

“Vertuall Paradise”:
Vision and Practice in the Poems, Books, and Gardens of Early Modern England

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Introduction

This project began innocently—and guiltily. I came into Elizabeth Fowler’s Memorial Culture class, in my first semester of the PhD program in English Literature at the University of Virginia, knowing John Donne was my favorite author on the syllabus. And so I wanted to write on him. Then I saw that there was a unit on medieval and Renaissance gardens, and I also wanted to write on them. Is there any way, I thought, to do both? Probably not. Donne for me was all about the heights of heaven and the earth of the grave. But I looked, and I found that there seemed to be precisely one way: to write on Donne’s lyric “Twickenham Garden.” This rather selfish desire not to choose, to have my apple and eat it, too, led to a term paper that bit off far more than it could chew. In the end, I was converted: from contemporary to early modern literature, from a project on postcolonial war to a project on Renaissance paradise. The Jacobean Donne now fought for my affections with Ricardian Geoffrey Chaucer, with William “for all time” Shakespeare (whom I had always loved but thought was beyond my reach), and especially with Elizabethan Edmund Spenser, a poet I had barely heard of only a few years earlier. Spenser’s arrival, in turn, prompted a shift in focus from what had been a projected examination of gardens in early modern English literature to the only slightly less vast and daunting topic of paradise in early modern English literature and the material artifacts—especially printed books and planted gardens—with which the literary texts enter into conversation.

Specifically, this study examines paradise insofar as it is “virtual.” There are three dimensions to this term, each more playful than the last, as follows:

- virtual gardens—gardens as imaginary spaces in literature; historical gardens whose once-extant space is recorded (or reimagined) in contemporary documents; those documents, especially printed books, that preserve (or create) a

tangible connection with or analogue to such real or invented garden spaces;

- “virtual” paradise—in the colloquial sense of the term, instances in which a virtual garden invokes or approaches paradise but somehow falls short or fails to function properly for those who find themselves within it, becoming inaccessible in spite of its presence or proximity;

- paradisaal virtue—distinguished in my title by the older spelling “vertue,” paradisaal gardens as producing, or aspiring towards, efficacious power or virtuous behavior.

These three dimensions, elaborated below, do not appear equally throughout the study.

The first forms in large part the critical background and method; it is my own conception of what I share with prior scholars and how I make use of it. The second provides the principle of selection for those cultural artifacts at the heart of my study.

The third represents some combination of the aims of the writers and artists under consideration, my own purpose and findings in pursuing the study within my discipline and on behalf of neighboring ones, and the study’s wider implications.

Explicit articulation of this third dimension is largely confined to this introduction as it gestures outside the bounds of the dissertation itself.

Nonetheless, questions of aesthetic and ethical virtue lie at the heart of this project’s motivations and implications. The visions of paradise I examine here are tantalizingly beautiful in their imagined sensory pleasures and in the real artistic craft that creates their virtual spaces. The beauty gives urgency to the problems figured by paradise’s proximate inaccessibility. Yet the visions also carry ethical risk. Their expression is solitary and univocal, framing largely individual problems whose implied solutions tend to be expansionist—seeking to claim more paradisaal territory—and exclusive—positing a world of zero-sum competition. However, these singular, even

solipsistic poetic and horticultural visions are often belied by the practice of their respective crafts, which require collaboration across genders, nationalities, ranks, professions, and fields of expertise, and which subsist within limited material, financial, and social resources, circumstances requiring circumspection, creativity, and some measure of humility.

Virtual Gardens: Imaginary Space¹

The poets seem at times to be aware of these tensions between their paradisal visions and their poetic practice. The deep history and rich resonance of conceptions of paradise in Renaissance thought makes its ideal at best a moving target and, at times, a double-edged one. “True Paradise,” Donne reminds his readers in “Twickenham Garden,” requires a serpent.

Gendered Garden Spaces in European Art

Literary gardens in the West have been gendered since at least the writing of the second chapter of Genesis. In medieval Europe this version of human origins had developed into a complex set of cultural resources woven together from a number of separate strands. The enclosed garden or *hortus conclusus* of the sister-spouse in the biblical Song of Songs was taken to represent both the earthly paradise of Eden before Eve’s fall and the heavenly paradise as redeemed by the Virgin Mary. Images of these holy spaces

¹ In this and the following sections I present in greater detail the three dimensions of “virtual” noted above. I have endeavored to shape each chapter as a self-contained essay and thus to include requisite engagements with cultural and critical backgrounds within their several boundaries. However, two brief discussions, on the Petrarchan tradition and the history of European garden design, have escaped their original locations—not unlike the *Antiquitee of Faery*, discussed below—and here prove useful for the study as a whole. These sections, themselves of differing weight, in places present more detailed notes in the manner of the chapters. Elsewhere this introduction is lightly referenced, indicating significant sources of theoretical inspiration.

were crafted in art and literature—and in monastic gardens cultivating virtuous work and heavenly contemplation. Sacred gardens in turn became the models for secular gardens of love, presided over by courtly ladies, but never entirely losing the numinous nature of their devotional counterparts. Meanwhile, a literary tradition increasingly aware of its classical analogues found congenial the accounts of a lost Golden Age, of heroic quests to far-flung gardens, and of pastoral recreation, and enfolded them into the resources available for future artists. To the wall, the flowers, the fountain, the tree, and the lady of the Christian tradition were added the multisensory pleasures of the *locus amoenus* or pleasant place: shade, fresh air, running water, the song of birds, the sight and scent of flowers, the taste of fruit, and the poet to enjoy them.² By the time of the writers considered in this study, it was all but impossible to work within the literary garden and not set off a seemingly infinite cascade of chiming associations with prior art. Like many of their compatriots, Spenser, Donne, and Shakespeare embrace these resonances for their rich source material while also pursuing poetic goals specific to their own artistic and social situations. Longstanding images and tropes build the imaginary spaces of new garden settings.

Francesco Petrarca and the Petrarchan Tradition

As noted above, through the prominence of Eve, Mary, and the courtly beloved in the origins and development of imaginary garden spaces in European culture, gendered relations and actions remain prevalent within them. Because of this they frequently intersect with the discourse of Renaissance Petrarchism. Derived ultimately from the medieval troubadour tradition, this performance of usually heterosexual love under

² See e.g. Elizabeth Fowler's "Acoustic Delay"; A. Bartlett Giamatti's *The Earthly Paradise and the Renaissance Epic*; Rebecca Bushnell's *Green Desire* (esp. Ch. 4).

conditions of unequal power had been explored to its fullest poetic and psychological potential in the *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta*, *Canzoniere*, or *Rime sparse* of Francesco Petrarca, known to his English disciples as Francis Petrarch. Three hundred and sixty-six poems, sonnets interspersed with occasional much longer *canzones* or songs with invented verse forms, as well as a few fixed-form ballatas, madrigals, and sestinas, explore the speaker's twin obsessions, his loves for the lady Laura and for the laurel branch that signifies poetic achievement: pun always intended, and overdetermined.

Framed in a Christian worldview, the verses also toy with blasphemous idolatry for the virtuous and distant beloved while frequently setting themselves in a space full of classical allusions. The Roman poet Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, which explore the disruptive and literally transformative power of love on the existences of gods and mortals alike, is the most pervasive classical source.³ Like the work of Petrarch's immediate poetic forebear Dante, the sequence champions poetry in the vernacular and models a rich and inventive metapoësis. These features, along with the inexhaustible brilliance of the poems themselves, proved irresistible to subsequent Renaissance poets. By the late sixteenth century this Petrarchan model had become a dominant mode for English love poetry, whether purporting to document a real affair or, as in the cases examined in this study, deploying the language of love as figure for other social relationships, including political complaints, patronage transactions, and territorial conquest.

³ Ovid's *Metamorphoses* of lovers and other transgressors into plants, animals, and objects were among the literary ancestors of the Renaissance's imagined poetic gardens (see Braden *Petrarchan* 38ff)—and realized landscape designs (see below and Hunt Ch. 4). Patricia Zalamea and Hester Lees-Jeffries also connect the *hortus conclusus* to the *locus amoenus* or "pleasant place" of Ovidian love poetry as distinct from the *Metamorphoses* (92; 30). I discuss the *locus amoenus* further in Chapter 1.

A Brief History of English Garden Design

Alongside these literary and artistic representations of garden spaces, contemporary landscape design developed in close conversation.⁴ Classical Roman gardens were deeply associated with the poetic arts and with the recreation of the leisured classes.⁵ These associations persisted and were renewed in the Italian Renaissance. In England, medieval and early Tudor gardens tended to emphasize enclosure for pleasure or for religious contemplation; their patterns were not elaborate but featured flowerbeds, paths for walking, and raised mounds or mounts. These gardens were built and tended by multiple persons, now mostly unknown, who were generally craftsmen for a noble patron—the “craft of mannes hand” that “so curiously / Arrayed hadde” the garden whose charms evade Chaucer’s Dorigen in Chapter 1. Components of a noble person’s garden might include an herber, a small enclosed garden with beds of herbs and flowers, often raised; an orchard, a larger enclosed garden with walks among trees and grass; and a pleasure park, a small, walled version of the hunting park, used for larger-scale entertainments. Around the time of Henry VIII, elite gardens became sites for the projection of royal or noble power through their predominantly “heraldic” iconography. This included a reinvention of the medieval mount on a grander scale. These developments were contemporaneous with the famed Italian “Renaissance” gardens which sought to recreate an imagined Roman past through a variety of features including terraces, elaborate fountains, and classical statuary.

In Roy Strong’s account, the Reformation cuts off most English access to these Continental innovations, so that in Elizabethan “emblematic” gardens the heraldic forms modulate into “reflections” of the queen’s virtue, still for the most part using

⁴ For an introduction to the history of early modern landscape architecture in England, see Landsberg, Strong, Henderson *Tudor*, Hunt; for Italy, Lazzaro. I rely on them here.

⁵ See McDougall “Ars”; Myers “Docta,” “Miranda.”

features of medieval gardens. John Dixon Hunt, however, cites instances of Italian influence beginning early in the reign of Elizabeth I. These two excellent studies can be partially reconciled. As Hunt argues, the general ideas of classicized Italian gardens did begin to enter English consciousness well before 1600—and indeed had to some extent already been present through Latin literature, especially Ovid’s poetry and the letters of Pliny the Younger. Meanwhile, as Strong demonstrates, the technology and skills required to emulate such “allegorical” Italian garden styles more closely did not arrive until the decade following James I’s accession to the throne and took time to develop fully. The important studies of Mark Girouard and Paula Henderson focus more on individual examples than attempts to chart or name trends. However, they accord with this general picture, emphasizing a predominant Tudor medievalism, punctuated by a burst of classical ornament early in Elizabeth’s reign and followed by increasingly Baroque elements under the Stuart monarchs.

Strong calls that period of English garden development during which the Jacobean imported Italian ideas in earnest “Mannerist” in accordance with concurrent trends in the visual arts. Major royal and noble gardens were planned by one or more named garden “architects” or “engineers” who drew inspiration from continental Europe. These included most prominently the brothers Salomon and Isaac de Caus, experts in grand garden design as well as in technical skills ranging from perspective drawing to waterworks. They operated on a model resembling artistic patronage, designing for numerous royal and noble gardens and, in Salomon’s case, dedicating a book on perspective to James’ heir Prince Henry. They also inspired other wealthy landowners to commission similar gardens without named designers, a continuation of the medieval employer-craftsman model.

Characteristics of Strong’s Mannerist gardens include a unified allegorical

message conveyed through overall structure and sculptural adornment; monumental scale; and the fancy engineering of waterworks, automata, and other mechanical features. Hunt's analysis is similar but tends to emphasize artistic themes (including classical revival or pseudo-revival and the rhythms of order and "nature") rather than specific components, since he finds this is how the English travelers of the time recorded their experiences of Italian gardens. However, the two approaches are complementary, documenting on the one hand a process of change governed by technological availability and iconographical development, and on the other a set of ideas that emerged early and remained broadly consistent while going through conceptual and practical refinement and elaboration. Indeed, Hunt finds that strikingly similar described features are claimed and admired for designs up to and including the eighteenth-century landscape garden, so often held up as the ultimate reaction against its Baroque predecessors.

John Milton's vision of Eden at the end of the period under consideration here offers a literary analogue for this irregular trajectory. Critics such as Alastair Fowler identify the "nice art / In beds and curious knots" (*PL* IV.241-42)—which Satan does "not" encounter there—with "parterres laid out in intricate regular designs formed by herbs, flowers, or coloured earths; associated with an old-fashioned Tudor garden-art."⁶ However, parterres are in fact features of Italianate gardens and Milton's dig could also be at contemporary French designs, which took Italian ideas in a different direction from their English counterparts, elaborating upon the parterre form to Baroque excess.⁷ Meanwhile, the "beds" that survive from medieval gardens and the echo of Chaucer's "curiously" together suggest a more general contrast between outdated, artificial

⁶ A. Fowler Notes 232n.

⁷ Hunt 144, 153, 174. This earlier stage of Italian influence on France did, in turn, influence the Tudor gardens (Strong 29-31).

Catholic and progressive, “natural” Protestant sensibilities. Instead of that “nice art,” “nature boon” unstudiously offers “A happy rural seat of various view” (PL IV.241, 247), cheerfully anticipating trends that, as Hunt also demonstrates, would culminate with rather than being invented by Capability Brown.⁸

Hunt’s study emphasizes a long-term development in fashionable garden-making, of bringing the “grove,” park, or artificial wilderness, back inside the garden proper. In medieval gardens, orchards and parks were separate features of the landscape, adjoining but not considered part of the garden itself. In medieval literature, the idea of “wilderness” was in tension with that of “garden.”⁹ One was the unbounded unknown, full of danger and adventure; the other the walled heart of civilization and safety. Hunt’s garden visitors understood this reincorporation of the wilderness into the garden to be a classicizing move and an aesthetic one, though it signaled other changes I discuss below. For the time being, it is important to note that, for all the explanatory power of Strong’s periodized garden categories, Hunt’s work documents gradual and uneven change, while Girouard and Henderson stress the persistence of older forms. Each of these scholars, however, is careful to note that changes in landscape forms and fashions are inevitably uneven, with old styles persisting long into new eras if the will or the resources to alter them are lacking.

The Space of Gardens; the Space of Books

In each of the following chapters we will meet with real or imagined gardens that place

⁸ Hunt xvii; 180ff. Milton’s possible garden-based critique of Continent or Catholicism, however, appears mild and subtle compared with, e.g., the 60 lines of jeering (during the previous leg of Satan’s journey) at the mistakenly devout or openly corrupt Catholic “Fools” who seek heaven where it is not and wind up in a “limbo” at the extreme perimeter of the universe, on the borders of Chaos (III.440-99).

⁹ Cf. Curtius 201-02.

themselves in the foregoing history. Spenser refers to emblematic Tudor gardens he may have seen (at the seats of his patrons) and describes gardens with Mannerist Italianate features. Donne's "Twickenham Garden" and Robert Smythson's plan of the garden at Twickenham jointly record a moment of transition between the two styles circa 1609. Shakespeare presents both medieval and early modern garden scenes, while some of his contemporaries record their own horticultural labors in garden and husbandry manuals. Yet none of these representations, poetic or documentary, can bring us into the space of the gardens themselves. This distinction may sound like a routine definition of imaginative literature or reconstructive history, but it marks the gardens as fundamentally different from the other cultural artifacts I consider in this study. In addition to the almost universal disappearance or wholesale redesign of the historical sites considered here, gardens are inherently ephemeral, changing with the seasons, the weather, the slant of light, the fall of cloud.¹⁰ Conversely, objects such as paintings, sculptures, or buildings can and do remain with us, offering themselves for our direct perusal today, albeit in rather different settings.¹¹ This is especially true of those seemingly fragile yet persistent objects, printed books, whose complex production practices leave more detailed and intelligible traces upon the object than those of many other crafts. Books bring the texts of literature tangibly before us, and likewise offer our most tangible—if more tenuous—connections with the garden spaces we have lost. Books also create their own imaginary spaces, constructed most obviously by way of illustrations but also out of *mises-en-page*, structure, paratexts, and other material features with artistic or intellectual significance.¹² The present study is concerned more with the transmission of material texts and their literary implications than with the

¹⁰ See E. Fowler "Acoustic Delay" 31-32.

¹¹ Cf. Jonathan Gil Harris' *Untimely Matter in the Time of Shakespeare*.

¹² See Gérard Genette's *Paratexts* and Anjali Nerlekar's *Bombay Modern*.

cognitive space of the codex, something I hope to investigate further in future projects. However, it is important to remember that monumental landscapes can be more fragile than a paper text block, and that a certain arrangement of print or script on the page serves to generate the imaginary spaces of the virtual gardens under consideration—and, sometimes, to reach out into the space of reading itself.

The strangeness of these seemingly mundane operations of small and familiar objects is intimated in the episode of Spenser's complexly allegorical epic romance *The Faerie Queene* in which Arthur, future king of the Britons, and Guyon, elfin knight, pause their quests in order to read.¹³ In a chamber of the House of Alma representing memory, our heroes find the histories of their respective lands and peoples, entitled *Briton moniments* and *Antiquitee of Faery*. Spenser's poem reads over first Arthur's and then Guyon's shoulder.¹⁴ Sixty-four stanzas present legendary British rulers from the conquest of the Trojan-Roman refugee Brutus until the poem's fictive Arthurian present:¹⁵ "After him Vther, which *Pendragon* hight, / Succeeding There abruptly it did end" (II.x.68.1-2). Arthur's reading ends "abruptly" because it is he who will be "Succeeding" his (probably unrecognized) father Uther at some time in the poem's future. The chronicle breaks off mid-sentence, a (fictional) material textual event which seems to be realized—literalized, in letters of type—in the text of Spenser's poem as "Succeeding" runs into "There," which begins a new clause.¹⁶ "Without full point, or other Cesure right" (68.3), the poem also shifts seamlessly from a report of the book's text and content to a description of its physical appearance, collapsing distinctions

¹³ Other episodes from *The Faerie Queene* appear in Chapter 1 below.

¹⁴ Cf. Matthew Woodcock on "The Fairy Chronicle," who suggests the same image but identifies instead "an editorial selection" (123ff).

¹⁵ One of its fictive presents; the ends of the two books make Arthur's Britain and Elizabeth's England at least allegorically contemporaneous.

¹⁶ For other readings of "the grammatical oddity," cf. van Es 47; D. L. Miller *Two* 205-06.

between them. This is not good bibliographical practice. However, in Chapter 1 I take up Spenser's invitation to read texts and book objects as engaged in mutually formative conversation, and thus as implicated in one another's successful interpretation.

Meanwhile, according to the story (but subsequently, in the printed text), eight stanzas trace Guyon's concurrent reading of the mythical origins of the fairy people (Prometheus makes Elfe, who finds his mate Fay in the gardens of Adonis) up to its present ruler Gloriana, the poem's eponymous figure for Elizabeth.¹⁷ The poem's turn from Arthur to Guyon, Rome to Greece, human chronicle to fairy myth, is also signaled by an odd shift in tense: "But Guyon all this while his booke did read, / Ne yet has ended" (70.1-2).¹⁸ The least disruptive reading is that the change from the literary past of "did read" to the present "Ne yet has" is one of emphasis and intensity within the action of the poem, where the "yet" refers to the continuous action of Guyon's reading juxtaposed with the interruption of Arthur's. But the lines also afford at least a momentary possibility that Guyon has trapped himself, and perhaps Arthur, and even the poem's audience, in the reading of a book that has no end and cannot be torn away from. "Ne yet has ended" ceases to refer to the scene of Guyon and Arthur but instead becomes, uncannily, the scene of reception. The poem looks forward to a time and space when it will be complete (as a text) and in the hands of its readers (as a book)—*and Guyon is still reading*. Perhaps he is here, alongside us, reading *The Faerie Queene* over our shoulders as we read *Antiquitee of Faery* over his.¹⁹ Distinct times and spaces

¹⁷ The stanzas in question are II.x.70-77; the complex architectonic construction of the whole canto has long been recognized (see Hamilton Notes 247-60n).

¹⁸ A. C. Hamilton glosses the second line "because it extends to the present reign of Elizabeth" (Notes 259n). While this is an adequate account for why the *book* "ne yet has ended," the phrase surely more properly pertains to Guyon himself as reader.

¹⁹ We may also imagine a similarly destabilizing moment of composition, in which "Ne yet has ended" becomes performative, yanking the still-reading Guyon out of his poem and into Spenser's study. (David Lee Miller anticipates some of these points, more

collapse into one another; as with *Briton monuments* the slippage occurs in the destabilization of layered fictional statuses of texts and book objects. Indeed, each of the three books—Guyon's, Arthur's, and Spenser's—wields strange powers over time, space, and the seemingly impermeable borders between fictive and real worlds. The example attunes us to the similarly strange powers of books, texts, gardens, and other cultural artifacts over imaginary and actual space we will encounter in the chapters.

Practice; Vision

The subtitle of this study announces its consideration of “vision and practice” in the cultural artifacts described above. As already indicated, that “practice” includes both the making of books and the making of gardens in the period. The gardens to be investigated are especially those of the elite, designed primarily for recreation, that engaged most intimately with the literary tradition. Such gardens of the wealthy aristocracy often staged their own temporal and spatial dislocations—reminiscent of Spenser's fairy chronicles—by way of elaborate iconographical programs that, for example, transported visitors to scenes of classical antiquity, and in some cases by way of sophisticated hydraulic engineering designed to create moving figures, singing birds, and surprising splashes or *giochi d'aqua*. Chapter 3 attends also to those more practical and thus more widespread gardens that were designed primarily to produce plants for domestic and scientific use and which, as we shall see, also engaged significantly with

gently: “the phrase [. . .] may secondarily imply that he is still reading in 1590[. . .] There is something peculiarly timeless about Guyon's reading” (*Two* 206).)

Furthermore, recalling that the *Antiquitee's* account begins with Prometheus, and noting that at one point its Faery dominions include “all *India* [. . .] And all that now *America* men call” (72.5-6), I find it possible that this one brief scene of the reading of one book reaches out to span the known world (Indies to America) and all of human time (Prometheus to the moment of reading), threatening to subsume all of the rest of the poem (and perhaps everything outside of it) into one episode, one codex.

contemporary discourses of paradise.

These paradisaal discourses as articulated in gardens, books, and poems in turn comprise the “vision” that this study claims as its first object of study. By naming certain of their settings “paradise,” constructing those settings out of poetic language and inherited images, and putting speakers or characters within them, the writers and artists assert a vision of what that paradise means, how it functions, and what may be possible within its imaginary space. Of primary interest for this study are those spaces I have found that are called paradise, with features appearing to accord with such a designation, but that somehow fail to function as such for at least some of their inhabitants because of an emotional state of extreme sadness approaching despair.

Paradise (virtually)

The details of these visions of what I call the “emotionally inaccessible paradise” are presented in their respective chapters. They include the aforementioned garden that Dorigen visits in Chaucer’s *Franklin’s Tale*, Donne’s “Twicknam Garden,” a series of related settings in the works of Spenser, and the garden in Shakespeare’s *Richard II* where the queen hears news of her husband’s fall from power. The example I present here is also the limiting case, a vision of paradise written much later than Chaucer’s, but set much earlier:

so lovely seemed

That landscape: and of pure now purer air
 Meets his approach, and to the heart inspires
 Vernal delight and joy, able to drive
 All sadness but despair: now gentle gales
 Fanning their odoriferous wings dispense
 Native perfumes, and whisper whence they stole
 Those balmy spoils. (PL IV.152-59)

In this passage we find a multisensory *locus amoenus*: “lovely” views, “purer air,” the

scent of natural “perfumes” carried on “gentle gales,” all tending to create “delight and joy” in the springtime setting. The setting is also explicitly paradisaical: it is once again the garden of Eden in *Paradise Lost*. Yet there is a catch to the scene. Not everyone will find “delight and joy” there, for this paradise is *only* “able to drive / All sadness *but despair*.” Fallen angels need not apply, for their state of physical and psychic distance from heaven is the definition of despair. And indeed, although the pleasures of the place and especially the sight of Adam and Eve seem poised to trigger a relapse of Satan’s earlier temptation to repent on mount Niphates, he remains resolute (353-92). Jilted by God, Satan finds not only that Milton’s Paradise is emotionally inaccessible for him, but also that his “revenge,” both personal and political, “compels” him to make certain it will no longer be accessible to anyone else (390-91).

To invoke paradise, Milton shows us, is to play for high stakes. Failure to be charmed by the epitome of God’s divine creation is a symptom of a diseased soul. Such situations as I examine are thus distinct from the many instances in the Western tradition, adduced in the first two chapters, of lovers unhappy in springtime, shepherds dispossessed in Arcadia. Chaucer’s garden, as we shall see, evokes “the verray paradys,” drawing on the artistic traditions described above to prepare readers for a scene of love and temptation. Furthermore, by marking his garden setting as explicitly paradisaical, Chaucer, along with Spenser, Donne, and Shakespeare, shows how extreme the situation of a character must be not to find solace there. Milton’s passage partly reverses this effect, using Satan’s despair to dramatize the wonders of Eden: despite his fallen state, how glorious the garden must be to tempt him to delight, however briefly.

For Spenser, Donne, and Shakespeare, whose characters find themselves in situations analogous to Dorigen’s, personal despair is often a figure for social problems or political discontent. As we shall see, the stakes are also those of poetry. Milton in the

phrases quoted above, “curiously” reminiscent of Chaucer’s, shows his poet’s craft by hiding it behind God’s or nature’s in creating the garden: “which not nice art / In beds and curious knots, but nature boon / Poured forth” (IV.241-43). The enjambed lines enact the “nice art” of interlaced knotwork they appear to condemn. Together, the social and metapoetic commentaries of the virtual paradises introduce the third dimension of this study, the quest for “virtue” as both ethical behavior and artistic power.

Paradisal Virtue

According to Sir Philip Sidney, the calling and the goal of all “right Poets” is to entice readers to virtue by “delightfull teaching”:

it is not ryming and versing that maketh a Poet, [. . .] but it is that faining notable images of vertues, vices, or what els, with that delightfull teaching, which must be the right describing note to know a Poet by. [. . .] for indeed Poetrie ever sets vertue so out in her best cullours[. . .] the Poet with that same hand of delight, doth draw the mind more effectually then any other Art doth. And so [. . .] as vertue is the most excellent resting place for al worldly learning to make his end of, so Poetry being the most familiar to teach it, [. . .] in the most excellent worke, is the most excellent workeman. [. . .] For if it be, as I affirme, that no learning is so good, as that which teacheth and moveth to vertue, and that none can both teach and move thereto so much as Poesie, then is the conclusion manifest; that incke and paper cannot be to a more profitable purpose employed.

(ll. 245, 279-83, 542-43, 673-78, 919-23)²⁰

Protestant thought leader, adulated artist, renowned warrior, godson to Elizabeth, Sidney in his *Defence of Poesy* (c. 1581, printed 1595) both describes the state of the art as he understands it and sets the terms for English literature following his influential example. Notably, he includes in his account not merely the virtuous pedagogical vision but also the craft or “worke” of poetry and the materials of its practice, in his case the ink and paper of coterie circulation. Sidney’s calls to virtuous vision and “excellent”

²⁰ Text from Renaissance Edition; lines from Oxford.

practice are inextricably intertwined. Spenser, Donne, and Shakespeare each take up this call within their own poetic practices in characteristic ways.

"Vertuous" Poetry

The Letter to Raleigh, which purports to instruct proper reading of the 1590 *Faerie Queene*, aligns Spenser's goals with those prescribed by Sidney: "*The generall end therefore of all the booke is to fashion a gentleman or noble person in vertuous and gentle discipline. [. . .] So much more profitable and gracious is doctrine by ensample, then by rule*" (ll. 7-8, 27-28).²¹ Each book of the poem will present facets of, threats to, and triumphs through its titular virtue—in the six completed books, holiness, temperance, chastity, friendship, justice, and courtesy—so that readers may learn "*by ensample,*" which A. C. Hamilton glosses as "by images of virtues and vices."²² The aim is restated allegorically in the 1596 Proem to Book VI as an invocation to the muses:

Ye sacred imps, that on *Parnasso* dwell,

Reuele to me the sacred nursery
 Of vertue, which with you doth there remaine,
 Where it in siluer bowre does hidden ly
 From view of men, and wicked worlds disdaine.
 Since it at first was by the Gods with paine
 Planted in earth, being deriu'd at furst
 From heauenly seedes of bounty soueraine,
 And by them long with carefull labour nurst,
 Till it to ripenesse grew, and forth to honour burst. (VI.P.2.2, 3)

The "sacred nursery / Of vertue" is here conceived as a seminary or seed-bed, a "siluer bowre" or heavenly garden "Planted" on the mountain of Parnassus by the classical gods. The Parnassus nursery is thus an analogue of the Christian Eden, symbol

²¹ Words with the root "*vertu-*" appear ten times in the Letter and five in Raleigh's two commendatory sonnets, which follow it in the back matter of the 1590 *Faerie Queene*.

²² Hamilton Notes 716n.

of both humanity's call to "vertue" and its failure to meet that calling.²³ While scholars rightly complicate Spenser's goals as stated in the Letter to Raleigh and as demonstrated in the poem, the pursuit and cultivation of poetic and ethical virtue remain foundational to the interpretations I set forth in Chapter 1.

In Chapter 2, along with "Twickenham Garden," I discuss a verse letter written to Donne's patron Lucy, Countess of Bedford, which deploys similar imagery in praising her country estate of Twickenham Lodge. The letter celebrates Bedford's "rare" combination of "Vertue" and "Beauty," drawing attention especially to those venues where one or the other is lacking:

Therefore at Court, which is not Vertue's clime,

all my rime
 Your vertues challenge, which there rarest bee;
 For, as darke texts need notes, there some must bee
 To usher Vertue, and say, 'This is shee.' (7, 8-12)

Donne's poetic skills are necessary, he explains, to proclaim and interpret Bedford's virtues in this unaccustomed environment. In an analogy reminiscent of the *Antiquitee* of *Faery* episode, Donne combines his poetic subject, Bedford, and his final product, the poem, into a single object: a "darke text" illuminated by his "notes." Later in the poem, he similarly conflates Bedford with her country garden into a single numinous vision of paradisaal beauty. He closes by implying that the garden and its angelic owner are jointly a sort of book to be read: "The story of beauty', in Twickenham is, and you. / Who hath seene one, would both; As, who had bin / In Paradise, would seeke the Cherubin" (70-72).²⁴ The metaphysical conceit makes Bedford and her garden into the material text of "beauty," perhaps a companion volume to her prior appearance as the (implicitly immaterial) text of "Vertue." Donne's poetic craft simultaneously creates

²³ For more on Parnassus and its connections to paradise, see Chapters 1 and 2.

²⁴ The punctuation of "beauty'" indicates an elision with "in."

and glosses these imagined textual objects to present Bedford as praiseworthy patron and virtuous exemplar. Once again I reserve analysis of the subtleties of patronage compliment for the chapter, emphasizing here the terms of virtue under which it engages.

As discussed in Chapter 3, Shakespeare's dramatic texts are by definition more multivocal, their terms of engagement even more difficult to attribute, than poems in the voice of Donne or of the characteristically Spenserian narrator. Nonetheless, Hamlet's metatheatrical instructions to the players offer a place to start. The "purpose of playing," he claims, "is to hold as 'twere the mirror up to Nature to show Virtue her feature, Scorn her own image, and the very age and body of the time his form and pressure" (*Hamlet* 3.2.20-24). Hamlet's drama aims to model both virtue and its negative images and thus implicitly to inform audiences of their own behavioral choices. It follows in its own medium Spenser's educational poem, Donne's serviceable lyric, and Sidney's instructions to his fellow-laborers.

The Vertue of Paradise

The passages cited above are significant not merely for taking ethical virtue as their foundational theme. Each of them is also a metapoetic statement about the purpose and the crafting of the poet's epic, lyric, or dramatic medium. It is here that the concept of "vertue" takes on the double edge of its etymological connections to power and virility. In pursuing ethical virtue as their stated goal, the writers also seek both artistic merit and the rhetorical power to command their audience's attention, perhaps to direct their future actions. Writers of garden manuals and herbals pursue not only the moral satisfaction of hard work but in many cases also the medicinal or magical "vertues" of the plants they cultivate.

These quests for artistic or scientific power may appear to be morally neutral in themselves, but they have already been inscribed into an ethical frame by Sidney's call for the other sort of virtue. Furthermore, as the chapters demonstrate, they are also deeply implicated in the intertwined, gendered discourses of patronage, Petrarchism, and the paradisaal garden. In crafting paradisaal settings and defining imaginary spaces, frequently the poets or their proxies are also laying claim to them, even—or especially—if they already belong to literary forebears, social superiors, or rivals for poetic, political, or temporal power. This poetic expansionism recalls the expansion of gardens, conceptually and territorially, to include the wilderness and wider landscapes noted by Hunt above. Both tendencies are formally characteristic of the age we now call colonial, an age that also witnessed the domestic enclosure of communal village lands for the private use of the aristocracy. Moreover, we now also know that the Western—or human—expansionism thus described is unsustainable given limited resources on a finite planet. Although the practical and ethical urgency of sustainability on a planetary scale is a relatively new concern, the destruction of natural beauty and natural resources troubled certain early modern writers from the Elizabethan Spenser, as we will see in Chapter 1, to the Restoration gardener and scientist John Evelyn, who wrote in *Fumifugium, or The Inconveniencie of the Aer and Smoak of London Dissipated* (1661) and *Sylva, or A Discourse of Forest-Trees* (1664) of his concerns about increasing air pollution and the scarcity of timber for ships and other purposes.²⁵ An acute awareness of colonialism's ethical risks and concatenating trauma seems also to have been present for Spenser, who was a planter and administrator on the front lines of England's colonization of Ireland, both in his fictional presentations of rebellion and retaliation in *The Faerie Queene* and in his policy treatise *A Vewe of the Present State of Ireland*, which

²⁵ See Tigner 194-94, 206-211.

advocates genocide as a bitter necessity of pacification. Neither were these problems early modern innovations; similar concerns appear in Chaucer. As stated at the outset, literary gardens have been gendered—and thus implicated in patriarchal culture and its expansionist corollaries—since at least the writing of the second chapter of Genesis.

The Practice of Poetry

But it is only the second chapter. If the *visions* of paradise here examined reveal certain ethical risks of an expansionism born of the selfishness or solipsism of a hierarchical, zero-sum world, the *practices* of creating those visions suggest possible counter-narratives of collaboration and sustainability. Making poetry can be a solitary effort, but the process of bringing that poetry into society is, in the cases studied here, an inherently collaborative process. Early modern writers rely on publishers and patrons to support their work; printers, scribes, or actors to disseminate it. Elite patrons in turn benefit from the artistic crafts of the poets who publish their virtue, the engineers who design their gardens, the servants who maintain them. These collaborations are not, of course, without their own imbalances of power, but by putting multiple value systems into play in service of an artistic project they can cut across singular hierarchies of gender, class, nationality, or rank. Finally, because projects such as publishing a book, planting a garden, or producing a play take place in the material world, with limited resources of time, technology, and funding, they offer at least the potential for a more humble and more sustainable approach to their craft. This practical humility can, in turn, inform the solutions to the problems represented in the visions of the emotionally inaccessible paradise.

Practicing Virtue

For the problems the visions articulate are real: problems of undervalued art, of social exclusion, of the exercise of temporal power in conditions of inequality. The ethical norms of the twenty-first century, however, do not allow us to rest easy with proposed solutions that heighten or perpetuate structural inequalities of gender or unsustainable approaches to our own resource limitations. Such concerns are important and timely within the fields of English literature and the allied humanities, but they are also urgent in the wider world.

And so I propose three connections to theoretical approaches that may usefully situate my findings within that wider world. This proposal is of necessity in the form of “implications for future research.” The methods of this dissertation have tended away from theory and towards a close engagement with the objects of study on their own terms, as discussed in the following section. The project is not as yet heavily theorized; pursuing the implications of my findings within these proposed approaches awaits a future iteration.

The first implication is fundamentally ecofeminist, a term I was not particularly aware of when I started the project.²⁶ Collaboration is (or can be) antipatriarchal, particularly when some of the real collaborators are women of talent and power, as in the cases I have found here. Collaboration can reframe relations across hierarchies within human societies—and between humans and their surroundings—in a more just way. Collaboration recognizes and promotes the interconnectedness of the ecosystem.²⁷

A second implication could also be considered ecofeminist. An awareness of material limitations can also be antipatriarchal, in the sense that it is anti-exploitation,

²⁶ See e.g. Carolyn Merchant’s *Reinventing Eden* Ch. 11, “Partnership.”

²⁷ Cf. Laurie Shannon’s reading in *The Accommodated Animal* of “political” human-animal relations before Descartes as modeling not only hierarchy but also community.

anti-expansionist. Sustainability is antipatriarchal. This finding, in the sense that it is focused on the materials of culture, could perhaps also be framed in terms of posthumanism.²⁸ The latter approach is perhaps congenial to my attention to the persistence and the strangeness of book objects, fountains, and other cultural artifacts, not to mention mandrakes and grape vines, but it is not the angle I would prefer to take.

Instead, at the close of this study I am interested especially in the implications of my findings for environmental virtue ethics, a field allied with but distinct from ecofeminism.²⁹ An awareness of material limitations promotes sustainability, and sustainability, to echo Spenser, is a virtue: it is a form of temperance. A form of chastity. A form of holiness.

Collaboration also promotes certain virtues: Friendship. Justice. Courtesy.

One of the advantages of virtue ethics becomes apparent in light of the theory of mental framing from cognitive linguist and political activist George Lakoff: to be “antipatriarchal” is still to be in the frame of patriarchy, to think with its terms, to fight on its home turf of vaulting ambition.³⁰ To work within the frame of virtue ethics is to step instead into the realms of virtue.

In the future development of this project, I plan to connect my findings in the following chapters more explicitly with these theoretical approaches. At present, the

²⁸ See e.g. Merchant’s *Autonomous Nature* (149-61).

²⁹ See e.g. Louke van Wensveen’s *Dirty Virtues*; essays in Philip Cafaro and Roland Sandler’s *Environmental Virtue Ethics*. See also Merchant *Autonomous* (161-64).

³⁰ *Moral Politics*; “How to Frame Yourself”; *Don’t Think of an Elephant*. Lakoff began his career as a student of literature. His work on framing began in the mid-1970s and is anticipated by Ursula K. Le Guin’s *The Left Hand of Darkness* (1969):

To oppose something is to maintain it.

They say here “all roads lead to Mishnory.” To be sure, if you turn your back on Mishnory and walk away from it, you are still on the Mishnory road. To oppose vulgarity is inevitably to be vulgar. You must go somewhere else; you must have another goal; then you walk a different road.

ethical dimensions of these findings and their theoretical implications remain in tension with a certain new critical, new formalist delight in exploring what art says, for art's sake. At times each chapter veers in the direction of single-author study, pursuing each new idea and side path to its delicious end. At such moments, I have found it difficult to see the forest for the trees, or the garden for the mandrakes—and the fountains—and, in the words of Smythson's plan, the "beastes in this border." Led with delight, I thus beguile the way.

As a scholar in the field of literature, I do believe that these latter concerns are, and of a right ought to be, as important as the former. But it occurs to me that they are subject to the risks of the solitary paradisaical visions I here find wanting: self-indulgence, solipsism, ignorance (or even violation) of the goals and sufferings of those excluded. Given world enough and time, all studies—at least all studies led with delight—are valuable. But in a world of material limitations—professional, political, economic, ecological—it is more virtuous to choose the more timely concerns.³¹

Materials and Methods

As stated above, the methods of this dissertation have tended to the practical: close reading of literary texts; broad reading of cultural analogues in visual and material culture, especially the histories of printing, illustration, and landscape design. In my work as a literary scholar with training in the methods of history, bibliography, and material culture—and brief encounters with the physical sciences and interdisciplinary social sciences united in the study of international development—I have sought both to operate within my fields of expertise and to be of service to those neighboring

³¹ See E. Fowler *Literary Character* 246-47.

disciplines whose work in turn undergirds my own in crucial places.³² I list here a few of these forms of interdisciplinary service, followed by an outline of the chapters.

Serving the Disciplines

Bibliography can serve literary interpretation both with its traditional evidence of printing procedures and with a renewed attention to the human relationships and collaborative practices—both artistic and commercial—that shaped them. Likewise, literary study can serve bibliography by posing new questions, many of which require technical answers. Such questions can guide bibliographical study beyond the fixing of texts and the processes of production; possibilities include joint investigations of the cognitive space of books and interpretations of illustrations that require technical knowledge as well as aesthetic assay. For example, in the research for Chapter 1, my interest in the visual semantics of the woodcuts of *A Theatre for Worldlings* (1569)—was Epigram 3's "fresh and lusty Laurell tree / Amidde the yong grene wood" part of a designed landscape? was the object in the corner suffering from improper perspective in fact a turf-covered wooden footbridge?—led me to the bibliographical discovery that the intaglio illustrations of the 1568 editions were printed "out of order," which in turn informed my conclusions about Spenser's experiences of an integrated publishing project.

The rewards of interdisciplinary collaboration beckon other allied fields, including history of landscape architecture, history of art, and literatures in other languages. Records of garden history—and those inductions that span the evidentiary gaps—can inform certain literary conclusions and preclude others. In a similar vein, my reading of "Twicknam Garden" in the context of Donne's poetic habits prompted

³² See E. Fowler *Literary Character* 245.

my skepticism of the received narrative of the iconography of Bedford's garden at Twickenham. Given the long-recognized productivity of close attention to the French and Italian forebears and compatriots of English poets, such as Petrarca, what might deep intertextual awareness of English and Dutch poetry add to our understanding? Likewise the fertility of connections made with medieval and classical literature is as boundless as that of Spenser's Garden of Adonis or *Natura Genetrix*, discussed in Chapter 1. An important ongoing area of study examines not merely what the antecedent texts say but how they were received and understood in the period.³³

Mastery of the relevant disciplinary fields is essential, but not possible in every area for every scholar. In addition to my own limited expertise, I bring to my work a special attention both to strangeness and to convention in the objects I study. Noticing, and describing precisely, the odd effects of Spenser's fairy chronicles or Donne's verse letter helps to illuminate the poetic practices of these "darke texts" and their implications for the visions presented therein. Likewise, attending to the terms of the conventional, so often overlooked, helps us to identify more clearly the discourses, allegiances, and implications of Donne's Petrarchism or Shakespeare's nationalism.

Surveying the Prospect

Chapter 1 examines the conventions of the *locus amoenus* as they appear in a strange succession of passages throughout Spenser's career. In the June eclogue of *The Shepheardes Calender* (1579), a pleasant place described as paradise is inaccessible to the poet's persona of Colin Clout. This problem of poetic exclusion also figures as a modesty topos in Chaucer's *Franklin's Tale*; as I demonstrate, the *Tale* provides Spenser with a solution in the form of claiming the authority of Chaucer and the classical muses

³³ See e.g. Helgerson "Language Lessons"; Jardine and Grafton; Cook "Making."

by incorporating a Chaucerian Parnassus within the bounds of *June's* paradise. The terms of that solution, however, derive from Petrarca by way of Spenser's 1569 translations in *A Theatre for Worldlings*. The images and vocabulary of Petrarca's paradisaical setting find their way into *June* and subsequently into a series of scenes in Spenser's later work. In the 1590 *Faerie Queene* and its aftermath, however, echoes of the paradisaical *locus amoenus* appear first as fractured or tainted and later as numinous and intact but farther removed from the reach of mortals such as Colin Clout. To help us understand these strange permutations, I draw our attention to the ladies who appear within these paradisaical settings, figures for Petrarchan ladies, muses, and noble patrons. Choosing sometimes complaint, sometimes satire, and sometimes praise, Spenser works through the tensions of patronage and the promises of collaboration that generate his poetic craft. A coda identifies the sources of Spenser's collaborative practice in the complex publishing project of the *Theatre for Worldlings* that launched Spenser's literary career amidst the displaced artists of the Dutch refugee community in London.

Chapter 2 rereads both Donne's "Twickenham Garden" and the Smythson plan recording Bedford's garden at Twickenham (both c. 1609) within contemporary conventions of Petrarchan love lyrics and elite garden design. The poem dramatizes a situation of Petrarchan complaint and Ovidian metamorphosis within another emotionally inaccessible paradise, presenting a speaker whose unrequited passion cannot be assuaged until he becomes a "senseless" yet vengeful fountain. The garden features an unusual plan of concentric circles of trees surrounded by mounts, and no fountain at all, at a time when such features were the height of fashion. Clearing away certain critical misapprehensions, I identify more precisely the sources of the Donne's poem within the *Rime sparse* and evaluate its status as a patronage object. The nature of Donne's poetic garden points to a hitherto-overlooked source for the iconographical

program of Bedford's own garden, the 1499 *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* of Francesco Colonna. This finding places Twickenham within the Garden of Love tradition and clarifies the poem's mixture of praise and complaint. Finally, the arrival of Salomon de Caus to build a Parnassus fountain for Bedford's friend Queen Anne in the same year suggests a new identification for the fountain Donne offers as his contribution to the collaborations of patronage.

In my analysis, Donne and Spenser's engagements with paradise share many features: the posing of social problems by way of the emotionally inaccessible paradise, the Petrarchan sources and Parnassian solutions they deploy, the ethical risks of figuring those solutions as territorial claims, and the productive tensions of collaborative patronage relationships with high-ranking women of education and talent. Shakespeare's engagements with paradise, however, require a different critical approach. Rather than sustained attention to paradise in a single work or an identifiable series of familiar settings, dramatizations of, or gestures towards, paradisaic situations are scattered across the playwright's works. Collectively, they point to a Shakespearean vision of paradise that is near to hand and available for conquest—military, romantic, or both, depending on the genre. This discourse of an achievable Eden strongly resembles the nationalist discourse of contemporary garden and husbandry manuals, which imply that England requires only informed cultivation to reclaim a paradisaic state. Shakespeare's plays and poems, however, reveal more explicitly than the works of Spenser or Donne the ethical risks of bringing violence into paradise in through war, Petrarchan power plays, or the forms of colonization. They thus present more urgently the need for practical alternatives to the paradisaic vision.

I end this introduction with a suggestive final passage not considered in the chapters proper. After Romeo brings violence into her own vision of paradise by killing

her cousin Tybalt, Juliet spectacularly visualizes some of the tensions inherent in the impulse to lay claim to the territory of Eden:

O serpent heart, hid with a flowering face.
 Did ever dragon keep so fair a cave?
 Beautiful tyrant, fiend angelical,
 Dove-feather'd raven, wolvis-ravens lamb!
 Despised substance of divinest show!
 Just opposite to what thou justly seem'st!
 A damned saint, an honourable villain!
 O nature, what hadst thou to do in hell
 When thou didst bower the spirit of a fiend
 In mortal paradise of such sweet flesh?
 Was ever book containing such vile matter
 So fairly bound? O, that deceit should dwell
 In such a gorgeous palace. (R&J 3.2.73-85)

Romeo briefly plays the serpent to Juliet's Eve. Her list of paradoxical metaphors, however, soon translates him from the heavenly (or hellish) plane into the animal, the human, the vegetable, and, finally, the mineral. The "mortal paradise of such sweet flesh" might be a human body possessed by "the spirit of a fiend," but it also figures Romeo as Eden, perhaps even as the forbidden fruit itself, before turning him into a book: a composite of plant fiber, linseed oil, lampblack, and leather, perhaps adorned with blind- or gold-tooling to make its "fair" binding resemble the monumental "palace" of her closing metaphor. The form of the metamorphosis is the same as Donne's vision of Bedford's "darke text" of "Vertue" in the verse letter, but the terms are reversed: "fair" object; "vile matter." Juliet's inability to maintain an uncorrupted paradisaic image for more than an instant hints at the difficulties facing Romeo's fellow volumes, the books promoting poetic and horticultural virtue as they aspire to cultivate England's Eden over time. Shakespeare's brief invocations of the desired paradise suspend its "gorgeous" images in a moment of unconquered perfection, but we have turned these leaves before with Spenser and with Donne. Under one of them, a serpent lurks.

Poets' Paradise:
Spenser's Visions of Parnassian Authority and Collaborative Print Culture

Introduction: The *Locus Amoenus* and the Spenserian Career

Edmund Spenser was a poet whose greatest personal and public literary goal—building a commonwealth where poetry and virtue might thrive—was often expressed as his deepest fear: that false art, corrupt power, inexorable time, or wilful ignorance would instead wreak destruction.¹ The crimes of Archimago, the evil sorcerer and master illusionist, and the Blatant Beast of slander in *The Faerie Queene*; the anxieties of *Amoretti* Sonnet 75, with its metaphor for poetry of writing in sand at the mercy of the waves, and *A Vewe of the Present State of Ireland*, concerned with fostering civilization in conditions of resistance and violence, demonstrate this fear. At decisive moments, however, glimpses of the goal itself appear.² Such moments, I find, are often signalled by settings and images that invoke paradise as a site of divine art and virtue and a refuge for deserving poets, albeit a fragile one. For Spenser and his contemporaries, importing classical and Christian images of paradise into the landscape of English poetry seems to require a series of moves amounting to colonization: an existing place is found to be inadequate; a promising addition is identified and then incorporated; its

¹ For related but distinct claims, see Richard Helgerson's examinations of "kingdom," "empire," "nation-state," and "power" (*Forms* 1-4, 295-301). See also Wilson-Okamura *International* 198; note [151] below.

² Terry Comito, commenting on the Proem to Book VI of *The Faerie Queene*, quoted in the Introduction, notes similarly that "Spenser is especially concerned with the vulnerability of [. . .] such bowers[. . .] But at the same time, he is seeking [. . .] the hidden bower from which, in a world of trackless wandering and false tokens, both noble behavior and authentic language may flourish" ("bowers" 107). Julia Reinhard Lupton has similarly analyzed passages in which "Spenser's created 'home' is [...] poetry itself, a *locus amoenus* established as both compensation for and critique of the public world" (140). Catherine Nicholson concludes Spenser "watched from afar the dissolution of his hopes for [. . .] a court that would nurture the kind of poetic community the language deserved" (64).

new identity overwrites its previous affiliation and inhabitants.³ Such actions, as Spenser himself would learn only too well in later life, may produce art, but rarely virtue, for their practitioners.⁴ At the start of his career, however, the aesthetic and ethical horizons seemed clear and inviting, offering bountiful solutions to Spenser's poetic problems, if only those problems could be properly framed.

The frame I examine in this chapter is that of a paradise—present, but paradoxically unfulfilling. At first glance, Spenser's vision of paradise appears simply to be a garden-variety version of the *locus amoenus* or traditional pleasant place of Western culture, itself often but not always figured as a paradise, such as the one described in this passage from a letter by Robert Langham in 1575:⁵

A **Garden** then so appointed, as whearin a loft upon **sweet shadoed wallk** of Terres, in heat of Soomer, to feel the **pleazaunt whysking winde** abooue, or **delectabl coolnes** of the fountains spring beneath: Too tast of delicious strawberiez, cherryez, and oother frutez, eeuen from their stalks: To smell such **fragrancy of sweet odoourz**: breathing from the plants earbs, and floouerz: Too heer such **naturall meloodious muzik and tenez of burds**: Too haue in ey, for myrth sumetyme theez **vnderspringing streamz**: then, the woods, the waterz (for both pool and chase wear hard at hand in sight), the deer, the peepl (that oout of the East arber, in the base court. allso at hand in view) the frute-trees, the plants, the earbs, the floourz, the chaunge in coolerz, the Burds flittering, the Fountain streaming, the Fysh swymming: **all in such delectabl varietee, order and dignitee**: whereby, at one moment, in one place, at hand without trauell too haue so full fruicion of so many Gods blessings, **by entyer delight vntoo all sensez (if all can take) at onez**: for *Etymon* of the

³ According to Lupton's analysis, Virgil's first eclogue is deployed in Book VI to authorize English colonization in Ireland (129-38). See also Helgerson "Language."

⁴ "If poetry is finally the home which Spenser creates for himself," Lupton observes, "it is an abode built with costs to others" (141). See Hadfield "Postcolonial."

⁵ James Nohrnberg observes that "Often it is not practical to distinguish the one [the earthly paradise] from the other [a *locus amoenus*]" because the conventions of the latter are used to describe settings identified as the former (*Analogy* 507). Ernst Robert Curtius gives a concise account of the classical origins and medieval development of this literary topos, including its deployment within descriptions of the earthly paradise, wild woods, and gardens (186-200): "Its minimum ingredients comprise a tree (or several trees), a meadow, and a spring or brook. Birdsong and flowers may be added. The most elaborate examples also add a breeze" (195). Shade, Curtius notes, is the foundational necessity for poetry (and philosophy) in a Mediterranean climate (186-87).

woord woorthy too be calld Paradis: and though not so goodly az Paradis
for want of the fayr ryuerz, yet better a great deel by the lak of so vnhappy
a tree.
(in Keay and Watkins 172; emphasis mine)

Langham's description highlights the distinctive characteristics of the *locus amoenus*: the conspiring either of natural features, seemingly by happy accident, or carefully crafted ones, by design, to provide "delight vntoo all sensez." Indeed, Langham carefully covers each sense in turn—"to feel [. . .]: Too tast [. . .]: To smell [. . .]: Too heer [. . .]: To haue in ey"—giving details of the sights, sounds, and other multisensory pleasures this garden has to offer. The objects that bring "delight vntoo all sensez" are common to many such pleasant places in European literature: shady walks, cooling wind, sweet odors, birdsong, and running water.⁶ Sometimes these combined features amount to something like—and yet unlike, as Langham is careful to specify—"Paradis." However, Langham is describing not a poetic garden but one that he has actually visited.

Langham's detailed description, of which this is the conclusion, is of the garden Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester, designed for the queen's 1575 visit to his castle at Kenilworth.⁷ With the garden, and a series of pageants set therein, Leicester hoped to convince Elizabeth to marry him. (He failed.) Langham's letter has in turn been the main source for English Heritage's 2009 reconstruction, along with archaeological work and references to contemporary depictions of continental gardens.⁸ On the far left of the

⁶ See e.g. A. Bartlett Giamatti (34ff), who notes that "What all these descriptions have in common is a sense of satisfaction of completeness, both for the poet who created the scene and whatever character is involved in the scene" (39). Comito lists the variety of sources Spenser draws on for different symbolic purposes, noting that "the invitation to make oneself at home in a fallen world must always be problematic" ("bowers" 107).

⁷ Lavish praise and ekphrastic description of gardens belonging to patrons and social elites has a long history, as K. Sara Myers' studies of Statius and Pliny the Younger demonstrate. Myers finds that Roman gardens of the early empire, and their proprietors' cultivation of "'learned leisure,'" served as an alternative or counterpoint to increasingly dangerous political careers ("*Docta*" 104, 109; "*Miranda*" 123), in stark contrast to Leicester's deployment of his garden in pursuit of his political ambitions.

⁸ Throughout this chapter I make occasional reference to the current forms or

prospect from the castle is a shady walk. On the day this author visited the garden in the summer of 2014, there was indeed a cooling wind that brought with it a sudden downpour. Elizabethan formal gardens made extensive use of scented herbs, a feature English Heritage appreciated as they sought to create a garden that was historically accurate while also meeting contemporary goals of accessibility.⁹ At the back of the view is the aviary, and in the center is a fountain of Carrara marble carved with Ovidian scenes. (English Heritage seem not to have opted for the “vnderspringing streamz” or *giochi d’aqua* that bring Langham such “mirth.”¹⁰) A literary commonplace has moved into the real world and is being used to describe a real garden. Meanwhile the gardens, or at least the descriptions thereof, are designed to conform to this literary model. Spenser uses images similar to Langham’s as he builds his pleasant places; as we shall see below, he may even have had the garden at Kenilworth in mind on at least one occasion. But he does more than that: in most of the significant instances of a *locus amoenus* in *The Faerie Queene*, he is drawing on a particular set of words and images that have been with him throughout his career. The Spenserian career has drawn much critical attention, because the poet himself invites such attention at various moments of

reconstructions of gardens contemporary with Spenser, such as Leicester’s Kenilworth, primarily for illustrative purposes. The comparisons are warranted by the observation that “Phaedria’s island, the Bower of Bliss, the Garden of Adonis, and the gardens of the Temple of Venus are each convincing representations of an Italian Renaissance garden. Their components are exactly those on which northern visitors to Italy commented with delight” (Hunt and Leslie 325). The similarities even extend to primarily natural settings such as Belphebe’s Paradize, where the “pumy stones” that “restraine” the “little riuer” recall both “the pumice decorations of waterworks” and an almost identical feature of the Bowre of Bliss (III.v.39.7; Hunt and Leslie 325; II.v.30.2). Each of these settings I examine below as instances of Spenser’s *loci amoeni*. As discussed in Chapter 2, Italianate features had begun to spread northward and in addition to the visitors’ reports Spenser may well have seen some of them at the houses of his patrons.

⁹ Fiona Tansey, head gardener at Kenilworth, private communication (2014).

¹⁰ See Henderson *Tudor* 79, 90-92.

inflection in that career trajectory.¹¹ In the following analysis, I return to Spenser's sources of literary inspiration in Chaucer and Petrarca and offer a new account of the significance of the London publishing milieu that fostered his early projects. In attending to these cases, Spenser's practical models, I find a recurring and overlooked setting: a *locus amoenus* explicitly evoking paradise. As we shall see, this setting appears throughout his work, developing over time and giving us a new vantage point on Spenser's paradisaical vision and his poetic craft.

Part 1 – The Source of Poetry: “Pernaso,” Paradise, and Spenser's Chaucerian Craft

Colin Clout has a problem. Well, Colin Clout has many problems. In the June eclogue of *The Shepheardes Calender*, however, his problem is very specific and very strange. He is, as it were, standing outside Paradise looking in—or, more precisely, Colin is standing *inside* Paradise looking *around*. The poem constructs a detailed three-dimensional setting of earthly perfection, yet Colin is excluded from its sensory pleasures. Somehow this paradise does not work for him. It fails to function as it ought to.

June is most famous for its homage to Chaucer as “the God of shepherds *Tityrus*” (81), marking the poem as an explicit site for Spenser's thinking about his project of making poetry and that project's relation to an English literary past.¹² The lament for Tityrus in *June* offers precise insights into the role Chaucer played in Spenser's early-career ambitions for his poetry, which this essay explores by examining the spatialized poetics of the June eclogue alongside Chaucer's similar project in *The*

¹¹ See P. Cheney *Famous*, esp. “Introduction”; M. Rasmussen 221-22.

¹² In *Shorter* 87-94. See Kinney “Marginal” and “SC” (168-69, 173); J. King 20-31. As discussed below, Tityrus also signifies Virgil, especially elsewhere in the *Calender*. The situation of *June*'s dialogue between one happy and one unhappy shepherd recalls Virgil's first eclogue featuring Tityrus and Meliboeus (see note [30] below).

Franklin's Tale. Colin Clout's situation in *June* resembles that of Dorigen in the tale.

Both poems stipulate a similar setting for the main character's emotional predicament: a *locus amoenus* described in terms of paradise. In each case a despairing emotional state prevents the character from experiencing the joys of the paradisaal space; each poem links this situation to a spatialized account of poetic making that locates literary failure, inspiration, and achievement within its imagined geography.

This section of the chapter investigates resonances between the two poems and their implications for Spenser's Chaucerian poetics.¹³ Staging a character's isolation from the ultimately pleasant place serves to highlight problems associated with poetic inheritance and ambition and to frame the solutions both poems contemplate. *June* figures Colin's problem as despair over love, which excludes him from the shepherd Hobbinol's pleasant retreat. E. K., the *Calender's* purported editor, explains that Hobbinol represents Spenser's friend Gabriel Harvey and Colin (*inter alia*) is a "shadow" for the poet himself ("September" [176]; *Epistle* 134). Similarly, Colin's "love" and its consequences stand in throughout the *Calender* for a set of artistic and political problems facing Spenser and his England: concerns that monarchs and clergy will abuse their power and that poets will fail to receive the recognition, patronage, and remuneration they deserve.¹⁴ In *June*, Tityrus's poetic authority and skill offer Colin—and, by extension, Spenser—a way to address the problems they face. Close analysis of the eclogue's resonances with similar passages of the *Franklin's Tale* reveals Chaucer's role as symbolic inspiration, practical guide, and, in the spatialized poetics of the *June* eclogue, material source for Spenser's lofty literary goals.

¹³ For more on "resonance" and intertextuality, see Dimock; Anderson "Chaucer's *TC*"; Barr.

¹⁴ See Patterson 106-32; Kelsey and Peterson; McCabe Introduction xi-xxi, Notes 514-74.

Hortus Exclusus: *Spenser's Vision of Paradise*

The Shepheardes Calender was published anonymously in 1579. Advertised as the work of an ambitious “new Poete” and his devoted editor, it comprises an annotated collection of twelve pastoral eclogues, usually conversations amongst a cast of variously characterized shepherds, and comes in a long line of politicized pastoral poems dating back at least to the Roman poet Virgil.¹⁵ Besides its classical heritage, the *Calender* also situates itself in the local and the vernacular, its title echoing those of early printed almanacs and its language including regional English dialects. The relationship of the poems to their paratextual setting is complex. A series of woodcuts illustrates each eclogue with limited artistic felicity and uncertain thematic import. E. K., an anonymous ally or authorial persona, offers an introduction and a running commentary of glosses that purports to explain the poems but as often complicates or wilfully misreads them.¹⁶

In the *Calender*, the shepherds complain, as well as celebrate. Nominally they complain about the weather and the girls they’ve lost. But under the surface of these complaints, and sometimes not very far under that surface, they complain about the political situation. In 1579 Queen Elizabeth was thinking of marrying the French Duc

¹⁵ The Syracusan poet Theocritus, who invented the bucolic genre, makes topical and philosophical references (Wells 11ff, 32). Alexander Barclay’s *Egloges* (c. 1520) provide a nearer example of the political pastoral (Lewis *Studies* 128; *Sixteenth* 129-32, 360-61).

¹⁶ For further background, see Patterson 106-32; Kinney “SC”; Luborsky “Allusive,” “Illustrations”; McCabe Introduction. Heather Dubrow aptly argues that “the extensive notes [. . .] urge us to study the poems” (*Challenges* 101-02). Dubrow inclines to Richard McCabe’s assessment that E. K. is “a literary agent too ideal to be other than fictitious” and thus “yet another *persona* under which the new poet ‘secretly shadoweth himself,’ possibly with scholarly assistance from Gabriel Harvey,” Spenser’s Cambridge mentor (Introduction xi, Notes 516). I concur: self-generated scholarly frames are exactly the sort of intensely earnest game brilliant and ambitious (recent) undergraduates are wont to play. The strategy is also one deployed by John Skelton, one of Spenser’s sources for a persona called “Collyn Cloute,” especially in his *Speke, Parott*: “Behind the apparent nonsense stand two authoritative figures who provide it with its unifying principles, the ‘gatherer’ and narrator, Parott, and the poet and ‘maker,’ Skelton” (Walker 215).

d'Alençon, and this had Protestants worried. Also prominent are perennial and topical concerns about clergy abusing their power. For my purposes, however, the atmosphere of political anxiety that seeps into the fictive space of the eclogues, and its implications for Spenser's poetics, are more significant than the particulars of those politics.

The sixth eclogue, presented as a dialogue between the shepherds Hobbinol and Colin Clout, begins on a seemingly happier note. Hobbinol describes a series of pleasant situations and invites Colin to join him in his happiness. The eclogue constructs a detailed three-dimensional setting of earthly perfection, yet Colin Clout is excluded from its sensory pleasures. In the eclogue's opening stanza Hobbinol welcomes his friend Colin to his "pleasaunt syte," what the accompanying editorial gloss explains is his "situation and place" (1). That "situation" appears at first to be a physical setting. With a density of spatially deictic and place-oriented words and phrases—"here the place," "pleasaunt syte" and so forth—that is unusual for the *Calender*, which by definition tends more often to mark itself in time, the poem signals that the nature of its space is something to pay attention to. Hobbinol's opening stanza elegantly compresses all the familiar components of the *locus amoenus* into eight lines:

Lo *Colin*, here the place, whose pleasaunt syte
 From other shades hath weand my wandring mynde.
 Tell me, what wants me here, to worke delyte?
 The simple ayre, the gentle warbling wynde,
 So calme, so coole, as no where else I fynde:
 The grassye ground with daintye Daysies dight,
 The Bramble bush, where Byrds of euery kynde
 To the waters fall their tunes attemper right. (1-8)

Cool air, gentle breezes, grass, flowers, birds, and musical water: these are familiar ingredients of the conventional pleasant place or *locus amoenus*, often implicitly or explicitly reminiscent of an earthly Paradise. In fact, Colin says so himself, before beginning a complaint about his own status: "O happy *Hobbinoll*, I bless thy state, /

That Paradise has found, whych Adam lost" (9-10). All the sights, scents, and "tunes attemper right" for a full-sensory experience echoed in the poetry itself (8). Judicious alliteration and dense rhyming add to the initial sense of fullness and repose to create the harmonious setting that "From other shades hath weand [Hobbinol's] wandering mynde" (2). The eight-line stanza contains only two alternating end-rhymes, which in this case use the same vowel sound. Yet the enveloped scheme ends not on a couplet but on a cross rhyme that suspends poetic closure, and Hobbinol's cheery "mynde" may have more of an impact on his surroundings than first appears.¹⁷

Elsewhere in the *Calender*, the eclogues set in winter suggest relationships in the pathetic mode between weather and personality, mental state, or time of life. In *Januarye* Colin appears alone, mourning the loss of his unfaithful love, Rosalind, and breaking his musical pipe in despair. Hobbinol's happiness in summer accords with this model, but the pleasant world of *June* is somehow inaccessible to Colin. Hobbinol may have found Adam's lost Paradise, "But I vnhappy man," Colin continues, "Can nowhere fynd, to shroude my lucklesse pate" (14, 16). The woodcut that accompanies the poem shows a central Hobbinol, clad in rags befitting a shepherd but with gesture and stance suggesting openness and relaxation (F2v). Faraway birds suggest light streaming down from the bright zodiac-inscribed cloud above. In the middle distance, scantily clad mowers build haystacks (the usual labour of June in medieval calendars), and in the high distance a pavilion or castle adds a touch of elegance and loftiness to the scene.¹⁸ Colin's cramped third of the image, in contrast, is dark and busy with clumps of sheep and hatchings of hills and water. Overshadowed by a tree, Colin is still

¹⁷ McCabe makes a similar point about the *ababc bc* scheme of *Daphnaïda*, "a variant of rhyme royal subtly altered to avoid the resolution of the concluding couplet" (Notes 642).

¹⁸ Hourihane lvii.

bundled in his winter garments and seems to huddle into them, wringing his hands with cold or pain as he cradles his drooping staff.¹⁹ Hobbino's upright crook divides the world into unequal parts. One part is joyous and *June*-like; the other is broken like the pipe of *Januarye* still lying on the ground, upended by Colin's grief, and stuck in the shadows of winter with little sign of being "weand" from them to enter his friend's "pleasaunt" shade. It is graphically clear that Hobbino's "Paradise" is a personal and not a general one. The wall of this garden may be invisible, but it is still there, constructed out of Colin's own despair.

Colin is disconsolate over the double loss of his lover Rosalind and his own poetic talent. Towards the end of the poem, his despair modulates into a lament:

The God of shepheards Tityrus is dead,
 Who taught me homely, as I can, to make.
 He, whilst he liued, was the soueraigne head
 Of shepheards all, that bene with loue ytake:
 Well couth he wayle hys Woes, and lightly slake
 The flames, which loue within his heart had bredd,
 And tell vs mery tales, to keepe vs wake,
 The while our sheepe about vs safely fedde.

Nowe dead he is, and lyeth wrapt in lead,
 (O why should death on hym such outrage showe?)
 And all hys passing skil with him is fledde,
 The fame whereof doth dayly greater growe. (81-92)

E. K. informs readers "That by Tityrus is meant Chaucer" ([81]). However, this gloss does not go far towards explaining the terms of Colin's characterization of Tityrus and his poetry, or the stakes of that identification. Two features of the lament are of paramount significance. First, Colin's grief for Tityrus is raw and fresh, suggesting that his death has only recently occurred. The tone and syntax strongly resemble passages from Thomas Hoccleve's *Regiment of Princes* (c. 1411), which record a genuinely recent

¹⁹ With thanks to Gareth Griffith for the last item.

loss as well as a desire to trade on Hoccleve's self-proclaimed Chaucerian lineage.²⁰ Second, Tityrus's poetic talent is figured as a "spring" (93-6). While the metaphor naturally leads to comparisons with the "Chaucer, well of English vndefyled" of the future *Faerie Queene* (IV.ii.32), more resonant connections emerge from the headwaters of Spenser's literary past.²¹ The image may originate in John Lydgate's own lament for Chaucer in "The Floure of Curtesye" (printed in William Thynne's editions of Chaucer's works, including apocrypha and tributes, between 1532 and 1561): "The welle is drie with the lycoure swete, / Bothe of Cleye and of Caliopé" (241-22).²² Yet unlike Chaucer's younger contemporary Colin claims Tityrus's well is *not* yet dry; he hopes to partake of its "drops" (93). Tityrus as spring, we shall see, represents Colin's personalization of the fountain of Helicon on the muses' Parnassus.²³ This locus of poetic inspiration emerges both in the *Franklin's Tale* and elsewhere in *June* as the symbol of a Chaucerian craft Spenser seeks to master. In the spatialized poetics of the June eclogue, Parnassus also becomes a territory Colin might claim to solve the problems of poetic and political exclusion.

