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"Goodfriday, 1613. Riding Westward": Looking Back

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"Men must imitate the Planets that go not their own motions, otherwise than they are permitted *per primum mobile*." This proposition is advanced in a sermon by Arthur Lake (1569-1626), the immediate and specific application being that "so should all the motions of our soule conforme themselves to the good pleasure of God."[1] The occasion for these remarks definitely was Good Friday, but the date is not specified in the folio and very possibly was not 1613, a year in which Lake must have been more than ordinarily busy. He was Bishop of Bath and Wells when he died in May, 1626, "having made his confession," as the *DNB* tells us, "to Bishop Andrewes a few hours before breathing his last." Thirteen years earlier, though not yet a bishop, he may have been known for practicing what he preached since "in 1613," as we also are told, "though not a candidate for the office, he was unanimously elected warden of New College, where he established at his own cost lectureships in Hebrew and mathematics."

On Good Friday of that same year, the traveller of Donne's poem was much occupied with quite different matters, but he sounds a bit like the new Warden when he explains, to his own evident satisfaction, how he happens to be headed in precisely the wrong direction on this day.[2] As "other Spheares" (3) are "whirld" by the "first mover" (8), so is his body "carryed towards the West," even though his "Soules forme bends toward the East" (9-10). For Lake, however, it is theistic good pleasure which is the governing factor, whereas Donne's speaker inverts the argument: his movements, quite explicitly, are directed not by God's "Pleasure or businesse" (7) but by his own. This grandizement of personal vanity in terms of divine and cosmic processes indicates that self-centeredness, if not solipsism, is well to the forefront here, and the fact that this journey, in modern parlance, is an ego trip as well as a westward ride is further shown by the not quite visible shrug which next occurs: a gesture over the shoulder at what might be observed if one took the trouble to look.

The scene there is a "spectacle" (16), and if a less worldly speaker were using the word on this particular day, then one might expect it to have close resemblance to the "sight"—in the Greek text, a "theorian" ("spectacle")—depicted in St. Luke's account of the Crucifixion, when "the people . . . came together at that sight" (23.48). As it is, however, the differences are conspicuous, and one way to underline the fact is to backtrack, for a moment, to Good Friday, 1605 and the sermon for that day by Bishop Lake's death-bed confessor.

"Saint Luke," Andrewes begins, "though he recount at large our SAVIOUR CHRIST'S whole storie, yet in plaine and expresse termes he calleth the *Passion* [Greek font for "theorian"], a *Theorie* or *Sight*."[3] Nearing his conclusion, he says (381) that some of those who came together "returned from it . . . as having seene a *dolefull Spectacle*." Surface similarities again can be seen, but in the poem the Passion Play is enacted on a not quite cleared stage, and in this sermon, even more so than in the Gospels, jumbled crowd scenes (including mob action) are called for. The only personages acknowledged by Donne's rider—other, that is, than himself—are "Christ on this Crosse" (13) and "his miserable mother" (30). But Andrewes asks (376-77), "Was it a *Tragaedy* [*sic*]," truly a "*Passion*"? Yes indeed,

> A *Passion* it was: yet, by their behaviour it might seeme a *may-game*. Their *shouting* and *out-cries*; their *harrying* of him about, from *Annas* to *Caiaphas*; from him to *Pilate*; from *Pilate* to *Herod*; and from him to *Pilate* again: One while in *purple*, *Pilate*'s suit; another-while in *white*, *Herod*'s *livery*: *Nipping* him by the *cheekes*, and *pulling* off his *haire*; *blindfolding Him* and *buffeting Him*; bowing *to Him* in *derision*, and then *spitting in his face*.

Donne's equestrian is aware, to be sure, that "Christ on this Crosse, did rise and fall" (13), but Andrewes (374) would have us know that "the *Crosse* is a *rack*," that

> *they ploughed His back, and made* (not *stripes*, but) *long furrowes upon it*. They did not *put on* His *wreath of thornes*, and presse it downe with their hands, but *beat it on* hard with *batts*, to make it enter through *skinne*, *flesh*, *skull*, and *all*. They did not (in *Golgotha*) pierce his *hands* and *feet*, but made *wide holes* (like that of a *spade*) as if they had been *digging* in some ditch.

Backtrack still another year, to 1604, and to "The Passion Sermon" preached at Paul's Cross by Joseph Hall:

> Which of his senses now was not a window to let in sorrow? . . . Look up . . . look upon this precious body . . . That head . . . that face . . . those eyes . . . those ears . . . those lips . . . those feet . . . those hands . . . that whole body . . . .[4]

Since Hall inherited this hortative mode, for a sampling of the kind of material which fills the ellipses just made, one can look back to 1571 and the two-part Sermon for Good Friday in the second of the officially appointed *Book*[s] *of Homilies*:

> Call to mind, O sinful creature, and set before thine eyes Christ crucified: think thou seest his body stretched out in length upon the cross, his head crowned with sharp thorns, and his hands and his feet pierced with nails, his heart opened with a long spear, his flesh rent and torn with whips, his brows sweating with water and blood: think thou hearest him now crying in an intolerable agony. . . . Couldest thou behold this woful sight, or hear this mournful voice, without tears[?] . . . O my brethren, let this image of Christ crucified be always printed in our hearts.[5]

