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Donne's Naked Time

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Many scholars have explored Donne's fascination with the nature of time. From Gary F. Waller and Anne Ferry on Donne's poetics of time to Gale H. Carrithers, Jr. and James D. Hardy, Jr. on the trope of moment in the sermons, Donne's readers have sought to understand his ideas about time and eternity, and about how secular *kronos* may intersect with sacred *kairos*.[1] In my own studies, I have recently noticed an intriguing conjunction between Donne's use of clothing imagery and his use of chronometric language, including references to units of time and images of devices that measure it. I have found that Donne often links the transcendence of time with the removal of garments, associating liberating atemporality with the process of undressing. Specifically, he links the language of clothing and the language of time in three very different poems dealing with sexual love: "To his Mistress going to bed," "The Sunne Rising," and the Princess Elizabeth epithalamion. Notwithstanding their very different genres—

[1]Waller, *The Strong Necessity of Time: The Philosophy of Time in Shakespeare and Elizabethan Literature* (The Hague: Mouton, 1976; Ferry, *All In War With Time: Love Poetry of Shakespeare, Donne, Jonson, Marvell* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1975), pp. 65–125; and Carrithers and Hardy, *Age of Iron: English Renaissance Tropologies of Love and Power* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1998), pp. 137, 153–161, 166. See also Wilbur Sanders, *John Donne's Poetry* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1971), pp. 68–82; A. B. Chambers, "*La Corona*: Philosophic, Sacred, and Poetic Uses of Time," in *New Essays on Donne*, ed. Gary A. Stringer (Salzburg: Institut für Englische Sprache und Literatur, 1977), pp. 140–172; and Paul Stanwood, "Time and Liturgy in Donne, Crashaw, and T. S. Eliot," *Mosaic: A Journal for the Comparative Study of Literature and Ideas* 12.2 (1979): 91–98.

erotic elegy, dramatic lyric, and nuptial song—each of these poems brings together time and clothing in order to portray erotic love, in all its naked glory, as not time-bound, but aeviternal.

Aeviternity is the mode of duration experienced in the *aevum*, the age of unending bliss in which dwell the angels and disembodied human souls; Aquinas calls it "a mean between eternity and time."[2] To dwell in the *aevum*, rather than in time, is to be impervious to time's force, immune to the debilitating mutability that affects all substances in the temporal realm; yet it is to be nevertheless capable of growth and joyfully responsive to changes in accident.[3] Perhaps the most familiar poetic allusion to aeviternity occurs in George Herbert's sonnet "Prayer (I)." The phrase "Angels age,"[4] an anglicized rendering of *aevum*, identifies prayer as humanity's taste of the angelic durational mode. A temporal act that transcends time, prayer works chronometric wonders; like a musician rewriting a score to change the key, one who prays does not merely keep time, but transforms temporal creation, "The six-daies world transposing in an houre" (7).[5] Prayer thus provides "Heaven in ordinarie" (11), a temporally accessible glimpse of the angels' age, their aeviternal existence in the presence of God.

A number of erotic poems by Donne make similar claims for the devotional acts of those who worship in "Loves halowed temple; this soft

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[2]Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, trans. Fathers of the English Dominican Province, 5 vols. (Westminster, MD: Christian Classics, 1948), Part I. Q. 10, Art. 5. Future quotations from the *Summa Theologica* are from this edition and will be cited parenthetically by part, question, and article.

[3]Donne does not use the term "aeviternity" or its Latin cognates in his poetry or prose, but as I demonstrate in my essay "From Here to Aeviternity: Donne's Atemporal Clocks" (forthcoming in *Modern Philology*), Donne taps Thomistic ideas about aeviternal duration in order to evoke the notion of a permanence that is not static, but dynamic. For an accessible twentieth-century account of Aquinas on aeviternity, see F. J. Sheed, *Theology and Sanity* (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1946), pp. 115–116.

[4]Herbert, "Prayer (I)," in *The Works of George Herbert*, ed. F. E. Hutchinson (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1941), line 1. Future quotations from "Prayer (I)" are from this edition and will be cited parenthetically.