"Who taught me homely, as I can, to make": Tityrus as/and Chaucer

While the June eclogue offers the most sustained engagement with "Tityrus," that person or concept appears seven times in the *Calender* to varying effect.²⁴ The slippery attribution refers sometimes to Chaucer and sometimes to Virgil, as E. K. professes to

²⁰ The poem was common in manuscript during Spenser's time. See Hoccleve 1958-74, 2077-107, 4982-98; Blyth 12-14. See also Spearing *Autographies* 129-31.

²¹ See Kinney "Marginal" 34-35; J. King 20.

²² In Forni 83-92.

²³ Note that for Spenser, as for Chaucer, Helicon is a spring, whereas in its origins with the Greek poet Hesiod it is a mountain. See Wells 25; notes [69, 85] below.

²⁴ Helen Barr's elucidation of the comic effects of E. K.'s Tityrus commentary is congenial to the following analysis. See also Cook 193.

explain in the *Epistle* that introduces the book: “Chaucer: [...] whom our Colin clout in his *Æglogue* called Tityrus the God of shepheards, comparing hym to the worthines of the Roman Tityrus Virgile” (5-7). E. K. frequently muddies the waters in his subsequent glosses. Nonetheless, when referring to Chaucer, the eclogues consistently assert Tityrus’s nearness to the poet-shepherds in time and space, and thus his accessibility as a poetic model. In his commentary on *June*, E. K. notes “That by Tityrus is meant Chaucer, hath bene already sufficiently sayde, and by thys more playne appeareth, that he sayth, he tolde merye tales. Such as be his Canterburie tales” ([81]). In his edition of the *Calender*, Richard McCabe sees through such bland transparency: “lurking in the background is the figure of Virgil.”²⁵ As the most famous of Virgil’s pastoral characters, Tityrus in the Renaissance was understood to be a mouthpiece for the Roman writer’s political commentary.²⁶ Virgilian references in *June* point to the abovementioned political causes of Colin’s despair. The presence of Tityrus-Chaucer, I will demonstrate, offers poetic solutions to those political problems.

The identification of Tityrus with Chaucer in the *Calender* as a whole is intermittent rather than obviously “sufficient.” E. K.’s “already” in the *June* gloss refers (with circular logic) to his assertion in the “*Epistle*.” Yet E. K. in *Januarye* reiterates “Tityrus” as Virgil’s shadow persona, analogous to the shepherd Colin Clout for “this Poete” ([1]).²⁷ The only other mention of Tityrus prior to *June* appears in *Februarie*. Using the words “tale,” and “Kent,” the shepherd Thenot clearly refers to Chaucer (91-93). However, E. K.’s doubtful “I suppose he meane Chaucer” makes his subsequent

²⁵ Notes 540. Clare Kinney reads references such to merry tales as a deflating joke (“Marginal” 26).

²⁶ See Patterson 106-32; P. Cheney 67.

²⁷ John Skelton and Clément Marot also “lurk” in the vicinity ([1]). In addition to Skelton’s Collyn Cloute, a character or persona “Colin” was used by Marot, whose own *Eglogue* is “imitated in *November*” (McCabe Notes 521). E. K. also praises “Lidgate,” but only as a “scholler” following in Chaucer’s wake (*Epistle* 3).

confidence in the *June* gloss all the more strange ([92]). After the lament of *June*, the poet-cowherd Cuddie in *October* specifies a “Romish *Tityrus*,” whom E. K. confirms is “wel knowen to be Virgile” ([55])—and explicitly connected to the political and patronage issues McCabe highlights. In *December* Colin’s “*Tityrus*” is glossed once again as “Chaucer: as hath bene oft sayd” ([4]). Finally, the closing *envoi* in the voice of the new Poete himself would seem to use the name to distinguish between Virgil and Chaucer—or else to enshroud the latter in a series of layered personas: “Dare not to match thy pype with *Tityrus* hys style, / Nor with the Pilgrim that the Ploughman playde a whyle” (9-10).²⁸ Unencumbered by the decorous “errour of shepherds understanding” proper to the eclogues (*Julye* [65]), the new Poete uses “*Tityrus*” for Virgil and “the Pilgrim” for Chaucer, although at this point it may be impossible to entirely disentangle the two.²⁹ Throughout the *Calender* the name *Tityrus* is associated with Chaucer and Virgil in equal and often alternate measure.

Virgilian political dissatisfaction is important to any thorough understanding of the *Calender*. However, the glosses’ misdirections can obscure what is actually a fairly consistent usage of *Tityrus* within the eclogues themselves, as interpreted by the *Epistle*: in *Februarie*, *June*, and *December*, *Tityrus* to Colin and his fellow shepherds signifies Chaucer. The exception in *October* is the one occasion to explicitly identify its *Tityrus* as “Romish.” All other references to *Tityrus* as Virgil occur in E. K.’s *Epistle* and glosses, or in the new Poete’s *envoi*. Each time Chaucer-*Tityrus* is mentioned, he appears as a renowned teacher and direct antecedent of *these* shepherd-poets and their art. *December* praises Colin by way of this association: “which wel coulde pype and singe, / For he of *Tityrus* his songs did lere” (3-4). Similarly, in *Februarie* the “olde Shepheard” Thenot

²⁸ McCabe Notes 574. William Langland, author of *Piers Plowman*, may also be present.

²⁹ See Kinney “SC” 169.

“cond” his tale “of *Tityrus* in my youth” (Argument; 92). For all E. K.’s reluctance to confirm Chaucer’s presence in *Februarie*, he ends by affirming, “whose prayse for pleasaunt tales cannot dye, so long as the memorie of hys name shal liue, and the name of Poetrie shal endure” ([92]). Colin’s *June* lament extends this praise of Chaucer’s art across many elegant lines, including a modest anticipation of the *December* reference: “who taught me homely, as I can, to make” (82). However godlike in his art, Tityrus is nonetheless local and thereby accessible to Colin and his compatriots. Thus it is possible to define the *June* Tityrus precisely as a renowned shepherd-poet of living memory. Tityrus-Chaucer offers the authority of English poetry and is sufficiently near at hand to directly confer that authority upon his self-nominated follower. Colin-Spenser requires Chaucerian authority, and Chaucerian craft, if he is to successfully address the problems the *Calender* presents.

“Wolde han maked any herte lighte”: The Emotionally Inaccessible Paradise

In the opening stanzas of *June* Colin labels Hobbinol’s “pleasaunt syte” a Paradise, an Eden temporarily un-lost, but one that he, Colin, cannot access—despite the fact that he seems to be physically located within it—because he is stuck in a personal microclimate of wintry depression. Hobbinol’s private paradise is constructed out of familiar cultural referents drawn from Chaucer and other literary forebears.³⁰ Colin invokes Adam’s Christian Paradise of Eden; E. K. adds etymological and possibly classical sources:

A Paradise in Greeke signifieth a Garden of pleasure, or place of delights. So he compareth the soile, wherin Hobbinoll made his abode, to that earthly Paradise, in scripture called Eden; wherein Adam in his first creation was placed. Which of the most learned is thought to be in Mesopotamia, the most fertile and pleasaunte

³⁰ Conflating the many versions of paradise in classical and Christian antecedents is common in medieval and Renaissance literature (Giamatti 4; 48ff). Distinctions among them are worth making but not always made in poetry or criticism of the period.

country in the world [...]

([10])

E. K.'s gloss stresses the comparative nature of Colin's reference to Paradise, while invoking many of its possible secular, sacred, and geographical meanings. Elsewhere E. K. hints that Colin's sense of deprivation has to do with the shepherds' current situations in life; Hobbinol has employment and Colin seeks it ([1], [18]).³¹ In the world the poem constructs, however, this "situation or place" is spatial and experiential. Colin's central problem is the failure of his poetry, whether this is due to lovesickness, politics, or unemployment. *June* transforms this literary problem into a set of symptoms in Colin's body and an incongruity with his surroundings. Colin inhabits the type of setting I call an "emotionally inaccessible paradise," as distinguished from other instances of paradise inaccessible because of temporal or spatial distance.³² The "Paradise" he refers to at the June eclogue's opening, the "pleasaunt syte" of his friend Hobbinol, is one Colin cannot access owing to his despairing emotional state.

Colin's situation is analogous to that of Dorigen in *The Franklin's Tale* as she sinks into despair over her beloved husband's long sojourn overseas. For Dorigen also has a problem, and she's about to have one or two more. As she sinks into despair over her beloved husband's long sojourn overseas, her friends seek to distract her with sensory pleasures. They arrange an outing to a garden on the sixth of May:

Which May hadde peynted with his softe shoures
 This gardyn ful of leves and of floures;
 And craft of mannes hand so curiously
 Arrayed hadde this gardyn, trewely,
 That nevere was ther gardyn of swich prys
 But if it were the verray paradys.
 The odour of floures and the fresshe sighte
 Wolde han makid any herte lighte
 That evere was born, but if to greet siknesse
 Or to greet sorwe held it in distresse,

³¹ See *October Argvment*. As noted above, this situation resembles Virgil's first eclogue.

³² See Giamatti 4; Scafi 342.

So ful it was of beautee with plesaunce. (907-17)³³

Longing for her absent husband, and terrified of the “grisly rokkes blake” that in her mind represent his peril at sea (859), Dorigen suffers from “to greet sorwe” which prevents her from enjoying the paradisaal garden. The multisensory charms of this garden—leaves, flowers, lovely odours and fresh “sighte”—strongly resemble those of *June* and, like *June* for Colin, fail to operate properly upon Dorigen’s emotions, to make her “herte lighte.” Like Colin’s, Dorigen’s despairing emotional state bars her from the delights of a place whose powers approach those of “the verray paradys.”³⁴ Chaucer’s pleasure-garden setting cues his readers to be prepared for a courtly encounter or a temptation scene, and they find both in the person of the amorous squire Aurelius.³⁵ Above all, the marvellous but ineffectual garden points out the extreme state of Dorigen’s passions. The rest of the plot is quite different from that of *June*, but the terms of the scene are almost identical: sensory pleasures arrive at eyes, ears, and nostrils to work an overpowering emotional transformation for all—except for those for whom they do not work, the ultimately distressed.

It is this strange failure that distinguishes these two situations within the broader traditions of the *locus amoenus* and its subsidiary, the *hortus conclusus*. To call a conventional *locus amoenus* “paradise,” and moreover to signal that that “paradise” is no idle metaphor but a specific invocation of the superlative delights and moral

³³ In *Riverside* 178-89.

³⁴ Dorigen’s situation is of course different from Colin’s: she is a married woman; her lover will return. Like Colin, however, she is afraid; as well as the stated terror for her husband’s life and safe return her concerns may also include fears resembling Colin’s for her autonomy and status.

³⁵ Unlike Hobbinal (whose “syte” is officially a pastoral landscape, only implicitly a garden), Dorigen’s friends remain oblivious to her new problem as they enjoy the garden’s realistic tree-lined paths: “And in the aleyes romeden up and down, / And nothyng wiste of this conclusioun” (1013-14). For the significance of roaming up and down elsewhere in Chaucer, see E. Fowler “Proximity” 21ff.

tensions of the Christian Eden, as both poems do, is to dramatically raise the stakes for claiming that—somehow—the protagonist remains unsatisfied therein.³⁶ Milton understood this: to remain unhappy in “Paradise[. . .], whych Adam lost” is, potentially, to align oneself with Satan—or to deny the affective power of unfallen creation, which amounts to the same thing.³⁷

Analysis of Spenser’s project in the *Calender* has tended to focus on his complex engagement with the pastoral mode as a familiar locus of poetic critique.³⁸ However, the June eclogue’s insistence on paradisal—and, by extension, horticultural—settings suggests that an alternative lens for understanding Spenser’s ideal of poetic making is appropriate. The “curiously” crafted garden of the *Franklin’s Tale* offers such an alternative; considering the two poems together serves to illuminate more clearly the poetic spaces each works to build. Resonance with the June eclogue runs beyond similarities of setting and emotional predicament; just as *June* cryptically offers Tityrus

³⁶ As noted above, Colin specifically invokes Adam; the moral stakes of Dorigen’s garden are discussed further below. Their situations contrast with familiar *hortus conclusus* settings in *The Knight’s Tale* (1030-1122) and *The Kingis Quair* (211-466), which do not mention paradise and in which overt lovesick despair takes place not in the garden but in the towers above (in *Riverside* 37-66; Mooney and Arn eds. 31-79). Compare also *The Romance of the Rose*, the source of so many of these conventional settings, in which the delights of a “*parevis terrestre*” do work as expected on the emotions of the young man (de Lorris 633-740). In any case, the *Romance* here remains resolutely secular: “the Dreamer [. . .] does not identify the garden with the garden in Eden and risk the doctrinal and artistic consequences” (Giamatti 62-63). For evidence of Spenser’s ethical engagement with *The Franklin’s Tale* in the *Faerie Queene*, see Cooper; Anderson *Reading* 70-78.

³⁷ See Introduction; *Paradise Lost* IV.152-59. The failure is not merely the failure of the pathetic mode—the landscape’s refusing to correspond to the character’s sorrow—but instead the opposite: the character’s refusal (or inability) to be moved by surroundings that, insofar as they are labeled “paradise,” spring from a divine source. This is the state of Satan. Cf. the state of Marlowe’s Mephistophilis, discussed in Chapter 3.

³⁸ See Patterson 106-32; P. Cheney *Famous* ch. 2; Alpers *Pastoral*, Bernard *Ceremonies*, “June;” T. Brown; Shore. Harry Berger productively reads the “paradise principle” of the *Calender* and *June* through a pastoral lens (“Mode” 140-49; “Orpheus” 27, 43ff; *Revisionary* 432-41); here I propose instead a horticultural refraction as offering a clearer vision of the poetics of “June.” See also Hamilton “Greene” 9, “Argument” 176.

as the solution to Colin's poetic problems, critics have long identified *The Franklin's Tale* as a site of Chaucer's own thinking on the relations amongst art, nature, and poetry.

"I sleep nevere on the Mount of Pernaso": Siting Chaucerian Poetics

A focus on the poetic implications of the garden topos allows me to take up some of the "rokkes" V. A. Kolve left unturned in his analysis of the *Franklin's Tale* as Chaucer's presentation of the aesthetics and ethics of his art. Kolve analyzes the tale as a function of three settings. The rocks are a psychological figure for harsh reality; the garden is their opposite, the place of sweet illusion.³⁹ The third setting Kolve examines is the study of the Clerk of Orleans, a magician Aurelius visits in the hope of holding Dorigen to her rash promise, made in the garden, to love him if he can make the rocks disappear. Kolve claims the Clerk's magical study as the source of art or illusion that can mediate the other two settings, for good or ill. He argues that Chaucer recognizes dangerous similarities between the Clerk's magic and his own poetry, and that he seeks to define himself against such false art, both aesthetically and ethically (189-93). However, the garden setting is more significant for the tale's poetics than Kolve's reading will allow.

Central to my reading of the tale is a sense that its narration is of a distinctly Chaucerian flavour, and thus that its account of rhetorical art is one the poet would own.⁴⁰ Such passages as the *occupatio-cum-diminutio* that claims "I ne kan no termes of

³⁹ Kolve 174-78. This analysis is foundational to many subsequent understandings of the role of poetry in *The Franklin's Tale*, including my own. The great contribution of Kolve's reading is its detailed examination of the specific poetic functions of the rocks and the study. The garden, however, does not receive such intense scrutiny; instead a brief selection of conventional medieval garden tropes weighted towards the sensory pleasures of the Song of Songs is offered by way of analogues. Such a reliance on conventional pleasure may be appropriate for a vast array of medieval gardens, but not in this case. Kolve's analysis further under-reads the garden by failing to account for its craftiness—and its craftedness.

⁴⁰ Locating Chaucer in one of his tales can be as slippery a proposition as positively

astrologye”—and then deploys such terms for thirty lines (1266-96)—remind this reader of the studied ignorance of the modesty topos in introductions to *Troilus and Criseyde* or the dream poems, particularly in such “gentil” matters as love:⁴¹

What shulde I speke more queynte,
Or peyne me my wordes peynte
To speke of love? Hyt wol not be;
I kan not of that faculte. (House of Fame 1.245-48)⁴²

This and other examples suggest that the “I” of the tale’s text, when present, speaks in an authorial voice, signalling Chaucerian instances of what A. C. Spearing has termed “autography.”⁴³ Much as the repeated deictics of *June* reveal the eclogue’s spatial preoccupations, the heightened authorial attention implicit in the “craft” of the garden description and other moments of narrative “rethorik,” I argue, points readers to the

identifying either “Chaucer” or Spenser himself in the *Calender*. As A. C. Spearing warns in an early articulation of what would become his work on autography, “the narratorial voice and position are fluctuating and inconsistent[. . .]; to stabilize them in terms of a set of values attributable to the Franklin” is a misleading exaggeration (Introduction 76. See *Autographies* 6, 269n7). Kolve’s approach ignores the Franklin entirely while seemingly attempting to “stabilize” a consistent Chaucerian contrast between the deceptive magic of the Clerk and the “real magic” of “literature” that snatches mercy from the jaws of so-called justice at the tale’s ending (196). My reading attends to Spearing’s caution by focusing on those moments in the course of a “fluctuating” narrative when a distinctly authorial voice emerges. Dubrow addresses a similar problem of voice by way of audience in the *Calender* and other Renaissance lyric (*Challenges* 61-62).

⁴¹ Love is inappropriate to a middle-class persona (Spearing *Subjectivity* 180-81; *Autographies* 156), although *June* celebrates Tityrus as love poet (85-86). Oddly, Kolve claims that the “details and language [of magic] are of little interest to” Chaucer, citing the astrology passage as a simple dismissal indicating Chaucer’s anti-magic poetics (192). For the origins of the *diminutio* or modesty topos, see note [44] below.

⁴² In *Riverside* 348-73.

⁴³ The “I” need not be either an autobiographical Chaucer or a fictional Chaucer-pilgrim. Instead, such moments are consistent with the poetic persona or “I” who occasionally appears in the course of Chaucer’s autographic passages. (See *Autographies*, 40; 33-51.) Spearing cites the tale as an example of Chaucer’s “normal narrative manner throughout his work” (*Subjectivity* 126). Freed by Spearing’s example from a need to mine tale and prologue jointly for purported clues to the psychology of a Franklin narrator, analysis can instead look for other autographic passages in the tale and its surroundings, as well as similarities of voice and theme that signal moments of heightened authorial attention.

tale's articulation of its poetics (909, 719).

Such moments also appear in the tale's introductory frame.⁴⁴ "The Prologe of the Frankeleyns Tale" briefly claims the Breton *lai* as its literary antecedent and then apologizes for any lack of rhetorical skill:

I lerned nevere rethorik, certeyn;
 Thyng that I speke, it moot be bare and pleyn.
 I sleep nevere on the Mount of Pernaso,
 Ne lerned Marcus Tullius Scithero.
 Colours ne knowe I none, withouten drede,
 But swiche colours as growen in the mede,
 Or elles swiche as men dye or peynte.
 Colours of rethoryk been to me queynte;
 My spirit feeleth noght of swich mateere. (719-27)

⁴⁴ In fact, the tale is preceded by two introductory frames. First, "the wordes of the Frankeleyn to the Squier, and the wordes of the Hoost to the Frankeleyn" cut short the Squire's Tale and set up the Franklin as the next teller. (The "wordes" run 36 lines; the "Prologe" 20.) At the head of the tale itself, "The Prologe of the Frankeleyns Tale" briefly claims the Breton *lai* as its literary antecedent and then apologizes for any lack of rhetorical skill:

Which I shal seyn with good wyl as I kan.
 But sires, by cause I am a burel man,
 At my bigynning first I yow biseche,
 Have me excused of my rude speche. (715-18)

Both frames share with the tale thematic concerns about the nature of "gentillesse" (mentioned explicitly at 674, 693-95, 709, 754, 1524-27, 1543, 1574, 1595, 1608-11). The social and rhetorical tensions displayed in the exchange between the Franklin and the Host appear to find echoes in the reference to "gentil Britouns" and the highly rhetorical *diminutio* on "rethorik" from the self-described "burel man" of the prologue (709, 716-27; see Spearing Introduction 74; note [44] below). Yet "burel," according to the MED, can signify specifically a lay clerk as well as a rustic person, and "good wyl" to tell a tale may be a claim for ethical sentence as much as jolly solas, neither pointing as conclusively to the Franklin's voice as might first appear. (I owe the latter suggestion to Sherif Abdelkarim.) For example, see the similar phrasing of the *Introduction to the Squire's Tale* at the beginning of the same Fragment (V): "Have me excused if I speke amys; | My wyl is good, and lo, my tale is this" (7-8).

The "wordes" present a revealing dialogue amongst named pilgrim characters with almost no narration. The "Prologe" features a less-characterized autographic voice more in keeping with the Chaucerian passages of the tale.⁴⁴ According to Spearing, "in the Prologue, the Franklin's confused values are amusingly exposed," whereas the tale presents such values clearly and "explicitly open to question" (Introduction 75). (For the purposes of his introduction, Spearing does not distinguish between the "wordes" and the "Prologe.") Thus it seems clear that the Franklin's voice as presented in dialogue in "the wordes of the Frankeleyn to the Squier" does not extend into the narration of "The Prologe of the Frankeleyns Tale."

This explicit invocation of rhetorical principles, shrouded in comic renunciation, is designed to frame reception of the tale itself.⁴⁵ The “rethorik” *diminutio* resembles those noted above in structure and diction; Chaucer also rhymes “peynte” with the distancing “queynte” in the deprecatory passage from the *House of Fame* (1.245-6). Later in the same poem, he refers to poetic inspiration in terms similar to those of the “Prologe.”⁴⁶

The Proem to Book II calls on the muses:

And ye, me to endite and ryme
 Helpeth, that on Parnaso duelle,
 Be Elicon, the clere welle (2.520-22)

The “rethorik” *diminutio* in the “Prologe” uses the terms of this invocation to deny its efficacy, averring that “I sleep nevere on the Mount of Pernaso” (721).

“But swiche colours as growen in the mede”: Chaucer’s Verray Crafted Paradise

It is well known, of course, that the claim of the “Prologe” is as much a misdirection as any of E. K.’s glosses.⁴⁷ Spearing observes the skill of the last few lines of the prologue: its ostentatious plainness; its denial of the rhetorical colours (“ne knowe I none”) in favour of those “as growen in the mede,” which may in turn be linked with the artfully

⁴⁵ Curtius outlines the development of the medieval *diminutio* or modesty topos from classical models (83-85). Constance Wright discusses the conventional use of the word “rude” in the topos, which seems to have begun with Apuleius, and notes that while Persius is the original source of the line “I sleep never on the Mount of Pernaso,” the phrase became a commonplace in the Mannerist rhetorical tradition that Chaucer draws on in the passage. Here the move seems also to be claiming (by denying) a classical authority; a Christian version of the topos opts for Sion over Parnassus (742-45). As we will see below, Spenser also deploys “rudeness,” a quality Matthew Harrison has identified as a sign of “frank” poetic engagement in the world of politics (257-58). Louis Friedland notes that Jan van der Noot, author of *A Theatre for Worldlings* (of which more below), also makes use of the topos in his dedication to Elizabeth: “albeit the stile be rude . . . the matter shall be fitte for your Maiestie to reade” (qtd. in Introduction xiii).

⁴⁶ Calling the frame “the Franklin’s Prologe” obscures the autographic claim. For the “Prologe” elsewhere in the *Calender*, see J. King 26.

⁴⁷ See Spearing *Autographies* 229-30.

crafted flowers in Dorigen's garden. "Perhaps," Spearing speculates, "the Orleans Clerk should be thought of as a gardener-poet."⁴⁸ This gentle rebuttal to Kolve's indictment of the Clerk may be elaborated, I hope, into two points central to my analysis of the Chaucerian poetics implied in the tale. First, I interrogate the elegant simplicity of Kolve's dichotomy between the Clerk and Chaucer as bad and good models for the poet as illusion-maker. Second, it is Dorigen's garden rather than the Clerk's study that, in my reading, illuminates the tale's poetics, as I find paradise rather than pastoral does for *June*.

The Clerk of Orleans is one of the candidates for the "mooste fre" in the tale's closing riddle asking listeners who has shown the greatest generosity and mercy (1622). As the sole representative of a less than "gentil" middle class, he might be expected to stand in for either the Franklin's or Chaucer's perspective on the avoidable predicaments and mystifying pickles the gentry seem to find themselves in over love. However, the Clerk is often read as unsympathetically inscrutable.⁴⁹ Kolve's reading condemns him outright, finding him in the study deliberately deceiving Aurelius with his magic and then exacting a "ruinous price" for his art, the self-serving act of "a shrewd business man" (192).⁵⁰

But what if our reading of the Clerk himself is more "fre"? Kolve cites the line, "On which hymself he [Aurelius] daunced, as hym thoughte," as evidence of the false art of the Clerk's confidence scheme as it entraps his mark in the engrossing illusion of dancing with his lady (1201). It is Aurelius, however, who tracks down the Clerk in the first place, and the line may describe Aurelius's own self-deception. Could the Clerk's

⁴⁸ Introduction 76.

⁴⁹ See Spearing Introduction 66; Knopp 338-39, 351n7, 351n10.

⁵⁰ The implication that an artist cannot be shrewd and financially successful would seem to be belied by Chaucer's own biography (not to mention Shakespeare's).

“ruinous price” perhaps be designed to save Aurelius from his own foolish desires, or at least to exempt the Clerk from being implicated in them: a sort of rash promise of his own, designed to be rejected? “He made it straunge” (1223)—in unsympathetic readings a demurral serving to drive up the price—tersely covers a range of possible reactions, including an astonished disbelief not unlike Dorigen’s at Aurelius’s original declaration of love: “‘Nevere erst,’ quod she, ‘ne wiste I what ye mente’” (981).⁵¹ And since he forgives Aurelius’s debt so quickly, having only belatedly learned the real moral stakes of a job he has undertaken on false pretenses and nonetheless faithfully performed (1587-1602), might not the Clerk be arguably “mooste fre”?⁵² “He made it straunge” falls in the same line as “so God hym save,” which Spearing identifies as “the only specifically Christian phrase” spoken in the tale.⁵³ In a world of mostly virtuous pagans hampered by their lack of grace, such words seem unlikely to be spoken by the villain. Indeed, while drawing on Kolve’s analysis, Spearing reads the possible identification of Chaucer with the Clerk in a far less sinister light.⁵⁴ This would appear to put him in company with Shakespeare, whose appropriation of “Al oure revel was ago” for *The Tempest* suggests he, too, sees the Clerk less as Mephistophilis than as Prospero (1204).⁵⁵

Denying the Clerk the status of villainous foil opens up possibilities for other instances of poetic modelling elsewhere in the tale.⁵⁶ Aurelius composes a love “pleynt” in his prayer for aid and another in his confrontation of Dorigen in the temple (1029-79,

⁵¹ Compare the prudence of the doctor in *The Good Earth* (Buck 253 [ch. 25]).

⁵² I read Aurelius’ need to explain Dorigen’s true feelings in lines 1598-1602 as an indication of the Clerk’s ignorance hitherto. This would, however, require the Clerk’s claim to mindreading or prescience at 1176 to be intermittent or at least partly boastful.

⁵³ Introduction 68.

⁵⁴ Introduction 66-68. See also “Classical” 66-67.

⁵⁵ See Knopp 338-41, 350n1, 351n10.

⁵⁶ Compare Colin, Cuddie, and other “paterne[s] of a Poete” in the *Calender* (October Argvment).

1311-38), and Dorigen also voices “hire compleynt” at the cruelty of fortune in her lengthy contemplation of suicide (1354-1456). Although William Woods convincingly describes a Chaucerian “spatial poetics” in which central characters “define” the space that surrounds them (51), this diffusion of poetic endeavour suggests that it is not in any single character that this tale locates its spatialized poetic claims. Focusing on the garden as a site not only of pleasure but also of moral testing, as in Eden, and of poetic art, as in the “craft of mannes hand” that built it, produces an account of poetic making distinct from any one character’s embodiment thereof, be it the Clerk’s dangerous wish-fulfilment, Aurelius’s glorious self-deluding complaints, or Dorigen’s inventive despair.⁵⁷

The garden explicitly evokes “the verray paradys” (910), a place of testing, fall, and judgment—not (merely) softness and pleasure—and functions as such a place throughout the tale.⁵⁸ Dorigen is wrong to find her plight “to greet” and in the garden opens herself up to the error of emotional excess. The events set in motion there lead directly to Aurelius’s subsequent error of greedy misperception in the study. The garden is both the actual site of Dorigen and Aurelius’s original encounter and the anticipated final setting towards which all their thoughts and actions tend, only averted at the last minute by a chance meeting as they make their way “to the gardyn-ward” (1505). As in *June*, the paradisaal garden serves as the posing of a problem—and governs the aesthetic and ethical space of the poem long after the action has departed from it. Chaucer’s garden presents virtue on trial and ultimately redeemed by the “sentence” and “solaas” of the tale’s poetry.⁵⁹ This presentation of the aesthetics and ethics of his

⁵⁷ Paul Alpers makes a similar point regarding Spenser’s poetic “art” in the Bowre of Bliss episode, discussed below (“Bower” 107).

⁵⁸ See Pearsall 247.

⁵⁹ *General Prologue* 798 (*Riverside* 23-36). Kolve makes a similar claim from other

art may constitute an attempt to shape or construct his own future memory. The tale seems to be one of the sites where Chaucer as poet-retractor was concerned with the judgment of future audiences, and perhaps also with that of potential poetic followers, such as Colin and Spenser claim to be.⁶⁰

Like *June*, the tale highlights the garden-paradise as a central locus of poetic making. The *diminutio* of the “Prologue” explicitly links the powers of Parnassus to the flowers of rhetoric *and* of horticulture.⁶¹ The rhetorical appeal to real flowers in turn primes the tale’s listeners or readers to be sensitive to the art that has “arrayed” Dorigen’s garden “so curiously”: the “craft of mannes hand” that planted it but also the hand that wrote it—Chaucer’s.⁶² It is in the garden, not the study, that the art of poesy reaches its full potential. This is an ethical as well as an aesthetic claim. Conventional medieval gardens are always potentially spaces of danger, but also—therefore—always potentially spaces of high morality and miraculous transformation.⁶³ In the garden passage the flaunting modesty of the narrative does not shy away from likening the pleasant place it builds unto “the verray paradys.” The poetry aligns itself not merely with human artistry but also, by implication, with the craft of *goddess* hand. Poetry, Spenser’s admired contemporary Philip Sidney reminds his own readers, is next to godliness. Its greatest achievement, he suggests, is just such a paradisaal reinscription as Chaucer’s garden: “pleasaunt rivers, fruitfull trees, sweete smelling flowers”—by these

evidence (196).

⁶⁰ See Kolve 171.

⁶¹ Spearing offers prologue, garden, and Clerk as compounding illustrations of poetic and “rhetorical processes” (Introduction 76).

⁶² C. S. Lewis notes the first stanza of *June* as a similar moment of elevated craft unusual for its time: “we should perceive that poetry[. . .] was now once more beginning to sing” (*Studies* 128).

⁶³ See Pearsall 237.

shall ye know the “golden” world.⁶⁴ Vatic status confers legitimacy on grateful (or duplicitous) poetic disciples; Spenser learns from Sidney and Chaucer as Chaucer (more surreptitiously) “lerned” from “Scithero” and “Pernaso.”⁶⁵

“I neuer lyst presume to Parnasse hyll”: Chaucerian Misdirection

One thing Colin seems to have “lerned” from Tityrus is, like the “Prologe” *diminutio*, to lay claim to Parnassus obliquely by denying it outright:

Of Muses Hobbinol, I conne no skill:
For they bene daughters of the hyghest Ioue,
And holden scorne of homely shepheards quill.
[. . .]
I neuer lyst presume to *Parnasse* hyll [. . .] (65-70)

Colin’s Chaucer-like demurrer is nonetheless the third time *June* seeks to import Parnassus and its denizens into the landscape it constructs.⁶⁶ Alongside Hobbinol and Colin, a cast of mostly classical characters also physically inhabits the eclogue’s poetic space.

The first Parnassus reference in *June* appears in Hobbinol’s elaboration of the delightful pleasures of his paradisaal *locus amoenus*. Colin claims he is hounded by “angry Gods” (15); Hobbinol assures him that “Here” he will find “Graces, / And lightfote Nymphes” who

⁶⁴ “The Defence of Poesy” (ll. 183-5, in *Major* 212-50; text from Renaissance Edition). Sidney later distinguishes amongst the *poiein* or “maker” of Greek (and English) poetry, described in this passage; the *vates* or religious visionary of Roman and biblical poetry, the highest poetic calling; and the versifier of other liberal arts, whom he excludes from his discussion (ll. 223-64). However, as this chapter demonstrates, Spenser was clearly interested in linking the roles of the vatic visionary and the maker’s sub-creation (Tolkien 122; see D. L. Miller “Kathleen” 14; Oram “Audiences” 518; Wilson-Okamura *International* 178-79; McCabe “Plato” 446). Ayesha Ramachandran associates Spenser’s cosmological visions explicitly with his gardens (“Lucretian” 390-91).

⁶⁵ As Craig A. Berry notes, Chaucer’s strategy in the “Prologe” resembles E. K.’s (private communication).

⁶⁶ Not counting E. K.’s prior mention of Mesopotamia, another importation of a significant locus of human civilization into the linguistic field of the poem ([10]).

chace the lingring night,
 With Heydeguyes, and trimly trodden traces,
 Whilst systers nyne, which dwell on *Parnasse* hight,
 Doe make them musick, for their more delight:
 And *Pan* himselfe to kisse their christall faces,
 Will pype and daunce, when Phœbe shineth bright:
 Such pierlesse pleasures haue we in these places. (23, 25-32)

By way of their vivid verbs, the mythical ladies partaking of “A country daunce or rownd” ([24]), along with Pan to “pype and daunce”—and “kisse”—all appear to be acting within the space of the poem, rather than inhabiting an imagined space of myth.⁶⁷ Hobbinol’s “syte” is very near the home of the muses, the “systers nyne, which dwell on *Parnasse* hight,” for their “musick” is within earshot for the nymphs to dance to (28-29). Parnassus seems to be as close to the shepherds in space as Tityrus is in time.

The incorporation of Parnassus and its inhabitants into the space *June* builds is different from an earlier invocation to the muses in *Aprill*: “And eke you Virgins, that on *Parnasse* dwell, / Whence floweth *Helicon* the learned well [...]” (41-42). This is the apostrophe of a confident poet, Colin before his despair, to distant patrons. It is analogous to, and syntactically reminiscent of, the passage from *The House of Fame* quoted above (II.520-22).⁶⁸ In *June*, however, both Hobbinol’s description and Colin’s denial imply that the poet could “presume” to physically approach Parnassus, if he dared. Here the *June* eclogue is more like *The Franklin’s Tale*; the line “I sleep nevere on the Mount of Pernaso” implies spatial access to Parnassus, even in the course of renouncing it. This sense of Parnassus’ being near to, but not quite present within, Hobbinol’s “syte” complicates the paradisaical nature of the scene described by Hobbinol and labelled by Colin. As a holy mountain, source of art and learning, Parnassus can

⁶⁷ Phoebe “shineth,” contributing sensory effects as a more distant agent.

⁶⁸ McCabe Notes 532.

encode a classical Golden Age paradise.⁶⁹ It also stands in metonymically for a complex of classical symbols for poetic inspiration, often conflated, as E. K. illustrates in his gloss to *Aprill*:

Helicon) is both the name of a fountaine at the foot of Parnassus, and also of a mountaine in Bæotia, out of which floweth the famous Spring Castalius, dedicate also to the Muses: of which spring it is sayd, that when Pegasus the winged horse of Perseus (whereby is meant fame and flying renowne) strooke the grownde with his hoofe, sodenly thereout sprange a wel of moste cleare and pleasaunte water, which fro thence forth was consecrate to the Muses and Ladies of learning. ([42])

Parnassus-Helicon/Helicon-Castalius is a source of both “water” and “learning,” multiply or redundantly sacred to the muses.⁷⁰ Although E. K. withholds a direct connection between Parnassus and Paradise, his gloss describes the sacred spring in “pleasaunte” terms that associate it with Hobbinol’s “syte” and thus with a paradise setting.⁷¹ In Hobbinol’s account, however, Helicon remains a distinct if nearby location.⁷² Within the geography of the poem Hobbinol may have “found” Adam’s paradise, but Apollo’s remains farther off. A space that is merely Edenic in its pleasures may appear incomplete to an aspiring poet with classical ambitions. Perhaps this is why Hobbinol’s “syte” fails to comfort Colin. The inspired poetry of the muses is at hand,

⁶⁹ See Giamatti ch. 1.

⁷⁰ The gloss, as is so often the case, is slippery and possibly duplicitous: is this E. K. the anthropologist, reporting a set of related myths, or E. K. the sleight-of-hand artist, preventing Helicon’s firm designation as fountain-spring or mountain? Interchangeable with “springs” in natural contexts (“fountain, n., 1.a.” OED), fountains as upward jets of water did not arrive in England until around 1590 (Eburne and Taylor 188). However grandiose the basin’s design and decoration, the water in most English fountains would have resembled a spring, with a downspout flowing into a pool.

⁷¹ Both water and poetry served as paradisaal symbols in Renaissance Italian Parnassus fountains (Lazzaro 132-34; see also P. Cheney *Famous* 9).

⁷² In *Julye* E. K. glosses as “Paradise” Morell’s “hylye place,” a garbled pastoral Eden that is also Mount Ida, inhabited by Titan—Phoebus as “the Sonne” if not explicitly as Parnassian Apollo—and his sister Phebe’s dreaming shepherd Endymion (46, 58-64; [64], [6[5]]). Morrell refers to Parnassus separately, but he may be no more a reliable source than E. K. is: his words are the referent of the gloss’s “error of shepheards vnderstanding” (46, [63]).

but not present—at least not in the present time and place of Hobbinol and Colin’s dialogue.

“To heare thy rymes and roundelayes”: Recreating Paradise, Remembering Song

Part of what makes Hobbinol’s “syte” so pleasant is that he can hear the muses playing “on *Parnasse* hight.” But Hobbinol also recalls a time when Colin’s music was so beautiful that the muses themselves left Parnassus to seek him out. For there is another *locus amoenus* in the poem, a few lines later, described in almost identical terms to Hobbinol’s “pleasaunt syte.” This one, however, is set not in Hobbinol’s present but in Colin’s past, and recalls some prior occasion upon which a (presumably happy) Colin created a *locus amoenus* out of his own poetic song:

Colin, to hear thy rymes and roundelayes,
Which thou were wont on wastfull hylls to singe,
I more delight, then larke in Sommer dayes:
Whose Echo made the neyghbour groues to ring,
And taught the byrds, which in the lower spring
Did shroude in shady leaues from sonny rayes,
Frame to thy songe their chereful cheriping,
Or hold theyr peace, for shame of thy swete layes. (49-56)

Even the muses paid attention, claims Hobbinol:

And from the fountaine, where they sat around,
Renne after hastily thy siluer sound.
But when they came, where thou thy skill didst showe,
They drewe abacke, as halfe with shame confound,
Shepheard to see, them in theyr art outgoe. (60-64)

The wording of Hobbinol’s description links his “syte,” where muses sing and nymphs dance, to the similar sensory effects of Colin’s past “songe” (55). This is a complex moment of poetic making, unique in the *Calender* for its attempt to recreate the experience of prior song without presenting the song itself.⁷³ Hobbinol (re)constructs an

⁷³ Virgil’s ninth eclogue recalls snatches of songs along with some remembered effects,

episode from Colin Clout's happier days, when he was "wont on wastfull hylls to singe."⁷⁴ Elsewhere in the *Calender* songs appear as directly reproducible within the "Æglogues," E. K.'s so-called goatherd dialogues (*Epistle* ll. 2-8). Hobbinol presents an old "laye" of Colin's in *Aprill* (33) and the singing contest in *August* concludes with Cuddie's doing the same (149).⁷⁵ Distinguished by changes in form within a given eclogue, these quoted or performed songs imply that the balance of the *Calender*'s poetry, not marked as formal singing, is to be read as (comparatively) informal conversation. The moment of remembered song in *June*, however, does not alter the form of its intricately rhymed stanzas, which persist throughout the eclogue. The consistency of form makes the verbal and sensory parallels with the opening stanza clear. These poetic echoes further highlight the psychological and temporal distinctions between Colin's present despairing emotional state, Hobbinol's equally present "Paradise," and Colin's own strikingly similar past experience.⁷⁶ Exploring the formal construction of this paradisaical past, memorable yet seemingly inaccessible—in time as

including a similar image: "Alas! was the solace of your songs, Menalcas, almost torn from us, along with yourself? Who would sing the Nymphs? Who would strew the turf with flowery herbage, or curtain the springs with green shade?" (17-20).

⁷⁴ See P. Cheney *Famous* (92-98) and Helfer (114-17) for entirely different readings, also highlighting this episode's significance for Spenser's poetic project. There appears to be some discrepancy or debate about hills and dales in the eclogue: Hobbinol earlier suggests Colin leave the barren hills for the fruitful dales (19-21), but here implies the hills were once happy, too. Meanwhile, the hill in the woodcut, as described above, seems to be a seat of power and appears on Hobbinol's side of the scene (cf. Oram et al.: "The polarity of hill and dale continues to the eclogue's end and organizes the woodcut," including "a fortified hilltop with its connotations of power and risk" (Notes 108, mistaking Hobbinol for Colin)). Neither appears directly connected to the later "*Parnasse* hyll," though cf. Hamilton "'Grene'" 15, "Argument" 180.

⁷⁵ See Dubrow on audience inclusion and distancing in the fictive world of *Aprill* and its subsequent reception, with implications for voice and autography (*Challenges* 57-62). As will already be evident, *Aprill* shares with *June* several relevant features and images which have received more critical attention. Here and throughout, I note these without extensive discussion of the prior eclogue.

⁷⁶ The vivid distinctions fostered by similarities in the form and language of *June* might be added to the formal and indexical distancing effects Dubrow further discusses ("Shepherdess" 62, 66-9).

well as in affect—helps to characterize Spenser's engagement with his own literary past and his ambitions for a personal and national poetic future. A Chaucerian strategy of spatializing the locus of poetic thought enables *June* to work through literary source material while renewing its availability to Colin and Hobbinol within the imagined space the poem builds for itself.

In Hobbinol's memory, Colin's past music shames the natural as well as the supernatural musicians into silence, but it also recreates—or anticipates—the harmony of the opening stanza: birds, groves, and air in the form of Echo all "Frame" themselves to his song. The diction of the stanza echoes the sensory plenitude of the opening even in those images that are not strictly part of the scene: neither "larke" nor "Sommer" is necessarily present "on wastfull hylls," but they are in the text beside them. E. K.'s gloss "Spring) not of water, but of young trees springing" is nonetheless a sort of liquid *occupatio* ([53]), and the birds' "shady leaues" echo Hobbinol's superlative "shade." The passage also closely recalls the first recorded Spenserian *locus amoenus*, the first half of Epigram 3 in *A Theatre for Worldlings*, an emblematic book of poems, illustrations, and religious commentary compiled by Dutch poet and refugee Jan van der Noot in 1568:

Then heauenly branches did I see arise,
Out of a fresh and lusty Laurell tree
Amidde the yong grene wood. Of Paradise
Some noble plant I thought my selfe to see,
Suche store of birdes therein yshrouded were,
Chaunting in shade their sundry melodie.
My sprites were raiisht with these pleasures there. (1-7)⁷⁷

Here again are "shade," "birdes [...] yshrouded" singing, "yong" trees, and ravishment for the June eclogue's "delyte" (3)—a "Paradise," or garden of "pleasures," indeed. Thus Hobbinol's memory of Colin's "songe" is also Spenser's memory of his own

⁷⁷ In *Shorter* 1-22.

youthful work as a translator for van der Noot's project.⁷⁸ This direct connection between the *Theatre* and the *Calender* serves to illuminate more precisely the June eclogue's status as protest literature, posing personal and public problems and seeking solutions for them by way of its literary source material.

"A Spring of water mildely romblyng downe": The Source of Spenser's Parnassus

The 1569 English edition of the *Theatre* opens with commendatory poems and a dedication to Queen Elizabeth.⁷⁹ The main text consists of a series of six "Epigrams," not-quite sonnets which a teenage Spenser translated from Clément Marot's French (itself translated from Petrarca's Canzone 323), and then a longer series of fifteen "Sonets" translated in blank verse, eleven from Joachim Du Bellay's *Songe* (inspired by the same *canzone*) along with four by van der Noot, the *Theatre*'s principal author and project mastermind, based on the visions of the Apocalypse.⁸⁰ Each short poem faces an emblematic image illustrating its subject, often including before-and-after scenes.⁸¹ The remainder and bulk of the work comprises van der Noot's religious commentary on the poems.

Before he even gets to his commentary, van der Noot has dramatically altered the meaning of the Petrarca by its context.⁸² The Epigrams remain very close to the original Italian text, presenting six beautiful visions—of a deer, a ship, a tree, a spring, a phoenix, and a lady—that are suddenly ruined or destroyed. Petrarca's visions, of course, all signify in the first instance his beloved Laura, with other important

⁷⁸ Colin's slightly archaic spelling of "songe" (song) visually echoes the title of Joachim Du Bellay's *Songe* ("dream"; see below), although the latter is not named in the *Theatre*.

⁷⁹ See note [44] above.

⁸⁰ See McCabe Notes 508; C. Rasmussen 26n. For details of the *Theatre*'s publication, see Coda below. See also MacFaul 152; C. Rasmussen; D. Rasmussen 230; Stein 175; Davis.

⁸¹ The first Du Bellay sonnet is unillustrated and faces a tercet envoi to the Epigrams.

⁸² See C. Rasmussen 10.

resonances in the complex relationship amongst love, art, and ambition.⁸³ Van der Noot's book, however, makes the Epigrams about the transitory nature of earthly pleasure, a generalized frame for Du Bellay's sonnets, understood in the *Theatre* to be specifying grave problems in the contemporary Church of Rome.⁸⁴ Each and all of these meanings held significance for Spenser throughout his career.⁸⁵ Most resonant for my reading of *June* is the way Petrarca's *canzone* supplies a version of Spenser's anxiety, articulated at the beginning of this chapter, concerning how art and virtue can face up to the destruction of the beauty that inspires them, whether from the ravages of time or the more sinister works of humankind. Such problems, in a more pointedly Reformation context, seem also to have been deeply felt concerns for van der Noot and his collaborators on the *Theatre* project.

That Spenser in *June* was thinking closely and precisely about his prior work with the *Theatre* is clear not only from the textual echoes of these passages but also from the parallels of setting and, for lack of a better word, of plot. Recall that in Hobbinol's account the muses are within hearing of Colin's "groue" from where they "sat around" a spring, presumably—with help from E. K.'s *Aprill* gloss—Helicon or Castalia on Parnassus. The sixteen lines of the seventh and eighth stanzas of *June* describe, first, a pleasant place with trees and birds and, second, the muses seated beside a spring. In the *Theatre*, the first seven lines of Epigram 3 present the "yong grene wood" with its birds and paradisaal laurel. To accord with the episode in *June*, a spring must be within shouting, or singing—or page-turning—distance. In fact, as presented overleaf in the first half of Epigram 4, it may be the same spring:

⁸³ The *Theatre* is only one example of Canzone 323's long afterlife in visionary European art. See Bondanella; Davis.

⁸⁴ See C. Rasmussen.

⁸⁵ See MacFaul 149.

Within this wood, out of the rocke did rise
 A Spring of water mildely romblyng downe,
 Whereto approched not in any wise
 The homely Shepherde, nor the ruder cloune,
 But many Muses, and the Nymphes withall,
 That sweetely in accorde did tune their voice
 Vnto the gentle sounding of the waters fall.
 The sight wherof dyd make my heart reioyce. (1-8)

A spring, in or hard by a paradisal *locus amoenus*, where muses and nymphs congregate but shepherds “approched not,” sounds a great deal like the remembered past of *June*.⁸⁶ Colin creates such a paradise with his pipe, so marvellous that the muses seek it (60-61). Hobbinol’s two eight-line pentameter stanzas describing the numinous scene take up almost identical poetic time and space as the portions of the *Theatre* epigrams quoted above.⁸⁷ Their semantic fields are strikingly similar. And they occur in the same order,

⁸⁶ Here and in *June*, Spenser also deploys vocabulary from Chaucer’s *Parliament of Fowls* (183-210, in *Riverside* 385-94). Anderson discusses the poem’s subsequent “refractions” in the *Faerie Queene* (*Reading* ch. 9). The ultimate source for any juxtaposition of muses, fountain, laurel, and rude shepherd—as Spenser seems to have recognized, since he specifies Helicon (in error, as a fountain) and includes “lightfote” dancing—is surely Hesiod’s *Theogony* 1-10, 22-34 (see also R. D. Brown 147):

Let us begin to sing from the Heliconian Muses, who possess the great and holy mountain of Helicon, and dance on their soft feet around the violet-dark fountain and the altar of Cronos’ mighty son. And after they have washed their tender skin in Permessus or Hippocrene or holy Olmeius, they perform choral dances on highest Helicon, beautiful, lovely ones, and move nimbly with their feet. Starting out from there, shrouded in thick invisibility, by night they walk, sending for the their very beautiful voice, [. . .]

One time, they taught Hesiod beautiful song while he was pasturing lambs under holy Helicon. And this speech the goddesses spoke first of all to me, the Olympian Muses, the daughters of aegis-holding Zeus: “Field-dwelling shepherds, ignoble disgraces, mere bellies: we know how to say many false things similar to genuine ones, but we know, when we wish, how to proclaim true things.” So spoke Zeus’ ready-speaking daughters, and they plucked a staff, a branch of luxuriant laurel, a marvel, and gave it to me, and they breathed a divine voice into me, so that I might glorify what will be and what was before, and they commanded me to sing of the race of the blessed ones who always are, but always to sing of themselves first and last. (tr. Most; see also tr. Athanassakis).

⁸⁷ The Epigrams’ second halves describe their subjects’ violent destruction.

with the place and moment of paradise first established through shade, birds, and multi-sensory attunement, and then a scene shift to the nearby water and muses in the next epigram or after the stanza break.

In the *Theatre* an earthquake subsequently destroys the spring, whereas Colin's playing only makes the muses draw "abacke," but it seems clear that Spenser had these passages in mind as he was crafting the world of the June eclogue, where amongst so many other echoes Hobbinol, along with his birds, "To the waters fall their tunes attemper right" (8).⁸⁸ Thus Petrarca's Canzone 323, via the *Theatre*, is the direct model for the Spenserian *locus amoenus* as presented in *June*—and, as I demonstrate below, subsequently, in shorthand or elaboration, for pleasant places throughout Spenser's career. Petrarca's pleasant place combines with the spatialized poetics of *The Franklin's Tale* to allow this literary source to appear as a specific location within the eclogue.

June adds to Dorigen's Edenic space the classical feature of the muses' Helicon, the fountain of poetic inspiration featured in Spenser's versions of both his Petrarchan and Chaucerian sources. This classical addition would seem to be a quintessentially

⁸⁸ John Hollander has identified the figure of "A singer 'tuning' his or her voice to the fall of water" as "the Spenserian signature trope" (*Melodious Guile* 174, 162; see also 157, 173-76), focusing especially upon its use in *Aprill* as Hobbinol introduces a "laye" of Colin's, "Which once he made, as by a spring he laye, / And tuned it unto the Waters fall" (33, 35-36). Hollander notes the origin of the trope in Epigram 4 and traces its appearance in *June*, *Virgils Gnat* in the *Complaints*, and the scene on Mount Acidale in Book VI of the *Faerie Queene*, which I examine below, and which Hollander recognizes as "a direct reminiscence of the Marot translation" (175). Contemporary readers also recognized the repetition; Hollander observes "the trope of tuning poetry to the flow of poetic waters became, for many of Spenser's followers, a kind of colophon or signature to be acknowledged," citing numerous examples (176, 252n).

Elsewhere Hollander elegantly examines Spenser's poetic and sonic fascination with water, notes the importance of "a flowing river" as a metaphor throughout early modern English literature, and cites "the ancient trope of flowing water for discourse" (153). Each of these is significant for the following discussion. However, Hollander's focus on the trope as a figure for poetry causes him to focus on human (or divine) voices and thus to miss the more extensive repetitions of *June* and the Epigrams' multisensory pleasures, characters, and plotting both here and elsewhere in Spenser's work, which I discuss in Part 2.

“Renaissance” move on Spenser’s part, but it is one that Chaucer has made earlier in his backhanded invocation of “Scithero” and “Pernaso.”⁸⁹ Like the “Prologe,” Colin also denies Parnassus, rejecting Hobbinol’s recollection. Colin’s former muse-charming song, he now claims, is irrevocably lost: “I neuer lyst presume to *Parnasse* hyll” (70). This Chaucer-like *diminutio* would appear to cut off all access to Parnassus in the poem’s present. In an architectonic sense, however, the remembered episode and Colin’s response to it are central to the June eclogue—seventh to ninth of fifteen stanzas—just as Epigrams 3 and 4 are the middle two of six. Indeed, Spenser places Helicon in the central couplet of the poem: “And from the fountaine, where they sat around, / Renne after hastely thy siluer sound” (60-61). Lest any reader miss its significance, E. K. notes “Thys [eighth] staffe is full of verie poetical inuention” ([57]). From this epicenter the poem sends out a shockwave with enough power to relocate the source of poetic inspiration. Unlike its antecedent, Chaucer’s “Prologe,” in this instance the classical muses are leaving their fountain to seek the English poet.⁹⁰

“Of that the spring was in his learned hedde”: Chaucer as Helicon

Spenser inscribes the muses’ Helicon within the bounds of the poem’s paradisaical space as part of his declaration of poetic importance as well as independence from his lesser compatriots and forebears. Later in *June*, however, Spenser re-figures the muses’ fountain as Tityrus himself, whose “little drops” could restore the transformative poetic power that Colin has lost:

⁸⁹ Although *The Franklin’s Tale* does not seem to be thinking particularly hard about Marie de France’s trope of her Breton lais as written versions of existing oral poems, its notional genre coincidentally offers a model for the *Calender’s* re-membered songs. See Spearing Introduction 8-9. Spearing emphasizes the necessity of writtenness for the autographic effects he identifies (*Autographies* 8-9).

⁹⁰ Hamilton notes a similar episode in *December* (“‘Grene’” 5).

But if on me some little drops would flowe,
 Of that the spring was in his learned hedde,
 I soone would learne these woods, to wayle my woe,
 And teache the trees, their trickling teares to shedde. (93-96)

Another spring, another (hypothetical) wood transformed by the power of poetry and its pathetic forces: and this performance Colin might consider worthy of the muses' notice, since it would be fully efficacious in representing the depths of his despair.

Tityrus offers Colin what Geoffrey in *The House of Fame* seeks from the inhabitants of "Parnaso": a wellspring of poetic inspiration.⁹¹ In so doing, Tityrus makes what has been inaccessible available once again. Parnassus and Eden are on the same continuum, as classical and Christian versions of paradise, and Chaucer and Spenser share a similar sense of their poetic tools and projects. Spenser posits poetry, and specifically Chaucerian poetry, via the classical Helicon, as a route back to paradise for poets like Colin—and himself.

Along with their characters' emotional, aesthetic, and ethical relationships to Paradise, the eclogue and the tale also resonate in their invocations of Parnassus. Both poems present the home of the muses as a place their poets explicitly renounce, although they have physical access to it. Both nonetheless implicitly lay claim to a Parnassian inspiration and authority.⁹² Colin Clout takes his implicit claim a step further by transforming Chaucer himself into a fountain, a material source for Colin's poetry. Colin believes that "if on me some little drops would flowe, / Of that the spring was in his learned hedde," then his work will succeed. Throughout the eclogue, Spenser asserts himself in a Chaucerian tradition of "sentence" through "solaas," a goal also espoused by the *Calender's* dedicatee Sidney and, later, by Spenser's Letter to

⁹¹ Colin, of course, would expect to find Tityrus on Parnassus, *diminutio* notwithstanding.

⁹² For further authoritative strategies, see Berry.

Raleigh.⁹³ *June*, however, further asserts the *nearness* of Tityrus, striking a preemptive blow against periodization by placing him temporally within living memory and spatially as a fountain within the landscape of the poem, thus increasing the legitimacy of Spenser's own claims to poetic authority. A Chaucerian poetics grants him access to the hitherto-inaccessible Paradise.

Each poem claims some new ground to help address its version of the emotionally inaccessible paradise, staking out territory for its poetic art in response to the problem of accessibility it presents. This is, formally, a colonizing move.⁹⁴ The

⁹³ For examinations of the subtleties of the Letter to Raleigh, see e.g. Erickson "Letter"; E. Fowler *Literary Character* 188-93.

⁹⁴ In using the word "colonizing" I refer to the formal action rather than to any supposed topical reference such as Chaucer's appropriation of the Breton lay (which is not unique to him) or Spenser's anticipation of an Irish career (which seems far-fetched in this context). I am instead thinking of Alpers' claim that in the *Calender* "Spenser created what I would like to call a 'domain of lyric'"—that is, an "'aesthetic space'" where the poet has "rule and authority," a declaration of "genuine independence" in the face of the "social authority" of the court ("Domain" 94-95), Nicholson's speculation on the *Calender's* England "as the fertile ground of a new poetic and political imperium" (55), or Richard Helgerson's examination of Spenser's desire for "'the kingdom of our own language'" (e.g. "Language Lessons" 292). The line from the Spenser-Harvey letters (1580), published to advertise their authors' poetic ambitions and explicitly referring to their attempts at imitating Greek quantitative verse, for Helgerson signifies nationalist as well as personal ambitions to "sovereignty over English, [. . .] To govern the very linguistic system, and perhaps more generally the whole cultural system, by which their own identity and their own consciousness were constituted" (*Forms* 3, 25).

These goals of "authority" and "sovereignty" are colonizing, I claim, because in order to achieve them Spenser must appropriate poetic territory belonging to others: the muses' Parnassus is imported into the space of *June* and, despite Colin's denials, claimed for him, the "Shepherd [who] them in theyr art outgoe." Chaucer, too, spatialized as the Tityrus fountain, finds himself plotted within the *June* landscape. In order to found his "kingdom"—or even, as I will argue below, his republic—of poets, Spenser must have space to do so, space already occupied by past authorities, Continental rivals, and present cultural arbiters who control the power of patronage. (That these indigenous forces appear powerful and sophisticated does not prevent their colonization, as crusaders and conquistadors had demonstrated. They do, however, suggest an incentive to turn future efforts towards people and places less able to resist—vernacular fairies over classical figures, disrupted Irish subjects rather than established English peers, women whose power is provisional instead of men for whom it is implicit.) Chaucer's "colonizing move" is, as I say, gentler, in that it is conventional: he, too, is laying implicit claim to a "Pernaso" that does not belong to

poem sets up a local problem—affective and personal—for which the response is expansive, or expansionist—poetic and territorial. Chaucer does it more gently, claiming the space of *The Franklin's Tale* as one for thinking explicitly about the ethics of making poetry, from the reference to Parnassus in the “Prologe” to the “craft of mannes hand” in the garden. The June eclogue, I suggest, specifically claims the power of *Tityrus as Helicon* for the English vernacular. Focusing on the vehicle of this metaphor gives concrete shape to the familiar argument that Spenser asserts the authority of Chaucer to provide an established poetic tradition, giving legitimacy and cover to his poetic followers.⁹⁵ Still more artfully, Spenser claims Chaucer himself as the material source of poetry in English, a fountain future poets can draw upon for their own poetic making.

Chaucer is the font and fountain of Spenserian poetry, the dominant poetic source Colin seeks. But Spenser's assertion of a continuous, unitary Chaucerian authority partially conceals a further shared feature of the poetics implied by the two poems. *June*, like the tale, partakes of the humanist project of assimilating many literary and cultural antecedents into a new work, including in this case Petrarca, van der Noot, and the anonymous woodcut artists, along with Chaucer himself. Both poems also spatialize this transmission, encoding their borrowings into the geographies of their settings and characters. This spatialized poetics in turn enables a uniquely powerful access to the literary past. When Paradise is here, now, a poetic character has the ability to repudiate its charms, to be in but not of them, to hold out for a better offer—or a worse, as Dorigen finds, and Milton's Satan after her. When Parnassus is just over

him and that he pretends not to deserve, demonstrating his claim spatially by way of his flowery rhetoric and crafted garden.

⁹⁵ Cf. Berger's otherwise exemplary reading of the eclogue, envisioning a decapitated Tityrus translated, Bottom-like, to Colin's “own shoulders” (*Revisionary Play* 435).

there, its territory and thus its inspirational authority are available for poetic conquest. Chaucer writes Christian, classical, Celtic, and contemporary matters into the physical and moral landscapes of coastal Brittany, clerkly Orleans, and crafted garden. Spenser's Hobbinol stands "Here," the vernacular fairies dance nearby, and the muses play over there, while Rosalind as a vision of personal or political happiness remains out of reach. Together, these figures in their connected but distinct spaces serve to entwine future Virgilian aspirations and current politics with the material of an English literary past. The Chaucerian technique of planting varied sources to shape one (heterogeneous) literary garden, practiced in *June*, will enable Spenser to build his Faerie lond.

Part 2 – The Lady in the Garden: Spenser's Vision in *The Faerie Queene*

The first part of this chapter traced the origins and implications of Spenser's vision of paradise as it appears in the June eclogue, arguing that the inaccessibility of Hobbinol's paradisaal *locus amoenus* warrants Spenser's staking a claim in Petrarchan and Parnassian territory by way of Chaucerian modesty, authority, and poetic craft. *June's* vision thus grounds the *Calender's* career ambitions in the poetic resources that will enable them to succeed. As noted in the introduction to the chapter, Spenser's vision is in many ways a typical *locus amoenus* to which a paradisaal label is affixed. But there are also certain features that mark this *locus amoenus* as specifically Spenserian and allow me to track the passage as Spenser rewrites and repurposes it continually throughout his career. Among them, as demonstrated in the June eclogue and Epigrams 3 and 4 of *A Theatre for Worldlings*, are a remarkably consistent vocabulary of sensory description, as well as a similarity of circumstance or plot. The paradisaal site is threatened with destruction or withdrawal; unusually accomplished mortals attract supernatural attention. Another common feature is the cast of extras who seem to accompany the scene, namely, piping

shepherds and dancing nymphs, graces, or fairies. Indeed, sometimes, as we shall see, the extras become the main attraction.

These features and their echoes appear, in whole and in part, throughout Spenser's later works, especially his epic romance in honor of Elizabeth, *The Faerie Queene*, published in two installments in 1590 and 1596. This massive poem pursues the scope of epic and the style of romance in its meandering adventure and its matter of knight-errantry. It is divided into six books, each devoted to one of the "*vertues of a priuate man*"—holiness, temperance, chastity, friendship, justice, and courtesy—as presented by protagonists who both represent and learn their respective virtues over the course of their journeys, with many cautionary tales and sideshows along the way (Letter l. 17). The following section examines the recurrence of Spenser's *June* vision in its myriad permutations, both in such thoroughly pleasant places as Mount Acidale and in suspect or damaged settings such as the Bowre of Bliss or the (now-)ruined Helicon of *The Teares of the Muses*. In so doing it traces both the fortunes of *June*'s paradise of Chaucerian poetry throughout his later career, and the implications of those fortunes for the career and for our understanding of Spenserian poetics as both ambitious and frustrated, uncompromisingly visionary and pragmatically negotiated.

Broken Echoes of June's Vision in 1590

The Shepheardes Calender of 1579, Spenser's first independent publishing project, presents in its June eclogue the glorious vision of a Parnassian paradise at hand, awaiting only the poet who dares to claim it. By the 1590 *Faerie Queene*, however, Spenser's early vision is shattered. Its characteristic elements appear piecewise in settings where pleasure is morally suspect or somehow broken. Early in Book I, its heroes Redcrosse and Una seek shelter from a storm in an unusually pleasant wood:

Enforst to seeke some couert nigh at hand,
 A shadie groue not farr away they **spide**,
 That promist ayde the **tempest** to withstand:
 Whose loftie trees yclad with sommers pride,
 Did **spred** so **broad**, that heauens light did hide,
 Not perceable with power of any starr:
 And all within were pathes and alleies wide,
 With footing worne, and leading inward farr:
Faire harbour that them seemes; so in they entred ar.

And foorth they passe, with pleasure forward led,
Ioying to heare the birdes sweete harmony,
 Which therein shrouded from the **tempest** dred,
 Seemd in their song to scorne the cruell sky.

.....

Led with delight, they thus beguile the way[.] (l.i.7, 8.1-4, 10.1)⁹⁶

This is the Wandering Wood, home of the monstrous snake-woman Errour, and this passage at the outset of the poem's most straightforwardly didactic book has long been famous as a lesson in skeptical reading: the repetition of a very pointed "seem," along with the "hid[ing]" of "heauens light" in exchange for "beguil[ing]," distracting "delight," alert diligent readers that this is not a safe space.⁹⁷ The words that build the setting, however, are directly lifted from Epigram 3 of the *Theatre for Worldlings*: "the birdes sweete harmony" sounds in "A shadie groue," which is "therein shrouded" and protected from the storm and "sky."⁹⁸ That the trees are able to "withstand" the

⁹⁶ This and subsequent citations are from A. C. Hamilton's 2006 Longman edition. Here and below, underlined words use vocabulary from *June* or Epigrams 3-4. Underlined phrases echo syntax, image, and/or action, and frequently diction as well. Words in **bold** introduce concepts not found in the earlier poems but repeated in subsequent passages under consideration. See Appendix for full text of the relevant passages.

⁹⁷ See E. Fowler *Literary Character* 206. Hamilton adds "couert" and "pride," as well as the repeated forms of "led," to the sinister list (Notes 33-34n). He also suggests that in 8.1-4 "The elaborate alliteration sets up its own 'sweete harmony' to convey the sense of an enclosed garden" (33n), supporting links to the "Paradise" of *June* and the Epigrams. As John Webster observes in relation to this passage, sometimes an oft-repeated word such as "Faire" can have deeper allegorical significance, while frequently it is part of a general effect of oral verse formulation (see esp. 86-88). See also Comito "bowers" 107.

⁹⁸ "Sommer" appears in *June* (51). Note also the echo at the end of the *Antiquitee of Faery* episode: "Beguyl'd thus with delight of nouelties, / And naturall desire of countryes

“tempest” of the world rather than perish as Petrarca’s laurel did may offer a further clue that they possess an unholy strength are perhaps in league with the tempest, the carrot to its stick. The proliferation of such false paradises elsewhere in the 1590 *Faerie Queene* also suggests a deeper disillusionment on Spenser’s part with the promise of *June*’s ambitions. The next significant echo of the scene makes no secret of an underlying horror:

Long time they thus together traueiled,
 Til weary of their way, they came at last,
 Where grew two **goodly trees**, that **faire** did **spred**
 Their armes **abroad**, with gray **mosse ouercast**,
 And their **greene leaues trembling** with euery blast,
 Made a **calme shadowe** far in compasse **round**:
 The fearefull **Shepherd** often there aghast
 Vnder them neuer **sat**, ne wont there **sound**
 His **mary** oaten **pipe**, but shund th’vn lucky **ground**.

But this good knight soone as he them can **spie**,
 For the **coole shade** him thither hastily got[.] (I.ii.28, 29.1-2)

The “calme shadowe” of “greene leaues,” elsewhere so wholesome and pleasant, is the result of Fradubio, the unfaithful lover imprisoned as a tree alongside his lady, “trembling” at being beset on all sides by the “blast” of Epigram 3’s “ouercast” storm.⁹⁹ Likewise, since shepherds only appear a handful of times in *The Faerie Queene* before the pastoral Book VI, their presence in *occupatio* here suggests Spenser is explicitly recalling the Epigram-*Calender* scene, transforming it to a “feareful” and uncanny site.

Early, fragmentary and warped echoes in the Wandering Wood and Fradubio’s grove warn of false shelters. Fainter but more appealing echoes emerge in the woodland abodes that appear in two of the first three books. Una surrounded by reverent dancing satyrs mirrors (with inverse gender) Colin and Hobbinol and their

state” (II.x.77.1-2). Here the only consequence is being late for dinner (77.7).

