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Contexts and Strategies: Donne's Elegy on Prince Henry

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Donne's "Elegie on the vntimely Death of the incomparable Prince, Henry" has most frequently been placed in two related contexts.[1] The first is as an entry in a coterie contest, a view bolstered by Ben Jonson's comment to Drummond of Hawthornden that Donne wrote the poem "to match Sir Ed: Herbert in obscurenesse"[2] and by the fact that it was first printed in a collection of elegies on the prince by Donne's friends and poetic rivals—including Edward Herbert and Henry Goodyere—in the augmented third issue of Joshua Sylvester's *Lacrymae Lacrymarum* in 1613. The second, related context is that of Donne's ongoing attempt to gain royal patronage, with the particular difficulty in this case of praising the dead prince, whose political agenda was in many ways antithetical to his father's, without implicitly criticizing either the prince or the king and thereby alienating the prospective royal patron. Both of these contexts are crucial to appreciating aspects of the work—and we hope to help further clarify them, especially by proposing that the poem at once fulfills a patronage obligation owed by Donne's father-in-law Sir George More and also participates in the poet's own quest for patronage; but neither separately nor taken together can they account for many of the poem's peculiarities. What needs to be added to them is an examination of the Prince Henry elegy specifically within the context of Donne's other funereal poems.

While Donne's elegy on the death of Prince Henry contains the three elements expected of the genre in the early modern period—passages of mourning, praise, and consolation—these three parts are presented in terms that strike most readers as idiosyncratic and hyper-

bolic. The poem opens with a lengthy discussion of the two "*Centres*" of the speaker's being (2), faith and reason, distinguishing the two and musing on their relationship to each other. It then proceeds to an announcement of how first faith and then reason have been shaken by the death of the prince, along the way praising the young man's potential; and it concludes with a consolation that has the speaker envisioning the prince and a "Shee-Intelligence" who guided his actions as "Two mutual Heauens" (90, 97). The odd features of the poem are, first, the primary position and the comparatively great space and weight given to religiophilosophical musings, which—despite Donne's attempt to co-opt the reader by the use of the first person plural—nevertheless seem solipsistic; second, the extravagance and blatant distortion of the praise; and third, the sudden intrusion of the puzzling she-intelligence to effect what seems to be a less than adequate consolation. These eccentricities can be better understood, if not made fully palatable, when the elegy on Prince Henry is placed within the context of Donne's other funereal poems and his reshaping of the English funeral elegy.

Perhaps the first observation to make about Donne's practice in the elegiac mode is to note that he was a reluctant elegist. Unlike many of his more prolific contemporaries, and despite his own preoccupation with death, he wrote relatively few funereal poems and he apparently did not mourn close friends and family members in verse. His only surviving poems that seem occasioned by deep personal loss are the Latin epitaph for his wife and the Holy Sonnet beginning "Since she whom I loved." In 1625, he remarked in the prose letter to Sir Robert Carr that accompanied "A Hymne to the Saynts and to the Marquesse Hamilton" that he was "loth" to fulfill the latter's request for a memorial poem (Variorum 6:219); and throughout his career, he seems uncomfortable in the genre. One reason for this discomfort may be that his funereal poems were virtually all occasioned by or at least implicated in the pursuit of patronage. Donne may well have resented the necessity to mourn individuals whom he may not have known very well and to praise public figures whose policies he did not respect. Despite—or perhaps because of—Donne's own ambivalence about funereal poetry

and the obligations of the traditional English elegy, he pioneered in the development of a new kind of funeral elegy and a new rhetoric of grief.

Over the course of more than twenty-five years, Donne wrote eleven works that may be broadly classified as funereal: the brief elegy beginning "Sorrow, who to this house scarse knew the way," probably written in the late 1590s; the four poems (including the verse letter "Elegie to the Lady Bedford," beginning "You that are she") occasioned by the deaths in rapid succession in the summer of 1609 of Lady Bridget Markham and Cecilia Bulstrode, two close friends of Lucy, countess of Bedford; the "Funerall Elegie" and the two Anniversaries occasioned by the death of Elizabeth Drury, in 1610; the elegy on Prince Henry, who died in 1612; the "Obsequyes" on Lord Harrington, who died in 1614; and the hymn marking the death of Marquis Hamilton in 1625. In several respects, these eleven poems are quite distinct from each other. The first eight mourn the deaths of essentially private individuals, while the last three deal with the passing of public figures. The initial audiences of the individual poems also vary, as to some extent do their generic approaches. Moreover, they differ greatly in length and scope, from the 26 lines of "Sorrow" to the 258 lines of "Obsequyes upon the Lord Harrington" to the massive bulk of the Anniversaries. For all these differences, however, the poems comprise a closely related group and examining them together proves instructive. While these eleven elegiac pieces do not constitute a sequence, viewing them sequentially provides insight both into the individual poems and into Donne's evolution as an elegist.