[5]See *Oxford English Dictionary*, s. v. "transpose," v., 7: "*Mus.* To alter the key of; to put into a different key (in composition, arrangement, or performance)."

bedd" (*ElBed*, 18).[6] In "To his Mistress going to bed," the speaker specifically compares the body's disrobing for erotic communion with the soul's disembodiment at the moment of death, and he goes on to assert that "As Souls vnbodied, bodyes vncloth'd must bee / To tast whole ioyes" (34–35). Despite the conventional Neoplatonism in the first half of this analogy, which asserts that "Souls" must be "vnbodied," and thus treats bodies as nothing more than cumbersome costumes in which souls are temporarily forced to masquerade, the analogy in its entirety subverts such dualism, insisting that body and soul are equivalent in their capacity for unfragmented bliss. The obscene pun on "whole" should not deafen us to the ways in which the speaker—and perhaps Donne himself—is asserting the naked body's capacity to experience perfect integrity of the sort Augustine claims for eternity when he says that, in it, "nothing passes, for the whole is present."[7] Indeed, the phrase "whole joys" may even allude slyly to the completeness that the *Summa Theologica* claims for resurrected bodies when it says that "all the members that are now in man's body"—including the male and female genitals—"must needs be restored at the resurrection" (III Suppl. Q. 80, Art. 1; Q. 81, Art. 3).[8]

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[6]All Donne poems are cited by *Donne Variorum* abbreviation of title and line number. Whenever possible (for *ElBed*, *EpEliz*, *FunEl*, *Har*), I quote from *The Variorum Edition of the Poetry of John Donne*, gen. ed. Gary A. Stringer, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1995–). For poems (*SunRis*, *Sat3*) not yet available in the *Variorum*, I quote from John T. Shawcross's *The Complete Poetry of John Donne* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1967).

[7]Augustine, *The Confessions*, trans. Maria Boulding, ed. John E. Rotelle (Hyde Park, NY: New City Press, 1997), XI.11. Future quotations from *The Confessions* are from this edition and will be cited parenthetically by book and section number.

[8]The Supplement to the Third Part of the *Summa Theologica* was composed after Aquinas's death by his friend Fra Rainaldo da Piperno, who completed the work by consulting Aquinas's commentary on Peter Lombard's *Fourth Book of Sentences*. Question 81, Article 3 specifically deals with the sex of resurrected bodies and cites Augustine (*The City of God against the Pagans*, ed. and trans. R. W. Dyson [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998], Book XXII, Ch. 17) as rejecting the notion that all bodies will be male after the resurrection. The views expressed in the Supplement are clearly Aquinas's own, as he takes the same position in the *Summa Contra Gentiles Book Four: Salvation* (trans. Charles J. O'Neil [London: University of Notre Dame Press, 1975], Chapter 88, Paragraph 1): "Since the resurrection is to restore the deficiencies of nature,

According to the speaker of "Going to bed," lovers can enter this state of naked, aeviternal wholeness even while still apparently living within the fragmentary temporal realm, and they may do so specifically by stripping off their restrictive garments in order to expose the nakedness of their bodies and taste the "whole ioys" those bodies offer.

Within the context of this claim, the chronometric sound that resonates in lines 9–10 of Donne's elegy is a particularly fascinating auditory image. The speaker says, "Vnlase your selfe: for that harmonious chime / Tells me from you that now t'is your bed time." He thus links the telling of time and the act of undressing so intimately that scholars have hotly contested whether the sound is made by the woman's watch or by her metal-tipped corset laces.[9] Whichever of the two it is (and this being a poem, why shouldn't it be both?), the sound is most definitely—as I have argued in a recent article—a chronometric bell calling the couple to erotic worship.[10] But like the bells of a monastery, which measure earthly time only in order to pull devotees into what Herbert called the "Angels age" of prayer, the "harmonious chime" of Donne's elegy marks "bed time" as the moment in which one slips outside of time as we ordinarily experience it. It is thus not so much a chronometer as an

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nothing that belongs to the perfection of nature will be denied to the bodies of the risen. Of course, just as other bodily members belong to the integrity of the human body, so do those which serve for generation—not only in men but also in women. Therefore, in each of the cases members of this sort will rise."

