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Donne the Sea Man

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As a young man, Donne served in two naval expeditions, to Cadiz and then to the Azores, the first a one-sided but bloody English victory, the second a confused debacle. What he saw, heard, learned and remembered about sailing, ships and navigation entered his poems, his prose and his thought. T.S. Eliot in his 1926 Clark lectures noticed Donne's bevy of nautical images, conflating "The Storme" and "The Calme" into one poem he admired as "The Voyage."[1] More recent Donne criticism has preferred to investigate the technical and biographical contexts of Donne's marine journeys, rather than examining the figure of the ship in the life of Donne's mind. John Carey's short list of Donne's favorite images includes "angels, mummy, mandrakes, coins, maps and shadows," and sometimes seas, but no ships.[2] Ships and sea travel, though, pervade Donne's writing; they populate his epigrams, verse-letters, satires, secular and sacred lyrics, and sermons, as do their deadly and eschatological counterparts, shipwrecks, drownings, the Flood and the Ark. Carey and other critics have depicted a willful, even a self-centered Donne, haunted by his family's Catholicism and driven by ambition. But the ships and sea journeys, real and figural, described in Donne's poems reveal a very different temperament: the Donne who survived the Cadiz fight and the Azores disaster consistently favors the private social world he shares with lovers or friends over the Great World of public esteem. The sheltered, shared, better world exalted in Donne's verses is said to resemble a fragile boat, to be in its passengers, or to remain behind on land; the public realm Donne fears, downgrades or repudiates is sometimes itself

a ship, and sometimes an imperiling sea. Contemplating his voyage to Germany in 1619, and reviewing his life in the poems called "Hymns," the Donne of the sermons and sacred poems retained the figures of ships and the sea. His smaller shared realm, of Ark, shore and home, becomes in the religious poetry not the human spaces of friendship or love, as fragile and timebound as the ships which represent them, but Heaven, God the Father, and Christ, who appear in the late works as the hope of the shipwrecked, and as a protected and peaceful shore.

Donne the Cadiz-man

> Never go out in a boat with an author— they cannot tell when they are over water. —John Ashbery, "Sleepers Awake"

Donne's biographers agree that he sailed with both the Cadiz expedition in 1596 and the Azores, or Islands, voyage a year later. Izaak Walton writes that "the Earl of Essex going first the Cales, and after the Islands voyages, the first Anno 1596, the second 1597, [Donne] took the advantage of those opportunities, waited upon his Lordship, and was an eye-witness of those happy and unhappy employments."[3] We have not much besides Walton's word as to whose ships Donne sailed in; but we know he went.[4] The raid on Cadiz involved a two-and-a-half week sea voyage out from Plymouth, and subsequent naval combat, in which the Spanish warship *San Felipe* was put to the torch and sank: the victorious English, and their Dutch allies, took and plundered Cadiz before sailing home, though the Spanish kept some riches out of Protestant hands by burning the ships in which the goods were stored. Cadiz had to be rebuilt from the ground up; a Spanish visitor to Lisbon in the plague year 1599 wrote that he had seen "nothing like it but Cadiz after the sack."[5]

Donne left no prose account of Cadiz, but other sources describe the violent events: one is the anonymous "brief and true report" in *Purchas his Pilgrims:*

> In all this cruell terrible fight there were not either slaine or hurt by any manner of meanes many above the number of 100 of our men; notwithstanding divers of our ships were many times shot thorow and thorow: yea, and some of them no lesse than two and twenty times, as I was enformed by credible report of the Captaines and Masters themselves.[. . .] One of the Flemmings Flie-boats [. . .] chanced by great negligence and misfortune, to be fired and blown up by his owne powder, who could not have any fewer in him, than one hundred fighting men by all supposed, and so in the very twinkling of an eye, both ship and men were all cast away, excepting seven or eight, which by very good fortune, and great care and diligence of some of the other ships were saved.[6]

Essex almost lost the battle by his foolhardy tactics for landing the troops. Sir Walter Raleigh left his grandchild a manuscript describing the Cadiz voyage; in it he explains the first English attempt at a beachhead:

> When I was arrived back again (which was two hours after the rest) I found the earl of Essex disembarking his soldiers [...] but such was the greatness of the billows, by reason of a forcible southerly wind, as the boats were ready to sink at the stern of the earl; and indeed divers did so, and in them some of the armed men [. . .] All the commanders and gentlemen present besought me to dissuade the attempt; for they all perceived the danger, and were resolved that the most part could not but perish in the sea, ere they came to set foot on ground; and if any arrived on shore, yet were they sure to have their boats cast on their heads; and that twenty men in so desperate a descent would have defeated them all.[7]

Raleigh's account of the naval combat ends:

> [H]aving no hope of my fly-boats to board, and that the earl and my lord Thomas both promised to second me, I laid out a warp by the side of the Philip [the *San Felipe*] to shake hands with her: (for with the

> wind we could not get aboard:) which when she and the rest perceived, finding also that the Repulse (seeing mine) began to do the like, and the rear-admiral my lord Thomas, they all let slip, and came aground, tumbling into the sea heaps of soldiers, so thick as if coals had been poured out of a sack in many ports at once, some drowned and some sticking in the mud. The Philip and the St Thomas burnt themselves; the St Matthew and the St Andrew were recovered by our boats ere they could get out to fire them. The spectacle was very lamentable on their side; for many drowned themselves; many, half-burnt, leaped into the water; very many hanging by the ropes' ends by the ships' sides, under the water even to the lips; many swimming with grievous wounds, strucken under water, and put out of their pain; and withal so huge a fire, and such tearing of the ordnance in the great Philip, and the rest, when the fire came to them, as, if any man had a desire to see hell itself, it was there most lively figured.[8]

"Donne," Carey aptly notes, "could hardly have had a more spectacular introduction to warfare."[9]

One result was a set of epigrams. "Il Cavalliere Gio: Wingefield" celebrates Sir John Wingfield, the only Englishman of rank to die at Cadiz, who "performed heroically in the attack on the city itself."[10] Donne's lines make Wingfield one of the "Pillars" marking the limits of the known world, and crediting the Earl of Essex for the conquest:

> Beyond th' old Pillers many'have travailed,
> Towards the Suns cradle, and his throne, and bed.
> A fitter Piller our Earle did bestow
> In that late Iland; for he well did know
> Farther than Wingefield no man dares to go.[11]

"Bestow" means that it was the Earl of Essex who brought Wingfield there, whose chaplain conducted the funeral service, and who therefore made Cadiz a memorial for Wingfield—the sense is that Wingfield has become so famous as not to need a literal "pillar" or monument. (Neither the anonymous "true report" nor Raleigh's letter mentions a memorial column).

It would be a mistake about tone, I think, to see in those lines much irony, or to take them as blaming Essex for the death: the idea is to remember Wingfield's courage, and the Earl of Essex is both credited and buried in the middle of the middle line. "Cales and Guiana" is another matter:

> If you from spoyle of th'old world's fardest end
> To the new world your kindled valors bend,
> What brave examples then do prove it trew
> That one things end doth still begine a new. (1-4)

Here as in the lines on Wingfield is the sense that Elizabethan naval projects threatened to exceed the bounds of human capability, and might land the projectors and adventurers right back where they started. New worlds, new charts and new lands amounted to new opportunities for action, but also for exhaustion and risk. Donne pivots from "valours," a positive word, to "brave," which in other accounts of the same events (such as Sir Arthur Gorges's) describes not the courage of men like Wingfield, but the showy costume and useless expenditures of gentlemen-adventurers who proved worse than useless once the trip was underway.

If "Sir John Wingfield" is the verdict of somebody who had been there, "Cales and Guiana" sounds like the work of a man advising others to stay home. The last line suggests that these expeditions had no logical stopping place, perhaps even that they could ruin a kingdom, a sentiment Donne reprised at the end of "The Dissolution." He has been imagining his lady dead:

> Now as those Active Kings
> Whose foraine conquest treasure brings
> Receive more, and spend more, and soonest breake;
> This (which I am amaz'd that I can speake)
> This death, hath with my store
> My use encreas'd,
> And so my soule more earnestly releas'd,

> Will outstrip hers; As bullets flowen before
> A latter bullet may o'ertake, the pouder being more. (16-24)

It is hard not to hear the "foreign treasure" and "conquest" sought by Raleigh and Essex here, alongside Wingfield's bullets.[12]

Other epigrams seem to describe the battle off Cadiz. Arthur Marotti endorses R.C. Bald's suggestion that "A Burnt Ship" "probably refers to the burning of the [. . .] *San Felipe* ."[13] R.J. Dingley dissents, arguing that "A Burnt Ship" derives from a scene in Sidney's 1590 *Arcadia.*[14] There is no reason to think the two sources exclude each other, and every reason to think Donne saw the *San Felipe* burn:

> Out of a fired ship, which, by no way
> But drowning, could be rescu'd from the flame,
> Some men leap'd forth, and ever as they came
> Neere the foes ship, did by their shot decay;
> So all were lost, which in the ship were found,
> They in the sea being burnt, they in the burnt ship drown'd.
> (1-6)

The epigram is general and brittle, with double adverbs, single-line antitheses, and "which," "so" and "did" clauses more characteristic of 1590s poets in general than of the later Donne: it sounds like apprentice work, as Donne's verse-letters about the Azores expedition do not. Carey attributes its brittleness to Donne's insensitivity; he writes, "When we compare Raleigh's account of the death throes of the *San Felipe* with Donne's, we are inevitably struck by the superior humanity of Raleigh's . . . . Donne treats the slaughter as a joke, the pretext for a smart paradox. There is no pity in his lines."[15] One might contend instead that the brittle impersonality of "A Burnt Ship" reflects not coldness to others' suffering, but numbness from having recently witnessed so much of it: Dennis Flynn has recently seen in the poem a "studied refusal to acknowledge any glory for Essex or the English at their moment of victory."[16] In any case Donne cared enough for the

image of persons simultaneously burnt and drowned to generate another epigram upon it, "Hero and Leander"—"Both rob'd of air, we both lye in one ground,/ Both whom one fire had burnt, one water drowned"(1-2). The dead English and Dutch sailors off Cadiz and their Spanish adversaries rest in the Atlantic in the same shared condition.

Donne's early readers would have had the battle on their minds: indeed, the Cadiz voyage helped shape one of what Arthur Marotti has taught us to call Donne's coterie audiences. The young veterans of Cadiz formed a recognized social group on their return to London: some even wore stubby "Cadiz-beards" to commemorate the event.[17] A possible early reference to Donne *classifies* him as one who had been to Cadiz: Everard Guilpin's *Skialethia* attacks a personage called *La volto Publius,* an Inns of Court dandy whose father was a successful ironmonger. Guilpin writes

> I know some of their humourous near of kin
> Who scorn to speak to one which hath not been
> In one of these last voyages: or to one
> Which having been there, yet (though he hath none)
> Hath not a Cades beard . . .[18]

R.E. Bennett and others identify Guilpin's target as Donne.[19] Apparently the short beard which marked the Cadiz veteran was important enough as a social token that young London snobs of a certain stripe would scorn those who lacked the sign even if they had had the naval experience.

