The *Locus Amoenus*: Ethically Justified Space in Seventeenth-Century Poetry

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Abstract

The subject of this thesis is the *locus amoenus*, the classically derived ideal place appropriated by seventeenth-century rural poets. The poetic representation of a place of both safety and comfort took both topographical and ideological form in the upheaval of the seventeenth century. To date, no extended studies of the *locus amoenus* in seventeenth-century rural poetry have been published. Moreover, examinations of this subject conventionally focus on classical expressions of an ideal place. This thesis provides a critical consideration of the *locus amoenus* regarding the poetry of Aemilia Lanyer, Ben Jonson, Mildmay Fane, Robert Herrick, John Denham, Andrew Marvell, and John Milton.

The classical roots of the term *locus amoenus* reveal many of the elements that went in to the poetic fashioning of the ideal place. More than classical symbolism, the ideal place of the seventeenth century was set against a backdrop of agrarian capitalism, anxieties over social hierarchy, and civil war. By studying a variety of poets and their contexts, it is possible to account for and clarify the manifestations of the ideal place the century produced. Aemilia Lanyer and Cookham are considered first in this thesis. The poet envisages the female family at the centre of the ideal place in command of the estate. Next, Ben Jonson creates the estate of Penshurst as a place of temporary respite, away from the flattery demanded of him at court. Mildmay Fane, with his combination of staggering wealth and moderation in all things, seeks a quiet, natural *locus amoenus*, and is remarkably consistent in his commitment to the *via media* throughout his body of work. Fane’s ideal place holds friendship as the anodyne to civil strife and the increasing difficulties between Parliament and the Stuart monarchy. His great friend, Robert Herrick, shared the same Royalist sympathies, but perceives that social harmony can be found on the ideal estate. The way to this estate lies in the traditions and sports of old, where peasants dutifully bring in and celebrate the estate’s harvest with a benevolent lord. John Denham found the ideal place was firmly rooted in both historic and present-day England, perceived from his vantage point atop Cooper’s Hill. Andrew Marvell’s approach to the ideal place is one based on community, spirituality, and moderation. Marvell’s ideal landscapes are surrounded by the aftermath of civil war, whether in vegetative military symbolism or a mowing down of grass like so much human flesh. Lastly, Milton subverts the Jonsonian practice of the masque of praise to transpose a physical space into a *locus amoenus* of the mind. Ultimately, it is in the redeemed soul that Milton perceives the strongest hope for an enduring *locus amoenus*.

This thesis reflects on the individual idealism and identity that each poet wished to create. By focusing on an assembly of poets, I demonstrate the importance of understanding the complex and diverse potential of the *locus amoenus* in the seventeenth century. Even though the nature of each ideal place is not always congruous between poets, much can be learned about the social, political, and cultural nature of the seventeenth-century ideal place when considered together. This study of the *locus amoenus* not only illuminates strife-ridden England, but considers the characteristics of landscape for definiton in a new, more peaceful world.
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Introduction

The long literary tradition of the *locus amoenus*, or pleasant place, demonstrates the universality of the search for an ideal realm. Originally theorised by Hesiod and Homer, and developed by Virgil and Ovid, the *locus amoenus* is traditionally a natural place offering safety and comfort to those dwelling in it. Whilst literary depictions of the *locus amoenus* hold a number of common features—for example, grass, shade, and water—there is no single, unifying description for the concept. It can manifest as an argument, a memory, and a longing for how things should be. Notwithstanding these various methods of presentation, the *locus amoenus* remains a discernible idea in the Western literary tradition. From the different versions of the ideal place evident in seventeenth-century poetry, modern readers can better understand the way upheaval impacted poets from different social and political backgrounds. The development of the poetic ideal place from the mid to late Middle Ages runs parallel to the physical *locus amoenus* in real life, frequently intersecting. However, neither ideal place will ever properly be achieved as both the real and imagined *locus amoenus* are only ever aspirational. Thus, the ideal place imagined via the medium of poetry, and that sought physically in topography, both help to orient each other, even though in both cases the *locus amoenus* is a fiction. Moreover, the real and imagined ideal place serves as an escape from the issues of the real world for the writer. For this reason, the *locus amoenus* is invariably written from a position of vested self-interest, despite the poets’ determined attempts to adopt a position suggesting some sort of universal truth. It can be a comforting and attractive ideal, but that is because the poets do everything to make it seem so.

In this thesis, I explore the multifaceted notion of the *locus amoenus* from the early 1600s to the 1680s. To do so, I consider the work of Aemilia Lanyer, Ben Jonson, Mildmay Fane, Robert Herrick, John Denham, Andrew Marvell, and John Milton. I have chosen these poets because they provide a range of well-known and less-known voices, but are all alike in their desire for an ideal place. Through a close study of the most relevant *locus amoenus* poems by each of these authors, I elucidate the presence and nature of the ideal place in seventeenth-century English poetry. Within these readings, it will become apparent that the ideal place is frequently conceptualised in geographical and topographical ways. In classical times, the *locus amoenus* was often thought of in terms of agricultural spaces and idyllic, untrammelled pastoral landscapes. In Biblical and medieval times, the pleasant place could be commonly located in garden
spaces. However, in the seventeenth century, poets draw on this long tradition of the ideal place and add to it, incorporating and sometimes combining different topographical spaces as a means for them to consider the conceit.

Each of the seventeenth-century poets examined in this thesis reveal examples of the *locus amoenus* in their work. From these examples, I find that the site of the *locus amoenus* can take the form of the garden, but it can equally take the shape of the home, the estate, England, the soul, or particular combinations of these. These sites hold certain features. The garden embodies a spiritual, natural space, and is commonly a place of classical and Christian ideas, images, and ideology. In addition, the spiritual, poetical garden is regularly conflated with the idea of the well-governed estate, often with the manor at its centre. The home in this landscape is characteristically strong and immutable. As such, this structure frequently embodies the ruler of the estate, emphasising his or her own place at the heart of their realm and the authority they have to reside there. The home and the estate strive to wall out the violent, corrupt, sinful world, protecting the inhabitants of the estate in a temperate and well-ordered environment. However, this is not to say that the home cannot stand alone. In some poetic instances, the home is divorced from the landscape, providing an ideal place of its own, and remaining a place of strong bonds, safety, and intellectual stimulation. Similarly, when examined on a macrocosmic level, England is often revealed as the embodiment of the *locus amoenus*. Notably, though, the national ideal place, like the home and the estate, is not always successful at walling out violence and sin. Rather, the *locus amoenus* of England predominately takes two forms: first, as a site where positive and negative aspects of the landscape must be counterbalanced to produce an ideal place; and second, as a place of aspiration, where it is hoped that peace will reign in England once more. Lastly, the soul is also often created as the site of the pleasant place. Detached from landscape, though the soul can be beset by evil, it can ultimately be redeemed through Christ. The result is a ‘paradise within thee, happier farr’ which stands fortified against the corruption of wider England.

Within these sites of the ideal place, a number of ideological concerns can manifest. Anxieties over land, religion, and the monarchy frequently cast a shadow over the *locus amoenus*, both real and imagined. Personal concerns are also evident in the shape of patronage and artistic freedom, community, friendship, and redemption. Moreover, towards the mid-point of the seventeenth century, despite the propensity to think of Civil War in terms of sides, the treatment of the *locus amoenus* reveals that a number of poets sought an ideological stance of moderation, instead of a clear allegiance to one
side or another. In many cases, absolute power is denounced, and a quiet place for the soul is sought to wall out the difficulties of the world. There are few generalisations that can be made between all of these poets about the way topography conflates with the ideology in the perfect place. Thus, it is in the individual arrangement of landscape and ideology that the modern reader can apprehend the significance of the *locus amoenus* to each poet. When these studies are considered together, the reader can develop a picture of how the idea advanced and varied throughout the period.

This thesis explores a topos on which there are presently no extended studies, though there have been many shorter works that have explored the broad concept of the *locus amoenus* in poetry. Although the wider field of the pastoral tradition as a whole has generated earlier studies, this specific field of study was first recognised as such by Ernst Robert Curtius who, in 1942, drew attention to the ideal place, or *pleasance*, in literature. Though his exposition is just a few pages in length, Curtius suggests that from classical times through to the sixteenth century, this motif forms the chief foundation of all descriptions of nature. In a brief examination of the world of Theocritus and Virgil, Curtius contends that the ideal places in these instances were initially conceived as backgrounds to the action in poetry, but they soon became the subjects of rhetoric in their own right. By the early Middle Ages, Curtius argues, the *locus amoenus* had become a poetic requisite. He also notes the increase in luxurious spices, balsam, honey, and wine in the poetic ideal place arising in the twelfth century. Curtius stops short of discussing examples of the *locus amoenus* in literature from the thirteenth century onward, but does reinforce that it is a clearly defined topos in landscape poetry up to the sixteenth century. My work goes beyond that of Curtius to explore the extended treatment of the *locus amoenus* in seventeenth-century poetry.

In 1969, Thomas G. Rosenmeyer also drew attention to the *locus amoenus* in *The Green Cabinet*. Rosenmeyer focuses, for the most part, on the work of Theocritus but his examination includes glimpses of poets from the latter centuries of the Middle Ages, sixteenth, and seventeenth centuries. He builds on Curtius’ work and describes the ‘franchise’ of the *locus amoenus* using incidental references to Theocritus’ *Idylls*. He also maintains that the two *loci amoeni* within the *Idylls* lead the reader from past to present, and from myth to reality. My work on the seventeenth-century *locus amoenus*

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3 Rosenmeyer, p. 187.
demonstrates that there is no such clear path in that period. The journey from past to present and from myth to reality may be linear, but it is not one way, and may double back on itself, or even reverse entirely.

The topos of the *locus amoenus* was examined more exclusively within the bounds of the seventeenth century in David Evett’s “‘Paradice’s Only Map’: The ‘Topos’ of the ‘Locus Amoenus’ and the Structure of Marvell’s ‘Upon Appleton House’” (1970). Evett acknowledges two thousand years of development of the *locus amoenus* form. However, Evett argues that because the *locus amoenus* invites pantheism and appeals to corporeal instincts, it has an in-built openness to moral perversion and eroticism. My study does not find support for this view in the seventeenth century, but it is in tune with his subsequent contention that the *locus amoenus* is a place of refuge. The second half of Evett’s paper is restricted to a discussion of Andrew Marvell’s ‘Upon Appleton House’, which is valuable, but does not have the latitude of poetical history represented in this study.

Toshihiko Kawasaki extends this interest in Marvell’s work in ‘Marvell’s “Bermudas” – A Little World, or A New World?’ (1976). He also establishes the connection between the imaginary world of the *locus amoenus* and the real life *locus amoenus* that poets sought. Kawasaki states that Marvell constructed the ideal place of ‘Bermudas’ at a time when he had just left his own ideal place at Lord Thomas Fairfax’s estate. I will contend that the imagined and real *locus amoenus* began to intersect in the mid to late Middle Ages, and that this continued to occur in the seventeenth century.

The next significant work on the *locus amoenus* is Eduardo Saccone’s 1997 paper ‘Wood, Garden, “Locus Amoenus” in Ariosto’s “Orlando Furioso”’. Though his exploration centres on an early fourteenth-century poem, Saccone conflates the notion of the garden and the ideal place within his study. He submits that the two motifs both engage and repel each other in the *locus amoenus*. I agree that the ideal place can be a site of engagement and opposition, but this cannot uniformly be said to be the case in

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5 Evett, p. 505.
6 Evett, p. 506.
7 Evett, p. 507.
8 Kawasaki, p. 43.
10 Saccone, p. 3.
the seventeenth century. In addition, Robert Bernard Hass considers the ideal place in the work of Tennyson, with ‘The Mutable Locus Amoenus and Consolation in Tennyson’s In Memorium’ (1998). Hass expounds the idea that within Tennyson’s work, and the loci amoeni within In Memorium, the poet continually shifts his poetic gaze to construct a series of ideal places. Though I do not examine Tennyson’s work, I assert that the poetic gaze can shift between seventeenth-century poets and poems in creating the ideal place, but within a poem, they remain immutable. Hass also refutes the idea that the locus amoenus is a stable concept, an idea from which my thesis takes inspiration. I do not find that there are multiple loci amoeni within the seventeenth-century poems I examine, but I do argue that the nature of the locus amoenus can vary considerably from poet to poet.

Magnus Florin discusses the locus amoenus in terms of his own 2008 volume, The Garden. But he also considers the impact of Biblical and classical literature on the ideal place he appropriates for his own work. In his paper ‘The Grove of Linnaeus. With Digressions Between Eden and Gethsemane’, Florin depicts the ideal place as a site of restfulness and peace, where everything a human being wants is accessible. Though this is frequently the case in seventeenth-century poetry, I argue in this thesis that it is not consistently the case. Individuals can enter the locus amoenus, real or imagined, to be assailed by forces they did not predict would be there. Rather, it is the hope of protection and safety that remains consistent in the seventeenth-century ideal place.

Finally, Julie Fifelski writes in brief about the connection between the locus amoenus and two poems from the late Middle Ages in ‘Two Loci Amoeni in Pearl and The Roman de La Rose’ (2008). Fifelski privileges the spirituality of the ideal place within both poems; they are both heavenly realms. Within my thesis, the ideal place is always a spiritual place, but this spirituality is frequently a combination of Christian and classical spiritual beliefs.

To fully understand the ideal place of the seventeenth century, it is necessary to study the development of the locus amoenus from ancient Greece through to the seventeenth century. I demonstrate that the locus amoenus has always had the capacity to be

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13 Hass, p. 670.
exhibited in different ways, yet remain a discernable literary idea. I will also argue that the quest for the ideal place began as a literary conceit, but with the development of monasteries and private houses, began to intersect with the real life locus amoenus of England.

Hesiod’s *Work and Days* is the earliest instance of the ideal place. Hesiod and his brother, Perses, are the inheritors of their father’s farm. Perses has returned to the family farm to claim his inheritance after wasting his fortune in the city. Instead of simply giving him his share, Hesiod’s persona educates his brother about the merits of hard work. Presumably, this instruction is given in order to both counsel Perses against future frivolousness and teach him to produce earnings for himself. Both the persona’s instruction and the arguments engendered by it give the poem structure. Just as the poet freely shows his own anxieties in instructing his brother on the virtues of hard work, he also pronounces the desirable attributes of the ideal place. At the beginning of *Work and Days*, the persona describes the creation of the earth. Within this Greek view of history, the persona also defines the Golden Age, full of natural harmony and containing men who:

…dwell high up on the top of Olympus
Fashioned the first born race of articulate men, which was golden,
And it is said that they lived when Cronus was ruling in heaven.
God like, they lived like gods, and their hearts were entirely carefree,
Distant strangers to labor and suffering; neither did wretched Age overtake them: instead, their members intact and unchanged, they Took much pleasure in banquets and parties, apart from all evil,
Till they died as if sleep overcame them. And everything worthwhile Came to their hand, as the grain-growing earth bore fruit without tilling,
Plenty of good food crops unbegrudged: so they lived at their pleasure,
Peacefully minding their own business, amid numerous good things.18

This race is ‘entirely carefree,/ Distant strangers to labour and suffering’ in a natural setting which offers up its fruits willingly. Peres has hitherto been a stranger ‘to labour and suffering’, but now on his father’s farm must learn the value of toil. The ‘first born race of articulate men’ are a community at peace within the *locus amoenus*. Further, the

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‘first born race’ are ‘God like’ and live ‘like gods’, strengthening the sanctity of the community. There is no need to harvest food for the ‘banquets and parties’, as ‘the grain-growing earth bore fruit without tilling’, nourishing those who dwell within. By implication, the climate is eternally temperate. Even death is painless, and comes to them ‘as if sleep overcame them’ and never ‘did wretched age overtake them’ to mar their good health. This Golden Age gives way to the Iron Age of the present and future, where the community will be undone and ‘guests with their hosts will differ’ (line 181) in argument, and ‘no more will a brother, as previously, be beloved’ (line 182). The creation of the earth and the history that is borne out of it is understood as a gradual decline from the locus amoenus of the Golden Age. Outside of its harmony, individuals will ‘devastate each other’s cities’ (line 187) and the ‘wicked will try to ruin the good man’ (line 191). Even the brothers’ father has his origins in ‘a miserable village’ where it is ‘horrid in winter, obnoxious in summer, and never pleasant’ (lines 629 – 631). The Muses ultimately teach the persona ‘clear-voiced music and poetry also’ (line 648) as both a means of communicating his anxieties and an anodyne to the ills of the landscape. Hesiod delineates the certainty of labour and suffering in his instruction to his brother Perses. Yet, he also teaches that just actions bring fortune, even though the notion of fortune is closely aligned with his brother’s self-interest in gathering money.

Unlike Hesiod, Homer accepts the world as he finds it. Though there is much action in the shape of sea voyages and war in Homer’s The Odyssey, Elysium is briefly mentioned as the place for good souls in the land where:

- men have a life most easy and pleasant:
- there is no snow or tempestuous winter, and never does rain fall;
- always instead clear freshening breezes of Zephyr are breathing,
- sent to the land by the Ocean to blow upon men and refresh them.19

Elysium is a prize for the good man after death and, like Hesiod’s Golden Age, is an example of the locus amoenus. In Homer’s description, it is the place where the heroes of battle spend their afterlife. The weather is perpetually temperate, the wind is ‘clear’ and ‘freshening’ which revitalises the men it reaches. There is ‘no snow’ and their life is ‘easy and pleasant’. The goodness of the place reflects the quality of the men who dwell

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there. Men who have fought courageously in battle are able to dwell in this ideal place as a reward for their goodness on the earth.

Drawing on the work of Hesiod and Homer, Virgil also produces a version of Elysian Fields in the *Aeneid*. Aeneas is dismayed at the siege of his city of Troy, an attack precipitated by the goddess Juno’s hatred of the Trojan people. After gathering survivors of the siege, Aeneas builds a fleet and travels on the open sea, stopping at sites around the Mediterranean. At the end of Book Six, and about halfway through his journey, Aeneas receives a vision of his deceased father who advises him to journey into the underworld to see a prophetic vision of Rome. The path divides in two, and Aeneas’ father Anchises dwells in the section of the underworld where heroes abide. It is a pastoral land, where, as his guide states:

> ‘We have no fixed homes but dwell in shadowed Groves, recline on riverbanks, and live in meadows Freshened by streams. But if you so wish, Over this ridge I can show you an easy path.’

He lead them up and pointed out to them Shining fields below. The pair went down.

Anchises, deep in a green valley, was reviewing As a proud father the souls of his descendants Yet to be born into the light, contemplating Their destinies, their great deeds to come. When he saw his son striding toward him Through the grass, he stretched out His trembling hands…

Elysium is the ideal place of heroes like Anchises, but it is also a site of strong family connections, both present and future. The landscape possesses features that, in later literature, become standard trappings of the *locus amoenus*: ‘groves’, ‘riverbanks’, ‘meadows’, ‘streams’, an ‘easy path’ allowing effortless passage. It is when Aeneas sees Anchises that the importance of the *locus amoenus* to the family unit is best revealed.

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Anchises is the ‘proud father of the souls of his descendants/ Yet to be born into the light’. His descendants wait for their moment to go forth into the world. They are born out of the ideal place, and Anchises is full of pride when contemplating his family’s ‘destinies, their great deeds to come’. This general, familial pride, moves to a specific connection between father and son when Aeneas appears in the *locus amoenus*. The son strides through the grass towards his father, whilst Anchises movingly greets his son with ‘trembling hands’, a biological detail indicative of the emotional force of the connection between father and son. Where men in the *locus amoenus* of Hesoid’s *Work and Days* ‘died as if sleep overcame them’, in the *Aeneid* the emphasis is on familial connections and those ‘descendants’ yet to be born. It is also a *locus* of proud family bonds, where a father greets a most beloved son.

The stories told in Ovid’s *Metamorphoses* all feature action that occurs outdoors in the pastoral realm. However, where the *locus amoenus* in *Work and Days*, *The Odyssey*, and the *Aeneid* is detached and protected from the world, the *locus amoenus* in *Metamorphoses* is inverted. Instead of being sheltered, the characters in each of the fifteen books are vulnerable to attack. The *locus amoenus* does not successfully wall out violent forces, in fact, a description of topography is sometimes a prelude to violence. In Book Three, just before Narcissus’ infamous admiration of his own reflection, the pool is described as ‘limpid and silvery’ (line 407), and ‘never bird nor beast/ Nor falling branch disturbed its shining peace’ (line 409 – 410). Moreover, ‘grass grew around’ (line 411) the silvery pool and trees shield it ‘from the warming sun’ (line 412). Like Narcissus, the gods are perplexed, humiliated, or made ridiculous by love. But as a final, redeeming, act in Book Fifteen, Pythagoras states that in the constantly changing universe, ‘our souls are still the same forever’ (lines 171 – 172). Ovid makes a case for the enduring soul to become the ideal place:

Let, when it will, that day, that has no claim
But to my mortal body, end the span
Of my uncertain years. Yet I’ll be borne,
The finer part of me, above the stars,
Immortal, and my name shall never die.21

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When the ‘mortal body’ is no longer needed and his ‘uncertain years’ are at an end, Pythagoras’ soul, the ‘finer part of me’, will endure. The divine soul will ‘never die’ and ensure the continued existence of man. It is in this enduring part of man that his identity is secure. Although the *locus amoenus* is inverted in the landscape, mankind can fashion a *locus amoenus* in the immortal soul.

In the Christian tradition, the *locus amoenus* exists in the form of the Garden of Eden in *Genesis* and the orchard in the *Song of Songs*. The description of Eden is less florid than its Greek and Latin precursors, though the pastoral landscape is no less strategically rendered. There is little ornamentation, perhaps to emphasise the *locus amoenus* as a state of mind as well as a *locus*:

> And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed. And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil. And a river went out of Eden to water the garden; and from thence it was parted, and became into four heads.\(^{22}\)

God, the first gardener in the Christian tradition, plants a garden and places his own creation of man within it. Eden is planted with trees that are both ‘pleasant to the sight, and good for food’, with the ‘tree of life’ at its centre. There is no need for man to toil in the garden, as ‘a river went out of Eden to water the garden’. Later, it is revealed that God put man ‘into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it’,\(^{23}\) suggesting that some labour is needed to keep the verdant garden under control. Adam (and later Eve) are self-sufficient in the garden, replete with food, water, shelter, and knowledge, though the latter ultimately leads to their expulsion. But whilst there is deceit and sin in the *locus amoenus*, there is also redemption. Christ’s cross was commonly held to have been fashioned from the Tree of Knowledge, and it is through this act of crucifixion that mankind is ultimately redeemed.

The *Song of Songs*, by contrast, describes a more sensory and florid ideal place. Like the Garden of Eden, it contains trees ‘pleasant to the sight, and good for food’, but with its fountains, fruit trees, and spices, it is altogether more exotic and sensual. In addition,

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\(^{22}\) *Genesis* 2:8 – 10.

\(^{23}\) *Genesis* 2:15.
the emphasis on friends and hospitality within the orchard makes it more akin to a
domestic garden:

A garden inclosed is my sister, my spouse; a spring shut up, a fountain
sealed. Thy plants are an orchard of pomegranates, with pleasant fruits;
camphire, with spikenard. Spikenard and saffron; calamus and cinnamon,
with all trees of frankincense; myrrh and aloes, with all the chief spices: A
fountain of gardens, a well of living waters, and streams from Lebanon.
Awake, O north wind; and come, thou south; blow upon my garden, that the
spices thereof may flow out. Let my beloved come into his garden, and eat
his pleasant fruits. I am come into my garden, my sister, my spouse: I have
gathered my myrrh with my spice; I have eaten my honeycomb with my
honey; I have drunk my wine with my milk: eat, O friends; drink, yea, drink
abundantly, O beloved.24

The garden is ‘inclosed’, a private orchard able to wall out the exterior world. It is
described in feminine terms as ‘a spring shut up, a fountain sealed’, virginal and pure.
In Eden, the trees are ‘pleasant to the sight, and good for food’, but in the Song of Songs
the emphasis is on the ‘pleasant fruits’ that the trees bear. The fact that the garden is
also ‘my sister, my spouse’ once again emphasises both the femininity and intimacy of
the space. It is also a landscape where ‘my beloved’ can ‘come into his garden, and eat
his pleasant fruits’. The catalogue of spices present in the form of ‘camphire’, or henna,
merely the ‘chief spices’, indicating that there are further examples to be found. The
spices lend an exoticism to the scene and are carried by the ‘north wind’ which blows
‘upon my garden, that the spices thereof may flow out’, amplifying the sensuousness of
the orchard.

After indulging in the further sensory gathering of ‘myrrh with my spice’, eating
‘honeycomb with my honey’ and drinking ‘wine with milk’, the overwhelmingly
sensory stimulation of such scent and taste is shared with ‘beloved’ friends, whom the
speaker invites to ‘drink, yea, drink abundantly’. It is a sign of the developing
relationship between friendship and hospitality in the locus amoenus. The speaker’s
friends are invited to share in the space and the tranquil state of mind that the orchard
offers. The orchard is concomitantly the scene of communal sharing, but it also places

24 Song of Songs 4: 12 – 16, 5:1.
emphasis on the individual, where ‘My vineyard, my very own, is for myself’. The *Song of Songs* can also be understood as a manifestation of the relationship between man and God, which extends the spiritual nature of the orchard. The Virgin Mary was identified with Solomon’s bride and the Church itself, and out of this conflation of enclosure and spirituality grew the idea of the *hortus conclusus*, in which the Virgin was portrayed as ‘a garden inclosed…a spring shut up, a fountain sealed’. This idea of the enclosed *locus amoenus* is transported through to the mid to late Middle Ages and Tudor times in the building of actual cloisters and private, walled gardens. The *hortus conclusus* offered an allegory for a paradise or lost Eden, just as it was in the monastic garden.

Love dominates the *loci amoeni* of the medieval period. In *The Romaunt of the Rose*, the ideal place becomes significant in the understanding of desire and contentment. There is a clear debt to the *Song of Songs* in this emphasis. Whilst the interior of the garden, which ‘enclosed was, and walled well’ (line 138) is dedicated to love, the exterior world represents a more quotidian life. Figures such as Hatred, Sorrow, and Poverty stand outside the garden, embodying the worldly cares that individuals outside the *locus amoenus* must endure. Within the walled garden, the Dreamer finds Sir Mirth and his companions Beauty, Largess, and Youth, amongst others, dancing whilst Gladness sits next to the God of Love. This gallery of allegorical figures, found within a walled garden, is a distinctly medieval approach to the ideal place and its impassioned, ornate nature:

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And whan I was inne, iwys,
Myn herte was ful glad of this,
For wel wende I ful sikerly
Have ben in paradys erthly.
So fair it was that, trusteth wel,
It semede a place espirituel.
For certys, as at my devys,
Ther is no place in paradys
So good inne for to dwelle or be
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25 *Song of Songs* 8: 11 – 12.
27 Stewart, p. 31.
As in that gardyn, thoughte me.\textsuperscript{28}

And when I was inside, certainly,
My heart was fully glad of this,
For I knew well, with full certainty,
That I was in earthly paradise,
It was so beautiful, that, trust me well,
It seemed a heavenly place.
For certainly, in my opinion,
There is no place in heaven
So good in which to live or be
As in that garden, I thought.\textsuperscript{29}

As in the \textit{Song of Songs}, it is the beauty of the garden that, in part, lends the scene a connection with the divine. The scene was ‘so beautiful, that, trust me well./ It seemed a heavenly place’, and it is the pleasing look of the garden that confirms its status as an ‘earthly paradise’. The Dreamer believes himself in a \textit{locus amoenus} and his ‘heart was fully glad’ when he arrived. The divine nature of the space is so striking that he is sure there is no place in heaven so good to reside ‘as in that garden’. The useful aspects of the garden in terms of the production of food and plentiful water seen in the \textit{Garden of Eden} and the \textit{Song of Songs} are now replaced with love and happiness, whilst retaining a sense of spirituality in the ‘heavenly place’. This \textit{locus amoenus} contains both desire and spirituality, and both serve the Dreamer well on his quest to gain his lady’s favour.

In \textit{The Romaunt of the Rose}, a garden ‘with high walles embattailed’ (line 139) holds ‘many a bride syngung’ (line 655) as well as the allegorical figures of, for example, Mirth, Beauty, and Largess. It is a place of private, communal joy and splendour. It is also a ‘place espirituel’ (line 650). But the high walls primarily exclude ideas that would compromise the joy and beauty of the garden, rather than violent forces. Subsequently, the everyday allegorical figures of Hatred, Sorrow, and Poverty remain on the outside of the garden. This style of walled \textit{locus amoenus} in literature parallels the development of the \textit{locus amoenus} in real life. High garden walls keep out


\textsuperscript{29} Great thanks to Dr Rebecca F. McNamara from The Medieval and Early Modern Centre, University of Sydney, for her translation of these lines from Geoffrey Chaucer’s, \textit{The Romaunt of the Rose}, ed. by Charles Dahlberg (Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 1999), lines 645 – 654, p. 75.
the everyday, rather than violence, in *The Romaunt of the Rose*. Similarly, in real life, the reliance on moated castles and defensive ditches fell away around the end of Edward I’s reign in 1307, yet walls and boundaries remained, as castles were adapted to more domestic spaces. Domestic buildings were added and gardens expanded at Berkley, Ludlow, and Saltwood transforming these defensive-looking residences into more homely spaces. Gardens were a normal part of both the fortified and unfortified variety of castle, even for the King. Typically, gardens from the mid to late Middle Ages were also marked out from the rest of the landscape by trenches, walls, or other barriers to close off more modest, private residences from other areas of land. These domains delineate a secluded space, and were legitimised by law as it was a criminal act to trespass on someone’s garden. These physical barriers also served to keep out animal and vegetable intruders and preserve the private garden. The enclosed domains of private houses were symbolically separated from the rest of the population and secluded from the rest of the community. Moreover, the private nature of this isolated space makes an oblique reference to monastic and Biblical gardens, implicitly enhancing the sanctity of bounded, domestic spaces.

So what were these gardens like? Some of them had vines, fish, birds, elaborate marble cloisters, and fountains at their centre. The practice of laying out gardens in an aesthetically pleasing manner was widespread enough by 1305 for the noted agricultural writer Pietro de’ Crescenzi to write *Liber Ruralium Commodorum*, or *The Book of Rural Benefits*, sometime between 1304 and 1309. His volume opens with the chapter ‘Siting and layout of a manor, villa or farm, considering climate, winds, and water supply; also the duties of the head of the estate’. This chapter on the utilitarian aspects of the garden demonstrates the importance of such a space for the running of the household. Gardening would likely have been the primary method for providing for all households, and as such Crescenzi gives particular importance to the medicinal aspects of gardening, as well as the garden’s use for the cultivation of food. Crescenzi also discusses the importance of the aesthetic aspects of the garden alongside them in his

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33 Kiser, p. 235.
34 Kiser, p. 235.
chapter ‘Pleasure Gardens’. Notably, this conflation of pleasure and practicality in the walled garden appears to draw inspiration from the arrangement of monastic gardens. In 800 AD, Walafrid Strabo, a Frankish Monk, wrote the poem *Hortulus*, detailing the method of gardening in several monastic gardens, as well as the functions of the herbs and plants therein. Sage, fennel, and poppies all feature, but so do the aesthetically pleasing rose and lily, which were his favourite flowers due to their perceived Godly perfection and inherent beauty. *Hortulus* demonstrates a deliberate attempt to cultivate a practical and beautiful garden and arrange the landscape. Strabo borrows from the practical nature of the Garden of Eden and the more aesthetically pleasing setting of the *Song of Songs*. A garden was seen as so integral to wellbeing in Strabo’s volume, that the sick were counselled to speed their healing by inhaling the fragrance of its flowers and fruits. Like the country houses discussed earlier, these monastic gardens were communal spaces bound by charity and divinity, walling out the exterior world and cultivating useful plants like vegetables and fruit trees.

Henry VIII’s Dissolution of the Monasteries between 1536 and 1541 destroyed many of these monastic spaces; around the same time, the castle-building programme of Edward I was replaced by Henry VIII’s palace-building programme. The resulting estates and gardens that grew up in the monasteries’ place, built on their land and sometimes hewn from their very stone, became more strongly linked to individuals and communities beyond their boundaries. Terry Comito remarks that ‘the changing form of the gardens themselves reflect the growing absolutism of their owners’ claims upon the world, a greater and greater domination of the natural terrain’. Not only were monastic lands and gardens appropriated by the crown and sold to court favourites, but syndicates of London merchants entered into land speculation. In some cases, newly-wealthy men acquired vast amounts of land, sometimes acquired primarily as a means of generating income. As a result, rack-renting and enclosure became of concern to some tenant farmers. The notion of the good man and the stable, immutable house and garden also came to be a coveted ideal. For example, in 1542 Sir William Hollis made the transition from London merchant to country gentleman. A successful baker who rose to be Mayor of London and in command of a fortune of £10,000, he bought lands

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39 *Medieval Gardens*, p. 44.
43 Chambers, p. 6.
at Haughton and other counties in England. He built Haughton Hall and enjoyed the role of the self-effacing country gentleman. A popular landowner, he involved himself in the village and community in a variety of ways, from keeping his estate open for twelve days over Christmas, to taking fifty of his servants to see the Coronation of Edward VI in handsome new coats purchased for the occasion. Possibly to consolidate his connection to the landscape and its community, his son was later to purchase the title of Baron of Haughton in 1615. What I mean to show by this example is that the *locus amoenus* was no longer the domain of monasteries, isolated from the village. New estates found a more open connection to the landscape. In their care of tenants and villagers, they implicitly claimed the spirituality of the place for their own.

This concern over the growing authoritarianism of landowners is manifested in Shakespeare’s *Richard II*. First performed in 1597, Richard II’s land is England itself, characterised as this ‘other Eden, demi-paradise’ (Act II, Sc I, line 724). The ‘sea-walled garden’ of England’s encircling ocean replaces the walls of monastic gardens and domestic spaces. At the beginning of the play, the nation is an idyllic place of safety, protected from the ‘the hand of war’ (Act II, Sc I, line 726) and civil strife. But to achieve this ‘demi-paradise’ and control over the natural landscape, others have necessarily been disenfranchised of land and life. Thus the kings of *Richard II*, celebrated in the play for their armed conquests help to define an English *locus amoenus*. This attitude is reminiscent of the appropriation of land by court favourites to the detriment of tenant farmers. Further, this play also expresses growing anxieties over land, spirituality, community, politics, and England that were becoming a growing part of the disquiet surrounding the English *locus amoenus*.

The England of *Richard II* is a landscape presided over by ineffective politicians and, of course, Richard II himself, a fact that inverts the idyllic sense of the *locus amoenus* as this ‘other Eden, demi-paradise’. Richard II rules over England in an authoritarian, unjust manner. Though Richard is inherently insensitive to other people’s feelings and possessions, his divine right to rule not only presents an understanding of kingship, but orders the whole of society dwelling within England. Bolingbroke is a more effective ruler than Richard II, but he is not the rightful king, and so the order and stability of England is implicitly threatened by him. In 1597, a childless, elderly, monarch—Elizabeth I—sat on the throne of England. Like the real and literary versions of King Richard II, some may have considered her a tyrant due to her reliance on internal spies.

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44 Chambers, p. 6.
45 Chambers, p. 6.
and propaganda. Whilst reviewing historical documents relating to the real-life Richard II, Elizabeth herself was said to have acknowledged the fact. She remarked to her archivist William Lambarde ‘I am Richard II, know ye not that?’ The Queen likely referred to Richard II’s tyrannous reign which began in earnest at the end of the 1390s, and speculated that she may possess the same reputation amongst her subjects.

Richard’s England is likened to an abandoned garden in Act II, with health-giving herbs swarming with caterpillars and fruit trees upturned. When the King finally relinquishes the crown, the audience observes the undoing of a monarch and the dismantling of order. Richard represents an old, medieval realm of chivalry and the divine right of kings, where Bolingbroke represents a new realm of ambition and hard-headed politics. Richard has no place in this new regime, and as the *locus amoenus* festers, order is undone.

The desire for a *locus amoenus* in *Richard II* and in Elizabethan England is further indicated by the political activism the play inspired. The Earl of Essex and a group of political conspirators attended *Richard II* at the Globe to steel themselves for an actual overthrow of Queen Elizabeth I the next day. All were captured and condemned to death, but their attendance at the play and their execution underline the way debates about justice and tyranny, so on display in Shakespeare’s play, flowed out to the real realm of Elizabethan society. The question of whether it is ever just to upset the natural order and dethrone a monarch was to become increasingly central to English politics in the years leading to the Civil War.

Along with the corruption of the topographical ideal place, Shakespeare revives the Ovidian idea of the immortal, enduring soul, seen at the end of *Metamorphoses*. Richard is forced to confront his mortality at the end of the play. When he is finally killed by Exton in the dungeon at Pontefract Castle, he declares that:

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\text{thy fierce hand} \\
\text{Hath with the king’s blood stain’d the king’s own land.} \\
\text{Mount, mount, my soul! thy seat is up on high;} \\
\text{Whilst my gross flesh sinks downward, here to die.}
\]

\[(\text{Act V, Sc V, lines 2866 – 2869)}\]

In a sense, Richard is redeemed because he finds his true ‘soul’ within his ‘gross flesh’, despite his violent death. His true ‘seat is up on high’, with the God who appointed him to rule England in the first place. In the earthly realm, Richard’s murder
is borne by England, when Exton ‘Hath with the king’s blood stain’d the king’s own land’, injuring both the King and the ‘demi-paradise’ of England. Even Bolingbroke is moved to pity at the sight of this dual corruption:

A deed of slander with thy fatal hand
Upon my head and all this famous land.

(Act V, Sc VI, lines 2921 – 2922)

It is not just Bolingbroke who must bear the guilt for his murder, but ‘all this famous land’ of England. Bolingbroke’s ‘soul is full of woe./ That blood should sprinkle me to make me grow’ (Act V, Sc VI, lines 2928 – 2929). The immortal part of Bolingbroke is now under threat, and by no means secure, and the land of England is no longer a locus amoenus.

Through this brief discussion of the literary and historical convention of the ideal place, I have demonstrated that the topos has been pursued since classical times. It is most often manifested in the pastoral world, and it has variously displayed the principles of community, family, virtue, spirituality, or love within it. The development of the literary locus amoenus from the mid to late Middle Ages runs parallel to the physical, architectural development of the locus amoenus in real life, often intersecting. With this historical picture established, I move to describe my arguments about the nature of the locus amoenus in the seventeenth century, where the quest for the ideal place remains strong.

In seventeenth-century literature, the locus amoenus is expressed poetically by the context in which the poet wrote, and it is rendered in geographical and topographical ways. The imagined, poetic ideal place and the earthly, physical version noted in the mid to late Middle Ages hold their positions according to each other and intersect often in the seventeenth century. However, neither locus amoenus will ever properly be achieved as both the real and imagined locus amoenus are only ever aspirational. But the site of the ideal place broadens from the idyllic landscapes and gardens of classical and medieval literature to include the home, the estate, England, the immortal soul, or particular arrangements of these features. The garden predominantly remains a spiritual space, but the image of the well-ordered and well-governed estate evidently becomes more important in the seventeenth century. This space is frequently defined not by walls, but by who it keeps in and who it walls out. The home is habitually at the centre of the estate, yet it can equally stand alone to delimit its own locus amoenus. In both
cases, the rulers of the home or the estate are made steadfast in their authority to govern there. They may leave the ideal place, but the right they have to reside there and their virtue, remains. The strong bonds within the community further reinforce the virtue and safety of the realm. In addition, England itself is revealed as a *locus amoenus* in its own right, though it characteristically operates slightly differently to the ideal place of the microcosmic level. The ideal place of England typically either counterbalances positive and negative forces within itself to produce harmony, or it is a site of aspiration, where peace may one day rule again. Finally, the soul is also repeatedly rendered as a *locus amoenus*, divorced from topography and free from the corrupting taint of violence and death. Though it is assailed by sin, the soul has already been redeemed through Christ’s death. Those who follow God can create a ‘paradise within thee, happier farr’.

Within each of these sites, ideological concerns that generate the poets’ need for a *locus amoenus* can vary. Anxieties over land ownership, attitudes to religion, and the King exist in both the real and imagined ideal place. But more individual concerns also manifest themselves there, such as anxieties over patronage, court favour, freedom of speech, liberty, community, and personal redemption. This poetry also reveals many poets who sought a moderate stance in relation to politics and Civil War, despite the inclination to think of war as constituting distinct sides and strong, unwavering allegiances. Further, absolute power on both sides of politics is often rejected. It is the arrangement of topographical and ideological features that demonstrate these concerns and point to the significance of the ideal place for each poet. To elucidate this, I will study the treatment of the *locus amoenus* in the literature of Aemilia Lanyer, Ben Jonson, Mildmay Fane, Robert Herrick, John Denham, Andrew Marvell, and John Milton, the details of which I will summarise below.

The principal subject of my opening chapter is Aemilia Lanyer’s ‘The Description of Cooke-ham’, written at the beginning of the seventeenth century. Much of the criticism written about Lanyer is feminist. Whilst I do not take a point on the validity of that approach, I prefer to dwell on her position as a poet than her position as a woman. In Chapter One, then, I contend that Lanyer’s poetic persona is located in a noble community within which she seeks social advantage and patronage. Lanyer finds common ground with her patron in her dissatisfaction with both marriage and the legal system. In return, the persona names her patron, Margaret Clifford, highest authority in the estate and surrounds her with submissive, leafy admirers. The volume that ‘The Description of Cooke-ham’ was published in, *Salve Deus Rex Judaeorum*, is dedicated to a number of powerful women. But it is with Clifford that Lanyer attempts to cultivate
a particular relationship. The dedication to Clifford at the beginning of *Salve Deus Rex Judaeorum* outlines Lanyer’s reasons for writing ‘The Description of Cooke-ham’ as she did. Within this dedication, Lanyer promises to fortify Clifford’s soul and power by immortalising her in the *locus amoenus* of Cookham. In addition, the dedication to Clifford outlines that her patron’s virtue is profound in the face of the mortal notions of honour. So assured is Clifford’s virtue that she will light the way to heaven. To further magnify Clifford’s spiritual worth, the poet spends much of her time professing unworthiness in the face of Clifford’s superiority.

Clifford, who generates the pre-lapsarian springtime within the estate, ultimately leaves with her daughter. The architectural descriptions of Clifford and her daughter cannot contain them within the landscape, despite the immutable imagery that Lanyer employs to describe them. The bountiful imagery of the garden fades to autumnal scenes as the seasons shift, and grieving plants interweave their withered branches. Lanyer’s persona, amongst this grief, is similarly forsaken. Importantly, even though the landscape and the persona clearly mourn the loss of the Clifford women, I argue that the nature of memory is such that the persona in ‘The Description of Cooke-ham’ does not recreate relationships as they once were. Lanyer creates an idealised landscape, one that she wishes existed, and hopes might exist in the future. Ultimately, the cycle of the seasons gives some hope that perhaps spring, and the Cliffords, will return to the *locus amoenus* once more. Despite Lanyer’s desire to reinforce Clifford’s attachment to the estate and her authority within that domain, her efforts do not result in a permanent place within the Cookham community. Even in death, the estate remains well-ordered, but Lanyer’s attempt to gain favour and patronage withers like the plants around her when Margaret and Anne leave. Lanyer’s own *locus amoenus* is the estate of Cookham. The poet strives to find a place for herself within its community whilst asserting Clifford’s rightful place as the supreme authority of the estate. Though the spiritual estate remains ordered even in death, and the poet promises Clifford immortality in print, the ideal place disappears, leaving behind the hope that it may return.

In both Lanyer’s and Ben Jonson’s poetry there is a strong sense of the community centred around the family. In my second chapter, I contend that Jonson asserts the importance of the good man and the good friend within the community in ‘To Penshurst’ and ‘Inviting a Friend to Supper’, demonstrating a clear debt to Stoic principles. Though ‘To Penshurst’ centres on the combination of the estate and the manor, and ‘Inviting a Friend to Supper’ centres on Jonson’s home, both places are held up as sites of safety and friendship. Whilst Jonson’s home is removed from landscape,
the humble *locus amoenus* confers on Jonson’s persona all the authority that was given to Robert Sidney at his estate. This inherent power also yields a stable community. The result of living without community is evidenced in Jonson’s play *Epicene*, where the central character, Morose, exists discontentedly within an inverted *locus amoenus*. By inadvertently enclosing himself in the artificial rather than the natural, Morose lives a dissatisfied life surrounded by boisterous characters, remote from God.

In addition, the prefacing epistle to his play *Volpone* indicates Jonson’s disenchantment with the baseness of the theatre. He does not excuse himself from this behaviour, but significantly Jonson resolves to create a style of poetry to describe the ‘servants, Riuals, yea and the maisters…to imitate to justice, and instruct to life’. The poetic communities seen in ‘To Penshurst’ and ‘Inviting a Friend to Supper’ were created from this thought. The communities within both poems amplify his concerns over the moral and ethical wellbeing of wider England. I then assert that his relationship with James I was problematic too, and though the masques he wrote probably fulfilled his deeper poetic desires, it evidently did nothing to make his profit-based relationship with James I sit more easily. In ‘Inviting a Friend to Supper’, Jonson describes an ideal place where the good man and the good friend sit at the heart of community.

Mildmay Fane wrote a prodigious amount of poetry – over 500 poems – that has only recently been published. Within this large body of work, his consistent commitment to the *via media*, or middle way, is remarkable. The quest for the *locus amoenus* in this poetry seeks out a space that is rational and manageable at a time when England was increasingly neither of these. For him, the ideal place is defined at the beginning of the seventeenth century as the place where society can find togetherness as it loses cohesion. Fane recommends peace, virtue, and friendship as a remedy to trouble. Like Jonson, Fane also draws on Stoic philosophy, including a cyclical view of time. Within this principle, the rational soul understands the universe by nurturing amity, truth, and modesty, and thus can ultimately know justice. Fane’s poetry also adds Christian and Platonic imagery. It is with these Stoic, Christian, and Platonic ideals in mind that Fane writes a poem to his great friend Ned Beecher in ‘Ode to N.B. an Angler’, to enhance Beecher’s communion with the divine, making his salvation look assured within the *locus amoenus* of Fanes idyllic, pastoral landscape.

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Fane’s own chance of salvation is less sure, and his poetry depicts him as desolate in featureless topography, and without God’s grace. The redemptive qualities of Stoic philosophy become even more important, particularly the notion of friendship as Cicero described it in ‘De Amicitia’. Friendship equates to hope for redemption, and is one of the cornerstones of his Cavalier approach to life and the ideal place of his poetry.

Good relations between men remain important in Fane’s views on politics, and the poet’s view of the importance of Parliament in politics was remarkably stable. He believed in the fundamental importance of habeas corpus, The Petition of Right, and the role of Parliament, rebuking anyone who lusted after power. In Fane’s view, Cromwell’s and Charles I’s lack of reverence for these laws threatened the peace of England. Though it could be argued that Fane’s brother in law, Thomas Fairfax, Commander-in-Chief of Cromwell’s army, could be similarly reviled for such behaviour, I posit that Fane’s attitude to Fairfax fluctuates, from disdain to adoration as a heroic Roman soldier. Whilst his attitude to Fairfax varies, Fane’s attitude to absolute power and the role of Parliament in national politics remains firm.