Donne must have been alive to details of this kind, if not from Andrewes and Hall and the *Homilies*, then from *The Golden Legend*; or the earlier (often pseudonymous) medieval meditations on which the *Legend* levies; or the Passion sermons of Church Fathers such as St. Augustine and St. Ambrose; and, of course, from the Gospels themselves and the Old Testament prefigurative types cited by the Evangelists and by St. Paul. I do not wish to be more tedious than need be, but it is important, I think, to remember that the Crucifixion customarily was displayed with an abundant wealth of detail which invited the eye to linger.[6]

Indeed, as Andrewes observed in another sermon, preached at Whitehall in 1604, there is insufficient time, even on Good Friday itself, to look into the Passion fully: "Thus we have *considered* and seene, not so much as in this sight we might or should, but as much as the time will give" (361). Or, as Hall put it, at Paul's Cross on that same day, "There is no branch or circumstance in this wonderful business which yields not infinite matter of discourse" (25).

Donne, however, leaves almost all of it out. Admittedly, he was writing a poem, not a sermon, but so was John Davies of Hereford (or, if not a poem, then verse), and *The Holy Roode, or Christs Crosse: Containing Christ Crucified, described in Speaking-picture* (1609) puts in (regrettably, as it happens) almost everything.[7] One can and should allow for differences on both sides of this issue: on the one hand, the contrast between verse and homiletic prose; on the other, more than 25 rambling pages of verse by Davies and a tight dramatic monologue by Donne. Even so, it is clear enough that one of Dŏnnĕ's rhetorical strategies could be thought of as significant silence.

By one kind of reckoning, in fact, Donne gives rather less than half of what the reference to "spectacle" might cause one to expect in even a brief poem. When Andrewes proposes, in the sermon for 1605, to "let all other *sights* goe . . . to see this great *Sight*" (367), he divides his material by saying that the "principall parts thereof are two.[1] *The sight it selfe* (that is) the *Thing* to be seen:[2] and the *Sight* of it (that is) the *Act of seeing it*, or *looking* on it." In the poem, there are a few objects (Christ, the cross, the sun, the mother) which *might* be seen if one were only facing the right way ("There I should see . . ." [11]). Others, however, are not affected by geographical placement since they are mental constructs dependent on invisible rather than visible reality: "all spheares" (22), for example, or "endlesse height" (23), or the "Zenith" and "our Antipodes" (24). Rabbi Akiba (sometimes Akiva) once entered Pardes ("paradise"), saw God, and safely returned to have the fact recorded in the *Talmud* (Hagigah, 14b). Scholem and Bauer attest to the continuing fame of that experience in some circles, both Jewish and Christian.[8] The general rule proved by that remarkable exception is, however, "there shall no man see me, and live" (Exodus 33.20), and one therefore will hardly quibble with Donne's assertion, "Who sees Gods face . . . must dye" (17).

And yet one of the rapidly emerging effects quite obviously is a stress on that which is *not* seen, and another, equally strong, is an emphasis on not *seeing*. This entire "spectacle" is "of too much weight" (16). "Yet dare I'almost be glad, I do not see" (15). A question is raised: "Could I behold those hands which span the Poles . . . peirc'd with those holes?" (21-22). Since the sun itself is forced to "winke" (20), a reply is scarcely required; how could anyone endure so side-piercing a sight? But the question evidently is beside the point since even upon the very human *and most pitiable mother, "I durst not looke" (29).*

This imagery is consistent and persistent, but other literature for the Passion points up the fact that somewhere in between "There I should see" and "I durst not looke," the argument has turned inward implosively. When the poem ends, the rider is still in England, not Jerusalem,

and the year continues to be 1613. In the middle, however, planes of normal time and diametric spaces of physical geography shift in and out of discontinuous existence since, in England in 1613, daring or not daring to cast one's eye ought in one sense to be a meaningless alternative; no miserable mother is there to be seen in either case. Language also becomes chaotic since distinctions between the literal and metaphoric disappear when the rider pointlessly blinks and an eclipsed sun, with surrealistic parallelism, is said to "winke." The words blur, perhaps obliterate, the customary co-ordinates of macrocosmic space-time and of microcosmic thought processes so that neither supplies a meaningful referential system. One also recognizes, of course, that from the devotional point of view which Donne's viewer at first declines to take, this destructive process is appropriate at this psychological moment of the poem and is so in more than one way. Macrocosmically, when "those hands" are "peirc'd" that "span the Poles," then the cosmos being held in and supported by the hands is likely to tilt. Microcosmically, if reviewing the past is to be followed by redemption in the future, then the personal world of sinful corruption will need a new kind of map. The literal meanings of words have to be undermined so as to be displaced by symbolic vocabulary; geography and time themselves must be translated into states of mind. Otherwise, the traveller surely will arrive, sooner or later, at whatever destination his body is moving toward, but the disparity between self-sacrificing God and self-centered humanity will be as abysmal at journey's end as it was at the outset.