Donne and the Islands

> ANTONY. Terrible tales you tell! That's what going to sea is like? God forbid any notion should ever enter my head!
> ADOLPH. Oh, no, what I've related up to this point is mere sport compared with what you'll hear now.
>
> —Erasmus, *Naufragium*

Raleigh concludes of the Cadiz adventure:

> What the generals have gotten, I know least; they protest it is little: for mine own part, I have gotten a lame leg, and a deformed; for the rest, either I spake too late, or it was otherwise resolved. I have not wanted good words, and exceeding kind and regardful usage; but I have possession of nought but poverty and pain.[20]

The frustrations that followed Cadiz did not prevent Raleigh himself from setting out on more ambitious naval adventures. Nor did they prevent the young Donne, who set out again with Essex, Raleigh, Admiral Thomas Howard, and others for the Azores. That expedition, famously, set out, returned to Plymouth, set out again, split up at sea, and limped back increased in nothing except bitterness. The earliest datable letter attributed to Donne describes conditions in August 1597 at Plymouth, where the troops and ships waited for a second chance at sailing to "St. Michael's" islands:

> Written from Plymouth
>
> Sir,
> The first act of that play which I sayd I would go over the water to see is done and yet the people hisse. How it will end I know not *ad ego vicissim.* It is true that Jonas was in a whales belly three dayes but hee came not voluntary as I did nor was troubled with the stinke of 150 land soldiers as wee; and I was there 20 days of so very very bad wether that even some of the marriners have beene drawen to thinke it were not altogether amisse to pray, and my self heard one of them say god help us. For all our paynes wee have seene the land of promise Spaine; whether wee shall enter or no I guesse not; I think there is a blott in their tables but perchaunce this not on our dice to hitt it. Wee are now againe at Plymouth quasi ply mouth; for we do nothing but eate and scarce that . . . .[21]

After the company got out to sea again, Donne wrote "The Storme" and "The Calme," poems which fold several topics into one familiar

epistolary style, and which prefigure or echo images and ideas salient in some of Donne's most accomplished poems.

The first half of "The Storme" tries to locate and define true worth, as against mere grandeur or public esteem. Art historians often cite it to show Donne's, and his friends', regard for Nicholas Hilliard; it certainly shows that Donne expected Brooke to share his high estimate of that miniaturist.[22] But Donne does not simply say that Hilliard's miniatures excel in technique: more striking is the transvaluation of private, "miniature" values above public ones—an hand or eye by Hilliard is worth a big history-painting by "a worse painter," precisely as a private friendship, or a life composed of such, is better than a life of futile, unsuccessful or grandiose action on the world stage. Once value becomes private, as liable to lodge in small things as in great—and as long as it remains interpersonal, grounded in some *social* bond—it must be located in the minds of friends, or lovers, without whom the privately shared, or miniature, world would not exist.

The opening sentence of Donne's verse letter thus completes a logical progression, one which might be paraphrased: *"an history/ By a worse painter" is worse than "hand, or eye/ By Hilliard," and, by the same rationale, anything publicly or by convention esteemed is worse than anything my friend esteems, whether it's Hilliard (about whom we agree) or even my own lines.* The first comparison locates value in technique and accuracy, rather than in the thing depicted; the second locates it in the proper reader or beholder. This transvaluation, setting private shared things above public success, links the best verse-letters to the great love poems, and both to the later divine lyrics: it amounts to a turning-away from precisely the worldly glory Carey considers Donne to have been seeking—a turn (as Barbara Everett has put it) for Donne from Leah to Rachel. In Donne's verse-letters to Brooke as later, it is not the contemplative *solitary* life, the quest after wisdom through reason, Donne exalts. Instead, a privately imagined, privately built social world becomes an alternative to the exploded public one, a ship on the otherwise-unnavigable sea of troubles.[23]

Many Elizabethan poets use storms to represent worldly difficulties; less ordinary are Donne's terms in "The Storm" for the *good* wind that pushed the ships from port. That wind, like public valour, proved false; it was

> . . . but so kinde, as our countrimen,
> Which bring friends one dayes way, and leave them then.
> Then like two mighty Kings, which dwelling farre
> Asunder, meet against a third to warre,
> The South and West winds joyn'd, and, as they blew,
> Waves like a rowling trench before them threw. (23-28)

"Countrymen" does not logically have to be in the line at all, and part of what it does by being there is to contrast the interpersonal loyalty of Donne and Brooke (or any other pair cemented by private affections) to the unreliable loyalty merely national affections demand. Countrymen, Englishmen, abandon their friends; two mighty kings gang up on a third; storms buffet ships, which almost sink. The lines record a failure of morale: "Honour and misery have one face and way," the verse-letter earlier declares. Donne's poem begins, before the storm does, in rejecting public valour in favor of affections which can be shared only privately (and which, like a letter itself, cannot achieve their *raison d'être* unless shared). "The Storme" thus anticipates "The Relique" with its cry "let' us alone," "The Canonization," with its own rejection of public concerns, and "The Sunne Rising," where "All honor's mimique; All wealth alchimie" except for what Donne and his lady or wife share (ll. 7, 24). The tone of "The Storm" is less certain, less grand, as is usual when Donne addresses male friends, but the habits of thought are already vivid, and their naval contexts already on record.

Donne's account of the menace implicit in calm weather and bright signs, like his account of the worth of friendship, seems more original than his account of the storm itself, partly because there exist conventional ways to describe thunderstorms, and partly because Donne is sometimes translating, or adapting, storm-scenes from Latin poetry, notably (as Clayton Lein has argued) Ovid's *Metamorphoses,* book

11, as well as Lucan's *Pharsalia*.[24] Arthur Gorges, who in 1614 published his English version of the whole *Pharsalia*, also sailed on the Islands expedition, and wrote a prose account of it. Gorges' and Lucan's storms share with Donne's the sense that the world has sunk back into uncreated Chaos; in Gorges' translation,

> This night was not the heavens night
> But hellish dark depriving light . . .
> The clouded aire becomes obscure
> The convex spheres quakings endure,
> The Axle that the world sustaines,
> Both sound aloud with cracking straines
> The joints and structures of the poles
> With labouring motion tottering roles.
> Nature suspects the Chaos old
> And that discording uncontrold
> The Elements again would warre
> And in their harmony would jarre.
> And then with God the fiends of hell
> Would now all mingled be pell mell.
> One onely sign some hope did give
> That in this storme this barke could live. [25]

Donne finally echoes the *Pharsalia*: "we, unless God say/ Another *Fiat,* shall have no more day" (ll. 71-2). Gorges' translation notes in the margin, beside the italicized couplet, "Right paganisme." But Donne's sailors and soldiers wish for the (Christian) *Last* Day, with detail not in Lucan:

> Some coffin'd in their cabins lye,'equally
> Griev'd that they are not dead, and yet must dye.
> And as sin-burd'ned soules from graves will creepe
> At the last day, some forth their cabbins peepe:
> And tremblingly'aske what newes, and do heare so,
> Like jealous husbands, what they would not know. (45-50)

Ships are coffins; coffins are cabins; bodies are coffins; all these phenomena, reminding the poet of one another, remind Donne and his shipmates of the End of Time. The last two lines predict or echo the Satires and the coarser Elegies, where jealous husbands, dangerous news, and uncontrollable information virtually define life in modern London and at court.[26] But the first two look forward to the eschatological Holy Sonnets and to the considerations of suicide. Donne would present himself over and over as a storm-tossed and melancholic personage grieved or angered both at having to die and at not being already dead. These tropes and modes of thought all emerge early in Donne's career when he considers the hazards of a *ship*. Next (as Lein has put it) "the shaky, leaky ship becomes a body on its sickbed," afflicted with contradictory fatal conditions; then that body becomes a lute:

> Then note they the ships sicknesses, the mast
> Shak'd with this ague, and the Hold and Waste
> With a salt dropsie clogg'd, and all our tacklings
> Snapping, like too high stretched treble strings. (53-56)[27]

Lucan and Gorges have nothing like this: the analogs are in Donne's later verse and prose, where sick body, tuned or untuned instrument, and imperiled bark come together again.

"The Storme" and "The Calme" are companion poems, and both liken their nautical catastrophes to the end of the world. In the second verse-letter the world ends without even a whimper, by *stopping,* a triumph of King Log so terrible and so complete that Donne wishes the storm would come back: "farre more/ A blocke afflicts, now, than a storke before" (ll. 3-4). Time and utility come to an end, and with them religion, institutions, human endeavor, whether in churches, courts, theaters, or wars:

> As water did in stormes, now pitch runs out
> As lead, when a fir'd Church becomes one spout.
> And all our beauty, and our trim, decayes,

> Like courts removing, or like ended playes.
> The fighting place now seamen's ragges supply;
> And all the tackling is a frippery.
> No use of lanthornes; and in one place lay,
> Feathers and dust, to day and yesterday. (11-18)

No wonder Ben Jonson had those lines by heart. (The phrase "feathers and dust" reappears in Satire 5, where it represents the extreme tatteredness of Macrine's clothes, and where courtiers are players who "board" court ladies, as pirates, unwisely, board weakened ships.) Donne can gather in this poem so many figures from his London poetry, because the calm allows him to imagine them all gone. "Fate grudges us all"— grudges *all* of us, and takes *everything* away, and becomes a good reason for radical skepticism (l.47). "The Calme" contains the first of several moments in Donne's writing life in which he imagines himself "nothing," and can bring against his imagination's nihilism only the evidence of feeling:

> What are wee then? How little more alas
> Is man now, than before he was? he was
> Nothing; for us, wee are for nothing fit;
> Chance, or our selves, still disproportion it.
> We have no power, no will, no sense; I lye,
> I should not then thus feele this miserie. (51-6)

By its end, the poem has been purged of images, collapsed into chains of negated abstract nouns, until the "I" returns and affirms its own existence through communicable feeling.[28]

Since so many of Donne's early poems are undatable, "The Storme," "The Calme" and the events the poems describe may be taken as a major inspiration for Donne's verse about court and city life, and as ramifying through much of his later verse. The letters might also be read simply as two more examples of Donne's willingness to see London, court life, and death, everywhere he looked. Marotti in taking the latter position reveals the plausibility of the former:

> What [Donne] says about the tattered tackling of the becalmed ship suggests that it is a symbol not only of the superficial luxury of the world but also of the state of the ruined gallant: ". . . All our beauty, and our trimme decays, / Like courts removing, or like ended playes." [Donne] makes a point similar to the one made by Arthur Gorges, who described the effects of the earlier storm on the dandified gentleman-volunteers, recounting the way harsh experience at sea could dispel their romantic illusions: "This violent and dangerous tempest had so cooled and battered the courages of a great many or [sic] our young Gentlemen (who seeing that the boysterous winds and merciless Seas, had neither affinitie with London delicacie, nor with Court bravery) as that discharging their high Plumes, and embroidered Cassockes, they secretly retired themselves home, forgetting either to bid their friends farewell, or to take leave of their General."[29]

For Gorges it is the sea-experience itself that "dispel[led]" the gentlemen's illusions: the voyage became a kind of starting-date or initiation into new, disillusioned styles of thought.