It is the improvement of Fane’s own godly, immortal soul that will finally help him understand himself and the Civil War world. He waits for God’s grace and providence through otium and negotium in ‘To Retiredness’. At his estate, Fane can enjoy happiness in England. But his desire to atone for past sins and his need for God’s grace and teaching is ever-present, as it was in his early poetry. Fane comes to believe that it is possible for both man and nation to be both sibi imperiosus and know God’s grace. Thus, Fane’s locus amoenus remains consistent in his poetry. Christian and Platonic imagery remains important, and whilst the site of the ideal place can shift from a classical, idyllic scene, to his own estate, the concerns examined in the shape of politics, the monarchy, freedom of speech, and personal redemption, are ever-present. I argue that Fane finds the firmest hope for a locus amoenus in the redeemed soul.

Fane’s great friend, Robert Herrick, was a more convincing Royalist than Fane, and I contend that the ritual contained in the ‘The Hock-Cart’ is tantamount to a declaration of loyalty to Charles I. Herrick’s locus amoenus features ceremony as a means of raising England from the violence of the Civil War. It is a nostalgic and feudal

47 Otium denotes leisure time, or retirement, after a period of negotium, or public service. These terms are further explored in Thomas G. Rosenmeyer’s The Green Cabinet (Berkley: University of California Press, 1969).

community, and Herrick’s depictions of the people of Devon are sensitively rendered. Having elucidated this, I move to consider the critical Puritan attitudes towards ceremony and ritual in the years leading up to the Civil War, exemplified by the dispute between Peter Smart, a clergyman, and Archdeacon Cosin. Smart rounded on Cosin in a sermon in 1628, criticising Cosin’s endorsement of religious ceremony. By the time of the English Civil War, the role of accuser and accused had changed places, and Cosin excoriated Smart, eventually leading to the latter’s imprisonment. This conflict, I argue, provides a valuable context to Herrick’s publication of Hesperides (which contained ‘The Hock-Cart’ and ‘Corinna’s Going a-Maying’): Smart’s and Cosin’s respective troubles illustrate that a Royalist publication in support of ritual was a perilous act.

Herrick’s locus amoenus is surprisingly egalitarian, and neither Herrick nor Fane (to whom ‘The Hock-Cart’ is dedicated) are more entitled to the celebrations than the workers who have toiled for the estate. Farm-workers are described in kindly, nostalgic tones as they bring in the final harvest and take part in the Harvest Home festival. In the feudal society that Herrick envisaged, everyone knew their place and, via that, stability was assured. Within such an ideal place Herrick can also defend the Harvest Home festival, and ritual in general, from the increasing, external Puritan attacks to which it was subject. Herrick’s locus amoenus is, then, at the heart of Mildmay Fane’s estate. Though Herrick perceives that Puritan forces threaten this community, it is a strong allegiance to Charles I and the values he embodies that will provide hope for this threatened way of life.

Like Mildmay Fane, John Denham was a Royalist and imprisoned very early in the Civil War. Fane was released within a year and set about facilitating negotiations between the monarchy and Parliament. Charles was frequently unwilling to negotiate, but I argue that this opportunity enabled Denham to witness the King’s humanity at close quarters. In his final revision of his most famous poem, ‘Coopers Hill’, Denham advocates a commitment to the via media, a view manifested and guided poetically by the Thames River. The river serves a didactic purpose, both traversing and knitting together the patchwork of English landscape and landmarks, creating a locus amoenus that draws on England’s past as much as its present. Denham’s last version of ‘Coopers Hill’ is a broad survey of that landscape. His locus amoenus features Windsor as a symbol of balance and order, the Thames as an emblem of harmony and moderation, and the tragic pursuit and death of a stag as emblematic of the demise of Charles I. From his vantage point atop Cooper’s Hill, Denham can see present and historical England laid out before him. The final lines posit that if the moderate Thames is
unnaturally constrained, the harmony and power inherent in the state will become a destructive force.

The *locus amoenus* of Denham’s England is not only balanced between past and present, but between peace and violence, and corruption and innocence. These manifestations of the *locus amoenus* are all a natural part of the landscape, but it is the Thames alone that stands for harmonious power. In this quest for balance in the ideal place of England, self-interested men renew their designs on the nation’s power, implicitly rejecting *Magna Carta*, and posing a threat to the harmony of England. Obliquely, absolute power on both sides of politics is denounced by Denham. Yet, implicitly, both positive and negative aspects of the English landscape are deemed necessary to create a balanced, English *locus amoenus*.

In Andrew Marvell’s ‘Upon the Hill and Grove at Bilbrough’ and ‘Upon Appleton House’, the spiritual nature of community is foregrounded. Though the house of Nun Appleton was hewn from the stone of a convent appropriated during the Dissolution of the Monasteries, Fairfax’s virtue outshines that of the former religious community. The Catholicism, ritual, and immorality described at the convent are replaced with the good Protestant family and the sanctity of marriage. In ‘Upon the Hill and Grove at Bilbrough’, the nature of the community there is implicit in the perfection of the landscape. This faultless topography stands as the anodyne to the horror of the Civil War, which can be glimpsed just beyond its boundaries. The outlying mountains are not full of proto-Romantic splendour, but ambition and corruption, and the scenes of slain bodies demonstrate the limits to Fairfax’s authority. Marvell’s ‘Upon Appleton House’ amplifies these external horrors by distorting perspective at the outer boundary of Nun Appleton. The estate reveals semi-wild imagery at its limits, where the Mowers ghoulishly and thoughtlessly mow down the Rail. By magnifying misrepresentations in the natural order, Marvell plays on the contemporary developments in lenses and, more specifically, microscopes, in the mid-seventeenth century. In both poems, Fairfax metaphorically shuns ambition and the exterior world in favour of this small community, as he did in real life. I argue that the reason for this decision can be gleaned in the world at the edges of these communities. The world beyond both is, by comparison, treacherous. The *locus amoenus* at the centre of the estate espouses the virtue and harmony of Fairfax himself.

To conclude my study, I turn to John Milton’s poetry. Like in Herrick’s and Fane’s expressions of the concept, in Milton’s *locus amoenus* everybody knows their place. Milton’s Puritan ideas and the didacticism of his work are conveyed most powerfully by
his use of garden allegory. *Arcades, Comus, Paradise Lost, and Paradise Regained* represent Milton’s developing sense of community and spirituality within the pastoral world. The divine journey characters undertake and the self-fashioning that takes place ultimately leads to self-reliance, in the form of the internal, immortal, ‘paradise within thee, happier farr’. It is a journey, though, that demands discipline and full moral engagement, and thus, the control which Milton’s characters must exert over their landscape is perhaps also an allegorical representation of the control they must exercise over themselves. The loss of the English Republic embodies the same lesson as the expulsion in *Paradise Lost*: it is an opportunity for English men and women to develop a purposeful life, full of self-knowledge. Though the landscape in *Paradise Lost* and *Paradise Regained* both represent temptation, importantly, they also allow for salvation. To Milton’s mind, after the Fall the soul became the site of the *locus amoenus*, and the means through which men and women can achieve redemption.

It is, then, the conflation of the site of the *locus amoenus* with the poet’s particular ideological concerns that produce a specific manifestation of the ideal place in the seventeenth-century poetry I study. The topos of the *locus amoenus* has its roots in classical literature, but even when tracing its development from classical times it is evident that it has always been a subject open to variation. It is frequently conceptualised in topographical ways, and its development has featured farms and idyllic open spaces, Biblical gardens, walled gardens of the Middle Ages, and England itself in the late Elizabethan period. Ideological concerns within those spaces have involved, but are not limited to, community, family, love, and national identity. The seventeenth-century poets I examine in this thesis draw on these previous topographical and ideological features and combine them with their own individual context. The poets’ topography takes the shape of the garden, the estate, the home, England, the soul, or particular combinations of these, whilst their ideology can concern land, religion, kingship, or more personal concerns like patronage, freedom of speech, friendship, community, and redemption. Moderation is often sought as an answer to war, and absolute power is rejected. Consequently, it is in the singular arrangements of landscape and ideology that the significance of the *locus amoenus* to each poet can be understood by the modern reader.
Chapter One

Aemilia Lanyer
‘The Description of Cooke-ham’ 1611

In Aemilia Lanyer’s 1611 ‘The Description of Cooke-ham’,¹ the poet creates a locus amoenus out of a work of patronage. Lanyer’s patron Margaret Clifford, Countess of Cumberland, her daughter Anne, and the poet dwell temporarily in Lanyer’s ideal community, full of knowledge, virtue, and Godliness. Although Clifford does not, in reality, own the estate of Cookham, Lanyer fashions a poetic estate where much is made of Clifford’s authentic power over her domain. The plants of the estate bow to her command, unite to defend her, and ultimately weep at her absence. Lanyer herself craves community, belonging, and most prominently, patronage in her ideal place, but never attains it. When Clifford and her daughter leave the newly-wintered grounds of Cookham at the end of the poem, the poet finds herself friendless in the chilly garden. With her Jewish and Catholic roots, and a father who was a court musician, Lanyer was an outsider to England’s nobility on many levels. ‘The Description of Cooke-ham’ is the poet’s attempt to assimilate all of them using her gender—the one characteristic she shares with the Countess. The poet implements a human rather than gendered or feminist standpoint in ‘The Description of Cooke-ham’ as she attempts to gain advantage with her patron. Like Clifford, Lanyer is portrayed as landless. At a time when land ownership brought with it status and power, both women look to the estate to imbue them with the stable identity they long for. The quest for an ideal community within the locus amoenus is related both through the activities and ultimate departure of Clifford and her daughter. Intent on embedding herself within this inward-looking society, Lanyer’s ideal place is at once garden paradise and a fading memory.

Chiefly celebrated by the poet is Margaret Clifford, Countess of Cumberland. The Countess was married to George Clifford, Third Earl of Cumberland, but they separated towards the end of their marriage. Though he was a scholarly man whose interest in mathematics led him to navigation, and a career as an Elizabethan privateer, he was also a gambler, an ostentatious member of court, and notorious philanderer. His business

ventures at sea were, in part, pursued to recover losses incurred by his lavish lifestyle.² Like her husband, Margaret Clifford had also received a far-reaching education in her youth, and was described as an exceedingly pious woman by her daughter.³ Margaret Clifford displayed keen interest in many areas of science, medicine, and industry, including innovative new methods for smelting coal. She also invested widely in new businesses ventures such as the East India Company.⁴ Margaret’s daughter, Anne, similarly undertook an extensive, classical education which reflected her mother’s instruction.

The Countess and her daughter spent time at Cookham to escape her troubled marriage, and later sought respite there after her husband died in 1605.⁵ The estate at Cookham was owned by the crown but had been leased to Margaret’s brother at the end of the sixteenth century.⁶ As both of his sons had died in their youth, George Clifford left his lands and title to his brother, with a reversion to his daughter Anne on her uncle’s death. Unhappy with this result, Margaret Clifford initiated legal action on her daughter’s behalf to recover the inheritance. Anne’s husband, Richard Sackville, whom she married in 1609, eventually took over the legal battle, contributing to the unhappiness of her own marriage. The acquisition of money was her husband’s primary objective.⁷ Many have written about the varying degrees of feminism that this litigation and marital instability awoke in Lanyer and the Cliffords, and Amy Greenstadt goes so far as to label the Clifford struggle for autonomy against their husbands as representing same-sex desire.⁸ What these years of litigation did generate in both Margaret and Anne was a very strong sense of family, self-worth, and female solidarity which Lanyer takes advantage of and displays in the locus amoenus at Cookham. The poet presents the estate as a place of exclusively female power, unfettered by the domestic sphere.

Lanyer had similarly experienced social advantage and struggled against the judicial system. Her father was Baptista Bassano, an Italian-Jewish musician from Venice

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⁴ Spence, ‘Margaret Clifford’.
⁶ Woods, p. 29.
⁸ Amy Greenstadt, ‘Aemilia Lanyer’s Pathetic Phallacy’, The Journal for Early Modern Cultural Studies, 8 (2008), 67 – 97. Although Greenstadt’s discussion of the homoeroticism in ‘The Description of Cookeham’ is not examined here, her comments on the reaction of nature to Clifford’s presence are useful to read in the context of this chapter.
employed at the court of Elizabeth I. Her father died in 1576 when Lanyer was just seven. When her mother died in 1587, she inherited goods and chattels from her, and a modest £100 from her late father. It is known that Lanyer lived for a time with Susan Bertie, dowager countess of Kent, during her formative years. The Countess’ husband was nephew to the formidable Bess of Hardwick, but there is no evidence to suggest that the young Lanyer ever met the Countess of Shrewsbury herself. Though the details of Lanyer’s education are obscure, her learning was directed by Susan’s mother, Catherine Bertie, dowager countess of Suffolk, who was an ardent Protestant and Humanist. Later, Lanyer became mistress to Henry Carey, Lord Hunsdon, the Lord Chamberlain of Queen Elizabeth I. Lanyer enjoyed luxurious gifts and fine treatment, but was married off to Alphonso Lanyer, a court musician, in 1592 when she became pregnant by Hunsdon at the age of twenty-three. When Lanyer’s husband had spent her modest inheritance, he joined an expedition to the Azores in 1597, and then a campaign in Ireland in 1599 in anticipation of financial remuneration. When Alphonso died in 1613, Lanyer set about recovering her husband’s hay- and straw-weighing patent in court, but the court was not to rule in her favour until 1637. Lanyer’s own disappointment with her husband and years of litigation gave her common ground on which to relate to the Clifford women.

Lanyer’s country house poem, ‘The Description of Cooke-ham’, is the last poem in her volume entitled Salve Deus Rex Judaeorum. Given that in ‘The Description of Cooke-ham’ Anne Clifford is engaged but not yet married to Richard Sackville, Third Earl of Dorset, the poem was probably written between 1609 and 1611 when she was around forty-two years old. The work was dedicated by Lanyer to Clifford as well as a number of powerful women and potential patrons, namely Lady Elizabeth Grace; Lady Lucy, Countess of Bedford; Lady Anne, Countess of Dorset; and Queen Anne herself.

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11 Hutson, ‘Emilia Lanier’.

12 Hutson, ‘Emilia Lanier’.

13 Gary Kuchar’s article ‘Aemilia Lanyer and the Virgin’s Swoon: Theology and Iconography in Salve Deus Rex Judaeorum’, English Literary Renaissance, 37 (2007), 47 - 73 makes for interesting reading on the subject of authority in Lanyer’s Salve Deus Judaeorum. Kuchar argues that, like Clifford, in ‘The Description of Cooke-ham’, the depiction of Mary in Salve Deus Judaeorum is an attempt to imagine authority not only as an ideal, but as an exemplum of real-life spiritual power.

14 Although outside the scope of this chapter, for a feminist critique of Lanyer’s approach to patronage see Barbara Kiefer Lewalski, ‘Re-Writing Patriarchy and Patronage: Margaret Clifford, Anne Clifford, and Aemilia Lanyer’, The Yearbook of English Studies, 21 (1991), 87 – 106.
No doubt this was an attempt to advertise her talents and gain favour and patronage. But it also underscores the universal subjects Lanyer used to appeal to each woman, and the fondness and intimacy with which she viewed her relationship with Clifford.¹⁵ Where all the other dedicatory pieces are written in verse, the dedication to Clifford is written in prose, serving as a kind of philosophical introduction to the main poem, much as Jonson’s prefatory epistle did in the printed Volpone in 1607.¹⁶

Lanyer gives all the usual deference to Clifford in her dedication, including the ‘perfect eyes of your understanding’,¹⁷ and also remarks on what the poem will provide for Clifford. Lanyer declares that ‘just as Saint Peter gave health to the body, so I deliver you the health of the soul’.¹⁸ The poet’s gift to her patron is a protection for the part of Clifford that Lanyer deems capable of immortality and communion with the Divine. Within the poetic estate of Cookham, Clifford’s soul is shielded and cultivated. Lanyer goes on to delineate the supreme authority of God in her dedications, already inherent in the importance she places on the wellbeing of the soul. He is the ‘Crowne and Crownor of all Kings’,¹⁹ and it is implicitly through faith in Him that Clifford can fortify her soul and her power. Kari Boyd McBride and John C. Ulreich detect submission to the supreme authority of God in both Lanyer’s and Milton’s work. In Book I of Paradise Regained ‘what concerns my knowledge God reveals’, thus no authority is needed except that of God.²⁰ Clifford is at one with the ‘Crowne and Crownor or all Kings’. For this reason, Lanyer ‘presents to her Lord Jesus himself’,²¹ an action full of ‘infinite value’.²² Within this spiritual gesture, Lanyer delivers:

the inestimable treasure of all elected soules, to bee perused at convenient times; as also, the mirror of your most worthy mind, which may remain in

¹⁵ The emphasis on relationships in Salve Deus Rex Judaeorum is also noted by Constance Furey, ‘The Self Undone: Individualism and Relationality in John Donne and Aemilia Lanyer’, Harvard Theological Review, 99 (2006), 469 – 486. She juxtaposes the inwardness of Donne’s poetry with the importance of relationships in Lanyer’s work, p. 471.
¹⁸ Lanyer, ‘To the Ladie Margaret, Countesse Dowager of Cumberland’, p. 17.
¹⁹ Lanyer, ‘To the Queenes Most Excellent Majestie’, Salve Deus Rex Judaeorum, 1611, pp. 1 – 6 (p. 2).
²¹ Lanyer, ‘To the Ladie Margaret, Countesse Dowager of Cumberland’, p. 17.
²² Lanyer, ‘To the Ladie Margaret, Countesse Dowager of Cumberland’, p. 17.
the world many years longer than your Honour, or my selfe can live, to be a light unto those that come after, desiring to tread in the narrow path of virtue, that leads the way to heaven.23

The preservation and cultivation of the soul, a reflection of her worthy mind, and an exploration of virtue are all promised to Clifford. The emphasis on immortality remains strong in the delineation of Lanyer’s volume as the ‘inestimable treasure of all elected soules, to bee perused at convenient times’. But it is also evident in the mention of ‘honour’, which is, by contrast, an ephemeral notion. ‘Honour’ is discussed with the same dismissive tone that Shakespeare employs in King Henry IV Pt 1:

What is honour? a word. What is in that word honour? what is that honour? air. A trim reckoning! Who hath it? he that died o’ Wednesday. Doth he feel it? no. Doth he hear it? no. ‘Tis insensible, then. Yea, to the dead. But will it not live with the living? no. Why? detraction will not suffer it. Therefore I’ll none of it. Honour is a mere scutcheon: and so ends my catechism.24

The idea of honour, to Lanyer and to Shakespeare, is ‘insensible’. It does not ‘live with the living’ nor abide with the dead. It is a ‘mere scutcheon’ to both deflect criticism and obscure true nature. To Lanyer, Clifford has no need of this. The poet holds up a mirror to Clifford’s ‘most worthy mind’ and her ‘virtue, that leads the way to heaven’ will light the way for others, and nurture her soul.

Lanyer reinforces her commitment to Clifford by beginning the volume with an introduction addressed to her patron and ending the volume with the country house poem, ‘The Description of Cooke-ham’. According to Susanne Woods, the poem is likely to predate Jonson’s ‘To Penshurst’, widely regarded as the first country house poem.25 Given the details of Anne Clifford’s marriage, ‘The Description of Cooke-ham’ was probably written between 1609 and 1611, and in Ian Donaldson’s view, ‘To

23 Lanyer, ‘To the Ladie Margaret, Countesse Dowager of Cumberland’, p. 18.
Penshurst’ was written in the summer of 1611. Considering Lanyer’s courtly background and Jonson’s occupation - as well as the musical court masques he wrote - it is arguable that they knew each other, though no conclusive proof of this exists. It is, however, pointless to speculate on whether they knew each other, or who wrote before whom, and more relevant to note that they both wrote at a similar time. Both Lanyer and Jonson create an ideal estate in poetry at a time when the idea of landholding and community were subject to destabilising forces. Just a few years before the writing of ‘The Description of Cooke-ham’ and ‘To Penshurst’, the Midland Revolt over enclosure had occurred, which culminated in a pitched battle between gentry and protestors. Between forty and fifty people were killed, and the protestors’ leaders hanged and quartered. Whilst there is no indication to suggest that either poet was directly involved, these contextual events speak of the anxiety associated with land and land ownership at the beginning of the seventeenth century. Evidently, both Lanyer and Jonson felt that constructing a poetic estate, firm in its community and expunged of violence, would gain them advantage in the form of profit and authority.

Just as Jonson did, Lanyer embodies her patron in the country house at the heart of the estate. Judging by the placement of the poem at the end of *Salve Deus Rex Judaeorum*, Lanyer seems to be ending both her volume and her time at Cookham in this wistful verse. The plaintive tone makes the leaving of such an ideal place a poignant act, particularly as the estate is burgeoning with virtue and grace. But nostalgia also has ameliorative properties:

Farewell, sweet Cookham, where I first obtained
Grace from that grace where perfect grace remained
And where the Muses gave their full consent
I should have power the virtuous to content,
Where princely place willed me to indite
The sacred story of the soul’s delight.

(lines 1 – 6)

Lanyer presents Clifford as a Godly woman, in keeping with the strong, Godly women present in *Salve Deus Rex Judaeorum*. Just as Pilate’s wife remedies Eve’s faults in striving to save Christ from the cross, Lanyer cultivates her patron’s soul and fills it with virtue and grace. Whilst it can be argued that the source of Clifford’s grace could be natural, human, or divine, there is the overwhelming sense that it has emanated from all three. Lanyer perceives that she first received natural grace from graceful Clifford at Cookham, where God’s ‘perfect grace remained’. Presumably the abundance of spirituality within the estate lies in contrast to the lack of Godliness beyond the bounds of Cookham. However, there are many possible readings of this line. For example, Patrick Cook also cites the use of ‘grace’ in ‘The Description of Cooke-ham’ as echoing Protestant religious lyric and, hence, Clifford’s piety. But to my mind the repetition of grace underpins the spiritual nature of the *locus amoenus*, and suggests that such a place endures in the modern world.

Lanyer uses the idea of grace to support her vision of the ideal place as she addresses her female patron. The poet’s handling of grace provides her with a strategy that pervades *Salve Deus Rex Judaeorum*: that Godliness overrides any debt to masculine authority, and lends women absolute power in their domain. In her address to the Queen, Lanyer asks ‘who can loose when the Almighty bindes?’. The flourishing grace at the estate certainly binds the community at Cookham, but it implicitly binds Lanyer to her patron too. It perhaps also suggests, somewhat ironically, that piety, not justice, connects the human and the divine at Cookham.

The poet spends much of her volume declaring her ‘unworthiness’ in a situation where deference and flattery were the norm. At Cookham, the ‘Muses give their full consent’ to her poetic creations and she attains ‘power the virtuous to content’. Presumably the ‘virtuous’ individuals she refers to are the ‘virtuous’ who inhabit this estate, namely Margaret and Anne Clifford. Nevertheless, she could also be referring to the ‘virtuous ladies’ named at the beginning of her volume in her note ‘To All Virtuous Ladies in General’. Though Clifford seems to be her surest bet, given the number of

28 Patrick Cook, ‘Aemilia Lanyer’s ‘Description of Cookham’ as Devotional Lyric’, *Discovering and (Re)Covering the Seventeenth Century Religious Lyric*, ed. by Eugene R. Cunnar and Jeffrey Johnson (Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 2001), pp. 104 – 118. Further to his discussion of the Protestant devotional lyric, Cook resists the parameters of the country house poem and instead focuses on areas he perceives as neglected by discussion of the country house genre, such as virtue, ownership, and community.


pages dedicated to her praise, Lanyer unmistakably casts her net of patronage wide in the hope of remuneration. Not only does Margaret Clifford stand as an immutable, dominating ‘princely palace’ at the centre of the estate, but she inspires and dominates the volume that Lanyer has written, the ‘sacred story of the soul’s delight’. Lanyer’s verses deliver spiritual wellbeing to her patron, just as the estate and her patron deliver poetic power to Lanyer.

Lanyer made her suit exclusively to female patrons, and with the inclusion of the Muses in ‘The Description of Cooke-ham’, Lanyer uses a poetic trope that both expresses her patron’s authority and evokes a sense of female community. Barbara Keifer Lewalski considers that this creation of female community was, in part, borne out of the female community at Queen Anne’s court. In this way, Lanyer uses the one thing she had in common with the Countess – her gender – to gain favour. For the purpose of asserting her vocation and establishing solidarity with Clifford, Lanyer constructs her female poetic inspiration in the form of the Muses. She summons them at the beginning of ‘The Description of Cooke-ham’ in the same way that Homer implores his Muse to:

Tell me, Muse, of the man versatile and resourceful, who wandered many a sea-mile after he ransacked Troy’s holy city.

Many the men whose towns he observed, whose minds he discovered, many the pains in his heart he suffered, traversing the seaway, fighting for his own life and a way back home for his comrades.

The ancient poet here asks for inspiration as he prepares to tell the story of Odysseus, just as the persona in ‘The Description of Cooke-ham’ asks for inspiration as she prepares to tell the story of Clifford. Like Homer’s persona, she fights for her ‘own life and a way back home’ for her ‘comrades’ in constructing this locus amoenus. Thus, the story of Cookham is one that is redeeming for both Lanyer and Clifford, performing a dual purpose. The invocation of the Muses by Lanyer and Homer give a status and


32 Lisa Schell goes further and discusses her ideas on an early modern feminist consciousness in “‘So Great a Difference Is There in Degree’: Aemilia Lanyer and the Aims of Feminist Criticism”, *Modern Language Quarterly*, 57 (1996), 23 – 35.


34 For further treatment of the concept of home in ‘The Description of Cooke-ham’, see Vassiliki Markidou, “‘This Last Farewell to Cooke-ham Here I Give’: The Politics of Home and Nonhome in Aemilia Lanyer’s ‘The Description of Cooke-ham’”, *Oxford Journals*, 60 (2011), 4 – 19.
importance to Clifford’s story and connects her to a revered lineage of poets, reinforcing her true poetic vocation. Though here the Muses are petitioned to aid the female poet, in the mid-seventeenth century the same entreaty would be used to the same end in John Denham’s ‘Coopers Hill’. At Cookham, they empower Lanyer’s persona to ‘content’ the ‘virtuous’ in the form of her noble patron. The persona is given ‘power’ by the Muses to pay tribute to a physical place, but this ‘power’ also provides the persona with the ability to construct a commentary on social relations and delineate the social order. Thus, Lanyer asserts a specifically female spirituality and community as the source of this classical, gendered poetic inspiration. The Muses’ ability to inspire and their role in literature reinforce the strong bonds of female community at Cookham, even if these bonds only exist in poetic terms.

Clifford is embodied in the house at the centre of Cookham, and her estate joins Lanyer in paying homage to her patron. The reaction of the plants in the garden to the mere presence of their mistress reflects harmony. All things live to honour and serve Clifford on the estate, hence the strong connection witnessed between the landscape surrounding the house and Clifford as she traverses it. The deference of the flora, fauna, and even the sun to Clifford’s authority bears some similarity to the scenes of gift-giving in Ben Jonson’s ‘To Penshurst’. At Penshurst, the tenants of the estate give gifts of fruit, nuts, cheese, and other foods grown from the estate to reinforce the bonds which exist between tenant, lord and lady. At Cookham, protective, giving, sycophantic nature is used to the same end: it is a means of reinforcing the bonds of community, hierarchy, and legitimising Clifford’s authority within the estate. In addition, Lanyer incorporates a courtly context into the existing spirituality of the scene, and the persona is spectator to acts of courtly deference played out by nature when interacting with its ruler. The virtue of her patron is defined through the protective, almost cloying, gestures of this servile, idealised landscape.

The walks put on their summer liveries,

And all things else did hold like similes:
The trees with leaves, with fruits, with flowers clad
Embraced each other, seeming to be glad,
Turning themselves to beauteous canopies
To shade the bright sun from your brighter eyes

(lines 21 – 26)

These embracing plants in their joyful but submissive ‘summer liveries’ depict a communal, lively relationship with each other and with Clifford. Lanyer’s metaphor reveals the collective nature of the estate, but it also reflects her lack of place within it. She establishes herself as the noble poet inspired by the ancients and her patron, yet Lanyer’s role is oddly removed from the action. The poet is bound to merely observe the trees which ‘embraced each other, seeming to be glad’, rather than take part. The protection that the encircling garden provides for her patron is to the exclusion of the poet. Though Lanyer’s persona conveys the servile imagery of the protective garden, she has no-one to ‘shade the bright sun’ from her ‘brighter eyes’. Instead, she stands by to report that the leafy world identifies its ruler in Clifford and creates her patron the head of a naturally ordered aristocratic estate. The trees strive to ‘shade the bright sun from Clifford’s ‘brighter eyes’ and ‘each plant, each flower, each tree/ Set forth their beauties then to welcome thee!’ as her patron moves through the spring landscape, generating fecundity as she moves.

In the significant expanse of protective shade generated for Clifford, there is the suggestion that outside the *locus amoenus* of Cookham, and in the post-lapsarian world, men and women are exposed to the discolouring effects of the sun. In an effort to delineate the totality of the Countess’s power over nature, Lanyer shows it is also the sun that needs to be shaded from Clifford’s ‘brighter eyes’:

Turning themselves to beauteous canopies
To shade the bright sun from your brighter eyes

(lines 25 – 26)

Perhaps the trees shade Clifford’s eyes from the ‘bright sun’, or perhaps the verdant garden protects the sun from the greater brilliance of her eyes. Both meanings are equally possible. John Donne’s ‘The Sun Rising’, a love poem, makes reference to the sun in a similarly powerful, reciprocal fashion to Lanyer. Both ‘The Description of
Cooke-ham’ and ‘The Sun Rising’ expound love and devotion using the image of the sun to examine the conceit. Donne’s persona rebukes the sun for waking him and his lover:

Thy beams, so reverend and strong
Why shouldst thou think?
I could eclipse and cloud them with a wink,
But that I would not lose her sight so long:
If her eyes have not blinded thine.\textsuperscript{38}

(lines 11 – 15)

The superior radiance of his beloved’s eyes has ‘blinded’ the sun, even though the sun’s beams are ‘reverend and strong’. The same trope is used in ‘The Description of Cooke-ham’ to show adoration and love for Clifford who blinds the sun with hyperbolic bright eyes. Whilst the sentiments in Donne’s work are more sensual, the greater radiance of Clifford’s eyes bears the same authoritative, and potentially destructive, powers of Donne’s lady. But there is no shade for Donne’s lady, where Clifford has a whole estate to ardently admire and protect her.\textsuperscript{39}

Not only does the protective nature of the landscape demonstrate the subservient, protective role of the \textit{locus amoenus}, but it forms nature at Cookham into a temperate, Hermetic setting.\textsuperscript{40} Though Casimire’s poems, which drew heavily from the Hermetic writers, were not published until 1625,\textsuperscript{41} Isaac Caaubon’s critique of the \textit{Corpus Hermeticum} was published in 1614.\textsuperscript{42} It is conceivable, then, that literary interest in the \textit{Hermetica} was present between 1609 and 1611, at the time of Lanyer’s writing of ‘The

\textsuperscript{39} Though my reading of Donne’s ‘The Sun Rising’ posits the strength of the lover’s eyes which have ‘blinded’ the sun, this poem is the subject of much comment by Donne scholars. They advance various readings of the poem, and the sun image specifically. For example, Phillip C. Kolin suggests that the sun is representative of economics and politics essential to the mercantile world and hence measure Donne’s wealth, in ‘Love’s Wealth in “The Sunne Rising”’, \textit{The South Central Bulletin}, 43 (1983), 112 – 114. Also see Anthony Parr, ‘John Donne: Travel Writer’, \textit{Huntington Library Quarterly}, 70 (2007), 61 – 85, who suggests that the sun metaphor illustrates the lovers’ ability to defy mutability, p. 80.
\textsuperscript{40} For further treatment of Hermeticism, see Frances A. Yates, \textit{Giordano Bruno and the Hermetic Tradition} (London: Routledge and Keegan, 1964).
\textsuperscript{41} \textit{The Odes of Casimire}, ed. by G. Hils (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1953). In the introduction of this volume, Maren-Sofie Røstvig states that a selection of Casimire’s verses were published in 1625 and 1628. She states that there is strong evidence of the influence of the Hermetic tradition in Casimire’s Ode II, 5 (‘E Rebus Humanis Excessus’), which paraphrases \textit{Libellus I}, sections 25 and 26 (p.1).
Description of Cooke-ham’. The Hermetic nature of the individual is composed of both matter and mind: the individual is both mortal and immortal at once. It is the mortal component which insists on the pursuit of worldly, inferior pleasures achieved through labour, and the immortal part which is revealed only when the trees encircle Clifford, ‘turning themselves to beauteous canopies’. In this way, Lanyer in her position of poet performs the only human labour in the garden and embodies mortality, whilst the Countess, free to contemplate the divine nature of God shaded by the Book of His Work, embodies immortality. This complimenting gesture by Lanyer also delivers to Clifford ‘the health of the soul’, which ‘leads the way to heaven’. Lanyer and Clifford counterbalance each other: they reflect mind and matter, mortality and immortality. It is through this harmonious balance of opposites that it is possible to know both contentment and God at Cookham.

Within this devoted landscape, Lanyer constructs Margaret Clifford as the authoritative, immutable ‘princely palace’ at the beginning of the poem. Likewise, Anne Clifford’s virtues are outlined in architectural terms. This comparison serves to reinforce the similar virtues of mother and daughter, but it also sketches the Clifford family lineage as bound to the estate:

…that sweet Lady sprung from Cliffords race,  
Of noble Bedfords blood fair stem of grace,  
To honourable Dorset now espoused,  
In whose fair breast true virtue then was housed –  
Oh what delight did my weak spirits find  
In those pure parts of her well framed mind.  
(lines 93 – 98)

Like her mother, Anne possesses a ‘well framed’ mind alongside Lanyer’s contrasting ‘weak spirits’. Anne’s extensive knowledge and intelligent conversation impressed Donne, who observed that ‘she knew well how to discourse of all things, from predestination to slea-silk’. She is ‘to honourable Dorset now espoused’ but Dorset has little impact on the scene. He is part of the reason that ‘Cliffords race, Of noble

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43 Lanyer, ‘To the Ladie Margaret, Countesse Dowager of Cumberland’, p. 17.
44 Lanyer, ‘To the Ladie Margaret, Countesse Dowager of Cumberland’, p. 18.
Bedfords blood’ will be perpetuated, and therein ends his influence. Ultimately, the marriage did not prove happy, but here in the *locus amoenus* Anne is hopeful and content. The idea of ‘grace’ is one that Anne has inherited from both her mother and the estate of Cookham. She is the ‘sweet Lady sprung from Cliffords race’, as if Clifford’s daughter has ‘sprung’ from a whole ‘race’ of Cliffords who populate the microcosm. This graceful similarity is natural and convenient, as Anne is the ‘stem’ of the family line. She has ‘sprung’ from ‘Cliffords race’ like Athena who leaped to life already an adult, sporting full armour.46 Equipped with her mother’s wisdom and strength, this ‘sweet lady’ is the future of Cookham.

Anne is embodied in architectural terms, as her virtues are ‘housed’ in her ‘fair breast’, though she is less stately than her mother’s ‘princely palace’ (line 5). Constance Furey argues that the poems contained within *Salve Deus Rex Judaeorum*, including ‘The Description of Cooke-ham’, are primarily about the celebration of place outside of more usual female roles in the domestic sphere.47 At Cookham, the embodiment of Margaret Clifford in a ‘princely palace’ and her daughter who is ‘housed’ in virtue demonstrates power over the estate in the same way it does for Thomas Fairfax in Andrew Marvell’s ‘Upon Appleton House’.48 This housing speaks of permanency, solidity, and control. Even though the architectural conceit is an important poetic tool for Lanyer, it is the garden that is of most significance. So happy are they in the estate that they have no need of interior scenes at all. The garden is where the women receive their verdant courtiers, and pray. The garden is where their power lies.

This emphasis on the land outside the house and Clifford’s connection to it may speak of the Countess’ anxieties about land ownership, engaged as she was in her own fight for Cookham. Concern over land ownership was not a worry unique to Clifford, however, but a wide-ranging concern at the beginning of the seventeenth century. At this time, trees were felled to make way for grazing pastures to enable the growth of the wool trade. The enclosure movement lead to the rise of a landlord more interested in capitalism than community. Villages in the way of arable land, or a good view, were simply dissolved.49 In fact, a few years later, the same anxieties about land, handled in a strikingly similar way, can be seen in Jonson’s 1616 play *The Devil is an Ass*. Those in

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48 See Chapter Six of this thesis for further explication of Fairfax’s embodiment in his country house and power over his estate.
possession of land are portrayed as having a precarious hold on their most significant asset. A Jonsonian character remarks:

We see those changes daily: the fair lands
That were the client’s, are the lawyer’s now;
And those rich manors there of Goodman Taylor’s
Had once more wood upon them, than the yard
By which they were measured out for the last purchase.\(^{50}\)

The instability of land ownership during this period is signaled by Jonson as there are litigious ‘changes daily’ in the ownership of land, seldom in favour of the original landholder. The ‘fair lands’ of the estate are treated as a commodity as they move from the possession of the client to the lawyer, but as in ‘The Description of Cooke-ham’ the transfer of land is also threatened by an intruder. After the Dissolution of the Monasteries, the rapid transference of land, property speculation by London business owners, enclosure, and sharp rises in tenant rents no doubted all impacted on contemporary concerns about land. According to Richard Henry Tawney, these concerns persisted until the end of the seventeenth century. It was the plunder of land which principally stirred the greed of the age, and agrarian grievances were a significant ground of social agitation.\(^{51}\) Only twenty-seven percent of land was common in 1600, no doubt making land ownership even more coveted.\(^{52}\) A poetry of place is favoured by Lanyer, precisely because land is a power now advantaging her patron, at least in poetic terms. It is Margaret Clifford who sustains the pre-lapsarian beauty and religious virtue of the estate, just as Penshurst manifests its care and virtue in its lord.\(^{53}\)

Lanyer further defines the \textit{locus amoenus} in ‘The Description of Cooke-ham’ by comparing it with the fallen paradise it becomes upon the Countess’ departure in the second half of the poem.\(^{54}\) The first half of ‘The Description of Cooke-ham’ is very

\(^{50}\) ‘The Devil is an Ass’, in \textit{The Devil is an Ass and Other Plays}, ed. by Michael Cordner, 1st edn (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), Act II Scene IV, lines 33 – 37, pp. 223 – 330.


much in keeping with classical and Christian depictions of earthly paradises. There are no seasons and it is perpetually spring. Agriculture, trade, and travel are unknown. There is also no decay at Cookham until Clifford leaves. The subsequent disintegration of the estate is depicted via the wintering of Clifford’s verdant admirers, in turn a reification of Lanyer’s pitiable mental condition. The decay of Eden imbues Lanyer’s persona with a nostalgia for the Godliness of her former locus amoenus. The same motif can be found in Marvell’s ‘Upon Appleton House’ written after the Civil War. The poem similarly contains a longing for Eden which is nostalgic rather than joyful:

    Oh thou, that dear and happy isle
    The garden of the world ere while,
      Thou paradise of four seas,
        Which heaven planted us to please,
          But to exclude the world, did guard
            With watery if not flaming sword;
              What luckless apple did we taste,
                To make us mortal, and thee waste?

      (lines 321 - 328)

This clearly post-lapsarian England has Fallen from a ‘happy isle’ after the taste of the ‘luckless apple’ made men mortal and laid the garden of England to ‘waste’. The ‘garden of the world’, this ‘paradise’, has fallen, just as it has at Cookham. The spiritual nature of the garden, which ‘heaven planted us to please/ But to exclude the world’ can no longer keep the degenerative, exterior world at bay. Decay and time are to take their place in the garden.

Where Marvell’s persona ponders the aftermath of the Civil War in his examination of the Fall, Lanyer’s persona considers her own fate after the Fall of her personal Eden. For the persona, Cookham was perfect and glorious when the Cliffords resided there. Though Eden is not presided over jointly by man and woman, the rule of this mother and daughter is seen to be just as important to the landscape. Their departure is, hyperbolically, presented as being as heart-wrenching as the departure of Adam and Eve. When Adam and Eve are expelled from Eden, God states that he will ‘greatly multiply thy sorrow’. But at Cookham, it is not Margaret and Anne Clifford who are

55 Genesis 3:16.
forlorn, but Lanyer and the landscape they have left behind. The gesture of their leaving demonstrates the totality of the Clifford’s control over their estate:

At their departure when they went away,  
How everything retained a sad dismay.  
Nay, long before, when once an inkling came,  
Methought each thing did unto a sorrow frame:  
The trees that were so glorious in our view  
Forsook both flowers and fruit, when once they knew  
Of your depart; their very leaves did wither,  
Changing their colours as they grew together.

(lines 128 – 136)

The change of the seasons from spring to autumn continues the pathetic fallacy as the garden responds to the withdrawal of the Cliffords. At the departure of the mother and daughter ‘everything retained a sad dismay’ once they had an ‘inking’ of the grave news to come. The fawning scene of verdant courtiers is replaced with a scene which ‘did unto a sorrow frame’. The leaves ‘change their colours’ in the autumnal setting. Where once the landscape was energetic and vibrant, movement is curtailed and drawn inwards. Instead of embracing each other to shield Clifford and create ‘beauteous canopies’ (line 25), they are seen ‘changing their colours as they grew together’. In life, these plants ‘embraced each other, seeming to be glad’ (line 24), but as they approach death, they knit their branches together for support in their final moment. Bare, interwoven branches occupy the scene that was once ‘so glorious in our view’, and the lushness of the trees which yield ‘flower and fruit’ are ‘forsook’. The ‘grief’ that Cookham ‘did conceive’ at the departure of the Countess is all-pervasive and final. Cookham without Clifford is an estate without divine love and grace, and therefore it is also without redemption. It seems that the locus amoenus of Cookham is fleeting, and is subject to the forces of ‘blind Fortune’ (line 126) now that natural grace is no longer present.

Finally, Lanyer is alone in the landscape and her grief joins with the sorrowful outpourings of the estate. The Cliffords’ departure from the garden precipitates the persona’s own expulsion, as she cannot linger at the estate without her patron. Thus, their withdrawal from Cookham evidently functions as a metaphor for the poet’s own lack of home and identity. The persona began ‘The Description of Cooke-ham’ with her
own loss, beginning with ‘farewell, sweet Cookham’, and now ends it with her own loss too. By framing the poem in such a way, the poet underpins the nostalgic qualities of the *locus amoenus*, but also underscores her peripheral place on the estate:

> Fair Philomela leaves her mournful ditty,  
> Drowned in dead sleep, yet can procure no pity.  
> Each arbour, bank, each seat, each stately tree  
> Looks bare and desolate for want of thee,  
> Turning green tresses into frosty grey,  
> While in cold grief they wither all away.  
> The sun grew weak; his beams no comfort gave,  
> While all green things did make the earth their grave.  
> Each briar, each bramble, when you went away,  
> Caught fast your clothes, thinking to make you stay.  
> Delightful Echo, wonted to reply  
> To our last words, did now for sorrow die.  

*(lines 189 – 200)*

The ‘pretty birds that wonted were to sing’ (line 185) now ‘neither sing, nor chirp, nor use their wing’ (line 186). They become silent and static like the plants who are now framed by sorrow (line 131). The birds and their tune changes to ‘warble forth sorrow, and their own dismay’ (line 188), but they are finally replaced by Philomela who is ‘drowned in dead sleep’ and so ‘leaves her mournful ditty’.\(^{56}\) To be ‘drowned in dead sleep’ underscores the totality and pathos of Philomela’s demise, particularly when she can ‘procure no pity’, as she is friendless in the landscape. Where sleep possesses regenerative capabilities, being ‘drowned in dead sleep’ dismisses its healing properties. It is an association with closer resemblance to death than renewal. By the end of the

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\(^{56}\) Philomela is a figure in Greek mythology who is frequently associated with the nightingale. The myth can be summarised as follows:

After travelling with King Tereus, he forces Philomela to a cabin and rapes her. After cutting her tongue out so that she has no voice with which to accuse him of his crime, Philomela weaves a tapestry telling of the rape, and sends it to Procne, her sister, and the wife of King Tereus. In revenge, Procne kills Philomela’s son by Tereus and serves him to Tereus, who unwittingly eats him. On discovering what they have done, Tereus tries to kill both women, and all three are turned into birds.

poem the persona, the nightingale, and Lanyer herself, lose their voices. The end of the poem at the end of her volume *Salve Deus Rex Judaeorum* means that Lanyer has no poetic voice left with which to procure patronage or profess love for the women she admires. Whilst an allusion to Philomela brings with it associations of rape, it is Philomena’s muteness and silence, and the violence with which that was rendered, which was probably more striking to Lanyer. Just as Philomela wove when she could not speak, Lanyer creates through her own sorrow and loss. The poet has no voice and no vocation without a patron to hear her work.

The persona states that ‘each arbour, bank, each seat, each stately tree’ now laments her loss at the end of the poem. The repetition of the line echoes Clifford’s benevolent, natural court earlier in the poem, when ‘swelling banks delivered all their pride’ (line 43) to her, and:

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Each arbour, bank, each seat, each stately tree,
Thought themselves honoured in supporting thee.
The pretty birds would oft come to attend thee,
Yet fly away for fear they should offend thee
(lines 45–48)
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The trees believed themselves ‘honoured’ in paying homage to their great ruler. However, Lanyer uses the word ‘honour’ here in the same way that she uses it in her introductory address to Clifford in *Salve Deus Rex Judaeorum*. ‘Honour’ in the introduction is fleeting. By contrast, it is Clifford’s ‘most worthy mind, which may remain in the world many years longer than your Honour, or my selfe can live, to be a light unto those that come after, desiring to tread in the narrow path of virtue, that leads the way to heaven’. 57 The ‘pretty birds’ who ‘would oft attend thee’ in her green court are replaced by increasingly mournful and silent birds, culminating in the ‘fair Philomela’ and her ‘mournful ditty’. Equally, ‘Each arbour, bank, each seat, each stately tree’, her former courtly theatre, is ‘bare and desolate’, turning ‘green tresses into frosty grey./ While in cold grief they wither all away’. Even amidst the wretchedness of the Fall, the sense of order extolled by the subservient plant life at Cookham is maintained, where ‘each briar, each bramble, when you went away/ Caught fast your clothes, thinking to make you stay’. The almost cloying sycophancy remains, even in grief.

The pathetic fallacy is extended to one final physical gesture, an anxious yearning for Clifford to remain at Cookham. Now, finally, the nymph Echo, who so loved her own voice, has her voice taken away too, and stands silent in the landscape. Along with the voiceless Philomela, the pathos associated with the death of Echo serves to emphasise the silence of such an empty estate which now did ‘for sorrow die’. Though Lanyer can capture this estate in its pre-lapsarian state, she cannot preserve the joys of Cookham. The elegiac tone of the poem was established in the opening lines of ‘Farewell, sweet Cookham’, now the beauties of the garden fade in despair. The autumnal imagery describing the plants and landscape as ‘bare and desolate for want’ ironically carries the only hope for renewal of the *locus amoenus*, as if Clifford may return the estate to its former Godliness and fecundity. Autumn will, hopefully, become spring again.

