

Excess

AND THE

Mean

in Early Modern English Literature

Joshua Scodel



EXCESS AND THE MEAN IN EARLY  
MODERN ENGLISH LITERATURE



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PRINCETON UNIVERSITY PRESS

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COPYRIGHT © 2002 BY PRINCETON UNIVERSITY PRESS  
PUBLISHED BY PRINCETON UNIVERSITY PRESS, 41 WILLIAM STREET,  
PRINCETON, NEW JERSEY 08540  
IN THE UNITED KINGDOM: PRINCETON UNIVERSITY PRESS,  
3 MARKET PLACE, WOODSTOCK, OXFORDSHIRE OX20 1SY  
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**LIBRARY OF CONGRESS CATALOGING-IN-PUBLICATION DATA**

SCODEL, JOSHUA, 1958—  
EXCESS AND THE MEAN IN EARLY MODERN ENGLISH LITERATURE / JOSHUA SCODEL  
P. CM. (LITERATURE IN HISTORY SERIES)

INCLUDES BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES AND INDEX.

ISBN 0-691-09028-9 (ACID-FREE PAPER)

1. ENGLISH LITERATURE—EARLY MODERN, 1500–1700—HISTORY AND CRITICISM.  
2. MODERATION IN LITERATURE. 3. LITERATURE AND SOCIETY—ENGLAND—  
HISTORY—16TH CENTURY. 4. LITERATURE AND SOCIETY—ENGLAND—HISTORY—17TH  
CENTURY. 5. DIDACTIC LITERATURE, ENGLISH—HISTORY AND CRITICISM. 6. ENGLISH  
LITERATURE—CLASSICAL INFLUENCES. 7. TEMPERANCE IN LITERATURE. 8. POLARITY  
IN LITERATURE. 9. ETHICS IN LITERATURE. I. TITLE.

PR428.M63 S36 2002

2001059168

THIS BOOK HAS BEEN COMPOSED IN GOUDY

PRINTED ON ACID-FREE PAPER. ∞

WWW.PUPPRESS.PRINCETON.EDU

PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

1 3 5 7 9 10 8 6 4 2

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## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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I AM DEEPLY INDEBTED to Gordon Braden, David Bromwich, Jim Chandler, Michael Murrin, Janel Mueller, and Richard Strier for extraordinarily helpful readings of earlier versions of this book. For immensely useful responses to portions of this study (as well as for much else), I am very grateful to Ullrich Langer and David Quint; my sister Ruth Scodel; and cherished Chicago colleagues David Bevington, Sandra Macpherson, Lisa Ruddick, and Jay Schleusener. I thank Philip Gossett and Geoffrey Stone for graciously providing me with invaluable leave time, and Mary Murrell, Fred Appel, and Henry Krawitz for their editorial efficiency. For advice and aid let me also express my gratitude to Lauren Berlant, Douglas Bruster, Laura Demanski, Heather Dubrow, David Engster, Richard Goodkin, Achsah Guibory, Paul Hunter, Ralph Johnson, Aaron Kitch, Adam Krantz, Jim Lastra, Stephen Lewis, Paula McQuade, Steve Monte, Maria Parks, Steve Pincus, Hank Sartin, Christopher Segrave-Daly, Joshua Shaw, Steven Streed, Katie Trumpener, Peter White, and David Wilson-Okamura. I can also now, at last, thank Mayumi Fukui, Sarah Scodel, Harvey Scodel, Bettie Scodel, Barbara Scodel, and Lewis Kopel, who endured my volubly anxious travails with loving grace; and Hatsuaki and Kiku Fukui, who spurred me on with polite but nudging queries.

Earlier versions of portions of this book appeared as articles: chapter 1 in *Modern Philology* 90 (1993): 479–511, and sections of chapter 1 in *John Donne's Religious Imagination: Essays in Honor of John T. Shawcross*, ed. Raymond-Jean Frontain and Frances Malpezzi (Conway, Ark., 1995), 45–60; chapter 2 in *Creative Imitation: New Essays on Renaissance Literature in Honor of Thomas M. Greene*, ed. David Quint et al., MRTS, vol. 95 (Binghamton, N.Y., 1992), 89–126 (copyright Arizona Board of Regents for Arizona State University); and chapter 9 in *Comparative Literature* 48 (1996): 189–236. I am grateful for permission to reprint them here.

### NOTE ON CITATIONS

Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* is abbreviated throughout as *NE*. All citations and translations of classical texts are from the Loeb Classical Library except where it is noted that I have modified the Loeb translation or substituted my



own. Citations of church fathers are from the *Patrologia Cursus Completus . . . Series Graeca*, ed. J. P. Migne (Paris, 1857–1866) and the *Patrologia Cursus Completus . . . Series Latina*, ed. J. P. Migne (Paris, 1878–1890). Citations of Milton's poetry are from John Milton, *Paradise Lost*, ed. Alastair Fowler, 2d ed. (London, 1998), and *Complete Shorter Poems*, ed. John Carey, 2d ed. (London, 1997).

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## INTRODUCTION

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### Ancient Paradigms in Modern Conflicts

“WE MAY QUICKLY EXCEED a mediocrity, even in the praise of Mediocrity,” cautioned John Donne in a 1625 sermon.<sup>1</sup> With a destabilizing paradox, Donne invoked the venerable norm of “mediocrity” or the “golden mean” to warn his contemporaries against the danger of overuse. Twenty-first-century readers might well conclude that early modern authors, including Donne, celebrated the mean to excess. Yet, as his admonition suggests, the mean was not only a cultural commonplace but also a source of controversy.

This book studies English literary representations of means and extremes from the late sixteenth to the late seventeenth century. Classical in origin, the notion of a virtuous mean between two vicious extremes figured crucially in the writings of educated early modern English authors. Historians and literary scholars have studied the concept’s importance for the period’s struggles concerning the national church and the constitution. This study is the first, however, to examine a broad variety of literary treatments of the mean-extremes polarity as representations of major cultural tensions extending far beyond—though often related to—ecclesiological and constitutional conflicts. Early modern authors apply the schema to numerous aspects of personal and collective life in innovative, surprising, and contentious ways. Writers not only construct highly original versions of the mean; they also advocate various extremes.

Donne himself transforms the classical mean to promote individual freedom, while the aggressively modern Francis Bacon holds extremism necessary for human empowerment. Erotic literature pits extreme passion against temperate conjugal love; symposiastic or drinking-party poetry extols polemically defined norms of sociable moderation or of intoxicating excess. Imagining a modern rival to ancient Rome, georgic poets laud the nation as the embodiment of the golden mean, warn against national excesses, or urge extreme ways of increasing the nation’s power and wealth. Challenging his predecessors’ and contemporaries’ erotic, symposiastic, and georgic writings, John Milton deploys the mean to celebrate ideals of pleasurable restraint and self-respect that his countrymen have ignored to their peril. Such literary adaptations and transformations of an ancient opposition figure centrally in the emergence of a deeply divided, ambivalent, yet self-consciously modern English culture. In both conspicuous and subtle ways, furthermore, these clashing treatments of means and extremes continue to resonate within contemporary cultural debates.

## The Classical Mean in Early Modern England

The social and intellectual elite of early modern England often espoused Aristotle's definition, most fully developed in his *Nicomachean Ethics*, of ethical virtues as habits that preserve a mean between excess and deficiency in actions and emotions. Throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, as in the medieval period, Aristotle's works remained the core of the university curriculum. Accompanied by various medieval and early modern commentaries and epitomes, the *Nicomachean Ethics* was the major university text in ethics.<sup>2</sup> Numerous Latin translations made the work accessible to those with little Greek.<sup>3</sup> Cicero's *De officiis*, which invokes the "mean" ("mediocritas") and the closely associated notion of proper "measure" ("modus") to detail the behavior of the ideal Roman gentleman (1.25.89, 1.29.102–104, 1.35.129–1.39.140), was frequently reprinted both in Latin and in English translations. Taught in grammar schools as well, it was often treated as a more accessible companion to the *Nicomachean Ethics*.<sup>4</sup>

Recent scholars have drawn renewed attention to the powerful Stoic strands in early modern English thought.<sup>5</sup> Yet English authors frequently preferred Aristotelian "mediocrity" to the Stoic ideal of wholly extirpating the emotions. Mixing Aristotelianism with Augustine's famous critique of Stoicism (*De civitate dei* 9.5, 14.8–9), numerous writers argue that one should, for example, feel the appropriate amount of anger or pity toward a fellow human being, neither too much nor too little, rather than seek an apathy impossible in practice as well as inhumane and un-Christian as an ideal.<sup>6</sup> Taking up an ancient theme (Cicero, *De finibus* 5.8.22; Plutarch, *Moralia* 449a–c; Augustine, *De civitate dei* 14.9), early modern defenders of Stoicism also often minimized its differences from Aristotelianism by characterizing them as merely terminological in order to claim that Stoics, like Aristotelians, called for regulating rather than eliminating emotions. The eclecticism of Seneca, the most widely read and influential ancient Stoic, encouraged such a view. While often arguing in traditional Stoic fashion that passions were incapable of moderation and therefore must be extirpated, Seneca also claimed that virtue is in all things a mean between excess and deficiency (*De beneficiis* 2.16.2).<sup>7</sup>

Other widely read and admired classical authors of an eclectic philosophical bent, like Horace and Plutarch, offered nontechnical discussions and representations of the Aristotelian notion. These ancient authors encouraged early modern syncretism by associating the mean with values originally quite foreign to it, such as (in Horace's case) Epicurean hedonism.<sup>8</sup> Drawing on multiple pagan sources, various church fathers, including the vastly influential Augustine, invoked the mean as an ethical norm, treating virtues such as courage and liberality as means between excess and deficiency and calling for Aristote-

lian temperance with regard to bodily appetites. While simultaneously using and distrusting the Catholic Scholastics' Aristotelian formulations, English Protestants found in the church fathers purer assurance of the mean's compatibility with Christian faith.<sup>9</sup>

Early modern English authors of different religious, political, and social commitments and backgrounds often espouse the mean as a norm for everyday life. "The golden mean is best" is one of numerous sixteenth- and seventeenth-century proverbs in this vein.<sup>10</sup> Sixteenth- and seventeenth-century writers frequently extol "moderation," often equated with the Aristotelian mean.<sup>11</sup> The popularity of books on courtesy and manners, both homegrown and translated from continental sources, attests to the massive early modern concern with the regulation of behavior.<sup>12</sup> Influenced by Aristotle, Seneca, and especially Cicero, such works invoke the mean as a guide to well-nigh every aspect of gentle behavior.<sup>13</sup> Heavily indebted to Aristotelian notions, Protestant ministers and Galenic doctors alike preach the mean in conjugal love and sexual activity, diet, labor and recreation.<sup>14</sup> Though in tension with their professed zeal in God's cause, university-trained Puritan ministers resemble their more high church brethren in treating the Aristotelian mean as a norm for daily behavior in the world.<sup>15</sup>

Such extensive invocation of the mean as a norm, however, does not establish a homogeneous national culture among the educated elite, whether conceived of according to an old literary historicist Tillyardian model of a shared "world picture," an (early) new historicist model based upon a Foucauldian episteme or Geertzian seamless "culture," or the revisionist political historians' model of fundamental ideological consensus.<sup>16</sup> For one thing, widespread protestations that the mean was best entailed little agreement concerning how the principle was to be construed or deployed.

The mean is indeed a quintessential example of what post-Wittgensteinian philosophers call a "fuzzy" concept, whose borders are hard to define.<sup>17</sup> Aristotle, who emphasizes from the outset that ethical theory is perforce inexact in its general formulations and even more sketchy regarding particular cases of conduct, claims that it is difficult and rare to discern the virtuous mean (*NE* 2.2.3–5, 2.6.13–14, 2.9.1–2). He argues that because the mean is greater than vicious deficiency and less than vicious excess, a brave man appears reckless to a coward and appears cowardly to a reckless one. Furthermore, since one extreme is closer to the mean than the other (e.g., recklessness is closer to courage than cowardice), the extreme closest to the mean in particular displays a potentially deceptive "likeness" [*homoiotês*] to virtue (*NE* 2.8.1–8). In a circular argument that reveals the full—and avowed—imprecision of his central concept, Aristotle identifies the mean in any given circumstance as what the "prudent man" [*phronimos*], that is, the man who reasons correctly concerning what is proper to do and feel, would determine it to be (*NE* 2.6.15, 6.1.1, 6.5.1–3).<sup>18</sup> It is consequently not surprising, to take one example, that

widespread early modern exhortations that one should observe the mean in mourning for the dead—avoiding both excessive grief and inhuman, Stoic insensibility—left intense disagreement among English moral guides about precisely how much mourning was appropriate.<sup>19</sup>

More significantly, the mean's imprecision encouraged polemical manipulation and aroused hermeneutic suspicion. In his *Rhetoric*, when he is concerned with rhetorical efficacy rather than ethical discernment, Aristotle himself notes that the panegyrist should praise men's excesses as if they were the proximate virtuous means (1.9.28–29). Many ancient and early modern writers either laud or—more frequently—decry the ability of sophisticated speakers or social groups (courtiers were a favorite early modern instance) to denigrate virtuous means as their proximate extremes and to exalt proximate vices as virtuous means.<sup>20</sup> The ideal of the mean thus became an intense source of conflict.

### The Mean in Early Modern Religious and Political Controversies

The vagueness of the mean was both extremely evident and deeply troubling when extended beyond the Aristotelian list of virtues and opposing vices, where broad agreement existed about the general definitions—though not specific applications—to fundamentally contested areas of communal experience. The most conspicuous early modern disagreements concerning the proper understanding and application of the mean revolve around conceptions of the national church and constitution, the two central and interrelated sources of intense conflicts throughout the early modern period. Because these arguments form a crucial context for the literary and cultural developments foregrounded in this book, I will briefly discuss three aspects that are most relevant to my concerns: the dependence upon longstanding traditions of conceptualizing the mean; the malleability of the concept, which permitted its application to new situations and experiences even as it revealed its weakness as a source of consensus; and appeals to values in tension with the mean, which in turn precipitated attempts to reconcile those values with the venerable Aristotelian norm.

Both classical and patristic authors extended the Aristotelian mean to religious belief and practice. Plutarch influentially treated proper religion as a mean between extremes of superstition and atheism. The Cappadocian church fathers and Augustine conflated biblical images of the righteous “way” with the Aristotelian mean in order to define orthodox Christianity as a virtuous mean or “middle way” [*mesê hodos*, *via media*] between opposite heresies.<sup>21</sup> Drawing upon such formulations, the major rival churches of the Reformation promoted themselves as the virtuous “middle way” between (variously described) extremes.<sup>22</sup> Early modern Englishmen similarly applied the notion of

the Aristotelian mean to identify the national church as a *via media* between “popery” or Roman Catholicism and “extreme” Protestantism.

English espousals of the *via media* concealed numerous disagreements concerning the formula’s precise meaning. Members of the national church disagreed as to what constituted the “extreme” Protestantism ranged on the other side of “popery” (Anabaptism? English Presbyterianism? Genevan Calvinism?), which extreme was furthest from the mean, and what the most relevant criteria were for distinguishing the mean from the extremes (ceremonial practice? ecclesiastical structure? dogma?). The fluidity of the concept helps explain how the English church could be hailed by so many of its members as the *via media* from the late Elizabethan period through the Restoration even as it changed from a largely Calvinist to a largely Arminian church. Disagreements hidden in the vague formulation caused conflicts within the church between Puritans desiring further “reformation” and anti-Puritan conformists during the Elizabethan and Jacobean period and between Arminians and their opponents during the Jacobean and Caroline periods. These erupted into civil war in the mid-seventeenth century and continued to divide the church between high church and latitudinarian factions during the later seventeenth century. To muddy the middle path further, many Protestant opponents of the national church from the Elizabethan period through the Restoration, including both Presbyterians and Independents, claimed that they, rather than the errant established church, represented the middle way between “popery” and Protestant extremism.<sup>23</sup> Given the conflicting senses of the *via media*, literary historians have rightly emphasized the need for careful interpretation of the *particular* position of such complex literary professions of the *via media* as, for example, George Herbert’s lyric “The British Church.” Elsewhere I have explored Donne’s highly self-conscious positioning of the English church in his sermons, which draws upon various classical, patristic, and Scholastic formulations to draw polemical distinctions between true and false conceptions of the church’s middle way.<sup>24</sup>

Rival claimants to the *via media* regarded and attacked opponents as hypocritical representatives of a vicious extreme by, for example, equating Arminians with papists or Calvinists with sectarians. Many opposed Charles I and proceeded, however reluctantly, into civil war because they viewed the Arminian faction he supported as crypto-papist.<sup>25</sup> Yet the mean was not the only norm of religious debate and controversy. Since it was generally agreed that religious fundamentals were not to be compromised but intensely debated as to what these fundamentals were, zealous defenders of what they deemed “fundamental” reproached self-described moderate opponents for their sinful lack of religious conviction. These opponents were compared to the Laodiceans condemned in Rev. 3:15–16 as “lukewarm . . . neither cold nor hot.” For example, in his much-reprinted *A Coal from the Altar* (1615), the Puritan Samuel Ward attacked as Laodiceans those who complacently approved the

state of the church; in “commend[ing] the golden mean” and seeking “the name of a moderate,” they lost all proper “zeal.” While warning in Aristotelian fashion against “bitter zeale” beyond “moderation,” Ward preferred the former to deficient “lukewarmnesse,” the worse of the “two extremities.”<sup>26</sup> The palpable tension in Ward between Aristotelian norms and Puritan zeal prefigured the mid-seventeenth-century breakdown into opposing religious rhetorics.

As in the vituperative controversy between Joseph Hall and John Milton over episcopacy in the 1640s, debate was often polarized between self-described moderates (like Hall) and “vehement” or zealous opponents to lukewarmness (like Milton).<sup>27</sup> Should zeal trump moderation or vice versa? To avoid this troubling question, some strenuously sought to realign virtuous zeal with the mean, Laodiceanism with extremism. For example, in the heated days of 1642 Thomas Fuller distinguished between a Christian moderation consistent with reasonable zeal and Arminian “lukewarmness” regarding fundamentals of faith. Clarifying his distinction, Fuller redefined lukewarmness as an “immoderate unsettledness” that oscillated between “Papists” and Protestants rather than dwelling virtuously midway between Catholicism and extreme Protestantism. Richard Whitlock, who noted (like Aristotle) that the “Golden Meane” was misconstrued by opposing “Extreams,” responded to Interregnum disorder by distinguishing a “Well temper’d Zeale,” the virtuous mean, from the deficient extreme of “Lukewarmnesse” with which it was falsely identified by the overzealous.<sup>28</sup>

Similar contestations and reassertions of the virtuous mean emerged in early modern struggles over the constitution, which were closely intertwined with religious controversy. Disparate political factions throughout the period espoused a middle way. Moderation was commonly regarded as the central political virtue, essential to preserving political—and cosmic—order. For the early-seventeenth-century moral essayist William Cornwallis, moderation separated legitimate power from “tyranny” and “temper[ed] . . . the whole frame of the world”; without moderation, “extremes” would “ruine all.” Commonplace wisdom held that both monarch and subject should use moderation to preserve the constitutional balance of the royal prerogative and subjects’ liberty, a relation conceived of as a vague but normative mean between the extremes of tyranny and anarchy.<sup>29</sup>

The constitutional and religious turmoil of the Exclusion Crisis (1679–1681) arguably witnessed the earliest formation of political parties in the modern sense. Yet both supporters and opponents of Charles II appealed for political moderation and balance even while accusing the other side of extremism—either a republican/sectarian or absolutist/popish variant. To square intense partisanship with the norm of moderation, Tories also distinguished between virtuous moderation and unprincipled compromise by attacking those perceived as insufficiently committed as “trimmers” (a term invented during the Exclusion Crisis as a political analogue of Laodiceans).<sup>30</sup> As literary scholars

have shown, John Dryden's brilliant appeals to the *via media* in support of Charles II's political and religious policies (as well as his attacks on trimming) must be situated within the highly propagandistic rhetorical milieu of the Restoration.<sup>31</sup>

Calls for moderation during the Restoration expressed, sometimes explicitly, the ever-present fear on all sides of renewed civil war. During the civil war and Interregnum, such calls dramatically failed to preserve unity, and it is true, as Nigel Smith demonstrates, that "the middle ground was sacrificed to a series of increasingly confident and opposed views and rhetorics."<sup>32</sup> Yet throughout this period, alongside zealous religious and political positioning, members of the ever-evolving Royalist and Parliamentary camps often appealed to the mean and moderation—and in so doing revealed both how widely accepted a norm it was and how malleable it had become. Both Royalists and Parliamentarians initially appealed to a "mixed" monarchy or properly "tempered" (though differently conceived) constitution that restrained both king and subject from extremes.<sup>33</sup> After the regicide, Parliamentarians of various stripes continued to call for a constitutional balance that avoided extremes of monarchical tyranny and mob rule.<sup>34</sup>

In 1650, for example, Marchamont Nedham associated the political middle way with a republic rather than a mixed monarchy. Positioning the Commonwealth regime as the virtuous mean, he warned against the "tyrannical" rule of a conquering Charles II, on the one hand, and the "license" that is equivalent to "extreme tyranny" of the "multitude," with their "extremes of kindness or cruelty," on the other.<sup>35</sup> With numerous citations of classical and Renaissance authorities, Nedham here invoked the ancient and early modern commonplace that the irrational "multitude," as the Jacobean ethicopolitical writer Robert Dallington put it, "whirled with a . . . violent variation from one extreme to the other" rather than "keep[ing] any meane."<sup>36</sup> This commonplace comported as well with the elitist classical republicanism to which Nedham appealed as with diverse forms of Royalism: the Roman historian Livy, the advocate of republican liberty as a mean between tyranny and anarchic license, famously condemned the "multitude" [*multitu(do)*] as either "a humble slave or a haughty master" that could not "moderately" [*modice*] attain or keep the "mean" [*media*] of liberty (*Ab urbe condita* 24.25.8; trans. modified).

Quentin Skinner has argued that Nedham's contemporary Thomas Hobbes, the most brilliant and most reviled political philosopher of the period, addressed the longstanding laments concerning rhetorical manipulations of the mean by rejecting Aristotle's notion of ethical virtue as a "mediocrity." Hobbes replaced the Aristotelian concept with his own supposedly more accurate identification of virtue with behavior that contributed to peaceful order, which in turn entailed identifying virtue (with minor qualifications) with whatever the sovereign power declared it to be.<sup>37</sup> The conflicting political applications of the mean—and their ultimately violent consequences—make Hobbes's radical



maneuver comprehensible. Yet the dedicatory epistle of *Leviathan* (1651) reveals his awareness of the deep-seated appeal as well as the extreme plasticity of the *via media* that he seeks to eliminate at its Aristotelian roots: while his treatise promotes absolutism and attacks the generally commended notion of “mixt Monarchy” as a cause of civil war, the epistle describes his treatise as placed in the virtuous but vulnerable mean between those that “contend on one side for too great Liberty, and on the other side for too much Authority.”<sup>38</sup> The political *via media* to which Hobbes alludes as a rhetorical *captatio benevolentiae* outlasted his subsequent forcefully argued case for absolutism.

### Means and Extremes and the Variety of Early Modern Discourses

Outside the polemics over church and state, I shall argue, early modern authors treat the mean-extremes contrast in even more diverse and contradictory ways. Working in a variety of genres, they imagine new kinds of means—some idiosyncratic, some highly influential—unlike those deployed in religious and constitutional debates. They also formulate and frequently embrace various extremes that defy even the most tendentious construals of moderation invoked in disputes over the national church and state. While numerous early modern moralists apply the norm of the mean indifferently to both individuals and national institutions, some contemporary writers more flexibly deploy the mean-extremes distinction to explore the complex relationship between the individual, on the one hand, and national religious and sociopolitical formations, on the other. They use the mean-extremes polarity to define the freedom of the individual vis-à-vis religious and social institutions (Donne) or to empower the individual seeking fulfillment either in struggle for mastery over or in isolation from such institutions (Bacon). While exalting zeal over Laodiceanism in his 1640s polemics on church government, in *Paradise Lost* Milton applies his own ideal of the mean to represent the self-respecting individual and conjugal pair, rather than the church or state, as the proper locus of national values. Georgics and georgic-influenced poems exalt an ideal national representative who embodies the golden mean but whose identity is contested (is he farmer, poet, or king?). Authors proclaim as virtuously moderate or admirably excessive erotic and homosocial pleasures condemned by conventional moralists. Writers also promote new activities, such as Baconian scientific investigation, with their own rules regarding means and extremes. Thus, early modern English authors deploy the mean to express clashing understandings of themselves—their labors, pleasures, passions, and national identities.

Niklas Luhmann has characterized the complexity of modern societies in terms of relatively autonomous discursive “systems.” Luhmann argues that the modern period, broadly defined, witnesses an increasing move from sociopolitical stratification based on multifunctional institutions such as the state and

family to functional differentiation, in which social actors participate in a diverse set of partially autonomous systems (e.g., political, religious, economic, erotic, scientific). Each of these is for Luhmann a discourse, a system of communication dependent upon specialized terms and modes of analysis.<sup>39</sup> Some historians of early modern England support this general view. While religious controversy and national politics were continually intertwined during the period (and beyond), C. Johan Sommerville charts a powerful albeit uneven process of secularization in early modern England. He argues that religious faith did not decline; rather, the period witnessed a “growing differentiation of religious symbols and institutions” from other areas of English society and culture. Susan Amussen similarly explores the development of conflicting norms of manly behavior during the early modern period out of distinctive and “context-specific” religious and secular “codes.”<sup>40</sup>

On several counts I will take issue with Luhmann’s particular application of his argument to erotic discourse during the early modern period. His approach nevertheless illuminates the period’s deployments of means and extremes to articulate the distinct norms of specific domains of personal and collective life. It might appear paradoxical to analyze the mean-extremes contrast, found in so many different contexts, in terms of distinctive discourses, especially since authors often invoke the concept precisely in order to analogize between various aspects of life, all of which demand moderation. Yet writers also employ the mean-extremes polarity in strikingly disparate ways in different contexts. With varying degrees of self-consciousness, they treat persons as participants in diverse subsystems with distinctive standards and rules. Bacon, for example, applies means and extremes differently when he considers persons as political subjects or members of the national church, on the one hand, and as individuals with particular ethical, medical, or career goals, on the other. He also deploys the mean to differentiate between religious and scientific norms, as does Donne to contrast religious and political imperatives. To take another example, some erotic literature distinguishes between praiseworthy excess in love and moderation in other domains of life: lovers’ norms diverge from those of political subjects or economic agents. Georgic poets sometimes use contrasting or even contradictory rhetorics concerning moderation and excess when representing domestic politics or foreign trade and when considering Englishmen as subjects or as economic consumers. In literary studies, scholars of eighteenth-century culture have emphasized the “discursive divide[s]” (to use Liz Bellamy’s term) between, for example, ethical and economic discourse, as a defining characteristic of their period’s modernity.<sup>41</sup> Yet such discursive divisions and tensions are increasingly in play, I contend, from the late sixteenth century through the late seventeenth century.

Much new historicist work has focused on what Louis Adrian Montrose has called “the synchronic text of a cultural system,” that is, the relationship among contemporaneous literary and social “texts” conceived of as parts of a

unified, stable whole.<sup>42</sup> My work is, by contrast, doubly diachronic. I examine both changes in conceptions of means and extremes over the course of the early modern period and how those changes result from innovative appropriations of classical treatments of means and extremes. The very proliferation of ancient discourse about the mean upon which English authors drew—including many classical texts rediscovered during the period—not only provided extensive authority for the mean as norm but also increased its flexibility because of the numerous differences, large and small, within eclectic ancient texts about how the norm was to be understood, applied, and related to other philosophical tenets and values. Religious, political, and literary historians who have discussed the *via media* often treat the classical formulations as inert “background.” This book, by contrast, examines how early modern authors articulated the distinctiveness of their period and their individual positions by the energizing appropriation and transformation of diverse classical texts. By focusing on what I take to be the central ancient ethical concept in early modern English culture, my work complements such recent explorations as Andrew Shifflett’s and Reid Barbour’s concerning how early modern English authors mediated their responses to their changing times by their particular engagements with ancient philosophic schools.<sup>43</sup>

Construing “literature” in its broad early modern sense of learned writing,<sup>44</sup> this study examines argumentative prose as well as verse, fiction, and drama. I focus particularly on works that reward close reading because of their complex allusive relationships to classical models, self-aware handling of language, and often rich sense of literary genre. Engaging with classical treatments of the mean encouraged aesthetic self-consciousness. Aristotle compared the ethical mean to a “perfect work of craftsmanship, that you could not take from . . . nor add to” (*NE* 2.6.9; trans. modified), an analogy that parallels his claim that everything beautiful lies between the too large and too small (*Poetics* 7.8–10). He also applied the mean to rhetoric in order to warn against opposite stylistic vices (*Rhetoric* 3.3.3, 3.8.1–3, 3.9.6, 3.12.6), a practice subsequently adopted by numerous ancient authors.<sup>45</sup> Such analogies and parallels between ethical and aesthetic norms encouraged early modern English authors to forge their own diverse connections between the means or extremes they advocated and the language they deployed. Some writers, for example, adopted “middle” style deemed suitable for celebrating the mean, while others used sublime images or hyperbolic figures to glorify extreme states.

The works I examine often deftly exploit generic conventions and expectations. Literary genres are themselves “fuzzy” concepts best approached in terms of Wittgensteinian “family resemblance” rather than essential defining features: members of a genre variously relate to one another due to the ever-changing generic developments produced by influence, imitation, and innovation.<sup>46</sup> Nevertheless, early modern authors who work in widely recognized, traditional genres or “historical kinds” (to use Alastair Fowler’s term) self-

consciously evoke, by both similarities and differences, the longstanding generic traditions they engage. Such “historical kinds,” with their distinctive subject matters and styles, are indeed a particularly “sedimented” form, rife with powerful literary and cultural memories. By embodying “values of very long standing,” Fowler argues, genres may “partly resist period incorporation” and allow authors room to express visions beyond “immediate social contexts.”<sup>47</sup> The appropriation of genres from other places and other times, even when the author deviates from or decisively rejects the values of his major generic models, afforded broad perspectives and imaginative freedoms that would have been unavailable if various widespread contemporaneous beliefs had simply been accepted as absolute constraints. With their recognized deviations from pure veridical assertion, fictions or verse in particular gave writers flexibility with respect to communal values. Early modern representations of the mean-extremes opposition engage in dialogue not only with the ancient philosophical tradition in which the concept received its most sustained elaboration but also with diverse generic traditions in which the concept was imaginatively applied to different features of individual and social life.

This study will examine in detail the diverse ways that authors working in—and against—various genres deploy the mean-extremes contrast. Donne’s innovative early poems creatively appropriate Horatian satire and epistle. Early modern georgic poets diversely respond to their Virgilian model, which identified the mean with a farmer-soldier uneasily poised between rural idyll and imperial expansions. Authors of erotic literature imitate continental genres such as the Petrarchan sonnet, the chivalric romance, and Neoplatonizing pastoral romance that glorify passion in ways that challenge early modern English ethical discourse, with its calls for Aristotelian moderation in love. Symposiastic poets draw upon Anacreontic and Horatian depictions of both moderation and excess in drinking sharply at odds with much contemporaneous religious, medical, and economic discourse. Milton’s *Paradise Lost*, a magnificent instance of the Renaissance conception of epic as a kind of “encyclopedia” of literary forms, engages with various genres whose representations of moderation and excess it diversely adapts and transforms.

### Rationale and Overview

Throughout this study I have sought to balance the intensive analysis of individual authors who are particularly original or influential (or both) with broader accounts of thematic and generic trends. While trying to convey the extensive ramifications of my topic, I have not tried to be exhaustive. For example, I say little about Shakespeare, whose treatments of means and extremes deserve a book unto themselves.<sup>48</sup> Though I have sought to chart diverse major literary and cultural mutations in the representation of means and

extremes, I proceed thematically and generically rather than chronologically in order to preclude any misleading notion of unilinear change. Particular discourses and genres develop in different ways as authors simultaneously respond to the specific literary and intellectual traditions in which they participate and refract contemporaneous events and conflicts. This study traces no neat progression or clear shift from the celebration of the mean to the embrace of excess. Instead I chart a series of uneven developments in early modern authors' ongoing struggle to define and represent their values by deploying means and extremes.

What follows is an overview of the book's contours. Part I, "Two Early Modern Revisions of the Mean," analyzes how Donne (chapter 1) and Bacon (chapter 2) very differently and innovatively deploy classical and Christian conceptions of the mean-extremes polarity as tools to be exploited rather than commonplaces to be invoked. While many contemporaries use the mean to justify prevailing social and religious formations, in his early poetry Donne adapts it to enlarge the sphere of individual freedom. Spurning the English church's self-description as the *via media*, however defined, Donne draws on ancient and Renaissance skepticism to propose a new mean of inquiry between rash acceptance and rejection of opposed Christian churches. Eschewing both the celebration of courtly splendor and the reaction which glorified a given position in the social hierarchy as the ideal mean estate, Donne invokes a fluid mean between conventional social identities that legitimizes a socially mobile self. Donne's compelling adaptations of the mean, while highly idiosyncratic, anticipate various early modern extensions of the concept to the needs of individuals seeking to define their proper relation to powerful sociopolitical forces.

Rejecting the Aristotelian tradition as moribund, Bacon claims various kinds of extremism as essential for human empowerment. He agrees with contemporaries that rulers and subjects must adhere to the mean for sociopolitical order. When considering persons as individuals capable of transcending ascribed sociopolitical roles, however, Bacon advocates their flexible use of means *or* extremes, depending on their particular situations and goals. In support of his anti-Aristotelian program for natural philosophy, the most influential aspect of his thought, Bacon also advocates both means and extremes in daring fashion. Influentially expanding upon the notion of an intellectual mean expounded by ancient and Scholastic predecessors, Bacon condemns the Aristotelian scientific method as proud and irresponsible extremism while promoting his own as a sober, reasonable *via media* of the mind. Yet in formulating the ambitious goals of natural philosophy, he extends his interest in empowerment to all mankind and argues that proper scientific practice, seeking to transform the human condition by conquering nature, is fueled by a charitable extremism far superior to Aristotelian moderation. Bacon's flexible

espousal of both means and extremes reverberates throughout and beyond the seventeenth century as diverse followers appropriate his contradictory legacy.

The next six chapters move from individual authors to genres and discourses that have been widely studied in scholarship but whose particular uses of the mean-extremes opposition to articulate conflicting cultural, sociopolitical, and religious visions have been largely neglected. Different sections examine texts centered on very different concerns: rural labor, war, commerce, and nationhood; love and sexuality; wine and drunkenness. Modifying or transforming the classical mean-extremes contrast, these works offer rival visions of the good or happy life with diverse implications for individual and nation.

Part II, "Means and Extremes in Early Modern Georgic," argues that both the Donnean struggle with regard to the nature of the true mean and the Baconian flexibility regarding means and extremes shape divergent georgic visions of early modern Britain's promise and perils as a nation. Inspired by the contradictory uses of the mean in Virgil's *Georgics* to articulate Rome's destiny, Edmund Spenser's *Faerie Queene*, Joshua Sylvester's *Divine Weeks and Works of . . . du Bartas*, Michael Drayton's *Poly-Olbion*, and Milton's *L'Allegro* and *Il Penseroso* deploy competing cosmological, ethnographic, and sociopolitical visions of the golden mean to depict their visions of Britain as a modern rival to Virgil's Rome. All these works identify the farmer or a surrogate—including, most importantly, the georgic poet himself—with the golden mean and represent him as a national ideal. In so doing they challenge identifications of the nation with the monarchy and court. Georgic moderation is sometimes conceived of as harmonious cooperation with the "temperate" land and nation, but more often it is viewed as a laborious and even violent struggle against the excesses to which the land and nation are prone. While the first conception glorifies (albeit in patronizing fashion) a mean estate virtuously and happily rooted in a fixed place within the social hierarchy, moderation-as-struggle legitimizes the georgic poet, whose supposedly all-encompassing vision of social life defines him (like Donne in his early poetry) beyond existing social hierarchies.

After analyzing English georgic poems' celebrations of and exhortations to national temperance (chapter 3), I next examine the growing tensions in georgic poetry between the praise of moderation as the source of sociopolitical concord and celebrations of diverse sorts of extremism (chapter 4). By closely associating the temperate farmer with the imperial soldier as the foundations of Roman regeneration, Virgil's *Georgics* leaves a complex legacy promoting both national moderation and aggrandizement. Some English authors, including Spenser and Drayton, depict a composite ideal of the farmer-soldier who maintains some of the Virgilian emphasis upon moderation. Seventeenth-century English poets, however, more generally substitute members of the sociopolitical elite for humble farmer-soldiers as the source of national greatness and thus "co-opt" the antimonarchical and anticourtly implications of the

genre. Such English georgics as John Davies of Hereford's neglected *Microcosmos* (1603) and John Denham's vastly influential *Coopers Hill* (first published in 1642) exploit the tensions within the Virgilian genre. They suggest that the elite must not only embody and promote the mean for sociopolitical harmony but also indulge in or promote immoderate behavior for assuring national power and plenty—whether it be ruthless Machiavellian strategies, glorious imperial conquest, or “boundless” foreign trade and consumption of luxuries. In Restoration georgics partly inspired by Denham, Edmund Waller and Abraham Cowley treat virtuous moderation as an increasingly archaic norm while celebrating the growth of national wealth and might through trade and the Royal Navy's exploits. While the georgic traditionally employed a “middle” style appropriate for praising the temperate life, Denham and his heirs aspire to a sublimity worthy of English ambitions and achievements. By making the georgic a self-conscious expression of their nation's immoderate modernity—and its discontents—seventeenth-century poets ensure that the genre has a long poetic and cultural afterlife.

