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Opulence and Iron Pokers: Coleridge and Donne

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Cliches die hard, if they ever die, and those surrounding John Donne seem to be among the most enduring. One tires of the inept epithet "metaphysical," which remains attached even to this present collection of essays. John Dryden had compared Donne with Charles, Earl of Dorset,

> You equal *Donn* in the Variety, Multip[l]icity, and Choice of Thoughts; you excel him in the Manner, and the Words. I Read you both, with the same Admiration, but not with the same Delight. He affects the Metaphysicks, not only in his Satires, but in his Amorous Verses, where Nature only shou'd reign; and perplexes the Minds of the Fair Sex with nice Speculations of Philosophy, when he shou'd ingage their hearts, and entertain them with the softnesses of Love.[1]

Dryden seems to mean by the term an unnatural quality, an involved intellectualism, abstruse arguments couched in inappropriate words. Critics of Restoration literature have been silent in pointing out how incompetent this statement (and others) show Dryden to be as a reader and a critic. But it is a view fired by that ubiquitous cliche of Jack Donne the Rake (fostered in certain ways by Donne himself) that scholars have been trying to dissociate in reading some of the songs and sonnets and the elegies from those poems as poems. Perhaps the definition of "metaphysical" that greeted Samuel Taylor Coleridge's early acquaintance with Donne's poetry[2] involved the transcendence of the physical through physical imagery that moved a reader into an intellectual and thence an emotional understanding of the idea or emotion being communicated. Thus it stressed metaphoric likenesses in things seemingly

unlike (the "conceit"), avoiding the tired and unimpressive "natural" imagery used so repetitively that understanding was blunted. It was a method of argument from the known to the unknown, by way of startling imagery and language, built on intellectual apprehension; and, in order to avoid the reader's being lulled by pretty words, it was sustained by unusual syntax, seeming obscurities of language, dramatic re-creations, extended comparisons, and a rapid association of images and thoughts.

The preceding defines technique, language/imagery, poetic impression, and acceptably enough applies to some but certainly not all of Donne's poetry (such as many of the verse letters). It has nothing to do with the substance of the songs and sonnets and elegies or with the soul/body dilemma which supports a different kind of metaphysical label. Such unprivate and "nonmetaphysical" poets as Thomas Carew and Sir John Suckling are often close to Donne in content and imitations of his language, much closer than his supposed followers, but not in technique or syntax or dramatic setting.[3] On the other hand, a so-called metaphysical poet like George Herbert does not exhibit the content or imitative language but does the technique and drama, yet with such a difference that we can be misled in using one term for both authors. Herbert's resolution of the soul/body dilemma, as well, is in sharp contrast to Donne's in setting and completion, yet the label for most people umbrellas both.[4] A more serious misreading occurs for Henry Vaughan who is a Son of Ben in much of his poetry, not a Donnean metaphysician under any defintion. Vaughan's approach to the metaphysics of man's relationship with God, by way of Herbert, leads him into such a rapid association of images and thoughts, with unexplored spaces between, that most readers have been incapable of following him. Many condemn his poetry for not being satisfied with Herbertian resolutions (involving the abject acceptance of supernal greatness) and for its surging into seemingly chaotic and cosmic expansions. Vaughan's poems from *Silex Scintillans* read without preconception of what they should be (that is, not read as if they were part of the Herbert canon) will yield planned, well-executed, and more expansive poems.

With ambiguous reference alongside "The Extasie" Coleridge remarked: "I should never find fault with metaphysical Poems, were they all like this, —or but half so excellent.—" The negativities of that statement may reflect the preceding paragraph and the narrow and unanalyzed definition of "metaphysical." The positivities I take to be Donne's "tracing the leading Thought tho'out the whole," his "opulence" of creative imagination, the way the poem makes sense as a whole when "iron pokers into true-love knots" is recognized not as "wanton ingenuity" but as a key to a clearer expression of the thought.[5] Later on, in

Literary Remains (I, 149), Coleridge was to define wit as "Wonder-exciting vigour, intenseness and peculiarity of thought, using at will the almost boundless stores of a capacious memory, and exercised on subjects, where we have no right to expect it—this is the wit of Donne!"[6] Whatever his reaction to other seventeenth-century poets, Coleridge felt the difference in Donne's brand of metaphysical verse[7] and, intellectually engaged by it (a kind of conundrum-recognition that has caught many a reader),[8] pursued a broad study of the poems, sermons, and other prose. As has been now rather frequently demonstrated, Donne was better known in the nineteenth century than the older cliche had told us, and Coleridge was among the prime movers in his resuscitated reputation.[9]

However, I would also question whether the eighteenth century had so totally obliterated Donne that Coleridge would not have experienced some, at least vague, residue to whet his interest once he had directly come upon Donne's poems in the early 1790s. A. J. Smith has reprinted and discussed numerous references in the period.[10] While Donne certainly does not have the visibility of Milton or Cowley, he is known as a poet, prose writer, and sermonist. Donne's nonheroic verse is criticized in this age which debated "Miltonicks" and rhyme persistently, and the heroic couplet of the satires presents versification considered rough and harsh.[11] The still-heard epitomes of Donne, based on the "love" poetry, cast him as an extravagant author of biographical poems, as a wit, as an obscure poet, and as a pursuer of uncommon sentiment. In this vein, Samuel Johnson's remarks (1779) are not different from John Oldmixon's much earlier attitude: "But those Wits that subtilize, need only follow their Genius to take Flight, and lose themselves in their own thoughts. Dr. *Donne*, and Mr. *Cowley* are sufficient instances of this Vice in our Language." He goes on to say that in Donne "there's hardly any thing that's agreeable, or one Stroke which has any Likeness to Nature. . . . Both *Donne* and *Cowley* were Men of Learning, and must consequently have read the Antients over and over. They could never learn this from them, but owe all the Extravagance in it to their own Genius's."[12] The demands of the so-called neoclassical age, the prosodic monotonies, the narrow understanding of nature, and theories of *imitatio* (rather than *mimesis*) clearly blighted literary opinion; yet we can point out the presence of Donne in numerous instances in addition to those previously cited. Charles Gildon printed a poem called "The Visit," with an allusion to Donne, in *Examen Miscellaneum* (London, 1702), p. 63 (second pagination). Roger de Piles's *The Art of Painting, and the Lives of the Painters* (London, 1706), in "An Essay Towards an English School of Painters," under Nicholas Hilliard, quotes lines from

"The Storme" (p. 431: "A hand, an Eye / By Hilliard drawn, is worth a History.")[13] Aaron Hill's *The Plain Dealer*, No. 33, 13 July 1724, has a letter from Peter Trout (dated 1 July 1724) which refers to "The Bait" and offers three poetic stanzas influenced by it in language, appropriation of lines, and content.[14] In Christian Gottlieb Jöcher's biographical account it is interesting to note the continued unacknowledged use of Anthony Wood in the reference to "Fasciculum poem. & epigramm. miscel."[15] "*Doctor* Donne *has given us the* Lamentations *in as good Verse, as can be expected from the Times he wrote in,*" the unknown author of *Darius's Feast; or, The Force of Truth. A Poem* (London, 1734) informed the reader in the preface, A2v, indicating knowledge of an unusual item as well as a vague negativity toward verse of the Jacobean period. In his essay on piscatory verse prefaced to his own eclogues, Moses Browne refers to Walton's life of Donne (p. 17 note) and "The Bait" (p. 19), and then indicates his indebtedness to Donne in Eclogue II by quoting ten lines from "Metempsychosis," stanza 29, in a note to page 51.[16] This latter work of Donne's, which in our own day receives so little attention, was a focus also for the anonymous author of *Prae-existence and Transmigration: Or, The New Metamorphoses. A Philosophical Essay on the Nature and Progress of the Soul. A Poem, Something between a Panegyrick, and a Satire* (London, 1743). Here we find as epigraph on the title page a quotation from the Preface to "The Progress of the Soul," and stanza 62 discusses Donne and "Metempsychosis." William Thompson's note to *Sickness. A Poem. Book I* (London, 1745), p. 40, for line 105, calls attention to another less usual poem: "See . . . *Donne*'s excellent Epithalamium on the Lady Elizabeth and the Count Palatine, being Valentine's day." The litany of Donne's underlying influence and presence for some in the eighteenth century continues with an allusion in Friedrick von Hagedorn's *Poetische Werke. Dritter Theile* (Hamburg, 1757) in the "Vorbericht," pp. xxiv-xxv; with John Hackett's printing of Donne's epitaph in St. Paul's Cathedral and a biographical note, pp. 74-75, in Volume II of *Select and Remarkable Epitaphs on Illustrious and Other Persons* (London, 1757);[17] with Myles Cooper's "the Triple Fool. Paraphrased from Dr. Donne" in *Poems on Several Occasions* (London, 1761), pp. 35-36; with Owen Ruffhead's repetition of Pope's comment in the 1733 advertisement for *The First Satire of the Second Book of Horace Imitated* without clear acknowledgment, "The example of much greater freedom in so eminent a divine as Dr. Donne, seem'd a proof with what indignation and contempt a Christian may treat vice or folly, in ever so low, or ever so high, a station" in *The Life of Pope* (London, 1769), p. 350;[18] with Johann Wolfgang Goethe's reference in *Frankfurter Gelehrte Anzeigen vom Jahr 1772* (Frankfurt am Mayn,