A calm as harsh as the one in "The Calm" was not only the image of death, but a reason to anticipate the real thing; provisions could run out, as Gorges feared they would. Carey minimizes the impact these events had on Donne's art:

> [T]hough Donne was in new and exotic circumstances—becalmed off the Azores—his head, as the quoted lines illustrate, was still full of London life; the court, the playhouse, the second-hand clothes shops ("fripperies"). His powerfully self-absorbed mind imprints itself and its contents on the scene before him, so that we get the effect of a photographic double exposure. The seascape off the Azores is seen through layers of Elizabethan London. As a result the poems, for all their descriptive life, give us a less solid impression of someone venturing into strange climes than do the plain accounts by Elizabethan seamen.[30]

The idea of the double-exposure, of London coming to mind on shipboard, seems apt, an early instance of the conjunction-disjunctive

Johnson taught us to nickname "metaphysical": but the Donne who saw sailing in terms of London could also see London in terms of sailing. Carey quotes, for contrast, Gorges' own depictions of scenes Donne nowhere describes: the topography of the Azores, and St. Elmo's fire. Nor is it clear that Donne or anyone could *see* the Azores during the lull (or through the blinding storm)—the verb "seek" (line 10 of "The Calm") suggests that from the vessel no land was visible. The Donne of "The Calm" is not self-absorbed, but drawn into a condition so like solipsistic despair that it terrifies him:

> We can nor lost friends, nor sought foes, recover,
> But meteorlike, save that wee move not, hover.
> Only the Calenture together drawes
> Deare friends, which meet dead in great fishes jawes.(21-24)

What vexes Donne here is the *irrecoverability of* the private social context that will make life and language meaningful in the absence of public rewards and effective public action— the private contexts friends and lovers create, the contexts one imagines being created when a friend reads a letter, and which will never be created if letters never get there and friends never meet.

Donne, of course, did survive the calm.[31] But the adventurers' troubles were hardly over. Essex's narrative explains what made him turn his ships around the first time out:

> And because I the Generall thought my too soone giving over would not onely deprive the Fleete of our principall ship, but absolutly defeat the journey; I forced my company first to abide the continuall increasing of a most dangerous leake, which I made light of, because I saw that with labour of men I could free the ship as fast as the leake did grow. Secondly, I made them endure the craking of both my main and fore mast, the one in two places, the other in three; so as we still loked when they should be carried by the boord; which was not enough to make me beare up, because I knew whensoever I should loose them both, I could with jurie masts, by Gods favour, carry the ship home. And I continued so long that my ships Okam [oakum]

> came all out, her seames opened, her deckes and upper workes gave way, her very timbers and maine beames with her labouring did teare like lathes; so as we looked hourely when the Orlope would fall, and the Ordnance sinke downe to the keele: then did those few, whom before I had wonne to stand wth mee, all protest against me, that if I did not within a minute of an houre beare up the helme, I did wilfully cast away the ship and whole company.[32]

After the ships had embarked again from Plymouth,

> Sir Walter Raleigh the Vice-admirall brake his maine yard, which forced him to beare along to the Westward before the wine; and I in this second ship had such a desperate leake sprang, as when we pumped and boled with buckets as much as we could for our owne lives, it grew still on us: and when we sought by ramming downe peeces of Beefe, and holding linnen cloath wrong together, to stop the comming in of the water, it came in notwithstanding so strongly, as it bare downe all, and beate away every man that stood to stop it: Then was I faine to lye by the lee, and make my company worke upon it all night, my master Carpenter, the only skilful man I had, dying at that very instant.[33]

All these calamities happened *before* the English captains had sighted Spanish ships. The rest of Essex' narrative piles confusion on confusion— the ships lose sight of one another repeatedly, tactics get bungled, supplies run out: the man in whose charge the adventure took place paints it as a sometimes terrifying series of makeshifts, errors, and unavoidable disasters. Thomas Howard, Raleigh, Anthony Sherley, Charles Mountjoy, Francis Vere and Christian Blunt all co-signed Essex's brief, "official" apology for the expedition, to which the only longer prose record of the voyage, Gorges' "Larger Relation," constitutes an amplification and rejoinder.[34] Gorges stresses the incapacity and unpreparedness for hard naval service of the companies of gentleman-marines in which Donne served:

> And many of our Gentlemen and Knights, with this boysterous and bitter entertainment on the Seas, returned extreme weake and lay

> dangerously sicke long after: Insomuch that some of them dyed thereof at Plimouth, and were there honourably buried by the Generall. Some also were so much weakened and distempered, as that they were not able to recover strength to put to the Seas again...[35]

Gorges goes on to "reprehend and taxe" the "unproper and vaine" system of informal recruitment that brought London dandies into the front ranks of naval warfare, and made them provide their own equipment, "whereby they come both to the Sea and Field service, rather like Maskers than Souldiers."[36] The next thirty-odd pages of Gorges' narrative catalog badly tangled tactics, bad supplies, unfortunate weather, internecine betrayals, "boldnesse by some esteemed fortitude," "violent counsels," "ambitious humours" and "disorderly haste homewards."[37]

"Ships . . . are deaths"

> the sea has nothing to give but a well-excavated grave.
> —Marianne Moore, "A Grave"

Donne and his friends had had possibly transformative, certainly spectacular and traumatic, experience in these shipboard adventures. Donne's experiences show up in his poems, both in Donne's images and associations involving seas and sailing, and in Donne's impulse to counterpoise his private values and sheltered space to that of the Great World. The Azores expedition, like the Cadiz action, affected Donne's coterie readerships, in particular through its association with the Earl of Essex. Both Raleigh and Essex had served in Cadiz, and both had gone again to the Islands, but later readers seem to have associated the Azores disaster with Essex's leadership: "The Storme" and "The Calme" in many manuscripts, and in the 1635 and 1639 editions of Donne's poems, bear the subtitles "From the Island Voyage with the Earle of Essex."[38] And, as Barbara Everett writes, "whether or not he was in fact of the Essex party Donne seems to have felt some degree

of involvement with Essex's fate when he spoke of himself as having died in that grey year when the courtier fell and he himself married."[39] There seems to have been an understanding of the Essex party as composed of his gentleman-marines, or else as like them: the 1669 edition of Donne's poems printed as his "Sixth Satire" a 134-line poem addressed to Sir Nicholas Smyth, which begins "Sleep, next Society and true friendship, / Man's best contentment." The poem (reproduced in Grosart's edition) sounds very little like Donne, even the "rough" Donne of the Satires, and contains both specific, vicious attacks on Queen Elizabeth and cryptic criticism of James; even Gosse took it as perhaps not Donne's.[40] Its interest for an understanding of Donne and Donne's sea-voyages is in its discussion of Essex's party:

> Too much preparing lost them all their lives,
> Like some in Plagues kill'd with preservatives,
> Friends, *like land-souldiers in a storm at Sea,*
> Not knowing what to do, for him did pray.(italics mine)[41]

The satirist, whoever he was, seems to have identified Essex's party with the "land-soldiers" he had carried.

The Cadiz and Azores adventures had thus helped to generate the social ties and the climate of ideas which Donne's later verse-letters invoke. "To Mr. R[owland] W[oodward]" ("If, as mine is, thy life a slumber be") shares Woodward's hopes for the Guiana expedition, and for news about it.[42] The letter to Sir Henry Wotton, "Here's no more newes, than vertue," which manuscripts date "20 July 1598," uses the failure of the Guiana trip as a trope for other frustrations "At Court."[43] The Wotton Donne invokes in the poem already knows all about the failure of the Azores journey, as he knows also that "vice doth here habitually dwell," and that honesty, in the Great World, is helpless against intrigue, as "Indians" were "'gainst Spanish hosts," (3, 15) These triple-rhymed stanzas present a triad of likenesses familiar from "The Calm": *(corrupt) Courts = (obsolete or ended) plays = (fruitless) sea-voyages* — all three fields of action now seem as pointless as games of chess.

Donne therefore proposes to replace the failed and dangerous world for which *nautical* news stood, and which now has its epitome at Court, with the more private world represented by the letter itself, by friendship, and by the valediction at the end. Since the public world makes demands on friends which require them to work separately, or to go on voyages (which is why they have to *write* to one another), the condition of having a real friend or lover, and therefore a shared private world, is one of having to say goodbye to it, and of expecting or hoping to return. Donne explained in a 1618 sermon:

> An Epistle is *collocutio scripta,* says Saint Ambrose, Though it be writte far off, and sent, yet it is a Conference, and *separatos copulat,* sayes hee; by this meanes we overcome distances, we deceive absences, and wee are together even then when we are asunder.[44]

Epistles mingle souls, and imply valedictions, for thus friends about to be absent meet and go on meeting. The circuit of thought and feeling these verse-letters display, and which other poems repeat, works this way: the *miniature representation makes its way aided by some special power* (romantic love, or the affection of friends, or shared piety, or God's power) *over a hazardous chaos, like the sea, to its recipients, for whom* (like new charts) *it redescribes the world in such a way as to make opposites meet and people whole.* Poems thus resemble ships or arks, and persons— Donne's readers or writers— are like ships, arks, sailors, navigators, or even victims of shipwreck.

