John Donne Journal
Vol. 22 (2003)

Establishing a "fitter" Text of Donne's "The Good Morrowe"

Lara M. Crowley

The Good Morrowe[1]

I wonder by my troth, what thou and I,
Did till wee lou'd; were wee not weand till then?
But suckt on Countrye pleasures Childishly?
Or snorted wee in the Seauen sleepers den?
Twas soe; But this all pleasures fancies bee

If euer anie Beawtye I did see
Which I desird, and gott, twas but a Dreame of thee.

And now Good morrowe to our wakinge soules
Which watch not one another out of feare
For loue all loue of other sights controules,

And makes one littell roome an euerie where.
Let Sea discouerers to new worlds haue gone,

[1]Many people contributed their time, materials, and expertise in assisting me with this project. Thanks to Gary A. Stringer, Syd Conner, Ernest W. Sullivan, II, Tracy McLawhorn, R. V. Young, Brian Blackley, Kirsten Shepherd-Barr, and especially M. Thomas Hester for their support and guidance.

Let Maps to others, worlds on worlds haue showne
Let vs posses our world: each hath one, and is one.

My face in thine eye, Thine in myne appears
And true plaine harts, doe in the faces rest
Where can wee finde two fitter Hemispheres
Without sharpe North, without declyninge west;
What ever dies was not mixt equallye:
If our two loues bee one, or thou and I
Loue soe alike, that none doe slacken, none can die.

Emendations of the Copy-text (Dolau Cothi manuscript):
2 lou'd;] loud; 8 Good morrowe] God-morrowe 16 true] trw 17 can] cane fitter] better

Sources Collated:[2]
Dolau Cothi ms. (WN1), Denbigh ms. (B7), Skipwith ms. (B13), Glover ms. (B23), Harley Noel ms. (B30), Newcastle ms. (B32), Lansdowne ms. (B40), Stowe ms. (B46), Stowe II ms. (B47), Edward Smyth ms. (C1), Cambridge Balam ms. (C2), Leconfield ms. (C8), Luttrell ms. (C9), Emmanuel College, Cambridge ms. (CE1), Puckering ms. (CT1), Dublin ms. (DT1), Dublin II ms. (DT2), Thomas Smyth ms. (F4), Norton ms. (H4), Dobell ms. (H5), O'Flahertie ms. (H6), Stephens ms. (H7), Utterson ms. (H8), Bridgewater ms. (HH1), Haslewood-Kingsborough II ms. (HH5), John Cave ms. (NY1), Dowden ms. (O20), Phillipps ms. (O21), St. John's ms. (OJ1), Bishop ms. (R9), Grey ms. (SA1), Drummond miscellany (SN2), Wedderburn ms. (SN4), St. Paul's ms. (SP1), Dalhousie I ms. (TT1), Dalhousie II ms. (TT2), Nedham ms. (VA2), Herbert ms. (WN3), King ms. (Y2), Osborn ms. (Y3), 1633 edition (A), 1635 edition (B), 1639 edition (C),

[2]Sigla in this essay are those of *The Variorum Edition of the Poetry of John Donne*. Gen. ed. Gary A. Stringer. 3 vols. (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana Univ. Press, 1995-).

1649 edition (D), 1650 edition (E), 1654 edition (F), 1669 edition (G).

"Country pleasures childishly" or "childish pleasures sillily," "snorted" or "slumbered": which words are the "fitter" choices? These are only a few of the textual questions concerning Donne's "The Good Morrowe," an aubade that appears in forty extant manuscripts and all seven seventeenth-century printed editions of Donne's verse. Versions represent Groups I, II, & III of Donne's work, but the poem does not appear in the Westmoreland manuscript, excluding Group IV representation. While most manuscripts contain all twenty-one lines of the poem, the Drummond miscellany has only five, and no two manuscript versions are identical. Some variations are minor, such as insignificant spelling differences or scribal "sophistications,"[3] but there are some key verbal alterations, as well. What does not remain, of course, is a holograph version of the poem.[4]

