

THE UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA

THE ANATOMY OF MELANCHOLY AS PROSE SATIRE

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A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES

IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE

OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

WINNIPEG, MANITOBA

OCTOBER 1973





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## THESIS

### THE ANATOMY OF MELANCHOLY AS PROSE SATIRE

(Summary)

Robert Burton's Anatomy of Melancholy has been interpreted in a variety of ways by three centuries of critics, but only lately has emphasis been placed on its relationship to satire. Analysis shows that the Anatomy is deeply indebted to the classical satiric tradition, and, equally, is one of a group of peculiarly English prose satires that flourished in the sixteenth and earlier seventeenth centuries.

Satire itself is a literary kind the theory of which has been full of contradictions; but in Renaissance England there existed a very precise notion of what satire--in its formal verse manifestation at least--ought to be. Satire was thought to be etymologically related to the "satyr," the shaggy woodland deity, and, accordingly, a decorum demanding crudeness and obscurity was attached to it. A second mark of this formal verse satire was the recurrent use of the image of anatomical dissection, appropriate enough in satire of a virulent sort. The product of these characteristics is clearly visible in such formal verse satires as the notorious Scourge of Villainie by Marston, the relatively milder Virgidemiarum of Joseph Hall, or the waspish, anonymously-written Whipper Pamphlets.

During the same period, however, a body of extremely popular prose works was being produced, including extravaganzas like Harington's Metamorphosis of Ajax, and the vituperative tracts of Nashe and Harvey. These prose works are strikingly similar to the formal verse satires both in tone and technique; they, too, have as their speaker a persona in the satyr-mold; they display an even greater ingenuity in their use of linguistic crudities, colloquial obscenities, and veiled personal references, than their verse counterparts; significantly, also, they employ the image of anatomical dissection with great frequency, in some instances making it the dominant motif. It is to this group of prose satires that Robert Burton's Anatomy of Melancholy belongs.

The Anatomy of Melancholy, first published in 1621 in a relatively compact form, achieved a widespread fame immediately, and went through five editions, all corrected and enlarged, in its author's life; the sixth edition, the last to be proofed and expanded by Burton, was published posthumously in 1651. The Anatomy has unmistakable links with the other prose satires of the day: it is, for example, dependent upon the anatomy-image, and its speaker, Democritus Junior, is a satiric persona with many of the attributes of the satyr. But the Anatomy is also an offshoot of the classical European tradition of satire, and makes abundant use of the great

satirists of antiquity, particularly Lucian, as well as of the modern representatives of the tradition such as Aretino and Rabelais.

That Burton's aim was to produce a satire as early as the 1621 edition can be seen from an analysis of that not-easily-available work. Lacking many of the embellishments of the 1651 edition (it is some 60% shorter), its vision is all the more readily grasped. It reveals a mastery of the techniques of satire that its author had displayed in his first publication, the satiric drama Philosophaster, but it also embodies a philosophy that had darkened with the passing of time: Burton, unlike his persona, is no ingenuous pedant full of unfounded admiration for the human race; rather, one sees him mercilessly dissect the great institutions of Western civilization, as he knew them, and exhibit their futility. Significantly, suicide is defended at several climactic points in the Anatomy, and the first edition closes with a "Conclusion of the Author to the Reader" that reinforces the pervasive satiric vision.

A study of the post-1621 editions consolidates the view that the Anatomy is satire. The additions and revisions, especially to the preliminary matter and the Preface, leave the reader in no doubt as to the tone of what he is reading and the intent of what is to follow; even the apparently "scientific" passages have their function within the overall satiric pattern. Everywhere, the post-1621 editions reveal Burton polishing with loving care, endlessly interpolating the ironic phrase, the incongruous allusion, or weaving long satiric passages to enhance further the original effect.