Donne often presents himself as isolated and endangered: he promises to use poems as vessels to preserve him for, or to transport him back into, the small worlds he preferred to share. "Sir, more than kisses," a longer letter to Wotton, explains that it is precisely because life constitutes a dangerous sea voyage that friends need to be writing, "for thus friends absent speake":

> Life is a voyage, and in our lifes wayes
> Countries, Courts, Towns are Rockes, or Remoraes;

> They break or stop all ships, yet our state's such
> That though than pitch they staine worse, wee must touch.
> (7-10)

The ship of this voyage is both good, as a friendship, the desirable container for privacy, without which we would drown, and bad: if we didn't need to *go* somewhere in the ship, we could remain with friends, and not have to hazard courts, countries, seas, etc.[45] "A Valediction Forbidding Mourning" shares with this verse-letter the sense that a faithful companion's leavetaking is like a good man's death; in the verse-letter, the marine context is explicit:

> And in the worlds sea, do not like corke sleepe
> Upon the waters face; nor in the deepe
> Sinke like a lead without a line: but as
> Fishes glide, leaving no print where they passe,
> Nor making sound, so closely thy course goe,
> Let men dispute, whether thou, breathe or no. (53-58)

Life, whether in countries, towns, or courts, becomes a particular kind of sea-voyage, one in which friends are to avoid striving for notice and construct instead a privacy in which they "mingle souls," a mingling which (since life is a voyage) will be accomplished as a sequence of valedictions.

"Sir, more than kisses" almost takes for granted that *all* of life's "ships" will be stopped or broken; many other vessels in Donne's work are similarly endangered or doomed. Satire 3 goes out of its way to list overseas perils:

> Dar'st thou ayd mutinous Dutch, and dar'st thou lay
> Thee in ships woodden Sepulchers, a prey
> To leaders rage, to stormes, to shot, to dearth?
> Dar'st thou dive seas, and dungeons of the earth?
> Hast thou couragious fire to thaw the ice
> Of frozen North discoveries? and thrise
> Colder than Salamanders, like divine

> Children in th'oven, fires of Spaine, and the'line
> Whose countries limbecks to our bodies bee,
> Canst thou for gaine beare? (17-26)

Equally pointless risks await those who seek a Northwest Passage, who will freeze, and those who are so foolhardy as to seek their fortunes in tropical climates (like the Azores, or Guiana). Why, does Donne expound at length the hazards of foreign travel, when his larger argument requires only that the true field of valor be shown to be religion, the war with the Devil? These explorations and contests (all but one of his examples involves a boat) are *what has proven* the unworth of the Great World; it is on the sea that the need for human beings to turn inward has recently been shown.

> So the worlds selfe, thy other lov'd foe, is
> In her decrepit wayne, and thou loving this
> Dost love a wither'd and worne strumpet. (37-39)

Satire 3 shares with the verse-letters and with many of the *Songs and Sonets* the sense that the public world is no longer worth having on its own terms. And one way to see this turn inward is to read it as the reaction of a disillusioned veteran—a perspective which adds weight to, and explains the persistence of, the nautical figures.[46]

Donne "was a man—and it was an age—that took to the metaphor of sailing, by second nature," writes LeComte.[47] Metaphors of shipwreck and drowning seem peculiarly Donne's, and multiply in his bleakest works. He wrote to Sir Henry Goodyer of his sometime "desire of the next life":

> I know it is not meerly out of a wearinesse of this [life], because I had the same desires when I went with the tyde, and enjoyed fairer hopes than now .... When I must shipwrack, I would do it in a Sea, where mine impotencie might have some excuse, not in a sullen weedy lake where I could not have so much as exercise for my swimming.[48]

One of Donne's examples in *Biathanatos* makes the body a ship that bears the soul:

> But I say, if in a Tempest we must cast out the most precious ware aboard to save the lives of the Passangers, and the Marchant who is damnified thereby cannot impute this to any, nor remedie himself, 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? For this is not to sink the ship but to retire it to safe Harbour, and assured Anchour.[49]

Ships are prisons as bodies are prisons; a man in a boat is like the fish in the guts of a swan in *Metempsychosis,* who "swam / A prison in a prison put"—the swan itself being "like a ship in her full trim" (ll. 241, 231). Fish-sperm (milt), a small container for a soul, is at once a boat and a manuscript, "row[ing] / It selfe with finnie oares," with scales "yet of parchment"(229). When a whale eats the fish, Donne imagines at once sea-combat, Jonah, courts, storms, and the likeness of the seas to the heavens, the same combination he invoked in "The Storm":

> At every stroake his brazen finnes do take
> More circles in the broken sea they make
> Than cannons voices, when the aire they teare:
> His ribs are pillars, and his high arch'd roof
> Of barke that blunts best steele, is thunder-proofe:
> Swimme in him swallow'd Dolphins, without feare,
> And feele no sides, as if his vast wombe were
> Some Inland sea, and ever as hee went
> He spouted rivers up, as if he meant
> To joyne our seas, with seas above the firmament.
>
> He hunts not fish, but as an officer,
> Stayes in his court, at his owne net, and there
> All suitors of all sorts themselves enthrall;

So on his back lies this whale wantoning,
And in his gulfe-like throat, sucks every thing
That passeth neare. Fish chaseth fish, and all,
Flyer and follower, in this whirlepool fall;
O might not states of more equality
Consist? and is it of necessity
That thousand guiltlesse smalles, to make one great, must die?
(311-330)

It is a good—it may seem to a more democratic age, an unavoidable—question about monarchs and courts; but it is also a question lurking in even Raleigh's account of Cadiz action. The trope of the little bark in which the poet sails (*Metempsychosis,* stanza 6) is conventional, but Donne adds the notion that we are all inside the *whale or ship* of Destiny, which holds all other shiplike, imperiled institutions, from monarchies down to physical bodies:

Nor, holy *Janus,* in whose soveraigne boate
The Church, and all the Monarchies did floate;
That swimming Colledge, and free Hospitall
Of all mankinde, that cage and vivarie
Of fowles, and beasts, in whose wombe, Destinie
Us, and our latest nephewes did instal
(From thence are all deriv'd, that fill this All)
Did'st thou in that great stewardship embarke
So diverse shapes into that floating parke,
As have beene mov'd, and inform'd by this heavenly sparke.
(21-30)

The disturbing flatness of much of the *Metempsychosis* comes, I think, from Donne's deliberate suppression of the private- or alternative-world trope that informs the best verse-letters, including "The Calme" and "The Storme," and the most serious love poems. Since a soul is what Donne is *tracking,* from the outside or objectively, as it were, he cannot tell us what it is like to *be* that soul; it writes no letters, cannot

imagine itself elsewhere, experiences bodily lust often but "love so much refined" never, and has, significantly, no private homelike love or friendship to *return* to. It will keep voyaging through the wet, great world forever, or until the poem is abandoned.

If most of the Elegies are very early poems, and *if* Donne's preoccupation with sea-travel dates from his Cadiz and Azores experience, one would expect few of the Elegies to include strings of nautical images. Most do not; some do. In "On His Mistress" ("By our first strange and fatall interview"), otherwise Elegy 16, it is the dangers of European travel which give the poem its gravity, balancing the comic lines about French and Italian sexual habits which precede the *fortissimo* close. The valedictory mode, the dangers of ships and winds, Donne's desire that his lady *not* travel, and his ability to imagine his own corpse go together; a poem that includes any one of these will probably include them all. The chain of comic nautical images in "Love's Progress" begins at line 2 ("one who goes / To sea for nothing but to make him sick") but unfolds in its full, exaggerated glory at lines 43-72, a catalog of metaphors Donne uses separately and more seriously elsewhere, and one which begins and ends near the word "shipwreck." J.B. Leishman writes that "the ingenious comparisons Donne uses in order to describe the lover's progress in terms of a voyage could never possibly have occurred to Ovid or to any classical poet."[50] In "Loves Warre" the sense is that none of the current military conflicts is worth fighting, not Flanders, not France, not Ireland, not Spain, not Spain's tropical possessions, off which Donne had already felt himself parched to "dust and ashes" in "The Calme," not, in fact, anything that requires sea travel. William Empson explains that in "Love's Warre" "The strife of love ... is better than fighting for one's country, and why? Because patriotic fighting, whether in Ireland, Spain or Flanders, always means getting into a *boat*":[51]

> To mew me in a Ship, is to enthral
> Me in a prison, that weare like to fall;
> Or in a Cloyster, save that there men dwell
> In a calm heaven, here in a swaggering hell.

> Long voyages are long consumptions,
> And ships are carts for executions.
> Yea they are Deaths: ist not all one to fly
> Into an other World, as t'is to dy? (21-28)

Ships are not just prisons, but prisons that collapse, like the bare, ruined monasteries, and are full, moreover, of diseases, "long consumptions," which heat and confinement render even more contagious.[52] Like the Donne of "The Relique," or of "The Good Morrow," the comically self-convinced Donne of "Loves Warre" wants to replace those political and religious struggles with more self-contained erotic ones, in which boats—like engines, "thrusts, pikes, stabs, yea bullets" and even (*pace* Empson) planets—are merely figural, and only Donne and his lover are real (1.37).

The older Donne of the sermons and the Donne of the elegy "His Picture," like the Donne who wrote "The Storme," cared very much for pictures and books that could be carried on one's person, or sent home by travelers, as mnemonics.[53] Preparing to go to Germany in 1619, Donne told his congregation:

> If thy memory have not held that picture of our general deliverance from the [Spanish] Navy [in 1588]; (if that mercy be written on the water and in the sands, where it was perform'd, and not in thye heart) if thou remember not our deliverance from that artificial Hell, the Vault [i.e., the Gunpowder Plot]... If these be too large pictures for thy gallery, for thy memory, yet every man hath a pocket picture about him, a manuall, a bosome book, and if he will turn over but one leaf, and remember what God hath done for him even since yesterday, he shall find even by that little branch a navigable river, to sail into that great and endless Sea of Gods mercies toward him, from the beginning of his being. (*Sermons* 2:11, 238)

Valedictions, memory, portrait miniatures, ships and shipwrecks: the same sequence that had turned up in the verse-letters to Brooke here animates "His Picture." Offering his own portrait to his lover, Donne is doing something ordinary for his class and time.[54] What gives the poem

its first burst of energy, its first unusual semantic aspect, is the speed with which the poet moves from the ostensible occasion—the gift, upon departure, of a portrait-miniature—to imagining himself already dead, in shipwreck or in land or sea battle.[55] If Donne dies by shipwreck, parts of his corpse will look "tanned" (as vellum does); others may have the texture or color of "haircloth." If Donne dies in battle, his hair will have whitened suddenly, his skin be bruised or stained with gunpowder, like so many of the dead in battle at Cadiz.

