

## Matter and Spirit, Body and Soul, Time and Eternity in Donne's *Anniversaries*: A Response\*

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The essays by Ryan Netzley, Sarah Powrie, and Michael Ursell to which this one responds variously address the relation of matter to spirit, body to soul, time to eternity. Concentrating primarily on *The Second Anniversarie*, Netzley's and Powrie's essays disagree about the Donnean speaker's commitment to relating, escaping, or overcoming these traditional binaries, as well as about his success in doing so. Ursell, like Netzley, but not exactly so, argues for Donne's creative commitment to the material world and for its continuity with a spiritual one; he treats relevant passages from both *Anniversaries*, as does Netzley to an extent. Beyond these qualified likenesses and differences, each of the three essays employs an interpretive lens that separates it from the others, offering readers, if not three different poems, three markedly varied ways of understanding them. Conspicuously and focally, each uses a different aspect of intellectual history: Netzley focuses on universals/particulars, Powrie on Augustinian inwardness, Ursell on Stoic/Christian *pneuma* (Greek for "breath," "wind," "vital spirit," "soul"). Each of the essays has value; each makes a point well worth pondering.<sup>1</sup> It is also a pleasure to read three essays that, when they turn to Donne's text for evidence, attend to his words

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\*References: Ryan Netzley, "Learning from Anniversaries: Progress, Particularity, and Radical Empiricism in John Donne's *The Second Anniversarie*," *Connotations* 25.1 (2015/2016): 19-45; Sarah Powrie, "Speculative Tensions: The Blurring of Augustinian Interiority in *The Second Anniversarie*," *Connotations* 25.1 (2015/2016): 1-18; Michael Ursell, "The Pneumatics of Inspiration in the *Anniversary Poems*," *Connotations* 25.1 (2015/2016): 46-59. For the original article as well as all contributions to this debate, please check the *Connotations* website at <<http://www.connotations.de/debanniversaries0251.htm>>.

closely and skillfully. Yet a further result of seeing the three essays together is a heightened awareness of the relativizing function of interpretive lenses. A possible response to this awareness is a skeptical shrug; another, which I prefer, is serious, respectful engagement.

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Netzley's essay, the longest and most abstract of the three, finds in *The Second Anniversarie* what he terms, after Gilles Deleuze, "radical empiricism." In it, a particularity is not *governed* by an abstract universal. The qualifying condition of government or control is important to Netzley's argument, which by its end acknowledges the function of universals for Donne's thinking, first allowing that they might be "already there" (in things, thought, whatever), then asserting their presence "alongside their particular instantiations," and finally defining and accepting them as "a species [form?] of expansive repetition" (38-40). Expansive repetition is what Netzley crucially locates in the refrains of *The Second Anniversarie* and thence in the nature of anniversaries themselves—in this poem, the annual commemoration of a particular young woman's death. That this expansion is temporal is crucial to his view.

Netzley wants to free Donne's universals in the poem from stasis, as opposed to change; from commonality, as opposed to individuality; from teleology, as opposed to progress; and indeed from potentiality (Greek *dynamis*, Latin *potentia*) if it is conceived in conjunction with a *telos*, or an ultimate end. He considers such an end controlling and authoritarian. His emphasis on each of the second terms in the series (change, individuality, progress) is admirable and persuasive, as is his enlightened defense of particularity and temporality, even as the stability of any civilized order hangs fire. A large question regarding Netzley's essay concerns the way he uses the term "universals" throughout, and whether the descriptions of this term at the end, which I have cited in the preceding paragraph, are consistent with his earlier uses or truly inconsistent with more traditional conceptions, such as those of Aristotle and Aquinas, to the latter of whom Netzley refers favorably. To what extent do Netzley's offending universals

correspond to the theories that historically propose them? And how are they related to conceptualization itself, which is necessary for abstract thinking, indeed for any serious thought?

