

# Robert Burton's Anatomy of the Heart: Realigning *The Anatomy of Melancholy*

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There are two ways of understanding *The Anatomy of Melancholy* as an “anatomy” which conflict with one another. On the one hand is the obvious sense of anatomy as an encyclopedic survey. On the other, and less obvious, is the experience of reading that becomes an anatomy of the reader's heart, an experience of being exposed and dissected by the book. The first option, the pose of methodological objectivity, is relentlessly undercut by comic irony, for Burton's final strategy is not to transmit information but to transform his readers. In his “satirical preface” Burton protests that if the *Anatomy* “be over medicall, or savour too much of humanity, I promise thee, that I will hereafter make thee amends in some Treatise of Divinity.”<sup>1</sup> Beneath its surface, *The Anatomy of Melancholy* is already a divinity treatise. It is a work of practical theology, and its agenda is the cure of souls. Its therapeutic answer to melancholy is found in laughter. The book teaches us to laugh at anything and everything that pretends to high seriousness, and teaches us, most importantly, to laugh at ourselves.

Ironic declarations of intent abound. Burton gives “honourable Presidents” for his *Anatomy*, in the first instance the Roman Catholic Bishop Anthony Zara's *Anatomia ingeniorum et scientiarum* (Venice, 1615), which Burton playfully cites as Zara's *Anatomy of Wit*. This comprehensive survey of learning set out in stately anatomical divisions and totally lacking in irony is all that Burton's *Anatomy* pretends to be, but is not.<sup>2</sup> Then in a note he adds *The Anatomy of Popery*, *The Anatomy of Immortality*, and Angelus Salus' *Anatomy of Antimony* (*Preface*, 6). This list surveys the variety of species of the anatomy family—anatomy as comprehensive survey, social criticism, schematic description and medical manual. Each defines *The Anatomy of Melancholy* in one way or another, but none does so exhaustively. As the list is characterized as a company of “absurd, vaine, idle, illiterate, &c” precedents (*Preface*, 12), it functions as that list of mock encomia Erasmus cites in *The Praise of Folly*. It gives playful cover to the *Anatomy*'s complex, serious depth.<sup>3</sup> This depth of purpose is found in a further anatomical dimension of this book, to which Burton does not call explicit attention: the anatomy of the heart commonly practiced as a spiritual discipline in the mainstream Calvinism of the early Seventeenth Century. I shall argue here that this branch of the anatomy family lies hidden beneath the others as the medium of the book's ultimately serious intent in the cure of souls, and offers the most fruitful approach to understanding *The Anatomy of Melancholy* as a whole. Attending to the serious depth of Burton's work does not, of course, require us to ignore the *Anatomy*'s rampant hilarity. As in *The Praise of Folly*, the two motives work hand in hand. In any case, it is a mistake to caricature Calvinism as a narrow, humorless Puritanism. Burton's Calvinism is grounded in the rich literary community of late Renaissance Christian humanism.<sup>4</sup>

Anthony Milton has shown that the Calvinism of the English Church of Burton's formative years “did not . . . constitute a single undifferentiated system of thought.” It was an uneasy consensus which, in Milton's words, “was breaking up of its own accord” in the years of Burton's maturity.<sup>5</sup> The wrenching political and religious changes accompanying the years Burton wrote and expanded *The Anatomy of Melancholy* through its successive editions put the Calvinist perspective of this book in high relief. But placing *The Anatomy of Melancholy* in that community of early seventeenth century Anglicans for whom the discipline of anatomizing the heart was common practice calls for a rather thorough ideological realignment of this work. A key critical problem is that the *Anatomy* has been read not from the perspective of its own complex history but anachronistically, from a perspective that seems to have been drawn from the Restoration Anglican establishment of the latter third of the Seventeenth Century, weary of controversy and wary of zeal in any form.<sup>6</sup>

In the introduction to his edition of the *Anatomy*, for instance, A. R. Shilleto maintains that “in the question of religious tolerance Burton held liberal views. . . . It may be doubted whether he objected to downright infidels.”<sup>7</sup> Readers of *The Anatomy of Melancholy* in the last three decades have generally echoed Shilleto. Stanley Fish describes the bleak nihilism of a book lacking “an independent center of authority.” For Fish the *Anatomy* is characterized by “a total unreliability, in the author, in his materials, in his readers, and in his structure, a total unreliability and a total subjectivity.”<sup>8</sup> David Renaker places Burton in a community of Calvinist orthodoxy (a “profoundly unoriginal thinker,” Renaker calls him), but while he presents Burton’s use of the Calvinist teaching on predestination in thorough detail, he says Burton’s extreme position on this doctrine is “insincere,” and that his aim is rather to “carry on his eclectic policy of offering every sort of comfort to every sort of sufferer.”<sup>9</sup> Renaker’s reluctance to accept Burton’s Calvinism is a common feature of *Anatomy* readers. Hugh Trevor-Roper maintains Burton “was not himself theologically minded,” and believes “no one would suppose, from his work, that he was a clergyman.” Trevor-Roper nevertheless identifies Burton with the Laudian party and says Burton “was one with Laud against the Puritans.”<sup>10</sup>

For Michael O’Connell Burton’s Anglicanism is a broad, inclusive high-churchmanship and Burton himself is like “one of Trollope’s more worldly clergymen.”<sup>11</sup> Explaining how the *Anatomy* “collects, anthologizes, makes a collage of the best and the oddest bits from the storehouse of literary experience” (70), O’Connell complains that such an inclusive vision is uncharacteristically narrowed in the final partition’s discussion of religious melancholy, which “partakes all too much of this theological dark age” (72). The Calvinist perspective of that discussion of religious melancholy does not fit easily in O’Connell’s high church view of Burton and his view of the *Anatomy* as an uncritical, inclusive compilation of literary bits.

Patricia Vicari has recognized a different agenda for the *Anatomy* in its affinity with the cure of souls tradition, identifying the work generically as being like a sermon, with the end of persuading us that “the author is one like ourselves, a fellow-sufferer.”<sup>12</sup> But she maintains that Burton argues against Puritans throughout and holds that “all of Burton’s consolation entitled “Cure of Despair” is directed against the Puritan interpretation of Predestination.”<sup>13</sup> John Stachniewski also sees Burton’s place among physicians of the soul, and argues for an antipathy in the *Anatomy* for Puritan thinking. While showing Burton to be writing in the language and themes of that Puritan community, he criticizes Burton’s “failure to reproduce” the expository clarity of treatise writers like William Perkins in his consolation. Burton, he says, is neither interested in nor capable of doing so. Puritan theological method disappears in his “verbal swill” and “dedication to superficiality.” The *Anatomy*’s governing motive is seen as O’Connell sees it, as an anthologizing in which the literature of consolation was only one among a vast collection of odd bits: “Religious despair . . . was a prominent cultural phenomenon in the eye of the antiquarian don which commanded inclusion in his omnium gatherum of human eccentricities.”<sup>14</sup>

W. Scott Blanchard has recognized more perceptively than others the way in which Burton’s Calvinism is “an appropriate sensibility” for what he describes as “a skeptical Menippean mind, rejecting as it does the vaunting claims of human reason.”<sup>15</sup> While calling attention to Burton’s frustration with Archbishop William Laud’s vision for the English Church, he characterizes Burton’s Anglicanism as “conventional.”

Simply to say that Burton’s Anglicanism was conventional begs an important question. I argue that the *Anatomy* is not an artifact of that Anglicanism which only became normative after the Restoration,<sup>16</sup> but of an earlier English Church which, as a reading of successive editions of the *Anatomy* will show, had a complex configuration of shifting theological loyalties but was still, in Burton’s mind, broadly Calvinist. The inertia of the idea that this book is defined by a latitudinarian eclecticism has been so strong that it has skewed the readings given it even by those like Stachniewski who have demonstrated the Calvinist, even Puritan intellectual community in which *The Anatomy of Melancholy* took shape.

The root of the confusion about Robert Burton’s Anglicanism is perhaps found in Anthony à Wood’s comment that Burton used wafers at communion.<sup>17</sup> Lawrence Babb, for instance, concludes from this detail that in ritual Burton belonged to Laud, while in doctrine, paradoxically, he was Calvinist:

A minister of the early Stuart period. . . could hardly have avoided taking a stand on three questions which were then agitating the clergy. One of these, a matter of church polity, was the question of episcopacy. Burton was a staunch Episcopalian. The second was the question of ritual in worship. Burton was a defender of the traditional ceremonial; he is known to have used wafers in conducting the communion. The third was the doctrinal issue of predestination. Burton believed in election and reprobation, finding sanction for his position in the Articles of the Church. His opinions on church government and on ceremonial worship seem to align him with the Laudian conservatives. Yet doctrinally he stands with the moderate Calvinistic Puritans. His infrequent references to Calvin are all deferential. He attacks many sects with wrath and ridicule, but never the Presbyterians.<sup>18</sup>

A brief look at this issue of wafers in the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century English Church will show that Wood's comment reveals more about a late seventeenth-century bias than it does about Robert Burton.

Bishop Joseph Hall, an early seventeenth-century Calvinist and delegate to the Synod of Dort, explained that "Geneva useth leavened bread; we wafers."<sup>19</sup> Hall implies that the use of wafers was not only formally required but also broadly accepted. The actual situation was more complicated. Before 1559 there was official tolerance for a variety of practice. While Cranmer opposed anything supporting the idea of "consecration" and encouraged the use of ordinary table bread (the 1552 Prayer Book contains a rubric allowing ministers to take leftovers home to their families) even a major theologian of the Reformed Church like Bucer, consulted on the drafting of the Prayer Book, could be open to variety of practice.<sup>20</sup> In mid-sixteenth century England use of wafers and common bread varied widely even within the diocese, as Grindal's often quoted observation of the Diocese of London indicates: "Some with unleavened bread, some with leavened."<sup>21</sup> Elizabeth required wafers as normal parish practice by force of law, but these were "Protestant" wafers, thicker and lacking images: "The same sacramental bread be made and formed plain, without any figures and fashioned round, though somewhat bigger in compass and thickness, as the usual bread and wafer heretofore named singing cakes, which served for the use of private Mass."<sup>22</sup> Elizabeth's injunction was often ignored in Burton's years, the prevailing norm being "wafers tacitly assumed and common bread expressly conceded" (Procter & Frere, 501). Under Laud and at the Restoration there was less tolerance for Geneva, and Restoration additions to Prayer Book rubrics indicate that the theology behind the Elizabethan compromise of plain, substantial wafer bread was becoming obscured by a high-church understanding of consecration that provided for reservation of the host and thus restricted the conditions under which leftovers could be taken home. Such qualifications put greater distance between common bread and the more sacramentally distinct wafers (see Procter & Frere 501). Anthony à Wood's comment on Burton's practice is written from this late seventeenth-century perspective, but for mainstream Calvinists in the early Seventeenth Century such practice was relatively unproblematic, and certainly lacking the significance it would carry in the post-Restoration Church. In any case, we only have Wood's word for this, as Burton makes no reference to wafers in *The Anatomy of Melancholy*. Parish records for the church Burton served in Oxford, St Thomas, are missing. Karl Joseph Höltinger has shown that Burton's curate at Seagrave, John Mallinson, was a Puritan ejected for nonconformity in 1662.<sup>23</sup> Plain table bread was no doubt used at Seagrave, as it was in the church of Burton's "quondam chamber fellow," James Whitehall, at Checkley, Staffordshire.<sup>24</sup>

What, then, of Burton's episcopal loyalties? He may have bishops in his Utopia (Preface, 89), but so would the thoroughly Calvinist Archbishop George Abbot. According to Anthony Milton, "The most important work to expound [the Church of England's episcopacy] was commissioned by Archbishop Abbot. Abbot encouraged his chaplain Francis Mason to compose his *Of the Consecration of Bishops* (published 1613) as an exhaustive apologia for the English ministry" (Anthony Milton, 462). Certainly, for Burton to support the episcopacy of the English Church does not put him among the Laudian conservatives. A more careful look at Burton's times can remove the inconsistency Babb saw in Burton's ecclesiological and doctrinal commitments.

The importance of realigning the *Anatomy* with the community of early seventeenth-century Calvinism is that doing so reveals the *Anatomy's* pastoral agenda, its anatomy of readers' hearts. The cure of melancholy in *The Anatomy of Melancholy* comes through engaging the reader in a

total reorientation of the self that is both a spiritual ordeal and a comic reversal of the reader's expectations. In the end, no treatise on melancholy itself—medical or theological—will cure melancholy. Reading such discourse may in fact be a symptom of the disease itself, of a desire for distraction and amusement, and stand in the way of cure. To see the “anatomical” nature of this book as an omnium gatherum like Bishop Zara's *Anatomia ingeniorum et scientiarum* is only to see a comic surface, an outward, superficial objectivity subverted by an intimate anatomy of the readers' inner selves. The following sketch of the place of anatomizing the heart in seventeenth-century Calvinism will support an understanding of the significance of such tactical discourse in *The Anatomy of Melancholy* as a whole, both as a strategy of composition and as an engagement in the ecclesiastical controversies surrounding its successive editions.