In the final lines of the poem, Lanyer returns to the notion of virtue, community, and the soul’s immortality. Just as Milton mourns the loss of his great friend Lycidas and the pastoral community which they shared, so Lanyer misses her great patron and friend, as well as the community she was borne out of:

This last farewell to Cookham here I give;
When I am dead, thy name in this may live
Wherein I have performed her noble hest
Whose virtues lodge in my unworthy breast
And ever shall, so long as life remains,
Tying my heart to her by those rich chains.

(lines 205 – 210)

Lanyer gives her plaintive ‘last farewell’ to Cookham, echoing the very first line of the poem of ‘farewell, sweet Cookham’ (line 1). But Lanyer successfully achieves Clifford’s immortality, and hence, ‘just as Saint Peter gave health to the body,’ so Lanyer delivers Clifford ‘the health of the soul’, virtuous and immortal. Though Lanyer’s poetic voice is lost, like Philomela’s and Echo’s, Clifford’s ‘name in this may live’ long after the poet has died. Lanyer’s quest for patronage subtly returns in the display of her poetic arts and her care for her patron’s soul. Lanyer shows herself as possessing the power and authority to immortalise her patron in poetry, and hence, the *locus amoenus* of Cookham. To accomplish this, Lanyer has made Clifford part of

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59 Lanyer, ‘To the Ladie Margaret, Countesse Dowager of Cumberland’, p. 17.
classical lineage reaching back to Arcadia. In her deferential role, the persona credits the creation of these lines as inspired by her patron, ‘wherein I have performed her noble hest’. The old deference returns with the persona’s yet ‘unworthy breast’ even though her patron’s ‘virtues’ also ‘lodge’ in her. This makes the connection between the two women both egalitarian and intimate whilst Lanyer protests their separation. The poet has professed her worthiness to remain with the Countess as an equal, giving her the gift of immortality, as her ‘name in this may live’ long after her death. The ‘rich chains’ that bind Lanyer to Clifford speak of the spiritual and intellectual richness of their relationship, and the estate itself. But it is also a sideways glance at the requirement of money and patronage for the poet.

Lanyer’s memory does not necessarily reconstruct relationships as they once were, so ultimately Cookham is a construction of idealised relationships. Lanyer examines her own situation as someone who is landless and classless; her ideal state of belonging is now confined to the past, in memory. Simon Schama argues that this relationship between landscape and memory is not confined to Jacobean literature. Rather, pastoral literature from classical times through to the present day envisages and preserves an attachment to landscape through memory.60 Lanyer has already claimed an attachment to classical lineage both for herself and her patron, and now she reveals that her relationship with Margaret Clifford was perhaps not entirely accurate, but depicted as she desired it to be. As the title ‘The Description of Cooke-ham’ suggests, her residence at Cookham, and hence her own sense of spirituality, vocation, and virtue, is now a thing of the past.

The estate of Cookham is a spiritual world lost, but recoverable through memory. Lanyer’s persona extols the virtues of her patron and delights in the connection of the human with the divine. The persona’s deferential nature and that of the landscape amplifies Clifford’s authority. The sycophantic garden protects and reveres Margaret Clifford at its centre and Falls when her grace is removed from the estate. In searching for Clifford’s own ideal community, away from the strain of litigation and philandering husbands, Lanyer returns to the question of patronage time and again. She seeks advantage and patronage from Clifford, yet never attains it. But if Lanyer delineates an ideal place for her patron, replete with a fawning nature which lends the Countess power, authority, and legitimacy, she also delimits one for herself. Lanyer’s poem is her

ideal place, now a memory, that she inhabited with Margaret Clifford and her daughter Anne. As she stands alone in the post-lapsarian garden, that memory can be perpetually re-experienced, though the *locus amoenus* has long since faded.
Chapter Two

Ben Jonson
‘To Penshurst’ 1611 and ‘Inviting a Friend to Supper’ 1616

When read in the context of Jonson’s biting, urban satires, ‘To Penshurst’\(^1\) appears something more modest and personal. The moral and ethical well-being that so concerned Jonson in his theatre of the 1590s is increasingly present in the quiet poetry of his middle years, and this 1611 work is a fine example. In ‘To Penshurst’ Jonson is concerned with self-government, friendship, and introspection, much as the Stoic philosophers were. Both this and his later poem, ‘Inviting a Friend to Supper’,\(^2\) delineate a small community of good people who stand detached from society, even in the face of changeable fortune. Whilst the satires that forged Jonson’s theatrical reputation deal with what is wrong in the world, the poet at Penshurst cultivates and enjoys what is right. Images of tradition and immutability define the idea of virtue which he urges friends to live by. The figures in ‘To Penshurst’ and ‘Inviting a Friend to Supper’ are secure in their community and know their proper place within it. Importantly, these geographical spaces are free from the noise and licentiousness of the London stage, as well as the problematic notion of ambition bound up with courtly life. Penshurst is a *locus amoenus*, a genuine moment of escape, almost an idyll, without the moral impoverishment of the real world. But this refuge is illusive and whilst the landscape of Penshurst is based on a real place, the poetic Penshurst exists only in Jonson’s mind. He must, inevitably, return to his urban life. Whilst he remains, though, Jonson can look out from his *locus amoenus* onto the rest of England and trace the moral inconsistencies he sees there.

Jonson wrote ‘To Penshurt’ as he approached middle age. On the face of it, England enjoyed relative political, religious, and economic stability early in the century, yet in ‘To Penshurst’ Jonson yearns for togetherness and community in a society that he perceives to be losing cohesion.\(^3\) He is an unlikely moral hero. Famed for his humble bricklaying roots, Jonson volunteered in the regiment of Francis Vere in early life to fight in the Low Countries. There, he is said to have killed a man in hand-to-hand

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combat and only a few years later, in 1598, he was imprisoned for killing an acquaintance in a duel. Jonson pleaded guilty and was lucky to escape the hangman’s noose by pleading benefit of clergy.\(^4\) In fact, according to Ian Donaldson, the playwright lived on the other side of the law his entire life.\(^5\) His first play, written with Thomas Dekker and called *The Isle of Dogs* (1597), is now lost but it was known to be a satire on the court, going so far as to critique the Queen herself.\(^6\) Whilst the co-author of the play, Thomas Nashe, fled his lodgings before Elizabeth’s men could seize him, Jonson and another actor from the play were arrested and probably subjected to torture under interrogation.\(^7\) No confession, nor script, was forthcoming from Jonson, though all the theatres in London were shut down for months after the playwright’s satiric attack. As common as the closure of theatres and interrogation of playwrights and actors was in the era, Jonson’s experience confirms that satire was a dangerous business. It also defines him as an improbable champion of virtue and friendship at Penshurst.

The raucous and licentious theatres of London seem an appropriate place for the literary but streetwise Jonson to display his immense talents. However, it later became the same world that Jonson sought to escape from. In 1598, the playwright’s first great literary success was the satire *Every Man in His Humour*\(^8\) quickly followed by *Every Man Out of His Humour*,\(^9\) written and performed in the same year. Jonson reveled in the War of the Theatres and went on to pen *Cynthia’s Revels* and *Poetaster* which satirised other playwrights in London. Unlike ‘To Penshurst’, the characters in these plays are more engaged in cultivating their own success than remedying the ills of England—a social function that Jonson believed playwrights, and particularly those writing satire, had a duty to perform. At the beginning of *Every Man Out of His Humour*, Asper perhaps reflects the governing attitude of the twenty-six year old Jonson when he asks:

\(^4\) Originally defendants would demonstrate their clerical status by reading a Bible verse, but this also enabled laymen to demonstrate their literacy and claim benefit of clergy during trial. In 1351 this loophole was legitimised in a statute and anyone who could read could claim benefit of clergy and appeal for a lighter sentence, which is what Jonson did at his own trial. For further information on benefit of clergy see J.H. Baker, *An Introduction to English Legal History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), pp. 513 – 515.


\(^7\) One of Jonson’s interrogators was Richard Topcliffe who was known to regularly torture his victims. Robert S. Mila, ‘Ben Jonson: Catholic Poet’, *Renaissance and Reformation*, 4 (2001), 101 – 115 (p. 101).


Who is so patient of this impious world,
That he can check his spirit or rein his tongue?
…not I!

(line 2 – 3, 11)

Jonson would soon learn to both ‘check his spirit’ and ‘rein his tongue’ on a quest to secure royal patronage. The medium of the theatre no doubt served to heighten Jonson’s ability to capture the spirit of the age and to position his plays near the religious, political, and social centres of England.

Money, satire, and the frenetic energy of the theatre which so attracted Jonson also drew the ire of London’s Lord Mayor, who stated that:

By no one thing is the politic state and government of this city so greatly annoyed and disquieted as by players and plays and the disorders which follow thereupon.10

Theatres were often located near brothels and drinking houses and shared their unseemly reputations. In fact, Jonathon Haynes suggests that the alehouses became crucial to the realism of Jonson’s plays.11 The sheer volume of people drawn to the theatre meant that thieves and prostitutes were frequently among the crowds there.12 Amongst the noise of all manner of transport and theatre-goers there was also concern that mere proximity to the unseemly elements of society might lead to even the most honorable members of society misbehaving.13 The risk of transferring plague when people were cheek-by-jowl was also a concern. From a spiritual point of view, plague was a contagion thought to be a Godly punishment for sin and also attributable to the theatre, making the playhouses to blame for the ills of the city.14 Within this unseemly place, Jonson sought to promulgate moral and political veracity as he saw it, and he condemned to an audience of thousands. Despite the fame that theatrical work and court privilege were to convey, Jonson evidently began to tire of the ambition that the stage

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11 Jonathon Haynes, ‘The Origins of Jonson’s Realism’ in The Social Relations of Jonson’s Theatre (Cambridge: University of Cambridge Press, 1992), pp. 13 – 33. Haynes suggests that the alehouse was an important cultural institution in the Early Modern period and was frequently the only social setting defined in morality plays.
13 Pollard, p. xii.
cultivated. Instead, the notions of friendship, self-government, and virtue became important subjects for him. The theatre was an unsavory place and natural Penshurst stood as its counterpoint.

On James I’s ascension to the throne in 1603, Jonson’s own career ambitions were realised by James’s royal patronage. Though the tradition of flattery which advanced him did not sit so easily with the playwright in later years, royal patronage eased Jonson’s financial dependence on the stage, as did commissions from other nobles such as Robert Sidney, William Cavendish, and Lucy Russell, Countess of Bedford. Whilst Jonson could not be described as autonomous, he was not wholly subservient to his patrons either. At a time when the playhouses represented one of the few venues for mass communication, theatre was one of the most effective ways to promulgate the ideology of both Jonson and James I. From the beginning of his reign, James I had sought to locate his rule within a Stuart vision for England and, though public approval was important, he did not have Elizabeth I’s need to engage with the people personally. Royal patronage was thus not only significant for Jonson’s ambitions and income, but the communicative power it bought was important to James’s reign. Michael McCanles proposes that Jonson’s literary accommodations of monarchy and the nobility are complex, but they allowed him to articulate the intersection of his social situation at court and his literary ambitions. Moreover, Hugh Craig suggests that Jonsonian masques made monstrosities of political opposition that James I was keen to suppress. How much space in Jonson’s plays was given over to the King is a matter for speculation only, given the distance between Jacobean cultural forces and ours. But, to know of Jonson’s desire to rise through the ranks of society is to concede that he would likely have capitalised on the opportunity to consolidate his relationship with the King in an age where flattery was the norm. Perhaps it is this submission to authority that made the autonomous locus amoenus seemingly so desirable to Jonson in the poetry of his middle years.

Ultimately, Jonson grew weary of London and the stage. In the prefatory epistle to Volpone published in 1607, he shows contempt for the theatre and prefigures the attitudes expounded in ‘To Penshurst’ and ‘Inviting a Friend to Supper’. Kirsty Milne

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argues that Jonson’s early seventeenth-century satires fashioned dissent in London by creating Puritan stereotypes and satirising powerful figures in authority. However, in his epistle, it is the lewd, profligate side to satire that Jonson cannot abide. Though Jonson’s epistle does refer briefly to Volpone, his ‘latest worke’, he only mentions his play briefly. Instead, the epistle presents a general commentary on the neglected state of poetry and the dissolute nature of the theatre. Jonson is uneasy with the ‘foule, and unwashed Baudry, as is now made the foode of the Scene’. The work of playwrights in London has now ‘growne a Trade with many’ who utter ‘their own virulent malice, under other simplest meanings’. They desire to ‘make themselves a name with the Multitude, or (to drawe their rude, and beastly clappes)’. Though Jonson censures his fellow playwrights and their malicious, uncouth plays, he does not absolve himself from blame. He concesses that ‘I dare not deny a great part of this’, presumably harbouring some guilt at his previous works and their perceived vulgarity.

Jonson presents an alternative to the theatres and desires to ‘pay the world a debt’ as recompense for his own part in breeding such contemptuous entertainment. He proposes to:

raise the dispis’d head of Poetry againe, & stripping her out of those rotten and base ragges, wherewith the Times have adulterated her forme, restore her to her primitive habite, feature, and majesty, and render her worthy to be imbraced, and kist, of all the great and Maister Spirits of our World.

Yet, this desire to restore poetry to ‘her primitive habite, feature, and majesty’ could equally speak of ‘To Penshurst’ and ‘Inviting a Friend to Supper’. He sets out to counsel England in the ‘manners of the Scene, the easinesse, the propriety, the innocence, and last the doctrine, which is the principall end of Poesy to informe men, in

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18 Kirsty Milne, ‘Reforming Bartholomew Fair, Bunyan, Jonson, and the Puritan Point of View’, Huntington Library Quarterly, 74 (2011), 289 – 308. Milne suggests that through the parallels between Jonson’s Bartholomew Fair and the Vanity Fair episode in The Pilgrim’s Progress we can better understand the way these plays fashioned dissent in London.
20 ‘The Epistle’, p. 2.
21 ‘The Epistle’, p. 2.
the best reason of living’. To teach men the ‘best reason of living’ now usurps Jonson’s theatrical ambition. Instead of plays, he undertakes to write poetry that reflects the ‘servants, the Riuals, yea and the maisters…to imitate justice, and instruct to life’, all of which feature in ‘To Penshurst’ and ‘Inviting a Friend to Supper’. But the task that he has set to benefit ‘the Multitude’ is also of benefit to Jonson himself, as it is impossible for any man to be ‘the good Poet, without first being a good Man’.

This spiritual, but non-denominational, ‘good man’ seeks to ‘preserve that part of reputation most tenderly, wherein the benefit of a Friend is also defended’. Thus, the good man and the good friend are not mutually exclusive; rather, one cannot be achieved without the other. The impetuousness of youth had given way to an altogether more reflective and philosophical Jonson, who sought to revive the poetry of the good man and create his own locus amoenus in the process.

Notwithstanding the sycophancy demanded of those at the royal court, the writing of masques perhaps satisfied Jonson’s profounder poetic instincts, and brought him closer to fulfilling the proper function of the poet as outlined in his epistle. But the masque played to a very small, elite audience, and whilst he could avoid the ‘foule, and unwashed Baudry’ in these intimate performances, he did not have the scope to inform the general populace as to the ‘best reason of living’. Masques were also notoriously expensive, perhaps adding to Jonson’s unease with the stage. Whilst making plans for the royal Christmas entertainment of 1605, James I was told that a masque would cost him £4000.

Further, despite this enormous cost, masques were generally created for a single performance. So ephemeral was the form that when the elaborate scenery was dismantled it was customary for members of the audience to take a piece of it home as a memento. However spectacular the masque would have been, the locus amoenus was fleeting, where Penshurst was enduring.

In 1611 Jonson finally left London for Penshurst and resided there for a period of several months. Robert Sidney and his wife, Barbara Gamage were the lord and lady of Penshurst. It is likely that Jonson met Sidney as early as 1603 at court where the

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27. ‘The Epistle’, p. 5.
31. ‘The Epistle’, p. 5.
33. Donaldson, p. 203.
34. Donaldson, p. 284.
business of masquing gave them a common interest. Sidney and his wife were an erudite couple with a large library, who shared a great enjoyment of poetry and love of musical performance. Jonson reveals close knowledge of the Sidney family and the workings of the estate in ‘To Penshurst’, but the estate also represents a retreat from the wearisome world. It is both a real place in the landscape and a literary creation. Within the estate, Jonson finds feudalism, tradition, and friendship the natural anodyne to the rest of noisome England.

The treatment of the manor at Penshurst is not intricate: it is a modest house at the centre of an estate which sustains the community of good people who reside there. Jonson portrays Penshurst as a reflection of Sidney’s own modesty and virtue, and he commends the beauty of the place by contrasting it with other, less natural, country houses:

Though art not, Penshurst, built to envious show,  
Of touch, or marble; nor canst boast a row  
Of polished pillars, or a roof of gold:  
Thou hast no lantern, whereof tales are told;  
Or stairs, or courts; but stand’st an ancient pile,  
And these grudged at, art reverenced the while.  
Thou joy’st in better marks, of soil, or air,  
Of wood or water: therein thou art fair.  
Thou hast thy walks for health, as well as sport:  
Thy Mount, to which the dryads do resort  
(lines 1 – 10)

From the poem’s opening lines, the house at Penshurst is located within a frame of modesty. It is not ‘built to envious show’, but to sustain those drawn to the centre of their community. The advantage of Penshurst lies in its organic formation: it has grown up around the medieval great hall and continues to observe ancient rituals of hospitality. Built in 1341 for a London merchant and granted to the Sidneys by King Edward VI in 1552, the great hall later had apartments constructed around it to suit the needs and style of the family in possession of the estate. There is no evidence to suggest

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35 Donaldson, p. 284.  
36 Andrew Hadfield detects the influence of Philip Sidney in these opening lines, in ‘Ben Jonson and Philip Sidney’, Notes and Queries, 56 (2009), 85 – 86.
the Sidney family had a consistent architectural vision. The medieval great hall was surrounded by an interplay of apartments and mis-matched facades constructed by local masons, rather than architects.\(^{37}\) The modesty represented by this lack of conscious architectural aesthetic also manifests the character of Sidney himself, portrayed by Jonson as the self-effacing country gentleman, much as Thomas Fairfax was in Marvell’s ‘Upon Appleton House’.\(^{38}\) Like Fairfax’s estate, Sidney is at the centre of his domain providing nourishment and a spiritual, ‘reverenced’ calm. The connections of the house to ‘ancient’ traditions and nature turn the modesty of it into something enviable in the face of the ‘marble’ and ‘polished pillars’ of more ostentatious abodes. There is no ‘roof of gold’ at Penshurst, nor ‘courts’ in the sense of an enclosed space in greater houses. This lack of flamboyance and symmetry sits well with Jonson. The estate has its own natural ‘art’ which shuns contrived forms in favour of the natural. The Sidneys also revere the land around the manor for its ‘better marks, of soil, or air’, and make much of its usefulness in pursuing ‘walks for health, as well as sport’. Thus, the ‘ancient pile’ guards the wellbeing of those who dwell there. The estate even harbours the ‘Mount, to which the dryads do resort,’ making Penshurst self-sufficient in classical inspiration. The Sidneys are autonomous on their estate, and dwell in a place which benefits the bodily and spiritual health of those who reside at Penshurst.

The natural setting of Penshurst marries neatly with Stoic philosophy. Seneca was the most influential of Stoic philosophers, particularly in seventeenth-century England, and we can be certain that Jonson had read his work, either in the original or translated editions that were wide-spread at the time. Seneca’s tragedies, along with Jonson’s own marginal notes, can be be found in his personal copy of *Martini Antonii Delrii ex Societate Jesu Syntagma Tragoediae Latinae*.\(^{39}\) Jonson’s debt to the Stoic philosophers has been well documented by scholars.\(^{40}\) It was through Seneca’s writings that the basic

principles of Stoicism were communicated from classical thinkers to those working in the Renaissance, and Jonson’s poem demonstrates his familiarity with them. The emphasis on the natural world is one aspect of the estate that links directly to the Stoics: where a life of virtue can be attained by any man who follows nature. The governing idea of Stoic philosophy is that man should learn to live well. To achieve this, each man should be governed by his natural reason and a life of virtue. Embodied in the country house and its lack of ‘envious show’, Sidney exists in the natural estate and actively safeguards those that lie therein. He is natural reason and the life of virtue at the heart of the estate. The reward of his virtue is not financial, given the modest proportions of Penshurst; instead, in Stoic philosophy remuneration is received in the form of the wise man’s state of mind. Providence gives riches and health to the vicious man and poverty and suffering to the virtuous man, as fortune and misfortune are neither good nor evil. But the Stoic individual receives a higher benefit than others in his mental state. The Stoic principles of immutability and self-governance are also on display in the manor and its surrounds. The small community of good people who reside at Penshurst stand detached from greater society, making them more able to endure changing fortune. Jonson implicitly urges others to live by the natural and reasonable example of Penshurst, detached from the external world.41

For Jonson, Penshurst is a feudalistic landscape. The workers and servants of the estate naturally gravitate towards the Sidneys and the manor house, offering gifts of thanks. This image of ritual bears shades of the Harvest Home festival depicted in Robert Herrick’s ‘The Hock-Cart’.42 But where the workers in Herrick’s poem bring in the last of the harvest and present it to their lord as a ritual offering, the workers here arrive with a ceremonious offering already prepared for the table. The food is no less ritualistic, but the means of its harvest and assembly is obscured for their lord and lady. Aside from the attitude of deference manifested in the giving of food, the scene is
remarkably egalitarian. The estate is accessible to people of varying statuses, and the tenants gravitate towards their rightful place beside the Sidneys:

But all come in, the farmer and the clown
And no one empty-handed – to salute
Thy lord and Lady, though they have no suit.
Some bring a capon, some a rural cake,
Some nuts, some apples, some that think they can make
The better cheeses…

(lines 48 – 53)

The phrase ‘all come in’ demonstrates that this is a meeting place for the community, irrespective of status. The ‘farmer and the clown’ are equally welcome. Yet, no-one comes in empty handed, and the declaration that they ‘have no suit’ suggests that they pay homage to their lord and lady in a manner that perhaps parodies the sycophancy and gift-giving at the Royal court. Lavish diplomatic and merchant gifts given at court were customarily an attempt to win favour and expand trade, sometimes by corrupt means.\footnote{Linda Levy Peck, \textit{Consuming Splendor: Society and Culture in Seventeenth Century England} (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), p. 18.} This practice was not merely restricted to the court: many Englishmen used luxury gift-giving as a means of honouring relationships between client and patron, master and servant, and good neighbours.\footnote{Peck, p. 18.} Jonson’s conception of how these relationships should ideally be strengthened, as outlined in the epistle of \textit{Volpone}, is just as it appears in ‘To Penshurst’. He fashions a picture of ‘servants, the Riuals, yea and the maisters…to imitate justice, and instruct to life’.\footnote{‘The Epistle’, p. 5.} The capon, ‘rural cake’, nuts, apples, and ‘better cheeses’ are simple fare and reflect the ancient bonds of ritual between tenant and master in the \textit{locus amoenus}. Jonson creates a model of good living. This act of offering food also consolidates the place of Penshurst as an autonomous, self-provisioning, economic entity and takes the place of the rents that would have been paid by tenants on an estate such as Penshurst. It also circumvents the unpleasant reality that estates with this feudalistic social order require remuneration from those with the least means. In Sidney’s feudalist estate, the monetary system does not exist, yet worker and lord exist in harmony.
Jonson’s play *Epicene*, written in 1610 similarly depicts a character striving to dwell in an ideal place. Characters naturally move towards the *locus amoenus* as they do at Penshurst, but instead of offerings of cakes and fruit, they arrive empty-handed and are the means of disrupting the *locus amoenus*. The central character, Morose, is a man who abhors the din of London and seeks a quiet life. But in place of a natural setting, with ‘better marks, of soil, or air./ Of wood or water’, he lives within a ‘room with double walls and treble ceilings, the windows shut and caulked; and there he lives by candlelight’ (Act I Sc I lines 146 – 148). He bars the outside world with elements appropriated from the natural world seen at Penshurst. Timber creates his ‘double walls and treble ceilings’ and the earth creates the glass of the windows. In his unsuccessful attempt to create his own seclusion, Morose inadvertently encases himself in artificiality rather than the natural. All of his efforts to restrain the exterior world come to naught, and the *locus amoenus* is inverted. Morose hates noise, but lives on a busy street. He avoids conversation, yet his barber and his wife chatter incessantly. His wife furthers the inversion when she reveals herself to be a boy in disguise, with the rebuke of ‘Now you may go in and rest, be as private as you will, sir,/ I’ll not trouble you’ (Act V Sc IV lines 174 – 175), leaving him to his solitude. Instead of keeping noise and immorality at bay, Morose unwittingly invites it. His community is the opposite of what it should be because the foundation of his *locus amoenus* – the house and landscape – was ill-conceived. As a result of this, he lives without community, and without an ideal place.

Like the character Morose, and Jonson’s fellow poet Aemilia Lanyer, Jonson may have felt on the fringes of community more often than at its centre. Although Jonson clearly worked industriously in a literary sense to ensure his acceptance by James I on his accession, his vain, argumentative, and hard-drinking ways, along with his criminal convictions and secret Catholicism were not a ready-made fit for the Stuart court. However, they would not prove a barrier to his employment at court. Though Jonson was embraced by this community, his recruitment was strategic because he could promulgate the policies of the new Stuart monarch. Jonson’s conversion to Catholicism in 1598 was a very risky undertaking at a time when there was still great suspicion of Catholic plots at court. When James I ascended the throne, Jonson felt some optimism

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for his own career and possibly for Catholicism too. In *The King’s Entertainment* written for the coronation of James I, Jonson hopes that:

No more shall rich men, for their little good,  
Suspect to me made guilty, or vile spies  
Enjoy the lust of their so murdering eyes;  
Men shall put off their iron minds and hearts,  
The time forget his old malicious arts  
With this new minute, and no print remain  
Of what was thought the former age’s stain.

(lines 497 – 503)

He hopes that the ‘vile spies’ and ‘murdering eyes’ of Elizabeth’s reign will be forgotten, ‘and no print remain’ of her repressive, and anti-Catholic, legacy. Instead, the ‘best of kings’ will put off the ‘old malicious arts’ and unite the country through shared culture. But perhaps Jonson, like so many English Catholics, was thwarted in his hope for a more tolerant government. A few years into his reign, James I was famously to utter ‘Na, na, gud faith, we’s not need the Papists now’, before re-instituting harsher punishments for Catholics. Jonson initially persevered with the Catholic faith, but returned to Anglicanism in 1610 after living on the fringes of three communities: Catholicism, Anglicanism, and the court. Though Jonson is enfolded to the heart of the communities in ‘To Penshurst’ and ‘Inviting a Friend to Supper’, he is curiously non-denominational in his approach to religion, just as his fellow poets Lanyer and Mildmay Fane were in their poetry. Whilst Fane’s Presbyterianism did not require secrecy, Jonson and Lanyer’s Catholic sympathies represented a far more dangerous ideology that benefited from obscurity. His efforts to live within the Catholic community and the courtly community were evidently neither spiritually nor morally fulfilling for Jonson. By contrast, he is embraced to the heart of the community at Penshurst.

The humble and heartfelt gift giving at Penshurst from lines forty-eight to fifty-three of the poem belie a harder reality for Jonson, but also for Sidney. Sidney’s income was

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47 Jonson, Epigram IV, ‘To King James’, p. 36.
48 Donaldson, p. 196.
50 See Chapter Three of this thesis for further examination of Fane’s attitudes to religion.
reduced in 1612 because of spiraling inflation. The amount he received from rents in that year was less than he had received in previous years, and many of his fellow landowners were likewise affected.\textsuperscript{51} Jonson’s poem may have appeared as both consolation and reassurance for Sidney, and in part legitimises the reason for the flattery of such a landowner and the overblown praise of his estate. Thus the cake, meat, and fruits presented may not only symbolise the rent that tenants pay, but it may suggest the family’s ability to live off the land and remain autonomous, even if their income is threatened. It was not unusual for a Jacobean lord to be in debt and even Fane, with his stupendous wealth, found himself in debt more than once.\textsuperscript{52} Sale of land could be temptation or necessity. Jonson discourages his master from treading this common path to pay his debts, and instead outlines the many benefits of the land he controls, strengthening the self-governance at play in the estate.

Both the financial constraints that Sidney faces as a result of changing economic circumstances, and Lady Sidney’s role as the mistress of the house, are obscured when the creatures of the estate sacrifice themselves for the table. There is no need for scenes of hunting or slaughter, as these animals know intuitively that their death is for the good of the Sidneys’ realm. As a result, the banks simply ‘yield thee conies’ (line 25) to ‘crowne thy open table’ (line 27). Though these animals are instinctively produced for the estate, these offerings do not automatically find their way to the table. It is ‘Sidney’s copse’ (line 26) that furnishes the hall with produce, bringing Barbara Gamage, Sidney’s wife, and her impressive domestic skills to the fore. Just as the embodiment of Sidney is to be found in the country house, his wife is ‘thy copse, too, named of Gamage, though hast there,/ That never fails to serve thee seasoned deer…’(lines 19 – 20). She is just as integral to the structure of the estate as her husband. Without Gamage to cultivate and organise food, there would be no journey from copse to table. Under her guidance, nature demonstrates its willingness to unite with man, even as supper:

The purpled pheasant with the speckled side.
The painted partridge lies in every field
And for thy mess, is willing to be killed.
And if the high swollen Medway fail thy dish
Thou hast thy ponds that pay thee tribute fish:

\textsuperscript{51} Riggs, p. 184.
\textsuperscript{52} The Poetry of Mildmay Fane, Second Earl of Westmorland, ed. by Tom Cain (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2001), p. 21.
Fat, aged carps that run into thy net
And pikes, now weary their own kind to eat,
As loath the second draught or cast to stay,
Officiously, at first, themselves betray;
Bright eels that emulate them and leap on land
Before the fisher or into his hand…

(lines 29 – 38)

The ‘purpled pheasant’ could equally signify the wound incurred at death or the colour of royalty. King James himself ‘when hunting late, this way./ With his brave son, the Prince…saw thy fires’ (lines 76 – 77) of Penshurst, though there is no proof that he ever stayed there. Ambition is expunged from the landscape, but clearly royal connections are still faintly to be desired. These connections enhance the reputation of the estate despite its modest proportions. In fact, the ‘purpled pheasant’ is so royal a dish that its colour inherently offers solidarity with the King. In light of such royal associations, the other animals of the estate happily sacrifice themselves to sustain the Sidneys’ domain. The ‘painted partridge’ that ‘lies’ is ‘willing to be killed’, the pikes have no need to wait for a second cast of the line and ‘officiously at first, themselves betray’, whilst the eels ‘leap on land’, needing no line or net at all. The carps do not need to be hooked by a fisherman, they simply ‘run into thy net’. These animals are not slaughtered but made willing sacrifices on such an important and well managed estate. Hardman even suggests that the willingness inherent in the self-sacrifice of the fish imbues the poem with a playful tone.53 The creatures on the estate realise that they exist solely to serve the Sidneys, and their devotion makes them eager to give their lives for the sustenance of the estate.

The bonds of obligation within this estate describe a means of achieving communal stability throughout the rest of England. However, though the scene of gift-giving is remarkably egalitarian and the self-sacrifice of the animals is described as a noble act, the waiter at the Sidneys’ table does not enjoy similar favour. Instead, he delineates a juxtaposition of the real and ideal, in that he is able to eat his fill, but distant from those of higher social standing:

That is his Lordship’s, shall be also mine.
And I not fain to sit (as some, this day,

At great men’s tables) and yet dine away.  
Here no man tells my cups; nor, standing by, 
A waiter does my gluttony envy:  
But gives me what I call and lets me eat.  
He knows, below, he shall find plenty of meat.  

(lines 64 – 70)

Whilst Jonson is treated as an equal, the servant who attends Jonson and Sidney must eat ‘below’, away from the table where Jonson’s persona dines with the Penshurst community. Ironically, within this class division, each figure adhering to their place in the hierarchy imbues the estate with strength. Jonson prefigures the Hobbesian ideal of order and stability engendering a common social good:

The only way to erect such a common power, as may be able to defend them from the invasion of foreigners, and the injuries of one another, and thereby to secure them in such sort as that by their own industry and by the fruits of the earth they may nourish themselves and live contentedly, is to confer all their power and strength upon one man, or upon one assembly of men, that may reduce all their wills, by plurality of voices, unto one will… And in him consisteth the essence of the Commonwealth; which, to define it, is: one person, of whose acts a great multitude, by mutual covenants one with another, have made themselves every one the author, to the end he may use the strength and means of them all as he shall think expedient for their peace and common defence.\(^54\)

In order to live secure lives and ‘live contentedly’, Hobbes contends that the members of a Commonwealth need to ‘confer all their power and strength upon one man’. It is only in this ‘common power’ that the community will be able to defend themselves from ‘invasion of foreigners, and the injuries of one another’. Each observes their own patterns of behavior accordingly, to secure them in ‘their own industry and by the fruits of the earth they may nourish themselves’. The same demonstration of communal power through rank is on display at Penshurst. First, the generosity of the Sidneys is apparent in the fact that even the lowly servant who attends them has ‘plenty of meat’, even

though he does not partake in their repast. Second, Jonson argues that when the estate is knitted together with bonds of responsibility and place, social stability is assured.\textsuperscript{55} Moreover, it is the emphasis on community, invitation, and the manner in which the pastoral realm is formed that is similarly pertinent to relations at the table.\textsuperscript{56}

The act of sharing food becomes a means to define social position and organise community. The servant assumes his rightful place and dines away from the general scene, yet invitations are extended to those who pass through the pastoral world like Jonson and the tenants who bear gifts. The poet is invited to dine at Penshurst, and the invitation empowers both men, making them good men.\textsuperscript{57} Sidney is the generous and hospitable lord of the manor who allows Jonson access to this idyllic \textit{locus amoenus}. In turn, Jonson can retreat from the world and enjoy a meal with his friend where he is enclosed in a tranquil, natural space. There is little distance between the two. It is ironically through both remoteness and intimacy that social stability on the estate is ensured. Though the servant will ‘dine away’, detached from his social betters, Jonson’s persona is able to enjoy more egalitarian treatment.

The passage also witnesses Sidney’s own courtesy towards Jonson at his table. Jonson and any other ‘guest’ are able to partake in the same meat, bread and wine as their lord. There is relief in this good fortune where the poet can eat his ‘lord’s own meat’ without ‘fear’. Many landowners like the Sidneys who rose during the Elizabethan and early Stuart period were keen to adopt the traditions of the older familial orders with whom they were often allied through marriage. In contrast, the line ‘Some of the great men’s tables’ is an allusion to different estates where it seems Jonson was not treated as well. Though no specific details are given in the poem, Donaldson notes that it was a common habit to serve different food according to status at country

\textsuperscript{55} Anne Brumley, ‘Two Menus: Carnival in Ben Jonson’s Poetry’, \textit{Exemplaria}, 22 (2010), 223 – 239. Brumley asserts that Jonson makes ambiguous the terms of servants and lord in ‘To Penshurst’, rather than prefiguring a Hobbesian view of the social order. She further states that this blurring of the role of servant and lord is borne out of the lack of names used in ‘To Penshurst’ p. 226.

\textsuperscript{56} Kimberly Huth, ‘Come Live With Me and Feed My Sheep: Invitation, Ownership, and Belonging in Early Modern Pastoral Literature,’ \textit{Studies in Philology}, 108 (2011), 44 – 70. Huth only mentions Jonson briefly, but her examination of other examples of pastoral invitation from the Early Modern period is a great compliment to the study of Jonson’s pastoral poetry. See also Robert Cummings, ‘Liberty and History in Jonson’s Invitation to Supper’, \textit{Studies in English Literature, 1500 – 1900}, 40 (2000), 103 – 122. Though Cummings examines the idea of invitation in ‘Inviting a Friend to Supper’, the discussion is useful to read in the context of ‘To Penshurst’.

\textsuperscript{57} Jeffrey Hart also discusses the notion of good men and good society in ‘Ben Jonson’s Good Society’, \textit{Modern Age}, 7 (1962/1963), 61- 68. However, Hart’s discussion centres on the classical nature of the landscape as the predominant source of their goodness.
houses in the seventeenth century. Yet in Jonson’s case, he is able to ‘call’ for whatever he would like to eat and the servant dutifully obeys.

In ‘Inviting a Friend to Supper’, written four years after ‘To Penshurst’ in 1616, Jonson appropriates Sidney’s role at dinner and invites his own friends to dine with him at his own modest table. The self-deprecation evident in much of the poem both satirises and illustrates Jonson’s humble fare and unpretentious surrounds. When juxtaposed with modest Penshurst, Jonson’s house is found to be even more basic, but no less convivial:

Tonight, grave sir, both my poor house, and I
Do equally desire your company:
Not that we think us worthy such a guest,
But that your worth will dignify our feast,
With those that come; whose grace may make that seem
Something, which, else, could hope for no esteem.

(line 1–6)

The social span between guests and their lord is small at Penshurst. In ‘Inviting a Friend to Supper’, the social span between friends is even less obtrusive, even though the persona is ‘poor’. In keeping with Stoic principles, Jonson has learnt to live well. His ‘grave’ friend, in the sense that he is important and respected, ‘will dignify our feast’. Jonson displays deference to his guest not through gift-giving, but by his own professed lack of social standing. It is both his ‘poor house, and I’ that require his friend’s ‘worthy’ company. Whilst much is made of Sidney’s sharing of meat with others at the table, Jonson’s act of sharing with friends is so intrinsic to the scene that it hardly needs a direct allusion from him. The sycophancy that evidently displeased Jonson at court and in the theatre becomes more palatable in the context of friendship. Though the persona is unworthy of ‘such a guest’ at his table, in the context of his humble surrounds this statement appears sincere. He has little to offer, yet his friend’s inherent ‘grace’ will ‘make that seem/ Something, which else, could hope for no esteem’. Jonson now merely requires the hand of friendship and a simple meal to feel in charge of his

58 Donaldson, p. 290.
domain. Thus, he is at liberty to mold his poem ‘to instruct to life’ and depict the value of friendship. In the honesty of his description of his house to his friend, he reinforces his right to do so. To this end, the poem is not only a definition of a simple meal, but of a friend. Like Sidney, it is the act of nourishing others that confers authority on the persona.

There is much trustworthiness in the description of the feast in ‘Inviting a Friend to Supper’. Jonson’s table bears more similarity to the celebratory, humble meal enjoyed in ‘The Hock-Cart’, with its ‘fat beef’, ‘stoute beer’, ‘mutton, veal/ And bacon’ than it does to the ‘painted partridge’ and royal ‘purpled pheasant’ at Penshurst. Notably, the food that Jonson secures for his meal is not divided along lines of luxury. Instead, he gives the impression that his meal is either an ad hoc, last minute affair, or that laziness prevents him from securing a more lavish feast. The plenty seen at Penshurst is now distant:

Yet shall you have, to rectify your palate,
An olive, capers, or some better salad
Ushering the mutton; with a short-legged hen,
If we can get her, full of eggs, and then,
Lemons, and wine for sauce: to these, a coney
Is not to be despaired of, for our money;
And, though fowl, now, be scarce, yet there are clerks,
The sky not falling, think we may have larks.
I’ll tell you of more, and lie, so you will come:
Of partridge, pheasant, woodcock, of which some
May yet be there; and godwit, if we can:
Knot, rail, and ruff too.

(lines 9 – 20)

The humour in the scene lies in the fact that it is not only luxurious meats that Jonson cannot procure, but more every day meats too. Though his friend will have ‘An olive, capers, or some better salad/ Ushering the mutton’, it is one of the few parts of the meal which is assured. The single olive with its Italian origins and the humble, English

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61 ‘The Epistle’, p. 5.
62 See Herrick’s ‘The Hock-Cart’, lines 29 – 38 for these specific descriptions of food and a more general description of the scene.
mutton sit side by side on the table. The poet declares that they will have a ‘short-legged hen./ If we can get her’ but ‘Lemons’ ‘coney’ and the more exotic ‘wine for sauce’ seem readily available at his house, probably because they are already in the pantry. The feast on offer at Jonson’s table is simpler than that of Sidney, but the goodness of Jonson’s table is lauded. The lack of lavishness seen at Penshurst and the lines of lively, comic descriptions of the food, not only makes the scene more ideal, but mimics the conviviality and jocular conversation that might be heard around Jonson’s table.63

But it is not long before the uncertainty begins again, and ‘though, fowl, now, be scarce, yet there are clerks’. The ‘clerks’, or scholars,64 that surround Jonson’s table are the counter to the scarcity, or lack, of fowl. The want of particular foods is unimportant when such men grace his company. Since the vault of heaven is ‘not falling’, Jonson surmises that ‘we may have larks’. Though the sense of the sky falling probably retains its modern, cataclysmic meaning, the ‘larks’ that may be had refer to the tremendous height the bird achieves despite its low nest,65 as well as the ‘larks’ that may constitute part of the meal. The scholarly heights that may be realised with such friends makes up for any want. Jonson then drolly does away with the idea of balancing his lack of an impressive meal with scholarly conversation, and decides to ‘lie, so you will come: Of partridge, pheasant, woodcock, of which some/ May yet be there’. These birds, one of which conferred status on Penshurst, are not even to be hoped for at Jonson’s house. This honesty between friends promotes trust and bonhomie, even though the table is rather bare. Though Jonson was a famous gourmand,66 there is restraint and balance in the dishes offered at Jonson’s house. His feast is a model of friendship and virtue, rather than a manner of eating. The focus on the food that they have and do not have nudges the real world out of the scene, rendering Jonson’s locus amoenus eminently stable.

The nostalgia for feudalism that Penshurst embodies echoes Chaucer’s idea of hospitality and friendship. Jonson owned a copy of Chaucer’s The Canterbury Tales,67 and whilst Jonson’s plain style has no debt to the florid style of Chaucer, the description of the Franklin in the ‘General Prologue’ bears striking similarity to the scene set in ‘Inviting a Friend to Supper’. Neither the Franklin, nor Jonson’s persona, are compelled

by a sense of duty or order. Instead, both men revel in the easy friendship they have with their guests:

Our Host gave us great welcome; everyone
Was given a place and supper was begun.
He served the finest victuals you could think,
The wine was strong and we were glad to drink.
A very striking man our Host withal,
And fit to be a marshal in a hall.
His eyes were bright, his girth a little wide;
There is no finer burgess in Cheapside.
Bold in his speech, yet wise and full of tact,
There was no manly attribute he lacked,
What’s more he was a merry-hearted man.
After our meal he jokingly began
To talk of sport, and among other things
After we’d settled up our reckonings,
He said follows: ‘Truly, gentlemen,
You’re very welcome and I can’t think when
-AUpon my word I’m telling you no lie –
I’ve seen a gathering here that looked so spry.68

The dual notions of the good host and good friends are consistent between Chaucer and Jonson. Chaucer does not dwell on the status of his host, but instead describes him as a ‘merry-hearted man’ who is ‘bold in his speech’. Everyone is ‘given a place’ using the same care with which Jonson creates a genial atmosphere for his friends. Although the Franklin differs from Jonson in serving ‘the finest victuals’, Jonson’s persona places the same emphasis on the conviviality of after dinner conversation, where Chaucer’s host ‘jokingly began/ To talk of sport, and among other things’. In ‘Inviting a Friend to Supper’ the after dinner space is as important as the meal. It is where easy friendships, good humour, and constancy within a locus amoenus are assured. The ‘General Prologue’ features a similar emphasis on speech, knowledge, and food to ‘Inviting a Friend to Supper’. The Franklin also enjoys a similar comic quality. Moreover,

Chaucer’s Franklin adopts a deferential tone when he says that he has ‘never seen a gathering here that looked so spry’, with ‘no lie’. The warm ‘welcome’ that he extends to his party and the emphasis on their amity are the same motifs that Jonson’s persona creates at his own table. Perhaps the Chaucerian influence demonstrates Jonson’s reminiscence of the world that was, away from ambition and theatre life.

The importance of hospitality and speech is furthered in ‘Inviting a Friend to Supper’ when the persona dwells on the security of their realm. Jonson and his friends are able to ‘speak our minds, amidst our meat’ (line 23). The comic, light-hearted quality is gone, and replaced with a more serious, pensive tone:

Of this we will sup free, but moderately,
And we will have no Poley, or Parrot by;
Nor shall our cups make any guilty men:
But, at our parting, we will be, as when
We innocently met. No simple word,
That shall be uttered at our mirthful board,
Shall make us sad next morning: or affright
The liberty, that we’l1 enjoy to night.

(lines 35 – 42)

Evidently, Jonson’s trouble with the authorities over the Isle of Dogs is not forgotten. His assertion that ‘we will have no Poley, or Parrot by’ likely refers to the government spy Robert Poley, who was active as an informer from the 1580s. The reference to Parrot is less clear, though it may identify Henry Parrot who sought to entrap suspected Catholics. Jonson refers to the incident broadly in his brief epigram ‘Of Spies’ when he further clarifies his attitudes to those who inform on others:

Spies, you are lights in state, but of base stuff,
Who, when you have burnt yourselves down to the snuff,
Stink, and are thrown away. End fair enough.

In his own view, Jonson has been slandered by those made of ‘base stuff’. There are no bonds of friendship between spies and their masters; instead, once they have ‘burnt’

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69 Cummings, p. 83.
themselves ‘down to the snuff’ they ‘are thrown away’. The freedom to speak is closely married to surrounding oneself with trustworthy souls. Jonson’s invited friend is of the same mind as Jonson, as they will both ‘sup free, but moderately’ and not be made ‘guilty men’ because of any ‘Poley, or Parrot’. At the end of the sixteenth and beginning of the seventeenth century, Jonson suggests that those who speak truth are vulnerable. Whatever the result, Jonson chooses to end his supper, and his poem, on the subject of free speech and truth in an age where doing so could bring harsh punishments.

Jonson’s style of quiet, Stoic, and pastoral poetry manifested in ‘To Penshurst’ brought him the favour of the Sidneys, but it also says something of Jonson’s own disillusionment with the theatre, the Royal court, ambition, and morality. ‘To Penshurst’ is a reflection of both the idealistic and the real, in that the inhabitants of Penshurst know their place in the hierarchy, underpinning the social fabric of the community. Luxury is shunned in favour of a simple repast, and a strong family unit sits at the centre of this feudal community. Sidney encourages hospitable relations between all ranks of society at his table, and the implicit understanding between lord and tenant in ‘To Penshurst’ reinforces the Sidney’s social position. Jonson reveres Penshurst as a locus amoenus, but the spectres of financial difficulty and social inequality, whilst lessened, still haunt this fruitful and self-governing landscape. In ‘Inviting a Friend to Supper’ and ‘To Penshurst’, Jonson becomes the advisor of proper behavior and good living, and molds poetry into the means through which he can ‘informe men, in the best reason of living’.\footnote{‘The Epistle’, p. 5.}
Chapter Three

Mildmay Fane

Royalist, Presbyterian, and Cambridge-educated Mildmay Fane, the Second Earl of Westmorland, was the first Peer of England to publish his own writing. Yet it is in his manuscript work made up of some 500 poems written between 1621 and 1665 that the contemporary reader can glean a true sense of Fane’s stylistic and thematic developments. In Fane’s poetry, the Cavalier sensibility is found in microcosm. It features so early in his poetic oeuvre that it might even be argued that Fane was, in large part, responsible for the principles of Cavalier ideology adopted during the Civil War. Though his only published volume, Otia Sacra1 (1648) is principally a group of religious poems, his most famous poem, ‘To Retiredness’,2 appears at the end of the volume and fits neatly into the sensibilities expounded in his manuscript verse. The values of friendship, the good life,3 time and its regulation, as well as order and disorder are all to be seen. Fane distills Cavalier life into his own moderate poetic truth in times of both peace and external strife. Re-discovered in the early twentieth century and published by Tom Cain in 2001,4 Fane’s manuscript poems cut a great swathe through the seventeenth century. Striking in their intimacy and remarkable for their sustained political and religious moderation, Fane’s poetry was his own locus amoenus.