Without this holograph, an editor of "The Good Morrowe" faces the same task as Grierson, Gardner, and all other Donne editors: choosing a copy-text without any authorial guidance and with nothing but available material evidence. Although many

---

[3]For further discussion regarding scribal practices, as well as analyzing textual transmission histories and reading Renaissance poetry in context, see Arthur F. Marotti, *Manuscript, Print, and the English Renaissance Lyric* (Ithaca; London: Cornell Univ. Press, 1995). Also see Harold Love, *Scribal Publication in Seventeenth-Century England* (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 1993) and Peter Beal, *In Praise of Scribes: Manuscripts and Their Makers in Seventeenth-Century England* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998). Ted-Larry Pebworth analyzes scribal practices as they relate to Donne in particular in "Manuscript Poems and Print Assumptions: Donne and His Modern Editors," *John Donne Journal* 4.1 (1984): 1-22, as does Arthur F. Marotti, *John Donne, Coterie Poet* (Wisconsin: Univ. of Wisconsin Press, 1986).

[4]Modern editors are left with only one known holograph of a Donne poem: a verse epistle addressed to the Lady Carey and Mrs. Essex Riche.

former editors of Donne's work made extensive use of the manuscripts known at the time, not until the 1980 publication of Peter Beal's *Index of English Literary Manuscripts*[5] was a compilation of all Donne poems contained in known manuscripts available, allowing for manuscript material never incorporated into modern editions to be included and strengthening the growing call for a new edition of Donne's poetry: a call answered by the editors of *The Variorum Edition of the Poetry of John Donne*, an edition aimed at being inclusive, thorough, and current. Like the Donne *Variorum* editors, I recognize the obvious challenges involved in editing Donne's works[6]; the process of editing "The Good Morrowe" demonstrates both the editorial limitations, especially regarding print materials, and the wealth of editorial resources currently available for editing any Donne poem. For this poem, in order to attempt "to recover and present exactly what Donne wrote,"[7] I transcribed the manuscript versions and the seventeenth-

[5]London: Mansell; New York: Bowker, 1980.

[6]Through systematic study of all 239 extant artifacts containing Donne's poetic works, *The Variorum* editors' careful collations and analyses provide strong evidence to support each conjecture regarding manuscript transmission. But modern editors also recognize challenges to methods in the vein of New Bibliography and to the notion of an editor's "mystical communion with his author" (Derek Pearsall, "The Uses of Manuscripts: Late Medieval English," *Harvard Library Bulletin* 4:4 [1993-4]: 30-6). But, when presenting a printed edition of a poem, ultimately choices must be made; Donne *Variorum* editors make editorial decisions but also endeavor to present all available information in order to provide the reader with the opportunity to recreate all versions of Donne's poems.

[7]Gary A. Stringer, "Introduction." *The Variorum Edition of the Poetry of John Donne: Elegies*; (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana Univ. Press, 1995), p. xlix.

century printed editions and collated and examined the texts in order to establish this text of "The Good Morrowe."[8]

The process began with the transcription of the forty manuscript versions of the poem and all seven seventeenth-century printed editions.[9] These transcriptions were then collated[10] in order to examine the verbal variants and to choose a copy-text. Upon running the first collation of "The Good Morrowe," a pattern emerged. Lines 3 and 21 seemed to contain the most dramatically different readings: "But sucked on country pleasures childishly?" versus "But sucked on childish pleasures sillily?" for line 3 and "Love so alike, that none do slacken, none can die" as opposed to