### 1. Anatomy as Calvinist self-scrutiny

The tradition of anatomizing the heart in the Calvinist devotional practice of Burton's day was the first step in a method of meditation that was to be practiced not just as a daily discipline but as a continuing habit of mind. The believer was encouraged to look within, to anatomize the contents of the soul, to cut away the fabric of hypocrisy in order to expose interior worlds that were judged in the light of Scripture to be chaotic and rebellious. Henry Smith said, “[T]he Scriptures cried, Examine thyself, accuse thyself, judge thyself, 1 Cor. xi. 28-31. . . . Let thy question be, ‘What hath I done?’ and make thy anatomy of thy self.”<sup>25</sup> Barbara Lewalski, in her *Protestant Poetics and the Seventeenth-Century Religious Lyric*, quotes John Bate describing the Penitential Psalms as the “Anatomy of the spirit and the heart, as it were, of the new man,” and testifies that “we find this notion and this language everywhere” in the seventeenth-century English Church.<sup>26</sup> Owen Watkins calls attention to “the countless anatomies of the soul that went through edition after edition in the seventeenth century,” devotional manuals that were published by “almost every Puritan preacher of note.”<sup>27</sup>

When Watkins speaks of “almost every Puritan preacher of note” he has in mind preachers like Richard Rogers, who, in his *Seven Treatises*, recommends an anatomical self-scrutiny as the first task in a daily regimen: “First, that every day wee should bee humbled for our sinnes, as through due examination of our lives by the Law of God we shall see them.”<sup>28</sup> The discipline was Calvinistic, and as such broader than Puritanism by any definition. No one, for instance, would claim John Donne for a Puritan. But in a sermon on Psalm 32:5 (“I acknowledge my sin unto thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid”), Donne describes such self-scrutiny as Rogers does, as a necessary first step preliminary to confession:

For first, in the first, there is a reflected Act, that David doth upon himselfe, before he come to his Confession to God . . . . *Non operui*, I have not hid mine iniquity, none of mine iniquities from mine owne sight: I have displayed to myselfe, anatomized mine own conscience, let no corner unsearched, I am come to a perfect understanding of mine own case, *Non operui*.<sup>29</sup>

For Donne, such acknowledgment comes by means of “the Method of the Holy Ghost.” The first step for Donne is not an act of personal will. The reflective act “was his first quickening, and inanimation, that grace gave his soul, as the soule gives the child in the Mothers wombe.”<sup>30</sup> While scholars find it difficult to label John Donne himself, what he is describing here is a distinctive feature of Calvinism. In Calvinist thought, anatomizing the heart was itself a response to the “prevenient” movement of divine grace. The Calvinist's God was thus understood to be active in the cure of souls from the beginning. Without benefit of priestly absolution, penitents in the Reformed churches found their consolation through direct, often dramatic engagement with their God. William Perkins, while strongly emphasizing the supporting and counseling role of trained ministers, nevertheless highlights the work done by the penitent “by, and in himself” to “examine his conscience most straightly and narrowly, of all the sinnes of his heart and life.”<sup>31</sup>

What did the Calvinist mind see when, purged of hypocrisy, it looked into its own heart to discover its standing before God? An entire catalogue of depravity, Richard Rogers implies:

. . . to anatomize and describe the heart, and in few words to say so much of so large a matter, we must know, that it is overspread with unbeleefe, deceitfull, unruly, loose, hardened, willful, vaine, idle, blockish, cold in goodness, and without savouring it, and soon wearying of it; high, big, proud, disdainful, self-loving, uncharitable, unkind, conceited, impatient, angry, fierce, envious, revenging, unmercifull, froward and techy,

churlish, sullen, meddling, worldly, filthy and unclean, loving pleasure more than godliness, unprofitable, repining, earthly, greedy or covetous, idolatrous, superstitious, unreverent, hypocritical, disobedient to betters, judging rashly, hardly reconciled, and in a word prone to all evil: is it not then hardly tamed. (Rogers, 118)

Rogers' copious list of exposed depravities reminds us of that branch of the anatomy family represented by works like Philip Stubbes' *Anatomy of Abuses* (1586), examples of which were legion in Burton's time. The breadth of social criticism in *The Anatomy of Melancholy* is informed by the equal rigor Calvinism gave to the vigilant exposure of the world's abuses in this community of satirical anatomies. In the Calvinist scheme of things every personal sin had a social dimension, and social corruption imperiled the individual soul. Burton confesses that he finds it difficult to maintain the "even tone" of medical objectivity: "If hereafter, anatomizing this surly humor, my hand slip, as an unskilled Prentice, I launce too deep, and cut through skin and all at unawares, make it smart or cut away . . . *difficile est Satyram non scribere*" (*Preface*, 113).

Of course the discipline of self-scrutiny was not invariably named "anatomy,"<sup>32</sup> nor did writers who pursued the theme of exposing the heart's inner secrets with the anatomy metaphor in mind always do so in an overt and predictable manner. As the speaker explains in one of Anne Lok's sonnets (part of a sonnet sequence elaborating on Psalm 51 published with Lok's translation of Calvin's sermons on Ezekiel), "My cruell conscience with sharpned knife / Doth splat my ribbed hert, and layes abroad / The loathesome secretes of my filthy life."<sup>33</sup> The devotional manuals labeled "anatomies" by Owen Watkins rarely paraded the actual word in their titles, as the social-satire anatomies did. But use of the specific metaphor of anatomizing the heart to describe this practice was sufficiently widespread and broadly enough recognized to encourage our use of the metaphor as a generic label. A sermon preached by Thomas Watson later in the century, *Gods Anatomy upon Mans Heart* (London, 1649), offers a particularly clear summary of the convention. By exposing their hearts and the heart of their society to the light of Scripture, Christians were opening themselves to God's probing dissection.

Anatomizing the heart was not an end in itself but only the first step in a program for the heart's healing. Cutting and mending were organically-related processes. According to William Perkins, God "workes all things in his creatures in, and by contraries" (Perkins, *Cases*, 67). "Thus in the worke of our Redemption," Perkins continues, "Christ gives life, not by life, but by death, and he sends men to heaven by the gates and suburbes of hell . . . that man may have no hope in himselfe, but that the hope he hath, may be in God" (Perkins, *Cases*, 68) The second step in Rogers' daily self-scrutiny is, "Every day we ought to be raised unto a cheerefull and lively beleiving, that our sinnes . . . are forgiven" (*Seven Treatises*, 428). For John Donne the anatomy discovers not only our corruption but also our redemption:

We must . . . anatomize our soule . . . and finde every sinewe, and fiber, every lineament and ligament of this body of sinne, and then every breath of that newe spirit, every drop of that newe blood that must restore and repair us. (Donne, *Sermons*, 2, 159)

As anatomizing the soul was the first step in the Calvinist practice of the cure of souls, the anatomist had an affinity with that more ancient community of the "good physician." Burton pretends in his preface to be by inclination a physician even though a divine by profession. "A good Divine either is or ought to be a good Physitian," he says, "a Spirituall Physitian at least, as our Saviour calls himselfe" (*Preface*, 22). Later (2.2.4.1, 91) Burton will cite the Augustinian source for this "good physician" motif. What he means is that he is by inclination a physician of souls, which is only to say by a traditional metaphor often adapted by the literary anatomists that he remains a divine. He writes in phisic, he says with profound irony, given the state of the nation's soul that is anatomized in the pages to come, "not that I preferre it before Divinity . . . but that in Divinity I saw no such great neede" (*Preface*, 20).<sup>34</sup> The gift of phisic is given to ministers who, in John Milton's words, "beginning at the prime causes and roots of the disease sends in . . . divine ingredients of most cleansing power . . . to purge the mind . . . a rough and vehement cleansing medicine . . . a kind of saving by undoing."<sup>35</sup> The motivation for this process of discernment is not the bleak masochism which would prevail if the process simply ended in the anatomical exposure of the heart's hidden secrets. The anatomy is only the prelude to a larger process of spiritual healing, a "saving by undoing," as Milton called it.

Can Burton's readers bear the psychological trauma of anatomizing their own hearts, of uncovering and coming to terms with such a willful, inveterate malady? Some no doubt will be like that one who, in Milton's words, "having foul diseases about him, perishes for shame and the fear he has of a rigorous incision to come upon his flesh" (John Milton 683). But if readers can face such a probing scalpel, the cure is in sight: "*Parcam huic homini, saith Austin (ex persona Dei), quia sibi ipsi non pepercit; ignoscam quia peccatum agnovit*: I will spare him because hee hath not spared himselfe; I will pardon him, because hee doth acknowledge his offense; let it be never so enormous a sinne, *his grace is sufficient, 2. Cor. 12.9*" (3.4.2.6, 441).

## 2. Unexpected agendas

The Calvinist view of human capacities is harsh. In its most severe form, it denies the utterly corrupt human will the ability to accomplish anything for good, not even repentance or conversion, without the prevenient grace of God. While some English Calvinists spoke of cooperating with God in "preparing" the heart for salvation,<sup>36</sup> and while the growing Arminian movement, followers of Jacob Arminius (1560-1609), held that the natural human will could exercise free choice in accepting or refusing salvation, Burton found himself among those who emphasized the role of divine grace, and the inability of individuals to influence their salvation in any way whatsoever. Burton's first task then was not so much to convince readers to repent but to bring them to recognize that in their despair the grace of God was already at work:

Thou dost not belevee thou saist, yet thou wouldst belevee if thou couldst, 'tis thy desire to belevee, then pray, *Lord help my unbeleeffe*, and hereafter thou shalt certainly belevee. . . . A desire to repent is repentance it selfe. . . . He that is destitute of Gods grace, and wisheth for it shall have it . . . . A true desire of mercy is mercy it selfe, a desire of grace in the want of grace is grace it selfe. (3.4.2.6, 430-431)<sup>37</sup>

Thus Burton leads his readers to the point of despair in order to bring them to what the Calvinist would call a firmer hope, to bring them, in Calvin's words, "to understand, that they . . . are upholden by the onely hand of God: that they being naked and emptie, may flee to his mercie, that they may . . . take hold of it alone."<sup>38</sup> *The Anatomy of Melancholy* must break its readers down, anatomize them, in order to build them up. Despair precedes assurance as an unexpected means of grace.

Burton's pastoral agenda produces a fabric of irony that disrupts formal expectations as well as his readers' emotional equilibrium. On the one hand, he pretends to a strictly medical discourse, saying he will omit "impertinent digressions" and avoid cases that are "improperly melancholy." But on the other hand, what he actually gives readers is what he says he will avoid, a conflation of all those who are "metaphorically mad, lightly mad, or in disposition, as stupid, angry, drunken, silly, sottish, sullen, proud, vainglorious, ridiculous, beastly, peevish, obstinate, impudent, extravagant, dry, doting, dull, desperate, harebraine, &c. mad, phrantike, foolish, heterocrites . . ." (*Preface*, 109-10). Burton will insist every reader suffers in one way or another from "melancholy"—or madness, folly, or senility: "properly or improperly . . . truly, or metaphorically, 'tis all one" (*Preface*, 25), he says. For Burton, "melancholy" is an inveterate, even inevitable condition, a metaphor for the totality of human experience as understood by the Calvinist imagination. The *Anatomy's* subject is not melancholy so much as it is the human depravity of which all this is symptomatic, and its formal status is not methodological objectivity but personal engagement. "That which crucifies us most, is our owne folly, madnesse, (*quos Jupiter perdit, dementat* by subtraction of his assisting grace God permits it); we "provoke God to Anger, and heap upon us this of Melancholy, and all kindes of incurable disease, as a just and deserved punishment for our sinnes" (1.1.1.1, 128). Burton says at the very outset of the *Anatomy*, "Thou thy selfe art the subject of my Discourse" (*Preface*, 1). And he will explore the anguish lying at the heart of every reader's life with pastoral intent

not to upbraid any miserable man, or by way of derision (I rather pittie them) but the better to discerne; to apply remedies unto them; & to shew that the best and soundest of us all, is in great danger, how much we ought to feare our owne fickle estates, remember our miseries and vanities, examine and humiliate our selves, seeke to God, and call to him for mercy, that needs not looke for any rods to scourge our selves, since wee carry them in our bowels, and that our soules are in a miserable captivity. (1.3.2.1, 408)

In language exactly paralleling that of the godly preachers, Burton calls his readers to examine and humiliate themselves in a way that prepares them for understanding God's grace. His intention is "to make them reflect and knowe themselves" (2.3.1.1, 125), and his approach is one of direct address. The possibility of medical objectivity keeps dissolving in the experience of being addressed by this book, dissected and exposed.