Of the 500 poems contained in his three surviving manuscripts, it is probable that only 100 of those were penned before his imprisonment in the Tower of London in 1642.5 At the beginning of his oeuvre, Fane’s poetry is almost untouched by worldly affairs. In his poems of the 1620s Fane certainly recognises the possibility of civil strife, but recommends virtue, friendship, and enjoyment as a remedy. He only makes reference to his own Parliamentary career by subtle, nuanced means. In 1626, the year after Charles’ staggering demand of £700,000 from Parliament, Fane was writing poetry which reflected none of the Parliamentary furor he had witnessed in his formative years.

1 Otia Sacra, ed. by Donald M. Friedman,1st edn (New York: Scholars’ Facsimiles & Reprints, 1975).
3 Maren-Sofie Røstvig discusses the notion of ‘the good life’ in The Happy Man: Studies in the Metamorphosis of a Classical Ideal 1600 - 1700, Vol 1 (Oslo: Norwegian Universities Press, 1962). It is essentially the site of the happy man within English pastoral or georgic poetry, and is created in praise of country life. Also see Earl Miner, 'The Good Life', in The Cavalier Mode from Jonson to Cotton (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1971), pp. 43 – 99. In terms of seventeenth-century poetry, Miner contends that the good life represents ‘a conservative outlook, a response to social threat, classical recollections, love of a very English way of life, and a new blending of old ideas. This ideal is not necessarily Christian or pagan’, p. 44.
4 All the poems referenced in this chapter are drawn from The Poetry of Mildmay Fane, Second Earl of Westmorland, ed. by Tom Cain (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2001).
5 Cain, p. 12.
After experiencing disempowerment and even imprisonment as an MP at the hands of Charles I, his return and period of personal rule at his estate of Apethorpe in the 1630s empowered him once again through the cultivation of local economy, the dispensing of local justice, and the exertion of control over his own estate.

Fane’s praise of the country life and fascination with sports and pastimes continued throughout the 1630s. Charles’ suspension of Parliament meant that he did not return to his office as an MP. Charles’s order for gentry to return to their estates to consolidate Charles’ rule and better control unrest in the countryside meant that he was able to spend much more time managing his estates. There is no evidence to suggest that he attempted to temper his country retirement with regular visits to court. The only act that consolidated Fane’s relationship with the King was the naming of Charles as godfather to Fane’s son, born in 1636. However, this act of allegiance, if so it was, seems token. Unlike his father James I, there is no indication that Charles I stayed at Apethorpe more than once, and communication between the King and senior peers seems unusually absent. Instead, Fane’s poems from the 1630s concentrate on sports, religious meditation, salvation, and the business of being *sibi imperiosus*, as he had done previously. This quintessentially Cavalier poetic role is one which other Cavaliers - like his great friend Robert Herrick and fellow poet Richard Lovelace - did not to take up until the 1640s as a means of expressing their reaction to Royalist defeat. In the lead-up to the Civil War, Fane comments more overtly on Charles’s dealings with Parliament and the failings of the Roundheads, although he remains faithful to his ideal of moderation in all things. Though Fane joined the Royalist side, he did so with reluctance. Like John Denham and Andrew Marvell, it appears that Fane believed in the institution of monarchy more than the monarch himself.

During the Civil War, Fane’s plays and poetry become more concerned with the origins of the war. The failure of both Royalists and Cavaliers to reconcile and save

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6 See Leah S. Marcus’ important work *The Politics of Mirth* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986) for further discussion of sports and pastimes practiced in the seventeenth century. Marcus states that sports were customs, popular pastimes, as well as ecclesiastical and pagan rituals, p. 1.

7 Cain, p.1.

8 The Apethorpe records are now held at the Northamptonshire Records Office, and can be accessed at ‘Westmorland of Apethorpe’, *The National Archives*< http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk> [accessed 23rd June 2011].

9 Røstvig also discusses the idea of *sibi imperiosus* throughout her volume, *The Happy Man*. It is the notion of self-governance reflected in the individual and the nation, free from ambition, p. 16.

10 Mildmay Fane’s plays *Raguaillo d’Oceano* (1640), *Candia Restaurata* (*Candy Restored*, 1641), *Time’s Trick Upon the Cards* (1642), *The Change* (1642), *Virtue’s Triumph* (1644), *Don Phoebus’s Triumph* (1645), and *De Pugna Animi* (1650) survive in manuscript form in the British Library and the Huntington Library. No online access is available. Only one play, *Ladrones, or the Robbers’ Island*, is deemed lost. *Raguaillo d’Oceano* and *Candia Restaurata* may be accessed in *Raguaillo d’Oceano and Candy*
their countrymen from ‘a most iniquitous servitude’, breeds both anger and lamentation in his poetry. ‘To Retiredness’ observes the same sensibilities. His sustained political and religious moderation is maintained and justified, even amidst a time of perceived injustice. In the 1650s and 1660s his rejection, acceptance, and criticism of Cromwell and the New Republic imbes his poetry, until finally the Restoration is described with great enthusiasm and relief.

From very early in his reign Charles I promoted sports, a seemingly unlikely topic for large political discussions, or indeed, a subject in Fane’s poetry. Charles’s father James I had already asserted his support of old pastimes in 1599 in Basilikon Doron as a remedy against commoners who might ‘judge and speake rashly of their Prince’. James wrote to his son suggesting that:

> Certaine dayes in the yeere would be appointed, for delighting the people with publicke spectacles of all honest games, and exercise or armes: as also for conveening of neighbours, for entertaining friendship and heartliness, but honest feasting and merrinesse: For I cannot see what greater superstition can be can be in making playes and lawfull games in Maie, and good cheere at Christmas, then in eating fish in Lent, and upon Fridayes,…so that always the Sabboths be kept holy, and no unlawfull pastime be used: and as this forme of contenting the peoples minds, hath beene used in all well governed Republicks: so will it make you to performe in your government that olde good sentence, *Omne tulit punctum, qui miscuit vtile dulci* (He who mingles the useful with the agreeable bears away the prize).

The final quote from Horace touches on the equivocal nature of sports, where the ‘useful’ lawlessness associated with sports translates into an ‘agreeable’ submission to authority. Sports will content ‘the peoples minds’. Initially promulgated in Basilikon Doron, James’s views on the utility of sports in governing the populace saw him further clarify his views in the *Book of Sports* in 1617. Whilst he did not make sports

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*Restored*, ed. by Clifford Leech (Uystpruyst: Louvain Universitaire, 1938), though the volume is not easy to find.

11 ‘Vita Authoris’, Cain, p. 95.


13 *Basilikon Doron*, p. 128.

mandatory, he required that sports be allowed in the face of Puritan opposition. The declaration listed ‘leaping, vaulting, or any other such harmless recreation’\(^{15}\) as acceptable sports, along with more ritualistic ‘May-games, Whitsun-ales and Morris-dances, and the setting up of May-poles’.\(^{16}\) Moreover, ‘women shall have leave to carry rushes to the church for the decorating of it, according to their old custom’ underlining the importance of sports and customs in a religious context. In this way, the Book of Sports also marginalised Catholics who did not attend church services in their parish, as James I specified that only people who had attended a Protestant service were entitled to the ensuing rituals. Such was his belief in sports as a means of control, Charles re-issued the Book of Sports in 1633 as the Puritans gained power in Parliament in the lead-up to the English Civil War. Not only did this act reinforce the King’s determination to continue with traditional Stuart policy in the face of growing political opposition to the monarchy, but the matter of sports was an extension of Protestant liturgical worship and a covert means of administering religious conformity. From a Royalist perspective, just as in Fane’s ‘An Ode To N.B. an Angler’,\(^{17}\) Robert Herrick’s ‘The Hock-Cart’\(^{18}\) and ‘Corinna’s Going a-Maying’,\(^{19}\) English rivers, meadows, and villages became an image of ecclesiastical order and divine space from a Royalist point of view.

Fane creates his own locus amoenus in his poetry for the same reasons that James I and Charles I placed so much emphasis on the Book of Sports: the locus amoenus was a space that was manageable, understandable, and controllable, in a place which was increasingly none of these things. In 1626, Fane wrote ‘An Ode To N.B. an Angler’ addressed to his friend Ned Beecher, to whom he addressed a number of poems on the subject of friendship. The nature of the locus amoenus within this poem is decided not by the ideals or needs of Beecher, erstwhile engaged in the sport of fishing, but by the pastoral demand for freedom, pleasure, and salvation. It is not through Puritan gravity or Catholic sacraments that Beecher is to find salvation, but by following a spiritual via media. The Protestant via media sits between the extremism of Lutheran and Reformed varieties of Protestantism on one hand, and the Roman Catholic Church on the other. In the via media the Old and New Testament, combined with love of the natural world, contains all things necessary for salvation:

\(^{17}\) Cain, p. 59.  
\(^{19}\) ‘Corinna’s Going a-Maying’, pp. 43 – 46.
Thou that dost cast into the silver brook
Thy worm fed hooke
The greedier fishes for to cheat
Whilst they would eat
Remember that times wheel will bring
Thy deeds to censuring
And then as thou through wile
Those creatures didst beguile
Soe caught thou’lt be for thy deceipt
And made the food for thin own bayt.

Let this suffize to cause thee t’steer aright
Both day and night
That skilfully avoiding this
That shelf thou miss
For ‘tis not all for to repent
Thy youthfull dayes misspent
But care must now be had
The future be not bad
And as they audite waxeth neer
Soe thy accompts make perfecter.

(lines 1 – 20)

Beecher casts his ‘worm fed hook’ into ‘the silver brook’, the stream itself a potent symbol of ever-flowing Time. The ‘greedier fishes’ head for the ‘cheat’, or rough bread made of coarse flour, used as bait to attract the fish who ‘would eat’ the worm and be hooked by Beecher. Fane presages that ‘times wheel will bring/Thy deeds to censuring’, and thus warns of the inevitability of God’s spiritual judgement if Beecher does not ‘steer aright/Both day and night’. Just as the fish were caught by his hook, so Fane’s friend must take care not to become his ‘own bayt’ and keep to a straight moral path. By learning from this moment, Fane suggests that Beecher might to some degree defeat time with eternity, and in placing this concept within the sport of fishing Fane chooses that rather Cavalier technique of raising large issues of time, death, and

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salvation, from the smallest details. In Fane’s poem, time is a river, a cycle, which unrelentingly encompasses ‘both day and night’. What distinguishes Fane’s usage of time and salvation from that of other Cavaliers is the concern for the good life, both its attainment and potential loss by Beecher. Time and the good life compete, so one must seize the day.

The friendship between Fane and Beecher represents security in a realm of instability. In an increasingly embattled world, Fane was drawn to the ancient values encoded in the concept of friendship. For Fane, and later other Cavalier poets like Lovelace and Herrick, this doctrine of friendship was derived primarily from the Roman Stoics, principally Cicero and Horace. Fane also drew on another strand of Stoic thought: a cyclical concept of time. Within such thought, providence ultimately directs lives towards consummation in fire, just as Christian man moves ever closer to the inevitable Day of Judgment.21 This ancient doctrine may have given Fane some security amidst growing volatility. Marcus Aurelius, in his Stoic tome Meditations, states:

These are the properties of the rational soul…it traverses the whole universe, and the surrounding vacuum, and surveys its form, and it extends itself into the infinity of time, and embraces and comprehends the periodical renovation of all things, and it comprehends that those who come after us will see nothing new, nor have those before us seen anything more…This too is a property of the rational soul, love of one’s neighbour, and truth and modesty, and to value nothing more than itself, which is also the property of Law. Thus then right reason differs not at all from the reason of justice.22

Even at the beginning of the seventeenth century this Stoic view of time as equally capable of ‘periodical renovation of all things’ may have been comforting for Fane. Aurelius writes that ‘those who come after us will see nothing new, nor have those before us seen anything more’. Similarly, the political upheaval reflected in the mutual

21 For further discussion of the relationship between Stoicism and Christianity, see Ralph Stob, ‘Stoicism and Christianity,’ Classical Journal, 30 (1935), 217 – 224. Stob asserts that Christianity developed from movements already present in the Hellenistic Age, but Stoicism was the most impactful of them all. Also see Jaap Mansfeld’s paper ‘The Interpretatio Christiana of a Stoic Doctrine’, Vigiliae Christianae, 37 (1983), 218 – 233. Mansfeld discusses the similarities between Stoic and Christian doctrine, particularly in terms of the Christian notion of resurrection, purification, and a cyclical view of time.

suspicion between Parliament and Charles I, and the ongoing religious conflict between Protestants and Catholics, places Fane and Beecher in their stable *locus amoenus* as the ‘rational soul[s]’ who gaze ‘into the infinity of time’ and ‘comprehends the periodical renovation of all things’. The Stoics maintained that the universe is subject to cyclical growth and decay just as Fane does in ‘An Ode to N.B. an Angler’, and ultimately in Beecher’s case, God’s judgment. The ‘love of one’s neighbour, and truth and modesty’ are also underpinnings of the scene and Fane’s ideology. The rational soul values ‘nothing more than itself, which is also the property of Law’. It is in the guarding and cultivation of the soul that one finds moral ‘Law’ and true ‘justice’. In his poetry of the 1640s, this idea of just law will become more potent for the spiritually embattled Fane.

Fane describes ‘times wheel’ in such a way that, despite the inevitability of death, the impediments to Beecher’s salvation are paltry in light of his virtuousness. Just as Beecher catches fish without difficulty, he catches his salvation with similar ease. Beecher does not engage with the environment as Marvell’s and Fairfax’s community does in their tour of the estate at ‘Upon Appleton House’. Rather, Beecher is static in these pastoral environs. He offers an attitude of respect and enjoyment even as he is advised on his salvation, as ‘care must now be had’ to ensure it. The coolness of the ‘silver brook’ and the seclusion of the landscape also emphasise the divinity of the place, as well as the spiritual metaphor of the sport of fishing itself. Fane’s *locus amoenus* is full of moral interpretations through the Christian and Platonic treatments of nature. Beecher has no obstacles in communing with animals or the divine. The isolation of the *locus* enables Beecher to devote himself to both the task of fishing and redemption, and Fane to concentrate on his deepest and most valuable thoughts with little consideration of wider political anxieties beyond the bounds of the pastoral landscape. Fane and Beecher will ultimately, like the fish in the river, be caught by death, but when Beecher’s spiritual ‘audite waxeth neer’, fishing will ensure that his spiritual ‘accompts make perfecter’, earning him access into heaven.

Though ‘An Ode to N.B. an Angler’ was written in 1626 when the Cavalier sensibility was still evolving, the Cavalier urge to seize the day, as well as meditation and redemption, is apparent in poetry of Fane’s youth. Fane and his poetry are placed early in the development of Cavalier sensibilities. Earl Miner contends that Cavalier

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poetry began with Ben Jonson, yet I would argue that Fane gives a much fuller and sustained treatment of the Cavalier mode within his poetry. Presumably, some of Fane’s verses circulated amongst a small group of family and friends possessing the same status, values, and education, perhaps perpetuating this notion of the Cavalier sensibility. Yet, the publication of most Cavalier poetry was not undertaken until the Civil War, the Interregnum and the Restoration, though the ideology had existed for some time. Take for instance Denham who first published in 1642, Waller in 1645, Herrick in 1648, Lovelace in 1649, Marvell in 1681, and Cotton in in the same year.

The *otium* and retirement apparent in ‘An Ode to N.B. an Angler’ represents the same desire for *otium* and retirement seen in published, Cavalier, war and post-war volumes generated for public consumption. In light of this, Fane’s own decision to publish *Otia Sacra* in 1648 appears as a strategic, political decision, a means of proposing *otium* as an honourable response to defeat, and an articulation of the Cavalier values that he had maintained from his youth.

The Cavalier good life on display in ‘An Ode to N.B. an Angler’ is also perhaps a manifestation of the *eudaemonism* of moral men. Aristotle held that *eudaemonism* was an individual’s highest objective, and an application to the aspects of life that are pleasing and worthwhile. By living according to reason, and hence salvation, Beecher can successfully navigate the constraints and challenges of life, avoiding situations deemed counter-production to his redemption. In this way he can ‘skilfully’ avoid the ‘shelf’ of rock which lies just beneath the river’s surface and is obscured to most fisherman. Beecher pursues a self-sufficient and personal goal, the appeal of which seems consistent throughout Fane’s poetry. Importantly, according to Aristotle, *eudaemonia* requires action; it is not enough for Beecher to possess a misspent ability or intemperate character, his salvation must be earned. Thus, this state requires both a moral, thoughtful character and rational activity. Fane demonstrates his moderation even in matters of salvation. He tells Beecher that ‘tis not all for to repent/ Thy youthful days misspent’, suggesting that his days should not be spent feeling guilty about his past behaviours. Instead, he warns that ‘care must now be had,’ though Beecher’s ‘future be not bad’. Fane’s friend is instructed not to feel guilty for the past, nor worried for the future. The emphasis lies in avoiding that rock shelf that might

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25 Miner contends that Cavalier poetry began with Jonson, and for that reason, ‘the reader will quickly discover that Jonson’s role in this book is central’, p. ix. Also, see Miner’s ‘Postscript’ pp. 306 – 310, where he further delineates the Cavalier ideals that Jonson’s poetry celebrates.

prevent Beecher from his ultimate salvation. Just as ‘honest George Hastings’ was described in *The Compleat Angler* as ‘an excellent Angler, (and now with God)’, so in Fane’s poems, sports and the good life represent the passage to heaven. Fane’s poem is founded on the happiness that can be derived by association with good people and friends, thus Fane’s friendship with Beecher in itself represents the path to salvation.

As positive as Fane is of Beecher’s moral stature and salvation, Fane is not equally confident of his own virtue. In ‘My Reformation’, the poet proposes that if ‘God should but skan’ (line 5) the expanse of ‘times kalender’ (line 4) He would find ‘sin’ (line 13) and a realm gone ‘unto the flesh, the world, the Divel’ (line 15). The rest of the world in this poem is entirely corrupted and without any natural topography to redeem it. Fane is not above this world; instead, he sees himself as inextricable bound to this realm of sin. Where Beecher will probably be saved, Fane’s redemption is less certain. He is ‘one of their number’:

Heer, am I lost
Soe small,
Yet soe much cost:
Wherin, the debt
Would well nigh drive into despaire,
Had not the most
Of me been dross, and soe unfit,
To take the stampe, of any grace, or good

(lines 31 – 38)

The poem is introspective. There is no landscape at all – just an expanse of ‘times kalender’ and the sin that populates the scene. The soliloquy takes place within Fane. Gone is the succor of the pastoral scene and moral counsel he gave to Beecher. He sees himself as ‘soe small’ in the eyes of God. Such is his weight of sin, his ‘debt/ Would well nigh drive into despaire’. Yet, he is ‘soe unfit,/ To take the stampe, of any grace, or good’. The poem’s longer length, shorter lines, more somber tone, and late placement in the Fulbeck manuscript indicate that this poem was probably written sometime during the 1640s. Writing such a poem in the midst of the Civil War could be argued to colour

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27 Izaak Walton *The Compleat Angler*, 1653  
28 Izaak Walton *The Compleat Angler*, 1653.  
29 Cain, pp. 149 – 151.
Fane’s attitudes to his own salvation and grace. However, nowhere else in his poetry does he refer to anyone’s salvation in such negative terms. Beecher and Herrick are referred to fondly in poems addressed to them by Fane. By contrast, Fane doubts his own spiritual worth. Equally, in ‘My Invocation’ Fane states that his ‘Creation Fuell’s done’ (line 5), unless he can:

In awe to that find a decay
Of such lewd thoughts, words, Acts did bring
My whole man to a wintering
In Lust and Sin, and growth in Grace
T’assure a spring tide in the place
(lines 8 – 12)

His ‘words’ that formerly brought him the comfort of the _locus amoenus_ and friendship have now brought his ‘whole man to a wintering/ In Lust and Sin’. He must grow ‘in grace/ T’assure a spring tide in the place’, as Beecher did. But the world the reader looks on through Fane’s poetry is still one of peace, friendship, and a non-doctrinal _via media_. Fane acknowledges the sin of the exterior world, but he also looks for its source and complicity within his own breast. For the Neoplatonist, God showed his glory in every intricately wrought detail of his creation, and Fane’s hope for ‘a spring tide in the place’ gives him some small hope in his redemption.

Thus, with such unworthiness in the sight of God, Fane’s redemptive capabilities are strongly tied to the notion of friendship. Likewise, Cicero’s great Stoic dialogue ‘De Amicitia’, or ‘On Friendship’, venerates the stability of loyal friendship in the face of politics and untrustworthy citizens just as Fane does in ‘An Ode to N.B. an Angler’. Moreover, Laelius has achieved a state of happiness because of the strength of his friendship with Scipio. Cicero writes that friendship cannot exist without virtue, and in Fane’s poem, the study of virtue is central. In ‘De Amicitia’, Laelius enumerates what

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30 Cain, pp. 151.
31 For further discussion of Neoplatonic thought and friendship in poetry, see Mark Llewellyn, ‘Katherine Phillips: Friendship, Poetry, and Neo-Platonic Thought in Seventeenth Century England’, _Philological Quarterly_, 81 (2002), 441 – 469. It is interesting also to note that Mildmay Fane’s grandfather founded Emmanuel College at Cambridge, the same college that the Cambridge Platonists operated from between 1633 and 1688.
qualities make for good friends, and expounds these points by the way he bears the loss of Scipio’s passing:

Wherefore, as I said before, all is as well as possible with him [Scipio]. Not so with me; for as I entered life before him, it would have been fairer for me to leave it also before him. Yet such is the pleasure I take in recalling our friendship, that I look upon my life as having been a happy one because I have spent it with Scipio. With him I was associated in public and private business; with him I lived in Rome and served abroad; and between us there was the most complete harmony in our tastes, our pursuits, and our sentiments. Which is the true secret of friendship. It is not therefore in that reputation for wisdom mentioned just now by Fannius – especially as it happens to be groundless – that I find my happiness so much, as in the hope that the memory or our friendship will be lasting. What makes me care the more about this is the fact that in all history there are scarcely three or four pairs of friends on record; and it is classed with them that I cherish a hope of the friendship of Scipio and Laelius being known to prosperity.

The idea that Laelius’ life has ‘been a happy one’ because he has spent it in friendship with Scipio is a philosophy that resonates in ‘Ode to N.B an Angler’. Beecher is an honorable friend of Fane’s whose ‘future be not bad’, though he recounts the ways Beecher can ‘steer aright’ to ensure his ‘accompts make perfecter’ in heaven. But this strong and loyal friendship also reflects hope for Fane: he must be in possession of at least some virtue to maintain such a strong friendship with Beecher, even though he has doubts about his own redemption. Between Fane and his friend there exists ‘the most complete harmony in our tastes, our pursuits, and our sentiments. Which is the true secret of friendship’. Both Fane and Beecher enjoy ‘That innocent delight/ Of Clubbing’, 33 or combining in clubs or parties of a social or political nature, ‘jollity’, and ‘the bright flaming Sherries fire’. Moreover, they both deplore the baseness of cards, otherwise known as ‘some of Tom’ 34 after the knave of trumps in a game of Gleek, popular in the seventeenth century, which ‘Blottes alle’. Beecher’s friendship provides the dim hope of salvation for Fane.

Whilst Fane did not give a full treatment to his political views in his early poetry, by the 1640s he was prepared to articulate his political leanings in a more forthright manner. Where Parliament had initially been the place for his political voice, during the Civil War, Parliamentary forces were the cause of his imprisonment. ‘The Times Steerage’ was written during Fane’s time under house arrest in July 1643 and examines the origins of the Civil War. In general, the first two years of the Civil War went well for the Royalists. The turning point came in in the late summer and early autumn of 1643, around the time ‘The Times Steerage’ was composed, when Royalist victories steadily became less convincing and they suffered heavier casualties. Finally the Parliamentary army forced the King to raise the Siege of Gloucester in August 1643, and the victory for the Parliamentary forces was decisive. Royalist forces withdrew with heavy losses of men and weaponry. Fane, under house arrest in London after his imprisonment in the Tower, did not see either a Royalist or Parliamentary victory at this time as a solution. Instead, the poet begins ‘The Times Steerage’ by delineating the victory or loss at battle as equally valueless. Here, two vessels are driven in different directions by the wind:

Like Ships by the same wind favourd, yet can stear
A severall Course; soe now the Cavallier
And the Bowle-Noddled-Crue pretend They fight
Both that Religion & the laws have right
For Liberty tis doubtless that their own
Whereby all Property & safety’s gon.

(lines 1 – 6)

In Fane’s view the Cavaliers and Roundheads are by the ‘same wind favourd’, driven by the same desires, ‘yet can stear/ A severall Course’ of two or more distinct routes. The Cavaliers and ‘Bowle-Noddled-Crue’, or Parliamentarians, both ‘pretend’ that they fight honourably for the religious values and political beliefs that they embody. But Fane postulates that in reality this fighting represents either a misplaced belief in the ‘right’

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35 Cain, pp. 82 – 86.
37 Wedgewood, pp. 220 - 255.
38 Wedgewood, p. 232.
39 For further treatment of prison as a *locus* for writers to engage with their political identity and issues of loyalty, see Jerome de Groot, ‘Prison Writing. Writing Prison during the 1640s and 1650s’, Huntington Library Quarterly, 72 (2009), 193 – 215.
of their cause on both sides, or that they ‘pretend’ to fight for ‘Religion & the laws’. In either case, ‘they fight’, in reality, for their own personal gain. The fighting is also the means by which ‘all Property & safety’s gon’. From the beginning of the poem, Fane lays the blame for his own loss of property and England’s civil strife at the feet of both the Royalists and Cavaliers equally.

The dubious ‘liberty’ that both sides fight for is the reason that ‘all Property & safety’s gone’. Not only was the ‘safety’ of England clearly threatened by the Civil War, but the loss of ‘property’ is also significant to the poet. Fane wrote this poem when his estates were sequestrated by the Parliamentarians. It further demonstrates an even-handed dealing of blame to both the Royalists and Parliamentarians for the loss of his lands and property. His brief poem ‘Upon a small occation of 10000£s disburcementrapim’, probably written between 1642 and 1644 when his estates were sequeastered, also bemoans his loss of property:

Two Daughters’ Portions gon, and spent,
Th’one on the King T’other on the Parlement
Howses and Goods Confiscat: Woods hold out
Least I become at length a bankerout
Yet whilst Integrety ‘thout shuffling’s delt
Douries and Patrimonies Loss’ less felt.
(lines 1 – 6)

Fane had a duty to give a dowry to each of his six daughters. His reason for being unable to fulfil his financial duty is twofold in this poem: first, his fine from the King under the guise of the revived Forestry Laws in 1637, whilst reduced from £19,000 to £2,500, evidently still impacted on Fane’s income. Second, the sequestration of his estates beginning in 1642, the year he was captured and imprisoned, deprived him of further income. It is notable that, whilst Fane was frequently in debt to husbands securing his daughters’ dowries, they are not mentioned as the cause of Fane’s financial distress. It is the King and Parliament who are equally to blame for his dispossession.

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40 Cain, p. 71.
42 Cain, p. 21.
Sequestration presented a serious threat to Royalist social power. Whilst the beginnings of the process in 1642 were informal, by March 1643 it had become common practice and formalised in an ordinance. This ordinance was passed when negotiations started with the King, suggesting that Parliament was little interested in compromise with Royalists.\(^{43}\) Though Fane did not return to Apethorpe until 1646, he was more fortunate than many Royalist landowners, and did secure Mereworth in 1644 on his release from jail. The Committee for Tendering the Covenant resolved in 1644 that he had:

> Expressed his good affection by staying in town upon his honour, by taking the Covenant, by paying £2000…and by voluntarily paying all other assessments; and that as he has dealt freely, they should deal free and nobly with him. As he has suffered much by soldiers, has many children, and was one of the first Lords that took the Covenant, they recommend that he should enjoy three quarters of his estates, and pay the remainder to Parliament’s use during the pleasures of both Houses.\(^{44}\)

Outwardly, Fane had compromised by taking the Covenant, remaining in London, surrendering part of his estate, and paying a fine. Inwardly, his poetry reveals that he believed both Royalists and Parliamentarians were responsible for his ills. Even a year later, nothing remains of ‘Two Daughter’s Portians’, it is ‘gon and spent./ Th’one on the King’ to support the Royalist cause, and ‘T’other on the Parlement’. The ‘Woods hold out’ and presumably become a limited source of income for Fane, ‘Least I become at length bankerout’, or bankrupt. Whilst Fane manages to maintain his ‘integrity’ without cheating (‘shuffling’\(^{45}\)), he feels the loss of his estates and income at the hands of both King Charles and Parliament alike. In his view, both are to blame for his current situation, and both are to blame for England’s Civil War.


\(^{45}\) *Oxford English Dictionary Online* [accessed 23rd June 2011].
Ironically, Fane was by no means an ardent supporter of Charles I. He was the second richest peer in England, yet he was a moderate with a background as an MP, and had been jailed by Charles himself. In the early days of Charles’ reign, seventy MPs (including Mildmay Fane) had been jailed without trial or charge for refusing to contribute to the forced loan. However, fearing that the Privy Council would find the loans illegal, Charles did not bring any charges against them and released the MPs in 1627. The unforeseen effect was that the loans were made illegal by Parliament. Moreover, support for Charles was not easy in a family where his brother-in-law, Thomas Fairfax, was later to become Commander-in-Chief of Oliver Cromwell’s forces. In addition to this, Fane complained about Ship Money in 1634 along with many other landowners, but more outrageously even than this, in 1637 the enormous sum of £19,000 was demanded from him by Charles under the guise of the Forest Laws. This sum was eventually reduced to £2,500, but evidently it did not endear Charles to Fane:

My house has ever been obedient without dispute to his Majesty’s commands and unwilling to contend with him; yet when we have any request to him, we find no more favour than his absolute opposers do.

Fane’s absence from court in the 1630s may speak of his disillusionment with the crown. Nor did the King’s decision to invade Scotland in 1639 – the home of Fane’s beloved Presbyterian Church – do much to win favour with the Presbyterian Fane family. When he was first summoned to fight for the King, Fane resisted and pleaded illness. But by May of 1639 Fane had joined the King in York, and Thomas Fairfax, Fane’s brother-in-law, lead the Parliamentary side. This no doubt made the question of allegiance even more problematic in the Fane household.

The brothers-in-law found themselves on opposite side of the Civil War, whilst Fane’s wife, Mary Vere, resided at Fairfax’s seat of Nun Appleton with her sister Anne

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48 J.A. Guy, ‘The Origin of the Petition of Right Reconsidered’, *The Historical Journal*, 25 (1982), 289 – 312 (p. 293). Implicit in this move was Charles I’s reluctance to expose the forced loans to legal review and formally articulate the reason for their detention.
49 Guy, p. 302.
51 Cain, p. 15.
Vere. His attitude towards Fairfax during the Civil War, as reflected in his manuscript poetry, was decidedly mixed. The poem ‘Upon Sir Thomas Fayer-Fax whose vertues make Him shine a bright star in our Horizon’ praise him as ‘Great Alexander’ (lines 1) who ‘ill-humors doth repell’ (line 12). Yet ‘To Sir Thomas Fairfax’ is more accusatory, describing him as ‘prict with fame’ (line 3) and one who ‘embroylst thy native country in a flame’ (line 4) of war. On the subject of Fairfax’s retirement at the end of the Civil War in ‘Upon the Generall the Lord Fairfaxes resigning up his Commissions to Oliver Crumwell’, Fane observes that it is when Roundhead ‘theevs fall out one comes by good’ (line 2). Fairfax’s ‘good’ decision to retire as Commander-in-Chief on his refusal to invade Scotland is not lost on Presbyterian Fane, and makes him a ‘good’ man again. Though by 1650 the war had been well and truly won, he lauds Fairfax’s decision to exit the proceedings and observes that ‘swords make plowgh shears’ (line 23) in their rightful place at Nun Appleton. He also tries to rationalise Fane’s decision to fight for the Parliamentarians in the first place. Fane writes that ‘misplac’d ther may be reason/ To judg it is but for a season’ (line 10 – 11) and so Fairfax’s allegiance was merely a brief moment of misjudgement. Three years later in ‘Upon the Strange adventure and memorable voyage of Prince Tomaso ali: Black Tom from wansford bridg to Londond the 29th October – ’ Fane’s attitude to Fairfax lies somewhere between jest, familiarity, and disdain. Fane is certainly not complimentary in his naming of Fairfax as ‘Black Tom’, nor is he particularly hostile towards him. He recognises that Fane travels to ‘give purse and body ease’ (line 7) in the pursuit of business, but ironically Fairfax travels in some luxury where ‘he exceeds/ The Fiery Pallfries with hi eight good steeds’ (line 10). Fane’s opinion of Fairfax doubtless changed according to the greater issues of politics and war, but was probably equally swayed by quotidian family conversations. The personal nature of his poetry gave him the latitude to express these opinions, no matter how they were formed, in a forthright manner.

In commenting on the wider political and religious origins of the English Civil War in ‘The Times Steerage’, Fane perhaps draws on his own experience as an MP to describe his present-day attitudes:

52 Cain, p. 23.
53 Cain, p. 200.
54 Cain, p. 221.
56 Nicholas Murray, World Enough and Time: The Life of Andrew Marvell (New York: St Martin’ Press, 1999), pp. 47 – 48. Fairfax’s resignation and refusal to invade Scotland is further explored and contextualised in Chapter Six of this thesis on Andrew Marvell.
57 Cain, p. 206 – 207.
But like Dictators that perpetuall are
Sole moderators grow, of Peace and war
A large prerogative: yet not too high
For Those assume infallebilety
In all They order, or Ordain, decree,
Voat, Pass, and Repass: Say ‘tis Soveranty
When th’Soveran’s away to guive consent
And not to be soe Costively up pent
In Ceremoney, ‘tis Abomination
To make Le Roy Le veut Rudder th’whol Nation
And no Coast made but when the Pylotts heer it
Fro’th’Masters mouth Soy’t faict comme ils desirent.
Printed, and Publisht to maintain, advance,
The Course whater, and tiers of Ordinance
To weary all the Presses…

(lines 39 – 53)

Like ‘dictators’, Fane suggests that ‘sole moderators grow’ from both ‘Peace and war’ and desire to govern alone. It is easy to imagine that Fane criticises Cromwell here for assuming the position of ‘dictator’. Fane may also be expressing some disillusionment with The Church of Scotland. The Head of the Church of Scotland is referred to as a ‘moderator’, and perhaps incurs some criticism from Fane for attempting to style himself a Protestant Pope. Those who ‘assume infallebilety’ in ‘all they order, or ordain, decree,/ voat, pass, and repass’ are acting as ‘th’Soveran’, and make the same errors of absolute power that Charles has made. Equally, whilst in 1643 Oliver Cromwell was the ‘dictator’ and ‘sole moderator’ who was beginning to ‘grow’ out of the war, Fane had witnessed a time when King James I, and then King Charles I in 1625, had desired to be the ‘sole moderators’ to grow out of peace and so draws on observations of them too. Fane’s time as MP for Peterborough from 1620 – 1621, then 1626 -1628, and as MP for Kent in 1625, evidently shaped his luke-warm sympathies for both the King and Parliament. This time in Parliament also made him suspicious of both Cavaliers and Roundheads who crave absolute power. Michael B. Young contends that the
Parliamentary events of the 1620s did not cause the events of the 1640s. However, he also submits that the 1620s were a time of deepening mistrust between the King and his Parliament which did manifest itself in the 1640s. Those who opposed Charles in the 1640s believed he could not be trusted to safeguard the Anglican church, lead the army, or employ good counsel.

King James I held himself to be the ‘sole moderator’ of England, observing few reasons to engage with the Parliament, and he instructed his son to do likewise. In giving advice to his son in Basilikon Doron, James I had encapsulated his attitude to Parliament when he instructed his son to ‘Hold no parliaments but for the necessitie of new laws, which should be but seldom’. When Fane first sat as an eighteen year old MP having just matriculated from Cambridge, the Parliament had been at loggerheads with King James for over a decade. Relations began to deteriorate in 1604 when Parliament declined to grant him funds and the title of King of Great Britain. James refused to ‘thank where I feel no thanks is due…I am not of such stock as to praise fools. You see how many things you did not well…I wish you would make use of you liberty with more modesty in times to come’. The Parliament of 1604 seemed to shape both Parliamentary and monarchical attitudes for the rest of his reign, even before Charles I ascended the throne.

Matters were not to improve with the ascension of Charles I in 1625. With widespread public opposition to Charles, his favourite the Duke of Buckingham, and the war, increasing numbers of MPs were elected to the Parliament who opposed the King, including John Coke, John Pym, and a young Oliver Cromwell. John Coke, the Secretary of State, began preparing his famous Resolutions on 1st April, 1628; the four resolutions it contained stated that imprisonment was illegal except under law, that habeas corpus should be granted to anyone, that citizens could not be remanded in custody until the crime they were charged with was shown, and that non-Parliamentary taxations, such as forced loans, were illegal. The Resolutions were unanimously

58 Michael Young, Charles I and the Erosion of Trust 1625 – 1628, p. 234.
59 Young, Charles I and the Erosion of Trust 1625 – 1628, p. 234.
61 Basilikon Doron, p. 133.
63 See Croft’s ‘The English Throne’ in King James, pp. 48 – 68. James dissolved Parliament in 1610 when negotiations surrounding a lump sum to pay off the King’s debts and a stipend became drawn-out. He dissolved Parliament yet again in 1614 when MPs refused to grant him money. Thus the King, dissatisfied with Parliament’s resistance, attempted to rule without the assistance of Parliament from 1614.
64 Guy discusses all of these figures in his paper on the origin of The Petition of Right.
accepted by the Commons, but Charles and the House of Lords refused to accept them. Parliament turned to what to do next on the 6th May 1628, resulting in John Coke making a speech urging the Commons to pass their four resolutions as a Petition of Right, which features in ‘The Times Steerage’, drawing absolute power away from Charles I.

Despite this criticism of Charles, Fane also postulates that ‘Soveranty/ When th’ Soveran’s away to guive consent’, and levels at Cromwell accusations of his kingly aspirations. He further instructs Cromwell not to be so bound up with ceremony, for ‘tis Abomination/ To make Le Roy Le veut Rudder th’ whol Nation’ and allow the King alone to decide the laws of England. ‘Le Roy Le veut’, or ‘the King assents’, was the phrase uttered when the King approved of a bill passed by the legislature. On this directionless ship, the King attempts to ‘Rudder th’ whol Nation’ with these words, while ‘no Coast made but when the Pylotts heer it’. The ‘Pylotts’, or Parliamentarians, are depicted as powerless to make any contribution to legislations until the King affirms their bills, just as Parliamentarians must have felt in the years leading up to The Petition of Right. Moreover, Fane refers to the words uttered by the King at the approval of the Petition of Right: ‘Soy’t faict comme ils desrient’ to make reference to habeas corpus and The Petition of Right, and also to underscore the power the King’s word still held. Charles gave a grudging assurance that the petition would be accepted, in the face of Parliament’s demand to remove Buckingham and Charles’s request for Parliament to subsidise the war effort. Unhappy with his elusive response, the Parliament demanded that a clear and satisfactory answer be given by the King in full Parliament. Charles appeared before Fane and the Parliament on the 7th June 1628, and after a reading of the petition uttered the words traditionally associated with the acceptance of a bill: ‘soit droit fait comme est desire’, or ‘let right be done as it is desired’.

The House of Lords had previously acted as a buffer between Charles and the House of Commons, but with the Lords now willing to work with the House of Commons, Charles’s most important protection within Parliament had become less assured. Charles and the Parliament entered a new stage in their uneasy relationship where the ‘Pylotts’

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65 The first three later became the foundation for the Habeas Corpus Act of 1679.
68 David Norbrook, Writing the English Republic: Poetry, Rhetoric, and Politics 1627 – 1660, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), p. 301, ‘New coins were struck which depicted Cromwell in an Imperial guise’.
70 Young, Charles I and the Erosion of Trust 1625 – 1628, p. 232. Young emphasises the mistrust between Charles and the Parliament in his paper.
of the Parliament had decidedly more leverage against the King. Disagreements over the interpretation and authority of the petition between the House of Commons and the House of Lords began almost immediately, leading to the dissolution of Parliament on the 26th June, 1628, and so ended Fane’s pre-Civil War term as an MP.\footnote{Jess Stoddart Flemion, ‘The Struggle for the Petition of Right in the House of Lords: The Study of an Opposition Party Victory’, \textit{The Journal of Modern History}, 45 (1973), 193 – 210 (p. 210).} Fane writes in ‘The Times Steerage’ that The Petition of Right was ‘Printed, and Publisht to maintain, advance./The Course whатere, and tiers of Ordinance’, and thus the legislative ship lumbered on, torn between the command of ‘Pylott’ and ‘Master’. Fane forlornly observes that these ‘tiers of Ordinance’ would prove wearisome even for the parchment they were inscribed on, and thus ‘weary all the Presses’.

Fane’s views on the politics of the day are also expounded in ‘Song or Ode: Upon the speakers of either houses leveing their charges and running away to join the army’,\footnote{Cain, pp. 209 – 210.} written in the 1640s. Fane’s wish is to return to the old social order, where ‘shoomakers noe more exceed their Last/ Nor Princes obay that Subjects might raign’ (lines 6 – 7). In the poem, Parliamentarians are accused of a ‘trick to put all authority downe/ But that some would change a Monarch to a State’ (lines 10 – 11). Seemingly, those to blame for England’s civil strife are the ‘shoomakers’ and Parliamentarians who are ‘subjects’ (perhaps unsympathetically one and the same to Fane) who should know their place. He also acknowledges the importance of adhering to the laws that Parliament and the King fought over for so long, including the Petition of Right, and suggests that ‘both houses’ of Parliament would benefit from the study of these laws:

\begin{quote}
Sing Round about Babilon twill be thy fall
With Multitudes thou both houses dost awe
Till now thy great army and Generall
Doe seek to give thee and the Kingdom the Law
What proffitts it now magna charta to read
What of Foresta or the Petition of Right
Wher time Devoures all things upon them doe tread
And the best understanding is how to fight
\end{quote}

(lines 20 – 27)
Fane refers to ‘Babilon’ – a derogatory term for the city of Rome and the seat of the Roman Catholic Church – as contributing to the ‘fall’ of the subjects of England. Both ‘houses’ were afflicted by ‘awe’, or fear, in 1647. Fane stresses what ‘proffitts’ the kingdom is an acquaintance with the ‘law’ including the Petition of Right which peacefully gives more rights to the common man, the same rights which the ‘great army and Generall’ Cromwell enforces through war. Fane suggests a re-acquaintance with the Petition of Right, but also suggests further familiarity with *Magna Carta* (1215) and the Charter of the Forest, or *Forresta* (1217), which after turbulent discussions between King and Parliament all resulted in greater powers for Englishmen whilst keeping the monarchy intact. Fane demands that the ‘known laws alone be our guide’ (line 39). The fact that the Petition of Right is so similar in its demands to Magna Carta and the Charter of the Forest reveals the importance with which Fane looked upon the Petition of Right. Instead, ‘the best understanding’ is not of England’s ancient laws, but ‘how to fight’. In a place where cyclical time ‘Devoures all things’ Fane hopes that England might return to these laws before too long, or else, ‘all will be under confusions storme’ (line 31).

It was not just Cromwell’s perceived refusal to observe ancient English laws that was concerning to Fane. Charles’s refusal to negotiate with Cromwell and find a peaceful resolution is also hinted at when ‘all that was ordained was not worth a louse’ (line 4). Though some would ‘blaste the flowers of the crowne’ (line 12), if some ‘members’ (line 34) of Parliament were to ‘goe out our King may come in’ (line 34) and in such mediation find a renewed sense of balance and order. The King appeared unyielding at such a suggestion when it was put to him by Fane. The King’s resistance to arbitration can be first gleaned in a letter to Prince Rupert, a general in his army, when he declared he would not negotiate in future except with Essex personally, ‘being the chief rebel’. The King no longer recognised the Parliament at Westminster as reflecting the kind of Parliament that he had negotiated with, however unwillingly, in the 1620s. Fane wrote to the King himself when he was imprisoned, pleading with him for a ‘reformation both in Church and State’. In the letter, he defends Parliament and reminds Charles of his duty:

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74 Wedgewood, p. 269.
75 Wedgewood, p. 269.
Soe as the king of kings hath committed these Scepters to your Majestyyys Charge, soe hath this your kingdome att this tyme impos’d a special trust on these your Subjects called together by your Majesty to sitt in Parliament and to discharge their dutyes faithfully on its behalf, By seeking meanes of redresse from all such Grievances as it hath groaned under, and finding ways whereby to procure its securitye for the future…I beseech you to disperse togeather with such Cloudes of malevolency all difficultyes by entertaining this into your thoughts [:] Warres a Canker devouring kingdoms and people and those destroyed where sits the king?76

Fane urges Charles to let members of Parliament ‘discharge their dutyes faithfully on its behalf,’ called together by Charles himself. According to Fane, Parliament could restore order by ‘seeking meanes of redresse from all such Grievances as it hath groaned under, and finding ways whereby to procure its securitye for the future’. Fane puts this advice to the King in very forthright terms. Cromwell was not, therefore, solely to blame for the lack of negotiation between Royalist and Parliamentary forces.

Despite Fane’s apparent belief in the institution of the monarchy over the man himself, Fane displays compassion towards Charles in ‘The Times Steerage’, and blames part of his misfortune on poor guidance from advisers and Henrietta Maria:

And soe or Judg or wish: Our Gratious King
Good in Himself, but ther’s another thing
He is a Man, may not’s affections cleav
To be seduc’t? Had not an Adam Eve?
Discerting of His Counsailes Great and Wise
Though Feares and Jealouzies works them t’surmise
(lines 19 – 24)

The marriage between Charles and Henrietta Maria was initially a difficult one, but after Buckingham’s assassination in 1628, Charles sought his wife’s support and advice, and each grew in affection for the other.77 In the poem, Fane suggests that the King is ‘Discerting of His Counsailes Great and Wise’ and instead is governed by the ‘Feares and Jealouzies’ of a domineering queen. French was spoken in preference to English at

76 Reprinted in Morton, p. 40.
and this French influence along with the Queen’s unapologetic Roman Catholic faith failed to win her the sympathy of the English people. Her Catholicism probably did not endear her to the Protestant Fane either. Henrietta Maria also spent lavishly on her own dresses and jewels, and built a Catholic chapel at Somerset House with gold and silvery reliquaries, paintings, statues, an impressive Baroque garden, and an alterpiece by Rubens. Thus the ‘gratious king/ Good in Himself’ is lead ‘seduc’t’ by ‘Eve’, and in the process ‘Discerting of his counsailes great and wise’, much to the detriment of the Royalist cause.