Preoccupied and beguiled, this wayfarer thus begins by turning away the eyes of his body and then fastidiously tries to avert the eyes of his mind. He does manage to remain oblivious to, and thus never notices the existence of, that richness of detail so compelling to other viewers. But however egocentrically he thrusts forward his own limited ability to see some things and his self-serving aversion to seeing others, a few hard truths simply have to be faced. In effect, therefore, a heavily truncated Passion Sermon is being preached unwillingly to the equally reluctant audience of the self. A parallel can be drawn, though with considerable inversion, to the last stanza of the "Hymne to God my God, in my sicknesse":

> So, in his purple wrapp'd receive mee Lord,
> By these his thornes give me his other Crowne;
> And as to other soules I preach'd thy word,
> Be this my Text, my Sermon to mine owne,
> Therfore that he may raise the Lord throws down.

On Good Friday, 1613, however, the homiletic text for the day (a biblical source for it will be given shortly) is this: "They *shall* look upon me whom they have pierced." Almost but not quite successfully suppressed, that statement underlies the fussiness about what one may or may not be willing and/or able to see, and it surfaces in the rhetorical question, "Could I behold those hands . . . peirc'd with those holes?" That the question goes unanswered turns out, in fact, to have been another significant omission.

The emergent text just quoted is from Zechariah 12.10, and I delayed the reference for two reasons. First, "shall" is not italicized in any of my editions, but the imperative verb was regularly emphasized, and it seemed worthwhile to underline at the outset that about this particular seeing, very little choice exists: one way or another, they *shall*. Second, the statement was conventionally understood to be prophetic of the Passion, an overwhelmingly powerful reason being that St. John interpreted it that way, and not once but twice. As a result, the words reappear in two variant forms. At the Crucifixion (John 19.34-37),

> one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came thereout blood and water. . . . For these things were done, that the Scripture should be fulfilled, . . . They shall look on him whom they pierced.

And on Patmos, years later, the apocalyptic vision begins, "Behold, he commeth with clouds, and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him" (Revelation 1.7). On this third occurrence, however, the soldier's spear is replaced by a divine and terrifying weapon: "out of his mouth went a sharp two edged sword" (1.16). That sword is one of the reasons, in fact, why those who pierced *shall* look.

With scissors and a little paste, one could compile from standard commentaries an anthology of comments which illuminate Donne's biblical allusion, but Andrewes obviated the need by preaching this text on Good Friday, 1597. Since his sermon sums up a long tradition for two kinds of looking, a paraphrase, even a fairly full one, takes no more space and has the advantage of preserving the skeleton of a coherent argument which partly resembles Donne's own.[9]

Since hermaneutic principles control interpretive practice, Andrewes' first point is that, in understanding Zechariah's words to be prophetic of the Passion, "the Holy Ghost is our warrant; who, in S. *Iohn's Gospell* reporting the . . . last act . . . saith plainly, that in the piercing, *the very words of the Prophecie were fulfilled*." "There is" of course, "no part of

the whole course of our Saviour CHRIST'S life or death, but it is well worthy our *looking on*,"

> But, of all other parts, above them all, this last part of his piercing, is here commended unto our view . . . this spectacle, when He was *pierced*. . . . most requisite at this time; this very day, . . . That, though on other dayes, we employ our eyes otherwise, this day at least, we fixe them on this object.

Syntax is another control upon meaning, and Zechariah's may *seem* to absolve post-biblical people of this duty. "For, . . . he entendeth by very construction, that"—the square bracket which follows is Andrewes' own—"the first and second [*They,*] are not two, but one and the *same Parties*: And that *they* that are here willed to looke *upon him*, are *they*, and none other, that were the authors of this fact, even of the murther." We, however, can scarcely be the "they" who were guilty since "we" were not even there; or so we would like to argue. "Our manner" is "either to lay it on the *Souldiers* . . . Or if not upon them, upon *Pilate* . . . upon the *people* . . . Or . . . the *Elders of the Iewes*." One of our difficulties, however, is that the heterogeneously plural "they" (whom we accuse) were but "Instruments" in the perpetration of the crime. "We that *looke upon, it is we that pierced Him*: and it is we that *pierced Him*, that are willed *to looke upon*." "We verily, even we, are . . . the *principalls* in this *murther*." The "they" who in reality are "we" therefore must look and "not slightly, superficially or perfunctorily, but stedfastly . . . And . . . with our eye to *pierce* him that was thus *pierced*." The "effect of such a spectacle" is or at any rate should be to "*Looke*" and "be *pierced* thy selfe . . . that with *looking* on Him, wee might be *pricked in our hearts*."