⁹⁹ Hamilton also notes the “leaues” and “shadow” as “conventional features of the *locus amoenus*” (Notes 49n). For “aghost” cf. “gastly” in *June* 24.

attendant nymphs and muses:

Their harts she ghesseeth by their humble guise,
 And yielde her to extremitie of time;
 So from the ground she fearelesse doth arise,
 And walketh forth without suspect of crime:
 They all as **glad**, as birdes of ioyous Pryme,
 Thence lead her forth, about her dauncing round,
 Shouting, and singing all a shepheards ryme,
 And with greene braunches strowing all the ground,
 Do worship her, as Queene, with oliue **girlond** croud.

And all the way their merry pipes they sound,
 That all the woods with doubled Eccho ring,
 And with their horned feet do weare the ground,
 Leaping like wanton kids in pleasant Spring. (I.vi.13-14)

Una, lady of holiness and princess of Eden, declines to be worshipped. The semblance continues when, drawn to Una's beauty as the muses are to Colin's song, "light-foot" woodland beings "runne apace" and then, also like the muses, turn back in shame:

The wooddy Nymphes, faire *Hamadryades*
 Her to behold do thither runne apace,
 And all the troupe of light-foot Naiades,
 Flocke all about to see her louely **face**:
But when they vewed haue her heauenly grace,
 They enuy her in their malicious mind,
And fly away for feare of fowle disgrace:
 But all the *Satyres* scorne their woody kind,
 And henceforth nothing **faire**, but her on earth they find. (I.vi.18)

The "Eccho ring" of Colin's *June* song helps Una know that she is safe in the satyrs' rustic care, and the nymphs' actions confirm the echo for attentive readers. However, this version of the setting and its plot are merely a waypoint; Una must not remain there but carry on her journey to reunite with Redcrosse and save her kingdom. In Book III, the satyric grove of the lustful Hellenore even more explicitly invokes the "Laurell" of Epigram 3, but the coming of night imbues the familiar "shrowd" and "shade" with Fradubio's foreboding:

The iolly *Satyres* full of fresh delight,
 Came dauncing forth, and with them nimbly ledd

Faire *Hellenore*, with **girlonds** all bespred,
 Whom their May-lady they had newly made:
 She proude of that new honour, which they redd,
 And of their louely fellowship full **glade**,
Daunst liuely, and her **face** did with a Lawrell shade. (III.x.44.3-9)

Tho vp they gan their mery pypes to trusse,
 And all their **goodly** heardees did gather rownd,
 But euery *Satyre* first did giue a busse
 To *Hellenore*: so busses did abound.
 Now gan the humid vapour shed the grownd
 With perly **deaw**, and th'Earthes **gloomy shade**
 Did dim the brightnesse of the welkin rownd,
 That euery bird and beast awarned made,
 To shrowd themselues, whiles sleepe their sences did inuade. (III.x.46)

Although Hellenore appears to be satisfied with her band of inexhaustible lovers, hers is not a universally appealing solution.¹⁰⁰ The echoes of *June's* paradisaical ambitions have fallen into fabliau.¹⁰¹

There is a more promising and explicit "Paradise" in the 1590 epic than Errour's wood or Hellenore's shade. However, in Book III's "philosophical" Garden of Adonis Spenser avoids strong echoes of the earlier scenes.¹⁰² The Garden is anomalous among Spenser's *loci amoeni*; the description of the Mount of Venus uses Langham's familiar images for building blocks but displays little close mirroring of the phrasing from *June*:

There is **continuall** Spring, and haruest there
 Continuall, both meeting at one tyme:
 For both the boughes doe **laughing blossoms** beare,
 And with fresh colours decke the wanton Pryme,
 And eke attonce the [**heauy**] trees they clyme,
 Which seeme to **labour** vnder their fruits lode:
 The whiles the ioyous birdes make their pastyme
 Emongst the shady leaues, their sweet abode,

¹⁰⁰ Note also that it is "*Faunes and Satyres*" who have destroyed the muses' Helicon in *The Teares of the Muses*, discussed below (268).

¹⁰¹ See Hamilton Notes 385n; Brill "Hellenore." Comito contrasts the hope of Una's scene with "parodies" such as Hellenore's ("bowers" 107). Cf. D. L. Miller: "Jilted by Paradell, Hellenore finds her slice of paradise with a band of Satyrs[,] in a moment of sublime self-parody" ("Kathleen" 9).

¹⁰² Richard T. Neuse discusses the variety of specifically philosophical and generally mythic interpretations of the Garden. See also Gross; Lewis *Studies* 153ff.

And their trew loues without suspition tell abroad.

Right in the midst of that Paradise,
 There stood a **stately Mount**, on whose round top
 A **gloomy groue** of mirtle trees did rise,
 Whose shady boughes sharpe steele did neuer lop,
 Nor wicked beasts their tender buds did crop,
 But like a **girlond** compassed the hight,
 And from their fruitfull sydes **sweet gum did drop**,
 That all the ground with **pretious deaw** bedight,
 Threw forth most dainty odours, and most sweet delight. (III.vi.42-43)

The omnipresent birds make an appearance, and the “delight” is very much multisensory, but this language is “heavy” and laborious.¹⁰³ There is “deaw,” but no running water; the scene is overgrown and sticky with sap.¹⁰⁴ No dancing here. The difference between *June’s* “pleasaunt syte” and the “stately Mount” is as great as that between the restored Kenilworth garden and the seventeenth-century mount at New College, Oxford, now barely discernable under its modern shrubbery.¹⁰⁵ The case of the Garden of Adonis indicates that Spenser deploys certain sets of images for some places and not others, choosing language associated with *June* and the *Theatre* deliberately for a particular space he is attempting to create rather than automatically for every *locus amoenus* he encounters. Rather than presenting figures for poetic craft or career, the Garden of Adonis is here focused on vegetal and sexual generation.¹⁰⁶ Conversely,

¹⁰³ Stanza 41.5 reads “heauenly” in 1590, the preferred text, but Hamilton concurs that 1596’s “heavy” is more likely in context. He notes the “continuall Spring, and haruest”—that is, all the fruitful seasons’ occurring simultaneously—“are traditional features of the *locus amoenus*” (Notes 348n); however, they are not found in the *June* scene, further distinguishing the sources and purposes of the Garden of Adonis. They may also be contrasted with what Hamilton identifies as perpetual summer in the Bowre of Blisse (Notes 279n; see II.xii.51.1-2). Yet the Bowre remains “temperate” (51.5; see below).

¹⁰⁴ The “deaw” and the “gloom” also appear in Hellenore’s scene, suggesting either a conflation or perhaps merely the sticky residue of Spenser’s Garden of Adonis inventions earlier in the Book.

¹⁰⁵ See Seeber for the dating of the mount.

¹⁰⁶ See Hamilton Notes 349n. Given Hollander’s observation of Spenser’s “signature” noted above, the lack of running water in the Garden of Adonis suggests that, whatever else it may be understood to represent or think through, poetry is not of central concern.

those scenes that do echo *June* appear for the most part to be reworking and commenting on its multisensory celebration of paradisaal plesasure and poetic ambition—just as these seem to falter.

The clearest echo of Spenser's early paradisaal vision in the 1590 *Faerie Queene* is also the most morally ambiguous. Book II sets up its hero Guyon's showdown with the "vile" and "false enchaunteresse" Acrasia in her "cursed land," the Bowre of Blisse (II.i.51.2, 3, 9). However, the poem's descriptions of the Bowre's pleasurable features are less clearly marked with moral valence than those of the Wandering Wood. Acrasia bears a strong resemblance (*inter alia*) to Ludovico Ariosto's sorcerous temptress Alcina, but Spenser has distributed the latter's tricks among the duplicitous Duessa (who has turned Fradubio into a tree, and whose evil is shown where Acrasia's is told) and laughing Phædria with her idle temptations.¹⁰⁷ The Bowre of Bliss reconstitutes *June*'s

¹⁰⁷ See *Orlando Furioso* (1532) Cantos 6-7. Phædria is the "seruant" of Acrasia (II.vi.9.8); her island features fainter echoes of *June*'s vocabulary in stanzas very similar in image and syntax to II.xii.70-71, discussed below (II.vi.12-13; see Comito "bowers" 108). However, the diction of Phædria's "litle nest" (II.vi.12.2) is less rich and musical than that of its equivalent in the Bowre, and the running water of poetry is also lacking. Nohrnberg also compares the two passages, favoring the "coordinated and harmonious appeal" of the Bowre over the "none too subtle" art of Phædria (*Analogy* 504). He cites as a precursor a passage from the fourth century CE Latin poet Tiberianus' *Amnis ibat*:

has per umbras omnis ales plus canora quam putes
cantibus vernis strepebat et susurris dulcibus;
hic loquentis murmur amnis concinebat frondibus,
quis melos vocalis auræ musa Zephyri moverat.
sic euntem per virecta pulchra odora et musica
ales amnis aura lucus flos et umbra iuverat. (15-20)

Through those shades each bird, more tuneful than belief could entertain,
Warbled loud her chant of spring-tide, warbled low her sweet refrain.
Here the prattling river's murmur to the leaves made harmony,
As the Zephyr's airy music stirred them into melody.
To a wanderer through the coppice, fair and filled with song and scent,
Bird and river, breeze and woodland, flower and shade brought
ravishment. (in Avianus et al. 558-61)

Nohrnberg notes careful "design [. . .] to make the concluding résumé possible," citing Curtius (195ff) on "the tendency of the *locus amoenus* to become a rhetorical showpiece

multisensory pleasures at far greater length than the passages discussed above:

Thus being entred, they behold arownd
 A large and spacious plaine, on euery side
 Strowed with pleasauns, whose **fayre** grassy grownd
 Mantled with greene, and **goodly** beautifide
 With all the ornaments of *Floraes* pride,
 Wherewith her mother Art, as halfe in scorne
 Of niggard Nature, like a pompous bride
 Did decke her, and too lauishly adorne,
 When forth from virgin bowre she comes in th'early morne.

Therewith the Heauens alwayes Iouiall,
 Lookte on them louely, still in stedfast state,
 Ne suffred storme nor frost on them to fall,
 Their tender buds or leaues to violate,
 Nor scorching heat, nor cold intemperate
 T'afflict the creatures, which therein did dwell,
 But the milde ayre with season moderate
Gently attempred, and disposd so well,
 That still it breathed forth sweet spirit and holesom smell.

.....

Eftsoones they heard a most melodious sound,
 Of all that mote delight a daintie eare,
 Such as attonce might not on liuing ground,
 Saue in this Paradise, be heard elsewhere:
 Right hard it was, for **wight**, which did it heare,
 To read, what manner musicke that mote bee:
 For all that pleasing is to liuing eare,
 Was there consorted in one harmonee,
Birdes, voices, instruments, windes, waters, all agree.

The ioyous birdes shrouded in chearefull shade,
Their notes vnto the voice attempred sweet;
 Th'Angelicall soft **trembling** voyces made
 To th'instruments diuine response meet:
 The siluer sounding instruments did meet
 With the base murmure of the waters fall:
The waters fall with difference discreet,
 Now soft, now loud, vnto the wind did call:
The gentle warbling wind low answered to all.

(II.xii.50-51, 70-71)¹⁰⁸

unto itself" (505-06). Spenser's design in 70-71 below is even further interlaced.

¹⁰⁸ Stanza 71 rewrites Canto 16.12 of Torquato Tasso's *Gerusalemme Liberata* (1580), describing the sensuous garden of the Saracen sorceress Armida:

Vezzosi augelli infra le verdi fronde
 temprano a prova lascivette note;

The Bowre, by way of its combined words and images, is much like the Paradise of *June*, but then so is the Wandering Wood—indeed, the Bowre reportedly exists “Within a wandering Island,” perhaps as a sensual counterpart to the Wood’s intellectual labyrinth

mormora l’aura, e fa le foglie e l’onde
 garrir che variamente ella percote.
 Quando taccion gli augelli alto risponde,
 quando cantan gli augei più lieve scote;
 sia caso od arte, or accompagna, ed ora
 alterna i versi lor la musica òra. (16.12)

And pretty birds under the greenwood shade
 temper their merry notes in harmony,
 and the wind murmurs, and the leaves and streams
 chatter, as the wind strikes them variously,
 for when the birds are still those sounds are deep,
 but when they sing they strike a lighter key.

By chance, or art, the music of the air
 accompanies or responds to the voices there. (tr. Anthony M. Esolen)

Spenser enlarges the role of the water in stanza 71, adds “voyces” and “instruments,” and emphasizes words like “respondecence,” “meet,” and “answered,” which create a greater effect of joint harmony (see Hollander “Music” 283). While “attempred” and “murmure” are in the Italian (the former overdetermined, since it also appears in *June* 8), Spenser’s “shade” is not: Esolen’s “greenwood shade” is identical to Edward Fairfax, who drew on Spenser for his 1600 translation (see Nelson xxxiii; Quint 679):

The joyous birds, hid under greenwood shade
 Sung merry notes on every branch and bough;
 The wind, that in the leaves and waters play’d,
 With murmur sweet now sang, and whistled now;
 Ceased the birds, the wind loud answer made,
 And while they sung it rumbled soft and low:

Thus, were it hap or cunning, chance or art,
 The wind in this strange music bore his part. (tr. Fairfax)

Referring to Hollander’s identification of Spenser’s “signature trope” (*Melodious Guile* 162), discussed in note [87] above, Hamilton suggests “The waters fall” in 71.7 is “inserted to stamp the art of the Bower as his own, perhaps because he so deliberately overgoes Tasso” (Notes 283n). The broader echoes of *June* across several stanzas however, suggest that there is more going on than a simple ownership mark.

Elsewhere in the Bowre Spenser includes near-direct translations of several of Tasso’s stanzas, along with other close references, including 58.8-9 below (Tasso tr. Esolen 474-75n; Quint 679; Alpers “Bower” 105; Hamilton Notes 280-83n; Lewis *Studies* 115-17). Armida’s motivations and plot, however, are farther removed from the Bowre than Alcina’s: Armida has fallen in love with the knight Rinaldo and builds her garden solely for his captivating pleasure; her love appears to be genuine by evidence of her later actions (Tasso Canto 20; Quint 679).

(II.i.51.5).¹⁰⁹ Many skeptical readings of its landscape have focused on the strife between art and nature in the Bowre as intimated in stanza 50 and later elaborated in stanza 58 and elsewhere.¹¹⁰ Instead, Paul Alpers suggests, the passage calls attention to itself as Spenser's superlative example of the promise and the peril of poetic art.¹¹¹ Analogous to—if rather less concise than—the passage I identified in the first part of this chapter as Chaucer's call for attention to the poetic "craft of mannes hand" in Dorigen's garden, the Bowre of Bliss showcases the full force—and risk—of a sophisticated poetic technique and the variety of responses it can elicit: delight, delay, delusion, dissolution. The scene's superlative and seemingly genuine paradisaal pleasures may help to explain why Guyon's Talus-like response of "rigour pittillesse" remains unsatisfying as the pleasant place faces implacable and perhaps disproportionate destruction (II.xii.83.2):¹¹²

More sweet and holesome, then the pleasaunt hill

.....

Or sweet Parnasse, the haunt of Muses fayre;
Or Eden selfe, if ought with Eden mote compayre.

.....

There the most daintie Paradise on ground,
It selfe doth offer to his sober eye,

¹⁰⁹ We saw "trembling" with Fradubio; "wight" (a common word) appears in *June* 100.

¹¹⁰ See especially Alpers "Bower" 106; see also Giamatti 268, 274ff; Hamilton Notes 278n, 280n; Quint 679; Hollander "Music" 483. Lewis argues that the conflict is "innocent" in Tasso but that here it sets up a moral contrast with the Garden of Adonis (*Studies* 115-17). See also Comito "bowers" 108; Tayler 505; Wilson-Okamura *International* 178-79; Ramachandran "Clarion" 92-93.

¹¹¹ "Bower" 105-07. Alpers finds Spenser's "revision of his sources shows that he meant to emphasize the problem of poetry and its powers. Unlike Ariosto and Tasso, he does not attribute his false paradise to the magic of its reigning sorceress [. . .] since 'the art which all that wrought' is in some sense his own" (107). Giamatti disagrees (256n).

¹¹² Talus is the justice robot of Book V (of that titular virtue): an "yron man [. . .] Immoueable, resistless, without end" (V.i.12.2, 7), whose actions to punish wrongdoers also tend towards indiscriminate "rac[ing]" (razing), "pitous slaughter," and "battr[ing] without remorse" (V.ii.28.1, vii.35.5, xii.7.4). Mary Villeponteaux argues that pity is negative in Book II (173-74).

In which all pleasures plenteously abownd,
 And none does others happinesse enuye:
 The painted flowres, the trees vpshooting hye,
 The dales for shade, the hilles for breathing space,
 The **trembling** groues, the christall running by;
 And that, which all faire workes doth most aggrace,
 The art, which all that wrought, appeared in no place. (II.xii.52.1, 8-9, 58)

Like Hobbinol's "syte" in *June*, the Bowre prompts direct and seemingly unironic comparisons with "Parnasse," "Eden," and "Paradise" (52.8-9, 58.1).¹¹³ The implicit warning about the invisible "art, which all that wrought" but which "appeared in no place" is balanced by an all but prelapsarian claim that "none does others happinesse enuye" (58.9, 4). In the Bowre, without qualification or moral hedging, "Birdes, voices, instruments, windes, waters, all agree" (70.9)—in the words of *June*, "attemper right" (8), a verb repeated in the following stanza after a tense shift (71.2).¹¹⁴ Earlier, after stanza 50's suspicions about "pompous" Art and "niggard Nature" (7), stanza 51 also praises the "gently attempred" seasons and negates "intemperate" winter (8, 5).¹¹⁵ The

¹¹³ Anderson makes a similar claim for Spenser's source in the *Parliament of Fowls* (*Reading* 138; see note [114] below). Giamatti argues that Spenser does "condemn" the garden through the phrase "if ought with *Eden* mote compayre," implying with "delicacy" that to attempt such a comparison is "blasphemous" (271). All subsequent references to "paradise" thus become "sinister" (273). Hamilton notes that all of these "*loci amoeni* evoke scenes of natural beauty which, except for 'Parnasse' [. . .], are marred by sin and death" (*FQ* 279n). However, we see above (in the *Theatre*) and below (in the *Tears of the Muses*) this distinction does not hold for Spenser; all such pleasant places are subject to destruction and share similar multisensory depictions. For an alternative frame, see Wilson-Okamura *International* 104-06.

¹¹⁴ The preliminary description of the Bowre at II.v.29-32 (as experienced by the "varlett" Atin (25.4), who has come to rescue the knight Cymochles from Acrasia) includes many of the familiar features of the *locus amoenus* but describes them individually—first flowers, then river, then "the mery birds of euery sorte / Chaunted alowd their chearefull harmonie" (31.6-7)—rather than arranging them in a collective harmony following the *June* template.

¹¹⁵ Stanza 51.8's "attempred," like that of 71.2 discussed in note [107] above, is also overdetermined, drawn both from *June* and the *Parliament of Fowls* (see note [85] above): "Th'air of that place so attempre was / That nevere was grevaunce of hot ne cold. / There wex ek every holsom spice and gras" (204-6; Hamilton Notes 279n). Chaucer's vocabulary also seems to join with Tasso's syntax as a source for stanzas 70-71:

On every bow the bryddes herde I synge,

pleasant weather could be more of Acrasia's sneaky "art," but the stanza instead attributes agency to the jovial heavens, where Jove as supreme god is presumably immune to that art and disapproving of its ensnaring aims. With all this moderate attempering, some of it by external and presumably benevolent agents, stanza 83's "tempest of his wrathfulness"—Guyon's temper as he destroys the Bowre—suggests that "of the fairest," making "the fowlest place" is not consistent with the Book's stated virtue of temperance, of which the Bowre itself offers at least a partial example (83.4, 9).¹¹⁶ However, its temptations exert power over the men it ensnares, and to Guyon this power is so threatening that he destroys the garden unilaterally—rendering its unwanted pleasures inaccessible to himself and everyone else. With its power in the wrong hands, the *locus amoenus* can provoke violence as well as nourish virtue.

Guyon's alternative, it would seem, appears briefly in the following book.

With voys of aungel in here armonye;

.....

Of instruments of strenges in acord
 Herde I so pleye a ravyshyng swetnesse,
 That God, that makere is of al and lord,
 Ne herde nevere beter, as I gesse.
 Therwith a wynd, unnethe it myghte be lesse,
 Made in the leves grene a noyse softe
 Acourdaunt to the foules song alofte.

(190-91, 197-203)

Anderson also notes the "insistent memories" of Chaucer and agrees with my sense of "heightened poetic engagement" and "joyous voicing" in these passages (*Reading* 39; 137-39): "Recognizing such a benign source behind Spenser's Bower confirms and complicates still further our response to its undeniable attractions, making all the more shocking the reductive violence of Guyon's wrath" (*Reading* 138). Elsewhere she and Berger offer feminist rereadings of Acrasia (*Reading* 224-38; "Wring.") For Spenser's "critique" of "the adversarial structure of erotic desire," see Gregerson "Sexual" 183).

¹¹⁶ Hamilton implies the opposite, noting that "tempest" carries an "etymological connection with temperance" (Notes 285n); Nohrnberg claims "Guyon's fury[. . .] represents the will's self-recovery" (*Analogy* 498); Giamatti, "a recognition [and "restoration"] of the proper role of the senses" (281). Lewis also stresses the premodern idea that what is most beautiful is often the most evil (*Studies* 115-17; see Giamatti 237). However, Alpers, drawing on the work of Herbert Grierson, insists on allowing the full moral and poetic force of negative reader responses to Guyon's actions ("Bower" 106-7). See also Dauber 172-74.

Critical attention has focused upon similarities between the sexually extractive relationship of Acrasia and her victim knight Verdant in the Bowre and the similarly passive relationship between Venus and Adonis in their Garden.¹¹⁷ The parallels may serve to trouble the latter garden “Paradise,” or else to set up its generative pleasures as a more viable alternative to the Bowre’s parasitical ones. But Guyon’s role is neither that of Verdant nor Adonis. Instead, I suggest comparing the Bowre and the “Paradize” to which the huntress Belphœbe brings the wounded squire Timias:¹¹⁸

Into that forest farre they thence him led,
 Where was their dwelling, in a pleasant glade,
 With mountaines rownd about enuironed,
 And mightie woodes, which did the valley shade,
 And like a stately Theatre it made,
Spreading it selfe into a **spatious plaine**.
 And **in the midst** a little riuer plaid
 Emongst the pumy stones, which seemed to plaine
 With gentle murmure, that his cours they did restraine.

Beside the same a dainty place there lay,
Planted with mirtle trees and laurells greene,
In which the birds song many a louely lay
 Of gods high praise, and of their sweet loues teene,
 As it an earthly Paradize had beene:
 In whose enclosed shadow there was pight
 A **faire Paulion**, scarcely to be seene,
 The which was al within most richly dight,
 That greatest Princes liuing it mote well delight. (III.v.39-40)

This scene, in a different way from the Garden of Adonis, would seem also to be

¹¹⁷ See e.g. Hamilton on III.i.36 and III.v.46 (Notes 283n, 295n, 349n); Giamatti 284ff); Nohrnberg’s extended discussion of relations between the two settings (*Analogy* 491ff).

¹¹⁸ In addition to the echoes of *June* in both passages examined here, the preliminary description of the Bowre at II.v.29-32 contains an almost identical phrase to III.v.39.7-9 above: “And fast beside, there triced softly downe / a gentle streame, whose mururing waue did play / Emongst the pumy stones, and made a sowne” (II.v.30.1-3). Of these “recur[ring]” passages, Nohrnberg notes “we should notice not only the similarity, but also the difference[. . .] between a passive dissipation and a lively energy” (*Analogy* 504-05). For reasons such as their contrasting forms of female sexuality, Comito suggests Belphœbe’s “bower” as the “true” version of Acrasia’s illusions (“bowers” 108). Since the former evokes the classical Vale of Tempe, another pun is available (Curtius 198ff).

anomalous amongst the passages I have been discussing.¹¹⁹ Unlike the Wandring Wood or the Bowre, it echoes much of the vocabulary of *June* in describing a place that seems to be neither dangerous nor damaged. Indeed, it bears a sort of temporal authority rarely found elsewhere, able to “delight” not just the poet, knight, or shepherd, but “greatest Princes liuing.” This reference is unsurprising since, as I discuss below, Belphebe is one of the explicit figures for Elizabeth in the allegorical epic.¹²⁰

Nonetheless, even in this princely place a sort of destruction still ensues:

Thether they brought that wounded Squyre, [. . .]

 Daily she dressed him, and did the best
 His grieuous hurt to guarish, that she might,

 It she reduced, but himselfe destroyed quight. (III.v.41.1, 5-6, 9)

Belphebe’s healing of Timias’ “grieuous hurt” goes awry when he falls in love and exchanges physical wound for emotional devastation. This, I believe, is the alternative presented to Guyon, albeit for rather different stakes—sensual pleasure in the Bowre; chaste courtly devotion in the “Paradize” of Belphebe.¹²¹ Still, if Guyon’s choice is active violence rather than passive love, to destroy rather than to be “destroyed quight,” the choice is understandable from his perspective.¹²² The sort of lady who inhabits a given paradisal space—beautiful or monstrous, numinously virtuous or frighteningly unregulated, independently powerful or poetically inspiring—also appears to be significant for that space’s interpretation, and for its fate, although she may not be able

¹¹⁹ Hamilton connects it only to “such *loci amoeni* as the dwelling of the mermaids at II.xii.30.2-7 and the site of the Bower of Bliss,” as well as to the passage from *The Ruines of Time* discussed below (Notes 338n).

¹²⁰ According to the Letter to Raleigh (l. 36) and the Proem to Book III (5.8); see also Anderson “Belphebe” 85-87; Kinney’s discussion of the Proem to Book 2 (*Strategies* 84).

¹²¹ Alpers notes forcefully that the stakes are also those of poetic art itself (“Bower” 106-07). See DeNeef, and the discussion below.

¹²² If not forgivable, as the paradisal “enuiron” suffers for Acrasia’s crimes (III.v.39.3).

to alter its perilous character.¹²³ Belpheobe's "Paradize" escapes the violent destruction Guyon wreaks on the Bowre, but this intact version of *June's* vision nonetheless remains unsafe for those who venture in: accessible, perhaps, but at what cost?

The pleasant places of the 1590 epic are indeed full of violence—against intruders, against inhabitants, and, most significantly for my study, against the place itself. Guyon destroys the Bowre within the action of the poem, but the fragmented and outright sinister appearances of *June* and Epigram 3's other echoes within the first three books hint at a prior destruction of the paradisaic scene's numinous power in Spenser's disillusioned mind. This is not the place to speculate as to the poet's (well-documented, if unclearly timed) biographical frustrations, but it seems clear that *June's* ambitions—even in a work of great achievement and with great hope of patronage—have somehow faltered.¹²⁴

The extent of and possible reasons for that faltering become clearer in *The Teares of the Muses*, published as one of the *Complaints* shortly after the 1590 *Faerie Queene*.¹²⁵ Richard Danson Brown has read the poem and its ruined Helicon as Spenser's search for a new sort of poetry in response to the persistent failure of learning and patronage.¹²⁶ This reading connects the concerns of the *Teares* to those traditionally

¹²³ See Introduction and below. As we have already seen in the case of Belpheobe—and, in her own way, Acrasia—these alternatives are not mutually exclusive binaries.

¹²⁴ In addition to the bloody events of the tenure of Arthur, Lord Grey de Wilton, as Lord Deputy of Ireland while Spenser was his secretary (1580-82), and the possible death of Spenser's first wife (before 1594), Willy Maley cites evidence of Irish corruption and legal quarrels beginning in the 1580s (20-24; also Escobedo xix). Highley points out the deaths of significant patrons such as Sidney, Leicester, and Walsingham (86), some of whom may also have been mentors or friends. Anderson notes "the poet's growing disappointment – even his disillusionment – with the English Queen" in Books 2-4 ("Belpheobe"). R. D. Brown, however, claims that "*The Teares* is concerned with poetry in the abstract rather than with specific English verse of the 1580s and 1590s" (135).

¹²⁵ See M. Rasmussen 218-23; Brink.

¹²⁶ Brown finds an "unresolved debate between Christian and humanist" poetics, with the possibility that both will fail in the face of "the crisis" of willful ignorance (133).

recognized for the *Calender*, discussed in the first part of this chapter. It also confirms the significance of my own reading of *June*'s poetic ambitions to claim the territory of Parnassus. The keywords of the *Teares* are "earst" and "wont": "So we, that earst were wont in sweet accord / All places with our pleasant notes to fill," says Euterpe, at the turn of an epic simile likening the muses' situation to that of birds in the change from summer to winter (241-42).¹²⁷ Such rhetorical moves signal the lost past each muse laments in turn:

So wee that earst in ioyance did abound
And in the bosome of all blis did sit,
Like virgin Queenes with laurell garlands croud,
For vertues meed and ornament of wit;
Sith ignorance our kingdome did confound,
Bee now become most wretched wightes on ground[.] (306-12)

Terpsichore's regret hints at the situation of Epigram 4, before the earthquake destroys the muses' fountain, but here the villain is "ignorance," whose personified progeny with "fowle infamy" in the following stanzas have displaced true art and wisdom from the "Court" of the powerful (311, 316, 328).¹²⁸ The closest and most extensive echoes of *June*, however, appear in the lament of Euterpe and the very similar proem.¹²⁹ Between them, the two passages all but recycle Hobbino's celebratory *June* stanzas into their words of misery.¹³⁰

While Elizabeth offers the hope of successful patronage (161-65), the consequences of failure are severe (133, 145-57, 165-67).

¹²⁷ In *Shorter* 189-209. Specifically, Euterpe invokes "*Philomele*" in "her widowhead," but the terms are closer to natural seasonality than Ovidian myth (236, 240).

¹²⁸ See R. D. Brown 153-54.

¹²⁹ Euterpe 235-294, esp. 247-52; 277-92; Proem 1-42, esp. 5, 19-22, 25-28, 31-34, 37.

¹³⁰ It is important to note that the composition date of each of the *Complaints* is uncertain; it is possible that the *Teares* precedes or is concurrent with *June*, though R. D. Brown agrees with Harold L. Stein's date of 1589-90 (134n; Stein 42-53). Lewis suggests the poem is "undatable," also positing that repetitions are more likely due to forgetfulness (*Sixteenth* 368)—possible in cases of single lines, but not multiple repetitions of whole sets of lines, words, and images. In any case, it remains significant that *June*'s published ambitions long antedate the choice to make the *Teares* equally

In *June*, Colin is present within Hobbinol's happy scene yet somehow cut off from it. However, as I have argued above, the eclogue itself ambitiously claims the power of Parnassus for Colin as well as for the author of the *Calender* as a whole. This paradisaical vision of poetic success, it seems, does not persist into the world of *The Faerie Queene*. Its repeated echoes there are partial, sinister, insufficient, destructive, or destroyed. Similarly partial and even more devastated echoes appear in the *Teares* and other laments as the muses' inspiration turns to grief.¹³¹ *June's* ambitions have somehow been waylaid, deflected, or destroyed, perhaps for want of patronage and poetic appreciation, the very things the *Calender* feared would go astray. Strangely, however, these are the very things *The Faerie Queene* anticipates and seems designed to attract. Have the anxieties expressed by Colin undermined the very work the *Calender* and the epic are aiming at? Or do we need to look more closely at such complete visions as the Bowre of Bliss and Belphoebe's Paradize, paying more attention to their content than their fate? To answer these questions, I turn to the second part of *The Faerie Queene* (1596), comprising three new books published along with slight revisions to the original three, and its coda in the Mutabilitie Cantos, approximately one-sixth of a planned seventh book first published a decade after Spenser's untimely death in 1599.

Restored, Receding Visions in 1596

The 1590 *Faerie Queene* presented Spenser's monumental work of praise, but the 1591 *Complaints* hint at a sublimated anxiety and discontent even at that work's moment of fulfillment. In contrast to these partial, suspicious, and broken echoes, the rewritings of

public.

¹³¹ Fainter echoes appear in *Daphnaïda* (1591; 309-322, *Shorter* 323-41) and *Astrophel* (1595; 43-52, *Shorter* 372-84), insofar as they partake of tropes of worldly transience: the attractions of nymphs' dancing or being drawn to the shepherd's song (cf. *June* stz 4, 8).

the paradisaal *locus amoenus* in the 1596 installment of *The Faerie Queene* and the posthumous Mutabilitie Cantos are more generative and whole—but seemingly even less accessible to mere mortals than either the promise of *June* or its ruins in 1590. In Book IIII, the island of Venus features many attributes of that other island, the Bowre of Blisse, without apparent negative consequences. To Scudamour, the knight who ventures onto the island in quest of the lovely Amoret, it appears to be

The onely pleasant and delightfull place,
That euer troden was of footings trace.
For all that nature by her mother wit
Could frame in earth, and forme of substance base,
Was there, and all that nature did omit,
Art playing second natures part, supplied it. (IIII.x.21.4-9)

Here, art and nature collaborate rather than vying for first billing as in the Bowre.¹³²

Like the Bowre, however, “In such luxurious plentie of all pleasure, / It seem’d a second paradise to ghesse,” explicitly comparing favorably to “Th’Elysian fields” (23.1-2, 5). Here there are also echoes of *June* and Epigram 3, but they appear compressed within Scudamour’s longer description of the landscape that surrounds his real goal, the temple of Venus (IIII.6-29):

Fresh shadowes, fit to shroud from sunny ray;
Faire lawnds, to take the sunne in season dew;
Sweet springs, in which a thousand Nymphs did play;
Soft rombling brookes, that gentle slomber drew;
High reared **mounts**, the lands about to vew;
Low looking dales, disloignd from common gaze;
Delightfull bowres, to solace louers trew;
False Labyrinthes, fond runners eyes to daze;
All which by nature made did nature selfe amaze.

And all without were **walkes and alleyes dight**,
With diuers trees, enrang’d in euen rankes;
And here and there were pleasant arbors pight,
And shadie seates, and sundry flowring bankes[.] (IIII.x.24-25.4)

¹³² See e.g. Hamilton Notes 485m. Anderson notes other resonances between Bowre and Temple, some of them “darker, more threatening,” but concludes that “This Temple is more positively weighted than relatively sinister sites like the Bower” (*Reading* 148).

Further echoes, this time more distant, are reserved not for the setting, but for a “tormented” lover’s prayer to the goddess herself (43.8):

Great Venus, Queene of beautie and of grace,
 The ioy of Gods and men, that vnder skie
 Doest fayrest shine, and most adorne thy place,
 That with thy smyling looke doest pacifie
 The raging seas, and makst the stormes to flie;
 Thee goddesse, thee the winds, the clouds doe feare,
 And when thou spredst thy mantle forth on hie,
 The waters play and pleasant lands appeare,
 And heauens laugh, & all the world shews ioyous cheare.

Then doth the dædale earth throw forth to thee
 Out of her fruitfull lap abundant flowres,
 And then all liuing **wights**, soone as they see
 The spring breake forth out of his lusty **bowres**,
 They all doe learne to play the Paramours;
 First doe the **merry birds**, thy prety pages
 Priuily pricked with thy lustfull powres,
 Chirpe loud to thee out of their leauy cages,
 And thee their mother call to coole their kindly rages. (III.x.44-45)

Here the vocabulary of *June* is deployed sparsely to describe the powers of Venus, the “Great God of men and women, queene of th’ayre, / Mother of laughter, and welspring of blisse” over the whole earth, rather than some particularly blessed location (III.x.47.7-8).¹³³ Scudamour, meanwhile, is amazed by all he sees and hears, but his operation is a surgical strike to capture Amoret rather than a deep engagement with the place itself. He is in it, but not of it, cut off from its wonders not by Colin’s despair but instead, it would seem, by a less emotional, more fundamental distinction between the divine realms and the world of human (or elfin) action.¹³⁴

¹³³ Stanza 45 also rewrites the opening sentence of the General Prologue to *The Canterbury Tales*; see Hamilton for sources in Lucretius and Natale Conti (Notes 489n).

¹³⁴ Lesley Brill independently confirms these observations: “Of all Spenser’s allegorical places, the Temple of Venus has perhaps been least expressive for modern readers. This may reflect on Scudamour, who as teller sometimes seems uncomprehending of his own tale, or it may reflect the evasiveness of the central symbol, Venus” (“Scudamour” 635). Anderson, however, calls Scudamour “engaged” (*Reading* 149). See also E. Fowler

The Mutabilite Cantos take this distinction further, presenting pleasance not as a setting, a real place that shepherds like Colin in *June* could “presume” to if they “lyst,” but as the effect Dame Nature has on her surroundings at Arlo Hill.¹³⁵ The great goddess has come to earth, holding court as the ultimate arbiter of a dispute amongst the gods and titans:

Her garment was so bright and wondrous sheene,
That my fraile wit cannot deuize to what
It to compare, nor finde like stufte to that,

.....

So hard it is for any liuing wight,
All her array and vestiments to tell,
That old *Dan Geffrey* (in whose gentle spright
The pure well head of Poesie did dwell)
In his *Foules parley* durst not with it mel,
But it transferd [. . .].

(VII.vii.7.3-5, 9.1-6)

These famous lines concerning Chaucer as “The pure well head of Poesie” explicitly look back to the similar passages of *June* (and to Chaucer’s *Parliament of Fowls*),

“Failure” 56-57; Kinney *Strategies* 79.

¹³⁵ Paradoxically, those surroundings *are* a real place: “Arlo Hill is S.’s name for Galtymore, the highest peak of the Galtee mountains, about 30 km north-east of his residence at Kilcolman Castle, [to which] he transfers [. . .] the name of the glen of Aherlow, a notorious haunt of rebels, beneath” (Hamilton Notes 697n). However, despite the possibly ironic familiarity of “(Who knowes not *Arlo-hill*?)” (vi.36.6; see note [142] below), I do not find that the Cantos therefore imply accessibility to Nature’s paradise on the part of Spenser or his characters. The name, with its rebellious associations, signifies its present inaccessibility to Spenser as embattled colonist. It sets up the canto’s etiological myth of “how *Arlo* through *Dianaes* spights / (Being of old the best and fairest Hill [. . .] / Was made the most vnpleasant, and most ill,” the haunt of “Wolues and Thieues” (37.5-8; 55.8). This change is itself precipitated by a moment of inappropriate access, the voyeurism of Faunus. The myth in turn becomes a complaint about Spenser’s own experience in “*IRELAND*” (38.1), which he blames on Elizabeth’s lack of attention (Teskey “Two” 339). (For an alternative reading of the “social space” of Arlo Hill, see E. Fowler *Literary Character* 240-41.)

The hill’s prior existence as a *locus amoenus* in its own right is now in “the deep past” (Teskey “Two” 339). Nature’s visit may thus also be long ago (consistent with one of the fictive statuses of the poem, as an Arthurian epic); it is in any case ephemeral. Terry Comito contrasts the “fleeting” accessibility of “Edenic perfection” in this scene and the one on Acidale discussed below with the truly inaccessible, because both “past” and reported, Garden of Adonis (“bowers” 108; cf. Tonkin 128-29).

reinvoking the modesty topos and thus signalling an even more direct attention to Spenser's poetic career than the echoes of vocabulary and cast of characters I have cited above.¹³⁶ Nature's presence at Arlo Hill restages the Art-Nature contest of the Bowre of Blisse and the island of Venus, but this time it is no contest, for

In a fayre **Plaine** vpon an equall Hill,
She **placed** was in a **pauilion**;

.....

th'earth her self of her owne motion,
Out of her fruitfull bosome made to growe
Most dainty trees; that, shooting vp anon,
Did seeme to bow their bloosming heads full lowe,
For homage vnto her, and like a throne did shew.

.....

And all the earth far vnderneath her feete
Was dight with flowres, that voluntary grew
Out of the ground, and sent forth odours sweet;
Tenne thousand mores of sundry sent and hew,
That might delight the **smell**, or please the **view**:
The which, the Nymphes, from all the **brooks** thereby
Had gathered, which they at her foot-stoole threw;
That richer seem'd then any tapestry,
That Princes **bowres** adorne with painted imagery. (VII.vii.8.1-2, 5-9; 10)

Nature herself choreographs the design of a space that partly recalls *June* but also deploys an alternate vocabulary for the familiar multisensory appeal of the *locus amoenus* that, with its flat-topped or "equall Hill," recalls early depictions of Eden.¹³⁷ Here, once again, is a paradise Nature creates by virtue of her presence, as Colin once did with his piping. While the conclusion of the Art-Nature debate and the echoes of *June* demonstrate that this passage presents Spenser's latest rewriting of Hobbinol's

¹³⁶ Hamilton quotes Ben Jonson, noting that "Poesie" signifies "the poet's 'skill, or Crafte of making' [. . .] rather than poetry itself" (Notes 702n). See e.g. Berry; Cooper; Anderson *Reading* 79.

¹³⁷ Visitors to Renaissance Italy could view images of "the Mount of Paradise, which in the earliest Christian art was shown as a typical mesa formation, with steep sides and a flat top" (Frye 235). Acidale's "hill plaste in an open plaine," cited below, would seem to reverse the feature, but the scene also implies a flat top suitable for dancing. Hamilton notes that 10.1-3 "is a common classical motif" (Notes 702n).

“syte,” this version of the scene makes no mention of human access to the goddess’ *sui generis* paradise, but is instead wholly focused on the celestial debate between the gods and the titan Mutabilitie over which Nature has deigned to preside.¹³⁸

If the brief and muted echoes of this “pauilion” of Nature, along with the island of Venus, comprised Spenser’s only engagement with *June* in the later installments of the *Faerie Queene*, we might be forced to conclude that the shattered visions of 1590 turned the poet’s gaze in other directions. But this is not the case. Instead, late in Book VI of the 1596 epic we find the mature expounding of *June*’s vision, not only restored but amplified to suit an epic setting. It forms part of the famous scene on Mount Acidale, where the elfin knight Calidore comes

Vnto a place, whose pleasaunce did appere
To passe all others, on the earth which were:
For all that euer was by **natures skill**
Deuized to worke delight, was gathered there,
.....

It was an hill plaste in an open plaine,
That round about was bordered with a wood
Of matchlesse hight, that seem’d th’earth to disdaine;
In which all trees of honour stately stood,
And did all winter as in sommer bud,
Spredding **pauilions** for the birds to **bowre**,
Which in their lower braunches sung aloud;
.....

And at the foote thereof, a gentle flud
His siluer waues did softly tumble downe,
Vnmard with ragged **mosse** or filthy mud;
Ne mote wylde beastes, ne mote the ruder clowne
Thereto approach, ne filth mote therein drowne:
But Nymphes and Faeries by the bancks did sit,
In the woods shade, which did the waters crowne,
Keeping all noysome things away from it,
And to the waters fall tuning their accents fit.

¹³⁸ Attendance by “all[. . .] earthly wights” and “all other creatures” has been previously noted (vi.36.2, vii.4.2), but no humans (or elves) are specified or even mentioned in the remainder of the scene except in simile.

.....

Vnto this place when as the Elfin Knight
 Approcht, him seemed that the **merry sound**
 Of a shrill **pipe** he playing heard on hight,
 And many feete fast thumping th'hollow **ground**,
 That through the **woods** their **Eccho** did rebound.
 He nigher **drew**, to weete what mote it be;
 There he a **troupe of Ladies dauncing** found
 Full **merrily**, and making **gladfull** glee,
 And in the midst a **Shepherd piping** he did see. (VI.x.5.4-7, 6.1-7, 7, 10)

Here are all the elements of *June's* paradisal space, including trees, birds, water, piping shepherd, dancing ladies (minor graces, we learn), surrounding "the Graces, daughters of delight" (15.1). For good measure, the Nymphs and Faeries seated by the waterside reappear from Epigram 4. The now-familiar words, hitherto often fragmented and used in ways at odds with their former sense, have been reassembled into phrases and images much like the original: "to the waters fall tuning their accents fit" (7.9) / "To the waters fall their tunes attemper right" (*June* 8).¹³⁹ Even one of E. K.'s notes now makes an appearance in the body of the poem.¹⁴⁰ *June's* birds sang "in the lower spring," which E. K. glosses as "young trees springing" (53, [53]); Acidale's trees are "Spreddeing paulions for the birds to bowre, / Which in their lower braunches sung aloud" (6.6-7). The image is identical, if here described more clearly and ornately, as befits an unglossed scene of numinous revelation.

Here, too, we find Spenser making other explicit and metapoetic connections to his past work, asking readers to see his career as a single corpus, this scene as a

¹³⁹ Thus Spenser's most complete repetitions of his "signature," as identified by Hollander in Epigram 4, are in *June* and the Acidale episode. Hamilton notes connections among Acidale and other Spenserian *loci amoeni* (thus implicitly connected with poetry), including the Garden of Adonis, the Island of Venus, Belphebe's Paradize, and a brief reference to the muses' Helicon at I.x.54.6-9 (Notes 668n).

¹⁴⁰ Berger implies a similar situation with respect to Acidale for *Aprill*, "the meaning of whose forms remained inert in the gloss" (*Revisionary Play* 239).

reconstitution of and comment upon all that has come before.¹⁴¹ “That iolly shepheard, which there piped,” is not just any shepherd: he “was / Poore *Colin Clout*” (16.3-4). The line continues, “(who knowes not *Colin Clout*?)”—rhetorically, for those readers familiar with his earlier appearances in Spenserian publications.¹⁴² The foregoing analysis suggests an additional query: who knows not Colin’s dancing ladies, whose appearance alongside him is by now even more to be expected?¹⁴³ Colin here appears as a participant, piping for the dance as even *June* could only request—and remember. Colin’s lady is also present and has “aduaunst to be another Grace,” temporarily displacing even the queen herself, as I discuss further below (16.9).¹⁴⁴ In one sense, then, Acidale would seem to represent the restoration, affirmation, and culmination of all that *June* hoped for. Colin Clout has at last presumed to the hill and been welcomed there; the inaccessible paradise has opened its sensory affective doors to his emotional enjoyment and, perhaps, his psychological or professional fulfillment.¹⁴⁵

¹⁴¹ Nohrnberg compares Spenser’s “culminating vision” in the passage to Petrarca’s “inaugural scene” in *Bucolicum carmen* 3 and 10: “Spenser no less than Petrarca implies the poet’s authority to confer his laurels on himself” (*Analogy* 729; “Acidale” 5). See also Tonkin 137-38; Bellamy 172ff. Kinney notes especially connections to the Garden of Adonis and *Aprill* (*Strategies* 106-07).

¹⁴² See e.g. Hamilton Notes 670n, Tayler 504, and Hollander in the following note.

¹⁴³ Risa Bear connects the scene to the graces’ dance in *Aprill* (109-21), citing the latter as the epicenter for Spenser’s “great theme” of divine grace gracefully borne and shared, especially by and through Elizabeth, which finds its culmination on Mount Acidale (Introduction). Gordon Teskey connects *Fowre Hymnes* (“Retrograde” 491). Nohrnberg cites a range of ancient and contemporary sources, including especially the judgment of Paris on Mount Ida (“Acidale” 4-5). Hollander notes several “instances of overprivileged—and perhaps overdetermined—minutiae in Spenser which, by self-echoing, he seemed to avow,” including “the rhetorical formula, [. . .] ‘Who knows not X?’” (*Melodious Guile* 176).

¹⁴⁴ In fact, Spenser has specifically repurposed the image, which in *Aprill* 113-17 praises Elizabeth (see e.g. Hamilton Notes 670n; D. Cheney 8.).

¹⁴⁵ Tayler also connects the “evanescent vision” of Acidale explicitly to Spenser’s goal of perfecting the balance of “nature and art” through poetry: “The vision, inaccessible to all but the poetic imagination, may serve as a guide for future action but remains an ideal unattainable except in memory” (504). His “inaccessible” and “unattainable” anticipate my analysis.

Yet Acidale, too, proves itself to be in some sense inaccessible to the mortals who encounter it. This inaccessibility is quite different from the sort we have seen previously. Calidore is not in despair and thus unable to enjoy Acidale; indeed, he derives great pleasure when he stumbles upon “An hundred naked maidens lilly white, / All raunged in a ring, and dauncing in delight” (11.8-9). The maidens, however, do not appear to derive the same pleasure from his presence, “vanish[ing] all away out of his sight” as soon as they notice he is there watching (18.2).¹⁴⁶ Rather than being shut out of a present paradise emotionally, as Colin is in *June*; or given access to a false paradise, a former paradise that has already been destroyed, or a true paradise only to destroy it or be destroyed himself, as are Redcrosse, Una, Hellenore, the muses, Guyon, and Timias in the 1590 *Faerie Queene* and the *Complaints*; or approaching it in a transitory fashion, like Scudamour; or being denied physical access to it altogether, as seems to be the case in the *Mutabilitie Cantos*, Calidore experiences the paradise of Acidale’s disappearance as the vision whisks itself away from his physical or sensory space altogether, perhaps never to return: “For being gone,” Colin explains, “none can them bring in place, / But whom they of them selues list so to grace” (20.4-5). Calling Calidore “vnhappy” (20.2), the shepherd strongly implies that the knight is unlikely to be so graced in the foreseeable future.

This sort of inaccessibility seems on the one hand to be less violent, less troubling to Calidore—or to his readers—than the situations of his predecessors.¹⁴⁷ Mount

¹⁴⁶ Humphrey Tonkin notes the similarity to the disappearing dance of ladies witnessed by the knight in Chaucer’s *Wife of Bath’s Tale* (133; see Hamilton Notes 670n). In contrast to the following discussion, Tonkin argues that the dance’s similarity to fairy folktales “brings the Dance closer to us” than if only Graces were invoked (136).

¹⁴⁷ Note that this loss of Acidale’s paradise is also not the same as that of the biblical Eden, where (at least, before Milton) the garden is usually understood to persist wherever it happens to be, while the humans are driven away from it with a show of violence (see Scafi). See Kinney for an alternative reading of Calidore’s “superb

Acidale is not, so far as we know, destroyed. What vanishes is the vision of the dancing ladies, one of whom is Colin's beloved. Colin, however, is so frustrated by this turn of events that he breaks his pipes (again), repeating the violent act of *Januarye* that overshadows the *Calender* as a whole, and threatening a return to the earlier work's frustration and despair.¹⁴⁸ Indeed, it is possible to read the whole trajectory of the *June* vision as more endangered than I have hitherto allowed. Each time it appears, the scene is threatened with destruction or disappearance. In the *Theatre*, Epigrams 3 and 4 comprise part of a series of emblematic scenes presenting the transitory world, always about to be destroyed. In *June*, the scene is presented intact, but part as of a disjunctive past, unavailable because its poet, Colin Clout, is in despair and has lost his ability to sing. In the 1590 printing of the first three books of *The Faerie Queene*, fragments of the scene appear in representations of settings that seem pleasant but are in fact dangerous—the Wandring Wood, the Bowre of Blisse—or that at least appear so dangerous as to call upon the protagonist to destroy them. The 1596 installment features a partial but intact version of the paradisaal setting in the Island of Venus, but seemingly at a remove from Scudamour's lived reality.¹⁴⁹ Indeed, there seems to be a general trend in the course of Spenser's career of the paradisaal setting's becoming more and more fabulous, but more and more remote or restricted from the mere mortals who stumble across it or report upon its pleasures.¹⁵⁰ The receding paradise is one more sign

nonchalance" in this scene as a failure of interpretation (*Strategies* 110-11).

¹⁴⁸ See Hamilton Notes 670n; for another reading, Kelsey and Peterson 256. Although critical opinions differ (see McCabe "Plato" 443-44; "Ungainefull" 251), my reading of Colin's statement at 20.4-5 is that only Calidore is likely to be permanently shut out of Acidale by his missteps (cf. Lewis *Discarded* 128-29; Krier 235, 240). Tonkin likens Calidore's effects to those of the Blatant Beast (142).

¹⁴⁹ If Scudamour, not one of the deepest characters of an author not known for psychological roundedness, can be said to have a lived reality. See e.g. Gregerson "FQ" 206-07, "Interpretation" 4; E. Fowler *Literary* 206-07, "Failure" 56-57; note [133] above.

¹⁵⁰ I am grateful to Gordon Braden for this observation. Compare Jacqueline T. Miller,

of a world at risk of abandonment by the muses and their poetic promise.

Yet there is also reason to focus as I have done on the content of the paradisaical visions beyond the fact of their rupture or recession. First, in my reading of *June*—and even of the Bowre—my assessment of the episode's enduring significance gives more weight to its unfolding in space on the page, and in the sequence of the poem, than to references pointing outside the text itself to an unstated prehistory or possible future. The character "Colin" in *June* is unhappy because the *Calender* tells us so, but the Colins, past and present, who are comprised of lines of *June*'s poetry spend more time in Paradise, or in praising Tityrus, than they do lamenting. The Bowre unfolds over thirty-odd stanzas; Guyon's destruction over three. Likewise, the joys of Acidale (thirteen stanzas), and Colin's polite exegesis of those joys to Calidore after they have gone (nine stanzas), seem to be of greater interest to the poem than the two lines of its vanishing. In contrast, the Epigrams spend almost equal time on praise of the paradisaical object and on its destruction, emphasizing the latter; the *Teares* are the only example of the damaged present's overwhelming the happy past by weight of numbers. This is not to say that the briefer moments of destruction or loss are insignificant, but instead that I take the poems at their words—all their words—as to the preponderance of their attentions. For a poet so concerned with architectonics, the center of a poem or a passage is often more significant than its ending; for a poet who strove for quantitative verse, quantity counts.¹⁵¹

Over the course of his career, Spenser is denied paradise, lays claim to it, finds it

who claims that the *Antiquitee of Faery* "present[s] the Faeryland vision as ultimately unattainable, predicting that it will recede, become remote, disintegrate"—and finds that this recession has occurred in the 1596 installment (33, 39-40). Clare Kinney notes that it is in the Garden of Adonis that "for the first time an important locus of instruction is reserved for the poet and reader alone" (*Strategies* 77).

¹⁵¹ See also note [160] below for Berger's account of why the vision must be ephemeral in order to succeed.

perverted or ruined, destroys it, and then reconstitutes it, albeit at some remove from its previous location. This dance among denial, claim, destruction, and reclamation seems to me to partake less of frustration or despair than of productive negotiation—of complaint and collaboration—with muses, with patrons, with the distressing but inevitable gulfs between aspiration and reality, with the idea of poetry itself.¹⁵² Spenser has great but not absolute power to govern his poetic world, to negotiate the terms of his vision. He requires partners, some of whom also wield power in the world outside the poem.

“Like virgin Queenes with laurell garlands croud”: Visionary Collaborations

I conclude by revisiting Acidale and the question mentioned above of the role of the lady (or ladies) in the fate of the paradisal space. At the outset of this chapter I noted features the Spenserian *locus amoenus* shares with the conventional pleasant place, of which the one described in Robert Langham’s letter provides an example. Langham’s example, too, is familiar in its terms but unusual in its claim to represent a real place, Leicester’s garden at Kenilworth, and to recount a real event, Elizabeth’s visit there. In fact, it is a place and an event that Spenser may also have written about, in the third “Pageant” of his *Ruines of Time* (490), printed as part of the 1591 *Complaints*.¹⁵³

3

¹⁵² Cf. Wilson-Okamura, whose formulation “But Spenser was a complainer, not a quitter. He was always a complainer, and the complaining was always about the Blatant Beast” reminded me to move “complaint” to the other side of my fulcrum “than,” although I have kept “frustration” where it was (*International* 198, 197).

¹⁵³ *Shorter* 167-87. R. D. Brown dates a comprehensive revision of the poem (and its compilation from prior texts) to 1590-91, noting that the “Pageants” may be referred to in the Spenser-Harvey letters as *Dreames* a decade earlier (101-02). E. K. mentions the latter in the 1579 *Calender* (*Epistle* l. 184, *November* [195]; McCabe Notes 519, 570, 590; Oram et al. Notes 253). This would date a version to within four years of Elizabeth’s 1575 visit. *June* [25]’s reference to “Pageaunts” seems by the line quoted to be more closely related to “An Hymne in Honoure of Beautie” (1596) (ll. 254-55, *Shorter* 463-71).

Then did I see a pleasant Paradize,
 Full of sweete flowres and daintiest delights,
 Such as on earth man could not more deuize,
 With pleasures choyce to feed his cheerefull sprights;
 Not that, which *Merlin* by his Magicke flights
 Made for the gentle squire, to entertaine
 His fayre *Belphebe*, could this gardine staine. (519-525)

The “Pageants” are modeled directly upon the Epigrams and Sonets of the *Theatre for Worldlings*, presenting visions of precious objects, especially wonders of the world, that are subsequently destroyed.¹⁵⁴ The “Paradize” of this vision is a preternaturally beautiful garden (according to the wonder scheme, the Hanging Gardens of Semiramis at Babylon), which compares favorably to “that, [. . .] / Made for the gentle squire, to entertaine / His fayre *Belphebe*.” In the *Faerie Queene*, as mentioned above, Belphebe is a figure for Elizabeth, while Timias is usually identified as Raleigh based upon his subsequent adventures in Book III.¹⁵⁵ But, as Richard McCabe notes, the plot of the epic contains no such event as described in the *Ruines*; instead, as discussed above, Belphebe takes Timias to her own “Paradize” to be healed.¹⁵⁶ This reference in a poem outside the scope of the multiferously allegorical *Faerie Queene* must therefore “shadow” some other garden episode, of which Leicester’s horticultural plot at Kenilworth seems a likely possibility.¹⁵⁷ The connection with Elizabeth as potential

¹⁵⁴ See McCabe Notes 590; Oram et al. Notes 253-54.

¹⁵⁵ The identification was contemporary, and the poem’s resolution of the conflict even shaped its real-world denouement (DeNeef; see also Hamilton Notes 336n, 338n, 463-65n.) However, see note [156] below.

¹⁵⁶ McCabe Notes 590.

¹⁵⁷ While Raleigh is the most common current identification, the Leicester correspondence is an older idea expounded with romantic fervor by Edwin A. Greenlaw in 1910 (560) and qualified by Herbert Ellsworth Cory in 1917 (270), based on the analogy Arthur:Gloriana::Timias:Belphebe, twin shadows of the same couple whom Spenser hoped at one point to honor as joint patrons before the failure of Leicester’s marriage plans and his death in 1588 (see also Roche 270-71; Woudhuysen 432). The name “Timias” signifies “honored” in Greek (DeNeef 690), and Leicester was “his honor” to Spenser both in formal address and in the imperfectly revised prefatory poem to *The Shepheardes Calender*, in the end dedicated to Sidney (Ringler; Woudhuysen

bride, and potential patron, offered by the two “Paradize” passages further illuminates an echo of the *June* setting that had been somewhat anomalous in 1590, as discussed above. Less dangerous than the Wandring Wood, less significant than the Bowre, the Belpheobe episode in III.v deploys *June*’s vocabulary seemingly for purposes of plot or historical reference rather than for exploring poetic ambition or warning of its imminent destruction.¹⁵⁸ Yet it also highlights a crucial link between Spenser’s poetry and his ladies, including chiefly Elizabeth but also a range of others—muses, patrons, lovers. As the *Ruines* passage reminds us, Leicester’s garden was created for the queen’s 1575 visit, to give Elizabeth as monarch a private space in which to recreate and, in a sense, to give Elizabeth as object of marital machinations a symbolic setting in which she might figure as Leicester’s Petrarchan lady. In a strikingly similar way, each of the Spenserian spaces I examine above also presents itself, in one way or another, as surroundings for a lady.

Kenilworth garden was conceived primarily as a setting for Leicester’s wooing of Elizabeth. Spenser’s pleasant places are, jointly and severally, doing richer and more various work with space, plot, poetics, and rhetoric. Like Elizabeth at Kenilworth, however, in Spenser’s *locus amoenus* there persists always the lady at the center—be she wrong or right, physically at hand or present only in regretful memory: Laura,

432; Luborsky “Allusive” 39). Of course, as Greenlaw later pointed out in another context, “any identification is misleading in principle because historical references cannot be sustained: a character like Arthur may in different episodes suggest different courtiers (Leicester early in the poem, Essex later), but in most he will suggest no one at all” (paraphrased in Teskey “Arthur” 71). Allan H. Gilbert suggests that any Raleigh reference exists in a late-revised part of Book III, and thus “there is the less reason to find his biography symbolized in the earlier and later adventures of Timias” (638; cf. Oram “Raleghs” 350). Therefore my identification of Timias as Leicester in the *Ruines* passage, and perhaps in the Belpheobe episode of Book III, need not imply this identity is total or consistent. For another dimension of historical reference, see also Galyon.

¹⁵⁸ R. D. Brown finds that Spenser “implies through contrast a connection between this garden and his own poetry,” by way of the apparent reference to the making of *The Faerie Queene* (126).

Rosalind, Errour, Una, Hellenore, Acrasia, Belphebe, the Muses, Venus, Nature, the fourth Grace.¹⁵⁹ The first section of this chapter noted a few of the many well-known and fraught references to Elizabeth in *The Shepheardes Calender*; *The Faerie Queene*, too, is famous for its praise of Elizabeth in the guise of Gloriana, the absent title character, as well as several other personas such as Belphebe, but also for its veiled and not-so-veiled critiques of the queen under still other names, such as Diana/Cynthia in the *Mutabilitie Cantos*.¹⁶⁰ Apart from Belphebe, few if any of these women in the scenes I have discussed directly index Elizabeth herself, although Gloriana always hovers over the poem as an implicit point of reference. Acidale, however, offers an exception.

In Book VI, concerned with its titular virtue of courtesy and the related practice of courtliness, Acidale is presented as preferable even to Venus' court, although it also becomes a sort of court, because here are her "handmaides," her ladies in waiting:

Those were the Graces, daughters of delight,
Handmaides of Venus, which are wont to haunt
Vppon this hill, and daunce there day and night:
.....

But that faire one,
That in the midst was placed parauaunt,
Was she to whom that shepheard pypt alone,
That made him pipe so merrily, as neuer none.

She was to weete that iolly Shepheards lasse,
Which piped there vnto that merry rout:
That iolly shepheard, which there piped, was
Poore Colin Clout (who knowes not Colin Clout?)
He pypt apace, whilst they him daunst about.
Pype iolly shepheard, pype thou now apace

¹⁵⁹ Linda Gregerson observes that, according to Raleigh's commendatory sonnets, it is the Petrarch of courtly love rather than an epic poet who is the ultimate Spenserian "predecessor"—and subject of "critique" ("FQ" 215-16; "Sexual" 180-82). Cheney also notes the importance of Petrarca as a career model and finds that, in the four-phase career he identifies, Spenser's poetic "'Other' recurrently turns out to be feminine: Dame Nature in pastoral; his queen in epic; his wife in love lyric; and the form of woman herself in hymn" (*Famous* 6-7). Cf. Harrison 253; Oram "Audiences" 533.

¹⁶⁰ See Letter to Raleigh ll. 35-37; note [134] above. See also e.g. Gregerson "Sexual" 195; McCabe "Plato" 441; Villeponteaux; McLane 28; Lewis *Sixteenth* 383-84; following note.

Vnto thy loue, that made thee low to lout;
 Thy Loue is present there with thee in place,
 Thy Loue is there aduaunst to be another Grace.

.....

Sunne of the world, great glory of the sky,
 That all the earth doest lighten with thy rayes,
 Great Gloriana, greatest Maiesty,
 Pardon thy shepherd, mongst so many layes,
 As he hath sung of thee in all his dayes,
 To make one minime of thy poore handmayd,
 And vnderneath thy feete to place her prayse;
 That when thy glory shall be farre displayd
 To future age of her this mention may be made. (VI.x.15-16, 28)

In describing the pastoral court of Acidale, Spenser also apologizes to Elizabeth-Gloriana for even briefly praising “thy poore handmayd”—Colin’s “Loue,” and presumably Spenser’s wife, Elizabeth Boyle, courted and celebrated in the 1595 *Amoretti* sonnet sequence—and for thus locating someone other than herself at the center of this superlatively pleasant place.¹⁶¹ This apology highlights an interesting fact: as discussed in the Introduction to this dissertation, as and demonstrated by Langham’s letter and Spenser’s scenes presented above, in order to function as a quasi-paradise or *hortus*

¹⁶¹ Cf. D. L. Miller “Kathleen” 15; D. Cheney; Kinney *Strategies* 108. Nohrnberg also suggests that since “she is said to have inspired the piping of Colin Clout, [she] therefore corresponds to the Grace of Art,” confirming the *June* echo’s signal of attention to poetic craft (*Analogy* 702). Indeed, Berger names her “Rosalind” and argues that in the Acidale episode Spenser is returning to, recapitulating, and reinscribing the *Calender* in its entirety (“especially [. . .] *Aprill*”): its pastoral conventions, its rhetorical rhythms, and all its concerns with the art and “artifice” of poetry (*Revisionary Play* 239, 236-42; see also Tonkin 138-41; Kelsey and Peterson 255; Wilson-Okamura “Problems” 8). “The past and present are juxtaposed as promise and fulfillment in a single poetic form, and the oscillation between them is sustained by Spenser’s keeping unworked pastoral elements in the later vision” (*Revisionary* 237). But it is not just Rosalind; “at the center of the ring of Graces is no single creature but a richly complicated knot of all the figures the poet has ever meditated on—Rosalind, Elizabeth, Amoret, Belphoebe, Florimell, Britomart, Venus, Psyche” (241; see also P. Cheney “CCCHA” 247; Bellamy 175; Weixel 199). And it cannot last: “Thus poetry, having triumphed, must dissolve its triumph again and again to show that it is still engaged in the ongoing process of life where experience is not yet ordered. [. . .] the vision must be bounded and shaped by the sense that it is not reality; and it must yield to reality at last” (*Revisionary* 242). Or, as Berger says earlier, “his Muses reveal *what is* as well as what should or could be (49).

conclusus, a conventional *locus amoenus* seemingly *must* have a lady at its center. Eve, Mary, the courtly beloved, and their varied shadows all take turns, defining the space about them almost as directly as Spenser's Nature does hers. But what if they do not give way gracefully, but instead seem to jostle—as Gloriana, Colin's Loue, and the hundred (other) naked ladies seem to do—or even to compete more strenuously?

In the *Theatre Epigrams*, Petrarca's Laura takes pride of place, except when she is refigured as worldly transience—or when the fountain that figures her is surrounded by nymphs and muses. In *June*, Rosalind as the unfaithful beloved is the nominal source of Colin's despair, but the poem's claiming of Parnassus would seem also to prefer, and to promote, the muses as its ladies of honor. As mentioned above, *The Faerie Queene* is full of positive and negative figures of female power, not limited to those presented here. The passage from Acidale further supports the idea that with any given instantiation of *June*'s vision comes a choice: muses, love, or majesty. The paradise can celebrate only one lady at a time.¹⁶²

A further illustration of this point arises outside Spenser's poetry, at another contemporary garden. Lyveden New Bield is the unfinished last work of the ingenious architect and staunch recusant Thomas Tresham, probably designed at the very end of Elizabeth's reign.¹⁶³ The cross-shaped garden lodge encodes various symbols of Christ. The massive and equally-unfinished garden would have been overlooked by the lodge if the latter's planned third and fourth stories had been completed. What is left of the garden features four mounts, a partial moat, and the trace remains of "circular beds"

¹⁶² Some ladies are multiple, as in the muses, the Graces, and the ladies who dance, but in these cases they fill one collective role and offer one type of gendered inspiration. While Acidale delights in its nymphs and ladies, the Graces take pride of place, and among the Graces Colin's Loue receives the fullest attention.

See Donald Cheney's subtle readings of this and similar moments (7-9, 17-18, 25-26). Cf. Tonkin 125, 141; Bernard *Ceremonies* 8, 108; D. Cheney; Kinney *Strategies* 108.

¹⁶³ Construction ceased on Tresham's death in September 1605 (*Lyveden* 3).

that the National Trust now gestures towards with labyrinth-shaped mowing. The site is impressive, but the meadow that was once a circular garden, now a maze, also recalls the razing of the Bower of Bliss.¹⁶⁴ According to the National Trust, Tresham's records speak of roses to be planted in the circular beds. Roses are a symbol of the Virgin Mary, and the irrepressibly symbol-making, Catholic Tresham would have been one of those who resisted the celebrity worship of the Virgin Queen because it displaced the cult of the Virgin Mary.¹⁶⁵ As in Spenser's epic, there can only be one lady in the absolute center.¹⁶⁶

Spenser's works, however, cease their rewritings of the *locus amoenus* with neither Mary nor Elizabeth, but with Nature. The Nature of Mutabilitie is presented almost as a Venus Genetrix with life springing up about her: *Natura Genetrix?*¹⁶⁷ This feat suggests that, contra Leicester's efforts at Kenilworth, and in accord with Colin's hints on Acidale, it is the lady herself who makes the space around her by establishing its character and thus its moral and aesthetic order (or disorder). For that matter, Spenser has been hinting all along at his ladies' power to create or define their spaces: Laura's fragile paradise, Rosalind's squandered one; the muses' paradise of poetry; Error's false paradise, Fradubio (via Duessa)'s fearful one; Una's tame and Hellenore's lascivious groves; Belphebe's wild bower and Acrasia's treacherous one; Venus' fruitful garden and majestic temple; the Graces' Acidale; finally Nature's pavilion,

¹⁶⁴ On labyrinths, see Chapter 3 (cf. Moore; Fletcher). The archaeological remnants of the circular beds were discovered in 2010 by a curator reexamining aerial surveillance photos taken by the Luftwaffe, now in the US National Archives ("The Tresham Code").