The strategies that Donne employs in the epicedes and obsequies are to a large extent dictated by the nature of the conceived audiences of the individual poems and the particular circumstances of their occasions. Like most poets, Donne is more a rhetorician than a philosopher and he tailors his poems for specific purposes. Although the funereal poems contain some abstract philosophizing about the nature and meaning of death, the group is finally most remarkable not for its philosophy or even its striking imagery or ingenious arguments, but for Donne's rhetorical agility and his bold refashioning of the elegiac tradition. The peculiar circumstances of each poem pose

particular problems that the poet solves in ways specific to the individual work. Nevertheless, there emerges an overall pattern of evolution as Donne progressively transcends his actual subjects, a tendency that ultimately results in poems that use the deaths of those subjects primarily as occasions for religiophilosophical musings. One striking feature in this evolving strategy is the gradual disappearance from his elegies of both the body of the deceased and the figure of death as destroyer, along with a concomitant growing emphasis on the released soul and what Donne terms its "progress" toward bliss. The place of the Prince Henry elegy in this evolution of the Donnean funereal poem is illuminating, as it comes just after the change in focus has been effected, in the pivotal funeral elegy on Elizabeth Drury and in the Anniversaries.

Donne's earliest funeral elegy, that beginning "Sorrow, who to this house scarse knew the way," is firmly earthbound. All who enter the house of the deceased are the "pray" (i.e., prey) of an anthropomorphized sorrow (2). What consolation is offered is formulaic and perfunctory—the deceased "gaines now / But life by Deathe" (17-18)—and the poem ends with an emphasis on the dead body. The surviving children mimic the corpse over which they mourn. They "are his pictures," but they are "Pictures of him dead, senseles, cold as hee" (23, 24); and he "needes no marble tombe" since both he and those "about him . . . are turnd to stone" (25-26). Although this poem is generally agreed to be early, probably written in the 1590s, no one has identified to everyone's satisfaction the subject of this elegy, and so any place it may have had in Donne's pursuit of patronage remains obscure. It may have been written to curry favor with a patron or prospective patron, but its brevity, bleakness, and lack of any developed consolation are puzzling.

Donne's next four funereal poems are clearly (if not exclusively) shaped by considerations of patronage. The four works occasioned by the deaths of Lady Bridget Markham and Cecilia Bulstrode are complex social transactions, motivated not only by the need to commemorate the deceased individuals, whom Donne may not have known very well, but also—and especially—by the desire to solidify

his relationship with Lady Bedford. The poems exemplify what Dennis Kay defines as Donne's attempt to devise a non-pastoral Latinate funeral elegy "that could be both domestic and serious."[3] While their hyperbolic comparisons, restless thought, imaginative leaps, and disturbing images anticipate the Anniversaries—perhaps especially the "Elegie on Mris. Boulstred" (beginning "Death I recant"), which achieves consolation by contemplating Cecilia Bulstrode as an exemplar of the regenerate soul—these poems are firmly rooted in the particularities of their unique occasions. They can best be understood as Donne's adaptation of the elegy as a vehicle to explore large philosophical and religious issues, while also fulfilling the epideictic obligations of the elegiac mode. These works seek to discover in the senselessness of specific losses some transcendent meaning to death and attempt to find in the meditations occasioned by those deaths some abstract truths, yet they are neither impersonal meditations nor self-absorbed exercises. Rather, they are coterie performances carefully tailored to a narrowly circumscribed audience. They skillfully mix lamentation, praise, and consolation in order to commemorate the lives of the dead women and to comfort their survivors, including especially their chief mourner and Donne's principal audience, Lady Bedford.