The universals Netzley seeks to counter seem closest to Plato's Ideas, at least in dialogues like the *Republic*, and a major subtext for his argument would appear to be Donne's *Idea of a Woman*, by Edward W. Taylor.<sup>2</sup> Netzley refers to "a static Neoplaton[ism]" (36) in passing, which does not sound much like the Florentine kind, let alone like the dynamic eros of Plato's *Symposium*. He also refers to Aquinas' concepts of hylomorphism (see 28) and *phronesis* ("prudence" 31) with apparent approval but without considering their participation in the larger contours of Thomist thought, which includes both pairs of terms mentioned at the outset (teleology, potentiality, etc.) and, like Aristotle, endeavors to contain them: for Aquinas, however, hylomorphism, a combination of animating form and matter, has its origin and end in a Christian God; *phronesis*, the universalized concept deriving over time from many experiences of many things, complements wisdom, a biblically attuned virtue enlightened by faith. Reconciled as far as possible with reason—and herein lies a catch—faith is neither neutral nor merely supplementary in Thomism or in Donne's poems. Faith informs and modifies the registers of meaning. It does so in Taylor's book, which aligns Mistress Drury with the *species intelligibilis expressa*, an *intelligible* universal, or intelligible essence, and more exactly the image of the Trinitarian God. This is not merely the abstraction, or product of abstracting reason, that Netzley seems to intend in the earlier stages of his essay when, for example, he refers to "a future heaven of universality, in which particularity has been eliminated" (23), and not to the heaven of personal immortality that Christianity typically embraces. In other words, in the course of Netzley's essay, a shift occurs in his basic terminology as he gets down to the business of more fully engaging with the words of Donne's poems. For me, the shift is highly desirable, but I wish it had been addressed directly, with adjustment present from the start.

Taylor's book refers in particular to the psychology found in Lodowick Bryskett's *Discourse of Civill Life* (pub. 1606), which aims to reconcile the divinely inspired, intuitive ideas in the mind with the evidence of the senses, and thus attempts to reconcile Plato with Aristotle, the latter of whom embedded universals in things—*universalia in rebus*, or Netzley's "universals [...] always already there, hiding in the dark" (38).<sup>3</sup> Netzley's readings are usually perceptive, and his comments on the refrains of both *Anniversaries* are especially interesting: for example, the refrains of *The Second Anniversarie*, while reiterative, are also increasingly expansive, incorporating progress "inside of repetition itself" (36). But early on, under the influence of the merely abstract universals, a dubious reading worth mention occurs, since it further indicates that these universals are getting in the way. This reading pertains to one of the most celebrated passages in the poems, the ascent of the soul and, more exactly, the "speed vndistinguish'd" that leads the soul "through those spheares, as through the beades, a string, / Whose quicke succession makes it still one thing" (*The Second Anniversarie* [SA] 208-10).<sup>4</sup> Netzley asks rhetorically whether "this is what the progress of a soul looks like, the transition into indistinguishability?" He then adds, "*The Second Anniversarie* exhibits an obsession with such questions" (23). Despite the hedged rhetorical question, this reading is misleading. The point of the passage is not that the soul is moving into a situation in which it is indistinguishable from everything else or in which nothing is distinguishable. The striking phrase "speed vndistinguish'd" indicates an unearthly, unworldly speed because it is unmeasured and immeasurable by points of reference, in this instance the astral bodies and spheres. Like Keplerian light, the ascent of the disembodied soul is instantaneous.<sup>5</sup> Its ascent suggests Augustine's three-fold comprehension of time, of past and future held together in the attentive present, and therefore offers an insight into timelessness, as well.<sup>6</sup> It also recalls Zeno's related paradox in which the linear trajectory of an arrow at any given moment consists of still points, in which case the arrow is motionless while moving, and it therefore combines movement and

rest, speed and stillness. The speaker's puns, first "quicke,"—speedy, living—and then "still"—always, motionlessly, immutably—and their combination at once with "succession" and "one thing," the many and the one, movement and stasis, join together to straddle time and eternity, containing them both in a single line of verse, a continuity of words and rhythmic stresses within a single unit.<sup>7</sup>