---

[8]See Stringer's "Introduction" for an extensive explanation of the necessity of examining the manuscript versions of Donne's verse. The manuscripts' comparative chronological closeness to Donne's composition of the poems makes them more likely candidates than the printed versions to contain Donne's original choices. In most cases, *Variorum* editors have chosen their copy-texts from manuscript versions, which are more likely to reflect accurately the original holographs due to the manuscripts' earlier date of composition and to the unlikelihood that any extensive holograph collection of Donne's poems ever existed; the absence of such a collection suggests that the printed editions were mainly or solely based on manuscript materials anyway. While scribes certainly introduced alterations (or "corruptions"), either through accident or through the notion that they were "improving" the poems, one can examine the variants so closely that one can trace the poem's line of descent and choose the version that evidence suggests to be the exemplar of the poem. Although this exemplar is not the holograph and cannot be treated as such, it is the closest extant version to Donne's original based on all available material evidence.

[9]Nearly all transcriptions were made from microfilm versions of the original manuscripts, although many were later compared with other editors' transcriptions from originals. Most of the microfilm versions were quite clear and legible. But, until all transcriptions are checked against the original manuscripts, some room for error still exists.

[10]I used the Donne Software Collation Program, established by editors of *The Variorum*, to collate the files.

"Love just alike in all, none of these loves can die" for line 21. But these readings do not occur haphazardly, for in every case in which line 3 reads "country pleasures childishly?" line 21 reads "Love so alike..." and the other two readings are also always paired. In fact, the manuscripts traditionally considered to be part of Groups III and II[11] contain "childish pleasures sillily" and "Love just alike..." readings, while all Group I manuscripts (and others that often present Group I readings) contain the "country pleasures childishly" and "Love so alike..." readings. Thus, the consistent pairing of lines suggested that there must be a clean break between a Lost Original Holograph (LOH) of "The Good Morrowe" and another Lost Revised Holograph (LRH) that contains revisions, potentially Donne's, made to the original poem.

To examine this possibility further, the files were collated again in order to determine the major word variants and their consistency (or lack thereof) with this LOH/LRH splitting pattern. Following are the significant verbal differences:

line 3: "country pleasures childishly" I+[12] / "childish pleasures sillily"
4: "snorted" III+, I+ / "slumbered"
10: "For love" III, I+, John Cave (NY1), Nedham (VA2) / "But love"
11: "one room" III+, I+, NY1, VA2 / "a room"
14: "one world" Newcastle (B32), Cambridge Balam (C2), Leconfield (C8), Dowden (O20), St. Paul's (SP1), NY1, VA2 / "our world"
16: "true plain hearts" III+, I+, NY1, VA2 / "plain true hearts"

---

[11]For more information on the grouping of Donne's manuscripts, see an introduction to any volume of *The Variorum.*

[12]"+" after the group number indicates that other manuscripts that are often associated with this group are included as well.

17: "better hemispheres" I+, NY1, VA2 / "fitter hemispheres"
19: "was not mixt" III+, I+, NY1, VA2 / "is not mixt"
20: "our two loves" III+, I+, NY1, VA2 / "both our loves"
21: "Love so alike, that none do slacken, none can die." I+ / "Love just alike in all, none of these loves can die."

In addition to lines 3 and 21, the most intriguing variants appear in line 4 ("snorted" versus "slumbered"), line 14 ("one world" versus "our world"), and line 17 ("fitter" versus "better"). But these variants did not slip neatly into their expected groups. Groups III and I contain "snorted," while the Group II manuscripts read "slumbered," an inconsistency with the general split between Groups III and II and Group I, suggesting that the transmissional history actually is more complicated than the original hypothesis that one version was revised to a second version.

