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Donne Wondering

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Working up to a focus on Donne's poetry, and in particular on "The Good Morrow" and "Love's Growth," I want first to consider wonder itself as a cognitive passion with a history that has recently attracted Shakespeareans, as earlier it attracted at least one reader of Donne, namely, Dennis Quinn.[1] Wonder plays a recurrent role in Donne's prose and poetic writing in which, as an emotion affecting the mind, it combines emotive response and intellectual cognition. Triggering this combination, wonder belongs essentially to the whole person, working to unify this potential oneness instead of separating it into parts. In the affective turn, or welcome return, of critical attention to the role of the material, the human body, and especially the senses in poetic utterance, the specifically cognitive

[1] See Dennis Quinn, "Donne and the Wane of Wonder," *ELH* 36.4 (1969): 626-47. For Shakespeare, see J. V. Cunningham, *Woe or Wonder: The Emotional Effect of Shakespearean Tragedy* (1951, 1960; rpt. Denver, CO: Alan Swallow, 1964); T. G. Bishop, *Shakespeare and the Theatre of Wonder* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996); Peter G. Platt, *Reason Diminished: Shakespeare and the Marvelous* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1997); Adam Max Cohen, *Wonder in Shakespeare* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012). On Donne, as well as Shakespeare, see Charis Charalampous, *Rethinking the Mind-Body Relationship in Early Modern Literature, Philosophy and Medicine* (New York: Routledge, 2016). On the tradition of wonder more generally, see Philip Fisher, *Wonder, the Rainbow, and the Aesthetics of Rare Experiences* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1998); Lorraine Daston and Katharine Park, *Wonders and the Order of Nature, 1150-1750* (New York; Zone, 1998); Caroline Walker Bynum, *Metamorphosis and Identity* (New York: Zone, 2001). I have used some of the following material on wonder in "Wonder and Nostalgia in *Hamlet*," *Studies in English Literature* 58.2 (2018): 353-72 at 357-58.

passion of wonder, which acts to bridge any putative divide of mind from body, plays a deeply meaningful role.

Looking at Wonder Historically: Plato to Donne

From ancient times, wonder is recognized as the motivation for understanding. In Plato's *Theaetetus*, Socrates describes "the sense of wonder [as] the mark of the philosopher," and he ascribes philosophy to "no other origin."[2] In the Greek text, the word for this sense, or distinctive mark, is *pathos*—"experience," "passion of the soul," "feeling."[3] Socrates adds that "a good genealogist . . . made Iris the daughter of Thaumas." Iris, a messenger of Zeus and Hera, is the goddess of the rainbow, which connects heaven to earth. Thaumas, her father, is a sea god, whose name means "the wondrous." In sum, Plato's Socrates connects wonder with the pursuit of wisdom, with nature, and with the divine.

Aristotle opens his *Metaphysics* with the assertion that "all men by nature desire to know."[4] He observes that human wonder gave birth to philosophy, and he characterizes "even the lover of myth . . . [as] in some sense a lover of wisdom, for myth is composed of wonders."[5] He goes on to make the knowledge of causes the end of wonder in both senses of an *end*: that is, wonder leads to the pursuit of understanding, which is wonder's contrary, whose achievement consumes it. In the pseudo-Aristotelean *Mechanics*, "Our wonder is excited . . . by phenomena that occur in accordance with nature but of which we do not know the cause."[6] In Aristotle's *Poetics*, "incidents arousing pity and fear . . . have the very greatest effect *on the mind* when they occur unexpectedly and at the same time in consequence of one another;

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[2] *The Collected Dialogues of Plato*, ed. Hamilton and Huntington Cairns (New York: Bollingen Foundation, 1961), p. 860 (155d2-4).

[3] Liddell and Scott, s.v. *pathos*; cf. Fisher, 10.

[4] *The Complete Works of Aristotle*, rev. Oxford Translation, ed. Jonathan Barnes, 2 vols. (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1984), II:1552 (1.980a25). Even a modern like Brian Massumi turns to wonder as the defining affect of nature and philosophy: *Parables for the Virtual: Movement, Affect, Sensation* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2000), pp. 239-40, 242-43.

[5] Aristotle, II:1554 (1.982b12-15).