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Switching for contrast to Powrie's "Speculative Tensions," I find her focus on Augustinian inner dialogue valuable and her original gloss on Donne's watchtower illuminating. But I would make the ambivalence she discovers in the word "watch-tower" a Derridean trace, rather than clinching evidence of the Donnean speaker's failed vision in *The Second Anniversarie*. A trace does not overwhelm a larger—in fact, a dominant—context. This context becomes the crucial issue, and the trace a sign of the complexity and imperfection of human language, implicitly of anything it fashions on its own. After all, it is *to ward off* ambiguity that Augustine distinguishes between the Latin for "watchtower" and for "mirror" in discussing 1 Corinthians 13:12 in *De Trinitate*, a text Donne knew well. Could it be this gesture that is relevant, along with biblical texts in which use of a watchtower is urged, even by divine inspiration?<sup>8</sup> Accordingly, I would further complicate the leap from the general influence of Augustine's interior dialogics to the specific interpretation of the watchtower in *The Second Anniversarie* by turning to the larger context in which Donne's watchtower occurs: namely, to the latter half of *The Second Anniversarie*, following the ascent of the soul.

Powrie, like Ramie Targoff, finds Donne's speaker incapable of sustaining to the end of *The Second Anniversarie* the visionary experience in its middle and, as evidence, points to passages in which he speaks disparagingly of worldly affairs and the soul's cognitive powers (see Targoff 100-03). She argues that the speaker, although scornful of worldly business and pleasures, is nonetheless both distracted from an exclusive interiority and even attracted by them. In addition, al-

though the cognition he disparages is not fundamental to faith, his soul is slighted, its true redemptive power ignored. Both specific readings and an overall sense of the second half of the poem are at issue.

In contrast, I would argue that the conclusion of the soul's ascent leaves the speaker to make something of it in the time that remains.<sup>9</sup> He is back in the body, though addressing his soul, and the grieving parents are still there to be comforted. The first thing he does is to praise Mistress Drury's body at length, finding it so fair, so rich, and so nearly unified that "one might almost say, her bodie thought" (SA 246). The narrative progress of the poem from vision back to earth is precisely what has enabled this perception "almost" of unity, which will return elaborately and consummately near the poem's end. The postlapsarian body, even the purest, was not seen this way before. In other words, progress counts, as does narrative.

The praise of Mistress Drury next gives way to reflection on the soul's lack of knowledge not only of itself but also of the body or of anything else that is useful. Anything originating in sense-data is brushed aside. Instead, all knowledge and libraries are to be found in Mistress Drury's soul, now in heaven, which is "our best, and worthiest booke" (SA 320). Perhaps surprisingly, when the speaker next addresses his soul imperatively, it is to urge her not to return "from this extasee, / And meditation of what thou shalt bee, / To earthly thoughts" (SA 321-23). A modern reader might suppose that the ecstasy had ended with the visionary ascent of the soul, but apparently not. The condition of return to earthly concerns that the speaker now imposes on his soul is a general reform of society, in lieu of which, he turns with reawakened energy to an unearthly state: "Vp, vp, my drowsie soule, Where thy new eare / Shall in the Angels songs no discord heare" (339-40). Having earlier been uplifted by the imagined vision of his ascending soul, the speaker newly listens with an Augustinian's inner ear, and his thoughts are directed to higher things: he would hear "Angels songs" and the music of the spheres, which is inaudible to ears of flesh.<sup>10</sup>

I want to emphasize that the ascent of the soul has made a real difference—that it effects a kind of sea change. Consider this brief example, complementary in the poem to the imagined possibility of an inner ear: after the soul's ascent, the word *joy* appears no less than twenty times. In neither *Anniversarie* does it appear earlier, save the exception of one compromised instance in *The First Anniversarie* (FA 20). The reverberation of joy in the latter half of *The Second Anniversarie* is a transformation in tone and perspective. Words have an enhanced status in this *Anniversarie*, and their enhancement is a virtual signature of Donne's faith, as it is later found in *Devotions* and the sermons.