For all the consolation the poems offer, however, death is still very much a present figure in them. In the Markham elegy, death is "the Ocean / To which God giues the lower parts of man" (1-2). In the first Bulstrode elegy, death is addressed directly as a hungry beast to whom

> Th'earths face is but thy table, and the meate
> Plants, Cattle, men, dish'd for Death to eate.
> In a rude hunger now hee millions drawes
> Into his bloudie, or plaguy, or starued iawes. (5-8)

And in the second Bulstrode elegy there is the "rauenous earth, that nowe wooes her to bee / Earth too" (57-58). But none of these elegies are as bleak as "Sorrow," and one way bleakness is relieved in these poems is through a strikingly different treatment of the bodies of the deceased. Whereas the most notable image in "Sorrow" is the coldness

of the corpse and its tomb in the concluding lines, in the Markham and Bulstrode elegies, the emphasis is on the resurrection of the body and its triumphant entry into heaven. For example, in a beautiful series of metaphors, Lady Markham's "fleash" is "refin'de by Deathes cold hand":

> As men of China after an ages staye,
> Doe take vp Purslane, where they buried clay;
> Soe at this Graue, her Limbeck, which refines
> The Diamonds, Rubies, Saphirs, Pearles, and mynes,
> Of which this fleash was; her Soule shall inspire
> Fleash of such stuff; as God, when his last fire
> Annulls this world, to recompence it, shall
> Make, and name then the Elixar of this All. (20-28)

Likewise, in the second elegy on Bulstrode,

> The rauenous earth, that nowe wooes her to bee
> Earth too, will bee Lemnia, and the tree
> That wrapps that chrystall in a woodden tombe
> Shall bee tooke vp spruce, fill'd with Diamon . . . . (57-60)

Conceiving of corporal death as a means of releasing the soul, the Markham and Bulstrode elegies emphasize the the incorruptibility of the subjects' bodies and souls. Mixing the personal and the impersonal, these works are transitional poems in the evolution of Donne's mourning style.

No less rooted in their external occasion are the very different Anniversary poems, including "A Funerall Elegie," which cumulatively constitute Donne's most profound meditation on death and which are distinguished from the earlier Epicedes and Obsequies by virtue of their symbolic mode and greater remoteness from their ostensible subject.[4] Another variance between the Anniversaries and the earlier Epicedes and Obsequies is that the Anniversaries were printed while the elegies on Bulstrode and Markham circulated only in manuscript. Written to please one of the wealthiest men in England, Sir Robert

Drury, the Anniversaries, like the earlier mourning poems, are deeply implicated in the patronage system.[5] But unlike them they are presented to a wide audience, prefaced by commendatory poetry, and ushered forth, as the title page of the 1611 edition of the first Anniversary, *An Anatomy of the World*, proclaims, "to be solde" at Samuel Macham's "shop in Paules Church-yard, at the signe of the Bul-head" (Variorum 6:[3]). The fact of publication in the form of commercially distributed books makes the Anniversary poems less coterie works than public performances. As poems offered for sale to the general public, the Anniversaries lack the familiarity and intimacy of the Markham and Bulstrode elegies. If they share other aspects of coterie poetry with the earlier Epicedes and Obsequies, including especially intellectual sophistication, they differ in that the assumed audience is circumscribed only by the difficulties of the verse.

What makes the Anniversaries appropriate as public poems is the fact that Elizabeth Drury is only their nominal subject. As the complete title of the first Anniversary announces, the poem is "An Anatomie of the World, Wherein, By Occasion of the vntimely death of Mistris Elizabeth Drury the frailty and the decay of this whole world is represented." Similarly, the full title of the second Anniversary reads "Of the Progres of the Soule. Wherein: By Occasion of the Religious Death of Mistris Elizabeth Drury, the incommodities of the Soule in this life and her exaltation in the next, are Contemplated" (Variorum 6:22). That is, the Anniversary poems are occasioned by Elizabeth Drury's death but they are not really about her. They could hardly be so, since Donne not only did not know the adolescent girl personally but also apparently had never even seen her. Thus, it is not surprising that many readers, protesting that Elizabeth Drury simply cannot bear the weight of Donne's hyperboles of lament and praise, have questioned the sincerity of the poems and have found that the expression of grief in them rings hollow. In a famous statement, Donne himself allegedly answered Ben Jonson's accusation that the poems were blasphemous by explaining that "he described the Idea of a Woman and not as she was."[6] But while Donne's lack of familiarity with the details of the fourteen-year-old dead girl's life might seem to have disqualified him