## CHAPTER I

### THE VAGARIES OF BURTON CRITICISM AND A THEORY OF SATIRE

There has been a great diversity of critical opinion over the exact nature of Burton's Anatomy of Melancholy. It has been categorized as the disorganized rambling of a pedant who was old-fashioned even in his own day, as a major scientific treatise, as a great Renaissance religious work, or, more commonly, as a hotch-potch whose aim is either confused or confusing.<sup>1</sup> The problem of ascertaining Burton's aim and the nature of his Anatomy, however, is compounded by the lack of a definitive edition of the work. Burton supervised the revision and publication of the first five editions, and had personally

<sup>1</sup>In these introductory pages (1 - 7), I am providing only the barest outline of the variety of critical opinions. Later in the chapter, they will be considered rather more fully. As for the four views exemplified here: a typical proponent of the notion that Burton was an erratic pedant is the anonymous essayist who, in Cornhill Magazine, April 1880, p. 490, patronises the Anatomy by suggesting that it is "a patchwork, stuck together with scissors and paste, a queer amorphous mass, in spite of its ostensible plan." Still, he does find "a real charm in the old gentleman." Foremost among those who suggest that the Anatomy is an important scientific work is Sir William Osler, "Burton's Anatomy of Melancholy," Yale Review, III (Jan., 1914), 252, asserting that it is "a great medical treatise." A number of critics have attached themselves to the opinion that the Anatomy is essentially a religious work; the most recent of these is Miss Patricia Vicari, who has delivered a paper before the 1971 meeting of the Association of Canadian University Teachers of English, entitled "Robert Burton: The Anatomy as Sermon, and the Sermon as Anatomy." The most useful Burton critic, in many senses, Lawrence Babb, Sanity in Bedlam (Michigan State University Press, 1959), considers that there is "serious disunity" in the Anatomy, and suggests a confusion in Burton's mind.

prepared the sixth edition, which was unfortunately not published till 1651, eleven years after his death. Yet the modern standard edition of the Anatomy, Shilleto's, is a version of the error-ridden seventh edition, which Shilleto assumed to be a faithful copy of the sixth.<sup>1</sup> Nor does any modern edition, for logistic reasons, attempt to cope with the problem of somehow illustrating the gradual development of the text, which is some sixty per cent longer in the sixth edition than it was in the first.

The two problems--critical indecision and lack of a comprehensive text--are closely interlinked in the case of the Anatomy, for readers have been deprived of an opportunity to study the growth of the work and the author's continuing preoccupations. Yet a sound critical approach can only be enhanced by such a study, and, conversely, through it, improper emphases stand a good chance of being exposed.<sup>2</sup> With respect to the present thesis, a study of the additions and revisions to the 1621 edition lends weight to the contention that the Anatomy of Melancholy is basically a work whose unity lies in its satiric character.

<sup>1</sup>The dates of publication of the six editions are as follows: first, 1621; second, 1624; third, 1628; fourth, 1632; fifth, 1638; and sixth, 1651. The Shilleto text (George Bell and Sons, London, 1896) was based on the 1660 edition.

<sup>2</sup>R. G. Hallwachs, "Additions and Revisions in the Second Edition of Burton's Anatomy of Melancholy" (Diss. Princeton 1942), casts doubt on Osler's interpretation in this way, showing that Burton makes no effort to expand the much-mooted "scientific" areas in the second edition.

Many readers have detected the presence of satire in the Anatomy, to be sure, and one group has gone so far as to describe it as "Menippean satire." This term, however, comes to be a specialised label for a form of extended essay, and lacks the connotations of "satire" in the orthodox sense.<sup>1</sup> Burton's Anatomy, in any case, is satiric in a much more basic sense than has been hitherto proposed. Not only does it have the characteristics of satire (in the commonly accepted sense), but it also has specific affinities with a whole school of Renaissance prose writers who certainly regarded themselves as satirists, but whom scholars have generally been loath to classify. The writers of formal verse satire in the Renaissance, on the other hand, have been studied much more intensively, and their work has been shown to contain a number of notable distinguishing features:<sup>2</sup> it uses the "loose" satura form;<sup>3</sup> it employs a satyr-figure as its speaker;

<sup>1</sup>Northrop Frye is the leader of this group. His suggestions as outlined in the Anatomy of Criticism (New York: Atheneum, 1966), will receive a more detailed evaluation later in this chapter. A more "orthodox" (in my view) definition of satire is proposed below, p. 53.

