Grouping *Annun* with *Corona*, *Cross*, and a few other lyrics according to their circular uses of closure, Frontain comments that *Annun* “is arguably the most engaging, yet inexplicably the least discussed” (178).

<sup>366</sup> Similar lack of interest in *Cross* and *Annun* is noticeable in two important monographs, Carey’s *Donne: Life, Mind and Art* and Targoff’s more recent *Body and Soul*, studies which draw widely on both Donne’s poetry and prose. For example, Carey only mentions *Cross* twice (127, 133), and each time it is to cite Donne’s interest in the bones of the brain, quoting lines 55 and 56 of the poem: “And as the braine through bony walls doth vent / By sutures.” Likewise, Carey’s chapter, “Imagined Corners,” on Donne’s interest in “conceptual corners” (247), can only muster the comment that *Annun* offered Donne “a congenial topic” (260). Neither poem appears in Targoff’s study.

<sup>367</sup> Although Lewalski describes *Cross* as relating to controversy surrounding the Hampton Court Conference in 1604 (see my discussion of the controversy below), she does not emphasize either *Cross* or *Annun* as works significantly responding to specific occasions. According to Lewalski, *Annun* only “ostensibly celebrates the feast day but actually develops as a kind of emblem poem.” Although Lewalski sets out a category of “occasional meditations” in her division of Donne’s religious poems along broad generic lines, she only counts “Goodfriday, 1613. Riding Westward”

(*Goodf*), “A Hymn to Christ at the Author’s Last Going into Germany” (*Christ*), and *Sickness* as Donne’s occasional religious poems. *Protestant Poetics*, 255, 256, 277.

<sup>368</sup> Hurley, *Donne’s Poetry and Early Modern Visual Culture*, 149–51. See also Sullivan, “Recusant Graffiti.”

<sup>369</sup> Stirling, “Liturgical Poetry,” 236.

<sup>370</sup> See *OED Online*, s.v. “cross.” The OED provides entries on “cross” as a noun, verb, and adjective. Donne utilizes at least a half dozen senses of the word in both noun and verb forms in the poem.

<sup>371</sup> In discussions of the issue of religious images in the period, it is not always clear whether “cross” is being used to include the more specific meaning of “crucifix” or to refer only to a cross shape without an image of Christ fixed on it. E.g., Gardner states that even “a cross on an altar would be very rare,” even though Elizabethan law banned only crucifixes on altars. Gardner, *Divine Poems*, 92. Robbins, in contrast, offers notably clear distinctions in his annotations.

<sup>372</sup> The first point of the petition states: “(1) In the Church service: that the cross in baptism, interrogatories ministered to infants, confirmation, as superfluous, may be taken away.” Fuller’s *Church History*, 509, Hanover Historical Texts Project.

<sup>373</sup> William Barlow, *The Sum of the Conference* (1604), 74, quoted in Gardner, *Divine Poems*, 92.

<sup>374</sup> As Collinson explains, “So efficiently did the Elizabethans eradicate the life-sized figures of Christ on the cross (or ‘rood’, hence ‘rood screen’), flanked by images of Mary and John, which had commanded the devotion of worshipers in every parish church, that today only one set of pre-Reformation images survives, in a small church in Wales.” Collinson, *The Reformation*, 187

<sup>375</sup> Gardner, *Divine Poems*, 92. It is often unclear whether Gardner means any religious cross or specifically a crucifix.

<sup>376</sup> *Book of Common Prayer*, 145.

<sup>377</sup> Puttenham, *Art of English Poesy*, 329.

<sup>378</sup> The crosses in small things that Donne is referencing could perhaps be long-legged insects or the lines in brick paths.

<sup>379</sup> Lewalski, *Protestant Poetics*, 255.

<sup>380</sup> Stirling, “Liturgical Poetry,” 237.

<sup>381</sup> Wilcox, “Devotional Writing,” 155.

<sup>382</sup> In these lines, and throughout the remainder of the poem, Donne draws on definition 10, both a. and b: “a. A trial or affliction viewed in its Christian aspect, to be borne for Christ’s sake with Christian patience”; “b. In a general sense: A trouble, vexation, annoyance; misfortune, adversity; sometimes (under the influence of the verb) anything that thwarts or crosses.” *OED Online*, s.v. “cross.”

<sup>383</sup> Lanham, *Handlist of Rhetorical Terms*, 12.

<sup>384</sup> *OED Online*, s.v. “cross,” definition 14. The earliest verbal sense in English is “To crucify” (definition 1), and Donne may also be drawing on the sense of 4.a.: “To cancel by marking with a cross or by drawing lines across; to strike out, erase. (*lit.* and *fig.*).”

<sup>385</sup> I write this knowing full well that “precise” was a common term for Puritans in the period.

<sup>386</sup> Luke 1:31–32.

<sup>387</sup> Robbins, *Complete Poems*, 490. See also Bond, *Handy-Book for Verifying Dates with the Christian Era*, 407, 410.

<sup>388</sup> As Robbins points out, “the scribe of the ancestral copy of Group III thought” 25 March 1608 was the date. Robbins, *Complete Poems*, 490.

<sup>389</sup> Robbins, *Complete Poems*, 490. See also Weiser, *Handbook of Christian Feasts and Customs*, 301–302.

<sup>390</sup> Robbins calls attention to the Annunciation and Passion coming together in the Collect for the Feast of the Annunciation in the *Book of Common Prayer*, *Complete Donne*, 490.

<sup>391</sup> Wohlers, web author, “Collects, Epistles, and Gospels from the 1549, 1552, and 1559 Books of Common Prayer.” The words of the collect remain largely the same through the various revisions of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

<sup>392</sup> Albrecht, *The Virgin Mary in Donne*, 103.

<sup>393</sup> The speaker’s soul is figured as female, following the devotional convention to gender the human soul female in relation to God conceived of as male.

<sup>394</sup> Carey, *The Major Works*, 450n.

<sup>395</sup> Lewalski, *Protestant Poetics*, 256–57.

<sup>396</sup> Stirling, “Liturgical Poetry,” 237. She also points out that this is one of Donne’s favourite themes in his religious works.

<sup>397</sup> Peacham, *Garden of Eloquence*, 109.

<sup>398</sup> The double vision of *Annun* recalls not only the double vision of Christ as ram and lamb that Donne constructs in “La Corona: Ascension” but also the double vision associated with poetry in the period. For instance, Puttenham describes metaphor as creating “a certain doubleness.” *Art of English Poesy*, 238. See Ch. 1, pp. 31–32, 33–37. Interestingly, the Catholic Church today, perhaps recognizing the difficulty of holding such events together, pushed to early April 2016 the celebration of the Annunciation. “Since March 25, 2016 is Friday of the Passion of the Lord (Good Friday), the Solemnity of the Annunciation of the Lord, normally assigned to this day, is transferred to Monday, April 4, 2016.” *Liturgical Calendar of the Dioceses of the United States of America: 2016* (Washington, DC: United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2016), 7.

<sup>399</sup> Lanham, *Handlist of Rhetorical Terms*, 65.

<sup>400</sup> Peacham, *Garden of Eloquence*, 29.

<sup>401</sup> Burton, *Silva Rhetoricae*, s.v. “polyptoton.”

<sup>402</sup> Hoskins, *Directions for Speech and Style*, 36.

<sup>403</sup> Peacham, *Garden of Eloquence*, 25.

<sup>404</sup> Donne presents a similar image in “A Hymn to God My God, in My Sickness”: “We thinke that *Paradise* and *Calvarie*, / *Christs Crosse*, and *Adams tree*, stood in one place” (21–22). The hymn presents two trees in the same spot, superimposed, across time, but with inverted meanings: Adam eating from the Tree of Life brought death into the world, whereas Christ’s death on an instrument of execution, a cross, brought new life.

<sup>405</sup> See, e.g., Exodus 13:21–22: “And the LORD went before them by day in a pillar of a cloud, to lead them the way; and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light; to go by day and night: he took not away the pillar of cloud by day, nor the pillar of fire by night, *from* before the people.”

<sup>406</sup> See, e.g., Calvin’s discussion of the invisible and visible churches in Battles’ translation of *Institutes*, bk. 4, ch. 1, part 7, pp. 1021–22: “For we have said that Holy Scripture speaks of the church in two ways. Sometimes by the term ‘church’ it means that which is actually in God’s presence, into which no persons are received but those who are children of God by grace of adoption and true members of Christ by sanctification of the Holy Spirit. Then, indeed, the church includes not only the saints presently living on earth, but all the elect from the beginning of the world. Often, however, the name ‘church’ designates the whole multitude of men spread over the earth who profess to worship one God and Christ. . . . In this church are mingled many hypocrites who have nothing of Christ but the name and outward appearance. . . . Just as we must believe, therefore, that the former church, invisible to us, is visible to the eyes of God alone, so we are commanded to revere and keep communion with the latter, which is called ‘church’ in respect to men.” In comparison, Luther, as Mark Noll explains, more often describes the true church as the “hidden” church: “For Luther the true church and the hidden church were virtually the same entity, but the visible church was not to be identified with the false church.” Noll, “Martin Luther and the Concept of a ‘True’ Church,” 80.

<sup>407</sup> Peacham, *Garden of Eloquence*, 29.

<sup>408</sup> Silcox, “Strangely Familiar,” 281.

- <sup>409</sup> Samuel Johnson, "Samuel Johnson," 218.
- <sup>410</sup> Frontain, "When First and Last Concur," 180.
- <sup>411</sup> Cummings, "Notes to Litany 1549," *Book of Common Prayer*, 705. The 1559 edition would have been more immediately familiar to Donne writing in the early seventeenth century.
- <sup>412</sup> Patterson, "A Man is to Himself a Dioclesian," 40.
- <sup>413</sup> Gibbons, *Conflicts of Devotion*, 154.
- <sup>414</sup> *Book of Common Prayer*, 117.
- <sup>415</sup> Patterson, "A Man is to Himself a Dioclesian," 46–47.
- <sup>416</sup> Donne, "To Sir H. G.," *Letters to Severall Persons*, 34.
- <sup>417</sup> *Annun* considers two events in the Christ narrative and in the church calendar, but at the poem's centre is the controlling emblem of the circle, symbolizing their conjunction.
- <sup>418</sup> Donne, "To Sir H. G.," *Letters to Severall Persons*, 32–33.
- <sup>419</sup> Schoenfeldt, "The Poetry of Supplication."
- <sup>420</sup> Donne, "To Sir H. G.," *Letters to Severall Persons*, 34.
- <sup>421</sup> Haskin, "Is There a Future for Donne's 'Litany'?", 64.
- <sup>422</sup> Wilcox, "The Seventeenth-Century Religious Lyric," 12–21; italics in original.
- <sup>423</sup> Haskin, "Is There a Future for Donne's 'Litany'?", 55.
- <sup>424</sup> Haskin, "Is There a Future for Donne's 'Litany'?", 54. Haskin further observes: "Donne's nine-line stanza regularly interlaces into a sequence of three tetrameters and three pentameters a trimeter in the sixth line; here a 'd' rhyme is introduced. As in the Spenserian stanza, this rhyme is rounded out in a final couplet. . . . something of the traditional feel of a litany's repeated going-out and coming-back is preserved."
- <sup>425</sup> Patterson, "A Man is to Himself a Dioclesian," 39.
- <sup>426</sup> Stanwood, "Liturgy, Worship, and the Sons of Light," 106.
- <sup>427</sup> Targoff, *Common Prayer*, 92–94.
- <sup>428</sup> Donne's "Upon the Translation of the Psalms" suggests that the Sidneys' highly literary renderings of the psalms were in use in private chambers, and Donne conveys a desire that a similarly inventive and thus worthy psalter would be instituted in public worship:
- When I behold that these Psalmes are become  
So well attyr'd abroad, so ill at home,  
So well in Chambers, in thy Church so ill,  
As I can scarce call that reform'd, until  
This be reform'd . . .
- (37–40)
- <sup>429</sup> Patterson, "A Man is to Himself a Dioclesian," 38.
- <sup>430</sup> Stirling, "Liturgical Poetry," 233, 235, 236, 238.
- <sup>431</sup> Wilcox, "The Seventeenth-Century Religious Lyric," 24.
- <sup>432</sup> Wilcox uses the phrase "curious frame" (which she borrows from Marvell's "The Coronet") to describe the genre of the seventeenth-century religious lyric in "The Seventeenth-Century Religious Lyric," 9–10. For the reference to Marvell, see Marvell, "The Coronet," *The Complete Poems*, 54.
- <sup>433</sup> Patterson, "A Man is to Himself a Dioclesian," 35; Haskin, "Is There a Future for Donne's 'Litany'?", 52. Haskin believes that the irenic possibilities of *Lit* tend to be overlooked and/or suppressed: "biographical interpretations have repeatedly sought to protect readers from discerning productive religious and political claims on our energy in Donne's eirenicist exercise of wit" (63).
- <sup>434</sup> Lanham defines *enargia* as "A generic term for visually powerful, vivid description which recreates something or someone, as several theorists say, 'before your very eyes.'" *A Handlist of Rhetorical Terms*, 64.

<sup>435</sup> Genesis 2:6–7: “But there went up a mist from the earth, and watered the whole face of the ground. And the LORD God formed man *of* the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul”; Genesis 3:19: “In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou *art*, and unto dust shalt thou return.” Donne’s combination of “clay” and “red” blood in stanza 1 from *Lit* also seems influenced by the biblical accounts of creation and cursing, each of which blends the wet and the dry: “mist” and “ground” and “dust” in Genesis 2, and “sweat” and “ground” and “dust” in Genesis 3.

<sup>436</sup> Donne, *Paradoxes and Problems*, 1.

<sup>437</sup> Romans 6:23.

<sup>438</sup> Wilcox, “No More Wit,” 13.

<sup>439</sup> Cf. Haskin, “Is There a Future for Donne’s ‘Litany’?,” 69, who compares the experience of listening to the names in the Litany of the Saints as “analogous with our experience of watching a camera create a panorama.” Interestingly, both our analogies are visual, but a litany is first and foremost an auditory experience.

<sup>440</sup> Burton, *Silva Rhetoricae*, s.v. “antithesis.”

<sup>441</sup> Stanza 11, on the Confessors, ends with a similar use of estrangement to open up the grouping (and interpretive category) for “every Christian” (96); for the speaker argues, “A man / Is to himselfe a Dioclesian” (98–99). Donne references the Roman Emperor Diocletian (ruled 284–305 CE), known for his official persecution of Christians, but Donne applies the notorious personal noun to every Christian, for each believer is capable of putting his or her faith to the test.