Meditation on the inconstancy of earthly beauty and honor follows the reenergizing of the speaker's soul until he exhorts her to make an even greater effort to sustain higher thoughts and to recover true vision (SA 435). To object that the speaker has to exhort his soul is to overlook the volition, the effort, faith asks on the part of the believer, ever allowing for prevenient and sustaining grace, as well as to overlook the traditional renunciation of worldly goods and concerns as part of the commitment to a religious calling. It is also to forget Donne's immediate audience, the grieving parents, and the difference between a public poem, an anniversary (that is, the occasion, the temporal memory) of a loved one's death, and a purely interiorized meditation. At this point in the poem, the speaker relates diametrical lines within a circle to thoughts of heaven:

Know that all lines which circles doe containe,  
For once that they the center touch, do touch  
Twice the circumference; and be thou such.  
Double on Heauen, thy thoughts on Earth employd. (SA 436-39)

"For once" means "for a single time" and "for every time." It embraces the former ascent of the speaker's soul and ascents still to come. A circle, recurrently the form of perfection and completion in Donne's writing, traditionally represents the movement of the soul, eternity, or God himself. Its center rests on a stable point equidistant

from all points on its circumference; this is the center that was lacking in *The First Anniversarie*, where, since the center did not hold, coherence was gone. All diametrical lines cross this central point in the circle, and all radial lines spread out from and return to it. It represents origin and return and the centrality of meaning and being. The circumference, another figure of divine perfection, since it has neither beginning nor end, is also the expansion, expression, and in some sense the completion of the central, stable point: as there is no circle without a center, so there is none without a circumference. As lines that touch the center touch the circumference twice as often and twice as much, thus evoking both a memory of time and number and a promissory intimation of these in the very symbol of eternity, so the speaker urges his thoughts while on earth, which have once ascended in soul-flight, to redouble their efforts to reach heavenward again and again. It is hardly a coincidence that this speaker is heard next instructing his soul about the “essentiall ioye” of beatific vision, in which the sight of God is the unity of object and intellect. Instead of merely talking about the image of God in the soul, Donne’s speaker once again gives voice to the vision it enables.

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Ursell’s essay, by detailing the tradition concerning *pneuma* and its relevance to the *Anniversaries*, makes another notable contribution to existing scholarship on them. Ursell seeks to show in both *Anniversaries* that the material, the immaterial, and the spiritual are continuous without the subordination of any one of them. He further aligns *pneuma* as the single principle that “vivifies the universe” both with Stoic fire and with the inspiration—the breath—of the Holy Spirit (Ursell 48).<sup>11</sup> Ursell is particularly invested in the material grounding of *pneuma* and twice quotes passages from Agamben’s *Stanzas* in order to establish its physiological basis and its assimilation in Stoicism and Neoplatonism to the phantasy, a sensitive faculty but one which, under divine influences, can mediate between the corporeal and incorporeal, the human and divine, and, I trust, also the material,

immaterial, and spiritual (Ursell 48, 50).<sup>12</sup> The meaning of these last three terms, which is unstable in Donne's time—perhaps in any time—is clearly something to watch, especially in view of the collapse of coherence and stability lamented so vociferously in *The First Anniversarie*.

In response to Ursell's two quotations of Agamben's *Stanzas*, I will briefly quote yet a third, in which *pneuma* becomes what Agamben calls "pneumophantasmology," namely,

The breath that animates the universe, circulates in the arteries, and fertilizes the sperm is the same one that, in the brain and in the heart, receives and forms the phantasms of the things we see, imagine, dream, and love. Insofar as it is the subtle body of the soul, it is in addition the intermediary between the soul and matter, the divine and the human, and, as such, allows the explanation of all the influxes between corporeal and incorporeal. (94)