It should be no more news than virtue to note that Donne's poems are full of compasses, globes, maps, charts, and other solid objects from the Age of Discovery. But for all his immoderate desire of humane learning, when Donne thinks about astronomy and geography, he often considers them as aids for navigators. Charts, globes and so on are practical technology, and usually relate to some direction, or failure of direction, in human life. Modern criticism has considered with great industry the navigational, cartographical, and philosophical contexts for the compass in "A Valediction Forbidding Mourning"; less attention has been paid of late to the navigational equipment that provides the sea-contexts for other short poems.[56]

The procession of self-contained tropes in "A Valediction: of the booke," like the monumental stanzas, recalls the other valedictions less than it does Donne's other short stanzas made of lists—angry, embittered or cynical verses like "The Will" or "The Curse." But the patterns of feeling "Of the booke" records link it with the other valedictions, and with poems of confident mutuality, like "The Relique," in which—as in "Of the booke"—Donne imagines future ages learning, by reading, his love's perfection. Most of the books Donne asks his lover to write are such triumphant annals; the poem almost abandons its valedictory function, and its context of parting, until both return in the last stanza, and, with them, nautical technology:

> Thus vent thy thoughts; abroad I'll study thee,
> As he removes farre off, that great heights takes;
> How great love is, presence best tryall makes,
> But absence tryes how long this love will bee;

> To take a latitude
> Sun, or stars, are fitliest viewed,
> At their brightest, but to conclude
> Of longitudes, what other way have wee,
> But to marke when, and where the darke eclipses bee? (55-63)

The complex syntax and the invention in the 18th century of very accurate shipboard clocks—which made it pointless to take longitude by eclipses have made this stanza harder for modern readers, who may not recognize that it invokes a book at all.[57] Finding a longitude (and therefore steering correctly) in Donne's age required the eclipse charts in an almanac. A shipmaster also needed to know *when* the eclipses would take place; it was the intervals between the predicted and the observed lunar eclipses that told him where on the ocean he was, just as the interval between Donne's departure and his return will, in the logic the poem sets up, tell Donne and his lover how lasting their love can be. The extended simile forces readers familiar with Renaissance navigation to imagine Donne already on a boat and out of sight of land, and then to imagine whoever steers the boat using timetables and charts to return home. It helps, in weighing the seriousness and the technical quality of the metaphor, to remember that Donne had himself spent time on a lost ship.

Hymns, valedictions, destinations, shores

> Then, when they had been without food for a long time, Paul stood up among the men. "Friends," he said, "you should have listened to me and not put out from Crete. You would have spared yourselves all this damage and loss. But now I ask you not to give way to despair. There will be no loss of life at all, only of the ship."
>
> —Acts 27:21-22

Some sermons recapitulate Donne's habits of thinking about the world in nautical, navigational or naval terms. One is the relatively early (1618) *Mare Mundus* sermon admired by T.S.Eliot:

> The world is a Sea in many respects and assimilations. It is a Sea, as it is subject to stormes, and tempests; Every man (and every man is a world) feels that. And then, it is never the shallower for the calmness, The Sea is as deepe, there is as much water in the Sea, in a calme, as in a storme; we may be drowned in a calme and flattering fortune, in prosperity, as irrecoverably, as in a wrought Sea, in adversity; So the world is a Sea. It is a Sea, as it is bottomlesse to any line, which we can sound it with, and endlesse to any discovery that we can make of it. The purposes of the world, the wayes of the world, exceed our consideration; But yet we are sure the Sea hath a bottome, and sure that it hath limits, that it cannot overpasse; The power of the greatest in the world, the life of the happiest in the world, cannot exceed those bounds, which God hath placed for them. So the world is a Sea. It is a Sea, as it hath ebbs and floods, and no man knowes the true reason of those floods and those ebbs. All men have changes and vicissitudes in their bodies (they fall sick) And in their estates (they grow poore) And in their minds (they become sad) at which changes (sicknesse, poverty, sadnesse) themselves wonder, and the cause is wrapped up in the purpose and judgement of God onely, and hid even from them that have them; and so the world is a Sea. It is a Sea, as the Sea affords water enough for all the world to drinke, but such water as will not quench the thirst. The world affords conveniences enow to satisfie Nature, but these increase our thirst with drinking, and our desire growes and enlarges itself with out abundance, and though we sail in a full Sea, yet we lacke water; So the world is a Sea. It is a Sea, if we consider the Inhabitants. In the sea, the greater fish devoure the lesse; and so doe the men of this world too. And as fish, when they mud themselves, have no hands to make themselves cleane, but the current of the waters must worke that; So have the men of this world no means to cleanse themselves for those sinnes which they have contracted in the world, of themselves, till a new flood, waters of repentance, drawne up, and sanctified by the Holy Ghost, worke that blessed effect in them.
>
> All these ways the world is a Sea. (2:11, 246)

Words are the wind which drive the boat of the congregation, or of the soul; the preacher serves as a navigator, who can perform, in any one

sermon, only one position-finding operation—one for latitude, and another, on another day, for longitude:

> But as that Pilot which had harbored his ship so farre within land, as that he must have change of Winds, in all the points of the Compass, to bring her out, cannot hope to bring her out in one day: So being to transport you, by occasion of these words, from this world to the next; and in this world, though all the Compasse, all the foure quarters thereof; I cannot hope to make all this voyage to day. To day we shall consider only our longitude, our East and West; and our North and South at another tyde, and another gale (9:1, 50)

Carey says of the sermons:

> Rivers and seas figure widely in [Donne's] writing, not as geographical locations— he scarcely ever gives them fixed positions on the globe—but as anonymous masses of fascinatingly amorphous stuff. He will distinguish discerningly between 'an ebbing back of the main River' and 'a giddy and circulat Eddy, in some shallow places of the stream' while conducting a theological debate. He will assert "The world is a Sea," and then add billowy paragraphs of marine metaphors, full of ebbs and floods and deeps and storms, to justify the idea. Disease, disaster and decrepitude are seen in his sermons and waves and tempests, and the shifts and abysses of our inner consciousness also find watery equivalents. Seas heave and lurch inside man as he walks about.[58]

Donne's thinking about seas, however, does not involve only watery chaos and illimitable mutability. Persons at sea and alive must be in a ship, and following the oceans through the sermons involves following ships. For Doctor Donne, that people are ships can mean less that they are imprisoned than that they have been made for use, to put to sea, to sail towards true religion. Donne says in the sermon he preached before leaving for Germany with Doncaster,

> We see ships in the river; but all their use is gone, if they go not to sea; we see men fraighted with honor, and riches, but all their use is

> gone, if their respect be not upon the honor and glory of the Creator; and therefore says the Apostle, *Let them that suffer, commit their souls to God, as to a faithful Creator;* that is, He made them, and therefore will have care of them. [59] (2:11, 246)

The image of the sea as illimitable peril also remained with him; woe unto the world, *because* it is our sea.

> But in such an extension, such an expansion, such an exaltation, such an inundation of woe, as this our text, *Vae mundo,* woe to the world, to all the world, a tide, a flood without any ebbe, a Sea without any shoare, a darke skie without any Horizon; That though I doe withdraw my selfe from the wofull uncertaintie, and irresolutions and indeterminations of the Court, and from the snares and circumstances of the City; Though I would devest, and shake off the woes and offences of Europe in Afrique, or of Asia in America, I cannot, since wheresoever, or howsoever I live, these woes, and scandals, and offences, tentations and tribulations will pursue mee, who can express the wretched condition, the miserable station, and prostration of man in this world? *Vae mundo.* (3:7, 432)

Conversely, divine consolation means sighting land:

> Some cosmographers have said, *That there is no land so placed in the world, but from that land, a man may see other land.* I dispute it not, I defend it not; I accept it, and I apply it; there is scarce any mercy expressed in the Scriptures, but that from that mercy you may see another mercy . . . . Between land and land you may see seas, and seas enraged with tempests; but still, say they, some other land too. Between mercy, and mercy, you may finde Comminations, and Judgements, but still more mercy. For this discovery let *this texte be our Mappe.* First we see land, we see mercy, in that gracious compellation, Children (*the Children of Israel)* Then we see sea, then comes a Commination, a Judgement that shall last some time, (*many days shall the Children of Israel suffer)* But there they may see land too, another mercy, even this time of Judgement shall be a *day,* they shall not be benighted, nor left in darknesse in

> their Judgements; (*many dayes,* all the while it shall bee day) Then the text opens into a deep Ocean, a spreading Sea, (*They shall be without a King, and without a Prince, and without a Sacrifice, and without an Image, and without an Ephod, and without Teraphim)* But even from this Sea, this vast Sea, this Sea of devastation, we see land; for, in the next verse followes another mercy, (*The Children of Israel shall returne, and shall seeke the Lord their God, and David their King, and shall feare the Lord, ad his goodnesse in the later dayes.)* And beyond this land, there is no more Sea; beyond this mercy, no more Judgement, for with this mercy, the Chapter ends. (8:17, 415-16)

Finding Christian consolation in a terrible event, or in a puzzling text, amounts to having the right map, or globe, in which East can be made to meet West, and without which one loses one's way. Similarly, the Anglican compromise evolved to keep the true Church Militant afloat:

> And as in storms it falls out often that men cast their Wares and their Fraights overboard, but never their Ballast, so as soon as we thought we saw a storm, in point of Religion, we cast off our Zeal, our Fraight, and stuck to our Ballast, our Discretion, and thought it sufficient to sail on smoothly, and steadily, and calmly, and discreetly in the world, and with the time, though not so directly to the right Haven. (6:18, 361)

This makes the Church very much like Noah's Ark.

> [We] have in the Scriptures two especially types of the Church, *Paradise* and *the Arke.* But, in that Type, the *Arke,* we are principally instructed, what *the Church in general* shall doe, and in that in *Paradise,* what *particular men in the Church should do.* For, we doe not read that in the *Arke Noah,* or his company, did *waigh* any *anchor, hoyst* any *saile, ship* any *oare, steare* any *rudder;* but, the *Arke*, by the providence of *God,* who only was *Pilot,* rode safe upon the face of the waters. The *Church* it selfe, (figured by the *Arke),* cannot shipwrack; though men sleep, though

> the Devill wake, *The gates of Hell shall not prevail against the Church.* (8:17, 423-24)

In fact, *all* ships suggest the Ark, or derive from it, as the Hebrew word for "ship" describes both Noah's Ark and Moses' tiny bark:

> Wee are not sure that there was no kinde of shippe nor boate to fish in, nor to passe by, till *God* prescribed *Noah* that absolute *form of the Arke.* That word which the *holy Ghost* by *Moses* useth for the *Arke,* is common to all kindes of *boates, Thebah,* and is the same word that *Moses* useth for the *boate* that he was *exposed* in, that *his mother laid him in an arke* of *bulrushes.* (10:11, 233)

At the same time the ship of the Church is unlike Noah's Ark in that God does not steer it directly: it must endure its storms through human and pragmatic tacking, without always sailing straight toward its goal.