There are a number of theories as to the extent of Henrietta Maria’s influence over the embattled Charles during the English Civil War. Wedgewood, for example, states that the Queen’s:

…mental ascendancy over her husband increased; he sought her advice on every subject, except religion and had been heard to regret that he could not make her a member of his council. Only in religion was there no understanding between them, for she was as devoted to the Church of Rome as he to the Church of England.79

Quinton Bone takes an opposing view and suggests that Charles seldom conversed with Henrietta Maria on questions of politics.80 Michelle A. White asserts that the Queen did, in fact, exercise political influence, particularly during the Civil War. But White adds that this was likely due to her public activities, rather than providing counsel to the King.81 Whatever the case, an overtly Catholic queen, unwilling to relinquish her Catholicism in England, became a difficult political issue for Charles. This difficulty was amplified by an English society already arguing over religion, morality, and politics. The Queen even incurred wrath from Puritans for continuing to act in masque plays throughout the 1630s. The result was an increasing intolerance of Henrietta Maria in Protestant, English society. She would even be blamed for the Irish Rebellion of 1641, believed to be orchestrated by the Jesuits, with whom she was linked in the public imagination.82 Thus, Charles, ‘Our Gratuitous King/ Good in Himself’ is portrayed as a

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79 Wedgewood, p. 74.
80 Quinton Bone, Henrietta Maria: Queen of the Cavaliers (Urbana, University of Illinois Press, 1972), p. iv.
81 White, p. 5.
82 Purkiss, p. 113.
man ‘seduc’t’ by his Eve, an opinion probably held by many in mid seventeenth-century England.

‘To Retiredness’, Fane’s most well known poem, was likely written during his period of house arrest in 1643, and around the same time as the political poem ‘The Times Steerage’. Both lament the path the Civil War has followed and reveal his moderate political sentiments more plainly than his early poetry. However, in ‘To Retiredness’ Fane draws on God’s comfort and delineates his estate as an anodyne to the pain of Civil War. Though the scene is secluded as it was in ‘Ode to N.B. an Angler’, Fane’s belief in his own salvation is much stronger than it was in ‘My Reformation’ and ‘My Invocation’. At the beginning of ‘To Retiredness,’ Fane declares that God is the only being to whom he owes allegiance:

Next unto God; to whom I owe
What e’er I here enjoy below,
I must indebted stand to Thee,
Great Patron of my Libertie;
For in the Cluster of affaires,
Whence there are dealing severall shares:
As in Trick Thou hast conveigh’d
Into my hand what can be said;
Whilst He who doth himself possess,
Makes all things pass him seem farr less.

(lines 1 – 10)

Even under house arrest, God is the ‘Great Patron of my Libertie’, rather than any authority on the Royalist or Parliamentary side. Fane stands ‘indebted’ to God, and remains the humble Christian even in his imprisonment. There is also a sense that Fane must await divine providence through both otium and negotium as Beecher did in ‘Ode to N.B. an Angler’. Though the persona owes ‘What e’er I here enjoy below’ to God, this otium is difficult to separate from the ‘cluster of affaires’ which ‘deal’ and ‘trick’ the unsuspecting. The emphasis on the indebtedness of man to God fits well with Fane’s humble brand of Christianity. Once again, neither Roundheads nor Cavaliers are to blame for the external, warring world which contains the ‘cluster of affairs’. Fane’s conviction that ‘he who doth himself possess,/ Makes all things pass him seem farr less,’ stands as his answer to problems of loyalty, politics, and obligation. If man ‘doth
himself possess’ in terms of his morality and religious convictions, then ‘all things pass
him seem farr less,’ and it is possible for man to find a Quietism\textsuperscript{83} and peace. It also
reinforces the divine providence of Civil War, where God’s plan for the world and
every soul that he has created is guided by His will. Accordingly, man must look to his
own Godly soul for guidance and understanding of such turbulent times.

Fane’s emphasis in ‘To Retiredness’ is in keeping with the Stoic doctrine of *sibi
imperiosus* much in favour with men of classical education and liberal understanding.
The connection between *otium* and *sibi imperiosus* parallels Horace’s\textsuperscript{84} link of virtue
and ideal in his *Sermo* II.7 which describes the man who controls his own life as the
freest, happiest man:

> Who, then, is free? The wise man who is master of himself,
> Who is frightened neither by poverty,
> Nor death, nor bondage,
> Who defies his passions, and scorns ambition.\textsuperscript{85}

Naturally, this Stoic idea of being *sibi imperiosus* found popularity among Royalists
like Fane who had their estates sequestrated during the Civil War. If there is a
consistency in Fane’s thinking from the 1620s to the Civil War period, it lies in his
desire to trust in God and Platonism for hope, for enlightenment, and for political
salvation. Fane had little personal faith in the King; through all the political changes of
the seventeenth century he kept a religious constancy, though only suggestions of his
Presbyterianism are revealed in his poetry. Fane writes of retirement because he likely
found it in keeping with the freedom and tolerance in society to which the poet had long
committed himself. Fane’s enforced retirement to his London House, then to Apethorpe,
must have been the way that he could come to ‘himself possess’, there patiently to await
events and as they unfolded.

Prefiguring Marvell’s Mower and in step with Herrick’s emphasis on ceremony and
tradition, Fane presents his persona as knowledgeable through the rhetorical reference to
the Mower in the field:

\textsuperscript{83} For an exploration of the Christian philosophy of Quietism, see David Macarthur, ‘Pragmatism,
\textsuperscript{84} Norbrook contends that Fane made Horace a Royalist symbol, offering alienated Royalists a coded
language of bonding and renewal, p. 254.
\textsuperscript{85} Horace, *Sermo* II. 7, quoted in Nanette C. Tamer’s “‘Sibi Imperiosus’: Cooper’s Horatian Ideal of Self-
tamer.html> [accessed 16th December 2011]. Translated by the author.
Here is no other Case in Law,
But what the Sun-burnt Hat of Straw,
With crooked Sickle reaps and bindes –
Up into Sheaves to help the hindes;
Whose aguing alon’s in this,
Which Cop lies well, and which amiss,
How the Hock-Cart with all its gear
Should be trick’d up, and what good chear,
Bacon with Cook’s reports express,
And how to make the Tenth goe less.

(lines 50 – 60)

The ‘Sun-burnt Hat of Straw’ is an oblique reference to a crown, and hence the King, whose ‘crooked Sickle reaps and bindes’. Yet this persona, like Marvell’s Mower in ‘The Mower Against Gardens’, is a self-made authority who decides ‘which Cops lies well, and which amiss’, perhaps misguided. Like the King, Cromwell and others in authority have failed to study ancient English law to guide their behavior, and here there is ‘no other case in law’ to guide the Mower. He makes decisions on ‘which Cop lies well, and which amiss’ according to his own opinion, though his ‘aguing alon’s in this’. The reference to ‘the Hock-Cart with all its gear’ which ‘Should be trick’d up’ confirms the imagined authority of the persona, who is all the while imagining ‘how to make the Tenth goe less’, and pay less tithe. Personal gain is his objective. Herrick and Fane are of one mind as to the political symbolism of the hock cart, and the fields for both of them are governed by ceremony. Whilst Fane in ‘To Retiredness’ is a benevolent overseer of the harvest, the Mower in ‘To Retiredness’ bears more similarity to the sinister Mowers in ‘Upon Appleton House’ who patrol and harvest the outer reaches of Nun Appleton. However, like the workers in ‘The Hock-Cart’, the workers here are given ‘good chear’ and ‘bacon’ as a reward for their toil.

Thus Fane’s musings on how to accept the Civil War as well as human frailty and its consequences, are ultimately understood through God and religious meditation. With the exterior world of violence excluded as it was in ‘Upon Appleton House’, Fane is at liberty to enjoy pastoral, innocent pleasures:

There, are no other Warrs, or Strife’s –
Encouragers, shrill Trumpets, Fyfes,  
Or horrid Drumms; but what Excels  
All Musick, Nature’s Minstrels  
Piping and Chriping, as they sit:  
Embrow’d in branches, dance to it:  
And if at all Those doe contest,  
It is in this, but, which sings best:  
And when they have contended long,  
I [though unseen] must judge the Song.

(lines 60 – 70)

There are no ‘other Warrs, or Strife’s’ in the garden, and Fane exists in a garden which is governed exclusively by him. The external world of ‘horrid Drumms’ may be beyond his control, but in his quiet estate, he is the one who must unseen ‘judge the Song’. The clamour of the instruments of war is replaced with natural music and song. The ‘piping and chirping’ of the grasshoppers, or Royalists, is reminiscent of the Puritan stance against music,\(^86\) and signals Fane’s liberty to do as he sees fit in his own domain. Insects were often used as representations of the Royalist and Parliamentary forces, and just as Marvell and Lovelace depicted Royalist ‘grasshoppers’, equally Lovelace created an unflattering portrait of Puritan values in ‘The Ant’. It is here that the notion of the good life takes on a transformation. Previously, nature was an escape from, and remedy for, human corruption. Yet in ‘To Retiredness’, the good life provides a model for the rest of England to follow. In his benevolence, Fane describes new ways of creating harmony in the world. From his Neoplatonic landscape, he can deduce God’s laws, and thus understand nature better in a bid to better understand the world.

On the eve of the Restoration, England and Fane finally enjoy a shared salvation. In ‘Wrot at Raynam June-23-1659’\(^87\) Fane marks ‘A change in Kingdoms, Powers, and States/ Smile on This sinfull Land’ (lines 4 – 5). England is absolved from its past sins. The poet appeals to God to ‘Now in these Our Times/ Cancell the Guilt of all our Crimes’ (lines 7 – 8) from Civil War. Gone is landscape-less expanse of sin seen in ‘My Redemption’ and ‘My Invocation’. Now, the ‘Conquering Sword’ (line 9) no longer

\(^{86}\) For further exploration of the relationship between Puritans and music, see Richard Crawford’s *America’s Musical Life: A History* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2005). See especially the chapter entitled ‘European Inroads: Early Christian Music Making’, pp. 15 – 28, which describes the approved ‘sacred singing’ that was sanctioned by Puritan leaders, p. 21.

\(^{87}\) Cain, pp. 305 – 306.
prevails, but the ‘Sunshine of Thy world’ (line 10) will ‘light us in our wayes’ (line 11) through the ‘Vine, Fig, Olive Tree’ (line 14) of the pastoral landscape.

Nevertheless, it is not until 1661 that Fane feels truly worthy of his own redemption. The poem ‘Wrot at Mereworth June-9-1661’ implores God’s guidance in a tone very similar to ‘To Retiredness’:

Graunt me such grace
As to Efface
Those Blots and Staines
My youthfull vaynes
Contracted had
Which were so bad

(lines 6 – 11)

Having recognised his past ‘blots and staines’ from his youth ‘which were so bad’ he better understands himself and his path to redemption. A man, as well as a nation, should be *sibi imperiosus*, and with the benefit of hindsight he can ‘efface’ those sinful days of war with God’s ‘grace’. Fane, and England, should be directed by laws of their own creation. Fane has cause to ‘look back’ (line 13) on his life, the Civil War, and the Cavalier sensibility, and decides:

To what of it I then did lack
And for the future Grant
I do not want
That forecast may implore
I sin no more
But in the Evning of my Setting Dayes
Throughly Repent, Amend, and guive Thee Praise.

(lines 14 – 20)

Fane does not suggest that he will ‘sin no more’, but instead ‘in the evening of my setting dayes’ he promises to ‘repent, amend’ and give praise to the Almighty. Though his path to salvation is still not assured, he lends himself similar advice that he gave to Ned Beecher in ‘Ode to N.B. an Angler’. He no longer sees himself as ‘lost/ soe small’

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88 Cain, p. 306.
(line 31), or ‘unfit./ To take the stampe, of any grace, or good’ (line 37 – 38) as he did in ‘My Reformation’. Instead, Fane is able to atone for his past sins just as England is, and in this attitude he regains his liberty.

In Fane’s manuscript poetry and ‘To Retiredness’, the poet reveals his belief in divine providence, and it was not to be coerced by Royalists or Cavaliers. Fane maintained a path of moderation throughout his life, and placed his faith in the institution of monarchy, God, friendship, and the cyclical nature of time. Though the locus amoenus of his early poetry successfully keeps the exterior world at bay, by the 1640s the nature of warring England is revealed in his verses. He is even-handed in his dealing of blame to both sides of politics, and denounces them for his own financial and spiritual losses, as well as those of greater England. It is in ‘To Retiredness’ that Fane seems the most contented, and in the business of being sibi imperious that his salvation is most assured. Amongst the turmoil of war, Fane initially sees more hope for the salvation of others than for himself. But at the end of his oeuvre, both Fane and England have the opportunity to atone for their sins, and it is in this redemption that both can know God’s grace. The firmest hope of a locus amoenus lies in the redeemed soul.
Chapter Four

Robert Herrick
‘The Hock-Cart’

When the fifty-seven year old Robert Herrick submitted the manuscript of *Hesperides* to his publisher in 1648, the Second Civil War had just begun.¹ The ubiquitous English antiquary Anthony Wood observed that Herrick’s volume of poetry ‘made him much admired in the time when they were published, especially by the generous and boon loyalists’.² The emphasis on the endurance of ceremony and tradition in *Hesperides* must have had an evocative and nostalgic impact on Royalists. Herrick’s pointedly Royalist poems within *Hesperides* were fitting for Cavaliers who had risen up against Cromwell in July 1648, and were decisively defeated at the Battle of Preston in August of the same year. So emphatic was Herrick’s allegiance to Charles I that the inscription on the title page of *Hesperides* reads ‘to the most illustrious and most hopeful prince, Charles, Prince of Wales’ who sat imprisoned in the Isle of Wight in the year of its publication. ‘The Hock-Cart, or Harvest Home’³ is the resonance of a Royalist locus amoenus which resided in the memory of the defeated. Though ‘The Hock-Cart’ is often discussed alongside ‘Corinna’s Going a-Maying’,⁴ this chapter largely focuses on ‘The Hock-Cart’.⁵ Many of the same ideas of ritual, Royalism, and tradition are examined in both poems, but a discussion of the locus amoenus in terms of the shared values between Herrick and his friend Mildmay Fane are fitting in the context of this thesis. Evidence of the wider popularity of Herrick’s Royalist poetry can be found in the copious poems from *Hesperides* which were subsequently included in the 1650 edition of the anthology *Witt’s Recreations*.⁶ The image encouraged by the Stuart court of an idealised English countryside dotted with benevolent gentry and their

1 Though it is certain that *Hesperides* was published in 1648, scholars disagree on the year that ‘The Hock-Cart’ was composed. For a detailed discussion of the various theories, see John Creaser’s ‘“Times Trans-Shifting”: Chronology and the Misshaping of Herrick’, *English Literary Renaissance*, 39 (2009), 163 – 196.

2 Anthony Wood, *Athenae Oxonienses: An Exact History of all the Writers and Bishops who have their Education in the University of Oxford: to which are added the Fasti, or the Annals of the said University*, ed. by Phillip Bliss, Vol 3 (Oxford: J. Parker, 1813), pp. 250 - 251.


5 See, for example, Richard E. Hughes, ‘Herrick’s “Hock Cart”: Companion Piece to “Corinna’s Going a – Maying”’, *College English*, 27 (1966), 420 - 422.

ever-burgeoning estates reflects an England under control. The tableau that Herrick creates and the debt he owes to the masque tradition flouted a Royalist spectacle rejected by Puritans. Cheery workers who cultivate their lord’s estate and English tradition with equal vigor render the landscape in ‘The Hock-Cart’ as immutable and peaceful in violent times. ‘The Hock-Cart’ speaks of Herrick’s allegiance to Charles I, the Church of England, and the sense of permanence that Stuart authority impresses on the microcosm of the estate.

The brief poem ‘Liberty’ in Hesperides warns that a ‘grief denied, though small/
Shakes the whole roof, or ruins all’. Herrick’s fears for Civil War England are envisaged in the sweeping destruction of ‘all’. ‘Liberty’ presages ruinous times, and stands counterpoised in Hesperides with ‘The Hock-Cart’, the subject of this chapter, which instead offers comfort to defeated Royalists and an impression of an English world that should have been. In 1648, customs such as the Harvest Home festival, enacted in ‘The Hock-Cart’, were perceived as pagan and idolatrous to many Puritans who railed against their continuation. Herrick unites the figures in his poetry with Charles I’s effort to renew ancient ritual customs through the Book of Sports, though he asserts his own Royalist position in ‘The Hock-Cart’ with a distinct lack of elitism.

The Herrick family were London goldsmiths, and Robert Herrick worked in the family business as a boy before being formally apprenticed to his uncle. He likely learned a great deal about the urbane world of London business at a formative age. In ‘The Hock-Cart’, that commercial, London realm and its values are challenged by a way of life where true prosperity is borne out of late medieval feudalism and customs. In desiring a return to traditional understandings of work and celebration in the interest of national stability, such a seemingly lighthearted harvest poem carries considerable political weight.

Herrick’s allegiance was to the King, a commitment he shared with many of his friends and patrons in Devon. Though Devon was technically a Royalist stronghold, the Parliamentary cause garnered significant support in the cities of the county. ‘The Hock-Cart’ exhibits an immutable, noble world replete with Royalist traditions and values threatened by the Civil War. The title page to Hesperides bears the Ovidian phrase ‘Effugient avidos carmina nostra rogos’ which translates as ‘My songs will escape the

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greedy funeral pyre’. With the Royalists defeated in Wales, Kent, Essex, and Colchester, the final Parliamentary victory at the Battle of Preston in Lancashire marked the end of the Second Civil War in 1648. The ‘funeral pyre’ of Royalist conquest gives reason for the nostalgic celebration and gravity which co-exists in the ‘songs’ which populate *Hesperides* and ‘will escape the greedy funeral pyre’ of Civil War conquest. By this time, Herrick had already been most unceremoniously ejected from his parish for refusing the Solemn League and Covenant. Parliamentary success at the end of the Second Civil War meant that Herrick was replaced with a Presbyterian vicar in 1647 who was to minister to Herrick’s former parish until the Restoration. With neither a stipend nor a home, Herrick remained in London, almost completely reliant on the charity of affluent families. The historian John Walker writes that ‘having no fifths paid him [Herrick] was subsisted by Charity’.¹⁰ Some of this charity came from his great friend Mildmay Fane, to whom ‘The Hock-Cart’ is dedicated, who paid Herrick 8 per annum until 1660.¹¹

Herrick himself symbolises Stuart repastoralisation. He was a ‘Londoner bourn’,¹² but after his time at Cambridge accepted a post as a vicar in Dean Prior, Devon, in 1626.¹³ Whilst his occupation in London before his relocation is unclear, the move imbued his poetry with a sensitivity towards rural life above that of London-based poets like Denham and Jonson. Though some scholars such as Leah Marcus argue that Herrick was unhappy with his ‘“exile” to Devonshire in 1630’,¹⁴ there is also evidence to indicate that he grew very fond of Devon and its inhabitants. Agricultural workers made up the majority of his congregation as Devon drew much of its trade from farming, as it does today. Herrick remarks on his visits from the poor of his parish in his poem ‘A Thanksgiving to God, for His House’:¹⁵

...the threshold of my door,

Is worn by th’poor;

¹¹ Walker, p. 213.
¹² Wood, p. 250.
¹³ Cain, ‘Robert Herrick’.
¹⁵ ‘A Thanksgiving to God For His House’, *Hesperides*, pp.199 – 201.
Who thither come and freely get
Good words, or meat

(lines 13 – 16)

The very threshold of the persona’s door ‘is worn by th’poor’, such is their number seeking ‘good words, or meat’ from him. Herrick almost certainly would have learnt much about the plight of the poor in Devon, and most likely drew on his own experiences ministering to his Devonian parish when he wrote these lines. However, Herrick did not spend all his time giving food and advice to the poor. According to Wood, he also ‘became much beloved by the gentry of those parts for his florid and witty discourse’, including the Giles family, the Northleighs, Lowmans, and Yards. The local gentry would have provided him with both friendship and social advantage. His verse probably circulated among this network of gentry, and perhaps even further afield than Devon. Ruth Connolly suggests that Herrick circulated his poetry amongst the gentry for three decades before he reworked his verses for publication in 1648.

The church of Dean Prior and Herrick’s modest vicarage lay separate from both the houses of his agricultural parishioners and the estates of the gentry. Just as Herrick’s housing was physically removed from both rich and poor, in ‘The Hock-Cart’ Herrick’s persona stands alone to mediate between these two societal groups. On one hand stands Herrick’s friend and patron Mildmay Fane, Earl of Westmorland, and on the other, the workers of his estate who bring in the harvest. In the seventeenth century, the church and vicarage would have been at the centre of community life as the vicar represented ecclesiastical authority in his parish. Equally, Herrick was at the centre of his rural community. Thus, the mediating role of Herrick’s persona in ‘The Hock-Cart’ probably reflects his role as mediator in his parish.

To support ceremony and customs in the mid-seventeenth century was not only a declaration of loyalty to Charles I, but an affirmation of devotion to high church Anglicanism. Bishop Thomas Morton asserted in 1618 that the Anglican church’s authority to impose religious rites was so intrinsic to the Anglican church that it was a derivation of the liberties granted in Magna Carta. He states unequivocally that

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16 Wood, p. 250.
17 Cain, ‘Robert Herrick’.
18 Ruth Connolly, ‘New Approaches to the Work of Robert Herrick’, Literature Compass, 6 (2009), 1177 – 1187. Connolly presents a fascinating discussion of the manner in which the technologies of printing affected the composition of Herrick’s poetry.
19 Thomas Morton, A defence of the innocencie of the three ceremonies of the Church of England viz. the surplice, crosse after baptisme, and kneeling at the receiving of the blessed Sacrament. Divided into two
'ceremonies may be held to be part of God’s worship'. Throughout the 1620s and 1630s, Puritan thought and influence grew and found resonance with many, including the clergyman Peter Smart. In 1628, Smart denounces Anglican ceremonies in his vitriolic sermon given at Durham Cathedral when he poses the question:

> What are ceremonies? Are all vain? Are all superstitious? God forbid. Many are tolerable, a few necessary; most are ridiculous, and some abominable.  

Smart was contemptuous of what he viewed as ‘a world of ceremonies’ carried out at Durham. Archdeacon Cosin was unequivocally singled out for attack, and the introduction to Smart’s published sermon lists ‘a brief, but true historical of some notorious acts and speeches of Mr. John Cosins’. Smart went on to label Anglican church services an affront to God himself, as:

> the sacrament itself is turned near into a theatrical stage play, that when men’s minds should be occupied about heavenly meditations, of Christ’s bitter death and passion, of their own sins and of faith and repentance, of the joys of heaven, and the torments of hell, their ears are possessed with pleasant tunes, and their eyes fed with pompous spectacles.

The tableau created by Herrick in ‘The Hock-Cart’, as well as the masquing overtones of the poem, go straight to the heart of what most offended Smart about ‘the sacrament itself’. The theatre of ceremony in both ecclesiastical and poetic terms is an affirmation of Royalism and Anglicanism, which offended Puritanical sensibilities. Moreover, Cosin was not without influence, and had formally gained a royal commission to compose devotions for Henrietta Maria’s ladies in waiting. He also maintained a firm friendship
with William Laud, Archbishop of Canterbury. Both ardent Royalists, they viewed ritual in church services as indispensible.25 Although Smart was imprisoned for his views in 1630 and his sermon publicly burned, by 1641 Puritan influence had grown considerably. At the dawn of the Civil War he was released from prison and called to give evidence at the trial of Cosin who he had publicly denounced fourteen years before. In fact, some of the evidence leveled against Cosin was drawn directly from Smart’s sermon.26 When Smart’s petition was read by the Long Parliament in 1641 and Cosin appeared to defend the charges, he reportedly bowed before a Common’s committee. A member of the committee was heard to remark ‘Heere is no Altar, Dr Cosin’, to which he replied ‘Why then, I hope there shall be no Sacrifice’.27 Though Cosin was found unfit to hold his position, he escaped further prosecution. Approaches to styles of worship had changed along with the balance of power in England. The difference in the verdict of charges brought against Smart in 1630, then Cosin in 1641, illustrates the gradual but decisive shift of power from Royalist to Puritan in the first half of the seventeenth century.

Finally, when Laud himself was tried, clearly the Common’s committee that sentenced him was even more unsympathetic to the ritual and Royalist cause. The committee of the House of Commons outlined the ways in which the Head of the Anglican Church had despoiled places of worship in detail. Listed in their catalogue of evidence were the chapels at Lambeth, Cambridge, Oxford, Whitehall, Westminster Abbey, as well as cathedrals and churches throughout England degraded ‘with Popish superstitious Crucifixes, Altars, Bowings, Ceremonies, Tapers, Copes, and other Innovations’.28 Though the charges brought against Cosin and Laud bear much similarity, in 1641 the charges against Cosin resulted only in his dismissal. In 1645 the charges brought against Laud resulted in his execution. The use of both corporeal images and material objects in English church services became a highly contentious and
dangerous act, making Herrick’s decision to publish *Hesperides* in 1648 a similarly antagonistic decision.\(^{29}\)

In Herrick’s ‘The Hock-Cart’ he creates the persona of the master of ceremonies in this little agricultural community. The poet endeavors to represent the excitement of the Harvest Home festival and the weary triumph of the workers who have toiled year-long for communal prosperity. The agricultural labourers and their lord, Mildmay Fane, are both present but Herrick’s mediating persona refers to the labourers first, despite the dedication of the poem to Fane. The labourers of the estate rattle home with the hock cart full of ‘ears of corn’ to celebrate the traditional Harvest Home, a pagan religious festival signifying the end of harvest time:

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Come Sons of Summer, by whose toil
We are the lords of wine and oil:
By whose tough labours, and rough hands,
We rip up first, then reap our lands.
Crowned with the ears of corn, now come,
And to the pipe sing harvest home.
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(lines 1 – 6)

Herrick’s persona chooses to first ‘sing’ in praise of the ‘harvest home’ festival and the workers themselves, rather than Fane. The ‘Sons of Summer’ have performed the ‘tough labours’ to ‘reap our lands’, so they generate the overwhelming sense that they have earned this feast. This scene does not feature a benevolent lord providing for his employees; instead, the workers are the ‘lords’ who provide for Fane and the estate. The ‘hands’ of the labourers are roughened by their industry tending to the harvest. Though they bear ‘rough hands’ as a result of their work, Fane’s farm hands do not appear particularly burdened by their toil. Their proclivity for georgic song at the end of a most arduous harvest demonstrates the estate’s sense of community. The opening six lines of ‘The Hock-Cart’ are not far removed from the beginning of Virgil’s *Georgics*: he too writes of ‘…the present help of farmers/ (Come, Fauns and Dryad maidens, dance: / Yours are the gifts I sing)’.\(^{30}\) The act of singing in ‘The Hock-Cart’ connects Herrick to Virgil’s georgic tradition. It also signifies the commencement of worship and festivities,

\(^{29}\) David W. Landrum explores the relationship between Anglicans, Puritans, and Herrick’s *Noble Numbers* in “‘To Seek of God’: Enthusiasm and the Anglican Response in Robert Herrick’s ‘Noble Numbers’”, *Studies in Philology*, 89 (1992), 244 – 255.

with both pagan and Christian overtones. The piping and singing as the harvest is brought in reinforces the intrinsic value of the labourers to the estate. They are not only valued for their toil, but for the manner in which their toil is accomplished: with care for tradition and community.

Like Herrick, Fane was a Royalist in matters of politics—seemingly a forgone conclusion given his enormous wealth and privilege. Eleven years younger than Herrick, Fane was not an elitist, and in fact articulates his own moderate political views in his own poetry.31 Given Fane’s own commitment to the via media, it is likely that he would have found Herrick’s own mediating persona in ‘The Hock-Cart’ in keeping with his own moderate sympathies. Fane was no stranger to politics: he had been an MP for Peterborough and Kent for most of the 1620s, gave money to the Royalist cause, and was captured at the Battle of Edgehill in 1642. So closely connected to the King was he that Charles I was the godfather to Fane’s eldest son, though this may have been a sign of allegiance over love. Fane’s loyalty was tied to the monarchy, but his formative years as an MP had taught him the importance of the collective Parliamentary voice. As he observed the tensions between the King and his Parliament unfold, Fane maintained his moderate political views along with a belief in one’s duty to the King to safeguard English peace. But Fane showed reluctance to take his expected place beside the King’s generals on the battlefield.32 Fane’s Civil War military service was brief, as he was captured almost immediately at the battle of Edge Hill in 1642 and imprisoned until 1643. His lands were sequestrated, which ultimately cost him £3300, a substantial sum. Even though Fane pledged his commitment to the Commonwealth to ensure his freedom, his lands did not return to his control until 1644. Like so many Royalists, between 1645 and 1660 Fane retired completely from public life and turned once again to the management of his estates, finally deciding to make his home at his estate in Apethorpe, Northamptonshire. Fane’s steady political moderation, described in his manuscript poetry, eventually culminated in the publication of the more explicitly political Otia Sacra in 1648 at the urging of Herrick himself.33 In ‘The Hock-Cart’, the ‘Sons of Summer’ embody the Royalist values of ritual and tradition which Herrick and Fane so believed in.

31 I discuss Fane’s politics in more detail in Chapter Three of this thesis.
32 Tom Cain, The Poetry of Mildmay Fane, Earl of Westmorland, from the Fulbeck, Harvard, and Westmorland Manuscripts (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000), pp. 15 - 16. Cain finds that Fane was critical of the war and pleaded illness when he was first summoned to fight for the King in 1639.
33 Cain, p. 2.
Herrick’s persona unites with Fane’s agricultural workers by declaring that ‘we are the lords of wine and oil’ suggesting unity and easy familiarity with the workers and their ‘toil’. It is not Fane who speaks or directs his workers. The persona is in the midst of the action, virtually claiming an identity as a laborer who has struggled with the ‘tough labours’ and developed the resulting ‘rough hands’. Professing an almost-involvement in their labours, and undoubtedly involved in the tableau here created, the persona can definitively state that it is through the ‘toil’ of these labourers that the last harvest has come home. Moreover, and more prominently, it is through the toil of the workers that Fane can enjoy his status and prosperity. The roughened hands of his tenants denote the years of ‘tough labours’ they have endured for the prosperity of the estate and denote the source of Fane’s income. The ferocity of ripping and reaping the land further speaks of the physical demand on the workers. They collectively ‘rip up first’, ploughing the land ready for seeding, and then ‘reap our lands’ and bring the harvest in to the heart of the estate. These actions of ploughing and reaping mark both the estate and the labourers who toil within it. In this way, the workers are central to the unfolding drama: along with Herrick’s persona, they are the heart and wealth of the estate.

Whilst the physical and ‘tough’ nature of the labourers’ efforts is articulated by the persona, the actual day-to-day tasks of Fane’s workers would have been much more burdensome than they appear in ‘The Hock-Cart’. In the seventeenth century, few labour-saving approaches to work existed, and toiling on the Earl of Westmorland’s estate must have been enormously demanding. Even the most unassuming of tasks which constituted part of everyday life required considerable effort, from using a sparking kit to start a fire to fetching water for the household. Nearly two hundred years later, the agricultural labourers were described by Anna Bray as possessing ‘manners rude’ which were somewhat peculiar to themselves, and their clothes kept sound through the ‘industrious patching of their good mothers’. Perhaps this clarifies why Herrick chose to momentarily ennoble and create these workers ‘lords’ in their boundless ‘toil’. Even though the persona identifies with the workers and imagines himself as one of them in ‘The Hock-Cart’, the actual inequality between the labourers and Fane was glaring. James Turner finds that Fane received £5,750 in rent and in

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35 Bray, p. 25.
excess of £1000 worth of grain in the year of 1647. By contrast, each labourer that year received five pounds and their festive dinner.\(^{36}\)

‘Corinna’s Going a-Maying’ conceals the social and financial realities of life in Devon Prior even more than ‘The Hock-Cart’. Reveling villagers remain equally anonymous in the town and in the woods. The village, as a place of commercial transaction, is itself is reabsorbed into the countryside through the greening of the town:

Come, my Corinna, come; and coming, mark
How each field turns a street; each street a park
Made green, and trimmed with trees: see how
Devotion gives each house a bough,
Or branch

(lines 29 – 33)

The amalgamation of pagan and Christian worship can also be observed in the generic ‘Devotion’ that is the reason behind such festive greening. The festivities which in ‘The Hock-Cart’ are centered around Fane’s estate have now shifted to the village itself, where the villagers appropriate such May Day celebrations to reinforce their own internal bond of community. Such ceremonies are not merely enacted for Fane’s benefit, but for the benefit of the entire parish.

The festivities about to commence in ‘The Hock-Cart’ are the reward for labour. The contribution of the harvest to the success or failure of communal endeavours is reminiscent of Book One of Virgil’s \textit{Georgics}.\(^{37}\) The labourers of Fane’s land have a vital role in the Harvest Home festival and the running of the estate. Similarly, for the farm labourers in Book One of the \textit{Georgics},\(^{38}\) toil is of chief importance to society’s success, farming or otherwise. The workers are indispensible to the farm, and the act of tilling the soil becomes a didactic experience which secures the notion of the common good:

The Father himself
Willed that the path of tillage be not smooth,
And first ordained that skill should cultivate

\(^{38}\) Virgil, p. 60.
The land, by care sharpening the wits of mortals,
Nor let his kingdom laze in torpid sloth.
Before Jove’s reign no tenants mastered holdings,
Even to mark the land with private bounds,
Was wrong: men worked for the common store, and earth
Herself, unbidden, yielded all more fully.

(lines 121 – 129)

For the workers, the ‘path of tillage be not smooth’ yet it sharpens ‘the wits of mortals’. In this way, the act of plowing cultivates virtue and reason, along with crops for the ‘common store’. Virgil creates a poetic farm that is so natural in its order and virtue that the ‘earth/ Herself, unbidden’ will yield produce ‘all more fully’ as long as the kingdom does not ‘laze in torpid sloth’. These farm labourers work within a community on communal land, benefiting all who dwell therein. This ennobling pastoral tableau is much like that enacted by the workers and Herrick in ‘The Hock-Cart’. The agricultural community at Fane’s estate works for the common good, which includes their lord. Fane’s estate eschews ‘torpid sloth’ and though his land is marked with ‘private bounds’, those dwelling within are fortified and ordered by their communal efforts. So natural is the order and community at the estate, that the full extent of their toil is obscured. The final part of the harvest trundles home, yet the degree of ploughing, reaping, and harvesting, and the subsequent toll on the workers, is not fully explored. Nevertheless, this system is conducive to the earth yielding crops ‘all more fully’, and though the ardours of the workers are significant, they cultivate order and reason, which are infinitely valuable to the operation of the estate and to themselves.

Herrick addresses the workers first, then Fane, in a kind of joining together of the two within a community where everyone knows their place. True to Stuart values, Fane is not at court in London, but remains at his country estate to be a part of the rural celebrations and fulfill his lordly obligations. The festivities and the harvest will only be successful if Fane is there to play his part. But the tableau is, by its very nature, fictional. There is no doubt that this poem is populated with echoes of Fane’s real-life labourers and Fane himself, but the estate is nostalgic, expounding feudal notions of community. Herrick invites Fane to ‘come forth’ and oversee the triumphant entry of the decorated hock cart in this fictionalised world:

Come forth, my lord, and see the cart
Dressed up with all the country art:
See here a maukin, there a sheet,
As spotless pure as it is sweet:
The horses, mares, and frisking fillies,
Clad all in linen white as lilies.

(lines 7 – 12)

Herrick initially describes the festive scene from within the tableau, then moves outside it to stand by Fane, so that the Lord can demonstrate his solidarity with his labourers. Once Herrick invites Fane to ‘come forth, my lord, and see the cart’ each element of the tableau is pointed out to Fane by Herrick, as if they both were admiring a painting, or in this case, ‘country art’. The ‘maukin’, or scarecrow, clearly plays some part in this festival, but the effigy also romanticises the actual job of scaring birds which would have been held by a child. Though the workers earlier arrived at the estate with the marks of their labour visible, the work horses, who probably would have incurred similar abrasions, now arrive ‘Clad all in linen’, sanitised for the scene. The persona mediates between the voices of labourer and lord in the poem, but he describes the scene from a distance; a kind of double perspective. Herrick places himself between the lord and the labourers to make unequivocal the prevailing community relations. He presents this revered social order to Fane as a locus amoenus under threat from Civil War forces. Nonetheless, there remains the question of Herrick’s perspective. In the pursuit of this medieval, cheerful, rural England, it is wise to remember that this kind of English community, in all likelihood, never actually existed. Liana Vardi argues that this medieval view of peasants as servile and bound to their masters was superseded in the Early Modern period. In reality, peasants were in command of the fields they tilled and this command was reflected in seventeenth-century depictions of workers. Herrick’s tableau is, then, a romanticising of feudal values. The order so on display at Fane’s estate has traditional and reciprocal community relations which naturally bind the members of the estate to each other. In this way, Herrick’s persona, the agricultural workers, and their lord are all joined in a steady and well-ordered unification, where each knows their place in this idealised feudal order.

41 Vardi, p. 1379.
The tableau created by Herrick and enacted by his persona in ‘The Hock-Cart’ shares elements of its ideology and structure with the Stuart court masque. The cheerful ‘rustics’, the ‘country art’, the pleasing pastoral landscape, and the promulgation of Royalist values all specify the influence of such aristocratic entertainment. Stuart policy was disseminated to the court and kingdom via this theatrical spectacle, which included allegorical characters, dancing, music, and picturesque tableaux. Stuart masques were enacted within imagined pastoral topography, a perspective on landscape further manipulated by Inigo Jones’s introduction of moveable scenery. Through the proscenium arch, the actors played to the King, arranging and privileging his viewpoint in the theatrical landscape. Such settings would often endeavor to achieve the look of topographic verisimilitude, as Herrick does with his fatigued workers bringing in the harvest in his idealised landscape. David Bevington and Peter Holbrook have suggested that, rather than the locus of a dominating monarch and a one-way communication of authority, the masque form should be looked on as an arena of negotiation, where competing groups of courtiers jockeyed for position and influence. However, it remains that there were nine Stuart proclamations ordering the nobility back to their estates to keep the peace of the realm and subdue agrarian insurgency over enclosure. Thus, Fane’s presence at the Harvest Home festival styles him as the personification of Stuart policy. The civilised art of the court masque is now the ‘country art’ of Fane’s estate. This art harmonises the opposition of court and country to yield a new community inspired by Stuart policy.

The court masque, like ‘The Hock-Cart’, is a performance which embodies and expresses kingly authority. Like Charles’s aristocratic entertainments, the viewer both witnesses and receives ideological imperatives in the performance as they do in Herrick’s idealistic, sylvan tableau. In Herrick’s poem, the viewer observes the persona’s political directives to the characters in the line ‘Feed him ye must, whose food fill’s you’ (line 52), and sees that directive tempered by comic scenes, in the worker who runs ‘after with their breeches rent’ (line 25). However, the viewer’s domain is not discerned by the personages within the tableau. The masquers are anonymous, just as Herrick’s workers are. Their individuality is concealed from the viewer, and instead masquers are rendered as allegorical figures who personify Royalist virtues. Equally,}

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Fane’s agricultural workers are men of obscured identity, representing the Royalist values of tradition and ancient community. But the masque, like the Harvest Home Festival, is a ritualistic display, which draws on ancient pastimes and values to illustrate the dangers associated with Puritan and Parliamentarian ideology. Even though everyone knows their place in a masque performance and ‘The Hock-Cart’, the threat of disorder, or chaos, lies just beyond both.\footnote{Gerald Eades Bently’s A Book of Masques: In Honour of Allardyce Nicoll (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1967) provides an excellent introduction to the masque form.}

The persona refers to the reveling labourers in classical, antiquated terms that align Herrick’s persona with Fane as a scholarly equal. Using such literary terms as ‘swain’ and ‘youngling’ to address workers in real life seems doubtful, even in such a stratified social order as an estate. This mode of address features terms that labourers would potentially not understand. However, these terms also achieve a solidarity with the reader who Herrick implies has the same literary and intellectual background as himself, and has the capacity to understand the classical and pastoral implications of this terminology. The persona’s shift in address to the ‘rural younglings’ enjoying the festivities also marks the double perspective at play in ‘The Hock-Cart’: one centering on the workers, the other on Fane. The persona’s explanation to Fane of the revelries is infused with a delight at seeing the labourers of the estate ‘bound for joy’:

\begin{quote}
The harvest swains and wenches bound
For joy, to see the hock-cart crowned.
About the cart, hear how the rout
Of rural younglings raise the shout
\end{quote}

(lines 13 – 16)

As unlikely as the address of ‘harvest swains’ or ‘rural younglings’ is in real life, in the poem these fanciful terms of address mark out the shift in address from worker to Lord. This terminology is not a mode of presenting the workers in a condescending fashion, but rather, Herrick’s method of idealising the scene and lamenting the threat to this timeless, feudal system.

The order of Fane’s estate in ‘The Hock-Cart’ is a Royalist fortification against the violent Civil War world of Roundheads and Cavaliers on the battlefield, and the threat of class war closer to home. The 1630s and 1640s were marked not only by tensions between the King and Parliamentarians, but concerns that isolated, agrarian uprisings
would develop into class conflict.\textsuperscript{45} Both well-to-do Cavaliers and Roundheads probably feared the impact insurgency could have on their livelihood. For many, their very status as land owners was almost completely dependent on producing wealth from the land. For the labourers, the land was concomitantly the mark of a labourer’s authority to rework the landscape, and a symbol of their omission from the results of their toil. Even in ‘The Hock-Cart’, the harvest celebrations are illuminated whilst the means of achieving that harvest are partially obscured. Gerrard Winstanley’s ‘Diggers Christmas-Carol’ from 1650 indicates that landowners were sometimes regarded with suspicion by their workers, as ‘Lord of Mannors./ With fines, quit-Rents, and Heriots’\textsuperscript{46} whilst landlords ‘make the poor their slave’.\textsuperscript{47} Though armed attacks on property naturally caused some trepidation for landlords, they occurred infrequently.\textsuperscript{48} The spectre of full scale agrarian revolt was perceived as an ever-present threat to their revenue and status.\textsuperscript{49} Land was both the \textit{locus} and reason for struggle. In defending the natural and traditional hierarchy of Fane’s estate, Herrick casts out violence.

Pagan and Christian religious practices, along with Devonian superstition, are entwined in ‘The Hock-Cart’ and amplify the reverence of the scene. The workers’ acts of piety in ‘The Hock-Cart’ are observed by Fane and Herrick’s persona, yet they do not play a meaningful part in the proceedings themselves. The persona pronounces the devotional practices of the workers, as:

Some bless the cart; some kiss the sheaves;
Some prank them up with oaken leaves:
Some crosse the fill-horse; some with great
Devotion, stroke the home-borne wheat.

(lines 19 – 22)

These traditional rites are enacted with much earnestness, as the ‘Devotion’ of the farm hands dominates the scene. The crossing of the ‘fill-horse’ is a sign of reverence that

\textsuperscript{45} Christopher Hill, \textit{Puritanism and Revolution: Studies in the Interpretation of the English Revolution of the 17th Century} (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1968), p.154 – 155. Hill outlines that conflict leading up to the Civil War, and the Civil War itself, were more to do with class war than scholars have previously considered.

\textsuperscript{46} Gerrard Winstanley, ‘The Diggers Christmas-Carroll’ in \textit{Digger Tracts} transc. by Clifford Stetner \texttt{<http://phoenixandturtle.net/excerptmill/hopton.htm>} [accessed 4th October 2011].

\textsuperscript{47} Winstanley, ‘The Diggers Song’.

\textsuperscript{48} Hugh Jenkins, \textit{Feigned Commonwealths} (Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 1998), p. 22. Though Jenkins only describes the Midlands Revolts of 1607 briefly, and in terms of Jonson’s poetry, his analysis illustrates the unrest that existed in the countryside and the consternation it gave to landlords.

\textsuperscript{49} Jenkins, p. 22.
bears as much solemnity as Herrick’s own ecclesiastical services would have borne. Alongside this Christian gesture, the stroking of the ‘home-borne wheat’, the kissing of the sheaves, and the decoration, or ‘prank’ of the cart with oaken leaves, resound with pagan ritual performance. Pagan reverence was an integral part of rural, Devonian life, and in Anna Bray’s 1837 record of her husband’s parish, she observes and records the same pagan worship enacted by Devonian locals that Herrick had written about centuries before. Although the passage is lengthy, it bears repeating here for its likeness to ‘The Hock-Cart’:

One evening, about the end of harvest, I was riding out on my pony, attended by a servant who was born and bred a Devonian. We were passing by a field on the borders of Dartmoor where the reapers were assembled. In a moment the pony started nearly from one side of the way to the other, so sudden came a shout from the field, which gave him this alarm. On my stopping to ask the servant what all the noise was about, he seemed surprised by the question, and said ‘It was only the people making their games as they always did to the spirit of the harvest.’ Such a reply was sufficient to encourage me to stop immediately; as I felt certain here was to be observed some curious vestige of a most ancient superstition; and I soon gained all the information I could wish to obtain on the subject. The offering to the spirit of the harvest is thus made.

When the reaping is finished, towards evening the labourers select some of the best ears of corn from the sheaves; these they tie together, and it is called the nack. Sometimes, as it was when I witnessed the custom, this nack is decorated with flowers, twisted in with the reed, which gives it a grey and fantastic appearance.50

The ceremony of ‘The Hock-Cart’ clearly endured in Devonshire until at least the early nineteenth century for the same reason it features in Herrick’s poem: it was an orderly way for a community to uphold societal strength. Furthermore, it is Herrick’s view of the importance of this kind of ceremony and this kind of lord of the manor. It is as vital to the wellbeing of the lord as it is to the rural folk that the harvest festival is repeated,

50 Bray, p. 329.
and the ‘people make games as they always did, to the spirit of the harvest’. The Hock-Cart’ wields a Roman and pagan appearance that counters Puritan ideology. The agrarian workers are Roman, yet they practice and uphold English custom. Herrick associates the pagan with the Christian at a time when Cromwell’s forces had defeated the Royalist army and freely condemned all things that were reminiscent of ceremony or paganism. To the Royalist and classically-styled Herrick, images resounding with blessing, ornamentation, and tradition likely offered happy stability and respite from the Civil War, although this must have been a very dangerous polemic to publish at the end of the Civil War. The accent on the classical and the pagan in the poem is everywhere, and in ‘The Hock-Cart’ pagan celebrations stand alongside Christian ‘prayers’. The religious beliefs expounded in ‘The Hock-Cart’ blend into one universal, sanctified moment.