As cited here, *pneuma* is clearly corporeal, material, sensitive, and, as intermediary, something more. It is animating breath like that of the creative God in Genesis, a divine influx. But is God's a material breath? As "the subtle body of the soul" and the mediator between the soul and matter, what is *pneuma*? It has to be other and more than air or a gas, since these, however rare (not dense), are still material. If *pneuma* really is the sign of synthesis between God and (fallen?) humanity, its efficacy appears to require mysticism, magic, or belief—as incidentally, does Paracelsus, whose work Donne knew. While I accept that *pneuma* is revealing with respect to Donne's thinking in the *Anniversaries*, as it is in his erotic lyric "The Extasie," it is not the end of this matter, so to speak.<sup>13</sup>

Many of Ursell's pneumatic readings, from the "putrid stuff" (phlegm?) in the lungs to trumpet and voice (endings respectively of first and second *Anniversaries*) are inspired, as is his illuminating discussion of Donne's pneumatic poetics (see 53). In this poetics, verse "hath a middle nature," which Ursell explains "as a special kind of matter that cannot be equated entirely with either bodies or souls" (51).<sup>14</sup> At the same time, however, the two *Anniversaries* neither mention *pneuma* nor make the explicit reference to spirit(s), the most familiar substitute in English for *pneuma*, that we might expect.<sup>15</sup> It is hard

not to conclude that something else in the poem is more important to the resolution of grief and its accompanying doubt. Since the length of the present essay begins to push that of a proper response even to three essays, I will only gesture at my own answer, which is developed at further length in *Light and Death*. It shares with Ursell's readings a hospitality to voice, but it radically prioritizes verbal language, the redemptive word/Word, not over matter, since words are simultaneously concept and sound—the graphic image of sound, if written—but over fallen flesh.

Near the end of *The Second Anniversarie*, a contested analogy occurs, focused on the person of Mistress Drury:

for shee rather was two soules,  
Or like to full, on both sides written Rols,  
Where eies might read vpon the outward skin,  
As strong Records for God, as mindes within;  
Shee, who by making full perfection grow,  
Peeces a Circle, and still keeps it so [...] SA 503-08)

The word “rather” in the first line means “more accurately,” “more properly,” and also “earlier, before the present time,” and so when she was living. The second line qualifies the previous assertion of dual souls: when living, her skin, figuratively the outer soul, is then analogized to her intellect, figuratively the inner one, and the result is analogized to a parchment roll with writing on both its sides. Unlike the analogy of the woman's living body to a transparent scarf or to the soul's exhalation in Donne's *Fvneral Elegie*, here the body has equal substance and, more broadly, has equality with the mind. Moreover, the juncture, the near-unity, of body and soul is as striking in Donne's image as in Saussure's modern analogy of signified and signifier to the recto and verso of a single page.<sup>16</sup> Yet the analogy at hand is also subject to interpretation in line three, and it involves writing, both as the surface of the present poem and as part of its content, the “written Rols.”<sup>17</sup> The antiquity of parchment rolls enforces the special biblical, sacred context of Donne's allusion, perhaps to Revelation 5:1. These rolls also recollect the earlier imagery of words, writing, books, and libraries in this *Anniversarie* but do so with a difference: unlike paper,

parchment is made from the skin of a dead animal. Like the earlier image of the exposed vertebrae in the ascent of the soul, it has a connection to life (Drury's) but only through death.<sup>18</sup> Yet "only" is misleading here, since the parchment in the image has writing, words, on it, and these are specifically designated "Records for God." They figure forth the expressions (evidence) of faith.<sup>19</sup> Records are also reminders of what is written on the heart, Latin *recordari*, "to remember," from *cor/cordis*, "heart." Memory and the heart are earlier much present in both *Anniversaries*. This image of written rolls is a recollection, a mnemonic gathering, and also a further reverberation.