<sup>442</sup> Haskin, “Is There a Future for Donne’s ‘Litany’?,” 54.

<sup>443</sup> Donne, “To Sir H. G.,” *Letters of Severall Persons*, 33.

<sup>444</sup> Haskin discusses the negative connotations of the word “litany” today as well as in Donne’s age. Haskin, “Is There a Future for Donne’s ‘Litany’?,” 66.

<sup>445</sup> In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus says, “Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house” (Matthew 5:14–15). Donne diverges from the translators’ decision to employ “candlestick,” instead figuring the believer as a “glasse lanthorne” (26),

<sup>446</sup> *OED Online*, s.v. “labyrinth,” definitions I.1.; 3.a.

<sup>447</sup> *OED Online*, s.v. “rectify,” definitions 1.a; 5.a; 4.a.

<sup>448</sup> *Book of Common Prayer*, 120

<sup>449</sup> *Book of Common Prayer*, 122.

### Notes to Chapter 3: “His strange love still admire”: The Estrangement Effect in Donne’s Holy Sonnets

<sup>450</sup> Douglas Bush, for example, in his seminal literary history *English Literature in the Earlier Seventeenth Century*, observes that over Donne’s poems on religious subjects “hangs the lurid shadow of death,” and that Donne has “only one theme, his sins and his salvation, ‘Despaire behind and death before’” (citing *HSMade*). Distance, a quality associated with the strange, colours the language with which Bush chooses to describe Donne’s themes: “the abysses of sin and death are more constantly vivid to his imagination than is the abyss of God’s love and mercy” (134). Lewalski, in *Protestant Poetics*, argues that “The sonnets explore the spectrum of emotional states associated with conviction of sin, conversion, repentance, faith, and spiritual struggle” (25). More recently, Wilcox has noted the centrality of fear to Donne’s devotional writing, although she frames fear as a response to sin, death, and salvation: “Fear of death—or,



more accurately, of its consequences—is the impulse behind most of his Holy Sonnets, occasional meditations, *Devotions*, and hymns.” “Devotional Writing,” 164.

<sup>451</sup> Stauffer, *Nature of Poetry*, 85.

<sup>452</sup> Marno, *Art of Holy Attention*, 3.

<sup>453</sup> Berlina, Translator’s introduction to *Viktor Shklovsky: A Reader*, 24.

<sup>454</sup> Gibbons, *Conflicts of Devotion*, 159.

<sup>455</sup> The *Variorum* editors conclude that the 1635 arrangement, although presenting an ordering of the sonnets that has been influential even to this day, is not authorial, but is rather the assemblage of the 1635 editor, who interjected four sonnets that Donne seems to have removed as he revised the sequence. When discussing the Holy Sonnets, critics still often set aside the textual problems and interpretive possibilities that the *Variorum* raises for the simplicity of a single order and numbering of the sequence, relying on that of 1635. For example, Targoff, *Body and Soul*, adopts the 1635 order “for ease of reference” (108).

<sup>456</sup> Gosse, *Life and Letters of Donne*, vol. 2, 370–71. In textual studies, the Westmoreland manuscript is denoted as NY3.

<sup>457</sup> Gary A. Stringer explains that there remain roughly 4,000 “whole or partial copies of individual Donne poems in the manuscript record.” “Composition and Dissemination of Donne’s Writings,” 18. Yet, only 200 individual copies of the Holy Sonnets survive. Stringer, “Introduction to Vol. 7.1,” lx.

<sup>458</sup> Ernest Sullivan notes that Donne “attempted to guide reader response by restricting circulation of *Biathanatos* in manuscript to personal friends.” “The Paradox: *Biathanatos*,” 154. Lynne Magnusson sees Donne’s comments on *Biathanatos* as “The most familiar example of Donne constructing the author or the author’s work as potentially injurious to an unprepared reader.” “Danger and Discourse,” 752.

<sup>459</sup> Targoff, *Body and Soul*, 108.

<sup>460</sup> Young, “Religious Sonnets,” 227–32.

<sup>461</sup> Jackson, speculating in *John Donne’s Christian Vocation* about an earlier dating for *HSShow*, suggests the sonnet could have “been suppressed from circulation because of its content” (148).

<sup>462</sup> For a description of the evidence for Donne’s readership and informed speculation about Donne’s expectations for readers, see the introduction, pp. 49–53.

<sup>463</sup> For a comparison of the sequences, see *Variorum*, vol. 7, part 1, 4–26.

<sup>464</sup> See *Variorum*, vol. 7, lxxviii–lxx.

<sup>465</sup> Martz, *The Poetry of Meditation*, 25–56; Gardner, introduction to *Divine Poems*, l–lv. Gardner contends that the set of 12 sonnets in the Group-III manuscripts “presents no obvious sequence,” but that the set of 12 printed in 1633 (and which corresponds to the *Variorum*’s Revised Sequence) “form a coherent set of poems. . . . The first six are quite clearly a short sequence on one of the most familiar themes for a meditation: death and judgement, or the Last Things. . . . The last six . . . are on two aspects of a single theme, love.” Gardner further argues that the four sonnets Donne removed from the Original Sequence—*HSMade*, *HSLittle*, *HSSighs*, and “If faithful souls” (*HSSouls*)—are a “penitential” on “sin and tears for sin.” She also considers the four sonnets to have been interpolated into the 1635 edition. Introduction to *Divine Poems*, xl–xli.

<sup>466</sup> Lewalski, *Protestant Poetics*, 265. Cf. Kuchar, “Petrarchism and Repentance,” 556n59: “Although there are some signs of a spiritual progression between certain sonnets, . . . the *Holy Sonnets* are best read as individual dramatic monologues in which the lived experience of repentance is enacted, contradictions and all.” Although Kuchar is hardly alone in this respect, gesturing towards some sort of progress in the sequence while pointing to each sonnet’s complexities avoids the fact that the sonnets seem to be presented as a sequence in the manuscripts. To be fair, however, the critical tendency that I notice in Kuchar and others seems in some way to be a reaction away from the overly precise and assured plans Gardner read into the sequence.

<sup>467</sup> Young, “Religious Sonnets.” Young argues: “If the poems are designed to be read and comprehended in sequence . . . as the textual evidence suggests, then it is incumbent upon critics to explain what is *meant* by Donne’s substantial revision” (221; emphasis his).

<sup>468</sup> Donne estranges aspects of genre on other occasions. We have seen that *Tilman*, a work usually grouped among the Divine Poems, combines the genres of verse letter and religious meditation. The speaker of *Tilman* addresses the titular clergyman in the second person as he assesses and contemplates the nature, effects, and functions of a religious vocation. Although neither *Cross* nor *Annun* is especially innovative in terms of genre, *Lit* involves the transformation of a corporate liturgical prayer into an individual devotional poem (and prayer), but the dislocation in terms of genre is fairly minor. Donne’s three hymns have also been noted for their combination of a highly individual voice with the communal form of a religious song of praise and prayer. See Stirling, “Liturgical Poetry,” 238–41.

<sup>469</sup> Donne participates in two innovative trends in English religious poetry. First of all, Donne’s recasting of Petrarchan elements in a devotional setting resembles Robert Southwell’s methods of appropriating the conventions of love poetry for writing on religious topics. Second, Donne uses the sonnet form for religious subject matter, although Donne was not the first poet to do so. Other poets, such as Anne Locke (1530–c. 1590), Fulke Greville, Lord Brooke (1554–1628), and William Alabaster (1567–1640), had used the sonnet to explore religious themes.

<sup>470</sup> Dubrow, “Resident Alien,” in *Echoes of Desire*.

<sup>471</sup> Evans, introduction to *Elizabethan Sonnets*, viii.

<sup>472</sup> Kuchar, “Petrarchism and Repentance,” 537.

<sup>473</sup> Cf. Matthew Biberman, *Masculinity, Anti-Semitism, and Early Modern English Literature*, 78, who challenges the general critical agreement, arguing that the Holy Sonnets present a hyper-masculine speaker.

<sup>474</sup> Lanham, “Chiasmus,” in *Handlist of Rhetorical Terms*, 33.

<sup>475</sup> In early 1601, Donne secretly married the niece of his employer, Lord Egerton. As a result, Donne lost his post as secretary, was briefly imprisoned, and subsequently struggled to maintain steady employment and obtain advancement over the following decade. See Bald, *Donne: A Life*, 128–99. Bald assigns “the majority of the ‘Divine Poems’” to Donne’s years at Mitcham. *Donne: A Life*, 200. Carey explains the Holy Sonnets as conditioned by both Donne’s anguished apostasy from Catholicism as well as aspects of Protestant theology: “Donne’s need for a God who would make him suffer, voiced so stridently in the ‘Holy Sonnets,’ can be related to this sensitivity about missed martyrdom,” Donne having abandoned the Catholic faith of his early years. However, according to Carey, Protestantism as conceived in the period “was a recipe for anguish.” *Donne: Life, Mind and Art*, 35, 43. Gardner attributes the “almost histrionic note” of the Holy Sonnets to both the aims of their genre, that is, “the meditation’s deliberate stimulation of emotion,” as well as personal aspects of Donne: “The meditation on sin and on judgement is strong medicine; the fact that his mind turned to it suggests some sickness in the soul.” Introduction to *Divine Poems*, xxxi. Marotti, in *Donne, Coterie Poet*, 254, argues that the Holy Sonnets’ portrayal of the speaker’s relationship with God reflects Donne’s struggle to obtain favour from social superiors: “the Donne who felt neglected and abused by secular authorities, including the King, portrayed a paradoxically hurtful and helpful God whose power he both resisted and felt drawn to.”

<sup>476</sup> Gardner, although she argues for the influence of Ignatian meditation on the structure of the sonnets, reads them somewhat anachronistically as fundamentally Anglican. For Gardner’s views on Donne’s religious development, see introduction to *Divine Poems*, xvii–xxi. For her treatment of the influence of Ignatian meditation on the sequence, see l–lii. Martz, in *The Poetry of Meditation*, has emphasized Counter-Reformation influences, while Lewalski, in *Protestant Poetics*, has argued for an English biblical poetics, albeit one reliant on Calvin and Continental Reformed theology. Carey, in *John Donne: Life, Mind and Art*, emphasizes a Calvinist God in his

readings of the Holy Sonnets, and John Stachniewski, in “The Despair of the ‘Holy Sonnets,’” maintains that the doctrines of Calvinism inspire the speaker’s dread and despair that he reads as pervading the sonnets.

<sup>477</sup> Strier, “John Donne Awry and Squint: The ‘Holy Sonnets,’ 1608–1610.

<sup>478</sup> Kuchar, “Petrarchism and Repentance,” 537.

<sup>479</sup> Gibbons, *Conflicts of Devotion*, 159–74. See also Marno, *Art of Holy Attention*.

<sup>480</sup> Gibbons, *Conflicts of Devotion*, 174.

<sup>481</sup> Young, *Doctrine and Devotion*, 8. See also Alison Shell and Arnold Hunt, “Donne’s Religious World,” in which they assert “Donne’s emotionally charged interest in finding common ground between the denominations,” 78. I agree with Young’s reading of the importance of Donne’s private expressions of irenicism.

<sup>482</sup> Lewalski notes the emotional range of the Holy Sonnets. *Protestant Poetics*, 25.

<sup>483</sup> Many critics have noted the parallels between Donne’s religious and secular love poems. E.g., Wilcox observes, “The sonnets struggle to contain the contraries of desire and despair, passion and preoccupation, trials and triumphs: loving God, Donne’s devotional writing suggests, can be as troubled and varied an experience as that depicted in his secular love poetry.” “Devotional Writing,” 150.

<sup>484</sup> Wilcox, “Devotional Writing,” 151.

<sup>485</sup> Gibbons, *Conflicts of Devotion*, 163.

<sup>486</sup> Peacham, *Garden of Eloquence*, 25.

<sup>487</sup> Although the position of the two poems within the larger sequence changes over the course of Donne’s revisions, at all three stages of the Holy Sonnets *HSBlack* immediately precedes *HSScene*. The two seem bound together by their preoccupation with trying on and dispensing with different devotional metaphors, evoking the figuration as clothing trope common to the period’s literary-rhetorical theory. In the Original Sequence, the two sonnets are in positions 5 and 6, in the Westmoreland MS, 5 and 6, and in the Revised Sequence, 2 and 3.

<sup>488</sup> Targoff, *Body and Soul*, 107.

<sup>489</sup> The combination of “three persond” with the violent verb “Batter” suggests the triple-pronged power of God in three persons. The tripling also suggests the desperation of the speaker, who wants to be battered by all three persons of the Trinity: the more, the better.

<sup>490</sup> Burton, *Silva Rhetoricae*, s.v. “polyptoton.”

<sup>491</sup> Marno, *Art of Holy Attention*, 5.

<sup>492</sup> Lanham defines *enargia* as “A generic term for visually powerful, vivid description which recreates something or someone, as several theorists say, ‘before your very eyes.’” *A Handlist of Rhetorical Terms*, 64.

<sup>493</sup> Biberman, *Masculinity, Anti-Semitism and Early Modern English Literature*, 77–78;

Guibbory, *Returning to John Donne*, 250.

<sup>494</sup> See, e.g., Shami, “Anti-Jewish Rhetoric,” 49, who points out that Donne more often discusses historical rather than contemporary Jews.

<sup>495</sup> For an important account of Jews in early modern English literature, see James Shapiro’s *Shakespeare and the Jews*, 189, which argues that *The Merchant of Venice* “reproduces the practice of translating anti-alien into anti-Jewish sentiment.” Whether Jews could be English citizens was not a clear-cut matter, but their status as religious and thus social Others was widely perceived. Shapiro, 189–193. Guibbory, in *Returning to John Donne*, 250, calls attention to Shapiro’s comments on Donne’s use in some sermons of anti-Semitic stereotypes as well as Shami’s interest in Donne’s use of anti-Jewish rhetoric. But Guibbory also notes how Donne’s Sermon Preached to the Earl of Exeter, and his Company, in his Chappell at St. John’s, 13 June 1624 (*PS* 6.7) “stands as one of the more tolerant stances towards Jews in Donne’s day.”

<sup>496</sup> Burton, *Silva Rhetoricae*, s.v. “antithesis.”