Thus, the next step was to examine each of these ten verbal differences in order to establish a more detailed theory about the textual progression and the likelihood (or lack thereof) that these revisions might have been made by Donne.[13] In general, extant materials suggest that differences between Group III readings and

[13]Determining whether textual alterations were authorial or scribal can be extremely tricky (and sometimes impossible), but certain guidelines are useful, guidelines that Stringer establishes in "Discovering Authorial Intention in the Manuscript Sequences of Donne's Holy Sonnets," *Renaissance Papers,* edited by M. Thomas Hester and Christopher Cobb (Rochester: Camden, 2002): "Does the reading represent a 'genuine alternative'?"; "Is the reading readily explicable as a scribal misreading or slip of the pen?"; "Is the reading appropriately located in the poem's transmissional history?"; and "Are there extrinsic considerations touching individual scribes, artifacts, or transcriptions that affect confidence in the legitimacy of particular readings?"

readings in Group I or Group II manuscripts normally are one of two types: scribal "corruptions" or authorial changes to a Group III prototype. For "The Good Morrowe," the Group III+ manuscripts contain similar verbal features, such as the simpler readings of lines 3 and 21 ("childish pleasures sillily" and "Love just alike in all, none of these loves can die"). And, of the ten major verbal differences, Group III+ manuscripts also contain "snorted" (line 4), "For" (line 10), "one" (line 11), "our" (line 14), "true plain" (line 16), "fitter" (line 17), "was" (line 19), and "our two" (line 20). Most of these Group III+ readings also are present in the Group I+ manuscripts, but Group I+ manuscripts contain the more interpretively interesting "country pleasures childishly" and "Love so alike, that none do slacken, none can die." These chronologically "new" lines provide more conceptually complex readings for the poem overall, and it seems highly unlikely, although possible, that a scribe created them. These changes appear to be authorial—revisions that Donne made to his original poem.

The "revision" of the Group III+ "fitter" to Group I+ "better," however, at first seemed to be an anomaly with an otherwise logical explanation. Chronologically, "better" appears to have come after "fitter," suggesting that Donne made this change; but, as will be examined further, "fitter" seems to be the more complex reading. One can argue that an aspiring poet-scribe could have made the alteration, trying to establish a "better" reading than that intended by the poet, but Donne's "fitter" certainly seems the "fitter" choice overall. The likelihood that Donne revised "fitter" to "better" is slim, so the editor must assume that a scribe working on the manuscript from which this group was derived made this choice either on purpose or more likely by accident, an understandable mistake since the words appear nearly identical in some secretary hands.

"One" and "our" are two words that also can look nearly identical, and approximately half of the Group I+ manuscripts contain the significant alteration of "our world" to "one world" in

line 14. Although one could argue that "one" seems to be a more exact word choice, "our" fits metrically, as well, and suits the general meaning of the poem in its declaration of the couple's mutual ownership of their own room and of their own world. Thus, whether or not this change is authorial cannot be determined based on its complexity in the poem. However, because all other materials substantiate that other authorial changes were made at an earlier point, prior to the "fitter" change in line 17, historical evidence strongly suggests that the logical misreading of "our" as "one" is also a "corruption." Most likely this scribe created an altered manuscript (represented by 2 in the schema) from which several other manuscripts in Group I+ were derived.

The Group II manuscripts also contain many common verbal readings that are either derived from the LOH or are "corruptions" of the LOH. Lines 3 and 21 maintain the original readings, "childish pleasures sillily" and "Love just alike in all, none of these loves can die." The Group II manuscripts also retain "fitter" in line 17 and "our" in line 14—thus providing further evidence, in fact, that those alterations were scribal changes that occurred farther down the family tree in the Group I+ manuscripts. The first common change among the Group II manuscripts is the alteration of "snorted" to "slumbered" in line 4.[14] In addition, all Group II manuscripts contain "But" instead of "For" (line 10),[15] "a" in place

[14]This alteration also occurs in NY1 and VA2; otherwise, NY1 and VA2 read like the other Group III+ manuscripts. But, this verbal variant is unusual enough that the potential for two different scribes to make the same change coincidentally is very slim. More likely, both manuscript sets were derived from a common lost ancestor (represented by in the schema) that contains this single alteration from the LOH.