[6] Aristotle, II:1299 (847a10).

there is more of the marvellous [i.e., the wondrous] in them than if they happened of themselves or by mere chance."[7] In Aristotle's *Rhetoric*, since "wondering implies the desire of learning, . . . the object of wonder is an object of desire."[8] Given that Latin *admiratio*, "admiration," is a likely translation of the Greek word for wonder (*thauma*), a line from Donne's Holy Sonnet (17) on his wife's death stands out, "Here the admyring her my Mind did whett / To seeke thee God."[9] In passing, I would emphasize this association of Donnean wonder with the desire for something beyond itself before tracking the history of wonder further. I would further notice the tie of such admiration to the whetting specifically of the "mind" in Donne's sonnet, as also in the quotation from Aristotle's *Poetics*. I'll also mention a distinction within the wonder tradition between *admiratio*, "admiration," and *stupor*, "amazement, astonishment," even "stupefaction," a distinction that resonates with Donne's "Air and Angels"—with "things / Extreme, and scatt'ring bright" such as "would sink admiration." Unlike admiration, or wonder, which motivates a desire for knowledge, amazement overloads the mind, thus overpowering it.[10]

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[7] Aristotle, II:2323, sec, 9 (1452a5-19), my emphasis; cf. II:2336 (1460a10-15).

[8] Aristotle, II:2183 (1.1371a30).

[9] *Elegies*, *Anniversaries*, *Holy Sonnets* cited from *The Variorum Edition of the Poetry of John Donne*, ed. Gary A. Stringer, *et al*. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1995—), vol. 2 (*Elegies*), vol. 7.1 (*Holy Sonnets*), vol. 6 (*Anniversaries*). Unless specified otherwise, the *Songs and Sonnets* are cited from *The Complete English Poems of John Donne*, ed. A. J. Smith (1971; rpt. New York: Penguin, 1996), checked against *The Complete Poems of John Donne*, ed. Robin Robbins, rev. ed. (Harlow, UK: Pearson, 2010); *The Complete Poetry of John Donne*, ed. John T. Shawcross (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1967); *The Poems of John Donne*, ed. Herbert J.C. Grierson, 2 vols. (1912; rpt. Oxford: Clarendon, 1963), 1 (texts), 2 (commentary).

[10] See Cunningham, 81, also 60, 132n2. After my reading a shorter version of this paper at the Donne Conference in Lausanne, 2018, Piers Brown suggested to me the relevance of the word "stupid" (also from *stupor*) in Donne's *Second Anniversarie*: "Forget this world, and scarse thinke of it so, / As of old cloaths, cast of a yeare agoe. / To be thus stupid is Alacrity" (61-63). This relevance, or its lack, is worth clarifying. Insofar as "stupefaction" as an overwhelming degree of amazement, astonishment, or wonder in these extreme senses applies to the lines I have cited in "Air and Angels," it is a

Commenting on the medieval tradition of wonder, Caroline Walker Bynum stresses the fact that wonder was not understood as "merely a physiological response" but instead as "a recognition of the singularity and significance of the thing encountered."[11] It was considered to be "cognitive, non-appropriative, perspectival, and particular"—thus, in my own word, "situated."[12] Sounding a little like the admiring speaker (or seeker) in "Air and Angels," Bynum adds that for medieval thinkers, human beings "cannot wonder at what is not there; but neither can we wonder at that which we fully understand."[13] At the same time, such wonder stirs "a passionate desire." Wonder, encompassing awe or "playful delight," terror or revulsion, was "never a response to "the *merely* strange or inexplicable" or merely to a curiosity or a puzzle; wonder had "to point beyond itself . . . to something deeper" that was implicit in the phenomenon.[14]

I have lingered over Bynum's stress on the cognitive nature of wonder, coupled with her rejection of its reduction to a physiological response, because it offsets the still more recent argument of Charis Charalampous, who, while hardly denying the cognitive nature of wonder, positions it in what she variously calls the "intelligent body" or the "cognitive body" (e.g., i, 115). In her engaging view, the early modern body is "an intelligent agent, with desires, appetites and understanding independent of the mind."[15] She rejects either the view

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liability. In *The Second Anniversarie*, "stupidity" is paradoxically equated with "alacrity," or liveliness, purposive–ness—something positive, even while it is also characterized as a lethargy (64). In context (always important), such stupidity resembles the biblical folly in worldly eyes that is wisdom in God's. It could not intelligibly be glossed as the *admiratio*, "admiration," which it sinks in "Air and Angels." It fails to bear on the passage in "Air and Angels" except by contrast or on the distinction within the wonder tradition between wonder as admiration that inspires a desire for something further or higher and some form of stupefaction, whether as dulling the physical senses (*Second Anniversarie*) or as entrancing them ("Air and Angels"). That both occurrences happen to be paradoxical in some way is beside the point. Their meanings are different.