<sup>497</sup> Biberman, *Masculinity, Anti-Semitism and Early Modern English Literature*, 78.

<sup>498</sup> Patrides, *Complete English Poems*, 441n.

<sup>499</sup> Martz, *The Poetry of Meditation*, 50.

<sup>500</sup> Hoskins, *Directions for Speech and Style*, 36.

<sup>501</sup> *OED Online*, s.v. “admire.”

<sup>502</sup> Geoffrey, “From *Poetria Nova*,” 236.

<sup>503</sup> Puttenham, *Art of English Poesy*, 221

<sup>504</sup> *Variorum*, vol. 7, lxiii. The four sonnets were appended as “Other Meditations” to “Diuine Meditations” in certain manuscripts (C9 and H6) from Group III “at some point after the initial collection was entered” (lxiii). In the Westmoreland Manuscript (NY3), the four stand as a unit after the original arrangement of twelve, and are followed by the three sonnets unique to NY3. The *Variorum* editors summarize the insertion of the four sonnets and the reconstitution of the sequence as follows: “the Group-I manuscripts B32, C2, O20, and SPI revert to a 12-poem sequence of Holy Sonnets that incorporates 8 of the Group-III poems, but discards the 1st, 3rd, 7th, and 10th [*HSMade*, *HSSighs*, *HSLittle*, *HSSouls*], moves *HSPart* [“Father part of his double interest”] to the concluding position at the very end of the sequence, and inserts *HSSpit*, *HSWhy*, *HSWhat*, and *HSBatter* into positions 7–10 of the new arrangement” (lxiii). The four sonnets remain in positions 7–10 in the Revised Sequence, which corresponds with the arrangement in the first print edition of 1633. The editor of the 1635 edition modifies the sequence to reintroduce the four sonnets removed from the Original Sequence; nevertheless, 1635 preserves the order of *HSSpit*, *HSWhy*, *HSWhat*, and *HSBatter* in positions 11–14.

<sup>505</sup> See, e.g., Calvin, *Institutes*, trans. Battles, 474: “clothed with our flesh, he fulfilled the office of Mediator.”

<sup>506</sup> Labriola, “Biblical Typology in John Donne’s ‘Spit in my face yee Jewes,’” 50.

<sup>507</sup> See Genesis 27 for the story of Jacob disguising himself as Esau to steal his blessing.

<sup>508</sup> Fetzer, *John Donne’s Performances*, 154, 157.

<sup>509</sup> Fetzer, *John Donne’s Performances*, 154–57.

<sup>510</sup> Fetzer, *John Donne’s Performances*, 157.

<sup>511</sup> Gardner, *Divine Poems*, xli.

<sup>512</sup> Young summarizes the case for the three Westmoreland sonnets having been composed at a significantly later date than the other sonnets, citing the death of Donne’s wife on 15 August 1617 and an allusion, in *HSShow*, to “the Protestant defeat at the Battle of White Mountain on 29 October 1620 (227). Young continues: “It is not much of a leap, then, to infer that the third of these Sonnets [*HSVex*] . . . was also written about the same time.” “Religious Sonnets,” 228.

<sup>513</sup> Mueller, *John Donne*, 551, 553.

<sup>514</sup> See, for example, Stachniewski, “The Despair of the ‘Holy Sonnets,’” 686; “Dubrow, “Resident Alien,” in *Echoes of Desire*, 227; Kuchar, “Petrarchism and Repentance,” 562–64. Mueller notes antecedents in Dante, Petrarch, and Sir Philip Sidney. *John Donne*, 549–50.

<sup>515</sup> Stachniewski, “The Despair of the ‘Holy Sonnets,’” 686.

<sup>516</sup> Mueller, *John Donne*, 550. Dropsy is also known as oedema.

<sup>517</sup> Mueller, *John Donne*, 550.

<sup>518</sup> Stachniewski in “The Despair of the ‘Holy Sonnets,’” 686, argues that “Since she whom I love” “represents a failed attempt by Donne to wrench his mind into acceptance of the loss of his wife as an act of love on God’s part.” Strier makes a more general argument against artificially divorcing Donne from the speaker of the Holy Sonnets: “I may seem to be ‘naively’ taking Donne’s religious lyrics as directly reflecting his life. I hope to do this non-naively. . . . We need not relentlessly sever poetic speakers from historical authors. Sometimes the poetic speaker is the historical author, or is a direct projection of him (or her).” “Awry and Squint,” 358.

<sup>519</sup> Mueller, *John Donne*, 550.

<sup>520</sup> Young, “Religious Sonnets,” 229.

<sup>521</sup> Mueller, *John Donne*, 550–51. Although Donne’s poetry is remarkable in the period for its scant references to classical myth, Donne’s use of the word “ravish” in this sonnet to describe God’s actions towards his wife evokes the Greek gods who frequently ravish human women. The God of the Hebrew and Christian Bibles is generally nonsexual, although God’s relationships with humankind are occasionally described or figured in erotic terms, a tradition which was developed in the Middle Ages in Christian interpretations of the Song of Songs.

<sup>522</sup> Drummond, *A Cypress Grove*, 339.

<sup>523</sup> Stachniewski, “The Despair of the ‘Holy Sonnets,’” 687.

<sup>524</sup> See Exodus 20:5: “for I the LORD thy God *am* a jealous God.”

<sup>525</sup> Young notes the connection between *HSDue* and *HSBatter*, and calls attention to “ravish” in *HSShe*, but he does not explore the connections between all three poems. “Religious Sonnets,” 226, 229.

<sup>526</sup> Stachniewski, “The Despair of the ‘Holy Sonnets,’” 687.

<sup>527</sup> Patrides, *Complete English Poems*, 446n.

<sup>528</sup> Guibbory, *Returning to John Donne*, 226.

<sup>529</sup> See, for example, Hosea 1:2: “And the LORD said to Hosea, Go, take unto thee a wife of whoredoms and children of whoredoms: for the land hath committed great whoredom, *departing* from the LORD”; Matt. 25:1: “Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom”; Rev. 21:2: “And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.” Young notes the contrast of Jerusalem having “playedst the harlot” in Ezekiel 16:15 with Christ being the husband of “a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing” in Ephesians 5:27. Young, “Religious Sonnets,” 231.

<sup>530</sup> Puttenham, *Art of English Poetry*, 271.

<sup>531</sup> Mueller, *John Donne*, 555.

<sup>532</sup> See, for example, Robbins, *Complete Poems*, 463.

<sup>533</sup> Luther and others interpreted the Roman Church as the Whore of Babylon from Rev. 17. Dickson notes that “The Roman Catholic Church was frequently depicted by Protestants as a painted harlot.” *John Donne’s Poetry*, 144n4.

<sup>534</sup> Puttenham, *Art of English Poetry*, 271.

<sup>535</sup> Puttenham, *Art of English Poetry*, 272.

<sup>536</sup> Dickson glosses “On one” as Mt. Moriah, “on Seauen” as Rome, and “on no hill” as Geneva. *John Donne’s Poetry*, 144n6.

<sup>537</sup> In Donne’s own life, his search for “true religion” led him from the church of his youth to the established church of his nation.

<sup>538</sup> Gardner, “The Interpretation of Donne’s Sonnet on the Church,” *Divine Poems*, 121–27. She states: “it could hardly have been written by anyone but an Anglican” (122).

<sup>539</sup> Jackson, *John Donne’s Christian Vocation*, 166–67.

<sup>540</sup> Guibbory describes *HSShow* as a “witty, paradoxical argument for inclusivity.” *Returning to John Donne*, 226. To qualify my claim, Donne’s understanding of irenic, inclusive Christianity should not be read as synonymous with twenty-first century definitions of diversity and inclusion. Young persuasively reads Donne’s irenicism historically: the sonnet is “a composition that documents the beginnings of this novel ‘ecumenical’ vision of the church,” one precipitated by the new religious conflicts of the Thirty Years War. “Religious Sonnets,” 230.

<sup>541</sup> Mueller, *John Donne*, 554 notes that “The conventional ‘fire’ and ‘ice’ extremes of the Petrarchan lover’s erotic torments are here transposed in typical Donnean fashion to a religious register.”

<sup>542</sup> Carey discusses this motif in the chapter, “Imagined Corners,” in *Donne: Life, Mind and Art*: “What, we may start by asking, have angels, mummy, mandrakes, coins, maps and shadows in

common, apart from the fact that they are among Donne's favourite subjects? The answer seems to be that they are meeting places for opposites" (247).

<sup>543</sup> Guibbory, *Returning to John Donne*, 226. She adds that "the Holy Sonnets chart that inconstancy." My earlier discussion of the speaker's shifting tropes in sonnets such as *HSBlack* and *HSScene* corroborates Guibbory's argument. See pp. 148–50.

<sup>544</sup> Young, "Religious Sonnets," 231.

<sup>545</sup> Augustine, *Confessions*, 3.

<sup>546</sup> Calvin, *The Institution*, trans. Norton, 1.15.5, p. 44. For a fuller discussion of the trope of estrangement in Calvin, see "Estrangement as Religious Trope" in the introduction, pp. 44–50.

<sup>547</sup> Puttenham, *Art of English Poesy*, 243.

<sup>548</sup> Wilcox, "Devotional Writing," 151–52.

<sup>549</sup> Marotti, *Donne, Coterie Poet*, 279.

<sup>550</sup> Novarr, *The Disinterred Muse*, 120–21.

<sup>551</sup> Mueller, *John Donne*, 553.

<sup>552</sup> Cf. Stirling, "Liturgical Poems," who describes one of Donne's "favourite themes, one to which he returns in later poetry and in his Sermons: that the beginning and end of man's life, as on the circumference of a circle, are one and the same point," 237.

<sup>553</sup> Donne, *Essayes in Divinity*, 63–64. The final reason Donne provides is "that we might ever have occasion to accustome our selves, to that best way of expounding Scriptures, by comparing one place with another." The idea of the value of vexing also recalls *Biathanatos*, in which Donne defends himself: "yet because I thought, that as in the Poole of Bethsaida, there was no health till the Water was troubled, so the best way to finde the truth in this matter [i.e., suicide] was to debate and vex it, I abstaynd not for feare of misinterpretation, from this vndertaking." Donne, *Biathanatos*, 30. The idea of the value in vexing and debating indicates Donne's more general belief in the need for purgatives before health (metaphorically and literally).

#### Notes to Chapter 4: "I am not alwayes I": Estrangement as Technique and Theme in Donne's Sermons

<sup>554</sup> Chamberlain, vol. 2 of *Letters*, 407–8. Richard Corbet was Dean of Christ Church at the time.

<sup>555</sup> Walton, *The Life of Dr. John Donne*, xxi. Walton's description immediately preceding the quotation I use is more famous and frequently discussed: Donne was "a preacher in earnest; weeping sometimes for his auditory, sometimes with them; always preaching to himself like an angel from a cloud, but in none; carrying some, as St. Paul was, to Heaven in holy raptures, and enticing others by a sacred art and courtship to amend their lives" (xxi). Many of the elegies about Donne published in the posthumous collection, *Poems, by J. D.* (1633) single out Donne's preaching. For example, Thomas Carew's elegy on Donne's death, which I noted in the introduction, describes Donne's sermons as committing "holy rapes upon our will" (17). Thomas Carew, "Donne the Renewer of English Poetry (1633)," in *English Renaissance Literary Criticism*, 555.

<sup>556</sup> In spite of his fame as a preacher, only six of Donne's sermons appeared in print before his death in 1631. John Donne Jr. had his father's sermons published in three large handsome folios in the middle decades of the seventeenth century: they are *LXXX Sermons* (1640), *Fifty Sermons* (1649), and *XXVI Sermons* (1661). Nevertheless, over the subsequent three centuries, Donne's sermons were not widely available and infrequently read and studied, Coleridge's extensive annotations in his copies of Donne's sermons being a notable exception. The multi-volume publication of *The Sermons of John Donne*, edited by George Potter and Evelyn Simpson (1953–62), brought new critical attention to Donne's sermons and facilitated study of them as a group.

<sup>557</sup> See Simpson, *A Study of the Prose Works*; and Potter and Simpson, “The Literary Value of Donne’s Sermons.” Logan Pearsall Smith’s early collection of sermon passages is also notable. The tradition of assembling “poetic” passages has continued down to the first incarnation of the Oxford Authors edition of Donne’s major works. Carey’s collection extracts passages he deems important, while including all of *Death’s Duell*, which is the most anthologized and probably most read sermon by Donne. See Smith, *Donne’s Sermons: Selected Passages*; Donne, *The Major Works*. In a somewhat anachronistic merging of Donne’s careers as poet and preacher, Horton Davies applied the “metaphysical” label to Donne as a preacher and proceeded to catalogue a school of “metaphysical preachers” in the Church of England of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. However, Davies’ application of the “metaphysical” label to preachers remains controversial and is rarely duplicated, not only because of the evolution of sermon studies towards political and rhetorical readings, but also as the “metaphysical” label for Donne’s poetry has itself come under increased scrutiny and fallen into disuse. Davies, *Like Angels from a Cloud*.

<sup>558</sup> See, e.g., P.G. Stanwood and Heather Asals, *John Donne and the Theology of Language*; Debora Shuger, “Absolutist Theology: The Sermons of John Donne” in *Habits of Thought*; and Troy D. Reeve’s *The Annotated Index to the Sermons of John Donne*, which has facilitated selective quotation from the sermons. Jeanne Shami has challenged Shuger’s use of quotations (and, relatedly, her reading of Donne’s politics) in “Donne’s Sermons and the Absolutist Politics of Quotation.” Cf. Jeffrey Johnson’s study of Donne’s theology, which tries to circumvent some of the issues of selective quotation by focusing on a number of representative sermons. Johnson, *The Theology of John Donne*.

<sup>559</sup> Ferrell and McCullough, eds., *The Early Sermon Revised* is a seminal summation of the first wave of new perspectives, while McCullough, Adlington, and Rhatigan, eds., *The Oxford Handbook of the Early Modern Sermon*, presents the dominant critical trends of the twenty-first century.

<sup>560</sup> See McCullough, *Sermons at Court*, and Shami, *John Donne and Conformity in Crisis in the Late Jacobean Pulpit*.

<sup>561</sup> McCullough, “Donne as Preacher,” 168.

<sup>562</sup> See Shami, “Donne and Discretion,” 50, and “The Sermon,” 334–36. See my fuller discussion of Donne’s “nearness” below.