[15]Although this change also occurs in the Stephens manuscripts (H7), the alteration of these similar three-letter words is so common that the likelihood of this chance occurrence is high between two different scribes and is not significant enough on its own to suggest a relationship between the Stephens and the other Group II manuscripts.

of "one" (line 11), "plain true hearts" instead of "true plain hearts" (line 16), "is" in place of "was" (line 19), and "both our" instead of "our two" (line 20). Comparison of these readings with the original Group III manuscript readings shows none of the changes to be improvements; indeed, most of them offer poorer readings. "But" in line 10 makes little sense, and "a" instead of "one" takes away from the numerical terminology present in the poem,[16] as well as the specificity provided by the word "one." The inversion of "plain true hearts" for "true plain hearts" is explainable by the nature of the manuscript culture; certainly the clichéd "true hearts" could spring to the mind of a busy scribe quickly scanning the lines, thus causing an accidental inversion. The replacement of "was" with "is" also is most likely a scribal alteration, for setting the unequal mixing of elements contemporaneously with death, as indicated by "is," removes the cause-and-effect relationship established by "was," a much more logical reading. Finally, "both our" certainly does not strengthen the line, offering instead a reading that is not as precise as the pulling together of two forces into one, represented by "our two." None of these readings can be construed as likely authorial changes, thus indicating that the Group II manuscripts are very likely derived from a "corrupt" manuscript (represented in the schema by 2).

The next step in the editorial process was to run further collations to segregate these main groups into families and subfamilies to provide a more exact transmissional history. Some prior knowledge of the manuscripts was helpful in this initial grouping, although not allowing prior assumptions to deter from checking thoroughly for patterns and possibilities is critical in accurate stemma determination. When *Variorum* editors established the text of "Loves Warre," for example, the Thomas Smyth (F4) and Bridgewater (HH1) manuscripts were determined to be a subfamily, so, naturally, looking for distinguishing word patterns

[16]The poem contains several numerical references: "Seven," "one" (several times), and "two" (twice).

between the versions of "The Good Morrowe" in these two manuscripts was a logical step in this process. As expected, there were some commonalities; both contain "fancy" instead of "fancies" in line 5, and both alter "out" in line 9 to another three-letter word: "but" in F4 and "not" in HH1. Although "but" and "not" obviously are quite different words, when combined with other evidence such changes can substantiate the possibility that both manuscripts were copied from the same parent, one in which that particular word is difficult to read. Such investigative grouping techniques allowed for establishing many parent-child and sibling relationships among the manuscripts.[17]

---

[17]Another example of this investigative grouping technique can be found in the Dalhousie manuscripts (TT1 and TT2). Errnest W. Sullivan, II argues effectively that the main poetic sequence of TT2 was copied from TT1 (*The First and Second Dalhousie Manuscripts* [Columbia: Univ. of Missouri Press, 1988].) Because this parent-child relationship has been established for the majority of Donne's verse in these two manuscripts, looking for unusual linking features between the two versions of this poem in TT1 and TT2 was logical, and several verbal echoes are apparent. Both contain "our childish pleasures" instead of the usual "on childish pleasures" in line 3 and "but as all pleasures" instead of "but this, all pleasures" in line 5. However, I then had to determine whether the TT1 and TT2 versions of this particular poem fit Sullivan's general findings for the two manuscripts; is the TT2 version of "The Good Morrowe" a scribal copy of TT1 or were these manuscript versions siblings, children of another version that contains these unique readings? Therefore, I analyzed the manuscripts to see if either manuscript contains a reading so unique that the scribe who composed the other manuscript could not possibly have coincidentally changed this reading back to the original while copying it. In this case, for example, TT2 (incorrectly) reads "But love, all other love" instead of "But love, all love." TT1, however, maintains "But love, all love." The chance that the TT1 scribe copied the TT2 manuscript but by happenstance changed that line back from the TT2 "all other love" reading to the correct original "all love" reading is so remote that TT1 cannot be a child of TT2. But, so many verbal variants connect the two manuscripts that they must be a