1772), No. 89, 6 November, p. 706, in a review of Johann Joachim Eschenburg's edition of *Horazens Epistein an die Pisonen und an den Augustus;* with a significant comment by John Aikin in 1773; with the reprinting of "Epigram—*On a lame Beggar*" in a 1784 almanac;[19] with Robert Nares's use of lines 61-62 from "Satyre I" to illustrate the word "antic";[20] with a reprinting of "Song: Go and catch a Falling Star," pp. 140-41, and the first nine lines of "Negative Love," called "Song," p. 141, in George Ellis's *Specimens of the Early English Poets* (London, 1790);[21] with six citations in Friedrick von Blankenburg's *Litterarische Zusatze zu Johann Georg Sulzers Allgemeiner Theorie der Dehonen Kunste* (Leipzig, 1796-98), three volumes, noting satires, epigrams, sonnets, verse epistles, elegies, hymns, and *Ignatius his Conclave;* and with John Ferriar's *Illustrations of Sterne: with Other Essays and Verses* (London, 1798), which pulls us back to 1761 by noting on page 174 that the last two lines of "The Will" (quoted) appear in *Tristram Shandy,* Volume 5, Chapter 16, and Ferriar himself employs "Thou shalt not laugh in this leaf, Muse" from "Satyre V" as the epigraph for "A Northern Prospect; an Ode," p. [309].[22] John Aikin's remark presents both what is commonly thought to be the attitude toward Donne in the century and what might be considered a more balanced view. It may offer an abstract of the attitude that greeted Coleridge as he began his literary studies in the late eighties and the nineties. "Among our own writers it is sufficient to instance Donne, Suckling and Cowley for this constant affectation of wit and uncommon sentiment, and for a consequent obscurity of expression. Yet all these, and Sir W. D'avenant, perhaps, in a more eminent degree than the rest, had for great occasions, above the temptations of trifling, a majestic and nervous simplicity both of sentiment and expression; which, with our more refined taste and language, we have never been able to equal."[23]

For Coleridge the power of imagination is the synthesis of opposites in balance or reconciliation (such as natural/artificial). Deriving his ideas from Friedrich Wilhelm von Schelling's "On the Relation of the Formative Arts to Nature," Coleridge maintained,

> The impression on the wax is not an imitation, but a copy, of the seal; the seal itself is an imitation. . . . It is sufficient that philosophically we understand that in all imitation two elements must coexist, and not only coexist, but must be perceived as coexisting. These two constituent elements are likeness and unlikeness, or sameness and difference, and in all genuine creations of art there must be a union of these disparates. The artist

> may take his point of view where he pleases, provided that the desired effect be perceptibly produced—that there be likeness in the difference, difference in the likeness, and a reconcilement of both in one.[24]

Thus Joseph E. Duncan is most justified in saying that "Coleridge's theories serve to interpret Donne's poetry and Donne's poetry serves to illustrate Coleridge's theories. The two have shed a radiant aura of critical approval upon each other and together have acted as a guiding beacon for modern metaphysical poets."[25] The concept of the conceit, which Coleridge's comment encapsulates, had been Johnson's main avenue of depicting the style and for vilifying it since it was not "natural"; that is, for the eighteenth-century poetic the seal should be as nearly a seal as possible, not an imitation, closer to a photograph than a painting. But all metaphor involves representation and is not thus the same as nature (and of course any perception of nature is dependent upon many elements such as angle of vision, fore- and backgrounding, relationships). It focuses one or more aspects of likeness or unlikeness with an attendant tacit dismissal of other aspects of unlikeness or likeness. ("O my luve's like a red, red rose" illustrates the simile function that too many critics forget when talking about Milton's Satan as a toad, for example. One thing is not the other: my love is not a rose, it is not red, the rose also has thorns; Satan is not a toad, he is not bodily but a "spirit" projecting himself into Eve's dream, the toad also has "warts."[26])The conceit simply involves a more unusual linking of things (concrete or not), focusing on one or more aspects of startling likeness or unlikeness, neither likeness nor unlikeness being usually within the perceptor's experience until related by the poet for those specific things.

Conceit, however, does not encompass Donne's art, and certainly not all his poetry. Coleridge was as limited in accepting this epitome as T. S. Eliot. As Duncan argues (pp. 33-34), Coleridge's enthusiasm for Donne brought Donne into the ken of his literary acquaintances with effect on their own poetry, but what they saw was that aspect of Donne called "metaphysical" in the conceit, in the unusual syntax and rhythm, in the dramatic on-the-spot re-creations, and in the communication of the intellectual and emotional understanding through an arresting physical image. One wonders whether these limitations in seeing Donne whole are behind Coleridge's apparently not producing a full discussion of Donne in his seventh lecture as expected.[27] Coleridge's remarks on the poetry suggest that he, like most readers of Donne in the past and today, read poems in the songs and sonnets category in basically biographical terms for content even though Coleridge stresses techniques of language and prosody. Marginalia in the Chalmers edition (dated January

1829) offer a reading of lines 15-18 of "The Good-Morrow" (see Whalley, II, 218), for instance, which do not lead us to think that Coleridge understood the poem as a characterization, not of Donne himself, but of a speaker who is sophistically trying to convince himself—not the auditor—that this one-night stand could prove serious and could continue since their lovemaking has been so much better than what he (and he hopes she) had experienced before. Coleridge admitted he did not understand line 18, and he talks of it as "nonsense or a bull." Nothing in what he notes leads one to think that he is commenting on the speciousness of the argument, and no inkling of psychological understanding of the idealistic, "constant," cerebral, naive male depicted in the poem appears.

The question of Donne's prosody is a frequent one for the literary years preceding Coleridge, but for Coleridge as well. The satires provided then and apparently even today the cause for disparaging Donne's poetic ear and arguing that the received texts are suspect even in line-arrangement. Thus it must unendingly be pointed out that the prosody of the satires is not so rough and harsh as the popularly repeated cliche would have it.[28] The accent does shift from Jonsonian-exact iambs to trochees, spondees, and pyrrhics, and a defective or hypermetric line occurs here or there. But these—like having the article "a" complete line 215 of "Satyre IV"—are calculated not only to create a semblance of actual speech but to poke fun and subtly to draw characterizations. A major problem has been readers who are not sensitive to syncope. Coleridge believed (rightly) that Donne's poems were "grievously misprinted."[29] But not so grievously misprinted that an attentive reader will not be able to make prosodic sense of the lines and to recognize Donne's leading of the reader in how to read, what to stress, what to understand as the gist of statement or characterization or tone, and how to avoid being lulled into noncommunication. This Coleridge knew. In John Stockdale's edition of Beaumont and Fletcher (1811), penned after 29 March 1815 and perhaps in January-March 1818 when he was preparing his literary lectures, Coleridge remarked, "Read even Donne's Satires as he meant them to be read, and as the sense & passion demand, and you will find in the lines a manly harmony."[30] The marginalia, not only for Donne's but for others' poems, evince strongly Coleridge's concern with versification.[31]

His sensitivity to the poetry (seen too in his criticism of the ascribed Satire VI, which he perceptively found most unlike Donne) is counterbalanced somewhat by some questionable scanning. A comment on line 16 of "The Triple Fool" ("Griefe, which verse did restraine") is both right and wrong:

> "-⏑/ -⏑⏑/ -. a good instance, how D. read his own verses. We should write, The Grief, Verse did restrain. But D. roughly emphasized the two main words, Grief & Verse, and therefore made each the first Syllable of a Trochee: -⏑, or Dactyl."