from writing her elegy, it actually freed him to escape the domestic obligations of the traditional elegy almost altogether. In the Anniversary poems, Donne explores via a symbolic mode the meaning not merely of Elizabeth Drury's individual life and death but, as Barbara Lewalski notes, the "nature and potential of man as image of God," as well as more specific questions about the nature and powers of the soul.[7] The poems represent a decisive break with the traditional English elegy, developing tendencies already apparent in the Markham and Bulstrode poems toward refashioning the elegy as a vehicle for philosophical and metaphysical speculation.

Perhaps the most relevant of the Anniversary poems to the Prince Henry elegy is "A Funerall Elegie." Donne's funeral poem for Elizabeth Drury contains the kernels of the theological argument and symbolism developed more fully in the Anniversaries and provides few details of the subject's life; as Paul Parrish notes, "the 'Elegie' moves toward the transforming art of the Anniversaries as it moves away from more conventional patterns of the [elegiac] tradition."[8] The elegy differs from the Anniversaries proper in that it celebrates Elizabeth Drury as an individual even as she is also represented as an exemplar and an ideal. This strategy of abstraction and idealization even in the more personal "Funerall Elegie" may have been dictated by the fact that Elizabeth Drury (like Prince Henry) died young, before she had achieved great deeds. While Donne emphasizes that her brief life had been exemplary ("How faire and chast, humble and high shee' ad beene / Much promis'd, much perform'd, at not fifteene" [85-86]), her virtues are nevertheless presented as more "promis'd" than "perform'd." Unable to praise her deeds, he praises her potential. She will inspire others "T'accomplish that which should haue beene her fate" and her legacy is in fact the "future vertuous deeds" of those who will emulate her (100, 103).

To fulfill the epideictic obligations of a funeral elegy, Donne idealizes Elizabeth Drury—both in the elegy and the two Anniversaries that follow it—and presents the individual death of this virtuous young woman as a death blow to a sickly world. As a part of this process of idealization, after a reference to her physical remains in the opening

lines—"Tis lost, to trust a Tombe with such a ghest, / Or to confine her in a Marble chest" (1-2)—Donne virtually causes her body to disappear from the reader's consciousness. And while death is depicted as a terrifying, hungry creature in the Markham and Bulstrode elegies, in the Drury elegy it is presented in the more dignified persona of a triumphing conqueror whose visage and methods are left undescribed:

> For since death will proceed to triumph still,
> He can finde nothing, after her, to kill,
> Except the world it selfe, so great as shee.
> Thus braue and confident may Nature bee,
> Death cannot giue her such another blow,
> Because shee cannot such another show. (31-36)

These changes in strategy broaden the scope of the Drury elegy. Instead of mourning the passing of private individuals whose deaths affect only those who knew and loved them, as is the case in "Sorrow" and the elegies on Markham and Bulstrode, the Drury elegy mourns the passing of an almost literally disembodied, abstract virtue whose death is seen to affect the whole world. And with these changes comes a shift in emphasis. Instead of concentrating primarily on the dead individual and the fate of his or her soul, as he had in the earlier elegies, Donne in the Drury elegy largely identifies and laments the effects that he perceives her death to have wrought on a world in the last stages of its decay. Similarly, in the first Anniversary it is the world, not the body of the deceased Elizabeth Drury, that is anatomized; and in the second Anniversary it is the world's "Carkas" that is contemplated (55-60) and the speaker's soul that is asked to "Thinke that thy body rots" (115-20).

In the Prince Henry elegy, Donne moves from the private to the political arena. Tellingly, however, in contemplating Henry's death he does not appreciably alter the strategies of the Drury elegy, but instead pushes them to further extremes. If a world in its dotage is diminished and sickened by the death of an essentially private individual whose only sphere on earth was her family, how much more is it devastated by the death of a young man whose sphere was to be the British isles and

presumptively—as the leader of Europe's Protestant powers—all of Christendom? If a young woman can be contracted into the soul of the world through her private virtues, why should not a young prince be so idealized through his political virtues? And in each poem, the idealization of the young subject is accomplished primarily through a contemplation of potential rather than actual deeds. Central to the argument of the elegy on Prince Henry is the conjoining of faith and reason in the prince's potential: "For, All that *Faith* could credit Mankinde *could,* / *Reason* still seconded that This PRINCE *would"* (19-20). In actuality, the Prince was not the strong arm of his pacific father any more than Elizabeth was the actual saint of Donne's portrait. But in each instance, Donne dwells on the distant potential of his subject, depicting Elizabeth as the Platonic "idea" of woman and Henry as the ideal Christian prince.