<sup>563</sup> Colclough, introduction, xxv. Colclough singles out Webber, *Contrary Music* and Schleiner, *The Imagery of Donne’s Sermons* as offering earlier yet still influential formal studies.

<sup>564</sup> In *Holy Ambition*, Nelson sees Donne as drawing on and dialectically purifying his congregations’ worldly ambitions to climb the social hierarchy, persuading his auditors to court God (1–3). Nelson adapts Kenneth Burke’s theory of rhetoric and courtship to the early modern period (7). In Burke’s and Nelson’s conceptualizations, “the conditions of estrangement” are important rhetorical motivations (5, 8). Burke, however, was concerned about social forms of estrangement, not spiritual (9). Nevertheless, Nelson sees parallels in the Christian sermon (7), and his parenthetical qualification—“Social estrangements (*or any relation of difference*)” (9; emphasis mine)—opens the door to my extension of his rhetorical analysis into a study of literary and spiritual estrangement.

<sup>565</sup> Nelson, *Holy Ambition*, 15–17.

<sup>566</sup> Nelson, *Holy Ambition*, 1.

<sup>567</sup> Fetzer, *John Donne’s Performances*, 25. Cf. Ramie Targoff’s account of the interdependence of body and soul in Donne’s thought: “For Donne, the relationship between the body and soul—a relationship he regarded as one of mutual necessity—was the defining bond of his life.” *Donne, Body and Soul*, 1.

<sup>568</sup> For an account of the Book of Job’s significance for Donne, see the beginning of part 2 of the chapter.

<sup>569</sup> Simpson, introduction to vol. 3, 6–7.

<sup>570</sup> See the rationale for the venue in my discussion of the sermon below.

<sup>571</sup> Simpson, the preeminent editor of Donne's sermons, divides Donne's career into three distinct stages: "the early years of his ministry and whilst he held the readership at Lincoln's Inn," the sermons from which period she characterizes as "severely logical" and dominated by legal imagery; the middle stage, comprising "the first few years of his life as Dean of St. Paul's [where] he preached the majority of his finest sermons," which she describes as "rich," "flexible," and featuring a wide array of imagery; and "the final stage, during the last years as Dean of St. Paul's," the sermons from which she characterizes as frequently repetitious and with echoes of the themes of his earlier works. Simpson, introduction to Vol. 8 of *Sermons of John Donne*, 33–34. The chapter quotes from early in Donne's career in addition to his middle and late periods in order to discern several dominant patterns in Donne's handling of devices of estrangement in his sermons. Simpson's evaluation of Donne's preaching career might be contrasted with Jeffrey Johnson's study of Donne's theology as expressed in his sermons, in which Johnson describes Donne's style and messages as being fairly consistent. *Theology of John Donne*, x, n.8.

<sup>572</sup> Over the course of Elizabeth's reign, preaching became more central to worship services in the Church of England, and, under James, the court sermons in particular took on great importance. Donne seems to have valued both the Eucharist and preaching as the main methods for delivering God's grace to congregations.

<sup>573</sup> Many scholars, such as, for example, Fetzer, in *John Donne's Performances*, and Brian Crockett, "Thomas Playfere's Poetics of Preaching," have observed parallels between early modern sermons and drama, noting the popularity of both forms as well as their performativity. Many auditors took notes on sermons or kept journals about the sermons they heard, evidencing the popularity and centrality of sermons in the culture.

<sup>574</sup> Although Donne did not take holy orders until middle age, on 23 January 1615, he enjoyed success in his career as a clergyman. Donne's ordination as both deacon and priest at the same time was irregular but not unheard of, although McCullough emphasizes how unprecedented and extraordinary Donne's almost immediate appointment to the Royal Chaplaincy was. McCullough, introduction to *Sermons Preached at the Jacobean Courts*, xviii. Donne's ordination and appointment to the Royal Chaplaincy was soon topped off with King James securing an honorary doctorate from Cambridge for Donne. Soon after, Donne returned to the Inns of Court where he studied law in his youth, being appointed Reader at Lincoln's Inn in 1616. This appointment would dominate his career as a preacher until he was installed as Dean of St. Paul's Cathedral in 1621. Donne additionally served as vicar of a parish church, St. Dunstan's in the West, from 1624 onward. Donne dutifully served as a parish priest, in spite of his status as Dean of St. Paul's, which underscores the significance of Donne's pastoral aims when considering his preaching. As a royal chaplain, Donne would preach regularly at court over the years, usually during the Lent sermon series and in April. Donne's ability to engage his diverse congregations was commended throughout his career.

<sup>575</sup> Crockett, in "Thomas Playfere's Poetics of Preaching," describes Playfere as using techniques of defamiliarization.

<sup>576</sup> McCullough, "Donne as Preacher," 167; Shami, "The Sermon," 320. While I think both scholars are essentially correct, my readings of Donne's sermons tend to pay closer attention to exegetical and theological connections rather than classical ones.

<sup>577</sup> Nelson comes to the same conclusion, observing, "Donne draws his rhetorical resources from whatever quarter serves his turn." *Holy Ambition*, 22.

<sup>578</sup> Kneidel, "*Ars Prædicandi*," 17. The homily tends to explicate a longer passage from scripture, very often the liturgical reading assigned for the date, in a fairly straightforward way, following the order of the text (10). The thematic sermon, which developed out of the *artes prædicandi* of the High Middle Ages, generally takes a specific, short Bible passage, and devises a complex



argument based on it, with parts and subparts (10). The early humanists, such as Erasmus, championed a return to the classical oration for the structure of sermons (12). In contrast to classically-oriented theories of preaching, William Perkins' important Puritan manual for preaching, *The Arte of Prophecyng* (1592; trans. 1607), emphasizes a plain style and dual approach, first emphasizing the law and sin, before the gospel and moral application (15).

<sup>579</sup> Alison Knight, "(Mis)quoting Scripture," 442, summarizes the direction of preaching in England over the sixteenth century: "In contrast to the Edwardian and early Elizabethan homiletic mode of elaborating on a spiritual theme using scripture as a support, by the late Elizabethan period the sermon's function as scriptural exegesis, focused on an epigraphic verse or verses, was established as the norm." A major factor in the move towards exegetical sermons was almost certainly efforts to increase the education of the clergy. Early Elizabethan preaching often involved unlearned clergy reading a select sermon from the *First* and *Second Book of Homilies* (1547, and 1571), the mandated use of which declined as more and more clergyman acquired learning and received license to preach their own sermons. See Kneidel, "*Ars Prædicandi*," 7.

<sup>580</sup> Nelson, *Holy Ambition*, 21.

<sup>581</sup> Nelson, *Holy Ambition*, 21.

<sup>582</sup> Colclough recognizes this in his description of Donne's exegetical method in his sermons: "his aim is to select a passage, to gloss and paraphrase it as far as possible in the light of his interpretive ends, to compare it with other places, and to return to it with a new understanding." Introduction, xxxi.

<sup>583</sup> The edification was not meant to be only intellectual, clarifying and reinforcing Christian doctrine, but was also intended to be spiritual and moral, encouraging inward renewal and the reform of outward habits and behaviour.

<sup>584</sup> Sloane, "The Poetry in Donne's Sermons," 411; Nelson, *Holy Ambition*, 22.

<sup>585</sup> Although Donne's exact identity and loyalties as a clergyman within the divided landscape of the Church of England in the seventeenth century are intensely debated, no one would suggest that Donne was a Puritan. The main issue at question is whether and to what extent Donne aligned with the Calvinist consensus in the Church under James, or whether he would be more accurately aligned with Arminianism and/or the emergent ritualist Laudian party. For example, Shami, *Conformity in Crisis*, maintains that Donne was comfortable with the Calvinist consensus, while Achsah Guibbory, *Returning to John Donne*, emphasizes Donne's Arminian tendencies. See my discussion of Donne's religious identity across his life in the introduction.

<sup>586</sup> Sullivan, introduction to *Biathanatos*, xxi.

<sup>587</sup> Donne's Sermon Preached at Lincoln's Inn Sermon upon Trinity Sunday, 1620 considers Genesis 18:25: "Shall not the iudge of all the earth do right?"

<sup>588</sup> Kneidel, "*Ars Prædicandi*," 11. Kneidel notes homioiptoton, homioiteleuton, isocolon, paronomasia, and polyptoton.

<sup>589</sup> Puttenham, *Art of English Poesy*, 227.

<sup>590</sup> Sloane, "The Poetry in Donne's Sermons," 410.

<sup>591</sup> Fetzer, *John Donne's Performances*, 26.

<sup>592</sup> For her linking of Donne's familiarizing strategies with the quality of "nearness" that Donne works to achieve, see Shami, "The Sermon" 336. For further discussion of her brief treatment of defamiliarization, see the introduction.

<sup>593</sup> Shami, "Donne on Discretion," 50. Cf. Shami, "The Sermon," 321, where she describes Donne's "goal of *conversion* through 'nearnesse.'"

<sup>594</sup> Shami, *John Donne and Conformity in Crisis in the Late Jacobean Pulpi*, 21.

<sup>595</sup> Kuchar, "Ecstatic Donne," 631.

<sup>596</sup> Kuchar, "Ecstatic Donne," 633–35.

<sup>597</sup> In Donne's first Sermon at the Hague, the language of inclination/aversion and estrangement informs Donne's understanding of possible objects that Christ did not apply to Peter and Andrew

when he bid them follow him (in Matthew 4): “No eloquence enclined them, no terrors declined them: No dangers withdrew them, no preferment drew them” (*PS* 2.13.283.492–94). See further discussion of the sermon below.

<sup>598</sup> Ettenhuber, introduction to vol. 5 of *OESJD*, 1, li.

<sup>599</sup> Puttenham, *Art of English Poesy*, 227; Shami, “The Sermon,” 336–37.

<sup>600</sup> Peacham, The Epistle Dedicatorie, *The Garden of Eloquence* (London, 1593). *EEBO*.

<sup>601</sup> Shami, “The Sermon,” 324. I would also point to the relevance of the related word “ordnance,” meaning “Artillery for discharging missiles.” *OED Online*, s.v. “ordnance,” definition 2.

<sup>602</sup> In the headnote, Donne explains, “Since in my sicknesse at Abrey-hatche in Essex, 1630, revising my short notes of that Sermon, I digested them into these two” (*PS* 2.13.269). If the headnote is any indication of Donne’s usual practice, it appears that Donne preached from notes, and then used those notes as the basis for writing out his sermon texts later. Donne also revised many of his sermons at the time of the plague epidemic of 1625. See Simpson, introduction to vol. 2, 33.

<sup>603</sup> Admittedly, we do not know the extent of Donne’s revisions as he “digested” one sermon (from “short notes”) into two, but the fact that he deemed it worthwhile to restructure the sermon as two suggests, at a minimum, that some revisions took place and that the material held enough interest for him 11 years later to choose to do so. In spite of the sermon’s revealing comments about preaching, Simpson maintains that “Donne was not at his best” in his sermons from the trip. Introduction to vol. 2, 36.

<sup>604</sup> At the beginning of his second Hague sermon, Donne briefly explicates the pun on “fishers” in the Gospel as evidence that Peter’s and Andrew’s callings changed them but did not make them something different or new, voicing yet again Donne’s obsession with the paradox of things changing yet remaining the same: “And then we shall see the promise it selfe, the employment, the function, the preferment; In which there is no new state promised them, no Innovation, (They were *fishers*, and they shall be *fishers* still) but there is an emprovement, a bettering, a reformation, (They were *fisher-men* before, and now they shall be *fishers of men*;)” (*PS* 2.14.287.13–18).

<sup>605</sup> Donne is specifically refuting Julian the Apostate’s claim that Christ’s message could only “work upon so weake men” (*PS* 2.13.282.481).

<sup>606</sup> Donne, *Devotions upon Emergent Occasions*, 99. See chapter 1, pp. 4–7.

<sup>607</sup> Donne, *Essayes in Divinity*, 63.

<sup>608</sup> Ettenhuber, introduction to vol. 5 of *OESJD*, xxxix.

<sup>609</sup> Simpson, introduction to vo. 2 of *Sermons*, 18.

<sup>610</sup> Puttenham, *Art of English Poesy*, 311.

<sup>611</sup> Reade, “Puns: Serious Wordplay,” 83.

<sup>612</sup> In the Elizabethan Church, the same set of authorized sermons, published as *Certain Sermons or Homilies* (1547, 1562, and 1571), were repeated again and again in churches without licensed preachers, while Elizabeth’s bishops worked to increase the level of education of all members of the clergy. In the Jacobean Church, under a King who was particularly fond of sermons and theological disputation, preachers were expected to not only edify but also engage and entertain their congregations.

<sup>613</sup> Jesus, in his final moments on the cross, asks, “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” Matthew 27:46; see also Mark 15:34. As we have seen in the previous chapters, Donne is aware of how estrangement figures throughout the Bible. For instance, Jesus’s cry on the cross is a quotation of Psalm 22:1. The Psalms themselves (as Donne’s sermon on Psalm 38:4 indicates) are deeply concerned with states of estrangement, from both God and people, and with how those estrangements affect inward experience and self-perception. For example, in the first six lines of Psalm 22, the psalmist moves from lamenting his estrangement from God to a dehumanized description of himself and his present alienation from society: “My God, my God, why hast thou

forsaken me? *why art thou so far from helping me, and from the words of my roaring? . . . But I am a worm, and no man; a reproach of men, and despised of the people.*” Psalm 22:1, 6; italics in original.

<sup>614</sup> *OED Online*, s.v. “estrangement”; emphasis mine.

<sup>615</sup> Shami, “The Sermon,” 328.

<sup>616</sup> This was Donne’s first sermon to be published, in a separate quarto in 1622.

<sup>617</sup> See, for example, Morrissey, *Politics and the Paul’s Cross Sermons*.

<sup>618</sup> See Morrissey, *Politics and the Paul’s Cross Sermons*, 93–94; Shami, *John Donne and Conformity in Crisis in the Late Jacobean Pulpit*, 102–16.

<sup>619</sup> Morrissey, *Politics and the Paul’s Cross Sermons*, 94; Shami, *Conformity in Crisis*, 105.

<sup>620</sup> See Judges 4–5.

<sup>621</sup> Chamberlain, vol. 2 of *Letters*, 451.

<sup>622</sup> Shami, “The Sermon,” 327.

<sup>623</sup> Shami, “The Sermon,” 327.