Andrewes—or rather, in his view, the Holy Ghost—was well aware that looking of this kind is distasteful. God "did easily foresee, we would not readily be brought to the *sight*, . . . Indeed, to *flesh and blood* it is but a dull and *heavy spectacle*." "Therfore is the *Verbe* . . . put into this *Coniugation* of purpose: . . . They shall procure or *cause*, or even *enioyne* or *enforce themselves to looke upon it*; or (as one would say) *looke*, that they *looke* upon it." Our inclination, quite understandably but no less wrongly, is to abuse the verb, in effect to misconjugate it:

> For some new and strange *spectacle* (though vaine and idle, and which shall not profit us how strange

> soever) we cause our selves sometimes to take a journey, and besides our paines, are at expenses too, to *behold* them: we will not only look upon, but even *cause our selves to looke upon* vanities.

And what we therefore need to do is *re*-apply the grammar. "Therfore . . . do it *willingly*, or do it *by force*: Do it, I say; for, done it must be." "Set it before you and looke." Or, if not that, then "*Respice, Looke backe upon it* with some *paine*: for, one way or other, looke upon it we must." St. John's apocalyptic vision of Christ coming in judgement with the two-edged sword puts this last matter beyond doubt. "Either here, or some where els; either now or then, *looke upon Him* you shall. And, they which put this spectacle farre from them heere, and cannot endure to *look* . . . shall be enforced to *looke* . . . whether they will or no."

In consequence, the better question to ask is not *whether* but rather "how long we shall continue" to look "and when we may give over?" Strict observance dictates that "this be the answere, *Donec totus fixus in corde, qui totus fixus in cruce*."[10] "Or, if that be too much or too hard, yet *saltem* at the least, *Respice in Illum, donec Ille te respexerit*." [Literally: look back at him until he has looked back at you.] "Looke upon him, till He looke upon you againe." "By *looking on Him* first, we may provoke ["pro-voco"—"call forth," "elicit"] him in a sort to a second *looking on us* againe."

Another good question to ask is, "How shall we know"—the pun which follows is deliberate—"when CHRIST doth thus *respect* us?" "Then truely, when fixing both the eyes of our meditation *upon Him that was pierced* . . . we find . . . some motion of *grace* arise within our *hearts* . . . and so grow into delight of this *looking*."

Because of the heritage which Donne and Andrewes shared, the sermon can gloss the poem without being a source for it. Some of Andrewes' characters travel in search of new sights not worth the seeing; others know full well what they ought to be looking at but maintain that the spectacle on view is too heavy for them to behold. Donne's character presumably would have felt at ease with either group, but since he assumes the role of preacher as well as congregation, he also approaches the perspective from which Andrewes is looking even while facing westward in the wrong direction. For Andrewes, the recommendation is "fixing both eyes of our meditation upon him"; for Donne,

> Though these things, as I ride, be from mine eyes,
> They'are present yet unto my memory,
> For that looks towards them. (33-35)

Donne's lines affirm an oxymoron--away "from" but "present yet unto"—which, in abstract terms, conjoins absence-presence. That particular simultaneity inheres in Good Friday because of a distinction carefully to be drawn on this specific day. All liturgical occasions normally "are" happening "now" regardless of when the events being celebrated "first" took place and no matter how many times the celebrations have previously occurred. Eucharist is no exception since Christ is sacrificed anew whenever Communion occurs. Herbert, in "The Agonie," thus validates the concurrence of past action and present renewal by an appeal to twofold personal experience, Christ's and his own: "Love is that liquour sweet and most divine, / Which my God feels as bloud; but I, as wine" (17-18, the last lines).[11] Oxymoron is present, but it consists of "blood-wine," not "was-is." Minds accustomed to thinking with theological precision (Herbert's mind, for example, or Donne's) nonetheless will often want to remember that the death of Christ was literally unique and not literally repeatable. "Was ever grief like mine" is the rhetorical question repeatedly asked by Christ in Herbert's "The Sacrifice," and the charge implicitly but unanswerably being laid against us is, "Never before nor since."

The question asked by Augustine is, "Does Christ die as often as the celebration of Easter comes round?" He is expounding the Vulgate's Psalm 21—"the Psalme of the Passion," as Andrewes (334) calls it on Good Friday, 1597, partly because of the verse, "They pierced my hands and feet."[12] Augustine, answering his own question, says no, but "the yearly remembrance brings before our eyes, in a way, what once happened long ago and stirs in us the same emotions as if we beheld our Lord hanging on the cross." "Call to mind . . . think thou hearest" (to requote from the Elizabethan *Homilies*); "fixing both eyes of our meditation upon him," Andrewes urges. As the Eucharistic statement itself powerfully asserts (though cold print may need to be assisted by the italics and the bracket I have added), Christ

> upon the crosse . . . made there (by his *one* oblation of himself *once* offered) a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice . . . and did . . . command us to continue a perpetual *memory* of that [*not* "this"] his precious death.

These discriminations need not always be insisted upon and deeply pondered; pectoral crosses and those genuflected to in church mutely testify to the spiritual value sometimes accrued from the devotionally motivated supposition that Christ is everywhere crucified and ceaselessly dies in sinful hearts. But if Donne's rider was offhandedly cavalier about his devotion at the outset, he is attempting to be more exact about his theology now, and in terms of that which is far from and yet also present unto, it must indeed be the "memory" that "looks," and it is in terms of visual memory that "thou"—Christ—"hang'*st* upon the tree" (36).