In taking readers through the hellish, laughable and often beguilingly pleasant world of melancholy, Burton is using what the Calvinist divine would consider God's method, to cure their souls by giving readers a knowledge of themselves and of God, which Calvin considered the whole of Christian doctrine. At the very outset of *The Institution of Christian Religion* Calvin says

The whole summe in a manner of all our wisdome, which onely ought to be accounted true and perfect wisdome, consisteth in two parts; that is to say, the knowledge of God, and of our selves. But whereas these two knowledges be with many bonds linked together, yet whether goeth before or engendreth the other, it is hard to discerne. For first, no man can looke upon himselfe, but must needs by and by turne all his sense to the beholding of God. . . . and so by our owne needinesse, better appeareth that infinite plentie of good things that abideth in God. Specially that miserable ruine, where into the fall of the first man hath throwne us; compelleth us to lift up our eyes, not only being foodlesse and hungry, to crave from thence that which we lacke, but also being awakened with feare, to learne humililty. (Calvin, *Institution*, 1)

The strategy of Burton's encyclopedia of learning in *The Anatomy of Melancholy* is ultimately not to transmit information but, through such self-knowledge, to transform the heart of the reader. Scott Blanchard says the work is not a monolithic summa but a "parodic summa," dialogical and demanding response, and Ruth Fox says Burton's subject is "not so much man as it is man's knowledge of himself."<sup>39</sup> Burton plays with such conflicting motives throughout the *Anatomy*. His survey of melancholy's causes, for instance, includes an analysis of diet which the reader soon recognizes is an attack on gluttony. Burton then moves through topics which become increasingly transparent diatribes on a traditional catalogue of sins (envy, malice, anger, concupiscence, covetousness, greed), ending just before the digression on the misery of scholars with an assault on pride. "All this madnesse . . . proceeds from our selves," he says (1.2.3.14, 299). Burton's dispassionate anatomy of causes dissolves into a vehement anatomy of his readers' depravities:

Now goe and bragge of thy present happinesse, whosoever thou art, brag of thy temperature, of thy good parts, insult, triumph, and boast; thou seest in what a brittle state thou art, how soone thou maist be dejected, how many severall waies, by bad diet, bad ayre, a small losse, a little sorrow or discontent, an ague, &c. how many sudden accidents may procure thy ruine, what a small tenure of happinesse thou hast in this life, how weake and silly a creature thou art. *Humble thy selfe therefore under the mighty hand of God. 1 Pet. 5. 6.* know thy selfe, acknowledge thy present misery, and make right use of it. Be not secure . . . I have said. (1.2.5.5, 380)

The call to self-scrutiny is to yield a humble understanding of the self which, according to Richard Rogers, is far more important than merely intellectual learning: "And they who have not this knowledge in greatest account, and delight not in it, whatsoever learning, or wisdome they have, they are as farre from practising of it . . . as if they were blind and ignorant like the common sort. . . . And this is the cause why many which are learned . . . are farre from a godlie life" (Rogers, 199-200).

Michael O'Connell has noted the sense in the *Anatomy* of two books that are at odds with one another, one a proper medical treatise, the other "a work of humanist wisdom, a kind of commentary . . . on human knowing" that "finds its ancestor in Erasmus's *Praise of Folly*" (49-50). The interplay in the *Anatomy* between objective discourse and the intimate discourse of engagement defines a struggle between competing epistemologies. Stanley Fish is completely correct in putting this work in the company of "self-consuming artifacts" exploiting these two ways of looking at the world, the one more conventionally rational, characterized by "distinguishing," by "separation and discrete entities where everything is in its proper place," a knowledge of the objective world which becomes a dispensable stage in a dialectical strategy that opens up another way of seeing which is an engaged, unified knowledge of the world indistinguishable from knowledge of the self (Fish, *Artifacts*, 3).

It would have been clear from the beginning for readers raised in the broad Calvinist orthodoxy of the English Church of Burton's day that the *Anatomy's* agenda was to instill such knowledge of God and self while highlighting the absurdity of the book's pretense of objective, encyclopedic survey. Burton's First Partition evokes that section early in Book I of Calvin's *Institutes*, "The Knowledge of God the Creator," which proclaims the excellence of creation and condemns the fallen human willfulness by which that excellence is totally obscured. The very perspicuity of creation in revealing its creator's goodness is a judgment upon "the foule unthankfulnesse of men," who, dull, blind and stupid, adapt a variety of fictions to meet their own view of divinity.<sup>40</sup> Burton, similarly, begins his work with a celebration of human excellence that will be negated by human depravity: "Man, the most excellent, and noble creature of the World . . . is fallen from that he was, and forfeited his estate, become . . . one of the most miserable creatures of the World" (1.1.1.1, 121-2). In this first subsection of the *Anatomy's* First Partition, Burton has set out the basic framework of Calvinist theology by which his readers will perceive the pattern of all that follows. The frailty and rebelliousness of the human condition is known not in itself but only in juxtaposition to the glory of God, the Law of God, the Word of God. "In this sense we are all . . . Fooles, and the Scripture alone is *Arx Minervae*, wee and our writings are shallow and unperfect . . . All our actions, . . . our whole course of life is matter for laughter" (*Preface*, 30).

Each specific instrumental or accidental cause of melancholy described later embodies by nature what is explained here at the outset to be melancholy's general cause: Adam's primal sin is the "impulsive" (i.e., originating or primary) cause of our melancholy; God's "just judgment" is a "concomitant cause, and principall agent" (1.1.1.1, 122-123). The description of God as cause, the first hint at Burton's commitment to the most orthodox Calvinist position on predestination, leads him to what will become the crucial point of his consolation, prescribed here parenthetically as a possibility to be considered, that God's punishment of sin is related to the final cause of our infirmities, our reconciliation:

Or else these chastisements are inflicted upon us for our humiliation, to exercise and try our patience here in this life, to bring us home, to make us knowe God and our selves, to informe, & teach us wisdom. . . . Hee is desirous of our salvation. . . . and for that cause pulls us by the eare many times. (1.1.1.1, 124)

These general causes become the foil against which all that is anatomized in the subsequent sections, members and subsections is highlighted. What is true in the general sense is true in all particulars. According to the Ramist natural method of logic by which Burton organizes his *Anatomy*, "Proceed . . . *à partibus ad totum*, or from the whole to the parts, and you shall finde no other issue. . . . The whole must needs followe by a *Sorities* or induction. Every multitude is mad" (*Preface*, 65). Peter Ramus called his method "natural" because it arranged its arguments in "natural" hierarchies carefully distinguishing between general and specific in a way that was said to evoke the pattern in the mind of God. The Puritan community in particular celebrated the method for the access it gave to modes of thought circumventing distortion by a corrupt, post-lapsarian human will. Ramus' translator Roland MacIlmaine explains the basic operation: "The definition as most generall is first placed, next foloweth the division, first into the partes, and next into the formes and kyndes. Every part and forme is defined in his owne place, and made manifest by examples of auncient Authors."<sup>41</sup> Rosemund Tuve has shown how the Ramist "stress on the power of 'specials' to state 'generals'" yields the capacity of images to convey concepts in the poetry of Burton's contemporaries.<sup>42</sup> The same pattern is found throughout the *Anatomy*, "make how many kinds you will, divide and subdivide" (*Preface*, 32). Though the melancholy narration of this discourse makes a shambles of the method—David Renaker says Burton "took a curious revenge on Ramus"<sup>43</sup>—the principle remains intact and gives readers a key to the *Anatomy's* fabric of irony.

Perhaps the primary irony of Burton's discourse is the way in which these general causes setting out the spiritual ground for anatomizing the heart seem to get forgotten in the challenge of following the maze of instrumental and accidental causes. Burton describes his text as a labyrinth (1.2.4.7, 356) in which "our present state" is invariably "the worst" (1.2.4.5, 342). Readers testify generally to the way in which new arguments are taken up with obsessive immediacy. MacIlmaine explains that each level of cause in Ramist method is "defined in his owne place"—a principle that tempts an easily distracted melancholy mind to become obsessed with lower levels of cause ("a

most incomparable delight, it is so to melancholize" [1.2.2.6, 243]). Burton may call his readers again and again to self-knowledge, but the fascination with particulars, with survey, with compilation is ironically presented as the book's formal intent, a scheme against which the anatomy of the heart runs in contrary motion. Though at the very beginning Burton has said, "Thou thy selfe art the subject of my discourse," early in the First Partition he says something else: "The three precedent species [head melancholy, melancholy of the whole body, and hypochondriacal or windy melancholy] are the subject of my proposed discourse" (1.1.3.4, 169). Thus there are two divergent and mutually subversive modes of anatomy operating, the one yielding self-knowledge and the other enticed by knowledge of the world outside the self. When Burton says, "I write of Melancholy, by being busy to avoid Melancholy" (*Preface*, 6), he is defining the act of gathering this vast compilation as a distraction, as a kind of dithering idleness that is a symptom of the disease of which he would be cured. The author "expels . . . idleness with idleness" (*Preface*, 7). Melancholy scholars may "divide and subdivide . . . but understand not the state of their owne Soules" (*Preface*, 29).

The discourse, as a strategy to avoid melancholy, displays it. In so far as it fails as a means of introspection and self-knowledge, it is, in Richard Rogers' words, the fruitless work of the blind and ignorant. Preceding the passage in which Burton defines the subject of his discourse as those three species of melancholy is a lengthy consideration of the diverse ways scholars have divided this topic in the past. In the end, the choice of three is made to seem completely arbitrary, as a means of solving the problem by *fiat*. The encyclopedic mode of anatomy is no refuge from confusion. Earlier, in the preface, Burton says, "I doubt not but that in the end you wil say with me, that to anatomize this humor aright, through all the Members of this our *Microcosmus*, is as great a taske, as to reconcile those Chronological errors in the Assyrian monarchy" (*Preface*, 23). The *Anatomy's* narrative voice, the "I," which Joan Webber has shown "is not always the same 'I,'"<sup>44</sup> is in its melancholy mode the primary vehicle for the *Anatomy* as methodical survey. This narrative voice is by turns solitary, envious, curious, inconstant, rhapsodic, carried away and often overwhelmed by its anatomical method of discourse. The insatiable curiosity of the persona amassing this vast intellectual store of melancholy displays the very traits of melancholy it attempts to survey, and leads to the helplessness of Burton's confession: "It is most true, *stylus virum arguit*, our stile bewraies us. . . . I have layd my selfe open (I know it) in this Treatise, turned mine inside outward" (*Preface*, 13), "I have anatomized mine own folly" (*Preface*, 112). The false security of objective method ironically undercut by such self-dissection defines a contrary motion that is at once aesthetic, moral and spiritual. According to Perkins, such contrary motion defines God's preferred mode of operation. "The Lord very often in and by contraries works another," says Perkins: "A man that hath lived in security, by Gods goodnesse hath his eyes opened to see his sinnes . . . Hereupon hee presently thinketh that God will make him a firebrand of hell: where indeed the Lord is now about to worke, and frame in his heart sanctification and sound repentance" (Perkins, *Works* 1, 418). Burton may protest his intention is "to anatomize this humour of Melancholy, through all his parts and species, as . . . an ordinary disease" (*Preface*, 110), but anatomy as encyclopedic survey keeps collapsing into anatomy as self-knowledge, the first step in the cure of souls.

The "I" that is anatomized is not so much the voice of a constructed persona as it is a style appropriate to the subject of the discourse. It is the stylistic expression of "melancholy," a melancholy shared by the narrator, the *Anatomy's* sources, and the readers themselves. Its habits are not the result of the author's incompetence but are a deliberate feature of decorum in the discourse as a whole. The discourse becomes a caged animal's frustrating search for an escape, "as a dogge in a wheele, a bird in a cage, or a squirrell in a chaine . . . with much labour, but never make an end" (1.2.3.11, 282). There is nowhere to turn: "[S]eeking to avoid Scylla, they fall into Charybdis" (1.2.2.4, 230), and every cause for melancholy "is more grievous then other" (1.2.3.1, 246). Cures merely echo causes. Those who seek cures for melancholy brought on by solitude, for instance, are carried along by a drunken, riotous crowd into deeper pits of depravity: "As good be melancholy still, as beasts and beggars" (2.2.6.4, 124). The tortured journey functions as a reading of readers' emotional states as they are carried through this labyrinth. Sharon Seelig says Burton's readers are "forced to take part in the construction of the text and the meaning it holds."<sup>45</sup> Webber, similarly, says "almost all his stylistic techniques force us to take an active part in responding to the prose" (Webber, 100). Burton's prose anatomizes his readers. The text and its readers are one.

This search for solutions to human existence short of divine grace embodied in Burton's style is, for the Calvinist, a common feature of experience. It also informs the larger structural patterns of the *Anatomy*. "Exercise Rectified," for instance, begins with prescribing vigorous exercise like hawking and hunting ("*Herod* . . . was eased of a grievous melancholy by that means," 2.2.4.1, 70) and ends by encouraging the melancholic to "calculate Spherical Triangles, square a Circle" (2.2.4.1, 94), to gossip or "to say so many *Paternosters, Avemaries, Creeds*" (2.2.4.1, 95). In between we read of emperors recreating themselves by catching flies or playing with nuts (2.2.4.1, 78). Every antidote to melancholy is presented as yet another symptom, every example of exercise as an instance of idleness, and the entire discourse is colored from the outset by a diatribe against sport as the idleness of the gentry. Possessing no calling and performing no labor, they spend their days hawking and hunting (William Perkins, we learn here in a note, criticizes such idleness as failed vocation).<sup>46</sup> Their total attention is given to pastimes; except for sports they do not know how to spend their time.