> It was only Christ Jesus himself that could say to the Tempest, *Tace, obmutesce,* peace, be still, not a blast, not a sob more; only he could becalm a Tempest at once. It is well with us, if we can ride out a storm at anchour; that is, lie still, and expect, and surrender our selves to God, and anchor in that confidence, till the storm blow over again. It is well for us if we can beat out a storm at sea, with boarding to and again; that is, maintain and preserve our present condition in Church and State, though we encrease not, that though we gain no way, yet wee lose no way whilst the storm lasts. It is well for us, if, though we be put to take in our sayls, and to take down our masts, yet we can hull it out; that is, if in storms of contradiction, or persecution, the Church, or State, though they be put to accept worse conditions then before, and to depart with some of their outward splendor, be yet able to subsist and swimme above water, and reserve itself for Gods farther glory, after the storme is past; onely Christ could becalme the storme; He is a good Christian that can ride out, or board out, or hull out, a storme, that by industry, as long as he can, and by patience, when he can do no more, over-lives a storm, and does not forsake his ship for it, that is not scandalized with that State, nor that Church, of which he is a member, for those abuses that

> are in it. The Arke is peace; peace is good dispositions to one another, good interpretations of one another; for, if our impatience put from us our peace, and so out of the Arke, all without the Arke is sea; The bottomlesse and boundlesse Sea of Rome, will hope to swallow us, if we dis-unite ourselves (3:7, 184-85)

In Donne's worlds, nothing temporal, and nothing public, is safe. The sense of two worlds, a narrower better one to *get* to (or, in a valediction, to regret having to separate oneself from) and a wider world *through* which we dangerously go, appears in almost all Donne's uses of ships and the sea in lyric or religious verse. In the late Hymns and Holy Sonnets the other world beyond the perilous flood is not a privately shared imaginative realm, but Christ's, most true and pleasing when open to most men; and that realm is often figured as a far and saving "shore." The Church of England had the advantage, for this metaphor, of not being overseas: it made available a farther shore of light for the believer without making him, or her, cross the Channel. Holy Sonnet 18, "Show me, dear Christ" includes this idea at lines two and fourteen—the true word of God cannot possibly *require* believers to go across the sea, and the pacific, inclusive Anglican Church (as the Donne of the sermons preferred, more often than not, to imagine it) saw itself as more open than either the narrow zealous sectaries of the "left," or the Counter-Reformation Catholics (whose doctrines, as Donne never tired of pointing out, could *change* and strand the old believers). The sermon preached before James' burial makes the connection between the "shore" figure and the Anglican doctrine explicit:

> First, when we are bid to *Go forth* [Egredemini], it is not to go so far, as *out* of that Church, in which God hath given us our station; for, as *Moses* says, That *the word of God is not beyond Sea,* as that we must needs seek it *there,* either in a *painted Church,* on one side, or in a *naked Church,* on another. (6:14, 284)

The "Hymn to Christ at the Author's Last Going into Germany," like some of the Holy Sonnets (the one, for example, about "profane

mistresses") recapitulates motifs from the secular poems; it sums up, too, many of the senses in which Donne's other poems had considered ships and the sea. The poem begins by predicting a swift and unbreakable link between "embarking," storms, drowning and sinking, the Flood, and the Ark: the rhymes proceed from "embarke" to "Arke," then from "flood" to "blood," and make a neat typology. Donne will willingly submit himself to shipwreck on this voyage because his "bark" is not, now, the poet's skiff it had been in the *Metempsychosis,* but—through Grace—the Ark; and this second Flood (Donne's personal Last Day) can save him, because Christ has made it "an emblem," not of "our seas," but of his salvific blood(ll. 2, 11). Readers who understand Donne to be setting himself up, in this stanza and in stanza three, as equal to Christ (who *walked* on water, rather than drowning) may be missing the tone; readers who understand Donne as Jonah, seeing his own actions as emblems of New Testament events, and blowing hot and cold as that Old Testament figure does, seem more on the mark.

The middle of the poem describes a sacrifice and a contract between Donne and his Lord, and the rhymes—*thee, mee, mee, thee*—redescribe it, not as reciprocal or equal, but as involving some exchange (what lawyers call "consideration"). "Sacrifice this Iland" means that Donne will give up both whatever of worth remains for him *in England,* and the more private, islanded worlds he has imagined as shared with those "who lov'd mee"; the unequal contract believers have with Christ, who gives up his body and blood, is first a *turning-back* of Christ's face in the clouds(ll. 9-10). (Donne had promised earlier, in "Good-Friday Riding Westward," to turn his face when he felt Christ could "know mee.") The syntax and momentum of the lines show Donne still alive, still bargaining, not drowned yet, but *ready* to give up this world for the one on the opposite shore, as the Donne of "The Good Morrow" and "The Sun Rising" was ready to give this one up for "new lands."

"A Hymn to Christ" is also a valediction, and like the secular poems entitled "Valediction" ends when Donne imagines himself both present (thus, still speaking to his auditors) and already gone overseas. Donne

begins with a pair of future conditionals (*whatsoever... will be)* and ends with that rare English verb tense-and-mood, the simple present indicative. In "A Nocturnal Upon St. Lucy's Day" Donne had *become* a night, a flood and, past those, a nothing. Now he *chooses* to go to those things, because *beyond* them, *after* the shipwreck he seems to have been imagining off and on for twenty-five years, Donne's amorousness, and his images, will find their best, and their appropriately unworldly, object. Donne's stanza-closing lines expand, as if he were laying himself prostrate dramatically before God, and at the same time *sinking*—the end of each stanza is a shipwreck of its own, a wreck of the pentameter couplets that have safely carried near, but never all the way to, each concluding point. The power in the last line comes not from the antithesis of day and night, but from the intrusion of the word "stormy," which returns us to the maritime context of the first twelve lines, and to the poem's occasion.

The "Hymn to Christ at the Author's Last Going into Germany" thus sums up, begins and ends with, the habits of thought Donne took from the sea; the "Hymn to God my God, in My Sickness" (for which the leading conjectural dates are 1623 and 1630, and which has numerous echoes in the *Devotions*) sums up all manner of tropes Donne had used before, among them maps, navigations and discoveries.[60] The earlier hymn imagines two kinds of audience, Christ, to whom Donne promised to *go*, and the human audience Donne said he expected never to see or hear again. Part of Donne's tempestuousness in that poem may be traced to the *absence* of precisely the return or circularity that cements the fast balm at the end of the "Valediction Forbidding Mourning" and in many of the verse-letters.[61] The later, more monumental poem is, as it tells us, less a valediction than "a Sermon to mine own"; it has, like the Germany hymn, the exemplarity of the preacher (Donne's readers can learn to behave as he did on *their* deathbeds), and, like the "Valediction Forbidding Mourning," circularity, balance, confidence, release.

Of course, it describes its own circularity, not least by the familiar globe, world, map. Donne has to kick away, as he does other props, the map/globe trope by the end— he moves from it to the sacred places

it can represent (Paradise and Calvary, etc.), from secular tropes to Old Testament types (the first Adam) to Christian antitype (the last Adam) back and down to his own particular case; the meeting of East and West, as in his earlier sacred verse, represents both the completion of the Old Testament prophecies and the transformation of pain into salvific force. Here, too, navigational and nautical language plays a role. The "Physitians . . . growne/ Cosmographers" (not "astronomers," but "makers of maps of the world") have made Donne, flat on his bed, their "flatt Mappe"; if Donne gets better he will rise and be made a globe, but since Donne will not get better his doctors do not raise him but point out *on* him "my south-west discovery," the straits through which Donne, not a map now but a boat, will pass (ll.6-7, 9).

Noteworthy in these middle, seagoing stanzas is the *absence* of the apocalyptic tropes Donne normally associates with oceans as with globes: "theire currants yeeld returne to none" signifies Donne's personal dying, *not* a general flood or apocalypse(l.12). Donne's soul will be, not shipwrecked or drowned or flooded, but sailing for home:

> Is the Pacifique Sea my home? Or are
> The Easterne riches? Is *Jerusalem*?
> *Anyan*, and *Magellan,* and *Gibraltare*,
> All streights, and none but streights, are wayes to them,
> Whether where *Japhet dwelt*, or *Cham,* or *Sem.* (11-15)

This says that voyages of discovery (1) are like the voyage of the soul (which has to go around the world into unknown regions before coming home) but (2) don't matter very much, since all continents and all seas are equal before God. (The same trope described the never-written conclusion to the *Metempsychosis* in one of the initial stanzas of that poem: "For though through many streights and lands I roame,/ I launch at paradise, and I saile towards home," where the figure stands clearly for *both* Heaven and England [56-57]). The language of the stanza, and finally of the poem, thus represents a religious *confidence* analogous to the confidence in a private world the most serious love poems manifest: Donne's sentence-rhythms resolve into tacitly confident,

evenly "tuned" end-stopped lines, at the closes of the first three stanzas and then throughout the last two. The questions in the nautical stanzas, about locations in this world, are enjambed:

> *What shall my West hurt me? | As West and East . . .*
>
> *All streights, | and none but streights, | are wayes to them*
> *Whether where Japhet dwelt, | or Cham, (|) or Sem.*

But after the final "So," when the speech-act called prayer has clearly begun, the phrases of the poem are each exactly one line long. Only with this even confidence, this *dissociation* of the sea and its ships from storms, floods, violence and futility, is Donne able to end a poem about his death with such conclusive faith. This confidence may be a sense that the "other world" of Christian salvation is not really another world at all, but simply a place believers can reach in this one if their faith is in order. This is the valedictory promise, the promise that under God no one is forever lost or at sea, that Donne described in a later sermon: "We think not a friend lost, because he is gone into another romme, nor because he is gone into another Land; And into another world, no man is gone; for that Heaven, which God created, and this world, is all one world" (8:15, 384). Those who "seek out new seas, and of new lands can write," have not, after all, discovered a private cosmos; nor are all whom the flood did and fire shall overthrow really "scattered," since all will be brought to its proper place on the last day. And it is this Christian promise that all voyages of faith can reach some permanent end, that Donne the sea man will reach home, that "A Hymn to God the Father" illuminates:

> I have a sinne of feare, that when I'have spunne
> My last thred, I shall perish on the shore;
> Sweare by thy selfe, that at my death thy Sunne
> Shall shine as it shines now, and heretofore;
> And having done that, Thou haste done,
> I have no more. (13-18)

Readers disturbed by the transition between "shore" and "shine," between Christ as eternal sun and the idea of Donne's drowned or dying body arriving on land, may return to "The Storme" and remember how decreation and chaos, and the apparent purposelessness of life in this world, figure not only as a life-threatening storm at sea, but also as that storm's capacity to make all light go away, "except God say / Another *Fiat.*" The sworn creating Word, the Word made Flesh, Donne requests or requires in the Hymn to God the Father is precisely that *Fiat*, the word which banishes storms from seas by installing the light of Christ "now, and heretofore." No wonder in his poem to George Herbert Donne made of the Cross an Anchor, and made, of hope's anchor, his emblem; no wonder he liked to imagine Christ both as crucified on an anchor, and as Himself an anchor for Christians.[62]