¹⁶⁵ See Gregerson "Sexual Politics" 193.

¹⁶⁶ Tresham, like Langham, has an unexpected connection with Spenser studies, for it was his letter to his Catholic compatriot Lewis, Lord Mordaunt, that provided contemporary evidence, in the form of witty and sympathetic gossip from a reader of poetry and a victim of state violence, of the calling in of *Complaints* (Peterson).

¹⁶⁷ See e.g. Anderson *Allegorical* 136; Ramachandran "Lucretian" 382. As Spenser tells us, the image derives from Chaucer's *Parliament of Fowls*, and thence from Alan de Lille/ Alanus de Insulis (Curtius 117ff; E. Fowler *Literary Character* 240-41).

where “th’earth her self of her owne motion” furnishes forth a glorious living pattern. Nature offers a Marian alternative seemingly more potent than that of Elizabeth. Indeed, in his *diminutio* on her incomparability the narrator is only able to “compare” Nature to the transfigured Christ (VII.vii.5-9). Does this move reinscribe a divine image where the queen sought to displace it? Or does it offer something new, a way out of the limitations and risks of the *locus amoenus*, by transferring power—moral, aesthetic, poetic—away from the lover and the lady and to the nature of the place itself?

By removing his poet’s paradise from the grasp of the human (and elfin) world, Spenser risks losing Colin’s own hard-won access to it. At the same time, he takes it out of the reach of the human politics that so troubled him. It seems to me that these paradisaic negotiations mark yet another version of the tensions between control and collaboration in the Spenserian career that I have hinted at the first part of this chapter and will extend below. A vision of solitary poetic success (or failure) is balanced by the need for collaborative poetic practice: previously with Spenser’s literary forebears and fellow-laborers; here with the ladies figured in his poems, who in the world outside of them were themselves so frequently recipients of his dedications and presumed targets of his hoped-for patronage. Spenser can and does praise them, as his setting and his ambitions require—and, at least in the later instalments, seems to enjoy and celebrate this poetic task. But he can and does also adjust the nature of the setting to suit his poetic needs, while reserving the right to shift the identity and the characterization of the lady, and even to supplant her with his own, or with the power of nature herself.¹⁶⁸

¹⁶⁸ This poetic authority only extends so far, however, if Spenser is to maintain the goodwill and collaboration of his patrons and muses. The famous example is the calling in of the *Complaints*, which threatened to undo the royal favors Spenser had earned with *The Faerie Queene* (e.g. Peterson 8, quoting Tresham). See also Highley on Spenser’s reaction to this disfavor (94), and Oram on the “world of limits” or “circumstances that he cannot control” in the 1596 epic (“Human” 50, 49).

Coda: Spenser's Vision and Publishing Practice

The two main parts of this chapter discuss the poetic sources of Spenser's early vision of paradise and the development of that vision throughout his later career, tracing its destruction and its reconstitution in negotiation, it is suggested, with various representations of women both as sources of poetic inspiration and as rivals for power within the poetic fiction and in the world of patronage that governs it. Each part has hinted at connections between Spenser's poetic visions and his practice of presenting those visions, which comprises not only poetic craft but also the printing projects that brought them to a public audience. In this closing section I will make more explicit what I understand to be Spenser's approach to publishing practice; the sources of that approach, which parallel those of his early vision; and the practice's own development in Spenser's later career. In so doing I call for renewed attention to the *Theatre for Worldlings* as foundational to Spenser's career in more ways than have previously been examined.¹⁶⁹

¹⁶⁹ MacFaul claims "we can still find almost all of Spenser's later preoccupations in embryo in the *Theatre*" as text, but does not examine the bibliographical evidence. Jonathan Crewe, whose work I encountered late in the present study, anticipates several of the following points in his claims for Spenser's "'theatricality'" and thus multivocality, again with a focus on the text rather than its production (92): "the *volume* rather than the poem may have to be taken as the basic unit of poetic production for Spenser as his career unfolds; [. . .] appropriation of a multitude of voices and roles[. . .] becomes possible on the scale achieved by Spenser only when the *volume* is conceived in this theatrical manner" (100). Crewe's readings of Epigrams 3-4 include evidence for the "redeem[ing]" power of "poetic language" and "A version of pastoral comprising *many* Muses, summoning up or fashioning a sympathetic chorus of female voices, and founding an exclusive, sympathizing community of noble women?" (108-10). Cf. also Friedland's conclusion: "The *Theatre* is one more indication of how closely knit and of a piece is the great corpus of European Renaissance literature ("Introduction" xvii).

“So many strange things hapned me to see”:¹⁷⁰ *The Theatre and Publishing Practice*

As discussed in the first part of this chapter, Spenser’s original source for *June*’s paradisaical vision was Clément Marot’s translation of Petrarca’s Canzone 323, printed as the Epigrams in Jan van der Noot’s *Theatre for Worldlings*. Spenser seems to have been engaged to translate Marot’s work and Du Bellay and van der Noot’s sonnets for the English edition of the *Theatre*, perhaps through the offices of Richard Mulcaster, Spenser’s schoolmaster and a friend of van der Noot and others of the Dutch literary community in London.¹⁷¹ The second part of this chapter has demonstrated the enduring significance of *June*’s vision, derived from Epigrams 3 and 4, for Spenser throughout his career. Clearly Spenser was reading *A Theatre for Worldlings*—or at least his part in it—very closely, and found in it an inspiration for what Michael Bath identifies as “the visionary scope” of much of his later work.¹⁷² What might he have been reading besides the text itself? If he chose to pay attention to the whole of the *Theatre* as book object, and as publishing project, what might he have learned? Pursuing these questions requires a detailed understanding of the history of the *Theatre* both as text and as a collaborative artistic and publishing project. The *Theatre*’s textual history locates Spenser’s *June* within a long and complex development of ideas surrounding the Petrarchan *locus amoenus*, as discussed above. The *Theatre* as project situates Spenser at the cutting edge of early modern publishing and the inner circle of Dutch Reformation art.¹⁷³

Recall the structure of the *Theatre*, with front matter including dedications and

¹⁷⁰ *A Theatre for Worldlings* Epigram 1.2.

¹⁷¹ See Forster “Translator” 33, *Janus* 57; van Dorsten 79.

¹⁷² Bath notes that the word “vision” itself may be traced to Marot’s title *Visions de Pétrarque* for what became the epigrams, and draws connections with emblem literature, medieval dream visions, and religious revelation (86-87).

¹⁷³ See Forster *Janus* 61; van Dorsten 84-85, 88; Jongenelen and Parsons 235-38; Hadfield “Translations” 146-49.

commendatory poems, then the main text of emblematic poems and images of the world's vanity, followed by extensive prose commentary that offers moral teaching and criticism of the Church of Rome in an increasingly apocalyptic mode.¹⁷⁴ The English version, *A Theatre for Worldlings*, was the last of three small octavo editions, all published in London, the first two by John Day in 1568 and the third by Henry Bynneman in 1569.¹⁷⁵ The first edition appeared in Dutch under the short title *Het Theatre oft Toon-neel* and featured van der Noot's prose commentary as well as his translations of the poems by Marot and Joachim Du Bellay from the French alongside his original sonnets.¹⁷⁶ Van der Noot, who also wrote the prose dedications, is himself a major Dutch Renaissance poet and was at the time, along with numbers of his artistic and poetic colleagues, a refugee from the wars of the Reformation.¹⁷⁷ The second

¹⁷⁴ See Forster "Translator" 28. The poems and images appear to be the moral and artistic heart of the book for van der Noot, though the commentary may have held more appeal for the audience (MacFaul 150; Forster *Janus* 51-52, 55; Zaalberg 252-53). J. A. van Dorsten observes that "paradoxically, the militant Van der Noot's ultimate message is one of unity and peace[; . . .] the long prose commentary [is] borrowed largely from [John] Bale and [Johann Heinrich] Bullinger" (78; see Bath 87n). Carl Rasmussen notes that "Rome is not the focus of his attack," but "an allegory of vanity" (16). Van der Noot became a Catholic again later in life and the 1572 German edition removes attacks on the papacy (Jongelen and Parsons 237-38; Weevers 68; Friedland "Introduction" xii).

¹⁷⁵ These dates are deduced by scholars from internal evidence but cannot be absolutely proven (Gaskell, private communication). For further details see Jackson, Stein 109-14, Bath 81-82, Friedland "Illustrations" 109; Evenden 95-99.

¹⁷⁶ Forster *Janus* 50. See also MacFaul 152; D. Rasmussen 230; Stein 175; Davis. Stein notes that van der Noot used Petrarca's Italian as well (112n).

¹⁷⁷ See Forster *Janus* 49ff; Friedland "Introduction" xiv; Weevers 67-68. According to Theodoor Weevers, van der Noot's poetic ambitions were similar to Spenser's:

His unfinished epic *Olympias* is a neo-Platonic journey of the soul, couched in an allegorical form derived from the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* (1499 [see Chapter 2 of this dissertation])—or rather from its French version[. . .] As an attempt at an allegorical epic of the type of which *The Faerie Queene* is the acknowledged masterpiece, it fails because, speaking generally, it is as nebulous, both as regards imagery and allegorical significance, as Spenser's epic is graphic and definite, although one passage, at least has a certain apocalyptic grandeur. (72-73)

Weevers notes, however, that "By a curious irony of history the poet who had striven so assiduously for literary fame in three languages was almost forgotten within ten years

edition was in French—*Le Theatre*—with Marot and Du Bellay's poems appearing in their original French and van der Noot's apparently self-translated commentary.¹⁷⁸ For the third, English edition, the poems were translated by Spenser and the prose by one Theodore Roest, probably another Dutch immigrant.¹⁷⁹ The Dutch edition is dedicated to Rogier Martens (Roger Martin), the Lord Mayor of London and another Dutch immigrant; the dedication is dated 18 September 1568. The other editions are dedicated to the queen, and the date of the French dedication, 28 October 1568, is the day after Martens left office.¹⁸⁰ The prefatory poems were written by other Dutch poets living in London, in Latin, Dutch, and French, depending on the edition. These bare facts are the sum of scholarly consensus to date regarding the *Theatre's* print history.

Bibliographically, the book is interesting particularly for its illustrations. While opinions differ as to whether to call the *Theatre* "an emblem book," it is an early English example of that sort of "emblematic" publication combining verse, image, and text as objects of meditation and instruction.¹⁸¹ The illustrations also provide clues to some curious features of the production history. Although they are not as skillfully crafted as contemporary Continental work, the etchings in the Dutch and French editions were the first etched book illustrations printed in England.¹⁸² The woodcuts are nearly identical to the etchings except in details attributable to the variations in the medium and the frequent horizontal reversal to be expected when a printed image is copied by hand

of his death" and only rediscovered at the turn of the twentieth century (68).

¹⁷⁸ Forster *Janus* 51.

¹⁷⁹ Forster *Janus* 56-57; Friedland "Introduction" x.

¹⁸⁰ Friedland "Illustrations" 109, "Introduction" x; Stein 112-13, 173; van Dorsten 76; Forster *Janus* 51; Bath 80-1. See note [44] above.

¹⁸¹ Harold L. Stein calls it "apparently the first emblem book printed in England" (111). See also C. Rasmussen 21-22n; Orth and Cooper 57; Thorp 130; Forster *Janus* 50; Hodnett *Marcus* 41; Heninger "Typographical" 33-34; Bath 73, 86-87; Tung; Friedland "Introduction" x-xi, xvi-xvii.

¹⁸² Griffiths *Stuart* 13; Hodnett *Image* 40; Bath 83.

onto a new printing surface.¹⁸³ A standard bibliographical assumption would be that the expensive etchings were made first, perhaps for small editions of presentation copies in Dutch and French, and the woodcuts were subsequently copied from them for a cheaper, wider-circulating English edition.¹⁸⁴ This turns out not to be the case. Bath has convincingly suggested that all the Epigram images derive from a manuscript of the Marot text illustrated in watercolor, dated c. 1540-c. 1560 and currently in the Stirling Maxwell collection at the University of Glasgow.¹⁸⁵ Bath also demonstrates that the order of transmission seems to be manuscript, then woodcut, then etching. The most obvious evidence is the lady of Epigram 6, whose form in the woodcut is much closer to the manuscript and may even be traced from the painting.¹⁸⁶ Finally, it is likely that van der Noot and not the publishers owned both plates and cuts, since both appeared in

¹⁸³ See e.g. Griffiths *Printmaking*. The etchings were likely printed for Day by a specialist rolling-press printer (Gaskell 216-17). “Nearly identical” is a fair assessment of the set of images as a whole, but some are more equal than others (Bath 75; Jackson xix).

¹⁸⁴ A typical description is “woodcuts copied from the engravings” (Stein 175).

¹⁸⁵ Glasgow MS. SMM2; see Bath 75-77. The spelling of the manuscript’s French is that of early printed editions of Marot’s *Visions de Pétrarque* (1533-34), while the *Theatre* follows later editions’ spelling conventions; “the style of both pictures and handwriting makes [a date] as late as 1568 wholly implausible” (75-76n). Variations among the images are more easily explained by the constraints of combining two manuscript scenes into one woodcut (76-77). Glasgow University Library gives “second quarter of the 16th century” (Thorpe 130). Myra Orth and Richard Cooper discuss a manuscript with related illustrations, perhaps from the same workshop (Berlin Staatsbibliothek ms Phill. 1926; see Petrarca *Triumphe*). They date both the Berlin and Glasgow manuscripts “Vers 1560” because the Berlin inscription appears to celebrate a 1562 wedding; the Glasgow illustrations derive but are not copied directly from it (54-57). Orth and Cooper confirm Bath’s claim that the manuscript precedes the images: “le style des aquarelles et de l’écriture paraissent français plutôt que flamand ou anglais” (59). However, they note that the late J. B. Trapp disagreed with Bath’s dating and order, putting the two manuscripts around 1570 (59n). Trapp appears more circumspect in his published comment, claiming “these manuscripts are clearly related to the etchings and woodcuts” and dating them to “the third quarter of the sixteenth century” (17). In his study Trapp mentions a Paduan manuscript of the early sixteenth century that seems to me to be related to the Berlin and Glasgow images (25, 78 [Figure 19: Bibliotheca Bodmeriana MS 130, f. 107r]).

¹⁸⁶ Bath 75; 84-85.

subsequent Continental printings of his work.¹⁸⁷ If, according to Bath's evidence, the woodcuts for the 1569 English edition were designed first, based on the manuscript, and the etchings for the 1568 Dutch and French editions in turn made from the woodcuts, then, I argue, van der Noot must have envisioned and perhaps commissioned a multipronged publishing project from the beginning, with multiple editions in multiple languages, two printers (not counting whoever owned and operated the rolling press for the etchings), at least two artists, and several poets all collaborating to produce the final product.¹⁸⁸

Details of the editions provide further evidence of their integrated production. The images copied from or inspired by the Glasgow manuscript would have been drawn onto wood blocks by one artist or craftsman and carved into the wood by another. The original artist may also have designed the etchings, perhaps with assistance from another craftsman more familiar with that technique, as discussed below. Since the source of the illustrations for the Sonets lies elsewhere than the Glasgow manuscript, it is possible that those etchings were prepared before the woodcuts in the more normal fashion. Woodcuts take longer to produce than etchings, and—even if the six Epigram woodcuts were completed first—the long process of carving the fourteen Sonet illustrations may have contributed to the gap between the French and English editions, which has tended to be attributed to the translation time alone.¹⁸⁹ While the Dutch edition bears the hallmarks of a first edition, with the

¹⁸⁷ Bath 82; Jackson xx. Van der Noot claims responsibility for the images in the text (Hodnett *Marcus* 42). Gaskell observes that the prints in the 1572 German edition (printed in Köln) show almost no deterioration of the blocks and “are if anything better printed than in the English” (private communication; see also Friedland “Illustrations” 108, van Dorsten 79).

¹⁸⁸ Cf. Friedland: “The English *Theatre* was well planned, soundly compiled, and attractively arrayed” (Introduction xii).

¹⁸⁹ See Forster “Translator.”

preliminary signature containing the front matter signed separately so it could be printed last, the texts of the French and English editions seem to have been fully planned before the type was set: thus the “second and third editions” of the Dutch text are in fact the first (and only) editions in the other languages.¹⁹⁰

The timing of the various editions also suggests a coherent plan rather than a series of ad-hoc republications. If the Dutch edition’s dedication to Martens as Lord Mayor of London “expired” on the day of his leaving office, the French edition’s dedication to Elizabeth the following day might be understood as extending its protection under a new patron.¹⁹¹ These editions are also less extensively signed on the illustrated pages and lack running titles, perhaps an aesthetic decision to avoid visual clutter.¹⁹² My observations suggest that the Dutch edition, at least, may be more finely printed, on finer paper, than the English and perhaps the French as well.¹⁹³ The English

¹⁹⁰ *Le Theatre* is signed A-N⁸ O⁴; *A Theatre*, A-R⁸ S². My own observations are here confirmed by Stein’s collation (172-5). Strictly speaking the French edition is inconclusive; B1 contains “two quotations” (Stein 174), from Saints Paul and Jerome (“2.Tim.3; Prologue sur Esai.Tome 4”), under the heading “TOVT SE PASSE, SANS L’AMOVRE DE DIEV.” These do not appear in the other editions; B1 in the English edition carries the end of the dedication and the corresponding A1 in the Dutch edition is blank. *Het Theatre* is signed *A⁸ A-M⁸ N⁴ (Stein 173).

¹⁹¹ Both editions are often identified as small runs of presentation copies for reasons largely unstated, likely including the scarcity of surviving copies, presumed expense and refinement of intaglio illustration, and timely (or opportunistic) dedication to powerful patrons in sequence (e.g. Stein 111-13; Forster *Janus* 51; Crewe 95).

¹⁹² As Harold Stein observes, both Day and Bynneman omit catchwords on the illustrated pages, which makes the pages visually cleaner—and imposition considerably easier—and which seems in keeping with the spare mise-en-page (173-75). Gaskell also suggests the lighter signing in Day’s editions could be to avoid obvious registration errors between plates and type, since Bynneman’s signing is consistent throughout (private communication). Further research could compare the printers’ typical signing practices. In any case, several French copies do not escape glaring registration errors.

¹⁹³ Although I have found evidence of sloppy printing in the French edition, Gaskell observes that the paper in the British Library copy of *Le Theatre* is “much finer” than that of its English copies, and “took good impressions” of the “lovely etchings” (private communication). It is, of course, entirely possible that quality amongst copies of *Le Theatre* (and perhaps within each edition) varies. The paper stock within editions might also vary; I have not yet had the opportunity to make detailed comparisons.

edition, as expected, appears to be an attempt to capitalize on previous work by publishing a cheaper version for a wider audience.¹⁹⁴

The French edition shows further signs of an unusual and perhaps rushed order of production. The printing of the etchings is in some cases much poorer in quality than the Dutch edition, and I have discovered evidence in several copies that the letterpress French text of the poems, on the versos of signatures B, C, and D, was printed after the etchings on the rectos.¹⁹⁵ This is not considered a best practice since there is a greater risk of marring the relatively expensive intaglio print in the subsequent letterpress process.¹⁹⁶ However, it seems to have happened in the French edition of the *Theatre*. This may have been a midcourse attempt to speed production; it also provides still further evidence of the holistic planning of the three editions, with a single order placed at the rolling press shop for the Dutch edition (intaglio on previously printed letterpress) and the French (intaglio on blank paper, subsequently to be printed). The French edition seems to have been time-sensitive in some respect, with its aforementioned dedication to the queen on the day of Martin's leaving office.¹⁹⁷

¹⁹⁴ Stein 113; Preston 691.

¹⁹⁵ This conclusion regarding printing order is based on my comparison of the Folger copy of the Dutch poems and a Bodleian facsimile of *Het Theatre* with the Folger, Bodleian, and British Library copies of *Le Theatre*, as well as an online facsimile of *Le theatre* at the Hertzog August Bibliothek (HAB). The Bodleian copy of the French edition shows most clearly the signature overprinted in letterpress on a prior intaglio print; raking light reveals the type impressions that would have disappeared had the paper subsequently passed through the rolling press. Several French copies contain wrinkles in the pages that appear to postdate the intaglio but precede the letterpress as they interfere with the smooth printing of certain lines of verse; Dutch copies show smooth type, wrinkled images. Finally, when intaglio images are printed, the paper is forced into the etched lines by the pressure of the rolling press; this has caused those areas of the page, sunken on the verso, not to take the letterpress ink. The clearest example of this is the negative image of the ship's pennant of Epigram 2 appearing in the letters entitling Epigram 3 in the HAB copy.

¹⁹⁶ See Gaskell 231.

¹⁹⁷ The existence of the etchings themselves may point to time sensitivity. Etching was the most likely form of illustration to be completed by the artist alone, without the

Any study of the influence of the Epigrams on Spenser's experience must also consider their situation as part of this larger and well-integrated publishing project. More specifically, the longer and more complex history of the Epigram images, derived from the Glasgow manuscript and thus *prior* to the project and to Spenser's translation of the text, suggests that they must be an integral part of any study of that text. There are several indications that the illustrations influenced both Spenser's conception of the *June* landscape and the design of the *Shepherd's Calendar* illustrations. For example, in the original Petrarchan context it is not clear whether the six visions, notionally seen from the speaker's window, are to be understood as happening within the world of the poem or in an imagined space. The artists of the *Theatre's* Epigram illustrations, however, have clearly set even the most fantastic events in a relatively realistic and apparently contiguous landscape. At least half of the Epigrams take place in the "yong grene wood" of Epigram 3, and indeed the water in the foreground of illustrations 1, 3, and 5 appears to be part of the spring of Epigram 4, while the fallen "Laurell" also appears in illustration 5, the phoenix, along with the sea of Epigram 2.¹⁹⁸ These connections warrant *June's* linking of the texts of Epigrams 3 and 4 into a continuous scene or plot. Most of the images also feature tiny background images of figures, ships, or towns, as was conventional in Dutch illustrations of the period.¹⁹⁹ A similar enmeshing of poetic subject and pastoral background appears in the *Calendar* illustrations. Finally, while Epigram 3's phrase "of Paradise" can be read as describing the laurel's beauty by analogy (the tree was so beautiful the speaker thought it belonged

intermediary of a skilled block-cutter or trained engraver. It was also the fastest, since designs were composed directly on the plate in a manner like sketching, and the acid bath carved lines in minutes that would take an engraver weeks or months (Griffiths *Printmaking*). Etchings could have been added to the plan if the blocks were delayed.

¹⁹⁸ Bath notes that "The style of the poems is full of deictic terms which continually insist on the presence of the observer, and the point of view of the seeing eye" (86).

¹⁹⁹ See Hodnett *Marcus* 31, 42.

in Paradise) rather than as making a claim for its setting (the tree was so beautiful the speaker thought it, and he, were *in* Paradise) the artists' choice to retain the woven hurdle container surrounding the tree in the Glasgow manuscript, and to add a footbridge crossing the foreground water, makes the illustrated setting more explicitly a garden and thus the latter interpretation more likely.²⁰⁰ The laurel tree becomes available to Spenser as an image of Paradise itself. Insofar as it is a "homely" image, it becomes all the more appropriate in a paradise of "shepherds" (*June* 82, 81).

These details suggest more subtle and nuanced—and more thematically direct—connections between *Theatre* and *Calender* images and texts than has been recognized. Scholars have long assumed that the general presentation of the *Theatre* images inspired those of the *Calender*, since these may be the only two instances of poems accompanied by original illustrations in sixteenth-century England.²⁰¹ However, there are several other illustrated books that offered similar models, sometimes far closer to the *mise-en-page* of the *Calender*, such as editions of Virgil and Jacopo Sannazaro.²⁰² The emblematic format alone does not capture the extent of the *Theatre's* influence.

Instead, I believe there may be an even closer, unrecognized connection between the *Theatre* and the *Calender* images, as suggested by the similarities of detail and the closeness of conceit discussed above. A further striking link emerges from close scrutiny of the Epigram 4 images alongside the *Calender* woodcut for *Aprill*, the fourth month (F11v). In the lower left corner of each scene is the strikingly similar form of a

²⁰⁰ Present-day gardeners decry the apparent use of hurdles for a planter, but Eburne and Taylor note that woven coppice was among the materials commonly used to construct raised beds (108). Roland Mushat Frye notes that the wall of Eden was "sometimes of plaited wickerwork" in medieval depictions (236). Note that a similar horticultural marker appears in *The Teares of the Muses*, in which the "pleasant groues" of Helicon "planted were with paines" (277).

²⁰¹ Heninger "Typographical" 33-34; Luborsky "Allusive" 30, 41ff; Bruce Smith 79-85.

²⁰² Luborsky "Allusive" 43-44, "Illustrations" 14ff; Patterson 106-32; Heninger "Typographical"; Galbraith 25ff.

spring, its water streaming out of a rock or miniature escarpment in a narrow curving arc. Where the muses sat in the Epigram, a standing shepherd now pipes, in keeping with *Aprill*'s more confident framing of images and ambitions that motivate Colin's despair in *June*.²⁰³ The image of the spring itself derives from the Glasgow manuscript and would appear to be the visual analogue of what John Hollander has identified as Spenser's "signature" line, his signal of the scene of poetic making, beginning with Epigram 4: "Vnto the gentle sounding of the waters fall" (7). Hollander finds echoes of this line reverberating through *Aprill*, *June*—where birds "To the waters fall their tunes attemper right" (8)—and on to *Acidale*.²⁰⁴ Here, in the pleasant places of *Aprill* and the *Theatre*, the woodcuts also tune in, it seems, adding another dimension to the early tempering of Spenser's song.

This direct connection of the images argues strongly for direct connection of the artists of the *Theatre* and the *Calender*. The artist of the *Theatre* etchings has been (at times) confidently identified as Marcus Gheeraerts, but Louis Friedland demonstrated long ago that there is very little evidence there. Friedland's study retains certain errors, but I find his suggestion of Lucas de Heere, a friend of van der Noot's who wrote poems for the Dutch and French *Theatre* (and is credited with introducing the sonnet to Dutch literature), and in 1568 had lived in London longer than Gheeraerts, far more convincing.²⁰⁵ Along with the artists' divergent approaches to shading and texture, the

²⁰³ See note [75] above.

²⁰⁴ See notes [88], [106], [108], [139] above.

²⁰⁵ Friedland "Illustrations" 109, 112-13, 118-20; Bath 78. See also Forster *Janus* 51-52; Luborsky and Ingram 600; Preston 691; Jackson xviii; Hearn. Edward Hodnett pointedly disagrees, although I believe his conclusions are hindered by the presumption that the etchings preceded the woodcuts—whose existence he cannot account for (*Marcus* 15, 42-45; see also Smit and Vermeer 45. Bath follows Hodnett and finds that the etchings are "entirely in keeping with what we know of Gheeraerts' working practices," and noting "characteristic" deployment of "enhancements and changes of detail" as well as a "space-coding for temporal sequence" familiar from

remote faces and poised figures of de Heere's women seem to me the most telling points of similarity, especially when contrasted with Gheeraerts' animated features and muscular forms.

Ruth Luborsky's extensive study of the *Calender* illustrations still stands as the definitive account, as does her determination that there are multiple artists at work, most displaying a lower level of skill than those of the *Theatre*.²⁰⁶ The differences within the *Calender* are great enough that, despite the possibility for deterioration between block-designer and block-cutter, it seems unlikely that one set of designs could have been so variously represented even by three block cutters of vastly different techniques and skills. However, despite the clear differences in hand, style, and skill amongst the *Calender* woodcuts, I note in several instances a set of formal similarities—the attitudes of the figures and details of their faces and attire noted above; the approach to landscape and vegetation, and above all the distinctive rolling clouds enwreathing the signs of the zodiac—that suggest an attempt to follow a consistent program or design.²⁰⁷

Thus I propose that one chief artist designed at least the first three blocks, which Luborsky admires, and perhaps contributed a sketch or scheme for the design as a whole, but that he was then unable to complete the project. Two subsequent artists, one

Gheeraerts' work as an illustrator of Aesop (84-85). Many literary scholars simply cite either Friedland or Hodnett, the main proponents of de Heere and Gheeraerts, respectively, or Arthur Hind, the recognized authority, whose comments in support of Gheeraerts are brief: "etched in precisely the same manner as his *Æsop*" (that is, Edewaerd de Dene's *Fabulen*); "unquestionably by the same hand" (104, 122-23). See my article in preparation on the bibliography of the *Theatre* images.

²⁰⁶ "Illustrations" 18ff.

²⁰⁷ Luborsky, however, uses the sky to differentiate between different patterns of drawing or cutting ("Illustrations" 18). She later notes that "The zodiac figure in a wreath of clouds" was previously (and commonly) only found in "the traditional calendar," and attributes "authorial direction" and assertive artistic "innovation" to their inclusion in the *Calender* "Illustrations II" (249, 252). The Sambucus images, however, commonly feature such clouds, either empty or with classical gods similarly enshrouded. Again, Gheeraerts' approach to the same image (e.g. Jove in the tale of King Log) creates an entirely different effect (De Dene 36).

more competent than the other (or one artist and two block-cutters, or two of each) designed the remainder of the blocks “after” the first three, or rendered on the blocks the original plan, keeping some formal features but not reproducing the overall style and quality. Why might not the original artist have seen the project through? Perhaps because he returned home from his English exile before the publication was complete?

I suggest Lucas de Heere as both the designer of the *Calender* images and the artist of the *Theatre* who first designed the woodcuts after the Glasgow manuscript and probably drew the etchings afterwards, perhaps with help from Gheeraerts. Close examination of images in the 1564 *Emblemata* of Johannes Sambucus, many of which were also designed by de Heere, reveals similar approaches to the modeling of figures and puffy clouds that I have not observed in other contemporary woodcuts apart from the *Calender*.²⁰⁸ The closer one looks, the more details chime together. Striding singers, reaching harpists, and statuesque ladies in classical attire join the ragged shepherd by his arcing spring. De Heere, like many Dutch exiles, left London to return to the Netherlands by December 1577.²⁰⁹ His departure could explain the differences in quality and style Luborsky identifies amongst the *Calender* woodcuts. Thus the *Theatre* that provided a general model of illustration and several important details for the

²⁰⁸ Friedland “Illustrations” 118-19. This was de Heere’s first book project and he seems to have been inexperienced in the exigencies of designing blocks for cutting. The publisher, Christoph Plantin, commissioned Geoffroy Ballain and Pieter Huys to redraw 80 of 168 blocks (Visser 63, 226-28; Friedland “Illustrations” 119). It is unknown whether this involved wholesale redesign or simply, for example, clarifying a drawing to meet the needs of the block cutters, Gerard Janssen van Kampen, Cornelis Muller, and Arnold Nicolai (Visser xxvii). This makes attribution of any single block design to de Heere alone “difficult” (Friedland “Illustrations” 119). However, I hope to study further the relations among those images featuring the monograms of the block-cutters and those that do not, since these accord with my preliminary stylistic divisions. In any case, I find a style reminiscent of the *Theatre* and/or *Calender* in a sizable proportion of the Sambucus images.

²⁰⁹ See Bracken, Yates *Valois* 31; Cust 360. Hodnett gives January 1577 (*Marcus* 14).

Calender may also have provided Spenser with his lead artist or artistic style.²¹⁰ If so, this connection would further demonstrate the deep and broad influence of the *Theatre* on Spenser's first mature work: in content and form to be sure, but also, perhaps, in its artistic partners, and above all in a mode of collaborative partnership among poets, artists, and printers that van der Noot's publication exemplifies.

The case presented above for the whole project of the *Theatre* as long-standing, coherent, and involving the contributions of multiple writers, artists, and printers in potentially "irregular" circumstances must condition our understandings of its intentions and its influence. The religious and artistic community of the Dutch exiles shared common ambitions and exercised frequent collaboration.²¹¹ Somewhat speculatively, Leonard Forster characterizes van der Noot's *Theatre* as a project of like-minded young men.²¹² Put that way, Spenser's relationship with van der Noot's partnership sounds not unlike his later ones with Gabriel Harvey and other slightly older men who shared poetic aspirations—beginning with the *Calender*.²¹³ Indeed, Henry Bynneman printed not only the English *Theatre* but also van der Noot's poetry collection *Het Bosken* (1570/1) and the Spenser-Harvey letters (1580), indicating an ongoing business relationship with each poet.²¹⁴

²¹⁰ Alastair Fowler's forthcoming *Mind of the Book* (31, 45, 102) confirms Margery Corbett and R. W. Lightbown's findings that authors seem frequently to have had input into and influence over frontispiece designs (1, 35, 45-7). Steven K. Galbraith extends authorial influence to such areas as typography and layout (28-31). See also Zurcher "Printing", Heninger "Typographical" 34; Evenden 97; Luborsky "Illustrations II."

²¹¹ See Forster *Janus* 48ff; van Dorsten 27ff, 60ff. Van Dorsten observes that Anglo-Dutch collaboration on artistic—and political—fronts extends to the death of Sidney (87).

²¹² "The whole book is the work of progressive young people; Van der Noot was not yet thirty, Spenser was still in his teens, and Roest seems also to have been an young man" (*Janus* 57).

²¹³ Maley 17ff; see also Heninger 51.

²¹⁴ Forster *Janus* 49-50; Hadfield "Translation" 148. Bynneman printed Harvey's works (Luborsky "Allusive" 61n). Van der Noot himself was a significant Dutch Renaissance poet; it behooves English-language scholars to better account for Dutch influences as we

While Spenser's works after the *Calender* were not illustrated and do not seem to have undertaken complex visual programs, the collaborative practices learned from van der Noot's project persisted.²¹⁵ Scholars have long noted Spenser's dedication practice, unusual in both its extent and its precision.²¹⁶ In addition to the formal dedication to Elizabeth, some seventeen dedicatory sonnets inscribe *The Faerie Queene* to a complex "Pageant" of titled protectors, recruiting them for his poetic project.²¹⁷ Conversely, Spenser's later collections of multiple titles such as the *Complaints* carry separate and specific dedications to patrons implicated in the subject matter or sought as providers of political or financial support.²¹⁸ Finally, many of Spenser's works are explicitly multivocal and thus either implicitly or fictionally collaborative. The personas of E. K. and the new Poete jointly present the *Calender*, which is itself a set of conversations

trace French and Italian ones. (See C. Rasmussen; Jongenelen and Parsons.)

²¹⁵ The single woodcut of St. George at the end of *The Faerie Queene* Book I was recycled from earlier publications, a common practice (Hamilton Notes 156n). Galbraith notes that a patron, perhaps Leicester, is likely to have funded the *Calender* images (30).

²¹⁶ See e.g. Erickson "Patrons" 111-15; Oram "Paratexts"; Levy; Zurcher "Printing," "Getting"; Owens ch. 1. See also Oram "Seventeen" 103-04, "Audiences" 519; Highley 85-86, 88; and note [44] above.

²¹⁷ See D. Miller *Two* 52; 50-62. David Lee Miller describes "a complex image of social and political hierarchy" in the "sequence" (*Two* 58). William Oram further complicates the account, arguing that the sonnets "form an apology for poetry," praising the noble dedicatees while also instructing them and asserting Spenser's own authority to construct his own "list [of] the heroes of the English court" ("Seventeen" 106, 111; "Audiences" 517ff). Wayne Erickson extends the analysis to include an "assertive stance, complicated and enriched by understated ironic playfulness and juxtaposed to submissive rhetorical postures," and finds a similar approach in the Letter to Raleigh ("Poet's" 92, "Letter" 158). See also Oram "Audiences" 533; Stillman; Owens ch. 4; Hamilton Notes 719n, 726n.

²¹⁸ R. D. Brown has "diagrammatized" the carefully rhythmic or "interwoven effect, almost a kind of sequenced rhyme between the Spencer and Dudley families as Spenser's patrons[. . .] as a rhymed stanza" (33-34). Bondanella notes that the Epigrams, revised as *The Visions of Petrarch* in the *Complaints*, "stand as the finale to this entire collection" in the section dedicated to Elizabeth Spencer, Lady Carey (87). (Although Brown designates the *Visions* sonnet sequence as "undedicated," following Lady Carey's *Muiopotomos*, Stein finds evidence of explicit celebration of Lady Carey throughout the *Visions* (68-69).) Spenser claimed kinship with the Spencers and the existence of the dedications implies that they permitted this (McCabe "Ungainefull" 248-49; Oram "Audiences" 523).

amongst multiple shepherds.²¹⁹ Complaints and elegies conventionally appear as voiced by invented or appropriated characters such as the muses in the *Teares* or the grieving husband Alcyon in *Daphnaïda*; more unusual is the situation of *Astrophel*, a lament for Philip Sidney seemingly in Spenser's own voice, to which is appended the *Dolefull Lay of Clorinda*, attributed to Sidney's sister Mary, Countess of Pembroke, as well as related works by Lodowick Bryskett and several other poets. The latter elegies are themselves published alongside *Colin Clouts Come Home Again*, a conversation amongst Colin, Hobbinol, and other shepherds revived, repurposed, and enlarged from their *Calender* origins—and more easily identified as Spenser's friends, colleagues, and patrons.²²⁰ In their own ways, each of these publishing practices—illustration, dedication, and multivocal works such as the *Calender* and *Astrophel*—mark themselves as collaborative, appearing through the efforts and offices of multiple people rather than as the work of a solitary poetic genius.

Spenser is known for his fear, this chapter acknowledged at the outset, a fear that is often taken to have produced paranoia, solitude, and burned bridges. But he is also known for his friendships that he celebrated with Harvey, members of the Sidney circle, Raleigh, Bryskett, and the many noble ladies whom his later dedications address.²²¹ These collaborative relationships, enacting the search for a landscape where not only

²¹⁹ Luborsky finds that “the collaborative nature of the *Calender* is announced partially by means of the contemporary conventions of book format. There may be two dedications; there are certainly two [or three] dedicatees” (“Allusive” 55; see also 40-41).

²²⁰ Patrick Cheney identifies in “The *Colin Clout* volume” both “the early modern practice of seeing individuated authorship as part of a larger collaborative effort,” and “the national poet as the center of a national community of fellow poets and civic leaders, especially Raleigh and Queen Elizabeth” (“CCCHA” 237-39). See also Highley 90-91; McCabe Notes 649-61n. For complaint as genre and *Daphnaïda*, see D. Rasmussen 222, 231-32.

²²¹ See e.g. Erickson “Friendship” 98-99; Carey and Carroll. For more skeptical readings of Spenser's Sidney associations, see McCabe “Thine”; Heninger “Spenser.” For Spenser's “ambivalent” approach to Raleigh, see Oram “Raleghs”; Buckman.

Colin but also his fellow poets and muses may thrive, characterize most of his publishing efforts and thus practically undergird the visions of paradise discussed above.

Conclusion: The Republic of Our Own Language

Regardless of whether or not a true or “verray” paradise is actually available to anyone in the worlds of the poems considered in this chapter, the paradisaal visions I examine frequently dramatize a troubling situation in which something paradise-like ought to function but cannot, deploying different aspects of this now-familiar situation for their own purposes. Dorigen’s state of mind, her “to greet sorwe,” prevents her body from experiencing the garden the way her friends do; Colin has lost his ability to share the landscape embodiment of Hobbinol’s joyful state of mind. Whereas the despair of gendered loss and anxiety that cuts Dorigen off from paradise *is* the problem to be solved or warded off in the world of *The Franklin’s Tale*, Colin’s discontent points outside his text and signifies a response to the personal and political situations facing him—or the poet he stands in for. Colin is the canary in the coalmine, what biologists call an indicator or sentinel species, alerting readers to the risk of a broader affective climate change if the *Calender’s* hyperbolized winter of social corruption and poetic devaluation spreads.

In *June*, the solution to this problem is (unsurprisingly) poetry. Colin still aspires to a “passing skil” that might come to him from his own personal Helicon—Tityrus, “Of that the spring was in his learned hedde” (91, 94). If so, he can force the world into his own pathetic accompaniment as described above, a poetic power that Dorigen could only imagine:

Then should my complaints, causd of discourtesee,

As messengers of all my painfull plight,
 Flye to my loue, where euer that she bee,
 And pierce her heart with poynt of worthy wight [...] (97-100)

Such poetry might make even Rosalind listen. Such poetry might also, quite literally, create a paradise—for it already does create one, earlier in *June* as in *The Franklin's Tale*, by building the pleasant passages I analyze above. Hobbinol ventriloquizes Colin's song in remembering (and re-remembering) it for him. And, lest we forget, "happy Hobbinol," despondent "Colin," and the words they speak, all come from the same poetic brain.

They also, of course, represent real people, or so E. K. claims, as apparently do others of the characters and allusions in the *Calender*.²²² Spenser and Harvey were corresponding and inventing new forms for English poems—and English Poesy—while the *Calender* was under construction. Whether all the words in the book are Spenser's, or E. K. is partly Harvey or some other person, Spenser's first "independent" publishing product is clearly a collaboration amongst printer, visual artists, and poets as much as the *Theatre* was. These poetic collaborators are contemporaries like Harvey, but they are literary forebears such as Petrarca and Chaucer. This model of collaboration, learned from Spenser's earliest publishing experience, is one he carried with him in various ways throughout his career, from the paratexts of the *Calender* and *The Faerie Queene* to the composite *Complaints* and multi-authored "communal grief" for Sidney following *Astrophel*.²²³ Through works that celebrate poetic skill in such collaborative and meritocratic settings, I argue, Spenser sought to found a *republic* "of our own language" over the course of his career.²²⁴ Parnassus, transplanted into the landscape of English

²²² McCabe Notes 514-74n.

²²³ McCabe Notes 662n.

²²⁴ Compare Helgerson *Forms* 25ff; see note [93] above.

poesy, offers the territory for that poets' sanctuary.²²⁵

So, can supremely skilful poetry, in the hands of a "happy" poet (with the help of his literary, artistic, and publishing collaborators), charm the politics as well as the literature of England into a more pleasant course? Such is the lofty claim of *June*, however much Colin protests that he "neuer lyst presume to *Parnasse* hyll / [...] Ne striue to winne renowne" (70, 74). Paradise can be approached, Spenser's work suggests, through poetic inspiration, assiduous effort, and collaboration with other like-minded artists. The moment of *The Shepheardes Calender* was an exciting one for Spenser; his career lay ahead and full of promise. It is important for critics to honor that moment, even as we may be aware of the frustrations and failures that lie in the poet's future.²²⁶

The poet stages his own distance from the authoritative source of poetry, and simultaneously lays claim to it. He expounds a prickly, solitary vision of paradise to suit his own ends, and collaborates incessantly with fellow artists and with frustrating patrons to bring that vision to fruition. He negotiates pride of place for the ladies it honors, time and time again.²²⁷ In the end, at both Acidale and Arlo, he removes his vision from the reach of mortals altogether, so that it may remain complete and safe from further destruction.²²⁸ However, just as it is important to honor the Spenserian

²²⁵ Compare Lupton, quoted at the beginning of this chapter (140).

²²⁶ Such frustrations also appear in the shepherd's imagined poetic career as presented in *October*. See note [52] above. Patrick Cheney also argues against discounting the precise ambitions of the *Calender*, claiming their promise was as precisely fulfilled (*Famous* 3, 46, 52-56, 75-76). Cf. Oram "Audiences" 533.

²²⁷ For another instance of negotiated collaboration with a lady, this time with reference to *Amoretti* 75, mentioned in the second sentence of this chapter and alluded to in the closing one, see Gordon Braden's analysis of the shift over the course of the sequence from the cruel fair to the "happy ending": "the static Petrarchan posture of worshipful frustration has relaxed into a transaction between the two of them[. . .] Her profession of humility is cradled in his exaltation of the person he knows her to be" (139).

²²⁸ Clare Kinney makes a similar claim about "the identity of [. . .] the fourth grace, the Beloved, the figure at the center of the sacred space [which] is withheld, and is thus forever protected from the Beastly reader's slander of allegory" (*Strategies* 108-09, 117).

career's founding moment alongside its antecedents and its later developments, it is important also to recognize that any satisfaction derived from that Acidalian or Arlovian safety is not—or should not have been—the end of the story. A great deal of critical ink has been spilled over the retroactive fitness of the “unperfite” Mutabilitie Cantos, with their closing vision of “Sabaoth's Sight,” as the end to a career cut short by war and reported starvation (VII.viii.2.9.²²⁹ Yet the Cantos are (posthumously) marked as the central ones of Book VII, whose virtue was to be constancy, and (whatever their intended location) would inevitably have been placed in conversation with the other events of that book, the six books that came before it, and the five (or seventeen) others projected to follow.²³⁰ We cannot know what they would have contained—though some have tried to imagine it²³¹—but we do know that Spenser, in collaboration with his co-creators, never ceased to reinvent, rewrite, and reinscribe his visions of paradise, of the beautiful ladies in the mutable world, upon the shifting sands of his poetic work.

²²⁹ See e.g. Teskey “Two” 335; P. Cheney *Famous Flight* Conclusion; Kinney *Strategies* 72; Maley 26-27.

²³⁰ See Hamilton Notes 712n; Teskey “Two” 333-36; Wilson-Okamura *International* 196ff; Lewis *Sixteenth* 378-79.

²³¹ See e.g. Knevet.

Complicit Paradise:
Invasive Species and Collaborative Design in Donne and Bedford's Twick(e)n(h)am

Introduction

What happens when John Donne sets up shop in Lucy Bedford's garden? Or in Francis Bacon's, John Gerard's, and Salomon de Caus'? To ask the question is to go some way towards answering it. Scholars have long recognized that a full interpretation of Donne's lyric "Twicknam Garden" depends upon investigating the poem's literary origins in Petrarchan convention alongside its social origins as a product of the patronage relationship between Donne and Lucy, Countess of Bedford.¹ This chapter demonstrates that a comprehensive understanding of the poem's significance can only be achieved by opening our critical window wide onto the prospect of Bedford's garden at Twickenham as it was recorded in a plan by Robert Smythson. We must attend to the historical, social, and literary origins of that garden and to its relationship with the broader horticultural arts and sciences of the period. Our objects of study will include not only texts and social networks, but also printed books, hand-drawn plans, and works of art sharing key themes across media. These varied objects, taken together, index material practices of making and use. Along the way, this investigation will document prior critical misconceptions of the sources of both poem and garden plan. More importantly, it will reveal how the sometimes reverent, sometimes bitter Petrarchism of the poem stands in tension with collaborative design practices, across time and across media, without which it could not exist. Seen in light of these practices, an often confusing, seemingly solipsistic poem will be understood as part of the lively

¹ I take the 1635 *Poems* as my primary text for the poem (23-24). This makes slight corrections to the posthumous first edition text of 1633 (218-19). For manuscript alternatives, see Robin Robbins (253-57), who primarily follows Dowden (Bodleian MS. Eng. poet. e. 99). Throughout this chapter, "'Twicknam Garden'" refers to the poem, as distinct from "the garden at Twickenham" belonging to Bedford.

community of contested meaning, as well as generative co-creation, that emerges from the patronage relationship.

The starting point for this study of “Twickenham Garden” is its speaker’s claim “that this place may thoroughly be thought / True Paradise” (8-9). The task of excavating the visions of paradise proffered by this poem—and its titular garden—is complicated because there have been so many layers of well-intentioned critical misapprehension. Neither of the two primary artifacts of investigation, poem or garden plan, is fully intelligible without recourse to the details of the other. Each cultural artifact needs the other in order for its aesthetic and social import to be fully open to interpretation. In the absence of such an approach, each has suffered from a history of misreading: an undervalued because conventional poem; an underread because exemplary garden. Critical assessments of Donne’s poem have presented it as an example of self-consciously conventional love poetry. Conversely, the garden as it is portrayed in the Smythson plan has inspired many landscape historians to present it as exemplary of its kind. The garden has been valued for its conventional excellence rather than the particularities of its history and design, which must for the most part remain speculative.² Guided by the poem’s preoccupations, and attending in greater detail to a wider range of sources and analogues across media, I am able to make bolder and more substantiated claims for the garden’s aesthetic program than have hitherto been possible. In turn, I find that my reading of the garden is the key that allows the final pieces of the poem’s kaleidoscopic puzzle to fall into place, revealing at last the full

² Both the historical studies of the garden at Twickenham and the prior readings of “Twickenham Garden” are right in focusing on the patronage relationship as essential to an understanding of either cultural artifact. But to reduce the poem to its social situation, its conventional attributes, its theological clues, or to abstract the plan to its visual impact, its fashionable features, its iconographical program, however instructive, is to leave flourishing avenues unexplored. The fruits of these explorations will in turn shed new light on the patronage situation itself.

ambition of its paradisaal vision.

Pursuing this investigation requires contemplating the thicket of images and ideas collectively known as “convention” from a different angle than is typical of literary study. Frequently, and productively, literary convention is something to be seen through or peeled away so that the poet’s unique contributions to a common theme or mode may be identified. Into this category fall, for example, the many studies sifting the poem’s Petrarchan foreground of frustrated love for underlying evidence of Donne’s thinking on, for example, sacramental theology.³ Biographical readers, meanwhile, seek to escape the bounds of convention in the other direction, pushing through the stylized Petrarchan frame for intimations of Donne’s actual patronage relationship with Bedford and the anxieties it produced.⁴ Complementing these useful methods, this study turns its gaze onto the stuff of convention itself, tracing the Petrarchan situation and other features of stylized gardens across media, as the poem requires, to identify its sources with more precision, so that the stakes of its reinventions may become fully visible. This process of following convention where it leads allows me to examine a fuller range of the poem’s detail and to provide a clearer account of what “Twickenham Garden” achieves as a poetic object enmeshed in a cultural ecology.

This chapter examines the two objects, poem and plan, alongside one another in greater detail than has hitherto been attempted. In exploring the sources and the stakes for the vision of paradise put forth in “Twickenham Garden,” I find that their full significance can only be determined with reference to the garden at Twickenham’s own presentation of a paradisaal vision, itself frequently misread. Elucidating these twin visions of paradise reveals that the poem’s conventional Petrarchan frame and

³ See note [32] below.

⁴ See especially Marotti *Coterie* 202-18; Brown “Presence.”

mordantly misogynist end mask a deeper engagement with the garden's aesthetic program, an assessment of its shortcomings, and an impulse to collaborate in remedying them—all the while maintaining a petulant distance in order to hold back some power and authority from its seemingly extravagant courtly praise.

Objects: Patronage Poem and Garden Plan

A spider, a serpent, and a mandrake walk into a lady's garden.⁵

Such, it would seem, is the setup for the bitter joke at the heart of the otherwise glorious vision of "True Paradise" set forth in John Donne's lyric "Twicknam Garden" (8).⁶ A speaker comes to a splendid and miraculously wholesome garden for solace, complains of what he finds there and of the infestation he himself has brought, asks for a palliative metamorphosis into a mandrake or a fountain, and proposes a test of women's "truth" that all but his lady will fail, for only she is virtuous. Like many of Donne's short love poems collected as "Songs and Sonets," it features a three-part structure with two stanzas that present an imaginative situation (the garden scenario) and a concluding third stanza that pivots towards metaphysical speculation or a changed perspective (the truth test), not unlike the turn of a sonnet. The poem lacks the directness of conceit of some of Donne's other love lyrics, offering instead a tangle of

⁵ The lady says to the mandrake, I thought I told you never to come in here again. The mandrake says, that was when I was a dying tree. The lady says, you could be any living thing and you still wouldn't belong here. The mandrake says, by the time I've finished, you'll be begging me to stay. (To be continued.)

⁶ Though critical readings of the poem's tone vary so much as to suggest a Rorschach test, in this characterization I trace a line of critical readings of the poem that includes N. J. C. Andreasen and Arthur Marotti. Marotti qualifies as "probably an overstatement" Andreasen's claim that "Twicknam Garden" is a "terrifyingly bitter poem" (151; quoted in Marotti *Coterie* 214) by repeatedly emphasizing its "comically disruptive" features, such as grafting an inappropriate eroticism onto the decorous Petrarchan world exemplified by "*Zefiro torna*" (214-17)—of which, more below.

conventional images that has tended to prevent clear visions of the forest for the trees—or, in this case, the garden for the mandrakes. Often read with Donne's other misogynist lyrics as lovelorn, metamorphic Petrarchism carried to its logical extreme, it presents witty but unfulfilled emotional contortions that seem to reflect badly on everyone involved. Critical interest in the poem has largely focused on its clues either to Donne's theology or to the relationship between the poet and the proprietor of the garden at Twickenham: his patron, Lucy Harington Russell, Countess of Bedford, friend of Queen Anne, and in her own right a significant figure in the artistic production of the Jacobean court.

Donne and Bedford shared a literary patronage relationship between approximately 1608-12, and to call the poem "Twicknam Garden" is thus necessarily to associate it with both the physical garden and with Bedford. Whether the ascription is authorial or scribal cannot be definitely decided from the manuscript evidence.⁷ However, one of Donne's verse letters to Bedford, probably from April 1609, praises the countess and her estate at Twickenham in similarly hyperbolic terms:

Yet to that Deitie which dwels in you,
 Your vertuous Soule, I now not sacrifice;
 These are *Petitions*, and not *Hymnes*; they sue
 But that I may surway the edifice.

 The story of beauty', in Twicknam is, and you.
 Who hath seene one, would both; As, who had bin

⁷ The poem "A Nocturnal upon Saint Lucy's Day being the Shortest Day" is likewise associated with Bedford because it refers to her name and uses a similarly despairing tone (Robbins 225-26n). Scholars have usually accepted the purported biographical or thematic link; most note the title "Twicknam Garden" as uncertain and then cheerfully continue to use it because it gives them more evidence to go on (See Gardner *Elegies* 215, and most subsequent studies). Robbins' recent critical edition does not specifically question the attribution, although he follows the *Variorum* edition in noting that such manuscript "headings" (as opposed to definitively authorial "titles") can never be certain (253n; xviii). At a minimum it would seem to indicate that scribes had reason to associate Donne's poem about a garden with Bedford, or Bedford's garden with Donne. Because the reference is so specific it seems to me unlikely to be an invention.

In Paradise, would seeke the Cherubin. (31-34, 70-72)⁸

The carefully offhand reference to Bedford's divinity, the verse letter claims, is not its point; he does not "now" offer her sacrifice. Instead, it "Petitions" for an audience, the chance not only to visit Twickenham but also to "survey the edifice" of Bedford's person, figured as a temple of "Vertue." The poem links patron and garden inextricably: if Twickenham is like the Garden of Eden, then Bedford is the angel guarding the gate. Both lyric and letter label their garden settings jointly "Twicknam" and "Paradise" and, as we shall see, share other resonances.

Donne also explicitly links Bedford's garden with *her* poetry, and by implication his own, in an undated prose letter:

To the Countesse of Bedford.

Happiest and worthiest Lady,

I Doe not remember that ever I have seen a petition in verse, I would not therefore be singular, nor add these to your other papers. I have yet adventured so neare as to make a petition for verse, it is for those your Ladiship did mee the honour to see in Twicknam garden, except you repent your making and having mended your judgment by thinking worse, that is, better, because juster, of their subject. They must needs be an excellent exercise of your wit, which speake so well of so ill. I humbly beg them of your Ladiship, with two such promises, as to any other of your compositions were threatenings: That I will not shew them, and that I will not beleieve them; and nothing should be so used which comes from your braine or heart. If I should confesse a fault in the boldnesse of asking them, or make a fault by doing it in a longer letter, your Ladiship might use your stile and old fashion of the Court towards mee, and pay mee with a pardon. Here therefore I humbly kisse your Ladiships faire learned hands, and wish you good wishes and speedy grants.

Your Ladiships servant,

Jo. Donne. (1635 *Poems* 296)

Donne claims never to have encountered "a petition in verse" (perhaps not

⁸ "MADAM, / You have refin'd me, and to worthiest things" (1635 *Poems* 162-64). The "" following "beauty" seems to indicate an elision with "in," such as occurs frequently in the poem's earlier stanzas. For dating and other textual matters, see Robbins 680-88n.

disingenuously, if the formal legal sense of “petition” is implied by the trained lawyer, and provided that this letter predates the explicit “Petitions” in verse above) and instead asks “*for verse*”: her poetry, which she has previously shared with him in her garden at Twickenham. Behind the meticulous flattery of the countess’ “judgment,” “wit,” “braine,” “heart,” “stile,” mercy, beauty and “learn[ing],” it emerges that Bedford has written some poetry praising him but he worries she will not send copies to him because she might have thought “juster” of her ever-humble “subject.”⁹ Scholars have read Donne’s request for copies of Bedford’s poems as an allusion to a “courtly social game of responding to one another’s poems” between supplicant and patron, such as the famous exchange between Raleigh and Elizabeth.¹⁰ Both Raleigh’s poem and “Twicknam Garden” cast the poet-speaker as a courtly lover and the patron-lady as his reluctant or hard-hearted mistress. Donne’s lyric, with its stylized Petrarchan contortions and abstracted Ovidian metamorphoses, plus a conclusion as generically bitter as any of Donne’s misogynist lyrics, at first appears to be far less topical than Raleigh’s example. Nonetheless, “Twicknam Garden” is the rare Donne poem that claims for itself a specific earthly setting, the garden at Twickenham where poet and patron exchanged verses.

Bedford’s country garden is documented in the plan labeled “my Lo: / of Bedfordes: at : / Twitnam” in the Smythson Collection of drawings at RIBA, the Royal Institute of British Architects (I/20). The plan is one of several recording existing houses and gardens that seem to have interested the mason-architect Robert Smythson

⁹ See Brown “Presence” 70 for a more detailed reading of Donne’s letters concerning Bedford.

¹⁰ Marotti “Patronage” 224; poems in Braden *Sixteenth* 337-38. See also Robbins 253n, Gardner *Elegies* 251, Brown “Presence” 68, Lewalski *Writing* 111.

during a visit to London around 1609.¹¹ Bedford, along with her usually ineffectual and sometime invalid husband Edward, occupied the house known as Twickenham Lodge from around 1608 to 1618.¹² Prior to that, it had been the country home of scientist and statesman Francis Bacon for at least a decade.¹³ The poem has been dated to 1608-10, coincidentally the same time frame as that of the Smythson plan.¹⁴ The garden as recorded in the plan comprises a large square, with a wall around it of 321 feet to a side. There are three entrances, from the forecourt, the “Kichen Garden,” and what is probably the park. A series of concentric paths is planted with hedges or rows of trees: from the outside in, “quick sett” (hawthorn), “Ewe: trees: cut into Beastes in this Border” (topiary yews), rosemary, fruit trees along the innermost square and presumably the outermost circle, two circles of lime or linden trees, and three of birch. The stippled areas are grass, and there are four mounts of varying complexity. Transverse paths lead to the center. Two football fields (or the Wimbledon Centre Court complex) could fit inside the garden.¹⁵

Spaces of Convention

Smythson’s plan of the garden at Twickenham has become a standard example for

¹¹ The plan of Wimbledon House is dated 1609. The others attributed to Smythson’s “1609 visit” are in the same hand and style, differing from those of later plans in the collection signed by Smythson’s son John. See Girouard “Smythson” 36 and Girouard *Robert* 169. (The RIBApix online database listed the date as 1604 in May 2017.)

¹² The lease was taken over by the countess’ trustees (Lawson 76; Henderson “Essay” 71; Strong 120; Girouard “Smythson” 36). In 1601, Edward had been exiled from court and fined £20,000 (later reduced) for his close association with the abortive 1601 rebellion of the Earl of Essex (Lewalski *Writing* 96-97; Lawson 32-34).

¹³ Bacon’s brother Edward was granted the lease from the crown in 1574; Francis had taken over the lease by 1595 (Henderson “Essay” 71; Strong 120; Girouard “Smythson” 36).

¹⁴ Robbins 253n. These were the years of Donne and Bedford’s closest association.

¹⁵ Not including the entirety of the end zones. This equates to roughly 1.33 international soccer pitches, or 36 (unadorned) tennis courts.

English gardens of its period. RIBA considers it one of the highlights of its collection, storing and displaying it alongside other treasures rather than with the Smythson drawings.¹⁶ In reproduction, it is one of a set of attractive explanatory images that seem to find their way into every serious attempt at giving a history of landscape architecture in early modern England.¹⁷ Because it stands in for its age, however, the garden's unique features have often remained unexamined.

Similarly, the poem "Twickenham Garden" has long proved useful as one of a set of sources shedding light on the facts and the affects of the patron-client relationship between Donne and Bedford, itself a commonly cited example for the period. The prevalence of the Petrarchan model in Renaissance poetry, however, has always left some poems open to the charge of cliché. What was innovative, dangerous, and infinitely complex in Petrarca's original sequence became the Petrarchism, the stuff of

¹⁶ On my visit to the RIBA archives in May 2015, the plan, catalogued as Smythson I/20, was not to be found in its hefty box. The box in question was already a special one, containing a Picasso drawing and other collection highlights; the Twickenham plan is not filed with the others from the Smythson group. The curator on duty surmised that, because it is such a favorite object, it would either be found "in the education drawer" or at "a patrons' event" with RIBA's director, to be paraded before admiring donors. (Fortunately for my two-day research window, it was the former.)

¹⁷ As part of a section on "The early Stuart garden," Paula Henderson claims that "the densely planted garden at Twickenham was the most complex of all those that Smythson recorded" (*Tudor* 99). (The latter statement is repeated in the plate caption with the qualification "one of" (100).) John Dixon Hunt cites "the Countess of Bedford's elaborate garden" as one of two instances of Jacobean gardens as "diversified within [a] more organized space" (110). Mark Girouard does not even discuss the plan as such, simply using it as an example of Robert Smythson's doings on his 1609 tour: "He drew the plans of a number of elaborate formal gardens (Plate 100)" (*Robert* 170). Plate 100, on the recto, is labeled simply, "Lord Bedford's house at Twickenham, Middlesex" (169); a later footnote compares the circular garden to the one at Chastleton (314n). (I do not find the similarity of the Chastleton garden particularly compelling.) Meanwhile, Lucy, Countess of Bedford is one of Roy Strong's major characters in his history of English gardens and the people behind them; the "extraordinary plan" of Twickenham is introduced as "the first of her two celebrated gardens [. . .]" (120). Strong uses the garden at Twickenham as a key example of the Mannerist form, and subsequent scholars of gardens and literature alike have in turn tended to cite Strong as the standard history of the period (See Hunt 110, Lawson 77, Robbins 253n).

courtly convention.¹⁸ “Twicknam Garden” has often been dismissed as an unsatisfying Petrarchan parody, complete with despondent lover and cruel fair; its misogynist twist far overgoing its model.¹⁹ This common line of critical assessment of the poem, however, seems inadequate to me; what has good poetry ever been but a reinvention of standard tropes?²⁰ The interesting question, already intimated, is what the implications may be when those reinventions unfold in a poetic space closely identified with a real physical setting, which in turn has its own complex pedigree. Tracing these implications requires me first to examine more closely the commonly attributed Petrarchan origins of “Twicknam Garden” and to trace my findings outwards across media to gardens, printed herbals, and other sources that begin to infiltrate the baseline Petrarchan monoculture.

“Twicknam Garden” makes use of Petrarchan conventions, to be sure. Far from being merely a playful or sardonic response to a set subject, however, the Petrarchan space of tantalizing beauty and artful despair that the poem constructs, adapts, and expands is actually probing something deep and urgent. Something is wrong here, for this “Paradise,” too, is inaccessible to its speaker, despite its being all around him.

In specifying the nature of this problem and the solutions the poem may offer, it is the precise nature of the poem’s setting, its sense of place—physical and allusive and psychological—that opens the door to interpretation. What kind of space does the

¹⁸ Musa xiii, xxi; see also Braden *Petrarchan* 61ff.

¹⁹ “The actual subject of ‘Twicknam Garden’ is so trite and conventional that it might well have been a subject proposed, or a subject on which Lady Bedford and Donne competed” (Gardner *Elegies* 251; see 215 for Petrarchan comparison). See also e.g. Marotti “Patronage” 224; Robbins 253n; Lewalski *Writing* 110-11. Sallye Sheppard outlines such critical tendencies as misguided before claiming that the poem is less conventional and more coherent as a parody of Christian sacramental theology (65ff).

²⁰ See e.g. Curtius; Hollander *Work* ch. 2, esp. 28ff. Moore et al. make a similar point regarding conventional gardens (13; 50). Marotti calls Donne’s poem “a self-consciously innovative lyric” (*Coterie* 218).

poem build for itself? Which aspects of Petrarca's poetic world—a world of longing and wonder, solitude and society, despairing love and literary triumph—does it select in this particular case, given that both the source poet and his respondent habitually offer multifarious and nuanced variations on their complex respective themes?

The Poem's Vision: Invading Paradise

In anatomizing the conventional Petrarchism Donne deploys in "Twickenham Garden," our task is first to identify what kind of paradisaal setting the poem offers, then to specify the sources of that setting, and finally to clarify what is at stake in presenting such a vision of paradise. As I have already suggested, the incongruity of "True Paradise" as the setting for a mordant Petrarchan joke indicates that all is not right with the world: or, as we have seen in the previous chapter, that the world is all right, but something is wrong with the poem and its speaker. The precise ingredients that make up that world offer clues to what is wrong, and how to solve it.

The Setting: Emotionally Inaccessible Paradise (again)

Donne's lyric wastes no time in signaling a world out of balance. In defiance of its locational title, the text of poem begins with dislocation, deliberately delaying any recognizable spatial cues. "Blasted," that violent, initially unattributed adjective, immediately assaults readers and throws them off balance, *in medias res* yet out of recognizable space. The effect at first suggests one of Donne's typical dizzying, placeless conceits, or the sort of relational poem where two lovers' proximate or departing bodies are more important than their vague surroundings.²¹ It is far more

²¹ As in "A Valediction: Of Weeping," in which eyes become tears become coins (and mirrors) become globes become planets become people, and the only real physical

common for Donne's poems on any topic to consider bodies in motion than to present anything like a visualizable setting. Occasionally there is the idea of a bedroom; once a hill covered in violets (for what is also rare, a sincere and happy poem about mutual love); sometimes a grave. More often, the relevant space of a poem is relational, psychological, or metaphysical—a farewell between lovers, a complaint about unfaithfulness, a philosophical or spiritual meditation—or else metaphorical as required: the walls of a flea, the motions of a compass, the vast unexplored regions of a “new-found land.”²² In any case, “Twicknam Garden” seems not to offer the promise of those happier spaces of fulfilled love. “Blá sted with síghs, | and sur róun ded with téares,” is not an auspicious start, syntactically or metrically.²³

Blasted with sighs, and surrounded with teares,
 Hither I come to seek the Spring,
 And at mine eyes, and at mine eares,
 Receive such balme, as else cures every thing: (1-4)

With “Hither,” the apparent dislocation of the opening line begins to resolve itself. The heading tells us that “Hither” is to a garden. The speaker presents himself not only as a suffering lover, sighing and weeping, but also as a new plant specimen for that garden—albeit a somewhat unprepossessing one, “Blasted with sighs, and surrounded with tears.” These are meteorological afflictions: “Blasted” as an adjective was at the time almost exclusively used for plants destroyed by “parching wind.”²⁴ This sense of

existences in the world of the poem seem to be the speaker and his beloved.

²² E.g. “The Sun Rising,” “The Ecstasy,” “A Valediction: Of Weeping,” “Woman’s Constancy,” “Air and Angels,” “The Flea,” “A Valediction Forbidding Mourning,” “To his Mistress Going to Bed.”

²³ The poem contains three stanzas of nine lines each with rhyme scheme ABABBCCDD and—after this dactylic or anapestic opening line—a predominantly iambic meter of variable feet (544535455). Helen Gardner complains of “a lack of metrical tact in thus opening a poem with a line that sets up the wrong expectation” (*Elegies* 215); the *ductus* seems to be to deliberately destabilize readers from the first beat (see Carruthers).

²⁴ The blasting in question could be of mundane or divine origin, though the latter is the older sense (OED).

“blasted” is first recorded in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, as is “surrounded” in its watery sense of “overflowed, flooded” (OED). The metaphor is one of stricken vegetation, tying the speaker into a suffering ecology. “Blasted” as in withered; “surrounded” as in swamped.²⁵ An individual plant—likely a tree, since trees and grass are the only plants indicated on the Smythson plan—cannot perambulate itself to more favorable growing conditions, especially if its weather is self-generated. Yet “Hither I come to seek the Spring,” says the speaker, the deictic markers insisting on a balmy atmosphere.