In terms of dramatic monologue, moreover, the change in mentality can be broadly attributed to the tumultuous mental transpositions of space and time which enable the scene to be visible at all. More specifically, what has triggered awareness of the memory itself (as separable from what is "present yet unto it") may be the piercing which Zechariah foresaw, and the reason for thinking so is the meaning of that prophet's name.

The etymology of "Zechariah" is, in fact, "God" (Jah or Yah) is "renowned," but at one time the import of "renown" was thought to be of a kind which may not be obvious today. Isidore of Seville translates "Zecharias" with "memoria Dei," which appears to mean "memory of God." John Stockton (citing Isidore) re-translates with "*Zacharias*, The remembrance of the Lord."[13] What is signified, as both writers immediately add, is that the Lord remembered his people when, thanks in part to Zechariah's preaching, they were mindful of him. The "populus," moreover, consequently was "reversus," as Isidore puts it—"turned back," that is—for the rebuilding of Jerusalem and the temple ("reversus est Dei populus, et reaedificandum est urbs et templum").

Whatever the specific cause, Zechariah or not, Donne's traveller at length perceives that his memory—located, of course, in the back of the mind, as in Spenser's House of Alma—*is* looking east. And that realization immediately leads to the further awareness that Christ has been looking west toward him: my memory "looks towards them; and thou look'st towards mee, / O Saviour, as thou hang'st upon the tree" (35-36). At this point, the usefulness of Joseph Hall's "The Christian's Crucifixion with Christ" must override the anachronism that the sermon dates from 1628 and, despite the title, was not preached on Good Friday:

> Those that have searched into the monuments of Jerusalem write that our Saviour was crucified with his face to the west; which howsoever spitefully meant of the Jews, as not allowing him worthy to look on the holy city and temple, yet was not without a mystery, *Oculi*

> *ejus super Gentes respiciunt, His eyes look to the Gentiles*, &c. saith the Psalmist [66.7]. As Christ therefore on his cross looked [past tense] towards us sinners of the Gentiles, so let us look [present-future] up to him. (*Works*, 5:382)

Donne reverses the order as given in Hall since looking to the east precedes the vision of Christ facing west, but the time interval is so short that the "reversal" and "recognition" scenes of this Passion Play are nearly simultaneous. And, of course, no matter when one finally gets round to noticing it, Christ was looking our way long ago.

Yet the westward ride continues, apparently uninterruptedly, despite the double retrospection, both toward Christ and by him. A geographical explanation arises from the facts that the farthest "West" necessarily is "East" and that "death doth touch the Resurrection" ("Hymne . . . in my sicknesse," 15). The crucial question, even so, concerns how one arrives at one's own western end. In terms of faculty psychology, if—but *only* if—rearward memory looks back at what needs to be seen, then forward progress in any direction (or, for that matter, no movement at all) can be significantly and properly reoriented. Hall, in *Contemplations* on New Testament history (*Works*, 2:663), meditates on the crucified thief at Christ's side and asks, "Who can despair of thy goodness, when he, that in the morning was posting towards hell, is in the evening with thee in paradise?" This encouraging instance cannot be generalized upon too far, however, and not merely because the other thief was never turned round. Jeremy Taylor sounds a cautionary note about even the first one: "Until all these things shall in these circumstances meet in one man, he must not hope for so safe an exit after an evil life."[14] Taylor also asks (711), "What contrition can be great enough, what tears sufficiently expressive," for our own iniquity? Donne himself, preaching on Easter, 1622 and again recollecting Zechariah (specifically, 10.8), remarks,

> though thou thinke thou heare sometimes Gods sibilations (as the Prophet *Zechary* speaks), Gods soft and whispering voyce, (inward remorses of thine owne; and motions of the Spirit of God to thy spirit), yet thinke not thy spirituall resurrection accomplished, till . . . thou heare his loud voyce. (*Sermons*, 4:70)

Donne's traveller, however, has *not* heard that voice, nor in his opinion has the time yet come for his own physical reversal. He has been like those "who will not frame their doing to turn unto their God; for the

spirit of whoredoms is in the midst of them" (Hosea 5.4). He has found himself among those "who have turned unto" God "the back, and not the face" (Jeremiah 2.27). Commenting on this verse, Lapide has much to say about the false baits of pleasure; Matthew Henry pointedly remarks, "Those that leave God wander endlessly, and a vagrant lust is insatiable."[15] The spiritual condition of Donne's wanderer no longer is so desperate as that, but renouncing "the spirit of whoredoms" does not seem nearly enough. He has strayed too far for too long and now finds himself thinking along the same lines as the psalmist: "Say unto God, how terrible art thou in thy works! Through the greatnesse of thy power shall thine enemies submit themselves unto thee."