<sup>2</sup>Chapter II is devoted to the study of Renaissance prose satire. Works dealing with the formal verse are: R. M. Alden, The Rise of Formal Satire in England (Philadelphia, 1899); O. J. Campbell, Comical Satyre in Shakespeare's Troilus and Cressida (San Marino, 1965); A. Kernan, The Cankered Muse (New Haven, 1959); and John Peter, Complaint and Satire in Early English Literature (Oxford, 1956).

<sup>3</sup>I am indebted to Irvin Ehrenpreis, The "Types" Approach to Literature (New York: King's Crown Press, 1945), for the terms "kind," "form," and "mode," as they will be used throughout this thesis. Northrop Frye, Anatomy, and René Wellek and Austin Warren, Theory of Literature



it is distinguished, accordingly, by excessively crude language; its main image comes from medicine, and particularly from the practice of anatomical dissection; it is frequently virulent in its onslaughts despite its protestations of humane concern--so much so, apparently, that in 1599 formal verse satire was outlawed and many volumes of it were consigned to the fire.

The works of the prose satirists of the sixteenth and earlier seventeenth centuries in England can be characterised in the same way as the formal verse satire. Prose works like Nashe's Anatomie of Absurditie (1589), Harvey's Pierces Supererogation (1593) and Sir John Harington's Metamorphosis of Ajax (1596)<sup>1</sup> contain features similar to some in the most virulent outpourings of the least savoury of the verse satirists, Marston. They usually have as their speaker a satyr-persona who is inclined to vilify his unfortunate enemies with unflagging zest and

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(New York: Harcourt, Brace and Co., 1942) denounce the word "genre" as "an unpronounceable and alien thing," and "kind" seems an acceptable English equivalent for what we normally understand by "genre." "Form" is used to describe the literary vehicles (such as "novel," "short story," "anatomy") for the various "kinds." "Mode" means "the manner characteristic of a kind"; we may find several "modes" operating within one such complex work as King Lear.

<sup>1</sup>In Chapters II and III of this thesis, there is an analysis of the major prose-works of these writers, in which the close relationship between their satires and those of the formal verse satirists is shown. A scrutiny of the revealing "flyting" between Nashe and Harvey makes it clear that each was a master of the satiric arts of invective and abuse.

abundant moral indignation--saeva indignatio is the pass-word; they tend to use the satura form because of the opportunities it provides for tangential abuse of all and sundry; the major metaphor they employ is the pervasive anatomical one; and their language is frequently as crude as their imaginations can make it.

Burton's Anatomy seems to me to be a member of this group of prose satires, and would quite probably be recognized as such by the majority of his contemporary readers. Its speaker, Democritus Junior, is a satiric persona, sublimating the functions of doctor and priest in that of the satirist.<sup>1</sup> The Anatomy is written in the satura form, and parodies the medical treatise which very aptly supplies the basic medical image, the signature of Renaissance satire. It is an epitome, too, of the most sophisticated and explicit satiric devices,<sup>2</sup> assailing multitudes of targets in keeping with its stated aim of examining a universal disease.

The Anatomy's affinities with Renaissance prose satire appear more clearly from an examination of the relatively compact first edition.

<sup>1</sup>For information and speculation upon the origins of satire, I shall rely heavily upon R. C. Elliot's The Power of Satire (Princeton, 1960), the only major work dealing exclusively with the roots of the satiric mode.

<sup>2</sup>Sister Mary Claire Randolph, "The Medical Concept in English Renaissance Satiric Theory," SP, XXXVIII (1941), supplies us with a list of the popular satiric tools of the day, including catalogues, mini-anatomies, mock-odysseys, mock-encomia, irony, ridicule, diminutio, invective, and many others. Burton makes use of them all with superlative effect.