Of course, the middle foot is a trochee and the last an iamb, not catalectic; yet the rhythm is - /⏑ - /⏑⏑ -. Coleridge recognizes the shifted accents and implies a pun on "strain" with its heavy stress (punning on prosodic strain), made even heavier in his scansion, yet the line does not involve such curious phrasing as his marking would suggest. His comment makes clear the meaning that "rough" has for Donne's early readers: "roughly emphasized" indicates that it is in the shifted accents that the verse denies the expected "smoothness."

A lack of smoothness due to thought Coleridge also found in the elegies on Donne in the 1669 volume: their "almost only fault, being want of smoothness, flow, and perspicuity, from too great compression of thought—too many thoughts, and, often, too much thought in each." He clearly had not surmounted the demand that poetry to be worthy must be "smooth" in its prosody and in its nonforcing of rapid jumps of thought. There is less emphasis on the reader participating: the reader is to react only. His adulatory remarks on "Song: Sweetest Love, I do not go" repeat this message and suggest his limitations as a proponent of Donne's verses:

> This beautiful & perfect Poem proves by its Title "Song," that *all* Donne's Poems are equally *metrical* (misprints allowed for) tho' *smoothness* (i.e. the metre necessitating the proper reading) he deemed appropriate to *Songs*; but in Poems where the Author *thinks* & expects the Reader to do so, the Sense must be understood in order to ascertain the metre."

The implications of his remarks on reading the satires and the line from "The Triple Fool"—that Donne's meter leads the reader to the thought—has now been reversed so that one must understand before one can experience the meter. The position is not unlike attitudes one finds today, and Coleridge's attention, apparently, to only some of the poems has affinities with the pronouncements one gets from modern critics on the basis of a few poems. On the other hand, the evidence indicates that he read and reacted to more of them than a number of critical books implying coverage of the poetic canon have.

The list of cited, annotated, or imitated poems seems to include: "Aire and Angels," "The Blossome," "The Canonization," "The Dissolution," "The Extasie," "A Fever," "The Flea," "The Good-morrow," "The Indifferent," "Loves Deitie," "Loves exchange," "A nocturnal upon S. Lucies day," "The Primrose," "The Relique," "Song: Goe, and catche," "Song: Sweetest love," "The Sunne Rising," "The triple Foole," "Twicknam garden," "The Undertaking," "A Valediction forbidding mourning," "The Will," and "Womans constancy" [Songs and Sonnets]; Satires 3, 4, 5; "Metempsychosis"; Elegy IV ("The Perfume"); "Epithalamion and Ecclogue"; the Anniversaries; "Obsequies to the Lord Harrington"; "To the Countess of Bedford" ("Reason is our Soules left hand"), "To Mr. T. W." ("Hast thee harsh verse"), and "To Sir Henry Goodyer" ("Who makes the past"). Remarks on "The Extasie," "The Canonization," "The Good-morrow," and (partially) "The Indifferent" have been quoted before. Whereas he used to find out grand lines and stanzas in poems, Coleridge said, now, as a result of reading "The Canonization," he traces the thought throughout the whole. The often misread "Womans constancy" should have been entitled "Mutual Constancy," according to Coleridge, either because he recognized the twist in the poem from the sententia that man is constant and woman fickle, or because he did not fathom the dramatic reversal that Donne is drawing any more than most modern readers do. The speaker is a woman, as "Vaine lunatique," addressed to the auditor, requires; the person leaving is a lunatic because enamored of the moon (a symbol for woman), and therefore male. The woman—that is, the speaker—is supposed to be inconstant according to Renaissance gender stereotyping, but this woman shows signs of being interested in a continuance of the affair except that, since the man who is supposed to be constant has begun to leave—this is clearly another short-lived pickup—the speaker, in sour grapes tradition, says that she too may want to sever the relationship the next day. The chink in her lady-of-the-evening sensibility has shown itself and she has to regain her blasé reputation. I doubt that Coleridge was reading the poem very deeply; he was probably only commenting on the "inconstancy" of both speaker and auditor that lies on the surface.

The poem "On Donne's First Poem ['The Flea']" is discussed elsewhere in the present volume by John A. Hodgson, who also argues for Coleridge's authorship of "Limbo." Flea and other "beast" poems had a tradition both before and after Donne wrote. In the eighteenth century there are many, including Anne Finch, Countess of Winchilsea's "The Man Bitten By Fleas" in *Miscellany Poems* (London, 1713), pp. 223-26, and Peter Pindar (John Wolcot)'s "Elegy to the Fleas of Teneriffe" in *Odes to Kien Long, The Present Emperor of China* (London, 1792), pp.

44-48. The next poem in Pindar's collection, "Ode to Messrs. Townsend, Macmanus, and Jealous," recounts the story of a chambermaid who pursued and killed a flea (see pp. 53-55), nicely relating to Coleridge's remarks cited by Hodgson.

A variation of lines 5-17 of the verse letter to Goodyer is used as epigraph for Essay XV of *The Friend* (I, 179);[32] a variation of lines 49-53 of the "Ecclogue" appears in Essay XVI (I, 192) as "On Unworthy Wisdom." In the Notebooks he quoted line 28 of the "Ecclogue," dated February-March 1800 (Coburn, I.698. 21.48). The Anniversaries are "The strongest caprices of genius on record"; "all his thoughts as they crowded into his mind, careless how extravagant they became, when applied to the best woman on earth." The Notebooks also record the theme of hell as privation, perhaps in echo of "To Mr. T. W.," line 9 (Coburn, I.1789. 16.175) and variant lines from the verse letter to the Countess of Bedford (Coburn, I.1788. 16.174); quoted is "Obsequies to the Lord Harrington," lines 11-12, 131-32 (Coburn, I.1786. 16.172), dated December 1803-January 1804, as well as line 171 of the Second Anniversary, "Of the Progres of the Soule" (Coburn, I.1787. 16.173). Roberta Brinkley printed four lines called "Donnesque" from Notebook 43 (British Library, Additional MS 47538), ff. 79-78 reversed; they are lines 29-33 of "Loves Exchange."[33] In *Biographia Literaria*, Chapter XVIII (pp. 69-70 in Raysor) Coleridge quotes the apostrophe to the Sun, Stanza II, as well as seven lines of Stanza IV of "The Progresse of the Soule" (that is, "Metempsychosis"). The lines are offered as "excellent, and the legitimate language of poetic fervor self-empassioned." Coleridge is also concerned in other annotations with vocabulary, punctuation, and prosody in other poems of Donne.

Both the characteristics of a poem that would for Coleridge classify it as metaphysical and his patent understanding of Donne's achievement can be seen in an analysis of a few of Coleridge's own poems. We should recognize that these statements do not apply to all of Donne's poetry, or not equally so, and that Coleridge would not intend them to. Our analysis will, nonetheless, emphasize what his circle of friends and aftertimes could regard as altering the usual eighteenth-century poetic,[34] thus becoming influential in the developing of a new strand in the twentieth century's poetic world.