The Prince Henry elegy continues and extends the diminution of the physical body of the deceased that is a feature of the Drury funeral elegy and the Anniversaries. In the Drury elegy, the importance of the body is markedly less than it is in the Markham and Bulstrode elegies, being mentioned early and quickly dismissed in favor of a contemplation of the effects of the young woman's loss. In the Prince Henry elegy, the presence of the body of the deceased is deemphasized even further. Brought in more than halfway through the poem at line 56, that body is represented only in its "*putrefaction*," which, as a kind of spiritual fertilizer, is the only thing that "Sustains" the "Earth"—that is, the earthly existence—of the prince's survivors, and then only to "animate" their "*Griefs*" (57).

What is given the most space and emphasis in both the Drury and Henry elegies is the contemplation of the effects of the loss of their subjects, and again, the Prince Henry elegy may be seen as a logical extension of the Drury elegy. While the Drury elegy gradually builds toward a full realization of the consequences of the young woman's death and gradually entices the reader to acquiesce in Donne's idealization of her, however, the Prince Henry elegy opens with a powerfully worded statement of the consequences of the loss of the prince and forcefully co-opts the reader into acquiescence. Donne announces the

loss of his two "*Centres*," reason and faith, and proceeds with an extended consideration of the relationship of one to the other (1-16). Finally at line 18, identifying the cause of his intellectual and spiritual dislocation as the loss of "the PRINCE wee misse," Donne moves into the first person plural as he expands his personal confusion into a universal dislocation caused by Henry's death (19-24). In the next passage (25-42), its two halves each introduced by the inclusive question "Was it not well believ'd" (25, 35), intended to effect a universal assent, Donne defines his former faith—now shaken by death—as belief in the young prince's potential: first in using his strength to aid his father in achieving "*Peace* through[out] CHRISTIANITIE" (34) and then in sustaining that "*general Peace*" until it should "th'eternall ouertake" (36). In contrast to what might have been, in the next passage (43-54) Donne "now" sees this former faith as "*Heresie*" and human life reduced to such a state that "'Twere an *Ambition* to desire to fall" (50).

Like the Drury poem, the Prince Henry elegy is also a patronage poem, at least in the sense that patronage concerns inevitably helped shape it. The poem may conceivably have originated in a coterie contest featuring Edward Herbert and Henry Goodyere, as Terry Sherwood—following Edmund Gosse—speculates,[9] though more likely it was occasioned by larger and more pressing concerns than the competition of friends and rivals; and the audience for the poem, especially as published in Sylvester's *Lacrymae Lacrymarum,* includes more than a tightly knit coterie. The patronage context of Sylvester's volume is repeatedly proclaimed by Sylvester himself, who had served as one of the prince's chaplains.[10] Although it has not hitherto been noticed in discussions of Donne's elegy, an important impetus for its composition must surely have been the patronage relationship between his father-in-law, Sir George More, and the deceased prince. In late 1610, More, a close ally of Robert Cecil, earl of Salisbury, and a faithful supporter of the king, petitioned Cecil for "some sign of royal favour now that age and infirmity are coming on."[11] In response to this request, in December 1610, Prince Henry, undoubt-

edly at the instigation of Salisbury, appointed More his Treasurer and Receiver-general.[12] The prince, then, became an important source of patronage for Donne's extended family.[13] It may well be that Donne wrote the elegy at the prompting of his father-in-law. The poem fulfills the father-in-law's patronage obligation even as it also participates in the poet's quest for new patronage.