[9]Scholars embracing one or the other of these two possibilities include Mirko Jurak, ed., "The Stuart Age," in *English Poetry: An Anthology with a Critical and Historical Introduction for Foreign Students* (Ljubljana: Državna Založba Slovenije, 1972), p. 66; C. A. Patrides, ed., *The Complete English Poems of John Donne* (London and Melbourne: J. M. Dent, 1985), p. 183; Doniphan Louthan, *The Poetry of John Donne: A Study in Explication* (New York: Bookman Associates, 1951), p. 72; M. A. Shaaber, ed., *John Donne: Selected Poems* (New York: Appleton-Century Crofts, 1958), p. 64; John T. Shawcross and David Ronald Emma, eds., *Seventeenth-Century English Poetry* (Philadelphia and New York: Lippincott, 1969), p. 49; A. J. Smith, ed., *John Donne: The Complete English Poems* (Harmondsworth, England: Penguin, 1971), p. 448; and Alison Spreuwenberg-Stewart, "'To His Mistress Going to Bed,' or, 'Could You Lend Me Your Clothes?,'" *John Donne Journal* 18 (1999): 39–40.

[10]DiPasquale, "Hearing the 'harmonious chime' in Donne's 'To his Mistress going to bed,'" *ANQ: A Quarterly Journal of Short Articles, Notes and Reviews* 21.3 (2008): 19–28.

aeviternometer, a device that monitors the duration of love's aeviternal present. In calling for the mistress's "Vnlas[ing]," and saying that the "now" of that unlacing is "bed time," the speaker announces that eros's durational realm is not time dressed in the clothes it wears when it is up and about its daily business, not time covered up by its outward coverings, but naked time.

"To his Mistress going to bed" suggests only obliquely that love's durational mode is a version of time stripped of its usual garments; a more direct statement of this idea is made by the speaker of "The Sunne Rising," who asserts that "Love, all alike, no season knowes, nor clyme, / Nor houres, dayes, moneths, which are the rags of time." The most familiar definitions of the noun "rag" are "A piece of old cloth, *esp.* one torn from a larger piece" and—by extension—"A torn or irregularly shaped piece of something . . . a fragment, a scrap, a remnant."[11] Since the Augustinian conception of time as fragmentary is so clearly important to Donne, I always assumed that the "rags of time" were its shredded bits. That is, I assumed that, in the famous couplet from "The Sunne Rising," time was a fabric torn into the ragged subdivisions that human beings call "houres, dayes, moneths." Love, according to this reading, is atemporal because it is—like eternity as Augustine describes it—eternal, and thus immutable, indivisible, entirely "whole" (*Confessions,* XI.11).

The phrase "rags of time" certainly evokes the notion of time as fragmentary, both in "The Sunne Rising" and in a 1624 Christmas sermon in which Donne uses the phrase to contrast time's discontinuity with the seamless integrity of eternity. Commenting on the relationship between divine mercy and divine judgment, he asserts that the former precedes the latter, only to revise his assertion in order to acknowledge the temporal paradox at the heart of God's mercy: "Nay, to say that mercy was first, is but to post-date mercy; to preferre mercy but so, is to diminish mercy; The names of first or last derogate from it, for first and last are but ragges of time, and his mercy hath no relation to time, no limitation in time, it is not first, nor last, but eternall, everlasting."[12] Here, as in "The Sunne Rising," "the rags of time" are mere bits and

[11] *Oxford English Dictionary*, s. v. "rag," n.[2], 2, 6a.

[12] Donne, *The Sermons of John Donne*, ed. George R. Potter and Evelyn M. Simpson, 10 vols. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1953–1962), 6:170.

pieces of time, its discontinuous shards; mercy is all-encompassing and not subject to the petty subdivisions of sequence that characterize temporal experience.

But both the love poem and the sermon also conjure another usage of "rags," one that dissociates the atemporal thing (be it human love or divine mercy), not only from time's fragmentariness, but from its restrictiveness, its enclosure or covering of all things that exist within its confines; for the oldest definition of "rags," in the plural, is "Tattered or ragged clothes."[13] The two senses—rags as shreds, and rags as clothing—are related very closely.[14] In Protestant polemical discourse, the idea of the "rags of Rome" refers both in general to ragged, torn off bits of Catholic religious practice that survive in the post-Reformation church and specifically to clerical vestments as such remnants. In Donne's *Satyre III*, Mirreus's obsessed pursuit of his absent mistress's "ragges" (47) evokes both shades of meaning; and Donne again conflates the two meanings in "A Funerall Elegie" when the elegist doubts that Elizabeth Drury, having fled her perfect body, will consent to be enclosed in "ragges of paper" (11); here, too, the "ragges" are both fragmentary bits of a larger whole—shreds of a poet's wit committed to bits of scrap paper—and, at the same time, a form of clothing meant for the dead, a literary winding sheet or poetic shroud in which the elegist wishes to bind and preserve the dead girl, but in which she, having finally cast off the garment of flesh, will not consent to be swathed.