[11] Bynum, p. 39.

[12] Ibid., pp. 39, 73.

[13] Ibid., p. 39.

[14] Ibid., pp. 57, 72-73: my emphasis.

[15] Charalampous, p. 1.

that mind and body are conjoined, as in Aquinas, or that they are simply dual, as attributed to Descartes. The dualistic body she conceives is "a thinking and feeling entity" that is often associated with "moral, spiritual, and artistic gain." Charalampous' overarching subject is the mind-body relation, and it stirs up a mare's nest of questions about definition—of intellect, mind, cognition, and understanding, for example. Other questions concern the organic soul and its relation to the mind and the relation of her argument to the dominant psychology of the period, which was essentially Aristotelian. Perhaps her chapter on Donne comes down to a shift in perspective—in her own terms, from T. S. Eliot's notion that Donne felt his thought to the notion that Donne thought his feelings.[16] This is a shift in the relative weighting of mind and body.[17]

The tradition of wonder bears further on Donne's poetry, insofar as wonder is associated with metaphor and more generally with figures, including paradox and aporia, or doubt. Pointing to Expostulation XIX in the *Devotions*, Quinn connects Donne's "peregrinations of figures" in biblical rhetoric with the Ciceronian phrase "inopinata et peregrina dicta," effectually rendered by Quinn as the "paradoxical and exotic expressions" of Donne's figurative or "metaphorical God . . . in whose words there is such a height of figures, such voyages, such peregrinations to fetch remote and precious metaphors."[18] Although

[16] Ibid., p. 84.

[17] Cf. David Marno's argument that the affect of Donne's poems has "less to do with emotion and more with intellection": *Death Be Not Proud: The Art of Holy Attention* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2016), 3; cf. pp. 26-27 (thinking, cognitive). Marno's view of attention as both beginning and end (e.g., p. 227) effectually distinguishes it from Donne's wondering, as from that of the wonder tradition, in which wonder is more clearly a beginning (e.g., Aristotle).

[18] Quinn, p. 631; *Devotions Vpon Emergent Occasions*, ed. Anthony Raspa (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1975). *Oxford Latin Dictionary*, s.v. *inopinatus*, 1. "Not expected, unforeseen"; s.v. *inopinabilis*, "Not to be expected, extraordinary, paradoxical"; cf. s.v. *opinor/-atus*, 1. "To hold as an opinion, think, believe, suppose"; also s.v. *peregrinus*, 1.b "exotic, foreign"; cf. s.v. *peregrinor*, 1. "To go or travel abroad." Quinn notes that "*inopinata*" is the literal translation of Greek *paradoxa* (631n13). Metaphor, I would add, is regularly described as *alienus*, "alien, strange, foreign," in the rhetorical

Donne does not use the word "wonder" in this familiar passage, he certainly gives voice to it. The ancient rhetorician Longinus, whose *On the Sublime* was known for his embrace of heightened language, is relevant to Donne's peregrinations by clarifying contrast.[19] Longinus aims for an astonishment that overpowers the hearer, as if a flash of lightning, rather than for the engagement of the critical mind and passionate desire that together characterize wonder.[20] In Donne's words from "Air and Angels," Longinian astonishment "would sink admiration," or wonder. "Astonishment," incidentally, is a favored pun in Spenser and subsequent poets, suggesting a virtual turn to stone, a petrifying or freezing of response: for example, "astonisht, still he stood, as sencelesse stone."[21]

The association of wonder with paradox follows from this difference between Donne and Longinus. In *The Arte of English Poesie* (1589), George Puttenham dubs the figure *Paradoxon*, "the wondrer," and he uses the words "maruelous" and "admiration" in explaining it.[22] Cicero, Quinn notes, regularly translated Greek *paradoxa* by Latin *admirabilia* (633). Of course a paradox is a figure of doubleness. Its name derives from Greek *para*, "beside, alongside" and *doxa*, "opinion, belief," which

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tradition. Cf. Daston and Park, p. 155, for *peregrina* in the context of wonder with respect to rarity and strangeness, therapeutic *mirabilia*.