Through this process of finding unique connections between the manuscripts, the probable transmissional history of "The Good Morrowe" became apparent. The limitations of the stemma do not allow for a full listing of the verbal variants that assisted in the breaking up of families and sub-families. And, as previously mentioned, not all divisions are based solely on verbal variations, for knowledge of other parent-child and sibling relationships and recognition of other aspects of the manuscript versions, including sequence and indentation patterns, have been useful as well.[18] In the case of "The Good Morrowe," these manuscript relationships thoroughly substantiated the theory that Donne did in fact revise an original version of the poem but also led to the likelihood that another "corrupt" version must have resulted, as well. Therefore, there are three general groupings of "The Good Morrowe": the Group III LOH descendants, the Group I LRH descendants, and the Group II "corrupt" copy descendants, as presented in the poem's stemma.

After establishing that Donne must have revised the original holograph from the Group III reading to the Group I reading, the

---

sub-family, so, logically, the TT2 scribe has altered the TT1 text, establishing the parent-child relationship indicated in the schema.

Another example of this process is evident in the Phillips (O21) and Osborn (Y03) manuscripts, traditionally considered to be siblings. These manuscript versions exhibit many unique, linking features such as their reading of line 14: "each hath his one & his owne" instead of the traditional "each hath one, and is one." Certainly, neither of these manuscripts could be parents to any other extant manuscripts, for these dramatically different readings would have been consistent among others copied from these, and no extant manuscripts contain such readings. In addition, many other unusual verbal commonalities between these two manuscripts exist, establishing the sibling connection.

[18]For example, an unusual indentation pattern (containing indentation of lines 5-6, 12-13, and 19-20 only) found among nine manuscripts within Group II, combined with other verbal evidence, suggested a sub-family of a lost descendant (represented by 3 in the schema).

next critical decision was whether to provide readers with the original holograph text, the revised holograph text, or both versions of the poem. Because in the case of "The Good Morrowe" the principal alterations between the LOH and the LRH provide a more suggestive, multifaceted reading but do not radically affect the poem's meaning, only one version need be presented. And, just as most scholars cringe at the notion of having a rough draft of an article published or even read by a colleague, most authors vastly prefer to provide only their final editions.[19] So I attempted to determine the "least corrupted surviving version" of Donne's poem, the descendant of the LRH that would require minimal "anachronistic intervention."[20]

Choosing this descendant, a copy-text for "The Good Morrowe," was not simple, for an editor must determine the artifact that seems to have the fewest "corruptions" and stands the highest on the family tree. In the Group I+ manuscripts, two manuscripts stand out clearly as the most likely candidates: the Dolau Cothi (WN1) and the Dublin II (DT2) manuscripts. These two manuscripts contain few unusual variants, are somewhat consistent with the LRH, and are high on the family tree of that group. The Dolau Cothi[21] contains fewer scribal verbal alterations

---

[19]Throughout this editorial process I have come to understand more clearly the "isolated author" objections of scholars such as Jerome J. McGann (*A Critique of Modern Textual Criticism* [Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1983]), and I plan to continue my examination of social and textual contexts for Donne's poetry in future editorial projects. But the goal in this particular case is to interpret the extant evidence so as to present the closest possible poem to the one Donne composed, a poem for print and not a hypertext version that might include all authorial (or possibly non-authorial) variant states of the text.

[20]I have attempted to follow *The Variorum* editors' goal to present each "poem essentially free of conjecture and anachronistic intervention" (*Elegies*, p. liii).

[21]Consisting of 129 Donne poems, all composed in the same hand and dated between 1622 and 1633, this manuscript was owned by

than the Dublin II and contains the three-stanza pattern and lack of indentation that evidence suggests the LRH most likely contains. Although the Welsh spelling, capitalization, and punctuation are unusual, the Dolau Cothi provides the most consistent verbal readings and would require the fewest editorial emendations, and when choosing a copy-text the verbal readings are much more significant than scribal idiosyncrasies; thus, WN1 is the most logical choice for the copy-text of "The Good Morrowe."