The examples of exercise Burton commends move from hawking and hunting to fowling, fishing, to bowling, visiting friends, to looking at fountains, sitting in a shady seat, smelling perfumes, and to watching extravagant displays of wealth. "Such a sight were able of it selfe to drive away melancholy, if not for ever, yet it must needs for a while" (2.2.4.1, 76). Even reading about such shows will do. The discourse is content with the most ineffectual palliative option, and repeats a pattern to be observed throughout the *Anatomy* of an ever increasing desperation. Just when we think the examples cannot become more absurd, the list goes on. We are to engage in cockfighting to avoid idleness, keep exotic birds in cages, frequent barber shops to hear the news, spend entire days drinking and joking in ale houses, play cards ("for filthy lucre") or chess ("a sport fit for idle Gentlemen"), and to join in dancing, singing, masking and mumming. As by this point the ironic pattern of the discourse has been firmly established, it is hilariously significant that this is the very point Burton chooses to indicate support for the controversial anti-Puritan Book of Sports published by James I in 1618 and immediately reissued by Laud upon becoming archbishop under Charles I: "[F]or my part, I will subscribe to the *Kings Declaration*, and was ever of that mind, those May-games, wakes, & Whitson-ales, &c. if they be not at unseasonable houres, may justly be permitted" (2.2.4.1, 82). The recreations Burton cites here from the Book of Sports, survivals of merry pre-Reformation holidays regularly condemned by Puritans, are described as toys which are "winked at" because they provide a lesser evil for a debauched company that would otherwise be occupied in a genuinely pernicious idleness. This is not the language of the Book of Sports. The King's concerns were for accommodating (and, he hoped, converting) Lancashire Catholics, and for the fitness of the meaner sort who may be required for war.<sup>47</sup> Burton's theme, by contrast, is the very concern for idleness that motivated Calvinist opposition to this declaration, and he pursues that theme with sarcasm directed against idle gentry who overwork the laboring poor as well as against loiterers among the laborers themselves. Sports are maligned throughout the *Anatomy* as emblems of self-indulgence in an idle society:

What sport will your honour have? hawking, hunting, fishing, fowling, buls, bears, cardes, dice, cocks, playes, tumblers, fiddlers, jesters, &c. they are at your good worships commande. Faire houses, gardens, orchards, terrasses, galleries, cabanets, pleasant walkes, delightsome places, they are at hand. (1.2.4.6, 346)

Read properly, Burton's seeming survey of exercise rectified is an unforgiving anatomy of an idle society. Readers searching for antidotes find themselves drawn ever more deeply into recognizing the causes of melancholy in their own hearts. The search for a palliative distraction is a grasping after straws: "artificial toys please but for a time; yet who is he that will not be moved with them for the present" (2.2.4.1, 84).

The ethical analogue to this rhetoric of restless melancholy portrays a self-absorption that is blinded to anything but that which palliates existential insecurity. For Burton this self-absorption is a problem not only of social position but of faith, of misdirected charity, as he demonstrates in paralleling the narcissism of the gentry with what he sees as a self-centeredness at the heart of Popish piety:

A poor decayed kinsman of his, sets upon him by the way in all his jollity, and runnes begging bareheaded by him. . . . hee cares not, ride on: . . . Swear, protest, take God and all his Angells to witness . . . he is not touched with it, *pauper ubique jacet*, ride on, he takes no notice of it. Put up a supplication to him in the name of a thousand

Orphans, an Hospitall, a Spittle, a prison as he goes by, they cry out to him for aid, ride on, *surdo narras*, hee cares not, let them eat stones, devoure themselves with vermine, rotte in their owne dung, he cares not. Shew him a decared haven, a bridge, a schoole, a fortification, &c. or some publique worke, ride on, good your worship, your honor, for Gods sake, your countries sake, ride on. But shew him a role, wherein his name shall be registered in golden letters . . . he will stay and contribute; or if thou canst thunder upon him, as Papists doe, with satisfactory and meritorious workes, or perswade him by this meanes, he shall save his soule out of hell . . . (if he bee of any religion) then in all likelihood hee will listen and stay. (3.1.3.1, 34-35)

Paths open up throughout *The Anatomy of Melancholy* pointing to desired stopping places that are excruciatingly inadequate. Such inadequate endings in the *Anatomy* are calculated to frustrate the pursuit of final solutions implied by the anatomical method of total description, and become characteristic of the structure of the major sections of this book. The anatomy of love melancholy ends with recommending antidotes to jealousy in marrying a deaf and dumb woman to a blind man, putting out one's own eyes or getting a divorce (3.3.2.1, 328-329). The Second Partition's penultimate section ends with the consolation that it is "better to be miserable then happy: of two extreames it is the best" (2.3.8.1, 207), and reaches its final conclusion with correctives for wind (flatulence) which "must needs ease, if not quite cure" melancholy (2.5.3.2, 266). The First Partition concludes with a self-cannibalizing sentence giving the seemingly unavoidable prognosis of suicide: "Seldom this malady procures death, except (which is the greatest, most grievous calamity, and the misery of all miseries) they make away themselves, which is a frequent thing, and familiar amongst them" (1.4.1.1, 430). The ground of this despair, of course, is the question of one's predestined reprobation or election to salvation, to which Burton gives the simple and agonizing Calvinist answer: "God alone can tell" (1.4.1.1, 438).

The restless search characterizing the *Anatomy's* structure brings readers to an understanding that they have lost more than their sense of direction. Burton forces his readers to the deeper awareness that they have lost their very identity: "Thou hast lost thy selfe wilfully, cast away thy selfe" (1.2.2.7, 245).<sup>48</sup> The Calvinist discipline of self-scrutiny was a programatically-induced crisis of identity, not willful but willed. Margo Todd has called attention to the degree to which Puritan self-fashioning was in significant part a destructive as well as a constructive process, and cites Stephen Greenblatt's point that the "act of self-fashioning is an act of self-cancellation."<sup>49</sup> In the *Anatomy*, the more the narrative of willful loss of identity pricks the conscience of the reader, the more the text becomes the reader's mirror, a medium of self-awareness, of self-dissection, of anatomizing the reader's own heart, and thus a means of willed self-cancellation on the way to self-fashioning.

In so far as the reader's identity becomes embedded in Burton's discourse, self-cancellation in *The Anatomy of Melancholy* is a feature of a dialectical text that "succeeds at its own expense" (Fish, *Artifacts*, 3). In Sharon Seelig's words, "Burton has created a work that undoes itself, that gets unwritten as it gets written" (Seelig, 127). An example of such undoing comes less than twenty pages into the *Anatomy's* First Partition, when the melancholy narrator begins to unravel the clarity of Ramism with a digression, one of the melancholiac's most tempting ambits ("*Such Digresions doe mightily delight and refresh a weary Reader*" [1.2.3.2, 250]). In Ramist method scholars violate one of the first rules of clarity "when they degresse from their purpose and do rayle upon other things nothing pertayning thereto" (MacIlmaine, 4)." Measured against the Ramist's virtually moral requirement of order, the errors of melancholy digressions are the rhetorical equivalent of Burton's advice in "Diet Rectified" to "let every man observe and be a law unto himself" (2.2.1.2, 27).<sup>50</sup> Here in the second member of the *Anatomy's* very first section, the discourse highlights the first of its many wanderings from Ramist anatomical clarity with a digression on anatomy itself. Burton justifies interrupting the flow of his discourse by saying the digression is written for "better understanding of that which is to follow; because many hard words will often occur" (1.1.2.1, 139). The reference to "hard words" is not to difficult terminology but to the difficult challenge to readers coming at the conclusion of this Member, that we are "like so many beasts" (1.1.2.11, 161). The play on words opens up a further stage of undoing. The digression, which has already broken expectations of clarity, is introduced to remind readers of their fallen intellect. It ends with an anatomy of the will that is not so much a textbook description as an act of confession: "So that in voluntary things we are averse from God and goodness, bad by nature, by ignorance worse, by Art, Discipline, Custome, we get many bad

Habits, suffering them to domineere and tyrannize over us" (1.1.2.11, 160). These are the hard words of the traditional Calvinist anatomy of the heart. In what follows this "Digression of Anatomy," the "hard words" are unstinting, the satire is often bitter and the humor often savage. The alienation from God is complete.

### 3. The means of consolation

Rumors in the student community at Christ Church that Burton had taken his own life at the time his horoscope had predicted his death may have been false,<sup>51</sup> but they add poignancy to his prognostic that such self-knowledge and knowledge of God lead inevitably to despair, and "frequently" to suicide (1.4.1.1, 430). While in pre-Reformation scholastic thinking despair was an open and willful apostasy against God for which there was no remedy, in the theology of the Reformed Churches it was understood as part of ordinary experience. Moreover, it was seen as part of the scheme of salvation bringing believers to recognize their powerlessness before God's grace. Burton is keeping to this tradition in describing despair as either final or temporal: "[F]inall is incurable which befalleth reprobates, temporall is a rejection of hope & comfort for a time, which may befall the best of Gods children" (3.4.2.2, 410). But in the end Burton will teach his readers that they fear without cause, just as with any melancholy humor,<sup>52</sup> for though our sin is great, "*his grace is sufficient, 2. Cor. 12. 9.* Despaire not then, faint not at all, be not dejected, but relye on God, call on him in thy trouble, and he will heare thee" (3.4.2.6, 441). In defining despair Burton enlists the Italian Calvinist Girolamo Zanchi: "[S]ome kinde of Despaire be not amisse, when, saith Zanchius, we despaire of our owne meanes, & relie wholly upon God" (3.4.2.2, 410). Burton goes on to say that this temporal species of despair "is not here meant," because his aim at this point is to drive readers further and further into the depths. This more pernicious, soul-destroying desperation, he says, is the subject of his discourse. It is always important to remember that this discourse is an engagement with its readers, and that the meaning of any particular statement is determined by its place in the sequence of the readers' experience. Burton may agree with Perkins, who in a treatise on discerning whether we are in a state of damnation or grace says "the Church of Rome errest in this, that she teacheth desperation to bee a sinne" and that it only arises "through ignorance of mans owne estate" or "through compulsion & feare" (Perkins, *Works* 1, 378), but he continues to lead readers through their fears of final despair to the point where they become totally helpless and alone. This is the point of "spiritual desertion," according to Perkins, in which God removes the experience of grace so that, in despair, the believer may learn to depend on God alone:

God . . . in great mercie . . . lets his elect servants fall into trouble of minde and consience, and if they happily be of greater hardnesse of heart, into some actuall sinne: and so declaring his wonderfull mercie in saving them, he is faine against his mercy to bring them to his mercy, and by sinne to save them from sinne. By this meanes the Lord . . . makes a remedie of sinne to slay pride. (Perkins, *Works* 1, 419-420)

Grace is paradoxically discerned even in its withdrawal. Final despair, for Burton, is irrelevant as long as God continues to work through ordinary despair and the possibility of repentance remains open. "We know not how soon or late before our end we may be received" (3.4.2.6, 439).

The pastoral motive behind denying the ability to achieve salvation through independent initiatives was to relieve anxiety and open a way for the sheer gratuitousness of divine grace. Everything depends on God alone. The theological implications of this idea gave rise to the doctrine of predestination, which Zanchi maintained must be taught "for the humiliation of our pride, and the manifestation of divine grace,"

God hath assuredly promised his favour to the truly humble . . . who are endued with repentance, and despair of saving themselves; for a man can never be said to be really penitent and humble, till he is made to know that his salvation is not suspended in any measure whatsoever on his own strength, machinations, endeavors, free-will, or works; but entirely depends on the free pleasure, purpose, determination, and efficiency of another; even of God alone . . . such a person despaire of all assistance.<sup>53</sup>

When Burton speaks of those who torment themselves with thoughts of predestination, election and reprobation, and when he rails against preaching that frightens with images of hell fire and damnation (3.4.2.3, 414-16), he is making a common complaint that even ardent Puritans made about the misuse of doctrine. Richard Sibbes, typically, warned against the exploration of

predestination and election, saying, “Go first to thine own heart and then to the deeper mysteries afterward.”<sup>54</sup> The theology that emerged from Geneva was from the beginning pastoral—Perkins called it a “practical” theology—and the warnings against its misuse involved a fear of reverting to scholasticism.<sup>55</sup> Richard Rogers tells his readers how to read his *Seven Treatises*—not with curiosity but with personal, even emotional engagement:

Reade with a quiet, teachable, and meeke spirit, desirous of that which I labour to bring thee to, rather than with a curious head to carpe and cavill; or censure that which thou doest not practise nor follow. A dramme of grace is better than a pound of censorious wittinesse: remember that all our naturall gifts, and faculties of our soules should be sanctified: I go about to make thee see thy selfe inwardly and outwardly to be trained up to Gods family, where the heart must be well seasoned, as well as thy whole life ordered. (Rogers, B5<sup>1</sup>.)