[19] On the availability of Longinus in the Renaissance, see William Ringler, "An Early Reference to Longinus," *Modern Language Notes* 52. 1 (1938): 23-24; T.J.B. Spencer, "Longinus in English Criticism: Influences before Milton," *Review of English Studies* 8 (1957): 137-43 at 142.

[20] *Longinus on the Sublime* [*Perí hýpsous*], trans. A. O. Prickard (1906; rpt. Oxford: Clarendon, 1954), 2-3. Longinus' treatise is referenced in England from the sixteenth century on. Cf. Platt, 6: Cicero's flash of lightning, cited by Quintilian and thence by Platt, seems to anticipate Longinus', if only momentarily.

[21] Edmund Spenser, *The Faerie Queene*, ed. A. C. Hamilton, text edited by Hiroshi Yamashita and Toshiyuki Suzuki, 2nd edn. (Harlow, UK: Pearson, 2007), II.vi.31; examples could greatly be multiplied.

[22] Puttenham, *The Arte Of English Poesie* (1589; rpt. Kent, OH: Kent State University Press, 1988), p. 233. On paradox, see also Peter G. Platt, "'Much More the Better for Being a Little Bad,' or, Gaining by Relaxing: Equity and Paradox in *Measure for Measure*," in *Textual Conversations in the Renaissance: Ethics, Authors, Technologies*, ed. Zachary Lesser and Benedict S. Robinson (Aldershot, UK: Ashgate, 2006), pp. 45-68.

derives in turn from *dokein*, "to appear, seem, think." The word *paradox* thus implies a perception of two contrarious things at once. Puttenham, who carefully groups his figures, places "*Aporia*, or the Doubtfull," immediately after *Paradoxon*. His explanation of aporia begins, "Not much vnlike the wondrer [i.e., paradox] haue ye . . . [this next] figure," which he contrasts to a plain affirmation or denial.[23] His evident association of wonder with ambiguity, complexity, uncertainty, even skepticism is also present in the wonder tradition. Such features belong more to intellection than to passionate desire.

Wonder and Love in Donne's Writing, with a Nod to Herbert

While Donne's sermons and poems employ the term *wonder* and a wondering response variously, two emphases stand out. The first is the recurrent association of love with wonder in the secular poems: for instance, love and wonder were mutually given life by the woman mourned in Donne's "Funeral Elegy" (29); in his "Valediction of the Book," "all divinity / Is love or wonder" (28-29); and in Elegy 10, whose subject is foul Flavia, because "All Love is Wonder, yf we iustly doo / Accoumpt her wonderfull, why not Lovely too?" (25-26). Were the association of love and wonder not familiar, this parody would lose its punch. The second emphasis evident comes in the religious context of the sermons and Holy Sonnets, wherein it is recurrently the love of the Creator and the Savior that is wondrous. Holy Sonnet 14, which begins in wonder—"Why ame I by all creatures wayted on?"—later tells us to "wonder at a greater wonder," namely that their Creator "For vs, his creatures, and his foes hath dyed." In Holy Sonnet 13, the speaker prays, "let me then, his strange love still admyre," namely God's clothing "himselfe in vile Mans flesh, that so / He might be weake inough to suffer wo." The play of paradox in these sonnets is obvious, and in them, the paradoxes are at once of God's making and of the wondering speaker's perception. If there is doubt in them, it lies in the speaker's sense of unworthiness—in words like "vile" and "foes" to

[23] Puttenham, p. 234.

characterize "vs, his creatures" and "strange" to describe God's wondrous love.[24]

Again and again in Donne's sermons, his listeners are called upon to admire similar paradoxes of creative and redemptive love. But in a sermon on the Resurrection, whose text begins, "Marvell not at this; for the houre is comming," Donne treats wonder itself as a subject.[25] Observing that some things rightly deserve wonder, he dismisses the counsel of Stoic philosophers, *Nil admirari*, "Nothing is to be wondered at" and instead endorses the patristic view "*Principium veritatis est res admirari*, The first step to faith, is to wonder, to stand, and consider with a holy admiration, the waies and proceedings of God with man: for, Admiration, wonder, stands as in the midst, betweene knowledge and faith, and hath an eye towards both."[26] He continues, "If I know a thing, or believe a thing, I do no longer wonder: but when I finde that I have reason to stop upon the consideration of a thing, so, as that I see enough to induce admiration, to make me wonder, I come by that step, and God leads me by that hand, to a knowledge, if it be of a natural or civill thing, or to a faith, if it be of a supernaturall, and spirituall thing" (VI:265). The sonnets I have cited are clearly suspended in a condition of wonder, between knowledge and faith.