Part III, “Erotic Excess and Early Modern Social Conflicts,” considers challenges to traditional notions of moderation in the literature of love that parallel and, in places, oppose concurrent developments in georgic by pitting erotic passion against national loyalties. Though early modern English Protestant ministers emphasized the importance of Aristotelian moderation in conjugal relations, imaginative writers from the Elizabethan period to the Restoration increasingly exalted “extreme” passion. In so doing they undermined a key premise of the early modern gender hierarchy—the superiority of rational, self-controlled males to passionate, prone-to-excess females—and contested the traditional identification of men's intense passion for women with shameful effeminization. The ideal, moderate marriage was often associated with the “mean” estate, neither too high nor too low, or with the social order as a whole, based on the replication of ascribed status through marriage to spouses who were neither too much higher nor too much lower in rank. As I show in chapter 5, writers from the Elizabethan through the Caroline period challenged such assumptions in two distinct ways. Samuel Daniel and Thomas Lodge identified erotic extremism with the “true nobility” of the virtuous, whose passion for a socially superior beloved justified upward mobility. Philip Sidney's influential *Arcadia* and the Caroline court writings of William Davenant and Thomas Carew treated extreme passion in distinctively aristocratic fashion. In these texts all-consuming erotic obsession, represented either as devotion to one exalted beloved or as unrestrained indulgence in sensual appetite, served to distinguish the highborn lover from social inferiors, whose concern for “mediocrity” reflected a paltry investment in a “mean”—contemptible as well as middle—estate.

Focusing on Davenant's *Gondibert* (1651) and works of John Dryden and Aphra Behn, chapter 6 examines how the aristocratic cult of extreme passion

gained momentum during the mid- and late seventeenth century in dialectical interaction with the political and economic discourse concerning “interest.” Interregnum and Restoration writers of diverse political and religious positions claimed to be promoting the “public interest,” conceived of as including and balancing the legitimate interests of various political, socioeconomic, and religious groups. Interest discourse, even when deployed (as it often was) by defenders of the monarchy and the social hierarchy, opposed rational calculation to aristocratic excess. In response, Davenant, Dryden, and Behn contrasted interest—depicted as ignoble, mercenary deficiency and as the sordid reality behind claims to moderation—with the noble excess of overpowering erotic passion. Disputing traditional notions of effeminacy, Dryden celebrated self-sacrificing love on the part of both males and females that was all the more heroic—and “masculine” in its Stoic strength—because it struggled with intense desire. Behn, by contrast, transvalued conventional norms by depicting passion as rendering both genders passively—but gloriously—“feminine.”

In contrast to his Caroline dramas, which located ideal love at court, Davenant’s Interregnum epic romance placed erotic extremes within a pastoral world of retirement removed from public corruption even as the poem strove to reconnect the erotic and political realms. In his political and religious verse Dryden responded to successive crises by espousing a pro-court version of moderation. Yet in his dramas Dryden, like Behn in various genres, celebrated with lofty rhetoric and sublime images a private sphere of extreme passion pitted against a degraded public realm where base interest reigned. While contemporaneous georgic reevaluated luxurious consumption in “interest” terms as a contributor to the national wealth, Behn associated erotic passion with a luxurious prodigality nobly indifferent to public concerns. Though defending a residual aristocratic ethos against the norms of a commercial society, both Dryden and Behn influenced emergent middle-class representations of companionate marriage, which was increasingly celebrated as a haven of passion apart from the public world of economic and political interest.

Turning from erotic passion to what was at times its great rival and at other moments its accompaniment—love of the bottle—Part IV, “Moderation and Excess in the Seventeenth-Century Symposiastic Lyric,” explores lyrics in the Anacreontic and Horatian symposiastic tradition, in which the poet calls for or enacts a symposium or drinking party. Anacreontics and Horace called sometimes for moderate drinking with warnings against drunken violence, sometimes for a harmless drunkenness as a way of attaining poetic rapture or escape from mortal cares. English poets who adapt and transform ancient symposiastic poetry participate in major cultural conflicts of the period: between tavern norms of sociable pleasure and religious, Galenic, and mercantilist exhortations to observe the mean in wine drinking; between elite and popular modes of indulgence; and between diverse religious positions both within and outside the English church.



As chapter 7 details, English poets often distinguish refined drinkers of wine, a classically sanctioned as well as expensive beverage, from the crude and supposedly more disorderly imbibers of the notably nonclassical ale and beer. In generically and tonally complex poems that combine symposiastic topoi with antisymposiastic motifs, hyperbolic enthusiasm with sober moralizing, Ben Jonson reveals his ambivalence concerning wine drinking as a source of cultured pleasure and poetic inspiration that is also potentially excessive. His Caroline disciples simplify his legacy in one respect by defiantly celebrating drunkenness as a noble excess. They identify themselves with a classically sanctioned sociability, a court culture, and/or an anti-Puritan Catholicism or Arminianism superior to the hypocritical and antisocial morality of their religious critics. Yet the Sons of Ben also revive an ancient symposiastic motif ignored by Jonson: the anti-Aristotelian identification of heavy drinking itself with moderation insofar as it curtails unruly desires for what one does not have and fosters contentment with one's circumstances. In some of the most complex and varied drinking poems of the mid-seventeenth century, Robert Herrick simultaneously continues the Jonsonian celebration of the poet as an elite, inspired wine drinker and adapts the contentment topos to praise both himself and the lower orders in defiance of Puritan killjoys. Acknowledging but seeking to minimize the negative implications of social fragmentation, he portrays alehouse revels and neoclassical symposia as distinctive but parallel expressions of the need to escape from cares, each with its own dangers of excess.

Chapter 8 focuses on polarizations within symposiastic poetry during and after the civil war that ultimately brought the Anacreontic-Horatian tradition into disrepute. In the 1640s Richard Lovelace constructs a Royalist response to defeat that legitimizes intoxication as an appropriate response to hard times. Pitting Horatian decorum against Anacreontic recklessness and tempering drunken revelry with Stoic contentment, Lovelace's greatest poem, "The Grasse-hopper," suggests that symposiastic tradition has internal answers to its own excesses. Yet with mounting despair among Cavalier poets that they could do no more than ignobly survive, a nonclassical vulgarity also infects the drinking poetry of Lovelace and his contemporaries. His younger contemporaries Charles Cotton and Alexander Brome travesty classical motifs by celebrating mindless drunken and erotic excess as survival mechanisms for defeated Royalists. In two sonnets of the 1650s Milton disputes the identification of party poetry with the Cavaliers: he celebrates a temperate pleasure appropriate for supporters rather than opponents of the Parliamentary-Puritan revolution. In so doing Milton distances himself from the excesses not only of Cavalier symposiastic poetry but also of the Horatian verse that he emulates. Yet Milton's godly sonnets were not influential. During the Restoration Tories adapt Brome's drunken contempt for thinking to declare loyalty to the monarchy, which the happy tippler will not trouble, while libertines like John Wilmot, earl of Rochester, glory in the feverish pursuit of transgressive sympo-

siastic and erotic pleasure that diverge from Anacreontic-Horatian models of pleasurable contentment and testify, like erotic excess, to the aristocrat's superiority over déclassé self-control. Concurrently one finds a growing disdain for the symposiastic tradition on the part of an increasingly "polite" literary and social elite that pursued moderate convivial pleasures associated with rational discourse.

Milton, whose ventures in georgic and symposiastic poetry figure prominently in earlier chapters, takes center stage in the book's final section, part V, "Reimagining Moderation: The Miltonic Example." Forcefully responding to the valorization of extremes in English georgic, erotic, and symposiastic writings, Milton's *Paradise Lost* provides a simultaneously innovative and immensely influential representation of moderation. Despite his titular theme of loss, Milton presents unfallen Adam and Eve as models of a partially recoverable ideal. Wrestling from Cavaliers and Royalists a hedonist ethics first espoused by Xenophon, Milton has his Edenic couple discover in temperate self-restraint both a moral discipline and the source of truest pleasure. Adam and Eve's pleasurable restraint is grounded in their virtuous self-respect, represented as an Aristotelian mean and applicable in distinctive ways to husband and wife. Milton derives this conception of self-respect from a highly original synthesis of the Protestant glorification of conjugal relations and classical and classically inflected patristic views concerning human dignity. Against the Restoration he detested, Milton portrays pre-fallen Adam and Eve as evidence that self-governance depends upon norms of pleasurable moderation and of self-respect that his nation has ignored.

Despite the epic's politically contestatory stance, the focus on the married couple in Milton's quickly canonized poem vitally contributed to the general trend in early modern literature toward celebrating a private sphere of love. Milton's emphasis upon the first human couple allowed readers to imagine diverse relations between the values that ideally structured the self and existing social and political institutions. His depiction of Edenic conjugal love, both passionate and restrained, appealed to late-seventeenth- and eighteenth-century readers and writers of different religious and political persuasions for whom the domestic sphere had become the locus of affect and ethical reflection and who sought to reconcile traditional norms of conjugal moderation with opposed claims for intense passion. Furthermore, Milton's focus on a mean of self-respect as the foundation of self-restraint was profoundly in tune with the growing anti-Calvinist, Arminian strands within late-seventeenth- and eighteenth-century theology as well as more secular contemporary ethics. Miltonic self-respect, I argue, remains a recognizable ideal in liberal tradition down to our own time.

This study tries to recover, with both sympathy and rigor, the often strange modes of thought and imagination of a distinctive cultural period. Yet I take seriously the claim for modernity in the term "early modern" and see this

book as a partial genealogy of tensions and ambivalences within contemporary culture—necessarily partial, because so much has intervened between then and now. While early modern debates about the national church and constitution are of largely historical interest, the mean-extremes distinction continues to resonate in cultural debates in ways similar, sometimes strikingly so, to those I describe. At various points I suggest how recent viewpoints resemble and ultimately derive from positions that first came to prominence during the early modern period concerning individual and collective norms of reasonableness, pleasure, and passion. I have thus tried to maintain a *via media* of my own between identification and estrangement, which seems to me the appropriate response to an early modern past to which my readers and I are in diverse ways indebted.<sup>49</sup> Yet since one person's reasonable middle ground is another's excess or deficiency, I recognize that some will wish for either more or less "presentist" material. So let me close by reminding such readers that their dissatisfactions instantiate my theme.



PART ONE



Two Early Modern Revisions  
of the Mean

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## CHAPTER ONE

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### Donne and the Personal Mean

JOHN DONNE'S EARLY POETRY uses the notion of the mean so central to his contemporaries to articulate a distinctive ideological vision. His transformations of the mean emerge from his idiosyncratic classicism. Donne's spirited and independent engagement with ancient philosophy and literature gave him a vital critical distance from some of his culture's common habits of mind. Rejecting many of his contemporaries' use of the mean to justify prevailing religious and sociopolitical formations, he instead adapts the mean to enlarge the sphere of individual freedom. While English Protestants frequently lauded the national church as the virtuous middle way between Catholicism and extreme Protestantism, in "Satire 3" Donne spurns the English church's self-description as the *via media* and advocates a mean of skeptical inquiry between rash acceptance and rejection of any of the rival Christian denominations. Clergymen, country gentlemen, and urban panegyrists celebrated the virtue of the middle state between the humble and the great. In his verse epistle to Sir Henry Wotton, "Sir, more than kisses," Donne eschews this common deployment of the mean to glorify a fixed position in the social hierarchy—the middle state—and instead advances a mean that justifies a socially mobile self's freedom to maneuver between ranks.

At the time he composed these poems, Donne was unsure of his commitments.<sup>1</sup> He wrote "Satire 3" during a period of religious crisis (ca. 1596), after he had abandoned the Catholicism of his parents but before he joined the English church. As an ex-Catholic without confessional allegiance, Donne was a religious deviant in an England that punished nonconformity. The epistle to Wotton was probably written in 1597 or 1598, around the time Donne began his court career as secretary to Lord Keeper Egerton.<sup>2</sup> Though the son of a rich merchant, Donne often asserted his gentility with anxious pride and expressed contempt for the entrepreneurial and professional middle classes. Although drawn to the court as an avenue for gentlemanly advancement, he was also deeply aware of the precariousness of court careers and repelled by the subservience required to succeed. Both poems' transformations of the mean justify his lack of firm allegiances by celebrating transitional states between conventional religious and social identities.

Donne's use of the mean helps illuminate the relationship between early modern subjectivity and cultural institutions. In its early phase new histori-

cism emphasized that early modern persons were subjects indelibly shaped by cultural forces rather than the autonomous selves that some Renaissance figures and some Burckhardtian critics have celebrated. In *Renaissance Self-Fashioning* Stephen Greenblatt famously discovered no instances of “pure unfettered subjectivity” in the English Renaissance but only “human subject[s]” who were “remarkably unfree.”<sup>3</sup> Both new historicists and their critics have subsequently devoted much theoretical energy to articulating intermediate positions between freedom and subjection conceived as exhaustive binary opposites. Yet such accounts generally treat early modern texts as enacting or dramatizing relations between selves and their culture that the contemporary scholar must theorize and thereby retrospectively clarify.<sup>4</sup> By contrast, Donne’s middle way between the wholesale acceptance or rejection of cultural norms provides a compelling case of an early modern figure’s self-conscious attempt to articulate an intermediate position with his own literary and philosophical tools.

### Reimagining the Mean of Courage

“Satire 3” is one of three verse satires in which Donne follows Horace (*Satires* 1.1–1.3 and 2.2–2.3) by invoking the mean. Unlike the satiric Horace, however, Donne does not treat the mean as an unproblematic norm. Near the end of both his second and fourth satires, he uses the mean-extremes polarity to treat issues or characters peripheral to the central issues that he confronts. Both passages allude nostalgically to Horace’s secure stance, evoking a stable moral vision unavailable to Donne and incapable of explaining the most powerful evil forces of his world.<sup>5</sup> By contrast, in “Satire 3” Donne transforms the ancient mean to undergird his search for “true religion” in his own world of competing sects and difficult life choices.

“Satire 3” opens with a burst of intense but conflicting emotions as the poet confronts the sinfulness of his times: “Kinde pittie chokes my spleene; brave scorn forbids / Those teares to issue which swell my eye-lids.” In the third line, “I must not laugh, nor weepe sinnes, and be wise,” the poet admonishes himself to control his strong feelings with an allusion to an ancient satiric topos concerning the proper response to the flaws of humanity. Juvenal’s *Satire* 10 commends both Democritus’s laughter and Heraclitus’s weeping as wise responses to human frailties. Juvenal presents laughter as more natural, however, thus implicitly associating his poem’s stance with Democritus (ll. 28–53).<sup>6</sup> In “Satire 4” Donne similarly adopts the Democritean attitude when he claims that a court fop would make even Heraclitus laugh (l. 197). In one of his paradoxes, which were probably written during the same period as the satires, Donne also expresses a preference for laughter but notes that both responses are extreme: “The extremity of laughing, yea of weeping . . . hath

beene accounted wisdom: and *Democritus* and *Heraclitus* the lovers of these extremes have beene called lovers of wisdom.”<sup>7</sup> “Satire 3,” by contrast, deviates from both Juvenal and other Donnean works by suggesting that true wisdom will avoid such emotional extremes.

Donne’s rejection of laughter and weeping sounds Stoic. Seneca argues that the wise man should “calmly” accept human faults without either laughing or weeping because he should not trouble himself with others’ misfortunes (*De tranquillitate animi* 15.2–5). Seeking dispassionate detachment from the world’s foolishness, Seneca here advises eradicating the emotions rather than bringing them to the mean, as Aristotle recommended.<sup>8</sup> Yet, like many of his contemporaries, Donne the satirist is more Aristotelian than Stoic regarding the emotions. He does not seek Stoic impassivity. Though he wants to avoid the extremes of laughter or weeping, he does not suggest that his “pitty” and “scorn” are themselves improper.

“Can railing then cure these worne maladies?” (l. 4) fully reveals that Donne seeks not Stoic detachment but rather an efficacious and therefore morally justifiable expression of emotion. “Railing” recalls Juvenal’s most familiar stance, the angry abuse that stems from *indignatio* (*Satire* 1, l. 79).<sup>9</sup> Yet Donne does not simply vent his rage in a Juvenalian outburst; instead he weighs the propriety of giving expression to his anger. His sense that expressing rage might be the best response to sin runs counter to Stoic but not to Aristotelian norms. Seneca argues that both Heraclitus’s weeping and Democritus’s laughter are better responses to folly than anger, the most violent emotion (*De ira* 2.10.5). Aristotle, by contrast, argues that there is a mean of virtuous anger (*NE* 4.5). It is not clear what the implied answer is to Donne’s question concerning “railing,” or whether the rest of the verse paragraph is to be interpreted as virtuous “railing.” What is clear, however, is that Donne desires to regulate rather than suppress his emotions properly as he confronts contemporary sins.

The rest of the verse paragraph continues to stress the dangers of extremism by depicting these sins as Aristotelian extremes. Complaining that men neglect “our Mistresse faire Religion” in favor of secular pursuits (l. 5), the poet berates as a “desperate coward” (l. 29) a “thou” (l. 15) who represents both himself and his reader. Donne often contrasts reckless desperation and cowardice as dual extremes opposed to courage. One Donnean paradox begins by noting that “extreames are equally removed from the meane: So that headlong desperatnes asmuch [sic] offends true valor, as backward cowardise.” Another paradox claims that “betweene cowardise and despayre valor is ingendred.”<sup>10</sup> The satire’s oxymoronic “desperate coward” is a new version of Aristotle’s rash man. Although Aristotle contrasts rashness and cowardice as excess and defect on either side of courage, his detailed analysis of the rash man breaks down the distinction between these extremes by arguing that rash men are generally “rash cowards” (“*thrasudeiloi*,” *NE* 3.7.9) who exemplify Aristotle’s



view that vicious men often combine opposite extremes because they lack the self-consistency of the virtuous (*NE* 3.7.9; *Eudemian Ethics* 3.7.13–14). The rash man “pretends to courage which he does not possess,” is overly bold in situations that are not actually threatening, but is unable to endure truly frightening ones (*NE* 3.7.8–9).<sup>11</sup> Donne’s “desperate coward” similarly collapses the distinction between the two extremes: he “seem[s] bold” in recklessly fighting in “forbidden warres” but is afraid to fight the spiritual battle “appointed” by God (ll. 29, 32).<sup>12</sup>

Donne’s list of the various kinds of “desperate coward,” a gallery of sixteenth-century character types, underscores their extremism. Reversing conventional depictions of military men as boldly active and of lovers as meekly passive in order to emphasize the mad excesses of both, Donne opens with a soldier who entombs himself in “ships wooden Sepulchers,” thus making himself a “prey,” and ends with a gallant amorist who attacks others with sword or “poysounous words” (ll. 18, 28). Thus Donne, the love poet and (probably soon-to-be) participant in the 1596 Cadiz expedition, castigates his own extreme impulses. The imagery of hot and cold used to describe the middle figures of vice, the explorers and buccaneers, similarly emphasizes their extremism, which ancient and Renaissance texts often describe in terms of the contraries of hot and cold.<sup>13</sup> In “Oh, to vex me, contraryes meete in one,” a sonnet lamenting his own sinful mixture of opposite extremes, Donne laments that he is “ridlingly distemperd, cold and hott” (l. 7). The explorers and adventurers who use their internal “fire to thaw the ice / Of frozen North discoveries” (ll. 21–22) and endure “fires of Spaine, ’and the line” by being “thrise / Colder then salamanders” (ll. 22–24) seek out drastic situations to justify their lack of moderation.

As he proceeds, Donne transforms the Aristotelian mean of courage by adapting a patristic revision of Aristotelian ethics. Aristotle argues that the courageous man has the proper amount of fear and can therefore face death in battle, the most terrifying thing (*NE* 3.7.5, 3.6.6–9).<sup>14</sup> In his *Divinae institutiones* Lactantius agrees with the Aristotelians against the Stoics that virtue depends upon proper regulation rather than eradication of the emotions. The Latin father argues, however, that only Christians are able to control their emotions properly by attuning them to God’s order. He claims that the Christian’s fear of God is in fact “greatest courage” [*summa . . . fortitudo*], for it allows the Christian to face even the most painful death (6.17). Adapting Lactantius’s point, Donne identifies the fear of damnation with “great courage” (ll. 15–16) and claims that the truly courageous, God-fearing man dares to confront the most terrifying things, the “foes” of God, the infernal triad of the devil, world, and flesh that the poet proceeds to describe (ll. 33–42).

In a paradox asserting that “only Cowards dare dye,” Donne argues from the Aristotelian premise that courage is a mean between recklessness and

cowardice to a radically non-Aristotelian conclusion. While Aristotle distinguishes between the brave man's willingness to die in battle and the coward's desire to escape from life through suicide (*NE* 3.7.13), Donne's paradox deflates the norm of traditional military heroism by condemning all who court death as simultaneously reckless and cowardly suicides: whoever "run[s] to death unimportun'd" incurs "condemn'd desperatness" and whoever "dares dye to escape . . . anguishes" is a coward unwilling to endure the "warfare" of life.<sup>15</sup> In "Satire 3" Donne broadens his rejection of traditional concepts of valor by condemning as rash and cowardly suicides all who risk killing or being killed in secular strife rather than fight the spiritual war demanded by God. Such people seek suicide in a deeper sense than Aristotle envisioned. They court damnation, the death of their souls.

Donne's image of the truly courageous man as one who would "stand / Sentinell in his [God's] worlds garrison" (ll. 30–31) suggests how closely he identifies the "desperate coward" with the reckless and cowardly suicide. The image recalls Saint Paul's Christian soldier, who "stands" firm against his spiritual foes (Eph. 6:11–17); expanding on Paul, Christian writings from Lactantius's *Divinae institutiones* (7.27) to Erasmus's *Enchiridion Militis Christiani* warn that failure to persevere as a *miles Christianus* causes the "death" of one's soul.<sup>16</sup> Donne's image also evokes a classical and neoclassical topos condemning suicide based on an influential mistranslation of a passage in Plato's *Phaedo*. Refusing to commit suicide, Socrates argues that man dwells in a "prison" ("phroua," 62b) that he has no right to leave until God bids him to do so; ancient and Renaissance readers often gave *phroua* the (contextually implausible) meaning of "garrison."<sup>17</sup> In critiques of suicide based directly or indirectly on this passage, Cicero, John of Salisbury, Erasmus, Montaigne, Philip Sidney, and Edmund Spenser compare man to a soldier who cannot leave his garrison.<sup>18</sup>

The classical refusal of suicide is balanced by a refusal to cling to life. In the *Phaedo* Socrates refuses to avoid death by renouncing his philosophic mission, just as he refuses to embrace death (61c). In *De senectute* Cicero introduces the prohibition of suicide by noting that old men should no more avidly seek than violently reject continued life (20.72). Donne christianizes this classical ideal of equilibrium as a standing guard in spiritual battle, a religious mean between the excess of attacking in "forbidden" wars and the defect of retreating from the "appointed" battle. In *Pseudo-Martyr* (1610) Donne suggests once more that such a stationary position is a religious mean. Attacking the Jesuits' supposed pursuit of martyrdom as a reckless impetus to suicide, Donne notes: "The way to triumph in secular Armies, was not to be slaine in the Battell, but to have kept the station. . . . As it was in the Romane Armies, so it ought to be taught in the Romane Church, *Ius legionis facile: Non sequi, non fugere*. For we must neither pursue persecution so forwardly, that our natu-

rall preservation be neglected, nor runne away from it so farre, that Gods cause be scandaliz'd, and his Honour diminished."<sup>19</sup> The satire's Christian sentry is Donne's earlier version of the "easy law of the legion"—"Not to pursue, not to flee"—that saves men from suicidal extremes.

### Reimagining Religious Extremes

While the first verse paragraph of "Satire 3" identifies religious devotion with the courage to abandon secular pursuits in order to fight traditional Christian enemies, the second paragraph identifies it with the courage to seek true Christianity in a world of warring, state-imposed sects. Those who simply accept one of the national churches provide Donne with satiric examples of how not to seek true religion. Some of the satiric portraits have Juvenalian models, but their careful arrangement recalls Horatian depictions of opposite deviations from the mean rather than Juvenal's looser mode of progression. Donne first presents a triad of characters who embrace Roman Catholicism, Geneva-style Calvinism, and the English church. Because members of the English church often lauded it as the mean between the excessive and deficient ceremonialism that they ascribed, respectively, to Catholicism and radical Protestantism,<sup>20</sup> readers might have expected Donne to attack the first two characters' extremism and then praise the third's embrace of the English middle way. After satirizing the first two figures as extremes, however, Donne pointedly refuses to treat the third as the mean. *Mirrheus* chooses Catholicism, *Crants* his Calvinism on the basis of opposing "humors" (l. 53) or irrational preferences for various contraries (old versus young, ornamented versus plain, courtly versus rustic). Their respective attachments to the "ragges" of a "thousand yeares agoe" (ll. 46–47) and to a "yong" (l. 51) religion recall the contrast between what the Elizabethan prayer book describes as those "addicted to their old customs" and those "so newfangled that they would innovate all things."<sup>21</sup> Yet by comparing *Mirrheus*'s fondness for Roman "ragges" with Englishmen's fawning at a monarch's "statecloth" (ll. 47–48) and *Crants*'s love for Genevan "plaine" simplicity to a "lecherous" preference for "country drudges" (ll. 51, 53–54), Donne associates deviations from the supposed mean of the English church with two extremes of English social life: the slavish life at court, which Donne attacks at length in "Satire 4," and the coarse rustic life.<sup>22</sup> Moreover, *Graius*, the third figure, does not avoid extremes by staying "at home" (l. 55) in the English church but instead mixes them with a perverse embrace of contraries. Impressionable and subservient, he obeys corrupt elders, preachers who act simultaneously like "Godfathers" and "bauds," and laws "Still new like fashions" (ll. 56–57, 59), religious statutes that are as young as *Crants*'s church and as insubstantial as *Mirrheus*'s rags.

The name *Mirrheus* suggests a fondness for myrrh as ritul incense and thereby evokes an excessive reverence for “popish” ceremony and the defunct, since myrrh figured prominently in early Christian funerary rites (as attested, e.g., in Prudentius’s “*Hymnus circa exequias defuncti*,” ll. 51–52). *Crants*, a Dutch name, encodes allegiance to a foreign Calvinist church. “*Graius*,” the Latin for “a Greek,” is more puzzling. This enigmatic name is probably intended to make the Englishman’s allegiance to his national church seem literally alien. It also recalls Juvenal’s depiction of the typical Greek as an empty sycophant who not only does whatever his patron commands but also derives his opinions and even his facial expressions from his patron (*Satire* 3, ll. 73–80, 100–106). Donne’s allusion underscores that the typical English conformist, who thinks precisely what the authorities “bid him thinke” (l. 57), has forfeited his identity to the powers that be.

The first triad thus fails to locate a positive model. Having disposed of prevailing approaches to religious allegiance, Donne begins afresh with a second, unconventional triad composed of extreme figures who reject and accept all the religious sects plus the poet’s vision of the true mean adumbrated in the poem’s final exhortative section. Unlike the preceding characters, the two extreme figures in this second triad, *Phrygius* and *Graccus*, do not evade the problem posed by religious diversity through superficial preferences for the various national churches:

Carelesse Phrygius doth abhorre  
 All, because all cannot be good, as one  
 Knowing some women whores, dares marry none.  
 Graccus loves all as one, and thinks that so  
 As women do in divers countries goe  
 In divers habits, yet are still one kinde,  
 So doth, so is Religion; and this blind-  
 nesse too much light breeds. . . .

(ll. 62–69)

Insofar as *Graccus* and *Phrygius* have genuine reasons for their views, they approach what Donne will reveal as the proper stance. Yet they reason themselves into opposite extremes. *Phrygius* is spiritually deficient in joining “none,” while *Graccus* is excessive in regarding “all” sects as valid.<sup>23</sup> Donne deepens his attack, moreover, by suggesting that both figures actually combine rather than avoid opposite extremes.

*Phrygius* is “carelesse” primarily in the sense of “reckless.” He responds to the diversity of churches and the evident impurity of some with a rash decision to have “none.”<sup>24</sup> His “abhorre[nce]” implies dread as much as hatred, however, and he is not only rash but also cowardly in giving up the search for “true religion” out of excessive fear. Donne’s comparison of *Phrygius* to one who “dares marry none” indeed makes him a “desperate coward” like those

who “dare” to neglect religion in the first verse paragraph or those who “dare dye” in Donne’s paradox concerning suicides: he rashly denies himself the possibility of finding salvation within a true church because he is overly afraid of the possibility of being damned by the choice of a false one.

The philosophical resonance of the epithet “carelesse” reveals the self-defeating nature of Phrygius’s stance. Richard Strier has suggested that “carelesse” evokes *ataraxia* or tranquility, the ancient philosophical ideal of being without care.<sup>25</sup> Though Phrygius is too fearful actually to *be* “carelesse” in this sense, he clearly *seeks* personal tranquility by avoiding religious commitment. *Ataraxia* was the goal of the major Hellenistic philosophical sects—Stoicism, Skepticism, and Epicureanism—all of which advocated ways of detaching oneself from the world and thereby gaining tranquility. We have seen Donne eschew Stoic calm at the very opening of the verse, and the satiric portrait of Phrygius completes the poet’s rejection of the ancient ideal of detachment. Phrygius represents both a kind of Skepticism and a kind of Epicureanism, which the erotic analogy links as parallel and equally vain attempts to attain tranquility by suppressing the desire for knowledge, whether cognitive or erotic. Responding to the epistemological uncertainty caused by the diversity of philosophical sects, the ancient Skeptics sought tranquility by eschewing all doctrines; Phrygius responds to the diversity of religious sects by avoiding all churches. Epicureans sought tranquility by avoiding pain and those pleasures that could cause pain, such as erotic love; they consequently did not marry.<sup>26</sup> Donne’s erotic analogy suggests that, like the Epicureans, Phrygius seeks to avert possible pain by refusing to marry a (spiritual) mistress.

Through a pun, Donne’s epithet “carelesse” further associates Phrygius’s spiritual deficiency with an Epicurean avoidance of love. Like its counterpart *cura* in Latin poetry, “care” in English Renaissance poetry can refer to a loved object, love itself, or the anxieties and pains of love.<sup>27</sup> In sonnet 48 Shakespeare calls his beloved “mine only care.” In *King Lear*, after Cordelia refuses to pledge all her love to her father, the enraged Lear exclaims, “Here I disclaim all my paternal care . . . / . . . / And as a stranger to my heart and me / Hold thee . . . for ever.” In “A Lecture upon the Shadow,” Donne recalls to his mistress their anxious “infant loves,” when “Disguises did, and shadowes, flow / From us, and our care” (ll. 10–11). Being “careless” thus can connote being without love and its attendant pains: a poem in *Tottel’s Miscellany* presents a “carelesse” man “scorning” the servitude of love, while the Jacobean courtier-poet Robert Ayton asks a woman who “careless prove[s]” why she pretends to “love.” In a poem ascribed to Virgil by Renaissance critics, the speaker reveals the Epicurean’s emotional sacrifice when he bids farewell to his beloved, his “care of cares” [*o mearum cura . . . curarum*], so that he can pursue Epicurean *ataraxia*, a life “free of care” [*ab omni . . . cura*].<sup>28</sup> In “Satire 3” Phrygius makes a far greater sacrifice in his quest for tranquility: he is without care only to

the extent that he is without spiritual love or beloved, having suppressed all attachment to "our Mistresse faire Religion."

Yet his rejection of a specifically spiritual object of desire is itself true to Epicurean principles, for the Epicureans spurned traditional religion, just as they spurned erotic attachment, as a threat to tranquility. They denounced conventional religion as superstitious fear, and critics accused them of escaping superstition only by going to the opposite extreme of "carelesse" irreligion. Plutarch claimed that the Epicureans, like Phrygius, foolishly spurned religious faith in order to be "fearelesse and carelesse."<sup>29</sup> An Elizabethan moralist, who, like many of his contemporaries, felt that such Epicurean disbelief was on the rise, similarly deplored the "carelesse cogitations" of the irreligious philosophical sect.<sup>30</sup>

Donne's Graccus, by contrast, is described as a religious libertine: loving all sects, like all women, equally much and therefore equally little. Like Phrygius, he is both excessive and deficient: by "too much light," by seeking to be too enlightened or by blithely accepting the supposed "light" of all denominations, Graccus falls into "blindnesse," the inability to distinguish the light of "true religion." Since "breeds" activates the latent sense of "light" as "wanton, unchaste" (*OED* s.v. "light," 14b), Donne's claim that "too much light breeds" Graccus's "blindness" evokes the widespread Renaissance belief that sexual excess caused blindness.<sup>31</sup> Donne thereby suggests an erotic analogue for Graccus's combination of spiritual excess and defect.

Like Phrygius, though in an opposite way, Graccus avoids difficult but necessary choices. By accepting all religious sects as valid on the grounds that, like women, they are still "one kinde" despite their "divers habits" (l. 67), he avoids the superficial choices of the first three figures but irresponsibly evades the problem recognized by Phrygius, who knows "some women" are "whores." Donne bids his reader and himself to seek "true religion" (emphasis mine), not religion as such; to be a "Religion" is not necessarily to be a "true religion" any more than to be a woman is necessarily to be an honest one. In "The Indifferent," one of Donne's libertine lyrics, the speaker claims he can love any kind of woman as long as "she be not true" and not "binde" him to reciprocal fidelity (ll. 9, 16). As a secular Graccus, Donne realizes that erotic license is irreconcilable with norms of truth and troth.

A further pun reenforces Graccus's self-serving suppression of crucial distinctions. Aristotle defines virtues and vices as *hexeis*, normally translated into Latin as *habitus* and in Renaissance English as "habits." Donne's elegy "On his Mistris" uses the pun when he begs his beloved not to follow him as a disguised page and not to "change / Thy bodies habit, nor mindes" (ll. 27–28); "habit" can apply to mind as well as body, constitutive ethical dispositions as well as superficial appearances.<sup>32</sup> The pun on "habits" undercuts Graccus's love of all churches: while the dressing of a church or woman may not matter, their "divers habits" in the sense of divergent dispositions define them as good

or bad. The names Phrygius and Gracchus clarify Donne's attitude toward their positions. Donne derived his two names from an attack on Roman "effeminacy" in Juvenal's *Satire 2*. Juvenal ends a thirty-five-line section inveighing against men who shamefully participate in rituals traditionally restricted to women by comparing such ceremonies to the Phrygian rites of Cybele, at the climax of which men castrate themselves, and proceeds in the next twenty-six lines to mock the marriage of the transvestite Gracchus.<sup>33</sup> "Why wait any longer," Juvenal exclaims, "when it were time in Phrygian fashion [*Phrygio more*] to lop off the superfluous flesh? Gracchus . . . is now arraying himself in the flounces and trailing habits and veil of a bride" (ll. 115–117, 124–125; trans. modified). Juvenal attacks the Phrygian rites and the Gracchian transvestite marriage as random examples of "effeminacy" without pursuing the relationship between such diverse ways of losing one's "manhood." Donne was clearly struck, however, by the contrast between the Phrygians' self-emasculation through the removal of what is essential, the far from "superfluous flesh," and Gracchus's self-emasculation through the addition of what is unnecessary, elaborate female finery. This contrast begins to explain why Donne gives Juvenalian names to religious extremists figured in terms of sexual deficiency and excess.

Though "Satire 3" rejects the association of courage with actual war, Donne's redefinition of courage in terms of spiritual battle and a male quest for "true religion" is conventional in its masculinist assumptions. Following Juvenal and other classical authors, Elizabethan satirists often attack those deemed effeminate by labeling them as emasculated Phrygians: Edward Guilpin sneers at a pederastic "Batchelor *Del Phrygio*," while John Marston scornfully bids a cowardly "*Phrigo*" not to fear a duel and mocks a "prettie *Phrigo*" who abases himself before his mistress.<sup>34</sup> In his elegy "The Perfume" Donne claims that "to be call'd effeminate" is "the greatest staine to mans estate" (ll. 61–62), and in "Satire 3" his choice of a name underscores that Phrygius, who fears to join a church, is "less" than a man. Donne's likening of Phrygius to a marriage-shy bachelor makes the accusation of self-emasculation particularly apt: one may compare Erasmus's colloquy "*Proci et Puellae*," whose speakers agree that men who abjure marriage out of fear of carnal sin castrate themselves.<sup>35</sup>

The name Phrygius is especially appropriate, moreover, as an indictment of one who fears religious commitment. Both pagan and patristic writers describe Phrygian eunuchs as "nor man nor woman" (Ovid, *Ibis*, l. 455).<sup>36</sup> Donne uses the name to construct a conceptual pun on "neuter," a word not present in his text, which in both Latin and Renaissance English had not only its modern meaning but also that of "taking neither one side nor the other" (*OED* s.v. "neuter," 2). William Perkins draws on the specifically religious application of "neuter" when he complains that "the world abounds with atheists, epicures" and "neuters that are of no religion."<sup>37</sup> Donne's implicit pun reinforces the link between religious abstention and a deficiency of "manliness."