Despite the speaker’s predicament, terse gestures point towards the attributes of a *locus amoenus*, the familiar place of sensory pleasures that has its origins in classical poetry and the Song of Songs. Such a pleasant setting, hinted at by “Spring” and “such balme,” is atypical for Donne’s poetry, which as a general rule is more interested in mouldering bodies and anxious afterlives than in green and growing things.²⁶ It thus seems fitting that Donne’s only poem about a garden should begin with a most unpleasant half-dead tree, overwhelmed with its own bitter sorrow to the point of obscuring the pleasantness of the place itself. The cryptically unfolding metaphor likening the lovesick speaker to a tree desiccated by harsh winds and flooded by storms of weeping takes the pathetic trope and, as Donne was so fond of doing, pushes its conceit to the breaking point. Not only does the external environment mirror the speaker’s inner turmoil, but it also reflects his pain with such a vengeance that it inflicts

²⁵ Paradoxically—and aptly in this case—a common symptom of overwatering is withering leaves, as roots rot and fail to provide a sufficient supply of water.

²⁶ See such secular poems as “The Relic”, “The Dissolution”, “The Damp”, “The Funeral”, as well as many of Donne’s religious verses on the fate of his soul. From the most prominent current scholarship to his famed posing for his own *memento mori*, both external and internal evidence points to Donne’s being consumingly concerned with death and afterlife, “*Body and Soul*” (the subtitle of Targoff’s study; see also Stubbs, Walton).

even more damage upon him.

Still, with a garden so marvelous that its “balme [. . .] cures everything,” Donne has selected an unusual setting for a poem also unusually, for him, so deictically insistent. (“Hither I come.”)²⁷ Place matters, the locational markers signal, and this is not a generic place selected from the poet’s typical toolbox. Pay attention.

The healing balms of spring sought by the speaker-tree are the first clues to the nature of the poem’s space, what will become its vision of “True Paradise.”²⁸ In the world of Petrarca’s *Rime sparse*, such solace can occasionally come from a delightfully solitary outdoor setting. However, just as the powerful emotions of the despairing Petrarchan lover can force his environment to match his mood, so too can his lady hallow a location by her very presence. In such a case, the lady must therefore be present or implicated in the garden.²⁹ A passage in Donne’s verse letter stages a similar scene, making Bedford’s role in creating the garden’s paradisaal charms more explicit. Following a stanza praising her role “at Court,” where “Vertue[. . .] rarest bee” (7-12), Donne claims,

²⁷ In conjunction with this poem’s heading, the setting becomes almost as precise in space as “A Nocturnal upon Saint Lucy’s Day being the Shortest Day” would seem to be in time.

²⁸ In most versions of the poem, though not in the 1635 *Poems*, plural “balms [. . .] cure everything” (4). This would seem to make more logical sense, if the place is truly paradisaal and thus universally wholesome. However, see note [30] below.

²⁹ Whereas Petrarca’s sequence claims autobiography, the lady of this poem’s Petrarchan situation need not be “Lucy, Countess of Bedford” per se, just as the speaker does not have to be “John Donne, clerk.” The lovelorn speaker might be bringing his private despair to a place of public solace. Richard Strier, however, sees no reason not to call Donne’s speakers “Donne” as a general rule (2012 paper).

In any case, there is always a certain role-playing abstraction when the professional friendship of patronage is articulated through the conventions of love. As Gardner observes, “A poem may be written ‘for’ someone without necessarily being ‘about’ that person” (*Elegies* 250). However, she does not discuss the idea that poems can be “about” a patron in a more metaphorical sense, without a need for the purported emotions or behaviors of speaker and beloved to be “biographically” accurate (249-50). Cedric Brown provides an excellent reading of this situation (“Presence” 68).

So in the country's beauty: to this place
 You are the season, Madame, you the day;
 'Tis but a grave of spices, till your face
 Exhale them, and a thick close bud display.
 Widow'd and reclus'd else, her sweets she'enshrines
 As China, when the Sunne at Brasill dines. (13-18)

Bedford's rare beauty awakens matching beauty in "this place" only by her presence. *She* is "the season"—spring—and the daylight; her face breathes out living spices and brings forth budding flowers.³⁰ Without her, Twickenham's *hortus conclusus* is "reclus'd," condemned to the darkness of night on the far side of the globe.

According to the model of the verse letter, Bedford in "Twicknam Garden" presides over its setting both in her role as the garden's owner and as the beautiful lady conventionally found at its center. In either case, the miraculous powers attributed to the garden constitute a pretty courtly compliment to its proprietor. The balm works, too, on the meter of the poem, which has stumbled along on misleading dactyls or anapests in its first ten words before resolving into the predominantly regular iambs of the remaining lines with "Hí ther I cóme to séek the Spríng." Despite its disruptive opening, once the first stanza arrives "Hither," the quality of the "balme" is not in question, but only the speaker's access to it. With the iambic "I come" in the second foot of the second line, after the disorienting rhythmic and metaphorical buffets of the first, the poetic syntax at last allows a battered and delayed lyric subject to assert a point of view. At the same time, this assertion opens up a possibility for alternative subjectivities elsewhere in the world of the poem.

"Hither" is a deictically proximal *locus amoenus* or pleasant place. Donne's scene-

³⁰ Robbins identifies the "Deitie" Donne claims for her as "a goddess of spring, implicitly Flora" (685n). In another verse letter, Donne even attributes to Bedford "this Balme," her "youth and beauty" ("MADAM, / Reason is our Soules left hand, Faith her right" l. 24, 1635 *Poems* 160-61; Robbins 671-76n). In this instance the (singular) balm's healing powers are self-directed and intrinsic in each person, an idea possibly inspired by a passage in the writings of the Swiss physician Paracelsus (Robbins 674-75n).

setting offers a terse version of the multisensory or synesthesial pleasures of sound and sight conventional in such a place—"at mine eyes, and at mine eares"—and perhaps of scent and touch, as "balme" suggests by means of its association with "aromatic" and "anointing" functions (OED). The balm soothes by being ambient. The syntax likewise removes the speaker's agency in encountering it: in the phrase "And at my eyes, and at my eares, / Receive" even the passive action of receiving is delayed until the relevant sensory organs have already appeared, themselves as passive objects. The place is pleasant, whether the speaker is in a receptive mood or not.

And the garden is not merely a pleasant place, but a vision of "Paradise" itself. Donne's use of "balme" hints at an association of *locus amoenus* and paradisaical spaces: only the Tree of Life can "cure every thing."³¹ And soon Donne's speaker identifies the garden as another explicitly paradisaical space:

But O, selfe-traitor, I doe bring
The spider love, which transubstantiates all,
And can convert Manna to gall;
And that this place may thoroughly be thought
True Paradise, I have the serpent brought. (5-9)

However unpleasant a place populated by spiders and serpents might seem, in "Twickenham Garden" these galling creatures are the exceptions that prove the paradise. The conclusion of the first stanza holds readers uncomfortably in an Eden overlaid by the warping webs of love. Donne characteristically embraces the unsettling paradoxes of another Petrarchan trope: Cupid, god of Love, and the saintly beloved, servant of a very different God of love, somehow inhabit the same poetic location, the classical and Christian elements putting pressure on one another as they jostle for space.³²

³¹ See Richards 183.

³² This portion of the poem has particularly interested Donne's theological critics. The speaker's provocative and ambivalent mix of love and religion goes beyond merely characterizing the poetic space as first a Petrarchan *locus amoenus*, then Christian

For this speaker is “thorough” to a fault, or even to a Fall. He aspires to “Paradise,” a word expanding the scene beyond the Petrarchan situation to a version of the medieval *hortus conclusus*. The walled garden of perfection presents Mary as a restorative to Eve, her emblematic setting usually “thought / True Paradise” in comparison to its fallen precursor. Frequently, however, these spaces overlay one another; “Paradise” in this tradition can refer both to a space of temptation, in which the lady represents Eve, and a space of redemption, in which she stands for the Virgin Mary. The enclosed garden or *hortus conclusus* of the biblical Song of Songs is taken to represent first the earthly paradise of Eden before Eve’s fall, and second, often simultaneously, the heavenly paradise as redeemed by the Virgin Mary. In the middle ages, such sacred gardens in turn became the models for secular gardens of love, presided over by courtly ladies, but never entirely losing the numinous nature of their devotional counterparts. Such images remained current in seventeenth-century Catholic Europe, for example in Jacob van Langeren’s woodcut from the 1633 Marian emblem book *Partheneia Sacra*, written by exiled Jesuit Henry Hawkins (A6v).³³ Here,

Paradise, with a later pivot to the classical. The primary reading is blasphemous, as alluding to the Old Testament “manna,” a prefiguration of Christ as holy food, and attributing the sacramental verb “transubstantiate” to the traditionally venomous spider in a noxious “parody” of the contemporary Catholic (though not the official Anglican) account of the Eucharist (Robbins 254n; Labriola 219, Richards 181, Gardner *Elegies* 215, Baumlín 174, DiPasquale 164). Yet while the bitter gall of love seems a poor substitute for sweet manna, a second look suggests with more orthodoxy that “love [. . .] can convert” the manna of Exodus in the world of Mosaic law to the “gall” of the Crucifixion (Mt 27:34), where it fulfills a prophecy of redemption. This second, almost buried reading of the “spider love” contributes further to the poem’s contradictory images, and indeed almost a whiplash effect, as it careers from positive garden descriptions to increasingly damaged and damning language concerning the speaker—from “Blasted” to “traitor” to the loathed “serpent” of Genesis—and back again. For another variation on the saintly beloved in Donne’s Petrarchism, see Dubrow *Echoes* 204.

³³ Lottes 284. Donne was raised Catholic; after his pragmatic conversion to the English church he seems to have maintained an idiosyncratic sense of the unity and validity of aspects of both traditions. (In making this determination, I follow Theresa M.

still further by not responding to or echoing his emotional state: “winter” would be “wholsomer” than any putative “balme.” The poem follows Petrarca as an immediate source for the nature of their location and of the lady who governs its sensory and psychological effects. Although the first stanza of “Twicknam Garden” inscribes a Christian frame or overlay, the poem subsequently turns to a classicized world with precise Petrarchan origins. The emotionally inaccessible paradise I have identified here points to a particular type of Petrarchan model. While many critics have connected the poem to the elegiac “*Zefiro torna*” from late in the *Rime sparse*, I find that Donne’s poem fits better earlier in the sequence, where the beloved Laura’s distant perfection is as apt to provoke anger as adoration.³⁷ Identifying the source of the poem’s bitter tone makes clearer the precise nature of its paradisaical vision.

The Source: Beyond “Zefiro torna”

As noted above, far from offering an undifferentiated set of conventions, the poems and psychological possibilities of the *Rime sparse* are many and varied. Which sort of Petrarchan space is being invoked in Donne’s poem thus matters a great deal for our understanding of the poem’s vision of paradise. Prior studies have noted a particular resemblance between “Twicknam Garden” and *Rime sparse* Sonnet 310, known by its opening words as “*Zefiro torna*,” in which the speaker cannot enjoy springtime because Laura is dead.³⁸

Zefiro torna e 'l bel tempo rimena

.....
et Primavera [. . .]

³⁷ For “Twicknam Garden” and “*Zefiro torna*,” see Marotti “Patronage” 225, elaborated in *Coterie* 214; Robbins 253n; A. J. Smith *Songs* 50-51 and Donne *Complete English Poems* 403n; Mortimer 26; Martin 125.

³⁸ See Marotti “Patronage” 225; Robbins 253.

*Ma per me, lasso, tornano i più gravi
sospiri [. . .]*

(West Wind returns and brings back the fine weather

.....
and Spring [. . .]

.....
But for me, alas, return the most grave
sighs [. . .]

(1, 4, 9-10)³⁹

³⁹ My translation, consulting Durling and Musa. The full poem reads

*Zefiro torna e 'l bel tempo rimena
e i fiori et l'erbe, sua dolce famiglia,
et garrir Progne et pianger Filomena,
et Primavera candida et vermiglia;*

*ridono i prati e 'l ciel si rasserena,
Giove s'allegro di mirar sua figlia,
l'aria et l'acqua et la terra è d'amor piena,
ogni animal d'amar si consiglia.*

*Ma per me, lasso, tornano i più gravi
sospiri che del cor profondo tragge
quella ch' al Ciel se ne portò le chiavi;*

*et cantar augelletti, et fiorir piagge,
e 'n belle donne oneste atti soavi
sono un deserto et fere aspre et selvagge.*

(West Wind returns and brings back the fine weather
and the flowers and the grass, his sweet family,
and garrulous Procne and plaintive Philomena,
and Spring in her white and her red;

the fields laugh and the sky calms,
Jove's mood lightens to see his daughter,
air and water and earth are full of love,
each creature counsels itself to love again.

But for me, alas, return the most grave
sighs which throng out of my profoundest heart
towards her who in Heaven holds its keys;

and little birds singing, and fields flowering,
and the sweet acts of honest, lovely ladies
seem a harsh desert and savage beasts.)

An octave celebrates the coming of joyous spring, but the speaker remains desolate in the sestet: to paraphrase, "Spring returns with [explicitly classical] sights and sounds of love and loss, but I sigh gravely after one in heaven; pleasant places and lovely ladies are deserts and beasts to me." "Spring" and "sighs" appear to have their echoes in the opening lines of "Twicknam Garden." There is also a pun available to English readers of the Italian, or at least to those with their minds in the cemetery. Petrarca's "*gravi / sospiri*" could inspire Donne's "grave frost" as well as his withering sighs.⁴⁰

The situation of "*Zefiro torna*" is carefully elaborated the Earl of Surrey's "Soote Season":⁴¹

The soote season, that bud and blome forth brings,
 With grene hath clad the hill, and eke the vale:
 The Nightingale, with fethers new she sings:
 The turtle to her make hath tolde her tale:
 Somer is come, for every spray now springs,
 The hart hath hong his old hed on the pale:
 The buck in brake his winter coate he flings:
 The fishes flete with new repayred scale:
 The adder all her slough away she slings:
 The swift swallow pursueth the flies smalle:
 The busybee her hony now she minges:
 Winter is worne that was the flowers bale:
 And thus I see among these pleasant things,
 Eche care decayes, and yet my sorow springs.

The sorrow of Surrey's speaker grows with each natural sight of springtime as animals turn to love—and he, by implication, remains alone. This is not, however, the situation of "Twicknam Garden." Instead of finding spring's natural return to be a cause of

⁴⁰ The sense of "grave" as "hole for a corpse" is from a Germanic word for "dig," while "grave" as "serious" derives from the Latin for heavy (OED).

⁴¹ The second poem in *Tottel's Miscellany*, "Description of Spring, wherein eche thing renews, save onely the lover" (Holton and MacFaul 7). See Mortimer for Surrey's poem as "a variation on the theme" of "*Zefiro torna*," which he notes as one of "the same ten or a dozen sonnets" of Petrarca's that "keep turning up for translation and imitation" during the English Renaissance (16, 27). Mortimer also suggests Sonnet 164 as a closer analogue for Donne's first stanza of "bitter and sweet, manna and gall" (26).

melancholy, Donne's speaker-tree seeks out a place of preternaturally paradisaic spring, only to find it fails to assuage his pain. Its inhabitants mock his sadness. Rather than ending with the melancholic stasis of "*Zefiro torna*" or "Soote Season," as we shall see, Donne's speaker first seeks the oblivion of metamorphosis and, later, revenge on those he identifies as the source of his despair.

The second stanza of "Twickenham Garden" introduces a series of personifications, transformations, and interpolations to the space of paradisaic balms established by the first stanza. As discussed above, it begins with a counterfactual image that turns the hyperbolically pathetic situation of the blasted, drowned tree into an anti-pathetic "winter":

'Twere wholsomer for me, that winter did
 Benight the glory of this place,
 And that a grave frost did forbid
 These trees to laugh, and mock me to my face[. . .] (10-13)

Instead of the landscape's mimicking the speaker's internal emotional state in the conventional pathetic trope, here the winds are subjunctive and the "frost" hypothetical. The speaker wishes his surroundings to conform to his feelings, but the increasingly crowded psychic space of the garden does not cooperate.

The first stanza presented the speaker seemingly alone, albeit infested with spider and serpent, in a distressingly idyllic Eden. In this stanza, however, the space acquires a more populous feel, one befitting comparisons to Petrarca's classicized world, itself inspired by Ovid's personified nature. A possibly personified winter is longed for, but absent, while leafy, laughing trees, all too present, deride the speaker's pain.⁴² The garden's "glory" retains a prime position as it shines out from the center of the second line, but the ongoing compliment to the countess begins to seem encroached

⁴² Robbins capitalizes "Winter" (255n).

upon by winter's night on one side and the chill of the grave on the other. The end of the stanza confirms a Petrarchan-Ovidian setting when the speaker at last invokes a recognizable god of Love and asks for an appropriate metamorphosis:

But that I may not this disgrace
Indure, nor leave this garden, Love let me
Some senseless peece of this place be;
Make me a mandrake, so I may grow here,
Or a stone fountaine weeping out the yeare. (14-18)

The speaker's initial election to be a "mandrake" seems a fitting request. "Groan," the common emendation for "grow" from manuscript evidence, retains some possibility of poetic voice and articulation for the "senseless" plant. It expresses the lover's ongoing pain even in the inanimate world, while also mischievously alluding to the root's purported aphrodisiac qualities.⁴³ But this playful flick of the (phallic) serpent's tail is unlikely to serve any amorous ends the speaker might entertain. The close of the first stanza claims the garden to be Eden—the speaker's True Paradise is the primal one, since he "ha[s] brought" the serpent to prove it—but the apparently chaste mistress in this poem will align less with Eve than with Mary, or, in this Petrarchan space, with a Laura who is at times simultaneously virtuous and cruel.

This is not the lost Laura shading the spring setting of "*Zefiro torna*." However, there are other poems in the *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta*, less remarked by critics, that

⁴³ Labriola 227. Two textual variants in this stanza are of significance here. In line 15, for "nor leave this garden," the phrase "nor yet leave loving" appears in the 1633 *Poems* and some manuscripts. This would appear to be an intervention to make the poem more generally applicable or to substitute for a missing line; the reference to a garden is more specific and more likely to be original (Brown 69). In line 17, "groan" appears for "grow" in a set of manuscript witnesses editors have tended to follow. My preferred reading thus agrees with Robbins' emendation from the manuscript evidence (255-56n).

Vin Nardizzi has suggested that "grow" does appropriately characterize what mandrakes do in gardens, while offering a suggestion of sexual activity (private communication). However, "groan" seems to me to be the richer option since it does all this and more by including the lover's traditional affective behavior and the power of the mandrake in folklore (see Robbins 256n).

offer a closer analogy to the emotional setting of “Twicknam Garden.” Frequent similarities of tone, image, and plot or incident occur notably in the earlier parts of the sequence, associated with the time before Laura’s death, when readers first encounter the promises and perils of the poet’s hopeless love.⁴⁴ Two clusters of related sonnets in which the lady’s disdain provokes atmospheric sighs and tears culminate in canzones that rewrite Ovid’s *Metamorphoses* and feature their speaker’s transformation into a weeping statue or its analogue, a fountain. Donne’s poem feels more at home amongst these anxious meditations on the frustrations of scorned love than with the calmer, more elegiac “*Zefiro torna*.” Finding the right Petrarchan source for the poem’s setting and tone helps to clarify its paradisaical vision.

A particularly dense set of correspondences appears in *Rime sparse* 17 to 24. The passionate opening of Sonnet 17 is similarly meteorological: “*Piovonmi amare lagrime dal viso / con un vento angoscioso di sospiri*” (1-2).⁴⁵ The weather metaphor is identical to that of “Twicknam Garden,” although in this case there is no withered tree or garden setting and the plot turns on the lady’s presence or absence. Her “*dolce mansueto riso / [. . .] me sottragge al foco de’ martiri*”—“sweet laughter” providing a balm to cure all despair—but winter descends when she is gone: “*ma gli spiriti miei s’agghiaccian poi / [. . .] al departir*” (5, 7, 9-10).⁴⁶ Sonnets 18 and 19 end in tears.⁴⁷ An icy psychic climate appears again in Sonnet 20, which describes how “*l’ingegno [. . .] / ne l’operazion tutto s’aghiaccia*” in the face of its task of presenting the lady’s beauty (7-8).⁴⁸ Sonnet 21 offers English readers

⁴⁴ Although the *Rime sparse* present arcs of plot, the poems were written and rewritten at a range of times, so I do not seek to draw direct links between the sequential order I describe above and the temporal order of composition.

⁴⁵ “Bitter tears rain down my face / with an anguished wind of sighs.”

⁴⁶ Her “sweet gentle laughter / [. . .] draws me back from the martyrs’ pyre”; “my spirit then freezes / [. . .] at parting.”

⁴⁷ As, of course, do so many lyrics in the sequence.

⁴⁸ “[. . .] the wit [. . .] / in all its functions freezes entirely.”

another pun on “grave,” in the “*grave colpa*” or severe guilt that speaker and lady would bear if his heart were to lose its way (12-13). *Rime sparse* 22 is a sestina in which the speaker also sighs and weeps and associates himself with varying senses of “*selva*,” usually signifying a wilderness but sometimes instead a more curated grove like the planting at Twickenham.⁴⁹

The closest analogy of incident occurs in the longest poem of the group, Canzone 23, famous for its reworking of Ovid.⁵⁰ Donne’s speaker presents himself first as tree, then “senseless” mandrake, then “stone fountain.” Petrarca’s speaker transforms first into a laurel tree, then a swan, then a stone (but one that still lives and writes), a fountain, another stone (this time more deathlike and therefore also “senseless”), a deer, and a flame or an eagle.⁵¹ The poem ends with an apostrophe to itself and a desire, after the frenetic, terrified transformations, to come to rest in the first, retrospectively peaceful image of the laurel: “*ché pur la sua dolce ombra / ogni men bel piacer del cor mi sgombra*” (169-70).⁵² Although the plot of the Canzone is focused on the psychological experience of the metamorphoses, while in “Twickenham Garden” they appear as means

⁴⁹ “*Selva*” means wood or forest, mostly conveying wildness or darkness—the anti-garden of medieval literature—but in one instance, “*l’amorosa selva*,” it refers to the underworld abode of tragic lovers in Virgil’s *Aeneid* VI, which comprises fields as well as a shadowy wood (where Dido flees) and a set of paths and myrtle groves (9, 19-21, 26). The presence of lovers and the possibility of a managed landscape make this “*selva*” more gardenlike. Ernst Robert Curtius observes that “Virgil’s description of the Elysian Fields was employed by Christian poets for Paradise” (200).

⁵⁰ Donald Guss also compares the stone and fountain metamorphoses in Canzone 23 to those of “Twickenham Garden,” in a passage that primarily distinguishes Donne’s Petrarchism from Torquato Tasso’s (85).

⁵¹ Six transformations are generally recognized—a laurel, a swan, a petrified paralysis, a fountain, a stone with “*Spirito doglioso errante*,” a dolorous errant spirit not unlike Echo (141), and a deer—each with its (sometimes distant) origin in Ovid (Musa 532-36n). The *congedo*, a short final stanza of epilogue or leave-taking, briefly announces the flame and the eagle without narrating the psychological experience of these transformations.

⁵² “[. . .] for only its sweet shade / clears from my heart each subordinate pleasure.” The six primary metamorphoses are in their Ovidian source caused by grief or punishment. The fountain, of significance below, recalls the myth of Byblis who transformed in grief after her brother’s rejection of her forbidden love (Durling 64n, Musa 534-35n).

to an end, the apostrophe that ends the canzone alters the inflection of its momentum by choosing rest over frantic change, just as "Twicknam Garden" in its closing stanza shifts from a sequence of metamorphoses to an extended final metaphor.

In his final response to his problem of exaggerated Petrarchan despair, Donne's speaker wills himself to become "a stone fontaine weeping out the yeare," and ponders the implications:⁵³

Hither with Christall vyals, lovers come,
And take my teares, which are loves wine,
And try your Mistresse Teares at home,
For all are false, that taste not just like mine;
Alas, hearts doe not in eyes shine,
Nor can you more judge wom[en's] thoughts by teares
Then by her shadow, what she weares. (19-25)

Another "Hither" calls the speaker's fellow "lovers" to visit the fountain, as on a medieval pilgrimage.⁵⁴ Or perhaps they are Francis Bacon's new empiricists, coming to collect his tears in "Christall vyals," the test tubes by which to "try your Mistresse[s] Teares at home": the speaker's tears offer a litmus for determining whether a lady's love is false.⁵⁵ The deictic "Hither" initially seems as slippery in its reference as that of

⁵³ The unusual form "womés" for "women's" appears to apply a standard contraction for "n" to save space in an inordinately long line.

⁵⁴ Brown "Presence" 69. Or a future Catholic one, as in Donne's "The Relic", stanza 2.

⁵⁵ Leonard and Wharton notwithstanding, most editors identify a possessive in this line. The tear test has been identified as an ancient mourning ritual imagined by several Renaissance writers, although the relevance of such a practice to "Twicknam Garden" remains unclear to this reader. The ritual was extrapolated from Biblical passages concerning tears and archaeological theories as reported (decades later) by Sir Thomas Browne in his *Hydriotaphia* (Robbins 256n; Ps. 56:8; Browne III). "It was believed at this time that the small glass or alabaster vessels found in ancient tombs, probably to hold perfumes, were lachrymatories or tear-bottles in which mourners at funerals caught their tears in order to deposit them as tributes to the dead" (Gardner *Elegies* 216). Andrew Marvell draws on a similar tradition in "The Nymph Complaining for the Death of her Fawn": "I in a golden vial will/ Keep these two crystal tears; and fill/ It to it do o'erflow with mine;/ Then place it in Diana's shrine" (101-4). Editor Nigel Smith notes "Cp. Ps. 56.8: 'Put thou my tears into thy bottle: are they not in thy book?'; Crashaw, 'The Weeper' (1646): 'Angels with their Bottles come;/ And draw from these full Eyes of thine,/ Their Masters water, their owne Wine'" (71n). Baumlin and

the poem's second line. "Hither to the speaker-as-fountain, in some imaginary or future version of the garden," resembles the abstracted metaphysical turns that so often open Donne's third stanzas. But lest the stream of lovers make themselves too comfortable in the newly fountained garden, in short order he sends them out again, first to an unspecified "home" and finally, as his addressees, beyond a recognizable physical place of any sort.⁵⁶ The tear test gives way to a misogynistic meditation on the uselessness of female appearances, especially their eyes and tears, for determining truth. This uncharacteristic skepticism of shiny optical orbs suggests an aim and an audience fundamentally different from those of Donne's poems exploring sincere love such as "The Ecstasy" and "A Valediction: Of Weeping."⁵⁷ The speaker does not seek to ingratiate himself with believers in true love's spiritual communion, nor with the female sex in general. Instead, he asserts a homosocial vision of solidarity and judgment. The lady is now *persona non grata*, her deserved compliments forgotten, her garden turned to smoke and mirrors.

Petrarca's Sonnet 24, the last in the group of *Rime sparse* I have identified as the closest tonal and topical source for "Twicknam Garden," likewise deals with the consequences of failed love while addressing a male compatriot rather than the lady herself.⁵⁸ It opens with Petrarca's disappointment in not as yet attaining "*l'onorata fronde che prescrive / l'ira del ciel quando 'l gran Giove tona*" (1-2)—that is, roughly, the

DiPasquale also suggest with "wine" a return to the Eucharistic metaphor of the first stanza (174, 166), which can be read as blasphemous or paradoxically orthodox (Richards 182-83).

⁵⁶ Sheppard (65, 70) and Guss (87) distinguish between an earthly Petrarchan love (and poetry) and a more abstract, idealized one based on a Christian Neo-Platonism.

⁵⁷ Margo Swiss outlines a long Christian tradition of tears' betokening truthfulness, which Donne subscribes to in many of his writings (142-43).

⁵⁸ Originally a response to Petrarca's friend Andrea Stramazzo da Perugia, the poem makes use of the same end-rhymes as Stramazzo's prior sonnet epistle (Musa 536n).

laurel of poetic honor which protects from the blasts of heaven.⁵⁹ The sonnet closes with the poet's recommendation that his friend "*Cercate dunque fonte più tranquillo, / ché 'l mio d'ogni liquor sostiene inopia / salvo di quel che lagrimando stillo*" (12-14).⁶⁰ A friend, a fountain, an injunction to travel towards it: the terms are the same as those at the end of "Twicknam Garden," although Donne's apostrophe performs a summons to and dismissal from the perilous garden, while Petrarca's sends his friend in search of calmer climes. (The implicit quest for the laurels of poetry, however, will prove important to both.) Together this group from *Rime sparse* 17 to 24 presents a recurrent theme of tears and psychic trauma, figured as wet or wintry weather patterns. Action is driven by the speaker's emotional turmoil and the lady's chilling distance. It concludes in a weeping fountain. To be sure, in the course of eight separate poems, totaling nearly 300 lines of verse, much will also differ from Donne's lyric of one-tenth the length. Nonetheless, in the search for Donne's specific Petrarchan vision, we find far more specific verbal echoes and visual cues in the tormented throes of *Rime sparse* 17-24 than in the wistful spring of "*Zefiro torna.*"

Another set of resonances, including predominant sighing and weeping, several metamorphoses into stones and fountains, and assertions of the saving power of poetry, appears in two linked groups of poems between *Rime sparse* 127 and 135.⁶¹ As with the

⁵⁹ "[. . .] the honored frond which prevents / heaven's anger when the great Jove thunders."

⁶⁰ "Therefore search out a more tranquil fountain / for mine maintains a lack of every liquid / except that which in weeping I pour forth."

⁶¹ Musa, relying on the chronology of Ernest Hatch Wilkins, notes that *Rime sparse* 127-130 were written in the same place and time, while 130-134 comprise a cycle, the latter four of which along with 135 were written at Vacluse (603n; 607n). In Canzone 127, poetry still offers temporary comfort to the weeping speaker (99-106); Canzone 129 again invokes the *Metamorphoses* and describes Petrarca's seeing Laura's shape in ponds and trees and clouds until, disappointed, "*pur lì medesimo assido / me freddo, pietra morta in pietra viva, / in guisa d'uom che pensi et pianga et scriva*" ("although I still sit / I freeze, dead stone on living rock, / in the guise of a man who thinks and weeps and writes")

previous group, turbulent emotions propel transformations into insensate stone and miraculous fountains, this time set in a paradisaal landscape that can be both a mystical destination and a familiar homely place. At the end of the set, in the excessively metamorphic Canzone 135, the speaker finds himself in the midst of the poem becoming "*fonte di lagrime*" (53), a fountain of tears, prior to Laura's transformation into a series of fatal fountains that govern his destiny. While one of the fountains is to be found in classical Greece, most of these metamorphoses are located at the uttermost bounds of the known world—"l'indico mar" (16); "l'estremo occidente" (31); "nel mezzo giorno" (46); "Fuor tutt' i nostri lidi" (76).⁶² "Out past all our strands" are the Fortunate Isles, usually identified as the Canary Islands, a location often conflated with paradise.⁶³ This distant legendary fountain, however, is made analogous at last to the spring of the river Sorgue in Petrarca's country retreat at Vaucluse.⁶⁴ Familiar yet wondrous, close to

(50-52). He weeps more in Sonnet 130, and in 131 imagines a poetry so strong that it would force his lady to sigh and weep as well, figured with double metamorphoses as he hopes to see "*le rose vermiglie infra la neve / mover da l'ora, et descubrir l'avorio / che fa di marmo chi da presso 'l guarda*" ("the red roses under the snow / moved by the moment, uncovering the ivory / that makes marble whoever sees it close") (9-11). Musa describes it as a poem "intended to charm while containing a bitter, fierce message," an apt description for Donne's poem (603n). Sonnet 132 also questions why love bears "*l'effeto aspro mortale*" and concludes seasonally with the anti-pathetic claim of "*tremo a mezza state, ardendo il verno*" ("the killing bitterness; I tremble at midsummer, burning the winter long") (3, 14), a theme of conflict and paradox continued in 133-134. Finally, Canzone 135 deals again in metaphor and metamorphosis, figuring Laura as phoenix, lodestone, Medusa-like beast (albeit also "soave," sweet), and sun, and then as a series of fountains.

⁶² "The Indian sea"; "the extreme west"; "the equator"; "Out past all our strands."

⁶³ Giamatti notes several classical variations as well as Tasso's garden of Armida (see especially 27ff, 193).

⁶⁴ Vaucluse in Petrarca's poems is typically figured as a refreshing wilderness escape, his personal *locus amoenus*. (Musa suggests that Vaucluse, "where the wilderness came right up to the edge of his garden but where he felt completely safe" offered a contrast with "another kind of wilderness across the plain" in the papal politics of Avignon (xvi).) This attitude towards the natural landscape, markedly "Renaissance" rather than medieval, implies that the place functioned for Petrarca as a direct extension of his garden there. Poets following Petrarca seem often to have read a garden setting into this pleasant wilderness or to have deliberately added the garden setting for their own

home and yet out of all ken, this version of Petrarca's world provides a prototype for a defamiliarized "Twicknam Garden," offering in a notionally nearby site both the numinous space and the transformative power its emotional turmoil seems to require.

Donne's vision of paradise seems to find less inspiration in the mournful and apocalyptic visions of "*Zefiro torna*" and the *Rime sparse*'s closing sequences, and more in the bitter energies, intense anxieties, and frustrated transformations of its earlier poems. Contained within this source material are intertwining concepts that Petrarca turned over and over: the pains as well as the pleasures of poetic love, and its ability to produce powerful and unsettling metamorphoses in the speaker and the landscape—as well as, by implication, the glorious poems thus produced. Petrarca occasionally locates his struggles in a pleasant or paradisaal space suggesting the *hortus conclusus*, and at times strongly identifies his Laura with both Mary and Eve as well as with the cruel fair of courtly love, as in Donne's first stanza. However, the Petrarchism of "Twicknam Garden," marked by personification and shape-shifting, is increasingly Ovidian, and the speaker becomes increasingly angry at the lady who provokes these disturbances. The tension between these figures of the lady as blessed or baleful emerges in the transition over the course of the poem from ecstatic praise of her garden to vengeful indictment of her sex. The implications of this anger are of great practical consequence in Donne's poem, for its imagined lady is also its intended audience.

purposes—as Donne, influenced by Bedford's patronage, clearly does.

Musa suggests a link between the six metamorphoses of Canzone 23, the "six wonders of nature" in Canzone 135—both of which, I argue, offer source material for "Twicknam Garden"—and the six visions of Canzone 323 in which Laura is again figured as a beast, ship, tree, spring, phoenix, and lady. Musa notes that "Six wonders of nature appear in the poem, suggesting a correlation with poems 23 and 323" (605n).

The Stakes: The Lady in the Garden

As noted above, refined compliments to the marvelous garden and its life-giving proprietor are evident in the first stanza and present, though encroached-upon, in the second. By the third stanza, however, the poem's attention to and consideration for its patron seem to slip. Instead, the homosocial tear test implies that female tears, eyes, and shadows are inherently untrustworthy. The poem's close extends this ungallant assumption into a stinging couplet initially reminiscent of Donne's most bitter lovers:⁶⁵

O perverse sexe, where none is true but she,
Who's therefore true, because her truth kills me. (26-7)

The lines display a sort of epigrammatic finality, ending a poem of extremely straight rhyming on a strong "she" and "me" after four lines of almost completely regular iambic meter—with the obvious exception of the feet containing "*per vërse*" itself.⁶⁶ The lady escapes the couplet's initial attack on all her sex only to face a further condemnation: "because her truth kills me, therefore—and only therefore—she, alone among her sex, is true." The lady is a sadist.⁶⁷

What sort of patronage poem ends with an insult?⁶⁸ There are worse fates for a

⁶⁵ Compare the ending of "Song: Goe and catch a falling starre": "Yet shee / Will bee / False, ere I come, to two or three" (25-27).

⁶⁶ That is, a trochee followed by a spondee: "*Ó per vërse séxe, | where nóne is trúe but shé, / Who's thére fore trúe, be cáuse her trúth kils mé.*" Italicized letters indicate syllables possibly carrying half-stress.

⁶⁷ "Perverse" in this period does not have to carry the sense of "wicked," but it is in this sense that the OED cites Donne's use of the word one of his sermons. Readings of the poem as misogynist point to the apparent cruelty of the lady who is "true" out of spite rather than virtue (e.g. Gardner *Elegies* 216). Alternatively, the more complimentary readings see the conclusion as a sign of her strength and purity (e.g. Brown "Presence" 69). The serpentine rootlet of playful eroticism is present as well in the sexual frisson available in "kills," along with its more familiar cousin "die" (OED). (Sheppheard 70). Despite such attempts to soften the closing couplet with courtly compliment or sexual play, I find it difficult to accept readings that do not see the lines as fundamentally spiteful.

⁶⁸ In posing this line of inquiry I seek to answer both Andreasen's implicit question of how a poem that fails to be "complimentary" can be a patronage poem (10, 141), and

Jacobean woman than to be labeled as virtuous and cruel, such as that which Bedford's cousin and friend Celia Bulstrode suffered in verse as "The Court Pucell" at the hands of Ben Jonson in 1609, around the same time as "Twicknam Garden" was written.

According to Barbara Lewalski, the case of Jonson, whose patronage relationship with Bedford lasted longer than Donne's, also suggests that the countess was able to take a certain amount of satire in stride, since 1609—quite a busy year!—also saw the first production of *Epicæne*, whose collegiate ladies are a thinly veiled version of Bedford and her "Haughty" intellectual ambitions.⁶⁹ Lewalski suspects that Bedford "was willing to extend considerable license to [Jonson's] satire," and that she "was aware of these witty subversions" in Donne's poems, concluding that "Bedford constructs herself [. . .] as a figure of power and influence, of splendor and grace, of literary and artistic discrimination, of intelligence and wit."⁷⁰ But does "Twicknam Garden" fit either the mode of professional satire or of splendid homage?

The poem opens with seemingly lavish praise for the lady's horticultural beauties and closes with ambivalence or worse about her unassailable virtue. As mentioned above, Donne's verse letter offers a mirroring of the lyric's themes that becomes increasingly eerie as the tones of the two works diverge. The letter begins with Bedford's "Vertue" and aligns it with her beauty in the double-stranded, wholly positive motif of the poem. Only the court's mercenary disregard for proper values meets with oblique censure:

Marotti's of whether "Twicknam Garden" succeeds as a poem because it fails as a patronage offering, resulting in a "'mood of dejection and emptiness'" (*Coterie* 218, quoting Leishman 170).

⁶⁹ See Lewalski *Writing* 106-10. Bulstrode died the same year, and Donne wrote her an elegy. Donne was somewhat unusual amongst Bedford's poetic clients in that he sought not to advance his professional writing career but instead to obtain the court appointment he felt befitted his gentry class status (Marotti "Patronage" 207-23).

⁷⁰ *Writing* 110, 112, 123.

Therefore at Court, which is not Vertue's clime,
 (Where a transcendent height (as lownesse mee)
 Makes her not be or not show), all my rime
 Your vertues challenge, which there rarest bee;
 For, as darke texts need notes, there some must bee
 To usher Vertue, and say, 'This is shee.' (7-12)

At the (perverse) court, where in the first stanza supply and demand triumph over absolute value, "all" Donne's rhymes must be in service to Bedford's "vertues," explicating them for an audience to whom such a "text"—that is, the lady herself—is "darke."⁷¹ In the country, by contrast, Bedford's beauty is the sun and her virtue the temple that together bring forth "a new world" and a flock of "new creatures" to worship there (21-22). Donne figures his petitioned visit as "this pilgrimage"—equal and opposite to the stream of suspicious lovers, or included in their number?—and only halts his praise out of concern that its excess would "Tast of Poëtique rage or flattery" (63). He closes, emphatically, with the assertion of paradisaal beauty cited above (70-72). Equally decisive, the two poems present similar scenarios in starkly different tones.

Is "Twicknam Garden" acting out in reaction to the verse letter, rewriting a reluctant homage to express the poet's inner disgust for the exercise? Or does the letter seek to explicate the lyric, perhaps to compensate for its poor reception? Donne's letters often show him working through anxieties surrounding his own struggles for social standing and patronage, in missives to his friends as well as in texts presented to one source of both power and anxiety, Bedford herself.⁷² By turning earlier in Petrarca's sequence for tonal inspiration as well as for images of meteorologically inflected emotions and desperate transformations, Donne might be seeking a model for the paradoxical persistence of such troubled and troubling features within a paradisaal

⁷¹ According to Marotti, here Donne "facetiously argued that *she needed him*" (Coterie 210, emphasis original).

⁷² See Brown "Presence."

space, and a method for working through the psychic consequences of the emotionally inaccessible paradise, with the glory of poetic achievement offering some reassurance.

Or might the poem be, somehow, also a compliment, one of the “notes” to Bedford’s “darke text” of virtue that he promises to “usher” her with “at Court”? Recall the critics’ suggestion that “Twicknam Garden” results from a courtly game of exchanging poems in a Petrarchan mode. With its agitated beginning, metamorphic center, and bitter conclusion, the poem could have arisen from an assignment to supply a “missing” canzone in the *Rime sparse* sequence. Its form and subject would seem to fall conveniently between the lonely, troubled fountain of Sonnet 24 as mentioned above, and Sonnet 25, which presents a more companionable vision of the poet and the god of Love weeping together for another, unknown friend, then celebrating his return to their fellowship. Each sonnet was written to one of Petrarca’s friends, one decrying and one celebrating love and its poetic consequences. As the intervening poem, “Twicknam Garden” could have given further evidence of the perils of violent emotion, as well as its metamorphic power, before concluding with its apostrophe to a fellowship of lovers.

The two groups of Petrarca’s poems present the desperate effects of the power of love, and the power of the lady that causes it. Officially she is the perfect beloved, but she is also frankly terrifying, the source of psychic transformations that manifest physically in the poems’ metamorphoses. At times the sequence implies that the pressure is too great, and so it turns to the solace of friendship or of nature for relief, and perhaps for a re-centering of the poetic self. Petrarca aspires to “*l’onorata fronde*,” the honored laurel branch of poetry, as much as he seeks the love of Laura. For Donne, not pretending to any actual amorousness, such honors and their material rewards would seem to serve as the prime motivation for writing patronage poems.

Donne, however, faces a problem in “Twicknam Garden” that Petrarca does not. In Donne’s own search for poetic glory and the patronage that both sustains it and is its reward, *his* patron, Lucy, Countess of Bedford, must also take on the roles of both the lady *and* the friend.⁷³ In the Petrarchan mode, the former relationship is inherently fraught and adversarial, a source of despair—as well as of the poetry that chronicles it—while the latter offers temporary respite. In Donne’s lyric, the various metamorphoses proposed by the speaker seem to be his attempt to negotiate this paradox. Moreover, if we pay attention to the poem’s garden *as* a garden, an imaginary horticultural setting with features resembling the garden at Twickenham, the poem’s closing moves become both more attentive to his patron Bedford as garden proprietor, and perhaps more complimentary, than would otherwise appear.

Interlude “*Beastes in this border*”: *The Poet as Invasive Species*

Reading the poem through the material practices of garden design makes the entire series of metamorphoses more intelligible. The speaker presents as a dying plant (probably a bitter-tasting one), tormented by the skies and carrying two noxious pests: “the spider Love” and “the serpent.” Symbolism aside, no prudent gardener would welcome such a specimen, or the vicious atmosphere associated with it. Aware that if he remains in the opening lines’ hyper-pathetic situation he will not be welcome to enjoy the “balme” of the lady’s “Spring” garden, he then asks that Love “Make me a mandrake, so I may groan here,” longing to be “Some senseless peece of this place.”

In making this plea and invoking the conventional behavior of the mandrake, the speaker enters a conversation surrounding the ongoing organization of botanical

⁷³ In *The Faerie Queene*, as we have seen in the previous chapter, Spenser faces the similarly fraught situation of the lady’s being the patron, but without Donne’s further complicating aspirations to social parity.

knowledge and folklore into printed herbals. Like “Twicknam Garden,” these collections frequently juxtapose new empirical impulses with the inheritances of a more fantastical past. John Gerard’s 1597 *Herball, or Historie of Plants*—dedicated to chief minister William Cecil, whose gardens at Theobalds and in London Gerard supervised—records the tradition that the mandrake “will giue agreat shreeke at the digging vp” only to empirically dismiss it, “For I my selfe and my seruants also haue digged vp, planted, and replanted very many.”⁷⁴ This notion, Gerard insists, “besides many fables of louing matters, too full of scurrilitie to set foorth in print, which I forbear to speake of : all which dreames and olde wiues tales, you shall from hencefoorth cast out of your bookes and memorie” (281). Yet Gerard himself cannot help but give such fables substantial page room in *his* book, as in his memory, in a sort of horticultural *occupatio*.

Like Gerard, the speaker tries to have it both ways. He mentions the mandrake but shortly reconsiders, perhaps realizing that the lady still might not take kindly to the introduction in her ornamental garden—with sights, sounds, and smells verging on “True Paradise”—of a lowly (and lascivious) medicinal plant, despite its rather attractive appearance in the *Herball*’s accompanying Continental woodcut.

Bedford’s garden was not a medieval physic garden. Nor was it one of the botanical gardens beginning to be planted at Padua and other European universities as the discourse of global exploration transformed, relinquishing its initial hope of actually rediscovering the original Eden in favor of attempts to recreate it by (re)collecting all the plants of the world into one place. Such a scientific paradise would comprise a garden covering all four corners of the world, simultaneously offering spring flowers and

⁷⁴ For Gerard’s relationship with his patron and employer Cecil, see Harkness 49-55. See also Chapter 3.

autumn fruit.⁷⁵ The “Twicknam” of both lyric and verse letter, however, is exclusively springlike; the letter rejects the court’s “autumnall offices” (27). Although the letter claims that Bedford’s garden is “a new world,” with “new creatures,” in the context of its “Cherubin” and the Edenic features of “Twicknam Garden,” this would seem to be the old sort of newness, creation *ab origine*, rather than a colonialist’s collecting venture or a latter-day Garden of Adonis.

As curator of her formal garden at Moor Park a decade later, Bedford like other aristocratic collectors did seek to acquire new specimens. She wrote to her friend Jane Lady Cornwallis Bacon, to “intreate [. . .] som of the litle white single rose rootes I saw att Broome, & to challenge Mr Bacons promis for som flowers, if about yow ther be any extraordinary ones, for I am now very busy furnishing my gardens,” and promised to reciprocate in kind.⁷⁶ Neither collector would have wished among their “extraordinary” flowers to acquire the mundane mandrake, let alone such potentially invasive species as “The spider love, which transubstantiates all,” and “the serpent,” which, the speaker mordantly claims, makes the garden “True Paradise.” The poem treads the border between divine compliment and threats of infestation. To temper the latter, it is not Gerard’s mandrake but Petrarca’s fountain that the speaker alights upon to elaborate as his final conceit.

This fountain, when considered from the angle of garden design rather than Petrarchan discourse, hints that the final stanza’s misogynist experiment distracts attention from the poem’s real poetic power play. Petrarchan visions take readers on a journey through a world of psychic distress and ecstatic despair, to which poetic

⁷⁵ John Prest charts this transformation in his study of what Paradise meant to Early Modern English science. In Book III of *The Faerie Queene*, Prest notes, Spenser describes the Garden of Adonis in almost identical terms (46, 66).

⁷⁶ Quoted in Lawson (77; see also 140 for Bedford’s further plant collecting). The Mr. Bacon in question was Jane’s husband Nathaniel, painter and nephew to Francis.

metamorphoses and appeals to friendship cannot offer an entirely satisfying response. Beyond this, however—further into the poem’s paradisal vision of its world—lies a conversation with and a commentary upon Bedford’s garden, so recently acquired from Francis Bacon. The poem’s compliments to garden and gardener seem to disappear in the closing stanza. But the stanza dilates and builds upon the concept of the fountain: the one feature conspicuously absent from the Smythson plan, and the one the poem has spirited into its center ring, under the very noses of readers dazzled by its metaphysical sleight of hand.

*

To understand full the significance of this move, we must turn to the garden at Twickenham and its own vision of “Paradise” as a counterpart to, and inspiration for, the poem’s poetic strategies. As noted above, scholars have tended to use Twickenham as a superlative example in the course of telling a bigger story.⁷⁷ The garden at Twickenham as depicted in the plan is remarkable, and beautiful, and therefore it deserves mention in any story garden historians have to tell. But they do not all tell the same story.

The Garden’s Vision: Encircling Paradise

Seeing beyond the exemplary status of the garden at Twickenham requires a similar set of tasks to working through the conventional attributes of the poem. We must first determine what kind of garden the plan portrays, then attempt to find the sources of such a design, and finally, in turn, elucidate the significance of the design amongst its possible alternatives. Donne’s positing of a fountain where none existed, a fountain invited—and imposed—by the speaker’s narcissistic despair, draws our attention

⁷⁷ See note [17] above.

towards this feature integral to so many real and imagined gardens of European culture. Those features the plan does indicate allow us to sketch a history of the garden. This history, in turn, makes it clear that a common attribution of the concentric circles of a planetary diagram as a source for the garden's design is incorrect. Instead, I am able to suggest a prominent text of Renaissance garden aesthetics as the true source for both the shape of the plan and its iconographical significance. Pursuing the implications of this aesthetic program allows me to identify what Bedford and Donne understood the garden's vision of paradise to be and what the stakes of that vision are, both for Bedford as the garden's proprietor and for Donne as the poem's maker.

The Setting: Smythson's Plan; Bacon's Paradise?

Arriving at the garden gate by way of Donne's poem, we expect to find a fountain contained therein. However, Bedford's garden as shown in the plan did not have a fountain of any sort, although such water features (for those who could afford them) were both traditional and highly fashionable in Jacobean landscape design beginning around 1609, when the poem was probably written and the plan was drawn.⁷⁸

Smythson's plan shows the house and gardens without situating them in a topographical context: How big is the park surrounding the space depicted in the plan? Where is the river? Gaps in the walls for entrance or egress are indicated but not noted. One is in the lower right of the plan through the wall from "The Inner Courte at my Lo: of Bedfordes: at : Twitnam," beside what seems to be a tower staircase possibly leading to a balcony also overlooking the garden and just opposite one of the two more elaborate front mounts. A second entrance is in the upper right from the "Kichen

⁷⁸ On tradition and innovation in Tudor and Stuart gardens, see Henderson "Clinging" 53-62.

Garden,” almost a mirror image of the first; the third is in the center of the far left wall, presumably from the larger hunting park. Bedford and her resident guests would usually have used the “Courte” entry when coming from the house. However, the entry from the park—opening onto a slightly raised terrace, fifteen feet wide, a few steps up from the rest of the walks beyond, and running the length of that side of the garden—would have offered the best initial view of the garden as a whole. Four square-hedged walks surround four conical mounts, which in turn overlook six circular tree-lined walks and a large central lawn.⁷⁹

The plan thus offers three possible routes by which visitors might enjoy it. The garden invites its users to proceed around and around the garden along the orbital paths, or climb a mount and survey the whole, or take one of the four transverse paths cutting crosswise straight from the edges to the center. Each concentric border of hedges or trees is labeled as to its plants. The square walks along its outer rim would have formed visitors’ first impressions of the place, distinct from other parts or from a sense of the garden as a whole, which can only be achieved by looking at the plan or standing on one of the inner mounts.

Visitors’ initial impressions of the square walks might have corresponded in some details with those of the poem itself. Their straight lines with sharp turns resemble all verse on a page.⁸⁰ They also share with the poem specific images called up by the planting Smythson records. After the outer walk between the garden wall and a

⁷⁹ Landscape historian Kelly Cook has suggested the central feature might be a pool (private communication). However, the short hatching is consistent with grass on other Smythson plans. (One of the similarly hatched compartments at Worcester House, Nonsuch, is noted “sett with flowers” (I/17)). In the plan of Somerset House, the Thames is marked with squiggles and the fountain basin is left blank (I/13). Strong notes “probably of grass,” much like the “essentially English” bowling green (120, 178).

⁸⁰ An observation that becomes less trivial if Bedford and her guests strode Mr Ramsay-like up and down them while reciting.

hedge of “thorne and quick sett,” the inner hedges are, in turn, the topiary “Ewe: treese: cut into Beastes in this Border”; a probably lower border of “Rose mary:” shrubs; and finally “F[r]ute treesee: in this Border:” for the innermost square and, presumably, the outermost circle, enclosing the mounts and their roughly trapezoidal lawns.⁸¹ In Bedford’s garden, wild and possibly dangerous creatures vie for space with the aromatic herb of the Virgin Mary and the produce of Eden, not unlike the first stanza of Donne’s poem.

Whether the trees that crown the top edges of the mounts are also fruit trees remains unclear.⁸² The mounts appear to have twelve steps from bottom to top, suggesting a height of about eight feet.⁸³ Inside the mounts are two circles of “Lyme: Treese:” (or “Lime:”—that is, Linden) and three of “Birche.” The squares connecting the two innermost circles appear to indicate some further barrier such as a gate, arbor, or pergola; similar features appear at the outermost right-hand corners of the hawthorn square. Henderson observes that garden plans frequently show masonry niches for seats without indicating the seats themselves, so it is important to remember that any movable garden furniture, however probable, is invisible to the Smythson plan.⁸⁴ While the lines in the outer walks can be taken to represent hedging, the structure indicated by

⁸¹ Although the “r” of “Frute” is indistinct, the identical spelling and letterforms appear clearly in the plan of Worcester House, where “The Vper walke [is] sett with frute Treese” (I/17). Henderson reads “Fure” = fir, noting that Francis Bacon includes “fir-trees” amongst his recommended evergreens alongside yew and rosemary in “Of Gardens” (“Essay” 73). Bacon later recommends specific fruiting trees—but does not mention hawthorn, birch, or lime (430). While the suggestion is tantalizing, firs seem less likely for an internal tree border than for an edge or a grove planting, whereas fruit trees espaliered on freestanding supports seem more plausible here.

⁸² Reproductions of the plan often show a tree-sized dot in the center of each mount as well, but these are in fact the holes left by Smythson’s compass.

⁸³ High enough to see out over the wall, but an uncertain vantage for seeing over or under (or through) the trees encircling the center, depending on the height and density of their branches.

⁸⁴ See e.g. *Tudor* 90, 155.

the continuous lines between the tree trunks of the inner walks is less obvious. Possibly they represent balustrades, or a pleaching of the tree branches into an elevated hedgelike structure.⁸⁵ Indeed, the view from the center of the garden may have resembled that of the 20th-century Ellipse in the garden at Dumbarton Oaks designed by Beatrix Farrand—omitting, of course, its prominent central feature, a French fountain in a classical style.

There are no water features of any kind depicted in the plan. Thus it is striking that in the poem the speaker's final metamorphosis should be into a fountain. To eyes trained in the visual rhetoric of contemporary Italianate gardens, which were increasingly popular with elite English patrons, there is an obvious spot for one in the central green of the Smythson plan.⁸⁶ Whether this is a notable absence is partly a question of dating and attribution. Medieval conventions were slow to disappear in a Protestant England cut off from Continental innovations under the Tudors.

Iconographical programs featured heraldic or emblematic elements.⁸⁷ After 1603, new English gardens became increasingly Mannerist and baroque, engaging with

⁸⁵ To my knowledge, no garden historian has discussed the features of the Twickenham plan noted in this paragraph. Henderson notes that balustrades for garden terraces may have been first used in Queen Elizabeth's 1574 improvements at Windsor (*Tudor* 82). Alan C. B. Urwin suggests the inner circle trees are "pleached or trained as espaliers" (*Houses* 32).

⁸⁶ See Strong chs. 6-7.

⁸⁷ Strong ch. 2. Strong, clearly influenced by the date of the plan and an honorable desire to make Bedford his horticultural star, explicitly assumes that the garden, like the plan, dates from Bedford's tenure and is therefore Jacobean. Given this presumed date, Strong then looks for innovative Mannerist features in the garden, and finds them. This process then becomes circular, with the Baroque features supporting the presumed date. Strong's many followers, including Hunt, do not question his (usually unimpeachable) analysis.

A similar process occurs in a richly documented local history of Twickenham Park, its house, and its gardens over time. The house is expected to date from c. 1608 and thus must display features Girouard has identified as new and fashionable in Smythson's work. Details that do not fit, such as an "extremely asymmetrical" floor plan in an era in which symmetry was the height of fashion, must simply be ignored (Urwin *Houses* 17).

classical revivals and technical innovations that began in the Italian Renaissance and soon spread west and north. Roy Strong's frequently cited analysis of the garden at Twickenham identifies it as early Mannerist and thus dating to Bedford's tenure there. However, Mark Girouard, who first published the Smythson collection in 1962, succinctly expressed the problem with such an assumption: "If this plan was made in 1609, it seems unlikely that Lady Bedford had had much time to alter the garden, so that the elaborate lay-out shown in the plan may have been the work of Francis Bacon."⁸⁸ Even ornament takes time; Bedford had been in residence at most two or three years when the plan was drawn, but the time horizon for creating a simply shaped topiary yew on a large scale—let alone to shape it into "Beastes"—is close to a decade.⁸⁹ A thorough review of the (scant) historical documentation indicates that Girouard's impression is correct, and that Strong and his followers have inadvertently allowed too much power of suggestion to the date of the plan, and the laudable feminist appeal of Bedford, a powerful and fascinating woman renowned for her creativity and influence at court, as its designer.

Instead, Strong's own criteria suggest a late Tudor date. Design elements include medieval features such as mounts and "the orchard where beauty lay mainly in trees, grass and shady walks"—rather than the parterre, fountain, or grotto that might suggest seventeenth-century fashions.⁹⁰ Birches and hawthorn, which mark the inner and outer edges of the garden's walks, were native trees often used in medieval orchards and hedging.⁹¹ Henderson's analysis of Bacon's famous essay "On Gardens" finds in the Smythson plan a clear alignment with Bacon's known interests and lifelong

⁸⁸ "Smythson" 36. (Baconians, take note.)

⁸⁹ "It may take more than ten years to shape a vigorous yew plant 4-6ft (1.2-1.8m) high into a substantial cone over 8ft (2.5m) in height" (Joyce 24).

⁹⁰ Landsberg 54; Strong 126-36.

⁹¹ Landsberg 81.

practice.⁹² While Henderson's argument is primarily stylistic, Alan C. B. Urwin's detailed local histories of the Twickenham estates provide ample evidence—despite his own assumption of a 1609 construction recorded in the Smythson plan—that Bacon had both the time and the resources to produce such a garden.⁹³ The garden shares features with Bacon's tastes as expressed at Gray's Inn between 1597 and 1612.⁹⁴ There, tree-lined walks, first planted in 1598, included birch and cherry trees. Bacon added a

⁹² See Henderson "Essay." There are, however, also some very clear differences between plan and essay that may be attributable to evolution in taste and variations in resources, real or imagined. Henderson reads the essay alongside Bacon's known gardens in greater detail, and also encourages attention to complementary passages in the immediately prior "Of Building," which she claims convincingly as its pendant. However, just as the similar dates of poem and plan can be misleading, the essay first printed in 1625 should not be applied too rigorously as evidence for Bacon's design plans—still less his resource capacities—over 20 years earlier. The precise layout of Twickenham in the Smythson plan does not correspond to Bacon's equally precise essay, which calls for a circular central mount without "embossments" (Twickenham has four circular corner mounts, two with three lobes or bastions on their corners) and a fountain or pool with running water (Twickenham has none), and inveighs against "images cut out in juniper or other garden stuff, they be for children" as opposed to the more geometrical "pretty pyramides" he preferred (433). No "Beastes" in *that* border, thank you. Henderson suggests, convincingly, that such specific condemnations may be the result of decisive experiences as well as changes in tastes. Perhaps the bastions on the Twickenham mounts were difficult to maintain, or not as elegant in execution as they appear on the plan. The existence of the mounts and perimeter walks, and the overall simplicity of the design, suggest the Smythson plan is indeed consistent with a general Baconian style as expressed in the essay.

There are many plausible reasons for the specific disparities between garden and essay. The essay could present Bacon's theoretical revision of the outdated or unsatisfactory garden he had at Twickenham, or merely chart the development of his tastes over time. In any case it represents an unrealized, unrealizable ideal since the garden hypothesized is "prince-like" and, including "a green in the entrance," the formal garden "in the midst," and the wilder "heath or desert," covers at least "thirty acres of ground" (432). As such, it would have been "the largest garden in England" at the time, according to Kiernan (291, cited in Bacon 770n). Henderson suggests the essay may have specifically taken the great gardens at Theobalds and Audley End for its models ("Essay" 65). Bacon certainly designed the garden at his later house of Gorhambury, which does not closely resemble the directives of "On Gardens" even in miniature (Strong 127-29). The rapid changes in garden technology and fashion during this period may also be a factor; the fountain Bacon calls for in 1625 was not yet *de rigueur* at the turn of the seventeenth century.

⁹³ Probably during the tenure of his brother Edward, the original leaseholder.

⁹⁴ See Henderson "Essay" 69-71.

mount in 1608, around the time he left Twickenham and Bedford acquired its lease. The sketchy representation of the Gray's Inn mount on Richard Newcourt's 1658 map of London looks almost identical to the mounts at Twickenham as mapped by Moses Glover in 1635.⁹⁵ Finally, a pleasure garden did exist at Twickenham during Bacon's tenure. A letter from his brother Anthony celebrates "that wholesome pleasant lodge and finely designed garden."⁹⁶ In 1660 Francis Bacon's former assistant Thomas Bushell recalls "*Twitnam* Park, and its Garden of Paradise," which Bacon used "to study in."⁹⁷

The name or label "Garden of Paradise" is itself suggestive of an iconographical program behind the garden's design. Gardens throughout the period, especially those of monumental size and formal exemplarity, relied heavily on such symbolic programs.⁹⁸ Furthermore, there is the uniqueness of this particular garden form—its exceptionality rather than its exemplarity. Concentric circles as a dominant motif are rare, especially when comprised of tree-lined walks rather than hedges (as in Salomon de Caus' 1620 design for Heidelberg) or beds (as in the botanical garden at Padua begun in 1543, itself drawing upon a traditional garden model representing the four corners of the world).⁹⁹ Multiple mounts arranged in a pattern are almost unheard-of.¹⁰⁰ The uniqueness and complexity of the design suggests a thoroughly conceptual scheme behind its construction. Moreover, the single close analogue I have identified was

⁹⁵ Reprinted in Henderson "Essay" 70 and Urwin *Houses* 19.

⁹⁶ Henderson "Essay" 74.

⁹⁷ 17 [second series]. Caution should, of course, be exercised in giving too much weight to such a conventional label for a period garden. The antiquary (and sketch biographer) John Aubrey in 1656 deplores the decay of Bacon's later gardens at Verulam: what was "in his Lordship's prosperitie, a Paradise; now is a large ploughed field" (quoted in Henderson "Essay" 75). However, Bushell's phrase has the ring of a name rather than an apposition: Bacon presided at Twickenham over a garden that someone, at least, called "Paradise."

⁹⁸ See Strong ch. 2.

⁹⁹ Moore et al. 111-12; Prest 40-44.

¹⁰⁰ Henderson suggests the quincuncial form, popular in other contexts, which I find unlikely (*Tudor* 99).

commissioned by the most programmatic designer in England.

The one early modern Europe garden closely resembling the Smythson plan in both shape and planting is Thomas Tresham's unfinished garden at Lyveden New Bield. At Lyveden, four mounts surround a square moat, extended from a medieval remnant. The two mounts facing the distant main house (the "Old Bield") are pyramidal and also overlook the recently replanted rectangular orchard terrace. The other two mounts are larger, snail-shaped, and partly surrounded by the moat; these look towards the New Bield, an unfinished garden lodge.¹⁰¹ The garden enclosed by the moat seems to have been left unfinished, but recent studies of aerial surveillance from the Second World War have revealed "ten concentric circles seen in the Luftwaffe photo, measuring about 120 meters in diameter"; archaeological evidence indicates a use of gravel for walks or beds.¹⁰² Tresham referred to the garden as his "moated orcharde" in 1597 during the garden's construction; current restorations at Lyveden envision some sort of labyrinth planted out of fruit trees, since non-labyrinthine concentric designs were so rare.¹⁰³

It is unlikely that Bacon was particularly friendly with Tresham, a recusant Catholic whom Elizabeth had imprisoned and fined.¹⁰⁴ However, it is highly improbable that Tresham—whose other architectural projects included the Rushton Triangular Lodge, where every decoration points to the Trinity, and the New Bield itself, with its cross-shaped footprint and frieze with symbols of the Passion of Christ—

¹⁰¹ Henderson *Tudor* 130-31.

¹⁰² "The Tresham Code"; *Lyveden* 27. War is excavation by other means? The photograph is now the property of the U.S. National Archives ("The Tresham Code").

¹⁰³ Henderson *Tudor* 130; *Lyveden* 27. Cf. also Chapters 1 and 3 on Tresham, labyrinths.

¹⁰⁴ *Lyveden* 15-17. Tresham's son Francis (like Bedford's husband Edward) took part in the 1601 Essex Rebellion, whose conspirators Bacon helped to prosecute or fine, as well as the later Gunpowder Plot. Essex had previously been Bacon's patron. (See Jardine and Stewart 132-49, 233-52, 297; *Lyveden* 3, 17.)

did not construct his unusual orchard with some religious symbolism in mind. Bacon's "Garden of Paradise," so similar in form and so otherwise unique in Europe, likely signifies something congenial to his own beliefs and intellectual explorations.¹⁰⁵

Seeking Sources: Beneath the Spheres

Strong, a renowned garden historian, has heavily influenced the critical history of the garden at Twickenham by declaring that it "is surely an emblematic one based on the familiar plan of the pre-Copernican universe" with its seven concentric heavenly spheres.¹⁰⁶ He offers for comparison an astrological diagram from the *Practica compendiosa artis Raymundi Lul* of 1523.¹⁰⁷ This image appears to show a medieval version of the Aristotelian cosmos, with the earth at the center representing both human

¹⁰⁵ First, however, a warning (or three). In attributing any symbolic meaning to the form of the garden it is important to note Girouard's caution against overreading symbolic forms in the case of Elizabethan houses: while some have an intricate, explicit iconographical significance, analogous to more common ones found in medieval and Renaissance church architecture, many more houses of the period seem rather to "express only a simple pleasure in the shapes themselves [. . .] the Elizabethan's delight in pattern" (Robert 25). John Dixon Hunt also cautions against assuming an "iconographical programme," not because such programs were not there but because they were hard for visitors to notice or appreciate: "iconography is more about encoding than decoding" (45). Even Elizabeth Blair MacDougall, in her detailed analysis of what *can* be gleaned of horticultural iconography in baroque Italian gardens (in her account, a great deal), notes that there exists an event horizon:

Yet a word of caution is necessary. The principles discussed and the literary imagery interpreted provide the general framework by which garden forms and decorations can be interpreted. Beyond this primary level, however, one can be sure there were specific programs with allegorical references to ideas and events connected with the patron. ("Ars" 110)

Such references to autobiographical and other private or idiosyncratic details means that the significations of certain features in many gardens are all but irretrievably lost. Thus the path to correct identification of a garden's iconographic program can be fraught with dangers of both over- and underreading, as well as of simple error. Be bold. Be bold. Be not too bold.

¹⁰⁶ Strong 120-22.

¹⁰⁷ Fol. cxxviii verso. This work by Bernard de Lavinheta was one of the first published digests of the system of knowledge of the late medieval philosopher Ramon Llull (Bonner 65).

habitation and the element itself, followed by regions of the other elements of water, air, and fire. The orbit or sphere of the moon, Luna, marks the border between these elemental regions and the heavenly spheres. The spheres of the other six medieval planets are shown as lines without specific detail: Mercury, Venus, Sol, Jupiter, and Saturn. Finally, the outermost regions show the zodiac in the sphere of the fixed stars and the ultimate sphere of the prime mover. The most up-to-date scientific version of the pre-Copernican universe, the Ptolemaic system, would have included complex epicycles to account for observed planetary motion, but these do not appear in the *Lul* diagram—and would have been difficult to represent in topiary.