As an analysis of this edition indicates, there was no confusion in Burton's mind, at least, over his aim: it is a satire on the widespread proportions of human folly, and is no more a scientific work than Gulliver's Travels is an authentic traveler's tale. The technical passages are as often as not merely parodic, for they are the crutch upon which the satura must lean, and are not an end in themselves. The first edition also contains exclusively the "Conclusion of the Author to the Reader," a satiric apologia at the end of the work, which brings the Anatomy full circle from the "Satyricall Preface," and shows the consistency in the vision that has informed the entire work. Throughout the first edition, one can see the careful shaping of the persona's character, sometimes as the satirist himself, sometimes as the satirised; and one can savour Burton's mastery of the whole range of satiric devices, from the dominant mock-odyssey motif to the sophisticated irony that marks the interplay between author, persona, and subject.

In the editions after 1621, Burton continues to sharpen and deepen his satiric vision. Passages with potential for further satiric development he augmented with zest, and often, when the satire was not sufficiently explicit, as in the title and preliminary matter of the first edition, he added large gobbets of material to remedy the defect. The early editions were remarkably successful, and Burton, whilst still keeping up the pretence of a scientific purpose, made virtually no additions to the "technical" material after 1621.

Two factors of importance, then, seem to indicate that Burton's Anatomy is a satiric work whose aim is by no means confused: its relationship to the group of prose satires that was popular in England during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries; and the evidence supplied by a study of the additions and revisions to the post-1621 editions of the Anatomy, which suggests that Burton's vision was satiric. Since, however, the bulk of Burton critics over three hundred years have not considered the Anatomy to be satire, it becomes necessary and illuminating to examine their opinions more closely, to assess their conclusions, and to ponder whether, in fact, the label "satire," no matter how contentious, is not the most appropriate for a work like the Anatomy.

It is always a rewarding pursuit for the student of literature to scrutinize the critical treatment meted out to a particular writer over the years, though it is a well-warranted platitude that, as often as not, one learns more about the critic than about his author from such a study. In the case of one who, in the course of three hundred years, has received a great deal of critical notice, it is all the more illuminating.<sup>1</sup> Burton's Anatomy of Melancholy has run the gamut;

<sup>1</sup>William R. Mueller, in The Anatomy of Robert Burton's England (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1952), and Richard L. Nochimson, in "Robert Burton: a Study of the Man, his Work, and his Critics," Diss. Columbia 1967, have both given rather selective outlines of major trends in Burton criticism, Nochimson's being apparently very much indebted to Mueller's. Mueller shows that the critical trends do indeed mirror the ages in which they occur, Nochimson demonstrates that some very superficial work on the part of biographers has led to misconceptions about Burton. My concern in examining the critics is to evince the notion that it is confusion over the essential nature of Burton's major opus that has led to the conflicting interpretations of it.

on the one hand he is charged, like that unfortunate don of Lord Macaulay's "whose natural spark of wit was smothered by his pedantry," with collecting "the sweepings of the Bodleian,"<sup>1</sup> and on the other hand he is lauded as the foremost exponent of a recently rediscovered literary genre.<sup>2</sup> An examination of the meanderings of the stream of Burton criticism, however, shows little in the way of "progress" in critical appreciation that would give rise to any complacency about the superiority of modern critical approaches, but it does demonstrate effectively the perennial problems which the Anatomy has presented to all who have endeavoured to draw that leviathan out with a hook; from such a realization it is hoped that certain positions will emerge, upon which the superstructure of this thesis will rest.