Calvinists who insisted on the public proclamation of predestination were fully conscious of its potential abuse. In his subsection on the “Causes of Despair” Burton is speaking predominantly of “Papists, Casuists and Schoolmen” who threaten their parishioners with the eternal fires of hell, but he also includes an incidental reference to “our indiscrete Pastors” coming “not far behind” in misconstruing the message of damning judgment for the message of grace (3.4.2.3, 415).

*The Anatomy of Melancholy* may, like these thundering preachers, speak of reprobation and election, but the tone of grace is overarching. *The Anatomy of Melancholy* is, first of all, very funny, filled with gratuitous verbal jokes and syntax wrenched for comic effect. Commonly, Burton’s humor is strategic. John Stachniewski has noticed that toward the end of “Prognosticks of Despaire, Atheisme, Blasphemy, Violent Death, &c.” Burton borrows a sentiment from John Abernathy with which he would seemingly agree, that we must not judge in the case of suicide but put the best construction on it. He adds, “as Turkes doe, that thinke all fooles and mad men goe directly to Heaven” (3.4.2.5, 424), not because he is unable to maintain Abernathy’s sincerity, as Stachniewski would have it, but because this is only the penultimate subsection of the book and he will not allow readers to reach premature conclusions.<sup>56</sup> *The Anatomy* is filled with comic irony because all is melancholy. To portray any idea, aspiration or endeavor as “melancholy” is to portray it as merely mechanical, impotent and therefore laughable against the singular vitality of God’s overriding grace.

Secondly, the *Anatomy*’s graciousness prevails no matter how depressing Burton’s presentation of predestination may seem, no matter how savage his humor may become. His consolation will not be cheap, as he maintains it is among the Papists:

And yet for all these terrors of conscience, affrighting punishments which are so frequent, or whatsoever else may cause or aggravate this fearfull malady in other religions, I see no reason at all why a Papist at any time should despair, or be troubled for his sinnes; for let him bee never so dissolute a Catife, so notorious a villaine, so monstrous a sinner, out of that Treasure of Indulgences and merits of which the Pope is Dispensator, he may have free pardon and plenary remission of all his sinnes. . . . that I cannot see how hee that hat( any friends amongst them (as I say) or mony in his purse, or will at least to ease himselfe, can any way miscarry or be misaffected, how hee should be desperate, in danger of damnation or troubled in minde. (3.4.2.3, 419)

Burton debunks thinking that is caricatured as making a religion out of avoiding the more terrifying implications of living under God’s free grace. They are fools, mad, merely melancholy, who grasp after false securities. For Burton, the total helplessness of despair must be met head on, for it is in itself a means of grace. Religious despair, in other words, is not the melancholy we might suppose it to be, but, like Erasmus’ “Folly,” the single path to cure. In this, Burton is in keeping with other Calvinists who wrote on religious despair. Perkins in *Cases of Conscience* and Timothy Bright in his *Treatise of Melancholie* had kept melancholy and a troubled conscience strictly separate. “They are not all one, but differ much,” says Perkins.<sup>57</sup> While the melancholiac fears without cause, he says, “the Conscience afflicted, hath a true and certaine cause, whereby it is troubled, namely, the sight of sin, and the sense of Gods wrath” (Perkins, *Cases*, 113). For Burton the afflictions of a troubled conscience are “a School or Academy” (3.4.2.6, 440), reminding us of his intent in writing the *Anatomy* to “make an Antidote out of that which was the prime cause of my disease” (*Preface*, 7), which can now be seen in a new light: not indeed as an engagement in distracting busyness but as an acknowledgment of the inveterate presence of the

disease in the disobedience of one's own heart that opens the possibility of cure, "by sinne to save from sinne," in Perkin's words. "There is no man living," according to Perkins, "that feels the power and vertue of the blood of Christ, which first hath not felt the paines of hell" (Perkins, *Works* 1, 383). Scott Blanchard calls attention to the operational principle functioning here: "Like modern psychoanalysis, Burton's therapeutic paradigm is inescapably paradoxical, since 'cure' and 'cause' are dependent upon one another (Blanchard, 139).

#### 4. Resistance

Eventually Burton defines without equivocation his commitment to the theology informing this therapeutic paradigm. The Calvinist idea of predestination to election or reprobation leads inevitably and even necessarily to despair. "To avoide which inconvenience, and to settle their distressed mindes," he says, "our late *Arminians* have revived that plausible doctrine . . . that we have free-will of our selves, and that Grace is common to all that will beleeve" (3.4.2.6, 436). Burton dismisses their position by conflating it with a statement gleaned from Julian the Apostate: "Why should wee pray to God that are Gentiles, and thanke him for his mercies and benefits that hath damned us all innocuous for Adams offence?" (3.4.2.6, 437; added 1628). Some hold that those who live upright lives, no matter of what religion or nationality (even Turks) will be in. Some even hold that "the world shall end like a Comedy" (3.4.2.6, 438), with common grace not only for all believers, but for wicked livers, blasphemers, reprobates and the devils themselves brought at last into heavenly bliss. The sarcasm is rooted in an implied theological consensus. "We teach otherwise," Burton says.

When Burton says, "We teach otherwise," the "we" is Burton's understanding of the orthodox consensus of the English Church rather than "Calvinism." While Burton is aware of working within a Calvinist theological community, he is also capable of strong disagreement with much of that community's complex internal diversity. He aligns himself in this diverse community with specific Reformed theologians important to his understanding of the English Church, theologians like Beza, Zanchius and Perkins.<sup>58</sup> What the English Church teaches according to Burton is what they teach, a model of predestination belonging to the strictest form of scholastic, second-generation Calvinism:<sup>59</sup>

That this vocation, predestination, election, reprobation, *non ex corruptâ, praevisa fide*, as our *Arminians*, or *ex praevisis operibus*, as our Papists, *non ex praeteritione*, but Gods absolute decree, *ante mundum creatum*, (as many of our Church holde) was from the beginning before the foundation of the world was laid, or *homo conditus*, (or from *Adams* fall, as others will, *homo lapsus objectum est reprobationis*) with *perseverantia sanctorum*, we must be certaine of our salvation, we may fall but not finally, which our *Arminians* will not admit. (3.4.2.6, 438)

By differentiating his and his Church's position from that of the Arminians, Burton is defining his place within the uneasy intellectual world of the English clergy in the early decades of the Seventeenth Century. At the Synod of Dort (1618-1619), responding to the Arminian Remonstrance of 1610, Calvinist theologians from the Low Countries, the Palatinate, and Britain took a stand in favor of a rigid version of Calvinism against the disciples of their fellow minister Jacob Arminius (d. 1609).

Dort defined a reactionary Calvinist orthodoxy restricting human initiative and maintaining God's total sovereignty over the scheme of salvation, in opposition to a Remonstrance scheme allowing enough scope for human initiative to resist or cooperate with divine choice. It is important to remember that the debate had emerged from within the Calvinist community. Arminius had been refining the understanding of predestination in arguments directed not so much against Calvin as against the scholastic Calvinist Theodore Beza. After Dort, "Arminianism" was taken up in England to give a name to an already existent but undefined anti-Calvinism (and thus acquired ceremonial and hierarchical as well as theological characteristics).<sup>60</sup> While Burton saw "Calvinism" continuing to represent a much broader spectrum of the Church than what had been articulated by the Synod of Dort, he saw his own English Church defined more narrowly. He saw the English Church believing much as Dort believed, and extended the focus of the *Anatomy's* anti-Catholic sarcasm to include opposition to the "Arminianism" of those who did not see the English Church as he saw it.

The years encompassing the growth of *The Anatomy of Melancholy* through its successive editions (1621, 1624, 1628, 1632, 1638, and posthumous 1651) show the doctrines which inform Burton's theological stand confronting increasingly hostile opposition. In 1622, the year following the first edition of the *Anatomy*, James I issued a directive prohibiting all below the position of bishop or dean from speaking publicly on "the deep points of predestination, election, reprobation or of the universality, efficacy, resistibility or irresistibility of God's grace" that are more properly matters of debate in the university communities (Gee and Hardy, 517). Burton seems to comment on the directive by inserting in the 1624 edition (in a discussion of curiosity as a cause of melancholy) a description of predestination as "school divinity" (1.2.4.7, 364). In a sense what James was doing was no significant departure from cautions commonly voiced in the Calvinist community against pursuing predestination as a matter of curiosity. But the royal concern was clearly for more than theological issues. The directions went on to include prohibitions against preaching on matters of state, particularly "the power, prerogative, jurisdiction, authority or duty of sovereign princes." The immediate context for the King's latter prohibition was anti-Catholic protest in the pulpits to the pursuit of a match between Prince Charles and the Spanish Infanta, a protest no longer limited to a Puritan fringe but something that "infected the whole church from top to bottom" and gave the ghost of Puritanism a new and broader definition.<sup>61</sup>

Nicholas Tyacke tells how reaction to public criticism of the Spanish Match strengthened the emerging anti-Calvinist spirit in the church and at court (Tyacke, *Anti-Calvinism*, 34-35). The tension is illustrated in the combative Richard Montagu's *A Gagg for the new Gospell? No: A New Gagg for An Old Goose* (London, 1624), which maintained that the Pope was not the Antichrist, redefined anti-Catholic Calvinists as Puritans, and put public shape to the high church party's view that the English Church was living in the gap between the Scylla and Charybdis of Catholicism and Calvinism rather than the conventional Calvinist understanding of a Church living between Catholicism and the Anabaptist sectarians. Those who show "too much zeal in opposition to Antichrist" (3.4.1.3, 386) are, according to Burton, not the Calvinists but "Anabaptists . . . Brownists, Barrowists, Familists, and those Amsterdamian sects & sectarians" (3.4.1.3, 387).<sup>62</sup> The English Church, in forging a national church standing between Catholicism and schism, had traditionally found itself "stretched in the tension between the need to oppose both of those threats and yet retain their commitment to godly principles" (Lake, *Moderate Puritans*, 77). Montagu was redefining the field, portraying the traditional Calvinist as the schismatic. Orthodox Calvinists therefore saw themselves burlesqued in *A New Gagg* and accused Montagu of being a Papist and an Arminian. In Montagu's escalating defense against their criticism he railed at "your Divines, the commonly called Calvinists" and their "desperate doctrine of Predestination."<sup>63</sup> The 1625 Parliament moved to censure Montagu, and a Commons committee protested that by defining predestination as Puritan, "by his definition we may be all Puritans."<sup>64</sup>

It needs to be said here that while it is important to avoid joining Montagu in labeling Burton's Calvinism "Puritan," it is equally important to note that though *The Anatomy of Melancholy* hurls torrents of criticism at abuses in the English Church, and "Puritan" was increasingly becoming employed by the high church party as a term of vilification not only for nonconformists but for Calvinists in general, Burton employs the word only once in the entire book.<sup>65</sup> The silence is revealing. Divines like Perkins, Greenham and others whom we would readily label Puritan are cited in support of Burton's major arguments. What readers have taken to be Burton's intolerance toward "Puritans" is an intolerance toward schismatic nonconformists, "peculiar sects" (3.4.1.3, 387) like the Brownists whom Burton characteristically calls "Precisians," the "Precisians, Scismaticks, and some Hereticks even in our owne bosomes, in another extreme" (i.e., from Rome, 3.4.1.3, 386, line 30), conventional disrupters of the church's peace. Others may have called these people Puritans—for James I in *Basilikon Doron* (1603) Puritans were zealous independents who challenged royal authority—but Puritan was a term Burton avoided.