When Donne says in his Christmas sermon that one cannot speak of mercy as "first" because "first and last are but ragges of time," he is thus asserting not only that God's mercy is too comprehensive to be placed at one point on a fragmentary timeline, but also—given the preposition "in" in the phrase "no limitation in time"—that it is too pure an entity to be dressed in restrictive temporal wrappings. Similarly, when the speaker of

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[13] *Oxford English Dictionary*, s. v. "rag," n.[2], 1a.

[14] The "piece of old cloth" mentioned in *OED* definition 2 in fact referred specifically "(in early use) *esp*." to "any of the scraps to which a garment is reduced by wear and tear." I would note that the definitions of "rag" quoted in this essay are part of the newly updated "Draft Revision" of the online *OED* dated June 2010; the revised entry for the noun "rag" emphasizes more clearly than earlier versions of the *OED* that senses of the word referring to fragmentariness derive from the definition that identifies the word with tattered clothing specifically.

"The Sunne Rising" scorns the "houres, dayes, moneths" that are "the rags of time," he is claiming love's freedom not only from the fragmentation characteristic of temporal experience as it is ordinarily conceived, but also from the external measurements in which human beings dress time, thus obscuring its true lineaments. If "houres, dayes, moneths . . . are the rags of time" not only in the sense of bits and pieces of time, but also in the sense of imperfect and fragmentary garments that cover the body of *kronos*, then one may extrapolate that love has nothing to do with time as we know it because that sort of time wears rags, while love and the lovers who practice it in its consummate form are both clothing-free. When one considers the "rags" of "The Sunne Rising" as garments, then, one realizes that, even if love as the speaker defines it knows nothing of time's rags, it may know a form of time radically different from what we usually experience: a naked time that has thrown off the shabby apparel of hours, days, and months. And if the mode of duration known to such love is not something entirely distinct from time, but rather a version of time stripped bare, then perhaps time of that sort, time freed from its tattered wrappings, is something akin to the *aevum*, the aeviternal mode of duration.[15]

We catch a glimpse of the same notion—that love's time is time stripped of its restrictive wrappings—in what may be Donne's most public celebration of heterosexual love and marriage, the "Epithalamion Vpon Frederick Count Palatine and the Lady Elizabeth marryed on St.

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[15]Robert N. Watson (*The Rest Is Silence: Death as Annihilation in the English Renaissance* [Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994]), who also notices the verbal echo of "The Sunne Rising" in Donne's sermon, nevertheless misreads the phrase "rags of time" as Donne uses it in the poem. He argues that "the lovers bear some odd resemblances to corpses," since "If they were dead, rather than impassioned, it would indeed be irrelevant for the sun to intrude announcing morning, and absurd to imagine them undertaking any of the tasks of life—study, work, harvest. Death, as least as much as love, 'all alike, no season knowes, nor clyme, / Nor houres, dayes, moneths, which are the rags of time' (9–10). In the oblivion of death, climate is changeless, and time a seamless shroud. The timelessness that love grants him is precisely what he elsewhere fears death will impose on him" (pp. 167–168). Watson uses this tone-deaf account of "the rags of time" couplet to support his overarching psychoanalytic argument: that "Donne's Metaphysical conceitedness and his erotic fixations constitute predictable responses to annihilationist terror" (p. 169).