Fane and his workers exist in harmony with each other, a relationship which Herrick’s persona encourages and fortifies. Fane affords his farm hands the tools needed for sowing and harvesting his land, as well as an immutable place in this sanctified, communal domain. In turn, his workers pursue their labours to feed both Fane and themselves with due attention to their spiritual requirements. The succession of planting and reaping defines their harmonious bond, and is punctuated by the seasonal festivities that mark their transition. The cycle of the seasons and the harvest conclude with a great feast, reminiscent of the Eucharist itself, which suggests that Herrick calls for a liturgy of labour, liturgy of church, and a liturgy of state. Robert Keller submits that there are no overt references to Christianity in ‘The Hock-Cart’, though he states that the poem constitutes an elaborate metaphor for salvation. However, and more specifically, the collecting of the harvest in the hock cart summons images of the gathering of souls by Christ. When considered in light of Marvell’s sinister Mowers who, wittingly and unwittingly, mow down souls instead of gathering them, Herrick’s image speaks of security within the locus amoenus. Leah Marcus refers to Herrick’s use of religious language in profane places as being essential to the Royalist ideology Herrick defends. The poet contends that if the stability of such a liturgical scene as the Harvest Home festival could be manifest at a national level, England would be able to achieve the sort of harmony that exists between Fane and his reveling workers.

31 Bray, p. 329.
32 Robert Keller, ‘From Ambarvalia to Harvest Home and Beyond: Herrick’s Veiled Christianization of Tibullus in “The Hock-Cart”’, Discoveries, 18 (2001), 5 – 7 (p. 5). Keller goes on to argue that much of ‘The Hock-Cart’ is based on the Odes of Tibullus in terms of thematic concerns and structure.
33 Leah Marcus, ‘Herrick’s “Hesperides” and the “Proclamation Made for May”’, Studies in Philology, 76 (1979), 49 – 74 (p. 50).
Alongside devotion, Herrick also indicates that not all the labourers bear the same reverence for the festival. Herrick’s persona continues to comment on the action of the Harvest Home festival as the master of ceremonies, but the next three lines are tinged with a little exasperation:

While other Rustics, less attend
To Prayers, then to Merryment,
Run after with their breeches rent.

(lines 23 – 25)

At first, Herrick seems to take the part of Fane, evinced in the slightly vexed manner with which he refers to the ‘harvest swains and wenches’ with ‘breeches rent’. Herrick no doubt had great sympathy for the members of his parish as his threshold was ‘worn by the poor’, though he was equally capable of annoyance with his parishioners. During a Sunday service, Herrick was said to have thrown a book at a parishioner who fell asleep during his sermon, with a curse for his inattention. He also wrote epigrams on the odours and flatulence of some of his parishioners, later deemed unfit for gentle readers in a nineteenth century edition of Herrick’s work. Herrick may have had a particular parishioner in mind when he imaged a reveler running with his ‘breeches rent’ though there is no proof of this. William C. Johnson detects the same ‘playful seriousness’ in Herrick’s ‘Sack’ poems. In any case, the ‘rustics’ who are disinterested in ‘prayers’ and more interested in ‘Merryment’ are the ones who meet with his playful wrath in the poem as they do in real life. This could be read as derisive scene indicating Herrick saw his parishioners as foolish, perhaps to gain favour with Fane and his other noble readers. However, it does not do to damn Herrick by association. Herrick maintained many friendships with Fane and the nobility of his parish. Though he was probably tied in to a firm network of patronage, this is not to say that he did not identify with, and have sympathy for, estate workers.

The persona turns back to address the ‘swains’ and ‘wenches’, inviting them to feast at the ‘lords hearth,/ Glitt’ring with fire’, creating a Chaucerian impression of a

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medieval great hall, replete with hospitality and food.\(^57\) The workers and their lord enjoy each other’s company at the very heart of the estate and share in the repast as a tangible result of their efforts and success:

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For your mirth,
Ye shall see first the large and cheefe
Foundation of your Feast, Fat Beefe:
With Upper Stories, Mutton, Veale
And Bacon, (which makes full the meale)
With sev’rall dishes standing by,
As here a Custard, there a Pie,
And here all tempting Frumentie.
And for to make the merry cheere,
If smiking Wine be wanting here,
There’s that, which drowns all care, stout Beere.
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(lines 27 – 37)

At the table, matters of finance are hinted at and the rustic and inexpensive food from the estate is favoured at the table. The plain food offered to the workers might be less costly than ‘smirking wine’ or imported delicacies like pineapple and tomatoes, but the food and ‘stoute Beere’ is far more conducive to the ‘merry cheere’. The feast is doubly relished because the workers have produced this food and drink themselves. Such sentimentalities regarding the myth of Merry England are an inextricable part of Stuart policy, but these sentiments were also keenly disseminated by traditionalist Anglican churchmen like Herrick himself. As early as the 1620s, Anglican Bishop Richard Corbett’s poem entitled ‘Proper New Ballad, Intitled the Faries’ Farewell, or God a Mercy Will’ described the decay of pastoral ‘rings and roundelays’ and rural merriment due largely to the rise of Puritan ideology.\(^58\) Amid the nostalgia for Merry England is the irony that the workers partaking in the feast have prepared the whole meal themselves. Herrick’s feast in ‘The Hock-Cart’ is a joining together of worker and lord around the hearth in a microcosmic examination of how England should be.

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Alongside the feasting, there is a nostalgia for feudalism, and hence, a distinctly anti-capitalist sentiment. In *Drama and Society in the Age of Jonson*, L.C. Knights argues that this anti-capitalist sentiment in the seventeenth century equates to support of Marxist style economics. In fact, the opposite is true. Like Herrick, Jonson does not advocate a Marxist-style system where wealth is redistributed; rather, he longs for a return to feudalism where money is equally unnecessary. There is a fear present in Herrick’s feasting scene that capitalism may destroy the old social order, as well as the source of rustic beef, mutton, and beer. In reality, a mystified feudal structure which supplants an equally mystified capitalist structure would probably denote the exchange of one form of oppression for another to many workers. Levellers and Roundheads were sweeping away traditional behaviours on the way to discovering new, capitalistic means of utilising land, a sense of order which Herrick perceives to be deeply threatened and on the way out. As a symbol of re-affirmation to the old feudal order and their community, Herrick’s persona instructs the estate workers to salute each element of ‘the common-wealth’:

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Which freely drink to your lord’s health,
Then to the plough, (the common-wealth)
Next to the flails, your fans, your fats;
Then to the maids with wheaten hats:
To the rough sickle, and crook’d scythe,
Drink, frolic, boys, till all be blithe.
Be mindful, that the lab’ring neat
(As you) may have their fill of meat.
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(lines 38 – 45)

The workers are invited by Herrick’s persona to praise their little community: Fane, the plough, the Commonwealth, the maids in ‘wheaten hats’, even the ‘rough sickle’. All play an important role in the success of the estate. Real wealth is common, though money is unnecessary in such a scene, and this common wealth is created because of these labourers’ efforts behind the plough. This ploughing, the source of ‘the common-

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60 Knights, pp. 200 – 227.
wealth’, conjures an image of a repastoralised Commonwealth, both in the sense of Stuart policy and the physical act of planting the harvest on the estate. In the same vein, the title of Herrick’s *Hesperides* denotes the garden of *Hesperus*, an allegorical place of retreat which is subsequently dedicated to Charles I.\(^{62}\) *Hesperides* is the means of creating a poetic *locus amoenus*. This symbolism inspires political associations with Charles I and the nobility of retirement for defeated Royalists at the end of the Civil War. The importance of responsibility and charity strengthens the communal relations of an estate which has no need for money, and fortifies this feudal community against capitalism. Herrick’s persona participates in, and exhibits, a lost world, and by recreating it in the mid-seventeenth century, demonstrates how it can be recovered.

Herrick’s persona articulates the bounds of Fane’s charity at the end of the poem. As dutiful and hard working as Fane’s labourers have proven themselves to be, with excessive amount of beer they may become too ‘blithe’ if the festivities continue. The revelers begin to move away from ceremony and back to the ‘plough/ And harrow’ in readiness for the cycle of sowing and reaping to begin again:

\[
\text{As you, may have their fill of meat.} \\
\text{And know, besides, ye must revoke} \\
\text{The patient ox unto the yoke,} \\
\text{And all go back unto the plough} \\
\text{And harrow, though they’re hanged up now.} \\
\text{(lines 45 – 49)}
\]

The word ‘revoke’ is used strategically here. In this section it means ‘to call back’\(^{63}\) in a legal sense, underscoring their obligation to do away with festive guise and reprise their roles as agricultural workers. However sensitively the revelers are described, these labourers are close to being mere symbols of their labour in the final lines of ‘The Hock-Cart’, despite Herrick’s obvious compassion. They are bound to the tools that enable sowing and reaping, such as the ‘plough/ And harrow’. Like the ‘patient ox’, they are re-harnessed to their work without apparent complaint. Indeed, the line ‘all go back unto the plough’ indicates the mass movement away from the Harvest Home festival and towards their agricultural labour. Fane’s farm hands seemingly have the

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\(^{62}\) For further treatment of the significance of the dedication of *Hesperides* to Charles I, see Harold Toliver, ‘Herrick’s Book of Realms and Moments’, *ELH*, 49 (1982), 429 – 448.  
same tolerance and endurance for their toil as the ‘patient ox’ who prepares to till the field. The hospitality given by Fane is celebratory, but fleeting. Yet, it is important to note that just as there is little breadth given to the workers’ lives, there is also limited breadth given to Fane’s life. Herrick’s focus in ‘The Hock-Cart’ is to create an ideal relationship between worker and lord rather than to dwell on details of individual lives and Fane’s actual estate. The poem resounds with images of self-sufficiency and rural content, applicable to any English estate. Both lord and workers are compelled by ancient duty, and thus the workers need no explicit command to go ‘back unto the plough’ and their lord is completely autonomous on his estate. Everyone is drawn to their rightful place.

In the final lines of ‘The Hock-Cart’ Herrick outlines the reciprocity between Fane and his workers. The Harvest Home festival and the ensuing feast prepare the workers for tomorrow’s renewed cycle of labour. The persona outlines the terms of their reciprocity with the declaration that:

…ye must know, your lord’s word’s true,
Feed him ye must, whose food fill’s you.

(lines 50 – 51)

The line is almost uttered in a tone of admonishment. Herrick’s persona addresses the workers, stating that their lord’s word is ‘true’, so conceivably there is some concern that their lord’s word is not true. Herrick utilises the word ‘true’ in the sense of trouthe, as a means of pledging one’s faith or undertaking a covenant.\(^{64}\) To make such a serious assurance speaks of the solemnity with which Herrick and Fane regard ancestral calling and duty. Equally, the persona directs that Fane’s labourers be ‘true’ to their own ancient duty. For Herrick then, this poem represents a complex diplomatic relationship. Herrick seeks to bring Fane into communion with the workers. This rather pragmatic view of the functioning of the estate is central to its survival.

As a final point, the harmonious relationship of lord and worker is reflected in the agrarian cycle of planting and harvesting. Economic relationships are inseparable from the naturalness of the seasons:

And that this pleasure is like rain,
Not sent ye for to drown your pain,
But for to make it spring again.
(lines 52 – 54)

The seasons reflect patterns of work. The weather is bad, but it falls not to create ‘pain’, or labour, but to make crops grow and feed the estate. As Raymond Williams has noted, Stuart pastoral generally overlooks or mystifies the harsh realities or rural labour. By contrast, in ‘The Hock-Cart’, the ‘pain’ of farm work is clearly denoted and is part of a system of reciprocity. It is not clear whether the ‘rain’ both drowns and stimulates the ‘pain’ of work, or whether the season of ‘spring’ is welcomed in the new crops, but both readings seem equally likely. Pain can express exertion, but in Herrick’s poem ‘paine’ is juxtaposed with diversion and enjoyment. Fane’s entire estate is part of a cycle of planting and renewal. The crops and the fields will regenerate as part of the season cycle, naturally protecting Fane’s estate from non-cyclical and unnatural changes. However, poetic details that recreate the dynamics of the Harvest Home festival in ‘The Hock-Cart’ also expose the vulnerability of this locus amoenus to external forces. If either the labourers or Fane decline to enact their part in the tableau, the protective natural cycle within the estate will not endure.

Herrick perceives that the agrarian system in ‘The Hock-Cart’ was deeply threatened. The poet’s artistic imagination creates the Harvest Home festival as a traditional and ritualistic experience deeply connected to Stuart and Anglican values within the locus amoenus of Fane’s estate. Whilst ‘The Hock-Cart’ is a poem dedicated to Fane, it is also a poem addressed to the agricultural workers who tend and harvest the crops. Ritual here represents a sense of commonality; everyone knows their place within the festive performance, so class disappears. Moreover, the religious resonance of the poem is decidedly ecclesiastical and secular, creating an eloquent and rebellious enactment of the role of ceremony within rural England. ‘The Hock-Cart’ is ultimately an attempt to venerate and preserve a vanishing way of life by maintaining English tradition within an ideal place.

Chapter Five

John Denham
‘Coopers Hill’ 1655

In ‘Coopers Hill’, John Denham articulates Charles I’s desire to bind England together during the English Civil War, but it is the impossibility of the task that reveals the darkest truths about the King, his subjects, and the landscape of England. Denham fashions a poetic *Hollinshed Chronicles* for the mid-seventeenth century in his final revision of ‘Coopers Hill’ in 1655.¹ By tracing the history of England in the didacticism of its landscape, Denham establishes the vital role of balance, harmony, and moderation in the unity of the sceptred isle.² Though the landscape of England is undoubtedly shaped by the history of its monarchs, Denham submits that just and unjust action is not unique to a king or his subjects, and that the abuse of any authoritarian power is a crime. Whilst Charles I looms large in landscape and ideology, and is sympathetically rendered, the Royalist Denham can see frailties on both side of politics, and monarchs do not escape his judgement. Alongside the unflattering portraits of Edward III and Henry VIII, Charles I is full of doubts and fears, but loftier. Against the fog of Puritan London or the grim reality of the stag hunt, Charles refutes the historically awkward fit between monarchy and humanity conveyed by other monarchs in the poem. The moderation, quiet strength, and benevolence inherent in Charles’s kingship delivers a lesson for the new Republic in ‘Coopers Hill’: temperance and harmony within the *locus amoenus* of England must be nurtured above all things.

Urbane, Oxford-educated Denham applied himself to the study of law, gambling, and poetry with equal vigour. Despite a vast inheritance of eight estates received at the age

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² Earl Wasserman also finds evidence of the idea of balance in his chapter entitled ‘Cooper’s Hill’ in *The Subtler Language* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1959), pp. 45 – 100. However, he contends that this balance is based around the classical concept of *concordia discors*. Put simply, *concordia discors* is the notion that all things in the universe are made up of combinations of elements, and he references the fuller discussion of the term with Leo Spitzer’s ‘Classical and Christian Ideas of World Harmony’, *Traditio*, 2 (1944), 409 – 64. Wasserman’s discussion argues for a much stronger connection between ‘Coopers Hill’ and the classical roots of the term *concordia discors*. Similarly, Brendan O Hehir identifies a preoccupation with balance in the poem, and he too sees the idea of *concordia discors* in ‘Coopers Hill’. But he examines the balance of these elements in quite a technical manner, evidenced by the ‘dyadic nature of the universe’ and the ‘antagonistic pairs: hot; cold; moist, dry’ discussed on page 167 of *Expans’d Heiroglyphicks*. He also only refers briefly to the 1655 version of the poem.
of twenty-four, and a successful legal career, Denham was frequently in debt. The lawyer from London also showed great concern for the fate of England. At the outbreak of the Civil War he joined the Cavaliers and was appointed Sherriff of Surrey in 1642. The tide of Civil War quickly turned for the Royalist cause, and Denham found himself imprisoned in November of the same year that Cromwell’s forces took his stronghold of Farnham Castle. On his release in May 1643, he re-joined the Royalists at Oxford. Arrested in 1646 as a prisoner of war, then for debt, Denham retired to Paris and the exiled Henrietta Maria. The Queen sent him to attend Charles I in his captivity at Hampton Court, and in 1647 he was part of the council to attempt negotiation with Cromwell’s Parliamentary forces. This role as the King’s counsel no doubt gave Denham an opportunity to witness both the King’s humanity and unwillingness to negotiate with Oliver Cromwell. When negotiations proved unsuccessful, Denham returned to Paris and spent the rest of the war attempting negotiations with the Scots on behalf of the King, and acting as a courier between Charles’s son – crowned in 1649 from the safety of The Hague – and Henrietta Maria in Paris. Propelled by dwindling financial resources, Denham finally returned to England in 1653 but suffered none of the sequestrations, fines, or imprisonment that many of his fellow Royalists did. He evidently found allies in the new Republic, despite his past allegiance and close connection to the Royal family. ‘Coopers Hill’ was principally composed and revised at the beginning of the Civil War, with the first draft penned in 1641, then subsequently revised twice during 1642. It was edited for the final time in 1655 and we can safely assume that it draws on all Denham had experienced during the war.

Denham begins ‘Coopers Hill’ by both locating himself within the seventeenth-century Neoclassical tradition and asserting his Royalist sympathies. As someone so closely connected to the King and Henrietta Maria, it is curious that Denham was not more partisan in his Royalist sympathies in ‘Coopers Hill’. Instead, Denham describes the idea of moderation as vital to the balanced, harmonious locus amoenus of England. Between the classical Parnassus of Cooper’s Hill and Charles I himself, Denham recounts an idea of England and Englishness through the eyes of a Royalist.
Thames that weaves its way through the patchwork of England, the poet acts as a *via media*, uniting disparate aspects of England’s history into a constructive, balanced, whole. The poet treats Cooper’s Hill as the very mountain which was sacred to Apollo, god of poetry, and to the Muses who so inspired the creation of literature and the arts:

Sure there are Poets which did never dream  
Upon *Parnassus*, nor did taste the stream  
Of *Helicon*, we therefore may suppose  
Those made not Poets, but the Poets those.  
And as Courts make not Kings, but Kings the Court,  
So where the Muses & their train resort,  
*Parnassus* stands; if I can be to thee  
A Poet, thou *Parnassus* art to me.  
(lines 1 – 8)

The generic ‘poets’ to whom Denham refers are the emancipated creators of their own inspiration. In turn, the ‘poets’ give bearing and significance to Parnassus as the home of literary inspiration. The ‘muses and their train’ are no longer the ancient, classical forces acting on the poet and inspiring literary creation. The traditional and mythological role of Parnassus are relocated to Denham himself, who instead imbues this ancient structure with significance. The ‘poets which did never dream/ Upon Parnassus, nor did taste the stream/ Of Helicon’, bereft of classical inspiration, but full of Neoclassical thought, choose to create rather than be created. Thus, we may ‘suppose/ Those made not poets, but the poets those’, and so Denham is empowered to fashion the very thing he is inspired by. The balance between poetic power and Royal power is echoed in both the sentence construction and ideology espoused when Parnassus ‘made not Poets, but the Poets those’, just as ‘Courts make not Kings, but Kings the Court’. Charles I fashions his court of England in the same way that Denham fashions his Parnassus and subsequent poetry. Both dominate this moderate, Royalist, English landscape.

Just as Denham creates his own inspiration and political reality in ‘Coopers Hill’, so ‘Courts make not Kings, but Kings the Court’. Denham’s first draft of ‘Coopers Hill’

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see Brendan O’Hehir’s, ‘Vergil’s First “Georgic” and Denham’s “Cooper’s Hill”’, *Philological Quarterly*, 42 (1963), 542 – 547.
was published in 1642, but it has been argued that it was likely in circulation as early as September 1641, pre-dating the beginning of the Civil War.\footnote{John M. Wallace, ‘Coopers Hill: The Manifesto of Parliamentary Royalism, 1641’, \textit{ELH}, 41 (1974), 494 – 540.} It can also be argued that in 1641 there was still a hope that war might be avoided.\footnote{C.V. Wedgewood argues that in the summer of 1641 there was a resurgence of support for Charles I. The growing number of moderates in the House of Commons believed that the King was more open to the role Parliament played in the governance of England; \textit{The King’s Peace 1637 – 1641} (London: Collins, 1955), p. 435.} Therefore, in Denham’s 1642 draft of ‘Coopers Hill’, the reference to ‘Kings’ would almost certainly refer to King Charles I, evincing the view that much of government responsibility resides with the monarch. Over a decade later, it is curious to see such a monarchic reference remain in the last revision of the poem many years after the King’s execution. A reference which began its poetic life as a rallying-cry for Charles had become an anachronism by 1655, and even an expression of allegiance hostile to Cromwell’s new regime. But Denham’s assertion of ‘Courts make not Kings, but Kings the Court’ can be equally applied to Cromwell in his quest to create an English Republic and his transformation into quite the kingly Lord Protector of England.

Just two years before the final revision of ‘Coopers Hill’, Cromwell governed the nation as a king in everything but name; he held quasi-regal authority, and the nature of the newly created office of Lord Protector was the same as that of a monarch.\footnote{The article by Peter Sillitoe entitled ‘“Majesty had wont to sit inthron’d within those glorious Walls”: Whitehall, Monarchical Absence and Royalist Nostalgia’, \textit{The Seventeenth Century}, 25 (2010), 117 – 142, is very interesting to read in the context of Cromwell’s perceived ‘kingly rule’. Sillitoe discusses the concept of a ‘progressing court’ and suggests that the vacant palace was a centralising presence long after Charles’s execution.} On the 20th April 1653 Cromwell famously stormed into the English Parliament declaring that they had ‘sat long enough’ and that they were ‘no parliament’.\footnote{Cromwell’s speech has been lost, but it has been often paraphrased in texts such as \textit{Chambers’ Book of Days }<http://www.thebookofdays.com/months/april/20.htm> [accessed May 12th 2011].} Whatever the reason for abruptly ejecting MPs from England’s Parliament, to these politicians and to wider England it probably seemed that Cromwell was assuming absolute power for himself. Cromwell was now, in the general sense of the word, a king. Resentment, directed against Cromwell and the Commonwealth, was still present in England after the execution of the country’s King, Charles I.\footnote{David Norbrook, ‘King Oliver? Protectoral Augustanism and its Critics, 1653 – 1658’, in \textit{Writing the English Republic: Poetry, Rhetoric, and Politics, 1627 – 1660} (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1999), pp. 299 – 325.} Royalists also claimed that Cromwell was taking the Commonwealth in the same direction and along the political spectrum that Charles had been accused of taking the kingdom.\footnote{Norbrook, pp. 299 – 325.} In 1653 when Denham returned from exile and re-drafted ‘Coopers Hill’ for the final time, he resided with the Earl of
Pembroke, who was a prominent member of Cromwell’s Council of State. Denham would have had a singular insight into Cromwell’s government through the Earl of Pembroke, perhaps adding credence to his call for political moderation and balance.

The similarities between the iconic ‘Charles I on Horseback with M de St Antoine’ (fig. 1) and ‘The Headless Horseman’ engravings (fig 2, 3 & 4) produced some time after 1655, offer one view of Cromwell’s kingly self-fashioning. The treatment of Pierre Lombart’s engravings illustrates the ire that such images drew from the general public and Denham in ‘Coopers Hill’. Lombart followed in print the changing fortunes of the King and Cromwell during the Interregnum and the Restoration. The first printing of Lombart’s plate displays Oliver Cromwell, self-named Lord Protector of England from 1653 to 1658, mounted on a horse and attended by a groom (fig. 2). This image could almost be an exact copy of Charles I’s iconic image of royal power (fig. 1). After Cromwell’s death in 1658, Lombart scratched out his head in an act of historic revisionism (fig. 3). Finally, after Lombart himself had passed away, Charles I’s head was restored to the engraving (fig. 4) in keeping with England’s nostalgia and guilt for the execution of Charles I. Thus, Denham’s cautionary lines of ‘Courts make not Kings, but Kings the Court’ became a sentiment equally fitting for Charles I in 1642 and for Cromwell as Lord Protector of England in 1655.

From the vantage point of Cooper’s Hill, Denham’s eye follows the progression of the Thames as he reads England’s shifting politics and history in its topography. The features of the didactic English landscape convey the poet’s meditations on St Paul’s Cathedral, Windsor Castle, Chertsey Abbey, Windsor Forest, and the Thames. Whilst Denham’s sympathies are Royalist, this does not preclude him from the reproval of past monarchs for ineffectual rule, nor Cromwell for his desire for political and religious reform. Denham posits the perils of absolute power on both sides and advocates the via media between these two courses to ensure the harmony of England.

The first of a series of summits examined in turn and bound by the Thames is St Paul’s Cathedral. It is an emblem of ecclesiastical power and construction by Charles I, and later serves as a contrast with the religious deconstruction performed by Henry VIII at Chertsey Abbey atop St Anne’s Hill. Denham oversaw the additions and

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12 Kelliher, ‘John Denham’.
13 For a general discussion of Royalist propaganda, satire, and politics at this time, see Mark R. Blackwell, ‘Bestial Metaphors: John Berkenhead and Satiric Royalist Propaganda of the 1640s and 50s’, Modern Language Studies, 29 (1999), 105 – 130.
14 Whilst some may have thought of Cromwell as a figure who could evoke the infamous ‘I am myself alone’ speech given by the character Richard, Duke of Gloucester, in Henry VI Part III (Act V, Sc VI, line 3058), it is worth remembering Cromwell’s own instruction to Peter Lely to paint him ‘warts and all’, moving away from the previously romanticised portraits of the Lord Protector.
improvements made to St Paul’s in the 1630s on Charles’s behalf.\footnote{15} St Paul’s endures the Civil War through the strength given to it by both Denham and the King, drawing strength from its Royalist benefactors. Despite the damage it sustained during the Civil War, in 1655 St Paul’s still stood as an enduring symbol of Charles I and the Anglican Church, juxtaposed with Puritan, commercial London:\footnote{16}

\begin{quote}
My eye, which swift as thought contracts the space
That lies between, and first salutes the place
Crown’d with that sacred pile, so vast, so high,
That whether ‘tis part of Earth, or sky,
Uncertain seems, and may be thought a proud
Aspiring mountain, or descending cloud.
Paul’s, the late theme of such a Muse whose flight
Has bravely reach’t and soar’d above thy height:
Now shalt thou stand though sword, or time, or fire,
Or zeal more fierce than they, they fall conspire,
Secure, whilst thee the best of poets sings,
Preserv’d from ruine by the best of Kings.
Under his proud survey the city lies
And like a mist beneath a hill doth rise
\end{quote}

(lines 13 – 26)

St Paul’s has withstood ‘sword, or time, or fire’, such is its incorruptible nature. Denham’s eye ‘contracts the space’ allowing him to examine the scene of London in detail despite his remote vantage point. The metaphorical St Paul’s surveys the city just as the late Charles I ministered to his London flock. In opposition to this regal, benevolent image, Denham also notes the ‘the business and the crowd’ (line 28) of London. Those who ‘fall, conspire./ Secure, whilst thee the best of poets sings’ are associated with the miasma which ‘beneath a hill doth rise’. They are diminutive in Denham’s prospect in contrast to the ‘scared pile, so vast, so high./ That whether ‘tis part of Earth, or sky./ Uncertain seems’. Moreover, the perceived ‘zeal’ of urban,

\footnote{15} ‘John Denham’, \textit{Oxford Dictionary of National Biography}. In addition, the fee he had been paid for his role, along with the sum of £100, was donated to St Paul’s on his death.
\footnote{16} Wasserman concluded that it is only through seeing St Paul’s and London, Windsor Castle and Windsor Hill, St Anne’s Hill and Chertsey Abbey, as well as the Thames, that the poet can imbue these places with political significance: Wasserman, pp. 48 – 9.
Puritan factions and shop owners is as destructive as ‘sword, or time, or fire’ which has threatened both St Paul’s and the King in the past. But in this case, the image of the fatherly St Paul’s looking over London can do little but co-exist with the mist of Puritan business.\(^\text{17}\) St Paul’s is greater in a physical sense and in the eyes of God than the miniaturised ‘business and the crowd’ (line 28). The enduring nature of St Paul’s points to Charles’s martyrdom at his death, and his final words of ‘I go from a corruptible to an incorruptible crown’.\(^\text{18}\) By contrast, the obscured, threatening Londoners go about their business in the shadow of saintliness and majesty. In personifying St Paul’s as Charles I, Denham not only gives the King a poetical restoration, but a timeless, physical manifestation to counter Puritan influence.

Windsor Castle embodies the balance and naturalness that monarchy gives to England, but it also signals the failings of a historic king. Whilst Charles is embodied as the divine St Paul’s, Windsor’s first owner - Edward III - is not as sanctified. Windsor Castle itself invites the same reverence as St Paul’s, but the threat to disorder comes from Edward III:

Windsor the next (where Mars with Venus dwells.  
Beauty with strength) above the Valley swells  
Into my eye, and doth itself present  
With such an easie and unforc’t ascent,  
That no stupendous precipice denies  
Access, no horror turns away out eyes:  
But such a Rise, as doth at once invite  
A pleasure, and a reverence from the sight.  
Thy mighty Masters Embleme, in whose face  
Sate meekness, heightened with Majestick Grace

(lines 39 – 48)

Where Charles I possess ‘meekness, heightened with Majestick Grace’, Edward III and his abuses of royal power are accentuated. English history and English monarchy


\(^{18}\) King Charls, His Speech Made Upon the Scaffold at Whitehall-Gate, Immediately Before His Execution, On Tuesday the 30 Jan. 1648, With a Relation of the Manner of his Going to Execution (London: Peter Cole, 1649) <http://anglicanhistory.org/charles/charles1.html> [accessed 12th May 2011].
continue as part of the landscape. Strength does not exist at the expense of beauty, nor does the lack of a ‘stupendous precipice’ impact on the reverential sight of Windsor Hill’s ‘easie and unforc’t ascent’. It is no longer a medieval-style castle, fortified against the outside world, nor does it invite people in who live in its shadow. The hill and the castle are manifestations of harmony that Charles embodies. Windsor captures the union of Mars and Venus in its ‘Beauty with strength’, generating a harmonious landscape.

At Windsor, peace and conflict are arranged in the landscape. Though there is praise of Edward III in the description of his kingship from lines seventy-seven to ninety-six, the reader is also reminded of the vital role that his ‘greater son’ and his ‘Bellona’, or Queen Phillipa, have played in his kingship and the peace of the realm. Tanya Caldwell posits that Royalism lies at the heart of Denham’s influence, yet Denham is not beyond critiquing the monarchy:

But thee (great Edward) and thy greater son,
(The lillies which his Father wore, he won)
And thy Bellona, who the Consort came
Not only to thy Bed, but to thy Fame,
She to thy Triumph led one Captive King,
And brought that son, which did the second bring.
Then didst thou found that Order (whither love
Or victory thy Royal thoughts did move)
Each was a noble cause, and nothing less,
Than the design, has been the great success:
Which forraign Kings, who they thy captives were,
In after-times should spring a Royal pair
Who should possess all that thy mighty power,
Or thy desires more mighty, did devour
To whome their better Fate reserves what ere
The Victor hopes for, or the Vanquisht fear
(lines 77 – 96)

Edward III is lauded for the creation of The Order of the Garter, yet has the reasons that he ‘did’st found that Order’ queried, ‘whither love/ Or victory thy Royal thoughts did move’. Edward’s ‘greater son’, known in the seventeenth century as The Black Prince, ‘won’ the ‘lillies which his Father wore’ when he defeated France. The ‘lillies which his Father wore’ are the French emblem, the *fleur de lis*, worn by his father as a symbol of their victory when his son became Prince of Aquitaine and Gascony. Denham goes on to briefly sketch Edward III’s ‘Bellona’, Queen Philippa, who ‘to thy triumph lead one Captive King’ David II of Scotland, captured after a desperately ill-planned invasion of England. She ‘brought that son, which did the second bring’ as her son claimed victory over the ‘second king’: King John II of France. The Mars and Venus balance of opposites first seen in Charles I and Henrietta continues here, but the roles are reversed. Edward, who built the pleasing Windsor Castle and who sports the lillies of France, is concerned with Beauty. By contrast, his war-like wife who ‘triumphs’ over enemies is the source of strength in the relationship. Charles I and Henrietta Maria have inherited this ‘mighty power’ which Edward III and his family possessed, as well as the ‘desires more mighty’ that Charles I ‘did devour’, improving on the kingship. The reference to the ‘better fate’ of Charles and Henrietta is odd, given the King’s execution in 1648. Perhaps Denham suggests that the King’s execution and the Queen’s exile to France were a ‘better fate’ than waiting for what ‘the victor hopes for, or the vanquisht fear’. Peace, even in death and exile, is always preferable to war. Edward III was not imagined as the harmonious emblem of power and love which Denham has fashioned for Charles I in “Coopers Hill”.

Henry VIII receives even more of Denham’s opprobrium in the Chertsy Abbey section of the poem. Where Denham associates the regal ‘meekness, heightened with Majestick Grace’ (line 48) of St Paul’s and Windsor, the desecration of Chertsy Abbey is a terrible crime. Bruce Boeckel describes ‘Coopers Hill’ as a highly partisan act, 20 yet it might be more accurate to say that Denham reproves of absolute power in general, even when wielded by royalty. The ruined Chertsy Abbey reflects not only the Dissolution of the Monasteries carried out by Henry VIII, but the subsequent desecrations carried out by overzealous Puritans. It is an image of disharmony and violence which damages the church and the crown. The scene provides a poetic counterpoint to religious Puritan zeal and rebukes the ecclesiastical hypocrisy and perceived covetousness inherent in such actions:

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20 For further treatment of this idea, see Boeckel, pp. 57 – 93.
Viewing a neighbouring hill, whose top of late
A Chappel crown’d, til in the Common Fate,
The adjoyning Abby fell: (may not such storm
Fall on our times, where ruin must reform.)
Tell me (my Muse) what monstrous dire offence,
What crime could any Christian King incense
To such a rage? Was’t Luxury, or Lust?
Was he so temperate, so chaste, so just?
Were these their crimes? They were his own much more:
But wealth is Crime enough to him that’s poor,
Who having spent the Treasures of his Crown,
Condemns their Luxury to feed his own.
And yet this Act, to varnish o’re the shame
Of sacrilege, must bear devotions name.
(lines 113 – 126)

The ‘neighbouring hill’ of St Anne’s was with ‘a Chappel crown’d’ by the name of
Chertsey Abbey until ‘in the Common Fate./ The adjoining Abby fell’, unlike St Paul’s
and Windsor. Denham refers here to the ‘common fate’ of the Dissolution of the
Monasteries between 1536 and 1541 whereby Henry VIII disbanded monasteries, and
appropriated their income and assets. Chertsey Abbey was one of the largest chapels to
be destroyed and, in 1536, was one of the first. The symbolic blow to the Catholic
Church must have been significant. Much of the stone from the abbey was subsequently
used to construct Henry’s palace at Oatlands. Henry’s Act of Supremacy, passed by
Parliament in 1534, created him Supreme Head of the Church of England and separated
his realm from Papal authority in Rome. The enormity of the monasteries’ destruction
by a ‘Christian King’ incensed to ‘such a rage’ demonstrates the irony of Henry VIII’s
position as Head of the Anglican Church. Part of his Kingly brief as God’s
representative on earth was to keep the church safe. Officially, Henry moved against the

21 Christopher Haigh examines Henry VIII’s Dissolution of the Monasteries in ‘Two Political
Reformations’, English Reformations: Religion, Politics and Society under the Tudors (Oxford:
Clarendon Press, 1993), pp. 105 – 186. Haigh also argues that, contrary to Denham’s depiction, Henry
VIII did not initially enjoy his royal supremacy, but it grew to suit his self-importance and self-image, p.

22 Spoils of the Dissolution of the Monasteries, Swapped to Enable Henry VIII to Build the Palace of
Oatlands, 2 January 1637/8, Bonhams <http://www.bonhams.com/auctions/20135/lot/34/> [accessed
13th May 2011].
monasteries because of their moral corruption. However, in ‘Coopers Hill’ the corruptions that monks and nuns were accused of are the vices for which Henry himself was chiefly known: ‘Luxury’ and ‘Lust’. Moreover, being neither ‘temperate’ nor ‘chaste’, the hypocrisy of Henry’s move against the Catholic Church and the dangers in any form of absolute power are made clear.

The point that Denham makes about the difficulties inherent in any absolute authority are not lost. In separating himself and his kingdom from the Catholic Church, Henry replaces one form of control with another. The legally-enforced transfer of property with the Dissolution must have been very visible to the English populace, as they were at Chertsey Abbey. The ruins of the monastery in ‘Coopers Hill’ are a means of contemplating the future of the new Republic under Cromwell, amid hopes that no ‘such storm/ Fall on our times, where ruin must reform’. As a defeated Royalist, Denham probably felt that a great deal of ‘ruin’ had already befallen his country. Moreover, the word ‘reform’ is a loaded one, as it became increasingly clear during Henry’s reign that ‘reform’ exemplified destruction. In reality, the formal power that the monarchy wielded over the church was already considerable, and had been for a long time. Thus, when Denham casts his eye over a ‘neighbouring hill’ and the chapel that ‘crown’d’ it until the ‘Common Fate’, the word of ‘reform’ takes on sinister overtones and begs caution with national post-war transformation.

Denham further accuses Henry VIII of dissolving the monasteries for his own financial gain, as ‘wealth is Crime enough to him that’s poor’. The poet submits that the monasteries were condemned to sustain the King’s own luxurious tastes. Nor was it insignificant that Cromwell and Henry VIII were both searching for ways to appropriate and utlise ecclesiastical income. Denham’s Royalism and Royalist imagery does not preclude him from seeing corruption on both sides of politics; what Wallace refers to as ‘parliamentary Royalism’. Where Henry VIII abuses his Royal power to fill his coffers, Cromwell abuses his power to fashion himself a throne. The Stuart King exhibits virtue and love, qualities markedly lacking in Henry. Charles I is the Tudor King’s antithesis.

During the Dissolution of the Monasteries, within the context of the Protestant Reformation, it is likely that the oft-quoted Biblical phrase ‘in the beginning was the
word, and the word was with God, and the Word was God’\cite{26} became a familiar Protestant affirmation as cathedrals were appropriated and, in some cases, destroyed. In 1538 each English church was instructed to purchase a Bible for the laity to read, and the repeal of the Heresy Acts officially allowed for unrestricted Bible reading. Further, by 1549 the poor could purchase a version of the Bible in chapters.\cite{27} The word of God had become all-important within Protestantism. ‘The word’ is used by Denham in the same way: to create wordly images of ecclesiastical power to inform parishioners about the state of the nation. He appropriates ‘the word’ and fills it with images of the locus amoenus of England – frailties and all:

Thus he the Church at once protects, & spoils:
But Princes swords are sharper than their stiles.
And thus to th’ages past he makes amends,
Their Charity destroys, their Faith defends.
(lines 131 – 134)

Henry VIII ‘spoils’ the Church and ‘Charity destroys’. When Henry VIII should have joined together the ‘stile’, or pen, and the ‘Princes swords’, for the protection of the realm, he in fact employs them interchangeably and weakens England’s ecclesiastical and social fabric. Henry VIII’s ‘charity destroys’ the very thing he is meant to defend: English faith.

The Thames stands for harmonious power. An inextricable part of England, this river which both intersects the realm and knits the elements of English landscape together, ensures the peace of the nation as long as it remains within its bounds. If it overflows its banks, it can destroy.\cite{28} The Thames depicts something of what God has written in his Book of Works on the true nature of a Commonwealth and reveals the qualities of good government:

Though with such streams he no resemblance hold,
Whose foam is amber, and their gravel gold;
His genuine, and less guilty wealth t’explore,

\footnotesize{\cite{26} John 1:1
\cite{27} Haigh, p. 157, p. 168.
\cite{28} Rodney Stenning Edgecombe discusses the rhythm of this Thames passage, and the manner in which this became a template for Augustan poets, in ‘Edward Young, John Denham, and the “Quis Dabit Mihi” Topos’, The Explicator, 67 (2009), 165 – 167 (p. 166).}
Search not his bottom, but survey his shore;
O’er which he kindly spreads his spacious wing,
And hatches plenty for th’ensuing spring.
Nor then destroys it with too fond a stay,
Like mothers which their infants overlay.
Nor with a sudden and impetuous wave,
Like profuse kings, resumes the wealth he gave.
No unexpected inundations spoil
The mower’s hopes, nor mock the ploughman’s toil:
But God-like his unwearied bounty flows;
First loves to do, then loves the good he does.

(lines 165 -178)

Wealth that the Thames produces does not take the form of ‘amber’ which dripped from the trees around the River Po, or ‘gravel gold’ which made up the river bed of the mythological Pactolus River. Henry VIII appropriates his wealth from the monasteries, but the Thames is a source of ‘less guilty wealth’, which puns on both the guilt of having such ostentatious wealth and the gilt reflection of the golden sands. This general wealth which ‘hatches plenty for th’ensuing Spring’ is not the sole property of one man, but is distributed for the wellbeing of the nation. In spreading ‘his spacious wing’, the Thames fertilises the farming land on its banks through annual and regular flooding. Therein lies its wealth. It displays the attributes of a noble and worthy ruler. Unlike Henry VIII, the Thames is a moderate power in England. Nor does the Thames rescind its virtuous task with ‘too fond a stay’. The connection with Henry VIII is made even more apparent when Denham points to ‘profuse Kings’ who take back ‘the wealth he gave’. A just ruler, like the Thames, promises peace and prosperity as long as it remains within its bounds.

The happy life is lead on the protected plain by mowers and plowmen who, in their inconspicuousness, remain uncorrupted by ‘guilty wealth’. The Thames is predictable, and has ‘no unexpected inundations’ to spoil ‘the mowers hopes, nor mock the plowmans toyl’, and so they set about their bucolic work cultivating England’s food and wealth. These mowers and plowmen lead a rewarding and happy life governed by the Thames.29 Agricultural land is cleared of unrest and sown with a loyal, voiceless

29 For further discussion of the landed classes and labourer in poetry, see Chapter Nine ‘Bred to Till the Earth’in Raymond William’s *The Country and the City* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1973), pp. 87–
population. But the ‘bounty’ of the Thames flows on to those who need it in a ‘God-like’ fashion, who ‘loves to do, then loves the good he does’ for these people. The temperate and regular river reflects the stable, balanced England.

The Thames is also celebrated as a medium of foreign trade, sharing its harmonious nature with the rest of England. This secondary source of wealth, acquired in the Indies and other colonies, brings home revenue equally and naturally:

Nor are his Blessings to his banks confin’d,
But free, and common, as the Sea or Wind;
When he to boast, or to disperse his stores
Full of the tributes of his grateful shores,
Visits the world, and in his flying towers
Brings home to us, and makes both Indies ours;
Finds wealth where ‘tis, bestows it where it wants
Cities in deserts, woods in Cities plants.
So that to us nothing, no place is strange,
While his fair bosom is the worlds exchange.
O could I flow like thee, and make thy stream
My great example, as it is my theme!
Though deep, yet clear, though gentle, yet not dull,
Strong without rage, without ore-flowing full.

(lines 179 – 192)

The Thames ‘finds wealth where ‘tis’ and ‘bestows it where it wants’. The ‘blessings’ of the Thames are not ‘to his banks confin’d’, but are ‘free, and common’ wealth, like the annual flooding it provides for farmers. It captures the wealth of other nations, and disperses it freely and to all. The role of the Thames in foreign trade was emphasised in

90 Andrew McRae also sees the Thames as a site of economic exchange in ‘Fluvial Nation: Rivers, Mobility and Poetry in Early Modern England’, English Literary Renaissance, 38 (2008), 506 – 534. He also discusses the cultural meanings of rivers in early modern England.
Cromwell’s government from 1649.\textsuperscript{32} Even in the depths of the Civil War, James Howell writes in a letter that:

\begin{quote}
All men know there is nothing imports this island more than trade; it is that wheel of industry which sets all others a-going; it is that which preserves the chiefest castles and walls of this kingdom, I mean the ships.\textsuperscript{33}
\end{quote}

The expansion of this highly profitable foreign trade was formalised in the Navigation Act of 1651. This Act promoted a balance between domestic commerce and trade with ‘the world’. Cromwell was ever more committed to maintaining a proactive approach to trade from the 1650s onwards, with the Navigation Act at its centre. This was no doubt, in part, to raise revenue after the expensive business of war.\textsuperscript{34} English trade in ‘Coopers Hill’ is not a system of navigation used to bolster the Protectorate, and secured by this Act. Instead, the Thames is a natural, ancient, self-regulating system which flows from the very heart of England out to the sea and the rest of the world. It is an arrangement based on mutually advantageous exchanges, as accepted as ‘the Sea or Wind’. This depiction is at odds with the amplified regulation of foreign trade by Cromwell, which Denham submits went to the few, and not the many.

The site of natural commerce is the ancient Thames, and any unpleasantness which may accompany the acquisition of wealth from the Indies and the rest of the world is obscured. Countries far from England offer these ‘tributes’ gladly, and the Thames distributes its common wealth equally on English soil. The countries that these ‘tributes’ originate from also become English property via the ‘flying towers’, or great trading vessels, that ‘make both Indies ours’. Any cruelty or violence is expunged from England’s trade relationships. In addition, Denham illustrates the vital role that this trade plays when the Thames creates ‘Cities in deserts, woods in Cities plants’. To

\textsuperscript{32} The subject of international trade under the Protectorate as both communication and competition is examined in Thomas Leng’s ‘Commercial Conflict and Regulation in the Discourse of Trade in Seventeenth Century England’ in \textit{The Historical Journal}, 48 (2005), 933 – 954. His understanding of trade and its influence on debates about commercial governance is particularly useful in relation to the Thames passage of ‘Coopers Hill’.


Denham, establishing cities within deserts, and nurturing the growth of woods within those cities, lends the landscape a sense of advancement through both commercial enterprise and natural growth. Planting a wood within a city counters the ‘mist’ of commerce associated with Puritan zeal in London. Further, to build a city in a desert ascribes a value to something that was previously worthless, both in a natural and profit-making sense. In this way, the Thames delivers common wealth to those who reside in England’s urban areas.

At Windsor Forest Denham’s approach to the landscape alters. The scene is populated first by classical mythological figures, secondly by herds of deer, and lastly by a stag hunt. The images of the river and the trees on the hillside are rich, but their meaning is difficult to discern. I contend that this scene reads as a short glimpse into ‘the Cavalier’s need to sensuous beauty in all his surroundings.’ Just as the Duke of Newcastle retired ‘to his delightful company, music, or his softer pleasures’ at the end of the Civil War, Denham enjoys the ‘calmness of the flood’ (line 210). This scene privileges harmony in composition over that previously delineated through ideology. The ‘aery mountain’ (line 217) is high ‘Among the clouds’ (lines 218) and his ‘curled brows/ Frown on the gentle stream, which calmly flows’ (lines 219 – 220). Balanced against the towering mountain is the ‘spacious plain’ (line 223) of Egham Mead, and each feature counters the compositional weight of the other. All this ‘variety’ (line 228) and ‘mixture’ (line 227) in the scene illustrates harmony. Like the backdrop of court masques, the rural prospect of peace and coherence was worthy of the admiration of the King himself, as Charles I was a devoted collector of landscape paintings. Denham’s Royalist, poetic painting binds hill, river, wood, and field to imbue England with harmony and peace.

In the final stag hunt passage the reference to ‘our Charles’ that appeared in the 1642 draft is replaced with a more generic reference to ‘the King’ in the final version of ‘Coopers Hill’. This alteration modifies an anachronistic reference to Charles I to a

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broader statement regarding kingly moderation and harmony in the new Republic. However, later in the stag hunt passage, it becomes apparent that the metaphorical references to the hunt could easily describe the hunt and execution of Charles. O Hehir argues that this passage, in its first draft, referred to the execution of Strafford, but in its final 1655 form, the passage could equally refer to many Royalists who were dispossessed and executed in a similar manner over the course of the Civil War. The disbelief at the hunt approaching, the stag’s terror, escape, and vacillation, and his ultimate despair all speak of the Royalist trajectory of Civil War. These moments cannot be matched line for line to Charles I’s final years, but they can stand for him in general terms. The stag is hunted in an atmosphere of impending doom, where his place in the landscape becomes increasingly weak and uncertain.