The charge of Phrygian self-mutilation is also an apposite attack on one who avoids religious choice in imitation of ancient Epicureans and Skeptics. Cicero characterized the pain-avoiding Epicureans as “effeminate” and “soft” (*Tusculan Disputations* 2.6.15, 5.31.88); so did Seneca (*De beneficiis* 4.2.1). Critics of Epicureans and Skeptics accused them of cutting off natural human (i.e., male) cognitive and erotic impulses and, consequently, of advocating self-emasculation. The Skeptic Archesilaus mocked his Epicurean rivals for making Galloi, or Phrygian eunuch-priests, out of men. The Stoic Epictetus extended the charge to both rivals. After comparing Epicurus to the Galloi, Epictetus claimed that just as those who castrated themselves were unable to cut off sexual desires, so Epicureans who cut off everything that characterized a man failed to cut off desires, and Academic Skeptics, who denied all knowledge, failed to cut off their sense perceptions.<sup>38</sup>

Donne’s allusion to the Juvenalian Gracchus is also highly suggestive. Classical and Renaissance thinkers often treated a male’s excessive erotic interest in women as an “effeminate” loss of “manhood.”<sup>39</sup> There is thus a general appropriateness in Donne’s implicit comparison of his “effeminate” libertine Gracchus to the Roman poet’s would-be woman. Furthermore, by recalling Juvenal’s transvestite awaiting a husband, Donne underscores his own Gracchus’s extreme lability regarding objects of desire. Finally, the Donnean Gracchus’s flimsy reasoning that women who go in “divers habits” are nevertheless of the same “kind” takes on redoubled irony when one remembers that his Juvenalian counterpart presented himself as a woman simply by wearing the “trailing habits” (“longos habitus,” l. 124) of a bride. Donne’s allusion to Roman cross-dressing undercuts his Gracchus’s “blind,” self-indulgent confidence that he knows what “kinde” actually lies hidden beneath the surface “habits” of diverse religious denominations.

Hence Donne advocates seeking a mean position between Phrygian abstinence and Gracchus’s promiscuity. His claim that “thou / Of force must one, and forc’d but one allow” (ll. 69–70) demands that he and his reader seek a mean between Phrygius’s and Gracchus’s numerical extremes of “none” and “all.” The seeker must find the one true religion rather than remaining content with none, like Phrygius, and even under the force of persecution he must not concede the validity of more than one religion, like Gracchus.

### Donne’s Skeptical Mean

Donne’s satire proceeds, however, to promote a mean position based, like Phrygian irreligion, on ancient Skepticism.<sup>40</sup> Donne’s exhortation “Be busie to seeke her, beleeve mee this, / Hee’s not of none, nor worst, that seekes the best” (ll. 74–75), his command that one “doubt wisely” (l. 77), and his claim that “To stand inquiring right, is not to stray” (l. 78) all use the vocabulary



of Pyrrhonist Skepticism found in Sextus Empiricus, an author influentially rediscovered in the late sixteenth century.<sup>41</sup> Sextus claims Pyrrhonists were variously called “inquirers” [*skeptikoi*] and “seekers” [*zêtêtikoi*] because they professed to search ceaselessly for the truth and “doubters” [*aporêtikoi*] because they doubted all dogmatic claims.<sup>42</sup> There is a crucial difference, however, between Phrygius’s skeptical position and the one that Donne recommends.

The relationship between two major elements in ancient Pyrrhonism has puzzled commentators. For Sextus Empiricus *ataraxia* is the Skeptic’s goal, and his means to that end is *epochê*, the suspension of all opinions. Yet Sextus also presents the Skeptic as continuing to investigate both sides of any issue on the grounds that future resolution is theoretically possible. Myles Burnyeat observes that the Pyrrhonist treats as “an open question whether *p* or not-*p* is the case” without “actually *wondering* whether *p* or not-*p* is the case, for that might induce anxiety.” The Pyrrhonist must in some sense be satisfied that no answers are forthcoming in order for his inquiring thoughts to come to a state of rest. Burnyeat argues that the Pyrrhonist holds an impossible position, for insofar as he is satisfied that he will gain no answers he has, in fact, become a negative dogmatist like the Academic Skeptic, who professed to know that one could know nothing.<sup>43</sup> Donne avoids this dilemma by splitting the skeptical position: on the one hand is the negative example of Phrygius, who, in quest of *ataraxia*, holds himself back from any religious dogma in a state of *epochê* that is the practical equivalent of negative dogmatism; on the other hand is the position recommended by the poet, namely, continued inquiry on the grounds that thus far there is no proof of any given church’s validity. Donne’s portrait of fearful Phrygius suggests, however, that *epochê* cannot actually confer *ataraxia*. By exhorting himself and his reader to “Be busie to seeke” the true church, Donne further signifies his rejection of the very goal of classical tranquility, which was associated with *otium* rather than *negotium*, ease rather than business. By proceeding to compare the inquiring mind’s “indeavours” to “bodies paines” (ll. 86–87), Donne differentiates the rigor of his skeptical inquiry not only from Phrygius’s Epicurean avoidance of pain but also from a Skepticism compatible with such Epicureanism. Donne further underscores the distinction in gender terms, for his exhortation that the male inquirer struggle hard to “reach” and “winne” the feminine figure of “Truth” (ll. 79–82) sharply opposes his “masculine” urge to Phrygius’s “effeminate” dread of the female. Thus, Donne sets Phrygius’s permanent suspension and desired tranquility against his own ideal of temporary suspension and vigorous, passionate seeking. The litotes—“Hee’s not of none, nor worst, that seeks the best” (l. 75)—that Donne exhorts his addressee to “beleeve” (l. 74) asserts that to persevere in the skeptical search for the true church is already to belong, in some sense, to the community of true believers. Such a claim reveals how much Donne wishes to avoid Phrygius’s spiritual isolation.

Donne thus presents the proper religious stance not only as a quantitative mean between Graccus's "all" and Phrygius's "none" but also as a skeptical mean between the extremes of positive and negative dogmatism: the seeker must neither rashly believe that he has already found the one true church, as the first three satiric figures do, nor rashly despair of the search, as Phrygius does.<sup>44</sup> Lines 76–79 recapitulate the satire's movement from a triad consisting of the major churches' positions to one consisting of two extremes and the authentic mean of skeptical inquiry: "To'adore, or scorne an image, or protest, / May all be bad; doubt wisely; in strange way / To stand inquiring right, is not to stray; / To sleepe, or runne wrong, is." Donne's first triad hypothesizes that all the major churches' views concerning images might be in error: the Catholics' reverence; the Calvinist and radical Swiss reformers' iconoclasm; and the intermediate positions of the Lutherans, the original "protestants," and of the English church, which self-consciously sought a "middle way" concerning images.<sup>45</sup> Though such a possibility is hard to reconcile with the poet's firm conviction that one can eventually find the true church, Donne stresses that he is not advocating the easy adoption of a state-authorized compromise but a more fundamental conception of the *via media* between dogmas.

By introducing the second triad with "in strange way," he signifies that his "middle way" is on an unexplored road that each man must find for himself. The exhortation to "stand inquiring right" appropriately recalls the Christian of the first verse paragraph, who adheres to the mean by "stand[ing] / Senti-nell." Donne contrasts his skeptical mean with the two extremes of "sleepe," or shirking the quest for true religion, and "runn[ing] wrong," or recklessly embracing a particular church or all churches. While Donne's warning against spiritual sleep echoes Pauline admonitions like "Let us not sleep, as do others" (1 Thess. 5:6), his warning against running recalls classical, patristic, and humanist attacks on rash behavior that misses the mean. Horace claims that fools who seek to avoid a vice "run" [*currunt*] into its opposite (*Satire* 1.2.24), as does Augustine (*De genesi ad litteram* 9.8). Applying the topos specifically to Christian doctrine, Boethius attacks a theologian who "has run" [*cucurrit*] from one heretical extreme to its heretical contrary (*Contra Eutychen et Nestorium* 5), while the Tudor translator of Erasmus's *Adages* notes the human "tendency to runne to[o] farre" in redressing abuses of the church.<sup>46</sup> Donne's descriptions of "runn[ing] away" from spiritual perfection in *Pseudo-Martyr* and of "running to death unimportun'd" in his paradoxes similarly associate running with foolish extremism.

Donne's conception of a skeptical mean is not wholly unique. Sextus Empiricus provided a lead in contrasting three schools of philosophy: dogmatists, who claim to have discovered the truth; Academic Skeptics, who assert that it cannot be apprehended; and Pyrrhonists, who go on inquiring.<sup>47</sup> While Sextus does not relate the middle position of the ostensibly open-minded Pyrrhonists to the mean, Renaissance thinkers both before and after Donne did make

the connection. Montaigne, the most famous Renaissance Pyrrhonist and a major influence upon Donne, conflates Sextus Empiricus's contrast with the Aristotelian scheme: castigating dogmatists, who attribute to the human mind "a capacity for all things," and Academics, who argue that it is "capable of nothing," Montaigne claims that both kinds of philosophers espouse "extreme[s]." In the *Novum Organum* (1620) Francis Bacon similarly presents his form of skeptical scientific inquiry as the mean between dogmatic and Academic "extremes," the "presumption of pronouncing on everything, and the despair of comprehending anything."<sup>48</sup> Like Montaigne and Bacon, Donne associates skeptical inquiry with a mean between all and nothing and between the rash belief that one has the truth and despair that one can never attain it. He differs sharply from both, however, in applying the skeptical mean to the investigation of religion.

Montaigne and Bacon influentially participate in one early modern secularizing trend by differentiating between philosophical and religious domains. The Frenchman juxtaposes and supplements a Pyrrhonist attitude toward human reason with a fideistic acquiescence in Catholic dogma.<sup>49</sup> With a carefulness and complexity to be explored in the next chapter, Bacon excludes matters of Christian faith from his investigative natural philosophy.<sup>50</sup> Donne, by contrast, boldly collapses the distinction between religious and philosophical inquiry by setting both "true religion" and "Truth" itself as the goal of his simultaneously religious and philosophical inquirer.

Montaigne's and Bacon's distinctions allow them to combine skeptical philosophical attitudes with allegiance to their respective national churches. In the final section of his poem Donne, by contrast, proceeds to draw upon another powerful strand in early modern thought to distinguish between the secular and the spiritual in a different, more provocative, fashion by denying secular state powers any authority over personal belief.

### Keeping the Mean and the Limits of Obedience

Donne ends "Satire 3" by explaining how to "Keep the truth which thou' hast found" (l. 89), whatever it might turn out to be. Yet Donne's directives continue to employ the notion of a skeptical mean. Holding fast to the truth requires a distancing from opposite extremes similar to the skeptical stance of "inquiring right." The Pyrrhonist suspends belief by opposing every dogmatic claim with a contradictory claim of apparently "equal strength," pitting arguments from authority against one another.<sup>51</sup> Donne adapts this skeptical method to argue that the individual must not relinquish true religion by accepting either of the extreme "contraries" espoused by opposing pseudo-

authorities: "Is not this excuse for mere contraries, / Equally strong? cannot both sides say so?" (ll. 98–99).<sup>52</sup>

Donne denies that men "stand / In so'ill case here" (ll. 89–90) that temporal rulers can dictate the religious choices of their subjects. There is no legitimate authority besides God in spiritual matters, he argues; rulers deserve obedience only in secular affairs. While the first verse paragraph exhorts men to "know" the traditional enemies of mankind (l. 33), the end of the poem exhorts men to "know" the limits of earthly power: "That thou may'st rightly'obey power, her bounds know; / Those past, her nature, and name's chang'd; to be / Then humble to her is idolatrie" (ll. 100–102). Donne's formulation returns to the theory of the mean in order to challenge state control over men's consciences. The famous description of the mean in Horace's first satire notes "fixed bounds, beyond and short of which right can find no place" ("certi . . . fines, / quos ultra citraque nequit consistere rectum," ll. 106–107). Donne's claim that exceeding "bounds" changes the "nature and name" closely resembles the assertion in one of his paradoxes that "exces . . . changes the natures and the names" of things.<sup>53</sup> Just as near the beginning of "Satire 3" Donne suggests that excess changes courage into recklessness, so near the poem's end he claims that excess turns virtuous obedience into sinful "idolatry." Donne does not spell out the objective change in the nature of "power" when rulers exceed their "bounds" (the transformation of legitimate authority into tyranny) but instead focuses on the subjective consequences for the ruled (the change in the "nature and name" of a subject's obedience). He thereby underscores that for a subject to recognize the "bounds" of power entails his knowing the proper mean of response.

Although commentators have noted that Donne's defense of the subject's religious freedom draws upon a strand within Protestant thought contesting state control over religious belief,<sup>54</sup> they have not noted that Donne follows this Protestant strand precisely by adapting the mean to the issue of proper obedience. In 1523 Luther argued that secular authorities, who must assert neither "too little" nor "too much" power, had no jurisdiction over religious faith. In 1556 the Calvinist Marian exile John Ponet claimed the converse, namely, that subjects, who must eschew "to[o] muche" as well as "to[o] little" obedience, were answerable to God rather than rulers in religious matters. Like Donne's satire, the pseudonymous Huguenot work *Vindiciae contra Tyrannos* (published in 1579) echoed Horace when arguing that both rulers and subject must keep "power" [*potestatem*] within "fixed bounds . . . beyond and short of which right governance . . . could find no place" [*certos fines . . . quos ultra citraque recta administratio . . . non possit consistere*]. Subjects must obey God rather than rulers who exceed their "bounds" [*fines*] by interfering with their subjects' proper worship of God.<sup>55</sup>

Donne ends with a powerful image of the dangers that subjects incur when they exceed their proper obedience:

As streames are, Power is; those blest flowers that dwell  
 At the rough streames calme head, thrive and prove well,  
 But having left their roots, and themselves given  
 To the streames tyrannous rage, alas, are driven  
 Through mills, and rockes, and woods,'and at last, almost  
 Consum'd in going, in the sea are lost:  
 So perish Soules, which more chuse mens unjust  
 Power from God claym'd, than God himselfe to trust.

(ll. 103–10)

The poem returns to rash and cowardly suicides, souls that recklessly seek destruction because they fear to “stand” in their appointed station. The image of flowers and the stream is complex. The flowers that “perish” by giving themselves to the “streames tyrannous rage” represent souls who submit to a secular power that exceeds its legitimate authority by claiming spiritual dominion. The image of a stream’s flow suggests that rulers’ movement from the proper rule of the “calme head” to the tyrannical excess of the “rough stream” is all too natural in the fallen world.<sup>56</sup> Yet Donne’s strikingly unnatural image of flowers, which normally have no power of self-motion, willfully leaving “their roots” suggests that persons who willingly submit to tyranny perversely abandon and exceed their own natural human capacities and dispositions. The initial positive image of the “blest flowers” that “thrive” at the “calme head” implies that human beings can be nurtured rather than destroyed by worldly authority simply by remaining in their natural place, aware of the proper minimum and maximum “bounds” of their obedience. Donne thus envisions both the objective inevitability of tyrannical excess and the subjective freedom of individuals, who can flourish by recognizing only legitimate rule or (conversely) can destroy themselves by accepting tyranny. Trusting in God as their spiritual master, and consequently aware of the limits on the allegiance they owe secular powers, the blessed thrive. Instead of using the concept of the mean to defend the church and state of the Elizabethan settlement, Donne uses it to promote individuals’ independence—but not isolation—as they seek and preserve the truth. In such an active, masculinist poem, it is striking that Donne ends with the passive and—according to Renaissance connotations of gender—feminized image of souls as flowers. He clearly wishes to persuade himself and his reader that after successfully completing the painful struggle for truth, it will be fully possible for individuals to maintain the truth, the mean, and their own “blest” souls.

Jonathan Dollimore has argued that, far from promoting individualism, the most important English Renaissance writers “decentered” human beings. Ad-ducing Donne as an example of the “corrosive scepticism” of a period that

undermined conceptions of the free individual as much as cultural institutions, Dollimore cites Donne's sonnet "Oh, to vex me contraries meete in one" and other texts to exemplify his sense of the "fragmentation of the self." For Dollimore such fragmentation anticipates poststructuralist demolitions of the "secular/Enlightenment" cult of the "autonomous, unified self-generating subject."<sup>57</sup> Donne's portrayal of suicidal extremism in "Satire 3" certainly reveals a sense of fragmentation, but the satire also uses Skepticism reconstructively to imagine a self finally saved from self-destructive extremes. The poem's Skepticism is not "corrosive" because it is limited. While Donne questions the validity of any given ecclesiastical or political formation, he doubts neither God's ultimate benevolence nor the individual's eventual ability to find his proper place in the world. The free, inquiring self that Donne invokes and thereby seeks to create is neither Dollimore's "decentered" subject nor the completely autonomous person imagined by some secular Enlightenment thinkers but rather a distinctive early modern *tertium quid*.<sup>58</sup>

### Defining the Mean of Personal Space

Yet unlike "Satire 3," Donne's verse epistle to Wotton undertakes to define a limited sphere of individual freedom within the secular world without invoking a transcendental guarantor. The poem adapts the mean to imagine a personal space between—and thus at a vital remove from—oppressive social realities. Because Donne writes in the tradition of Roman moral epistles, his invocation of the mean is not in itself surprising. Like his satires, Horace's *Epistulae*, which were the major classical model for Renaissance moralizing verse letters, invoke the mean. Despite Seneca's Stoic critique of Aristotelian moderation concerning the emotions, his eclectic *Epistulae morales*, which were the other central ancient model for early modern ethical epistles, also advocate various means and attack diverse opposite extremes.<sup>59</sup> Donne enunciates a highly original ethics, however, by advocating a mean that challenges conventional sociopolitical norms as much as "Satire 3" challenges religiopolitical ones.

In "Satire 3," when Donne contrasts the mean with a combination of opposite extremes (e.g., "desperate coward"), he rejects one common though disputed way of conceiving the ethical mean. Although the *Nicomachean Ethics* defines the virtuous mean as the avoidance of contrary extremes and contrasts it with the vicious person's combination of them, Aristotle's *Metaphysics* discusses two kinds of intermediates: those that negate the two extremes and those that are compounded out of the contraries that they mediate (4.7, 10.7). Distinguishing between a *medium per abnegationem* and a *medium per participationem*, many medieval and early modern commentators argued that the mean as expounded in the *Nicomachean Ethics* was to be identified in some way with

the latter as well as with the former. Aquinas, for example, claimed that a virtue “participates in a certain fashion” [*particip(a)t aliqualiter*] in its vicious extremes.<sup>60</sup>

Lacking the Aristotelian commentators’ ambitions to both logical rigor and fidelity to Aristotle but possessing a strong sense of life’s opposing demands, Renaissance writers often treated the ethical mean as both a proper tempered combination and an avoidance of opposite extremes. For example, in his discussion of the adage “Festina Lente” Erasmus recommended the “tempering” of opposite extremes. Arguing that this “riddle” of “contradictory terms” teaches “a wise promptness together with moderation, tempered [*temperata*] with both vigilance and gentleness,” he noted that rulers must avoid the extremes of “sluggishness” and “ferocity” by combining “promptness” with “cautious deliberation.” In Giordano Bruno’s *De gli heroici furori* (published in London in 1585) a character claimed that the supremely virtuous man holds himself to “the mean, departing from the one and the other extremes” and thus dwelling where “the two extremes meet and become one.” Many early modern English writers assumed that to “hold a mean” (as the Jacobean minister Thomas Granger put it) was to “participate of both . . . extremes.”<sup>61</sup>

Yet the notion was not uncontested. Such an influential Reformation expositor of Aristotelian ethics as Philip Melancthon denied that the ethical mean is composed of extremes. Renaissance treatments of the mean sometimes equivocated: in Baldesar Castiglione’s *The Book of the Courtier*, for example, a speaker recommends “a certain difficult mean, and almost [*quasi*] composed of contraries.”<sup>62</sup> Though such disagreements today seem like verbal quibbling, in Donne’s time the distinctions could have important ideological consequences. The early modern tendency to argue that the ethical mean combined extremes was encouraged by Neoplatonic metaphysics, whose vision of a cosmic order based on mediation presupposed, in Thomas Stanley’s words, that “all mediums [*intermediates*] participate of their extremes.”<sup>63</sup> Donne’s epistle, however, employs a different set of distinctions: there is the natural order, characterized by harsh extremes and a mean that harmoniously combines them, and there is the social order, characterized by vicious extremes and an intermediate that combines extremes but is similarly vicious.

After declaring his joy at communicating with his friend Wotton, Donne defines life as a “voyage” (l. 7) and proceeds to contrast natural and social geography. He notes that the voyager in both the “furnace” of the equatorial region and “th’adverse icy Poles” knows that there are “two temperate Regions” (ll. 11–13) to which he can return. By contrast, he finds no analogous escape from the court or country: “But Oh, what refuge canst thou winne / Parch’d in the Court, and in the country frozen? / Shall cities, built of both extremes, be chosen? / . . . / Cities are worst of all three” (ll. 14–16, 19). It was a commonplace of Renaissance thought, embodied in the very word “temperate,” that the so-called temperate zones were the result of the proper

“tempering” or mixing of the hot and cold.<sup>64</sup> Donne implies an analogy to this cosmic process when he claims that the city is “built of” the extremes of court heat and country chill. Yet while suggesting that both the natural and social worlds consist of extremes and the intermediates created from their mixing, Donne sharply distinguishes between the city, whose mixture is worse than the extremes themselves, and the temperate zones of nature, which temper hot and cold to produce a hospitable habitat.

The three-way contrast between country, court, and city is an early modern poetic topos with roots in the *Greek Anthology*. Donne certainly knew Francis Bacon’s attack on all three locales in his poem “The World.” Donne’s epistle either elicited or responded to a poem by Wotton that deals with the dangers of court and country life.<sup>65</sup> Donne’s city, “built of both extremes,” is not found, however, in any other poem in the tradition. The formulation is nevertheless not arbitrary. Donne combines the widespread notion of intermediates as a mixture of their two extremes with an early modern understanding of the city as intermediate between the extremes of court and country.

This understanding of the city depends on equating physical and social place by identifying the court, city, and country with their representative inhabitants: exalted aristocrats, middle-rank citizens, and lowly rural laborers. One may compare Edmund Spenser’s treatment of the city in the sixth book of *The Faerie Queene*. Calidore’s pursuit of the Blatant Beast goes from court to country by way of the intermediate urban centers: “Him first from court he to the citties coursed, / And from the citties to the townes him prest, / And from the townes into the cuntrye forsed” (6.9.3). Geography here “maps” social strata as the Blatant Beast ranges from the noble court to the pastoral countryside, and cities and towns remind readers of the urban ranks between the highest and lowest, which are Spenser’s central focus.

By rejecting the urban middle state together with high and low, Donne steers against an important current in early modern ideology. Despite their frequent adoption of courtly values and fanciful espousal of pastoral ones, many early modern English writers also laud the “mediocrity” between wealth and poverty. Such praise has both classical and scriptural sources. Extending his theory of the mean to social classes, Aristotle claims in the *Politics* that the “middle” ranks, who are the “readiest to obey reason,” avoid the vicious extremes of both the rich, prone to insolence, and the poor, disposed to envy (4.9). In Prov. 30:8 Agur prays that God give him “neither poverty nor riches” lest he wax proud in wealth or despair in poverty. Early modern Protestant ministers often argue that both wealth and poverty, though morally “indifferent” in themselves, provide powerful temptations to sin. From the high church Richard Hooker to the Puritan William Perkins, clergymen echo Aristotle and Scripture to celebrate the “mean” estate between wealth and poverty as most conducive to virtue.<sup>66</sup>



Like the ethical norm with which it is associated, the social category of the “mean” estate is fuzzy. Aristotle himself seems to identify the mean with farmers of medium-sized estates who work their own land (*Politics* 4.5.3, 6.2.1).<sup>67</sup> Encouraged by Horatian associations of the golden mean with rural retirement (*Satire* 2.2.53–69; *Epistle* 1.10.42–43), classicizing early modern English authors laud the country gentleman’s life of leisure as the virtuous “mean estate.”<sup>68</sup> Preachers, by contrast, link ideal middleliness to labor in one’s calling. Thomas Granger, for example, praises the virtuous “meane” of the “laboring man.”<sup>69</sup> As we shall see, this fostered English georgic poetry’s cult of the self-sufficient yeoman-farmer as an alternative rural ideal to the country gentleman.

The association of the “mean” estate with labor also authorized, however, the celebration of the urban artisanal, commercial, and professional “middle sort” (as they were called).<sup>70</sup> In a pageant in Thomas Churchyard’s *The First Part of Churchyard’s Chippes* (1575), for example, city merchants proudly declare their “mean” between high and low. Robert Greene’s *The Royal Exchange* (1590) praises London merchants as neither too poor to be “honorable” nor burdened with “excesse of riches.” A panegyric appended to John Stow’s *A Survey of London* (1598) assimilates commercial Londoners to the Aristotelian mean by claiming that they are generally “neither too rich nor too poor” but in “the mediocrity.” Like their preachers, the urban “middle sort” often extol their mean between wealth and poverty in their diaries and autobiographies.<sup>71</sup>

By contrast, in scorning the city as home of the middle ranks Donne rejects the application of the mean to any particular position within the social scale. The rhetoric of the mid-sixteenth-century author George Turberville is typical when he argues for the superiority of the middle state by noting, “The fyre doeth frye, the frost doeth freese / The colde breedes care, the heate doeth harme, / The middle point twixt both is best, / Not over-cold, nor over-warme.”<sup>72</sup> Donne’s “parched” court and “frozen” country seems to prepare for a similar claim upon his part. Yet while Turberville suggests that knowing the best social station is as simple as evaluating the weather, Donne contests the use of such meteorological analogies to provide a quasi-natural justification for preferring a particular social position.

By rejecting all ranks, and thus repudiating even his own origins in the urban middle ranks, Donne attempts to establish and maximize his ethical stance: he writes not as a snobbish gentleman but rather as an independent surveyor of the social scene. His own rejection of the city is not, he declares, a fall from innocence. Yet Donne’s ruling out of court, country, and city raises the obvious problem of where one can safely live. The verse paragraph closes with a sharp antithesis that neatly epitomizes the problem: “I thinke if men, which in these places live / Durst looke for themselves, and themselves retriue, / They would like strangers greet themselves, seeing then / Utopian youth, growne old Italian” (ll. 43–46). The contrast between “Utopian youth”

and "old Italian" suggests that innocence is preserved only by dwelling in Utopia (i.e., no place) because all of the social world is an Italy (i.e., a den of craft and corruption).

The next verse paragraph reaches toward a solution by exhorting Wotton, Donne's addressee, to find a mean between Utopia and a corrupt world. Donne begins traditionally enough by proposing to Wotton a Stoic retreat into the self: "Be then thine owne home, and in thy selfe dwell . . . Bee thine owne Palace, or the world's thy Gaole" (ll. 47, 52). One may compare Seneca's similar epistolary advice to "withdraw into yourself" ("recede in te ipsum," *Epistulae morales* 7.8).<sup>73</sup> Donne, however, proceeds to adumbrate a new kind of mean positioned between complete withdrawal from and complete immersion in the social world: "And in the worlds sea, do not like corke sleepe / Upon the waters face; nor in the deepe / Sinke like a lead without a line" (ll. 53–55). Here Donne represents two opposite extremes as forms of self-loss: to be immersed in the world—"like corke [to] sleep / Upon the waters face"—is to lose one's individuating consciousness; to withdraw from the world—"in the deepe / [To] Sinke like a lead without a line"—is to disappear into oblivion. While Donne defines these extremes in terms of a deadening fixity of surface or depth, he imagines the mean as an elusive movement of transition: ". . . but as / Fishes glide, leaving no print where they passe, / Nor making sound, so, closely thy course goe; / Let men dispute, whether thou breathe, or no" (ll. 55–58).

Having denied any natural basis to the social order's mixture of extremes, Donne leaves himself with a mean that is a negation rather than a combination of contrary social formations. The verse epistle is consequently clearer about what he is against than about what he is for. His *medium per abnegationem*, expounded in a series of exhortations concerning what one should not do and not be, hews closer to a utopian vision of "no place" than to the actualities of the world. The final lines advising Wotton to be "no Galenist" (l. 59) stress the character of Donne's mean as a preservative of the self's freedom by negation. Conceiving of health as a harmonious mixture of opposite humoral extremes, Galenic medicine attempted to cure diseases by counteracting a supposed excess or deficiency of one extreme with an equivalent dose of its contrary.<sup>74</sup> By recommending that Wotton "purge the bad" rather than counteract "Courts hot ambitions" with "A dramme of Countries dulnesse" (ll. 60–62), Donne underscores that his ideal mean neither mediates nor compromises with the extremes of social life.

Donne's epistle to Wotton associates the individual's freedom not only with negation but also with mystery. The implication is that others' knowledge of one's condition limits the free movement of the self. The epistle's comparison of the virtuous man to fish that leave no "print" resembles the extraordinary praise of lesbian lovemaking in "Sapho to Philaenis." Despite his "phallogocentrism," Donne has his "Sapho" celebrate lesbian love for being impercepti-

ble, producing “no more signes . . . / Then fishes leave in streames” (ll. 41–42).<sup>75</sup> Similarly, the epistle’s exhortation that one keep people guessing whether one “breathe[s], or no” recalls the lovely opening simile of “A Valédiction (Forbidding Mourning)” concerning virtuous men who die so “mildly” that some say “The breath goes now, and some say, no” (ll. 1, 4). The circulation of these images in other Donnean poems that imagine an ideal way of life underscores their great resonance for the poet. What distinguishes the epistle from these other poems is Donne’s effort to link his personal vision to the conventional norm of the mean and thereby to reclaim the authority of Aristotelian ethics for the free individual rather than for social formations like the “middle sort.”

In the epistle’s final paragraph Donne works an elegant panegyric reversal of his lengthy moral counsel. He asserts that he has learned his ethics from Wotton himself: “But, Sir, I advise not you, I rather doe / Say o’er those lessons, which I learn’d of you” (ll. 63–64). The poem further complicates its view of man’s proper relation to the social world by moving from recommending a particular form of mobility in life’s metaphorical “journey” to praising Wotton’s conduct as an actual traveler. Complimenting Wotton for returning from his trips to the continent “free from German schismes, and lightnesse / Of France, and faire Italies faithlesnesse” (ll. 65–66), the poet lists three European nations whose bad qualities recall the negative triad of court, country, and city. Moreover, while noting conventional faults, Donne manages to describe the three nations as two extremes and an equally vicious intermediate. Italy’s “faithlesnesse” alludes to Italy’s proverbial corruption. Yet the conjunction of German “schismes” and Italy’s “faithlesnesse” also suggests the extremes of too much and too little faith, a rebellious German Protestantism that advocates *sola fideism* and a Roman Catholicism that supposedly repudiates faith altogether.<sup>76</sup> The “lightness” ascribed to France refers, on one level, to the notorious fashion-mongering of the French, whom Donne calls “changeable Camelions” in “On his Mistris” (l. 33). In the context of continental religious divisions, however, the term also suggests the mutability of France’s religious commitments from the religious wars through the conversion of Henri of Navarre in 1593.<sup>77</sup> France’s “lightnesse” is thus intermediate between Germanic schism and Italian faithlessness, a false mean based on the oscillation between extremes.

Donne reinforces his depiction of France as an intermediate that is no true mean by listing it between nations to its north and south. In the *Politics* Aristotle claims that the inhabitants of the cold north are vigorous but deficient in intelligence, the inhabitants of the warm south intelligent but deficient in vigor, while the Greeks who dwell in the “middle” hold to the mean, being “both spirited and intelligent” (7.6.1). Renaissance thinkers of various nationalities continued and refined such self-serving inferences from a geographical mean. Thus, Jean Bodin’s *Six livres de la république* (1576), a work well known in Renaissance England, distinguishes among temperate countries in terms of

their distance from the equator. Denying that the French suffer from "lightnesse," Bodin argues (in his early modern English rendering) that as a "middle" people of the northern temperate zone, they keep the virtuous "meane, betwixt wilfulnes and lightnes" in contrast to colder, northern neighbors, such as the "mutinous" Germans, and warmer, southern neighbors, such as the "obstinat" Florentines.<sup>78</sup> Just as Donne had begun the epistle by denying the association of the middle-class city with the natural mean of the temperate zone, so with his triad of faulty nations he implicitly rejects, near the epistle's conclusion, the identification of another sociopolitical formation, a "middle" nation-state, with a natural mean.

While his xenophobic slurs may seem typical of a Renaissance Englishman, Donne declines to celebrate his own country and its state religion as the most virtuous. He commends Wotton as an individual rather than an Englishman. The poet's praise of his friend for having "brought home that faith, which . . . [he] carried forth" (l. 68) would, in another poem, sound like patriotic English Protestant sentiment. Yet the earlier claim that the good man must be his own "home," coupled with the even earlier identification of all of social life with Italian corruption, prevents the identification of "home" with England in this passage. Though he must have conformed to the English church by the time he entered Egerton's service, Donne wholeheartedly committed himself to the national church considerably later. The epistle suggests that Wotton's "faith" is his personal *fides*, or faithfulness, as a good man and friend rather than his allegiances to an external institution, such as a national church.<sup>79</sup>

It is Wotton's supposed integrity, according to Donne, that allows him to engage the world on his travels and avoids the vices of various countries while gaining "all they had of worth" (l. 67). Because he does not indicate their positive features, Donne cannot successfully describe Wotton's interaction with these countries. It is nevertheless clear that the poet wishes to distinguish Wotton from the Stoic sage who eschews the corrupted world. Wotton neither embraced nor rejected the world; he adhered to the mean as redefined by Donne.

There could be an elusive subtext in Donne's praise of his friend's travels. The oddly coarse image of Wotton's having "suck'd all" the European nations "had of worth" (l. 67) suggests the plundering of valuable resources rather than the assimilation of unmentioned virtues. Donne may be hinting at Wotton's espionage activities as a continental traveler and implying that his friend was untainted by them. Wotton went to Italy disguised as a German, trying to steal Italian state secrets that would help his court career back in England, and he journeyed to France to lure back to England a man who had intercepted secret letters from Wotton's patron, the earl of Essex.<sup>80</sup> Donne's earlier claim that the self must preserve its mystery as it goes on its "course," followed by his claim that he has learned such lessons from Wotton himself, may simi-

larly contribute to an attempt to idealize and moralize Wotton's undercover operations: Wotton the spy practiced the essential technique of the ethically circumspect traveler, the art of remaining incognito. Jonathan Goldberg argues that Donne's obsession, in his Jacobean poetry, with preserving the mysteries of himself and his beloved appropriates for his own private sphere King James's concern with preserving mysteries of state, the *arcana imperii*. Mystery signifies power.<sup>81</sup> Donne's celebration of the lover's sovereign power in a Jacobean poem like "The Sunne Rising" has a hyperbolic cast that reflects—and deflects—awareness of his actual powerlessness as a failed courtier. In the Elizabethan epistle to Wotton, composed before the wrecking of his career, Donne may project a less grandiose political analogy—that of the cautious spy—for a self who preserves a secretive mean in his relations to the world in order to preserve his freedom of maneuver.

Friendship, however, is what most clearly frees the self from isolation. The poem is framed by declarations concerning Donne's relationship to Wotton. The opening line asserts a power that melds author and recipient: "Sir, more then kisses, letters mingle Soules." The final lines declare that if he can adhere to his own conception of virtue so perfectly embodied in his friend, Donne will achieve the intent of his letter, namely, to join friend to friend: "But if my self I have wonne / To know my rules, I have, and you have / DONNE" (ll. 69–70). Donne thus imagines friendship as the only positive human mixture in a poem that focuses on the improper mixtures of the social world. According to Aristotle, true friendship is a virtue only possible as a relation between virtuous men (*NE* 8.3.6), that is, men who hold the mean. Donne similarly suggests that only those who adhere to the mean as he defines it can attain the mixture of true friendship.

The poem not only seeks to mix two friends but also mediates between their extreme states. It moves between presence and absence, as its second line declares ("For, thus friends absent speake"), and between country and court. Donne endows his choice of genre with great meaning by transforming an epistolary motif of Horace, who in several verse letters from his country estate to friends in Rome favorably contrasts his simple rural life to their busy careers (*Epistles* 1.2, 1.7, 1.10, 1.16–18). Donne's opening comparison of himself to a "locke of Grasse" that would "wither in one day, and passe / To'a bottle'of Hay" (ll. 5–6) except for the sustenance of his writing suggests that Donne writes from the country, like Horace, but that composing the letter gives him an imaginative distance from a rural life that would otherwise reduce him to mindlessness. Donne advises a Wotton who, although ostensibly at court, will be able to avoid "Courts hot ambitions" if he attends to Donne's epistle and to his own best nature. By its self-declared middleness, the Wotton epistle both asserts and enacts the ultimate value of being in transit, neither here nor there. Even more than "Satire 3" the epistle makes the medium the message.