<sup>624</sup> Colclough, introduction, xxix.

<sup>625</sup> The effect produced would also have been dependent on how Donne performed the sermon. In the “Minute-glasses” example, the degree of estrangement relates to how long Donne may have paused after his first sentence before extending the image of “short-liv’d” glasses into a discussion of a fleeting life devouring earthly treasures, which would call to mind the heart’s treasure. Donne goes on: “If I were to preach upon this Text, to such a glass, it were enough for half the Sermon; enough to show the worldly man his Treasure, and the Object of his heart . . . to call his eye to that Minute-glass, to tell him, There flows, there flies Your Treasure, and your Heart with it” (*OESJD* 3.12.197.6–11).

<sup>626</sup> Shami, “The Sermon,” 328.

<sup>627</sup> Colclough introduction, xxvii–xxviii, xxxv.

<sup>628</sup> McCullough, “Donne as Preacher,” 180.

<sup>629</sup> Targoff, *Body and Soul*, 19. Targoff’s monograph explores the significance of Donne’s views on what happens to the body and soul after death, particularly his fear of their division, and she reads the confident affirmation of Job 19:26, “in my flesh shall I see God,” as being a pithy summary of Donne’s obsessions on the matter.

<sup>630</sup> Simpson, “Donne’s Sources,” 296.

<sup>631</sup> Kimberly Hedlin, “The Book of Job in Early Modern England,” 25. Knight, “(Mis)quoting Scripture,” calls the text of Job “notoriously difficult” (444), and cites comments by Hugh Broughton, Jerome, Luther, and Beza (444–45). Herbert Marks, in his annotations to Job in the Norton Critical Edition of the KJV, 891, explains: “The Hebrew text of Job is notoriously difficult. . . . recent versions continue to differ on the meaning of many words and entire phrases, and the glosses offered here are often no more than conjectures.”

<sup>632</sup> *OED Online*, s.v. “various,” definitions I.1.c, 5.a.

<sup>633</sup> Marks, Norton Critical Edition, 893, notes the strange role of Job’s wife in the book as well as the diverse interpretations she has generated. “Job’s *wife* never appears again (she is not mentioned in the epilogue). . . . She was treated sympathetically in Jewish tradition, but Christian exegetes described her as ‘the Devil’s helper’ (Augustine) and took her survival for one of Job’s trials.” The different readings of Job’s wife perhaps account for Donne’s refusal to pin down the meaning of her enjoyment to Job in either of his references to her in his sermons.

<sup>634</sup> Peacham, *Garden of Eloquence*, 109.

<sup>635</sup> For a brief account of the other uses of the word “estrange” in the Authorized Version, see the introduction, pp. 5–6.

<sup>636</sup> Hedlin, “The Book of Job in Early Modern England,” 17.

<sup>637</sup> Hedlin, “The Book of Job in Early Modern England,” 92–96.

<sup>638</sup> Donne, *Essayes*, 15–16. In his commentary on the essay, Raspa explains the context for Donne’s musings: “An ancient problem about the authorship and the dating of the Book of Job underlies Donne’s lines.” Raspa, Commentary, 124.

<sup>639</sup> Donne’s Lincoln’s Inn Sermon on Job 19:26, his Job Sermon Preached upon Easter Day, and his Job Sermon Preached to the King all date to April. Donne’s Job Sermon Preached to the Countess of Bedford was in January; Donne’s Job Sermon Preached at Hanworth was in August.

<sup>640</sup> For a reading of Donne’s thematic obsessions, see Carey, “Chapter 7: Death,” *Donne: Life, Mind and Art*, 184–216. Carey, ed., *The Major Works* includes many such passages in the sermon excerpts it includes.

<sup>641</sup> Capitalization is used in the Potter and Simpson text. I have regularized it.

<sup>642</sup> With a marginal note identifying Calvin, Donne observes that “though one, to whom we all owe much, for the interpretation of the Scriptures, do think that *Job* intends no other resurrection in this place, but what, when he shall be reduc’d to the miserablest estate that can bee in this life, still he will look upon God, and trust in him for his restitution, and reparation in this life” (*PS* 3.3.102.393–98). Donne does not spend time refuting Calvin, but rather acknowledges his divergence and then moves on, setting aside Calvin’s interpretation to keep his focus on the literal resurrection.

<sup>643</sup> Donne notes: “for, the *Nicen Creed* mentions no Article after that of the *holy Ghost*, not the Catholique Church, not the Communion of Saints, not the Resurrection of the flesh; Athanasius his Creed does mention the Resurrection, but not the Catholique Church, nor the communion of Saints” (*PS* 3.3.91.7–11).

<sup>644</sup> Knight, “(Mis)quoting Scripture,” 456.

<sup>645</sup> Italics are used in the AV to distinguish words not in the original biblical texts, which translators added for clarity.

<sup>646</sup> Knight, “(Mis)quoting Scripture,” 447.

<sup>647</sup> Knight, “(Mis)quoting Scripture,” 461–62. See her appendix (pp. 466–69) for the different translations of Job 19:23–27.

<sup>648</sup> Knight, “(Mis)quoting Scripture,” 457, 463.

<sup>649</sup> For a brief account of the other uses of the word “estrangle” in the Authorized Version, see the introduction, pp. 5–6.

<sup>650</sup> Shami, “The Sermon,” 328.

<sup>651</sup> I discussed in the introduction how this passage indicates Donne’s participation in the early modern discourse of strangeness.

<sup>652</sup> McCullough makes this observation in “Donne as Preacher,” 177.

<sup>653</sup> Knight, “(Mis)quoting Scripture,” 462.

<sup>654</sup> See Simpson, introduction to Vol. 3 of *Sermons of John Donne*, 8.

<sup>655</sup> Puttenham, *Art of English Poesy*, 324.

<sup>656</sup> A famous example of the *contrebazon* is Shakespeare’s sonnet Sonnet 130, “My mistress’ eyes are nothing like the sun.” Donne constructs his own, much harsher version in his Elegy “The Anagram.”

<sup>657</sup> Simpson, introduction to Vol. 3 of *Sermons*, 6–7. Targoff also considers Donne’s sermons on Job 19:26 and 1 Cor. 15:50 as complementary (or contrasting) sermons in a series. Targoff, *Body and Soul*, 19.

<sup>658</sup> Donne, *Essayes in Divinity*, 64.

<sup>659</sup> Targoff, *Body and Soul*, 19.

<sup>660</sup> Simpson, introduction to Vol. 3 of *Sermons*, 10–11, 15.

<sup>661</sup> Derrin, “Engaging the Passions,” 457.

<sup>662</sup> Derrin, “Engaging the Passions,” 458.

<sup>663</sup> Schleiner, *Imagery of John Donne’s Sermons*, 142.

<sup>664</sup> Shami, “The Sermon,” 336. I discuss Shami’s brief engagement with defamiliarization in the essay in my introduction.

<sup>665</sup> Johnson, *Theology of John Donne*, 78.

<sup>666</sup> Donne, *Major Works*, ed. Carey, 314–15.

<sup>667</sup> Puttenham, *Art of English Poesy*, 238.

<sup>668</sup> Simpson, “The Literary Value of Donne’s Sermons” in Vol. 1 of *Sermons*, 100.

<sup>669</sup> Simpson, front matter to Vol. 8 of *Sermons*, vi. It is highly probable that Donne, the Dean of St. Paul’s, would preach at the Cathedral on the most important Christian feast day; furthermore, if an occasion were important enough to have removed Donne to another venue on Easter, it would likely have been noted in the sermon’s title.

Although the volume has not been published yet, the website for vol. 14, *Sermons Preached at St. Paul’s Cathedral, 1628–1630* of the *OESJD*, lists this Easter Day sermon among the included titles. *The Oxford Edition of the Sermons of John Donne*,

<https://donesermons.web.ox.ac.uk/volume-xiv-sermons-preached-st-pauls-cathedral-1628-1630>.

<sup>670</sup> Simpson, “The Literary Value of Donne’s Sermons” in Vol. 1 of *Sermons*, 100.

<sup>671</sup> Simpson, “The Literary Value of Donne’s Sermons” in Vol. 1 of *Sermons*, 99–100.

<sup>672</sup> See both Simpson, “The Literary Value of Donne’s Sermons” in Vol. 1 of *Sermons*, 101–103; and Simpson, introduction to Vol. 7 of *Sermons*, 31–33.

<sup>673</sup> Knight, “(Mis)quoting Scripture.”

<sup>674</sup> Antanaclasis is “the figure in which a word occurs and is then repeated in a different sense.”

Read, “Puns: Serious Wordplay,” 83–84. Polyptoton is “Repeating a word, but in a different form. Using a cognate of a given word in close proximity.” Burton, *Silva Rhetoricae*, s.v. “polyptoton.”

<sup>675</sup> Simpson, introduction to Vol. 7 of *Sermons*, 32–33.

<sup>676</sup> *LXXX Sermons* is the only remaining seventeenth-century artifact to contain the sermon. A handsome folio, *LXXX Sermons* is the first major edition of Donne’s sermons (five of his sermons appeared in quartos during his lifetime), and it is based on manuscripts in the possession of Donne’s son, John Donne Jr. It includes the first version of Walton’s life as prefatory material, and it groups the sermons not according to chronology but around liturgical themes and topics. Donne’s Sermon Preached to the King, April 20, 1630 bears the heading of a sermon preached during Lent in the edition; indeed, it is placed first among the Lent sermons grouped in that edition. However, as both Colclough and Simpson point out, April 20, 1630 was not in Lent, Easter Sunday falling on March 28 that year. Either the date or the liturgical season (or possibly all the heading material) is inaccurate. Colclough, commentary, 454–56; Simpson, introduction to vol. 9 of *Sermons of John Donne*, 26.

As further evidence, Colclough points out that no other Donne sermon survives from April 1630. Since April was the month when Donne regularly preached before the court, it seems likely that the sermon is Donne’s court sermon from April 1630. As for internal evidence, the sermon seems to allude to the state of the Thirty Years’ War, during which “Catholic forces on the Continent threatened to reverse the process of Reformation” (455). With these points in evidence, and without positive evidence for the sermon falling in Lent (see note above), Colclough accepts the title and identification apart from the mention of Lent. Colclough, commentary, 454–56.

<sup>677</sup> Shami, “The Sermon,” 336–37: “One rhetorical strategy—in my view the most effective, although Donne does not use it in every Sermon—is to end his Sermon by contrasting worldly perspectives (even the most enlightened) with the heavenly, eternal perspective in a move that inspires his hearers with desire for that eternity.

<sup>678</sup> *OED*, 3.a. Colclough glosses the third sense of “establishment” in his commentary, 458.

<sup>679</sup> Colclough introduction, xxvii–xxviii.

<sup>680</sup> Colclough, introduction to *Sermons Preached at the Court of Charles I*, xxxvii.

---

<sup>681</sup> Colclough, introduction to *Sermons Preached at the Court of Charles I*, xxxvii.

<sup>682</sup> The description provided in Colclough's edition is as follows: "Delivered in a Sermon at White Hall, before the KINGS MAIESTY, in the beginning of Lent, 1630" (*OESJD* 3.14.229).

<sup>683</sup> Schleiner, *Imagery of John Donne's Sermons*, 11. Schleiner's conception of a "field of imagery" has affinities with recent studies that highlight the spatial dimension, or topographies, of language and meaning.

<sup>684</sup> Sin and death are, of course, intertwined in Christian theology. Death is considered to be the penalty for sin. Donne himself suggests as much in his Greenwich sermon, when he describes "a deliverance from the wages of sin, *Death*, by Christ" (*PS* 1.1.152.38), alluding to Paul in Romans: "For the wages of sin *is* death; but the gift of God *is* eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord" (6:23).

<sup>685</sup> *OED Online*, s.v. "estrangement"; emphasis mine.

<sup>686</sup> Colclough, commentary, 476.

**Appendix:**  
**List of Short Forms of Reference for Donne's Poetic Works**

<i>Annun</i>	Upon the Annunciation and Passion ["Tameley frail body"]
<i>BedfRef</i>	To the Countess of Bedford ["You have refined me"]
<i>Christ</i>	A Hymn to Christ at the Author's Last Going into Germany ["In what torn ship soever"]
<i>Corona</i>	La Corona
<i>Cor1</i>	"Deign at my hands"
<i>Cor2</i>	Annunciation ["Salvation to all that will is nigh"]
<i>Cor4</i>	Temple ["With this kind mother who partakes thy woe"]
<i>Cor7</i>	Ascension ["Salute the last and everlasting day"]
<i>Cross</i>	The Cross ["Since Christ embraced"]
<i>Eclog</i>	Eclogue at the Marriage of the Earl of Somerset ["Unseasonable man, statue of ice"]
<i>Ecst</i>	The Ecstasy ["Where, like a pillow on a bed"]
<i>EdHerb</i>	To Sir Edward Herbert ["Man is a lump"]
<b>Elegies:</b>	
<i>ElPerf</i>	The Perfume ["Once and but once found in thy company"]
<i>EpLin</i>	Epithalamion Made at Lincoln's Inn ["The sunbeams in the east"]
<i>FirAn</i>	The First Anniversary. An Anatomy of the World ["When that rich soul"]
<i>Goodf</i>	Goodfriday, 1613. Riding Westward ["Let man's soul be a sphere"]
<i>Henry</i>	Elegy on the Untimely Death of . . . Prince Henry ["Look to me, Faith"]
<i>HG</i>	To Sr. Henry Goodyere ["Who makes the past a pattern"]
<b>Holy Sonnets:</b>	
<i>HSBatter</i>	"Batter my heart"
<i>HSBlack</i>	"O my black soul"
<i>HSDeath</i>	"Death be not proud"
<i>HSDue</i>	"As due by many titles"
<i>HSLittle</i>	"I am a little world"
<i>HSMade</i>	"Thou hast made me"
<i>HSMin</i>	"If poisonous minerals"
<i>HSScene</i>	"This is my play's last scene"
<i>HSShe</i>	"Since she whom I loved"
<i>HSShow</i>	"Show me dear Christ"
<i>HSSighs</i>	"O might these sighs"
<i>HSSouls</i>	"If faithful souls"
<i>HSSpit</i>	"Spit in my face"
<i>HSVex</i>	"O to vex me"
<i>HSWhat</i>	"What if this present"
<i>HSWhy</i>	"Why are we by all creatures"
<i>Lit</i>	A Litany ["Father of heaven and him"]
<i>Mark</i>	Elegy on the Lady Markham ["Man is the world"]
<i>MHMary</i>	To the Lady Magdalen Herbert, of St. Mary Magdalen ["Her of your name"]
<i>RWEnvy</i>	To Mr. R. W. ["Kindly I envy thy song's"]