A moment that bears more than a passing resemblance to Charles I’s last moments is the stag’s melancholy observation of his accomplishments, echoing the King’s final walk through the Banqueting Hall at Whitehall on the way to his execution. Adorned with allegorical paintings commissioned from Rubens and celebrating the Stuart reign, these images of a strong, benevolent monarch must have stood in stark contrast to the condemned King striding towards the scaffold. In ‘Coopers Hill’ the stag - ascribed human emotions - observes similar scenes, where:

Like a declining States-man, left forlorn
To his friends pity, and pursuers scorn,
With shame remembers, while himself was one
Of the same herd, himself the same had done.
Thence to the coverts, & the conscious Groves,
The scenes of his past triumphs, and his loves;
Sadly surveying where he rang’d alone
Prince of the soyl, and all the herd his own;
And like a bold Knight Errant did proclaim
Combat to all, and bore away the Dame.
(lines 273 – 281)

O Hehir points to the stag hunt as a metaphor for Charles I’s guilt over his death in his analysis of The ‘A Text’, Draft I (1641); The ‘A Text’, Draft II (1642); and, The ‘A Text’, Draft III, pp. 177 – 226.

For a discussion of the stag hunt and the King’s martyrdom, see Anne Elizabeth Carson, ‘The Hunted Stag and the Beheaded King’, Studies in English Literature, 1500 – 1900, 45 (2005), 537 – 556.
King Charles I, or the ‘declining States-man, left forlorn’ studies the ‘scenes of his past triumphs, and his loves’, and like a ‘bold Knight Errant’ faces his fate. His boldness was also part of his admission of guilt at his execution over Strafford’s death. Charles seems to have felt that the unjust nature of Strafford’s death was now countered, and perhaps forgiven, now that the same unjust death is to be visited on him:

That an unjust Sentence that I suffered for to take effect, is punished now by an unjust Sentence upon me.\(^{42}\)

When Denham writes that the stag ‘himself the same had done’, he points to this line of Charles’s final speech. Balance and harmony, even in death, is the true path of the righteous. The King is so English, and so human, that he is ‘Prince of the soyl’. The historically awkward fit between monarchy and humanity in the poem can be cast aside in light of this sinful repentance. In the allegorical domain of the Banqueting House, Charles is St George in Ruben’s ‘St George and the Dragon’ who ‘bore away the Dame’, but in the public domain and the poem he possess the self-doubt which humanises him beyond any English monarch.

Denham’s ‘Master-piece’ of the stag hunt provides a double perspective of the landscape. First, the violence inherent in the hunt and the unjust nature of the stag’s pursuit are foregrounded. Second, the passage reveals the same commitment to harmony that imbues the rest of ‘Coopers Hill’:

Natures great Master-piece; to shew how soon  
Great things are made, but sooner are undone.  

(lines 239 – 240)

As a true prospect can depict both ‘how soon/ Great things are made, but sooner are undone’. The political landscape in the poem is didactic, and the lessons of the stag hunt lie at the core of this message. Though the ‘Master-piece’ of England has been fashioned by a series of monarchs, unjust actions can originate from any sector in society. Though Theodore H. Banks maintains that the didacticism of ‘Coopers Hill’

\(^{42}\) _King Charls, His Speech Made Upon the Scaffold at Whitehall-Gate, Immediately Before His Execution, On Tuesday the 30 Jan. 1648, With a Relation of the Manner of his Going to Execution_, (London, Peter Cole, 1649) <http://anglicanhistory.org/charles/charles1.html> [accessed 12th May 2011].
lends it little emotion or beauty of phrase, it is within the emotional stag hunt scene that in Denham’s view, power abused is a crime. But the growth and regeneration of verdant England is heavily dependent on moral and just kingship. The construction and destruction of monarchs is both physically and ideologically clear in Denham’s landscape. Just as Hollinshead created English identity through English history, so Denham portrays the locus amoenus of England as shaped by its history, for better or for worse. The murder of the stag at the end of this ‘Master-piece’ of English history is presented as the greatest lesson and the most morally reprehensible outcome of the Civil War and English history.

When the stag finally dies, he does so at Runnymead. To Denham, the English Civil War revealed that the harmony promised in Magna Carta at Runnymead had not been realised. Denham presents to his readers, in poetic terms, the historical situation before the signing of the Magna Carta in 1215. Such times saw ‘lawless power’ (line 236) and ‘Fair liberty’ (line 325) existing side by side, and when the Magna Carta was signed, it was hoped that these disparate elements would move toward ‘the same centre’ (line 333). However, the section of the Magna Carta now referred to as Clause 61 presented a serious challenge to King John’s authority. The clause established a group of barons who could overrule a royal decree if they agreed that it defied Magna Carta. The equilibrium of English government was created in Magna Carta, and whilst it was balanced between ‘lawless power’ and ‘liberty’ on paper, the reality was far more problematic:

The Subjects arm’d, the more their Princes gave,
Th’advantage only took the more to crave.
Till Kings by giving, give themselves away,
And even that power, that should deny, betray.

(lines 337 - 340)

At Runnymead, it is the ‘subjects arm’d’ that destroy the intended harmony of Magna Carta. King John signed Magna Carta at Runnymead after some of his most important barons became ‘subjects arm’d, the more their Princes gave’ and engaged in open rebellion against him in 1215. The correlation with the Civil War ‘subjects arm’d, the

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more their Princes gave’ is palpable: Denham suggests that Charles I was deprived of his Kingly power by armed, covetous subjects. These self-serving ‘subjects’ sought ‘th’advantage’ over their King, but ‘only took the more to crave’. Some of the fault also lies with poor decision-making of kings who, ‘by giving, give themselves away’. Denham does not blame Charles; rather, he states that his ‘subjects’ claimed powers that did not rightfully belong to them.

The final lines deliver a lesson for the new Republic. Just as the evenly-flowing Thames is representative of harmony and moderation, if it is constrained with ‘bays and dams’ beyond what is natural a ‘fiercer’ reaction will ensue. Denham also creates images of flooding in his 1642 play *The Sophy,* where he advocates moderation in kingly power. When violence in the state spills over, the Prince reproaches the King, and describes his own anger in terms of a ‘deluge’:

Yet more of horror? Then farewell my tears,
And my just anger be no more confined
To vain complaints, or self-devouring silence;
But break, break forth upon him like a deluge,
And the great spirit of my injur’d Lord,
Possess me, and inspire me with a rage
Great as thy wrongs, and let me call together
All my soul’s powers, to throw a curse upon him
Black as his crimes.

(Act V, Sc I, lines 395 - 413)

Like the Thames, the Prince demonstrates his potential to become a motif of ferocity, ‘stronger, and fiercer by restraint’. When the Thames stays within its moderate bounds, as it had been under the reign of Charles I, the power inherent in the state is constructive for all. When it overflows its banks it is damaging and chaotic:

When a calm River rais’d with sudden rains,
Or Snows dissolv’d, oreflows th’adjoyning Plains,
The Husbandmen with high-rais’d banks secure
Their greedy hopes, and this he can endure.

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But if with Bays and Dams they strive to force
His channel to a new, or narrow course;
No longer then within his banks he dwells,
First to a Torrent, then a Deluge swells:
Stronger, and fiercer by restraint he roars,
And knows no bound, but makes his power his shores.

(lines 349 – 358)

Once the Thames breaks its banks, its fury ‘knows no bound’. Parliament’s terms to the King proved to be those ‘high-raised banks’, ‘bays and dams’, and ‘shores’. Charles refused to negotiate terms with Cromwell and Parliament, and Cromwell himself was willing to make any concession to keep the King alive.\textsuperscript{45} The ‘subjects arm’d’ at the signing of Magna Carta now take the guise of husbandmen who ‘with high-raised banks secure/ their greedy hopes’. They too seek to appropriate the power of England and ‘force/ His channel to a new, or narrow course’. At the time of the first signing of the Magna Carta, an opportunity was presented to Englishmen to achieve English harmony, but it came to nothing because of their greed. Now, husbandmen with their ‘greedy hope’ renew their designs on the nation’s power. They attempt to bend England to their wishes. Denham warns that if they persist, the once gently-flowing Thames will burst its banks and make ‘his power his shores’.\textsuperscript{46}

The England of ‘Coopers Hill’ is a realm shaped by the moderation of Charles I, the harmony of the English landscape, and history. Though Denham had a deeply held regard for Charles I, those sentiments did not translate into the intrinsic approval of any king. Denham observed abuses of power, perpetrations of violence, and kindness in all sectors of the English landscape. Authoritarian power is reproved in favour of the \textit{via media} of the Thames which knits England together. The moderate Thames stands as a symbol of the well-harmonised nation and moderate ruler. Ultimately, though, Denham hails Charles I as, in Richard Lovelace’s words, ‘the wise emblem of our political world’.\textsuperscript{47} Balance and harmony are a vital part of both monarchy and government, and

\textsuperscript{45} Mark Kishlansky, ‘Mission Impossible: Charles I, Oliver Cromwell, and the Regicide’, \textit{The English Historical Review}, 515 (2010), 844 – 874. Kishlansky posits that the evidence pointing to Cromwell’s reluctance to execute Charles I has never been stronger.

\textsuperscript{46} For further discussion of the power inherent in the image of the Thames, see W. Hutchings, “‘The Harmony of Things”: Denham’s \textit{Coopers Hill} as Descriptive Poem’, \textit{Papers on Language and Literature}, 19 (1983), 375 – 384 (pp. 378 – 379).

the unnatural constraint or manipulation of power will cause disharmony in the *locus amoenus.*
Portrait entitled ‘Charles I on Horseback with M de St Antoine’ painted in 1633 by Anthony van Dyck (fig. 1)
Engraving by Pierre Lombart inspired by van Dyck’s portrait of Charles I on horseback. Produced some time after 1655 (fig. 2) ⁴⁸

Engraving by Pierre Lombart, ‘The Headless Horseman’ (fig. 3)
A subsequent impression of the plate by Pierre Lombart, with Cromwell’s head removed and replaced with that of Charles I (fig.4)
Chapter Six
Andrew Marvell

Out of a real-life *locus amoenus* was born the poetic *locus amoenus* of Bilbrough and Nun Appleton. Marvell composed ‘Upon the Hill and Grove at Bilbrough’ and ‘Upon Appleton House’ for Lord Fairfax, his patron, at a time when Fairfax had withdrawn from public office. In addition, the poet constructed the inverted ideal place of ‘Bermudas’ not long after he had left his own ideal place at Lord Thomas Fairfax’s estate. Yet, all three poems dwell on solitude, nature, and the idea of perfection, notions that stand in contrast to Civil War days of military and political energy. At Bilbrough and Nun Appleton, Fairfax is cast as the modest country gentleman, hero of the Civil War, and the embodiment of the *vita activa* and *vita contemplativa*. Though ‘Upon the Hill and Grove at Bilbrough’ and ‘Upon Appleton House’, composed during Marvell’s stay at Nun Appleton in the early 1650s, both explore these subjects, ‘Upon Appleton House’ gives a fuller treatment to, and amplifies, Marvell’s exploration of Fairfax’s secluded, post-war community. The feudalist community, as it was portrayed in Robert Herrick’s ‘The Hock-Cart’ and Ben Jonson’s ‘To Penshurst’, is done away with. Instead, Fairfax’s community is smaller, more intimate, and the few figures within it are happy in their solitude.

In the aftermath of the Civil War, Marvell saw his position as a poet not in terms of a war artist, but as a witness to the cultural anxieties and narrow-mindedness that existed at the beginning of the 1650s. Marvell was on the continent during most of the Civil War and so was not a direct observer or participant in the violence that took place. Though the war was still raging on his return to England in 1646, Charles I had already been taken into custody and the Royalist cause was looking increasingly unstable. From

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1 I examined the poems ‘Upon Appleton House’ and ‘The Mower Against Gardens’ in some detail in my Honours dissertation. The main aim behind this thesis is to compare the various treatments of the *locus amoenus* by a range of poets. Therefore, I have provided a shorter and more allusive account of ‘Upon Appleton House’ and the role of the Mowers within it, and omitted a discussion of ‘The Mower Against Gardens’.
5 Toshihiko Kawasaki, ‘Marvell’s “Bermudas” – A Little World, or a New World?’, *ELH*, 43 (1976), 38 – 52 (p. 43).
a good Yorkshire family, and probably known to the Yorkshirite Fairfax family.\(^6\)

Marvell was engaged by Lord Fairfax as tutor to his daughter, Mary. The time that
Marvell spent at Nun Appleton from the early 1650s until 1652 with Lord Fairfax, his
wife, and Mary, was a very productive poetic time for Marvell. The attention to subtlety
in his poetry, his willingness to consider both sides of politics, and his misgivings about
the human nature of those in authority all tell of a poet examining what was left of
England after the Civil War. ‘Upon Appleton House’ is more than a work of support for
one side or other; it is a product of the Civil War and the cultural anxieties and
complexities that arose from it.

Marvell was not a revolutionary, nor an idealist. But when fighting ceased, he
evidently lamented the former dominion of Civil War in England:

> Whether it were a war of religion or of Liberty it is not worth the labour to
> enquire. Whichever was at the top, the other was at the bottom; but upon
> considering all, I think the Cause was too good to have been fought for.
> Men ought to have trusted God; they ought and might have trusted the King
> with the whole matter…For men may spare their pains where Nature is at
> work, and the world will not go the faster for their driving.\(^7\)

Marvell’s words can be taken to mean both that the King should have been trusted to
resolve political conflict, or equally, that the ‘cause’ was so just that no-one should have
taken up arms against it.\(^8\) In either case, his lack of sustained partisan leanings and his
wish that men had spared ‘their pains where Nature is at work’ indicate that he analysed
the outcome of the Civil War from his own *via media*. Marvell believed in God and a
natural cycle of politics over man’s warring intervention, and his mild Puritanism no
doubt reinforced that divine providence had ultimately defeated man’s violence.
Marvell was not a political revolutionary or soldier at a time when plentiful numbers of
both abounded, but saw the aspirations and difficulties on both sides of the political
divide.

Marvell famously utilises different personae within his poetry to explore the
aftermath of the Civil War. Creating speakers who embody varied political and religious

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\(^6\) Nicholas Murray, *World Enough and Time: The Life of Andrew Marvell* (New York: St Martin’s Press,


\(^8\) For further treatment of these remarks, see Christopher Hill, ‘Society and Andrew Marvell’, in
allegiances is Marvell’s method of enabling more profound critical reflection on times of crisis. Amongst the personae that Marvell fashioned, those expressed in ‘Upon the Hill and Grove at Bilbrough’ and ‘Upon Appleton House’ best approximate Marvell’s own moderate views. In these poems, Marvell puts his faith in Fairfax, rather than the King or Cromwell. An erstwhile or covert supporter of Royalism, and faintly anti-Catholic, Marvell resists categorisation. In his position as a tutor at Nun Appleton, the poet no doubt enjoyed many conversations and reflections on all of these institutions with his employer Lord Fairfax. Fairfax himself shared Marvell’s dismay at the narrow-mindedness of fellow Parliamentarians, and made reference to this in his letter of resignation. In 1650, the Council of State resolved to invade Scotland, but Fairfax refused to participate in such an attack. He communicated his decision in a letter to Parliament, in which he stated that ‘Human probabilities are not sufficient grounds to make war upon a neighbour nation, especially our brethren of Scotland, to whom we are engaged in a solemn league and covenant’. Fairfax was unyielding in his decision to retire from public life and war, despite the protestations of Parliament. So with all Marvell’s misgivings about the destructive powers of those left in authority, he would have found a sympathetic ear with the recently retired Fairfax. ‘Upon Appleton House’ and ‘Upon the Hill and Grove at Bilbrough’ may only have been originally intended for an audience of three people: Lord Fairfax, his wife, and his daughter, but such thoughts are speculative. Ultimately, Marvell wrote both poems for a social circle dismayed at the unnatural outcome of the Civil War, but it is in fostering a virtuous, Protestant community that this unnaturalness can be overcome.

The secluded community in ‘Upon Appleton House’ is made up of Marvell, Lord Fairfax, his wife Anne Vere, and their daughter Mary, whilst the broader community of Nun Appleton is reduced to decoration. Mark D. Larabee contends that the country house tradition principally concerns human relationships, but here it is the resulting community which arises from those relationships and provides a model of rural life that is even more important. The indication that the estate still stands at the centre of a feudalistic community is contained in the symbolism of the ‘stately frontispiece of poor’

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11 Murray, p. 47.

(line 65) that ‘Adorns without the open door’ (line 66). This engraved panel above the door\textsuperscript{13} depicts a rather charming group of pitiable peasants in need of charitable assistance.\textsuperscript{14} However, Fairfax’s duty to the poor of his estate and the emphasis on hospitality is only discussed in terms of his general, lordly duty, and it seems that his deeper attachment is to the small circle of Marvell and Fairfax’s own family. Fairfax’s kindness will undoubtedly sustain the underprivileged around his door just as the door’s pediment supports the engraving. Even as mere symbolism, this gesture magnifies Fairfax’s own moral stature, as well as the religious nature of the house, built from the stone of a medieval nunnery.\textsuperscript{15} Nun Appleton is constructed from, and upon, ‘a mark of grace’ (line 70) that ensures his charity, just as the nuns would have ministered to the poor in the days of the convent. The statement ‘‘Twas no religious house ‘till now’ (line 280) reinforces the potency of claiming a Catholic ‘religious house’ for a pious, charitable family in Protestant community, magnifying its ‘mark of grace’. In Marvell’s estimation, to build a house from materials claimed from a formerly religious site is not seen as sacrilege. It also bears remembering that poems like ‘The Hock-Cart’ intimate that the duty to care for the poor was infrequently carried out, so the act of Fairfax’s benevolence retains its poignancy for Marvell’s audience despite its lack of a specific gesture.

Whilst Fairfax’s friends and social equals make it past the threshold, past the poor, and into the Protestant community of Nun Appleton, they are reduced to decoration and embellishment, just like the underprivileged. The ‘rooms within commends/ Daily new furniture of friend’ (lines 67–68) to embellish the interior of the house. They all arrive at the ‘inn to entertain/ Its lord awhile, but not remain’ (lines 71–72). These friends are for the furnishing of the mind, and point to the intellectual and spiritual conversations Fairfax sought with others, as well as the scholarly society he entertained. Nevertheless, like the classical statuary of the Italianate Garden of the seventeenth century which created the garden as theatre, these inanimate figures are merely a backdrop to Fairfax’s virtue in the face of worldly corruption. Vassiliki Markidou maintains that Fairfax experiences dislocation whilst at Nun Appleton and sees the religious and familial associations there as ‘disconcerting’\textsuperscript{16}. But I would argue that the religious, familial, and

\textsuperscript{13}The OED indicates that frontispieces were engraved, \textit{Oxford English Dictionary Online} \url{http://oxforddictionaries.com/} [accessed 2nd June 2010].

\textsuperscript{14}The seventeenth-century definition of ‘poor’ in the \textit{Oxford English Dictionary Online} includes the need for charity.

\textsuperscript{15}Murray, p. 53.

\textsuperscript{16}Vassiliki Markidou, “[A]n inn to entertain/ Its Lord a while, but not remain”: Home and Dislocations in Andrew Marvell’s “Upon Appleton House”, \textit{Critical Survey}, 22 (2010), 21 – 36 (p. 21).
social elements of Fairfax’s community lend themselves to seclusion and exclusivity rather than dislocation. Fairfax is very much at home on his estate.

At Bilbrough, the community is correspondingly isolated from the rest of the world. Only Fairfax, ‘the master’ (line 41), his wife, ‘the nymph that inspired him’ (line 43), and the poet live in the landscape. Whilst there are no friends to converse with, nor poor to minister to, the bond between Fairfax and his wife is even stronger at Bilbrough. The Latinisation of Anne Vere’s surname to Vera (line 43), or truth, depicts Fairfax as, quite literally, withdrawing to a world of truth with his wife. Fairfax ‘often here retired’ (line 44). The benign ‘wounds’ (lines 46) he inflicts on the oak are a reminder of his Civil War service and the real-life ‘wounds’ he inflicted on the enemy.17 Yet here, within the locus amoenus of Bilbrough, the Petrarchan commonplace of carving a lover’s name onto a tree becomes an act of ‘love and reverence’ (lines 50) rather than wounding, and reinforces the strong bonds that exist within the community at Bilbrough.

Marvell pronounces the moral impoverishment of the Roman Catholic ideal of withdrawal from the world,18 yet Fairfax’s own withdrawal from the world to his little community is looked on favourably. Ironically, the nunnery in ‘Upon Appleton House’ is in part responsible for Nun Appleton’s ‘mark of grace’, and would previously have ministered to the local poor in ages past, yet it is described in unflattering terms. Catholic deficiency in the scene is needed in order to describe the emancipating capacity of Fairfax and Protestantism. The innocence, charity, and chastity associated with convent life is replaced with the nuns who ‘restrain the world without’ (line 99). Fairfax’s noble life of retirement and Civil War heroism is not portrayed in the same terms, though he too seeks to ‘restrain the world without’, to create a locus amoenus in ‘Heaven’s centre, nature’s lap’ (line 767.) To fashion this locus amoenus, Fairfax ‘did, with his utmost skill/ Ambition weed, but conscience till’ (lines 535 – 354) when he retired to the little community of Nun Appleton after the Civil War, and given the sinister nature of the Mowers who dwell in the meadows beyond and ‘massacre the grass’ (line 394) it seems a good decision. Thus, from stanza twelve to stanza thirty-four in ‘Upon Appleton House’ convent Catholicism in the form of ritual, avarice and immorality is in want of a Fairfax to put it right and impart the correct, Protestant values. The ‘young Fairfax’ (line 258) appropriates the ‘virgin Thwaites’ (line 90),

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17 For further exploration of Marvell’s treatment of trees on the estates of Bilbrough and Nun Appleton, see Phillip Major “‘To wound an oak’: the Poetics of Tree-felling at Nun Appleton’, Seventeenth Century, 25 (2010), 143 – 156.
18 Marvell does not appear to have mellowed with age, and some of his later writings, including The Rehearsal Transpro’d (1672), General Councils (1676) and The Growth of Popery (1677), reveal a similar anti-Catholic sentiment, though not ardently so.
symbolically dispossessing the Catholic community to begin the Fairfax line. Within this act, the end of Catholicism is also celebrated:

But the glad youth away her bears,
And to the nuns bequeath her tears:
Who guilty their prize bemoan,
Like gypsies that a child have stol’n.
Thenceforth as when th’enchantment ends
The Castle vanishes or rends,
The wasting Cloister with the rest
Was in one instant dispossessed.

(lines 265 – 272)

Here ‘th’enchantment’ of Catholicism, is compared with superstition as the ‘glad youth’ bears away his ‘prize’. The Dissolution of the Monasteries within the wider context of the Protestant Reformation is couched in optimistic terms as the ‘wasting cloister’ is put to more Protestant, rightful use in beginning the community of Nun Appleton. In turn, ‘the guilty’ nuns ‘their prize bemoan/ Like gypsies that a child have stol’n’ when Thwaites and the nunnery is stolen away from them. In the seventeenth century the term gypsy was a contemptuous terms for a cunning woman, but it also brought with it all the perceived stereotypes of yet another licentious, immoral community. The Catholic community is ‘dispossessed’ and appropriated by Fairfax and his Protestant community. The masculine ‘glad youth’ Fairfax is Protestant and virtuous, while the feminine nunnery is Catholic and immoral.

Marvell’s nuns are observed distortions of true religious devotion. The ‘virgin Thwaites’ experiences a false sense of Catholic retirement at the nunnery, but when rescued by the ‘young Fairfax’ enters the righteous, Protestant world of retirement. Whilst the Fairfax world of Nun Appleton is one of withdrawal, it is conducive to a more active life than the Catholic retirement which saw her passive and ‘weeping at the altar’ (line 264) whilst waiting for Fairfax to liberate her. Protestant withdrawal from the world through the young Fairfax is the nucleus of their community, and the security of Protestant marriage ensures its continuation. This allegory is both an account of

19 The family line of Fairfax is explored in terms of puns and wordplay in Vitaliy Eyber’s, ‘Playing on Absent Words in Andrew Marvell’s “Upon Appleton House”’, Notes and Queries, 54 (2007), 421 – 422.
20 Oxford English Dictionary Online.
Protestant history and Fairfax family history. Ironically, it was not the overpowering of papal authority that created violence during the Protestant Reformation, but the dissolution of monasteries and nunneries. On attempting to pull down the crucifix in at Exeter Priory, women armed with spades and spikes defended the crucifixes and the Catholic images, and drove a carpenter to jump from the tower. For people in Early Modern England, as it was for Cicero, history was a source of didacticism and wisdom. This violence is purged from the scene in ‘Upon Appleton House’, and instead the nuns’ ritualistic devotion is made comic. Their retired life is now ‘holy leisure’, their devotion now pagan idolatry:

When we have prayed all our beads,
Someone the holy Legend reads,
While all the rest with needles paint
The face and graces of the saint
(lines 121-124)

Accusing Catholics of superstition instead of faith was a particularly Protestant tactic. The repetitive nature of praying ‘all our beads’ emphasises the perceived thoughtlessness of the nuns’ prayers as well as the plainness of Fairfax’s Protestant devotion. Those who are not praying read the ‘holy Legend’, perhaps a reference to the medieval *Golden Legend* by Jacobus de Voragine which detailed the lives of the saints. The rest paint ‘the face and graces of the saint’ in an empty gesture of reverence. Their

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22 Haigh, p. 143.
24 Marvell makes the same criticisms of Catholicism as Thomas Cranmer did. Cranmer’s homilies were first published in 1547, then 1562, and 1571. The printing of the thirty-three sermons as one volume in 1632 is testament to their growing popularity in pre-Civil War England:

And briefly to passe ouer the ungodly and counterfeit religion, let us rehearse some other kindes of Papisticall superstitions & abuses, as of Beades, of Lady Psalters, and Rosaries, of fifteene Oes, of Saint Barnards verses, of Saint Agathes letters, of Purgatorie, of Masses satisfactorie, of Stations, and Jubilees, of fained Reliques, or hallowed Beades, Belles, Bread, Water, Psalmes, Candels, Fire, and such other: of superstitious fastings, of fraternities or brotherheads, of pardons, with such like merchandise, which were so esteemed and abused to the great prejudice of Gods glory and Commandements, that they were made most high and most holy things, whereby to attaine to the everlasting life, or remission of sinne.

vow of chastity is transformed into homoeroticism, where the nuns lie ‘all night embracing arm in arm’ (line 191). These misguided divine and carnal behaviours are presented so as to rationalise the eventual storming of the monastery to release Thwaites and marry her to Fairfax. Fairfax’s community creates ‘heaven’s centre, nature’s lap’ to atone for the corruptions that are lacking in the exterior world and the nunnery. The estate of Nun Appleton contains a withdrawn community, which in its Protestantism and Godliness, denounces Catholic withdrawal.

At Bilbrough, peripheral figures are not represented as a means of emphasising community as they were in ‘Upon Appleton House’, nor are they styled in such a serio-comic fashion. There are no visits from the poor, nor friends. The only extraneous figures present are the inanimate and soberly presented ‘mountains raised of dying men’ (line 68). They serve as a potent moral reminder to the community at Bilbrough, just as the images of the poor and social equals did in ‘Upon Appleton House’. Andrew Barnaby suggests this witness to the anxieties of public life creates a necessary protection against the treacherous, public world. The ‘mountains’ and valleys of the natural landscape at Nun Appleton are deformation in its post-lapsarian state, made more poignant by the Fall of England after the Civil War. Such an image is a token of the community’s rightful place in the landscape, away from mountainous reminders of civil war, ambition, and sin. The locus amoenus is an unfallen world by comparison, with the landscape encircling them in ‘perfect hemisphere’ (line 2) at Bilbrough. Marvell expands upon this same motif in ‘Upon Appleton House’ at stanza ninety-six:

‘Tis not, what it once was, the world,
But a rude heap together hurled,
All negligently overthrown,
Gulfs, deserts, precipices, stone.
Your lesser world contains the same,
But in more decent order tame
You Heaven’s centre, nature’s lap,
And Paradise’s only map.

(lines 761 – 768)

The ‘more decent order tame’ conserved within Nun Appleton keeps warring England and original sin away from its bounds. The vice that exists in the external world and Civil War England disfigures the earth with ‘Gulfs, deserts, precipices, stone’ thrown together as a ‘rude heap’. The ‘lesser world’ of Nun Appleton ‘contains the same,/ But in more decent order tame’. When the group of four reach the perimeter of Nun Appleton after their journey of the estate is complete, the tour’s circular configuration links their expedition and their community to perfection and the divine. Jonathon F.S. Post also proposes that the act of walking reveals the mind and is concerned with the regulation of social and moral behaviour.27 The disordered state of the landscape ‘all negligently overthrown’ beyond its boundaries is shaped by original sin. The ridged appearance of the ‘gulfs’ and ‘precipices’ are a far cry from the pre-lapsarian world which was originally smooth and spherical in appearance.28 Juxtaposed with this corrugation, Fairfax’s garden is ‘Heaven’s centre, nature’s lap’ and therefore nearer to perfection than the exterior world. Observing nature at Bilbrough with this circular and perfect motif in mind, Marvell expands on the morality which exists within nature, and thus manifests Bilbrough as a place of contemplation and inquiry, away from the corruption of the Fallen world.29

In its geographical perfection and smoothness, it is the landscape in ‘Upon the Hill and Grove at Bilbrough’ that is foregrounded as a metaphor for the moral qualities of Lord Fairfax at the beginning of the poem. In ‘Upon Appleton House’, the house is a


28 Marjorie Hope Nicholson explains that the mountains and valleys were symptomatic of a post-lapsarian landscape. She explains that God was ‘a classical aesthetician to whom symmetry, proportion, and the restraint of the circle were of first importance. Something had happened to cause the “warts” and “pockmarks”;’ Marjorie Hope Nicolson, Mountain Gloom and Mountain Glory: The Development of the Aesthetics of the Infinite (New York: Norton, 1963), p. 77.

29 Rodney Stenning Edgecombe contends that this circular structure which keeps chaos at bay can also be seen in Henry James’s ‘Portrait of a Lady’ and Richard Wilbur’s ‘Caserta Garden’, in ‘Wilbur, Marvell, James, and the “Garden of the World”’, The Explicator, 69 (2011), 30 – 32.
metaphor for the virtue of Lord Fairfax in the opening stanzas, as well as the focal point of the estate. Fairfax, like his house, possess a ‘sober frame’ (line 1), and is ‘like nature, orderly and near’ (line 26), intimately connected with the landscape and the natural community within it. Whilst D.K. Smith argues that this representation of Bilbrough Hill belongs firmly in the cartographic imagination, it seems that Marvell more fully examines the correspondences between God’s architecture in landscape and the proportions of ideal design which imitate God’s topography, and the proportions of the human body. In this way, the human body functions as the outward representation of an inner morality, and was variously represented from medieval times as a ‘microcosm, as an island, as a state, as a city, as a castle, or as a house’ just as it is at Bilbrough. That the landscape itself was a human body is a belief as old as Seneca’s *Natural Questions*. At Bilbrough, we see Fairfax’s own qualities of humility and modesty reflected in the topography. Where the state of the body politic was frequently described as analogous to the human body at the beginning of the seventeenth century, here the private Lord Fairfax dwells at Bilbrough as the soul dwells in the body. His frame houses the estate by virtue of the community’s all-encompassing knowledge of the world. Just as the modest scope of Lord Fairfax’s house at Nun Appleton is praised in ‘Upon Appleton House’ because it is illustrative of Fairfax’s unpretentiousness, the modest size of Bilbrough Hill is compensated for by geometric, corporal and, hence, philosophical perfection:

See how the arched earth does here  
Rise in a perfect hemisphere.  
The stiffest compass could not strike  
A line more circular and like,  
Nor stiffest pencil draw a brow  
So equal as this hill does bow.  
It seems as for a model laid,  
And that the world by it was made.  
(lines 1 – 8)

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The ‘stiffest’ or most rigid and accurate ‘compass’, the draughtsman’s instrument, ‘could not strike/ A line more circular and like’ than Bilbrough Hill. Marvell adapts the artifice of design and architecture to suit a natural scene, like that craved in the poem ‘The Mower Against Gardens’. Henry Hawkins asked ‘For what are the most judicious Artisans, but the mimics of nature?’ and similarly in these opening lines it seems the architect merely mimics the sphere which God has described at Fairfax’s Bilbrough. The function of Fairfax’s locus amoenus here is not nostalgic; instead, it is compelling and picturesque as the locus amoenus is depicted in classical literature. The sphere is an image of perfection, and hence, the ‘perfect hemisphere’ at Bilbrough is an image of striving after that perfection. To draw attention to the hill of Bilbrough with its ‘arched earth’ which rises from the ground in a ‘perfect hemisphere’ is to dwell on the perfection of the estate, and hence, Lord Fairfax himself. It is also fitting that the Latin origin of the word perfect - perfectus - means to finish, or bring to completion. Given Fairfax’s retirement, the completion of his public life is given a positive manifestation in the perfect semi-circularity of Bilbrough Hill. Although the use of the sphere and hemisphere motifs in seventeenth-century poetry are relatively commonplace, it seems that Fairfax and Marvell shared a passion for Hermetic Neoplatonism, or the idea that philosophical truths can be read in covert signs within the landscape. Fairfax’s own poetry displays this Neoplatonic underpinning, and is the same as that displayed in the estate at Bilbrough. The landscape stands for the geographical perfection of the topography, the moral stature of Lord Fairfax, and the righteousness of the small, exclusive community that he fosters therein.


35 Rosenmeyer discusses such representations of Arcadia in terms of the work of Virgil, Theocritus, and other more minor poets from antiquity. Prospect, didacticism, and nostalgia, form an understanding of the locus amoenus in classical times, and bears close similarly to that created in ‘Upon Appleton House’ and ‘Upon the Hill and Grove at Bilbrough’, Thomas G. Rosenmeyer’s The Green Cabinet (California: University of California Press, 1969), pp. 232 – 246.


The contrasting imperfection of the mountains beyond the ‘perfect hemisphere’ of Bilbrough Hill speak of ambition and the treacherous world without. The image of the mountain could, on first inspection, be taken for an image of proto-Romantic splendor. Like that of the Romantic poets, the landscape in ‘Upon the Hill and Grove at Bilbrough’ is portrayed as a pattern of moral principles. However, Marvell does not associate the rugged landscape beyond Bilbrough Hill with beauty. The contrast between the mountains and the hill are an allusion to the opposing qualities of ambition and humility:

Here learn, ye mountains more unjust,
Which to abrupter greatness thrust
That do with your hook-shouldered height
The earth deform, and heaven fright,
For whose excrescence ill designed,
Nature must a new centre find,
Learn here those humble steps to tread,
Which to securer glory lead.

(lines 9 – 16)

To express the perfection of Bilbrough Hill over the ‘mountains more unjust’ is to delineate a preference for *otium* over the prestige and competition of public office, or *negotium*. The mountains denote the life of worldly desire which Fairfax left behind after the Civil War. They perhaps also denote Fairfax’s Roundhead successors who now have the task of rebuilding England. The ‘humble steps’ that lead the poet and Fairfax to Bilbrough, and concomitantly ‘to securer glory’, describe a glory which is more confidently assured than that sought in public life. Marvell’s persona stands between Bilbrough Hill with its perfect, but modest, proportions, and the ruggedness of the mountains, gesturing from one to the other. Where Fairfax ‘must a new centre find’ for ‘securer glory’, the persona takes the *via media*. Marvell was temporarily ensconced in the Fairfax community at Nun Appleton, but perhaps knew that he would ultimately have to return to the world without. The ‘mountains more unjust’, or irregular, do ‘the earth deform, and heaven fright’ which underscores their offensive nature on earth and in heaven. As the ‘excrescence’ of the mountains was ‘ill designed’, unlike the perfect and divine hill of Bilbrough, ‘Nature must a new centre find’ in the form of Bilbrough itself.
Beyond the borders of Nun Appleton, imperfection takes shape in the semi-wild meadows where the peasants harvest hay, broadly sketched amongst Civil War imagery. The sinister ‘mowers now command the field’ (line 418) with ‘whistling scythe, and elbow strong’ (line 393). Now ‘the careless victors’ (line 425) of the scythe operate, ‘Dancing the triumphs of the hay’ (lines 426). The menacing nature of the mowers, pagan dancing, and ‘fairy circles’ (line 430) render the meadow an ominous place for the core community of Nun Appleton, and implicitly counsels them to stay close to the heart of the estate at ‘heaven’s centre’. The English harvest ritual on display is clearly reminiscent of Herrick’s ‘The Hock-Cart’, but where the works are enfolded to the heart of the estate in Herrick’s poem, here they exist on the periphery, mowing the meadows that lie ‘quilted o’er with bodies slain’ (line 422). Women are equally suspect in this menacing world, as ‘the women that with forks it fling,/ Do represent the pillaging’ (lines 423 – 424) of war. The control Fairfax is able to impart over the core of the estate evidently does not extend to the more violent and sinister outer reaches of his world.

The shifts in perspective that transpire in the description of the mowing of the Rail further this motif of imperfection. The ‘engines strange’ of the masque reveal the ‘green sea’ as the backdrop to the Mower’s stage. They walk ‘on foot through a green sea’ (line 390) before one of their number unwittingly ‘carves the rail’ (line 395) in close-up as they ‘massacre the grass along’ (line 394). He is repulsed by his actions ‘and does his stroke detest’ (line 398), rendering the scene tragic as the Mower fears ‘the flesh untimely mowed/ To him a fate as black forbode’ (lines 399 – 400). The mower carries out his natural work, yet the consequences are unnatural and beyond Fairfax’s control.

In the Civil War, everyone fights with God on their side, yet even amongst such perceived righteousness there are innocent victims. Fairfax’s house at the core of the estate is ‘composed here/ like nature, orderly and near’, and whilst the ‘wasting cloister’ embodies unnaturalness and artifice, it is easily ‘dispossessed’ by a Fairfax. Yet, the semi-wild meadows are beyond his control and he is unable to save the guiltless. By contrast, Fairfax’s house and estate, in its perfection, is associated with the natural. Henry Hawkins proposed the same theory in *Partheneia Sacra* in 1633:

> All art is then in truest perfection, when it may be reduced to some natural principle or other…This same in our house is seen, comparing it with the fabric of our natural bodies.39

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39 Hawkins, p. 166.
The Mowers on their artful stage do not embody a natural principle in killing the innocent Rail. By contrast, the art that is Fairfax’s house, and Fairfax himself, betrays the ‘truest perfection’ of the house and the revelation of the great moral ‘fabric of our natural bodies’. Fairfax’s house is in fact the embodiment of the natural. But after the mowing of the rail, ‘this new scene, again withdrawing, brings/ A new and empty face of things’ (line 441 – 442), presents yet another scene in the unfolding drama of Civil War, curiously empty. Smith contends that mid seventeenth-century England was a land fixated on its geography, the evidence of which is seen in these topographical poems. But he also states that even the most exotic lands and colonies had become imaginatively accessible and cartographically familiar by this time, making this tabula rasa, or carte blanche, all the more disconcerting. The next scene of ‘levell’d space’ (line 443) brings with it its own problems of perspective, as it is so ‘smooth and plain’ as to make moral judgement, that was clear in the mowing of the Rail, now difficult. There are no figures in this ‘table, rase and pure’ (line 546), to indicate virtue or dishonour. Mildmay Fane makes a similar assertion in ‘My Reformation’ when he locates himself in a featureless landscape during the Civil War, populated with nothing but sin and ‘times kalendar’ (line 4). There, Fane is ‘lost’ (line 31) and ‘soe small’ (line 32), and without any ‘grace, or good’ (line 38). In both Fane’s and Marvell’s poems, experimentations in prospect and sight have been disconcertingly replaced with a blank space.

In ‘Upon Appleton House’, the issues of scale within the landscape both reveal and distort the feature being studied, and draw parallels with Margaret Cavendish’s criticisms of this new experimentation with lenses in her Observations on Experimental Philosophy of 1666. Microscopes were not used widely for scientific purposes until the 1660s, and at the time that ‘Upon Appleton House’ was composed they were ‘executive toys’ for the well-to-do. Nevertheless, it seems that Marvell shared some of Cavendish’s reservations in a lens’s ability to reveal the truth of natural philosophy, and believed in its capacity to distort and corrupt the natural world. Marvell’s investigation of perspective, scale and illusion reveal the same reservations about the use of lenses. In part, Cavendish critiques Robert Hooke’s scientific best seller, Micrographia, published

43 Ford, p. 29.
44 Ford, p. 29.
in 1665.\textsuperscript{45} Hooke’s microscope allowed him to produce illustrations of common household insects for the general public to admire. Whilst the lens of a telescope might reinforce a Fairfax-like remoteness from the universe, the lens of a microscope brings the building-blocks of the world and the exploration of life into sharp relief. Cavendish contends that in seeking to examine nature in detail, the lens of a microscope distorts the very thing it seeks to illuminate. She supposes:

that a natural figure may be presented in as monstrous a shape, as it may appear mis-shapen rather than natural: For example, a louse by the help of a magnifying-glass appears like a lobster...the truth is, the more the figure by art is magnified, the more it appears mis-shapen from the natural, in so much as each joint will appear as a diseased, swell’d, and tumid body, ready and ripe for incision.\textsuperscript{46}

Hooke’s \textit{Micrographia}, which included an illustration of a magnified louse, is clearly referred to here. To Cavendish, Hooke’s images of the natural world are corrupting, and even threatening. In ‘Upon Appleton House’, non-core members of the Fairfax community are similarly made foreign, and even dehumanised, through observation.\textsuperscript{47}

The resulting fusion of nature and art constructs ‘the figure by art’, producing monsters of perception, and transgressing the boundary between the human and the bestial. In trusting sense over reason, the lens provides delusions rather than information. Distortions in perspective also disrupt the order of nature, tending to produce more ‘confusion, then a conformity in Nature’.\textsuperscript{48} The true principles of nature, therefore, are the ones that Cavendish has discovered through reason.

Correspondingly, the world beyond Nun Appleton is a bewildering place where distorted perspective marries with images of the Civil War. Cavendish further contends in \textit{Observations} that ‘if they should make a new world by Architecture of Art, it would be a very monstrous one’.\textsuperscript{49} This concern at monstrosity not only carries the connotations of frightening appearance, but deviation from the natural order and strange

\textsuperscript{45} Robert Hooke, \textit{Micrographia, or, Some physiological descriptions of minute bodies made by magnifying glasses with observations and inquiries thereupon} (London: Jo. Martyn and Ja. Allestry, 1665), \textit{Early English Books Online} \url{http://eebo.chadwyck.com/home} [accessed 2nd June 2010].

\textsuperscript{46} Margaret Cavendish, \textit{Observations upon Experimental Philosophy to which is Added, The Description of a New Blazing World} (London: A Maxwell, 1666), \textit{Early English Books Online} \url{http://eebo.chadwyck.com/home} [accessed 5th April 2011] (pp. 8 – 9).

\textsuperscript{47} In turn, Ian C. Parker contends that Marvell appropriated other images, themes, phrases and words from other writers, in ‘Marvell, Nathaniel Whiting, and Cowley’, \textit{Notes and Queries}, \textit{57} (2010), 59 – 66.

\textsuperscript{48} Cavendish, p. 8.

\textsuperscript{49} Cavendish, p. 8.
or unnatural behaviour. Now, in the meadows beyond Nun Appleton, Fairfax’s community encounters the unnatural world that Fairfax retired from:

And now to the abyss I pass
Of that unfathomable grass,
Where men like grasshoppers appear,
But grasshoppers are giants there.
They, in their squeaking laugh, contemn
Us as we walk more low than them,
And, from the precipices tall
Of the green spires, to us do call.

(lines 369 – 376)

In this stanza ‘grasshoppers appear/ But grasshoppers are giants there’. They ‘contemn/ Us’ as the party moves through the ‘unfathomable grass’ and ‘precipices tall/ Of the green spires’. Fairfax’s community is dwarfed in relation to this world. It is a place of collective recollection, which perhaps also accounts for the peculiarities of memory and cultural function. Marvell may be associating the disappearing grasshoppers with Royalists as Richard Lovelace did in ‘The Grasshopper’. In the next stanza, they ‘see men through this meadow dive,/ We wonder how they rise alive’ (lines 377 – 378) and flee the impending mowing of the grass, lest they become casualties of war like the carved Rail. The disorders of scale here reinforce Fairfax’s lack of power over this domain. His former moral stature is not recognised, and he is a diminutive figure in these meadows. Like Cavendish, Fairfax must trust to his reason, and not his senses, to make meaning from this world.

By contrast, in Fairfax’s own garden at the heart of Nun Appleton, order is everywhere. The topography of a seventeenth-century Italianate garden is representative of strategy and instruction in its conception and maintenance, and Marvell takes advantage of that idea to praise Fairfax in a serio-comic fashion. Katherine O. Acheson

51 Randall Stevenson ‘Remembering the Pleasant Bits: Nostalgia and the Legacies of Modernism’, Academic Research Library, 3 (2010), 132 – 139 (p. 136). Whilst Stevenson applies this idea to Edwardian literature, I contend that the same trope has resonance in ‘Upon Appleton House’.
maintains that Marvell depicts a scene where armed, but peaceful vigilance is lauded.\textsuperscript{53} The poet describes the garden in military images:

These, as their Governor goes by,  
In fragrant volleys they let fly,  
And to salute their Governess  
Again as great a charge they press.  
None for the virgin nymph, for she  
Seems with the flowers a flower to be.  