Maneuvering with the Mean:  
From Early Modern to Contemporary Controversies

While Donne's early poems circulated widely before their posthumous publication in 1633, his highly original transformations of the mean were too idiosyncratic to be imitated. Yet they anticipate numerous other early modern English extensions of the mean on the part of individuals seeking to define their relation to powerful sociopolitical institutions. Many seventeenth-century English authors, for instance, reject retirement in order to articulate, albeit in more formulaic fashion than Donne, a mean between the individual's complete rejection of and acquiescent immersion in a corrupt social world. In a letter published in 1586, Justus Lipsius, the most influential Renaissance Neostoic, qualifies his claim that he "hides" [*latito*] from tyranny by applying to himself Tacitus's praise of a certain Lepidus (*Annales* 4.20.3), who maintained both the favor of the tyrant Tiberius and his own integrity by hewing a path "between the extremes of bluff contumacy [*abruptam contumaciam*] and repellent servility [*deforme obsequium*]." Englishmen from the Jacobean period through the Restoration embraced Lipsius's Tacitean mean for negotiating the world of power. Having argued that one must perform one's worldly "offices" rather than bury one's talents in retirement, in 1608 Daniel Tuvill resolves neither to affront nor to fawn upon "greatness" but to maintain a "path" between "barbarous contumacy" and "deformed obsequy." A Jacobean translation of a work by Lipsius's disciple Guillaume du Vair debates whether in evil times one should "withdraw" from public life or (better) participate with "innocent prudence" by keeping to the "middle path between an obstinate austeritie, and a shamefull servitude." In his *De Augmentis Scientiarum* (1623) Bacon commends Lepidus's "middle way" [*cursum . . . medium*]. The Restoration courtesy book *The Art of Complaisance* (1673) concedes that one can be totally "Innocent" only in retirement but argues that a courtier could and should, like Lepidus, find a "mean" between suicidally "contradict[ing]" his ruler and the "abject servitude" of participating in his ruler's "excesses."<sup>82</sup>

Though Donne himself became a minister of the established church in 1615 and a court preacher under James and Charles, he did not wholly abandon the intellectual independence of his early poetry. Elsewhere I have argued that Donne the minister used the mean both to maintain some of his freedom as a religious "seeker" and to endow the national church itself with his own sense of religious quest. Recalling "Satire 3," he represented the national church's "middle way" not only as the normative mean between Catholicism and extreme Protestantism but also as a path *toward* truth.<sup>83</sup> As a preacher Donne defended the social hierarchy and the courtly aristocracy as long as it remained "poor in spirit" (Matt. 5:3) in the sense of humble before God.<sup>84</sup> Yet he also continued to deploy the mean, as in the Wotton epistle, not to celebrate a

specific social station but rather to warn of the spiritual dangers that all social ranks faced. Citing Prov. 30:8 on the dangers of both riches and poverty, Donne deviates from standard expositions of the passage as a prayer for the mean estate. Though conceding that “mediocrity seemes (and justly) the safest condition,” Donne cautions that one may “exceed a mediocrity, even in the Praise of Mediocrity.” He proceeds to argue that social “Mediocrity” is itself dangerous insofar as it leads to “confidence” in oneself rather than trust in God.<sup>85</sup> Tempering and Christianizing the Wotton epistle’s attack upon the corruption of all ranks, Donne the minister emphasizes that no social station is spiritually secure.

Donne’s various deployments of the mean help challenge some contemporary critical and theoretical biases. Critics of the early modern self such as Francis Barker and Catherine Belsey have denounced the violence they find inherent in the “liberal humanist subject,” whose sense of estrangement from society and consequently from itself finds its logical culmination, they charge, in the ultimate act of self-differentiation, namely, suicide.<sup>86</sup> Donne’s obsession with suicide partially supports the ascription of a death wish to the would-be autonomous self: one may plausibly read *Biathanatos* (composed ca. 1607–1608) as his oblique argument for the free individual’s constitutive right to suicide. Yet, as we have seen, Donne’s early poetry rejects the extremism of suicide. The young Donne similarly rejects the loss of self that he associates with complete isolation from, as well as total commitment to, religious and social institutions. By assuming that the essence of the early modern self is reducible to its most extreme and destructive manifestations, Barker and Belsey have embraced an interpretive extremism that is the mirror image of the subjective extremism they condemn.<sup>87</sup>

A similar, though apparently opposite, hermeneutic extremism is evident in the critical fascination with extreme urges as liberating challenges to the social order. In the influential final chapter on *Othello* in *Renaissance Self-Fashioning*, Greenblatt valorizes a position not unlike the suicidal stance attacked by Barker and Belsey. Self-consciously advancing an extreme formulation by rejecting a middle ground between Shakespeare as a mordant critic or an apologist of his culture, Greenblatt claims that Shakespeare offers a powerful glimpse of liberation from cultural norms only by depicting, through a passionately “self-abnegat[ing]” figure like Desdemona, an “excessive . . . delight” that undermines “existing values” and “established selves.”<sup>88</sup> The widespread poststructuralist and postmodern interest in “excess” as what “exceeds” oppressive structure licenses yet paradoxically delimits Greenblatt’s reading.<sup>89</sup> He cites Georges Bataille, who celebrates a transgressive erotic “excess” that is “in the end” [*à l’extrême*] a “will to perish.” Bataille finds in such excess the paradoxical affirmation of a free, “sovereign” [*souverain*] self that destroys and transcends itself as mere subject.<sup>90</sup> Bataille thus imagines an eroticized, suicidal apotheosis of the Nietzschean “sovereign individual [*souveraine Individuum*] . . .

liberated . . . from morality . . . autonomous and supramoral," which is itself Nietzsche's self-consciously extreme radicalization of Enlightenment notions of moral autonomy.<sup>91</sup> Subsequent chapters of this book will trace the growing embrace of passionate extremes in early modern England that presage contemporary espousals of "excess." With his transformations of the mean, however, the young Donne provides a less extreme—and potentially more livable—vision of an early modern self's relation to his culture.

Donne's deployment of the mean is revealing not only in its divergence from celebrations of "excess" but also in its resemblance to the present-day recoil from extremes. Contemporary intellectuals from various perspectives often try to define intermediate positions between formulations that deny either human agency or social determination. Charles Taylor, for example, argues from a liberal-communitarian position for "situated freedom" as an alternative to the "polarized debates" between those who posit a wholly "disengaged subject" and those who wholly repudiate the concept of individual freedom.<sup>92</sup> The Marxist literary and cultural critic Terry Eagleton similarly attacks notions that we are "either totally constrained by our social contexts, or not constrained at all," and that a potentially liberating reason "must either stand wholly on the inside of a form of life . . . or lurk at some illusory Archimedean point beyond it."<sup>93</sup> Such arguments appeal to a general association of middle-ground views with reasonableness. Taylor frequently stakes out a "middle ground" between "equal and opposite" intellectual "absurdit[ies]" and "error[s]."<sup>94</sup> Eagleton happily (and repeatedly) provides a contemporary version of the ancient and early modern commonplace that fools rush from one ethical or religious extreme to its opposite when he chastises postmodern thinkers for reacting to one intellectual error by going "too far" or "overreact[ing]" in the opposite direction.<sup>95</sup> While contemporary defenders of the "middle ground" believe their intellectual positions have strong implications for how we might enhance or transform the relations between individuals and communities, their theoretical stance distinguishes them from Donne, who seeks a position that he and his addressees might personally inhabit rather than a general theory about selves and societies that deserves rational assent. Yet such theoretical applications of the mean also have their roots in Donne's period. As I will argue in the next chapter on Bacon, the notion that reasonable thinkers must avoid intellectual extremes gained new prominence during this period as a central motif of natural philosophy and of other intellectual discourses insofar as they aspired to scientific rationality.



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## CHAPTER TWO

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### “Mediocrities” and “Extremities”: Baconian Flexibility and the Aristotelian Mean

FRANCIS BACON PROMOTED KNOWLEDGE that would increase man’s power over himself and over nature.<sup>1</sup> With self-conscious innovation, he sought a union of theory with practice that has continued to define the “project” of modernity.<sup>2</sup> His major adversaries were Aristotle and Aristotle’s Scholastic interpreters, who remained central to the early modern university curriculum and encouraged what Bacon considered barren contemplation, rather than domination, of the human and natural worlds.<sup>3</sup> A largely neglected but absolutely central feature of Bacon’s anti-Aristotelian and anti-Scholastic program is his transformation and subversion of the Aristotelian doctrine of the mean.

While Donne adapts the mean as norm to empower himself as an individual, Bacon treats the very choice of the mean or its opposite extremes with new freedom.<sup>4</sup> Like many of his contemporaries, Bacon articulates distinctive norms for differentiated domains of human action. Bacon often argues, in conventional fashion, that rulers and subjects must adhere to the mean in order to preserve political and religious order. However, in his *De Dignitate et Augmentis Scientiarum* (1623) Bacon distinguishes between rules appropriate to men considered as “congregate” (social) and “segregate” (individual) beings.<sup>5</sup> When he considers men as individuals capable of choosing their own goals and transcending ascribed sociopolitical roles, he embraces more radical positions adapted from anti-Aristotelian strands within Renaissance thought or wholly of his own devising. Attacking Aristotle for not providing practical instructions in individual empowerment, Bacon tries to rectify the omission by proposing new modes of what Foucault called “technologies of the self,” techniques by which one can transform one’s body and soul.<sup>6</sup> In his rules for ethical self-mastery, worldly self-promotion, and physical training, Bacon boldly promotes the individual’s flexible and pragmatic use of means or extremes, depending on his particular situation and desires.

Bacon’s complex treatment of the mean-extremes polarity reveals his conflicting visions of himself as a loyal member of the established order, on the one hand, and as a self-motivating individual, on the other. Bacon’s traditional views regarding the mean’s importance to sociopolitical stability resemble those of his father, Nicholas Bacon, Keeper of the Great Seal under Eliza-

both I. Bacon idolized his father, a staunch upholder of the Elizabethan settlement's self-proclaimed "middle way," whose personal motto was *Mediocria firma* ("Middle things are stable").<sup>7</sup> Yet while Bacon sought high government office in imitation of his father, he experienced a slow, frustrating rise to the top, followed by a humiliating fall. Like many educated gentlemen of his generation, he found himself variously drawn and alienated by a court system that beckoned but failed to reward him as he felt he deserved.<sup>8</sup> In his innovative thoughts on personal empowerment, he addresses the needs of the individual seeking fulfillment either in isolation from or in a struggle for mastery over a recalcitrant sociopolitical world.

In support of his anti-Aristotelian program for natural philosophy, the most original and influential aspect of his thought, Bacon also deploys means and extremes in daring fashion. His ideological concern for stability as well as empowerment shapes his conception of man's proper relation not only to society but also to nature. Adapting notions of an intellectual mean expounded by various thinkers in the Aristotelian tradition, Bacon condemns the Aristotelian scientific method as proud and irresponsible rationalist extremism, while promoting his own as a virtuous and sober mean between rationalism and empiricism, a *via media* of the mind akin to the moderation of the proper subject.

Yet epistemological order is not enough for Bacon. In formulating the ultimate goals of natural philosophy, he extends his interest in individual empowerment to all mankind. Enlisting the Scholastic distinction between the moral and intellectual virtues, which reside in an Aristotelian mean, and the theological virtues, which surpass such measurement, he argues that his secular scientific practice, which seeks to transform the human condition by conquering nature, is fueled by the positive extremism of Christian charity.<sup>9</sup> It is therefore far superior to both Aristotelian ethical "mediocrity" and Aristotelian contemplative excess. Thoroughly imbued with Aristotelian and Scholastic categories, Bacon assaults the Aristotelian tradition with weapons it had itself forged. He thereby bequeaths a complex and unstable legacy to his numerous diverse heirs, who promote modernity and science with conflicting appeals to moderation and extremism.

### Self-Empowerment and the Mean

Bacon's innovative treatment of the mean emerges in his discussion of ethics in *The Advancement of Learning* (1605). While agreeing with Aristotle's claims that the ethical virtues are "Mediocrities" that "*consist in habit*," Bacon complains that Aristotle fails to explain "the manner of superinducing" the ethical virtues.<sup>10</sup> Aristotle, in fact, minimizes men's abilities to make themselves virtuous. He argues that men's good and bad habits depend on both their inherent

natures and repeated actions, shaped by childhood training, so that once men have become vicious they are generally unable to reform (*NE* 2.1.4–8; 3.5.13–14, 22).<sup>11</sup> Bacon is confident, by contrast, that men can break free from such natural and social determinants if they adopt effective techniques of self-transformation. Promoting what Charles Taylor has identified as the distinctively modern ideal of a human agent who can “remake himself by methodical and disciplined action,”<sup>12</sup> Bacon provides a series of rules for the re-creation of the self. His first rule foregrounds his departure from Aristotle by adapting the avoidance of excess and defect—which for Aristotle defines the virtues—to this psychological enterprise: Bacon counsels against taking “either to[o] *High* a strayne or to[o] *weak*” in “exercises” for modifying one’s habits (*AL* 151). By repeating this advice (in the 1612 essay “Of Nature in Men”) to whoever “seeketh Victory over his *Nature*,” Bacon underscores that his adaptation of the mean promotes a self-mastery that Aristotle neglected.<sup>13</sup>

The *Advancement* does, however, adopt one recommendation from Aristotle: “Another precept . . . which Aristotle mencioneth by the way . . . is to beare ever towards the Contrary extreame of that whereunto we are by Nature inclined: like . . . making a wand straight by bending him Contrary to his natural Crookedness” (*AL* 152). This passage, one of the few instances in which Bacon grudgingly follows Aristotle, borrows from the *Nicomachean Ethics* both the general precept and the example of the crooked stick (2.9.4–5). Significantly, the one Aristotelian recommendation Bacon adopts posed a problem for moralists in the Aristotelian tradition. Both ancient writers and contemporaries of Bacon who accepted Aristotle’s general account of the mean staunchly rejected his advice that a person attempt to reach the mean by swerving from one vicious extreme toward its opposite. In “How a Man May Discern a Flatterer from a Friend” Plutarch espouses the Aristotelian mean but contemptuously rejects the Aristotelian recommendation: “For we must avoid all vice . . . and seeke to correct the same by the meanes of vertue (& not by another vice contrary to it). . . [like] those, who for want of knowledge and skill to set a peece of wood streight that . . . lieth crooked one way, do curbe and bend it as much another way.”<sup>14</sup> “In avoiding a vice, fools run into its opposite,” claims Horace (*Satire* 1.2.24; cf. *Satire* 1.1.101–107), and Renaissance authors often accuse the *mobile vulgus* of precisely such oscillation between extremes.<sup>15</sup>

Aristotle’s recommendation was particularly controversial because of its use in English religious controversy. Between 1573 and 1575 Bacon studied at Trinity College, Cambridge, under the personal supervision of the college master, John Whitgift, who bought an edition of Aristotle for Bacon’s use and presumably guided his pupil’s study of the philosopher who dominated the university curriculum.<sup>16</sup> Bacon undoubtedly followed the heated rounds of the Admonition Controversy over church government, the polemics of 1572–1577 between Whitgift, who defended the established church, and the Presby-

terian Thomas Cartwright, who argued for major reform.<sup>17</sup> Cartwright recommended a total rejection of all ceremonies once associated with Catholicism: the papist association of practices otherwise indifferent made them offensive to the godly and dangerous for the spiritually weak.<sup>18</sup> Cartwright contended that to attain the *via media* it was necessary to pursue the extreme opposite of Catholic superstition:

Philosophy . . . teacheth that, if a man will draw one from vice which is an extreme unto virtue which is the mean, that it is the best way to bring him as far from that vice as may be, and that it is safer . . . to be led somewhat too far than he should be suffered to remain within the borders and confines of that vice wherewith he is infect. . . . [A]s we see, to bring a stick which is crooked to be straight, we do not only bow it so far until it come to be straight, but we bend it so far until we make it so crooked of the other side as it was before of the first side, to this end that at the last it stand straight, and as it were in the midway . . . which I do not therefore speak as though we ought to abolish one evil and hurtful ceremony for another, but that I would show how it is more dangerous for us that have been plunged in the mire of popery to use the ceremonies of it, than of any other idolatrous and superstitious service of God.<sup>19</sup>

Like many educated Elizabethans, Cartwright followed the Scholastics in identifying Aristotle with “Philosophy” as such. His use of Aristotle was nevertheless halfhearted, for he invoked Aristotle in order to justify moving from one extreme to the other while trying to avoid the charge that he was actually recommending an extremist reaction.

Whitgift derided Cartwright’s appeal to Aristotle:

“Philosophy” also “teacheth” that both the extremes be vices; and therefore your rule doth teach that a man must go from one vice to another, if he will come to virtue, which is a mean; but St. Paul teacheth the contrary, saying *Non est faciendum malum, ut inde veniat bonum*: “We must not do evil that good may come thereof.” Wherefore, as your rule is heathenish and naught, so do you as naughtily follow it. Is there no way . . . to come from popery to the gospel, but by confusion, and overthrow of all good order and government? . . . [S]uch divinity it is that Aristotle, a profane philosopher, doth teach in his Ethics, but not that Christ and his apostles do teach in the gospel.

While accepting the Aristotelian doctrine of the mean, Whitgift spurned as un-Christian the Aristotelian recommendation on attaining it. Cartwright’s response revealed how little he himself could stomach the Aristotelian precept: he indignantly denied having recommended treating one extreme as “remedy against the other”; he only claimed that such remedy was the lesser of two evils. Bacon’s unequivocal endorsement of Aristotle’s recommendation thus invokes the ancient philosopher’s authority to justify a corrective extremism rejected even by radical contemporaries.

In “Of Nature in Men,” moreover, Bacon modifies the Aristotelian precept in order to free it from its traditional condemnation: “Neither is the Ancient Rule amisse, to bend Nature as a Wand, to a Contrary Extreme, whereby to set it right: *Understanding it, where the Contrary Extreme is no Vice*” (*Essays* 119; emphasis mine). Bacon’s seemingly cautious qualification is actually bold: by warning his readers not to fall into vice while moving to an opposite extreme, he undermines the whole thrust of Aristotle’s ethical theory. For Aristotle the contrary extreme is by definition a vice, even though one must sometimes pursue it to reach the mean. Bacon’s cavalier treatment of Aristotelian moral categories betrays his priorities: he is less interested in upholding traditional ethical norms than in promoting the individual’s ability to conquer, by whatever means necessary, his own inclinations and habits. He consequently treats behavioral extremes as far more acceptable devices for self-mastery than does Aristotle himself, let alone later moralists in the Aristotelian tradition.

Committed to increasing the individual’s power, Bacon provides rules not only for moral transformation but also for worldly success—what the *Advancement* calls the “Architecture of Fortune.” Several of the *Essays* give additional guidance to those who, like Bacon himself, sought to rise at court.<sup>20</sup> Although he tries to reconcile self-promotion and moral action with declarations that power should be acquired and deployed for moral purposes,<sup>21</sup> Bacon’s worldly advice largely follows Machiavelli in assuming that one must often ignore traditional morality in order to gain or retain power.<sup>22</sup> The “Architecture of Fortune” consequently goes much further than Bacon’s moral thought in rejecting the ethical mean.

Moderation, as I have noted, was often deemed the defining virtue of the Aristotelian system and identified with the mean. Bacon warns the ambitious courtier that the appearance of moderation can be helpful but the reality crippling: while men should strive to “winne opinion of moderation,” those who lack the art of self-promotion suffer from actual “moderacion” (*AL* 170, 173). He also denudes moderation of its ethical significance by transforming one of Aristotle’s descriptions of moral defect into a positive portrayal of a strategic, non-Aristotelian “moderation”: “Another precept . . . is that . . . of *Bias*, construed not to any point of perfidiousnesse, but only to caution and moderation, *Et ama tanquam inimicus futurus, & odi tanquam amatorus* [love as though you will hate in the future; hate as though you will love]: For it utterly betrayeth all utility for men to imbarque them selves to[o] far, into unfortunate friendships” (*AL* 176). Aristotle argues that attaining the ethical mean requires doing and feeling “what is noble” [*to kalon*] (*NE* 3.7.13, 3.9.4, 3.12.9, 4.1.34, 4.2.7). Pursuing the “noble” dictates concern for the common good rather than for what is merely useful to one’s self (see, e.g., *NE* 9.8.7).<sup>23</sup> Contrasting the moral deficiencies of the old with the mean embodied by the middle-aged, Aristotle’s *Rhetoric* cites *Bias*’s precept as one of the defective principles of the old, who are overly mistrustful of others and who seek “what

is useful" [*to sumpheron*] to themselves rather than "what is noble" (2.13.4, 9).<sup>24</sup> Underscoring his revamping of Aristotle, Bacon espouses Bias's precept and notes that the "moderation" he recommends—a deficient extremism in Aristotelian terms—aims at personal "utility." In similar fashion, in his essay "Of Fortune" (1612) Bacon implicitly associates moderation with prudential self-interest when he contends that the ambitious man should avoid "*Too Much*" honesty or "Extreme" concern for others, for "when a Man placeth his Thoughts without Himselfe, he goeth not his owne Way" (*Essayes* 123).

Bacon also recommends the mean as a pragmatic instrument for advancement in the manner of the courtesy books popular in early modern England, which often invoke the mean as the norm for courtly manners. The best known and most influential Italian courtesy book, Castiglione's *Il cortegiano*, translated by Thomas Hoby in 1561, is typical in recommending the mean in sartorial fashions, jokes, and dance movements.<sup>25</sup> Aristotle authorized the mean as a general principle of behavioral decorum by applying it to the proper conduct of relaxing conversation (*NE* 4.8), and Cicero's *De officiis* provided a major model for early modern courtesy books by applying "mediocritas" in (bathetic) detail to the Roman gentleman's proper grooming, deportment, and dress (1.35–36, 40). Yet Renaissance courtesy books like Castiglione's deviate from both Aristotle and Cicero by subordinating the mean to self-promotion. Just as Aristotle associates the mean with the morally "noble" rather than the personally "useful," so Cicero argues that adherence to the mean requires doing what is "honorable" [*honestum*] rather than what seems "useful" [*utile*] to one's self (3.7–8). In Castiglione, by contrast, a speaker notes that one's reputation at court can be fostered by adhering to a decorous "mean" [*mediocrità*] that encompasses behavior immoral from an Aristotelian or Ciceronian point of view, such as a calculated deceitfulness that does not exceed the "bounds" of plausibility.<sup>26</sup> A French parody of Castiglione, translated into English as *The Philosopher of Court* without any evidence that the translator grasped the work's irony, recommends a decorous mean to further the courtier's sole goal, "reputation."<sup>27</sup> Lorenzo Ducci's cynical 1601 courtesy book, translated in 1607, likewise advises against opposite behavioral "extreme[s]" in order to achieve one's "end"—personal "interest."<sup>28</sup>

Bacon similarly advocates adherence to a mean not as an unqualified moral good but as an often useful strategy. The *Advancement* counsels an ambitious man to preserve "a good mediocrity" in candor and secrecy (*AL* 173). The paired essays "Of Dispatch" (1612) and "Of Delayses" (1625) warn against the "Extreme[s]" of waiting "too long" or striking "before the time" in pursuit of one's goals (*Essayes* 68–69). "Of Ceremonies and Respects" (1597) counsels the worldly man neither to despise nor to cultivate formalities "too much" (*Essayes* 157). "Of Discourse" (1597) bids the courtier to "Moderate" his speech, not to discuss any subject "too farre," and to avoid excess and defect in the courtly art of beating around the bush: "To use too many Circumstances,

ere one come to the Matter, is Wearisome; To use none at all, is Blunt” (*Essayes* 103–105). Like the courtesy books, Bacon demotes Aristotle’s and Cicero’s fixed axiological category of the mean to a mere instrumental option for the ambitious courtier.

### Mastering the Body with Means and Extremes

Just as Bacon promotes the individual’s control over his ethical nature and the social world, he also attempts to maximize the individual’s mastery over his own body. Improving health and increasing human longevity are central goals of his science. The appendix to the posthumously published *New Atlantis* (1627) treats “the prolongation of life” as the first *desideratum* of natural philosophy (3:167). Bacon even speaks, albeit tentatively, of immortality, the ultimate victory over the body’s decay: the fragmentary *Valerius Terminus, or The Interpretation of Nature* (composed ca. 1603) posits the goal of restoring man “to the sovereignty and power” of “his first state of creation,” including “immortality (if it were possible)” (3:222).<sup>29</sup> Bacon’s utopian desire to master death for the benefit of humanity contrasts sharply with Aristotle’s more modest attempt—in *On Length and Shortness of Life* and *On Youth, Old Age, Life and Death*—to understand the natural, inevitable causes of decay and death. Hoping that man can conquer rather than contemplate, Bacon promotes the transformation of medical theory and practice.

Aristotle closely associates health with ethical virtue: both depend on the mean. Following the medical theory, expounded in Hippocratic works like *Of Ancient Medicine*, that disease is caused by excess or deficiency of physical necessities, Aristotle compares ethical virtue with health and strength, which require the avoidance of extremes in diet and exercise (*NE* 2.2.6).<sup>30</sup> The *Secreta Secretorum*, ascribed to Aristotle during the Renaissance, argues that health depends upon (in Robert Copland’s 1528 version) living “temperatly” and avoiding too “moche” and too “lytell” food, drink, sleep, and exercise.<sup>31</sup> Indebted to both the Hippocratic corpus and Aristotle, the Galenism that dominated medicine from the Middle Ages through the early modern period consistently linked health to moderation. In his Galenic handbook *The Castel of Health* (1541), for example, Sir Thomas Elyot praises “moderate lyvinge” and warns readers to avoid extremes in eating, drinking, and sleeping as well as “immoderate” “affectes and passions” harmful to both physical and spiritual well-being.<sup>32</sup>

Bacon’s search for new techniques of self-mastery leads him to recommend behavioral extremes rejected by mainstream medical tradition. “Of Regiment of Health” (1597), one of his earliest essays, sets the pattern for his mixing of traditional calls for moderation with a new emphasis on the efficacy of extremes. The essay warns, conventionally, against “Excesses” in bad habits and

disturbing passions. It also applies the mean to the use of medicine: "If you flie Physicke in *Health* altogether, it will be too strange for your Body, when you shall need it. If you make it too familiar, it will worke no Extraordinary Effect, when Sicknesse commeth" (*Essayes* 100–101). Bacon injects more extreme counsel, however, amid traditional warnings against extreme shifts in one's habits: "Beware of sudden Change in any great point of Diet, and if necessity inforce it, fit the rest to it. For it is a Secret, both in Nature, and State; That it is safer to change Many Things, then one. . . . And trie in any Thing, thou shalt judge hurtfull, to discontinue it by little and little" (100). The opening clause and final sentence are conventional. The Hippocratic *Aphorisms*, for which Galen wrote a commentary, recommends changing any bodily condition slowly (2:51). Elyot cites Galen on the need to withdraw "lyttele by lyttele" from bad eating habits.<sup>33</sup> In the 1590s Bacon's own mother espoused Galenic principles in her warnings against "extremities" in regimen and "sudden" changes in diet (8:114). Bacon's advice becomes unconventional, however, when he claims, with a surprising analogy to *raisons d'état*, that when sudden change is necessary "both in Nature, and State" it is "safer to change Many Things, then one." Machiavelli argues that a prince in pursuit of absolute power must take the extreme measure, harsh as it may be, of changing "everything." He excoriates politicians who foolishly pursue dangerous "middle ways" [*vie del mezzo*] instead (*Discourses* 1.26).<sup>34</sup> Tempering such counsel by changing "everything" to "Many Things," Bacon adds a modified version of the extreme methods necessary (according to Machiavelli) in critical situations to the traditional moderate procedures for maintaining health in normal circumstances. The individual must know how to take the measures, whether moderate or extreme, that fit his particular situation.

Bacon distances himself further from Aristotelian and Galenic norms by citing the Roman medical writer Celsus on the usefulness of contrary extremes: "Celsus . . . a Wise Man . . . giveth it, for one of the great precepts of Health and Lasting; That a Man doe vary, and enterchange Contraries; But with an Inclination to the more benigne Extreme: Use Fasting, and full Eating, but rather full Eating; Watching and Sleep, but rather Sleep; Sitting, and Exercise, but rather Exercise; and the like. So shall Nature be cherished, and yet taught Masteries" (*Essayes* 101). Though he neither founded nor inspired a distinctive school, Celsus earned the admiration of Renaissance humanist doctors and became an important source of early modern medical terminology when his *De medicina* was rediscovered in the fifteenth century.<sup>35</sup> While invoking Celsus as an authoritative counterweight to mainstream medical doctrine, Bacon significantly modifies the emphasis of the following passage from *De medicina* concerning the healthy person's regimen: "His kind of life should afford him variety; . . . he should sail, hunt, rest sometimes, but more often take exercise. . . . It is well . . . to attend at times a banquet, at times to hold aloof; to eat more than sufficient at one time, at another no more . . . . Sexual



activity indeed is neither to be desired too much, nor overmuch to be feared; seldom used it braces the body, used frequently it relaxes it" (1.1; trans. modified). While Celsus focuses on health, Bacon stresses techniques for "Masteries" of nature. While Celsus notes the healthy person's need for variety and ends with a recommendation that one observe a mean in sexual activity, Bacon underscores the usefulness of extremes by sharpening the binary oppositions, adding the claim that the "benign Extreme" is to be preferred and eliminating Celsus's final recommendation of the mean.

The "enterchange" of contrary extremes that Bacon recommends for the healthy was traditionally considered appropriate only for curing the sick. While the Hippocratic *Aphorisms* (1.3) notes that the healthy should avoid "extremes" of fasting or satiety, the Hippocratic *Nature of Man* (9) enunciates the cure of the sick through opposite extremes adopted by both Aristotle and Galen and rejected, as we have seen, by Donne in his Wotton epistle: diseases due to overeating are cured by fasting and vice versa. This method is the medical analogue to the advice in the *Nicomachean Ethics* that one pursue the extreme contrary to one's own vice in order to reach the mean. The pseudo-Aristotelian *Problems*, which Bacon believed to be Aristotle's (*AL* 91), argues that extremes cure disease because "each excess or defect reduces the other to the mean" (1.2).<sup>36</sup> By including extreme measures as part of a healthy regimen rather than treating them solely as corrective medicine, Bacon undermines the usual identification of health with a balanced mean.

In later writings Bacon further reduces the mean's centrality by distinguishing between two goals that he conflated in his essay on regimen. In *De Augmentis Scientiarum* Bacon complains that medical tradition neglected its central task of prolonging life by not distinguishing this from the preservation of health and cure of disease (1:598, 4:383). Bacon's bold treatment of longevity as a legitimate goal distinct from health (virtue's bodily analogue) parallels his treatment of worldly success as a legitimate goal distinct from virtue. In *Historia Vitae et Mortis* (1623) Bacon himself concedes that seeking to prolong life is difficult to square with the Christian view that man should look to "eternity" rather than this world of "sins and sorrows" for his ultimate fulfillment (2:103, 105; 5:215, 217). Invoking a natural "term" of life, Aristotelian and Galenic medicine conceived the doctor's role to be regulating, through regimen and remedies, the patient's health during the life span determined by nature, not attempting to prolong life as much as possible or trying to avert the "natural" time of death.<sup>37</sup> The scriptural claim that God has "determined" a time of death beyond which each person could not "pass" (Job 14:5) reinforced English Protestant Galenists' emphasis upon the limits of medical art. For example, Andrew Borde's often reprinted mid-sixteenth-century regimen handbook *The Breviary of Health* notes that people cannot "prolong" their life span as determined by God; they can, however, avoid unnaturally shortening their lives by adhering to a moderate regimen and eschewing sinful excess.<sup>38</sup>

Bacon's anti-Galenic commitment to prolonging life was inspired by alchemical tradition, whose theories and methods he frequently attacked while sharing many of its ambitions.<sup>39</sup> Roger Bacon and Paracelsus, among others, conceded the value of a moderate regimen for health, but they argued that alchemical substances and occult processes could also lengthen human life beyond the limit accepted by traditional medicine.<sup>40</sup> In *Historia Vitae et Mortis* Bacon goes further than the alchemists in diminishing moderation's normative medical role by arguing that whether one should observe the mean or go to extremes in diet depends on whether one seeks health or longevity: "A . . . monastic diet . . . seems to have a strong tendency to prolong life. Yet . . . the greatest gluttons . . . are often found the most long-lived. The middle [*media*] diet, which is esteemed temperate . . . contributes to health but not to longevity. . . . For where extremes are prejudicial, the mean [*medium*] is the best; but where extremes are beneficial, the mean [*medium*] is mostly worthless" (2:153, 5:261; cf. 2:437). By correlating the prolongation of life as a legitimate goal with the adherence to extremes rather than means, Bacon reveals his amoral, pragmatic approach to human empowerment. He recommends "extreme" methods for attaining long life that contradict the precepts not only of Galenic doctors but also of Protestant ministers, who, applying the mean to daily life, decried both "popish" monastic asceticism and excessive indulgence in bodily pleasure.<sup>41</sup> Bacon's concluding statement transcends the particulars of diet and even of physical well-being with its general claim that one cannot determine *a priori* the efficacy of means and extremes. Their utility or harmfulness in any domain depends entirely on the individual's perceived needs and self-chosen goals.<sup>42</sup>

### Individual Empowerment versus Sociopolitical Order

Bacon's medical writings reject the concept of *krasis*, the proper blending or "tempering" of humoral extremes normally associated with the mean of health. Like some of the Hippocratic writings, Aristotle treats health as a mean arising from the body's proper mixing of the four contrary qualities: hot, cold, moist, and dry. Drawing on both the Hippocratic corpus and Aristotle, Galen treats health as a proper blending of the four humors associated with the Aristotelian qualities.<sup>43</sup> Elyot's advice that his readers seek "a meane and perfytted temperature" reveals the Galenic association of the proper "temperature" or mixture of humors with a mean state.<sup>44</sup> Bacon, however, spurns as unverified the Aristotelian-Galenic qualities and humors and the concept of a mean physiological "temperature" based on them (3:532).

Bacon's desire to empower the aspiring individual profoundly conflicts with his wish to preserve the existing sociopolitical order. He reveals his greater conservatism in matters of state by treating rulers' and subjects' ideal behavior

in terms of a concept he rejects in his biomedical discussions of the individual: the mean “temperament” conceived of as the proper blending of opposite extremes. Bacon’s defense of the king’s prerogative is rhetorically conservative in appealing to the balance between royal power and subjects’ liberties supposedly enshrined within the “ancient constitution.”<sup>45</sup> Like many contemporaries, Bacon invokes the ideal of the mean “temperament,” praising the British polity’s “excellent temper” for properly blending the king’s “sovereignty” and the subject’s “freedom” (7:547).<sup>46</sup>

In “Of Empire” (1612) Bacon describes a ruler’s ideal behavior as a “true Temper” that is “rare” and “hard” to maintain because it is based on “mingl[ing] Contraries” rather than “enterchang[ing] them.” He warns that “nothing destroyeth Authority so much, as the unequal and untimely Enterchange of Power *Pressed* too farre, and *Relaxed* too much” (*Essayes* 59). The virtuous ruler observes the mean between excess and defect by keeping the “Temper” or proper mixture of the two “Contraries” of absolute power (i.e., tyranny) and absolute liberty (i.e., anarchy). The passage recalls a speech Bacon delivered in Parliament in 1610. As Solicitor General and a defender of the king’s prerogative policies, Bacon sought to quell Parliamentary outrage over James I’s methods of extracting revenue without legislative consent. Arguing that the king’s “active” sovereignty and Parliament’s “passive” liberty were both essential for harmonious order, Bacon distinguished between the ruler who wisely “temper[ed] and mingle[d]” his sovereignty with the subject’s “liberty” and the ruler who “interchange[d]” the two “unequally and absurdly” (11:177–178). The striking contrast between Bacon’s advice that the health-seeking individual should “enterchange Contraries” and his advice that rulers and subjects temper rather than interchange extremes underscores his greater reliance on the mean when considering political stability.<sup>47</sup>

Like many of his contemporaries, Bacon treats harmony within the established church as essential for sociopolitical order, and his discussions of the English church exhibit the same cautious reliance on the mean. In 1603 he hails the new king as the “Christian moderator” who will find the “golden mediocrity” between those who “run into extremities”: conservatives who wish to halt reformation and radicals who seek to destroy rather than reform the church (10:104). In a work of the late 1580s written in response to the Marprelate Controversy (one of the series of face-offs between the church establishment and the Presbyterians), Bacon attacks “extreme” defenders of the English church for insisting on “altering nothing” but criticizes Presbyterians for measuring true religion by “the furthest distance” from popish “error” and thus falling into a contrary extreme (8:83–84, 88–90). When religious unity rather than individual well-being was at stake, Bacon could not countenance a corrective movement from one extreme to its contrary.

Bacon’s treatments of factional strife provide the most striking examples of the divergence between his vision of the individual and his conception of the

state. His writings discuss how to control both the figurative factions within the human mind—the passions—and the literal factions that dominated the Elizabethan and Jacobean courts. The *Advancement* argues that one can cure the “distempers of the affections” by knowing “how . . . to sett affection against affection, and to Master one by another . . . upon which foundation is erected that excellent use of *Praemium et poena* [reward and punishment]. whereby Civile states consist, imploying the predominante affections of *feare* and *hope*, for the suppression and brideling the rest. For as in the governmente of states it is sometimes necessarye to bridle one faction with another, so is it in the governmente within” (AL 149–150). This passage boldly extends the concept of the tempering of opposites. In striking contrast to Aristotle, Bacon’s technique of setting “affection against affection” suggests that men can be made virtuous even if their reason lacks the power to regulate their emotions and the extremes to which they are prone. Aristotle argues that ethical virtue is inseparable from practical reason or prudence [*phronesis*], which determines the mean according to “right principle” (NE 2.6.15, 6.13.4). He therefore distinguishes between the virtuous and the vicious by the degree to which practical reason controls them. While the virtuous few obey reason and therefore respond to those who “exhort” them to “virtue on moral grounds,” the vicious majority resist reason and must therefore “be chastised by pain” (NE 10.9.10). Earlier in the *Advancement* Bacon criticized Aristotle’s claim that “generous spirites are wonne by doctrines . . . and the vulgar sort by reward & punishment” for being too general to help men become virtuous (AL 134). Bacon’s analogy between moral self-improvement through the conflict between the emotions and the use of *Praemium et poena* wholly subverts the Aristotelian distinction between the virtuous, reasonable few and the vicious, pain-fearing majority.<sup>48</sup> Although the *Advancement* itself distinguishes between morality, which treats “Internall goodnesse,” and civil affairs, which is concerned only with “Externall goodnesse” (156), Bacon’s technique of setting “affection against affection” blurs the distinction by internalizing reward and punishment within the breast of a “civil” man. Such a man is not virtuous in the Aristotelian sense because his reason has not brought his emotions to a mean; rather, he has transformed himself into a battlefield in which warring extremes come to a stalemate. Less concerned than Aristotle with the nature of the “truly” virtuous man, Bacon focuses on the practical outcome, the individual’s “civilized” self-control, however achieved.