Such instantly recognizable images have long captured the imaginations of philosophically and aesthetically inclined minds alike. Strong's discussion of his theory makes a spirited rhetorical case for the aptness of such a scheme to Bedford's tastes and social position. But he does not adduce any further evidence for his speculation beyond the general similarity of form. The heavenly spheres theory presents at least two problems. First, the counting of the spheres has to get fairly creative. Viewers searching for the spheres of the seven planets find there are fewer than seven circles of trees in the garden, but more than seven orbital walks. Strong makes the innermost circle of grass Earth, and counts the six circles outside it as moon, Mercury, Venus, Sun, Mars, and Jupiter. The entire square exterior of the garden is left to "Saturn (beyond)," a rather inexact solution.¹⁰⁸ The second problem with the Ptolemaic attribution is that, if

¹⁰⁸ An alternative, possibly more coherent reading would allow the seven circles, six of trees and one of grass, to be the seven planets, but this tally only works if the Earth itself, the center of the pre-Copernican system, is reduced to a central point without mass or matter to represent it, or, as in the *Lul* diagram, if the whole grassy area is taken to be the elemental region with the lunar sphere its invisible outer rim. However, as the diagram indicates, the full medieval cosmos included at least two more spheres and, by the early 17th century, from as many as twelve in some systems to several dozen in Aristotle's most elaborate version (Robbins 534n; *Metaphysics* 1074a). A nice accounting

this *was* a garden of the spheres, why in the name of “the round Earth’s imagined corners” didn’t Donne mention it in his poem?¹⁰⁹ The planetary model is reasonable, instructive, and inspiring, but iconographical programs must be selected for a reason, even if it is only that the subject is one its authorizer—or its author—finds fascinating. Throughout his career Donne reveled in spheres and microcosms as sources of sublime conceits.¹¹⁰ Yet spheres of any sort are completely absent from “Twicknam Garden,”

of circles and hedges could probably make Bedford’s garden correspond to any and all of these figures. (Does the exterior wall count? What about the first hedge that on the left side borders, or is replaced by, the terrace? Do the “F[r]ute treeesee” make one or two, since they form an inner circle and an outer square? Why are some of the orbits square, and why are the round ones less varied in their plantings than the square ones? Might the first two circles of birch trees represent the regions of air and fire? What are the mounts doing there?)

Indeed, I could, with apologies to Jessica Wolfe, exercise my “assimilating fancy” and clinch Strong’s Ptolemaic identification and baroque attribution beyond all doubt by observing that the “F[r]ute treeesee,” which he ascribes to Jupiter, surround the four mounts. Aha! The mounts must therefore represent the four satellites of Jupiter, the (then-)recently discovered Galilean moons! (Which were, of course, themselves a patronage offering, named the “Medicean Stars.”) But then I must recall that Galileo’s *Sidereus Nuncius* was not published until 1610, and the plan is reasonably dated to 1609. Even if we stretch a point and presume that Smythson’s London tour lasted longer than a year, Galileo’s discoveries are not likely to have prompted Bedford to rush to build an old-fashioned, fountainless garden commemorating cutting-edge Italian science. And by 1610 mounts were *so* last century.

Donne was himself familiar with *Sidereus Nuncius* shortly after its first publication since he refers to Galileo in *Ignatius His Conclave*, published the following year (Gardner *Divine* 75; Coffin 80-81n). He may have even hurried to include those very Medicean Stars as the “new spheres” of his holy sonnet “I am a little world made cunningly” (6). The reference forms part of an apostrophe to astronomers and explorers; it may refer to revisions in an increasingly problematic Ptolemaic system or to the novae observed by many in the late sixteenth century, or to Galileo’s newly discovered moons of Jupiter, *if* the poem was written in or after 1610. Robbins points to the line “that heaven that was most high” (5) as evidence that the sonnet envisions a Ptolemaic rather than a new astronomy (534n).

The more precise the correspondence, the more far-fetched and assumption-laden it must become to claim definitive status. I am quite certain that clever close-readers could reason out any number of working sphere-theories, with an attribution for each orbit, but each would still be fairly arbitrary given the many other possibilities.

¹⁰⁹ *Divine Meditations* 8.1 (Robbins 535-36n).

¹¹⁰ E.g. “A Valediction: Of Weeping”; the aforementioned holy sonnet beginning,
 I am a little world made cunningly
 Of Elements, and an Angelike spright,

with only a few glancing references to them in Donne's other poems to or about Bedford. With a model of the whole cosmos "at mine eyes, and at mine eares," why would he restrict his speaker to a cramped Petrarchan scene?

Perhaps Donne was simply not very good at reading gardens himself.¹¹¹ Their omission from his oeuvre outside this one poem and (a few stray metaphors) demonstrates a lack of interest in horticultural matters, especially when compared with the works of Spenser, Milton, or Andrew Marvell.¹¹² Yet surely Bedford with her own design interests would have known what the garden signified and, as she shared her poems in the garden, explained that significance to a poet so fond of such conceits. Was there, instead, another reading of the garden that took precedence, relegating any spherical signification to a secondary or even tertiary meaning that might not have mattered sufficiently to Bedford to share, if indeed she were aware of it? What else might Francis Bacon have found suitable as an iconography upon which to base the

.....
 Powre new seas in mine eyes, that so I might
 Drowne my world with my weeping earnestly,

But oh it must be burnt[. . .] (1-2, 7, 9; 1635 *Poems* 334)

Both are dated to within a few years of "Twicknam Garden" (Robbins 273n, 520n). An early verse letter, "To Mr Rowland Woodward" (Robbins 54; found only in the Westmoreland MS), is interesting in that, although written over 10 years previously on a very different subject, it is also a sonnet sharing a great deal of metaphorical content with the later one *and* incorporating a rare garden metaphor as well:

Kindly∩I envy` thy song's perfection
 Built of all th'el'ments, as our bodies are:
 That little∩of earth that's in it is a fair,
 Delicious garden where all sweets are sown;
 In it is cher'shing fire, which dries in me
 Grief which did drown me; and half-quenched by it,
 Are sàt'ric fires which urged me to have writ
 In scorn of all[. . .] (1-8)

Friends and lovers get poetical spheres; patrons do not.

¹¹¹ Hunt's caution would excuse Donne or other casual visitors from making much progress at any "decoding" of garden iconography on their own (45).

¹¹² E.g. "The Garden"; "Upon Appleton House."

design of a garden, if not the old or new astronomy, Catholic symbolism, or the scientific collection of plants?¹¹³

The Strife of Love in a Garden: A Source Proposed

There is a literary and artistic source, both fantastical and heavily influential on garden designs throughout Europe from its first publication, which offers a compelling analogue. This is the garden Island of Venus from the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*. The elaborate and convoluted journey of Poliphilo through the spectacularly decorated landscape of his dream world in Francesco Colonna's feat of humanist fiction would seem an odd place to look for the source of Twickenham's largely unadorned Baconian style. Written in an overwrought mixture of Italian and Latin neologisms, Colonna's prose work presents the dream vision of a young man in love with the nymph Polia, along with every other beautiful maiden and any striking relic of antiquity he stumbles across.¹¹⁴ The book reads less as a romance and more as a commonplace book recording an idealized antique past.¹¹⁵ Its detailed woodcuts present fountains and forests; Latin, Greek, and "hieroglyphic" epigraphy; strange monuments and glorious triumphs; handsome gods and (in the opinion of this viewer) nymphs that suggest the artist had never gotten a good look at a woman's face, let alone her body. Written by a monk, the book's ceremonies include elaborate parodies of Christian rites. In the course of its "plot," Poliphilo wanders through a strange landscape and is rescued by a series of nymphs, one of whom turns out to be his beloved Polia. Together they travel to the

¹¹³ Bacon was indeed interested in plant science, but there is no indication of anything in the Smythson plan resembling, for example, the beds of a botanical garden. The "Kitchen Garden" could have offered such a function; Urwin cites a "tradition that Francis Bacon during his ownership planted many rare plants and herbs" (*Houses* 32).

¹¹⁴ See Godwin vii.

¹¹⁵ It is also read as a source of evidence for actual 15th-century garden design, usually with the acknowledgement that its specifics are too fantastic to be real (Lazzaro 37).

Island of Venus, an immense circular garden, where they pledge themselves to the service of Love. The shorter second part of the narrative, Book Two, comprises the lovers' story of how they met in Treviso. At the culmination of his happy tale, Poliphilo awakes alone.

The book was published by the great Venetian printer Aldus Manutius in 1499 to limited financial success, but grew influential as a design source over time and was reprinted in French in 1546 (with finer woodcuts).¹¹⁶ R. D., probably Sir Robert Dallington, published a loose English translation in 1592 that breaks off well before the journey to the Island of Venus.¹¹⁷ The book would become a significant source of inspiration for Baroque Italian gardens and is typically cited in the course of any study of their development.¹¹⁸ The island garden is comprised of a number of concentric circles, as shown in one of the original woodcuts (t8r). According to Terry Comito's literary study, *The Idea of the Garden in the Renaissance*, the island presents a microcosmic map of the Platonic version of the concentric universe.¹¹⁹ Twenty wedges are separated

¹¹⁶ Godwin more circumspectly calls the French woodcuts "more elaborate and manneristic" and comparisons between the two sets of illustrations, "interesting" (viii).

¹¹⁷ Godwin viii.

¹¹⁸ See e.g. Lazzaro 2, 5, 10; Strong 16-17; Lees-Jeffries 44ff; Henderson *Tudor* 99. In making my claim for the *Hypnerotomachia's* influence on the design of the garden at Twickenham, I must note that nearly all the major garden histories cite the book at some point without suggesting any such link. Indeed, Henderson introduces Colonna's work immediately before her section on Smythson's plans, without drawing any connections between them. Henderson instead suggests that the roughly circular walled garden at Bolsover Castle might have been inspired by the *Hypnerotomachia* since this accords with the general tastes of its owners (*Tudor* 208-11). This would add indirect support to my claim, since Girouard suggests the purpose of Robert Smythson's 1609 tour was to collect ideas for the garden of his own patron Charles Cavendish at Welbeck Abbey, and Smythson and his son John later designed Bolsover for Charles and his son William (Girouard *Robert* 170, ch. 6). However, Girouard's plan of Bolsover shows that the irregularly rounded walls of the garden are originally medieval, which would imply a certain amount of contingency in the subsequent design (238). Furthermore, Girouard locates the Bolsover design within a fashion of medieval revivalism, which does not obviously accord with the classical revivalism of Colonna's work.

¹¹⁹ Comito cites Plato's Atlantis, itself based on a cosmic order of concentric spheres

by paths converging on the center, of which one is the main road followed by Poliphilo and Polia as spoils in Cupid's triumph. Although the woodcut does not show it clearly, the radius of the island is divided into three by peristyles, marked by the black crown shapes. The outer ring is comprised of plantings of trees; the middle of walled *prati* or fields; the inner by fancy knotwork parterres. At the very center is the Fountain of Venus, the endpoint of the triumphal journey.

Poliphilo spends one long chapter describing the elaborate landscape of the island garden and another still longer one on the couple's journey to its center and what they find there (290-326; 327-68). Their destination is the mystical Fountain of Venus. Located in a vast stone amphitheater, it resembles a temple more than a garden fountain. There, the lovers are united through a ceremony of ecstatic and debilitating penetration by the arrows of Cupid in the apparent climax of their journey and of the book. However, after the ceremony in the amphitheater, a shorter closing chapter presents the lovers and their attendant nymphs wandering to another unspecified location on the island, this one more organic (369-78). Here, a simpler fountain of Venus as holy mother is the center of a more human-sized horticultural shrine to the fallen Adonis. It transpires that the sacred garden containing his tomb is the perfect site for nymphic poetry and song, and for Poliphilo and Polia to tell the stories that make up Book Two. This mystery garden, rather than the monumental amphitheater, is the true endpoint of Poliphilo's journey.

Poliphilo's account of the island is too diffuse, Colonna's prose too turgid, for effective quotation. However, Comito's summative paraphrase of the Island of Venus

somewhat less elaborate than Aristotle's but of a similar symbolic import, emphasizing order and regularity (Friedländer 27-8, 187-8, 261, 314-322). (It is interesting that Comito also connects it with the concentric beds of the botanical garden at Padua, although this postdates Colonna's work.)

sounds eerily familiar: the Island of Venus is a massive garden of concentric circles, and in it are smaller square garden *prati* with four terraced corner mounts, each planted with a tree on top.¹²⁰ In the center of each *prati* is “fountain or topiary work.” The original island diagram, along with the more detailed rendering in Joscelyn Godwin’s 1999 English translation (diagram np), offers the compelling possibility that the design of the garden at Twickenham zooms in on one of these small quadrangular sub-gardens and its corner mounts (without which the *prato* would be an unremarkable Renaissance quartered parterre) and finds inside its circular center not a “fountain or topiary” but the overall plan of the Island of Venus in miniature. The plants named in Smythson’s plan also echo some of Colonna’s. In the outer ring of the island diagram a series of hedges, including hawthorn and fragrant myrtle, culminates in a thick hedge of orange trees that forms the outer border of the rings of square *prati* and their terrace-mounts—just where the “F[r]ute treeesee” would be by analogy, surrounding the stepped mounts

¹²⁰ Comito’s summary reads:

Venus’ realm is in fact an immense formal garden, an elaborately geometrical fantasy in the manner of Plato’s Atlantis, whose **concentric circles** had already been utilized to express the cosmic ambitions of Hadrian’s villa gardens at Tivoli and were to appear again in the squared circles of the first botanical gardens at Padua—where Colonna’s interest in all the variety of the Six Days’ work and his faith in its essential order were implemented in practice many years before Francis Bacon proposed a college for this purpose, or rather a temple, in a new Atlantis. [. . .]

The design of the garden is a fantastic elaboration of the medieval motifs of **square enclosure and central accent**. Around the amphitheater in the very center of the island are three rings of quadrangular parterres and figured pavements [. . .] Closer to the circumference are three circles of *prati*, enclosed carpets of green like medieval walled gardens, [. . .] The trapezoidal shape of each garden, Colonna is careful to specify, is simply **the deformation of a perfect square**, for in this sacred place the quadrangles must acknowledge the domination of the center towards which they tend. Each has its own center accent (fountain or topiary work), an entrance in the exact center of each side, and **in each corner an elevation, like a medieval mount**, constructed of four terraces (squares, circles, or triangles) and **centered by a tree** clipped into a crown, a hemisphere, or a sphere. (*Idea* 181, 184-85)

on the Smythson plan. Smythson's plan, where dots signify trees, would seem to indicate a ring of trees encircling the top of each mount, again in striking similarity to Colonna's tree-crowned terraces.¹²¹ The text indicates that the terrace-mounts, planted with their own variety of fruit trees, are larger and broader than the impression given by the woodcuts (t5r). Although Colonna's text is notorious for discrepancies of scale and of basic arithmetic between and within text and woodcuts, the math for the *prati* appears to work out to a design roughly proportional to Twickenham and its mounts.¹²²

My attribution of the design recorded in the Smythson plan to the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* thus requires some creative rearrangement of Colonna's island garden, with a single *prato* enlarging in order to surround a model of the entire island in miniature.¹²³ This is not inconsistent with Colonna's work, which rejoices in deciphering and distortion throughout, and offers its own decentering dislocation to the fountain of Venus as mother as the culmination of the island journey. The text does not reveal whether the shrine of Adonis is located close to the center of the island or in one

¹²¹ Although Strong suggests that the mounts might have featured "pavilions" or similar for entertaining, only the trees are evident on the plan (120).

¹²² At 50 paces to a side, Poliphilo's small gardens are roughly half the length ($\frac{1}{4}$ the area) of Twickenham's 321-foot square. The dimensions given for the lowest of the four terraces are two feet high with one and a half feet of plantings before the next level. The top terrace has an opening one foot in diameter. Adding a 1.5-foot ledge to the second terrace makes four, with the third seven, and the lowest ten feet wide. If the lowest terrace is two feet high and the top, at a guess, is one foot, that puts the entire mount at around six feet, roughly half the height of the Twickenham mounts, but steeper and with a smaller footprint. In Colonna's original woodcuts the trees and terraced mounts seem not to be drawn to scale, as the terraces are dwarfed by the trees themselves (Colonna 305; Strong 17). Godwin gives another example of Colonna's faulty maths and suggests that, rather than diagrammatic precision, Colonna was primarily concerned with the overall visual effect (xi).

¹²³ The island's concentric circles may represent a Platonic cosmology concealed in Colonna's text. The cosmic spheres Strong posits are thus potentially present in the garden, but at one remove, and with a different intellectual genealogy. A Platonic universe presented as a philosophical model might have been more appealing to Bacon than an up-to-date rendering of the Aristotelian cosmos Strong posits, since Bacon's advocacy of a new scientific paradigm required a rejection of current scientific methods derived from Aristotle.

of the groves near its edge. Nonetheless, its relatively homely garden fountain of the maternal Venus, rather than the so-called Fountain of Venus as monumental temple of love, is presented as the true destination of the book.

This realistic garden and its fountain provide the site of poetic inspiration for the nymphs' song and the tales Poliphilo and Polia recount: that is, the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* itself. The shrine of Adonis thus contains and (re)produces the entire book. Analogously, I propose, the enlarged *prato* of the garden at Twickenham paradoxically encloses a model of the Island of Venus as a whole. Although one-to-one meanings in Colonna's work are rarely clear, the Island of Venus—and the main characters' journey through it as spoils in the triumph of Cupid—would seem to signify an apotheosis of the book's revival of classical antiquity. At the same time, the book's homage to Love, most visibly personified by Cupid; officially centered on the rarely seen Venus as titular deity and as motivating force; and culminating in the humble fountain garden, suggests more continuity with a medieval past than the book overtly admits.¹²⁴

Indeed, Poliphilo's dream island is a monumental variation on the medieval Garden of Love.¹²⁵ This secularized literary version of the Marian or monastic garden was first elaborated in Guillaume de Lorris' thirteenth-century *Roman de la Rose*; its descendants suffused the poetry and iconography of fourteenth-century Italy and then spread north.¹²⁶ Its iconographical attributes include lovers requited and unrequited, experienced and in need of instruction; a pleasing landscape; and the cultural trappings of nobility, all arrayed around one central feature: a hexagonal marble fountain almost exactly like the one of the maternal Venus (z9v).¹²⁷

¹²⁴ Strong 16-17.

¹²⁵ See Comito *Idea* 181-2.

¹²⁶ Watson 23-4; 28ff.

¹²⁷ Comito *Idea* 182-4; Watson 30ff, 65; Lees-Jeffries 9, 30.

A design based on the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* is one Bacon might even be inclined to call his “Garden of Paradise.” Colonna’s work presents the ultimate in paradisaical opulence throughout the Island of Venus, a giant garden centered on a fountain and dedicated to erotic love. On this grand scale—and at the smaller one of the culminating scene’s recitations in the garden shrine of Adonis and fountain of Venus as mother—it reinscribes a humanist classicism onto the already-multifaceted medieval Garden of Love, site of Edenic reverence and secular pleasure.¹²⁸

Like the scholar Bacon, the well-read and multilingual Bedford had opportunities to encounter and appreciate Colonna’s text, and its translation into her new garden’s design, while forming her own interpretations thereof.¹²⁹ Drawing on the same text, Bacon’s “Garden of Paradise” could easily have become Bedford’s “Garden of Love,” whether or not Donne was aware of a specific source for the title. The Garden of Love—which, rather than spheres, has a reasonable claim to be the subject of Donne’s poem—offers an already-rich set of literary and visual conventions the poet would have recognized. And so, if my hypothesis is correct and Bedford was aware of Colonna’s work as a source for Bacon’s design, she might nonetheless have presented her inherited landscape to Donne, himself seemingly indifferent to the finer points of horticulture, as nothing more nor less than a Garden of Love. Donne’s speaker is not Poliphilo, who experiences nary a bitter moment as he courses between hope and despair. “Love” in “Twickenham Garden” would seem to address Cupid rather than

¹²⁸ Precisely how Colonna’s work influenced Bacon’s vision of the garden at Twickenham, beyond offering a plan for its design, must remain obscure to us. Since we have (as yet) no poem written by or for Bacon on the matter, the precise reasons for and signification of his version of the Island of Venus are difficult to determine.

¹²⁹ John Florio lived in her house for some time, and dedicated to her “his Italian dictionary *A World of Words*, where he complimented her on her knowledge of Italian, Spanish, and French” (Buxton 335). While the possibility of flattery in such a claim, coupled with the Latinate and neologic obscurity of Colonna’s prose, diminish the likelihood that she read every word, this need not preclude some level of engagement.

Venus. Instead, the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* allows “Twicknam Garden” envision its space as more than an explicitly Petrarchan (or Colonna) setting, in the medieval tradition of the Garden of Love.

If the map of the Island of Venus strikingly grounds the plan of the garden at Twickenham in a literary forebear, the standard iconography of the Garden of Love seems at last to give the poem’s vision of paradise a place to come to earth. Placing Donne’s poem within this older and broader tradition, of which Petrarchism is an elaborate and particularized offshoot, seems immediately to give it a surer footing and a richer background; suddenly the generically Petrarchan gestures and reinventions become a response to specific iconographical traditions of the Garden of Love. Hitherto the sonic component of “at mine eyes, and at mine ears” has been unclear: does it refer to generic birdsong or to the poetry reading mentioned in Donne’s letter to Bedford? Either seems likely; the latter seems relevant. But when this line is placed alongside early Tuscan images of the Garden of Love, the implicit poetic recitation becomes a specific instance of the lyric and musical accompaniments that, along with the tuneful birds, are a standard feature of such spaces—including Colonna’s shrine of Adonis.¹³⁰

There exists an even more striking visual connection between the Garden of Love tradition and the poem’s early metaphors. One of the conventional images associated with these gardens is a “blasted tree and barren earth” located just outside, which “emphasize [by contrast] the fertility of the places where lovers dwell.”¹³¹ An unusual variation on this image depicts a submissive male lover offering his heart to his “aloof” but ultimately receptive beloved.¹³² In the painting, on an Italian casket lid from the 1430s, a “record of the lover’s inner state is a device embroidered upon his sleeve[:]

¹³⁰ Watson 67. Paul Watson locates the birthplace of the Garden of Love in Tuscany.

¹³¹ Watson 65.

¹³² See Watson plate 70.

around a blasted tree winds a scroll inscribed, '*per la forza delli contrari venti*.'"¹³³ The snakelike disposition of the scroll as it winds around its wind-damaged tree recalls a caduceus or an image from Eden's temptation scene. A tree withered "by the force of contrary winds" carries with it a serpentine motto, a snake made with words, as the courtly lover petitions for redress. The resonance with "Twicknam Garden" is as striking as Petrarca's grave sighs.

Finally, there is the central fountain. This object, whose hexagonal basin form echoes baptismal fonts of the period, remains "remarkably consistent" across the genre.¹³⁴

In most of the Gardens, lovers gravitate to a fountain. This artifact is perhaps the most important single element of the Garden of Love. In early examples its size dominates the composition. It stands precisely at the center [. . .] Take away the fountain and the Garden of Love is no more. (Watson 70)

The fountains usually feature a conveniently phallic central column also apparently borrowed from the font, although one early image shows instead a tree standing directly behind the fountain and creating almost the identical formal effect.¹³⁵ Medieval images of paradise, the iconographical ancestors of such gardens, conventionally feature at their center both a fountain and the Tree of Life, with its healing balms.¹³⁶ The closing and opening scenes of "Twicknam Garden" echo this connection, thus overlaying (once again—this time more wholesomely) an Edenic significance onto the medieval love garden that has become the poem's primary setting.

¹³³ Watson 86-88.

¹³⁴ Watson 71; plates 51-53; plate 58.

¹³⁵ Watson plate 51ff; see Comito *Idea* 50.

¹³⁶ See Comito *Idea* 43-49. In a discussion of Spenser, Lees-Jeffries also connects the balm of the Tree of Life to the manna of Exodus. Each offers "another type of the Eucharist" (163-64).

The Stakes: A Fountain for the Countess

In Donne's "Twickenham Garden," as in its various analogues in de Lorris, Petrarca, and Colonna, "a stone fountain" provides the central focus for a paradisaical garden setting. Yet the garden at Twickenham in the Smythson plan remains empty of water, despite the nearby Thames. Bacon's garden is imposing but perhaps frugal, contenting itself with plantings on a grand scale. If the garden's design warrants a fountain, a lack of resources—money, time or social capital—may explain its absence.

Could Bedford have added a fountain if she desired one upon her arrival at Twickenham? Although (or perhaps because) Bedford had a reputation for extravagance throughout her married life, she and her husband were chronically short of funds.¹³⁷ Known for her artistic patronage, she used her house Twickenham as "a salon of sorts for female and male friends, most of whom were also courtiers," as well as for visits from poets she supported, although she never gave Donne as much as he would have hoped, probably because of these same financial constraints.¹³⁸ Bedford was also kept busy at this time with her life at court, and there are no corroborating letters or records about works carried out at Twickenham as there are for her later gardens.¹³⁹ She may have been involved with or fascinated by her friend Queen Anne's new garden at Somerset House, also begun in our focal year, 1609, and the first designed in England by the great Huguenot engineer Salomon de Caus.¹⁴⁰ However, de Caus' Continental innovations did not spread beyond the royal family for several years,

¹³⁷ See Lewalski *Writing* 97; Lawson 31.

¹³⁸ Lewalski *Writing* 97-98. These included Michael Drayton, Samuel Daniel, and Ben Jonson; Bedford commissioned a number of court masques for her friend the Queen and her own advancement (Barbara Smith 54). She received many dedications, including one from John Dowland for one of his books of music (Poulton 56). Janet Pollack examines the contrasting patronage experience of Princess Elizabeth Stuart, who received primarily religious dedications and few artistic ones during this period (424).

¹³⁹ Lawson 77, 140-41; Strong 141-46.

¹⁴⁰ See Strong 87-92.

making similar concurrent alterations to Bedford's own garden even less likely.¹⁴¹ In all probability Bedford had neither the time, nor the financial resources, nor the artistic and technical support to install a cutting-edge Baroque fountain in her garden in 1609.

Though Bacon or Bedford may not have had the means to include or add a fountain by 1609, nor before that year the impetus to see one as a stylistic necessity, the innovations of de Caus first appearing at that moment meant that, by the time Bacon published his essay in 1627, water was the essential and most prominent feature of an elite garden.¹⁴² Fountains were to become the height of fashion in Stuart England, and Bedford strove to be a leader in the courtly arts.

And so, amidst its lavish compliments and bitter complaints, "Twicknam Garden" offers her one. Donne's speaker situates himself both in an actual garden built to recall a specific literary Garden of Love, and in a conventional poetic garden of love with similar literary and visual antecedents. He is able to draw on the strong iconographical program of such gardens. The speaker knows whose garden he is infiltrating, and he knows his role in it, as the unhappy lover providing a contrast to the happy ones who implicitly also inhabit the space. But even as he acknowledges his debilitating grief, the speaker tries to take command. With the slightest of gestures, he figures his lady as the healing tree and himself, rejected, as the central fountain of this richly contextualized space.¹⁴³ The stone fountain quickly becomes the controlling focus

¹⁴¹ Salomon's brother Isaac may have worked for Bedford on her subsequent gardens at Moor Park, Woburn Abbey, and Covent Garden (Hunt 133; Strong 141-47).

¹⁴² Strong 125-33.

¹⁴³ In fact, he may have been planning such a subversive campaign from the beginning. The speaker presents as a weeping tree, the sort Petrarca might label a living fountain. He "come[s] to seek the Spring," which might have a secondary meaning underlying that of the Edenic *ver perpetuum* (Richards 180). Richards first noted the centrality of fountains in the poem by observing that the "Spring" at the beginning might not be solely a season but also a prefiguring of the speaker's own fountain at the end (180). Compare also Francis Quarles' emblem of a weeper by a fountain, with the

of the poem and, by its close, its arbiter of "truth."

Donne's speaker, in addition to usurping an authoritative place in Love's hierarchy, also impudently seeks to improve the garden he has invested so much time in praising (and maligning). By substituting himself for the central fountain, he implants a new garden feature of his own "stone" substance, but not of his own invention, since it belongs so clearly in the visual and literary tradition of the Garden of Love. Perhaps he has heard of the doings at Somerset House, where as part of the 1609-12 garden improvements de Caus designed for Queen Anne a grotto fountain of Parnassus.¹⁴⁴ According to the visiting Duke of Saxony, this resembled and outdid the one in the Medici garden at Pratolino.¹⁴⁵

To one side stands a Mount Parnassus: the mountain or rock is made of sea-stones, all sorts of mussels, snails, and other curious plants put together : all kinds of herbs and flowers grow out of the rock which are a great pleasure to behold. On the side facing the palace it is made like a cavern. Inside it sit the muses, and all have sorts of instruments in [their] hands. [. . . The water] sprang up to the very top of the rock thick as an arm and besides here and there out of the mountain. It is thus a beautiful work and far surpasses the Mount Parnassus in the Pratolino near Florence.
(J. W. Neumayr von Ramssla, in Strong 90-91)

Parnassus or Pegasus fountains, signifying the spring of the Muses (Helicon-Castalia-Hippocrene) and thus the garden's fundamental role as a site of poetic inspiration, had become almost ubiquitous in Italian gardens.¹⁴⁶ Such significance was surely not lost on the English audiences of Somerset House although, unlike Bedford's, Queen Anne's

accompanying poem connected to Jer. 9:1, "O That mine eyes were springs, and could transforme/ Their drops to seas!" (3.153).

¹⁴⁴ Plate 13 from de Caus' Livre second of 1624 *Les Raisons des forces mouvantes* closely resembles both a sketch of the Pratolino fountain and Neumayr's description of the one at Somerset (both cited in Strong 89).

¹⁴⁵ Strong 87-91. Quoting Neumayr, the Duke of Saxe-Weimar, as translated from his own 1620 travelogue by Miss P. Sigl (Strong 225n33; Henderson *Tudor* 101).

¹⁴⁶ See Lazzaro 132ff; MacDougall "Ars" 108; "[. . .] no Renaissance garden is without its Parnassus mount or garden of the Muses" (Comito *Idea* 57). The association between gardens and muses was also common in antiquity (MacDougall "Ars" 108; Hill 87-89).

garden was not renowned as a site for coterie gatherings.

Bedford's garden as a setting for poetic reading and writing might thus seem a more appropriate site than Somerset House for a Parnassus fountain. While Donne's poem does not explicitly characterize its fountain as such, a close reading of the material, social, and literary history of Bedford's garden suggests a further connection. The poem's fountain does not seem to be, for example, the monumental Fountain of Venus as a site of reverent worship in the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*. (Such a vision might, however, be present in the "edifice" of the verse letter, which celebrates Bedford's body as temple of virtue.) The fountain is, of course, explicitly the source of the lovers' tear test, and more generally serves as an instance of the fountain of love-*cum*-fountain of life so ubiquitous in the medieval tradition. However, becoming the fountain of love seems to me an insufficient move to solve the speaker's problems. He would still be still trapped in the realms of erotic frustration, his tear test serving to exact revenge but never to win the favor of a lady both cruel and "true." He is back at the Petrarchan beginning, where the only chance at a satisfying solution is to sublimate the love of Laura into the love of laurel, the quest for poetic glory.

Instead, I argue that the fountain at the figurative heart of Donne's virtual paradise stands in for the real fountain Twickenham was lacking: the queen's fountain, the Muses' Helicon, the spring of poetry and an alternative to the judgmental space of Eden, or the frustrating space of Love, as a source of paradisaic qualities—and poetic inspiration. Such inspiration was, in turn, the implicit goal of the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* at the shrine of Adonis, site of amorous song and ambitious story, as well as the explicit goal of so much of Petrarch's own verse.¹⁴⁷ In both cases the trials of love

¹⁴⁷ The death of Adonis does not noticeably overshadow the scene. The narrative of the *Hypnerotomachia* spends two short paragraphs (of five ekphrastic pages) describing the

transmute into the rewards of poetic recitation. If Parnassus-Helicon is indeed the “stone fountain” the speaker of “Twickenham Garden” wishes to import, or impersonate, then the frenetic compilation of classical and Christian, amorous and paradisaical spaces within the poem can resolve kaleidoscopically into something very like the “pleasaunt syte” of Edmund Spenser’s *June*, discussed in the previous chapter: to present “True Paradise,” for the ambitious Renaissance poet, is to incorporate a broad spectrum of classical and Christian meanings of the term, from the balms of Adam’s Eden to the inspiration of Muses’ Parnassus.¹⁴⁸ For Donne, the field of sources and analogues stretches deeper and wider, including de Lorris’ Garden of Love, Colonna’s Island of Venus, and Bedford’s Twickenham itself—all variations on a theme, but each recombining that theme’s familiar elements for its own unique purpose.

Vision and Practice in Garden and Poem

Constructing his own Helicon (and spring of Life, and font of Love) gives Donne a dazzling opportunity in the patronage game: to offer Bedford, who couldn’t afford to make significant changes to Bacon’s garden, a poetic fountain to equal the state-of-the-art water feature that her friend the queen was building around the time the poem was written.¹⁴⁹ Donne becomes Bedford’s Salomon de Caus or Robert Smythson by offering her a fountain, a highly appropriate and desirable patronage object. Such a gift would

tragic scenes of Adonis’ death as represented on the fountain and records a “bitter” inscription, all in the same detached antiquarian tone used for other monuments throughout the work (370-74). Subsequently, the nymphs describe Venus’ “sacred and stately rite,” and her enduring grief during the annual ceremonies, with the attitude of ethnographers (or courtiers seeking favor: “at such a time it is easy to obtain her grace”) (375-76). Poliphilo responds to these “memorable and curious mysteries” with “happy and voluptuous repose” at the culmination of his successful love quest (376-77).

¹⁴⁸ And from the serpent to the Python?

¹⁴⁹ Strong 87-91; 120-21. At the same time, of course, Donne’s speaker secures his own pride of place as the central feature—the muses’ Helicon, no less—of the poetic garden of Donne’s making.

complete Bedford's own Garden of Love and, perhaps, transform it into a Garden of Poetry, that other commonplace of classical and Renaissance horticulture, where his talents might appear to better advantage.¹⁵⁰

The Practice of Patronage: Flattering Power, Collegial Competition

Donne and Bedford seem to have shared a genuine collegiality based on common intellectual interests and an exchange of poetry in which Donne was usually, but not always, the teacher, and Bedford the student as well as the patron and muse. Many scholars have noted that the reason there exist three Elegies for the death of Bedford's cousin Celia Bulstrode seems to be that Bedford thought Donne's original gave too much credit to Death. She wrote a correction using Donne's own words from his holy sonnet "Death, be not proud" as a rebuke, which gave Donne the cue he needed to write another, more acceptable elegy.¹⁵¹ While this and the playful tone of Donne's prose letter quoted above suggest a certain measure of ease and social equality, scholars of the whole archive of Donne's verse letters and other texts to and about Bedford note a profound ambivalence at having to submit to the whims of a patron, however officially, dutiful they are in reporting her glory.¹⁵² Bedford held nearly all the power in the actual garden at Twickenham, choosing to receive Donne with dinners at her house and poetry readings in her garden and occasionally giving him the small monetary gifts that were probably all she could afford but not nearly all he required.

Donne takes the opportunity in "Twicknam Garden" and some of his other

¹⁵⁰ See Lazzaro 132ff; MacDougall "Ars" 108; Comito *Idea* Ch 3.

¹⁵¹ Starting with Herbert Grierson (Buxton 333); Gardner *Elegies* 250; Robbins 541n, 753-55n. Robbins gives the text as "Death! be not proud" (*Complete Poems* 541).

¹⁵² See Brown "Presence"; Lewalski *Writing* 110; Marotti "Patronage" 226, Dubrow *Echoes* 232; Tourney 45ff. Lewalski observes a closeness "blurring somewhat, though by no means obliterating, the great social divide between them" (111); Marotti "a certain measure of social familiarity" (*Coterie* 202).

poems to reassert some of his artistic power in a semi-covert, “thoroughly” flattering way: to prove its Edenic nature, he will go to the lengths of staging the Fall all over again, whatever the implicit consequences for the garden and its inhabitants. He also has the final power to take his poetry elsewhere and put it in service of other patrons, as he was shortly to do with the Drury family, to the point of repurposing key metaphors from “Twicknam Garden” in the 1611 *First Anniversary*.¹⁵³ Even after their close patronage relationship ended, however, he tried to maintain a relationship with Bedford based on the exchange of poetry, perhaps seeking to placate her with assurances that his simple paper “tomb” in her “cabinet” was far more valuable to him than all the poetic riches he could devise for Elizabeth Drury.¹⁵⁴ But even this deduction is not entirely clear. According to Lewalski, “in these extravagantly hyperbolic poems of compliment[,] wit and high seriousness have fused so completely as to become indistinguishable.”¹⁵⁵ The apparent poetic discomfort and readerly confusion with patronage is not unique to Donne; indeed it seems to be a defining feature of the best patronage poems from Jonson to Marvell: “While in theory the patronage system reflected the underlying hierarchical order of the universe, in practice it created numerous opportunities for tensions, contradictions, suspicions, and resentment.”¹⁵⁶ I am skeptical of any implication that Donne’s patronage poems were less fully under his emotional and psychological control than his other poems, or other poets’ patronage verse. However, I see no reason to disbelieve the anxiety so many readers have found;

¹⁵³ See Lawson 111-12; Robbins 821n.

¹⁵⁴ In the verse letter known as “Epitaph on Himself”, beginning “That I might make your cabinet my tomb.” See Robbins 718-22m; Brown “Presence” 78.

¹⁵⁵ “Donne’s” 67. Much like MacDougall’s idiosyncratic garden iconographies, outside of their original context in Bedford’s select inner circle, the nuanced implications of the undated verse letters can be impossible to parse conclusively (Brown “Presence”).

¹⁵⁶ Evans “Ben” 381; *Ben* 48-50. As noted above, Ben Jonson wrote beautiful poems for Bedford and also satirized her with the “collegiate ladies” in *Epicæne* (Lewalski *Writing* 109-10).

indeed most good patronage poems seem to partake of an anxiety or ambivalence even as they engage in various forms of hyperbolic praise.¹⁵⁷

What would be the purpose, then, of writing such anxiety and ambivalence into his patronage poems, to the point of insulting the woman they are meant to honor, along with all her sex? Lyric poems function at least in part as a program for the passions: primary or intended readers work their way through the emotional postures the poem models for them.¹⁵⁸ What sort of program does Donne construct for his primary reader, Bedford, to see and experience, and, in some way, use?¹⁵⁹

Beginning with dislocation, the poem moves swiftly on to praise both the site and its proprietor. The second stanza sees the speaker discarding one metamorphic guise after another until he hits upon the form most suitable for his infiltration of the lady's paradisaal garden.¹⁶⁰ This fountain, I have argued, is the heart of and key to the poem's meaning. Still, it is hard for this reader to see as innocent the third stanza's proposed shift to a homosocial system in which the speaker-as-fountain is the relevant authority, first among equals of male lovers and the standard against which the always-already-condemned "perverse sex" will be judged.¹⁶¹ This does not have to be a bitter

¹⁵⁷ Compare, for example, Ben Jonson's praises of Bedford or of Penshurst.

¹⁵⁸ See E. Fowler "Art."

¹⁵⁹ Marotti notes that some of Donne's patronage texts anticipate multiple readers, for example Bedford along with Donne's friend and emissary Henry Goodyer (*Coterie* 206). In one letter to Goodyer, Donne gives an account of his motives in writing the prose letter to Bedford quoted above:

I also writ to her Ladiship for the verses she shewed in the garden, which I did not onely to extort them, nor onely to keep my promise of writing, [. . .] but because I would write apace to her [. . .]. (1635 *Poems* 295).

¹⁶⁰ Cf. Brown's claim that "Twicknam Garden" is at heart a "petition" for Donne's "presence" and "permanence" in Bedford's garden ("Presence" 68-9).

¹⁶¹ Such appeals to another court—often combined with an abrupt change of venue—are found in other Donne poems such as "The Indifferent," "Love's Exchange," "A Nocturnal upon Saint Lucy's Day," "Love's Deity," or "The Primrose," perhaps aiming at the alternative authority of the male coterie (*Complete Poems* 201-03, 215-18, 225-30, 211-13, 234-37; see Robbins 215n, 226n).

or emotional act. It could be a cold and pragmatic response to the inevitable stresses of the patronage relationship. As previously noted, Donne is walking a fine line here. The poem *is* a patronage offering, one that may already have had to explain away its misogynist end by highlighting the fountain as the real poetic and architectural prize.

Meanwhile, the popular and apposite setting for such a poem, the Garden of Love, provides the speaker with an alternative set of metaphors to the cosmic spheres (and tears) that figure so prominently in the poetry he seems to have written for his wife and for his friend Magdalen Herbert (Danvers) but that he eschews in the poetry he wrote for his most important patron.¹⁶² Even if he did, perhaps, know or believe that the Platonic cosmos Comito cites as underlying the iconographical program of the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* had in turn inspired the garden at Twickenham, Donne is unlikely to have deployed its metaphysical resources in this poem. He will give his patroness respectful petitions, hyperbolic adulation, Petrarchan conventions, and the occasional erotic joke, but he keeps the cosmic spheres for himself and his more intimate friendships.

Donne's letters and poems to and from Lucy, Countess of Bedford, suggest that while they may not have been close friends they were probably good colleagues. Her garden is the site of their collaboration to produce art that might in turn draw other poetic pilgrims to join them there. Gardens and poems in this context offer the means

¹⁶² E.g. "A Valediction: Of Weeping" to Ann More Donne, and "I am a little world made cunningly" for Herbert (Robbins 273n, 520n). The speaker of the "Elegy upon the Death of Lady Markham", Bedford's cousin, briefly refers to "tears" and the "firmament" (7-8), but only with just sufficient weight to prove the rule. Gardner suggests a reason for the disparity: "Donne's friendship with Mrs. Herbert was less tainted with worldly motives than his relationship with the Countess of Bedford, and it grew throughout his life" (*Elegies* 251). As it happens, Magdalen Herbert, mother of Sir Edward and of George, married Sir John Danvers in 1608—Aubrey: "she was old enough to have been his Mother. He married her for love of her Witt" (80-81)—and would have been living at Danvers House during the early years of its garden construction, which began in 1622, until her death in 1627 (Strong 176-77).

through which patronage occurs. At the same time, they provide the spaces (real or virtual) where the complex patronage ritual of submission and assertion, compliment and mutual poetic endeavor might be negotiated. The ambivalence in Donne's patronage poems makes them more complex, more honest, more collegial, and thus more intellectually appealing as reading material for a sophisticated courtier—or a dedicated member of a poetic coterie—like Bedford. Donne's "Twickenham Garden" seems to welcome a chance to create poetry with and for a likeminded partner. Yet despite these collegial practices, the poem's distinctive and at times disturbing vision of paradise persists. Misapplied collaboration can become appropriation. If we must not diminish the generative aspects of the patronage poem's situation, neither can we escape its bitter sting.

Persistent Visions: Donne Invades Twickenham

Having decided against the dying tree, its spider, its serpent, and the mandrake, the speaker asks finally to become an architectural feature instead. It is here that the echoes of Gerard's botanical discourse transmute into suggestions of Spenser's social transformation. The fountain metamorphosis follows a series of playfully insubordinate moves in which the speaker is—at least metaphorically or optatively—first introducing an unwanted spider and serpent to that garden, then planting a mandrake, and finally, in the last stanza, opening the gates to a suspicious hearts' club worthy of a revenge tragedy.¹⁶³ Amongst all of these, building a fountain might seem to be the most decorous option, a suitable offering from poet-craftsman to patron-designer. This is especially so if the fountain is specifically Parnassus, with all its

¹⁶³ Or perhaps a complement to the wedding masque of lunatics in Thomas Middleton and William Rowley's *The Changeling* (Bevington et al. 1593-1657)?

artistic glory and attendant social capital, sought after by poets and patrons alike from classical Greece to Renaissance Italy to Jacobean London.

The poem's crowning transformational act, however, may also be its most transgressive. If the poem's fountain is copied or relocated from the Queen's garden at Somerset House—warranted by its necessity to complete the Garden of Love at Twickenham—then the poem's fountain is at least partly de Caus' Parnassus. If that numinous fountain of poetic inspiration lies at the center of the poem, then the poem by way of its setting also seeks to locate a Parnassus at the center of the actual garden at Twickenham. Finally, if the speaker of the poem becomes its fountain, then in a sense Donne himself, as designer-poet—as the *source* of a stream of poems of patronage—seeks to fill the analogous space in Bedford's garden. In this, Donne's speaker goes further than poets such as Chaucer and Spenser who invoke the muses and seek to approach Parnassus. Not only “lyst [he] presume to *Parnasse* hyll,” as in Spenser's *June*: he offers to become it. Such a move is reminiscent of the despairing Petrarchan humility that so often transmogrifies into assertions of eternal poetic fame. It also brings the fountain of Helicon from *nearby* the paradisaical place—for the muses “where they sate around” it in *June* are within earshot of the shepherd characters—to *within* “Twicknam Garden,” and indeed at its very center.¹⁶⁴

This move allows Donne to flip the frustrating power dynamics of the patronage relationship by making himself, the poet, *the* poet, the *fountain* of poetry, in the middle of someone else's garden. Bedford may be the owner of the garden, as in the verse letter, but she is no longer its star attraction. At least temporarily, “Twicknam Garden” subverts the implied hierarchy of patronage and reasserts Donne and his poetic gifts as

¹⁶⁴ These details of Edmund Spenser's *June* eclogue from *The Shepheardes Calender* are discussed in the previous chapter.

of central, primary importance. In compensation, Donne offers Bedford fountains of poetry, in the double sense of the words flowing through the manuscripts they exchange and of the fountain built out of poetry that he inserts into the imaginative space of "Twicknam Garden." Such a fountain becomes both the ideal courtly compliment to its owner *and* a proclamation of her garden as a pilgrimage site and school for poets.

The "Blasted" speaker comes to this garden to seek "the Spring" of healing, but also to build the Helicon that is the source of all good poetry. The poisonous animals and Petrarchan conventions he brings with him cause him pain. They also give him the matter and the inspiration for the poetic acrobatics that turn the tables on that pain and transform him *into* the fountain that is the controlling center of the paradisaical Garden of Love. If this fountain resembles the new one at Somerset House, the muses' Parnassus, then it, and its poet, also assert their position as the source for all subsequent poetry. The speaker-as-fountain makes the garden a pilgrimage site for lovers-as-poetry-students. They, in turn, will take lessons from him as a means of testing their own works' poetic truth.

Bedford remains at or close to the center of this reading, for if the speaker's fountain testifies to the lady's sole truth in love, it also implies that in this space only he can write the poetry that will truly celebrate it. Her "truth" that "kils" becomes the necessary condition for his writing poetry that in turn can adequately represent their mutual brilliance. As his inspiration, she may find a place in the newly constructed fountain as one of the muses who sits inside of it. Still, to be a muse inside a niche on a fountain is to have been displaced from the summit of Petrarca's hierarchy of love, and from the seat of power, virtue, and glory that is the patron's perquisite, as in the verse letter. Unlike the case of the Bulstrode elegies, Bedford remains silent in this exchange;

Bacon has replaced her as the past commissioner of the garden and its exemplary design, while Donne commandeers control of its coterie present.

Donne's poem, like Spenser's, Chaucer's, and others that feature an emotionally inaccessible paradise, thus also takes a colonizing form, claiming new ground for its poetic art in response to a problem of social accessibility while displacing the claims of others. In such actions, Donne finds allies amongst other strivers of his era. For Gerard, the colonizing move appears in the form of claiming new scientific status while simultaneously retaining and denigrating older forms of knowledge. Bacon seeks to rewrite the rules of scientific inquiry and subject them to human authority. Indeed, Renaissance herbals and other scientific works frequently turn situations of co-creative collaboration with prior writers into opportunities for authorial appropriation.

As might be expected from his microcosmic obsessions, Donne colonizes inwards, importing a spider, a serpent, and a stream of suspicious lovers from the wider world into the enclosed space of his patron's garden. This territorial expansion threatens to extend to a different plane of existence: not merely the setting of the poem, but the sites of poetic making, and the broader society the poem figures and perhaps critiques. For this is the punch line of the poem's bitter joke: for all its potential insults, and its more serious attempts to rewrite the social hierarchy of patronage by way of a poetic bait and switch, Bedford cannot decline its offered fountain if she is to continue to play her own hand in the courtly game. Unlike the fountainless garden at Twickenham, only "Twicknam Garden" can rival Somerset House. By infiltrating the space of the Garden of Love with his tree, his mandrake, his fountain, and his muses, Donne inserts the poet himself as the ultimate invasive species—and, perhaps, the most welcome—in Bedford's *hortus conclusus*.

Coda

The Practice of Paradise: Collaborative Design

Yet the long history of patronage is full of puzzles and games in which the joke is not on, but is rather for the amusement of, the patron in question.¹⁶⁵ Lewalski suggests that Bedford was such a patron in her interactions with Ben Jonson. In fact, the poem's ultimate joke may be on the mordant solipsism of the joke itself. Any vaunting of the poetic prowess of the servant ought to redound to the patron's glory, as well. The act of fountain-building can be read as one designed to displace Bedford in the social hierarchy, or more generatively as an act of poetic and horticultural co-creation designed to escape from the patron-poet dynamic altogether. In such a light, Bedford may even regain her collaborative voice as she continues and adapts Bacon's own garden practice to suit the needs of her poetic coterie: the superlative composite garden combining Bacon's design from Colonna's vision with de Caus' construction of Queen Anne's fountain can only exist in Bedford's Twickenham, with Donne reciting his "Twicknam Garden" at her invitation.

It is important to note that despite the poem's bitter and solipsistic *vision* of paradise, the *practice* of paradise in this context—that is, the practice of making Renaissance gardens and making Renaissance poems—is both literally and figuratively a collaborative process, just as Spenser's publishing projects were. Patrons like Anne, Bedford, Bacon, and Cecil provided resources, tastes, and sometimes visions, and commissioned master craftsmen like Donne, as well as de Caus, Smythson, and Gerard, who in turn supervised teams of unnamed workers and gardeners in order to execute their own visions and practical designs. Alongside the less remarkable (because monumental) process of co-creating elite Renaissance gardens and elaborate illustrated

¹⁶⁵ See e.g. Simpson.

books, it is impossible to ignore the collaborative co-creation of Donne's poem, relying as it does on Petrarca's vision, Bedford's garden, Bacon's design from Colonna's imagination, and so forth back to de Lorris, Ovid (*inter alia*), and Eden itself.

Like Donne, the designers of the gardens drew on the shared resources of European culture to furnish their creations with familiar and resonant iconographical programs. Sometimes these resources were collective, such as the persistent images of the Garden of Love, Christian Paradise, and muses' Parnassus across centuries and media. Sometimes, however, the sources are specific: Petrarca's tumultuous weather; Colonna's grand plan; the Pratolino's Parnassus fountain. The gardener-scientist Bacon would probably have recognized the methods of this union of poetic imagination and horticultural experiment.¹⁶⁶ It is perhaps significant that, for all the real early modern innovations of Donne, Gerard, and Bacon; Bedford, de Caus, and Anne of Denmark, they are also drawing on their cultural heritage and its artifacts, not just as sources but also as tools and forms of art. Donne's poem, with its socially disruptive and meritocratic elements, relies for its effects on the oldest tropes of the gendered garden enclosed as well as the cutting edge of horticultural science and landscape design.

These sources of artistic inspiration and borrowings, along with the actual designers and laborers, point to a team of intergenerational and cross-media collaborators who are jointly responsible for both the garden at Twickenham and "Twicknam Garden." Bacon and his workers, Bedford and her poets, together supplied the images and ideas that Donne and Smythson transcribed onto their respective pages. Smythson and his future employers, like those who follow Donne in the long tradition of artists and poets of love and Eden, continue the collaborative process.

¹⁶⁶ See e.g. Bushnell 172-73.

Scholars, too, are part of this co-creative act, and must join in the game on its terms. Donne's speaker-fountain is no longer (merely) the bitter end of Petrarchism, tangled in its webs of conventional despair. He—it—is the muses' Parnassus, *and* the font of Love, and maybe also the redemptive water flowing from the Tree of Life to boot. The setting that surrounds him shimmers with the light of Eden, the music of medieval love gardens, the glamour of the Island of Venus. These myriad resonances of Donne's virtual Paradise would not be available to us without the evidence of hand-drawn plan, printed page, painted casket, or carved wooden block—and the material practices of gardening, bookmaking, and other crafts of which they are the traces. No less real or significant than the Petrarchan conventions and patronage relations with which we started, this cultural ecology of real objects and virtual duplications encompasses and far surpasses them.

Paradise Present:
Desiring English Eden in Shakespeare's Accessible Gardens

Introduction

This chapter contends that Shakespeare locates paradise squarely in the here and now. Rather than a lost ideal or a conventional commonplace, speakers invoke Eden as an object of present desire, an object that is potentially attainable. In this, their rhetoric resembles that of the garden books and husbandry manuals that have engaged a number of recent studies. However, Shakespeare's language of desire is also the language of conquest. Paradise is nigh, but it belongs to someone else.

In plays as disparate as *Richard II* and *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, the paradisaical garden is reimagined and redeployed for the purposes of the characters at hand. A scene or speaker takes the idea of the earthly paradise, with its promised pleasures and ever-present memory of the Fall, and overlays it with the play's dramatic circumstances, be they England at war, lovelorn complaint, or mercenary plot and counterplot. Rather than contrasting visions of an Edenic ideal with the imperfect realities the plays present, here I consider what effect the mundane tenor has on the paradisaical vehicle itself. In deploying Eden for their own local and immediate purposes, however, characters also overwrite the image of paradise itself, transforming the pleasant garden of human origins to a site of present dynastic conflict or extractive scheming. Such transformations of the idea of paradise to meet local circumstances and serve present needs echo nationalist discourses of Eden found in contemporary horticultural publications. Behind the practical instructions lies a dream shared by the dramatic characters: to seek and claim paradise close at hand. Sometimes the books seem as ambitious as any claimant to the English throne; at others they acknowledge the material limitations they face at the hands of weather, climate, and fortune.

This chapter's approach is different from the foregoing chapters' investigations of explicitly paradisaic visions presented at particular moments in the works of Spenser and Donne. Here, I examine the implications of paradise as it appears across the works of Shakespeare.¹ I find that his characters' paradisaic visions are untrustworthy, not because they offer false promises of an unattainable ideal, but because of the means by which they as humans propose in fact to attain it, which seem almost inevitably to render paradise—taking Orsino out of context—"not so sweet now as it was before."² I examine the details of speeches and settings invoking paradise and its garden analogues in the histories, where the object of desire is one of the king's two bodies, and in instances of romantic love, in which the desired body has changed to that of the beloved but the language describing it remains strikingly similar. Underlying this singular focus on paradise as a site of military or romantic conquest, however, lies the threat that an Eden so obtained may no longer be Edenic. Some characters reject paradise as unsatisfactory or redefine it to suit their own purposes. Another sort of transformation occurs when sites of imperial conquest, familiarly exotic, become overlaid with features of settings closer to home. This doubling of paradisaic visions in turn troubles readings of the vaulting ambitions to paradise so prevalent in the horticultural works of the period. Is Eden out there, waiting to be discovered, or right

¹ In the early stages of this research, I made valuable use of the distant reading techniques enabled by Eric M. Johnson's *Open Source Shakespeare* website (OSS), especially its "Concordance Search" function for terms such as "paradise," "Eden," "garden," and variants in its source text, as follows:

Open Source Shakespeare uses the "Moby Shakespeare" collection as its source text. [. . .] The collection is an electronic reproduction of another set of texts [of] which the Electronic Text Center at the University of Virginia identifies the source as the Globe Shakespeare, a mid-nineteenth-century popular edition of the Cambridge Shakespeare[.]

I have collated the passages generated by OSS with the Arden editions (see below note).

² *Twelfth Night* 1.1.8. Unless otherwise noted, quotations are from the Arden Shakespeare individual volumes or *Complete Works*. In future I may revisit original spelling and punctuation.

here, waiting to be cultivated? Slippage between the two possibilities reveals some of the dangers inherent in seeking after paradise—especially when there is a risk of actually finding it.

Vision: Present Paradise

“Adam was a gardener,” says Jack Cade, justifying his rebellion of workers against property holders, in his terms the truly deserving poor against the self-serving elite (2HVI 4.2.124).³ For Shakespeare, the converse seems also to be true: all gardeners are Adam, all gardens settings for the reenactment of Eden’s primal scenes. Cade invokes Adam at the start of his revolt only to find himself in another garden of high stakes at its end:

now am I so hungry that if I might have a lease of my life for a thousand years I could stay no longer. Wherefore oe’r a brick wall have I climbed into this garden to see if I can eat grass or pick a sallet another while, which is not amiss to cool a man’s stomach this hot weather. And I think this word ‘sallet’ was born to do me good; for many a time, but for a sallet, my brain-pan had been cleft with a brown bill[. . .]. (4.10.4-11)

Running from the law after the failure of his rebellion, Cade conflates his stolen salad with his rounded helmet or “sallet,” both preservers of life.⁴ For viewers primed with Cade’s punny wordplay as well as his earlier reference to Adam in Eden, the appearance of one Alexander *Iden* as the salad’s—and the garden’s—rightful owner

³ According to Nancy E. Wright and A. R. Buck, here Cade presents “an assertion of a common origin that challenges those who assume social differentiation is based on landholding by lineal succession. The ultimate aim of Cade’s rebellion is to reestablish the social order based upon common property in the Garden of Eden” (88): “Only when ‘all the realm shall be in common’ (4.2.68) will the social order again be like that in the Garden of Eden before the Fall” (75). As the scene indicates, the nobility, the educated elite, and the lawyers stand to lose by such a system. Cf. Maus 106.

⁴ According to the *OED*, “to pick a salad” was an expression meaning “to be engaged in some trivial occupation” or “to make a selection,” only cited in the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries (“salad, n”).

seems overdetermined.⁵ But there is more to the Eden connection than Jack's (or his author's) puns. Two crucial aspects of the scene and its setting appear to be of Shakespeare's invention. The chronicles note that Alexander Iden was part of the government's pursuit of Cade and that he ran him to ground "in a Sussex garden" not his own.⁶ The play, however, gives Iden a personal stake in the confrontation rather than a dispassionate legal office, thus enabling the pun and setting up an Edenic typology of theft and punishment-by-owner. To reinforce the echo, the play also gives Iden's garden a wall suitable for climbing over, making Cade's trespass more effortful and thus more intentional and bringing the setting even more in line with the *hortus conclusus* of the medieval paradise.⁷

A tendency to freely associate earthly gardens with Eden extends also to Shakespeare's characters, even in the shorthand of jokes: "Not that Adam that kept the Paradise but that Adam that keeps the prison," explains Dromio of Syracuse, lest his master follow the habitual chain of reference (*CoE* 4.3.17-18).⁸ Hamlet's Gravedigger

⁵ John Wilders reads Iden's declaration of agrarian contentment and plenitude as an earnest alternative to civil war (134). In contrast, Wright and Buck explore the serious joke of "Jack Cade in the Garden of Iden" at greater length by from the perspective of the legal humanities: "The scene [. . .] – an ironic allusion to the biblical, prelapsarian Garden of Eden – represents the political purpose and consequences of exclusive property rights" (85). Wright and Buck's analysis of the scene focuses on the landowner Iden as a marker of changing legal and ideological approaches to real estate during the period: where Iden characterizes himself as a gentleman sensitive to noblesse oblige, his actions reveal him to be not a generous feudal lord but a jealous sole proprietor (82-83). Iden's actions, namely his "response to an unarmed intruder whose identity is unknown," demonstrate that "The communal Garden of Eden that existed in a world of prelapsarian innocence has become the enclosed Garden of Iden, whose owner claims it as individual private property" (83, 85).

⁶ Griffiths 653; see also Maus 106ff. Cade was injured during his capture and later died of his wounds (Harvey 100). Katharine Maus suggests Iden's "thriving but not grand position as a small-scale provincial landholder [. . .] for the young Shakespeare, [. . .] may have embodied a personal aspiration," offering a more secure and virtuous middle way between the rapacious tendencies of both the nobility and the destitute (108).

⁷ Wilders 134.

⁸ Antipholus of Syracuse's "What Adam [. . .]?" may indicate that the chain is not

concurr: "There is no ancient gentlemen but gardeners, ditchers, and gravemakers; they hold up Adam's profession" (*Hamlet* 5.1.29-31).⁹ To "hold up," in the Gravedigger's sense, is to "support, sustain, maintain."¹⁰ Gardeners are not only Adam's lineal (professional) descendants; they carry on his work into the present.

The presence of Eden, as Cade's earlier speech indicates, does political work for those who invoke it. John of Gaunt famously presents an English Eden in his private condemnation of "the scandal" apparent in his nephew Richard II's reign (*RII* 2.1.68):¹¹

This royal throne of kings, this sceptred isle,
This earth of majesty, this seat of Mars,
This other Eden, demi-paradise,
This fortress built by Nature for herself
Against infection and the hand of war,
This happy breed of men, this little world,
This precious stone set in the silver sea,
Which serves it in the office of a wall
Or as a moat defensive to a house
Against the envy of less happier lands,
This blessed plot, this earth, this realm, this England,
This nurse, this teeming womb of royal kings,
Feared by their breed and famous by their birth,
Renowned for their deeds as far from home,
For Christian service and true chivalry,
As is the sepulchre in stubborn Jewry
Of the world's ransom, blessed Mary's son,
This land of such dear souls, this dear dear land,
Dear for her reputation through the world,

habitual to him (15), or instead that his version of the confusions of the day neither resembles any sort of "Paradise" nor enables him to think clearly about such cultural references.

⁹ In the latter case, a question arises as to whether the three "professions" of Adam are all to be understood exclusively as his postlapsarian labors, or if "gardeners" have a special status that pre-dates the Fall, rendering their present places of work at least potentially paradisaical.

¹⁰ OED sense 2. *A Midsummer Night's Dream* provides one of the sample quotations.

¹¹ The speech ends the "sombre colloquy" between Gaunt and his brother York (Forker 249n), in which Gaunt expresses hope (York, doubt) that Richard will hear his dying words. It is followed by the king's entrance and their direct admonitory exchanges with him: first Gaunt's, eloquent and bitter prior to his death (73-138); then York's, angry and forthright following Richard's confiscation of Gaunt's lands and wealth (163-214). Maus cites this interference with lawful inheritance as the proximate cause of the successful rebellion led against Richard by Gaunt's son Bolingbroke (2).

Is now leased out – I die pronouncing it –
 Like to a tenement or pelting farm.
 England, bound in with the triumphant sea,
 Whose rocky shore beats back the envious siege
 Of wat'ry Neptune, is now bound in with shame,
 With inky blots and rotten parchment bonds.
 That England that was wont to conquer others
 Hath made a shameful conquest of itself. (RII 2.1.40-66)

Gaunt registers discontent among the nobility at Richard's "waste" of his patrimony (103). Many critics attending to this speech read it as Gaunt's idealized memory of a past long-lost, if it ever even existed.¹² England's paradisaal past would seem to indict Richard's problematic present, emphasizing the contrast between a remembered English Eden and the fallen state of the current realm. However, Gaunt's speech is largely in the present tense.¹³ The main verb in this monumental sentence is "is": "This other Eden, demi-paradise / [. . .] Is now leased out." The anaphoric "This" binds Gaunt's vision of England inextricably close in deictic place and time.¹⁴ Gaunt seems not to question or qualify England's current status as a second paradise but instead

¹² According to Tigner, "Gaunt envisions a nostalgic conception of an Edenic England that is now lost [. . .] Gaunt looks back to another England [. . .] Gaunt can only see paradisiacal England through the lenses of the past" (81-3). Similarly, Joan Hutton Landis claims, "John of Gaunt remembers an Edenic England that never existed historically but which did exist for him seen through the particular nostalgia of impending death and royal catastrophe" (13). Many other critics claim a distinction between a more recent paradisaal past and a fallen present (e.g. Forker 76, Landis, MacKenzie, Tigner 81-2, Wilders 137).

¹³ As are its several ancestors and analogues in contemporary dramatic and poetic sources (see Forker 245-46). Gaunt himself characterizes his speech as prophetic, but this seems to refer explicitly to an earlier announcement that Richard's "rash fierce blaze of riot cannot last" (2.1.31-39). Angus Fletcher notes that "prophecy" in the period often referred to a "vision based on an inspired understanding of scriptures," situated in and commenting upon present history rather than projecting a future state (64).

¹⁴ MacKenzie also argues for a sort of present-ness in Gaunt's speech, in the course of a different line of reasoning: "It is the traditional quality and character of English life *on earth* that gives Lancaster's myth-paradise a sense of spiritual continuity" (323, emphasis original).

focuses on the possession of its title and use.¹⁵ England is still Eden, but someone else owns it, and that someone is renting out his patrimony, alienating it but not, in this speech, spoiling it. Only in the sense of legal access do the deictic markers shift to a distancing “that.” “That England, that was wont to conquer others, / Hath made a shameful conquest of itself.”¹⁶ Paradise is a site of contest and conquest in the play’s political present.

This porting of Eden and its implications into present space and time—places of conflict, contest, and desire—is fundamental to the vision of paradise put forth in Shakespeare’s works. Only infrequently do the plays explicitly mention Eden or its classical analogues. Nonetheless, they indicate that any garden, real or rhetorical, may be automatically linked with the original one, its laborers with the first of that name. Where Spenser and Donne place their alter egos in a paradisaal space built from literary convention, Shakespeare draws on those conventions in order to bring paradise and its significance into the world of action, the here and now of his characters’ struggles and desires.

In part, this difference may be attributed to the poets’ favored genres; Shakespeare implies as much earlier in *Hamlet* when he deploys that other sense of “hold up”—“To offer or present to notice; to exhibit, display”—which he may have coined.¹⁷

¹⁵ See e.g. Maus 22ff.

¹⁶ As M. M. Mahood says, “we do not expect to find Mars in Eden” (80). Mahood does not dwell on this incongruity but uses it to introduce an analysis of the “paradoxes and oxymora” she finds integral to the speech’s rhetoric, observing later—note the present tense “is”—that “What is beyond all value has been valued and leased” (80-81). Charles Forker observes that “The notion of England conquered by internal quarrels when foreign invasion would otherwise fail was common in Elizabethan propaganda” as well as in chronicle and fictional accounts of English history (248n).

¹⁷ OED sense 3. *Hamlet* and *The Winter’s Tale* contain the first two attested uses; the others are of the nineteenth century.

[. . .] o'erstep not the modesty of nature. For anything so o'erdone is from the purpose of playing whose end, both at the first and now, was and is to hold as 'twere the mirror up to Nature to show Virtue her feature, Scorn her own image, and the very age and body of the time his form and pressure. (3.2.19-24)

Hamlet's familiar instructions to the players imply that "hold[ing] the mirror up to Nature" is the particular "end" of drama. This is something the author of the Letter to Raleigh, at least, would likely dispute, with his "*doctrine by ensample*" serving "*to fashion a gentleman or noble person in vertuous and gentle discipline*" (28, 8).¹⁸ Nonetheless, the immediacy of drama, the requirement that all its words be spoken in real time for (and by) the character giving them voice, seem to be what furnish Hamlet's mirror for Claudius in his own play *The Mousetrap* (3.2.231)—and, by extension, Shakespeare's for us in *Hamlet* itself—with their presentative power. Shakespeare's deployment of paradise, however, goes beyond such core dramatic functions, as I demonstrate below. Furthermore, such an action is neither unique to Shakespeare, nor to drama, nor even to the literature of fiction. If presentism is a dramatic commonplace, the presence of Eden was a commonplace in early modern English culture.

Critical Background: English Eden, Petrarchan Colonies; Printing Gardens, Practicing Paradise

This chapter on its journey touches many critical shores, connecting a number of seemingly distinct studies through discourses of Edenic gardening. Amy Tigner has documented the existence of a "paradise imaginary" in early modern England. The ideal of paradise was a powerful one in literary, political, and scientific discourses, while at the same time any garden might be "always a synecdoche for Eden," so routine

¹⁸ As noted in the Introduction, A. C. Hamilton's edition of Edmund Spenser's *Faerie Queene* glosses "*by ensample*" as "by images of virtues and vices" (Notes 716n).

were the habits of thought.¹⁹ In this, they follow a set of traditions outlined by Josephine Waters Bennett, framing Britain's island isolation as otherworldly or Edenic from the Romans onward, which inform the later associations Tigner documents. Tigner's studies of Shakespeare focus upon those instances in which an ideal imagined or remembered Eden serves as contrast for a fallen earthly state or model for its improvement.²⁰ Similarly, Catherine Belsey examines the always-already-fallen nature of family life as presented in the plays and other cultural objects. However, Tigner and Belsey document the habitual use of paradise as a yardstick for a fallen world, while I examine the rhetorical moves—and their practical and ethical implications—that assert such a paradise as somehow present, latent, or close at hand.