(lines 297 – 304)

This order also reinforces the egalitarian nature of the relationship between the ‘Governor’ Fairfax and the ‘Governess’ Anne Vere. As Fairfax comically inspects the flowers as if on parade, ‘fragrant volleys they let fly’ to salute him. But they salute Anne Vere and ‘as great a charge they press’ as her husband to honour her presence. They both command their community and the landscape in equal measure. This benign army allows Fairfax military might in a place where it is constructive rather than destructive. His withdrawal from the world lends him honour and control in a \textit{locus amoenus} where he may pursue spiritual and intellectual fulfilment. Moreover, Fairfax’s experience of \textit{otium} refers more specifically to the militaristic etymology of the word: in the world of Theocritus, the concept of \textit{otium} denoted a soldier’s leave from duty.\textsuperscript{54} Fairfax’s own withdrawal from \textit{negotium} to \textit{otium} brings him liberty. The natural order and military order of the landscape at Nun Appleton are one and the same, and are morally and spiritually constructive. They stand in counterpoint to the militaristic violence beyond the borders of Nun Appleton.\textsuperscript{55}

In a similar way, Marvell’s poem ‘Bermudas’ also delineates a \textit{locus amoenus} which belies spiritual and violent realities. Marvell creates a garden paradise in the style of the \textit{Song of Songs}, bursting with pomegranates, figs, and melons, and scented with ambergris. Encircled by water, and desired by Englishmen, Marvell’s Bermuda is an

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{53} Katherine O. Acheson, ‘Military Illustration, Garden Design, and Marvell’s “Upon Appleton House” [with illustrations]’, \textit{English Literary Renaissance}, 41 (2011), 146 – 188 (p. 147). Acheson also gives a brief critical history of meaning in Fairfax’s garden at the beginning of her article.  
\textsuperscript{54} In classical literature ‘duty’ was regarded as \textit{negotium}, and thus \textit{otium} was leisure, freedom and escape, Rosenmeyer, p.67. For a detailed analysis of the origin and use of this term in antiquity, see Rosenmeyer’s chapter entitled ‘Otium’, pp. 65 – 98.  
\textsuperscript{55} Though it lies beyond the scope of this discussion, Ashley Marshall explores Marvell’s views on Cromwell and the outcome of the Civil War in Ashley Marshall, “‘I saw him dead’: Marvell’s Elegy for Cromwell’, \textit{Studies in Philology}, 103 (2006), 499 – 521.}
exotic ‘sceptred isle’ of English colonial paradise, though ‘huge sea-monsters’ (line 9) lurk in its watery boundary. Yet, at the island’s centre is a ‘grassy stage,/ Safe from the storms’ and prelates’ rage’ (lines 10 – 11) where ‘eternal spring…enamels everything’ (lines 13 – 14), embellishing God’s own art and promulgating religious peace. The earth simply yields fruit and ‘throws the melons at our feet’ (line 22). But instead of being a sanctified locus amoenus like Bilbrough and Nun Appleton, and thus safe from the ‘prelates’ rage’ (line 10), in reality those Bermudan settlers were subject to religious conflict during the Civil War period, inverting the ideal place.

Perhaps Marvell felt the loss of his own ideal place of Fairfax’s Nun Appelton when he considered the real-life conflicts alive on the island. Though Bermuda was largely Royalist in sympathy, all settlers were made to take an oath of allegiance testifying to the fact and dissenters were driven off the island, including the governor himself. In Bermuda, a lack of support for the King was tantamount to a declaration of loyalty to Cromwell, and even visitors to the island were censured from espousing anti-Royalist sentiments for fear of expulsion. This political disagreement grew into spiritual conflict between religious ministers on the island. In addition, a fascination with witchcraft overtook many of the settlers, resulting in the execution of four of their number, drawing the island’s spiritual differences into violence. Ironically, the ‘prelates rage’ in ‘Bermudas’ that poetically propelled these men and women to leave England, was, in reality, a religious ‘rage’ that was alive and well in Bermuda, and threatened the populace there. In a similar way to ‘Upon the Hill and Grove at Bilbrough’ and ‘Upon Appleton House’, Marvell fashions a poetic, safe locus amoenus from a real-life context plagued with religious differences and violence. However, where the secure estates of ‘Upon the Hill and Grove at Bilbrough’ and ‘Upon Appleton House’ are safe from violence, in ‘Bermudas’ the poetic ideal place conceals the actual religious and political conflicts that raged within the island.

In ‘Upon Appleton House’, Mary Fairfax is the only figure who can expunge the locus amoenus of its violence and conflict. She is a ‘flower’ when inspecting the militaristic garden with her parents, consolidating her association with nature and

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57 Pestana, p. 92.
59 Pestana, p. 92.
60 Pestana, p. 92.
61 Jarvis, p. 47.
62 Jarvis, p. 47.
indicating her suitability for the role of ruler. As such, she becomes an altogether more independent figure at the end of the poem. Fairfax had no son, so Mary was the heir of Nun Appleton. She does not feature at all in ‘Upon the Hill and Grove at Bilbrough’, but in ‘Upon Appleton House’ she shows herself ready to take over the command of the locus amoenus. If enclosed garden spaces are defined by what they exclude, as Katherine Bootle Attie suggests, then Fairfax’s estate is defined by the defence of the garden from military strife. When Mary inherits the estate, her garden has little need for defence, serio-comic or other. She displays such implicit control over the garden through nothing more than her presence and virtue:

‘Tis she that to these gardens gave  
That wonderous beauty which they have.  
She straightness on the woods bestows;  
To her the meadow sweetness owes.  
Nothing could make the river me  
So crystal-pure, but only she:  
She yet more pure, sweet, straight, and fair,  
Than garden, woods, meads, rivers are.  

(lines 689 – 696)

Marvell perhaps draws on the actual expeditions Mary embarked on with her father between military camps during the Civil War, but the influence is faint. It is more notable that nature’s militaristic ensigns that honoured her father are done away with. The garden salutes her in a natural, rather than militaristic sense. The sense of order she imparts on the garden is not one associated with Civil War imagery. Mary will come to command the estate herself as heir to the Fairfax community. She restores ‘straightness on the woods’ through her own ‘straight’ morality, and ‘sweetness’ to the meadows. She gave ‘wonderous beauty’ to the garden. Maria brings governance and order over the estate’s tendency to unruliness. The garden becomes as orderly as it was under Fairfax and his wife, but the militaristic imagery is expunged from the scene, as it is no longer needed.

In Mary’s purging of unruliness from the estate and its borders, Marvell praises the scholarly achievements of his pupil:

For she, to higher beauties raised,
Disdains to be for lesser praised,
She counts her beauty to converse
In all the languages as hers,
Nor yet in those herself employs
But for the wisdom, not the noise;
Nor yet that wisdom would affect,
But as ‘tis Heaven’s dialect.

(lines 705 – 712)

The acquisition of ‘wisdom’ means that she is ‘to higher beauties raised’ than mere prettiness. Instead, ‘she counts her beauty to converse/ In all the language as hers’ and does this for intellectual achievement rather than the ‘noise’ it creates. This wisdom enables her to rule over the future community of Nun Appleton and bring her closer to ‘Heaven’s dialect’, so that she can converse there with heaven too. Maria must ultimately maintain the order which her father had achieved at Nun Appleton. Like ‘young Fairfax’, the ‘virgin Thwaites’, Lord Fairfax, and Anne Vere, Maria will continue to cultivate order at the estate.

At the time that Marvell wrote ‘Upon the Hill and Grove at Bilbrough’, ‘Upon Appleton House’, and ‘Bermudas’, England had just emerged from the Civil War, where no doubt there had been constant pressure to take the Royalist or Parliamentarian side. But in the aftermath of such a destructive event, and in light of Fairfax’s disillusionment with the outcome of the war, debates over partisan leanings are diminished. In contrast to the destruction of war, there is a need for Fairfax to construct his own community in order to examine God and his natural work within the locus amoenus. But there is also a requirement to understand the world that lies outside the bounds of the locus amoenus in order to better understand the community’s rightful, moderate place in the world. The attributes of Bilbrough Hill and the house of Nun Appleton are emblems of Fairfax’s virtuous character, and are the natural anodyne to Fairfax’s strife in the exterior world. Bilbrough and Nun Appleton form the Neoplatonic models of virtue which Fairfax has fashioned from God’s work in his retirement. Although Lord Fairfax is heroic in his retirement, he is eclipsed in his ability to order
and control the *locus amoenus* by his daughter Mary, who sets upon the task of finally bringing the wildness of the exterior world under control.
Chapter Seven

John Milton

Despite James I’s recommendation of a restrained diet in *Basilikon Doron*, the Stuart court famously enjoyed unfettered feasting and inebriation. Such an example was documented by Sir John Harrington in 1606, when drunkenness ruined the masque planned for the King of Denmark on his visit to England:

Most of the presenters went backward, or fell down; wine did so occupy their upper chambers. Now did appear, in rich dress, Hope, Faith, and Charity: Hope did assay to speak, but wine renderd her endeavours so feeble that she withdrew, and hop[ed] the King would excuse her brevity: Faith was then all alone, for I am certain she was not joined with good works, and left the court in staggering condition: Charity came to the King’s feet, and seemed to cover the multitude of sins her sisters had committed; in some sorte she made obeyance and brought giftes, but said she would return home again, as there was no gift which heaven had not already given his Majesty. She then returned to Hope and Faith, who were both sick and spewing in the lower hall…I did never see such lack of good order, discretion and sobriety as I have now done.¹

As Harrington’s recount demonstrates, masque performances formed part of the courtly excess that rendered James’s endorsement of Stoic moderation in the *Basilikon* ironic. Not only were they lavishly and expensively costumed, the dancers were always of aristocratic birth, and the audience was exclusively drawn from the Court. Stuart court masques were written to be politically intelligible to a small, aristocratic audience, and to express the authority of the King. They were, then, elite and luxurious entertainments which, in their substance, reinforced the status conveyed by their form.

Milton, by contrast, subverted the masque form to criticise courtly excess and, in doing so, the general moral state of England. Milton’s masques reflect a Puritan response to the sinfulness of his society and also to the instability of wider England which belied the kingly vision of control that Stuart masques advanced. Milton suggests

that through moral self-examination it is possible for an individual to cultivate virtue. In turn, virtue strengthens the bonds of family and community, which leads to a peaceful social structure. Milton usurps the dramatic form normally used to flatter the Stuarts and uses it to obliquely attack them instead.

Milton’s Puritanical ideas were advanced by his use of a garden allegory, both as a measure of didactic communication and via his literary aesthetic. His early masques *Arcades* and *Comus* (both 1634) explicate Milton’s treatment of virtue and Puritan ideology in this most royalist of dramatic forms. Moreover, in *Paradise Lost* (1667) the poet uses the task of gardening, which orders Adam’s and Eve’s daily lives, to delineate a Puritan life of moral and spiritual commitment. This task also puns on the proper use of nature and reason both within Eden and after Adam’s and Eve’s expulsion. More broadly, an examination of the garden allegory’s place in the intellectual and historical context of Milton’s writing delineates the relationship between the ‘paradise within thee, happier farr’ and the sequestration of land in the mid-seventeenth century.

The masque form brought with it an emphasis on community and the communication of ideology. Milton found a welcome patron in Alice Spencer Egerton, Countess Dowager of Derby, known for her enthusiastic patronage of the arts and mother-in-law to John Edgerton, Earl of Bridgewater, who would later commission *Comus*. The twenty-one year old Milton was invited to write *Arcades* for the occasion of the Countess’ seventy-fifth birthday at Harefield, probably by the court musician and tutor to the Earl of Bridgewater’s children, Henry Lawes. In *Arcades* Milton established many ideas which were more fully explored in *Comus*, the masque written for the Earl and performed only months later.⁵

Milton’s criticism of the court is intimated early in *Arcades* through the geographical movements of its characters. The progressions of ‘the Noble persons of her Family, who appear on the scene in pastoral habit, moving towards the seat of State’ establish the masque around acts of journeying homeward towards a centre of rural power, and away from the court. *Comus* also reflects this journey. The Countess’ family, in pastoral attire rather than the opulent costumes of a court masque, move toward the *locus amoenus* which has the Countess enthroned at its centre, radiating light. They are welcomed by

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her and subsumed by the house when the Genius leads the family to ‘where she sits’ (line 90). *Arcades* begins by praising the Countess and describing her in regal terms:

Mark what radiant state she spreds,  
In circle round her shining throne  
Shooting her beams like silver thresds:  
This, this is she alone,  
Sitting like a goddess bright,  
In the center of her light

(*Arcades*, lines 14 - 19)

Although the reference to a ‘shining throne’ is unmistakably regal the Jonsonian masque, in counterpoint to *Arcades*, sought to express the relationship between ruler and ruled in terms of allegorical figures that might variously represent power, virtue, or nature. In sharp contrast to the Stuart court, the Countess’ estate is well-governed, moderate, and stable. *Arcades* mimics the Elizabethan royal progress that brought Elizabeth I to Harefield in 1602; such is her importance, that even royalty will come to see her enthroned at her country seat. The Countess would have reason to remember how the entertainment for Queen Elizabeth I had been staged some years before, and may well have been flattered to be placed on a ‘carpet and chair’ raised upon ‘steps neare to the entering into the house’, where Queen Elizabeth herself likely sat to enjoy her entertainment.\(^6\) Perhaps this mimicry itself, in its nostalgia for the more moderate court of Gloriana, acts to further critique Stuart profligacy. In any event, it is clear that at Harefield her family’s ‘solemn search hath end’ (line 6), and that this pilgrimage has led them to a place of enduring order with specific roles for all members of the family. A gardening allegory establishes the moral standing of the family members who return to this *locus amoenus*: it is the ‘better soyl’ (line 101) of the estate which, in part, establishes their natural virtue, just as Arcadians were born out of the very land they inhabited.\(^7\)

The journey to the Countess is a spiritual, as well as a geographical, pursuit. Milton makes clear that the moral quality of the ‘hallow’d ground’ (line 55) of the estate is


\(^7\) Thomas G. Rosenmeyer, The Green Cabinet (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1973), p.109, ‘Plutarch says that the Arcadians were the first men to rise from the earth, as the oak was the first plant’. Rosenmeyer also provides an excellent discussion of the *locus amoenus* in the work of Theocritus.
privileged over any physical pleasures that may be had there—something very different
to the Stuart court. The countess presides over an Arcadian landscape as a ‘rural queen’
and a ‘deity’ (line 93) at the end of her family’s spiritual quest, populated with gentle
swains, nymphs, pastoral shepherds, and the Genius of the Wood. The family seeks to
partake in the virtue she embodies, ‘too divine to be mistook’ (line 5), though ‘Envy bid
conceal the rest’ (line 13). Like *Comus*, as the Attendant Spirit helps to guide the
Bridgewater children through the forest, the spiritual journey the family undertakes
resists evil and arrives at a place of transcendent beauty.

A similar spiritual journey - and critique of the court - takes place in Milton’s next
masque, *Comus*. *Comus* has, correctly, been labelled a Puritan masque by Maryann Cale
McGuire. More directly, it can be read as Milton’s reaction to aristocratic, courtly
excess, and Charles’s decision to promulgate his father’s *Book of Sports* in 1633.

Puritan thought held that moral and spiritual purity was the means of giving glory to
God and achieving true happiness. Milton’s masque seeks to develop virtue by instilling
an ability to recognise temptation and then defeat it. In doing so, the masque highlights
the need for scholarly and emotive balance, makes clear the strain between the soul and
the body, and considers excess and order, as well as the correct use of nature.

Repeating the emphasis on family and community found in his earlier, experimental
masque *Arcades*, in *Comus* Milton writes a masque that places his patron’s three artistic
children on the stage to be threatened and tempted by Comus, and to survive the
intellectual and moral assault. In doing so, Milton pointedly revises the masque
structure. Both the Earl of Bridgewater and the King sought a noble self-fashioning in
these aristocratic entertainments, but accomplished it in different ways. Jonson created
Stuart masques where the noble himself or herself would play the protagonist, often a
much admired Greek god or goddess. In doing so, they would embody the immutability
of their power and always defeat the forces of drunkenness, disorder, and evil arrayed
against them in theory, if not in actual practice. Here, the Lady in *Comus* resolutely
plays herself, the Earl of Bridgewater’s daughter fending off the unwanted advances of
Comus, which reinforces the moral lesson at play. This removal of a layer of allegory
brings a closer focus on the individual’s spiritual journey towards virtue.

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McGuire posits that Milton added a Puritan seriousness and morality to aristocratic entertainment.
Pastimes* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986). *The Book of Sports* became a focal point for
political opposition to Charles’s court, something that grew with Puritan power in the early 1630s.
The predominant question produced by the sexual temptation Comus poses to the Lady is one of scholarly and emotive balance, as well as tension between the soul and the body. The concept of marriage underlines the Neoplatonic roots of the masque; that is, marriage is the union of body and soul, as it was for Cupid and Psyche. The idealism of such a view is held up by the argument for marriage rather than pre-marital relations of the Lady and the Attendant Spirit, and where Comus fails to corrupt the soul of the Lady in *Comus*, Satan succeeds in Book IX of *Paradise Lost*. Ultimately, though, through the Lady’s strength of argument Comus admits that she ‘fables not’ (line 800) and admits the veracity of her virtue and his licentiousness.

The correct use of nature is a core aspect of the images of beauty, excess, and order present in the masque. Comus tries to work against nature and reverse the values of the Lady by accusing her of being struck down with melancholia which produces ‘moral babble’ (line 807). The Lady, in turn rounds on his ‘gay rhetoric’ (line 790) with determination and vigor. Her natural intellect and virtue, demonstrated in a powerful argument, repulses his rhetoric and this resilience bears a closer resemblance to Jesus’ response to Satan in *Paradise Regain’d* than it does to Eve. The Lady’s moral fortitude naturally bonds with the heavenly harmony of the Attendant Spirit and the magic of Sabrina. With this alliance, the Lady can overcome ‘carnal sensuality’ (line 474) and ‘sensuall Folly, and Intemperance’ (line 975) with rational moral thought and argument.

*Comus* further reinforces Puritan ideology in its performance by drawing away from elaborate and expensive sets, costumes, and revelry—which the masque form was known for—and emphasising sermonising and moral instruction.\(^\text{10}\) This meant that the transmission of meaning fell largely to language rather than visual embellishment.

Milton creates the negatively-portrayed *carpe diem* oration of Comus as the main event to be observed, in place of the sheer spectacle of Stuart masques. In Comus’ speech, his views on beauty as ‘nature’s coyn,’ which ‘must not be hoorded, / But must be currant’ (line 739 – 740) suppose that the Lady has Eve’s weakness, but the Lady is not duped by his disguise.

Decades after Milton usurped the masque form in the 1630s to promulgate Puritan ideology, in the Interregnum Milton continues to disparage the kind of aristocratic entertainment practiced in the reign of James I and later Charles I. Milton’s Puritan ideology ran in opposition to the lavish nature of the courtly masque. In Book IV of

\(^\text{10}\) For more information on Puritan ideology at this time see Catherine Gimelli Martin’s *Milton Among the Puritans: The Case for Historical Revisionism* (London: Ashgate, 2010). The chapter entitled ‘Milton Among the Puritans’ pp. 65 – 105 is particularly useful.
Paradise Lost, Milton once again maligns the aristocratic entertainment favoured by the Stuarts, but now from the medium of poetry. Adam and Eve’s evening of prayer and nourishment is quite opposite to the revelry enacted in a court masque. They do not celebrate:

…the bought smile
Of harlots, loveless, joyless, unindeard,
Casual fruition, nor in Court Amours
Mixt dance, or wanton masque, or midnight bal,
Or Serenate, which the starv’d lover sings
To his proud fair, best quitted with disdain.
These lulled by Nightingales imbraceing slept,
And on thir naked limbs the flourie roof
Showd Roses, which the Morn repair’d.

(Book IV, lines 765 – 774)

Here Milton uses a sexual allegory to impugn a Stuart style of masque. A ‘smile’ can be bought, and ‘loveless…casual fruition’ with ‘harlots’ is unfulfilling. This base behaviour is contrasted with, and deplored as, the ‘mixt dance, or wanton mask, or midnight bal/ Or Serenate’. Comus, by comparison, is far from ‘wanton,’ and centres on the Lady’s virtue. To make the point emphatically, Milton refers to the courtly masque as ‘Court Amours’. To Milton, the Stuart masque was not only morally suspect but actually destructive of its audience’s virtue. It is the same kind of lusty attitude to sensual pleasure that describes Eve’s act of ingorging the apple later in Book IX.11

Milton’s technique of dealing with the locus amoenus is very similar in Comus, Paradise Lost, and Paradise Regained. Temptation is created as a landscape. In Comus, the darkness of the forest and the glow of the moon express threatened chastity. At the end of the masque the landscape is turned to joy in recognition of the Lady’s triumph over Comus. The masque is balanced between virtue and evil as nature stands for the lady as well as itself. Similarly, in Book V of Paradise Lost the landscape allows for ascension to Godliness:

11 Christopher Baker further examines the language of temptation in Paradise Lost, centring much of his argument on Milton’s intended meaning in Eve ingorging the apple, in “‘Greedily she ingorg’d’: Eve and the Bread of Life’, Milton Studies, 52 (2011), 95 – 110.
Well hast thou taught the way that might direct
Our knowledge, and the scale of Nature set
From center to circumference, whereon
In contemplation of created things
By steps we may ascend to God.

(Book V, lines 508 – 512)

The progression of the soul from ‘centre to circumference’ through ‘steps we may ascend’ depicts the balance between the internal and external paradise which God has created for Adam and Eve.¹² This allusion to Plato’s Symposium and a mythological description of man and woman’s spherical origin is given new meaning. Originally, Aristophanes attributes the origin of the sexes to the anger of Zeus. As retribution for insurgence against his rule over spherical human beings, and the ideal joining of man and woman, Zeus punishes them by bisecting each circular human into two separate beings, male and female. Hereafter, man and woman will seek its lost half.¹³ Eugene Cunnar contends that this ideal union of male and female was perceived as an ideal obtainable through coition and matrimony.¹⁴ Love of Eve’s body does not obstruct the love of the mind, nor the ‘steps we may ascend to God’. The internal paradise radiates outward, along with reason and thought, all of which are needed for communion with God. Equally, Comus demonstrates the same Puritan and Neoplatonic resolution of the tension between flesh and soul in the Lady’s triumph over Comus.

Like Comus, Paradise Lost delineates a way of life which demands attentiveness and full moral engagement, and employs a garden allegory to do so. Neither Eden, nor the locus amoenus of a lost England that it represents, should require excessive control in its innocent state. However, that is not as things are. The emphasis on labour in the garden can be read as Puritan discipline through constant work and a method of ordering one’s own life. The garden in Paradise Lost, like England, like men’s souls, is a difficult Eden. It is prone to overprofuseness, pleasure, reality, and fecundity, at its outer limits:


This tension between the encroaching Garden of Eden and Adam and Eve’s efforts to keep nature ordered is a task which defines their daily lives, as it should for the Godly Puritan and Protestant. There is a constant threat of disorder within the locus amoenus regarding both the garden and its inhabitants, thus the subsequent control which Adam and Eve must exercise over the garden is perhaps also a reflection of the control they must exercise over themselves.

Rather than employing force, the garden is tended in an educative fashion, with ‘the vine to wed her Elm’ (line 215) in Book V expressing the cajoling method of their gardening. The emphasis on labour in the garden can be read as a Puritan discipline through constant work and the application of reason to order one’s own life. When Adam and Eve tend the garden and allegorically fulfill the Puritan self-examination and control that leads to virtue, they become more Godly. When their labour is finally divided at Eve’s command in Book IX, Adam and Eve lose the ability to garden in this reasonable, sacramental fashion. Milton makes clear that if something is wrong with
their natural reason, a Fall must result.\textsuperscript{15} Eden, however, remains a reward for the good and, thus, reasoning soul. The ‘happy rural seat’ and the ideals Jonson and Lanyer sought to reify at Cookham and Penshurst in the earliest parts of the seventeenth century are now truly ‘here only’ in an internalised Eden. Milton makes these points not only thematically, but structurally.

The Puritan Milton believed that art and poetry should be useful, plain-speaking, and truthful – rather than adornment, flattery, or idle entertainment. The word ‘art’ has a negative connotation for Milton, who rejects ‘nice Art/ in curious knots’ in favour of ‘Nature boon/ Poured fourth profuse on hill, and dale, and plain’. The poet’s disinclination for Royalist art in favour of more instructive, purpose-filled, religious work translates into a profuse and natural Garden of Eden which God has planted in \textit{Paradise Lost}. Englishness also flourishes in this useful Eden. Charlotte F. Otten finds eight elements that an Englishman would recognise: ‘location, pure air, trees, flowers, furnishings, walks and alleys, bower, and gardening’.\textsuperscript{16} None of these garden features constitute the ‘nice art’ that Milton dislikes. In Eden, art does not glorify Adam and Eve, nor satisfy their individual vanity, but fulfills a didactic purpose.

Eden is a beautiful landscape, but the ‘shaggy hill’ and ‘steep wilderness’ present at the garden’s boundary are already starting to become chaotic. This peripheral, untamed nature is not part of the actual garden, but surrounds it. The wilderness has to be kept at bay by gardening so it does not encroach on the ordered, inner Garden of Eden. Thus, the ‘shaggy hill’ and ‘steep wilderness’ mark the limits of the innocent garden. As such, Adam and Even cannot pass through these areas to the outside world, as beyond these regions lies experience. On their expulsion from the garden, though, they must traverse these wild areas, signifying their Fallen state.

Within the \textit{locus amoenus}, the gardening labor of Adam and Eve reinforces their awareness of God. This activity structures their daily lives and secures their place in the divine order:

\begin{quote}
Man hath his daily work of body or mind
Appointed, which declares his dignity,
And the regard of heaven on all his ways;
\end{quote}

\begin{flushright}
15 Fredson Bowers, ‘Adam, Eve, and the Fall in \textit{Paradise Lost}, Modern Language Association, 84 (1969), 264 – 273. Bowers also questions what has lead Adam and Eve to a Fall, and finds that the justice of the ethical situation they find themselves in constitutes a large part of the question.
\end{flushright}
While other animal unactive range,
And of their doings God takes no account.

(Book IV, lines 618 – 622)

Man is ranked above ‘idle’ animals, of whom ‘God takes no account’ because of their lack of toil and of religious consciousness. Contemplation is not emphasised in Paradise Lost as it is in Lanyer’s ‘To Cooke-ham’, because Milton’s garden demands more work of its inhabitants. The Protestant prayers Adam and Eve deliver without visible rite (lines 720 – 735) might qualify as a mode of contemplation, since they contain much praise for God and his creations. Examined within the context of seventeenth-century pastoral poetry, the individual in an intricately planned and tended formal garden contemplating God has been replaced by two people earning their right to be there. Although Adam and Eve at this point rank higher than the vegetative world, they still struggle to ‘dress and keep’ the garden at its edges, and Adam does not seem to be successfully exerting his God-given authority over it at all. Throughout Book IV there is a tension between the garden and the human need for order as the garden delivers a bounty that would seem excessive in any other environment. Adam is conscious of how his life in paradise is part of the natural order established by God, and how in fact it pleases Him.

Adam and Eve’s gardening was to be distinguished from the submissive toil imposed upon man as a punishment for the Fall. The gardening process itself seems to be far more significant than the results. Gardening gives purpose and meaning to their lives and provides an allegory for the soul’s attention to the appetites of the flesh and, thus, the pursuit of Puritan virtue. Moreover, there is no suggestion that the ‘wanton growth’ is going to consume them or take over the garden. Milton seems to have believed that for Paradise to be truly perfect, there must be work existing for Adam and Eve, and their children. Milton’s paradise was a process that Adam and Eve participated in strenuously. As a result, this work is viewed as a token of man’s dignity rather than his misery. Puritanism reaffirmed the value of toil in opposition to much of Catholicism’s view of the superiority of mental over manual labour. Nature has been

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17 Genesis 2:15.
quite excessive in her generosity, and Adam and Eve have a considerable task on their hands if they wish to bring nature’s bounty under control:

…reform
Yon flowery arbours, yonder alleys green,
Our walks at noon with branches overgrown,
That mock our scant manuring and require
More hands than ours to lop their wanton growth.
Those blossoms also, and those dropping gums,
That lie bestrewn, unsightly and unsmooth,
Ask riddance, if we mean to tread with ease.

(Book IV, lines 625 – 633)

Adam observes that they can only barely cope on a day to day basis with the immense task of maintaining the garden in a condition of ordered beauty, and indeed that it is at times marred by overgrown paths and ‘unsightly’ blossoms strewn about. There are ‘flowery arbours’ to trim, tree branches to ‘lop’ off, and they need to pick up the ‘blossoms’ and ‘gums’ so that they can walk the paths in the garden. It is as if what God has given them is not enough, they feel the need to improve upon God’s creation. Adam and Eve strive to emulate the perfection of Christ, moving past his position as a virtuous man and striving for an even higher form of moral worth. Adam and Eve even declare that they need more help to curb the overgrown branches’ ‘wanton growth’, presumably through producing children. The representation of Adam and Eve as gardeners keeping nature at bay may seem to contradict the pleasures of Eden. Milton developed this role to a much greater degree than other seventeenth-century poets such as John Denham and Ben Jonson, but the apparent ineffectiveness of Adam and Eve’s gardening is strange given the amount of effort they exert. This image depicts the unstable nature of the garden, as it once again threatens to descend into disorder. It is the emphasis on a difficult Eden that undermines any generalisations between pre and post-lapsarian life in Paradise Lost. The gardener fighting to control Eden is an allegory for the rational soul fighting to control the appetites of the body. Thus the lost or Fallen garden of Genesis is countered by the promise of a new garden and a paradise regained.

The practical, external paradise illustrated in Book IV of Eden also foreshadows the internal ‘paradise within thee, happier far’. The walls of Eden which strive to keep Satan out also make reference to the hortus conclusus which walls and protects the
soul. Norbrook argues that Book XI and Book XII of *Paradise Lost* privilege dissent over Milton’s Puritan ideology, and that he persisted with the political public sphere. Yet, man’s internal paradise, away from the public sphere will make him ‘happier far’ than any external Eden. The passion that drove Milton into the public sphere even at the time of writing the last two books of *Paradise Lost* is, at least in poetry, subsumed by man’s interior and reasonable nature. Eve’s body is corrupted alongside the garden itself, when:

> Earth felt the wound, and Nature from her seat  
> Sighing through all her Works gave signs of woe,  
> That all was lost. Back to the Thicket slunk  
> The guiltie Serpent, and well might, for Eve  
> Intent now wholly on her taste, naught else  
> Regarded, such delight till then, as seemd,  
> In Fruit she never tasted, whether true  
> Or fancied so, through expectation high  
> Of knowledg, nor was God-head from her thought.  
> Greedily she ingorg’d without restraint,  
> And knew not eating Death: Satiate at length,  
> And hight’nd as with Wine, jocond and boon,  
> Thus to her self she pleasingly began.

(Book IX, lines 782 – 794)

Eve is now driven by desire, greed, and her senses, while nature ‘sighing through all her Works gave signs of woe’. Focused completely on ‘her taste, naught else/ Regarded,’ Eve doubts the very look of Eden, ‘whether true/ Or fancied so’. Now that she is ‘hight’nd as with Wine’ Eve is in danger of losing her reason, which keeps balance between her internal and external paradise. It is an image far removed from Eve’s ‘reason as her being’ in Book V, where Milton demonstrates the Platonic argument for reason as the defining aspect of the highest, immortal aspect of the soul. The convivial effects of the fruit erase the effect so ‘pleasingly began’, as the full effects of her

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consumption of the forbidden fruit will only be known after the Lord’s judgment and Adam and Eve’s expulsion. One can only guess at the reasons that a paradise within would be superior to this original Eden, and John C. Ulreich examines many theories that leave him unsatisfied.\textsuperscript{22} Perhaps, despite the horror of the Civil War and the failure of Republican government, Milton posits that it is through a knowledge of the soul that man enjoys a true \textit{locus amoenus}. Through suffering, a Christian soul can be borne out of transgression and ready himself for the second coming of Christ. The landscape comments on the spectacle of its inhabitants, such is the intimate connection between man and nature. Milton’s Edenic landscape is ultimately as fragile and vulnerable as the figures who inhabit it.

Consequently, when Adam and Eve divide their labours in Book IX, the disruption in their relationship begins:

Adam, well may we labour still to dress  
This Garden, still to tend Plant, Herb and Flour,  
Our pleasant task enjoyn’d, but till more hands  
Aid us, the work under our labour grows,  
Luxurious by restraint; what we by day  
Lop overgrown, or prune, or prop, or bind,  
One night or two with wanton growth derides  
Tending to wilde. Thou therefore now advise  
Or hear what to my minde first thoughts present,  
Let us divide our labours, thou where choice  
Leads thee, or where most needs, whether to wind  
The Woodbine round this Arbour, or direct  
The clasping Ivie where to climb, while I  
In yonder Spring of Roses intermixt  
With Myrtle, find what to redress till Noon:  

(Book IX, lines 205 – 219)

Eve warns that the garden is only ‘Luxurious by restraint’, and though nature

\textsuperscript{22} John C. Ulreich, Jr., ‘A Paradise Within: The Fortunate Fall in \textit{Paradise Lost}, Journal of the History of Ideas, 32 (1971), 351 – 366. Ulreich’s discussion is very useful in the discussion of the oft-quotes phrase ‘a paradise within thee, happier far,’ and examines the views of many academics on this point.
is in an everlasting state of fecundity, the perpetually growing landscape will tend ‘to
devenience’ if left unrestrained. This circumstance makes Adam and Eve’s industry not
simply the anticipated ritual gesture in a Puritan garden, but an indispensable and vast
undertaking. The difference of opinion between Adam and Eve sees them finally part,
when ‘Thus saying, from her Husband’s hand her hand/ Soft she withdrew’ (Book IX
lines 385) and Eve ‘never from that hour in Paradise/ Foundest either sweet repast, or
sound repose’(Book IX line 407). The Platonic perfection of their unity is finally lost,
and nature follows suit by sheltering the deceitful Satan ‘half-spied, so thick the roses
bushing round’ (Book IX, line 426). The symbolism of the roses here is secondary to
the landscape’s reflection of Eve’s temptation. When she succumbs, the landscape
provides ‘earths freshest softest lap’ (Book IX, line 1039) for love-making, as if
participating in the illicit sensuality of the scene. Here it is also apparent that Eden not
only draws from the garden of Genesis, but the luxuriant, sensual garden in the Song of
Songs. Eden’s reaction to the Fall demonstrates man’s inextricable attachment to the
natural and spiritual world. It is a part of man’s inward paradise, and as such the divine
qualities of Eden are part of his view of the world.

When considered within their wider intellectual and historical contexts, the expulsion
of Adam and Eve from the garden in Milton’s poem reveals something of the
seventeenth-century anxieties over sequestration of land. The loss of Eden reinforces the
need for a ‘paradise within thee, happier farr’. He who owns land has power, but at the
end of Paradise Lost Milton creates the manner of Adam and Eve’s empowerment
possible without the acquisition of land. Whilst Adam and Eve lose their physical locus
amoenus, they gain that ‘paradise within’. Similarly, the culmination of Paradise Lost
can also be read as embodying Milton’s hopes for England after the Civil War and the
failure of the Commonwealth. The loss of the Republican paradise, like the Fall, is an
opportunity for Englishmen to cultivate self-knowledge, self-reliance, and a purposeful
life, rather than acquisition. Book IX begins with a tragic tone, describing:

…foul distrust, and breach
Disloyal on the part of Man, revolt,
And disobedience: On the part of Heav’n
Now alienated, distance and distaste,

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21 For a discussion of the symbolism of the rose here, see Milton, ed. by Alistair Fowler, 2nd edn
Anger and just rebuke, and judgement giv’n,
That brought into this World a world of woe

(Book IX, lines 6 – 11)

With their impending expulsion from Eden, Adam and Eve are ‘One the part of Heav’n/
Now alienated’, making their expulsion from their land synonymous with their
‘alienated, distance and distaste’ with which heaven now views them. They are no
longer bound to the land, or each other, yet recovering paradise as it ever was may have
appeared naïve at the end of the 1650s. Further, the legal term ‘alienate’ was used to
denote the transfer of ownership of material possessions – including land – in the mid-
seventeenth century. Clearly this fear of disenfranchisement was an anxiety that did
not only extend to the wealthy. On the subject of enclosures in Leicester and the
Midlands in 1653, the minister of Knaptoft, John Moore, proclaims that there are some
who:

…care not how many Beggers they make, so themselves may be
Gentlemen; nor how many poor they make, so themselves may be rich. I
mean the unsociable, covetous, cruel broode of those wretches, that by their
Inclosure do unpeople Towns, and uncorn fields.

Though Moore later distinguishes between enclosure that depopulates and that which
does not, the dual negativities of estrangement and the transferal of land compounds the
disquiet of the post-lapsarian world, particularly for the English poor. Bound up in this
‘world of woe’ brought about by ‘breach/ Disloyal on the part of Man, revolt./ And
disobedience’ is the transference of two landscapes: the old Eden of the Commonwealth
and the new place of the Restoration. Milton continues to express his revolutionary
visions through Paradise Lost, even though much of it was conceived throughout the
Interregnum. Two years after Cromwell’s death and the end of the Commonwealth,
Milton’s publication of ‘The Readie and Easie Way to Establish a Commonwealth’.
signals that his republican vision for England was still very much alive. \(^{27}\) The tract, published in 1660 around the time of his commencement of the final books of *Paradise Lost*, warns against the inherent dangers of a monarchical government and the enduring potential of an English Republic. \(^{28}\) Published just one month before the Restoration of Charles II, Milton’s tract did little to steer the course of history, but it does elucidate his missive of hope as well as his familiar fears of courtly excess. Milton worried that Charles II would demand to ‘be ador’d like a Demigod, with a dissolute and haughtie court about him, of vast expence and luxurie, masks and revels’. \(^{29}\) So perhaps *Paradise Lost* was a means for Milton himself to be reconciled to the new world of the Restoration, via an interior paradise, but it also taught men to be worthy of their liberty in the way they conduct themselves after defeat. If Milton’s Republican ideology is not completely discarded, it can be a landscape reformed and sustained by virtue and God’s love as part of man’s soul. Thus, the hope that Milton articulates in ‘The Readie and Easie Way to Establish a Commonwealth’ for the autonomy of the individual, mirrors Adam and Eve’s realisation that the *locus amoenus* exists within them. After the Fall, the loss of authority and place can be overcome.

Milton began writing *Paradise Lost* during the last years of the Republic, so his creation of a vulnerable and fragile *locus amoenus* seems an apt means of examining the Civil War, his lament for the Republic, and concerns regarding the Restoration of the monarchy. The major expression of these anxieties were portrayed in a difficult paradisal life, one that was less contemplative than Lanyer’s garden, and perhaps a closer reflection of life in Milton’s time than other more Arcadian portrayals of Eden. In Eden, order can only be maintained through a consistent process of gardening: cutting, lopping, cajoling, and reforming, though man and nature in Milton’s garden are thoroughly intertwined. The *locus amoenus* restores its natural liberty, when Adam and Eve discover their ‘paradise within, happier farr’. Equally, the emphasis in *Arcades* and *Comus* was drawn away from splendid costumes and pageantry the masque for was known for, and towards moral instruction for English men and women. In Milton’s Eden, it is the paradise that we find within that will ultimately sustain the soul of the good man through turbulent and morally burdensome times.

\(^{27}\) For further treatment of Milton’s tract ‘The Readie and Easie Way to Establish a Commonwealth,’ see Crystal Bartolivich’s ‘Humanities of Scale: Marxism, Surface Reading – and Milton’, *PMLA*, 127 (2012), 115 – 121.


\(^{29}\) ‘The Readie and Easie Way to Establish a Commonwealth’, p. 1140.
Conclusion

My aim in writing this thesis was to demonstrate four propositions concerning the way the *locus amoenus* was conceptualised in seventeenth-century literature. First, each poet will invariably create a unique and individualised version of the ideal place by conflating its recognisable topographical and ideological features with the details of a personal context. Second, the *locus amoenus* is generally an attempt by a poet to espouse some kind of universal truth, even when the motives are, in fact, self-interested. Third, the ideal place is often revealed as a comforting and nostalgic ideal that delineates a poet’s own ideas and aspirations. Fourth, even though the literary topos of the *locus amoenus* is, in reality, a fiction, it often intersects with the endeavours to find an ideal place in reality.

My examination of the work of Aemilia Lanyer, Ben Jonson, Mildmay Fane, Robert Herrick, John Denham, Andrew Marvell, and John Milton explores the nature of the ideal place in seventeenth-century poetry. I argued in my introduction that the *locus amoenus* was often conceptualised in terms of pastoral landscapes and serene, peaceful scenes in classical poetry. Further, in Biblical and medieval times, the *locus amoenus* frequently assumed the form of the poetic, allegorical garden. In my consideration of the seventeenth-century ideal place, I have studied the manner in which seventeenth-century poets drew on and advanced the topos. The ideal place in this century continued to be manifested in geographical and topographical ways. However, it was the conflation of these topographical sites with the poets’ own ideological concerns that typified the seventeenth-century ideal place. It is when these individual arrangements of topology and ideology are considered together that the significance of the *locus amoenus* in the seventeenth century can be understood.

From the seven examples of the pleasant place examined in this thesis, I have determined that the site of the *locus amoenus* can take the form of the garden, home, the estate England, the soul, or strategic combinations of these. The garden remains a divine, transcendent place which frequently embodies classical and Christian images and ideology. Further, the site of the garden is habitually combined with the image of the well-governed estate, where the hierarchy points to the natural authority of its ruler. The home is regularly located at its centre and often embodies the immutable ruler who, in part, guards the order and pleasantness of the estate. Both the home and the estate endeavour to wall out the sin and corruption of the external world. However, the home can equally stand on its own, divorced from landscape, providing a *locus amoenus* via
the firm friendships, scholarly conversation, and safety it represents. On a macrocosmic level, England is also revealed as the embodiment of the ideal place. This can take one of two forms. First, as England can never successfully wall out violence, positive and negative aspects of the topography must counterbalance each other to produce harmony. Second, the *locus amoenus* of England is a site of aspiration, where it is hoped that peace will live once more. Finally, the soul is also often conceptualised as the *locus amoenus*. Though it can be assailed by evil forces, its great promise is that it lies detached from landscape and the sin of wider England. Ultimately, it is through Christ that men and women can be redeemed and find a “paradise within thee, happier farr” which strengthens them against the vice of wider England.

Within these sites of the *locus amoenus* a variety of ideological concerns can manifest themselves. The poets examined in this thesis have variously revealed concerns over religion, kingship, and land in both the real and ideal *locus amoenus*. There are also more personal concerns manifested in the shape of patronage, artistic freedom, friendship, community, and redemption. As the century advanced towards the prospect of war, the treatment of the *locus amoenus* reveals that many sought a political stance of moderation, rather than the selection of one side over the other. Further, absolute power was shunned on both sides of politics. Instead, a discreet, safe, moderate place is sought for the soul. Thus, it is in the arrangement of the topography of the *locus amoenus* alongside the ideological concerns it reveals, that the modern reader can apprehend the importance of the *locus amoenus* in seventeenth-century poetry.

In the first chapter of this thesis, I argued that Aemilia Lanyer’s persona is absorbed into a privileged community and, in return, Margaret Clifford is created the supreme authority in an estate filled with fawning, verdant admirers. Lanyer’s own *locus amoenus* is the estate of Cookham, and the community therein, even though the poet is unable to find a place in either. Like Lanyer, Ben Jonson frequently felt at the fringes of community, rather than at its centre. With a clear debt to Stoic principles, Jonson privileges the importance of the good man and the good friend within community, and both sit at the heart of his *locus amoenus*.

Mildmay Fane creates an ideal place of moderation within his poetry because such an ideal space is controllable and reasonable in a century which was increasingly neither of these. Fane discovers it is possible for a man and a nation to be both *sibi imperiosus* and know God’s grace. As such, Fane perceives that the strongest hope for a *locus amoenus* lies in the redeemed soul. In Chapter Four, my discussion turned to Fane’s great friend Robert Herrick. I maintained that the ritual of the Harvest Home festival in “The Hock-
“Cart”, which he dedicates to Fane, equates to an avowal of loyalty to the King. Further, this affirmation is an integral part of Herrick’s locus amoenus at the heart of Fane’s estate, and a means of raising England from the violence of Civil War. Herrick’s locus amoenus is surprisingly egalitarian, and though notions of religion and Puritan politics threaten this liberty, they do not overthrow this classical locus amoenus on Fane’s estate.

The ideal place of John Denham’s England is balanced, even though that balance is necessarily created from positive and negative features in the landscape. From this English locus amoenus, the final lines of “Coopers Hill” deliver a lesson for the new Republic: if the moderate Thames is constrained, the harmony and power inherent in the state will become destructive. Thus, Denham’s ideal place is representative of an inherently moderate and harmonised England. Andrew Marvell’s ideal place, by contrast, features a small, secluded community with strong familial bonds. Order is everywhere expressed at the heart of Nun Appleton. The locus amoenus at the centre of the estate manifests the virtue and authority of Fairfax himself. Conversely, the distorted and violent scenes at the periphery of the estate demonstrate the limits to Fairfax’s power, and hence, his need for the locus amoenus that the estate represents.

Finally, not only does John Milton comment on the spiritual decay of the locus amoenus of England, but he delineates the importance of the soul’s journey toward salvation and an immutable ideal place. Milton perceives that the garden, the soul, and England, are all difficult Edens. Whilst Adam and Eve lose their verdant locus amoenus, they gain a ‘paradise within thee, happier farr’. This hopefulness likely embodies Milton’s own hopes for England after the Civil War. The loss of the Republican paradise, like the expulsion, is an opportunity for men to cultivate self-knowledge, autonomy, and a purposeful life. After the expulsion from the Garden of Eden, the soul becomes the site of the locus amoenus, and the means through which men and women can achieve redemption.

The arrangement of topography alongside a poet’s particular ideological concerns yields a specific expression of the ideal place in the seventeenth century. The locus amoenus began with Hesiod in Work and Days, and it is clear in the development of the idea from classical times to the seventeenth century that it is a space with few consistent characteristics. The advancement of the ideal place from its first expression has offered topographical examples in the form of farms and pleasant, sweeping spaces, Biblical gardens, the enclosed gardens of the Middle Ages, and the nation of England in the late Elizabethan period. In addition, ideological concerns within these pre-seventeenth
century sites of the *locus amoenus* include community, family, love, and national identity. The seventeenth-century poets I studied in this thesis draw on these preceding topographical and ideological instances and consider them within the poets’ own personal contexts. In the seventeenth century, the poets’ topography variously assumes the form of the garden, the estate, the home, England, the soul, or particular arrangements of these, whilst the poets’ ideology can concern land, religion, the monarchy, or more personal matters like patronage, freedom of speech, friendship, community and salvation. A tone of moderation and reason are often sought instead of a clear allegiance to sides in war, and absolute power is eschewed, even though in each case the content reveals a more partisan set of allegiances. Consequently, it is in the organisation of topography and ideology that the importance of the *locus amoenus* to each poet can be apprehended.

More research might be undertaken in this area. I have observed that the body/soul topos often appears within the *locus amoenus* and might be more closely examined within that space. Is this topos to be found in further examples of the ideal place from the seventeenth century? Is it always used to describe introspection, virtue, and the particular brand of salvation the poet purports?

Much more remains to be said on Fane’s contribution to the ideal place. Very little research exists on his manuscript poetry or plays, yet his influence on the Cavalier sensibility and the *locus amoenus* seems profound. In addition, I perceived the influence of his notion of the ideal place in the poetry of John Denham, Robert Herrick, and Andrew Marvell, but more evidence needs to be found in order to positively assert that this is the case. What specific aspects of Fane’s notion of the *locus amoenus* did these poets feel would suit their own context, and why?

Lastly, the concept of community within the seventeenth-century *locus amoenus* takes on varying forms. The secluded communities of Lanyer’s “The Description of Cooke-ham”, Marvell’s “Upon the Hill and Grove at Bilbrough” and “Upon Appleton House”, and Milton’s *Paradise Lost* are in contrast to the wider, bustling estates in Jonson’s “To Penshurst” and Herrick’s “The Hock-Cart”. The idea of community seems to become increasingly secluded and quiet as the century progresses, but is this consistently the case? Lanyer’s quiet community appears as an anomaly in this respect at the beginning of the century, but are there other examples of this secluded style of community within the *locus amoenus* that can be found? These ideas are suitable for further treatment.
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