The last two lines in the passage return to the perfection of a circle, since *She* makes perfection itself fuller and "Peeces," improves, even a circle, thus recalling and bettering the earlier comparison of her embodied proportions to the detriment of abstract, circular perfection. With the verb "Peeces," reinforced in the same line by the phrase "still keeps it so," Donne's speaker also moves from the past, Mistress Drury alive, to the present. What then follows is "Long'd for, and longing for" heavenly perfection, she "to heauen is gone" (507-08). In the end, not only the body but even desire is back as the erotic, Christian-Neoplatonic connector between heaven and earth, between the soul's longing for God and God's for the soul, and implicitly the mutual longing for reunion of the Drurys on earth and their daughter Elizabeth, their treasure, their *drury*, in heaven.<sup>20</sup> Memory itself is redeemed by this eros.

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## NOTES

<sup>1</sup>In the interest of disclosure, I should note that all three essays in an earlier form were presented in a panel of the John Donne Society, which I organized for the MLA meeting in 2015. I should also mention that I have an investment in Donne's *Anniversaries*, having devoted a chapter to them in my forthcoming book, *Light and Death*. I read a short paper based on this chapter at the Donne Society conference in 2015, to which Theresa M. DiPasquale, who has published on the *Anniversaries*, was the assigned responder. My investment will be flagged in what follows.

<sup>2</sup>Taylor's book is the source of a quotation in another of Netzley's sources, namely Martin (11), who asserts that *The First Anniversarie* is an assault on Francis Bacon's *Advancement of Learning* (1605). I am not convinced by the evidence Martin offers for this narrow interpretation.

<sup>3</sup>Taylor uses Bryskett's *Discourse* extensively to exemplify the kind of thought evident in the *Anniversaries*. He focuses on synthesis, however, and does not engage the problems in Bryskett's efforts to bridge Plato and Aristotle or, put otherwise, immateriality and materiality.

<sup>4</sup>For Donne's *Anniversaries* and *Fvnerall Elegie*, I use volume 6 of *The Variorum Edition*.

<sup>5</sup>See Kepler, *Optics* 21.

<sup>6</sup>On Augustinian time, see Ricoeur 1: 5-30, esp. 16-22.

<sup>7</sup>The latter half of this paragraph draws on my chapter treating Donne's *Anniversaries* in *Light and Death*.

<sup>8</sup>Powrie's discussion of Donne's watchtower references, in addition to her primary concern, namely, Augustine's gloss on 1 Corinthians 13:12 in *De Trinitate*, includes a reference to a watchtower in a sermon by Donne in which he refers to ministers as *speculatores* ("look-outs," "watchers"), in accord with Ezekiel 33:7 (13). She does not mention other relevant biblical possibilities, such as Isaiah 21:5-6, 8, and Habbakuk 2:1, which, along with the passage in Ezekiel that I cite (different from Powrie's), support interpretation of the watchtower as a place above and apart from the world yet still in it, as is Donne's speaker at this point. If with Powrie we see a resemblance between this speaker and the historical Donne in *The Second Anniversarie*, it might be recalled that a monastery was not a viable option for him, a man—by this time, likely an apostate from Catholicism—with a wife and young children. Even Augustine returned, if reluctantly, to more worldly affairs when summoned to be Bishop of Hippo. Powrie mentions Taylor's two learned chapters on Donne's watchtower but rejects his argument (cf. esp. Taylor 166-67n26). For Taylor, the watchtower is a "mediating term," "the tripartite [Trinitarian] 'watch-tower' of the mind," and "the type of the identity of knower and known that foreshadows in this life [...] the Beatific Vision" (66).

<sup>9</sup>My phrasing recalls both 1 Corinthians 7:29 and the title of Agamben's *Time That Remains*, a commentary on Romans. For discussion of the second half of *The*

*Second Anniversarie* that follows, I draw again on my chapter treating the *Anniversaries* in *Light and Death*.

<sup>10</sup>Language itself has a material dimension as sound and script, however, and it is *sensed* as such. It also has an affective dimension. Data received by the imagination/phantasy, as thence by the memory, are at once “sensorily derived and emotionally charged”; necessarily, they are perceptual—mediated and filtered by the senses of the perceiving subject; see Carruthers 54, 59 and also Schofield; Wedin.