**Satires:**

<i>Sat2</i>	“Sir, though (I thank God for it) I do hate”
<i>Sat3</i>	“Kind pity chokes my spleen”
<i>Sat4</i>	“Well, I may now receive and die”
<i>SB</i>	To Mr. S. B. [‘O thou which to search’]”
<i>SecAn</i>	The Second Anniversary. Of the Progress of the Soul [“Nothing could make me sooner”]
<i>Sickness</i>	A Hymn to God My God, in My Sickness [“Since I am coming”]
<i>Sidney</i>	Upon the Translation of the Psalms by Sir Philip Sidney [“Eternal God, (for whom who ever dare . . . )”]
<i>SGo</i>	Song [“Go, and catch a falling star”]
<i>Tilman</i>	To Mr. Tilman after He Had Taken Orders [“Thou whose diviner soul”]
<i>TWHail</i>	“To Mr. T. W. [‘All hail sweet poet’]”
<i>TWHarsh</i>	“To Mr. T. W. [‘Haste thee harsh verse’]”
<i>ValMourn</i>	A Valediction Forbidding Mourning [“As virtuous men pass mildly away”]



### Bibliography

- Abrams, M. H. *A Glossary of Literary Terms*. 7th ed. Boston: Heinle & Heinle, 1999.
- Adamson, Sylvia, Gavin Alexander, and Katrin Ettenhuber. "Introduction: The Figures in Renaissance Theory and Practice." In Adamson, Alexander, and Ettenhuber, *Renaissance Figures of Speech*, 1–14.
- Adamson, Sylvia, Gavin Alexander, and Katrin Ettenhuber, eds. *Renaissance Figures of Speech*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007.
- Albrecht, Roberta. *The Virgin Mary as Alchemical and Lullian Reference in Donne*. Selinsgrove, PA: Susquehanna University Press, 2005.
- Andrewes, Lancelot. "The Copy of the Sermon Preached on Good Friday Last Before the King's Majesty, 1604." In Shuger, *Religion in Early Stuart England*, 29–41.
- Aquinas, Thomas. "From *Summa Theologica*." In Leitch, *Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism*, 243–46.
- Aristotle. *De Poetica (Poetics)*. Translated by Ingram Bywater. In *The Basic Works of Aristotle*, edited by Richard McKeon, 1453–87. New York: The Modern Library, 2001.
- Aristotle. *Rhetorica (Rhetoric)*. Translated by W. Rhys Roberts. In *The Basic Works of Aristotle*, ed. Richard McKeon, 1317–1451. New York: The Modern Library, 2001.
- Augustine. *Confessions*. Translated by Henry Chadwick. Oxford World's Classics. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992.
- Augustine. *On Christian Teaching*. Translated by R. P. H. Green. Oxford World's Classics. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999.
- Bacon, Francis. *Essays (1597)*. In *The Major Works*, 81–101. Edited by Brian Vickers. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002.
- Bald, R. C. *John Donne: A Life*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1970.
- Bartels, Emily C. *Spectacles of Strangeness: Imperialism, Alienation, and Marlowe*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1993.
- Bennett, Tony. *Formalism and Marxism*. 2nd ed. London: Routledge, 2003.
- Berlina, Alexandra. Introduction to Part 1 of *Viktor Shklovsky: A Reader*, 53–62.
- Berlina, Alexandra. Translator's introduction to *Viktor Shklovsky: A Reader*, 1–50.
- Biberman, Matthew. *Masculinity, Anti-Semitism and Early Modern Literature: From the Satanic to the Effeminate Jew*. Women and Gender in the Early Modern World. 2004. Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge, 2016.
- The Bible: Authorized King James Version*. Edited by Robert Carroll and Stephen Prickett. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997.
- Bishop, T. G. *Shakespeare and the Theatre of Wonder*. Cambridge Studies in Renaissance Literature and Culture. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996.
- Bogel, Fredric V. "Toward a New Formalism: The Intrinsic and Related Problems in Criticism and Theory." In Theile and Tredennick, *New Formalisms and Literary Theory*, 29–53.
- Bond, John J. *Handy-Book of Rules and Tables for Verifying Dates with the Christian Era; Giving an Account of the Chief Eras, and Systems used by various Nations, &c., &c.*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed. London: George Bell & Sons, 1889.
- The Book of Common Prayer: The Texts of 1549, 1559, and 1662*. Edited by Brian Cummings. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011.
- Brecht, Bertolt. *Brecht on Theatre: The Development of an Aesthetic*. Edited and translated by John Willet. London: Methuen, 1997.
- Brink, Jean R. *Michael Drayton Revisited*. Boston: Twayne, 1990.
- Burrow, Colin. Introduction to *Metaphysical Poetry*, xix–xliii. Edited by Colin Burrow. Penguin Classics. London: Penguin, 2006.

- Burton, Gideon. *Silva Rhetoricae: The Forest of Rhetoric*. Brigham Young University. Last modified February 26, 2007. <http://rhetoric.byu.edu/>.
- Bush, Douglas. *English Literature in the Earlier Seventeenth Century, 1600–1660*. 2nd ed. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1962.
- Calvin, John. *Calvin: Institutes of the Christian Religion*. 2 vols. Edited by John T. McNeill. Translated by Ford Lewis Battles. Volume XX and XI of *The Library of Christian Classics*. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1960.
- Calvin, John. *Institutes of the Christian Religion*. Translated by Henry Beveridge. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2008.
- Calvin, John. *The Institution of Christian religion*. Translated by Thomas Norton. London, 1561.
- Carew, Thomas. “Donne the Renewer of English Poetry (1633).” In Vickers, *English Renaissance Literary Criticism*, 554–57.
- Carey, John. *John Donne: Life, Mind and Art*. New ed. London: Faber, 1990.
- Carey, John, ed. *The Major Works*. By John Donne. Oxford World’s Classics. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000.
- Carey, John. Introduction to *The Major Works*, by John Donne, xix–xxxii. Edited by John Carey. Oxford World’s Classics. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000.
- Carrithers, Gale H., Jr. and James D. Hardy Jr. *Age of Iron: English Renaissance Tropologies of Love and Power*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1998.
- Chamberlain, John. *The Letters of John Chamberlain*. Ed. Norman Egbert McClure. 2 vols. Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1939, 1962.
- Cohen, Adam Max. *Wonder in Shakespeare*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012.
- Colclough, David, ed. *The Oxford Edition of the Sermons of John Donne*. Vol. 3, *Sermons Preached at the Court of Charles I*, by John Donne. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013.
- Colclough, David. Introduction to *Sermons Preached at the Court of Charles I*, edited by David Colclough, xv–lv. Vol. 3 of *The Oxford Editions of the Sermons of John Donne*. Edited by Peter McCullough et al. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013.
- Coleridge, Samuel Taylor. *Biographia Literaria*. Everyman’s Library. London: Dent, 1975.
- Collinson, Patrick. *The Reformation: A History*. New York: Modern Library, 2006.
- Crane, William G. Introduction to *The Garden of Eloquence (1593)*, by Henry Peacham, 5–23. Gainesville, FL: Scholars’ Facsimiles & Reprint, 1954.
- Crockett, Bryan. “Thomas Playfere’s Poetics of Preaching.” In *The Early Modern Sermon Revisited: Religion, Literature and History, 1600–1750*. Edited by Lori Anne Ferrell and Peter McCullough. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000.
- Cruikshank, Frances. *Verse and Poetics in George Herbert and John Donne*. Farnham, Surrey: Ashgate, 2010.
- Culler, Jonathan. *Literary Theory: A Very Short Introduction*. Very Short Introductions. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000.
- Cummings, Brian. Explanatory Notes to *The Book of Common Prayer: The Texts of 1549, 1559, and 1662*, edited by Brian Cummings, 687–796. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011.
- Cunningham, J. V. *Woe or Wonder: The Emotional Effect of Shakespearean Tragedy*. Chicago: Swallow Press, 1951.
- Davies, Horton. *Like Angels from a Cloud: The English Metaphysical Preachers, 1588–1645*. San Marino, CA: Huntington Library, 1986.
- Davis, Todd F., and Kenneth Womack. *Formalist Criticism and Reader-Response Theory*. Transitions. Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave, 2002.

- Derrida, Jacques. "White Mythology: Metaphor in the Text of Philosophy." Trans. F. C. T. Moore. *New Literary History* 6, no. 1 On Metaphor (1974): 5-74. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/468341>.
- Derrin, Daniel. "Engaging the Passions in John Donne's Sermons." *English Studies* 93, no. 4 (2012): 452-68. doi:10.1080/0013838X.2012.668310.
- Deschner, Annette. "Reforming Baptism: John Donne and Continental Irenicism." In *John Donne and the Protestant Reformation: New Perspectives*, ed. Mary Arshagouni Papazian, 293-313. Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2003.
- DeVun, Leah. "The Jesus Hermaphrodite: Science and Sex Difference in Premodern Europe." *Journal of the History of Ideas* 69, no. 2 (April 2008): 193-218. doi:10.1353/jhi.2008.0013.
- DiPasquale, Theresa. *Literature & Sacrament: The Sacred and the Secular in John Donne*. Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 1999.
- Donald R. Dickson, ed. *John Donne's Poetry*, by John Donne. Norton Critical Editions. New York: Norton, 2007.
- Dobranski, Stephen B. *Readership and Authorship in Early Modern England*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005.
- Donne, John. *Biathanatos*. Ed. Ernest W. Sullivan II. Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1984.
- Donne, John. *The Complete English Poems*. Edited by C. A. Patrides. Everyman's Library. New York: Knopf, 1991.
- Donne, John. *The Complete Poems of John Donne*. Edited by Robin Robbins. Revised ed. Longman Annotated English Poets. Harlow, England: Longman, 2010.
- Donne, John. *Devotions upon Emergent Occasions*. Edited by Anthony Raspa. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1975.
- Donne, John. *The Divine Poems*. Edited by Helen Gardner. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1952.
- Donne, John. *Essays in Divinity: Being Several Disquisitions Interwoven with Meditations and Prayers*. Edited by Anthony Raspa. Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2001.
- Donne, John. *Ignatius His Conclave*. Edited by T. S. Healy, S. J. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1969.
- Donne, John. *John Donne*. Edited by Janel Mueller. 21<sup>st</sup>-Century Oxford Authors. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015.
- Donne, John. *John Donne's Poetry*. Edited by Donald R. Dickson. Norton Critical Editions. New York: Norton, 2007.
- Donne, John. *Letters to Severall Persons of Honour (1651)*. Edited by M. Thomas Hester. Delmar, New York: Scholar's Facsimiles & Reprints, 1977.
- Donne, John. *The Major Works*. Edited by John Carey. Oxford World's Classics. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000.
- Donne, John. *The Oxford Edition of the Sermons of John Donne*. Ed. Peter McCullough et al. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013-
- Donne, John. *Paradoxes and Problems*. Ed. Helen Peters. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1980.
- Donne, John. *The Sermons of John Donne*. Edited George R. Potter and Evelyn M. Simpson. 10 vols. Berkley: University of California Press, 1957-62.
- Donne, John. *The Variorum Edition of the Poetry of John Donne*. Vol. 7, Part 1, *The Holy Sonnets*. Edited Gary A. Stringer et al. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2005.
- Dorsch, T. S. Introduction to *Classical Literary Criticism*, by Aristotle, Horace, and Longinus, 7-27. Harmondsworth, Middlesex, England: Penguin, 1965.

- Drayton, Michael. "To My Most Dearely-loved Friend Henery Reynolds Esquire, of Poets and Poesie." In Sylvester, *English Seventeenth-Century Verse*, 3–10.
- Drummond, William. "Ben Jonson's Literary Table-Talk (1619)." In Vickers, *English Renaissance Literary Criticism*, 528–36.
- Drummond, William. *A Cypress Grove*. In *Religion in Early Stuart England, 1603–1628*. 339, edited by Debora Shuger, 338–49. Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2012.
- Dryden, John. "John Dryden, 1649–1700." In Smith, *Donne: The Critical Heritage*, 149–52.
- Dubrow, Heather. Foreword to Theile and Tredennick, *New Formalisms and Literary Theory*, vii–xviii.
- Dubrow, Heather. *A Happier Eden: The Politics of Marriage in the Stuart Epithalamium*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1990.
- Dubrow, Heather. "Recent Studies in the English Renaissance." *Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900* 41, no. 1 (Winter 2001): 191–233. doi:10.2307/1556235.
- Dubrow, Heather. "'The Sun in Water': Donne's Somerset Epithalamium and the Poetics of Patronage." In *The Historical Renaissance: New Essays in Tudor and Stuart Literature and Culture*, edited by Heather Dubrow and Richard Strier, 197–219. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988.
- Eliot, T. S. "Andrew Marvell." In *Selected Essays*.
- Eliot, T. S. "The Metaphysical Poets." In *Selected Essays*, 281–91. 3rd ed. London: Faber, 1951.
- Ettenhuber, Katrin. "'Comparisons are Odious'? Revisiting the Metaphysical Conceit in Donne." *The Review of English Studies* 62, no. 255 (2011): 393–413. doi:10.1093/res/hgq103.
- Evans, Maurice. Introduction to *Elizabethan Sonnets*, vii–xxxii. Edited by Maurice Evans. Everyman's University Library. London: Dent, 1977.
- Fletcher, Angus. "Living Magnets, Paracelsian Corpses, and the Psychology of Grace in Donne's Religious Verse." *ELH* 72, no. 1 (2005): 1–22. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/30029961>
- Florio, John. *Queen Anna's New World of Words, or Dictionarie of the Italian and English tongues . . .* (1611).
- Flynn, Dennis. *John Donne and the Ancient Catholic Nobility*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1995.
- Frontain, Raymond-Jean. "When First and Last Concur: Closure in John Donne's 'The Annuntiation and Passion.'" *ANQ: A Quarterly Journal of Short Articles, Notes and Reviews* 25, no. 3 (2012): 175–81. doi:10.1080/0895769X.2012.692599.
- Fuller, Thomas. Book 10 of *The church-history of Britain from the birth of Jesus Christ untill the year M.DC.XLVIII*. London, 1656.
- The Harper Collins Study Bible: New Revised Standard Version with the Apocryphal/Deuterocanonical Books*. Edited by Wayne A. Meeks et al. New York: Harper Collins, 1993.
- Gardner, Helen, ed. *The Divine Poems*, by John Donne. 2nd ed. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1978.
- Gardner, Helen. Introduction to *The Divine Poems*, by John Donne, xv–xcvi. 2nd ed. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1978.
- Gardner, Helen. Introduction to *The Metaphysical Poets*, xix–xxxiv. Edited by Helen Gardner. 2nd ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1967.
- Gardner, Helen, ed. *John Donne: A Collection of Critical Essays*. Englewood Cliff, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1962.
- Gascoigne, George. "A Primer of English Poetry (1575)." In Vickers, *English Renaissance Literary Criticism*, 162–74.