Burton saw nonconformists as those lost souls driven by the madness of private revelation. Largely dismissed from public life following the Hampton Court Conference of 1604, they were, for Burton in 1621, flat caricatures easily ridiculed. His attention was much more focused on conflict with that increasingly confident opposition party the orthodox Calvinists were labeling "Arminians," who were questioning those theological ideas that gave shape to *The Anatomy of Melancholy*. In the 1628 edition of the *Anatomy*, when Burton speaks of supralapsarian

predestination he is able to say: “. . . Gods absolute decree, *ante mundum creatum*, (as most of our Church hold)” (3.4.2.6, 438). But by 1629 a subcommittee in the House of Commons could complain of “the publishing of books and preaching of sermons, contrary to the former orthodox doctrine” such as “Bishop Montagu’s Gag and Appeal, Mr. Jackson’s Book of the Essence and Attributes of God, Dr. White’s two sermons preached at Court.” Moreover,

These persons who have published and maintained such papistical, Arminian, and superstitious opinions and practices, who are known to be unsound in religion, are countenanced, favoured, and preferred: instance Mr. Montagu, made Bishop of Chichester; also the late Bishop of Carlisle, since his last Arminian sermon preached at Court, advanced to the bishopric of Norwich; a known Arminian made Bishop of Ely; the Bishop of Oxford, a long-suspected Papist, advanced to the bishopric of Durham. (Gee and Hardy, 525-6)

Charles dissolved Parliament, and ruled personally for the next eleven years. The issue was more than doctrine. In 1626 Laud had opened the King’s second Parliament with an aggressive sermon warning of a Presbyterian conspiracy threatening the overthrow of church and state (Tyacke, “Puritans,” 134). In June of that year, just more than one year after his accession, Charles had issued a royal proclamation, *For the Establishment of the peace, and quiet of the Church of England*, that was perceived as effectively outlawing Calvinism. Peter White reports Burton’s friend Samuel Fell’s inflammatory attack a few months later on the whole policy behind the proclamation (Fell had been appointed Lady Margaret Professor of Divinity in 1626): ‘To say peace, peace, where there is no peace is the voice of Jacob but the hand of Esau . . . . A middle way between God and Baal was always pernicious,’ Fell said, and went on to complain of those who were unable to speak, even joke, without tearing Calvin to pieces or labeling him a Puritan.<sup>66</sup> Then in the preface to the 1628 edition of *The Articles of the Faith*, Charles put a wider prohibition against public discussion of predestination that now included the university as well as the clergy (Gee and Hardy, 520). Given the strong Calvinism of those who held Oxford’s two chairs of divinity, Samuel Fell (before his conversion to the Laudian party) and John Prideaux, during the chancellorship of the third Earl of Pembroke, himself an outspoken Calvinist, the preface was relatively ignored and predestinarian views were preached and published freely there (White, 303). But Pembroke died in April 1630, and William Laud was elected Chancellor. Laud lost no time enforcing the terms of the royal decree, and by May 1630 was already engaged in bringing discipline to what he perceived to be a lax situation.<sup>67</sup> It is not difficult to find traces of these events in the *Anatomy*. In 1632 Burton inserts a sarcastic reference in the “Cure of Religious Melancholy” to “new ceremonies, customs and religions . . . to which every wise man as a good Formalist should accommodate himself” (3.4.1.5, 393), which seems to refer to Laudian enforcement of high church ceremonial. The subsection as a whole had in 1621 promoted a strong intolerance for novelty and diversity, but came from a perspective forged not on hierarchical Laudian ideals but specifically on the moral rigor of Calvin and Beza (3.4.1.5, 394). At the same time, the Burton who once mocked the royal encouragement of Sunday sports as encouragement of idleness can now chafe against the reactionary sabbatarian movement stiffening against the anti-Puritan mood of the 1630s.<sup>68</sup> Shifting public concerns and shifting canons of orthodoxy, in any case, gave *The Anatomy of Melancholy* an increasingly unsteady foundation. In the 1638 edition of the *Anatomy*, conscious of the declining fortunes of his Calvinist orthodoxy, Burton makes a telling minor revision to his description of the alignment of the English Church. It is no longer “most of our church” who hold to supralapsarian predestination, but “many of our church” (3.4.2.6, 438).

##### 5. Restating the theme

It is into the midst of such ecclesiastical controversy that Robert Burton projects his anatomy of the afflicted conscience in unambiguously predestinarian language. In the 1621 edition the final subsection was brief, and the only indication that the cure of despair was to be assurance of election, aside from earlier suggestions, was the final remark recommending further reading in Perkins, Greenham, Hayward, Bright, and Hemmingsen. In the second edition (1624) the extended consolation of despair along clearly predestinarian lines was added “at the request of some friends” (3.4.2.6, 425), despite or perhaps because of James’ controversial 1622 directive in the aftermath of the Synod of Dort prohibiting those under the ranks of bishop or dean from preaching on the topic. The friends, Burton’s brother George and his former chamber fellow

James Whitehall, seem to have suggested the extended consolation in order to reinforce what has been implicit all along, that the only cure for melancholy is found in dependence on God alone.<sup>69</sup>

Burton begins his new material by extending the list of “excellent exhortations” in Perkins, Greenham, Haywood, Bright, and Hemmingsen to include, in a rare (and suspicious) mood of latitude, “Azorus, Navarrus, Sayrus, &c. and such as have written cases of conscience amongst our Pontificall writers” (3.4.2.6, 425; the Puritan Robert Bolton was added in 1632, the physician Nicholas Laurentius in 1638). Burton says he will recollect comfortable speeches out of the writings of these theologians because they “are not to all parties at hand.” He will

recollect out of their voluminous Treatises, some few such comfortable speeches, exhortations, arguments, advise, tending to this subject, & out of Gods word, knowing, as Culmannus saith, upon the like occasion, how unavailable & vaine mens counsels are to comfort an afflicted conscience, except Gods word concurre & be annexed, from which comes life, ease, repentance, &c.

The effect of including the Pontifical writers in the list is to inject irony into what in the first edition was straightforward. When he says with Leonhard Culman that those counsels are “unavailable” he is punning on the Latin “inefficax” (provided in the margin), which in the original context means “ineffectual.” As we move into what Culman is saying, it is apparent that their counsels are useless that are not informed by Scripture.<sup>70</sup> This was a common Calvinist cavil against Papists. We hear it from Burton: “What else doe our Papists, but by keeping the people in ignorance, vent and broach al their new ceremonies and traditions, when they conceale the Scripture, read it in Latin, and to some few people alone, feeding the slavish people in the meane time with tales out of Legends” (3.4.1.357). The cures of despair which Burton lists out of the Catholic Navarrus are countered by those from the prominent Protestants Greenham and Culman which emphasize that all help comes from God and only from God (3.4.2.6, 425-426). Any other path to cure only ends as it has throughout the *Anatomy* in deeper melancholy.

The effectiveness of Burton’s consolation will also depend on readers having prepared their hearts to receive it. Those who have been sufficiently humbled by the experience of being engaged by this text are ready to hear the promise of grace:

Presupposing first what Beza, Greenham, Perkins, Bolton, give in charge, the parties to whom counsell is given be sufficiently prepared, humbled for their sinnes, fit for comfort, confessed, tried how they are more or lesse afflicted, how they stand affected, or capable of good advise, before any remedies be applyed: To such therefore as are so thoroughly searched and examined, I addresse this following discourse. (3.4.2.6, 425)

Burton is referring to the preparatory discipline of self-searching which we have called “anatomizing the heart,” that necessary first step of self-awareness drawing readers through the suburbs of hell to the comforting assurance of God’s unmerited gift of grace. Every comic irony, every madcap detour of this discourse, every trick of style, every assault on the reader in *The Anatomy of Melancholy* has prepared for this moment by removing all securities.

The final section remained substantially intact in subsequent editions until, in the fifth edition (1638), Burton made one more, brief addition to the final subsection. The new material indicates that the opposition was no longer merely from without, from Italian or Spanish Papists, for instance, but from within, from English Arminians and from the highest powers of the English nation. Immediately after a survey of election and reprobation (3.4.2.6, 438-39, quoted above, 14), Burton added,

I might have said more of this subject, but forasmuch as it is a forbidden question, and in the Preface or Declaration to the Articles of the Church, printed 1633, to avoid factions & altercations, we that are Universitie Divines especially, are prohibited *all curious search, to print or preach, or draw the Articles aside by our owne sence and Comment, upon paine of Ecclesiastical censure*. I will surcease, and conclude with Erasmus of such controversies, *Pugnet qui volet, ego censeo leges majorum reverenter suscipiendas, & religiosè observandas, velut à Deo profectas, nec esse tutum, nec esse pium, de potestate publicâ sinistram concipere aut serere suspitionem. Et siquid est tyrannidis, quod tamen non cogat ad impietatem, satius est ferre, quàm seditiose reluctari*. (3.4.2.6, 439)<sup>71</sup>

The capitulation to authority is wholly ironic. Lifted from an epistle written to silence detractors which Erasmus had inserted in the 1526 edition of his *Colloquies*, titled “De utilitate

Colloquiorum,” it appeared originally in his colloquy mocking the fish diet, an instance of Erasmus' own chafing against authority. His outspoken criticism of regulations for fasting raised their ire. “The Colloquy on the Fish Diet,” consequently, is about Christian liberty. Those who knew this original context for Burton's answer to the royal proclamation would have a clue to Burton's irony. At one point in the discussion between the Butcher and the Fishmonger, the Butcher says, “I'd like to hear how the liberty and welfare of the people are to be protected.” Then comes what Burton quotes. The Fishmonger answers, fearing for his livelihood: “Let those who want to fight do so,” he says,

I myself believe the laws of our forefathers ought to be obeyed, as though they came from God. It is neither safe nor right to conceive or spread harmful suspicion concerning public authority. And if there is some tyranny, but not enough to force us to do wrong, better to endure it than to oppose seditiously.<sup>72</sup>

The capitulation to authority was ironic in its original setting. Erasmus had added the Fishmonger's speech to “The Usefulness of Colloquies” with the same ironic intent Burton practices here. There is nothing altered in the original subsection. On the contrary, he has playfully inserted his capitulation to precede a paragraph that begins, “But to my former taske,” which in the earlier editions renewed the task of consolation after a brief digression for theological clarification. In the 1638 edition it appears as if Burton is merely going forward with his pursuit of a cure for melancholy now defined as fear of God's judgment justly deserved:

But to my former taske. The last maine torture and trouble of a distressed minde, is not so much this doubt of Election, and that the promises of grace are smothered and extinct in them, nay quite blotted out as they suppose, but withall Gods heavy wrath. . . . To such persons I oppose Gods mercy and his justice. . . . He may punish all if he will, and that justly for sinne, in that he doth it in some, is to make a way for his mercy that they repent and be saved, to heale them, to try them, exercise their patience, and make them call upon him. . . . (3.4.2.6, 439)

Insisting that hope is found only in a state of total helplessness, Burton outlines the relationship between humanity and God in its starkest Calvinist form, encouraging readers not to despair but, relying on God, to have “hope beyond hope” (3.4.2.6, 441). While the first edition closed suggesting the reader read further, the second closes encouraging the reader to “fly to God alone” and “by all meanes open himselfe, submit himselfe to the advice of good Physicians and Divines, which is *contraventio scrupulorum*, as [Navarrus] calls it” (3.4.2.6, 445). Burton cannot resist a final neo-Latin pun undercutting the cause of Popery. For Navarrus “scrupulus” meant “anxious.” In English, and particularly in relation to examining the conscience, “scrupulous” means “exacting,” “detailed.” If keeping a scrupulous conscience was synonymous with anatomizing the heart, then avoiding it was the hallmark of all that Burton opposed.<sup>73</sup>

As an anatomy of the heart, *The Anatomy of Melancholy* interacts with its readers in the scrupulous, sometimes ruthless but always comic reconstruction of identity. It concludes as it began, by engaging its readers in the formulation of its meaning and in direct address. As an anatomy of the heart, furthermore, Burton's *Anatomy* runs contrapuntally, at times even antithetically, to its pretended status as an objective treatise. Readers have mistakenly dismissed *The Anatomy of Melancholy* as the toy it pretends to be, simply because it does what it says it will do in subverting the habits of such straightforward discourse. At the conclusion of his first edition Burton referred readers still perplexed and anxious at this point to seek consolation in such straightforward discourse as is found in the works of writers like Abernathy, Bright, Greenham, and Perkins. These were writers who proclaimed unambiguously and less imaginatively that world view which is the *Anatomy*'s organizing principle, weaving as it does the book's pattern of comic irony, madcap humor and calculated structural and syntactic disruptions. For the second and subsequent editions Burton created a closure more in keeping with his book's richer and more provocative fabric of engagement, thus strengthening the tactical expression of a Calvinist agenda that remains as clear as it is in the expository discourse of William Perkins. Realigning this book with its immediate historical context has revealed presuppositions unlocking not only its strategies of composition but its pastoral agenda and its reforming critique of English society. It is indeed from the Calvinist commitments of this book that its most endearing features emerge: its comic unreliability and the magnificent absurdity of its universal survey of “melancholy.”