For Donne the late religious poet, the Savior at the Apocalypse will do the work which the Donne of the love poems told us his "love so much refined" could do. This work is, in Donne's system of figures, the construction and making-available of a saving second world, a world *like* a boat, but which saves us *from* boats—an imaginative enterprise made necessary by a distress like that of weary mariners, or like that of the gentleman-marines who saw action at Cadiz and endured the Islands voyage. This is the line of thought embodied, not only all through the Germany hymn and within the other two late hymns, but also in the sermon of valediction Donne preached before his last important sea-voyage, where the first figure of Christ's kingdom is the shore of a sea; the first figure for what we shall be when risen is a set of soldiers; and the very last verbs with which Donne describes the saved explain why valedictions, like sea-voyages, will finally have become unnecessary:

> Remember me thus, you that stay in this Kingdom . . . and Christ Jesus remember us all in his Kingdome, to which, though we must sail through a sea, it is the sea of his blood, where no souls suffers shipwrack; though we must be blown with strange winds, with sighs and groans for our sins, yet it is the Spirit of God that blows all this wind, and shall blow away all contrary winds of diffidence or distrust

> in Gods mercy; where we shall be all Souldiers of one Army, the Lord of Hostes, and Children of one Quire, the God of Harmony and consent: . . . where we shall have continuall rest, and yet never grow lazie; where we shall be stronger to resist, and yet have no enemy; where we shall live and never die, where we shall meet and never part. (2:11, 248-49)

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Notes

1. T.S.Eliot, *The Varieties of Metaphysical Poetry: the Clark Lectures at Trinity College, Cambridge, 1926, and the Turnbull Lectures at Johns Hopkins University, 1933* (London: Faber & Faber, 1993), pp. 130-31, 139.

2. John Carey, *John Donne: Life, Mind, and Art* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1981), pp. 118-19.

3. Izaak Walton, *The Lives of John Donne, Sir Henry Wotton, Richard Hooker, George Herbert and Robert Sanderson* (London: Oxford University Press, 1966), p. 26.

4. R.E. Bennett wrote in 1942 that the prose letter from Plymouth, if it is by Donne, proves that Donne sailed with Sir Thomas Howard's squadron, since by August 9, 1597 Raleigh's and Essex's had already departed. Bennett goes on to argue that Donne's epigrams on Cadiz and the Azores, and his later treatment to Guiana in a verse-letter to Roland Woodward, associate him later with Raleigh's party as against Essex's. See R.E.Bennett, "John Donne and the Earl of Essex," *Modern Language Quarterly* 3 (1942): 603. For the current state of the debate over whose ship Donne sailed in, and whose party he supported at the time, see Dennis Flynn, "Donne, Henry Wotton and the Earl of Essex," *John Donne Journal* 14 (1995): 197-200.

5. Quoted in Edward LeComte, *Grace to a Witty Sinner: A Life of John Donne* (New York: Walker and Company, 1965), p. 32.

6. "A brief and true report of the Honourable Voyage unto Cadiz," in *Purchas his Pilgrims* (20 vols., London: 1624; reprinted Glasgow: James MacLehose and Sons, 1903-7), vol. 20, pp. 11-12.

7. Walter Raleigh, *The Works of Sir Walter Ralegh* (8 vols., London: 1829; Reprinted New York: Burt Franklin, 1965), vol. 8, pp. 667-68.

8. Raleigh, p.672.

9. Carey, p.66.

10. Arthur Marotti, *John Donne, Coterie Poet* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1986), p.102. "Fall of a Wall," with its "too-bold captain . . . that had a town for tomb, his bones to hide," seems to refer not to any Cadiz action, but to one Captain Sydenham ('Prideville'), killed at Corunna in 1589, as chronicled by George Buc and by Hakluyt; the lines' freighted unease with military valor give them thematic and tonal links to Donne's verses on the later events. The epigram may reflect, or merely anticipate, Donne' naval experience—or even, perhaps, earlier military service—since it can be dated on external evidence only to 1589 or later. For the connection with Captain Sydenham, see M. Thomas Hester, "Donne's Epigrams: A Little World Made Cunningly," in Claude Summers and Ted-Larry Pebworth, eds., *The Eagle and the Dove: Reassessing John Donne* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1986), pp. 85-6.

11. *The Complete Poetry of John Donne,* ed. John Shawcross (New York: Anchor, 1967), p.162. Further citations to Donne's verse will be to this edition, citing poems by line number.

12. "The Dissolution" also let Donne experiment with lines other than pentameters in describing military events: the poem shrinks into itself at "increased" and expands back beyond its normative length for the hexameter at the end, where one bullet unexpectedly "overtakes" another, as Donne's soul flees his body more swiftly than other souls fleeing *their* bodies can go.

13. Marotti, p. 102.

14. R.J.Dingley, "Donne's 'A Burnt Ship.'" *Notes & Queries* 27 (1980): 318.

15. Carey, p. 95.

16. Flynn, pp. 202-3.

17. For the Cadiz knights Essex created as a recognized, and derided, microsocial category, see Lawrence Stone's discussion: some of the gentleman-soldiers "appear to have gone on the expedition merely to pick up the title." Lawrence Stone, *The Crisis of the Aristocracy 1558-1641* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1965), pp.72-3.

18. LeComte, pp.49-50.

19. See R.E. Bennett, "John Donne and Everard Guilpin," *Review of English Studies* 15 (1939): 66-72. P. J. Finkelpearl argues against Bennett (and LeComte) that Donne could not be *Publius*, since Donne's father, though an ironmonger, was not newly rich in the 1590s, but died in the late 1570s. But Finkelpearl also believes that Guilpin's lines

> some of their humourous neere of kin
> Which scorn to speak to one which hath not bin
> In one of these last voyages

imply that *Publius* had not himself been on the voyages. See P.J. Finkelpearl, "Donne and Everard Guilpin: Additions, Corrections and Conjectures," *RES* 14 (1965): 166. Finkelpearl's argument commands assent only if it is *Publius* to whom the near of kin scorn to speak, though Guilpin's lines may also be an indictment of general snobbery— and, more important for my purposes, a suggestion that the returned voyagers constituted a distinct social set, or could think of themselves as such. Guilpin continues:

> or to one
> Which having been there yet (though he have none)
> Hath not a Cades-beard: though I dare swear
> That many a beardlesse chin hath marched where
> They durst not for their beards come, though they dare
> Come where they will not leave theyre beards one haire.
>
> (quoted in Bennett, "Guilpin," p. 70)

"Though he have none" could mean either that "he" had not been to Cadiz, or that, though he fought there, he was so young that he could not grow the right

kind of beard.

20. Raleigh, p.674.

21. *Complete Poetry and Selected Prose of John Donne,* ed. Charles M. Coffin (New York: Modern Library, 1952), p.363.

22. Art historians, and Donne scholars, sometimes cite "The Storm" as the first mention of Hilliard in verse. It may not be. The Essex conspirator Henry Constable wrote a charming poem about a Hilliard miniature (now lost), "Mr Hilliard, Upon the Occasion of a Picture He Made of My Lady Rich," reprinted in Erna Auerbach's *Nicholas Hilliard* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1961), p.45. Another Cadiz-man, Arthur Gorges, translating a sonnet by Ronsard, names Hilliard where Ronsard had named the French painter Denisot; Gorges' poem is "Erect thy flighte on hye with Eagles winges," number 75 in *The Poems of Sir Arthur Gorges,* ed. Helen Sandison (Oxford: Clarendon, 1953), pp.73-4.

23. Everett's "Donne the London Poet," *Poets in Their Time* (London: Faber & Faber, 1986), pp.1-18, hints at this reading of Donne's secular lyrics, but I take its terms, including the use of Donne's motto, from Everett's unpublished talk at Yale University in 1995.

24. B.F. Nellist states uncontroversially that the sea is normally in Latin verse, as it is in these poems, the "type of all earthly instability"; Nellist gives examples from Ovid's *Tristia,* Lucretius and Propertius before showing the sea-as-fortune trope as it persisted in John Dowland and in the Water Poet, John Taylor. See B.F. Nellist, "Donne's 'Storm' and 'Calm' and the Descriptive Tradition," *Modern Language Review* 59 (1964): 511. Nellist concludes that Donne's shipboard descriptions resemble most closely Lucan's in book 5 of the *Pharsalia*, and that Donne's verses differ from their predecessors by being more "concerned with the passions aroused," and in leaving out the "moral syllogisms" which marked sea-descriptions in English verse before Donne (pp. 513-5). Clayton Lein's detailed survey of Donne's sources for "The Storme" ties the poem more closely to Ovid, and to Seneca's *Agammemnon;* see Clayton Lein, "Donne's 'The Storme': the Poem and the Tradition," *English Literary Renaissance* 4 (1974): 145-50.

25. Lucan, *Pharsalia,* trans. Sir Arthur Gorges (London: Walter Burre, 1614), pp.199-200.

26. Lein finds a model for these lines in Ovid, *Metamorphoses* 11:539-43, where Ovid's fearful passengers cry, grow mute, wish for death, pray (in vain), and consider their loved ones on land; none compares the ship's plight to the "last day," cabins to coffins, or natural disasters to political, contemporary "newes" (pp. 145-6).

27. Lein, p. 154. Lein finds no parallel to these lines in Ovid, or in Seneca either; he concludes that Donne's "expansion of the range of personification" amounts to his "principal modification of the [classical storm] genre," and that

the actual storm Donne survived "released in Donne the tremendous energies of a death fixation." (pp. 151, 153)

28. The extremity of the loss in "A Nocturnal upon St. Lucy's Day" is thus that Donne does not have, in that poem, the correspondent or friend to whom the end of "The Calm" appeals: his special plight there is to have become the "nothing" he first imagined being here.

29. Marotti, p.115 (quoting Gorges' p.44).

30. Carey, p.68.

31. He seems to have spent some of his time on shipboard reading and copying books, if not on this expedition then later, with the Drurys—this undated letter to "G.H." follows one dated "1600" in *Letters to Several Person of Honour:*

I send you here a Translation, but it is not onely to beleeve me, it is a great invention to have understood any piece of this Book, whether the gravity of the matter, or the Poeticall form, give it his inclination, and *principium motus;* you ar his center, or his sphare, and to you as to his proper place he addresses himself. Besides that all my things, not onely by obligation but by custome, know that that is the way they should goe. I spake of this to my L of Bedford, thinking then I had had a copy which I made long since, at Sea, but because I finde it not, I have done that again: when you find it not unseasonable, let her see it; and if you can think it fit, that a thing that hath either wearied, or distasted you, should receive so much favour, put it amongst her papers: when you have a new stomach to it, I will provide you quickly a new Copy.