- Geoffrey of Vinsauf. "From *Poetria Nova*." Translated by Margaret F. Nims. In Leitch, *Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism*, 229–40.
- Gibbons, Daniel R. *Conflicts of Devotion: Liturgical Poetics in Sixteenth- and Seventeenth-Century England*. Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 2017.
- Goldberg, Jonathan. *James I and the Politics of Literature: Jonson, Shakespeare, Donne, and Their Contemporaries*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1983.
- Gosse, Edmund. *The Life and Letters of John Donne, Dean of St. Paul's*. 2 vols. 1899; Gloucester, MA: Peter Smith, 1959.
- Grafton, Anthony, with April Shelford and Nancy Siraisi. *New Worlds, Ancient Texts: The Power of Tradition and the Shock of Discovery*. Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press-Harvard University Press, 1992.
- Greenblatt, Stephen. *Marvelous Possessions: The Wonder of the New World*. Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1991.
- Haskin, Dayton. "Is There a Future for Donne's 'Litany'?" *John Donne Journal: Studies in the Age of Donne* 21 (2002): 51–88.
- Hathaway, Baxter. *Marvels and Commonplaces: Renaissance Literary Criticism*. New York: Random House, 1968.
- Hedlin, Kimberly. "The Book of Job in Early Modern England." PhD diss., UCLA, 2018. ProQuest (UMI 10824574).
- Herbert, George. *The English Poems of George Herbert*. Edited by C. A. Patrides. London: Dent, 1974.
- Hodge, Bob. "Topographies of Space, Time, and Disciplinarity in Early Modern English: The Case of Andrew Marvell." In Kelly and Semler, *Word and Self Estranged*, 151–65.
- Holmes, Michael Morgan. *Early Modern Metaphysical Literature: Nature, Custom and Strange Desires*. Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave, 2001.
- Horace. *On the Art of Poetry*. In *Classical Literary Criticism*, trans. T. S. Dorsch, 77–95. Harmondsworth, Middlesex, England: Penguin, 1965.
- Hoskins, John. *Directions for Speech and Style*. Edited by Hoyt H. Hudson. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1935.
- Hudson, Hoyt H., ed. *Directions for Speech and Style*, by John Hoskins. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1935.
- Hurley, Ann Hollinshead. *John Donne's Poetry and Early Modern Visual Culture*. Selinsgrove: Susquehanna University Press, 2005.
- Iser, Wolfgang. *The Implied Reader: Patterns of Communication in Prose Fiction from Bunyan to Beckett*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1974.
- Jauss, Hans Robert. *Aesthetic Experience and Literary Hermeneutics*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1982.
- Jackson, Ken, and Arthur Marotti. "The Turn to Religion in Early Modern English Studies." *Criticism* 46, no.1 (2004): 167–190. doi:10.1353/crt.2004.0031.
- Jackson, Robert S. *John Donne's Christian Vocation*. Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1970.
- Johnson, Jeffrey. *The Theology of John Donne*. Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 1999.
- Johnson, Samuel. "Samuel Johnson, 1755–c.1785." In Smith, *Donne: The Critical Heritage*, 214–31.
- Kelly, Philippa, and L. E. Semler. "Introduction: Word and Self Estranged: Topographies of Meaning in Early Modern England." In Kelly and Semler, *Word and Self Estranged*, 1–11.
- Kelly, Philippa, and L. E. Semler, eds. *Word and Self Estranged in English Texts, 1550–1660*. Farnham, Surrey: Ashgate, 2010.

- Knight, Alison, "The 'Very Very Words': (Mis)quoting Scripture in Lancelot Andrewes's and John Donne's Sermons on Job 19:23–27." *Studies in Philology* 111, no. 3 (Summer 2014): 442–69. doi:10.1352/sip.2014.0020.
- Kneidel, Greg. "Ars Prædicandi: Theories and Practice." In *The Oxford Handbook of the Early Modern Sermon*, edited by Peter McCullough, Hugh Adlington, and Emma Rhatigan, 3–20. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011.
- Kuchar, Gary. "Ecstatic Donne: Conscience, Sin, and Surprise in the Sermons and the Mitcham Letters." *Criticism* 50, no. 4 (Fall 2008): 631–54. doi:10.1353/crt.0.0082.
- Kuchar, Gary. *Divine Subjection: The Rhetoric of Sacramental Devotion in Early Modern England*. Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 2005.
- Kuchar, Gary. "Petrarchism and Repentance in John Donne's Holy Sonnets." *Modern Philology* 105, no. 3 (February 2008): 535–69. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.1086/591260>.
- Kukkonen, Karin. "Form as a Pattern of Thinking: Cognitive Poetics and New Formalism." In Theile and Tredennick, *New Formalisms and Literary Theory*, 159–76.
- Labriola, Albert C. "Style, Wit, Prosody in the Poetry of John Donne." In Shami, Flynn, and Hester, *Oxford Handbook of John Donne*, 704–17.
- Lake, Peter. "Lancelot Andrewes, John Buckeridge, and Avant-garde Conformity at the Court of James I." In *The Mental World of the Jacobean Court*, ed. Linda Levy Peck, 113–33. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991.
- Lanham, Richard. *A Handlist of Rhetorical Terms*. 2nd ed. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991.
- Lazarus, Micha. "Aristotelian Criticism in Sixteenth-Century England." *Oxford Handbooks Online*. Sep. 1, 2016. <https://www.oxfordhandbooks.com/view/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199935338.001.0001/oxfordhb-9780199935338-e-148>.
- Lederer, Josef. "John Donne and the Emblematic Practice." *The Review of English Studies* 22, no. 87 (1946): 182–200. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/508914>.
- Leishman, J. B. "Donne and Seventeenth Century Poetry." In Gardner, *John Donne*, 109–22.
- Leitch, Vincent B., et al. Headnote to Geoffrey of Vinsauf. In Leitch, *Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism*, 226–29.
- Leitch, Vincent B., et al., eds. *The Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism*. New York: Norton, 2001.
- Levinson, Marjorie. "What Is New Formalism?" *PMLA* 122, no. 2 (Mar. 2007): 558–569. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/25501722>.
- Lewalski, Barbara Kiefer. *Donne's Anniversaries and the Poetics of Praise: The Creation of a Symbolic Mode*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973.
- Lewalski, Barbara Kiefer. *Protestant Poetics and the Seventeenth-Century Religious Lyric*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1979.
- Lewis, C. S. *English Literature in the Sixteenth Century, Excluding Drama*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1954.
- Locke, John. *A Letter Concerning Toleration*. Edited by James H. Tully. 1689; Indianapolis, IN: Hackett, 1983.
- Low, Anthony. *Love's Architecture: Devotional Modes in Seventeenth-Century English Poetry*. New York: New York University Press, 1978.
- Mack, Peter. *Elizabethan Rhetoric: Theory and Practice*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002.
- Magnusson, Lynne. "Danger and Discourse." In Shami, Flynn, and Hester, *Oxford Handbook of John Donne*, 743–55.

- Mann, Jenny. *Outlaw Rhetoric: Figuring Vernacular Eloquence in Shakespeare's England*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2012.
- Mann, Jenny C. "How to Look at a Hermaphrodite in Early Modern England," in *SEL Studies in English Literature, 1500–1900* 46, no. 1 (Winter 2006): 67–91. doi:10.1353/sel.2006.0008.
- Marks, Herbert, ed. *The Old Testament*. Vol. 1 of *The English Bible: King James Version*. 2 vols. A Norton Critical Edition. New York: Norton, 2012.
- Marno, David. *Death Be Not Proud: The Art of Holy Attention*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2016.
- Marotti, Arthur F. *John Donne, Coterie Poet*. Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1986.
- Martz, Louis L. *The Poetry of Meditation: A Study in English Religious Literature of the Seventeenth Century*. Rev. ed. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1962.
- Marvell, Andrew. "The Coronet." In *The Complete Poems*, edited by Elizabeth Story Donno, 54. Harmondsworth, Middlesex, England: Penguin, 1976.
- Maus, Katherine Eisaman, and Barbara K. Lewalski. Headnote to Donne in *The Norton Anthology of English Literature*. 9<sup>th</sup> ed. Vol. B, *The Early Seventeenth Century*, ed. Katherine Eisaman Maus and Barbara K. Lewalski, 1370–72. New York: Norton, 2012.
- McCullough, Peter. "Donne as Preacher." In *The Cambridge Companion to John Donne*, edited by Achsah Guibbory, 167–81.
- McCullough, Peter, and Lori Anne Ferrell, eds. *The English Sermon Revised: Religion, Literature and History, 1600–1750*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000.
- McCullough, Peter, Hugh Adlington, and Emma Rhatigan, eds. *The Oxford Handbook of the Early Modern Sermon*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011.
- McCullough, Peter. Introduction to *Lancelot Andrewes: Selected Sermons and Lectures*, by Lancelot Andrewes, ed. Peter McCullough. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005.
- McCullough, Peter. "Preaching and Context: John Donne's Sermon at the Funerals of Sir William Cokayne." In *The Oxford Handbook of the Early Modern Sermon*, edited by Peter McCullough, Hugh Adlington, and Emma Rhatigan, 213–67. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2011.
- McCullough, Peter. *Sermons at Court: Politics and Religion in Elizabethan and Jacobean Preaching*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998.
- McEleney, Corey, and Jacqueline Wernimont. "Re-Reading for Forms in Sir Philip Sidney's *Defence of Poesy*." In Theile and Tredennick, *New Formalisms and Literary Theory*, 116–139.
- Mirollo, James V. "The Aesthetic of the Marvelous: The Wondrous Work of Art in a Wondrous World." In Platt, *Wonders, Marvels, and Monsters*, 24–44. Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1999.
- Mueller, Janel. Introduction to *John Donne: 21<sup>st</sup>-Century Oxford Authors*, by John Donne, xiii–xxxii. Edited by Janel Mueller. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015.
- Mueller, Janel, ed. *John Donne: 21<sup>st</sup>-Century Oxford Authors*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015.
- Nelson, Brent. *Holy Ambition: Rhetoric, Courtship, and Devotion in the Sermons of John Donne*. Tempe, AZ: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2005.
- Newman, Barbara. "Rereading John Donne's Holy Sonnet 14." *Spiritus: A Journal of Christian Spirituality* 4, no. 1 (2004): 84–90. doi:10.1353/scs.2004.0012.
- Nicholson, Catherine. *Uncommon Tongues: Eloquence and Eccentricity in the English Renaissance*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2014.
- Noll, Mark A. "Martin Luther and the Concept of a 'True' Church." *The Evangelical Quarterly* 50, no. 2 (1978): 79–85.

- Novarr, David. *The Disinterred Muse: Donne's Texts and Contexts*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1980.
- Parr, Anthony. "John Donne, Travel Writer." *Huntington Library Quarterly* 70, no. 1 (2007): 61–85. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.1525/hlq.2007.70.1.61>.
- Patrides, C. A., ed. *The Complete English Poems*. By John Donne. Everyman's Library. New York: Knopf, 1991.
- Patterson, Annabel. "A Man is to Himself a Dioclesian: Donne's Rectified Litany." *John Donne Journal: Studies in the Age of Donne* 21 (2002): 35–49.
- Peacham, Henry. *The Garden of Eloquence (1593)*. Introduction by William G. Crane. Gainesville, FL: Scholars' Facsimiles & Reprint, 1954.
- Platt, Peter G., ed. *Wonders, Marvels, and Monsters in Early Modern Culture*. Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1999.
- Playfere, Thomas. *Hearts delight: A Sermon Preached at Pauls crosse in London in Easter terme. 1593*. Cambridge, 1603.
- Poole, William. "The Vices of Style." In Adamson, Alexander, and Ettenhuber, *Renaissance Figures of Speech*, 236–51.
- Potter, George R., and Evelyn M Simpson. "General Introductions: IV. The Literary Value of Donne's Sermons." In Vol. 1 of *The Sermons of John Donne*, 83–103. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1953.
- Praz, Mario. "Donne's Relation to the Poetry of His Time." In Gardner, *John Donne*, 61–76.
- Puttenham, George. *The Art of English Poesy*. Edited by Frank Whigham and Wayne A. Rebhorn. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2007.
- Rambuss, Richard. "Sacred Subjects and the Aversive Metaphysical Conceit: Crashaw, Serrano, Ofili." *ELH* 71, no. 2 (2004): 497–530. doi:10.1353/elh.2004.0030.
- Raspa, Anthony. Introduction and commentary to *Devotions upon Emergent Occasions*, by John Donne, xiii–lvi, 129–87. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1975.
- Raspa, Anthony. Introduction and commentary to *Essayes in Divinity: Being Several Disquisitions Interwoven with Meditations and Prayers*, by John Donne, xiii–lxxix, 111–91. Edited by Anthony Raspa. Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2001.
- Rebhorn, Wayne A. *The Emperor of Men's Minds: Literature and Renaissance Discourse of Rhetoric*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1995.
- Rebhorn, Wayne A. Introduction to *Renaissance Debates on Rhetoric*, 1–13. Edited by Wayne A. Rebhorn. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2000.
- Rebhorn, Wayne A. "Outlandish Fears: Defining Decorum in Renaissance Rhetoric." *Intertexts* 4, no. 1 (2000): 3–24. <http://go.galegroup.com.libproxy.wlu.ca/ps/i.do?&id=GALE|A80849923&v=2.1&u=wate18005&it=r&p=AONE&sw=w>.
- Read, Sophie. "Puns: Serious Wordplay." In Adamson, Alexander, and Ettenhuber, *Renaissance Figures of Speech*, 80–94.
- Reeves, Troy D. *An Annotated Index to the Sermons of John Donne*. 3 vols. Salzburg: Institut für Anglistik und Amerikanistik, Universität Salzburg, 1979–81.
- Rivers, Isabel. *Classical and Christian Ideas in English Renaissance Poetry*. 2nd ed. London: Routledge, 1994.
- Rivkin, Julie, and Michael Ryan. Introduction to "The Archaeology of Knowledge," by Michel Foucault. In *Literary Theory: An Anthology*, edited by Julie Rivkin and Michael Ryan, 90. 2nd ed. Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2004.
- Robbins, Robin, ed. *The Complete Poems of John Donne*, by John Donne. Revised ed. Longman Annotated English Poets. Harlow, England: Longman, 2010.
- Robinson, Douglas. *Estrangement and the Somatics of Literature: Tolstoy, Shklovsky, Brecht*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2008.