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[24] While my focal concern is Donne's association of wonder with love, not exclusively or exhaustively the occurrence of the word "wonder," I would note the occurrence of the word "wonder" in three other poems by him: "An Epithalamion or Marriage-Song on the Lady Elizabeth and Frederick, Count Palatine, being Married on St Valentine's Day," 39-40; *Metempsychosis*, 513-17 (both cited from the edition of Robin Robbins); "Elegia" (i.e., "Elegie on the L. C."), 1-4 (cited from the Donne *Variorum Edition*, vol. 6).

[25] The selected text is John 5:28-29, which reads in full: "Marvell not at this, for the houre is coming, in the which, all that are in the graves shall heare his voice; And shall come forth, they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evill, unto the resurrection of damnation": *The Sermons of John Donne*, ed. George R. Potter and Evelyn M. Simpson, 10 vols. (1953; rpt. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), 6:262 (I have not reproduced Potter and Simpson's capitalization of the entire biblical text). The date of the sermon is 1625, the place St. Paul's, the occasion Easter.

[26] *The Sermons of John Donne*, 6:265. Donne's Patristic authority is Clement of Alexandria. The Stoic "nil admirari" is a commonplace: e.g., Horace, *Epistulae*, I.6; Cicero, *Tusculanae Disputationes*, I.59; Seneca, *Ad Lucilium Epistulae Morales*, letter 23.

This suspended condition pertains as well to erotic, secular poems by Donne—notably, "The Good Morrow" and "Love's Growth." By comparison, it also bears on George Herbert's "Flower," whose clarifying difference I want to align with Donne's practice in eventually concluding. The speaker of "The Good Morrow" starts with wonder ("I wonder by my troth") but quickly turns to the distancing, defensive mockery of past pleasures, sucking and snorting. In comparison to the present love this speaker shares, he now discovers that "If ever any beauty I did see, / Which I desired, and got, 'twas but a dream of thee." This admiring dreamer wants his listener to know that he has been around, that he is experienced, a reliable judge of love and beauty: the phrase "and got" is both guarantee and comical qualifier. Yet the whole poem might be said to be an expansion and exposition of the wonder with which it begins—an attempt "to stop upon consideration of the thing," in the words of the sermon I have cited. In the terms of the same poem and same sermon, the speaker's wondering by his troth also introduces a *principium veritatis*, a truth, which is itself a *res admirari*, a thing to be admired, which is "The first step to faith," namely "to wonder, to stand, and consider . . . as in the midst, betweene knowledge and faith," with "an eye towards both." "Troth," or "truth," understood as medieval *trouthe*, an understanding readily available in Donne's time, has ontological, epistemological, and personal dimensions—as the godhead, objective reality, and subjective, affective loyalty (compare modern, plighted *troth*). In "The Good Morrow," the speaker's spec–ifying "my troth" inclines toward the most personal of these meanings, which still implies the others. Even while the rest of the poem moves to exclude a wider world, the very fabric of its language and imagery refuses to do so.

In "Love's Growth," the wondering speaker sounds older than the one waking to reality in "The Good Morrow": now, "Methinks I lied all winter, when I swore, / My love was infinite, if spring make it more."[27]

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[27] Within the present volume, Theresa M. DiPasquale argues persuasively in "Which 'springs encrease'? Estimating the Date of Donne's 'Spring'" that "Love's Growth" was written in 1610-13 when Donne would have been 38-41. If Nancy P. Brown, a major source for DiPasquale, is right in asserting that Donne's image of astral/planetary light registers the discoveries of Galileo's telescope, both she and DiPasquale lend support to my purely tonal sense that the speaker of "Love's Growth" is older than the speaker of "The Good

Surprised by the resurgence of desire, the speaker reasons that his earlier love was neither infinite nor "so pure, and abstract, as they use / To say, which have no mistress, but their Muse." Change, which includes movement, signals physical sense and material existence, even if this change is for the better. Shifting attention from greatness to eminence, size to intensity, quantity to quality, however, the speaker next compares his reawakened love to stars [i.e., planets] in the firmament that are seasonally illuminated by the sun's power, together with their proximity to this power, and then, in another shift, to ever-enlarging earthly and heavenly circles concentric to the love he addresses.[28] Here, as so often in Donne's poetry—notably in "A Valediction Forbidding Mourning" and *The Second Anniversarie* (436-