The exclamation is from Psalm 66, the one referred to by Hall in "The Christian's Crucifixion with Christ," and I quote its third verse as Donne quoted it from the Authorized Version in announcing his text for a sermon preached in 1627. In his introductory remarks (*Sermons*, 8:110-11), Donne is especially interested in the title of this particular psalm. He mentions high-handed papistic practices in departing from the original Hebrew but for this psalm is willing to use the Vulgate's title even though it incorporates an addition taken over from the Septuagint Greek. "That addition," he says, "hath beene accepted and followed, by many, and ancient, and reverend Expositors . . . and therefore, for our use and accomodation, may well be accepted by us also." Donne's point in all this (my own point, let me add, also is about to emerge) is that "the Title" is "the Key" which "opens the whole Psalme" but here appears to have been cut two ways as if for different doors. In the Hebrew (and Authorized Version), it is "*To the chiefe Musician*," but in Graeco-Latin versions—as Donne paraphrases them—it is "*In finem, A Psalme directed upon the end.*" "I thinke," Donne says, "they meane upon the later times, because it is in a great part, a Propheticall Psalme, of the calling of the Gentiles." And "after this change, they also adde, *Resurrectionis, A Psalme concerning the Resurrection.*" (Since Donne is paraphrasing, perhaps a literal translation of the Septuagint Greek should be given: "To the end. A canticle of [*not* "or"] a psalm of resurrection.") Hall also must have had this information to hand in quoting from (though not identifying) the Psalm in "The Christian's Crucifixion with Christ" since it probably accounts for the fact that he quotes in Latin and supplies his own translation: "His eyes look to the Gentiles." In Donne's case, the Authorized Version could not be bypassed, but its title—and also verse 7 ("his eyes behold the nations")—obscured something which both Donne and Hall believed to be of utmost importance.

So much so that it ought to be separately paragraphed. From the Cross, Christ looked to the Gentiles and thereby made it possible for

those of them who believe to look back at him: the eyes of the redeemer and of the redeemed regard one another across the centuries.

Also worth attention is verse 10: "For thou, O God, hast proved us: thou hast tried us, as silver is tried." Latin and/or Greek versions are here superfluous, partly because the imagery in both, as in the English, remains basically the same. Received opinion, whether Roman or Anglican, also is fundamentally consistent, as one can tell from the expositions of Henry Hammond and Robert, Cardinal Bellarmine.[16] Hammond (323) notes that "metallists are wont to throw gold or silver into the fire, to discern whether it be pure or no, and if it be not, to melt and separate all the dross and false metal from it." Bellarmine (188) cites (and quotes from the Vulgate, but I substitute the Douai's English translation) Wisdom 3.5-6: "God hath tried them, and found them worthy of himself. As gold in the furnace he hath proved them." And Ecclesiasticus 27.6: "The furnace trieth the potter's vessels." And especially 1 Peter 1.7: "That the trial of your faith (much more precious than gold which is tried by the fire) may be found unto praise and glory and honour at the appearing of Jesus Christ." Bellarmine adds a gratulation for those who shall attain ("perveniant") to "coelestem Jerusalem," where the purified shall rejoice in God and (paraphrasing 1 Corinthians 13.12) see him face to face ("ibi laetentur in ipso Deo, ipsum videntes facie ad faciem").

The crux of the matter in this case is that Donne evidently assumes that his own metal has not yet been sufficiently tried, that he ought to pray first for punishment of his errant ways. But on this day of the Passion, Christ "gave [his] back to the smiters," as Isaiah (50.6) prophetically foresaw and as the Evangelists confirmed. He did so that he, unlike those who smote him, might be merciful to those whom he himself smites. And since Christian "faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen" (Hebrews 11.1), the motion anticipated in the poem's last line is a turning not of the back but of the face.

> I turne my backe to thee, but to receive
> Corrections, till thy mercies bid thee leave.
> O thinke mee worth thine anger, punish mee,
> Burne off my rusts, and my deformity,
> Restore thine Image, so much, by thy grace,
> That thou may'st know mee, and I'll turne my face.

Since spiritual purifying is a process coterminous with the finitudes of time, the words of Christ on the Cross, "It is accomplished," cannot be fully repeated until the eschatological reappearance of him who "is like a refiners fire" (Malachi 3.2). This may be especially true for those

sinners who are themselves—as in Matthew Poole's gloss on Malachi—"like metals, which nothing but a fierce fire can purge."[17] Donne's rider, contemplating his not yet redeemed and still thievish condition, perhaps imagines himself standing at the westernmost gates of death and of time itself and turning round, just prior to passing through, to face his Saviour looking at him from the eastern elevation of the Cross. Hall, in "The Passion Sermon" (25), maintains, "Every day . . . must be the Good Friday of a Christian." He further urges, "Imagine, therefore, that you saw Christ Jesus, in this day of his passion, who is every day here crucified before your eyes, advanced upon the chariot of his cross."