## Notes

- <sup>1</sup> Robert Burton, *The Anatomy of Melancholy*, ed. Thomas C. Faulkner, Nicholas K. Kiessling and Rhoda L. Blair (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992-1998), “Democritus to the Reader,” 23. Subsequent references to Burton’s text in these volumes will be to his own divisions (i.e., ‘Preface’ for “Democritus to the Reader,” or ‘1.2.3.14’ for First Partition, Second Section, Third Member, Fourteenth Subsection), plus the page number of the volume. References to the introduction or commentary by J. P. Bamborough will be to “Bamborough” and the volume and page number.
- <sup>2</sup> The organization of Zara’s book builds on an anatomical metaphor, with a single head (“Caput Unicum”) and four sections of several members each. The *Anatomia ingeniorum* represents a mode of knowing that is quite at odds with Burton’s Calvinist epistemology.
- <sup>3</sup> Burton makes the connection with the *Encomium moriae* explicit later in the Preface (Preface, 110-11); see Rosalie Colie, “Some Notes on Burton’s Erasmus,” *Renaissance Quarterly* 20 (1967), 335-41.
- <sup>4</sup> In observing the Calvinist perspective of the *Anatomy*, it is always important to recall the imbeddedness of such thought in Christian humanism. See Margo Todd’s demythologizing of “puritanism” in *Christian Humanism and the Puritan Social Order* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987).
- <sup>5</sup> Anthony Milton, *Catholic and Reformed: The Roman and Protestant Churches in English Protestant Thought 1600-1640* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 543, 534.
- <sup>6</sup> It was not Calvinist zeal alone that fell from favor. Hugh Trevor-Roper shows that while the “forms and ceremonies and devotional paraphernalia of Laudian worship were revived at the Restoration,” the more significant items of his ecclesiastical and social reforms were “quietly dropped” by a non-critical, non-intervening Church bowing to an Erastian determination not to allow religious zeal to disrupt the state again (*Archbishop Laud 1573-1645*, 2nd ed. [London: Macmillan, 1962], 429-30).
- <sup>7</sup> A. R. Shilleto, ed., *The Anatomy of Melancholy* (London, 1896), xxvii.
- <sup>8</sup> Stanley Fish, *Self-Consuming Artifacts: The Experience of Seventeenth-Century Literature* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1972), 330.
- <sup>9</sup> David Renaker, “Robert Burton’s Palinodes,” *Studies in Philology* 76 (1979) 178.
- <sup>10</sup> Hugh Trevor-Roper, “Robert Burton and *The Anatomy of Melancholy*,” *Renaissance Essays* (London: Secker & Warburg, 1985), 249, 271.
- <sup>11</sup> Michael O’Connell, *Robert Burton* (Boston: Twayne, 1986), 24.
- <sup>12</sup> Patricia Vicari, *The View From Minerva’s Tower : Learning and Imagination in The Anatomy of Melancholy* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1989), 147.
- <sup>13</sup> Vicari, 89. In fact, no reference whatsoever is made to Puritans in this subsection, and Reformed Church theologians Girolamo Zanchi and Theodore Beza (“our best Divines”) are recommended to bring comfort to the afflicted mind. Forming her perspective largely from Henry McAdoo, Vicari describes a view of Anglicanism based on such divines as Richard Hooker, Jeremy Taylor and Lancelot Andrewes, who became retrospectively important in the later, Restoration Anglican establishment. Burton shows no interest in them. See Henry McAdoo, *The Spirit of Anglicanism: A Survey of Anglican Theological Method in the Seventeenth Century*, The Hale Lectures of Seabury-Western Theological Seminary (London: A. & C. Black, 1965).
- <sup>14</sup> John Stachniewski, *The Persecutory Imagination: English Puritanism and the Literature of Religious Despair* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), 237, 248, 253, 231
- <sup>15</sup> W. Scott Blanchard, *Menippean Satire in the Renaissance* (Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 1995), 157. Blanchard continues: “As a sect for which the central tenet is the depravity of the human intellect and the unbridgeable gulf between human and divine knowledge, the Calvinist is certainly close to embracing a Menippean position toward the vanity of human understanding.”
- <sup>16</sup> See for instance Stachniewski’s description of Burton’s belief “in conformity to the national church more as an institution and an instrument of social control than as the custodian of faith,” *Persecutory Imagination* 249. “Anglicanism” in a normative sense only became a reality after the Restoration. See Dewey Wallace, *Puritans and Predestination: Grace in English Protestant Theology 1525-1695* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1982), 77-78, and John Spurr, *The Restoration Church of England* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1991): “Between 1640 and 1690, the Church of England came close to enjoying, perhaps for the first and only time, a single identity of ‘Anglicanism’” (xiii).
- <sup>17</sup> Anthony à Wood, *Athenae Oxonienses* (London, 1721), 2, col. 652.

- <sup>18</sup> *Sanity in Bedlam: A Study of Robert Burton's Anatomy of Melancholy* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1959), 90.
- <sup>19</sup> *Works* (London, 1647), 331.
- <sup>20</sup> See Francis Procter and Walter Howard Frere, *A New History of the Common Prayer Book* (London: Macmillan, 1910), 73.
- <sup>21</sup> Henry Gee, *The Elizabethan Prayer-Book & Ornaments, with an appendix of documents* (London: Macmillan, 1902), 165)
- <sup>22</sup> *Injunction of 1559*, in Henry Gee and William John Hardy, *Documents Illustrative of English Church History* (London, 1896), 419
- <sup>23</sup> Karl Joseph Hölzgen, "Robert Burton's Rectory at Seagrave," *Review of English Studies* 21 (1976), 135-36. According to Edmund Calamy, Mallinson was "an excellent scholar but not a very celebrated preacher" (A. G. Matthews, *Calamy Revised: Being a revision of Edmund Calamy's Account of the Ministers and others ejected and silenced, 1660-2* [Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1932], 335).
- <sup>24</sup> Checkley church wardens' records show the bread was baked by Catherine Overton at the White Horse Inn (Staffordshire Record Office D113/A/PC/1).
- <sup>25</sup> Henry Smith, *Works* (Edinburgh, 1866), 1, 72-73.
- <sup>26</sup> Barbara Kiefer Lewalski, *Protestant Poetics and the Seventeenth-Century Religious Lyric* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979), 42-43, 13; John Bate, *The Psalms of Mercy: Or, A Meditation upon the 51. Psalme* (London, 1625), A4.
- <sup>27</sup> Owen Watkins, *The Puritan Experience* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1972), 11. Haller speaks of whole bookstalls filled with literature written "for the purpose of teaching the people how to dissect and physic themselves" (*The Rise of Puritanism* [New York: Columbia University Press, 1938], 92).
- <sup>28</sup> Richard Rogers, *Seven Treatises, containing such directions as is gathered out of the holy scriptures, leading and guiding to true happiness, both in this life, and in the life to come, and may be called the practise of Christianity*, 5th ed. (London, 1630), 421. Barbara Lewalski discusses Rogers' intention here to answer the Jesuit Robert Parsons' challenge that Protestants had produced no material directing daily devotions. Rogers "denounces [Parsons'] mechanical methods of meditation and devotion as a 'ridiculous tying men to a daily taske of reading some part of the storie of Christs passion, and saying certaine prayers through the weeke'" (Lewalski 149).
- <sup>29</sup> John Donne, *Sermons*, ed. G. F. Potter and Evelyn Simpson (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1953-1962), 9, 297.
- <sup>30</sup> Donne, *Sermons* 9, 297. "This is our quickning in our regeneration, and second birth; and till this come, a sinner lies as the Chaos in the beginning of the Creation, before the Spirit of God had moved upon the face of the water, Dark, and voyd, and without forme," *Sermons* 9, 299.
- <sup>31</sup> William Perkins, *The Whole Treatise of the Cases of Conscience* (London, 1604), 65.
- <sup>32</sup> For terms used synonymously with the anatomy metaphor in Calvinist spirituality, see the chapter on "Heart-Searching" in M. Van Beek, *An Enquiry into Puritan Vocabulary* (Groningen: Wolters-Noordhoff, 1969), 60-70. See also Todd, *Christian Humanism*, 30-31, for the tradition of self-examination in relation to the broader tradition of Christian humanism in sixteenth-century England, and for a discussion of heart-searching in relation to narrative strategy and reader response, Stanley Fish, *Surprised by Sin: the Reader in Paradise Lost* (London: Macmillan, 1967), 50-56.
- <sup>33</sup> *Sermons of John Calvin, upon a songe that Ezechias made after he had bene sicke* (London, 1560), H4<sup>v</sup>
- <sup>34</sup> John Abernathy, from whose *A Christian and Heavenly Treatise, Containing Physicke for the Soule* Burton gathered much of his consolation for religious melancholy, makes a similar distinction but insists without Burton's irony that his concern will be with divinity: "The body and soule have their fittest physicke out of their own proper elements: that from beneath, this from above" (*A Christian and Heavenly Treatise, Containing Physicke for the Soule* [London, 1615], "To the Reader").
- <sup>35</sup> John Milton, *The Reason of Church Government*, in *Complete Prose Works of John Milton*, 8 vols, ed. Don Wolfe et al. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1953-82), 1, 846-47, quoted by Fish, *Artifacts*, 2.
- <sup>36</sup> See Norman Pettit, *The Heart Prepared: Grace and Covenant in Puritan Spiritual Life* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1966). R. T. Kendall qualifies Pettit's description of "preparation" for grace, saying the doctrine of preparation "may be simply understood as the process by which a man becomes willing to believe" (*Calvin and English Calvinists to 1649* [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979], 4).

- <sup>37</sup> Burton cites William Perkins and John Abernathy here. The words find several parallels in Perkins' works, in his short tract, *A Graine of Musterd-seede*, for instance: "the desire of reconciliation with God in Christ, is reconciliation itselfe: the desire to beleeve, is faith indeede, and the desire to repent, repentance it selfe" (William Perkins, *Works*, 3 vols. [London, 1612-1613], 1, 639). John Stachniewski gives the parallel in Abernathy, "desire of grace in the want of grace, is grace itselfe," in *A Christian and Heavenly Treatise*, 139; Stachniewski, "Robert Burton's Use of John Abernathy's *A Christian and Heavenly Treatise*," *Neophilologus* 62 (1978), 635.
- <sup>38</sup> John Calvin, *The Institution of Christian Religion*, trans. Thomas Norton (London, 1634), 160. Calvin's *Institution* was the standard theological textbook at Oxford and Cambridge. See Phillip Schaff, *The Creeds of Christendom* (New York, 1877), 1, 566. Peter White describes Laud's discomfort in discovering, on becoming Chancellor, that "undergraduates at New College spent their first two years studying little but Calvin's *Institutes*" (*Predestination, Policy and Polemic: Conflict and Consensus in the English Church from the Reformation to the Civil War* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992], 304).
- <sup>39</sup> Blanchard, 160. Ruth Fox, *The Tangled Chain: the Structure of Disorder in the 'Anatomy of Melancholy'* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1976), 20.
- <sup>40</sup> Calvin, *Institution*, 1, 53-54. J. B. Bamborough, in his commentary on this section of the *Anatomy* (Bamborough, 4, 170), suggests Burton's model here is Du Laurens' work on melancholy, drawing together imagery in Du Laurens to parallel what Burton is doing here. But there is nothing in Du Laurens like the pessimism Burton evokes in explicit Calvinist fashion here. See Andreas Laurentius, *A Discourse of the Preservation of the Sight; Of Melancholy Disease; Of Rheumes, and of Old Age*, trans. R. Surphlet, 1599, The Shakespeare Association (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1938). The images Bamborough cites from Du Laurens were not unique but in fact broadly typical of the first chapters of anatomical discourse, which invariably invited readers to see themselves in the anatomy as a microcosm of the world and a paragon of perfection only a little lower than the angels. See William Schupbach, *The Paradox of Rembrandt's 'Anatomy of Dr. Tulp,' Medical History*, Supplement 2 (London: Wellcome Institute for the History of Medicine, 1982), 31-32. Calvin shares a similar constellation of imagery, while having a closer family resemblance with Burton.
- <sup>41</sup> Roland MacIlmaine, in his preface to *The Logike of the Most Excellent Philosopher P. Ramus Martyr (1574)* (Northridge, CA: San Francisco Valley State College, 1969), 6. Burton describes the method at the opening of the Second Partition: "[T]he same method . . . which I formerly used in rehearsing the causes; first Generall, then Particular, and those according to their severall species" (2.1.1.1, 1).
- <sup>42</sup> Rosemund Tuve, *Elizabethan and Metaphysical Imagery* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1947), 347.
- <sup>43</sup> David Renaker, "Robert Burton and Ramist Method," *Renaissance Quarterly* 24 (1971), 210. Renaker fails to show how the narrative confusion may be deliberate and therefore thematic.
- <sup>44</sup> Joan Webber, *The Eloquent "I": Style and Self in Seventeenth-Century Prose* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1968), 81. The "I" can even be the reader (3.4.2.6, 436, line 7; 441, line 32).
- <sup>45</sup> Sharon Cadmann Seelig, *Generating Texts: The Progeny of Seventeenth-Century Prose* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1996), 123
- <sup>46</sup> "They which spend their whole life in gaming, as players do, have much to answer for. And the like is to be said of them that have lands and possessions, and spend their time in pleasure and sports; as is the fashion of many Gentlemen in these dayes" (Perkins, *Cases*, 349).
- <sup>47</sup> See *The King's majesties declaration to His subjects concerning lawful sports to be used, 1618* (London, 1817), 6.
- <sup>48</sup> The sentence was added in 1632 to the subsection on idleness as a cause of melancholy. Burton's insertions in successive editions tend to be topical rather than editorial. Earlier in the subsection, also in 1632, Burton inserted a passage that seems to support the Laudian clericalist critique of the dissolution of the monasteries and the subsequent loss of church revenues to the laity. Burton limits the protest to an uncharacteristic defense of those who "sequester themselves from the cares and tumults of the world . . . and know not well where to bestow themselves" (1.2.2.6, 244), a protest undercut by an original context that goes on to speak of the inhabitants of such religious houses as "wretches" who "frequently degenerate from men" to become "beasts, monsters" (1.2.6.245). The 1632 insertions may be a topical critique of the sacerdotalist and ceremonial innovations evoking a "hazy golden age" of monastic piety that were enforced by Laud in his tenure as Oxford's Chancellor beginning 1630. See Peter Lake, "The Laudian Style: Order, Uniformity and the Pursuit of the Beauty of Holiness in the 1630s," *The Early Stuart Church, 1603-1642*, ed. Kenneth Fincham (London: Macmillan, 1993), 184.