Bacon’s analogy between the passions and political factions suggests that a society, like a “civil” individual, can be well ordered without a strong, disinterested rational power. Instead of a ruler who tempers opposites to attain the mean, Bacon’s analogy suggests a ruler who skillfully sets one faction against the other because he cannot subdue their extremism on his own. Yet the analogy omits a crucial aspect of Bacon’s political thought, for he continually stresses that a ruler *cannot* simply oppose faction to faction but must also act

as the rational mean between factional extremes and find impartial servants (such as Bacon himself!) capable of playing a similar mediating role.<sup>49</sup> “Of Seditions and Troubles” (1625) argues that princes should not join factions lest the “Boat” of state be swayed to one side and capsize (*Essayes* 44); the image suggests that only rulers who reside in the mean between—and therefore beyond—factions can keep the state intact. “Of Ambition” (1612) contends that the way for rulers to control unruly subordinates “is to Ballance them by others, as proud as they,” but Bacon goes on to note that “there must be some Middle Counsellours, to keep Things steady: For without that Ballast, the Ship will roule too much” (116). “Of Counsell” (1612) argues that rulers should employ several advisors who “keepeth Centinell over [one] Another” and thereby thwart one another’s ambitions (66), but the essay also notes that for “ripening Businesse” it is “better to choose Indifferent persons, then to make an Indifferency, by putting in those, that are strong, on both sides” (67). “Middle” and “Indifferent” counselors, the monarch’s disinterested surrogates, act as the stabilizing means between factional extremes. Bacon once more moderates his radical precepts for the aspiring individual when considering the preservation of political order.

### The Intellectual Mean in Natural Philosophy

Bacon’s flexible approach to means and extremes also shapes his innovative and influential philosophy of science. Using Aristotelian ethics against its originator, Bacon promotes his scientific method as a sober, productive mean while representing Aristotelianism as unruly, fruitless excess. Aristotle, who distinguished ethical virtues residing in the mean from intellectual virtues, did not himself relate intellectual activity—except in one passage of uncertain meaning—to the mean.<sup>50</sup> Defining religious orthodoxy, however, Augustine exhorted the faithful to hew to the “mean of truth” [*veritatis medium*] between opposite errors (*De sancta virginitate* 19.19). Inspired by this formulation and evincing their passion for systematization, the Scholastics conflated Aristotle’s discussions of opposite kinds of falsity (*Metaphysics* 4.7.1) and of truthfulness about oneself as a mean between mendacious boasting and self-deprecation (*NE* 2.7.11–12, 4.7.2–8) in order to define truth, the goal of intellectual virtue, as a mean between the excess of false affirmation and the defect of false denial.<sup>51</sup> Giving substantive content to this formal definition of truth as a mean, the second book of the *Advancement* examines “excess” and “deficiency” in each field of learning. Bacon treats the superfluities and omissions of previous thinkers, especially those of the disastrously influential Aristotle, as deviations from the virtuous mean of truth, which is only attainable through a Baconian reformation of knowledge.<sup>52</sup>

Bacon also goes far beyond Scholastic formula in claiming that scientific inquiry depends on an epistemological mean. Lorraine Daston and Katharine Park have argued that Bacon's critique of both Aristotelian-Scholastic natural philosophy and what Daston and Park call Renaissance "preternatural" philosophy represents a "turning point" in scientific method. While Aristotelian-Scholastic science consisted in generalizations about what always or usually occurred in nature, diverse medieval and early modern thinkers focused upon "marvelous particulars" as oddities that fell outside the Aristotelian-Scholastic framework. Bacon's major innovation was to argue that "zigzagging between the universal and the particular" would correct both the premature generalizations of the Aristotelian tradition and the "open-endedness of empiricism based on particulars" practiced by "preternatural" philosophers.<sup>53</sup> Yet Daston and Park do not examine how Bacon promotes his innovative method by transforming the venerable norm of the mean.

The discussion of "Moderation, or the Middle Way" [*Mediocritas, sive Via Medial*] in *De Sapientia Veterum* (1609) treats the myth of Scylla and Charybdis, which Aristotle used to explicate the ethical mean (*NE* 2.9.3), as a parable of the thinker's need to avoid the extremes of excessive distinctions and excessive generalizations (6:677, 755). The *Advancement* argues that since "particulars are infinite" and "higher generalities give no sufficient direction," the "middle propositions" between particular observations and grand generalizations are most useful (108). Such middle propositions have been neglected, however, because intellectual extremists too eagerly leap from utmost particularities to grand generalities.

Bacon treats Aristotle as both the major symptom and chief fomentor of such intellectual extremism. According to Bacon's *Redargutio Philosophiarum* (composed ca. 1608) Aristotle moved from particulars to generalities by way of false inductions based on an artificially small number of particular examples and without any attention to counterexamples (3:582).<sup>54</sup> In the *Novum Organum* (1620), the Baconian substitute for the logical treatises that comprise the Aristotelian *Organon*, Bacon characterizes Aristotelian logic as a reckless process of jumping from particulars to generalities and then using syllogisms with premises based on false generalizations to deduce the middle propositions on "which depend the affairs and fortunes of men" (bk. 1, nos. 104–105, 4:97–98; see also 4:24–25).<sup>55</sup> Bacon associates such intellectual recklessness with ethical extremism. In *Globi Descriptio Intellectualis* (written in 1612) Bacon recalls Aristotle's own description of "rash cowards" who deviate from the mean of courage (*NE* 3.7.0) to castigate Aristotle's scientific approach as "simultaneously cowardly and rash" [*pusillanimus simul et audax*] toward nature (2:757).

Bacon also expands upon classical formulations to construct his innovative intellectual mean. For him, finding the mean between excessive particularity and excessive generality requires treading a path between rival methodologi-

cal schools. Although neither Aristotle nor the Scholastics applied the mean to rival methodologies, Celsus did. Bacon's interest in medicine led him to explore its central epistemological question: the relationship between theoretical generalizations concerning disease and empirical observations of particular cases. The ancient medical schools of "rationalists" and "empiricists" each claimed one of these extremes as the source of medical knowledge. Celsus's advocacy of a mean between the two provided Bacon with a model for his own argument that one must mediate between methodological extremes in all scientific pursuits.

"Of Regiment of Health," which begins and ends with questions of method, is as important as a blueprint for Bacon's scientific methodology as it is for his views on health. The opening argues the need to balance general rules and particular empirical observations: "There is a wisdom in this, beyond the Rules of *Physicke*: A Mans owne Observation, what he findes Good of, and what he findes Hurt of, is the best *Physicke* to preserve Health. But it is a safer Conclusion to say; *This agreeth not well with me, therefore I will not continue it; Then this; I finde no offense of this, therefore I may use it.* For Strength of Nature in youth, passeth over many Excesses, which are owing a Man till his Age" (*Essayes* 100). Bacon shuttles between the general and particular. While he begins by noting that personal observation provides greater knowledge than rules, his caution that it is safer to avoid what is harmful than to indulge in what seems harmless is a rule for judging one's particular needs based on the general nature of youth and age.

Some Renaissance thinkers advocated complete self-reliance in personal regimen. Montaigne's rejection of general medical precepts and physicians is a powerful synecdoche for his dismissal of all authority over personal experience outside the self.<sup>56</sup> Bacon, by contrast, avoids such radical epistemological independence by arguing that the individual should not only balance his experience with rules but also enlist a professional who will similarly combine particular and general knowledge. The essay's conclusion complements its opening recommendations: "*Physicians* are some of them so pleasing, and conformable to the Humor of the Patient, as they presse not the true Cure of the Disease; And some other are so Regular, in proceeding according to Art, for the Disease, as they respect not sufficiently the Condition of the Patient. Take one of a Middle Temper; Or if it may not be found in one Man, combine two of either sort: And forget not to call, aswell [*sic*] the best acquainted with your Body, as the best reputed of for his Faculty" (*Essayes* 101–102). While Bacon pointedly avoids the Aristotelian-Galenic emphasis on the proper "temper" of health, he gives his search for an epistemological mean an original twist by calling for a doctor of "Middle Temper" who harmonizes the extremes by considering both the particular patient and general rules. After advising his reader to find such a physician, however, Bacon provides for cases in which the patient must himself take on this role. As in his advice concerning politi-

cal factions, here Bacon recommends that the patient control the extremism of medical “factions” by setting them against one another and, Bacon implies, by enacting the moderating mean. While the individual should avail himself of professional expertise, he cannot abdicate his own judgment.

Bacon’s ideal doctor recalls Celsus’s claim in the preface to *De medicina* that it is best for the physician to know both the general characteristics of a disease and the peculiar characteristics of a patient (*Prooemium* 73). This assertion concludes the preface’s discussion of the competing medical schools, the *rationales* or *dogmatici* and the *empirici*. The *rationales* or *dogmatici* insisted that one needed “theoretical medicine” [*rationalem medicinam*] to understand the “latent causes” of disease; the *empirici* argued that such causes were unascertainable, that all remedies were based on experience of particular cases, and that only after remedies had been discovered were vain theories about their workings propounded (12–39). Celsus claims his views “are neither wholly in accord with one opinion or another, nor exceedingly [*nimum*] at variance with both, but hold a sort of intermediate place [*media quodammodo*]” (45). With self-conscious moderation he terms medicine “an art based on conjecture” [*ars conjecturalis*] requiring both experience of particular cases and conjectural reasoning (46–53).

Bacon extended Celsus’s mean to new epistemological domains. The *Advancement* criticizes “Emperique Phisitions” who lack rational “methode” and argues that doctors should combine the experience of “Emperiques” and the learning of “Conjecturall” medicine (10–11, 101). In one of the earliest English uses of the term “empiric” outside a medical context, the *Advancement* also criticizes “Emperique” lawyers and statesmen, that is, men with practical experience but no theoretical training (11). In *Redargutio Philosophiarum* and *Cogitata et Visa* (composed ca. 1607), in *De Sapientia Veterum*, and again in the *Novum Organum* (bk. 1, no. 95) Bacon argues generally that the cleavage between *empirici* and *rationales* in the arts and sciences needs to be eliminated, proposing a “middle course” [*ratio media*] that properly tempers the extremes (3:583, 616; 6:673, 750; 1:201; 4:92–93). He identifies his scientific practice with the mean, his ancient opponent Aristotle and his heirs with overly-speculative rationalism, and such rivals as the alchemists with mindless empiricism.<sup>57</sup>

As the proponent of a new, anti-Aristotelian scientific method, Bacon does not simply extend classical conceptions of the mean. He also adopts the procedure that he recommends to the ambitious courtier, trying as much as possible to “winne opinion of moderation” even while he makes bold moves. Bacon seeks to lessen his readers’ suspicions of his proposed epistemological revolution by characterizing it as a mean between excessive veneration for the past and excessive craving for the new. The *Advancement* notes that thinkers all too often have an “extreame” love for “Antiquity” or “Novelty” at the expense of truth (28). Bacon shrewdly adapts the long-standing accusation that Aris-



totle resembled his pupil Alexander the Great in excessive love of glory. This charge was first made by the Roman historian-moralist Valerius Maximus (*Factorum ac dictorum memorabilium libri IX* 8.14.2–3), who was much admired in the Renaissance, and was echoed by the twelfth-century humanist John of Salisbury in his *Policraticus*, a text popular in the Renaissance as a counter to Scholasticism. Noting that Aristotle often criticized his philosophical predecessors, Bacon claims that Aristotle strove for “glorie” by disparaging “Antiquitie,” citing predecessors only to confute them, and compares Aristotle’s fame-driven ruthlessness to Alexander’s (81).<sup>58</sup> Bacon thereby associates his own anti-Aristotelian method with the virtuous mean by distinguishing his modest, sober search for truth from both Aristotle’s vainglorious quest for novelty and the exaggerated respect for antiquity (i.e., for Aristotle himself) displayed by Bacon’s Scholastic and Neoscholastic contemporaries.

Bacon makes his rhetorical strategy explicit when he explains that he will use Aristotelian terms like “Physicke” and “Metaphisicke” but will give them new meanings because “it seemeth best . . . to retaine the ancient termes, though I sometimes alter the uses and definitions, according to the Moderate proceeding in Civill government; where although there bee some alteration, yet that holdeth which *Tacitus* wisely noteth, *Eadem magistratum vocabula* [the names of the magistracies are not changed]” (*AL*, 80–81). Bacon’s allusion betrays contempt: the Tacitean passage refers to Augustus’s pretense that the republic continued in the age of the empire (*Annales* 1.3).<sup>59</sup> Yet Bacon’s comparison of Aristotle to a violent conqueror and himself to Augustus suggests his hope that a rhetoric of moderation, however devious, can bring about a peaceful transition from Aristotelian “tyranny” to the reign of fruitful Baconianism.<sup>60</sup> In the sentence Bacon quotes, Tacitus proceeds to note that Augustus’s deception brought peace to Rome. Augustus established the *pax Romana* that ushered in the Christian era; Bacon wished to establish a peace in the realm of learning that would usher in a new age of scientific progress.<sup>61</sup>

By proclaiming his Augustan “moderate proceeding,” Bacon the courtier links his peaceful program for the realm of learning to his king’s pacific program for the political realm. James I, whose motto was “Beati Pacifici,” was hailed as a new Augustus.<sup>62</sup> In the dedication to the *Advancement* Bacon compares James’s eloquence to that of the Tacitean Augustus (4; cf. *Annales* 13.3). While Aristotle resembles his ruthless student Alexander, Bacon—so he assures his potential royal patron—resembles his own moderate king.

### Adapting Religious Means to Scientific Ends

Bacon also boldly enlists and transforms specifically religious versions of the mean to support his secular scientific program. He claims his philosophy as the mean between two contrary “superstitions,” the mixing of theology with natural philosophy and the interdiction of natural philosophy by theology.

*Valerius Terminus* attacks those who give human knowledge “an over-large scope” by mixing natural philosophy and theological speculation, as well as those who “in a contrary extremity” place “too great a restraint” on lawful knowledge of the universe on the false grounds that such knowledge threatens faith (3:219). Bacon associates the first extreme with pagan religion, whose lack of dogma allowed ancient philosophers (such as Aristotle) to indulge in “metaphysical or theological discourse” rather than limiting themselves to what could be ascertained by reason; the second extreme with Islam and certain Christian “factions” that espouse a religious devotion based on “simplicity and ignorance”; and the mean with true Christianity, which allows what Bacon seeks to accomplish: a secular natural philosophy based on a “human reason” that does not broach the mysteries of faith (3:251).

While Bacon contrasts rationalism and empiricism as methodological extremes, he contrasts dogmatism and skepticism as substantive ones. He attacks the “excess” of those who “render sciences dogmatic,” like Aristotle, and those who “deny that we can know anything,” like the New Academicians, who made skepticism their defeatist “dogma” (*NO*, bk. 1, no. 67, 4:68–69). In the opening aphorism of the *Novum Organum* Bacon interprets the history of philosophy in terms of dogmatism and skepticism and the search for a mean between them:

Those who have taken upon them to lay down the law of nature as a thing already . . . understood . . . have therein done philosophy and the sciences great injury. . . . Those on the other hand who have taken a contrary course, and asserted that absolutely nothing can be known . . . have neither started from true principles nor rested in the just conclusion, zeal and affectation having carried them much too far. The more ancient of the Greeks (whose writings are lost) took up with better judgment a position between these two extremes,—between the presumption of pronouncing on everything, and the despair of comprehending anything . . . thinking (it seems) that this very question,—viz. whether or no anything can be known,—was to be settled not by arguing, but by trying. (4:39; see also 4:68–69)

Like Donne’s skeptical mean in “Satire 3,” Bacon’s normative position between two “extremes” is indebted to Sextus Empiricus’s contrast of Pyrrhonian searchers for truth with dogmatists and New Academicians who declare truth “inapprehensible” (*Outlines of Pyrrhonism* 1.1), as well as to Montaigne’s association of Pyrrhonism with the virtuous mean.<sup>63</sup> Celsus’s contrast of rationalists and empiricists in medicine parallels Sextus’s contrast of dogmatists and New Academicians in philosophy: rationalist or dogmatic physicians applied contemporaneous philosophical dogmatism to medicine, while the medical empiricists’ denial of the apprehensibility of the causes of disease and their attack on theoretical reasoning resembles, as Sextus Empiricus notes (*Outlines of Pyrrhonism* 1.236), the New Academy’s negative dogmatism.<sup>64</sup> Just as Bacon adapts Celsus’s contrast and intermediate stance, so he adapts Sextus’s triad

to promote Baconian scientific inquiry as the true middle way. Yet he dismisses the actual Pyrrhonist position for destroying rather than promoting investigation (4:69, 111; *Essayes* 11). Instead he presents himself as the rightful heir of the Presocratics, the philosophers whose “lost works” provide a conveniently unconstraining ancient authority for his middle position.<sup>65</sup>

In describing his own philosophy as the mean between “presumption” and “despair” Bacon also deploys a specifically Christian application of the mean. Like Augustine, who cautions the Christian to keep to the *via media* between presumption and despair concerning salvation, English Protestants often warned against these two extremes.<sup>66</sup> The Scholastics identified the mean between presumption and despair with the theological virtue of hope.<sup>67</sup> While Bacon piously notes in the *Advancement* that Christians “hope” for “Felicity” only in the afterlife (135), a bold this-worldly version of the mean of hope is central to Bacon’s progressivist project. A long section of the *Novum Organum* is dedicated to “inspiring hope” (bk. 1, nos. 92–94, 4:90–93) concerning the enormous improvements in mankind’s earthly lot that can be accomplished with Bacon’s method.<sup>68</sup> Bacon places his new scientific method under the aegis of religious hope by exhorting his reader to “prayer” and “hope” that from Bacon’s scientific account of “the true relation between the nature of things and the nature of mind” will arise “helps to man, and a line and race of inventions that may in some degree subdue and overcome the necessities and miseries of humanity” (4:27). Bacon gives his science the imprimatur of the Christian mean of hope as opposed to the presumption and despair of pagan systems, Aristotelian and Skeptic, and their pseudo-Christian descendents.

Thus, while Donne in “Satire 3” applies a secular epistemological mean to religion, Bacon deploys a religious mean to undergird his secular epistemology. Bacon does not, however, simply associate his program with a transformed religious mean. While hope is necessary to inspire, vigilant doubt is necessary to protect the scientific investigator from a premature belief that he has discovered the truth. Bacon advises keeping the “understanding equal” [*aequus*] by holding in “suspicion” whatever the “mind seizes and dwells upon with particular satisfaction” (*NO*, bk. 1, no. 58, 1:170, 4:60; trans. modified). Bacon’s “equal” understanding recalls the ancient ideal of equanimity sometimes conflated with the Aristotelian mean in the Renaissance. Horace praises the “equal [*aequam*] mind” that is “temperate” [*temperatam*] in all circumstances (*Ode* 2.3.1–5; trans. modified); Christopher Landino glosses Horace’s “equal” mind as one that falls into “no extreme” [*nullum extremum*] of joy or sorrow.<sup>69</sup> Bacon’s “equal” understanding is specifically an unbiased mean between excessive credulity and excessive doubt. Bacon adapts Aristotle’s warning that to attain the ethical mean “we must be especially on our guard against pleasure and what is pleasant, for when it comes to pleasure we cannot act as unbiased judges” (*NE* 2.9.6). For Bacon the greatest threat to the knowledge seeker’s “equal” understanding lies in credulity rather than its opposite

because the human mind takes “delight” [*delectatio*] in confirming its prejudices and is “more moved and excited by affirmatives than by negatives” (*NO*, bk. 1, no. 46, 1:166, 4:56); that is, it responds more happily to facts that support its preconceptions than to facts that do not.

Bacon argues, by contrast, that scientific investigation requires a bias toward doubt. After claiming that the mind should “hold itself equal” [*aequum*] between affirmation and negation, he corrects himself: “Nay rather in the establishment of any true axiom, the negative instance is the more forcible of the two” (*NO*, bk. 1, no. 46, 1:166, 4:56; trans. modified). Here Bacon foregrounds the most revolutionary aspect of his inductive method: the greater logical force of negative as opposed to positive examples in evaluating hypotheses.<sup>70</sup> He does not clarify, however, the relationship between his ideal of the unbiased mind, “equal” with respect to affirmation and negation, and the logic of scientific discovery, which requires that one give more weight to negative instances. Deferring to the traditional respect for the mean, Bacon stresses the need for mental balance even as he points out the necessity of a tilt toward doubt.

Bacon has special reason for caution regarding the centrality of doubt in his secular scientific program. He emphasizes that only inductions that take into account negative experimental results provide “solid” (i.e., rationally grounded) “hope” as opposed to the foolish “eternal hope” nurtured by those who dismiss negative results (*NO*, bk. 2, nos. 85, 106; 1:193, 206, 4:84, 98). Based upon a skeptical openness toward disconfirmation of one’s hypotheses, Bacon’s scientific hope differs profoundly from the theological virtue of hope, which depends, as Bacon notes in the *Advancement* and *De Augmentis*, upon “christian faith” (*AL* 135; 5:5). Bacon’s extremes of excessive credulity and doubt correspond to superstition and atheism in the religious domain, and Bacon’s discussion of proper induction evokes this highly charged religious context. His recommendation that men pay more attention to the “negative instance” follows his most dramatic example of a proper induction: “And therefore it was a good answer that was made by one who when they showed him hanging in a temple a picture of those who had paid their vows as having escaped shipwreck, and would have him say whether he did not now acknowledge the power of the gods,—‘Aye,’ asked he again, ‘but where are they painted that were drowned after their vows?’ And such is the way of all superstition” (*NO*, bk. 1, no. 46, 4:56). The *Advancement* tells the same story but names the witty inductivist who attacked superstition: the naysayer was Diagoras (116). Bacon probably derived the anecdote from Cicero’s *De natura deorum* (3.37.89), which introduces Diagoras with his nickname “the atheist” [*atheos*].<sup>71</sup> Thomas Nashe’s “Christes Teares over Jerusalem” (1593) suggests Diagoras’s Elizabethan infamy by describing an atheist as one who has been “Diagoriz’d.”<sup>72</sup> In a 1625 addition to his essay “Of Atheism,” Bacon himself notes that Diagoras was an atheist (*Essayes* 52). In Cicero a character remarks of Diagoras that it is easy to escape superstition if one destroys religion by

denying the gods' existence (*De natura deorum* 1.42.117). Though the *Novum Organum* omits Diagoras's name, Bacon's use of a famous anecdote concerning "the atheist" as a crucial example of his inductive method raises the question of whether one can free oneself from superstitions, as Bacon wishes, without becoming an atheist.

This question preoccupied Plutarch, who composed several essays attacking those who foolishly ran from the extreme of superstition [*desidaimonia*] to the extreme of atheism [*atheismos*] and thereby missed the mean of true religion [*eusebeia*]. Plutarch's discussions were influential in the Renaissance, when religious unbelief seemed a serious threat to Christianity and the word "atheism" and its cognates entered English and the other European vernaculars.<sup>73</sup> There is a striking difference, however, between Plutarch's treatments of superstition and atheism and those of most Renaissance thinkers: while Plutarch vacillates in his choice of which vice is the most extreme deviation from the mean,<sup>74</sup> Bacon's contemporaries normally treat atheism as further from the mean of true religion and therefore more heinous than superstition. In *An Apology for Poetry* (1595), for example, Sir Philip Sidney treats "superstitious" pagans as "much better" than "philosophers, who, shaking off superstition, brought in atheism." In the fifth book of *The Laws of Ecclesiastical Policy* (1597) Richard Hooker argues that true religion is the mean between superstition and "affected atheism," "the most extreme opposite to true Religion." (Like many early modern Christians, Hooker refused to believe there could be any true, as opposed to maliciously "affected," atheists.) In an unpublished work of 1604, John Harington similarly argues that atheism is the most dangerous extreme.<sup>75</sup>

By contrast, Bacon saw the real enemy as superstition, which stifled scientific inquiry, rather than atheism, which could promote it. He only gradually came to express this view and always did so cautiously and ambiguously. His first published work, the *Meditationes Sacrae* (1597), takes the standard position, arguing that "true religion" holds to the "mean" [*mediocritate*] between "Superstition . . . and Atheism" and that the "heresies" that spring from atheism are the worst (7:241, 252–253). In the *antitheta* appended to the *De Augustinis*, Bacon explores both sides of the question, attacking superstition in the name of atheism and vice versa (1:694, 4:477–478). Exercises for increasing mental flexibility, these antitheses are consciously sophistic arguments that allowed Bacon to reopen the question without taking responsibility for an unorthodox position. Such *antitheta* form the nucleus of his two essays "Of Atheism" and "Of Superstition" (1612). The first essay advances but heavily qualifies the standard view, whereas the second rejects that view and defends atheism as preferable to superstition. By presenting both sides, Bacon prudently obscures the distinction between personal views and rhetorical postures. Yet his ordering of the essays, giving the preference for atheism the last word, strongly suggests his own point of view.

"Of Atheism" begins with a conventional claim that atheism is worse than superstition but then proceeds to attack Aristotelian science as inimical to Christianity and to defend atomism—a cosmological system traditionally condemned for being atheistic—as closer to true religion:

I had rather beleeve all the Fables in the *Legend*, and the *Talmud*, and the *Alcoran*, then that this universall Frame, is without a Minde. And therefore, God never wrought Miracle, to convince *Atheisme*, because his Ordinary Works convince it. It is true, that a little Philosophy inclineth Mans Minde to *Atheisme*; But depth in Philosophy, bringeth Mens Mindes about to *Religion*. . . . Nay even that *Schoole*, which is most accused of *Atheisme*, doth most demonstrate *Religion*; That is, the *Schoole of Leucippus*, and *Democritus*, and *Epicurus*. For it is a thousand times more Credible, that foure Mutable Elements, and one Immutable Fift [sic] Essence, duly and Eternally placed, need no God; then that an Army, of Infinite small Portions, or Seedes unplaced, should have produced this Order, and Beauty, without a Divine Marshall. (*Essays* 51)

Introducing a motif that became central to later seventeenth-century opponents of Aristotelian science, Bacon suggests that Aristotle's cosmology, with its fifth essence or *Primum Mobile*, deifies the world itself and leaves no place for the true God, the Judeo-Christian creator.<sup>76</sup> After repeating the claim made in the *Advancement* that intensive scientific investigation of God's creation undermines atheism and leads men back to religion (*AL* 8–9), Bacon argues that atomism, unlike Aristotelianism, cannot explain the order and beauty of nature and thereby, by its very inadequacy, leaves room for and encourages faith in a transcendent God (cf. 1:570–571, 4:364–365). At the time he composed "Of Atheism," Bacon himself probably espoused a version of atomism as a scientific theory of nature that carefully avoided all matters of faith. The essay heavily qualifies the force of the superstition/atheism preference that Bacon ostensibly propounds by dismissing Aristotelianism as a kind of superstitious atheism and by defending godless atomism for its paradoxical openness to a religious faith that it studiously ignores.<sup>77</sup>

The opening of "Of Superstition" goes further in expressing Bacon's true preferences:

It were better to have no Opinion of *God* at all; then such an Opinion, as is unworthy of him: For the one is Unbeleefe, the other is Contumely: And certainly *Superstition* is the Reproach of the *Deity*. *Plutarch* saith well to that purpose: *Surely* (saith he) *I had rather, a great deale, Men should say, there was no such Man, at all, as Plutarch; then that they should say, there was one Plutarch, that would eat his Children, as soone as they were borne, as the Poets speak of Saturne*. . . . *Atheisme* leaves a Man to Sense; to Philosophy; to Naturall Piety; to Lawes; to Reputation. (*Essays* 54)

Atheism still leaves men like Diagoras with morality and “civil” behavior and allows them to pursue science (“Philosophy”) unhampered by superstitious preconceptions. Bacon further reveals his views by next attacking the Aristotelian “Schoolmen” for their “subtile and intricate *Axiomes*, and *Theorems*,” which are intended to save superstitious Catholic dogmas rather than find the truth (55).

Bacon frames his essay with borrowings from the beginning and end of Plutarch’s essay “Of Superstition.”<sup>78</sup> Yet while Bacon’s opening closely follows Plutarch’s in explaining why atheism is preferable to superstition, Bacon’s ending goes even further than Plutarch’s in condemning superstition rather than atheism. Plutarch attacks those who, by “seeking to avoid superstition, fall headlong . . . [into] Atheisme, leaping over true religion which is seated just in the midst between both.”<sup>79</sup> Bacon criticizes those who attack superstition with such extremity that they fall not into atheism but rather into a contrary form of superstition: “There is a *Superstition*, in avoiding *Superstition*; when men thinke to doe best, if they goe furthest from the *Superstition* formerly received” (*Essayes* 55–56). Once more attacking religious extremists who go from one extreme to another—like the Presbyterians and separatists in their flight from Catholicism—Bacon concludes by sparing atheism.

### Natural Philosophy and Charitable Extremism

Bacon’s tolerance for the “defects” of doubt and atheism in support of his anti-Aristotelian method is overarched by his claim that modern science must transcend the Aristotelian mean in its humanistic goals. The doubting inductivist is to be motivated by a love of mankind that far surpasses Aristotelian ethical “mediocrities.” One of Bacon’s *antitheta* concerning atheism and superstition argues the inapplicability of the Aristotelian mean to the problem of true religion: “Mediocrities belong to matters moral; extremities to matters divine” (4:478). Bacon here manipulates the Scholastic distinction between the ethical and intellectual virtues, on the one hand, and the theological virtues, on the other: while the former are “mediocrities,” the theological virtues of faith, hope, and charity are “extremities.” Theological virtues do not reside in a mean except *per accidens* and in relation to fallen men’s sinfulness (as hope lies between presumption and despair); in themselves and with reference to their unlimited object—God—they are extremes that admit of no excess.<sup>80</sup> Bacon’s argument that “mediocrities” are irrelevant to the triad of religion, superstition, and atheism is sophistic, since true religion is traditionally defined as an ethical rather than a theological virtue.<sup>81</sup> Bacon has ample Scholastic precedent, however, for proclaiming charity a virtuous extreme. The second book of the *Advancement* concludes its discussion of moral philosophy by contrasting the ethical doctrines taught by Aristotle and other pagan philosophers with the illimitable theological virtue of charity: “Cer-

tainly if a mans mind be truly inflamd with charity it doth work him sodainly into greter perfection then al the Doctrin of moralitye can doe. . . . [A]ll other excellencyes, though they advance nature yet they are subject to Excesse. Only Charity admitteth noe excess" (155; cf. 3:217–218, 4:21). "Of Goodnesse and Goodnesse of Nature" (1612) reveals the Scholastic basis of Bacon's claim by specifying that it is the "*Theologicall Vertue Charitie*" that "admits no Excesse" (*Essayes* 39). Bacon, who opposes knowledge fueled by "Charitie" to an "ill applyed moderation" (*AL* 9), continually claims that charity and concern for "the good of Men and Mankind" regulates his own philosophical enterprise (7). His praise of charity thus associates his own philosophy with an "extremity" of goodness far beyond the "mediocrity" of Aristotelian ethics.

Transforming a humanist attack upon Scholasticism, Bacon distinguishes his philosophical charity not only from the Aristotelian mean but also from the sinful excesses of Aristotelian philosophical speculation. In the *Nicomachean Ethics* Aristotle argues that because intellect [*nous*] is the divine element in human beings, the intellectual virtue of contemplative wisdom is divine and consequently superior to the merely human ethical virtues involving actions and emotions (10.7.8–10.8.7). With Aristotle and various church fathers as authorities, the Scholastics celebrated the contemplative life, which Aquinas followed "the Philosopher" in pronouncing divine.<sup>82</sup> Citing Paul's famous pronouncement, "Knowledge puffeth up, but charity edifieth" (1 Cor. 8:1), Christian humanists such as Erasmus and Juan Vives attacked Scholastic contemplation as proud curiosity and promoted instead a Christian ethics that could inform everyday life.<sup>83</sup> Substituting Baconian science for ethics, Bacon contrasts his own charity-driven natural philosophy with Scholastic contemplative excess.<sup>84</sup> In the *Advancement* Bacon cites Paul's dictum from 1 Corinthians in order to argue that charity alone frees the knowledge seeker from prideful excess (7). At the opening of the *Advancement's* discussion of moral philosophy, Bacon attacks Aristotle's praise of the contemplative life as an impious attempt to efface the distinction between man, on the one hand, and God and the angels, on the other, who alone are entitled to be mere "lookers on" in the "Theater of Mans life" (137). The conclusion of the discussion, a panegyric upon charity, contrasts the virtuous imitation of God's illimitable charity and the sinful excess of imitating God's knowledge: "By aspiring to be like God in knowledge man transgressed and fell. . . . But by aspiring to a similitude of God in goodnesse or love, neyther Man nor Angell ever transgressed or shall transgress" (155). Bacon's contrast clearly implies his own charitable philosophy's vast superiority to Aristotelian contemplation and its Scholastic progeny.

Yet while Bacon exploits the moral-theological significance of Christian charity, he transforms it, like hope, in order to promote his aggressively earthly philosophy. The Scholastics and English Protestants alike derive the love for one's neighbor from one's love of God as the "first and principal part of char-



ity,” to quote the Elizabethan *Book of Homilies*.<sup>85</sup> Bacon, by contrast, downplays love for God in favor of love for one’s fellow man. He equates Christian charity with the pagan virtue “the Grecians call *Philanthropia*” (*Essayes* 38). The Hippocratic texts and Galen declare that the doctor should care for fellow human beings out of *philanthropia*.<sup>86</sup> While claiming to outdo the ancients in both ambition and efficacy, in the *Advancement* and the *Novum Organum* Bacon similarly insists that his own natural philosophy is philanthropic, dedicated to “the use and benefite of man” and to “the reliefe of Mans estate” (*AL* 32; see also 4:21). A remark in “Of Great Place” (1612) reveals the extent to which Bacon secularizes his virtue of charity: “For good Thoughts (though God accept them) yet towards men, are little better than good Dreames; Except they be put in Act. . . . Merit, and good Works, is the end of Mans Motion” (*Essayes* 34). Man must help their fellows not because God demands it but because humanity requires it: God may be satisfied with “good Thoughts,” Bacon says in an audaciously offhand parenthesis, but “Merit, and good Works” alone fulfill man’s true nature. According to the Calvinist theology in which Bacon was raised, man could not merit eternal salvation from God by good works; without disputing the ways of salvation, Bacon counters that man can fulfill his worldly destiny only through merit and good works that better the human condition. Bacon’s philosophical project is intended as the supreme example.

Attacking Aristotle as a prideful contemplative extremist with an excessive attraction to barren dogmas and a deficient love for humanity, Bacon promotes himself as a virtuous man of action who pursues the mean of truth guided by a praiseworthy “extremity” of love for his fellow man. Appropriating Aristotelian and Scholastic categories to assert his crucial differences from Aristotle, Bacon makes the terms of the philosophical debate very much his own.