Nowadays, fairly well-known is a four-line epigram "On Donne's Poetry," which appeared in the 1836 *Literary Remains* (I, 148):

> With Donne, whose muse on dromedary trots,
> Wreathe iron pokers into true-love knots;
> Rhyme's sturdy cripple, fancy's maze and clue,
> Wit's forge and fire-blast, meaning's press and screw.

Henry Nelson Coleridge took the poem from marginalia in Chalmers's edition; let us call it Version C. The Oxford Edition of the *Poems* prints the epigram under 1817 but with ?1818 attached. Another version (B) occurs in a copy of *Sibylline Leaves* (1817), owned by Arthur A. Houghton, Jr.:[35]

> ~~With~~ Like Donne, whose Verse on dromedary trots,
> Wreathe iron pokers into true-love knots,
> Rhyme's sturdy Cripple-god, Wit's Maze and Clue,
> Thought's Forge and Furnace, Mangle-press and Screw.[36]

Whalley suggests that the epigram may have been "composed as early as Aug 1798," and he relates the "press" to "Brama's Hydraulic Packing-Engine," noted in connection with "Satyre III."[37] Joseph Bramah's industrial hydraulic press was introduced in 1796.

Logically the version in Chalmers's edition (C) should be later than this in *Sibylline Leaves* (B); "muse" is more meaningful as epitome than "Verse"; "fancy's" is more accurate as a term governing "maze and clue"; the replacement of "Wit's" led to the replacement of "Thought's" by "Wit's," with more appropriateness for "forge and fire-blast / Furnace"; "fire-blast," being more ambiguous of source or of nature, is a better image here; and "meaning's" emphasizes the significance of language to Donne's poetry and avoids the tautology in "Mangle-press." Johnson seems to prefer Version B; and of the alteration from "Cripple-god" (that is, Hephaestus) to just "cripple" (accommodating the change in the line from one syllable, "Wit's," to two syllables, "fancy's") she notes the deletion of an allusion which unites the imagery of ironworking, furnace, and forge (p. 478). Of major question is what do "rhyme," "wit/fancy," "thought/wit," "meaning" do in the poem? Cleanth Brooks, in an essay based on what seems to me to be a misreading of the epigram, takes the nouns "cripple," "maze," "clue," "forge," "fire-blast," "press," and "screw" as appositives for "Donne."[38] Seeing these nouns as conceits for the poet does not make much sense: how can the poet be a "maze" or "clue"? is he a "cripple" or a "fire-blast"? One can understand "forge," "press," "screw," but the other nouns just do not make sense as equivalents for the poet. Rather there seems to be a compression of thought to the point of omitting certain connectives; and the last two lines may instead be construed as saying that the kind of poetry Donne wrote can be imaged as a cripple, as a maze with a clue built in to lead one out of the maze, as a forge for wit which is annealed by the blast of the forge's fire, and as the press and screw out of which meaning will

be extracted. And hence the title "On Donne's Poetry," whether Coleridge's title or not. (The poetry is "crippled" because its lines do not run on "smoothly" in a relentless iambic pattern; but it is "sturdy" and epitomizes the way "rhyme" [that is, poetry] may be metrically successful even though not "smooth.") The earlier version (B) is preceded by three lines and some excisions (indicated by x's), which contrast older poets through an alchemical image:

> or while in too perverse a scorn | we hold
> The *lengthy* poets who, like Gower of old,
> Make drossy lead as ductile as pure gold,[39]
> X X X X X X X X X X X X

The "Cripple-god" here does seem to be an appositive, but the further nouns, particularly "maze" and "clue," are inappropriate as appositives and confused as parallels with "Cripple-god." The revision suggests to me that Coleridge recognized the chaos of meaning resultant from too much "packing" of thought. The nouns "Rhyme/Wit/Thought" and "rhyme/fancy/Wit/meaning" are thus the elements of poetry which Donne's peculiar brand of poetry defines in terms of "sturdy cripple"/"maze and clue"/"forge and fire-blast"/"press and screw." The deleted "With" of Version B may imply that some revision had already occurred by the time he penned the lines in 1817-18, or that there may be some faults of memory in what is recorded.

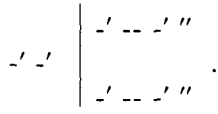
Unknown heretofore has been a holograph sheet now in the W. Hugh Peal Collection of the University of Kentucky Library, giving "Nature's Answer" to "Nature's Reply to the Suicide's Plea" (to be taken up shortly), which is followed by an early and altered version of the first two lines of "On Donne's Poetry" (Version A). The document, unfortunately, is undated but must lie before the date of the poem on suicide (*ca.* 1811) and it would seem before the version of the Donne poem recorded in *Sibylline Leaves*. The annotation recorded in *Sibylline Leaves* may constitute the epistle to Poole promised in October 1795, with the lines on Donne being part of that epistle, and thus the lines found in this new document should date prior to that. The verses following the Donne lines in the *Sibylline Leaves* occur with variations in a letter to John Thelwall, dated 31 December 1796. After "Nature's Answer" Coleridge wrote:

> P. S. the metre of the Above is a humble imitation of our earliest Satirist.

~~or choosing some rough Verse, all gnarls and knots~~
Like Donne, whose Muse on Dromedary Trots,
Twist iron pokers into true love knots.[40]

Here the word "Like" occurs as in Version B, but then there is "Muse" as in Version C. Perhaps the word "Verse" in the deleted line influenced the use of "Verse" in Version B. The deletion of the line may have occurred because it is not essential to the thought: in its backgrounding of the couplet it is not much like Donne who did not prepare to make a point but was quite direct. Or it may have also been recognized as less Donnean in its metric. The epigram indicates that for Coleridge the Donnean emphasis and difference lies in metrics, conceits, and compressed thought, requiring reader-interpretation.[41] Some of this obscuring of the thought through conceits needing to be "translated" tends to punning. Clearly "or choosing some rough Verse, all gnarls and knots" only describes; it does not also exemplify. This, I take it, is the reason for deletion of the line. Its accents would seem to be -' --" -' -' (or a regular iambic pattern without variation); it is not very rough, gnarled, or knotted, and thus not a good example of the kind of verse line that would be a Donnean epitome. This three-line version seems to talk of "choosing . . . verse, all gnarls and knots Like Donne," where the emphasis lies in a decision to choose out of other possible verses as Donne did those that are "rough." The deletion yields clearer syntactical meaning, "Like Donne . . . Twist even pokers into true love knots." The deleted line rather illogically links lines already "rough" metrically with the advice to achieve conceits, "Twist even pokers," to catch audience attention. The two lines remaining read: -' -' -' -- -' / " -' -- -' ". Unlike most Jonsonian meter, the less usual three unstressed syllables together in each line and three stressed syllables together in the second as well as the opening spondee force the reader to pay attention to the stressed words and ideas, cause questions of meaning for these linked but dissimilar concepts or pictures, and even give pause in figuring out the syntax of words. "Twist," of course, is an imperative and the line counsels the poet to employ an unmalleable image to achieve a concept of the unchangeability of true-love through a symbol of that love (with a phallic [the poker] and an anatomical [the love knots] pun available as well). The discordant has been linked so as to demonstrate the idea while that idea is actually being defined. The significance of the metric for Coleridge in epitomizing the craft of Donne is the point of the comment, "Since Dryden, the metre of our poets leads us to the sense: in our elder and more genuine bards, the sense, including the passion, leads to the metre."[42] He tells us that "to read Donne you must measure time."[43]

"On Dromedary Trots" emphasizes accentuation as well, although the first reading may envision the lumbering quality of the camel, plowing through sands. But as we allow the images to sink in we recognize their appropriateness and communication of prosodic idea: the dromedary at first is plowing through sands, and as the type of camel with one hump, it moves in the line from iamb to iamb to iamb, but then something happens and the animal begins a trot as we swiftly pass three unaccented syllables to get to "Trots." The trotting continues, and the next line begins with two accents and ends with another "trot" and three accents. It is as if the lines are paralleled:



Certainly the picture of a "muse" riding a camel is incongruous, and we are forced to think about meaning so much that meaning becomes more exacting and distinct. The thought of "twisting iron pokers" is likewise impossible to conceive in reality, but as an image of how to produce a meaningful conceit it has its intended effect. That twisting can produce knots is not odd, but that these are love knots, with concepts of softness yet constancy, points to the seeming difficulty of two people's engaging in sexual intercourse which is truly loving and not simply physical (posing the body/soul question). That these should be "true" love knots contrasts the symbol with the physical reality of the two in coition, altering the "iron" of the past (harshness, reserve). Even the content is Donnean as Coleridge employs an equivalent to the twin compasses of "A Valediction forbidding mourning"[44] to surmount the dilemma of body and soul, which besets so much of Donne's verse.