As we have seen, Petrarchism gives Spenser and Donne's despairing speakers a language to complain with and a posture of unanswered pain amidst paradisaical splendor. These in turn allow them to make claims upon both earthly patrons and the muses of Parnassus. In *Unrequited Conquests*, Roland Greene examines how the discourse of Petrarchan desire similarly served to articulate Europeans' relationships with the New World. Since Petrarchan love lyrics continually became sites of multivalent conquest, Greene argues, they were uniquely apt for colonial humanists seeking to make sense of their new roles and actions with respect to the lands and peoples they encountered. Although Greene distinguishes between this Petrarchan

¹⁹ See also Ernst Robert Curtius' study of medieval use of classical sources: "Since Paradise is a garden, a garden can, by transposition, be called a paradise" (200). Tigner's introduction offers a synopsis of the history and significance of gardens in early modern English culture (1-10). See also Martin Hoyles' discussion of "The Spiritual Origins of Gardening" in English print (*Delight* 124-27).

²⁰ Tigner's chapters on Shakespeare, however, do not investigate potential images of paradise itself. Her analyses of *Hamlet*, *Richard II*, and *King Lear* examine the "anti-paradise" scenarios of kingdom-gardens gone to weed, while her readings of *The Winter's Tale* and *The Tempest* provide analogues for concurrent developments in the marvel-producing technology of elite gardens, not in themselves paradisaical except in the associative sense Tigner strongly claims for the culture of the time (see chs. 2, 3).

discourse and the “biblical” discourse that located Eden in Latin America, there is a clear connection between the two in a trope Rebecca Bushnell examines, that of associating women with fine gardens, complimenting their beauteous grace but rendering them passive settings for male desire.²¹

Scholars such as Bushnell, Wendy Wall, and Charlotte Scott have demonstrated the importance of gardening books and husbandry manuals both in English print culture and throughout Shakespeare’s work. Through their texts, visual and physical presentations, and marketing postures, these early horticultural printings advocate for aesthetic, ethical, economic, and national improvement by means of working the soil. Bushnell’s *Green Desire* articulates the complex ambitions to “profit and pleasure” enfolded in the “dreams” and “fantasies” these books locate in their prospective gardens, as well as in the bodies of the women imaginatively associated with them.²² Wall in “Renaissance National Husbandry” has noted the nationalist project of certain of these husbandry discourses as exemplified by the works of Gervase Markham. Building on Wall’s analysis, Scott examines how *Shakespeare’s Nature* takes up these themes, especially in the plays that consider good and bad kingship.

Historian John Prest draws on a similar body of evidence in his survey of “the re-creation of paradise” across works of early modern cartography, literature, and horticulture. Having traced the history of speculative Edenic geography from the traditional far east of T and O maps through the hopes of rediscovering paradise in the New World, Prest argues that gardeners in the later Age of Exploration sought to recreate Eden by virtue of collecting plants, and planting virtue, in gardens at home.²³ I

²¹ Greene 6; Bushnell ch. 4, esp. 117-122. See also Louis Montrose and Peter Stallybrass’ examinations of women’s bodies as sites of colonization (79; 133).

²² Bushnell 7-10.

²³ Tigner draws on Prest’s analysis in her fourth chapter. See also Scafi for a detailed

find that the religious aspirations for horticultural science Prest describes and the “national husbandry” Wall identifies are in many ways part of the same intellectual tradition, which also draws on the trends and habits identified by Bennett and Tigner for paradise, Greene for colonization, Bushnell and Scott for gardening and husbandry. The nationalism is Edenic; the Edens are nationalistic. Such paradisaal claims are in most cases aspirational, but they are also declarative, engaged not with a paradise in the distant past or uncharted distance but with the world as it is, here and now. The various critical subjects—Tigner’s paradise imaginers, Greene’s Petrarchan conquerors, Bushnell’s desiring gardeners, Wall’s nationalist husbandmen, Scott’s cultivated kings, Prest’s devoted scientists—use similar discourses to claim paradise as an attainable goal.

Yet the interlinking of the texts’ nationalist aspirations, their rhetoric of desire, and their Edenic discourses goes unremarked, especially in the prior studies examining Shakespeare alongside horticultural books.²⁴ This may be because the links are so frequent as to appear as commonplaces. I find, however, that tracing references to paradise is essential to understanding the full import of both the books and the plays. Following Bushnell’s methodological lead, in the following section I establish the paradisaal discourse of the garden books in its own right. The subsequent discussion returns to similar invocations of paradise across the works of Shakespeare in pursuit of the twin discourses’ mutually illuminating potential for both the literary and the practical texts. Edenic metaphors add a typological frame and frequently a moral valence to the scenes they appear in. More significantly, I argue, invoking paradise in accounting of Eden’s varying cartographic locations.

²⁴ Wall uses no paradisaal words in her discussions either of Markham (who seems less interested in Eden than many of his colleagues) or of Spenser (“National”). Scott and Bushnell mention “paradise” and “Edenic” only in quotation or brief explication and index neither term.

situations where earthly acquisition is both at stake and possible in present space and time, and where outcomes may be decided by unequal power or even violence, serves in some cases to transform the meaning of paradise itself, damaging its image of perfection or manipulating that image as an instrument for temporal gain.

Renaissance National Paradise: England as Eden in Print and Practice

Continental precursors to printed English herbals and horticultural manuals arose out of classical traditions transmitted through medieval manuscripts and transformed by newfound needs for textual, empirical, and schematic accuracy.²⁵ In English printing, two rhetorical strands first oppose and later complement one another, one claiming the authority of classical and Continental sources and the other emphasizing unique English experience.²⁶ Unlike previous studies, I focus here upon the implications of the rhetoric itself, rather than on the contrast between the books' rhetoric and the world's reality. What is Paradise doing, specifically, in and for each of these works, even—and sometimes especially—when it appears to be merely conventional? What impacts do

²⁵ For a vivid account of this process focusing on transmission of images, see William M. Ivins, Jr. (13-15; 33-36; 40-46). Brent Elliott adds a consideration of botanical texts (24-33). See Brian W. Ogilvie and Sachiko Kusakawa for the development of realistic or “analytic” botanical images and descriptions depending on scientific and marketing needs (Ogilvie 146; Kusakawa Introduction, ch. 5).

²⁶ Hoyles opens (and closes) his survey of printed English gardening books by noting “There is no more recurring theme in [English] gardening literature than the emphasis on experience” (*Delight* 4; see also *Bread* 217). Hoyles cites as *locus classicus* Hugh Plat’s *Floraes Paradise* (1608; later *The Garden of Eden*), which “insists that his book is ‘[. . .] wrung out of the earth, by the painfull hand of experience’” (*Delight* 4, 13; see Henrey 155-56). Although distinctions between authority and experience are not unique to England, the earlier development of printed herbals on the Continent seems to have allowed for simultaneous claims of recovering authentic classical knowledge from the errors of centuries of copying and confirming that knowledge with contemporary observations. By the time scientific herbals were printed in England (beginning with William Turner—see Hoyles *Delight* 57, Henrey 21, and below note), classical / inherited and local / empirical botanical information had become more distinct (see Elliott 24-26; Ivins 35-36).

the manifestly imperfect signifieds of English gardening have upon their paradisaical signifiers?

Paradisaical aspirations for gardening came to England with the Continental authorities. The frontispiece of the original edition of Flemish physician and botanist Rembert Dodoens' *Cruydeboeck* (1554) and Carolus Clusius' French adaptation, the *Histoire des Plantes* (1557) includes a familiar scene at the center of the wide cartouche at its foot.²⁷ The action of plucking the apple from the tree, as well as the gestures and attitudes of the modeled nudes, seem to be drawn from conventional iconographies of Eden. However, the scene from the Dodoens frontispiece is—officially, at least—not Eden: as the full scene shows, it is one of its classical analogues, the Garden of the Hesperides, in which the serpent must be killed by Hercules before he can successfully steal the golden apples. The frontispiece image also followed the book into English as *A Niewve Herball* (1578), printed in Antwerp by Jan van de Loe, published in London by Gerard Dewes, and translated from the French by Henry Lyte, a Somerset botanist and antiquary.²⁸ In his front matter, Lyte claims a nationalist goal of benefiting his English “Countriemen” by giving them access to foreign expertise, referring to them or to his “Countrie” three times each across an epigram and two prefatory letters, one to Elizabeth, one “To the friendly and indifferent Reader” (*1v-*3r). Lyte praises the works of Dodoens and other “most learned Physitions of this age”:

Which hath made me desyrous (folowing their example) to make my Countreymen partakers of such knowledge, as other learned and wise men in other Countries haue thought meete to be made knowen in the

²⁷ Cut by Arnold Nicolai; design by Pierre van der Borch, both prominent employees of Christophe Plantin (Henrey 9-11; see ch. 1). Blanche Henrey notes that the block has been modified from its 1554 version, replacing the Spanish coat of arms with an urn of flowers (32). My citations of Henrey's work index the biographical and publishing details of the horticultural writers and some of their artists and associates.

²⁸ Henrey 32-36; Boulger. Van de Loe was Dodoens' original publisher (Henrey 8).

natiue tongues of their common Weales. (*2v)²⁹

English herbalists deserve Lyte's Continental learning by virtue of their membership in a nation among peers.³⁰ The frontispiece also signals this promise of authoritative learning by depicting above the Hesperides scene other classical figures associated with plants and medicine. The composite image positions the book as a whole in a humanist discourse that understood itself to be reviving ancient knowledge in service of a new scientific endeavor: a Renaissance. Self-proclaimed heir to the Continental tradition, Lyte's book places its nationalist goal beside the strikingly Edenic version of Hercules in the Hesperides, setting the parameters for this prominent strand of English gardening rhetoric in print.

The other strand of garden book discourse emphasizes vernacular English expertise, including both folk traditions and the personal experiences of the author.³¹ The many editions of *The Gardeners Labyrinth* (1577-1656; originally printed by Henry Bynneman) are an acknowledged compilation, "Gathered ovt of the best approved writers of Gardening, Husbandrie, and Physicke" by the London-based "popular science" writer Thomas Hill (1586 A1r).³² However, among the claims implicit in the workaday illustrations is that, unlike books such as Lyte's Dodoens that celebrate an elevated classical and Continental lineage, this is a book for practical application. The

²⁹ Here and below I silently expand printed macron abbreviations of m's and n's.

³⁰ In this, Lyte echoes the well-traveled Northumbrian Reformer William Turner's 1562 justification for printing his own *New Herball* in English rather than Latin, so that the Continental authors he compiles—and disputes—might read it and defend themselves against it: "To them that woulde that I should haue writen in Latin: I answer / that as I am naturally bounde / I haue first set out my bokes of herbes in Englishe for the profit of my contremen:" (*The seconde parte of Uuilliam Turners herball* A2v). For more on Turner, "Dean of Wells, Protestant controversialist, physician, and naturalist," see Henry 21; 18-26; Hoyles *Delight* 7-8, 9, 56-57.

³¹ For Hoyles, who cites Reformation distinctions between inherited tradition and lived experience, this is a particular instance of a common Renaissance narrative (*Delight* 36).

³² Henry 57-63; Hoyles *Delight* 10-11.

title page image of garden labor is a block used multiple times in the book and across the various editions. The mixing, matching, and recycling of the stylized but realistic images implies an ethic of practical economy and traditional repetition in both gardening and publishing.³³ Wall notes that sometimes husbandry books' claims to English exclusivity are misleading—for example preceding translations or, as with Hill, cribbed versions of Continental texts.³⁴ Such claims seek to reframe as a virtue the anxieties English writers of the Tudor period often seem to feel with respect to their Continental and classical predecessors.³⁵

Perhaps in the spirit of this anxious English reframing, *The Gardeners Labyrinth* is also content to eschew paradise. The title, along with the table of contents, imagines the book itself as a garden maze: "A Table expressing the Contents of euery Chapter, contained in this Labyrinth" (1586, A2r). Facing this table and following the title page, the dedication letter by Hill's posthumous editor Henry Dethick to William Cecil uses a similar metaphor.³⁶ Dethick's dedication contrasts "this terrestriall *Gardeners Labyrinth*" with "the Heauenly Paradise," recognizing the distinction between the two in accordance with the book's practical bent.³⁷ However, many of the books that deploy

³³ While repeating blocks for economy and efficiency's sake happened frequently, even in lavish books (Henry 63)—famously, the 1493 Nuremberg Chronicle (Ivins 29, 38)—Hill's ostentatiously recombinant blocks stand out from common practice.

³⁴ Markham's partial incorporation (1615) and translation (1616) of Charles Étienne's *La Maison Rustique* is Wall's example ("National" 774).

³⁵ Hoyles in his section on "Seventeenth-century Nationalism" once again cites a familiar Renaissance narrative whereby sixteenth-century anxieties of "foreign influence" gave way to "the flowering of English literature," until "in the seventeenth century English became a major European language" (*Bread* 146-47).

³⁶ Dethick was chancellor of the diocese of Carlisle and son of the Garter King-of-Arms; his friend Hill seems to have died a few years before the original 1577 publication (Henry 60).

³⁷ Mary Moore examines contemporary classical, Petrarchan, and Protestant associations of labyrinths with "enclosure and complexity" in her study of Mary Wroth's corona of sonnets (109). Labyrinths in the classical tradition can appear simultaneously as symbols of "confusion and error" but also "complexity and artistry," senses which

this ubiquitous trope of garden book *as garden* are happy also to proceed to the next logical step, the now-familiar one of garden as synecdoche for Eden.

While Hill thus exemplifies the practical, humble, and implicitly local strand of English gardening in print, far more common is a rhetorical approach linking the two strands. Poet and translator Barnabe Googe, introducing Protestant agriculturalist Conrad Heresbach's *Foure Bookes of Husbandrie* (1577), repackages his German text for an English audience: "I haue altered and increased his vvoorke," and "also haue ioyned herevwithall, the experience and husbandry of our ovvne husbandes of England, as farre as eyther myne ovvne obseruations, or the experience of sundry my freendes vvoulde suffer me" (π3r).³⁸ Googe spends quite some time in his "Epistle to the Reader" reiterating his belief that, climate notwithstanding, England really can produce good wine:

I haue also been carefull about the planting and ordering of the Vine, though some of my freendes vvould haue had it omitted, as altogeather impertinent to our countrey: because I am fully persvvaded (yf diligence, and good husbandry might be vsed) vve might haue a reasonable good vvine grovvyng in many places of this Realme: as vndoubtedly vve had immediatly after the Conquest, tyll partly by slothfulnesse, not liking any thing long that is painefull, partly by Ciuil discord long continuing, it vvas left, and so vvith time lost[. . .] (π3v)

Following this assertion of past viticultural success in defiance of his friends'

skepticism, Googe continues with a series of present examples of English winemaking,

carried over into the emotional labyrinth of Petrarchan love (111-12). Meanwhile, Protestant theology deployed "the labyrinth as symbolizing [. . .] inwardness and emphasizing both the necessity and difficulty of self-analysis" (112). In Angus Fletcher's analysis of the term, "labyrinth" takes on a more sinister bent as the existential, civilizational, and spiritual opposite of the "temple," often figured as a garden: "Temples may rise out of the earth in the form of sacred groves, while labyrinths may grow up as a tangle of vegetation (12). While it seems likely that Dethick's distinction between paradise and labyrinth alludes to the spiritual dimensions of "the necessity and difficulty" described by Moore, the reference appears perfunctory in light of the strict practical focus of the book itself. Other authors such as Ralph Austen, discussed below, trope such theological resonances and make them central.

³⁸ For Markham's reprinting of Googe's Heresbach, see Wall "National" 775.

North and South, for nearly the length of a large quarto page. Googe's anxious assertions are for English parity with other lands; his "Newly Englished" book of necessity relies on Heresbach's Continental authority. In an analogous position to the image of Dodoen's Hesperides, however, the book's simple title page quotes Adam's curse from Genesis 3:19. While Dethick draws an explicit distinction between Hill's earthly *Labyrinth* and "the Heavenly Paradise," Googe's epigraph suggests an analogy to be drawn between his work and Eden at the moment of the Fall.³⁹ If the two rhetorical strands of classical authority and English experience meet uncertainly in Googe, they grow to their national paradisaical potential in John Gerard's 1597 *Herball*.⁴⁰ The dedication letter from Gerard, a London barber-surgeon by training and a gardener by avocation, to his patron William Cecil makes both rhetorical claims, paying homage to the book's classical and Continental predecessors while humbly but pointedly asserting that it is Gerard's personal experience as gardener and naturalist—his local English knowledge—that makes his the very *Herball* for the shelves of discerning countrymen. Having cited Pliny and Plutarch's records of famous ancient gardeners, mentioned Solomon, and concluded his list with Cecil himself, Gerard devotes a similar space, three-quarters of a folio page, to his own efforts both as gardener and as writer of the present text:

To the large and singular furniture of this noble Iland, I have added from forren places all the varietie of herbes and flowers that I might any way obtaine, I have laboured with the soile to make it fit for the plants, and with the plants to make them to delight in the soile, that so they might liue and prosper vnder our climate, as in their natiue and proper countrie : what my successe hath beene, and what my furniture is, I leaue to the report of them that haue seene your Lordships gardens, and the little plot of my speciall care and husbandrie. But bicause gardens are priuate, and [. . .] come soone to ruine, there be that haue sollicitd me first by my pen,

³⁹ Andrew McRae notes that Googe and Heresbach are responsible for the "introduction of English readers to georgic ideals" (204).

⁴⁰ Henrey 36-54; see ch. 2.

and after by the Presse, to make my labours common, and to free them from the danger whereunto a garden is subiect[. . .]. (A2v)

England's unique "furniture" and "climate," and Gerard's unique "labour" and "successe," have resulted in a current volume "richer than former Herbals" and thus suitable to dedicate to Cecil himself (A2v). The engraved title page by William Rogers bolsters these claims, featuring both the classical figures of the Dodoens and—in the space previously occupied by the Hesperides—a view of a contemporary English courtly garden. Recalling one of Hill's distorted bird's-eye plans in its content, the image shows some richly clad figures enjoying its realistically dimensional space while others till it. Along with some putti and *trompe-l'oeil* strapwork, lifelike snails, butterflies, and spiders surround the image, echoing in miniature the book's mix of classicism and empiricism. In his letter "To the courteous and well-willing Readers," Gerard rehearses his classical citations in greater detail, beginning with "the garlands of the Muses" and running through both mythical and historical scholars and scholar-princes to conclude again with Solomon. Gerard also makes a concurrent argument for herbals and gardens as ways to wealth preferable to the more obvious one of mining, because they are more conducive to virtue:

[. . .] yet hath my labour (I trust) beene otherwise profitably employed, in descrying of such harmlesse treasure of herbes, trees and plants, as the earth frankly without violence offereth vnto our most necessarie vses. Harmeslesse I call them, bicause they were such delights, as man in the perfectest estate of his innocencie did earst enioy[. . .] wise men haue made their whole life as a pilgrimage, to attaine to the knowledge of them. By the which they haue gained the harts of all, and opened the mouthes of many, in commendation of those rare vertues, which are contained in these terrestriall creatures. I confesse blinde *Pluto* is now adaies more sought after, than quicke sighted *Phæbus*, and yet this dustie mettall, or excrement of the earth (which was first deeply buried, least it should be an eisore to greeue the corrupt hart of man) by forcible entrie made into the bowels of the earth, is rather snatched at of man to his owne destruction, than directly sent of God, to the comfort of this life. [. . .] Contrarywise, in the expert knowledge of Herbes, what pleasures still renewed with varietie? what small expense? what securitie? and yet what an apt and

ordinarie means to conduct man to that most desired benefit of heatlh?
 Which as I deuoutly wish vnto my natiue Countrie, and to the carefull
 noursing Mother of the same: [. . .] I thought it a chiefe point of my dutie,
 thus out of my poore store, to offer vp these my far fetched experiments,
 together with mine owne countries vnknown treasure, combined in this
 compendious Herball. (B5v)

The case begins in economics and passes through ecology to close in a conflation of classical and Christian values: “the world can brag of no more antient monument,” he says, referring to the aforementioned splendors of antiquity, “than Paradise and the garden of Eden.” Adducing its classical analogues—“the gardens of *Alcinous*, of *Adonis*, and the orchards of *Hesperides*[. . .] the pleasant garden of *Elysium*”—Gerard concludes his case for the moral as well as material virtues of horticulture with an anti-astrological pun: “Who would therefore looke dangerously vp at Planets, that might safely loke downe at Plants?” (B5v).⁴¹ The connection between gardens, the classical past, and Christian virtue is explicitly paradisal; in conjunction with the title page the work claims the authoritative mantle of Lyte’s *Dodoens*, this time under the rubric of the Christian paradise.

The discourse of English Eden continues into the seventeenth century. In a line of reasoning drawn from Googe’s modified Continental tradition, Oxfordshire botanist William Coles’ 1657 *Adam in Eden* offers to “lesse trouble the Reader with those Outlandish Plants [. . .] but rather acquaint him with those more wholesome [. . .] that he hath growing at his own doore, which are more consonant and proper for his Body” (a1v).⁴² The reason for this limitation to English plants, Coles’ letter “To the Reader” makes clear, is the island’s self-sufficient superiority: “As I would do my Country that honour and right, not without reason to compare her and her Gardens with the most

⁴¹ Hoyles places Gerard at the head of a gardening tradition promoting “delight” as the inspiration for virtuous paradisal labor (*Delight* 102-03).

⁴² See Henrey 88-89.

eminent Countryes and Gardens in the World" (a1v).⁴³ Even if—or, in fact, *because*—England is not actually suitable to grow all those implicitly unwholesome foreign plants, it can become all the more similar to Adam's Eden.

Even as the rhetorical moves become conventional, the iconography of Eden persists. In 1653 Oxford gardener Ralph Austen introduces his *Treatise of Fruit-Trees* as explicitly empirical, but also thoroughly devotional.⁴⁴ His engraved title page presents, like Gerard's, an idealized working garden, further stylized and circumscribed by a verse—the verse, for the biblical *hortus conclusus*—from the Song of Songs: "A Garden inclosed is my sister my Spouse: Thy Plants are an Orchard of Pomegranats, with pleasant fruits" (4:12-13). The effect is not entirely unlike that of Jesuit Henry Hawkins' elaborate emblem of the Virgin Mary as both *hortus conclusus* and the garden's constituent parts, discussed in the previous chapter. Hawkins' is a religious text, while Austen provides the "Theory and Practise of the Art of Planting Fruit: trees." Yet Austen does not shy away from devotional practice; his title includes "the Spirituall vse of an Orchard: [. . .] according to Scripture & Experience."⁴⁵ Meanwhile, Hampshire writer John Worlidge's *Systema Horti-culturae: or, The Art of Gardening* (1688), claims in the Preface to follow Austen's practical and "Experimental" principles, only referring briefly to the fact that "The Original of *Gardens* was from a Divine Hand" (v, 2).⁴⁶

However, even as Worlidge's first chapter announces a square garden as "the most pleasant and perfect Form," the book's ordering of the engravings by Frederik Hendrik

⁴³ While a reference to the mild and rainy climate that makes English gardens so famous today would seem logical, Coles' concern seems to be solely with the propriety of English plants for English bodies. Instead, as the evidence of Googe, Gerard, and John Rea (below) indicates, the English climate when discussed was seen as a liability, its coldness unsuitable for the Mediterranean plants prescribed by classical authorities (see e.g. Elliott 25-26).

⁴⁴ See Henrey 170-72; Hoyles *Gardeners* 11, 4; *Bread* 3.

⁴⁵ Orchards and gardens were generally interchangeable (Prest 70).

⁴⁶ See Henrey 206.

van Hove demotes this suggested design to second place (16, 15, 17). Instead, the book's first image for a pleasing garden conforms to the rounded *hortus conclusus* shape of Hawkins' emblem and the medieval Eden.⁴⁷ Intentionally or otherwise, the books of practical experience retain a paradisaal look.

In better keeping with its apparently practical and secular aims, van Hove's frontispiece to Worlidge's book draws on the decorative classical style David Loggan used for the urns in the frontispiece to John Rea's *Flora* (1665), which van Hove had elaborated for headpieces in the revised edition of 1676.⁴⁸ The florilegia, or empirical catalogues of garden flowers, grew out of the herbal tradition but tended to focus on decoration and exoticism rather than utility. Rea's version, however, includes subtitles *Ceres* and *Pomona*, which describe more practical crops. A century after Googe's claims for successful English winemaking, Rea in the 1676 edition of *Flora* pretends no such thing. From beginning to end Rea's main text makes dozens of concessions to "our cold Countrey" (B2r), "our cold and steril Land" (231), and the like. Rea, a renowned florist and gardener from Shropshire and Worcestershire, even undercuts his own patron's mid-book interpolation of instructions for growing vineyards with the author's personal opinion that England (specifically, deepest Kent) can at best produce passable

⁴⁷ Prest notes that both round and rectangular gardens could claim a paradisaal form: The gardens were regular in shape because many people living in a disordered world believed that the world had been regularly laid out by God before the Fall. There were those who held that the 'orbicular or round forme' was the most absolute and perfect. [. . .] But the general preference was for the four square. Perhaps this was an example of men rationalizing what they could not avoid, for [. . .] the practical advantages of the rectangle are considerable. (89)

While round, irregular, or indeterminate Edens are common on the maps cited by Alessandro Scafi, notable rectangular examples in print include Antoine Regnault (1573), Jacques d'Auzoles Lapeyre (1629), and Athanasius Kircher (1675) (293, 330, 316).

⁴⁸ Loggan, in turn, seems to have quoted these from a frontispiece of Rea's rival John Parkinson, as discussed below. For more on Rea's horticultural network, see Henrey 193-98. See also Hoyles *Delight* 14.

vinegar from whatever paltry few grapes manage to ripen at all (216-19). And yet Rea's dedicatory poem "Flora, to the Ladies" asserts, like so many others, that in his pages and in his flower garden may be seen wonders "Excelling all in *Eden* grew" (c3r). Despite their meteorological handicaps, the surpassing virtue of English gardens prevails.

The garden books invoke paradise in a variety of ways, often in the peritext.⁴⁹ The prefatory materials of these instruction books and manifestos range between the highly practical and the wildly fanciful, sometimes both at once. The books compete in a crowded market by denigrating their predecessors, however similar in content, while asserting variable Edenic visions for the contested ground of the ideal English garden. England is capable of growing all sorts of useful plants successfully, proving its status as the new paradise. Or, conversely, England's Edenic virtue is such that her native plants are far more important to consider than the traditional yet irrelevant lists of the classical or Continental herbals. England can have the best vineyards in the world! Or not. Despite these variations and outright contradictions, however, the assertion of English horticultural supremacy in virtue and in practice—outfacing both climate and Continental predecessors—remains remarkably consistent. The paradisaical excellence of English gardens is both a received fact and an achievable goal for the writers and their projected audiences.

Shakespeare and the garden books make similar rhetorical moves. The nationalist rhetoric Wall, Bushnell, and Scott have previously identified comes in part, I

⁴⁹ In his foundational work on *Paratexts*, Gérard Genette distinguishes between "peritexts," found "[w]ithin the same volume" as the main text, and "epitexts," which comprise "all those messages that, at least originally are located outside the book, generally with the help of the media (interviews, conversations) or under cover of private communications (letters, diaries, and others)" (5). Genette notes that modern scholarly editions often bring such epitexts as sources and reviews within their own peritext (5n).

find, from assertions or indications that paradise is present here and now, just within reach, the object of England's desire but also its desert. As noted above, Wall's study of Markham shows paradisaal discourse is not universal in the husbandry publications. However, as I have demonstrated, where this discourse appears it is often inextricably bound up with the nationalist and personal improvement narratives that are the fundamental marketing techniques of so much of this self-help genre—and not unfamiliar in the world of the sixteenth-century playhouse. Shakespeare's vision of paradise as present and attainable is thus shared by horticultural writers and entrepreneurs from Gerard to Rea. The garden books, especially their peritexts, are urging their readers to seek after paradise. Whether the aim of their search is spiritual edification or earthly pleasure, the books assure their audience that England is just the place for such a task—perhaps the only or the best place. This English exceptionalism is also one of the implications of John of Gaunt's speech within its play. The contradictions inherent in the garden books' heavenly aspirations and practical limitations, however, suggest the risks attendant on deploying paradise as a rhetorical tool. These risks become apparent when Gaunt's speech is glossed by his son Bolingbroke's subsequent actions: in order to save England's demi-Eden from Richard's folly or "shameful conquest of itself," its paradise must be reconquered.⁵⁰

⁵⁰ As noted above, Gaunt is privately describing the urgency of change and preparing himself for his final exhortation urging Richard to make that change; Bolingbroke is in exile and cannot literally hear his father's words. However, I find significant for play and plot the foreshadowing repetition of "conquer" and "conquest" in Gaunt's private words to York (2.1.65-66), along with his warning to Richard couched as a wish that Edward III (Gaunt's father, Richard's grandfather) would have prevented his reign, "Deposing thee before thou wert possessed, / Which art possessed now to depose thyself" (2.1.107-08). (In comparison, the less eloquent and more straightforward York merely warns Richard of "a thousand dangers"; of his loss of hearts and minds (2.1.205-08).) In a scene making use of "radical telescoping" of "historical time," Shakespeare fast-forwards through several months, making Gaunt's death, Richard's invasion of Ireland, the earls' correspondence with Bolingbroke, and Bolingbroke's own plans for

Making paradise an object of worldly desire opens it up to temporal threats of material theft, military conquest, and ethical contamination.

“Rue with a difference”:⁵¹ Contesting the Emotionally Inaccessible Paradise

Recall Jack Cade in the Garden of Iden, that knowing pun reinforced by Shakespeare’s choices to make the garden Iden’s own and to build a wall around it. Cade’s trespass on Iden’s turf and theft of his greens make the garden a plot of contention. Cade is part Satan, trespassing over Iden’s wall; part Adam, tempted by forbidden produce.⁵²

Assigning such roles to Cade in turn figures (or parodies) Iden as God the Father Himself instead of merely an avenging angel, let alone the long arm of the law.⁵³ At the same time, Cade’s real theft of real lettuce grounds the typological conflict, as well as the political one, in the territory of the English husbandman. The conflict between Cade and Iden offers a miniature version of “the whole contention” of the *Henry VI* plays:

invasion all but simultaneous (Forker 273n). Forker reads this “telescoping” as making Bolingbroke’s usurpation seem prompted more by ambition than by the personal wrongs and public discontent only first announced in this scene. However, since the audience experiences the events occurring in logical (if compressed) order, they may also logically attribute Bolingbroke’s actions to the latter motivations. The audience has heard Gaunt’s private speech and is free likewise to associate its lessons with his absent son (cf. Maus 2). (It would be interesting to stage the scene’s final conference amongst lords loyal to Bolingbroke (2.1.224-300) as a sort of “walk” through the activity of the weeks and months actually elapsing, with a background bustle of Richard’s party preparing for his Irish campaign and Bolingbroke’s messengers coming and going.)

⁵¹ Ophelia’s words in offering the “herb of grace,” perhaps to her own Queen (*Hamlet* 4.5.175-76). See the Gardener’s reference to rue below.

⁵² Cf. Maus’ parallel reading, eschewing religious typology (109-11). While the image of Satan’s having “overleaped all bound” is Miltonic (*PL* IV.181), the action would seem to be implied by the walled Eden familiar from medieval iconography, as noted above. Alastair Fowler cites Biblical corollaries for Milton’s similes (Notes 227n; see also 224n on “the verdurous wall” (IV.143)). Medieval cycle plays’ casting and costuming also sometimes call for Lucifer (prior and external to Eden) to become an angelic serpent; the serpent subsequently becomes the devil (Gretchen York, private communication).

⁵³ The working of such a parody is not unlike that of some of the medieval cycles, such as the *Second Shepherds’ Pageant* (Bevington 383ff). In *The First Part of the Contention*, King Henry extends the *double entendre*: when Iden brings him proof of his success, the king exclaims, “The head of Cade? Great god, how just art thou!” (2*HVI* 5.1.68).

does title or force of arms dictate the power to rule—and whose title, whose force?

In this, it anticipates the more famous garden scene at the heart of *Richard II*, in which the gardeners and the queen offer contending accounts of that generation's civil conflict.⁵⁴ The scene, another Shakespearean invention, takes up the themes of Gaunt's speech but stages a contest over responsibility for the problems he raises.⁵⁵ The kingdom's dynastic struggle is restaged as a media war; queen and commoners offer contesting accounts and interpretations of the current political situation. Each party seeks to define whose Eden (Gaunt's, or Richard's) was tarnished by which Fall (Richard's unruly reign, or his deposing). And yet the synecdochic garden in which they stand is itself, by both sides' accounts, still pleasant and well tended.

The speakers construct the play's garden piecewise by describing their material interactions with it. At first the scene appears to stage a Shakespearean version of the emotionally inaccessible paradise discussed in previous chapters, its opening lines both announcing and qualifying the setting: "What sport shall we devise here in this garden / To drive away the heavy thought of care?" the Queen asks her ladies (3.4.1-2).⁵⁶ The Queen identifies her present surroundings as a place for sport, not labor.⁵⁷ Like many a

⁵⁴ The scene expands and rewrites Queen Margaret's speech soliciting the death of Duke Humphrey in *The First Part of the Contention* (3.1.31-33).

⁵⁵ According to Forker's summative source analysis, the garden scene has no precedent apart from Froissart's brief mention of the queen's isolation (123ff; see especially 135, 361n). While Gaunt's scene may be derived from a combination of extant portrayals of the character and patriotic pronouncements in other contexts, it, too, offers a departure from the main source, Holinshed (Forker 123ff; see esp. 128, 146, 154). As scenes either completely original or requiring active synthesis from existing sources and importation into the chronicle storyline, these two hold a stronger claim to revealing authorial intention than many others. Forker cites early computational linguistics study data suggesting Shakespeare himself played both Gaunt and the Gardener—a speculation that accords with the tradition of his taking elderly and elegiac roles (see Foster).

⁵⁶ "[I]mportant information on a stage without scenery," notes Forker (361n).

⁵⁷ Hoyles notes that upper-class perspectives on gardening frequently occlude the labor of underlings (*Bread* 8, 113-15). (This was also a Roman practice, according to K. Sara Myers ("Docta" 119).) Clayton MacKenzie similarly observes that the gardeners'

medieval pleasure garden, it purports to offer a taste of Eden before the Fall.⁵⁸ Talk of bowls and dancing implies a flat expanse of grass; suggestions of stories and song call up images of the Garden of Love with its poetic gatherings amidst fountain, trees, and flowers.⁵⁹ But these paradisaal delights have ceased to function for the despondent Queen, who dismisses in turn each activity her ladies propose to cheer her (3.4.4-23).

The Gardener, in contrast, initially reads the garden as a site of government. His orders add to the ladies' bowling green productive garden features which include "young dangling apricocks," "fast-growing sprays," "wholesome flowers"—and "noisome weeds"—using the language of family and political hierarchy to explain the work of binding and pruning (3.4.29-39).⁶⁰ The Gardener's Man takes up this political metaphor and after three lines flips the vehicle and tenor, presenting the orderly garden as an inverted analogue for Richard's unruly kingdom:

Why should we in the compass of a pale
Keep law and form and due proportion,
Showing, as in a model, our firm estate,
When our sea-walled garden, the whole land,
Is full of weeds, her fairest flowers choked up,
Her fruit trees all unpruned, her hedges ruined,
Her knots disordered and her wholesome herbs

laborious perspective is not universal: "it is revealing that, while the garden itself represents to the Gardener a place of toil and close attention, it is, to the Queen's Lady (and, by association to the Queen herself), a place of games" (326). MacKenzie makes this observation in service of a nuanced argument that the play deploys the image of an extant Edenic England—Gaunt's "mythology of English paradise"—as coexisting with an obverse "mythology of the 'fallen paradise.'" While MacKenzie focuses upon the latter in his analysis of the play's message and moral force, his reading requires that the unfallen image nonetheless remains present. "*Richard II's* English Garden of Eden, a paradise that exists within a fallen world, turn[s] its own physical mortality to spiritual advantage" (324). MacKenzie's argument however, is more about the currency of both "mythologies" in characters' imaginations than their access or aspiration to that earthly paradise itself.

⁵⁸ See e.g. Pearsall 237.

⁵⁹ See Chapter 2 above.

⁶⁰ Note that apart from "root[ing] away" the "noisome weeds," none of these features or tasks would be out of place in Milton's Eden (*PL* 4.437-39, 625-633; 5.326-27). Hoyles notes varying class perspectives on the paradisaal nature of garden labor (*Bread* 110-15).

Swarming with caterpillars?

(3.4.40-47)

Echoing both Gaunt and Bolingbroke, the gardener's Man implies that a proper garden—likely this one he tends—contains flowers, fruit, hedges, knots, and “wholesome herbs.”⁶¹ Instead of explicitly articulating the flaws in Richard's realm, the Man negates each garden feature in turn with its horticultural nemesis. The Gardener glosses the Man's words with brief references to the king's flatterers and extends his list of good garden husbandry tasks from his opening speech into a detailed description of the work of pruning (55-64).⁶² Images of seasonality—indicative of continual management as well as of postlapsarian time—are prominent: “He that hath suffered this disordered spring / Hath now himself met with the fall of leaf” (48-49); “We at time of year / Do wound the bark, the skin of our fruit trees” (57-58).⁶³ Whatever their political affiliations—the Man seems to be firmly in Bolingbroke's camp, but the Gardener laments Richard's plight—both men appear to identify the kingdom's problems with the king's negligence. To Clayton MacKenzie, such speeches analyze a fall and name Richard as its author (326). Yet for these gardeners—or their playwright—the quotidian labor of their place of work appears to override its commonplace association with Eden.⁶⁴ This is Hill's labyrinth, not Gerard's paradise. It

⁶¹ See Forker 366n.

⁶² It is interesting to me that such close readers of garden and husbandry manuals as Rebecca Bushnell and Charlotte Scott have found little to examine in this scene. Bushnell's investigation focuses on Shakespeare's female gardeners, while Scott excludes garden scenes from her study of gardening metaphors—even when, as in this case, they seem to overlap.

⁶³ Seasonal imagery is threaded through the play (Forker 81). Forker cites Mahood (366n), who notes the “contradiction” between characterizing “Richard as a young tree choked by upstart weeds” and as the “neglectful gardener” himself, explaining that “the wordplay [. . .] carries us over an emotional watershed. Distressing [. . .] as is the thought of deposition, the kingdom calls for good government, and Bolingbroke, by his readiness to pluck weeds up root and all, has shown himself well able to tend and order the realm” (78).

⁶⁴ Forker and others emphasize that “This scene is choric in function”; the gardeners'

is the need for good husbandry that makes the gardeners identify management of their garden with that of the kingdom. They run a hard-won commonwealth rather than enjoying Eden's shade, assessing their own government in earthly rather than heavenly terms. Their practice of manual labor would seem to override the queen's vision of a paradise that she cannot use.

Although Richard's Queen tries to see the garden as a site of Edenic pleasure, the gardeners reveal the twin falsities of such a perspective, first lifting the veil of class that hides their all-too-real labor from the elites that enjoy its fruits, and subsequently exposing the consequences of those elites' failure to perform their own assigned labor of governance.⁶⁵ This unavoidable labor would seem to confirm the garden's postlapsarian existence. The elite space offers an image of paradisaal perfection but, like any earthly utopia, that image requires both hard work and a government willing to control, sometimes harshly, its rebellious or unproductive members.⁶⁶ Later, however, the Queen returns to contest the gardeners' characterization and reassert the site as that of the Fall, a designation that carries further implications for its present inhabitants.

When the Queen emerges from her shadows to decry the Gardener's revelation of Richard's capture she reasserts the setting as a paradise, albeit now an explicitly fallen one:

Thou, old Adam's likeness,
Set to dress this garden, how dares
Thy harsh rude tongue sound this displeasing news?

"characterization is emblematic rather than naturalistic" (360-61n).

⁶⁵ Amy Tigner reads the "aristocratic, formal" garden as a paradisaal space that serves to highlight the poorly tended garden of Richard's kingdom: "This garden stands in for the Edenic ideal that England as a whole tried to achieve" (86). Yet Tigner also notes the "incredible amount of labor [necessary] to maintain it," and that "agricultural labor signals the result of the fall" (86). See also Hoyles *Bread* ch. 3.

⁶⁶ See Judith E. Boss' distinction between the effortlessness of a Golden Age paradise and the hard political work required to maintain a man-made utopia against "the depravity of men" (150).

What Eve, what serpent hath suggested thee
 To make a second fall of cursed man?
 Why dost thou say King Richard is deposed?
 Dar'st thou, thou little better thing than earth,
 Divine his downfall? Say where, when and how
 Cam'st thou by this ill tidings? Speak, thou wretch! (3.4.72-80)

Earth felt the blow; the Queen's listless and generalized sadness at the scene's opening has become righteous (if misplaced) anger at the messenger who gives her sorrow a point of focus.⁶⁷ In labeling the Gardener as "old Adam's likeness," she claims both that "this garden" is a type of Eden and that his earlier work "to dress" it under Richard was explicitly that of an unfallen state rather than any postlapsarian toil.⁶⁸ Although some have identified the Queen's chaste presence in the garden as representing Mary, here she places herself in the position of God standing in judgment, condemning her Gardener-Adam and querying the source of his fatal knowledge.⁶⁹

And the Gardener seems to accept the recharacterization. In her closing couplet, the Queen curses the ground that he tends: "Gard'ner, for telling me these news of woe, / Pray God the plants thou graft'st may never grow!" (3.4.100-01). After she exits, he responds to wish her speech were performative, if it would spare her further grief:

Poor Queen, so that thy state might be no worse,
 I would my skill were subject to thy curse.
 Here did she fall a tear. Here in this place
 I'll set a bank of rue, sour herb of grace.

⁶⁷ Forker notes that "The Queen, not yet informed of her husband's captivity, nevertheless senses that disaster is in the offing" (364n); "In her anguished distraction, she blames the messenger for the message" (369n).

⁶⁸ Forker cites the Geneva Bible: "the Lorde God [. . .] put him into the garden of Eden, that he might dresse it and keepe it" (Gen 2:15). According to Joanna Picciotto, Martin Luther elaborated "to suggest that Adam would have labored in this manner 'not only within inconvenience but, as it were, in play and with the greatest delight'" (608n, tr. George V. Schick). The idea occurs frequently in *Paradise Lost*—"sweet gardening labor" (4.328); "easy charge" (4.421); "pleasant labor" (4.625); "pleasant task" (9.207)—and was anticipated in some of the horticultural manuals (Hoyles *Bread* 111; see note [57] above for varying class perspectives). Gordon Braden and the University of Virginia English Renaissance Working Group helped me to think about this distinction.

⁶⁹ For the Marian readings, see Ostovich 21ff.

Rue e'en for ruth here shortly shall be seen
In the remembrance of a weeping queen. (3.4.102-07)

In willing the Queen's words to be as efficacious as those of divine judgment, the Gardener in turn, perhaps, takes on another role. He is not analogous to the first Adam because he bears no responsibility for the king's fall; indeed the Queen's own speech by its end seems to transpose Richard into Adam's position. But in taking the blame for someone else's crime—Richard's, or Bolingbroke's—the Gardener stands in for another gardener of mistaken identity, his references to falling tears, "grace," and "remembrance" cueing up another set of echoes reverberating through Gethsemane.⁷⁰

The Gardener, projecting his "bank of rue," cedes to the Queen the authority to define their "situation and place," but the play allows both accounts to stand.⁷¹ Compared to Dorigen, Colin, or Donne's speaker, whose experiences define their poems' worlds, the Queen wears her rue with a difference. Other characters are able to offer competing definitions of their English garden in response to her version of the emotionally inaccessible paradise. The contested images of Bolingbroke as the good husbandman, the technocratic caretaker, and Richard as the fallen tree, the tragic victim, persist throughout the plot. Just as the garden stands "as in a model" for the "sea-walled" realm (3.4.42-3), the scene stands as a miniature version of the war of words,

⁷⁰ For "herb of grace," see note [58] above. Overt connection of Richard's plight to Christ's was commonplace in sympathetic chronicles dating from Froissart (Forker 156).

⁷¹ The quotation is from E. K.'s note to the June eclogue of *The Shepheardes Calender* discussed in Chapter 1 above. Indeed, Mahood argues that "The scene ends by once more counterbalancing facts against words—an opposition which is a leading theme of the play—in the Gardener's resolve to make new plants grow where he and his companion stand" (79). Thus "The self-renewal of vegetative nature, emblematic of the commonwealth's powers of regeneration, renders meaningless the Queen's curse on the Gardener's plants" (79). The "facts" of Bolingbroke's good governance and the gardener's skill outweigh the Queen's personal sense of "a cosmic disaster, a second fall of man [. . .] For the Eden image is primarily one of peace and security such as under the right guidance a demi-Paradise might enjoy" (78-79).

the contest for legitimacy, staged by the play as a whole.⁷² The struggle between Queen and Gardener to define the ground they stand on overlays the play's visions of Eden with the contemporary political landscape. Like Cade and Iden's, their recasting of paradise writes civil war and personal anguish onto the heavenly garden and calls down a cosmic significance onto their earthly conflicts.

All's Fair: Desiring bodies; Petrarchan conquests

Paradise-seekers throughout Shakespeare's history plays fall into the same pattern: they aspire to control the bodies and territories marked as gardenlike. Eden is available for conquest; gardens are, by typological definition, a site of treachery. A similar situation recurs even in paradises defined not by the aims of war but by the poetic language of romantic desire, which in its turn becomes implicated in ethical questions of control and conquest. Even in instances of seemingly paradisaic love, Eden's treachery is embedded in the very language of poetry.

"The world's best garden":⁷³ War and desire in the attainable paradise

In the *Henry VI* plays and *Richard II*, as we have seen, garden settings are symbolic landscapes that serve to display competing political forces in history. In *Henry V* the body of Henry himself is figured as such a garden, a site of interpretive contests in which the realm is at stake. The certainty of the prince's past behavior competes with evidence for the king's reformation in the minds of his subjects and his foes. The Constable of France counters the Dauphin's knowing scorn with this retort:

And you shall find his vanities forespent

⁷² Richard has earlier used the image of a grave-plot as a synecdochic "small model of the barren earth" (3.2.153).

⁷³ *Henry V* Epilogue 7.

Were but the outside of the Roman Brutus,
 Covering discretion with a coat of folly,
 As gardeners do with ordure hide those roots
 That shall first spring and be most delicate. (2.4.36-40)

The French long for the wastrel Hal of memory but find that persona was a cover, a layer of manure protecting and enriching the precious and desired plants of Henry's kingly nature. Back in England, the Archbishop of Canterbury, preparing to manipulate the king to his own desired ends, exalts the simile:

The breath no sooner left his father's body
 But that his wildness, mortified in him,
 Seemed to die too; yea, at that very moment,
 Consideration like an angel came
 And whipped th'offending Adam out of him,
 Leaving his body as a paradise
 T'envelop and contain celestial spirits. (1.1.25-31)

Henry's royal body is not merely a well-tended garden but the most desirable garden of all, the perfect analogue for his other bodies, the garden-figured realms of England and France.⁷⁴ The "celestial spirits" now enclosed by this *corpus conclusus* are suggestively multivalent. Within Canterbury's simile, they appear to be the heavenly colleagues of the angel with the flaming sword of Genesis, Adam's replacements as tenants of Eden come to take possession of the king's body as a site of virtue. The recent memory of Henry IV's evacuating "breath" also adds a layer of airy invigoration: celestial spirits as opposed to animal ones inhabit the body, powering and perfuming the new king's future actions. Finally, the idea of such beneficial infusions may extend to their mortal analogues, the pharmacological virtues produced by physick gardens and recorded in printed herbals. Henry's body can be simultaneously a locus of Edenic perfection, a source of earthly virtue, and a provider of medicinal aid to his surroundings. Although Canterbury's parable locates Henry's Edenic body in postlapsarian time, his virtue

⁷⁴ See Ernst Kantorowicz' influential study *The King's Two Bodies*.

makes it a place both superior and fundamentally alien to the fallen Adamic earth. Yet it remains a territory the most profane politicians—Canterbury, Constable, and all—can aspire to control.

Pleasant gardens and well-tilled lands—such as comprise the king's other bodies mentioned above—remain in actual and rhetorical contention at the close of *Henry V*. The miniature and microcosmic conflicts of Cade, Queen, and new-crowned king have expanded onto the world stage. In their peace negotiations, Henry and Burgundy figure France as both contested and desirable.⁷⁵ Burgundy's France manages to be simultaneously war-ravaged and yet still—in essence, in potential—“this best garden of the world” (5.2.36). The Chorus corroborates his words by repeating them in the closing sonnet: by virtue of Henry's military prowess, “the world's best garden he achieved” (Epilogue 7). Like Henry's paradisaical body, Burgundy's garden of France remains “best” while nonetheless serving as a very real site of conquest.

From the metaphorical and political conquests of Gaunt and Richard's England, to Cade's abortive rebellion, to Henry's internal struggles and his bloody victories, the history plays present a pattern of situating conquest in a discourse of paradisaical desire. In doing so, they, like Greene's colonizer-poets, come strikingly close in theme to the central metaphors of Petrarchan love poetry. The *Henry VI* plays are full of amorous intrigues and treasonous temptations taking place in, or aligned verbally with, gardens. Suffolk in *The First Part of the Contention* figures Margaret's body as a (classical) paradise as he bids her farewell:

To have thee with thy lips to stop my mouth;
So shouldst thou either turn my flying soul
Or I should breathe it, so, into thy body,

⁷⁵ Scott gives a detailed reading of Burgundy's description of an untended France “grow[ing] to wildness” (5.2.34-63), also noting Henry's incompatible language of compensation and conflict (ch. 2, esp. 110-18).

And then it lived in sweet Elysium. (2HVI 3.2.396-399)

Margaret's body offers an Elysian setting for Suffolk's desires. Their relationship from its outset presents an elaborate version of Greene's multivalent Petrarchan conquest: Suffolk takes Margaret prisoner and loses his heart to her, thus gaining control of England as she surrenders hers to him (1HVI 5.4.103-8). Similarly, Charles the Dolphin lauds Joan Puzel, holy maid, with Golden Age attributes reminiscent of Spenser:

Divinest creature, Astraea's daughter,
How shall I honour thee for this success?
Thy promises are like Adonis' garden,
That one day bloomed and fruitful were the next. (1HVI 1.5.43-46 [6.4-7])

To the Dauphin, Joan appears as a heavenly virgin; her vision of reconquering France is comparable to the image Renaissance thinkers understood to be another classical analogue of Eden: gardens of Adonis transcended seasonal variation with rapid growth and perpetual productivity.⁷⁶ Charles uses a language of paradisaical desire to characterize Joan's "promises" of success in battle and the reclaiming of his patrimony. Within the English play, of course, Joan is an enemy, a tempter, a witch proven false when her demonic powers abandon her. Yet her treachery runs still deeper, since even the play's condemnation cannot prevent her vision from being realized and Henry V's "world's best" garden changing hands from English to French once again, as Richard of York so bitterly laments:

Cold news for me; for I had hope of France
As firmly as I hope for fertile England.
Thus are my blossoms blasted in the bud,
And caterpillars eat my leaves away[.] (2HVI 3.1.87-90)⁷⁷

York's horticultural language echoes and foreshadows that of *Richard II*.⁷⁸ The misrule

⁷⁶ E.g. Prest 66-67; Hamilton Notes 346n; see Chapter 1 above.

⁷⁷ The first two lines are repeated almost verbatim from an earlier territorial setback (2HVI 1.1.234-35).

⁷⁸ As mentioned above, in *Richard II* Bolingbroke and the Gardener's Man also complain

he decries is the loss of France; thus his sons' horizons of conquest are diminished to the shores of Gaunt's "demi-Eden" alone. The pattern linking such territorial desires to visions of paradise, and to garden imagery that repeats political conditions in miniature, holds.

Other gardens in the histories do not pretend to paradisaical splendor. Even these seemingly quotidian spaces, however, tend to foster treacherous episodes that mirror the original serpentine danger and suggest an Edenic typology.⁷⁹ Also in *The First Part of the Contention*, the apparent safety of their gardens shields Eleanor of Cobham's conjuring—and capture—and York's securing of Salisbury and Warwick for his cause; Cade's encounter with Iden closes the trio (2HVI 1.4, 2.2, 4.10). At the heart of the same play, a verbal garden grows as Queen Margaret invokes the language of husbandry while tempting her King Henry to turn against his uncle Gloucester: "Now 'tis the spring, and weeds are shallow-rooted; / Suffer them now and they'll o'ergrow the garden / And choke the herbs for want of husbandry" (2HVI 3.1.31-3). Seemingly deploying a garden-variety example of Tigner's political metaphor, the queen's speech ironically and disingenuously works to bring about the very fate it warns against. There is little room for gardens in *The True Tragedy*, although York's son Edward IV is rescued (or stolen) from the Archbishop of York's hunting park, along with the huntsman who changes allegiance to escape death (3HVI 4.5). *Richard III's* garden of note is offstage, but it, like the others I have cited, presents in a pivotal instant—in scene 3.4, no less—the poisonous charm and cunning misdirection that, writ large, make up the plot of Shakespeare's own arch-tempter: "My lord of Ely, when I was last in Holborn / I saw

of traitorous caterpillars.

⁷⁹ Scott briefly assesses a similar list, drawing a distinction between scenes set in gardens and the "more complex" offerings of "the metaphorical garden" at the heart of her study (5).

good strawberries in your garden there; / I do beseech you, send for some of them" (*RIII* 3.4.31-3). So much for Hastings, and for Ely, too: the grasping serpent now has no need to enter the garden to expropriate it, since he has clergyman who deliver its fruit to him! Richard to-be-III's garden subplot might appear to be extraneous to his designs on the kingdom, a pretext for Ely's departure that could have been expressed in other ways.⁸⁰ However, Richard's apparently arbitrary order allows three lines of iambic pentameter to import a wealth of resonances, a miniature precursor of *Richard II*'s more extensive garden scene. The seemingly offhand request, presented as a symptom of Richard's rapacious desires and his high-handed habit of commandeering the property of others, locates itself in the primal setting of temptation, falsehood, and vaulting ambition. Overweening desire for Edward IV's sea-walled garden is merely the logical extension of lust for other people's strawberries contained therein.

This pattern of temptation and sin staged in a garden setting extends beyond the history plays. Old Hamlet's murder in a garden precipitates, Genesis-like, Denmark's subsequent travails.⁸¹ Along with the royal Danes, Cymbeline's queen, Leontes, and Angelo all find or invent treacheries in their gardens. The earlier comedies stage tamer versions of those deceptions: we see Olivia enamoured (and Malvolio ensnared) in her private garden; Benedick and Beatrice hoodwinked in Leonato's orchard; Biondello and Armado's lewd or high-falutin' accounts of trysts discovered in the kitchen gardens of Florence and the parterres of Navarre.⁸² Scott constructs a similar list, but deploys it in contrast to the tragedies and histories: "In the comedies, on the other hand, the garden

⁸⁰ The detail derives from Thomas More (Siemon 274n).

⁸¹ See e.g. Tigner 12-13, 91-96. Belsey instead focuses on *Hamlet*'s resonance with the Cain and Abel story (ch. 5).

⁸² *Cymbeline* (1.2); *The Winter's Tale* (1.2); *Measure for Measure* (4.1); *Twelfth Night* (2.5, 3.1); *Much Ado About Nothing* (2.3, 3.1); *The Taming of the Shrew* (4.4.96-99); *Love's Labours Lost* (1.1.226-64).

lends itself to those in search of amorous intrigue, or to manipulate affections" (5). My claim in this chapter is that such actions are not "on the other hand" at all: comedies do more than rehearse history tropes in a major key. Outside the genre of reported—if stylized—history, the comedies and related love poems offer clearer commentary on the risks of paradisaical aspiration, highlighting its ethical limitations and deriding its pitfalls. Satire tips its hand.

"Forc'd to content":⁸³ Postures of control in poetry's false paradise

Familiar treacheries abound in the "curious-knotted garden" of *Love's Labours Lost* (1.1.239). The play as a whole is famous for being more "about" its witty words than its thin plot, all set in the curated enclosure of a royal park; Catherine Belsey associates its (Sidneian) "golden world" of poetry with Eden before the Fall.⁸⁴ In this it may be seen as an experiment in staging the Petrarchan worldview in a lovers' paradise where sensual pleasures, heavenly aspirations, and passionate treachery are the matter of daily existence.⁸⁵ Longaville's sonnet, spoken in the King's garden, goes a step further, presenting Maria herself as "paradise":

'Did not the heavenly rhetoric of thine eye,
'Gainst whom the world cannot hold argument,
Persuade my heart to this false perjury?
Vows for thee broke deserve not punishment.
A woman I forswore, but I will prove,
Thou being a goddess, I forswore not thee.
My vow was earthly, thou a heavenly love;
Thy grace being gained, cures all disgrace in me.
Vows are but breath, and breath a vapour is:
Then thou, fair sun, which on my earth dost shine,
Exhal'st this vapour-vow; in thee it is.
If broken then, it is no fault of mine;

⁸³ *Venus and Adonis* 61.

⁸⁴ See Belsey ch. 2; for Sidney, Chapter 1 above.

⁸⁵ Jackson Barry discusses the pervasiveness of sonnets in the play's structure as well as its modes of thought (21-28).

If by me broke, what fool is not so wise
To lose an oath to win a paradise? (4.3.59-72)

The sonnet figures Maria first as “a goddess,” then the “fair sun,” and finally “a paradise” itself. The paradise in question appears to be heavenly rather than earthly, as well as conventional in its Petrarchan terms. Many scholars, however, point to this moment as the problematic moral center of the play, in which Longaville articulates a plausible excuse for oathbreaking.⁸⁶ His aspiration to heaven itself enacts a sort of fall.

That fall is about to be revealed, its consequences precipitated, in the comic stage business that makes Longaville the third in a nested sequence of spying, all taking place in King Ferdinand’s garden (4.3). Each lover in turn takes on the role of serpent, hoping that his fellows share his fate and privately (needlessly) urging them on to temptation. Ferdinand himself does a fair approximation of aggrieved, all-seeing God when he upbraids Longaville and Dumaine for the very oathbreaking Longaville seeks to rationalize away: “You would for paradise break faith and troth; / And Jove for your love would infringe an oath. / What will Berowne say” (4.3.140-42)—until, of course, Berowne emerges “to whip hypocrisy” in the king himself (4.3.148). Recalling Greene—and *1 Henry VI*’s Suffolk—we must also be attentive to territorial claims in these Petrarchan convolutions. Longaville in his oathbreaking also stakes a claim in the “paradise” that stands in for Maria’s heavenly body. The earlier play, however, rehearses what the later one interrogates. Suffolk and Queen Margaret inhabit a Petrarchan convention; Longaville and company deconstruct it, articulating their own ethical peril and losing their labor in the process.

The metapoetic posture of *Love’s Labours Lost* also associates it with similar occasions in Shakespeare’s non-dramatic poetry. *Venus and Adonis* parodies the play’s

⁸⁶ E.g. Bates (110-01); see also Belsey 32-36.

acquisitive Petrarchism by making the woman the unrequited aggressor.⁸⁷ The opening of the poem presents Venus as Spenser's Acrasia, extracting pleasure and nourishment from the captive Adonis:

Forc'd to content, but never to obey,
Panting he lies and breatheth in her face.
She feedeth on the steam as on a prey,
And calls it heavenly moisture, air of grace,
Wishing her cheeks were gardens full of flowers,
So they were dew'd with such distilling showers. (61-66)

Mistress of her improvised bower of bliss, Venus wants her own body to reciprocate with verdant flowering.⁸⁸ Later the poem explicitly figures Adonis' body, like Maria's, as a (suitably classical) paradise when he frustrates her desire for intercourse, so "That worse than Tantalus' is her annoy, / To clip Elizium and to lack her joy" (599-600). It is "the foul boar," however, who in the end makes "conquest on her fair delight" (1030), leading Venus to curse her own dominions. Adonis, Love's paradise, literally falls, and the poem thus offers a founding myth for the violent treacheries and perverse pleasures of human love. Bodies figured as paradises in turn become territory to be grasped and conquered.

Shakespeare's dramatic and poetic characters place paradisaal discourse squarely in the dominating, possessive, colonizing language of Petrarchism—even when only love seems to be at stake. Such postures are familiar in Petrarchan sonnets; Shakespeare's Sonnet 16 offers a relatively decorous elaboration of Bushnell's woman-as-garden trope:

Now stand you on the top of happy hours,
And many maiden gardens, yet unset,
With virtuous wish would bear your living flowers,

⁸⁷ Although the short epic or epyllion (in six-line eponymous stanzas) is suffused with loaded images of meadow flowers and other aspects of the natural world, its references to paradise or horticulture are relatively few.

⁸⁸ See *FQ* II.xii.72-73; Hamilton Notes 283n; Chapter 1 above.

Much liker than your painted counterfeit. (5-8)

The young man must fulfill his conventional duty by claiming a “maiden garden” of his own, “virtuous” but inherently passive and instrumental, a means to an end.⁸⁹ An even darker side of Sonnet 16’s trope appears in “A Lover’s Complaint.” Printed at the end of the Sonnets, the rime royal poem presents a sinister reflection of conventional love poetry: inevitably false, and known to be so, and yet still ultimately powerful as the inscription of unquenchable desire. Among the multifarious metaphors for the young man’s infidelity, the maid “Heard where his plants in others’ orchards grew” (171). Even his falseness is presented as fruitful. Armed with this evidence of treachery, she laments that, “I might as yet have been a spreading flower, / Fresh to myself, if I had self-applied / Love to myself, and to no love beside” (75-77). And yet, for all her self-awareness, she also concludes that the force of his attraction and feigned passion “Would yet again betray the fore-betrayed, / And new pervert a reconciled maid” (328-29). She is doomed to repeat her role as passive flower and receptive orchard soil. Such is his Edenic beauty: ““Each eye that saw him did enchant the mind: / For on his visage was in little drawn / What largeness thinks in paradise was sawn”” (89-91).

Throughout the poem, both lover and beloved take on horticultural associations; even in this tale of failed love Petrarchism is paradisaical. This is no more, however, than Longaville’s sonnet intimates, or Venus promises, or the Sonnets themselves reveal.

The “maiden gardens” quatrain from Sonnet 16 follows on from Sonnet 15’s observation “that men as plants increase, / Cheered and checked even by the self-same sky, / Vaunt in their youthful sap, at height decrease” (5-7). It goes on to present the poet as gardener-orchardist to these “men as plants,” perpetuating the desired cultivar

⁸⁹ Scott explores those sonnets that invoke a language of husbandry to influence the young man (ch. 2).

without recourse to the sexual reproduction of seeds and planting: "All in war with time [. . .] I engraft you new" (13-14).⁹⁰ In Sonnet 16, however, the idea of grafting withers at the admission of "my barren rhyme" (4). Instead, the speaker urges again "a mightier way" against age's "decay," the "living flowers" that the young man himself will plant in those gardenlike maidens (1, 3). The end of the poem even figures this planting as a superior form of representational art: either "this time's pencil or my pupil pen" is bound to be inadequate, so "you must live drawn by your own sweet skill" (10,14). The maiden gardens, dehumanized into the background of this reproductive and artistic triumph, are ostensibly the most desirable canvas on which to work.

Even the sonnets' routine projections of male agency onto female fertility are more complex—and more controlling—than they at first appear. The horticultural implications of "engraft" suggest that the speaker has not withdrawn from the field of contention so readily as he implies, making the young man, too, a site of contested desires between the maidens and the speaker (as is so often the case in the sequence). Readers familiar with the process of grafting know that the assertions of the two sonnets cannot both be correct. The reason orchardists graft scions of one cultivar onto the stock of another is because fruits like apples do not breed true.⁹¹ If the young man is a sort of tree amenable to grafting, then any "living flowers" produced by sexual reproduction will not be "like" to him at all. Furthermore, as Michael Ziser observes in another context,

The etymology of the word "graft" is peculiar, for rather than revealing a primitive natural meaning beneath the cultural one (as, e.g., seed

⁹⁰ However, as discussed below, grafting would not result in the desired fruit at all.

⁹¹ See Ziser 195. Scott mentions Sonnet 15 briefly as an instance of "human intervention" supporting "a process of renewal" (54). She implies hybridization, the opposite technique, but the sonnet is interested in exact reproduction.

underlies seminar) it does just the reverse. Following the word back in time from the Middle English (*graffe*) to Old French (*greffe*) to Low Latin (*graphiolum*, a small shoot or scion), one eventually arrives at the Greek *graphicum*, or pencil, from the verb *graphein*, to write. (215n)

Although Yorkshire vicar and gardening expert William Lawson found himself in 1618 unable to “Etymologize” the term (27), the OED entry for “graft” clarifies the connection: “The sense ‘stylus, pencil’ is common in Old French; the transferred sense of ‘scion, graft’ was suggested by the similarity of shape.”⁹² The tools and techniques of writing both supersede planting as a metaphor in the course of the sonnet and retrospectively undergird the apparent grafting metaphor itself.⁹³ Despite appearances, the speaker has never relinquished his claim that the power of lyric inscription is the most potent and fruitful source of reproduction.⁹⁴

The Autoerotic Body Shop

The beloved body figured as paradise begins as the stuff of Petrarchan cliché. Brief references in the plays and poems peruse and interrogate the trope’s paradoxes,

⁹² It would thus appear that the cutting of X or V shapes into the stock that will receive the grafted scion is a fortuitous connection rather than inherent in the rootstock of the word. For more on Lawson, see Thick, esp. 9-12, [60]; Henrey 158-60.

⁹³ Stephen Booth notes the etymological connection and “a probable pun,” but claims that “a reader presumably does not recognize this first of several traditional claims for the immortalizing power of verse [. . .] until the line is glossed by the first quatrain of sonnet 16, which is both logically and syntactically linked” (Notes 158n). Booth is referring to the “barren rhyme” (16.4), without which “engraft” is unclear since the speaker “has previously called no attention to the power of his verse or to himself as writer; he has offered no alternatives to procreation as a way to immortality” (158n). Further, “The reader’s lack of foreknowledge about sonnet 16, the speaker’s previous single-mindedness about urging procreation, and the similarities between grafting and sexual intercourse make it probable that a first reading of this line would suggest ‘As time withers you, I renew you by joining you to a wife’” (158n). While Booth’s emphasis on “a reader,” as opposed to a re-reader, of the sonnets offers a corrective to our always-already-Bardolatrous culture, I submit that the brevity and obsessiveness of the form encourage and demand revisionary rereading as readerly practice.

⁹⁴ Although this may be the first such claim for the poet’s power in the sequence, see preceding note.

revealing it to be as treacherous and full of verbal violence as its territorial counterpart in the histories. The ethical perils of such aspirations to claim or control other humans as plants or garden plots become clearer in a scene that also echoes the sonnets' longed-for power of the gardener-scribe over the garden-body. A man seeks advice because the woman he loves has married another: "What should I do? I confess it is my shame to be so fond, but it is not in my virtue to amend it" (1.3.319-20). His friend responds with advice taking up the French Constable's theme that, like Hal, the man can choose to cultivate virtue or vice, weakness or strength, according to his diligence in tending the garden of his body:

Virtue? a fig! 'tis in ourselves that we are thus, or thus. Our bodies are our gardens, to the which our wills are gardeners. So that if we will plant nettles or sow lettuce, set hyssop and weed up thyme, supply it with one gender of herbs or distract it with many, either to have it sterile with idleness or manured with industry – why, the power and corrigible authority of this lies in our wills. (1.3.320-27)

Scott's illuminating reading of the passage observes that the second man's "horticultural images support a lucid language of individualism, in which he can chastise his friend's defeatism as a form of irresponsibility" (3). This apparent common sense, however, takes on a "surprisingly sinister" aspect because of what it omits: the religious framework that gives "these conventionally biblical images of their moral registers" (3-4).⁹⁵ According to Scott, who does not delay identifying the play and the characters as I have done, "Iago locates his attitude to successful manipulation through the ability to control production" (4). To extend the implications of Scott's analysis beyond her elucidation of garden metaphor and into the rest of the play, by exercising his "will" where others fail to—and thus retaining "control" over information, emotions, and actions taken in response to Othello, Desdemona, and Cassio's

⁹⁵ E. A. J. Honigsmann cites various "theological commonplaces" as sources (156n).

perceptions of their own relationships—Iago will succeed in his manipulations.⁹⁶

For, of course, this is Iago speaking, counseling Roderigo to abstain from suicide not out of any friendly impulse but because he requires him for his own future machinations. I have briefly suppressed his identity in order to highlight this speech's resonance with other passages in this study, avoiding for as long as possible the third rail of attribution to the least appealing of all Shakespearean villains, which can lead us to cordon it off from words appearing to issue from less shocking sources. The Constable's speech in *Henry V* occurs in a context of admiration, reproving the Dauphin for failing to recognize the wisdom and virtue underlying the prince's behavior. However, aligning Hal's techniques with the advice of Iago adds weight to Machiavellian interpretations which read Henry as cold, calculating duck rather than ethical, inspiring rabbit.⁹⁷ Moreover, for all the apparent extremity of Iago's response to "silly" love (*Othello* 1.3.309), or his claims for human autonomy, his own reading of Roderigo's situation and the use he is about to make of it falls in line with the general Shakespearean inclination to automatically view gardens as sites of lust and treachery. Roderigo speaks of love, and Iago's mind goes straight to the garden, where his own proclivities are hard at work preparing to cultivate the bodily weakness he condemns in others, nurturing their sexual hopes and fears to fulfill his own nefarious if opaque desires.