Critics of the Anatomy of Melancholy have been divided over the true nature of the work. Broadly speaking, there are three main approaches to it, each with the "by streams and rilllets" beloved of Burton. The first school has tended to emphasize the utilitarian function of the Anatomy, though often, as with each of the other schools, not completely ignoring all other aspects of the book. The "utilitarians" feel that the Anatomy is, by design, a scientific or educational text-book;

<sup>1</sup>Quoted in F. P. Wilson's amusing and interesting Seventeenth Century Prose (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1960), p. 33.

<sup>2</sup>Northrop Frye, The Anatomy of Criticism is the main propounder of the view. Its merits will be discussed below, p. 22, and throughout.

the more sympathetically inclined of them suggest that it is rewarding reading for the student seeking to amass information on an encyclopedic scale. This "utilitarian" group is counterbalanced by a second, for whom the personality of the author is most important. This school finds the Anatomy to be a mirror of an erratic but attractive representative of a once-vital way of life now defunct; also, this group sees in the personality of the author a more positive unifying principle that permeates the Anatomy and explains the book's apparent diffuseness. Finally, there is a group of critics who have concentrated their attention on the literary form of the Anatomy, attempting to define it in terms of its literary affinities; it is upon the approach of this last group that this thesis depends, as I have hinted in the opening pages. I will deal first, however, with the "utilitarians."

The utilitarian approach to Burton, whilst predominating amongst the earlier critics, has had its atavistic modern support. In its original manifestation it appears as either an awe-stricken regard for Burton's erudition, or as a slighting and often spiteful contempt for his "damnable iteration." The Anatomy is called "a book of philology," in which Burton has "piled up a variety of much excellent learning."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Thomas Fuller, The Worthies of England, ed. J. Freeman (London: Allen and Unwin, 1952), pp. 320-21. Unfortunately, one has to suspect Fuller's authority: for instance, in describing Burton's work, he says cryptically and parenthetically, "None to the native to describe a country," and one has a nasty suspicion that he is confusing Robert with William, his brother, and author of A Description of Leicestershire (London: Jaggard, 1622).

Anthony à Wood, the validity of whose information is often questionable, may in this instance be taken safely to reflect the opinion of his age when he tells us that the Anatomy is a book "so full of variety of reading that Gentlemen who have lost their time and are put to a push for invention, may furnish themselves with matter [from it] for common or scholastic discourse and writing."<sup>1</sup> This is a striking foreshadowing of Lord Byron's comment, "If the reader has patience to go through [Burton's] volumes, he will be more improved for literary conversation than by the perusal of any twenty other works with which I am acquainted"<sup>2</sup> --a rather back-handed compliment. Doctor Johnson's comment on Burton is well known, and whilst we may have reason to doubt that he rose two hours earlier in the morning to read the Anatomy--according to Boswell, he never rose early for anything--his remark that it was "overloaded with quotation"<sup>3</sup> strikes the familiar chord and corresponds too much with other contemporary estimations to be dismissed: many critics have

<sup>1</sup>Anthony à Wood, Athenae Oxoniensis (London, 1721), quoted in Paul Jordan-Smith in his edition of Philosophaster (Stanford, 1931), p. 282. à Wood is notoriously inaccurate and speculative in his pseudo-history. One gets the impression that he has read the Anatomy, or at least the Preface, and has taken literally all apparently personal remarks that are there and applied them to the author.

<sup>2</sup>George Gordon Byron, Letters, ed. T. More (London, 1930), I, 98.

<sup>3</sup>J. E. Brown, ed., The Critical Opinions of Samuel Johnson (Princeton University Press, 1926), p. 300.

felt since that the Burtonian rifts contain too much ore. Amongst the more modern holders of the view, this damning statement is found: "no book bears a closer resemblance to the works of marginal Prynne,"<sup>1</sup> a remark calculated to offend the memory of the Burton who launched the bitter attack upon Prynne and his ilk in the Third Partition.