### The Persistence of Baconian Means and Extremes

Bacon acquired authoritative status in mid- and late-seventeenth-century English natural philosophy as rival groups sought to assume the mantle of Baconian science. His self-appointed heirs diversely adapted to new agendas his stress upon both moderation and extremism. During the civil war and Interregnum an intellectual coterie centered around the philanthropist Samuel Hartlib promoted Bacon’s conception of a charitable science for improving humankind’s material conditions as essential to the “reformation” of the nation. Hartlib’s 1642 translation of a treatise by his close associate Jan Amos Comenius [Komensky] reveals the group’s brand of Baconianism. Comenius urges a “reformation” of education focused upon practical knowledge and Scripture-based piety. Adopting Bacon’s Pauline rhetoric, Comenius contrasts Scholastic learning, which “puffeth up,” with knowledge guided by “charity”

for “use, and benefit.” Like Bacon, Comenius initially opposes his own “moderation” as a seeker of the “meane . . . truth” residing between extremes to Aristotle’s proud confutation of predecessors. Yet Comenius declares his impatience with Bacon’s “laborious” method requiring the “industry of many men, and ages.” With apocalyptic fervor Comenius spurns the professed moderation of Bacon’s method in favor of his own divinely inspired mode of grasping truth.<sup>87</sup>

During the Restoration, by contrast, members of the Royal Society frequently invoke Bacon as an authority to justify both their methods and goals.<sup>88</sup> Like Bacon, they associate scientific procedure with moderation. Emphasizing either Bacon’s *via media* between rationalism and empiricism or his calls for careful observation of “particulars,” they sometimes espouse a Baconian middle way and sometimes contrast their “modest” empirical observations with rash Aristotelian-Scholastic (or Hobbesian or Cartesian) speculation.<sup>89</sup> Robert Hooke’s *Micrographia* (1665), for example, proposes “middle ways” to avoid both “ignorance” and “presumptuous . . . dogmatizing.” Thomas Sprat’s panegyric *History of the Royal Society* (1667) derides the Greeks’ “hot” and “hasty” approach to natural philosophy and attacks Aristotle’s Scholastic heirs for their “*generall Terms*” based on insufficient observation. He proposes instead a Baconian middle way between “too much” generality and “useless particulars,” and between “overweening *dogmatizing*” and “*speculative Scepticism*.” Invoking Bacon, in 1676 Joseph Glanvill warns against both “extreme” epistemological “Confidence” and “Diffidence.”<sup>90</sup> Seeking the “marriage” of rational and empirical faculties, Robert Boyle commends Bacon’s method as both more “modest” and more “useful” than Aristotle’s. Modifying Bacon’s Pauline formula in order to underscore the scientist’s moderation, Boyle represents the true scientist as not “puffed up” with pride but rather filled with “modesty” or moderation of “mind,” which he praises as both an “intellectual” and “moral” virtue.<sup>91</sup>

The Royal Society sought to suppress the association between Baconianism and the Interregnum religious and political “reformation” promoted by the Hartlib group.<sup>92</sup> Instead, members linked their epistemological stance to the moderation they deemed essential to stabilize the Restoration church and state and avoid renewed civil war.<sup>93</sup> Adapting Bacon’s pronouncements to their ideological needs, they ignored or obscured his advocacy of various extremes. Royal Society propagandists represented science as the unequivocal friend of the established church’s *via media* between superstition, now associated with both papists and the sectarian “enthusiasts” of the Interregnum, and atheism and irreligion, which seemed to be gaining ground as an (extreme) reaction against Interregnum superstitious “excesses.”<sup>94</sup> Bacon had equivocally defended atheistic natural philosophy even as he claimed that intensive scientific investigation supported religion without broaching upon it. Sprat selectively paraphrased “Lord Bacon” in order to claim unequivocally that such investigation produced a “Religious mind” equally removed from superstition

and atheism. Sprat also invoked Bacon to argue that scientific activity would “moderat[e]” potentially rebellious spirits into “obedient” subjects of the “*Sovereign Power*” by “restraining the fury of Enthusiasm.” Glanvill’s anti-Aristotelian Royal Society polemic *Plus Ultra* (1668) similarly argued that natural philosophy would foster religious “modesty” and thus pacify those who had recently disrupted the church and nation with sectarian “*Disputes*.”<sup>95</sup>

While Bacon justified the novelty of his goals for natural science by proclaiming charity’s virtuous extremity, Royal Society authors downplayed—and perhaps failed to register—the disjunction between “modest” methods and (by traditional standards) immodest aims. Instead they oscillated between a rhetoric of moderation concerning their sober method and a heroic register concerning their ultimate goals. Sprat’s moderate rhetoric in support of science found a prefatory counterpoint in Abraham Cowley’s grandiloquent Pindaric ode lauding “mighty” Bacon and the Royal Society as “great Champions” in a glorious fight against both Aristotle’s stultifying authority and the yet unconquered natural world. Glanvill insisted his claims were not “immodest” regarding the Royal Society’s accomplishments and that his “expectations” were “sober” regarding the future. Yet he also trumpeted the Royal Society’s fulfillment of Bacon’s “*Mighty Design*” for humankind’s “*universal benefit*.”<sup>96</sup>

Royal Society propagandists made their Baconian ambitions especially appealing by conflating science’s benefits for mankind and for Englishmen. In the *Novum Organum* Bacon contrasted his noble desire as charitable natural philosopher to “extend the power and dominion of the human race itself over the universe” with the excessive “ambition[s]” of those who wished to increase either their own or their nation’s power (bk. 1, no. 129, 4:114). As a scientist Bacon thus denigrated both his own careerism and his patriotic promotion of British empire in such writings as “Of the True Greatnesse of Kingdomes and Estates” (1612).<sup>97</sup> The Royal Society, by contrast, linked humanity’s interests to national ones and promoted science as a way of increasing both human “empire” over nature and British prestige, power, and prosperity.<sup>98</sup> Sprat represented science as serving the “Universal Interest of the English Nation”—a nationalist reduction of Bacon’s sense of a “universal” science!—by quelling disputes, improving agriculture, increasing trade, and thereby making England the “richest and most powerful” nation. Dissolving Bacon’s contrast between the noble scientist and the morally inferior patriot, Sprat declared it the “bravest employment for a worthy mind to endeavor to make a great Kingdom greater.”<sup>99</sup> While appealing to moderation as a source of domestic order, the Royal Society also tapped into the growing interest among mid- and late-seventeenth-century Englishmen in increasing national “power” and “plenty” through commercial empire, a goal which, as we shall see in the next section on georgic poetry, conflicted with—and often marginalized—professions of moderation.


While ideals of “balanced” monarchy, established church, and British imperialism are now (largely) dead, Bacon and his seventeenth-century heirs’ rhetorical blend of moderation and extremism continues to inform arguments about knowledge, modern science, and technology. Contemporary philosophers seek reasonable “middle ways” between current versions of dogmatism and radical skepticism in order to avoid what Hilary Putnam calls the “recoil phenomenon,” the oscillation between opposite epistemological “excesses.”<sup>100</sup> Invoking Bacon’s attack on epistemological despair, Susan Haack, for example, seeks to avoid “going from one faulty extreme into the opposite” by avoiding both a discredited foundationalist “certitude” and a fashionable conventionalism that gives up “hope” of genuine knowledge.<sup>101</sup> Stephen Jay Gould, both an eminent scientist and a popular historian of science, endorses the Baconian association of the scientific stance with the mean. In an essay on Bacon, he cautions against thinking in polar oppositions; criticizing the dichotomization of diverse scientific issues into “extremes,” in Baconian fashion he often proposes a preferable “middle position.” He calls for balancing scientific theory and practice, correcting the “overemphasis” of both “rigid systematizers” and those who would investigate nature “without preferred hypotheses.” Defining science as a culture-bound, fallible activity that nevertheless grasps truths about the world, he professes a reasonable “middle way” between “extreme” realist and relativist views of science.<sup>102</sup> Gould even pays unwitting tribute to the Baconian kidnapping of the Aristotelian mean to justify modern science by asserting not only that most scientific debates are settled at “Aristotle’s golden mean” but also that Aristotle himself “argued that most great controversies are resolved at the *aurea mediocritas*.”<sup>103</sup>

Like that of his Baconian predecessors, Gould’s scientific vision has strong ideological implications. He associates the ideal scientist’s moderation with a liberal commitment to reasonably adjudicating between partially valid but competing sociopolitical claims: comparing fallacious “extremes” in science to those in public debates, he commends “intermediate” views on sociopolitical issues and invokes the “golden mean” to urge compromise in our “culture wars.”<sup>104</sup> Though applauding in Baconian accents science’s “benevolent use,” Gould moderates Baconian optimism by invoking the Hippocratic maxim “above all, do no harm” to insist that we “temper” modern utopian aspirations with caution regarding science’s unintended consequences. Ever claiming a middle ground, Gould denies a “technological fix” for ecological problems but rejects the deep ecologist’s antitechnologism. Characteristically, he lauds a human habitat between the “extremes” of untouched wilderness and a wholly man-made environment, a benignly “middle” space (his term) that “human activity has tweaked or shaped.”<sup>105</sup>


Max Horkheimer and Theodor Adorno, by contrast, influentially faulted Baconianism not for utopian excess but for repressive moderation. They framed the major section of their *Dialectic of Enlightenment* with attacks on

Bacon as the father of a scientific Enlightenment that through the technological control of nature fostered capitalist domination instead of liberating humankind. They associated such domination with a “moderate” [*massvoll*] ethics that thwarted human freedom out of fear of irrational “extremes” [*Extrem*] and in subjection to the “virtuous mean” [*Tugend der Mitte*]. Their colleague Herbert Marcuse argued that in a classless society liberated from work discipline by technology, humankind could escape such “moderate” [*massvoll*] norms and gratify its “most extreme [*äussersten*] potentialities.”<sup>106</sup>

With apocalyptic impatience, Slavoj Žižek has recently asserted that the current potential for technologically driven global catastrophe renders “meaningless” the “Aristotelian strategy” of seeking a “happy medium” or “moderate rational” approach to problems. He offers instead utopian exhortation for human beings to refuse “limitation.” Radicalizing the Baconian secularization of Christian hope, he declares “excess” our “only hope of [earthly] redemption.”<sup>107</sup> By contrast, the late Hans Jonas somberly argues that in response to the “excessive magnitude” of technological momentum, we should replace the “Baconian project” based upon hope for the future with an antiutopian ethics of fear. Because “the perils of excess” are now far greater than the risks of deficiency, cautious fear with respect to technology is now “the side of moderation.” Like Bacon but in opposition to him, Jonas invokes Aristotle’s notion that in pursuing the mean one should “lean over in the opposite direction, toward the side less favored by inclination or circumstances.”<sup>108</sup> Arguments such as these reveal how both the Aristotelian mean and Bacon’s unstable early modern mixture of moderation and extremism continue to figure centrally, as allies or rivals, in defining our contemporary predicament.



PART TWO



Means and Extremes in Early  
Modern Georgic

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## CHAPTER THREE

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# Moderation, Temperate Climate, and National Ethos from Spenser to Milton

ACKNOWLEDGING THE POWERFUL georgic strain in Renaissance English poetry, contemporary criticism has diversely explored how celebrations of rural labor (normally taken to identify georgic as a genre or mode) competed with a genteel idealization of rural leisure (normally taken to identify pastoral as a genre or mode).<sup>1</sup> Yet both themes figure prominently in Virgil's *Georgics* and in the early modern English poetry it inspired. In this chapter I argue that these opposed visions result from competing cosmological, ethnographic, and sociopolitical treatments of the golden mean that have profound implications for poetic depictions of the nation.

In its mixture of didactic lessons on farming with celebratory, historical, and mythological set pieces, Virgil's *Georgics* is thematically and tonally various. Alastair Fowler has persuasively argued that Renaissance authors and critics considered looseness—conceived positively as aesthetic variety—to be a defining feature of georgic.<sup>2</sup> Yet for all its variety, Virgil's *Georgics* influentially treats the ideal of temperance with respect to the farmer, the cosmos, and the sociopolitical world. For modern critics of the *Georgics*, the major interpretive problem of Virgil's text is the relationship between what Brooks Otis calls “man's harsh struggle with inanimate nature (regarded as a bitter opponent)” and “man's happy co-operation with inanimate nature (regarded as a friendly helper).”<sup>3</sup> Contradictions in the depiction of the laborer's relation to nature and resultant shifts between somber and celebratory tones abound in the text, not only between books (Book 1 is mainly harsh, Book 2 mainly happy) but also within individual books and even individual passages. Much modern criticism takes the somber for Virgil's true vision, the celebratory as his self-conscious fictional idealization. Scholars of early modern georgic have similarly tended to identify “hard” depictions of labor as authentic purveyors of the georgic vision, “soft” depictions of rural leisure as a descent into pastoral fancy. Yet Virgil's diverse text encouraged in his English imitators correspondingly divergent representations of the countryman's relation to the natural and political worlds; it also encouraged in some of his imitators, writing with an eye to georgic variety, a similar multiplicity of viewpoints.



The contradictory representations of rural life relate to cosmological and political aspects of the *Georgics* that were emphasized by ancient and Renaissance readers and writers but are largely neglected by contemporary English Renaissance scholars.<sup>4</sup> In depicting both the “soft” and “hard” versions of country life, Virgil deploys contrasting notions of the mean and of temperance as the proper blending and “tempering” of various extremes, the *medium per participationem* of Scholastic parlance. In his gentler mode he depicts the farmer as an embodiment of the golden mean who avails himself of the divine beneficence that made Italy itself a nurturing land of temperance, peace, and abundance. In his harsher mode Virgil depicts the farmer as struggling, praying, and failing to “temper” the elements of hot, cold, wet, and dry, whose imbalance Virgil depicts as the cause of discord in both nature and Roman society.<sup>5</sup> Because these diverse treatments of the farmer’s labor are inseparable from divergent depictions of Roman destiny, Virgil provided a model for English poets to express various viewpoints concerning their own nation’s promise and perils.

Treating early modern England or Britain as the cultural heir to Virgil’s Italy, English georgic poets respond diversely to the Roman poet’s contradictory legacy. Complicating by conflating Virgil’s two visions, Edmund Spenser in his *Faerie Queene* and Joshua Sylvester in his translation of Guillaume Du Bartas represent their own nation—the former allegorically, the latter explicitly—as rivaling Italy in temperate climate. Yet for Spenser and Sylvester such temperate weather fosters ethical and sociopolitical excesses that must be resisted by the temperate laborer and contested by the georgic poet. Michael Drayton’s *Poly-Olbion* patriotically lauds Britain as a temperate land of easy plenty while continually depicting the sociopolitical excesses against which he struggles as “industrious” patriot. Milton emulates both sides of Virgil in his companion poems *L’Allegro* and *Il Penseroso*. He challenges Virgil’s “soft” praise of temperate Italy and its happy farmers by celebrating temperate English weather and easy rural life in *L’Allegro*. He also provides a softened version of Virgil’s “hard” vision of georgic struggle against excess by depicting his own joyous labors as a self-disciplining, temperate national poet in *Il Penseroso*.

Despite their differing appropriations of the Virgilian genre and its thematics, the four English poets discussed in this chapter all directly or indirectly challenge the identification of national ideals and moral authority with the monarch and the court. From georgic they derive powerful literary authority for asserting their independence from contemporary habits of thought. Spenser and Sylvester represent themselves as georgic prophets warning their nation, including its courtly elite, against idleness and intemperance. Drayton and Milton associate the georgic poet’s own “middle” position with a comprehensive and mobile vision of the highs and lows of the social order that defines them (like Donne in his Wotton epistle) outside existing hierarchies, allowing them to discern most clearly the nation’s potential both for temperance and excess.

## Virgil's "Soft" and "Hard" Versions of Temperance

Passages from the *Georgics* that figure importantly in English tradition reveal the poem's crucial tensions. The "soft" vision dominates three well-known and often-imitated passages in Book 2. Virgil's praise of the happy farmer near the end of the book, which provided a model for numerous early modern celebrations of rural life, opposes the peaceful life of the humble farmer, contented with a life of simple pleasures and productive toil, to the luxuries and cares of the city and the violence of civil war.<sup>6</sup> While optimistic, the set piece contains many of the tensions between "soft" and "hard" visions within the *Georgics* as a whole: the farmers have "easy sustenance," "repose without care" [*secura quies*], and "soft slumbers," but are "hardened to toil" (2.460, 467, 470, 472); they are "rich in various treasures" [*dives opum variarum*] of nature (2.468; trans. mine) but used to "scant" fare (2.473). The combination of idyllic celebration of rural "riches" with realistic depiction of rural hardship helps explain the lines where the farmer is identified with a happy middle state: neither rich nor poor himself, he "neither pities the poor nor envies the wealthy" (2:498–499).

Influenced by Aristotle's association of those of "middle" fortune with the virtuous mean (*Politics* 4.9.3–4), Renaissance commentators and translators emphasized the Virgilian farmer's "mean" ethical state. The much-reprinted Renaissance commentator Badius Ascensius, who was well known in England, explains that the farmer, content with little, adheres to a "mean" [*medium*] regarding wealth.<sup>7</sup> In a gloss to his 1589 English translation of the *Georgics*, Abraham Fleming claims that the farmer who neither envies the rich nor pities the poor keeps "in a meane." In his 1591 Neolatin "paraphrase" the English humanist Nicholas Grimald similarly notes the Virgilian farmer's "most temperate" [*temperatissimam*] life. Renaissance imitations of Virgil's set piece expand upon the moral implications of the farmer's middleness: Marcellus Palingenius's Neolatin didactic poem *The Zodiacke of Life* (1534–1538), for example, contains a Virgil-inspired encomium upon the farmer who (in Barnabe Googe's 1576 translation) neither "exceede[s]" nor is "to[o] leane" in wealth but dwells contentedly in the "meane" and "best estate."<sup>8</sup>

For Renaissance readers the association of the farmer with the mean was reinforced by the long-standing conception of the *Georgics* as a work of "intermediate" style. The medieval *rota Virgilio*, ultimately derived from the ancient commentator Donatus, schematized Virgil's career as an ascent from pastoral through georgic to epic. The *rota* encouraged identification of georgic with an intermediate style appropriate to the supposedly "middling" status of the farmer between lowly shepherds and royal and aristocratic heroes.<sup>9</sup> Fleming's preface claims that Virgil's poem stylistically adheres (like the farmer it describes) to "a meane."<sup>10</sup>

The farmer's contentment depends upon Italy's natural beneficence, which Virgil links to the nation's own status as a land of "moderate" climate between the extremes of hot and cold. The set piece on husbandry looks back to two other passages from the same book, the praise of Italy [*laus Italiae*] and the celebration of spring. Virgil praises Italy's "eternal spring" (2.149). Servius, whose influential ancient commentary appears in numerous Renaissance editions of Virgil, glosses the line as hyperbole for Italy's "temperate climate" [*temperies*]. Expanding upon Servius, Grimald describes Italy as without "excessive heat" [*calore nimio*] or "immoderate cold" [*immodico frigore*].<sup>11</sup> The sixteenth-century commentator Jacobus Pontanus adduces as parallel texts Varro's farming treatise (one of Virgil's major prose sources), which proclaims Italy "more temperate" [*temperatio*] than other lands (*De re rustica* 1.2.4), and Dionysius of Halicarnassus's description of the Italian climate as "tempered" [*keramenon*] and without the "excessive" [*hyperbolais*] heat and cold of other lands (*Antiquae Romanae* 1.37.5).<sup>12</sup>

Virgil's celebration of spring, which comes between the praises of Italy and of its farmer, spells out the season's beneficent temperateness. Virgil describes how "tender" plants require the spring's "repose" [*quies*] between the "cold and heat" (2.343–345; trans. modified). Pontanus glosses this Virgilian spring as "a mean tempered [*temperata mediocritas*] from hot and cold," while Grimald describes the spring's "temperate climate" [*temperies*] peacefully blending otherwise warring extremes of hot and cold. Richard Crashaw's loose 1646 translation of Virgil's passage celebrates spring as "a sweetly temper'd mean, nor hot nor cold."<sup>13</sup>

In combination, the three set pieces on the Italian farmer, Italian land, and spring suggest that Italy's farmers adhere to the mean of temperance by living in harmony with a land that itself embodies this mean. Book 1 of the *Georgics*, however, provides a predominantly sober vision of the farmer struggling against the extremes of nature, conceived in terms of the four qualities and four elements. While Book 2 celebrates springtime's temperate fertility, Book 1 describes the season's destructive storms. Virgil here presents the farmer's task as laboring to restore "the balance between the dry and the wet, the hot and the cold."<sup>14</sup> The farmer should burn a field either to evaporate excessive moisture or, conversely, to allow moisture to penetrate what is too dry (1.88–93). The farmer must also balance the excessively dry field with irrigation or the excessively wet one with draining (1.104–110, 113–117). Between these examples of opposite strategies for correcting opposite imbalances, Virgil gives moral resonance to the farmer's battle against natural excess by noting that he must sometimes cut down his "luxuriant" [*luxuriam*] crop of wheat early lest it droop with overheaviness (1.111–113). "Luxuriant" evokes ethical excess. Exemplifying how an early modern reader might moralize Virgil's advice, Geoffrey Whitney's *A Choice of Emblemes* (1587) depicts top-heavy wheat

with the motto “Luxury is a burden to me” [*Mihi pondera, luxus*] in warning against moral “Excesse” and recommending the “meane.”<sup>15</sup>

Explicitly linking natural and moral excess, Virgil elsewhere suggests that the farmer cannot himself fully temper natural extremes and provides a religious explanation for the farmer’s limited powers. Early in Book 1 Virgil warns that the farmer must pray to the gods for a dry winter and wet summer (1.100–101). After similarly recommending that farmers worship the gods and pray to avert storms, whose brutal effects he describes in eloquent detail (1.311–350), Virgil concludes Book 1 by describing the natural disasters accompanying Julius Caesar’s assassination. These disasters show the extremes of nature in uncontrollable force. Aetna, for example, “floods” the land with fire (1.470–472). Such extremes both presage and mirror Roman civil war, and Virgil presents such cosmic and political disorder as divine punishment for an “impious age” (1.468; trans. mine) and for the sin of Rome’s ancestors (1.501–502). Prayer is the only solution to moral and cosmic excess: Virgil ends with his own plea that the gods and their divine agent, Octavius Caesar, avert further misery from the Roman people, who have suffered enough for Rome’s misdeeds (1.498–501).

Virgil mediates his benign and harsh visions with a vignette of the summer rounds of the Italian herdsman and his cattle from morning till evening (3.322–338). The morning, with its winds and “cool fields” (3.324), gives way to the “midday heat” (3.331), at which time the herdsman and his cattle should seek shade until the harsh sun sets and the cool evening star “tempers” [*temperat*] the air (3.337; trans. mine). Such a life is not the idealized temperateness of “eternal” spring in the *laus Italiae*, for the rustic must actively avoid nature’s extremes. But Virgil suggests its relative temperateness by proceeding to juxtapose the Italian herdsman, with his pleasant mornings and evenings and his noontime shade, with Libyan nomads, who never find shelter from the heat, and wild Scythians, who endure the ever-freezing cold only by living underground (3.339–383). Virgil here implicitly appropriates, for the glory of his native Italy, the celebration of the people of the “middle” region between the freezing north and the sweltering south that Aristotle had used in praise of the mean-adhering Greeks (*Politics* 7.6.1).<sup>16</sup> As we shall see, this ethnographic topos had serious implications for English georgic writers, who lived considerably north of Mediterranean Italy.

### Dangerous National Temperateness: Spenser and Sylvester

While scholars have long recognized Spenser’s incorporation of Virgilian georgic motifs and values in *The Faerie Queene* in order to celebrate a laboring hero, Book 2, the “Legend of Temperance” (part of the epic’s first installment of 1590), has largely been neglected in studies of Spenserian georgic.<sup>17</sup> Spenser’s

presentation of temperance is vitally linked to his overall georgic vision. Sharply distinguishing between the two strands in Virgil's presentation of the virtuous farmer, Spenser presents true temperance in "hard" georgic terms as a laborious struggle against the dual excesses of the self and the external world. He opposes it to false temperance, conceived in "soft" georgic terms as harmony with a beneficent nature. Guyon's destruction of the Bower of Bliss at the end of Book 2 dramatizes the victory of true temperance over false, of "hard" over "soft." It also encodes Spenser's concern over the destiny of Britain.

Spenser's conception of temperance as a "hard" georgic virtue emerges from his modification of an Aristotelian understanding. Book 2 reveals Spenser's greatest debts to Aristotle's conception of virtue in general and of temperance in particular as a mean. Yet Spenser's eclectic synthesis of classical and Christian elements produces a view of temperance that is radically un-Aristotelian in spirit. In the *Nicomachean Ethics* Aristotle distinguishes temperance from the half virtue of continence: the temperate man [*sôphrôn*] finds "no pleasure in things that are contrary to reason," whereas the continent man [*enkratês*] feels "pleasure in such things, but does not yield" to pleasure (7.9–6–7). While the temperate man does not struggle against his desires, since they are for what is fitting, Aristotle's continent man conquers his shameful desires (7.7.4). Lacking what C. S. Lewis calls Aristotle's "classical serenity," Spenser depicts laborious struggle against one's fallen nature and the temptations to which it is prone as a necessary part of virtue.<sup>18</sup> Continent struggle against temptation is identified with true virtue in the opening of canto 6. After acknowledging the difficulty of achieving "Continence," given human beings' "feeble nature," Spenser assures his reader that "vertue" nevertheless emerges victorious in the struggle against pleasure, as virtuous Guyon's "goodly maisteries" reveal (2.6.1). Spenser similarly effaces Aristotle's distinction between temperance and continence by depicting Guyon's culminating battle as the knight of temperance against Acrasia, or incontinence.

Spenserian temperance demands laborious action inimical to pleasurable idleness and the erotic excess with which it was so often associated. The temptress Phaedria offers "present pleasures" in place of "labours" and "toile" (2.6.16.3–4, 2.6.17.9), Sirenlike figures outside the Bower of Bliss tempt Guyon with a "Port of rest from troublous toyle," while Acrasia in her Bower of Bliss turns warriors' arms into "idle instruments" (2.12.32.8, 2.12.80.1). Spenser's identification of temperance with laborious struggle explains Guyon's wavering, difficult responses to the Bower of Bliss. He approaches it with "toylesome wearinesse" (2.12.29.8), traverses it "Bridling his will, and maistering his might" (2.12.53.5), and reveals his internal struggle by responding briefly to the bower's beautiful women with "wandering eyes" (2.12.59.2) until corrected by his rational guide, the Palmer.

Displaying his pervasive concern with the dangerous resemblances between virtue and vice that make virtuous choice so difficult, Spenser presents the Bower of Bliss as both a place of tempting “Excesse” (2.12.57.6) and as a lubricious and enervating parody of temperance itself. “Too lavishly adorne[d]” with flowers, the bower derives its excessive flora from its temperate calm. The “Heavens”

Ne suffred storme nor frost on them [flowers] to fall,  
 Their tender buds or leaves to violate,  
 Nor scorching heat, nor cold intemperate  
 T'afflict the creatures, which therein did dwell,  
 But the milde aire with season moderate  
 Gently attempted, and disposd so well,  
 That still it breathed forth sweet spirit & holesome smell.

(2.12.51)

The Bower of Bliss’s temperate protection of its “tender” flowers provides an ironic version of the temperate Virgilian spring’s beneficent nurturing of “tender” [*tenerae*] plants (*Georgic* 2.335). Spenser adapts Italian epic romance descriptions of sinfully tempting *loca amoena* where the weather is neither too hot nor cold. Ariosto’s temptress Alcina in *Orlando Furioso* inhabits an island whose “lukewarm” [*tiepida*] air preserves its roses and lilies. Tasso’s Armida similarly boasts a garden without “frosts and heats” whose sun “becomes neither inflamed nor wintry” and thereby perpetually nurtures grass and flowers. But Spenser’s description deviates from his Italian sources by provocatively infusing his diction with apparently positive ethical resonance that raises the georgic issue of the nature of true moderation.<sup>19</sup> The sinful Bower of Bliss seems to contain the very qualities of temperance and moderation that Guyon himself represents: “nor . . . intemperate,” “moderate,” “attempted.”<sup>20</sup>

Spenserian paronomasia reenforces the paradox. The Bower of Bliss’s Acrasia derives from the Aristotelian term for the half vice of “incontinence,” but *acrasia* is literally translatable as “distemper” in the sense of an unbalanced mixture. Early modern English usage would have made the translation obvious: the synonymy of “dyscrasie” and “distemper” in Renaissance medical discourse reveals the perceived synonymy of Greek *crasis* and Latin *temperatura*, their cognates, and privatives. Spenser describes a (climatically) “temperate” place presided over by a spirit of enervating (moral) distemper.<sup>21</sup>

The distinction between Guyon’s true and the bower’s false temperance recalls a similar distinction enacted on Guyon’s difficult journey to the bower. The bower’s temperate climate is complemented by the music of birds who “attempted” their notes in harmony with beautiful voices (2.12.71.2). This “attempted” music itself recalls the water music that accompanies the sirenlike ladies who try to convince Guyon to abandon his quest to destroy

the bower: the waves “A solemne Meane . . . measured” (2.12.33.4). By echoing Guyon’s own praise of temperance’s ability to “measure out a meane” (2.1.58.2), Spenser’s phrasing suggests that the waves, like the bower itself, parody Guyon’s virtue. The musical “meane” between high and low notes is a common English figure for the ethical mean: in John Skelton’s early-sixteenth-century *Magnificence*, for example, the personification “Measure” (moderation) declares “all trebles and tenors” are “ruled by a mean”; Thomas Howell’s Elizabethan epigram “The Commendation of the Meane” asserts that a “meane in Musicke soundeth best.”<sup>22</sup> The musical analogy suggests that human temperance participates easily and naturally in cosmic harmony. Rejecting the musical figure for the ethical mean and its suggestion of man’s potential harmony with temperate nature, Spenser describes the wave’s musical “Meane” as part of the lubricious “harmony” that tempted Guyon and against which the Palmer must warn “With temperate advice” (2.12.33.4–7, 34.2).

Spenser’s bower and wave thus underscore that temperance requires the georgic struggle against extremes rather than the harmonious living within a temperate, beneficent world celebrated in the set pieces of *Georgics* 2. In associating the bower’s “temperate” climate with intemperate behavior, Spenser may be drawing upon a rival ethnographic tradition. The Hippocratic text *Airs, Waters, Places* (translated into Latin in 1570, with commentary by Girolamo Cardano) provides the most elaborate version of the view that “temperate” climates (which this Hippocratic text conveniently identifies with the south and the north rather than with Greece), weaken their inhabitants’ moral fiber by making life too easy. The inhabitants of temperate climates lack courage, endurance, and industry; for them “pleasure rule[s].”<sup>23</sup> Drawing on such ethnographic theory, Tacitus describes Tiberius’s retreat in Capri as a “most delightful” place of “temperate climate” [*caeli temperies*] that fosters Tiberius’s “depraved luxuries” [*luxus*] and “evil leisure” [*malum otium*] (*Annales* 4.67; trans. mine).<sup>24</sup>

Stephen Greenblatt influentially contextualized Guyon’s fascination with the bower, which he violently demolishes, in relation to European colonialism—particularly Spenser’s colonialist response to Ireland as embodying “a sensuous life that must be rejected and destroyed.”<sup>25</sup> Yet Spenser’s Ireland does not seem much like his Bower of Bliss. The *Faerie Queene* does not describe the Irish climate, but in Spenser’s *A View of the Present State of Ireland*—if it is by Spenser<sup>26</sup>—Ireland is praised for a “most . . . temperate” climate.<sup>27</sup> Yet its people do not suffer, like the inhabitants of the bower, from sloth bred by temperate conditions but rather from the wild rebelliousness that, according to ancient and early modern ethnography, characterizes peoples of cold rather than temperate climes. The *View* links Irish barbarity to supposed Scythian ancestry and to the atavistic survival of “immoderate” Scythian customs that befit a nomadic, lawless people of the frozen north.

The *View* notes the Irish natives' thick Scythian mantles that are simultaneously "fit to shield the cold" and "continual frost" of Scythia and—the association is telling—"serviceable" as mobile homes that protect wandering "rebell[s]" from "the wrath of heaven."<sup>28</sup>

The bower is conceived less as a threatening "other" than as a threat deep within. On one level it evokes the Elizabethan court.<sup>29</sup> Distinguishing his virtuous queen from her vicious court in a fashion typical of Elizabethan anticourt rhetoric, Spenser has Elizabeth's allegorical shadow, Belpheobe, condemn "courtly blis" as a place of dangerous ease and abundance like the bower: "Where ease abounds, yt's eath to doe amis; / But who his limbs with labours, and his mind / Behaves with cares, cannot so easie mis" (2.3.40.2, 5–7). More broadly, however, the Bower of Bliss may be read as a warning regarding Britain, not as it appeared on its wild Irish peripheries but as it was glorified and defined by its core English characteristics. With varying degrees of defensiveness or aggressivity, Spenser's contemporaries glorify Britain as a land no whit inferior to continental European nations for climatic temperateness and abundance. Z. S. Fink has traced the influence in early modern English thinking of the classical and Renaissance notion (expressed in *Georgics* 3) of the superiority of the peoples of the "temperate" middle region to cold northern and hot southern peoples. Renaissance Italian and French authors (like Bodin, as we have seen) adapt ancient ethnography to celebrate their national climates for nurturing people in a perfect "mean." In so doing they regularly disparage a Britain associated with the cold north of courageous but unintelligent barbarians like the Scythians.<sup>30</sup> Yet while Englishmen sometimes reluctantly accepted and sometimes mocked such climatic theory, they also appropriated the theory by declaring England or Britain the truly temperate region.

William Harrison's *The Description of Britaine*, prefaced to Raphael Holinshed's *Chronicles* (1577), notes that British climate is as "commodious" as that of other European lands and that Britain is "much more temperate" than France. Later Harrison exclaims how Englishmen are "blessed" with natural plenty. William Camden's *Britannia*, first published in 1586, opens with a panegyric of Britain that applies the same notion of temperateness as Virgil's praise of Italy: the air is "temperate"; summers are "not excessive hote," for "gentle windes . . . yeeld . . . contentment"; winters are "milde." In later editions Camden quotes and translates an "ancient poem": "For aire, so milde and temperate right pleasing is thy seat; / Where reigneth neither chilling colde, nor yet excessive heat." Implicitly linking his climatic discussion to a *translatio imperii*, Camden argues that British weather is superior to Italian. In 1607 John Cleland declares no country in Europe more "temperate" in "climate" or "abounding in riches" than Britain. In 1611 John Speed similarly praises England and Wales as the "Eden of Europe" for "Temperature" (i.e., temperate weather [OED s.v. "temperature," 6]), and "Plenty." In his loose translation of a work by Giovanni Botero, Robert Johnson qualifies Botero's



claim that Italy, France, and Spain inhabit the superior “*Middle Region*” without “extreme heat” and “extreme cold” by inserting praise of England as “most temperate.” Even a foreigner contributed to such patriotic meteorology. In *Lo spaccio de la bestia trinofonte* (1583), published anonymously in London with a dedication to Philip Sidney, Giordano Bruno praises the land of the Thames, in terms recalling Virgil’s *laus Italiae*, as a “temperate” [*temperato*] region of perpetual spring, without “excessive” [*ecessivo*] cold or “overabundant” [*soverchio*] heat.<sup>31</sup>

Aristotle ascribed the Greeks’ capacity for ideal political institutions (in which the citizens both rule and are ruled) to their virtuous middle character, contrasting this with the anarchy of wild northerners and the tyrannical regimes of slavish southerners (*Politics* 7.6.1). In another addition to Botero, Johnson opposes to French absolutism the proper English balance of “Prince and Subject.” He thus endows England with both the ideal climate and the related political institutions that Aristotle ascribed to the “middle” Greeks. In the 1640s James Howell makes explicit the often implicit link between temperate climate and a people who embody the mean. In 1640 he claims that Britain’s “benignity” of climate produces “natives [who] are not so light and airie, as her *next transmarin neighbours* [the French], nor so affectedly grave and slow as *others* [the Spanish], but of a middle composed temper.” In 1642 he links England’s climatic “Temper” to its supposed religious “moderation” between “Superstition” and “Prophaneness.”<sup>32</sup>

These various writers celebrate the climate in order to glorify the nation and its ideal citizens. To Harrison it is simply an ill effect of trade that the English people have fallen into “idleness” and neglected the “plentiful” benefits of their own land in favor of foreign luxuries. But others express a more pessimistic thought, namely, that England’s pleasant climate of plenty, like Spenser’s Bower of Bliss, could be corrupting and enervating rather than beneficially temperate. Fynes Moryson’s *Itinerary* of 1617, for example, echoes Harrison and Camden in declaring England’s “temperate” climate superior to that of France. Moryson further notes the “fertility” resulting from England’s good “temper,” which nurtures fruits equal to those of Italy. But he moves from climate to culture by observing that “the English are . . . naturally inclined to pleasure,” suggesting a link between their land as a *locus amoenus* and their hedonism that recalls the Hippocratic treatise and Tacitus’s description of Capri. While initially treating such pleasures positively, later Moryson decries the hedonistic “prodigalitie” of English “Gentlemen,” who “in this great plenty make us poore.” Regarding English culinary habits, he notes that “abundance . . . make our tables plentifully furnished” and that “in such plenty and variety of meates, everie man cannot use moderation.”<sup>33</sup>

Is England a temperate land of moral temperance or a climatically temperate but incontinent Bower of Bliss? This question plagues the various English poetic transpositions of Virgil’s *laus Italiae* and praise of the happy farmer. First

published in sections from 1592 to 1608, Joshua Sylvester's *Divine Weeks*, a translation of Guillaume Du Bartas's *La Première Semaine* and unfinished *La Seconde Semaine*, was enormously popular in early- and mid-seventeenth-century England. Sylvester's translation deploys Virgilian georgic motifs to laud Britain's natural abundance and decry its resultant moral excess. Du Bartas's encyclopedic poem offers a Protestant account of the creation, the cosmos, and human history. Renaissance critics often classified Virgil's *Georgics* with other predominantly nonmimetic, didactic poems such as Lucretius's *De rerum natura*.<sup>34</sup> Du Bartas's nonfictional, didactic Christian poem seeks to rival such pagan poetry, especially georgic. English readers frequently celebrated Du Bartas's flights of religious rapture and cosmic vision.<sup>35</sup> Yet even in flight the French poet purports to treat a "middle" subject like Virgil's *Georgics*: as Sylvester faithfully renders Du Bartas's claim, his "Muse, trayned in true Religion, / Devinely-humane keeps the middle Region" by neither flying "too-high" nor "too-low."<sup>36</sup> Christianizing and elevating the conception of a "middle" subject like georgic, Du Bartas identifies his Muse's "middle region" with a proper religious approach to the universe—seeking to know and worship God through his creation—unlike those who presumptuously speculate on the divine or who consider the world from an earthbound, godless perspective.