- Schleiner, Winfried. *The Imagery of John Donne's Sermons*. Providence: Brown University Press, 1970.
- Schoenfeldt, Michael Carl. "The Poetry of Supplication: Toward a Cultural Poetics of the Religious Lyric." In *New Perspectives on the Seventeenth-Century English Religious Lyric*, edited by John R. Roberts, 75–104. Columbia, MO: University of Missouri Press, 1994.
- Schoenfeldt, Michael Carl. "'That spectacle of too much weight': The Poetics of Sacrifice in Donne, Herbert, and Milton." *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 31, no. 3 (2001): 561–584.
- Semler, L. E. "The Ruins of Persepolis: Grotesque Perception in Thomas Herbert's *Travels*." In Kelly and Semler, *Word and Self Estranged*, 33–59.
- Shami, Jeanne. "Donne, Anti-Jewish Rhetoric, and the English Church in 1621." In *Tradition, Heterodoxy, Religious Culture: Judaism and Christianity in the Early Modern Period*, ed. Chanita Goodblatt and Howard Kreisel, 29–50. Beer Sheva: Ben Gurion University of the Negev Press, 2006.
- Shami, Jeanne. "Donne's Sermons and the Absolutist Politics of Quotation." In *John Donne's Religious Imagination: Essays in Honor of John T. Shawcross*, ed. Raymond-Jean Frontain and Frances M. Malpezzi, 380–412. Conway, AR: UCA Press, 1995.
- Shami, Jeanne. *John Donne and Conformity in Crisis in the Late Jacobean Pulpit*. Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2003.
- Shami, Jeanne. "Donne on Discretion." *ELH* 47, no. 1 (Spring 1980): 48–66. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2872438>.
- Shami, Jeanne. "The Sermon." In Shami, Flynn, and Hester, *Oxford Handbook of John Donne*, 318–47.
- Shami, Jeanne, ed. *Renaissance Tropologies: The Cultural Imagination of Early Modern England*. Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 2008.
- Shami, Jeanne, Dennis Flynn, and M. Thomas Hester, eds. *The Oxford Handbook of John Donne*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011.
- Sherry, Richard. *A Treatise of Schemes and Tropes* (1550). Introduction by Herbert W. Hildebrandt. Gainesville, FL: Scholars' Facsimiles & Reprints, 1961. Project Gutenberg, 2009. <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/28447/28447-h/28447-h.htm>.
- Shklovsky, Viktor. "Art as Device." In *Viktor Shklovsky: A Reader*, 73–96.
- Shklovsky, Viktor. "Art as Technique." Translated by Lee T. Lemon and Marion J. Reis. In *Literary Theory: An Anthology*, edited by Julie Rivkin and Michael Ryan, 15–21. 2nd ed. Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2004.
- Shklovsky, Viktor. "Literature beyond Plot." In *Viktor Shklovsky: A Reader*, 97–103.
- Shklovsky, Viktor. *Viktor Shklovsky: A Reader*. Edited and translated by Alexandra Berlina. New York: Bloomsbury, 2017.
- Shuger, Debora. *Habits of Thought in the English Renaissance: Religion, Politics, and the Dominant Culture*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990.
- Shuger, Debora. Introduction to Shuger, *Religion in Early Stuart England*, xi–xx.
- Shuger, Debora. "Notes on Nomenclature." In Shuger, *Religion in Early Stuart England*, xxiii–xxvii.
- Shuger, Debora. *The Renaissance Bible: Scholarship, Sacrifice, and Subjectivity*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994.
- Shuger, Debora, ed. *Religion in Early Stuart England, 1603–1638: An Anthology of Primary Sources*. Documents of Anglophone Christianity. Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2012.
- Sidney, Philip. *The Defence of Poesy*. In *The Major Works*, 212–50. Edited by Katherine Duncan-Jones. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002.

- Sidney, Philip, and Mary Sidney. *The Sidney Psalter: The Psalms of Sir Philip and Mary Sidney*. Edited by Hannibal Hamlin, Michael G. Brennan, Margaret P. Hannay, and Noel J. Kinnamon. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009.
- Sievers, Julie. "Literatures of Wonder in Early Modern England and America." *Literature Compass* 4, no. 3 (2007): 766-783. doi:10.1111/j.1741-4113.2007.00450.x.
- Silcox, Mary V. "Strangely Familiar: Emblems in Early Modern England." In *The Mysterious and the Foreign in Early Modern England*, edited by Helen Ostovich, Mary V. Silcox, and Graham Roebuck, 281-98. Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2008.
- Simpson, Evelyn A. *A Study of the Prose Works of John Donne*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1948.
- Simpson, Evelyn A. Introductions to Vol. 1 of *The Sermons of John Donne*, edited by George R. Potter and Evelyn A. Simpson, 1-106. Berkely: University of California Press, 1953.
- Simpson, Evelyn A. Introductions to Vol. 2 of *The Sermons of John Donne*, edited by George R. Potter and Evelyn A. Simpson, 1-46. Berkely: University of California Press, 1955.
- Simpson, Evelyn A. Introduction to Vol. 3 of *The Sermons of John Donne*, edited by George R. Potter and Evelyn A. Simpson, 1-43. Berkely: University of California Press, 1957.
- Simpson, Evelyn A. Introduction to Vol. 7 of *The Sermons of John Donne*, edited by George R. Potter and Evelyn A. Simpson, 1-48. Berkely: University of California Press, 1954.
- Simpson, Evelyn A. Introduction to Vol. 8 of *The Sermons of John Donne*, edited by George R. Potter and Evelyn A. Simpson, 1-34. Berkely: University of California Press, 1956.
- Simpson, Evelyn A. Introduction to Vol. 9 of *The Sermons of John Donne*, edited by George R. Potter and Evelyn A. Simpson, 1-44. Berkely: University of California Press, 1958.
- Slights, Camille Wells. "Epithalamion." In Shami, Flynn, and Hester, *Oxford Handbook of John Donne*, 298-307.
- Sloane, Thomas O. "The Poetry in Donne's Sermons." *Rhetorica: A Journal of the History of Rhetoric* 29, no. 4 (2011): 403-28.  
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.1525/RH.2011.29.4.403>
- Smith, A. J., ed. "The first collected edition of Donne's poems, 1633." In Smith, *Donne: The Critical Heritage*, 84-103.
- Smith, A. J., ed. "Some general references to Donne's poems, or to Donne as a poet (c. 1608-30)" in Smith, *Donne: The Critical Heritage*, 64-7.
- Smith, A. J., ed. *John Donne: The Critical Heritage*. London: Routledge, 1975.
- Smith, Logan Pearsall. *Donne's Sermons: Selected Passages, with an Essay by Logan Pearsall Smith*. Edited by Logan Pearsall Smith. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1919.
- Southwell, Robert. "In Praise of Religious Poetry (1595)." In Vickers, *English Renaissance Literary Criticism*, 395-97.
- Stachniewski, John. "The Despair of the 'Holy Sonnets.'" *ELH* 48, no. 4 (Winter 1981): 677-705. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/2872957>.
- Stanwood, P. G. "Liturgy, Worship, and the Sons of Light." In *New Perspectives on the Seventeenth-Century English Religious Lyric*, ed. John R. Roberts, 105-23. Columbia, MO: University of Missouri Press, 1994.
- Stanwood, P. G., and Heather Ross Asals, eds. *John Donne and the Theology of Language*. Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1986.
- Stauffer, Donald A. *The Nature of Poetry*. New York: Norton, 1946.

- Stirling, Kirsten. "Liturgical Poetry." In Shami, Flynn, and Hester, *Oxford Handbook of John Donne*, 233–41.
- Stier, Richard. "John Donne Awry and Squint: The 'Holy Sonnets,' 1608–1610. *Modern Philology* 86, no. 4 (May 1989): 357–84. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/437982>.
- Strier, Richard. "Radical Donne: 'Satire III.'" *ELH* 60, no. 2 (1993): 283–323.
- Stringer, Gary A. "The Composition and Dissemination of Donne's Writings." In Shami, Flynn, and Hester, *Oxford Handbook of John Donne*, 12–25.
- Stringer, Gary A., et al. "Introduction to Vol. 7.1: General Textual Introduction." In *The Variorum Edition of the Poetry of John Donne*, Vol. 7, Part 1, edited by Gary A. Stringer et al., lx–ciii. Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2005.
- Stubbs, Jonathan. *John Donne: Reformed Soul*. London: Viking, 2006.
- Sullivan, Ernest W., II. "John Donne's Seventeenth-Century Readers." In Shami, Flynn, and Hester, *Oxford Handbook of John Donne*, 26–33.
- Sullivan, Ernest. General introduction to *Biathanatos*, by John Donne, ed. Sullivan, ix–xxxiii. Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1984.
- Sullivan, Ernest. "The Paradox: Biathanatos." In Shami, Flynn, and Hester, *Oxford Handbook of John Donne*, 153–57.
- Sullivan, Ceri. "John Donne, 'The Crosse' and Recusant Graffiti." *Notes and Queries* 63, no. 3 (2017): 458. doi:10.1093/notesj/gjw136.
- Sullivan, Ceri. *The Rhetoric of the Conscience in Donne, Herbert and Vaughan*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008.
- Sylvester, Richard S., ed. *English Seventeenth-Century Verse*. Vol. 2 New York: Norton, 1969.
- Targoff, Ramie. *Common Prayer: The Language of Public Devotion in Early Modern England*. Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2001.
- Targoff, Ramie. *John Donne, Body and Soul*. Chicago: U of Chicago P, 2008.
- Taylor, Jeremy. *Ductor Dubitantium*. London, 1660. EEBO.
- Theile, Verena, and Linda Tredennick, eds. *New Formalisms and Literary Theory*. Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013.
- Theile, Verena. "New Formalism(s): A Prologue." In Theile and Tredennick, *New Formalisms and Literary Theory*, 3–26.
- Tillyard, E. M. W. *The Elizabethan World Picture*. Harmondsworth, Middlesex, England: Pelican, 1972.
- Tranter, Kirsten Isobel. "The World Disfigured: Problems of Figuration in English Renaissance Poetry." PhD diss., Rutgers, 2008. ProQuest (UMI 3349597).
- Tuve, Rosemond. *Elizabethan and Metaphysical Imagery: Renaissance Poetic and Twentieth-Century Critics*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1947.
- Vickers, Brian. Introduction to Vickers, *English Renaissance Literary Criticism*, 1–55.
- Vickers, Brian, ed. *English Renaissance Literary Criticism*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1999.
- Walton, Izaak. *The Lives of Dr. John Donne, Sir Henry Wotton, Mr. Richard Hooker, Mr. George Herbert*. London, 1675.
- Walton, Izaak. *The Life of Dr. John Donne*. In *Devotions Upon Emergent Occasions, together with Death's Duel*, by John Donne, v–li. Ann Arbor, MI: Ann-Arbor Paperbacks–University of Michigan Press, 1969.
- Webber, Joan. *Contrary Music: The Prose Style of John Donne*. Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1963.
- Weiser, Francis X. *Handbook of Christian Feasts and Customs: The Year of the Lord in Liturgy and Folklore*. New York: Harcourt, 1958.
- Whitney, Geoffrey. *A Choice of Emblemes*. 1586.

- Whigham, Frank, and Wayne A. Rebhorn, eds. *The Art of English Poesy*. By George Puttenham. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2007.
- Whigham, Frank, and Wayne A. Rebhorn. Introduction to *The Art of English Poesy*, by George Puttenham, 1–72. Edited by Whigham and Rebhorn. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2007.
- Wilcox, Helen. “‘Curious Frame’: The Seventeenth-Century Religious Lyric as Genre.” In *New Perspectives on the Seventeenth-Century English Religious Lyric*, edited by John R. Roberts, 9–27. Columbia, MO: University of Missouri Press, 1994.
- Wilcox, Helen. “Devotional Writing.” In *The Cambridge Companion to John Donne*, edited by Achsah Guibbory, 149–66.
- Wilcox, Helen. “‘No More Wit Than a Christian?’: The Case of Devotional Poetry.” In *The Wit of Seventeenth-Century Poetry*, 9–21. Edited by Claude J. Summers and Ted-Larry Pebworth. Columbia, MO: University of Missouri Press, 1995.
- Willet, John, ed. and trans. *Brecht on Theatre: The Development of an Aesthetic*. By Bertolt Brecht. London: Methuen, 1997.
- Wiseman, Rebecca L. “Reading and Reception in Early Modern England: Aesthetics, Judgment, and Selfhood from Sidney to Milton.” PhD diss., University of Michigan, 2011. ProQuest (UMI 3477107).
- Wohlens, Charles, web author. “Collects, Epistles, and Gospels from the 1549, 1552, and 1559 Books of Common Prayer.” *The Book of Common Prayer*. Anglican Resource Collection. Last updated April 26, 2015.  
[http://justus.anglican.org/resources/bcp/1549/Readings\\_SaintsA\\_1549.htm#Annunciation](http://justus.anglican.org/resources/bcp/1549/Readings_SaintsA_1549.htm#Annunciation)
- Woods, Susanne. Introduction to *The Poems of Aemilia Lanyer: Salve Deus Rex Judæorum*. By Aemilia Lanyer. Edited by Susanne Woods. New York: Oxford University Press, 1993.
- Young, R. V. *Doctrine and Devotion in Seventeenth-Century Poetry: Studies in Donne, Herbert, Crashaw, and Vaughan*. Studies in Renaissance Literature. Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2000.
- Young, R. V. “The Religious Sonnet.” In Shami, Flynn, and Hester, *Oxford Handbook of John Donne*, 218–3