Valentines day." As is typical in the English epithalamion as it was pioneered by Edmund Spenser, the speaker is exquisitely conscious of time and expresses that consciousness by complaining of how slowly the wedding day passes; he eagerly anticipates nightfall and the consummation of the royal couple's love. In the stanza describing the ceremony known as the laying of the bride, however, the coming of night brings little relief; for, the speaker laments, "night is come, and yet wee see / Formalitys retarding" the moment of bliss (71–72). He finds the undressing ceremony particularly maddening:

> What meane these Ladyes, which, as though
> They were to take a Clock in peeces, goe
> So nicely about the Bride?
> A Bride, before a Good night could bee say'd,
> Should vanish from her clothes into her bedd
> As Soules from bodyes steale, and are not spy'd.
> (73–78)

Like the unbodied/unclothed passage in "Going to bed," this stanza compares the act of undressing with the soul's escape from the temporal realm, and it does so in the comparatively sacrosanct context of a royal wedding. But in the epithalamion, the analogy is complicated by a contrast between two different ways of being undressed. First, the speaker links clothing and time by saying that the ladies' slow and meticulous disrobing of the bride resembles the painstaking work of a clockmaker dismantling a timepiece. Then, he says that a bride *ought* to experience, not such a maddeningly protracted process, but rather a nearly instantaneous nakedness that resembles the imperceptibly precipitate and subtle passage of the soul from the body at the moment of death.[16]

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[16]Compare Milton's insistence on the alacrity with which the already naked Adam and Eve proceed to lovemaking after entering their bower: "eased the putting off / These troublesome disguises which we wear," they proceed immediately to lie down "side by side" and to celebrate "the rites / Mysterious of connubial love" (*Paradise Lost*, ed. Alastair Fowler [London: Longman, 1971], 4:739–740, 741, 742–743). Like the earlier description of the couple's nakedness at 4:312–324, in which the exposure of the genitals is a symbol of pre-lapsarian "Simplicity and spotless innocence," Milton's image of lovemaking that is not

The image of a woman as a clock disassembled was clearly on Donne's mind, having been featured just a few years before in "A Funerall Elegie":

> But must we say shee's dead? May't not be said
> That as a sundred Clocke is peece-meale laid,
> Not to be lost, but by the makers hand
> Repolish'd, without error then to stand,
> . . . .
> May't not be said, that her graue shall restore
> Her, greater, purer, firmer, then before?
> (37–40, 45–46)[17]

In the elegy, Donne describes Elizabeth Drury as a human timepiece taken apart by a wise and infinitely caring God, only to be fine-tuned and reassembled in a time-friendly heaven that brings to perfection an essentially chronometric human nature. In the "Elegie," the clock/woman analogy is proposed as positive and consoling; in the epithalamion, by contrast, the speaker conjures the image of woman as clock in order to express his disapproval of time-consuming, invasive, and counterproductive wedding-night ceremonies. "To think," his tone implies, "that a bride should be treated like a malfunctioning pocket-watch!" He seems impatient not only with the idea that she is in need of disassembly, but with the idea that she might be compared to a timepiece at all; for though the analogy is his, he makes it in order to describe a procedure he dismisses as absurd. The occasion, he insists, should involve disapparelling so rapid as to defy chronometric measurement; the consummation of a marriage should have nothing at all to do with clocks, and least of all with a clockwork bride who is left "in peeces" when her case is removed. On the contrary, she is a soul-like entity who is free to

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delayed by the need to remove "troublesome" garments depends on the trope of *nuditas virtualis*. On the deployment of this trope in the visual arts, see George Ferguson, *Signs and Symbols in Christian Art* (London: Oxford University Press, 1961), p. 49, and Joanne Snow-Smith, "Michelangelo's Christian Neoplatonic Aesthetic of Beauty in His Early *Oeuvre*: The *Nuditas Virtualis* Image," in *Concepts of Beauty in Renaissance Art*, ed. Francis Ames-Lewis and Mary Rogers (Aldershot, England: Ashgate, 1998), pp. 147–162.

[17]On the clock image in these lines, see DiPasquale, "From Here."

enjoy perfect bliss only when she escapes the garment in which she is confined and passes from the fragmentary temporal realm into aeviternal wholeness.