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Morrow": "A Note on the Imagery of Donne's 'Loves Growth,'": *Modern Language Notes* 48 (1953): 324-27. Galileo published *Sidereus Nuncius*, his major text relevant to Donne's poem, in 1610; his identification of the sun as source of astral/planetary light, Brown notes, can earlier be found in Plato and Proclus, albeit not accounting for its variation in brilliance there (p. 325). Brown's "Note" itself does not explain the *movement* that Donne's seasonal reawakening implies ("more eminent , Love *by the spring* is grown; / As, in the firmament, / Stars, by the sun are not enlarged, but shown" (my emphasis); that is, the implied *seasonal* brightness, or eminence, suggests a *shift* in position. Moreover, the planetary order that Donne observes in the ascent of the soul in *The Second Anniversarie* (1612), namely Venus before Mercury, is evidently Tycho Brahe's, not Galileo's, as noted by John Shawcross, ed., *Complete Poetry*, p. 296n189-206. Brahe's system, employing an extraordinary number of observations and epicycles for some planets (i.e., stars), was a compromise, mainly geocentric but with some degree of heliocentrism, or, more precisely, of Copernican heliostasis. Donne's image conceivably (confusingly?) combines a trace of more than one astronomical discovery. A further complication comes in Kepler's discovery of elliptical planetary orbits in 1609. Concentric spherical circles ("all concentric unto thee" in "Loves Growth") do not exactly equal ellipses. On Donne's knowledge of Kepler, see my *Light and Death: Figuration in Spenser, Kepler, Donne, and Milton* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2017), e.g., pp. 11, 148-52, 164, 173, 181, 273nn9-11, 274n14, 275n16, 279n45; this book's chapter 6, on "Proportional Thinking in Kepler's Science of Light" treats Kepler's astronomy, as well as his optics.

[28] Like Nancy P. Brown ("A Note," p. 326), I take "by"—"Stars by the sun are . . . shown"—to indicate either the sun's power or proximity or, without contradiction, possibly both.

39)—a circular form images perfection and completion, and astronomy is associated with wonder, as it is both in *Metempsychosis* (513-17) and "An Epithalamion" on the Lady Elizabeth: "Be thou a new star that to us portends / Ends of much wonder" (39-40).

A current of sexuality runs through "Love's Growth"—the shift from contemplation to the physical enactment (the doing) of love, the etymological play on "eminent" (*eminere*, "jut out"), together with the circles, and the "love deeds" that "bud out" from "love's awakened root."[29] The speaker starts with wonder and then by considering it enlarges, intensifies, and comprehends it. Comprehension, grasping, is emotive, sensual, and intellectual simultaneously and by turns. If it were otherwise, the end of the poem—comic, witty, sexually allusive, and sharp, if not pungent, would be merely dissonant instead of realistic and inclusive: "As princes do in times of action get / New taxes, and remit them not in peace, / No winter shall abate the spring's increase." A resonant citation from modernity could challenge my concordant reading of Donne's ending. It distinguishes Weberian "disenchant–ment" from the human capacity for wonder at a rainbow, thus separating "our relation to the sun and stars . . . from our relation to taxation and the civil service."[30] Its author might as well have been referring to

[29] Nancy P. Brown suggests that the word "eminent" in "Love's Growth" evokes the Scholastic sense of eminens/-entis as indicating a more perfect or higher manner of possession or containment than that required for a formal possession of something ("A Note," 326). Brown has in mind the attributes of God. But the directional movement of the poem at this point (stanza two) is distinctly earthward, toward physical enactment. While not rejecting Brown's association and the elevation she intends, I prefer the more general gloss that I have just provided, which is based on annotation of "virtualiter . . . et eminenter" ("virtually" and "eminently") in Milton's *Christian Doctrine* (*Complete Prose Works of John Milton*, vol. 6, ed. Maurice Kelley, trans. John Carey [New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1973], 309n34. Kelley's note is to a passage in which the (equivocally) monist Milton uses the Latin terms to discuss a principle of materiality inherent in a creative God. In any event, the etymological root of *eminent* and its sexual intimation that I have evoked cannot have been far from the speaker's mind (or wit!), given what follows in the second stanza of "Love's Growth."