The added couplet of the published epigram further illustrates what we have seen in the metrics, conceits, and content of the first couplet. The opening spondees of the lines seem to throw the feet of the lines into a trochaic rhythm, with emphases on the images: thus, "rough." At the same time that prosodic feeling enhances a somewhat onomatopoetic effect in "sturdy cripple," as it limps off with a caesura following, and "Wit's forge" and "fire-blast" strike us as strong, forging and annealing the image.

The annotation in *Sibylline Leaves* accompanies the printing of "Human Life. On the Denial of Immortality" (?1815): "These lines were written in purposed imitation of Donne—/ but Charles Lamb says, that he sees no other resemblances but that more thought is *packed* together

than is compatible with poetry." Then follows "This reminds me . . . ," the lines preceding the Donne verses, the four lines on Donne (all quoted before), and some further excisions and other verses. An added note to the volume by John Hookham Freer indicates that he also saw "little or no imitation of Donne"; he observed that "With the same condensation of thoughts, as Donne's Anniversary, it has more *stream*, more *passion*, and the thoughts are more natural" (p. 478 in Johnson). First, the subject matter—what is life and how do we reconcile death to being—is not unlike some of Donne's meditations in the Anniversaries, epicedes, and holy sonnets. Second, the images offer mazes of meaning but with clues which will allow its extraction. "Yet drone-hive strange of phantom purposes!" (l. 9) arrests us because we must translate: life yields hazy, fleeting, only sensed purposes that human beings undergo like mere bees, drones following instinct to do their "task," which is to live (l. 6). "Blank accident! nothing's anomaly!" (l. 14) considers humankind but an unplanned and vacuous result of "nature's" creating as opposed to God's animating spirit (cf. l. 5) to effect a grand scheme (as explored in *Paradise Lost*, and cf. l. 7), a creation which occurred only because Nature began creating and didn't stop, forming "with restless hands unconsciously" (l. 13). And, second, line 14 presents humankind as an aberration to the nothingness which life is because human life is cast by humankind as being something, having substance, though it does not. The poem ends with the statement that humankind has no reason to be sad or glad, and the reason it cannot is "Thy being's being is contradiction" (l. 29). The line delineates the paradox on which the poem is built: human life is a contradiction in itself, for the fact of existence with its laughter and tears (l. 17) is meaningless. Lamb's and Freer's comments remark this "packing" of the thought and its general likeness to Donne's multilevel poetry. But, third, this "condensation" is built on conceited images: "drone-hive strange," "nigh-finished vase,"[45] "weigh thy dreams" / "thy hopes, thy fears, The counter-weights," "these costless shadows of thy shadowy self." And, fourth, the meter can be labelled "rough" in contemporary parlance: "Go, ‖ weigh thy dreams, ‖ and be thy hopes, | thy fears, | The counterweights! ‖ ." The naturalness of the speech does not conform to the poetic lines—it is not simply enjambment—any more than Donne's "Sawcy | pedantique wretch, ‖ goe chide Late schoole boyes, | and sowre prentices"‖ ("The Sunne Rising," ll. 5-6).

The further verses in the annotation in *Sibylline Leaves*, after the Donne lines and "~~Ins~~ And now" with some more x's, refer to another element that Coleridge found in Donne—puns:

Inspir'd by Love that tender Lay I sang
That wakes the tear yet steals away the pang—
Now or with Berkley or with Hobbes romance it
Dissecting TRUTH with Metaphysic Lancet:
Or drawn from forth these dark *unfathom sieve-bucket* wells
With wiser FOLLY clink the Cap and Bells.
How many Tales we told! What Jokes we made,
Conundrum, Rebus, Crambo, and Charade:
Enigmas that had driven the *Theban mad *Edipus.
And Puns then best when exquisitely bad:
And I, if aught of archer vein I hit,
With my own laughter stifled my own wit!
S. T. C.—

The lines in the Thelwall letter cited before record variations (indicated here by italics):

[missing] *Repeating*
Such verse as Bowles, heart-honour'd Poet, sang,
That wakes the Tear, yet steals away the Pang,
Then or with Berkley, or with Hobbes romance it,
Dissecting Truth with metaphysic lancet.
Or, drawn from forth *those* dark *unfathom'd* wells
In wiser folly clink the Cap and Bells.
How many tales we told! What jokes we made,
Conundrum, *Crambo, Rebus, or* Charade; . . .

The full annotation and its earlier variants, if it does represent one poem written as a verse epistle to Poole, indicates that the subject is poetry itself and its practitioners: the older poets, "metaphysical" poetry, poetry such as William Lisle Bowles's sonnets (e.g., "Bereavement" or "Influence of Time on Grief"), philosophic poems, witty lines needing deciphering. While these later lines make no reference to Donne and do not seem to be imitative of him, we should acknowledge their touching upon a term often associated with him ("metaphysic") and the conundrum verse that evokes his name.

"On Donne's Poetry" may thus originally have been a section of a fuller poem, excerptable as an epigram epitomizing the nature of that poetry—its metric and conceit and compression of thought. It helps us determine what elements Coleridge associated with at least some of

Donne's poetry, and allows us to understand better than Lamb or Freer why Coleridge believed he was imitating Donne in "Human Life."

Evidence leading to a like conclusion is available in the poem concerning suicide. The newly discovered version of the poem, in the Peal Collection, joins versions in the Notebooks (Coburn, III.4106 18.330, f. 171v) under date of 1811 and in print (first published in the 1828 *Poetical Works*). Version A reads:[46]

[added] Nature's Reply to the Suicide's Plea
The Suicide's Plea
Ere the birth of *this / my* Life, if I wish'd it or no.
No question was ask'd me: it could not be so!
If *Life itself be / the life was* the question, —a thing sent to try
And to live on be. Yes! What can, No! be? To die.
Nature's Answer
Is't return'd, as twas sent? Is't no worse for the wear?
Think first, what you are! *Recollect, / Call to mind,* what you were!
I *grow / sent / gave* you Innocence, *and Health and Hopes; / I gave you hope,*
Sent Power, / Gave health, and Genius, and an ample Scope.
Send / Return you *the[n] back / me* Guilt, Lethargy, Despair?
Make out the Inventory! Inspect, compare!
Then die, if die you dare.

Version B in the Notebooks has no title for the poem or for the first part,[47] and seems later than Version A because it gives "my life" in line 1; "I gave you innocence, I gave you Hope" as line 7; and "me" in line 9. On the other hand, it also has "If ~~the~~ Life's self be" in line 3 (an intermediary reading?); "Recollect" in line 6; and "Power" in line 8. It has some differing readings from the other versions as well: "to be or," in line 1, replaced by "it or no"; "and" in place of the dash in line 3; "If" rather than "And" in line 4; "Gave Power" in line 8 (an intermediary reading?); "Send you me back" in line 9; "First, make" in line 10; "if then" in line 11; and a twelfth line: "Be thy own heart our common arbiter." The title of the second part is "~~The~~ Nature's Answer." Accidentals in Version B are frequently different, but greater accidental variants from both those versions occur in the printed version, which is, however, verbally the same as Version A, except for the title of the first part, which is "The Suicide's Argument."

The conclusion to be drawn is that Version A is earliest,[48] that Version B is somehow intermediary (and perhaps a remembered reading, particularly in view of there being only three alterations as reported by Coburn, two deletions of the definite article, one in line 3 and one in the title of the second part, and the change in line 1), and the version in print derives from Version A directly or indirectly but with a number of editorial changes to effect a smoother reading and a reading that would raise fewer questions as to meaning. For example, line 4 in print is: "And to live on be Yes; what can No be? to die."