It is, however, an aficionado of Burton's (and there are many from Lamb onwards--a group who make no notable critical contribution), Paul Jordan-Smith, who makes the definitive statement on Burton's erudition:

It covers almost every field of human interest: medicine, dietetics, psychiatry, climatology, ethics, education, theology, government, magic, astrology, travel, horticulture, and both the pleasures and pains of love. Add to all this the fact that on every subject the greatest masters of his own and every previous age are summoned to give their testimony; that the whole is enlivened by the poets of England, Greece and Rome, and by a multitude of droll, Decameronian stories, and even then one gets but a slight notion of the inclusive nature of this old book.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Arthur W. Fox, A Book of Bachelors (A. Constable and Co., 1899), p. 434.

<sup>2</sup>Paul Jordan-Smith, Bibliographia Burtoniana (Stanford, 1931), p. 4. Jordan-Smith's critical statements are, to put it mildly, impressionistic: for example, he informs us that given a choice of books to take to a desert island, he would opt for the Anatomy--not the best recommendation for it, one takes leave to suggest. At times, however, in defence of his idol, he becomes witty, as when he dismisses the idea that Bacon is the real author of the Anatomy (p. 67): "It would seem that Bacon, taking a day off from the production of Don Quixote, Montaigne's Essays, Shakespeare's poems and plays, The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia, The Faerie Queene, and other odds and ends of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century literature, on both sides of the Channel, not to make account of the works bearing his own name, did first the Treatise (1586), and then, thirty-five years later, enlarged and revised it into the Anatomy of Melancholy."



Such catalogues of the Anatomy's "ingredients" are the staple of most of the literary histories.

In general, the twentieth-century version of the "utilitarian" approach envisages the Anatomy as primarily an example of Renaissance scientific writing--a view adumbrated as early as 1730 by Thomas Hearne, who, in commenting upon the declining popularity of Burton in the eighteenth century (the nadir of his reputation), voices the standard view we have already noticed: "it hath been a common-place book for filchers" (like Sterne). His next comment is however of more interest to us:

now, tis disregarded, and a good fair perfect copy (although of the 7th impression), may be purchased for one shilling, well bound, which occasioned a Gentleman yesterday . . . to say that Sir Isaac Newton (he believed) would also in time be turned to waste paper, an observation which is very likely to prove true.<sup>1</sup>

The analogy with Newton the scientist has proved false, in that the reputation of Burton has grown since the doldrums of the eighteenth century, and is now fairly established--a course of events which may indicate that it is not to Burton's scientific contribution that one ought to look in search of his real worth. But the critics with whom

<sup>1</sup>Thomas Hearne, Reliquiae Hearnianae; the Remains of Thomas Hearne, M.A. of Edmund Hall; ed. J. Buchanan-Brown (London: Centaur Press, 1960), p. 409. Again, it has to be admitted that Hearne, picturesque as he may seem is not a reliable source, except inasmuch as he reflects eighteenth-century opinion. His comments, with the exception of the ones above, seem to be from à Wood, down to the very language; for example, that Burton was a "most facetious and pleasant companion;" indeed, so careless is he that he mentions à Wood in his next sentence, thus confirming one's suspicions, albeit unwittingly.

I shall now deal are determined that the basis for our continuing to read Burton rests not on his literary merits, but on his importance in the history of scientific advance. And the greatest proponent of this line is the formidable Sir William Osler, who pontificates:

The Anatomy of Melancholy is a great medical treatise, orderly in arrangement, serious in purpose, and weighty beyond belief with authorities.<sup>1</sup>

The area of Burton's scientific effort has been even further delimited by another observer, who describes him as a pioneer

who devoted his life to the study of mental aberration, and was concerned with no other branch of medicine, except in so far as it bore on his central interest.<sup>2</sup>

Burton is acclaimed as one of the founders of modern psychiatry in this view.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Osler, "Burton's Anatomy of Melancholy," 252.

<sup>2</sup>Bergen Evans, The Psychiatry of Robert Burton (New York, 1944), p. 1.