At my Micham hospitall,
Aug 10 Your very true friend and servant and lover
John Donne

Letters to Severall Persons of Honour (London: 1651; reprod. Delmar, N.Y.: Scholars' Facsimiles and Reprints, 1977), pp. 206-8.

32. Robert Devereux, Earl of Essex, "and other commissioners," "The Voyage to the Iles of Azores," *Purchas his Pilgrims,* vol. 20, p.25.

33. "The Voyages to the Iles of Azores," p.26.

34. Gosse, but not Bald, refers to this document, available in the 20-volume reprint of *Purchas his Pilgrims* along with Essex's account; Gorges' 20th century editor, Helen E. Sandison, mentions the MS. in 1953 as "in the possession of William H. Robinson, Ltd. Pall Mall, London SW1," and notes a long bibliographical dispute over whether the "Larger Account" should be attributed to Raleigh or to Gorges.

35. Arthur Gorges, "A Larger Relation of the said Iland Voyage," *Purchas his Pilgrims,* vol. 20, p.43.

36. Gorges, "A Larger Relation," pp.44-45.

37. Gorges, "A Larger Relation," pp.109, 116, 125. Two modern naval historians summarize the expedition: "It proved impossible . . . to hold things together in the face of bad weather and unfavourable winds which forced the expedition to turn back and then detained it in Plymouth where the consumption of victuals at a rate higher than their replenishment and the appearance of sickness rattled Essex to the extent of causing him to disband most of the military force. He led the fleet instead, though an attack on Ferrol was still the ostensible objective, on the so-called Islands Voyage to the Azores where is achieved no more than the earlier forays recently criticized by Essex himself as idle wanderings upon the sea . . . Nor was the experiment with courtly leadership as opposed to that of professional seamen a success. The campaign in Azorean waters was flawed by the inexperience as sea commanders of Essex and Ralegh and disturbed by the quarrels between them. The substitution of quarrelsome self-interested courtiers for quarrelsome self-interested seamen could not transform even a formidable fleet of royal warships into a professional navy" (David Quinn and A.N.Ryan, *England's Sea Empire 1550-1642,* London: Allen & Unwin, 1983, p. 121).

38. Shawcross, pp.464-5.

39. Everett, p.20. For an argument that Donne's epigrams dissociate him from the Essex party, see Flynn, pp. 201-212.

40. See Edmund Gosse, *The Life and Letters of John Donne,* 2 vols. (London: William Heinemann, 1899), vol.1, p.44.

41. *Complete Poems of John Donne, Vol. I: Satires, The Progress of the Soul, Elegies, Epithalamiums,* ed. A.B.Grosart (London: Robson and Sons, 1872), p.55.

42. Milgate and Shawcross follow Bald in dating the letter to the brief period in August 1597 between the first and second sailings of the Islands flotilla, during which Donne (if it was Donne) also wrote the prose letter "from Plymouth." A. J. Smith dates it before the Islands expedition, in the spring of 1597 amid general anticipation of profits from Guiana. See A.J. Smith, ed., *Complete English Poems of John Donne* (New York: Penguin, 1986), p. 533, and W. Milgate, ed., *Satires, Epigrams and Verse-Letters of John Donne* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1967).

43. Claude Summers and Ted-Larry Pebworth see in this letter to Wotton consolation for Wotton's absence from court after the July 1, 1598 quarrel between Essex and the Queen. See Summers and Pebworth, "Donne's Correspondence with Henry Wotton," *John Donne Journal* 10:1-2 (1991): 5-6.

44. *The Sermons of John Donne,* ed. George R. Potter and Evelyn Simpson, 10 vols. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1957), vol.1, sermon 8, p. 285. Further citation of sermons will be to this edition parenthetically by volume, sermon and page numbers.

45. For the topical background of this later letter, see Summers and Pebworth, "Wotton," pp. 6-7.

46. Donne must have known Erasmus' *Naufragium* ("Shipwreck"), though echoes of it in Donne's English verse are hard to spot, unless this is one; its caricatured priests and monks, and its attack on the doctrine of the intercession of saints, certainly speak to Donne's interests in theological controversy. For evidence of Donne's knowledge of Erasmus, see Lein, pp.138-9, n.4.

47. LeComte, p.75.

48. *Letters to Severall Persons of Honour,* p.50.

49. *Biathanatos* (Reprod. from first ed., New York: Facsimile Text Society, 1930), pp.110-111. My thanks to Gerald Hammond, *Fleeting Things: English Poets and Poems 1616-1660* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1990), p.185, for drawing my attention to this passage; for other seventeenth-century poets' uses of ships and the sea, see Hammond, ch. 7 (on the ship of state) and ch. 8 (on "Lycidas"), which attends in passing to Donne.

50. J.B.Leishman, *The Monarch of Wit* (London: Hutchinson's University Library, 1951), p.73.

51. William Empson, *Essays on Renaissance Literature, volume 1: Donne and the New Philosophy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), p.197.

52. Lein— who believes, with Helen Gardner, that "Loves Warre" can be dated to 1594— also notes the appearance in that poem of "the whole set of images which unify 'The Storme.'" See Lein, pp.155-6, n.39.

53. Leishman "like[d] to think of [His Picture'] as having been written before [Donne's] departure" for Cadiz; I would much prefer to imagine it written before the *Azores* voyage and after he had seen action at Cadiz, though of course such datings are conjectural (Leishman, p.69).

54. He does what Erasmus did in sending his picture to Thomas More with an accompanying letter which read (in Latin) "I am sending you the portrait in order that we may always be with you even when death shall have annihilated us" (quoted in Richard Brilliant, *Portraiture,* Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1991, p.124).

55. Some of the power of that initiating motion comes from the set of senses "shadows" (line 4) can take. Writers of the 1590s and the decade after "often speak of a painter 'shaddowing' a picture when they simply mean that he is painting it," as Lucy Gent demonstrates; and "pictorial shadows are only one kind of shadow in a period . . . interested in all forms of the shadow-substance pairing: dream, actor, ghost, mirror-image, as well as pictures." See Gent, *Picture and Poetry 1560-1620* (Leamington Spa: James Hall, 1981), p.21, 53. The dead are shades, and the bodies of the living are the shadows of their spirits, *and* a portrait is a shadow.

56. Stanton Linden and Graham Roebuck have both argued that Donne's compasses derive from (or in any case resemble) the ornate measuring "com-

passes or dividers" which appear in books of woodcuts and, especially, in the legends of late Elizabethan maps: see Linden, "Compasses and Cartography: Donne's 'Valediction Forbidding Mourning,'" *John Donne Journal* 3:1 (1984): 23. For a checklist of maps in Donne's verse, see Linden, p.26, note 4. Roebuck and others trace the compass-image to books Donne had read: "So 'literary' are the English maps in particular, that one might wonder whether poets such as Donne were inspired by the cartographic ornament, or whether the reverse is true, and the engravers were themselves 'poeticized.'" See Roebuck, "'A Valediction Forbidding Mourning': Traditions and Problems of the Imagery," *John Donne Journal* 13:1-2 (1994): 47. At least if the poems with map and compass images were written after 1596, Donne would also have seen actual navigators and sailors using maps along with actual compasses.

Eileen Reeves has recently found among the nautical contexts of Renaissance compasses another referent for Donne's. Following John Freccero's suggestion that Donne's final stanzas, in combining concentric circular with linear or radial motion, imagine the course of a particular spiral, Reeves says that the spiral path "involve[s] the way in which a ship's oblique course on the globe would be translated into lines upon a map." See Reeves, "John Donne and the Oblique Course," *Renaissance Studies* 7:2 (June 1993): 171. She continues: "That the 'Valediction: Forbidding Mourning' involves a voyage is crucial to our understanding of the poem, for it is upon Donne's sailing to the continent that the metaphor of the oblique course, an essential navigational concept—and indeed the movement of the whole poem— is based" (p.174).

57. According to D.W. Waters' *The Art of Navigation in Elizabethan and Early Stuart England* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1958), Tudor and Stuart shipmasters carried printed almanacs containing the phases of the moon and other astronomical predictions: the simplest forms were broadsheets "for posting up on a wall or ship's bulkhead, or as sextodecimo volumes for the pocket," though there were other longer or "true" almanacs for more curious readers (16-17). As for latitude and longitude: tables compiled in the late 15th century enabled navigators out of sight of land to determine latitudes with astrolabes and an instrument called a cross-staff, from observations based on the Pole Star; after 1485, Portugese tables called "The Regiment of the Sun" "enabled the navigator to use the sun as a means of latitude determination"(47). But determinations of *longitude* out of sight of land could not rely on the Pole Star or on the sun, because the earth rotates with respect to them: their positions on an East-West axis vary with longitude, time of year *and time of day.* The eventual solution was a very accurate shipboard clock, but the 16th and 17th centuries had to use other means. Waters explains: "Columbus had tried to find his longitude on his voyages of 1494 and 1504 by finding the difference in time between the occurence of eclipses based on his observations and the times predicted, probably in Regiomontanus' *Calendarium.* But the difficulty in

observing eclipses was to ensure that the same moment during the eclipse (which is a long drawn-out occurence) was observed. Moreover, apart from the fact that eclipses are infrequent, lack of accurate instruments of observation and of a sufficiency of accurate observations over a period of time long enough to establish accurately the laws of the moon's motions rendered the lunar tables far from accurate. They were to remain so until the eighteenth century" (p.58).

58. Carey, p.179

59. Potter and Simpson in their introduction to the *Sermons*, vol. 2, note the parallels among this sermon, the later "Hymn to Christ on My Last Going into Germany," and "The Calm" (*Sermons,* vol.2, pp. 32-33).

60. The critical history of this poem includes a dispute over the Biblical source of "Therefore that he may raise the Lord throws down," with Helen Gardner concluding that there is no direct Biblical source (but suggesting Job 22:29), John Dixon Hunt suggesting Psalm 146, and David Novarr *The Duchess of Malfi.* A.B. Grosart had argued in 1873 that the real source was Jonah 1:12, "Take me up and cast me forth into the sea," which has the merit of seeing the poem's beginning in its end: Donne had linked what sounds like a rough draft of his great line to a "tempest" in a verse-letter to the Countess of Huntingdon: "I cannot feel the tempest of a frowne, / I may be rais'd by love, but not throwne down" (ll. 27-8). For details of the dispute over sources, see Novarr, *The Disinterred Muse* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1980), p.180.

61. For example, to Sir Henry Goodyer ("Who makes the Past..."): "in these thoughts, although you never stirre, / You came with mee to Mitcham, and are here." (ll.47-8)

62. Walton, p.63.