Coleridge's note after the suicide poem on the manuscript in the Peal Collection is: "P. S. The metre of the Above is a humble imitation of our earliest Satirist." And we would seem to have a similar situation to that with Lamb's and Freer's reactions to "Human Life." Perhaps Coleridge read Donne's *Biathanatos* earlier than the existing notes and annotations suggest; he seems to have read it as so many others; that is, incorrectly as a defense of suicide. The suicide in the poem argues that s/he was not asked to be born, and now having tried life, being asked a question of whether s/he wishes to live on, then, the answer s/he would give (apparently) is No. Nature counters by arguing against suicide,[49] pointing out that the suicide does not return itself to Nature as it was given life: innocent, hopeful, potential of power and genius, with ample scope to achieve. Instead the suicide will give Nature guilt, lethargy, despair. Only if the given and the returned balance, should the suicide dare take her/his life; and of course they won't. (We should remark that Coleridge did not necessarily subscribe to the thought of the poem: it is the product of a "maker," whose intention was to write a poem.)

Aside from the content, the difficulties of unraveling the text must have struck Coleridge as being in that enigmatic vein identified with Donne, although the obscurities are not built on conceits. Specifying the satires, Coleridge must have seen the imitation in the dialogue form drawn from *Satyre I* or *IV*, where oppositions of body/soul, the sensualist/the philosopher, the pretentious "courtier"/the honest citizen are the backbone of the satire. And as before, the prosodic elements are significant. Line 4 of Version A, for example, is prosodically and rhythmically:

$$\breve{\text{A}}\text{nd } \breve{\text{t}}\text{o } \bar{\text{l}}\text{ive } \acute{\text{o}}\text{n } \bar{\text{b}}\text{e.} \mid \acute{\text{Y}}\text{es!} \parallel \text{What } \bar{\text{c}}\text{an, } \acute{\text{N}}\text{o!} \parallel \acute{\text{b}}\text{e?} \parallel \bar{\text{T}}\text{o } \acute{\text{d}}\text{ie.} \parallel$$

Lines 143-45 of *Satyre IV* read:

$$\bar{\text{A}}\text{nd } \bar{\text{s}}\text{aies, } \mid \acute{\text{S}}\text{ir,} \parallel \bar{\text{c}}\text{an you } \acute{\text{s}}\text{pare } \bar{\text{m}}\text{e; } \parallel \bar{\text{I}} \bar{\text{s}}\text{aid, } \mid \acute{\text{w}}\text{illingly; } \parallel$$

Nay, Sir | can you spare me a crown? ‖ Thankfully I
Gave it, | as Ransome. ‖

Iterated is the former conclusion: for Coleridge Donnean metaphysical poetry depends on content, its involved treatment through conceits and syntax, a compression of thought and possible punning, and prosodic characteristics. Created are "vigour, intenseness and peculiarity of thought" and "wit"; created is something quite unlike the "natural" eighteenth-century poetic: instead there are "affectation," "uncommon sentiment," "obscurity of expression." That these attitudes lead to partial reading of Donne—applying to only part of the canon and then only superficially to much of that—has been Donne's critical cross to bear into our own time.

Two comments on Donne comparing his poetry with that of some of his contemporaries and with that of more recent authors will serve to anchor Coleridge's appreciation and acclamation. They make clear why Coleridge should be accorded thanks for helping to renew and expand Donne's reputation. They also suggest a limitation that persists today in encompassing his work: Donne's ironic stances have been unseen by many because the engagement of the intellect in content and poetic technique obscured them for those following in Dryden's path.

Chapter 1 of *Biographia Literaria* has this important paragraph:

> One great distinction, I appeared to myself to see plainly, between, even the characteristic faults of our elder poets, and the false beauty of the moderns. In the former, from Donne to Cowley, we find the most fantastic out-of-the-way thoughts, but in the most pure and genuine modern English; in the latter, the most obvious thoughts, in language the most fantastic and arbitrary. Our faulty elder poets sacrificed the passion and passionate flow of poetry, to the subtleties of intellect, and to the starts of wit; the moderns to the glare and glitter of a perpetual, yet broken and heterogeneous imagery, or rather to an amphibious something, made up, half of image, and half of abstract meaning. The one sacrificed the heart to the head; the other both heart and head to point and drapery.

To say, no, the heart has not been sacrificed, undoubtedly falls on deaf ears. And to argue that nothing is squandered when poetic craft is placed under glaring lights will little deflect others from iterating with Coleridge:

> The populousness, the activity, is as great in C. [Cowley] as in D; but the *vigor*—the insufficiency to the Poet of active Fancy without a substrate of profound, tho' mis-created, Thinking—The Will-worship in squandering golden Hecatombs on a Fetisch, [on] the first stick or straw met with at rising! this pride of doing what he likes with his own—fearless of an immense surplus to pay all lawful Debts to [self-subsisting] Themes that rule, while they create, the moral will—This is Donne![50]

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Notes

[1] *The Satires of Decimus Junius Juvenalis. Translated into English Verse* (London, 1693), "Original and Progress of Satire," p. iii. In his "Observations on some of Mr. Waller's Poems," p. xxxv (added at the end of the volume), Elijah Fenton echoed or approved this evaluation of Donne's "love" poetry—*The Works of Edmund Waller* (London, 1729). The comment appears on p. lxi of the 1730 edition. William Drummond in a letter to Arthur Johnson, ca. 1625-30, had talked of "Metaphysical Ideas and Scholastical Quiddities," by which he seems to have meant a method of argument, and Thomas Hobbes employed the term to imply an abuse of language. But for the eighteenth century it was Abraham Cowley who brought vilification upon such poetic use of experience to comprehend feeling. Alexander Pope disdained that Cowley and William Davenant had borrowed their metaphysical style from Donne, and, as everyone knows, Samuel Johnson pilloried Donne's straining to see similarity in dissimilarity ("discovery of occult resemblances in things apparently unlike") in his "Life of Cowley."

[2] He read Charles Lamb's copy of the 1669 edition (now at the Beinecke Library, Yale University), probably a copy of Robert Anderson's edition, Volume 4 of *The Works of the British Poets* (London, 1795), as suggested by Kathleen Coburn, and James Gillman's copy of Alexander Chalmers's edition, Volume 5 of *The Works of the English Poets* (London, 1810), not located. The 1669 volume gives a completion date of annotation as 2 May 1811, but that is probably not indicative of Coleridge's first perusal of the volume. Rather he seems to return to reading and annotating Donne elsewhere frequently, and his numerous notes and references range over a number of years before and well after 1800. For Anderson, see Coburn, ed., *The Notebooks of Samuel Taylor Coleridge* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1957), I:171.G.166. The Chalmers edition was being read in 1829.

[3] Indeed, the influence of Donne has not really been attended to. Books and articles are numerous enough covering Donne and such authors as Chapman, Cleveland, Cowley, the Herberts, Marvell, among others, but there is nothing which postulates the kind of influence one observes in the first five lines of "A Prospect of Death" found in Anne Finch, Countess of Winchilsea's *The Spleen, a Pindarique Ode. By a Lady. Together with A Prospect of Death: A Pindarique Essay* (London, 1709), p. 9:

> Since we can die but once, and after Death,
> Our State no alteration knows;
> But when we have resign'd our Breath,
> Th' Immortal Spirit goes
> To endless Joys, or everlasting Woes.

[4] Coleridge concluded (in marginalia to Donne's *LXXX Sermons*, 1640, now in the Bodleian Library, cited from *The Literary Remains of Samuel Taylor Coleridge*, ed. Henry Nelson Coleridge [London, 1836-38], 4 vols.; III [1838], 135), "Donne was a poor metaphysician; that is, he never closely questioned himself as to the absolute meaning of his words. What did he mean by the 'soul'? what by the 'body'?"