On Good Friday, 1613, Donne remembers back to and re-visualizes that scene, but what never is *heard* at all—and this may be the most significant silence of the entire poem—is the redemptive promise to the thief, "To day shalt thou be with me in Paradise" (Luke 23.43). Donne's traveller has been dangerously like the rider who appears in Zechariah six verses before the piercing: "In that day, saith the Lord, I will smite every horse with astonishment, and his rider with madness" (12.4). In the future, he certainly hopes to be riding a horse like those which are seen two chapters later in Zechariah's own penultimate verse: "In that day shall there be upon the bells [margin: *Or, bridles*] of the horses, HOLINESS UNTO THE LORD" (14.20). At present, however, the best that can be done is to renounce metaphoric westward riding so as to make a pilgrimage.

With considerable hesitation, I follow the argument one further step, recalling but not fully trusting the fact that Donne sometimes pursues the logic of his own images with an intensity which borders on inexorability. If this pilgrim does indeed back into and through the western doors of death, then he arrives, at the end of his own very personal day, at that farthest west which is the east of Resurrection. Presumably he will need or at least hope to turn round yet again, but when (*if*) he does, what then will be visible is not the face but rather the back of Christ still looking the other way. Admittedly, that sight would itself be an astonishing spectacle and consistent with the idea that not even Moses saw more: "thou shalt see my back parts," Yahweh tells him, "but my face shall not be seen" (Exodus 33.23). If this is Donne's implication, he had been preceded by John Davies of Hereford in 1609 in the two concluding lines of *The Holy Roode*:

> But if I be vnmeet thy Face to ken,
> Shew me thy back-parts; kind Lord! say, *Amen.*

Perhaps, however, it is we who are now to do the imagining by supposing that the ultimate response of Christ to human turning is one last turning of himself. If so, then Jeremiah's prayer has been significantly modified: not, "Turn thou me, and I shall be turned" (31.18; and see Lamentations 5.21), but rather, "Turn thou, when I have been *re*-turned." For God's perspective on this matter, Donne's eye could have been on the beginning of Zechariah: "Turn ye unto me, saith the Lord of hosts, and I will turn unto you" (I. 3). And to see both turnings from both points of view, though not simultaneously, one more sermon may be helpful. Since Donne's concluding tone is penitential, there is propriety to be found in the occasion, though not the date, of Andrewes' homily for Ash Wednesday, 1619.

The text announced is from Joel 2.12-13, "Turne you unto Me . . . turne unto the Lord your God," and one of the points heavily stressed (*XCVI Sermons*, 204) is that the text is itself "a circle . . . which circle consists of *two turnings*; (for, twise he repeats this word)." Repentance, metaphorically, also "is nothing else, but . . . a kind of circling." "First, a *turne* wherein we look forward to GOD, . . . Then, a *turne* again, wherein we look backward to our *sinnes*." Each of these, by itself, is "but the *halfe-turne*" (205), and since that is true, the common preference for looking forward will not serve. Past sin must also be recalled: "the *Hemisphaere* of our *sinnes* (not to be under the *Horizon*, cleare out of sight) must ascend up" (208). When both half turns are made, however, "the two between them, make up a compleate *repentance*, or (to keepe the word of the text) a *perfect revolution*" (205). "And when our *turne* is done, GOD shall begin His" (213).

Donne was fully capable of taking metaphors with dedicated literalness, a notable example being the conflation of micro- and macrocosmic geographies both here and in the "Hymme to God my God, in my sicknesse." But whether a similar process is ongoing for the final turns of this poem remains problematic. "Goodfriday, 1613," after all, is complete but nonetheless is not finished; the tense of the last line establishes future faith without claiming present certainty. The most that could be claimed, therefore, is that double reversal of double retrospection in lines which could never have been written would be spectacular verification of the vision of St. Paul: "For now we see," and can only see, "through a glass darkly; but then face to face" (1 Corinthians 12.13).

Whatever the (de)merits of these speculations, looking beyond the poem's last line necessarily is to peer into unchartable territory. Retreating to safer ground, I would like to notice Andrewes on Good Friday in 1604 one final time. The conclusion at which Andrewes himself arrives (364), while devout rather than dramatic in tone, proclaims the message

which Donne's volatile rider, by travelling forward and looking back, has introspectively perceived to be deeply inscribed within himself.

> It is kindly to consider . . . The worke of the Day, in the Day it was wrought: and this Day it was wrought. This day therfore, whatsoever businesse be, to lay them aside a little; whatsoever our haste, yet to stay a little, and to spend a few thoughts in calling to minde and taking to *regard*, what this Day the SONNE *of* GOD did and suffered for us: and all for this end, that what he was then, we might not be; and what he is now, we might be for ever.

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Notes

[1] *Sermons with some Religious and Divine Meditations* (London, 1629), "In the third Alphabet" [i.e., third pagination; the work's four parts are separately paginated], 148. Much of the information given about Lake in the *DNB* (soon cited in the paragraph above) was taken, with minor changes in wording, from the unsigned preface to the *Sermons*.

[2] Donne is quoted from *The Divine Poems*, ed. Helen Gardner (Oxford, 1952); and later, from *The Sermons*, ed. George R. Potter and Evelyn M. Simpson, 10 vols. (Berkeley, 1953-62).

[3] *XCVI Sermons* (London, 1629), 365.