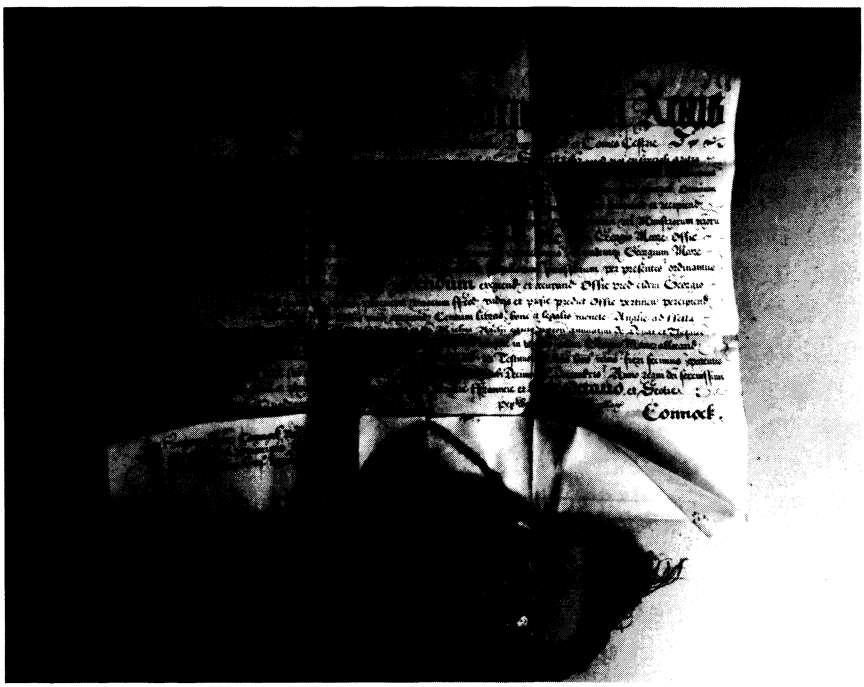

Figure 1. *Appointment of Sir George More as Treasurer and Receiver General to Prince Henry.* Reproduced by permission of Surrey History Service. Copyright of Surrey History Center.

Written at a time when the poet was actively lobbying Robert Ker, Viscount Rochester (later earl of Somerset), the king's favorite, for royal support,[14] the poem reflects Donne's acute awareness of King James as a principal reader. In fact, the poem is designed as much to curry favor with the king as to mourn the death of the prince. The king no doubt felt great personal grief at the untimely death of his elder son, but he may have also breathed a sigh of relief that a political rival had

been removed from the scene, for his son had become the champion of a religious position and a political program counter to his own. The prince inclined toward the more extreme wing of Puritanism and embraced a belligerent stance toward Catholic Spain. Foiled in their attempts to convert King James to their cause, militant English Puritans turned to the more sympathetic Prince Henry and saw in him a worthy successor to Henry VIII, one who would complete the Protestant reformation only begun by his great predecessor.[15] Thus, Donne's portrayal of him as a champion of his pacific father's policy is not merely the kind of exaggeration endemic to the elegiac mode; it is also a blatant and deliberate distortion of the historical record.[16] At the same time, however, it is a deft solution to the dilemma he faced in fulfilling the epideictic obligation of the elegy to praise a public person whose policies he found repugnant. Not only was Donne by conviction and allegiance of the father's party rather than the son's, but he also knew that in terms of patronage a live king is more likely to be helpful than a dead prince. Thus, in the elegy on Prince Henry, Donne exercises the poet's prerogative of reshaping the world into what he wishes it to be. In a strategy designed to please the king, Donne praises the prince by imagining how he might have evolved in the future under his father's tutelage.

The idealization of Henry also helps explain the problematic "Shee-Intelligence" (90) with whom the Prince joins, in bonds of love, to create the "Two mutual Heauens" on which the poem closes. She is an important figure, for on their union depends what little consolation the elegy offers. As the Notes and Glosses in the Variorum amply testify, many readers have assumed this figure to be an actual young woman (Variorum 6:609). Some have argued that Donne is or may be referring to the prince's sister Elizabeth, with whom he is said to have had a close relationship. Others have proposed that she is, in the words of Richard Hughes, a "resummoned Elizabeth Drury" who had already afforded Donne a "bridge between temporality and eternity" and whose father had the "grandiose" idea that his daughter might someday be the prince's consort.[17] Others have supposed her to be an actual young lady who, because of Donne's reticence, can never be identified. And still