While this copy-text choice is primarily historically based, critical interpretation corroborates the textual selection. First, Donne almost certainly revised his original "childish pleasures sillily" to "country pleasures childishly." While "childish" and "sillily" maintain similar meanings, making the original version repetitive, "country" and "childishly" combine the lewd simplicity of Hamlet's "country pleasures" with the notion of uncomplicated youth. In addition, the revision of Donne's original, bland ending "Love just alike in all, none of these loves can die" to "Love so alike, that none do slacken, none can die" reminds the reader of the interdependence of mutual love, as well as the fragile balance of the body's elements and of the spheres of the world. As David Daiches suggests, Donne's "slacken" conclusion "gives the necessary rhetorical weight to the final line of the poem" that the alternative ending lacks.[22] In addition, "snorted," as opposed to "slumbered," suggests a lack of refinement before the couple awakens to the enlightenment of reciprocal love. Also, "snorted" has an equivalent

---

Richard Lloyde circa 1700, belonged to the Johns family of Dolau Cothi until approximately 1944, and now resides in the National Library of Wales. The manuscript contains generally Group II readings, although some poems, such as "The Good Morrowe," are more consistent with Group I (*Elegies*, p. xcii).

[22]"A Reading of the 'Good-Morrow,'" in *"Just So much Honor": Essays Commemorating the Four-Hundredth Anniversary of the Birth of John Donne* (University Park and London: Pennsylvania State Univ. Press, 1972).

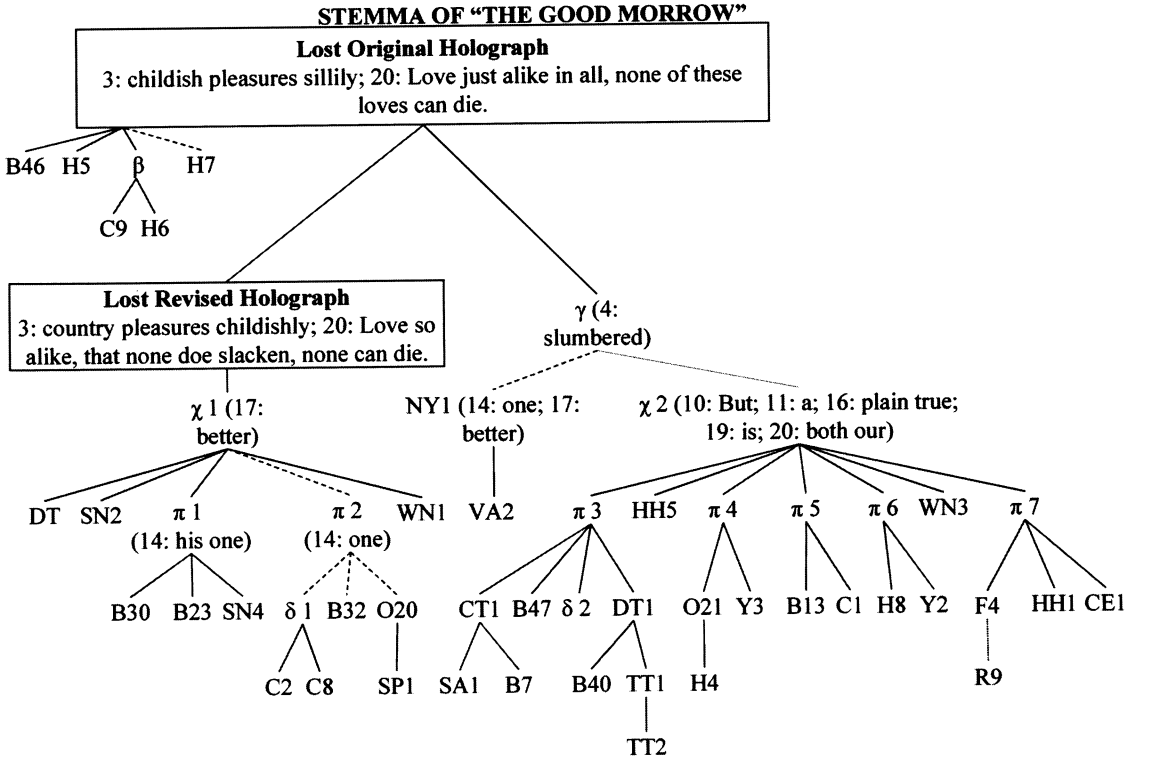
roughness to "country pleasures," offering a more consistent subsequent idea than the innocence and peace of "slumbered," which does not fit contextually.