<sup>11</sup>See Agamben, *Stanzas* 92. Agamben’s relevant chapter focuses on the Middle Ages, a focus that is surely relevant to the seventeenth century, yet still worth noting. In the period that witnessed development of the new science, not to mention the continuing impact of the Reformation, there were additional reasons for gnawing doubt and heightened anxiety, which the speaker of *The First Anniversarie*, in an understatement, reflects.

<sup>12</sup>See Agamben, *Stanzas* 92-93.

<sup>13</sup>Even in “The Extasie,” in which “our blood labours to beget / Spirits, as like soules as it can” (61-62), because something is needed to hold human being together in this life, the phrasing “as like [...] as it can” hedges. In “The Extasie,” the spirits seem to be the best we can do, but how good is that? How verifiable in the age of a new science? In Donne’s time, “spirit” was a richly overdetermined word—and concept—as Ursell’s citations suggest.

<sup>14</sup>Pertinently, Ursell also invokes the singing of Orpheus (10-11). Traditionally, Orpheus played a lyre, but Renaissance illustrations sometimes gave him a lute or other instrument. Ficino’s interest in the magic of song might also be invoked; e.g., see my *Words That Matter* 137-46.

<sup>15</sup>See FA 13, 150; SA 139 (reference to an angel). Lines in Donne’s “Fvnerall Elegie,” considered his earliest elegy on Mistress Drury’s death, have most relevance, since they suggest music: “*But those fine spirits, which doe tune and set / This Organ*” (27-28). The same elegy also refers to “spiritual mirth” in heaven (l. 105), which seems less to the point.

<sup>16</sup>See Saussure 113: “Language can be compared with a sheet of paper: thought is the front and the sound the back.”

<sup>17</sup>Grossman 189-91 identifies Donne’s “written Rols” with Augustine’s depiction of the firmament in his interpretation of Genesis in the *Confessions*. Proleptically, Augustine’s meditation includes references to the Fall, to the deaths of the ancient biblical writers, and to the abiding w/Word of God. It also glances at Revelation 6:14, a back reference to the scroll of Revelation 5:1 and related biblical passages: see *Confessions* 299; cf. 300 (XIII.xv.16, 18). Cf. n18 below.

<sup>18</sup>Interpreters of the Bible have suggested that a Hebrew Torah scroll, which must be made of parchment, is intended in Revelation 5:1, where the image of a double-sided roll (Greek *biblion*, “scroll”) occurs, as it does in Ezekiel 2:9 and Zechariah 5:1-3; see “sealed scroll” in <answersintheendtimes.com> and <oncedelivered.net>. Two-sided scrolls are unusual, and the three in the Bible are associ-

ated with vision and prophecy. Torahs are one-sided, however, and so only a Torah-type scroll with two lateral rollers, rather than precisely a Torah, would qualify for Donne's graphic image. The two-sidedness of Donne's image is conceivably an adaptation of a Torah-scroll to the recto-verso relationship of the Old and New Testaments and thus also to the dominant emphases at the end of *The First* and *Second Anniversaries*, respectively.

<sup>19</sup>"For God" can variously be taken as "for God to read"; "on behalf of God," "concerning God," and so effectually "of God," and perhaps even as "for God's immanence" or providential presence; cf. *OED* "For" II.4, III.7, V.16, 17; IX.26, 27.

<sup>20</sup>In *Light and Death*, I argue that the word *d/Drury* means "treasure," as it does in the Middle Ages: e.g., Langland, *Bi*<sup>v</sup>: "Whan al treasures are tried [...] truth is best [...] It is as dere worth a drury, as deare God him selfe." This meaning was available in the early modern period in popular printed editions. (The *OED* gives only the first record of a word in a given text and therefore lacks the currency of this meaning in the period.) The medieval meaning (sexual) "love" was similarly available in Donne's time. *Eros*, the word I use, in the Renaissance—well into the seventeenth century—encompasses love more broadly and inclusively than at present.

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