[30] Philip Fisher, pp. 88-89. The question at the end of my paragraph is, in effect, a deliberate invitation to reconsideration of Donne's ending. Relatedly, even Weberian disenchantment itself has recently been subjected to

Donne's shift from sun and stars to taxes. Is Donne's ending, then, merely dissonant and disenchanted or in actuality concordant, as I have suggested?[31]

To enforce this question of tone, I want to end by briefly comparing "Love's Growth" to Herbert's "Flower," a provocative coupling of poems related by cultural similarity and temperamental contrast. Both involve the traditional *reverdie*, the regreening of spring, the reawakening of vitality, the renewal of life, the celebration of love. Both also involve a defining sense of wonder. Like "Love's Growth," Herbert's "Flower" expresses a surprised sense of renewal, yet one without the incredulity, "I scarce believe," that opens Donne's poem. While both poems are reflective—thoughtful—by itself the renewal in Herbert is more exhilarating and less intellective than in Donne. In Herbert, spring figures the wondrous return of God's favor, and a spring flower figures the speaker himself. This speaker focuses most intensely on his feeling, which reflects the "wonders" of God's love.[32] A stanza that is simple and poignantly moving, comprehends all that the renewal of vitality means:

> And now in age I bud again,
> After so many deaths I live and write;
> I once more smell the dew and rain,
> And relish versing.

The budding plant delicately, conventionally intimates sexuality.[33]

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persuasive critical reassessment: see Jason A. Josephson-Storm, *The Myth of Disenchantment: Magic, Modernity, and the Birth of the Human Sciences* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2017).

[31] For a truly negative, arguably cynical, comparative foil, see Donne's "Farewell to Love": "the thing which lovers so / Blindly admire." The modifier "blindly" is a hedge, however, and by poem's end, a further qualification occurs: "though I admire their greatness." Cf. Raymond-Jean Frontain, "'So, if I now should utter this': Donne, Love, and the Liminal Moment" (*John Donne Journal 35* [2016 (pub. 2019)]: 259-71, for a perceptive treatment of hypothetical erotics (if-ness) in Donne's poetry, including "Love's Growth" (263).

[32] *The English Poems of George Herbert*, ed. Helen Wilcox (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

[33] When Marno (p. 212) distances "any erotic intent from Augustine's thinking about intention," he appears to assume the limited, modern sense of

Writing indicates creativity; smell and relish (< ME *reles*, "taste") the pleasures of bodily sensation.[34] We have conceivably underestimated that extent to which the poems of Donne and Herbert, contemporaries familiar with one another, could well have occasionally interacted within the ever-circulating tradition of manuscripts, as in this instance of "Love's Growth" and "The Flower."

Together with Donne's poems, Herbert's "Flower" glances at the range of wonder in lyrics of the period and attests to its importance, its subtlety, and its involvement of the *whole person*. In this connection, the heart of Herbert's poem consists of an extended meditation on the comings and goings of the wondrous renewal of divine favor. This renewal, which is likened to the physical cycle of the natural seasons, is finally contrasted to another, paradisal garden in which "to bide," and thus "to wait, dwell," an inner garden that anticipates an everlasting one.[35] Returning to the prioritizing of feeling to thinking, or thinking to feeling, in Donne and now in Herbert, I would, if pressed, find Herbert siding with the first of these opposed options and Donne with the second. But I would further want to see the question of priority itself as a hermeneutical provocation, essentially an opening for exploration of particular poems by each poet.

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eros as exclusively or primarily genital, rather than an earlier, broader Neoplatonic awareness of it as a cosmic principle, including its quite varied human expressions. For example, see Debora Kuller Shuger, *The Renaissance Bible: Scholarship, Sacrifice, and Subjectivity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), pp. 177-79. In another conversation at the Donne Conference in Lausanne, Ronald Huebert raised the question of Herbert's attitude toward sexuality. I stressed the phrasing "delicately, conventionally intimates sexuality" in my claim. (For what it's worth, Herbert was married.)

[34] For an impressive treatment of "natural life and the life of the mind" in "The Flower," see Brent Dawson, "The Life of the Mind: George Herbert, Early Modern Meditation, and Materialist Cognition," *ELH* 86.4 (2019): 895-918 at 912-14 (qtd. 912).

[35] On Herbert's word "bide," see the *Online OED*, 2nd ed., s.v. *bide*, *v*., I.1, 5 (accessed 5/14/18).