<sup>3</sup>Evans' book indulges in the dangerous if once popular practice of explaining the psyche, and thereby the "intention" of the author, through unconscious admissions made in his creative work. Often this method shows nothing more than the insensitivity of the critic to the artistic consciousness of a writer. So we find such irrelevancies as this: "The assumption that she [Burton's mother] was domineering and unaffectionate towards him--or at least that he thought she was--is supported by the intensity of feeling with which he so often alludes in the Anatomy to the cruelty and indifference of parents" (p. 6). Evans continues, "He [Burton] makes it quite clear, in the course of his book, that he had suffered an unhealable narcissistic injury in his childhood, that left him resentful, envious, scornful of himself and of others." The literary value of such comments is very difficult to ascertain, and their psychoanalytical validity seems doubtful, since they rest upon a very imperfect notion of the nature of the work.

Perhaps the most aggressive and uncompromising statement of this scientific branch of the utilitarian school is as follows:

A scholar who wrote in Latin was assured of an international reputation, and Burton's aim was to write a medical text-book. Burton would be much surprised to find out that his book is read only by those who find it amusing . . . .<sup>1</sup>

Since Burton did not write in Latin anyway, the point is not well taken.

This large and prominently represented group of critics who tend to treat Burton as scientist, or encyclopedist, or commonplace collector, is counterbalanced by a group of critics who are primarily interested in some aspect of the personality of Burton, which, they feel, pervades the work. Some of them regard the Anatomy as a case-book which shows what an odd creature its compiler was, others suggest that Burton's personality is that evasive unifying principle in the Anatomy which caused so much head-scratching.

One of this group's favourite and most bizarre attitudes has been a protective and possessive feeling towards the "fantastic old great man."<sup>2</sup> Lamb, for example, was full of righteous indignation at the resurrection of his protégé in modern-looking editions--he associated the Anatomy's peculiarly Burtonian flavour with the very appearance of the volume which encompasses his effort, seemingly preferring that he should be dead than read. When, in the present century, we find an

<sup>1</sup>E. L. Black, "Burton the Anatomist," English, VII (1949), 26.

<sup>2</sup>Charles Lamb, Works, ed. E. V. Lucas (London, 1903-5), V, 27.

article entitled "Quaint Old Treatise of Love," we are sufficiently warned not to be surprised at Burton's being described as "this strange old pedant" or at his work being discussed with good-humoured though misplaced superiority.<sup>1</sup>

An extension of this viewpoint became more popular in the twentieth century, when emphasis was laid on Burton's attractive "personality" as the dominating force and saving grace in the whole "amorphous mass:"

The Anatomy of Melancholy, like Southey's The Doctor, is essentially a cento, an immense collection of quotations from a very wide reading, moulded into a book by the strong personality of the compiler.<sup>2</sup>

The Anatomy is also referred to as

The multifarious expression of a nature as quaint, fantastic, various and mocking as that which created, stone by stone, with infinite labour, that great edifice [Notre Dame].<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Gamaliel Bradford, "Quaint Old Treatise of Love: Burton's Anatomy of Melancholy," Sewanee Review, XIX (April, 1911), 183.

<sup>2</sup>Richard Aldington, "Burton the Anatomist," Nation and Athenaeum, XXXVI (March 21, 1925), 861. The comparison between the Anatomy and The Doctor is of interest, since there is an implicit recognition of the generic similarity involved. The Doctor bears many resemblances to the picaresque novel, but also has the ingredients of the Menippean satire that Frye prescribes. Southey's doctor, however, is much more akin in temperament to Sir Thomas Browne, and, indeed, one of the chapters is headed, "Points of Similitude and Dissimilitude between Sir Thomas Browne and Doctor Dove." The book might almost be read as the development of a nineteenth-century Thomas Browne. It was about this time that Burton was coming back into favour.

<sup>3</sup>F. Mortimer Clapp, Scribner's Magazine, LXXXVII (1930), 221; This kind of analogy between the arts reaches its apotheosis in Wylie Sypher's work. Burton's Anatomy has some of the characteristics that Sypher would associate with baroque.