others have averred that Donne is imagining a lady whom the prince might have loved. What seems more likely, however, given the context of the poem, is that Donne intends the emphasis to be more on the "intelligence" half of the formulation than on the "shee." John T. Shawcross and Wesley Milgate are surely correct in associating the "Shee-Intelligence" with the angelic intelligences controlling the heavenly spheres of the Ptolemaic universe. At the point in the poem where she appears, the prince has been rendered thoroughly abstract; indeed, he has become the Platonic "idea" of a prince rather than the actual flesh and blood Henry. The appropriate consort for him in that state, then, is not an actual woman but an angelic guide who has acted as his "*Conscience*" and has thereby "mov'd" his "*Sphear*" (92, 90). It is the imaginative joining of the prince with such a creature in mutual bonds of love that can console the poet and make him wish to be "an Angel *singing* what *You* were" (98).

Since the Prince Henry elegy has been discussed here in the context of Donne's other funeral elegies, it is appropriate to note briefly Donne's strategies in the two elegies that followed it, which continue the poet's practice of using the elegiac mode for religiophilosophical musing. However, in the "Obsequyes vpon the Lord Harrington," Prince Henry's childhood companion and Lucy, countess of Bedford's brother, Donne refuses to idealize his subject. While he allows the young man into heaven, he denies him a triumphal entry since those are reserved for conquerers of mature vices and he had not lived long enough to conquer more than the vices of youth. Addressed to his soul, the poem concludes with a reference to Harrington's grave, in which Donne inters his muse, but there is no mention of his mortal remains.[18] Finally, the "Hymne" commemorating the death of Marquis Hamilton opens with the soul of Hamilton already in heaven, claiming an appropriate place among the orders of angels. It acknowledges his earthly remains only in terms of his soul's having left them.

Many of the problematic features of the elegy on Prince Henry—including its extended theological meditations, its hyperbolic idealization and distortion of the Prince's political positions, and its evocation of the "Shee-intelligence"—are illuminated by placing the poem in the

context of Donne's other funereal poems and, especially, of his evolution as an elegist. Probably as a result of the demands he faced within the patronage system to commemorate individuals whom he did not know intimately, Donne created a new elegiac mode. He solved the practical problem of mourning the deaths of remote subjects by transforming the traditional English elegy into a vehicle for theological and philosophical speculation. Adopting a symbolic mode, he wrote public poems that display his learning and virtuosity, in the process transcending his ostensible subjects and occasions.

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Notes

1. For summaries of discussions of the Prince Henry elegy published through 1989, see the Commentary on the poem in volume 6, *The Anniversaries and the Epicedes and Obsequies,* of *The Variorum Edition of the Poetry of John Donne,* General Editor Gary A. Stringer (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1995), pp. 586-95. All quotations from the Anniversaries and the Epicedes and Obsequies follow the Variorum text. The two essays on the Prince Henry elegy that have been most useful to us are Terry G. Sherwood, "Reason, Faith, and Just Augustinian Lamentation in Donne's Elegy on Prince Henry," *Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900* 13 (1973): 53-67; and Leonard D. Tourney, "Convention and Wit in Donne's *Elegie* on Prince Henry," *Studies in Philology* 71 (1974): 473-83.

2. Ben Jonson, "Conversations with William Drummond of Hawtornden," *Ben Jonson,* ed. C. H. Herford and Percy Simpson, vol. 1 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1925), p. 136.

3. Dennis Kay, *Melodious Tears: The English Funeral Elegy from Spenser to Milton* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990), pp. 81-101. For an extended discussion of these poems, see also Claude J. Summers, "Donne's 1609 Sequence of Grief and Comfort," *Studies in Philology* 89 (1992): 211-31.

4. We follow Barbara Lewalski, *Donne's Anniversaries and the Poetry of Praise* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973), in thinking of the Anniversaries as embodying a symbolic mode. Edward Tayler, in *Donne's Idea of a Woman: Structure and Meaning in* The Anniversaries (New York: Columbia University Press, 1991), inveighs against the use of "symbol" in connection with the poems, but many of his own explanations of the meaning of *idea* are elaborate distinctions with little or no real difference from Lewalski's understanding of the symbolic mode. They obfuscate rather than clarify. By "symbolic" we (like Lewalski) mean simply that Donne conceives Elizabeth Drury as simultaneously both her individual self and a universal figure; we do not mean that either "she" or "shee" is "really" Queen Elizabeth or the Virgin Mary or the logos, etc.