The second half of the speech strays from this locus to sound much like a follower of Pico della Mirandola:⁹⁸

If the balance of our lives had not one scale of reason to poise another of sensuality, the blood and baseness of our natures would conduct us to most preposterous conclusions. But we have reason to cool our raging

⁹⁶ See also Honigmann on "power" and "control" (156n).

⁹⁷ The double metaphor is Norman Rabkin's.

⁹⁸ See e.g. Boss on Neo-Platonism's "undetermined [human] nature" (149-50).

motions, our carnal stings, our unbitted lusts; whereof I take this, that you
call love, to be a sect or scion. (*Othello* 1.3.327-34)

Iago's brand of humanism may be unpleasantly graphic in its sexual anxieties, but here "Honest Iago" speaks truth with the intent to mislead (1.3.296). The terms of his lesson for Roderigo, if not the diction, would not be amiss in the mouth of Rosalind's Ganymede in *As You Like It* (another dissembler) or indeed, as suggested above, in certain of Shakespeare's sonnets.⁹⁹ It is a Renaissance truism that self-control—self-conquest—must strive to counterweigh the excesses of love's passion, here figured as gross physicality rather than any higher emotion. Iago locates this struggle in the body's garden, the metaphor that opens and closes the speech. Love is a "scion," an unruly plant that must be trimmed or uprooted so that Roderigo's—and, revealingly, Iago's—self-love may flourish. The body Iago most desires control over is his own, so that he may exploit the weakness of others without fear of exposing himself to the same treatment.

Far from isolating Iago as an anomistic anomaly, his corrupted garden vision is one he shares with Shakespeare's greatest thinker. Hamlet breeds in his own mind similar anxieties to the ones Iago hopes to sow in Othello's. In his grief, "this world" and its "uses" appear as "an unweeded garden / That grows to seed"; the remainder of the speech harps on Gertrude's marital propriety (*Hamlet* 1.2.133-58). This suggests that Hamlet is thinking—as usual—of Claudius' most egregious role as that of stepfather rather than that of king.¹⁰⁰ His concerns are personal before they are political.

While Hamlet's garden may be presumed to carry the conventional Edenic

⁹⁹ Scott discusses Sonnet 94 on the same page but does not directly connect the two (2-3).

¹⁰⁰ Tigner notes the "sexualized" language of the speech, but turns the focus to the rotten state of Denmark without Old Hamlet (91). She reads Hamlet's garden language in the political context noted above, taking the "unweeded garden" to signify primarily the kingdom of Denmark under Claudius' bad rule (91-104).

association defined at this chapter's outset, there are also hints at a more explicitly paradisaical frame. The exclamatory oath "Heaven and earth, / Must I remember?" implies a quasi-lapsarian distinction between the persons of Old Hamlet and Claudius (1.2.142-43).¹⁰¹ The classical imaginary in which the speech locates itself is filtered through a similar sieve of extreme contrasts or misjudgments. "Hyperion to a satyr" (1.2.140), and the reference to Hercules, remind hearers of the perils of failing to distinguish the divine from the mundane, while Niobe is a figure for overweening mortal pride and its just punishment. There is even, perhaps, the ghost of a garden fountain in the image of "Niobe, all tears," a queen petrified and yet forever weeping for her lost children (1.2.149). Of course Hamlet does not yet know that his words foreshadow the garden setting of play's original offstage sin and its subsequent restaging in Act 3.¹⁰² Nonetheless, like Iago's, Hamlet's broken conceptions of personal and political desire, thwarted as well as requited, are tied up in images of horticulture.

In Iago's modulation of the Petrarchan theme, gardens become a figure for self-mastery as a corollary to the figure of conquering desire. Both metaphors emphasize control over earthly objects, whether the latter are specified as the land to be conquered, the body of the beloved, or the improving self. As intimated above, the garden books also take part in this search for control over the English landscape and the vagaries of its climate, offering their classical or local horticultural knowledge as the source of that controlling power. Herbals and other works pursuing Hill's "Physicke" offer catalogues of plants' medicinal and other practical "vertues," and sometimes receipts for their use.¹⁰³ Husbandry manuals share empirical or astrological secrets of when and

¹⁰¹ Of course this exclamation can also be read as merely a polite oath.

¹⁰² See note [81] above.

¹⁰³ Along with Hill, of the writers considered here, William Turner, Lyte, Gerard, Lawson, Parkinson, Coles, and Robert Turner advertise the topic in their long titles.

how to plant: authors from Hill, who specifies which phases of the moon are best for planting and harvesting particular specimens, to polymath Robert Turner, who in his 1664 *Botanologica* follows the famed Nicholas Culpeper, “student in physick and astrologie,” list arcane garden tasks and benefits alongside mundane ones.¹⁰⁴ Perhaps in keeping with Turner’s interests as translator of alchemical texts, *Botanologica*’s frontispiece is one of the most formally unusual of the horticultural books. Its irregularly shaped garden scene seems to be viewed within or through the stone base of the author’s bust—which also appears to be a flat hexagonal portrait. While the *trompe-l’oeil* frame refuses to give up its secrets, the content of the scene, with its well-dressed laborer and identifiable plants, places it squarely in the tradition of Hill, Gerard, and especially the famous frontispiece to John Parkinson’s *Paradisi in Sole Paradisus Terrestris*, which it appears to quote for its images of individual flowers. Parkinson, a late herbalist or an early florist, here presents (via Christoph Switzer’s woodcut) an explicitly Edenic vision featuring real and mythological plants.¹⁰⁵ His text, however, focuses primarily upon utility and aesthetic enjoyment.¹⁰⁶ Parkinson also places himself within what has become an authoritative tradition of English horticultural striving: his urns derive from Lyte’s Dodoens, perhaps via Gerard, and will later inform Rea and Worlidge’s similar decorations, as well as Robert Turner’s less orthodox variation on

¹⁰⁴ See Henrey 82-92. In a slightly different vein, some authors also warn against female interactions with growing plants and fruits, particularly during menstruation, while others recognize women’s gardening work and knowledge (Hoyles *Bread* 75-78). Others, such as Coles and Austen, write against them from a variety of traditionalist or empiricist perspectives (Hoyles *Delight* 57-59, 126).

¹⁰⁵ The title translates as “Park-in-sun’s Terrestrial Paradise.” Hoyles thus places Parkinson in a tradition emphasizing “The Spiritual Origins of Gardening” (*Delight* 124-27; *Bread* 111). Switzer’s woodcut also appears to be the source for Loggan’s decorative urns on the frontispiece of Parkinson’s rival Rea’s *Flora*, discussed above. See Hoyles *Delight* 94; see also Hind 28-30; Henrey 49-50, 79-82, 161-66, 195-98; Prest 6-7, 51-52.

¹⁰⁶ Eyler 15-16; Hoyles *Delight* 55. Parkinson also tends towards nationalism, insisting on English plant names whenever they are available (Hoyles *Delight* 50-51).

the frontispiece form. Indeed, nearly all the horticultural books, especially garden instruction treatises such as Worlidge's, Lawson's, and Austen's, prescribe aesthetics, efficiency, and spiritual improvement.¹⁰⁷ Bodies and souls, land and people, and of course plants: the gardening books offer the knowledge that leads to control over the material world—and, in some cases, its transformation. While still promising the paradisaical success documented earlier, this facet of their Edenic discourse would seem to require, like Iago, human intervention rather than free enjoyment of a divine patrimony. However, a paradise defined or constructed by human preferences—and fallen labor—tends to alter the very terms of its existence.

"Why this is Hell, nor am I out of it":¹⁰⁸ The Mind's Upended Paradise

What happens when Iago's aspirations to control the mental garden become realized, either in the minds of the characters or in their visions of the world? What happens when they, like the gardeners of English Eden, claim power over the terrain of paradise itself? Certain of Shakespeare's dramatic lovers refer to the allure of paradise only to deny it or to turn it on its head. Rather than enduring the frustrations of an emotionally inaccessible paradise (as do the speakers considered in the previous chapters), or seeking merely to conquer it for themselves, as do their compatriots in the histories and comedies of Petrarchan love and war, these characters claim to alter paradise's substance, and so transform its meaning.

The opening of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* finds Hermia deeply in love and desperately afraid of losing her beloved. In this context, Lysander makes Hermia talk of paradise, but not in the same way as Maria does Longaville:

¹⁰⁷ See Hoyles *Delight* 4, 11, 124-27; *Bread* 3, 7.

¹⁰⁸ Marlowe, *Doctor Faustus*, 1.3.177 (A-Text)/ 1.3.74 (B-Text).

Before the time I did Lysander see,
 Seem'd Athens as a paradise to me.
 O then what graces in my love do dwell,
 That he hath turn'd a heaven unto a hell! (1.1.204-07)

All is relative: love, paradise, heaven, hell, home, exile. Hermia finds herself in a situation initially similar to Dorigen's or Colin Clout's in the first chapter; the earthly paradise she formerly experienced in the space of Athens has ceased to operate properly for her. And yet her plight is still worse, for she names it not as an emotion (despair, sorrow) but as a place, the opposite of paradise. The idea that paradise is fungible, or that there exists something else with even more to offer, extends Petrarchan hyperbole to new levels: the experience of love's passion is so extreme that even the ultimate good place fails to label or describe it accurately. So Hermia—like Marlowe's Mephistophilis, cut off from her own ultimate good—must redefine Athens' "paradise": absent Lysander, even paradise is hell.

Although her situation at first appears far different, in *All's Well that Ends Well* the victorious Helena of Rousillon articulates a similar problem to Hermia's. The French king has rewarded her with possession of her beloved Bertram, but he has rejected their marriage in favor of the homosocial society of his peers at the Italian war front. Fearing for his safety and feeling culpable for his choice to endanger himself, Helena resolves:

No; come thou home, Rossillion,
 Whence honour but of danger wins a scar,
 As oft it loses all; I will be gone;
 My being here is it that holds thee hence.
 Shall I stay here to do't? No, no, although
 The air of paradise did fan the house
 And angels offic'd all. I will be gone,
 That pitiful rumour may report my flight
 To console thine ear. (3.2.120-26)

Like Hermia, Helena can only think of Bertram's presence or absence in terms of

paradise, in this case in reference to an extremity of pleasure that is nonetheless found wanting. As is the case with Longaville's conceit, the paradise she is thinking of seems to be a celestial one, with angel inhabitants. Like Mephistophilis, Helena would seem always to suffer, lacking her own personal conception of divine presence. Unlike any of them, she seems neither to feel nor remember an experience of paradise, but instead to value Bertram's safety as more precious than any personal good she can imagine. Whether this is a right or good priority is another question; one might be tempted to page Dr. Iago on this occasion—or the maid of "A Lover's Complaint." But wisdom is not truth, and Helena's self-destructive abnegation rings true as an extreme behavior of protective love or desperate unrequitedness.

Hermia and Helena deny paradise its power. They claim that their love itself is overpowering—or else that they themselves have the power to destroy the heavenly garden's hold over their lives and imaginations. Another paradise contrarian is Claudio of Vienna, condemned to death for his fiancée's pregnancy in *Measure for Measure*. Unlike all the other speakers in this chapter, Claudio expresses to his sister Isabella his extreme desire not for land, lust, or love, but instead for life:

Ay, but to die, and go we know not where;
 To lie in cold obstruction, and to rot;
 This sensible warm motion to become
 A kneaded clod; and the delighted spirit
 To bathe in fiery floods, or to reside
 In thrilling region of thick-ribbed ice;
 To be imprison'd in the viewless winds
 And blown with restless violence round about
 The pendant world: or to be worse than worst
 Of those that lawless and incertain thought
 Imagine howling, – 'tis too horrible.
 The weariest and most loathed worldly life
 That age, ache, penury and imprisonment
 Can lay on nature, is a paradise
 To what we fear of death. (3.1.117-31)

Strong passions transmute even the most extreme experiences. Just as Hermia's love

can move Athens from heaven to Hades, for Claudio, fear can make a paradise out of a living hell. In this instance we might again be inclined to skepticism: prisoners under torture are not reliable witnesses; brothers who emotionally blackmail their sisters, as Claudio does with this speech pressuring Isabella to succumb to Angelo's desire and win his pardon, do not garner much sympathy.¹⁰⁹ Yet Claudio's response to death is as conventional as Longaville's to love. What disgusts hearers like Isabella, who prefer death to dishonor, is also what can begin to trouble the underlying assumptions of patriarchal chastity that have skewed Vienna's values towards extremes of license and repression in the first place. These values have led both to Claudio's death sentence and to Angelo's abuse of his regency power and saintly reputation. If this flawed city is paradise, what must the alternative look like?

To Mephistophilis' stark assessment of existence away from the divine countenance—"Why this is Hell, nor am I out of it"—one might be tempted to append Ariel's report of Ferdinand's terrified exclamation at the start of *The Tempest*: "Hell is empty, / And all the devils are here" (1.2.214-15). On stage, this line affords a creative announcement of one source for the setting, William Strachey's "*Devils Islands*."¹¹⁰ It sets up the voyagers'—and the audience's—ironic experience of the island as the seat not of diabolical magic but of good.¹¹¹ However, it also directs further attention to the ways

¹⁰⁹ However misplaced the sisters' own priorities may be, as implied by the text that contains them: viz, Isabella's repressive piety and the aforementioned Helena's obsessive love.

¹¹⁰ Sylvester Jourdain's *A Discovery of the Bermudas, otherwise Called the Ile of Divels*, another possible source, uses the more common phrasing. Strachey's letter, "A True Reportory of the Wracke [. . .]," is recognized as a significant source of both plot and language in the play (Vaughan and Vaughan 41-42; 309-10). See also Kennedy.

¹¹¹ Having named his location, Strachey goes on to note that names are misleading: I hope to deliver the world from a foule and general errorr: it being counted of most, that they can be no habitation for Men, but rather given over to Devils and wicked Spirits; whereas indeed wee find them now by experience, to bee as habitable and commodious as most Countries of the

Claudio, Helena, and Hermia's paradise-defying claims haunt Ferdinand's own changing readings of the island.

This last brave mortal who claims transformative powers over paradise is not in despair, but beside himself with joy. Marooned and orphaned on a desert island, Prince Ferdinand of Naples makes a statement that at first seems unremarkable in a world of wonders ranging from Olympian goddesses to love at first sight: "Let me live here ever. / So rare a wondered father and a wife / Makes this place Paradise" (4.1.122-4).¹¹² Ferdinand is in the midst of watching a masque celebrating his betrothal to Miranda, a masque in which the "wonder" of Ceres' and Juno's blessings might only be surpassed by the entire wonder of Prospero's art that simulates their presence. Sensory plenitude, magical power, and the achievement of his beloved might well make the young man assert that, for him, paradise is present and available. Here, now, is another Longaville, whose love's labors have at last been won.

Several strains of *Tempest* scholarship serve to complicate this apparent simplicity of joy, moving the statement from the realm of psychology, Ferdinand's recovery from trauma and discovery of happiness, into the material world, where ecological realities may resist the claims of language—and political realities may hide behind them. Ferdinand has recently suffered the trauma of a shipwreck and the loss of his father. The capacity of love or magical illusion to overcome this loss so swiftly and completely thus rings somewhat hollow, and suggests that such powers are not entirely honest or wholesome.¹¹³ This concern increases in light of the probable discomforts of

same climate and situation[. . .]. (In Vaughan and Vaughan 315.)

¹¹² For reasons explained below, this quotation is from Stephen Orgel's 1987 Oxford edition (178).

¹¹³ Even if—or indeed because—such "rebound" behavior is all too common. Hamlet's or Viola's mourning practices after shipwrecks and parental loss provide interesting contrasts.

Ferdinand's unprepossessing surroundings on "this bare island" (Epilogue 8). It is unclear how hard Ferdinand's imagination—or Prospero's art—must work to make the island appear paradisaical. In an early ecological reading, L. T. Fitz argued that the lushness prior critics had found in the play is located entirely in the characters' figurative language and other speculative fancies, whereas what limited description exists point to a barren physical environment comprised primarily of grass and sand.¹¹⁴ Although we must note that, given the textual and rhetorical construction of all Shakespearean settings, the aural environment created by the sum of words spoken is all we have—and that among the "qualities o'th' isle" is a tendency to inspire such lush imaginings (1.2.338)—the fact remains that the gap between the observed and the imagined island yawns widely and perhaps treacherously.¹¹⁵ If under these emotional and material conditions Ferdinand asserts a desert isle to be paradise, "paradise" would seem to have come down in the world. The inappropriate attribution empties its label of significance: or moves it from the realm of honest assessment to that of wishful thinking.

Another space of critical contention has been the question of whether love comes into it at all, or whether Ferdinand is merely celebrating his temporal acquisition of a new patrimony. His paradisaical expectations hinge upon his alliance to Prospero's art:

¹¹⁴ See esp. Fitz 33-34. Orgel's reading confirms Fitz' claim: "our sense of [the island's] lushness [. . .] comes almost entirely from Caliban" ("New" 123).

¹¹⁵ Orgel claims the "qualities o'th' isle" are in the psyche of the beholder: in "an ambiguity that functions throughout the play," perceptions are "qualified" by other characters and mediated by Prospero's "imaginative power" to make metaphor real and to regulate Caliban's "fantasy" by way of the masque's "ordered nature" ("New" 115, 118, 120, 124, 128; see also Marx 46-66). Karen Flagstad finds that the "insistently" unresolved debate between Gonzalo and the traitors over whether the island "is a green world or a wasteland" directly echoes contrasting contemporary accounts of the Virginia colony (221-22).

“so rare a wondered father and a wise” (4.1.123).¹¹⁶ Regardless of whether Ferdinand’s

¹¹⁶ Here quoting Alden T. Vaughan and Virginia Mason Vaughan’s Arden edition. Stephen Orgel’s amended article “Prospero’s Wife” offers the most nuanced account of a possible textual crux of “wife/wise” in Ferdinand’s speech (215). In short, “wife” was the received text into the twentieth century because it was editorial choice of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century editors. Early bibliographers found that the Folio said “wise” and changed their editions accordingly. Later, however, Jeanne Roberts traced rumors of a Folio variant to apparently definitive proof of an *f* undergoing damage in the press and so becoming a long *s*. Orgel celebrated this triumph of bibliography’s acquiring feminist glasses in the original version of his article. However, Peter Blayney subsequently claimed that closer examination of the copies in question revealed the wayward crossbar to be not type metal but a stray piece of lint, forcing Orgel to add a postscript and the editors of the most recent Arden edition to sadly acknowledge that, however likely they think “wife” to be the intended word, they have no textual basis for such an emendation. (Vaughan and Vaughan’s history of the crux is more detailed, if less artful, than Orgel’s (136-38).)

“So rare a wondered father and a wise” would appear to cut Miranda out of the equation entirely, for better or for worse. Traditional bibliographers might celebrate a triumph of their empiricism; skeptical readers of the *Tempest*, fresh evidence for its unsavory patriarchal ideology. That such a conclusion also supports the former group’s desire for its (male) heroes not to be caught in error, and the latter’s for its ideological enemies to be pure, serves only to highlight how the critical contests for the play’s “paradise” mirror those of its text’s characters.

Neither is such a conclusion the final word on the matter. Jonathan Goldberg provocatively argues that the case for “wise” is not closed (55-62). The grammatical argument cuts both ways, with the redistribution of “rare” and “wondered” to “wife,” or the transposition of “wise” back to “rare,” both possible in Shakespearean syntax. Although Vaughan and Vaughan argue that a wise/paradise “rhymed couplet” supports that reading (137), this is not a couplet at all:

FERDINAND This is a most majestic vision, and
Harmonious charmingly. May I be bold
To think these spirits?

PROSPERO: Spirits, which by mine art
I have from their confines called to enact
My present fancies.

FERDINAND: Let me live here ever!
So rare a wondered father and a wi[f/s]e
Makes this place Paradise.

PROSPERO: Sweet now, silence! (4.1.118-24)

Indeed, to place rhyming words so close *without* the couplet suggests an infelicity (see Luce 111n). Frederick S. Boas finds only one couplet in the main play text (112).

Even the bibliographical case, to my journeyman’s eye, is not entirely closed. While I have yet to examine the copies in question, Blayney’s rebuttal includes the apparently self-evident claim that the crossbar of an *f* cannot break off to turn it into an *j*. That much is true. However, as Roberts’ images indicate, it is not an *f* to an *j* but an *f* to an *ß* (that is, an *s* of the form of the first character in the ligature, with no swash and a half crossbar) that she is proposing. *Half* a crossbar’s breaking off falls within the

word is “wise” or “wife,” he envisions “paradise” as the desired familial union with “wondered” Prospero and Miranda mirabilis, the entirety of which can transform a desert island to Ceres’ delight.¹¹⁷ That Ferdinand’s claim (in this most colonial of Shakespeare’s plays) is one of appropriation—perhaps of conquest, of colonization—will by now come as little surprise to a reader of Greene and the foregoing discussion.¹¹⁸ Miranda as Marian virgin is enclosed by her own “sea-walled garden” (*RII* 3.4.43), or is perhaps herself a type of the *hortus conclusus*, a means of redeeming the world by her innocent presence within it and her promise of reconciliation through her giving birth to a prince of (Milanese) peace. Ferdinand claims Miranda, and through her Prospero’s inheritance. At the time of his speech, he believes that his claim includes “wonder” of Prospero’s art, the magic that makes a paradise out of an isle of devils. But that power seems to be neither transferrable nor transportable out of its island home, for Prospero renounces it (5.1.50-57). Instead, it transpires that Ferdinand’s real claim will be territorial, the alliance of his Naples with Prospero’s Milan via sanctioned marriage rather than usurpation and cliency. But has Prospero secured the future of his dynasty

bounds of expected type edge wear, and ought to be considered alongside the lint hypothesis, particularly given the pressure of bibliographical loyalty noted above. In any case, in Orgel’s conclusion as reported by Goldberg, “the fact remains that to anyone’s eyes two copies of F1 in the Folger appear to read ‘wife,’ a material fact that may well have extended beyond those two copies” (62).

¹¹⁷ As Goldberg and others have argued, “wondered” in its etymology calls up Miranda whether she is syntactically present or not (58; Orgel Notes 178n, “New” 117)). While I do not believe “wise” can be discarded, for it is plausible and has so many witnesses to support it, I find the case for “wife” to be stronger, in part for the reasons Goldberg cites. Furthermore, the apparent logical, psychological, and social pressure that has led “wife” to persist as a possible emendation appears to me too strong to make insistence on “wise” alone anything but reductive. Cruxes so often serve to enrich our collective thinking about a text, and while clear errors should not be made over into cruxes opportunistically, the rich and multifarious corpus that is “*The Tempest*” in literary culture is evidently capacious enough to contain both possibilities. Moreover, agreeing on Miranda’s presence would not prevent Ferdinand’s comment from being primarily dynastic in its import.

¹¹⁸ See Flagstad for further discussion of *The Tempest* and the New World (218-22), and Vaughan and Vaughan for postcolonial readings (98-108).

through a mutually happy marriage, or has he sold Miranda and his dukedom's future independence for a temporary reprieve?¹¹⁹ Has Milan entered the realms of John of Gaunt and "made a shameful conquest of itself," or a joyful one? As in the histories and comedies before it, even this late romance brings the threat of political appropriation or temporal violence into the paradisaal space.

And, speaking of Gaunt's "sceptred isle," who has conquered what? What is the territory being conquered? Ferdinand defines the island as paradise, projects his vision onto its landscape (as do Gonzalo and Prospero), and claims it as dynastic territory.¹²⁰ If, according to a reunion scene obsessed with territorial and familial possession, the island and its care (and creatures) are Prospero's—"I / acknowledge mine" (5.1.275-76)—and (Prospero's) Miranda is now Ferdinand's—"she's mine" (5.1.189)—then the island becomes a Neapolitan outpost in the spirit of that other Petrarchan conqueror,

¹¹⁹ See Orgel "Prospero's Wife" [amended] 213-14.

¹²⁰ Although Boss does not explicitly consider the topic of colonization, her analysis of three interwoven types or flavors of paradise present in the play finds recent transplants projecting preexisting cultural images onto the island's landscape. In Gonzalo and Ferdinand, Boss identifies aspirations to a Golden Age of inherently good people in a naturally good place. She contrasts this vision with the dangerous sensual pleasures of Cockaigne, the false paradise, as sought by Trinculo and Stephano. Finally, she suggests, a utopia requiring human government of fallible people is what Prospero offers as the necessary corrective to Gonzalo's dreams, given the existence of Sebastians and Antonios. Boss' analysis has a powerful explanatory clarity, but I do not find it wholly satisfying. Without mentioning imperialism as such, her presuppositions of uncomplicated good and bad carry a whiff of the white man's burden: Caliban must be saved from his false freedom by Prospero's wisdom, just as the Bower of Bliss comprises unadulterated evil that "Spenser does not hesitate to have his champions destroy" (149). (The latter point I discuss in Chapter 1; the former has been elegantly critiqued and complicated in works such as Aimé Césaire's *Une Tempête* [*A Tempest*].)

Furthermore, Christianity is almost entirely absent from Boss' account, although the typological similitudes of other Shakespearean gardens are clearly present on Prospero's isle. Prospero briefly rules over the virtuous solitary pairing of Ferdinand and Miranda in a space seemingly empty of other human inhabitants—even as his own designs are on Milan. He also tempts his Neapolitan enemies with a glorious feast subsequently snatched away by a chastising Ariel; although the order of events is disrupted (ancient sin, then sensory temptation, then punishment) an echo of Adam's fall and God's rebuke—or Satan's spite—may be detected.

Henry V: “when France is mine, and I am yours, then yours is France, and you are mine” (5.2.175-76).¹²¹ The plot would seem to locate this outpost in the Mediterranean, somewhere near Tunis; the play’s source in the Strachey letter marks it as Bermuda or, more generally, West Indian. Certain features, however, bring Prospero’s outpost rather closer to his playwright’s island home. Prospero’s magic is learned, coming as it does from books. In accordance with European tradition it is likely therefore Hermetic, ultimately classical or Near Eastern—a supposition redoubled by Prospero’s appropriation of Medea’s speech from the *Metamorphoses*.¹²² Formally, however, Ariel and Prospero are the descendants of Puck and Oberon, as popular reception has long recognized.¹²³ Fitz’ ecological account, mentioned above, emphasizes grass and sand, features which seem to me more reminiscent of a British than a tropical or Mediterranean setting.¹²⁴ When “*certain reapers, properly habited*”—“sunburned,” with “rye-straw hats”—make an entry in Prospero’s masque, the entertainment, too cuts a decidedly English figure (4.1.134-38*sd*).¹²⁵ According to Prospero, the masquers are

¹²¹ For other possessive discourse at the close of *The Tempest*, see esp. 5.1.163-213. Of course, what—who—Prospero specifically acknowledges “mine” is Caliban, who apparently remains on the putative Neapolitan outpost as sole inhabitant and governor by default. (Unless he, too, travels to Naples in an effort to “be wise hereafter / and seek for grace” (5.1.295-96)—or unless Prospero is also trapped there by the audience’s failure to clap (E.4-10), or, as in Césaire, he opts to stay to seek revenge on Caliban, yet seems to wind up a prisoner in his own mind while Caliban has freed his (61ff).)

¹²² See e.g. Mowat 287ff. “Prospero’s farewell to his magic (5.1.33-57) is a fairly direct translation of Medea’s invocation to Hecate in Ovid [7.265-68], through [Arthur] Golding’s mediation [tr. 1567]” (Vaughan and Vaughan 26; see Ovid).

¹²³ See e.g. Cooper.

¹²⁴ Fitz also notes trees found in temperate climates and a predominantly “Anglo-Saxon” vocabulary (47), without pursuing their implications. Some critics link Prospero’s island to England’s geographically proximate, culturally distant colonies in Ireland (Vaughan and Vaughan 51-54).

¹²⁵ The Strachey letter, however, appears to be at odds both with Fitz’ reading and my suggested interpretation. Strachey describes Bermuda’s climate as unlike Britain’s, “uncapable I beleeve of any of our commodities or fruits,” but potentially fruitful: all the European vegetables the castaways attempted to grow died, but he expects tropical cash crops to thrive (316). Wild pigs ate the governor’s experimental sugar cane before

“spirits” like Ariel (4.1.120).¹²⁶ Together, the island’s supernatural inhabitants offer Shakespeare’s audience a strange conflation of exotic magic and local culture, complicating its supposed colonial setting with a landscape strangely reminiscent of home.

Ferdinand and his compatriots indicate that mortals can redefine paradise according to their mental states of extreme anguish or joy and the language they use to describe them. (And sometimes by dynastic fiat.) Their cases, though extreme, fall into the familiar pattern of desire—for love, for autonomy, for territory—framed as aspiration to paradise and complicated by a desire to control the terms of its landscape. However, Ferdinand’s case also reveals another set of beings with the power to redefine a paradisaal space and disrupt a setting’s notional geography. Prospero’s spirits, analogous to Shakespeare’s earlier fairies, link colony and home, exotic and familiar, all the while provoking, rehearsing, and sometimes chastising a new set of paradisaal desires.

Fairy Paradise: English Indies; Exotic Home

Gardens evoke desire, and desire provokes treachery. In Shakespeare’s history plays, this formula leads to treason and civil war. In his dramas of human relationships, it wreaks similar harm on a smaller interpersonal scale. Petrarchan language also signals a colonizing impulse, whether over a fruitful body or a fair kingdom. But Shakespeare, like Spenser, sometimes draws more explicit colonial connections between the present and familiar and the desirable and otherworldly. For Shakespeare has his fairies, too,

his theory could be tested (317).

¹²⁶ This word explicitly refers only to Juno, Ceres, and Iris, but it is logical that the “nymphs” and “sicklemen” who are called up by spirits (4.1.128, 134), and who disappear with Prospero’s distraction (4.1.138*sd*), are of the same ilk.

and they serve him in strikingly similar ways. Remember the reapers on the grassy isle: their home ground may be as ecologically English as that of any midsummer fairies. Likewise, Shakespeare's most seemingly English fairies are nearly always associated with lands abroad.¹²⁷

As Laurence Publicover has argued, the apparent incoherence of some early modern dramatic settings in fact performs a finely calibrated dramatic function of near-simultaneous familiarization and estrangement. Anachronism and its analogue, anageography, are deployed deliberately to foster familiarity or to make a satirical point.¹²⁸ In the spirit of Publicover's analysis, and in contrast with more consistent fictional settings such as those of *King Lear*, *Cymbeline*, or *Julius Caesar*, I would like to describe Shakespeare's composite fairy spaces as deliberate designs, employing a carefully wrought syncretism that moves faraway places near and makes familiar places exotic—in order to de- and refamiliarize questions of desire and treachery.¹²⁹ Fairies are the indigenous denizens of magical, layered, lushly botanical and frequently horticultural spaces that seem to conjure desire by means of their very settings. As well as indulging in it, they make more explicit the plays' critique of the conquest that is motivated by a desire for paradise.

¹²⁷ For a detailed reading of fairies that locates their otherness in the realms of death, see Diana Purkiss (e.g. 76-77, 86-87, 98, 175). According to Purkiss, fairies are like us, only us in the past. Her aim, however, is an early modern anthropology of fairy culture, for which literary sources are often deemed misleading.

¹²⁸ Publicover, focusing especially on clowns as troublemakers of locational stability, has argued that deliberately composite settings, especially those that link the familiar with the exotic, are common in early modern drama and useful for engaging audiences at different registers: local politics inform accounts of distant heroism, which are in turn punctured by contemporary satire, and so forth. In this, he pushes back against Sidney's criticism of such of dramatic conventions ("Clowning"; see also the introduction to *Dramatic Geography*, forthcoming 2017).

¹²⁹ Perhaps under the influence of Chaucer, as discussed below.

A Midsummer's English Greek Indian Fairy Garden Colony

In *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, the fairy scenes would seem to collapse Greek, English, and Indian landscapes into a shifting whole marked by horticultural features. Fairy dominion's multiple locations are explicit, if not explained. While the humans are at least notionally Athenian, the basis of the play's fairy culture appears at first to be domestic and English.¹³⁰ So, frequently, is the environment the fairies describe themselves inhabiting. The first Fairy wanders "Over hill, over dale, / Thorough bush, thorough brier, / Over park, over pale" (2.1.2-4), and speaks of "the green" and "cowslips tall," features more likely to be found in England than Attica (2.1.9-10). This landscape is also gardenlike, and therefore (by association) paradisaic: according to Puck, ill meetings by moonlight happen "in grove, or green, / By fountain clear," while "all their elves for fear / Creep into acorn-cups, and hide them there" (2.1.28-31). Grove and green are common features of English horticulture; as in Colin's "Parnasse" from Spenser's June eclogue, there is the suggestion that fairy presence in a green and pleasant land creates a sort of wild garden. "Fountain" can mean a spring, natural or artificial, but Titania later specifies a "paved fountain" in her further litany of English-sounding meeting places:¹³¹

And never, since the middle summer's spring,
Met we on hill, in dale, forest, or mead,
By paved fountain, or by rushy brook,
Or in the beached margent of the sea,
.....
The nine-men's-morris is fill'd up with mud,
And the quaint mazes in the wanton green
For lack of tread are undistinguishable. (2.1.82-85, 98-100)

¹³⁰ As Wall has demonstrated, especially for reports of Puck's habitual behavior as Robin Goodfellow (e.g. 2.1.32-57) ("Puck" 67, 74ff). Purkiss notes that Auberón is originally a French fairy, but one quickly popularized and domesticated (130-31).

¹³¹ The Norton Shakespeare glosses "paved" as "pebbled" (823n), but OED only cites the term in artificial contexts such as streets and their figurative analogues.

Interspersed with these places—including a Morris-dancing ground and “quaint mazes,” again describing domestic landscape architecture—are equally British complaints of “Contagious fogs” and agricultural problems brought on by damp: rot, murrain, and so forth (90-97). “The human mortals want their winter cheer” may point to the English experience of the Little Ice Age, a well-documented early modern climate shift (101).¹³²

Yet despite these explicit details of northern European ecologies and horticulture, both Titania and Oberon are equally specific in naming the locations of their travels as Greece and India. Titania claims to

know

When thou hast stol’n away from fairy land,
 And in the shape of Corin, sat all day
 Playing on pipes of corn, and versing love
 To amorous Phillida. Why art thou here,

 But that, forsooth, the bouncing Amazon,
 Your buskin’d mistress and your warrior love,
 To Theseus must be wedded, and you come
 To give their bed joy and prosperity? (2.1.64-73)

The fairy king consorts with ancient heroes and pastoral shepherds in their country of origin. Meanwhile, Oberon retorts with his own account of Titania’s Greek dalliances (2.1.75-80). Both make it equally clear that these Arcadian escapades are journeys made out of India. The missing line in Titania’s above indictment of Oberon’s travels is “Come from the farthest step of India” (2.1.69), while her story of the changeling boy’s mother suggests a local community rather than a chance meeting:

The fairy land buys not the child of me.
 His mother was a votress of my order;
 And in the spiced Indian air, by night,

¹³² Various scholars have found evidence elsewhere in Shakespeare’s work for the problems of the Little Ice Age (Tigner 72, 84; Markley). Scott notes that Titania claims a “responsibility” she and Oberon share for this disruption, suggesting a “sympathetic relationship between the human and non-human worlds” (21).

Full often hath she gossip'd by my side;
 And sat with me on Neptune's yellow sands,
 Marking th'embarked traders on the flood:
 When we have laughed to see the sails conceive
 And grow big-bellied with the wanton wind;
 Which she, with pretty and with swimming gait
 Following (her womb then rich with my young squire),
 Would imitate, and sail upon the land
 To fetch me trifles, and return again
 As from a voyage rich with merchandise. (2.1.122-34)

This version of Titania presents her as a sort of Indian goddess—or abbess—enmeshed in that imagined setting. Oberon's later description of the "fair vestal, throned by the west"—usually interpreted as that "imperial votress," Queen Elizabeth—echoes this speech in vocabulary and perspective (2.1.158-63).¹³³ Oberon, like Titania, sits in India and watches the western world go by.¹³⁴

To the fairies, India is not exotic; indeed, conveniently (for a playwright who never saw it), it seems to need little physical description except for the existence of sandy beaches—and, of course, ships laden with trade goods. It is, however, a site of desire and appropriation, where captive bodies are measured with the price of land. The changeling child is "A lovely boy, stol'n from an Indian king" (2.1.22); in addition to the first line of Titania's speech quoted above, when Oberon persists in his demands she quickly reiterates: "Not for thy fairy kingdom" (2.1.144). But is that kingdom India, as this exchange appears to support, or Greece, the notional setting of the play, or England, as the fairies' descriptions of their landscape and culture imply? Or is it in fact the whole world?

¹³³ The Norton Shakespeare's gloss of "a fair vestal, thronèd by the west," is "to the west of India; in England" (825n). The note goes on to add "(a compliment to Queen Elizabeth, the Virgin Queen, and possibly an allusion to a specific entertainment in her honor, such as the water pageant at Elvetham in 1591)," thus further connecting fairy visions with English garden displays. Holland cites but notes skepticism about the Elizabethan connection (111, 263n).

¹³⁴ Technically, Oberon is sitting "upon a promontory" (2.1.149); see above note.

After firmly establishing India as fairy home base through this exchange, the play reverts to a predominantly English landscape vocabulary where the queen and her retinue are concerned. Surely Titania's bank is somewhere in Elizabeth's realm:

where the wild thyme blows,
Where oxlips and the nodding violet grows,
Quite over-canopied with luscious woodbine,
With sweet musk-roses, and with eglantine. (2.2.249-52)¹³⁵

The wild garden of the fairy queen is well supplied with English flowers. Bottom's friends Peaseblossom and company are likewise surely—by their names—to be found in England (3.1.154ff). Comedy such as Bottom's hits closer to home for Shakespeare's audiences, while the upper-class characters' setting remains a wood outside Athens.¹³⁶ Oberon and Puck also converse in a more classical register, mentioning Acheron, Aurora, and the "swift dragons" of the chariot of night (3.2.357, 379-80). However, the specifics of the overlaid settings in this instance do still more than create a cultural hodgepodge.

In the "imperial votress" speech, Oberon's remembered self is sitting in (Vedic era?) India, looking at Elizabeth's England, and speaking in terms of classical figures such as mermaids, dolphins, and Cupid (2.1.150-65). The rhetorical move here is not dissimilar to that of Spenser's *Antiquitie of Faerie*: Shakespeare's English fairies claim the realms of classical culture and Indian trade for their own dominion; Elizabeth as the ultimate Fairy Queen presides chastely over all. Such a claim is supported by the play's alternate accounting of fairy power as extending over the whole world, at least when that world is subject to the realms of night. Puck can "put a girdle round the earth / In forty minutes" (2.1.175-76); Oberon denies affinity with ghosts, "But [. . .] like a forester

¹³⁵ We may, with Ellen C. Eyler, romantically "feel that [Shakespeare] had a specific spot in mind that he knew well from his boyhood roamings in the beautiful Warwickshire countryside" (7).

¹³⁶ See Publicover "Clowning" (113-17).

the groves may tread / Even till the eastern gate, all fiery-red / [. . .] Turns into yellow gold" (3.2.388-93). Later the fairy king conflates the two concepts:

Then, my queen, in silence sad,
Trip we after night's shade:
We the globe can compass soon,
Swifter than the wandering moon. (4.1.94-97)

These are fairies of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, after all, servants to Cynthia, the moon deity, whose sphere encloses that of Earth—and another common figure for Elizabeth.¹³⁷ However frequently they share attributes with Wall's familiar kitchen sprites, they refuse to remain contained in that single identity. Mote and his fellows may, as Diana Purkiss says, be Shakespeare's diminutive invention, but Oberon commands with the power of a Greek god—or an imperial queen—the feelings and perceptions of mortals and fairies alike: "I am invisible" is a performative speech to rival Prospero's (2.1.186).¹³⁸

The composite, syncretic form of the play's settings serves a number of dramatic and political purposes. Planting English "Indian" fairies in Greece brings several aesthetic strands together. They are thrillingly exotic, while also familiar, drawing on folk culture and local flora to enhance suspension of disbelief. A different sort of familiarity, with the antics of other supernatural entities such as Greek gods, makes the action intelligible while also suggesting a sort of *translatio imperii*—or *translatio imp*—by way of culture and titular deity.¹³⁹ Athens' Indian-Greek-English fairies, like *The Tempest's* North African-Patagonian-Bermudan-Greek spirits, serve to extend the map

¹³⁷ See Chapter 1 above.

¹³⁸ On Shakespeare's innovations in fairy size, see Lewis *Discarded* 127-29; Purkiss 158, 164-65, 181. Purkiss notes Puck's similarity to Cupid, Oberon's affinity with Vertumnus, "a classical deity" but also "a trickster," and Titania's with classical nymphs (167-68; 176-79).

¹³⁹ Note (irrelevantly) that the first sense of "imp" in the OED is "A young shoot of a plant or tree"; the second is "a graft": only later is the word applied metaphorically to children and evil spirits.

for the play's most exotic and fantastical characters, but also for their English audiences. They knit the strands of exotic, numinous, and mundane—colony as Eden, colony as faerie, fairies as ours, and in our gardens—variously together. Politically, as well as aesthetically, they begin to claim the world for England, and to adorn it as a paradise.

The Colonist and the Fairies: Re-Placing Eden

Seemingly distant from classical Athens, a desert isle, or even the medieval England of dynastic conquest and royal privilege, even that most English, most contemporary, and most seemingly quotidian of Shakespearean plays, *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, also infuses its intensely local (and patently false) fairies with a dose of the exotic and the acquisitive. That there is also room for Edenic imaginings amidst the jealous machinations of middle-class Windsor suggests the dramatic utility of evoking paradise across genres and plots. The play's closing scenes present a situation formally equivalent to the one Alice-Lyle Scoufos identifies in *As You Like It*: a deceiver infiltrates a pastoral space of royal dominion whose central symbol is a tree.¹⁴⁰ Overlaid on this type of an Edenic landscape is the *Midsummer*-like vernacular paradise that the fairy masquers claim to create, in so doing manipulating the appropriative desires of their witting and unwitting accomplices. Falstaff the arch-appropriator links this locus of fairy wonder, deceit, desire, and conquest to similarly coded colonial spaces; the

¹⁴⁰ The case for Windsor Park as a type of Eden is less explicit than that for the Queen's garden or Gaunt's England in *Richard II*. I take as my warrant Scoufos' reading of the described scene of "ethical climax" in *As You Like It*, in which Orlando finds his treacherous brother Oliver at the mercy of a lioness:

In this scene, which happens offstage as do the climactic actions of classical drama, archetypal images pull the pastoral setting suddenly into the mystical realm. Shakespeare intensifies the action with this mysticism that is an important part of the *paradiso terrestre* tradition. Shakespeare's images are dense with allusions, for when a Renaissance poet placed a tree and a snake in the center of a garden or woods, the Edenic reference was automatically created for his reader or audience. (221)

knight also imports colonization's commercial language, threatening to despoil paradise by other means.

The play's title names its setting as domestic and local: its heroines are wives from the English town of Windsor, its plot more reminiscent of a city comedy than any other in the Shakespearean canon—albeit with a gentler ending and the intimacy of a village community. The play's language, however, is more spatially expansive, and also shares with the citizen genre an interest in transaction and speculation far afield. Falstaff's initial account of his speculative affairs casts him as colonial trader:

She bears the purse too: she is a region in Guiana, all gold and bounty. I will be cheaters to them both, and they shall be exchequers to me. They shall be my East and West Indies, and I will trade to them both.
(MWW 1.3.65-69)

English housewives Ford and Page are figured as colonized objects of extractive desire; Falstaff's boy is to "Sail like my pinnace to these golden shores" (1.3.77). So wedded to this exploitative view of human interaction is Falstaff that he projects similar desires onto Mistress Page: "O, she did so course o'er my exteriors, with such a greedy intention, that the appetite of her eye did seem to scorch me up like a burning glass" (1.3.62-64).¹⁴¹ Mistress Page's putative desire here appears to be sensual, but it, too, resonates with that of the treasure-hunter, as "Sometimes the beam of her view *gilded* my foot, sometimes my portly belly" (1.3.58-59; emphasis added). Of course, Falstaff is mistaken in specifics, but he correctly identifies opportunistic swindles—with material consequences—as comprising the central action of the play, and inscribes them in a colonial frame.

The play's closing swindle (upon swindle upon swindle), the fairy masque set in

¹⁴¹ A "burning glass" is a lens for starting fires (Melchiori 150n), but also conjures images of other optical devices.

Windsor Park, initially seems the antithesis of Falstaff's colonial grasping.¹⁴² Instead, it echoes the Edenic gestures Scoufos identifies in *As You Like It*. Disguised as the "spirit" of a "Sometime [game]keeper" (*MWW* 4.4.33, 27), Falstaff slips into the royal park, serpentlike (he thinks), to poach other men's wives under Herne's oak (5.5).¹⁴³ But this is not quite the lovers' paradise he imagines it to be. Instead, it is another kind of fairy garden. Mistresses Page and Ford have planned a second trick, the staging of a "fairy revel" which is to surprise Falstaff "And ask him why, [. . .] / In their so sacred paths he dares to tread" (4.4.57-58).¹⁴⁴ The "fairies" seek to create an imaginary space both holy and circumscribed:

And nightly, meadow-fairies, look you sing,
Like to the Garter compass, in a ring.
Th'expressure that it bears, green let it be,
More fertile-fresh than all the field to see;
And *Honi soit qui mal y pense* write
In em'rald tufts, flowers purple, blue and white,
Like sapphire, pearl and rich embroidery,
Buckled below fair knighthood's bending knee:
Fairies use flowers for their charactery. (5.5.65-73)

These fairies, in the imagination of someone—the fictive scriptwriter, be she Quickly, or Ford, or Page; and presumably the actual one, Shakespeare, the creator of the masque—encircle and plant a superlatively fertile bed of flowers, in a stylized pattern characteristic of emblematic Tudor gardens. They articulate a sort of vernacular

¹⁴² There is evidence that the masque was the original text and a play later grafted onto it (Melchiori 18-30).

¹⁴³ Edenic typology is here also overlaid with a supernatural vernacular landscape. The image of the antlered hunter is self-evidently pagan, whether or not Shakespeare invented Herne himself. All apparently corroborative sources post-date the play and appear to derive from it (Melchiori 257n; Purkiss 141; cf. Salinger 9-10). However, the lack of evidence is not in itself dispositive. As Wendy Wall demonstrates, the fairies' speeches draw on established folklore of domestic household sprites ("Puck" 90ff). Their "dance of custom round about the oak / Of Herne the hunter," and still more parson Evans' phrase, "I smell a man of middle earth," redolent both of fairy tales and Germanic cosmology, imply that the playwright is not inventing out of whole cloth (5.5.75-76, 80).

¹⁴⁴ Wall notes the significance of the false fairies as "vernacular tale" ("Puck" 103).

paradisaal space, which both enables the subsequent trickery and passes judgment upon it.¹⁴⁵

For a third, fourth, and fifth trick are underway, in the form of the three suitors' plans to elope with Anne Page and the two boys impersonating her as decoys. Clad in green and white and (sometimes) red, the prospective brides are bedecked in the colors of a Petrarchan lady in her garden.¹⁴⁶ Most of the desires at play, however, are for wealth and status rather than *fin amor*. The parents work to bring about the mercenary matches of their choice. Master Page's protégé is Slender: "well landed," his wife concedes, but "an idiot." She prefers Doctor Caius, who "is well moneyed, and his friends / Potent at court" (4.4.84-87). Even love cuts an economic figure. The noble Fenton, friend of Hal, admits that "the first motive" in his courtship of Anne was "thy father's wealth," but claims that now he loves her not "as a property" but for "the very riches of thyself" (3.4.10, 13-17).¹⁴⁷ If this be so, as the comic genre demands for its redemptive marriage plot, then Anne's fate holds a mirror up to Falstaff's. Courted by two inappropriate suitors, the maiden wins her true love by dint of having the last laugh, the final stratagem. The old knight inappropriately courts two witty wives who similarly get the best of him, his schemes, and his "unchaste desire" (5.5.96). Anne's desire is successful, dynastic, and potentially procreative, where Falstaff's fails for being illicit and inherently unfruitful. Falstaff's more explicitly transactional language may constitute a commercial play's overwriting of a prior masque of fairy marriage musical

¹⁴⁵ Cf. Leo Salinger, who observes, "The intervention of the fairies raises the poetic tone of the comedy to something approaching romance but almost simultaneously amplifies the farcical intrigue," contrasting the corrective function of the Windsor fairy masque with the staged antics of *Love's Labours Lost* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, in which "the performers are the victims of ridicule from the spectators on stage" (10).

¹⁴⁶ Giorgio Melchiori discusses the inconsistent assignments of color to the dresses of the various real and purported Annes (53-54, 278-79n).

¹⁴⁷ See Melchiori 45-48; Maus 10, 84.

chairs, but his transgression of the “sacred” space and his subsequent punishment and forgiveness still chime with a typical masque’s goal of banishing disorder.¹⁴⁸ This order is accomplished through the notional authority of the fairy queen, along with the practical effects of the Pages’ failed schemes and ensuing reconciliation to their daughter’s suitable and happy marriage choice. Indeed, Falstaff’s comeuppance offers a small, vernacular *felix culpa*. The priest Evans and the Windsor children are “couched in a pit hard by Herne’s oak,” in order to spy upon Falstaff’s transgression of this space and then confront him with it (5.3.13-14, 5.4). Falstaff’s “guiltiness of my mind” induces his belief in the charade, “in despite of the teeth of all rhyme or reason” (5.5.123-26). Yet no lasting harm is done, and the knight is invited to break bread with the Pages, celebrate everyone’s mutual hoodwinking, and rejoice that all’s well that ends well (5.5.168-71, 235-39).

Even the cozy domesticity of this English redemption, however, does not stand in isolation. The patently English fairies of Windsor nonetheless bear a metaphorical savor of Falstaff’s Indies. The emotional climax of Falstaff’s vernacular fall is his triumphant exclamation, “Let the sky rain potatoes [. . .] Let there come a *tempest* of provocation, I will shelter me here” (5.5.18-21; emphasis added), once again invoking the fruits of colonization—and, unbeknownst to him, foreshadowing a future play of colonized (f)airy sprites.¹⁴⁹ In Falstaff’s final assessment, trickery begets trickery; human serpents fall prey to their own temptations: “When night-dogs run, all sorts of deer are chased” (5.5.232). The knight may misread individuals and their true designs, as does everyone else with the exception of Anne and Fenton, but his understanding of the displaced transactions of desire that typify the world of the play is the most

¹⁴⁸ See Salinger 10.

¹⁴⁹ The “potato” in question is likely the (“gilded”?) sweet potato, which was known earlier (Eyster 45), and was “thought to have aphrodisiac qualities” (Melchiori 277n).

comprehensive of any character. The constellation of overlapping and treacherous desires—for Edenic pleasure; for fairy powers of fertility, judicial insight, or trickery; for colonial wealth—highlights the transformative effects of the Renaissance English tendency to associate cultural visions of a lost Christian paradise and an exoticized vernacular past with the tantalizing present promise of the New World. While the perils of colonization infect conventional love discourse, here as elsewhere Shakespeare's fairy scenes also serve to bridge home and away, then and now, transporting colonial spaces to close by and defamiliarizing the accessible in terms of the exotic.

Conclusion

The same imperious poetic moves that claim India, Greece, or a mysterious isle for England also serve to exoticize the plays' Edenic island home. A "paved fountain" can make the fairy haunts familiar, but a fairy garden may be unbounded, wild, and potentially transformative. The fairy-flavored paradises are marked as both English and other; the same rhetorical move that claims the desired territory abroad can also create the colony within. Eden as long-lost home and America as new-found land are cast by the plays as similarly exotic, equally desirable. Like Gaunt's Eden, fairy dominions are both tantalizingly desirable and notionally quotidian, nearly present but not quite to hand. Wall's reading of Shakespeare's fairies as domestic and English is powerful, but incomplete without their marked Indian and classical aspects. Similarly, Purkiss' claim that fairies are like us, only dead, I believe rejects too completely the possibility that such folklore also preserves—or imagines—memories of England's prior

status as colonized culture in its own right.¹⁵⁰ “Al was this land fulfild of fayerye,” says the *Wife of Bath’s Tale*, until the “hooly freeres” set about their work (859, 866). E.K. parodically rewrites this legend in the gloss to *June*, this time blaming the “bald Friers” for “feigned” fairy folklore imposed on credulous “comen people” ([25]). As the notes and the *Tale* also intimate, Shakespeare’s discourse of fairies envisions, wittingly or no, a prior colonial situation that has since been internalized. It is for this reason that, like Greene’s Petrarchism—perhaps more so—this discourse of fairies becomes so readily applicable to England’s new colonial situations. Which brings me back to paradise. Patricia Seed’s work on what signified colonial claims for different European powers demonstrates that, for the English, the requisite actions were building a fence and

¹⁵⁰ Cf. Richard Helgerson’s subtle analysis of “English linguistic nationalism,” which in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries was closely tied up with a postcolonial/colonializing dynamic, a dynamic in which the English came to think of themselves and their language both as having been colonized and as potentially colonizing others. In England, this dynamic was largely notional—a matter of stories the English told themselves about their past and future rather than of actual experience comparable to the Moorish occupation of Spain or the Spanish conquest of large stretches of the New World. But that notional quality makes the English example all the more significant. (“Language Lessons” 289)

This situation arises Virgil’s first eclogue, “an unavoidable school text in sixteenth-century England, [which] spoke of ‘the British wholly divided from the world’ [*toto divisos orbe Britannos*]” (291). Helgerson presents young Will Page’s Latin lesson in *The Merry Wives of Windsor* as staging both the ongoing effects of prior Roman colonization and the vernacular challenge to its residual power (290-93, 297).

Cf. also Alaric Hall’s linguistic analysis of the concept of “elf” in Anglo-Saxon culture posits “the otherworldly potentialities of neighbouring peoples” on a continuum between the “human in-group” and the monstrous other (52), while Purkiss’ own study acknowledges that fairies stand for otherness, and elides the fact that some of the dead were not us, but the people whose lands “we” took, the ones who built those ruins the fairies like to haunt (5-6, 6-7, 64, 73-74, 164). Perhaps the most clear and comprehensive accounting of fairy characteristics, which includes Purkiss’ conclusions among several other options, remains C. S. Lewis’ in *The Discarded Image* (122-38). In addition to noting traditions of Celtic deities as sources of some fairy lore (125-26), Lewis offers three types of fairy characters (frightening tormentors, small and/or merry revelers, beautiful and powerful lords and ladies) and four possible categories by which they fit into the medieval worldview (a distinct species; lesser angels; the dead; devils).

planting a garden.¹⁵¹ Is Adam, therefore, always already a colonizer, by British definition? Is God?

As noted above, Greene's analysis marks the New World-Eden analogy as a separate discourse from that of Petrarchism's unattainable desire.¹⁵² But the discourse of paradise plays an enormous role in Shakespeare's consideration of situations calling for, imagining, or reflecting upon possession of the desired other. And these conquests are usually achievable within their fictive worlds. It is this very attainability of paradise, however, that risks its imminent destruction. Eden can be here and now, according to the plays, but only momentarily, or in anticipation, for the violence of appropriative desire seems often to prevent its paradisaal qualities from functioning. Furthermore, in the typological restagings of the Edenic drama outlined above, the characters rarely identify their roles as those of Adam or Eve—that is, sinful, laborious, but ultimately redeemable. Instead, they assign themselves the Father or the serpent: either role altogether more daring and more dangerous, as overweening as Donne's speaker in the previous chapter.

"Oe'r a brick wall":¹⁵³ Cade in the Garden

Most of the above characters who lay claim to paradisaal gardens take as a given that aspiring to such places is a natural and virtuous—or at least a rational, politically and dynastically advantageous course of action, particularly when conceived in the aligned discourses of English Protestantism and the new science.¹⁵⁴ The writers of garden and husbandry manuals, according to Prest's analysis, envision themselves in the roles of the new Adams, cultivating virtue. They seek to make their way back to Eden by

¹⁵¹ See Seed ch. 1.

¹⁵² Greene 6, op cit.

¹⁵³ 2HVI 4.10.6.

¹⁵⁴ See Prest chs. 4, 6.

means of the labors of a fallen world, eliding the hubris of such a seemingly virtuous act.¹⁵⁵ Shakespeare's imagined characters, however, bring this tension squarely before his audience. In so doing, they also frequently bring violence to a place described by medieval tradition—despite the drama of Genesis—as inherently, essentially peaceful.

Shakespeare's insistence on the posture of conquest reveals the darker side of paradise as object of desire. A practice or intent of conquering Eden reforges, sometimes explicitly, the links between paradisaal thinking and colonization documented in Prest and Tigner. Further, if, as the speakers insist, these paradises remain extant, their search for admittance therein becomes the labor not of Adam but of Milton's Satan. Jack Cade jumps the wall of Iden. Does that make him of the devil's party without knowing it? Yet it is also Cade who curses Iden's ground, dooming it to be a site of graves rather than gardens (4.10.61-63).¹⁵⁶ Richard's Queen likewise curses the Gardener's work, and perhaps by extension Bolingbroke's new "sea-walled" realm. Eschewing Adamic humility, Shakespeare's paradise-seekers cast themselves alternately in the roles of Satan before the Fall and of God in its aftermath.

Cade's bid for paradise leads directly to his death. John of Gaunt's plea for intervention (as the logic of the play interprets it, via Bolingbroke) is the distant cause of Cade's failure. It launches decades of civil war. In their nationalistic claims of mastery

¹⁵⁵ Michael Ziser considers "the generative paradox" of the *felix culpa* within Ralph Austen's work on apple cultivation (198-9). See also Prest 54-6, 70, 78. Anthony Low charts a growing appreciation of the georgic mode in England from the late sixteenth century (16-19), noting that

Virgil's georgic theodicy, with its double vision of labor as both a curse and a blessing and its assumption that a historical devolution took place from a primal Golden Age [. . .] at the same time that an evolution took place in human thought, art, and invention, is readily and variously accommodated to a Christian world view. (11)

The passage Low refers to is the "Jupiter theodicy" of *Georgics* 1.121-46, called "the twilight of the Golden Age" in the Loeb edition (3). See also McRae 200ff.

¹⁵⁶ And thus, in the words of Hamlet's Gravedigger quoted above, to "hold up Adam's profession" in its postlapsarian iteration?

over land, weather, and environment, and of England's Edenic superiority, the garden manuals take on a similar ethical risk. Garden books are not, of course, warmongers, but any discourse in which nationalism trumps reality sows the seeds of future conflict to defend ideology against fact.¹⁵⁷

But the same play that brings us Gaunt's implicit call to arms also stages an alternative to the Queen's emotionally inaccessible paradise: one of diligent horticultural practice, a set of actions that in themselves constitute good governance and avoid dramatic gestures towards biblical tragedy. The scene also suggests, through the Gardener's final speech honoring the queen's grief and accepting her blame, a further transformation that may lead towards grace. In the comic mode, a similar promise of redemption closes *The Merry Wives of Windsor*. The implicit critique of paradisaal discourse may be clearest in these plays, but it is also present in the fallen thinking of other paradise-mongers, from Longaville and Hermia to the Archbishop and Cade himself. These examples also suggest, however, that the apparently accessible paradises sought after by the speakers heretofore have begun to slip out of reach, or have been found wanting in some way. When paradise is the site of literal or rhetorical conquest, it may not be able to maintain its Edenic qualities.

"This Place Paradise":¹⁵⁸ *Transforming Practices*

Unlike Spenser and Donne's works, Shakespeare's plays contain explicit rebukes or remedies for the problems they present. As Hamlet so famously promises, they "hold as 'twere the mirror up to Nature to show Virtue her feature, Scorn her own image, and the very age and body of the time his form and pressure" (*Hamlet* 3.2.21-24). They offer

¹⁵⁷ As Hoyles and Henrey note, many of the horticultural writers took prominent sides in their own era's civil war between Cromwell and the crown.

¹⁵⁸ *The Tempest* 4.1.124.

an image of self-knowledge and a hope of correction. But is the source of this insight a generic one, as I considered at this chapter's outset? One hesitates to attribute it solely to the power of multivocal drama over the singular lyric voice—the latter itself a palpable fiction. Still less would I make outdated claims for the special genius of England's national poet. Instead of reading too much into a poet's moral vision or a genre's significant form, I suggest looking towards practice: the humility inherent in making objects with colleagues under conditions of material limitations. The action of staging a commercial play, like that of producing a book—or planting a garden—is in practice collaborative. It is also—or must be, to have any notable duration—profitable, or supplied with sufficient external resources to keep it afloat. Conditions of collaborative work leading to communal plenitude, or at least to an engaged and vigorous corporate sufficiency, seem more likely to produce a generous competition of ideas than the isolated, uncertain, materially impoverished—but more aesthetically autonomous—conditions of the lyric or epic poet seeking preferment, or facing exile to Ireland (or Surrey).

While not as consistently self-aware as the plays seem to be, the garden manual discourse, in the same habit and posture, also contains the seeds of its own correction, remedy, and self-limitation. Alongside their vaunting claims to Edenic splendor, most of the writers also recognize that their horticultural labor lies at the mercy of the vagaries of John Rea's "cold and steril Land" (231), and that their best efforts to produce wine may result all too often in vinegar. Googe and Gerard note that horticultural success follows only with "diligence" and "labour" (π 3v; A2v). Lawson offers a litany of the troubles facing "evill thriving, rotten and dying trees":

What rottennesse? what hollownesse? what dead armes? withered tops?
curtalled trunks? what loads of mosses? drouping boughs? and dying
branches you shall see everywhere? And those that are like in this sort are

in a manner all unprofitable boughs, cankered arms, crooked, little and short boals: what an infinite number of bushes, shrubs, and skrogs of hazels, thornes, and other profitable wood, which might be brought by dressing to become great and goodly trees? (1656 31-32)

Such are the dangers of “Timber wood evill drest,” one of many such pitfalls Lawson warns against (31).¹⁵⁹ The empirical reports of failure as well as success that writers like Rea, Gerard, and Lawson offer temper their paradisaal claims. The material realities of making these gardens, the experiences the writers of these books report and compile, offer a corrective to their own visions: *It’s not Eden. It’s cold. We aren’t the greatest nation in the world, the shining city on the hill, Gaunt’s “blessed plot.” We are a real place with a particular climate and soil conditions that we can study, and tend, and from which we can bring forth fruit.* This sort of reality check is humbling, but far safer, wiser, and more virtuous than the sort of “make England great again” rhetoric that emerges in the prefaces. Or from John of Gaunt.

Gaunt’s notion of island Britain as walled Eden appears as a commonplace of these contemporary horticultural treatises, the majority of which claim that any desirable plant will thrive in England’s green and pleasant land. The same books, however, acknowledge inevitable limitations in a cold climate and uncertain soil, stressing virtues of modesty and diligence. Likewise, the civil or colonial violence inherent in Shakespeare’s Edenic visions mars their paradisaal origins and, I find, suggests recourse to more practical, and perhaps more ethical, alternatives within the plays’ own fictive horizons. The staged negotiations test and balance the promises and the risks of our own ambitions to master the material world.

¹⁵⁹ In so doing, Lawson repeats the verb used in Genesis for Adam’s prelapsarian work. See note [68] above.

Appendix: Poem Texts

I here present (for reading and cross-referencing convenience) the sections of *June* that subsequent Spenser poems echo and recycle most frequently, along with the full text of *Theatre* Epigrams 3 and 4, and Donne's "Twicknam Garden." The texts are the same as those cited in the chapters.

June

HOBBINOL

Lo *Colin*, here the place, whose pleasaunt syte
 From other shades hath weand my wandring mynde.
 Tell me, what wants me here, to worke delyte?
 The simple ayre, the gentle warbling wynde,
 So calme, so coole, as no where else I fynde:
 The grassye ground with daintye Daysies dight,
 The Bramble bush, where Byrds of euery kynde
 To the waters fall their tunes attemper right.

COLIN

O happy *Hobbinoll*, I blesse thy state,
 That Paradise hast found, whych *Adam* lost.
 Here wander may thy flock early or late,
 Withouten dreade of Wolues to bene ytost:
 Thy louely layes here mayet thou freely boste.
 But I vnhappy man, whom cruell fate,
 And angry Gods pursue from coste to coste,
 Can nowhere fynd, to shouder my lucklesse pate.

HOBBINOL

Then if by me thou list aduised be,
 Forsake the soyle, that so doth the bewitch:
 Leaue me those hilles, where harbrough nis to see,
 Nor holybush, nor brere, nor winding witche:
 And to the dales resort, where shepheards ritch,
 And fructfull flocks bene euery where to see.
 Here no night Rauens lodge more blacke then pitche,
 Nor eluish ghosts, nor gastly owles doe flee.

But frendly Faeries, met with many Graces,
 And lightfote Nymphes can chace the lingring night,
 With Heydeguyes, and trimly trodden traces,
 Whilst systers nyne, which dwell on *Parnasse* hight,
 Doe make them musick, for their more delight:
 And *Pan* himselfe to kisse their christall faces,
 Will pype and daunce, when *Phæbe* shineth bright:
 Such pierlesse pleasures haue we in these places.

.....

Colin, to hear thy rymes and roundelayes,
 Which thou were wont on wastfull hylls to singe,
 I more delight, then larke in Sommer dayes:
 Whose Echo made the neyghbour groues to ring,
 And taught the byrds, which in the lower spring
 Did shroude in shady leaues from sonny rayes,
 Frame to thy songe their chereful cheriping,
 Or hold theyr peace, for shame of thy swete layes.

I sawe *Calliope* wyth Muses moe,
 Soone as thy oaten pype began to sound,
 Theyr youry Luyts and Tamburins forgoe:
 And from the fountaine, where they sat around,
 Renne after hastely thy siluer sound.
 But when they came, where thou thy skill didst showe,
 They drewe abacke, as halfe with shame confound,
 Shepheard to see, them in theyr art outgoe.

COLIN

Of Muses *Hobbinol*, I conne no skill:
 For they bene daughters of the hyghest *Ioue*,
 And holden scorne of homely shepheards quill.
 For sith I heard, that *Pan* with *Phoebus* stroue,
 Which him to much rebuke and Daunger droue:
 I neuer lyst presume to *Parnasse* hyll,
 But pyping lowe in shade of lowly groue,
 I play to please my selfe, all be it ill.

.....

(1-32; 49-64)

Epigram 3

Then heauenly branches did I see arise,
 Out of a fresh and lusty Laurell tree
 Amidde the yong grene wood. Of Paradise
 Some noble plant I thought my selfe to see,
 Such store of birdes therein yshrouded were,
 Chaunting in shade their sundry melodie.
 My sprites were rauisht with these pleasures there.
 While on this Laurell fixed was mine eye,
 The Skie gan euery where to ouercast,
 And darkned was the welkin all aboute,
 When sodaine flash of heauens fire outbrast,
 And rent this royall tree quite by the roote.
 Which makes me much and euer to complaine,
 For no such shadow shal be had againe.

Epigram 4

Within this wood, out of the rocke did rise
 A Spring of water mildely romblyng downe,
 Whereto approched not in any wise
 The homely Shepherde, nor the ruder cloune,
 But many Muses, and the Nymphes withall,
 That sweetely in accorde did tune their voice
 Vnto the gentle sounding of the waters fall.
 The sight wherof dyd make my heart reioyce.
 But while I toke herein my chiefe delight,
 I sawe (alas) the gaping earth deuoure
 The Spring, the place, and all cleane out of sight.
 Which yet agreues my heart euen to this houre.

Twicknam Garden

Blasted with sighs, and surrounded with teares,
 Hither I come to seek the Spring,
 And at mine eyes, and at mine eares,
 Receive such balme, as else cures every thing:
 But O, selfe-traitor, I doe bring
 The spider love, which transubstantiates all,
 And can convert Manna to gall;
 And that this place may thoroughly be thought
 True Paradise, I have the serpent brought.

'Twere wholsomer for me that winter did
 Benight the glory of this place,
 And that a grave frost did forbid
 These trees to laugh, and mock me to my face;
 But that I may not this disgrace
 Indure, nor leave this garden, Love let me
 Some senseless peece of this place be;
 Make me a mandrake, so I may groaw here,
 Or a stone fountaine weeping out the yeare.

Hither, with Christall vyals, lovers come,
 And take my teares, which are loves wine,
 And try your Mistresse Teares at home,
 For all are false, that taste not just like mine;
 Alas, hearts do not in eyes shine,
 Nor can you more judge women's thoughts by teares,
 Then by her shadow, what she weares.
 O perverse sexe, where none is true but she,
 Who's therefore true, because her truth kils me.

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