- <sup>49</sup> Margo Todd, "Puritan Self-fashioning," *Puritanism: Transatlantic Perspectives on a Seventeenth-Century Anglo-American Faith*, ed. Francis Brearer (Boston: Massachusetts Historical Society, 1993), 83. Stephen Greenblatt, *Renaissance Self-fashioning from More to Shakespeare* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980), 57.
- <sup>50</sup> The phrase is a burlesque of the commonplace that different circumstances and needs yield different diets. Perkins, for instance, says, "A mans owne appetite, is not to be made a rule of eating for others" (*Cases*, 313), which is to say the particular example does not rule the general principle.
- <sup>51</sup> See Richard Nochimson, "Studies in the Life of Robert Burton," *Yearbook of English Studies* 4 (1974), 108.
- <sup>52</sup> According to Perkins, "The conscience afflicted, hath a true and certain cause, wherever it is troubled, namely, the sight of sin, and the sense of Gods wrath; but in melancholy, the imagination conceiveth a thing to be so, which is not so" (*Cases*, 113).
- <sup>53</sup> Jerome Zanchius, *The Doctrine of Absolute Predestination*, trans. Augustus Toplady (New York, 1811), 174-5. The idea of predestination is very difficult for modern readers, who tend to see it in terms of nineteenth-century determinism, with which it has little to do. It is rather much more a model of relationship than causality in the modern sense. Dewey Wallace has described it as "a theology that sought to magnify the role of divine grace in the process of salvation by stressing gratuitous regeneration and sanctification as well as predestination" (Wallace 92). See also John T. McNeil, *A History of the Cure of Souls* (London: SCM, 1952), for a helpful survey of the idea of predestination in the context of pastoral care. David Renaker provides a brief overview of theological issues involved, in "Palinodes," 162-81. A more thorough explanation of the idea in terms of the political as well as the intellectual and ecclesiastical worlds of early seventeenth century England is given in Peter White, *Predestination*, in the context of an argument that controversies over the doctrine were merely symptomatic of or even tangential to the fundamental conflicts of the time
- <sup>54</sup> Richard Sibbes, *Works*, 7 vols. (Edinburgh, 1862-64) 4, 182.
- <sup>55</sup> Patrick Collinson explains Perkins' concept of "practical" theology as involving "an absorption of Calvinist divinity which was so complete as to structure and furnish a world view, an intellectual system and a way of life. This was the difference between a merely theoretical Calvinism and the applied, practical, and highly combative Calvinism of some puritan divines" ("England and International Calvinism, 1558-1640," *International Calvinism*, ed. Menna Prestwick [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985], 218).
- <sup>56</sup> Stachniewski, "Abernathy," 635. See Abernathy, 404.
- <sup>57</sup> Quoted by Katherine Hodgkin in "Dionys Fitzherbert and the Anatomy of Madness," *Voicing Women: Gender and Sexuality in Early Modern Writing*, ed. Kate Chedgzoy, Melanie Hansen and Suzanne Trill (Keele: Keele University Press, 1996), 75. Hodgkins shows Fitzgerald struggling to insist on the religious, rather than merely medical interpretation of her mental breakdown.
- <sup>58</sup> Burton says the Calvinists are "more defecate than the rest, yet at ods amongst themselves" (3.4.1.1, 343), the latter point being no great observation, and one with which most, Calvinist or not, would have agreed. When Burton speaks of "our Church" he is not identifying with "Calvinism" as such, as he makes clear in the complex section of the *Anatomy* between 3.436.19 and 3.439.13. This was in large part a reply in 1621 to the Italian liberal reformer Caelio Secundus Curione's *De amplitudine regni Dei* (Poschiavo, 1554), which proposed the elect would far outnumber the reprobate. This section, which does not deal with Arminianism as such but with what might be described as its precursors in Calvinism's liberal wing, was extensively amplified in successive editions. In lines 2-15 of 3.4.2.6, 438, added 1632, Burton seems to have reformers like Zwingli and Bullinger supporting what he had in 1628 defined as a Pelagian heresy (437.21), and says "there be many Jesuits that follow these Calvinists in this behalfe" (438.4). This is pure sarcasm against those "Calvinists" who have erred so far that even the Jesuits are following their lead! What we have here is an extreme case of insider humor for the university community. Burton plays syntactical games to cajole us into doubling back to reread. At 438.12 he says "most of our Church, and Papists are stiff against it" (the Pelagian heresy? Calvinism?). What Burton's Church and the Papists are both stiff against is the moderate position of Mathias Ditmarsh and others on the question of the salvation of righteous Gentiles. Burton's Church and the Church of Rome are not in agreement, but split on opposite sides against a moderate position on this issue.
- <sup>59</sup> See Renaker, "Palinodes," 173-74. Renaker maintains Burton was more conservative than the Synod of Dort, while in keeping with Perkins. But Burton includes "sublapsarian" as well as "supralapsarian" predestination. For explanation of these terms see White, chapter 2 ("The Theology of Predestination"), 18-38. For a critique of Renaker, see Stachniewski, *Persecutory Imagination*, 241-48.

- <sup>60</sup> Nicholas Tyacke, *Anti-Calvinism: The Rise of English Arminianism c. 1590-1640* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987).
- <sup>61</sup> Kenneth Fincham and Peter Lake, "The Ecclesiastical Policies of James I and Charles I," *The Early Stuart Church, 1603-1642*, ed. Kenneth Fincham (London: Macmillan, 1993), 34-35. See also Thomas Cogwell, *The Blessed Revolution: English Politics and the Coming of War, 1621-1624* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 20-50: "Those who failed to appreciate . . . James' foreign policy," writes Cogwell, "continued to be labeled as seditious Puritans who posed as great a threat to the realm as the Jesuits themselves" (42).
- <sup>62</sup> The phrase "too much zeal in opposition to Antichrist," added 1624, sounds like a reaction to Montagu, whose *A New Gagg* had appeared that same year.
- <sup>63</sup> Richard Montagu, *Appello Caesarem* (London, 1625), quoted by Peter Milward, *Religious Controversies of the Jacobean Age: A Survey of Printed Sources* (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 1978), 41.
- <sup>64</sup> *Commons Debates in the House of Commons for 1625*, ed. S. R. Gardiner (Camden Soc., N.S. 6, 1873), 49. Quoted by Nicholas Tyacke, "Puritans, Arminians and Counter-Revolution," *The Origins of the English Civil War*, ed. Conrad Russell (London: Macmillan, 1973), 134.
- <sup>65</sup> For the 1624 edition Burton inserted in the "Digression of the Misery of Schollers" an alliterative list of recalcitrant extremists: "[W]e fall amongst refractory, seditious Sectaries, peevish Puritans, perverse Papists, a lascivious rout of Atheisticall Epicures, that will not be reformed" (1.2.3.15, 324). The context is concerned for scholars inducted to church livings only to inherit miseries brought on by the incompetent management of predecessors driven by agendas other than building maintenance. Use of the term "Puritan" is obviously encouraged by the alliteration.
- <sup>66</sup> White 247. White is quoting Fell's *Primitiae, sive Oratio habita Oxoniae Nono Novembris et Concio Latina ad Baccalaureos Die Cinerum* (Oxford, 1627), 9-16. Samuel Fell, Christ Church alumnus and, from 1626 to 1637, Lady Margaret Professor of divinity, was in Burton's creative years a strong Calvinist. "At length leaving this Opinion," says Anthony á Wood, he became "after great seeking and cringing, a Creature of Dr. Laud Archbishop of Canterbury" (Wood 2, 75). Leaving his professorship, he was given the deanery of Lichfield, the rectory of Stow-on-the-Wold and the deanery of Christ Church (*DNB* 6, 1163). Burton was a family friend, remembering Fell's wife, son and daughter in his will (O'Connell, 31), but not Fell himself.
- <sup>67</sup> Nochimson 106. Nochimson is surely mistaken in holding these events lay behind Burton's brother William's June 1630 letter referring to the "uncertainty of [his] brothers aboade in Oxford by reason of troubled state of the Colledge between Canons & Students." Hugh Trever-Roper ("Robert Burton," 241-4) shows more convincingly that the "troubled state" had to do with student stipends not rising with inflation even while the cathedral chapter's income continued to grow.
- <sup>68</sup> Laud reissued the Book of Sports in 1633 immediately upon becoming archbishop under Charles I. Note the extensive 1632 and 1638 expansion to 3.4.1.4, 391-92, in particular the reference added 1633 to "those rigid Sabbatarians," which are discussed by Thomas C. Faulkner in "Robert Burton's Sources and Late Topical Revisions in *The Anatomy of Melancholy*," *New Ways of Looking at Old Texts, II: Papers of the Renaissance English Text Society, 1992-1996*, ed. W. Speed Hill (Tempe: Renaissance English Text Society, 1998), 26-27. Keissling shows that among several works in Burton's library by the Puritan Henry Burton (no relation) was his sabbatarian tract *The Law and the Gospel Reconciled* (London, 1631). Burton also owned Francis White's *An Examination and Confutation of a Lawless Pamflet, entitled, A Brief answer to a late treatise of the sabbath-day* (London, 1637). Henry Burton wrote *A Brief Answer to a Late Treatise of the Sabbath-day* (London, 1635). White was the author of *A Treatise of the Sabbath-day* (London, 1635). An earlier work in Burton's library, by Edward Brerewood, similarly illustrates controversy raging over sabbatarianism: *A Learned Treatise of the Sabbath . . . with Mr [Richard] Byfields Answer and Mr Brerewoods Reply* (Oxford, 1630). But Burton's irritation with sabbatarianism did not put him in Laud's camp, as Faulkner implies. John Prideaux, Regius Professor of Divinity at Oxford in these years, a Calvinist and strong opponent of Laud, could rail against "the Sabbatarians of this Age, who by their Sabbath-speculations would bring all to Iudaisme" (*The Doctrine of the Sabbath: delivered in the Act at Oxon. Anno 1622* [London, 1636], H2).
- <sup>69</sup> James Whitehall was inducted as Rector of the Checkley Parish, Staffordshire, in 1620. Like Burton, he was no friend of independents. Checkley parish records show that he once compelled parishioner Thomas Wood not to attend unlawful conventicles "under pretense of religion" (Staffordshire Record Office B3955/1/1[1637]). But his Calvinist loyalties were unquestionable. Described on his alabaster memorial at Checkley as "that orthodox, that grave divine," he was, as church wardens' accounts reveal, continually harassed by visitations to conform to Laudian principles of church order. Wardens' accounts show that in

the summer of 1644, with Laud under arrest, Whitehall had the fence around the communion table dismantled: "Pd for John Arnold for taking downe the railles of the communion table 0-0-6" (Staffordshire Record Office D113/A/PC/1[1644]). The enclosure had been installed in 1633, the same year Whitehall was compelled to purchase the monastic-style hood to satisfy Laudian requirements for clerical vestments.

<sup>70</sup> "Scio quàm vana sit & inefficax humanorum verborum penes afflictos consolatio, nisi verbum dei audiatur, à quo vita, refrigeratio, solatium, paenitentia" (3.4.2.6, 425, v). Leonhard Culman ("Culmannus") is best known to English readers as the author of *Sententiae puerile*. See Charles Smith, *Spenser's Proverb Lore: With Special Reference to His Use of the Sententia of Leonhard Culman and Publilius Syrus* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1970). A German schoolmaster, he became a Lutheran minister in mid-life. His work on consolation, *Quomodo afflicti aegroti et moritui sunt instituendi atque consolandi, quomodo tentationes satanae & mors vincenda, brevis instructio ex verbo Dei* (Nuremberg, 1550), was in Burton's library.

<sup>71</sup> Burton gives the date 1633 rather than the actual date of 1628 for the publication of the Preface to the *Articles*. Lawrence Babb suggests a reference here to ejections from Oxford colleges following Laud's enforcement of the Preface upon his 1633 accession as Archbishop of Canterbury (*Sanity in Bedlam*, 89-90).

<sup>72</sup> Desiderius Erasmus, *The Colloquies of Erasmus*, trans. Craig R. Thompson (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1957), 340

<sup>73</sup> Navarrus (Martin Aspileueta) wrote a classic manual for confessors, the *Manuale sive Enchiridion Confessorum et Poenitentium* (Rome, 1588). Just above, Burton has had him espouse the kind of palliative distractions for the distressed soul that have been mocked throughout *The Anatomy* as characteristic of Catholic thinking. Earlier, when discussing melancholy as a cause of despair, Burton had quoted Navarrus saying "*Conscientia scrupulosa nascitur ex vitio naturali, complexione melancholica*" (3.4.2.3, 411). This is the first sentence in Navarrus' examination of the causes of an *excessively* scrupulous conscience. Burton leaves out the qualification to reduce Navarrus to absurdity. The original reads, "*conscientia nimis scrupulosa nascitur ex vitio naturali*" *Manuale*, Vv6<sup>v</sup>.