The speaker insists, moreover, that the bride's movement from her cumbersome wedding dress to the naked bliss of the nuptial bed should resemble the escape of the human soul as it passes from the time-bound body into aeviternity. Specifically, it should be an angel-like motion so free from the restrictions of time as to seem without duration. As Donne notes in his "Obsequyes vpon the Lord Harington," when an angel moves, he must pass through intervening space; despite his aeviternal nature, his motion is not instantaneous but, as Aquinas argues, exists in time. But in the "Obsequyes," such motion is nevertheless too rapid for human thought to "keepe [the angel] company" (*Har,* 82), and is thus even more completely imperceptible to the human eye. In the Princess Elizabeth epithalamion, Donne's approving image of a bride's nearly atemporal speed of movement from wedding clothes to bedclothes thus cancels the clock image that precedes it. The marriage bed is an aeviternal locus in which earthly time has no relevance. The bride is not a chronometric device to be "nicely" disassembled, but the angelic being whom the bridegroom will encounter when he has passed "through Spheare after Spheare" of matter surrounding her (81). "First," he'll get past "her Sheetes," the layer of cloth that has taken her dress's place in covering her body; "then" he'll penetrate the outer orbit of that body's planetary system, her encircling "Armes"; and finally, he'll enter the limitless "any where" or inner space of the intelligence within (82), which is both her soul and what the less decorous speaker of Shakespeare's sonnets would call the woman's "will . . . wide and spacious."[18]

Despite the flash of atemporal bliss that attends consummation, however, the royal couple of Donne's poem cannot dwell apart in an aeviternal mode of duration; the epithalamion ends by envisioning the nuptial wake-up call scheduled for some time "to morrow after Nyne" (111) and thus quickly shatters any illusion that this marriage will be free from the demands of time. Indeed, the love of the Princess Elizabeth and the Count Palatine was to know far too many "season[s]" and "clime[s]"

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[18]Shakespeare, Sonnet 135, in *The Norton Shakespeare*, ed. Stephen Greenblatt et al. (New York: Norton, 1997), line 5.

as the Winter King and his Queen were driven from Bohemia and into exile during the Thirty Years' War.[19]

Nor does the speaker of "The Sunne Rising" maintain without blinking the aeviternal ideal set forth when he asserts love's freedom from the "rags of time." By the second stanza of that poem, the speaker is refraining from his desire to show the sun that he could "eclipse and cloud" its beams "with a winke" because he does not want to "lose" the "sight" of his beloved "so long" (13, 14). "Aha," the sun might say; "So you *do* know something of the "the rags of time" after all! For you are admitting that your love can make that tiniest of temporal rags, the duration of a wink, feel like too 'long' a time to be cut off from the sight of your beloved!" As the second stanza continues and the third begins, it becomes clear that the speaker is accommodating the dawn rather than denying it: "Shine here to us, and thou art every where" (29), he says, thus seeming to cash in his initial claim to imperial atemporality in favor of an equally outrageous claim to spatial comprehensiveness.

The temporality that reenters the poem in its final stanza is, however, a transfigured temporality like that of the *aevum*. Thomas Docherty argues in his deconstruction of the poem that a lover who tells the sun to take it easy, to pause where it is and do its worldwide work by shining "here to us" is replacing the Ptolemaic assumptions of the opening stanza with his own "reactionary" version of the Copernican revolution: "the sun, embodied in the relation of love as a habitation of the space between two people, stabilizes, and the Earth is 'everywhere' on its peripheral trajectory."[20] But Docherty is not quite right in asserting that the effect of this revolution is a "change of historical time back to eternity,"[21] for the speaker of "The Sunne Rising" does not entirely discard the Ptolemaic model; on the contrary, he imagines a sun that is still circling in its "sphere" even though that sphere is so drastically contracted in size as to give that "busy old" body—the planetary sun of the ancient cosmology—the "ease" for which its "age askes." And what better image could there be for love's aeviternity than that of planetary motion so concentrated as

[19]Ronald G. Asch, "Elizabeth, Princess (1596–1662)," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), <http://www.oxforddnb.com>, accessed 24 May 2010.

[20]Docherty, *John Donne, Undone* (London: Methuen, 1986), p. 35.

[21]Docherty, p. 34.

to approximate stasis while maintaining the energy of motion? Lovers *do* have "seasons," as the opening stanza admits when it asks "Must to thy motions lovers seasons run?" But insofar as their bed is the "center" of the old sun's orbit, those seasons are endlessly repeating summers: warm, naked times when the only coverings a loving couple needs are their own (and each other's) skins.

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