5. For a reading of the Anniversaries as patronage verse, see Arthur Marotti, *John Donne, Coterie Poet* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1986), pp. 235-45. But, for a different perspective on the question of patronage, see Tayler, *Donne's Idea of a Woman,* p. 7.

6. Jonson, "Conversations with William Drummond of Hawthornden," p. 133.

7. Lewalski, *Donne's Anniversaries,* p. 220. On Donne's exploration of the nature and powers of the soul, see especially Paul Stanwood, "'Essentiall Joye' in Donne's Anniversaries," *Texas Studies in Literature and Language* 13 (1971): 227-38; rpt. in *Essential Articles for the Study of John Donne,* ed. John R. Roberts (Hamden, CT: Archon, 1975), pp. 387-96. Stanwood reads the Anniversaries in terms of the creative power of the soul and the "essentiall joye" of heavenly grace.

8. Paul A. Parrish, "'A Funerall Elegie': Donne's Achievement in Traditional

Form," *Concerning Poetry* 19 (1986): 55-66.

9. Sherwood, "Reason, Faith, and Just Lamentation," pp. 54-60. Sherwood's comparisons of Donne's poem with those by Herbert and Goodyere are interesting and suggestive, but the similarities between the poems may indicate little more than a shared intellectual discourse.

10. Besides mourning poems by Sylvester and Joseph Hall (also one of Prince Henry's chaplains, whose contributions began with the second edition), the third edition appends a section entitled "Svndry Funeral Elegies . . . Composed by seuerall Authors." It includes, in addition to Donne's, elegies by George Garrard, Hugh Holland, Sir William Cornwallis, Sir Edward Herbert (later Lord Herbert of Cherbury), and Sir Henry Goodyere, as well as brief epitaphs by Holland and Sir Peter Osborne. In their elegies, Holland and Cornwallis depict themselves as former suitors to the prince now devastated by his death. Garrard specifically denies any aspirations to Henry's patronage, a denial that itself highlights the issue of patronage.

11. Quoted in Roger Munden, "George More, 1553-1632: County Governor, Man-of-business and Central Government Office Holder," *Surrey Archaeological Collections* 89 (1996): 97-124. Munden's account of More's career stresses his dependence on Salisbury and his vociferous defense of the king's policies in parliament.

12. Munden, "George More, 1553-1632," pp. 103-105. For this appointment, see the accompanying illustration. R.C. Bald, *John Donne: A Life* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1970), p. 141, errs in dating the appointment to the summer of 1603.

13. As Munden observes, Salisbury's death in May 1612 and Henry's death in November of the same year deprived More of considerable political leverage and income ("George More, 1553-1632," p. 105).

14. See Bald, *John Donne: A Life*, Chap. 11, esp. pp. 290-93.

15. The best account of Prince Henry as a political figure is J.W. Williamson, *The Myth of the Conqueror: Prince Henry Stuart: A Study of 17th Century Personation* (New York: AMS Press, 1978). Williamson, however, errs in attributing *Principles for Yong Princes* (London, 1611) to Sir George More (pp. 84-85). In the Epistle Dedicatory addressed to Prince Henry, George More, Esquire states that he served Henry's grandmother (Mary, Queen of Scots), whom Sir George never served.

16. Marotti, in *John Donne, Coterie Poet,* remarks that the elegy "glosses over the contrast between James's pacific policies and the Prince's militant Protestantism" (p. 271), but he misunderstands Donne's purpose, for he unaccountably places the poet among Henry's clients, who felt alienated from James's court and whose hope of perferment were dashed by the prince's death. While some members of Donne's coterie allied themselves with Henry, Donne himself did not. Nor did his father-in-law, who owed his position in the prince's household not to any ideological sympathy for Henry's militancy, but to his fervent support for the policies of

Salisbury and the king.

17. Richard E. Hughes, *The Progress of the Soul: The Interior Career of John Donne* (New York: Morrow, 1968), pp. 243-44.

18. For a discussion of the "Obsequies" as an accomplished occasional poem, deeply rooted in contemporaneous political controversies and tensions, see Ted-Larry Pebworth, "'Let Me Here Use That Freedome': Subversive Representation in John Donne's 'Obsequies to the Lord Harington,'" *Journal of English and Germanic Philology* 91 (1992): 17-42.