Some scholars urge that "Let us possess one world" provides a stronger reading than "our world," due to the poem's numerical language and the idea of two becoming "one." However, others argue for the inclusiveness and ownership connoted by "our." But, as the stemma indicates, all Group III and 1 descendants (except those of 2) include "our," suggesting that the corruption from "our" to "one" occurred in the early, lost Group I manuscript represented by 2. Thus, all manuscript evidence points to "our world" as the authorial reading. However, because the seventeenth-century printed versions apparently developed from the "corrupt" 2 strand of transmission, most modern editors have maintained the "one" reading. Only Helen Gardner has presented "our" instead of "one," but even she provides little explanation for her editorial choice. Because historical evidence points to "our" as the correct reading, we can now say with confidence that "our" represents Donne's choice.

The Dolau Cothi presents these readings, but, in order to provide what appears to be authorial verbal choices, one major emendation was necessary: "better" to "fitter." Although the Dolau Cothi contains "better," as do the other Group I manuscripts, bibliographical evidence suggests that "fitter" is the "fitter" choice. The earliest readings contain "fitter," a more precise phrasing, suggesting the image of two synchronized hemispheres comprising a world and of two perfectly suited people creating a whole. And, paleographically speaking, like "our" and "one," "better" and "fitter" appear quite similar; but, as previously discussed, the odds of a scribe reading "better" and coming up with the unusual "fitter" are slim. "Better" appears to be a scribal trivialization based on misreading, a notion further supported by the fact that the lineage also contains "fitter." Neither logic nor textual evidence suggests Donne altered the more complex "fitter" to "better."

Although critical interpretation appears to substantiate the Dolau Cothi text of this poem, no final conclusions are indisputable, even regarding the likelihood that Donne edited this poem or any other. However, if, like Stringer, we envision in Donne the portrait of "an artist who very much cared about his poems and who continued to fine-tune or revise individual items, sometimes in multiple stages, even after distributing the original versions," then the potential for authorial and scribal revision must be taken into account for any edition of a Donne poem. At this point, all material evidence points toward this revised version of "The Good Morrowe" as the last authorial version of the text. Although this text diverges from that of Grierson, Shawcross, and other editors on several points, I humbly submit that this historically and critically based detective work on Donne's "The Good Morrowe" provides, if not a "better" text, then at least a "fitter" one.

University of Maryland


STEMMA OF "THE GOOD MORROW"
Lost Original Holograph
3: childish pleasures sillily; 20: Love just alike in all, none of these loves can die.
B46 H5 β H7
C9 H6
Lost Revised Holograph
3: country pleasures childishly; 20: Love so alike, that none doe slacken, none can die.
γ (4: slumbered)
χ 1 (17: better)
NY1 (14: one; 17: better)
χ 2 (10: But; 11: a; 16: plain true; 19: is; 20: both our)
DT SN2 π 1 (14: his one) π 2 (14: one) WN1 VA2 π 3 HH5 π 4 π 5 π 6 WN3 π 7
B30 B23 SN4 δ 1 B32 O20 CT1 B47 δ 2 DT1 O21 Y3 B13 C1 H8 Y2 F4 HH1 CE1
C2 C8 SP1 SA1 B7 B40 TT1 H4 R9
TT2