Furthermore, Du Bartas has three set pieces on France and the French farmer that closely recall Virgil's text. Adapting these to Britain with allusions to Du Bartas's Virgilian subtexts, Sylvester's versions provide a pointedly dark revision of Virgil's praise of Italy and the Italian farmer. At the end of one book Du Bartas praises France's "temperate" [*temperéz*] climate and fertile soil in terms reminiscent of Virgil's praise of Italy. However, he then complains that his country is racked by religious civil war and prays for peace.<sup>37</sup> Sylvester substitutes praise of Britain's "Sweet" climate and rich soil, which make it "Earths rare Paradice" ("The Colonies," ll. 756, 771). In place of Du Bartas's lament over civil war, Sylvester highlights the moral dangers of Britain's "Peace and Plenty" with thirty-nine original lines praying—and asking his countrymen to pray—that God not punish the nation for its ingratitude to God and its "Pride *extreamé*" (ll. 803, 828).

As in Spenser's Bower of Bliss, Sylvester suggests that benign weather and fertility breed excess. Virgil expressed his sense of the Italian farmers' great happiness by exclaiming, in oft-echoed lines, "O happy farmers! too happy, should they come to know their blessings" ("o fortunatas nimium, sua si bona norint, agricolas," 2.458–459; trans. modified). Sylvester introduces his call for his countrymen's repentance with a bitterly ironic Virgilian echo: "O too-too happy! too-too fortunate, / Knew'st thou thy Weale: or wert thou not ingrate" ("The Colonies," ll. 813–814). While Virgil's lines present the farmers' obliviousness as an innocent limit to overwhelming happiness, Sylvester's lines excoriate his countrymen's indifference to God's blessings as a courting of divine

wrath. In lines rendered faithfully by Sylvester, Du Bartas (in an earlier book) had transformed Virgil's exclamation to apostrophize Adam regarding his fall: "O too-too happy! had that Fall of thine / Not cancell'd so the Character devine" ("Sixth Day of the First Weeke," ll. 989–990).<sup>38</sup> By echoing these lines on Adam's fall when addressing his countrymen, Sylvester underscores that Britain is a bounteous but all-too-fallen Eden whose inhabitants must quickly confess "*foule unthankfulness*" to God for their manifold blessings, pray for forgiveness, and turn "Mirth" to "Mourning" and "Feast" to "Fast" ("The Colonies," ll. 824, 822). Sylvester thus combines Virgil's benign vision of natural plenty with the austere message of *Georgics* 1, namely, prayer as the only solution to natural and political distemperatures.

Sylvester augments Du Bartas with another jeremiad against native corruption. After describing the universe when its elements are all properly tempered, Du Bartas imitates Virgil's treatment in *Georgics* 1 of the meteorological portents that greeted Caesar's death and the subsequent civil war. Complaining that the French do not heed the portents but instead continue their religious civil wars, Du Bartas turns Virgil's scene of a recent horrible past into a description of a horrible present. After translating Du Bartas's portents faithfully, Sylvester seeks to arouse "*wanton ENGLAND*" ("Second Day of the First Weeke," l. 689) from sinful forgetting of its past sufferings as a nation and complacency about its future. Sylvester once more associates England's "Peace and Plentie" (l. 904) with spiritual corruption:

. . . *what avales my song*  
*To this deafe Adder [i.e., England] that hath slept so long,*  
*Snorting so loud on pillowes of securitie,*  
*Dread-les of daunger, drowned in Impuritie,*  
*Whose Senses all, all over-growne with Fat,*  
*Have left no doore for Feare to enter at?*  
*Yet once againe (deere Countrie) must I call:*  
*ENGLAND repent, Fall to prevent thy Fall.*

(ll. 915–922)

"Snorting . . . on pillowes of securitie" is a powerfully negative and sardonic version of the "repose without care" [*secura quies*] and "soft slumbers" of Virgil's happy Italian farmer. Virgil contrasts the "secure" [*secura*] rural life of the farmer with the violent fates of those who engage in civil war, killing their brothers and undergoing exile (*Georgics* 2.467). Sylvester, by contrast, sees in English "securitie" danger as great as the French civil war. He goes on to describe how England's "Plentie" has fostered an irreligious populace, idolatrous and lazy ministers (described punningly as "Idol-shepherds") who "fleece" rather than "feed" their flocks (ll. 931–932), and government corruption. Instead of a nation of farmers dwelling in the temperate mean, England is racked with socio-

economic and moral extremes: the rich indulge in “Usurie, Extortion,” “drunken Surfets,” “Excesse in Diet,” and “Sensuall wallowing in Lascivious Riot,” while the poor yield to “Idlenes” and “Repining” (ll. 935–938).

Sylvester thus positions himself as a poet-prophet warning both high and low of their sinful excess. His sermonizing on the dangers of “Peace and Plenty” and his religious solutions reveal his intense Protestantism: one may compare the Puritan minister Richard Greenham’s warning that prolonged “Prosperitie and Peace” will breed sinful “securitie.” Yet Sylvester also expresses a widespread anxiety. Writing after the Armada’s defeat, in *The Spanish Masquerado* (1589) Robert Greene celebrated England’s “peace and plentie” but also found the English too “secure” and “carelesse,” dwelling in “sloothful securitie.” James I himself lamented in 1604 that the nation’s “Peace and wealth” had corrupted its citizens with “sluggish delicacie” and “prodigalitie.”<sup>39</sup> Such anxiety drew sustenance from a Roman paradigm according to which peace and attendant prosperity corrupted the national fiber with luxury. For example, the Roman historian Sallust claimed that after Carthage’s destruction Roman “peace” and “abundance” led to “wantonness.” Sylvester’s picture of the social polarization and extreme behavior attendant upon peace and prosperity resembles Sallust’s claim that in peacetime the nobility and common people each sought more than their due and factionalized Rome, which had hitherto hewed to a “moderate” or “mean” [*medial*] course (*Bellum Jugurtham* 41.1–5; trans. modified).

Such pessimism about the sins and social ills associated with English “Plenty”—including the intense polarization between rich and poor—inflects Sylvester’s rendering of the extended Du Bartas version of Virgil’s praise of the happy farmer. Like Virgil, Du Bartas and his translator emphasize how this temperate figure avoids the luxuries and cares of the city. Like Virgil, who amid the praise of the farmer nostalgically wishes that he himself might dwell in the country, Du Bartas wishes to return to the French countryside of his birth; his English translator similarly wishes to dwell in his little patch of English countryside. But both early modern authors add a harsh counternote to their idyll, specifying that they are singing of the self-sufficient “happie Rustick[’]s weale” (“Third Day of the First Weeke,” l. 1141) who owns his own modest land and home, not of the needy farm laborer enthralled to his superiors. Sylvester draws the distinction thus:

... not the needie, hard-racke-rented Hinde,  
Or Copie-holder, whom hard Lords doe grinde,  
The pined Fisher, or poore daiery-Renter  
That lives of whay, for forfeiting Indenture,  
Who scarce have bread within their homely Cotes  
(Except by fits) to feed their hungrie throats.

(ll. 1143–1148)<sup>40</sup>

Du Bartas and Sylvester juxtapose the Virgilian ideal of the happy farmer, neither rich nor poor, with their own nations' extremes of rural wealth and poverty. Sylvester's stylistic energy suggests his poetic engagement in this social critique; importing into his translation Du Bartas's own habit of coining word compounds, Sylvester adds to the French passage the phrase "hard-rack-rented Hinde," whose rough consonance conveys more vigorously than the original the sufferings of the rustic laborer in such a polarized world of extremes.

In transposing Du Bartas, Sylvester deflates an influential aspect of early modern English patriotic ideology. As Debora Shuger has noted, early modern English authors often celebrated their land's supposed uniqueness in having a property-owning, free-spirited yeomanry unlike other lands—especially France—polarized between a proud, idle nobility and a servile, overworked, propertyless peasantry. Patriots proudly identified the English yeoman, like Aristotle's "middle" ranks and Virgil's happy farmer, with the golden mean. In his posthumously published *De Republica Anglorum* (1583) Sir Thomas Smith cites Aristotle's *Politics* for this purpose. In 1612 Francis Bacon contrasts England's "Middle People" who live in "Convenient [i.e., appropriate] Plenty" with French "Peasants." In 1642 Thomas Fuller celebrates, with a revealing analogy, the English yeoman as "living in the temperate Zone betwixt greatness and want." As part of its praise of "temperate" England, Johnson's translation of Botero contrasts the free-spirited, prosperous English yeomanry with the polarization into nobility and "base" peasants found in most of the world—and particularly France.<sup>41</sup> While such writers contrast the English yeoman with the debased peasantry of other nations, Sylvester's vivid rendering of Du Bartas suggests the likeness of England and France as lands of temperate climate but extreme social polarities, "harsh Lords" and poverty-stricken laborers.<sup>42</sup>

### Drayton's *Poly-Olbion*: Rewriting Virgil's Praise of Italy

As its subtitle ("A Chorographically Description of . . . Great Britaine") implies, Michael Drayton's *Poly-Olbion* (first part 1612; second part 1622) is indebted to the Renaissance prose genre of chorography that, from William Camden onward, celebrated the nation in terms of its locales.<sup>43</sup> Yet as a didactic, non-narrative patriotic poem in rhymed iambic hexameters, an unusual meter presumably intended as an English equivalent for Virgil's dactylic hexameters, *Poly-Olbion* also invites comparison with Virgil's didactic, non-narrative, and patriotic *Georgics*. Fowler has felicitously described Drayton's poem as "an enormous macrologia of Virgil's *laus Italiae*."<sup>44</sup> The poem indeed tries to provide Britain with an equivalent of Virgil's praise of Italy, and Drayton, the would-be heir of Spenser, is in some respects anti-Spenserian as he develops his enormous "soft" georgic treatment of Britain as a temperate land that produces abundance for its happy inhabitants. Yet *Poly-Olbion* is also deeply

concerned with the georgic issue of how to temper natural and sociopolitical extremes. Despite its predominantly celebratory thrust, the poem expresses anxiety about the potentially excessive effects of a temperate climate and reveals as much uncertainty as Spenser and Sylvester that ethical temperance can be achieved in Britain. Drayton worries both about the extreme, fractious pride of the various regions of Britain and the excessive luxury of the entire nation that he, too, associates with natural abundance.

Echoing panegyrics of Britain like that which opens Camden's *Britannia*, Drayton's "first Song" challenges Virgil's encomium of temperate Italy in its opening lines:

Of ALBIONS glorious Ile the Wonders whilst I write,  
 The sundry varying soyles, the pleasures infinite  
 (Where heate kills not the cold, nor cold expells the heat,  
 The calmes too mildly small, nor winds too roughly great,  
 Nor night doth hinder day, nor day the night doth wrong,  
 The Summer not too short, the Winter not too long)  
 What helpe shall I invoke to ayde my Muse the while?

(1.1–7)<sup>45</sup>

The four-line parenthetical description of Albions's temperate climate alternates between two related ways of representing such climate. In lines four and six Drayton describes the climate as a mean that avoids excesses: neither too mild nor too harsh, neither too long nor too short. In lines three and five he emphasizes the balancing of opposites. Yet rather than simply celebrate Britain's harmonious blending or "tempering" of opposites into a "sweetly temper'd mean" (to quote Crashaw on spring), here Drayton emphasizes the threats averted by the delicate balancing of moderated opposites that in their extreme states would "kill" or "expel" one another. This formulation encodes a highly topical moral and political ideal, for the poem in fact depicts a Britain full of threats to temperate balance.

The poem's title converts "Albion," the traditional name for Britain, into "Poly-Olbion," "blessed with a multitude of things." The opening allusion to "sundry varying soyles" similarly celebrates the land's variety. By claiming shortly thereafter that he will sing "hie or lowe . . . / to the varying earth so sute my varying vaine" (2.7–8), Drayton uses the diverse landscape to justify his putatively diverse mixture of "hie or lowe" subject matter and style. Later he claims that his Muse adapts her "sundry straines" to his nation's "varying Earth" (14, argument, l. 1; 14.1–6) and that whatever his "Ile produce[s]" is a proper "subject" for him, whether it be "simple" or "courtly" (20.204–209). Drayton makes explicit what is implicit in Virgil. Virgil teaches the farmer the distinctive potential of various soils and regions and celebrates the farmer's pleasantly diversified landscape (*Georgics* 1.53, 2.177, 2.468–469). Drayton foregrounds the analogy that Virgil implies between georgic poetry's thematic

and tonal variety and the diversity, both profitable and pleasurable, of the landscape that it describes.

Drayton's avowed mixture of "hie" and "lowe" style is also his own version of the "mean" style traditionally associated with georgic. Drawing on the conception of the mean as the proper blending of opposites, some ancient rhetoricians argued the middle style "participated" in the extremes of grand and plain, high and low. In his *De compositione verborum* Dionysius of Halicarnassus invoked the Aristotelian mean to celebrate the "well blended" or "tempered" [*eukraton*] intermediate style and argued that the middle style provided "a sort of judicious mixture of the two other [i.e., high and low] styles and a selection from the most effective qualities of each" (24).<sup>46</sup> In *De oratore* Cicero similarly claimed that the intermediate style's "middle course" [*mediocrita[s]*] "participate[d]" [*participens*] in the grand and the plain styles (3.52.199, trans. modified; cf. *Orator* 5.20.21). By propounding an inclusive rather than exclusive notion of middle style, Drayton claims a formal comprehensiveness equal to his national subject.

Yet Drayton not only celebrates and mirrors Albion's variety but also presents such variety as threatening to unity. Richard Helgerson brilliantly reads the poem's multiplicity as the formal correlative of a "country" ideology resistant to monarchical centralization, a celebration of "the headless (or, better, the many-headed) body of the land." Yet Claire McEachern has qualified Helgerson's argument by noting that the poem's support for "Britain" participates in the nationalist fervor associated with James I's attempt to unify the kingdoms of England and Scotland in the early years of his reign. She argues that the poem seeks to "reconcile polarities" by celebrating both the unity sought by the centralizing monarchy and its supporters and the autonomy and diversity promoted by supporters of the local "country."<sup>47</sup> Drayton's use of Virgilian tropes reveals his attempt to harmonize national variety and unity and highlights his claim that poetry is a crucial harmonizing agent. While *Poly-Olbion*'s first verse paragraph emphasizes diversity, its second invokes as Drayton's guide on his journey through Britain the "*Genius* of the place (this most renowned Ile)" (1.8). Drayton signals his concern here for unity by modifying Virgilian topoi concerned with the etymologically related terms "ingenium" (native genius or character) and "genius" (genius or spirit). In the *Georgics* Virgil advises farmers concerning the distinctive "geniuses" of different "regions/soils" ("*arvorum ingeniis*," *Georgics* 2.177; trans. modified); following Roman cult, Virgil also uses the term "genius loci" (genius or spirit of a place) to refer to the "genius" presiding over a particular locale (see *Aeneid* 5.95). By transforming the Virgilian local spirit into a national one and by subsuming Britain's "sundry varying soyles" under its spiritual aegis, Drayton invokes—and as poet tries to create—the spirit of Albion overseeing (or grounding) the variety of his poem and the land it celebrates.

The unity of various elements is rendered especially precarious by what Drayton represents as the pride of different locales. The poem's fourth song or canto, for example, treats the tensions between Wales and England, its penultimate song tensions between England and Scotland. Additionally, Drayton dramatizes in hyperbolic fashion the intensity of the regional attachments that were a powerful force in seventeenth-century politics, often outweighing national loyalties.<sup>48</sup> Simultaneously representing Britain's rich variety and the excesses of localism, *Poly-Olbion* relies heavily upon prosopopeia, in which mountains, valleys, and rivers praise their own local attractions and attack their neighbors. A mountain, one of the first speakers, accuses a river of "insatiate" encroachment, while the river, in turn, accuses the mountain of "distempred heat" (11.105, 116). Such deeply local passions threaten the Albionic balance of elements and the pleasant "temperature" celebrated in the poem's exordium. Yet these various "distempred" speakers provide the main material for Drayton's celebration of "varying" British greatness. Helgersson notes Drayton's exalted sense of the poet, who journeys through the British landscape like a monarch on a royal progress and who substitutes for the monarch as the (only) ubiquitous presence in the land he surveys.<sup>49</sup> Drayton also acts as impartial poetic moderator of local excesses. He notes each region's particular attractions and records each speaker's hyperbolic panegyric upon his or her local piece of British greatness, only to qualify such excessive praise by having a subsequent speaker accuse his or her predecessor of partiality before turning to equally excessive self-praise. Drayton's "industrious" (1.65, 1.84, 1.263, 12.601, 13.1, 23.1) and "laborious" (1.132, 11.150, 14.187) Muse thus takes on the job of tempering extreme elements that Virgil had assigned to the rural laborer.

Drayton, who claims to sing both the "courtly" and "simple," also worries about the problem central to earlier English georgic: the social polarization and excess that inevitably seems to accompany British peace and plenty. He describes a landscape not only of variety but of contrasting extremes:

The sundry sorts of soyle, diversitie of ground

. . . . .

The leane and hungry earth, the fat and marly mold,

Where sands be alwaies hot, and where the clayes be cold;

With plentie where they waste, some others toucht with want.

(3.350–357)

With its acknowledgment not only of climatic extremes (hot/cold) but also of economic contraries (waste/want), this passage's depiction of British variety is more troubled than the opening praise of temperate Albion. Drayton, however, quickly moves from such threatening extremes to the traditional complementary categories of pleasure and profit deployed throughout the poem in praise of the landscape:



As *Wiltshire* is a place best pleas'd with that resort  
 Which spend away the time continuallie in sport;  
 So *Somerset*, her selfe to profit doth apply,  
 As given all to gaine, and thriving huswifrie.  
 For, whereas in a Land one doth consume and wast,  
 Tis fit another be to gather in as fast.

(3.359–364)

Distressing “want” turns into Somerset’s beneficent labor and “profit,” while “waste” is reconceived as neighboring Wiltshire’s pleasant “sport,” both of which contribute to Albion’s blessed inclusiveness.

Yet Drayton’s solution here is literally all too local. Though he only occasionally touches elsewhere upon regions or times of “penurious dearth” (28.508–510), his poem betrays recurrent ambivalence about the “waste” arising from the natural “*Plenty*” that he celebrates in his opening poetic gloss upon his poem’s frontispiece (“Upon the Frontispice,” l. 3). Drayton often describes with almost Joycean verve the exuberant excess of British land and water: a valley “Abounding in excesse” (7.58), rivers “wallowing in excesse” (3.431), “sate with th’excesse,” and “with every pleasure rife” (29.57, 60). The “profuse excesse” of a river flows with “abundance” into marshland that provides “more lavish waste” than necessary for the local “Grasier” (28.39–40). Yet Drayton also represents such natural “excess” as the emblem of moral excess and the temptation to it on the part of the human beneficiaries.

Drayton expresses these worries allegorically in his description of the marriage of the Tame and Isis rivers, which produces the Thames. The passage is indebted to two related sets of verses: its “plot” derives from Camden’s Neolatin poem on the Tame-Isis marriage in his *Britannia*, but its major debt in language and thought is to Spenser’s description of the marriage of the Thames and Medway in the *Faerie Queene* (4.11). Whatever Spenser’s doubts about English plenty in Book 2, both Camden’s and Spenser’s verses celebrate their nation’s abundance and power.<sup>50</sup> As Helgerson points out, compared to Spenser Drayton depicts a “homely affair.” While Spenser describes all the world’s rivers paying tribute to the British marriage, Drayton (like Camden) includes in his pageant only the tributaries that actually join the rivers Tame and Isis.<sup>51</sup> It is all the more striking, then, that Drayton’s pageant is hedged with more anxiety about excess than either of his models. Like Camden and Spenser, Drayton celebrates natural abundance with his description of the lavish wedding in which bridesmaids “prodigally waste” (15.198) flowers to deck the bride. But he introduces the lavish wedding as the result of female extremism vanquishing male restraint: the bridegroom’s “wilfull” mother insists on the “prodigall expense” despite the disapproval of the bridegroom’s father, who sententiously invokes the mean: “Too much, a surfet breeds . . . /

These fat and lushious meats doe but our stomachs cloy. / The modest comly meane, in all things likes the wise" (15.22, 48–51, 55).

In several passages Drayton points more literally to the moral danger posed to human inhabitants by their land's and waters' fruitful excess. National self-sufficiency based on natural plenty, a positive state, encourages moral excess. Drayton charts Henry VIII's fall from abundance to intemperance: ruling "a Land with wealth abundantly that flow'd," Henry "Aboundantly againe . . . the same bestow'd, / In Banquets, Mask's, and Tilts, all pleasures prone to try / Besides his secrete scapes who lov'd *Polygamy*" (17.317–320). Henry VIII responds to his land's various blessings with excess variety: *Poly-Olbion* prompts Poly-gamy. For Drayton, the same syndrome now besets London. While Camden and Spenser celebrate London as the powerful center of British imperium, Drayton's treatment moves from the city's natural temperate conditions to its moral excess. In his opening description Drayton celebrates London's mild, "cheerefull" climate, protected by hills from "extreamer Winds," and the restraining Thames, which keeps urban sprawl from extending "too farre" (16.331, 333, 328). Yet Drayton concludes his treatment (as well as the song or canto) by lamenting that "every thing" in the present "consisteth in extreames" (16.360). In between, like Tacitus in his description of Tiberius's Capri, Drayton links London's material abundance to moral excess. London "enricht" the entire land until

. . . idle Gentry up in such abundance sprong.  
 Now pestring all this Ile: whose disproportion draws  
 The publique wealth so drie, and only is the cause  
 Our gold goes out so fast, for foolish foraine things,  
 Which upstart Gentry still to our Country brings;  
 Who their insatiate pride seek chiefly to maintaine  
 . . . . .  
 Wherein, such mighty summes we prodigally waste;  
 That Merchants long train'd up in Gayn's deceitfull schoole,  
 And subtly having learn'd to sooth the humorous foole,  
 Present their painted toyes unto this frantique gull,  
 Disparaging our Tinne, our Leather, Corne, and Wooll;  
 When Forrainers, with ours them warmly cloath and feed,  
 Transporting trash to us, of which we nere had need.

(16.342–358)

Drayton moves from celebration of landscape to city satire, complete with the extreme types of gentlemen prodigal gulls and avaricious merchant knaves familiar to the genre.<sup>52</sup> The movement from abundance to disproportion and prodigality, from contentment with English abundance to foreign superfluity, is mapped in terms of the contemporaneous mercantilist ideology that a na-

tion's wealth was determined by a favorable balance of trade, which in turn depended upon limiting foreign luxuries.<sup>53</sup> Instead of conserving their gold and attaining a positive balance of trade, the British waste their treasure in "toyes" and "trash." Yet Drayton's claim that "idle Gentry up in such abundance sprong" makes the turn from plenty to excess sound inevitable: from London's nurturing "aboundance," its positive plenty, the idle gentry seem naturally to spring up, like plants, in superfluous "aboundance."

Yet, as his pairing of hyperactive, greedy merchants with idle, prodigal gentry suggests, Drayton is as worried by excessive, destructive forms of "labor" as he is by excessive idleness. Repeated attacks on national deforestation decry man's felling, burning, and selling of the forest trees as labor arising out of "base Averice" (23.19; cf. 17.407). The "labouring plowman" violates "Nature" by cutting down trees she would have allowed to "ever stand" (22.1616, 1628); the "painefull laborers hand" that destroys forests (14.57) is both "full of pain" and "inflicting pain" (*OED* s.v. "painful," 1c) upon a sentient nature. The forest represents a natural, temperate order that protects "harmlesse" creatures from the extremes of "sharp Winter" (2.69–70) until men's greedy depredations.

Drayton's laments have Virgilian roots. From a "soft" georgic perspective in which man's ideal relationship is harmony with temperate nature, Virgil himself laments what labor destroys. Drayton's attacks upon the "labouring plowman" and the "painefull laborers hand" recall Virgil's sense of the laborer's destructive potential, clearest in the tender simile describing a nightingale mourning its young, whom a "harsh" [*durus*] ploughman (4.512; trans. mine) carelessly kills while pursuing his tasks (4.511–515). In Book 2 Virgil celebrates natural things that grow "needing no help from us," delighting in how "every wood grows heavy with fruit" without human intervention and how groves of trees "owe no debt to the harrow, none to the care of man!" (2.428–429, 437–439; trans. modified). Injecting the pathos of *Georgics* 4 into the celebration of self-sufficient woodlands in *Georgics* 2, Drayton finds a new yet recognizably Virgilian theme in decrying British deforestation.

Drayton's defenses of forests also borrow from Virgil's self-representations in the *Georgics*, which express his "soft" georgic ideal of man's harmony with temperate nature. After celebrating happy farmers in general terms (2.458–474), Virgil declares his wish to be either a philosopher studying the natural world or, if that is impossible, a contented country dweller (2.475–489); then he describes in detail the farmers' seasonal rounds (2.490–512). By inserting his two desired lives between eulogies of farmers, Virgil simultaneously associates himself with and distinguishes himself from them. The poet wishes for a life not of rural labor but of communion with nature in leisured contemplation or pleasure. Drayton's celebrations of forests as privileged sites both for contemplation of "the works of God" (13.194) and for "pleasure" (7.267) recall, respectively, Virgil's two ideals of the philosopher and the contented country-

man. Descriptions of forests as “holiest” (17.394) homes of “Wood-gods” (22.1615), “Nymphs” and “Sylvans” (17.385, 387; 18.64) specifically echo Virgil’s wish as a country dweller to have acquaintance with the “woodland gods” [*deos . . . agrestis*], “nymphs” [*nymphas*], and “old Silvanus” [*Silvanum*] (*Georgics* 2.493–494).

Drayton’s sense that labor can be as excessive as idleness explains a peculiar feature of his representations of his Muse. While most often describing her as “industrious” or “laborious,” Drayton also describes her “sporting” and “play[ing]” (13, argument, ll. 4, 13) and bids his “Industrious Muse, proceed” to “sport” (20.210). He does not, however, represent his Muse as properly balancing labor and pleasure. Instead, he rebukes her for her tendency to go to excess—like all the “distempred” elements in *Poly-Olbion*—whether in sportive playfulness or laborious didacticism. Drayton’s poetic self-chastisements expand on other Virgilian georgic motifs. In *Georgic* 3 Virgil rebukes himself for a pleasurable lingering that has gotten in the way of his didactic task: “But time meanwhile is flying, irretrievable time, while we linger seized with love [*amore*] of details! Enough . . . there remains the second part of my task” (3.284–286; trans. modified). The passage serves both as a formal transition, announcing Virgil’s move to a new topic, and as a *captatio benevolentiae*, entreating the reader’s tolerance through self-deprecation. Yet since Virgil has just described how all creatures, including man, are the victims of love’s mad “fire” (3.242–245), the passage also has thematic significance, suggesting that Virgil’s own love for his pleasurable details is a dangerous excess he must control as didactic poet. Drayton similarly chastises his Muse: after playfully describing how the river Bry is “inranc’t with love” of the Avalon river but is eventually “forc’t to leave” his beloved (3.334, 338), Drayton rebukes his Muse for “dallying,” that is, “lingering” with a suggestion of erotic “flirting” (*OED* s.v. “dally,” 1): “But, dallying in this place so long why doost thou dwell, / So many sundry things here having yet to tell?” (3.343–344). Yet Drayton elsewhere chastises himself for excessive didactic industry. Adapting Virgil’s ingratiating apology in *Georgic* 1 for “trivial” [*tenuis*] minutiae concerning farmers’ labors (l.177), after detailing the labors of Kentish gardeners Drayton asks, “But, with these tryfling things why idly doe I toy, / Who . . . the time intend not to prolong?” (18.698–699).<sup>54</sup> After lengthy passages on English history and monarchs, Drayton similarly upbraids his Muse for delaying his progress “too too long” (12.531) and claims that “in this tedious Song, / The too laborious Muse hath taried all too long” (22.1589–1590). Drayton, it seems, cannot win: he reprimands his Muse when she dallies too long over pleasant stories, gets too immersed in “tryfling” details of rural labor, and records too laboriously “high” historical matters regarding kings. Like their Virgilian models, Drayton’s rebukes are partly rhetorical poses, serving as announcements that his Muse will proceed and begging his readers’ patience with a long poem. Yet their representations of the poet as both falling into

excess with respect to his diverse poetic goals and seeking to moderate such excess provide a paradoxically decorous analogue to Albion's continual oscillations between excess and temperance. Drayton's Muse is the representative as well as the conscience of his nation.

### National and Poetic Temperament in *L'Allegro* and *Il Penseroso*

Milton's *L'Allegro* and *Il Penseroso*, published in 1645 but written circa 1631, are heavily indebted to georgic tradition. Designating the two poems "almost unmixed georgic," Fowler has catalogued their topoi but not provided an extended interpretation, while other critics have explored the poems' depiction of rural labor.<sup>55</sup> I here argue that reading Milton's companion poems in relation to classical and early modern English georgic treatments of temperance explains central features of the poetic argument. Transforming both Virgil's "soft" and "hard" versions of georgic for nationalist purposes, Milton challenges Virgil's praise of Italy and the Italian farmer by celebrating first the temperance of English weather and rural life in *L'Allegro* and then his own creativity as a temperate English poet in *Il Penseroso*.

Applying the mean to temperament in a way Aristotle had not, early modern ethical writings often advise keeping the mean between excessive mirth and melancholy, both of which are unseemly and dangerous to one's health. Palingenius warns against "laugh[ing] excessively" or being "Always in dumps"; one should adhere to the virtuous "middle." *Microcosmos* (1603), John Davies of Hereford's paean to moderation, warns against potentially fatal joy and grief "in extremes."<sup>56</sup> While Milton's companion poems do not explicitly thematize moderation, their depiction of the two rival temperaments implies it throughout. Geoffrey Hartman has noted that the opening ten-line "exorcism" of an extreme of melancholy and mirth in *L'Allegro* and *Il Penseroso*, respectively, clears the way for the celebration of more temperate spirits.<sup>57</sup> These spirits are more akin than their apparent antagonism suggests. In what remains one of the best close readings, Cleanth Brooks argued for the companion poems' "unity in variety," demonstrating that similar imagery and numerous parallels in the two poems bring the two temperaments "as close together as possible," so that they appear as options "which can appeal to the same mind."<sup>58</sup> *L'Allegro* sings of pleasures "unreproved" (l. 40)—wholesome, moral pleasures—and the speaker is no mindless reveler but one who seeks "heart-easing mirth" (l. 13) in order to dispel "sorrow" (l. 35). *Il Penseroso* celebrates a "sober" and "even" (ll. 32, 38) studiousness that is itself a source of "pleasure" (l. 50) rather than a debilitating depression. Mirth and Melancholy are tempered so that they can be kindred as well as rival spirits.

As part of his rejection of the extremes of mirth and melancholy, Milton grafts onto the contrast between two temperaments Virgil's two desired ways of

life from *Georgics* 2, the natural philosopher's and the country lover's.<sup>59</sup> *L'Allegro's* celebrant of the landscape and its rustics resembles Virgil's lover of the countryside. *Il Penseroso's* speaker—who would “behold the wandering moon” (l. 68) through the “heaven's wide pathless way” (l. 70), study the cosmos “In fire, air, flood, or under ground” (l. 93), and learn to “rightly spell / Of every star” (ll. 171–172)—recalls Virgil's philosopher, who wishes to study “heaven's pathways, the stars, the sun's many lapses, the moon's many labors; whence come tremblings of the earth, the force to make deep seas swell” (2.477–480). Since Virgil's two ways of life both involve immersion in the natural world, their similarities make it easy to see their appeal to him. Milton, however, further blurs the distinction between the two Virgilian figures. *L'Allegro's* cheerful noting of the rustics' folktales of Queen Mab and Robin Goodfellow provides native English equivalents for the “woodland gods” of Virgil's country lover. *Il Penseroso's* search for “shadows brown that Sylvan loves” and the “haunt” of “nymphs” (ll. 134, 136–137) similarly recalls (like Drayton's forest-loving Muse) the Virgilian country lover who delights in woodland “Silvanus” and the “nymphs.”

Milton's sequential poems suggest a poetic maturation from the lighter pleasures that *L'Allegro* associates with “youthful Jollity” (l. 26) to the more serious, contemplative pleasures that *Il Penseroso* associates with “old experience” (l. 173). Yet Milton diverges from Virgil by not unequivocally opting for the latter. By not ultimately choosing, Milton suggests that their combination constitutes the ideal. In both poems, furthermore, the perambulating poet (like Drayton's Muse) embraces georgic variety by traveling through a variety of scenes seeking a range of temperamentally congenial pleasures; the companion poems together raise this embrace of variety to a higher level. Moving from the opening “exorcism” of an opposite extreme to celebrating pleasures more complementary than contradictory, like *Poly-Olbion* both Miltonic poems combat the devolution of pleasurable variety into a conflict between mutually exclusive extremes.

The “tempered” quality of both temperaments colors their perceptions of the world. *L'Allegro* depicts English rural life in terms of cheerful, easy work, simple but “savoury” (l. 84) food, and carefree, innocent recreation. The major source for Milton's portrait of country laborers' easy toil, healthy sustenance, and happy recreation is Virgil's “soft” portrait of rural life in *Georgics* 2.<sup>60</sup> Virgil describes the happy farmer's seasonal labors, by which he receives the produce of a beneficent nature, and then depicts a “holiday” (“dies . . . festos,” 2.527) in which a group of farmers drink the wine they have produced, pour libations to Bacchus, and enjoy athletic games (2.513–531). Milton's equivalent patriotically emphasizes the Englishness of the happy scene: he proceeds from various agricultural laborers—including such typically English, as opposed to Roman, tasks as mowing and hay binding—and ends with a markedly English “holiday,” which includes dancing to native instruments, drinking of locally

produced “nut-brown ale” (l. 100)—the English rustic’s homegrown and homemade equivalent of the Roman farmer’s wine—and the telling of native folktales. Milton’s revelers have “secure delight” (l. 91), just as Virgil’s farmers have *secura quies* (2.467).

Increasing the sense of pleasurable variety that Virgil ascribes to the farmer’s life, Milton superimposes upon the pattern of labor and recreation in *Georgics* 2 yet another Virgilian template: the description of the herdsman’s summer round from morning to evening in *Georgics* 3.322–338. The Virgilian herdsman’s morning begins with “Zephyr’s call” (3.322) and the cicada’s song; Milton’s morning with the songs of lark and rooster and the hunting horns. Virgil advises seeking shelter during the “midday heat” [*aestibus . . . mediis*] in a “shady” spot with a “mighty oak with its ancient trunk” [*magna . . . antiquo robore quercus*] (3.331–332); *L’Allegro* describes a certain Corydon and Thyrsis “betwixt two aged oaks” (l. 82) for their midday meal. Virgil’s herdsman lets his cattle eat and drink “till sunset” (3.336); Milton’s revelers celebrate and drink “till the livelong daylight fail” (l. 99).

Milton’s Virgilian allusions not only provide an English version of Virgil’s portrait of the happy Italian farmer. They also obliquely signal his patriotic praise of English weather as more temperate than Italian and of English rural life as consequently more pleasant and wholesome than the Roman farmer’s. Milton pointedly avoids the one harsh element in Virgil’s passage: unlike Virgil’s description of the herdsman escaping the “midday heat” in the shade of an oak, Milton’s noon scene depicts Corydon and Thyrsis eating “betwixt” oaks but mentions no heat. The omission is reinforced by yet another Virgilian allusion suggesting that the English countryside—not Virgil’s Mediterranean Italy, with its fiery sun—is the truly temperate clime. As Annabel Patterson has noted, Milton’s noonday vignette—Corydon and Thyrsis’s meal “Of herbs, and other country messes, / Which the neat-handed Phillis dresses” before “in haste her bower she leaves / With Thestylis to bind the sheaves” (ll. 83–88)—alludes to Virgil’s *Eclogue* 2.<sup>61</sup> In Virgil’s pastoral the shepherd Corydon laments his unrequited passion under a burning sun (“sole sub ardenti,” l. 13), while Thestylis crushes “pungent herbs” for shaded “reapers” [*messoribus*] faint from the heat (ll. 10–12). Milton’s names Corydon and Thestylis and the repast of “herbs” and “country messes” (i.e., the crops [*messes*] gathered by reapers [*messores*]) recall Virgil’s scene. Milton incorporates Virgil’s pastoral into his georgic vision by eliminating the eclogue’s oppressive heat and expanding upon its allusions to reapers and food preparation, thus constructing a georgic vignette of the English country folks’ pleasant daily round of work, rest, and repast. Far from being enervated by the sun, Milton’s food-preparing Phillis leaves her shaded “bower” to go “in haste” to bind the sheaves of wheat.

Patterson reads Milton’s adaptation of Virgil as evidence of Milton’s “intentional or unintentional repression” of the realities of English rural life,<sup>62</sup> whereas I take Milton’s transformation of Virgil here to be a self-conscious

nationalist gesture in praise of English distinctiveness. Scenes that precede and follow celebrate a beneficent English sun. First, Milton describes the morning sun as a "great" monarch beginning his "state" progress through his realm, "Robed in flames, and amber light" and beautifying the clouds (ll. 60–62). Later Milton celebrates a "sunshine holiday" (l. 98) of "chequered shade" (l. 96). Since his "eye" (l. 69) follows the sun's course from morn to eve, Milton implicitly identifies his own cheerful attention to the rural scene with the royal sun's beneficent glance.<sup>63</sup> The "chequered shade" suggests the temperate conditions of the English rustics' innocent merrymaking: the shade pleasantly filters—rather than wards off, like Virgil's shade—a mild English sun. Without making the explicit claims of so many of his fellow English writers from Camden to Drayton, Milton joins in the nationalist celebration of temperate English weather and the culture it nurtures. In various works Milton explicitly struggled against—sometimes qualifying, sometimes wholly rejecting—the ancient climatic theory that denigrated the English as people of the cold, barbarous north.<sup>64</sup> *L'Allegro* goes further, however, by implicitly contrasting Mediterranean climatic excess with English temperateness.