[5] Quotations are marginalia on "The Canonization," on "The Indifferent," a line from his epigram on Donne; the marginalia are quoted from George Whalley's edition in *The Collected Works of Samuel Taylor Coleridge* (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1984).

[6] Dryden in reference to the first "Anniversary" called Donne "the greatest Wit, though not the greatest Poet of our Nation"—"Dedicatory Epistle" to *Eleanora* (London, 1692). The poem itself echoes the Anniversaries. In referring to puns in Shakespeare, William Warburton commented, "look into the sermons of Dr. *Donne* (the wittiest man of that age)," note on *Hamlet* II, 2; Coleridge admonished: "I have, and that most carefully, read Dr. Donne's sermons, and find none of these jingles. The real Art of an orator—to make whatever he talks to appear of importance—this, indeed, Donne has effected with consummate skill"—see Thomas Middleton Raysor, ed., *Coleridge's Shakespearean Criticism* (London: Constable, 1930), I, 26.

[7] Perspicaciously, of John Milton's metaphysical image of the sun pillowed on the ocean in "On the Morning of *Christ*'s Nativity," Coleridge noted that "it is most in the spirit of Donne"—marginalia (p. 184) in a copy of Thomas Warton's 1791 edition of *Poems on Several Occasions*.

[8] In a marginal note alongside Henry King's elegy in the 1669 *Poems* Coleridge remarked: "This fine poem has suggested to me many thoughts for 'An Apology for Conceits,' as a sequel to an Essay, I have written, called an 'Apology for Puns'"—Coburn, III.3762 note. See also "Hints for an Essay on Puns," dated October 1818—Coburn, III.4444 61.38, f. 37. The essay has not been discovered.

[9] "Some Notes on Donne," *Notes & Queries* 184 (1943), 77, 165-66, cited Coleridge especially to refute the idea that Donne emerged only in the current century. A. J. Smith in "Donne's Reputation," *John Donne: Essays in Celebration* (London: Methuen, 1972), pp. 1-27, argued most cogently that H. J. C. Grierson's 1912 edition produced "the completion of a process which started with Coleridge and Lamb a century before" (p. 20) rather than the totally new phenomenon it so often is purported to have created. In *The Reputation of John Donne, 1779-1873* (Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell International, 1975), Raoul Granqvist calls the twentieth-century "discovery" of Donne a myth and credits Coleridge, Lamb, Hazlitt, and Landor with the restitution of Donne as a literary personality and churchman. See also John Spence's critical article on Donne in *Retrospective Review* 8 (1823), 31-35.

[10] A. J. Smith, *Donne: The Critical Heritage* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1975).

[11] To John Hughes, for instance, "Donne's verse is vicious in having so many monosyllables, and no stops"—*Poems on Several Occasions* (London, 1735), I, xiii. For Peter Whalley (*An Enquiry into the Learning of Shakespeare* [London, 1748], p. 42n.), "The Verses of Bishop *Hall* are in general extremely musical and flowing, and are greatly preferable to Dr. *Donne*'s, as being of a much smoother Cadence; neither shall we find him deficient, if compared with his successor, in Point of Thought and Wit; and to exceed him with respect to his Characters, which are more numerous, and wrought up with greater Art and Strength of Colouring." (Whalley's belief in Hall's precedence results from the earlier publication of *Virgidemiarum* and Hall's claim to be the first English satirist. Of course, Thomas Drant and Edward Hake were unknown to him, as they were to Coleridge, who called Donne the first English satirist. Most historical discussions of English satire do not include Sir Thomas Wyatt, George Gascoigne, Edmund Spenser, or Thomas Lodge because the forms of their satires are different from the Donne/Guilpin/Hall/Dryden structure.) John Brown's pertinent lines (401-04) in *An Essay on Satire, Occasion'd by the Death of Mr. Pope* (London, 1744) condemn and praise:

> 'Twas then plain Donne in honest vengeance rose,
> His wit refulgent, though his rhyme was prose:
> He 'midst an age of puns and pedants wrote
> With genuine sense, and *Roman* strength of thought.

At times it is Pope's version of Satires 2 or 4 that is quoted but assigned to Donne; e.g., Johann Joachim Eschenburg prints a section of Satire 4 as Donne's, although the headnote indicates that he knew that Pope had produced the version given. See *Beispielsammlung zur Theorie und Literatur der schonen Wissenschaften* (Berlin und Stettin, 1788), II, 158-61.

[12] *The Arts of Logick* (London, 1728), pp. 332-33. Oldmixon's sociologically prejudiced bases for his "logical" statements should be noted.

[13] Joseph Strutt also noted Hilliard's miniature of Donne and quoted three lines from "The Storme," p. 17, as well as William Marshall's portrait of "*Dr. Donne when young*, an octavo plat," p. 126—*A Biographical Dictionary; Containing an Historical Account of all the Engravers, From the Earliest Period of the Art of Engraving to the Present Time* (London, 1786).

[14] The 1730 reprint gives this on pp. 276-77.

[15] *Compendioses Gelehrten-Lexicon* (Leipzig, 1726), Column 819; *Allgemeine Gelehrten-Lexicon* (Leipzig, 1750) gives the entry in Volume II, Column 188. Jean-Francois Niceron in *Memoires pour servir a l'histoire des hommes illustres* (Paris, 1729), VIII, 152, also cites "*Fasciculum Epigrammatum Miscellaneorum Londini*. 1652. *in* -8°. Ces Poesies Latines sont accompagnees d'une traduction Angloise de Gaspar Mayne Professeur en Theologie." The nineteenth edition of

Louis Moreri's *Le Grand Dictionnaire Historique* (Paris, 1745) reports this and Donne's epitaph from Niceron on pp. 100-01. *A New and General Biographical Dictionary* (London, 1761), IV, 172-81, also refers to "a book of epigrams, written in Latin by the same author, translated into English by J. Maine, D.D." No Latin collection has been discovered.

[16] I cite the second edition of *Piscatory Eclogues* (London, 1739).

[17] Under Shakespeare Hackett prints "On Shakespear," which begins "Renowned *Spenser* lie a thought more nigh," which he ascribes to Donne on the basis of the early editions (pp. 148-49).

[18] Ruffhead lists some surprises under the "School of Donne"—"Cowley, Davenant, Michael Drayton, Sir Thomas Overbury, Randolph, Sir John Davies, Sir John Beaumont, Cartwright, Cleveland, Crashaw, Bishop Corbet, Lord Falkland" (p. 425). This is supposedly Pope's classification. The omission of Herbert should be duly noted. This listing is reprinted by Smith.

[19] *An Almanack, For the Year of our Lord Christ, 1784*, by Daniel George (Boston), p. [4]; the version is the common one in print: "I am unable, yonder Beggar cries, / To stand, or move; if he says true, he *lies*." The same witty epigram is printed (with "go" instead of "move") in Vicesimus Knox's The Poetical Epitome (London, 1792).

[20] See *Elements of Orthoepy* (London, 1784), Part IV, Chapter IV, p. 328. The variant text is drawn from the 1669 edition, probably by way of 1719 or Bell's 1779 edition. The 1669 text, a partially "modernized" one with numerous variants and errors—this was the collection that Coleridge annotated, we remember—was the basis for the 1719 collection, of "John Dryden's" *Miscellanies* from 1716 on, of John Bell's edition of 1779 on, of Anderson's and Chalmers's editions, and apparently of many other eighteenth-century allusions, quotations, and discussions, including Alexander Pope's versions of Satires 2 and 4, Thomas Parnell's rendering of Satire 3, and William Mason's then unpublished adaptation of Satire 1.

[21] The 1816 expanded edition of Ellis reproduces Donne's 1591 portrait with lines from Walton beneath.

[22] Henry Fielding's *The History of Tom Jones* (London, 1749) quotes lines 244-46 of "The Second Anniversary" in Book IV, Chapter 2. The lines had also appeared in *The Spectator*, No. 41, 17 April 1711 (by Sir Richard Steele).