[4] *The Works*, ed. Philip Wynter, 10 vols. (Oxford, 1883), 5:35-36.

[5] *Certain Sermons or Homilies, Appointed to be Read in Churches* [i.e., the "Elizabethan" *Book(s) of Homilies* of 1547 and 1571] (Oxford, 1840), 378-79.

[6] See the marvellous (and magisterial) survey by J. A. W. Bennett, *Poetry of the Passion: Studies in Twelve Centuries of English Verse* (Oxford, 1982); Donne's poem is specifically considered on 151-52, but most of the earlier pages also are directly or indirectly relevant.

[7] Reprinted in *The Complete Works*, ed. Alexander B. Grosart (Edinburgh [Chertsey Worthies' Library], 1871).

[8] Gershom G. Scholem, *On the Kabbalah and Its Symbolism*, tr. Ralph Mannheim (New York, 1965), 57-58 [from *Zur Kabbala und Ihrer Symbolik* (Zurich, 1960)]; J. B. Bauer, ed., *Encyclopedia of Biblical Theology: The Complete* "Sacramentum Verbi" (New York, 1981), 949B ("Vision of God") [tr. from *Bibeltheologisches Worterbuch* (Graz-Vienna-Cologne, 1959]. Since the highest possible reference number for Hagigah (which regulates "festival pilgrimages") is 27, the number given in Bauer—77a—is perplexing.

[9] Andrewes, following his usual practice, announces his text in Latin before giving the English. The Latin, "*Respicient in Me, quem transfixerunt*," is taken from Junius-Tremellius. The Vulgate reads *aspicient* ("ad" [to] + "spicio"), but Andrewes prefers "re" + "spicio"; he frequently works with the prefix because of its ambivalent value: *re*peated seeing but also looking *back* repeatedly. Also noteworthy is that what Andrewes actually preaches (the inclusive page numbers are 333-48) tends to be a composite text from Zechariah on the one hand and from John's two references on the other. Biblical commentaries link these three passages quite closely together as if each one represented the other two with almost complete fullness; comments on Zechariah thus look ahead while those on John look back. For an extreme but otherwise not untypical example, see Cornelius a Lapide, *In quatuor Evangelia* (Antwerp, 1639) and *In duodecim Prophetas minores* (Antwerp, 1646); arriving at John 19.37, Lapide merely refers his reader back to Zechariah 12.10 and moves on to verse 38.

[10] Not translated in 1597 but repeated verbatim in the sermon for Good Friday, 1605, and then rendered, "till He be as fast *fixed* in our *heart*, as ever He was to His *crosse*"; to which Andrewes adds, "and some *impression* made in us of *Him*, as there was in *Him* for us." (In the 1629 edition, 379 is followed by misnumbered 362 and 363, a page without number, and then by 381; the quote just given is from the second—that is, the misnumbered—363.) See also Thomas Adams, "A Crucifixe" [a sermon for Good Friday], in *The Whole Works* (London, 1630), 824: "*Toto nobis*

figatur in corde, qui totus pro nobis fixus in cruce. Let him bee fixed wholly in our hearts, who was wholly for vs fastened to the crosse." In Adams, but not Andrewes, the folio margin gives a reference to St. Augustine; I have not tried to track it down.

[11] Herbert is quoted from *The Works*, ed. F. E. Hutchinson (Oxford, 1941; rpt. with corrections, 1953).

[12] Augustine, *On the Psalms*, tr. Dame Scholastica Hebgin and Dame Felicias Corrigan, 1 [Psalms 1-29] (London, 1960), 207. Since Vulgate (and Septuagint) Psalm 21 = Authorized Version (and Hebrew) Psalm 22, and since verse numbers also vary, for Augustine, the verse quoted above is 21.17, but for Andrewes, it is 22.16.

[13] Isidore, *Etymologiarum libri XX*, 7.8 ("De prophetis"), ed. W. M. Lindsay (Oxford, 1911); Stockton, *A Fruitfull Commentarie upon the Twelve Small Prophets* (Cambridge, 1594), 84. (Stockton says his work is an amplification of a Latin commentary by Lambertus Danaeus; I have not seen Danau's original.) Lapide, in the preface (folio 635B) to his commentary on Zechariah, also translates the name with "memoria Dei."

[14] *The Life of Christ*, in *The Whole Works*, ed. Reginald Heber, rev. Charles Page Eden, 10 vols. (London, 1883), 2:709.

[15] Lapide, *Commentaria in quatuor Prophetas maiores* (Antwerp, 1634), 585B-86A; Henry [1662-1714], *Commentary on The Whole Bible*, 6 vols. (Scottdale, PA, n.d. [c. 1935]), 4:410.

[16] Hammond [1605-60], *A Paraphrase and Annotations Upon the Books of the Psalms* (London, 1659); Bellarmine [1542-1621], *Explanatio in Psalmos [Editio novissima]* (Venice, 1759).

[17] *A Commentary on The Holy Bible*, 2 vols. (London, 1685); rpt. 3 vols. (London, 1962), 2:1025.