[23] J. and A. L. Aikin, *Miscellaneous Pieces. In Prose* (London, 1773), "On the Heroic Poem of Gondibert," pp. 153-54.

[24] "On Poesy and Art," *Literary Remains* (1836), I, 220.

[25] *The Revival of Metaphysical Poetry. The History of a Style, 1800 to the Present* (Minneapolis: Univ. of Minnesota Press, 1959; rpt. New York: Octagon, 1969), p. 35.

[26] Milton has set up a contrast with the Celestial Patroness of the narrator in the proem to Book IX though critics have not recognized this: both Patroness and Satan enter the sleeping person's unconscious through the ear and project thoughts.

[27] See, too, his comment to H. F. Cary in a letter of 2 February 1818 that Donne's name in the lecture might puzzle Cary. "Memorandum for a History of English Poetry" in British Library MS Egerton 2800, f. 53 (dated 1796?), indicates that Donne was to be included with other "witty Logicians." See also Coburn, I.171 G.166 note.

[28] An interesting view of the matter is William Belsham's, who in "Essay XII. Remarks on English Versification," raised the issue: "Why do we prefer, for instance, the imitations of Dr. Donne's Satires by Pope to the originals? because it may be said they are far more musical and harmonious. But why do we prefer the musical and harmonious Versification of the former, to the harsh and rugged numbers of the latter? Here we are at a stand, and the preference resolves itself into a mere matter of taste, without the shadow of a reason on which to ground that preference." See *Essays, Philosophical, Historical, and Literary* (London, 1789).

[29] See *Literary World* 12, No. 326 (14 May 1853), 349.

[30] See Lecture VII in *Literary Remains* (I, 67). These remarks appear in the preliminary sheets of the second volume of Copy B of Beaumont and Fletcher (in the British Library); they are not attached to Thomas Seward's preface which should be bound in Volume 2 but which is bound in Volume 1. He also expressed intention to write satires in the manner of Donne (dated 1796; Coburn, 171.G.166). Coburn noted Coleridge's intention in *Inquiring Spirit* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1951), p. 120. Indeed, the satires of Donne had become well known and apparently liked. In the second volume of *Memoires of the Life and Writings of Alexander Pope* (London, 1745), pp. 201-02, William Ayres gives a biographical synopsis of Donne along with his epitaph, and then reprints part of Donne's Satire 4 and Pope's version on facing pages.

[31] For example, see Whalley, I, 377.

[32] Citations are from the edition of 1818; they do not appear in the edition of 1809-10.

[33] Roberta Florence Brinkley, *Coleridge on the Seventeenth Century* (Durham: Duke Univ. Press, 1955), p. 528.

[34] T. S. Eliot, denying Coleridge's acclamation of Donne, continued to place Coleridge in an eighteenth-century tradition; see *The Use of Poetry and the Use of Criticism* (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 1933), p. 63.

[35] Discussed by Mary Lynn Johnson in "How Rare is a 'Unique Annotated Copy' of Coleridge's *Sibylline Leaves*?" *Bulletin of the New York Public Library* 78 (1975), 451-81, and recorded by Whalley. A facsimile of page 269, which shows the Donne poem, is included as page 459; the annotation is continued on page 270. See later for other verses echoing Donne and also recalled at later date. This volume of *Sibylline Leaves* may have belonged to Francis Wrangham; its later owners were Stuart M. Samuel and H. T. Butler.

[36] The full annotation written by Coleridge will be taken up shortly (transcription by Johnson on page 476). An important line precedes what is given here, and other verses appear before and after the poem on Donne. Coleridge first wrote "at Stowey," changed it to "af Stowey," placing "ter leaving" above the line. He then added between the lines and spilling down the margin ", in a ...conversations."

[37] See George Whalley, "The Harvest in the Ground: Coleridge's Marginalia," *University of Texas Quarterly* 38 (1969), 248-76. He speculates that the Donne poem refers only to the *Satyres* rather than to all the poems. I agree that not all Donne's poems can be epitomized in this way, and a major impetus for Coleridge's poetic reaction may have been the satires, but I believe he is epitomizing an understanding of Donne's techniques, and thought he was.

[38] See "Coleridge as a Metaphysical Poet" in *Romanticism: Vistas, Instances, Continuities*, ed. David Thorburn and Geoffrey Hartman (Ithaca: Cornell Univ. Press, 1973), pp. 134-54.

[39] A different version of these lines is found in the Notebooks (Coburn, I.295 G.292, f. 87v), dated ca. October 1796:

> With skill that never Alchemist yet told
> Makes de drossy lead as ductile as pure gold.

The Donnean echoes lie, first, in content: see "Elegie: The Bracelet" or "A Valediction forbidding mourning" ("Our two soules therefore . . . endure . . . an expansion, Like gold to ayery thinness beate") or "To *E.* of *D.* with six holy Sonnets" ("As fire these drossie Rymes to purifie, / Or as Elixar, to change them to gold; / You are that Alchimist which alwaies had / Wit"); and secondly, in metric: e.g., the near pyrrhic of "-chemist" and the pyrrhic and spondee of the last two feet, "-ile as pure Gold."

[40] The holograph sheet is first printed here with the permission of the University of Kentucky Library, Special Collections, from its W. Hugh Peal Collection: Samuel Taylor Coleridge, MSS.

[41] In Brooks's view the first is not in evidence: "Coleridge did not imitate Donne's handling of meter. What Coleridge tends to stress is Donne's analogical power: as we would put it today, his ability to think through his images" (p. 141). He sees a poem like "Recollections of Love" (?1807; published in *Sibylline Leaves*) as metaphysical and in company with "Aire and Angels"; it does echo language and tone. However, Brooks remarks, "What appealed to him in Donne's poetry was not the accidentals but the essence, its characteristics and animating principle" (p. 134).

[42] The sentence precedes his statement from Lecture VII referenced in note 30.

[43] *Literary World*, p. 349, and Whalley, p. 216: "To read Dryden, Pope &c, you need only count syllables; but to read Donne you must measure *Time*, & discover the *Time* of Each word by the Sense & Passion."

[44] Coleridge's annotation for this conceit (Whalley, p. 223) is "Nothing were ever more admirably made out than the figure of the Compass."

[45] One is tempted to see an allusion to the Elgin Marbles deposited in the British Museum in 1816 and a topic of discourse in the years immediately preceding.

[46] Italic words indicate revisions, the changes being separated by a virgule.

[47] A couplet precedes the poem but is spaced from it. Thus whether it should be considered in relation to "The Suicide's Plea" is uncertain; it does offer a view of one feeling sorry for oneself, a condition often preliminary to depression and suicidal thoughts. The couplet is: "Complain'd of, complaining, there shov'd & here shoving, / Every one blaming me, never a one loving!"

[48] The reverse side of the sheet records four poems without titles: 1) "Imitation of Elisa," translated from Claudian ("Sweet Gift! and always doth Eliza send"), dated 1833-34 in the Oxford Edition where it was first published. 2) Another on the same subject by S. T. C. himself, the translation only ("Whate'er thou giv'st, must still prove sweet to me"), dated 1833-34 in the Oxford Edition where it was first published. 3) "Over My Cottage" ("The Pleasures sport beneath this thatch"), dated 1799 and first published in 1893 in J. D. Campbell's edition of the *Poetical Works*. 4) "Names" ("I ask'd my Fair one happy day"), dated 1799 and first published in *The Morning Post*. These suggested dates along with those of "The Suicide's Plea" (1811) and "On Donne's Poetry" (?1798) should apparently be reconsidered.

[49] Perhaps in supposed refutation of Donne's statements; e.g., "how much more may I, when I am weather-beaten and in danger of betraying that precious soule which God hath embarqued in me, put off this burdenous flesh, till his pleasure be that I shall resume it?"; "But because of the benefits of death, enough hath beene occasionally interserted before, having presented *Cyprians* encouragement to it, who out of a contemplation that the whole frame of the world decayed and languished, cries to us, Nutant parietes . . . ."

[50] Annotation for "The Indifferent," Whalley, II, 219-20.