*L'Allegro* depicts the rustics' simple but tasty meal, consisting of food grown and prepared by rural labor as an emblem of unself-conscious, contented moderation associated with a beneficent, temperate England. Their vegetarian meal of "herbs" and "messes" embodies as a "natural" aspect of their socially determined lives the voluntary self-restraint that Milton's 1629 *Elegia Sexta* praises in Pythagoras and would-be "high" poets, for whom "herbs" [*herbas*] provide a "harmless diet" (l. 60).

Like the Virgilian poet, Milton in *L'Allegro* simultaneously associates himself with the temperate rustics and distinguishes himself from his social inferiors. While linking his own cheerfulness to that of the contented laborers he observes, he imagines for himself a life of leisure as he strolls and watches others work. By leaving the humble country scene to enjoy more sophisticated urban and courtly sights, the poet of *L'Allegro* further distinguishes himself from the rustics by his topographical and social mobility. More capacious in his embrace of variety than Virgil's country lover or the anti-urban *Georgics* as a whole, the poet in *L'Allegro* moves through his imagined English land- and cityscapes with a "Liberty" (l. 36) detached from any local place or particular social position. By implicitly analogizing between his freely roving eye and a monarchlike sun, Milton follows Drayton in substituting poetic for regal authority. Indeed, by roving with even more freedom than Drayton, whose Muse freely sang of "hie" and "lowe" but based her itinerary on the map of Britain, Milton displaces a monarchical ideal of centralized order with an ideal of free movement based on poetic fancy.

The georgic poetry of Milton's contemporary George Wither makes explicit what Milton leaves implicit. Published a few years after the probable date at which Milton composed his paired poems, Wither's *A Collection of Emblemes*



(1635) uses images of the rural laborer to celebrate the “Glory” of contented labor. Invoking the “*golden Meane*” to warn against avarice, Wither declares that men should practice “*Moderation*” by learning “how little will suffice.” Conceding that “A little *wealth*, may make us better able / To labour in our Callings,” he warns that “*excesse*” causes “ruine.” Despite his antiaristocratic emphasis upon virtuous labor, Wither’s georgic vision presupposes a fixed social order in which each man “keepes unto his Trade.” While criticizing aristocratic “*Great-men*” for foolishly thinking to teach laborers their trades, he attacks “*Poesants*” who “boldly meddle with affaires of State.”<sup>65</sup> Yet, like Milton, Wither exempts the poet from the fixity he commends in the contented rural laborer. Defending himself against the charge that he himself exceeds the bounds of his “*Trade*,” he replies:

No; for, the *MUSES* are in all things free;  
 Fit subject of their *Verse*, all *Creatures* be;  
 And, there is nothing nam’d so meane, or great,  
 Whereof they have not *Liberty* to treat.<sup>66</sup>

Wither explicitly and Milton implicitly lay high claim to the position of independent moral visionaries who remain outside the social hierarchy and thereby gain a comprehensive vision of it.

Yet Milton links his visionary freedom to his own temperance. While the temperate laborers of *L’Allegro* enjoy simple meals as part of their national birthright, the poet in *Il Penseroso* chooses self-restraint as part of his spiritual quest: “Spare Fast, that oft with gods doth diet” (l. 46). While *L’Allegro* presents a “soft” georgic vision of the rustics’ “unreproved” labors and pleasures in a temperate climate, *Il Penseroso*’s description of the poet’s activities provides a distinctive, softer version of the Virgilian farmer’s tempering of nature. The poet in *Il Penseroso* seeks to escape the noonday sun in a manner that recalls, while significantly deviating from, the Mediterranean scene of the shade-seeking herdsman in Virgil’s *Georgics* 3. Emphasizing that the companion poems are halves of an ideal whole, Milton borrows the hot sun from the *Georgics* passage concerning the herdsman’s summer day, which he pointedly omitted in his adaptation of the passage in *L’Allegro*. In *Il Penseroso* the speaker asks that

. . . when the sun begins to fling  
 His flaring beams, me goddess bring  
 To arched walks of twilight groves,  
 And shadows brown that Sylvan loves  
 Of pine, or monumental oak,  
 Where the rude axe with heaved stroke,  
 Was never heard the nymphs to daunt,  
 Or fright them from their hallowed haunt.

There in close covert by some brook,  
 Where no profaner eye may look,  
 Hide me from day's garish eye.

(ll. 131–141)

Virgil advises the herdsman at noon to seek the shade either of the ancient oak tree, as noted earlier, or “where some grove [*nemus*] . . . lies brooding with hallowed shade” [*sacra . . . umbra*](3.333–334). The poet in *Il Penseroso* similarly wishes to find during the noonday heat “groves” and “shadows” of “pine, or monumental oak” that are “hallowed.” Yet Milton transforms the Virgilian rustic’s exhausted retreat from climatic extremes into an unconstrained search for a private form of communion with nature’s spirits. *Il Penseroso*’s association of the sun’s “garish eye” with the “profaner eye” of other human beings underscores that *Il Penseroso*’s turn is not a response under duress to an oppressive sun, as in Virgil, but rather the poet’s inwardly motivated, spiritual rejection of an uncongenially bright world. Furthermore, in *Il Penseroso* Milton seeks not escape into unmitigated shade but a mingled light and shade, “twilight” that, like *Il Penseroso*’s other instances of mild light—“Even[ing]” (l. 64), moonlight’s “noon” (ll. 67–68), lamp-lit midnight (l. 85), clouded morning (ll. 122–125), a cathedral’s “dim religious light” (l.160)—parallels the “chequered shade” of *L’Allegro*.

Thus, while the poet in *L’Allegro* imagines happening upon the temperate climate on the English countryside through which he walks, in *Il Penseroso* he actively discovers this as part of his poetic vocation. Yet, like *L’Allegro*, *Il Penseroso* expresses the poet’s patriotic sense that he can find congenial native ground for his poetic musings. Milton underscores his nationalist poetics by reversing a trope from Drayton’s *Poly-Olbion*. Whereas Drayton laments how much British forest where “*Sylvans* made abode” has been destroyed by the “churlishe axe” (18.64, 77), Milton emphasizes instead the survival of numinous English groves still untouched by the “rude axe” and thus fit for nurturing his poetic fancy.

Both *L’Allegro* and *Il Penseroso* also represent the poet as temperate with respect to erotic passion. Thomas M. Greene has noted the poems’ “displaced sexuality,” their transmutation of the “frank eroticism” of an invitation poem like Christopher Marlowe’s “Come live with me, and be my love” into chaste challenges to feminine spirits to win the poet’s consent to live with them.<sup>67</sup> The poems continually glance at erotic attractions but keep them at a safe distance. Two of Milton’s Neolatin elegies, precursors of the companion poems, describe the poet’s rural and urban wandering and celebrate English life. The elegies follow Roman love elegy in expressing erotic desires. In *Elegia Septima* (composed ca. 1628) Milton describes his burning love for one of the beautiful women he has seen on his strolls. In *Elegia Prima* (composed in 1626) the speaker proceeds from viewing comedy or tragedy—attractions that reap-

pear in the companion poems—to viewing beautiful girls, whose eyes he compares to stars that shoot seductive flames. He patriotically declares English girls more attractive than ancient beauties or those of other lands before finally vowing to escape their influence.

By contrast, *L'Allegro's* two linked allusions to female beauty imagine other men's erotic fascination:

Towers, and battlements it [the poet's eye] sees,  
 Bosomed high in tufted trees,  
 Where perhaps some beauty lies,  
 The cynosure of neighbouring eyes.  
 . . . . .  
 Towered cities please us then,  
 . . . . .  
 Where throngs of knights and barons bold,  
 In weeds of peace high triumphs hold,  
 With store of ladies, whose bright eyes  
 Rain influence, and judge the prize,  
 Of wit, or arms, while both contend  
 To win her grace, whom all commend.

(ll. 77–80, 117–124)

In *Elegia Septima* the poet falls in love because he allowed his eyes to meet those of beautiful girls: “Recklessly I sent my eyes to meet their eyes: Nor could I keep my eyes in check” (ll. 59–60; trans. mine). In the first *L'Allegro* passage, by contrast, the poet avoids ocular contact. His roving eye allows him to imagine a hidden “beauty” that might be the object of attraction for “neighbouring eyes” but cannot check his own mobile “eye”/ “I” intent on catching “new pleasures” (l. 69). While the women’s “bright eyes” that “rain influence” in the second *L'Allegro* passage recall the starlike eyes of *Elegia Prima*, the poet beholds other men influenced, not himself. Both the “high” tower where a beauty may “lie” and the Spenserian diction of the “high” urban spectacle, which evokes the chivalric archaism of Elizabethan court tournaments and pageants, associate erotic life with the idle nobility. For himself, Milton both reverses and desexualizes the aristocratic scenario he imagines: he plays the role not of an enamored rival who “contend[s]” for a woman’s “grace” but of a judge for whom rival Muses of temperament contend.

Milton implicitly associates his temperance with that of humble English rustics. In between his two descriptions of “high” female power, Milton portrays erotic temperance as a native rural virtue by evoking—but cooling—Virgilian emotional as well as climatic heat. Two males (Corydon, Thyrsis) are balanced by two females (Phyllis, Thestyly), but Milton’s Virgilian allusiveness underscores that he has substituted wholesome English domesticity for excessive Roman passion. In *Eclogue 2* Corydon “burned” (“ardebat,” l. 1) with love under the hot Italian sun. Milton’s joining of Corydon, Thyrsis, and

Phyllis echoes yet another Virgilian text, Virgil's *Eclogue* 7, a poem full of erotic as well as meteorological extremities. Competing in song, Virgil's Corydon and Thyrsis sing of intense erotic longing by evoking climatic extremes: Corydon describes harsh summer heat and claims his beloved's departure would parch the streams; Thyrsis describes winter chill and claims his beloved Phyllis's arrival would make the parched season lush (ll. 45–60). Milton substitutes Corydon's and Thyrsis's simple midday meal in a temperate clime for Virgil's erotic passion in a harsh climate. Virgil's Phyllis appears in four separate eclogues as the absent object of shepherds' intense desire (*Eclogues* 3.76–79, 108; 5.10; 7.14; and 10.36); Milton's Phyllis is a down-to-earth, "neat-handed" (l. 86) rustic laborer—both "dexterous" and "having the hands of a neatherd"—rather than a passionately longed for beloved. She is as practical and unthreatening as the companion with whom she goes to stack wheat, Thestylis, who sensibly made lunch in Virgil's *Eclogue* 2 while Corydon "burned." Though the older Milton of *Paradise Lost* censoriously associates "Mixed dance" with "Casual fruition" (4.767–768), the rustic festival of "many a youth, and many a maid" in *L'Allegro* (l. 95) unsurprisingly issues in nothing more than innocent tales and sleep.

The poet himself, however, finds satisfaction by substituting poetry for heterosexual love. His most sensual encounter in *L'Allegro* is with poetic song:

And ever against eating cares,  
Lap me in soft Lydian airs,  
Married to immortal verse  
Such as the meeting soul may pierce  
In notes, with many a winding bout  
Of linked sweetness long drawn out,  
With wanton heed, and giddy cunning,  
The melting voice through mazes running.

(ll. 135–142)

Here Milton describes a genuine communion, the "meeting" that he hitherto avoided. These lines lovingly convey what could easily be regarded from an early modern moralizing perspective as immoral idleness—"soft," "wanton," "giddy," and "melting" are all potentially opprobrious terms—and the speaker boldly embraces the Lydian mode influentially condemned by Plato (in *Republic* 398e) as effeminizing (like erotic passion). Since Plato's condemnation of Lydian music is part of his attack on "effeminizing" poetry, *L'Allegro's* unusual embrace of Lydian songs encodes the poem's defense of poetic imagination.<sup>68</sup> Milton's phrase "eating cares" underscores his substitution of poetic for sexual delight. In *Ode* 2.11 Horace calls for a drinking party on the grounds that "Bacchus dispels eating cares" [*curas edaces*] and requests that "Lyde," a "coy courtesan," entertain him in his revels with her lyre (2.11.17–18, 21–22; trans. modified). Horace would dispel "eating cares" with a music-playing courtesan whose name suggests Lydian descent. Milton wishes "against eating cares" to

be lapped in “Lydian airs” chastely “married” to verse and played by the female personification Mirth. While Horace associates song with sex, Milton substitutes the first for the second.

Milton’s substitution of delightful poetry for sexual indulgence transforms another Virgilian georgic theme. *Georgic* 4 juxtaposes and implicitly contrasts the elaborately described labors of bees (4.156–205), who do not “relax idle bodies in sex” (4.199–200; trans. mine), with the excessive passion of the Ur-poet Orpheus, who failed in his “labor” to regain his dead wife Eurydice because an erotic “fury” and “frenzy” seized him “unwary in his love” (4.488–495; trans. modified). Virgil despairingly associates the archetypal poet and, by implication, poetry itself with an erotic excess antithetical to georgic labor and restraint. Rejecting Virgil’s dichotomous extremes, Milton charts a *via media* between the passionless labor of Virgil’s bees and the passionate excess of Virgil’s Orpheus by celebrating poetry both as a pleasant apian labor and as an enchanting Orphic song that can be separated from lubricious excess.

The poet of *Il Penseroso* takes as his companion in his noonday grove of contemplation a “bee” who “at her flowery work doth sing” (ll. 142–143). A symbol of the poet’s own meditative activity, her mingling of song and “work” figures poetry as georgic labor by recalling both Virgil’s bees and Horace’s comparison of his fashioning of “laborious” [*operosa*] songs to a bee at “labor” [*laborem*] in a grove (*Ode* 4.2.27–32; trans. mine). Thus, while distinguishing himself from humble rural laborers in seeking “retired Leisure” (l. 49), the poet in *Il Penseroso* counters poetry’s potential association with morally dissolute idleness by linking it to contemplative “work” and song that recall *L’Allegro*’s contented laborers, the ploughman who “whistles” and the milkmaid who “singeth blithe” (ll. 64–65).

In both poems, moreover, Milton seeks the beauty of Orphic poetry without the excessive passion that cost the Greek poet so dear. In *L’Allegro* Milton wishes for tunes more beautiful than Orpheus’s so

That Orpheus’ self may heave his head  
From golden slumbers on a bed  
Of heaped Elysian flowers, and hear  
Such strains as would have won the ear  
Of Pluto, to have quite set free  
His half-regained Eurydice.

(ll. 145–150)

In *Il Penseroso* Milton asks Melancholy to raise up from the dead various poets, including Orpheus, so that he can hear—and, one infers, outdo—their songs:

But, O sad virgin, that thy power  
Might raise Musaeus from his bower,  
Or bid the soul of Orpheus sing

Such notes as warbled to the string,  
 Draw iron tears down Pluto's cheek,  
 And made hell grant what love did seek.

(ll. 103–108)

Wishing to have the poetic power to revive Orpheus and other male Ur-poets rather than Eurydice or a beloved woman, Milton replaces heterosexual passion with devotion to the male poetic tradition.

Thus, in his two poems Milton charts a unique middle way appropriate to his vision of the English climate and his own poetic temperament. C.W.R.D. Moseley claims that each of Milton's companion poems "excludes an element essential to the balanced temperament" that "lies in something like the Aristotelian Golden Mean."<sup>69</sup> Yet the two poems rather suggest that together they are the best versions of the mean, superior to any third position that would have to exclude too much of what they happily embrace. By contrast, the early-eighteenth-century pastiche "Il Moderato" by Charles Jennens, the concluding praise of the "golden mean" in the 1740s Handel oratorio *L'Allegro-Il Penseroso-Il Moderato* based on Milton's paired poems, is an instructive attempt to provide refined early-eighteenth-century Englishmen, devout proponents of sober moderation, the traditional conception of the mean that Milton fails to offer. *Il Moderato's* condemnation of those who run from "One extreme / To another" and its celebration of a "middle way, / Nor deeply sad, nor idly gay" are not ethically inconsistent with Milton's tempered mirth and melancholy. But Jennens's final lines violate Milton's tone:

As steals the morn upon the night,  
 And melts the shadows away:  
 So truth does fancy's charm dissolve,  
 The fumes that did the mind involve,  
 Restoring intellectual day.<sup>70</sup>

This sharp Enlightenment opposition of light and shadow, truth and fancy, is what both Miltonic temperaments avoid. Poetic fancy and its associated half-light energize the unique middle way of Milton's poems, so full of echoes of georgic poetry and yet so distinctive in their anglicizing of the georgic theme of moderation to celebrate English life and the ambitious English poet.

This chapter has examined how late sixteenth- to early seventeenth-century English georgic linked the nation's temperate climate, for good and ill, to its culture. The celebratory mode dominated succeeding centuries as British writers deployed notions of the superiority of their "temperate" nation not only to bolster national pride—as does Drayton ambivalently and Milton unequivocally—but also to legitimize (as Milton does not) imperial conquest.<sup>71</sup> Indebted both to Virgil's *Georgics* and Milton's two poems, James Thomson's *The Seasons* (first edition 1726–1730), for example, transfers the *laus Italiae* to

Britain. In contrast to the barbarism of the torrid and frigid zones, Thomson associates Britain's "merciful" climate with domestic peace, prosperity, liberty, literary and cultural greatness—and imperial might (*Summer*, ll. 1446, 860–898; *Winter*, ll. 901–949).<sup>72</sup> National climate and a supposedly associated culture continued to serve as justifications for global power into the twentieth century.<sup>73</sup> Exploring Thomson's georgic precursors, the next chapter examines sixteenth- and seventeenth-century poets' deployment of Virgilian georgic motifs to promote British imperial power and consequent marginalization or deformation of georgic ideals of temperance and self-restraint at odds with imperial desires and designs.

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## CHAPTER FOUR

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### Concord, Conquest, and Commerce from Spenser to Cowley

WHILE THE PRECEDING CHAPTER examined English georgic poems' celebrations of and exhortations to national temperance, this chapter will examine the growing tensions in English georgic poetry between the praise of moderation as the source of sociopolitical concord and celebrations of diverse sorts of extremism. Virgil's *Georgics* closely associates the temperate farmer and the imperial soldier as the twin foundations of Roman regeneration, thus leaving a complex legacy promoting both restraint and aggrandizement. Many Elizabethan and Jacobean authors—including Spenser, Bacon, and Drayton—celebrate a composite ideal of the farmer-soldier in accents indebted to Virgil and other classical writers. However, English georgic poets increasingly substitute members of the sociopolitical elite for humble farmer-soldiers as the agents of both national tranquility and power. They exploit the tensions within georgic to suggest that the elite must not only embody and promote the mean for the sake of domestic harmony but must also sometimes practice or promote what was, by traditional standards, immoderation—whether ruthless Machiavellian policy, glorious foreign conquest, or trade in luxuries.

John Davies of Hereford's relatively unknown *Microcosmos: The Discovery of the Little World, with the Government Thereof* (1603) pointedly replaces the georgic farmer and soldier with the king and his counselor as directors of a national policy that combines virtuous moderation with extreme measures justified by reasons of state. While promoting the ruthless subjugation of Ireland as a georgic imperial mission, Davies also envisions trade as a pacific substitute for the foreign wars celebrated by Virgil. First published in 1642 in response to the tensions immediately preceding the civil war, John Denham's *Coopers Hill*, which decisively shaped all subsequent English georgic poetry, uses contrasting imagery to advocate both moderation as the source of political concord at home and "boundless" foreign trade and consumption of luxuries. With sublime imagery exceeding the "middle" style often associated with georgic, Denham (like Davies but far more influentially) represents trade as a more beneficent way of increasing national power and plenty than was Roman imperialism. Differentiating between habits essential to domestic politics and to global commerce, Denham celebrates both moderation and self-indulgence.



During the Restoration, georgic poets such as Edmund Waller and Abraham Cowley extol England with baroque grandiosity as a maritime and commercial empire. They adapt Denham by celebrating national prosperity and power through trade promoted and protected by the king and the Royal Navy. While Denham (like Davies before him) counterpoises his own poetic authority to the monarchical power he supports, both Waller and Cowley subordinate the poet's to the monarch's vision. In place of the georgic farmer-soldier, these poets praise Charles II as the royal planter whose reforestation of England after the devastations of civil war will provide sturdy English oaks for naval and merchant ships. Drawing on Royal Society propaganda for court-sponsored scientific agricultural improvement, Cowley presents a self-consciously modern georgic vision of economic expansion. Yet while visions of modern power and plenty come to dominate the English georgic, ambivalent poets continue to celebrate domestic harmony based on virtuous moderation, which remains an emotionally resonant but increasingly "residual" cultural norm (to use Raymond Williams's terminology).<sup>1</sup> Simultaneous delight in power and wealth and nagging anxiety concerning excess are central to eighteenth-century "polite" culture and help explain the continued popularity of georgic poetry, as crucially modified by Denham, throughout the century. Denham and his heirs make georgic a self-conscious expression of English modernity—and its discontents.

### Georgic Moderation and Imperial Expansion: The Farmer-Soldier in Virgil, Spenser, Bacon, and Drayton

In his *Politics* Aristotle identifies the "mean" between rich and poor not only with moderately prosperous farmers but also with their wartime counterparts, hoplites or infantrymen, those who could afford the infantry's heavy military equipment but not the aristocratic cavalry's equestrian accoutrements. He commends the "middle" or "mean" [*mese(n)*] constitution dominated by hoplites (*Politics* 2.3.9, 4.9.12, 4.10.8). Aristotle draws on the association of citizen-hoplites with moderation [*sophrosunê*] in Greek thought of the sixth and fifth century b.c.e. In peacetime the "middle," self-governing citizen provided the equilibrium within the city-state threatened by the arrogant aristocrat; in war the hoplite was a disciplined fighter working within his unit, in contrast to the aristocrat, who displayed individual prowess.<sup>2</sup>

The austere, self-sufficient farmer and hardy soldier are inseparable in Roman national-imperial myth. From the republican period to the last years of the Roman Empire, authors celebrated legendary farmer-soldiers who led the early republic to victory. In Cicero's *De senectute*, for example, Cato the Elder eulogizes the farmer-soldier Manius Curius Dentatus for exemplifying the "self-control" [*continentia*] and "discipline" [*disciplina*] of early Rome (16.55; trans. modified).<sup>3</sup> Such nostalgic evocations announce or imply a his-

torical irony that distinguishes the Roman farmer-soldier from Aristotle's. The Aristotelian hoplite belonged to a city-state that itself ideally adhered to "measure" [*metron*] and was neither too small nor too large to foster a temperate life (*Politics* 7.4–5). The Roman farmer-soldier, by contrast, served an empire whose oft-decried luxury was inimical to his own moderation. Plutarch praises the farmer-soldier of an early Rome of no "great bounds" (to quote Thomas North's translation) and portrays Cato the Elder, patterning himself upon Dentatus, as already an anachronism in the second century B.C.E., by which time imperial "wealth" had destroyed Rome's traditional "austeritie" and the state no longer honored "the plough."<sup>4</sup>

Virgil's *Georgics* participates in this nostalgic tradition by associating the increasingly anachronistic figure of the self-sufficient Italian farmer who dwells in the mean with the imperial soldier as complementary agents of Roman renewal after civil war. Virgil conveys the farmer's military virtues by describing his toil in "hard" georgic terms as a war against nature: the farmer "commands" [*imperat*] his fields with "weapons" [*arma*] (*Georgics* 1.99, 160). The *laus Italiae* lauds legendary farmer-soldiers—"the Marii, the great Camilli" (2.169)—as Augustus's heroic precursors. The set piece praises the Italian land for having "mothered a vigorous breed of men" (2.167, 173–174) who are both farmers and soldiers. Virgil's description of Ligurians "inured to [*adsuetum*] hardship" conflates their reputations as fighters and farmers: their military prowess is underscored by their pairing in a line with "Volscian spearmen," their farming skills by the descriptive phrase that looks forward to praise in the happy farmer set piece of the Italian farmers' "youth hardened to toil and inured [*adsueta*] to scanty fare" (2.168, 472).<sup>5</sup>

The Romans frequently contrasted horrifying civil wars with glorious wars against foreign enemies and recommended the latter as a means of avoiding the former.<sup>6</sup> Presupposing this normative distinction, Virgil prays that Augustus may live long enough both to restore peaceful farming to an Italy devastated by civil war and to fight Rome's external enemies (1.498–511). Yet Virgil also suggests the tension between the farmer's temperate life and the wealth derived from imperial conquest. While the poet celebrates the modest country dweller for being without such foreign luxuries as cloth of Tyrian purple (2.506), he imagines himself "resplendent in Tyrian purple" (3.17)—clad, that is, in the luxuries of the conquered East—as he lauds victorious Caesar.

Early modern Englishmen often followed the ancients in celebrating farmer-soldiers of "mean" estate.<sup>7</sup> They contrasted industrious, disciplined yeomen with an idle and fractious aristocracy in order to argue that the former were the nation's bulwark in peace and war alike. Like the Romans, English authors frequently lauded foreign war as an alternative to civil strife. While the yeomen's contented industry helped maintain domestic peace, their disciplined courage was invaluable in foreign war.<sup>8</sup> John Fortescue's late-fifteenth-century work *On the Governance of England*, which was widely read in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, had warned of the dangers of "over myghtye subjeti-

tes” and argued that the English yeomanry, neither too “riche” nor too “pore,” maintained English “might.”<sup>9</sup> Praise of the yeoman-soldier gained momentum with the gunpowder revolution, which made a well-drilled yeoman infantry more important than the aristocratic cavalry.<sup>10</sup> In *De Republica Anglorum* (1583) Thomas Smith identified the English yeoman with the Aristotelian “mean” rank and praised their “labour” as military “footmen.” Thomas Fuller’s 1642 celebration of the English yeoman in the “temperate Zone” between “greatnesse and want” glorified the belligerent aspect of his golden mediocrity by claiming that he “serveth on foot” but is “mounted on an high spirit.”<sup>11</sup>

Spenser’s *Faerie Queene* simultaneously provides a nostalgic glorification of chivalric aristocrats on horseback and a georgic celebration of the farmer and his wartime double, the infantryman.<sup>12</sup> As Anthony Low points out, in Book 1 Redcrosse Knight turns out to have been raised, like one of Rome’s legendary farmer-soldiers, as a husbandman.<sup>13</sup> In Book 2 Guyon’s loss of his horse allows Spenser to mingle aristocratic and “middle” values. Spenser’s portrait of Braggadochio, who vainly attempts to control Guyon’s horse, mocks upstarts who ape courtly manners without mastering aristocratic horsemanship (2.3.46). Yet Guyon’s “patience” as he journeys and fights “on foot” (2.3.2–3, 2.5.3) in defense of temperance evokes the yeoman-footman’s moderation. Spenser reinforces the equation of Guyon with the modest infantryman through a bilingual pun on “Guy-on” as “Gai[a] -on” or “Ge-on” (i.e., “on earth”). After Guyon is unhorsed in Book 3, his Palmer comforts him by noting that “Nothing on earth” is “alwaies happie” (3.1.10.7). Guyon, the embodiment of temperance, must humbly labor “on earth” literally and figuratively.

While Spenser exploits the traditional association of the footman with the temperate mean, other authors highlight the paradox of the farmer-soldier as the vehicle for English imperial expansion. Though Bacon, as a propagandist for science, declared the fight for mankind’s “empire” over nature morally superior to a nation’s imperial conquests, as a patriot he uses the Virgilian georgic association of farmer and soldier to advance British imperium. In “Of the True Greatnesse of Kingdoms and Estates” (1612) Bacon warns against an overmighty aristocracy, noting that England’s yeomen “*Middle people*” make a strong “*Infantry*,” “the Nerve of an Army.” If British yeomen maintain their self-sufficiency and do not become “*Servile*” like the French peasantry, the nation “shall attain to *Virgils* Character, which he gives to ancient Italy.—*Terra potens Armis atque ubere Glebae*” [“A land mighty in arms and richness of soil,” *Aeneid* 1.531, trans. modified].<sup>14</sup> Bacon cites the *Aeneid* rather than the *Georgics* not because he has replaced a “georgic vision of peaceful national prosperity” with a militaristic epic one.<sup>15</sup> The line in the *Aeneid* is consonant with Virgil’s georgic association of farmers and soldiers, but it underscores for Bacon’s more erudite readers his desired *translatio imperii* of Rome’s empire of farmer-soldiers to Britain. Bacon quotes one of Aeneas’s comrades, who notes that the Greeks call Italy “*Hesperia*” (1.530), the “Western” land associated

with the mythological “Hesperides,” or Fortunate Isles. Bacon invites readers to consider what nation best deserves the glorious appellation; as they would know from countless panegyrics, Britain was “Hesperides,” the island of temperate plenty to Italy’s west.<sup>16</sup> Yet, like the Romans, Bacon recognizes the ironies of georgic imperialism. In the 1625 edition of the *Essayes* he balances his call for empire based on the might of “Middle” yeomen by warning of imperial decline through luxury: “Of Vicissitude of Things” notes that “Warre-like” empires that grow to an “Over-power” (like Rome) bring on their own destruction, becoming “Soft and Effeminate” as they grow “rich.”<sup>17</sup>

Drayton’s *Poly-Olbion* registers similar ambivalence in celebrating the yeoman farmer-soldier, with echoes of both the *Georgics* and his contemporaries. Assuming the Roman ideal of domestic peace and foreign war and recalling Virgil’s praise of Italy, “mother” of farmer-soldiers, Drayton celebrates the “English ground” for nurturing as “children” in her “bosome” the “mightiest” Cheshire yeomen-farmers, contented in peace with sufficient “livelihood” and triumphing in foreign wars as “foot-men” (11.4, 13–14, 19, 29).<sup>18</sup> Drayton—who stresses the harmony between the “Leader and the Led,” the yeomanry and the monarchs that “led” them in “conquests” (11.13, 27)—similarly praises Elizabeth I for peace at home and conquest abroad: “This Iland kept in awe, and did her power extend” (17.343). By ending a catalogue of monarchs with imperial Elizabeth rather than the reigning James I, Drayton perhaps obliquely disparages his insular, peace-loving king.<sup>19</sup> Yet *Poly-Olbion* also associates imperial expansion with dangerous immoderation. Drayton condemns Julius Caesar’s attempts to “enlarge” an empire already “too great” (8.161–162, 179). Plotting the movement from positive abundance to excess oft decried in *Poly-Olbion*, Drayton also criticizes British kings who made themselves vulnerable to Roman conquest through their own imperial excess: Britain was

. . . with all abundance blest,  
 And satisfi’d with what shee in her selfe possest;  
 Through her excessive wealth (at length) till wanton growne,  
 Some Kings (with others Lands that would enlarge their owne)  
 By innovating Armes an open passage made  
 For him that gap’t for all (the *Roman*) to invade.

(8.175–180)

Imperial ironies lead to contradiction.

### *Microcosmos*: Georgic and Machiavellian Counsel

Though stylistically pedestrian, Davies’s *Microcosmos* provides a fascinating register of early modern ambivalence concerning moderation, military empire, and commerce, conquest’s alternative. This lengthy didactic poem uses hu-

moral theory and Aristotelian ethics to preach adherence to the mean for both mental and bodily health, since “excesse” and “intemperance” harm “nature” and cause disease.<sup>20</sup> Davies laboriously recommends “moderation” in almost every personal domain, including the pursuit of wisdom, bodily pleasures (eating, drinking, lovemaking), the management of one’s passions, and labor and rest. His deployment of a modified Spenserian stanza (with a final pentameter instead of Spenser’s alexandrine) signals his major English poetic model: the poem provides lessons like those of the house of Alma in Book 2 of the *Faerie Queene* concerning the temperate body’s “sober government” (2.9.1.4). Davies, however, underscores the georgic mode of his Spenserian moderation. He conflates Spenser’s georgic comparisons of himself to a ploughman unyoking his “wearie” team (4.5.46.8–9, 5.3.40.7–8) with his bitter declaration at the close of Book 6 that since his poem has earned courtly displeasure, he should henceforth “seeke to please” (6.12.40–41): Davies concludes his poem by figuring himself as a farmer whose “Penne” is his “Plough” but who will cease to “plow the barraine Soile” (88), that is, to write serious but financially unrewarding poetry.

Though Davies promotes moderation as a poet-ploughman, he does not idealize real farmers. Unlike contemporaries who saw the nation’s strength in “middle” yeoman-soldiers, Davies regards them as potential rebels: “Our [nation’s] *force* lies most dispersèd at the *Plow*, / Unready, rude, and oft rebellious too, / Whose *Sun-burnt Necks* oft rather breake then bow” (56).<sup>21</sup> Moderation for Davies must come from above, in the guise of two complementary but competing figures: the virtuous monarch and his good counselor. With flattering echoes of James I’s own Ciceronian espousal of the mean as the guide to royal behavior in *Basilikon Doron* (1599), Davies begins his poem with a lengthy panegyric upon the new king as the acme of moderation.<sup>22</sup> Yet even more clearly than his poetic master Spenser, Davies reveals the tension between praising the monarch and emphasizing his own independent moral authority as poet. It was an early modern English commonplace that the king should listen to virtuous and prudent counselors who could best advise him how to be strong without becoming tyrannical.<sup>23</sup> Davies provides a long digression on governance—first discussing the principles of “policy” or statecraft and then recording the successes and failures of English kings from William the Conqueror to Elizabeth—that advertises his own credentials as wise counselor. Here Davies applies the mean in startling fashion to aggrandize the counselor who

... 'twixt *Prince* and *People* beeing plac'd,  
 Best sees what is for *both* convenient:  
 . . . . .  
 For, in the *midst* can nothing sit that's base,  
 Sith *Vertue* there (as in her *Heav'n* of blisse)  
 Her selfe enthrones. (51)

Drawing on the Aristotelian point that the virtuous mean is a “summit” [*akrotês*] of “excellence” (*NE* 2.6.17), Davies declares the virtuous counselor to be in the middle and therefore the “most excellent” (51) position. Remarkably and indecorously, Davies raises the virtuously moderate counselor in the “enthroned[d]” mean above even his enthroned monarch in terms of both moral authority and comprehensive political insight.

The biggest shock, however, comes in Davies’s practical advice concerning governance, which contradicts his long-winded espousal of virtuous moderation elsewhere in his poem. Distinguishing between ethical and political discourse, Davies prefaces his discussion of “policy,” broached with elaborate reluctance, by noting that statecraft and morality are often at odds since the former “holdes for *good* a good *effect* / Causèd by *ill*” (45). Regarding “policy,” Davies several times footnotes Tacitus, yet behind Davies’s conception of the ends justifying the means is Machiavelli, who was often associated with Tacitus in the Renaissance and, because of his infamy as an immoralist, was often pillaged by English authors without citation. In *Discorsi* 1.9 Machiavelli claims that the “effect/result” [*lo effetto*] excuses the founder of a regime’s ill “deed” [*il fatto*].<sup>24</sup> Without acknowledging his source, Davies draws from the Florentine arguments that a king must often use extreme measures to secure and preserve his power: “Intemp’rate” subjects force monarchs to be correspondingly “cruell.” Claiming that a vulnerable king must spare no potential opponent during a rebellious or disorderly time, Davies asserts that a ruler may be forced to deploy illegal and immoral “*extremitie[s]*” for security when “*Vertue* hath no . . . certenty” (41, 57).

Davies praises William the Conqueror, his epitome of monarchical “policy,” for ruthlessness:

. . . He gave new *Lords* and *Laws*,  
Which curb’d the *Head-strong*, & did yoke the *Wild*. (60)

Hee pull’d up *all* that might pul downe his *state*,  
*Supplanting*, or *transplanting* ev’rie *plant*  
That might prove *poison* to his frolicke *fate*;  
And *planting* in their *place* (ere *Plants* did want)  
Such as were *holesome*, or lesse discrepant. (54)

Davies recalls Machiavelli’s argument (*Discorsi* 1.26) that a new prince wishing to establish absolute power must ruthlessly make everything “new,” appointing new governors and forcibly transferring the original inhabitants elsewhere, because “middle ways” [*vie del mezzo*] are disastrous (cf. *Discorsi* 2.23). Davies concludes his praise of William the Conqueror by claiming that Ireland needs a similar conquest (60). Other Elizabethan writers echo, without acknowledgment, Machiavelli’s discussions of the extreme methods of new princes when discussing how to subjugate Ireland.<sup>25</sup> In support of harsh measures, Davies uses not only Machiavellian rhetoric but also the English georgic

trope of “plantation” often applied to Ireland (and America) to “naturalize” colonization. The English “planted” or established “plantations” or colonies (OED s.v. “plant,” 3). Davies legitimizes the violence in such planting—and displanting—by treating William as a divine scourge, recalling the vengeful Old Testament God who destroys and creates kingdoms, proclaiming “that which I have planted I will pluck up” and threatening “to pull down” in order “to plant” anew (Jer. 45:4, 1:10).

Davies does not limit such violent measures to the past or to the British periphery of Ireland. Unlike many contemporaries, he condemns foreign wars but praises kings such as “valiant” Edward I. Once more using georgic imagery to figure military conquest as a natural process, Davies claims that “the *common-wealth* (fast rooted) gan to sprout” because Edward prudently abandoned foreign entanglements to reduce still-rebellious Wales and Scotland to obedience (54). By praising Edward immediately after condemning King John’s usurpation, Davies suggests the necessary severity of even the virtuous conqueror. Davies’s gloss on Edward—“That which is gotten with the Sword must so bee maintained” (54)—expounds a proverbial truth normally applied to tyrants like John: a Senecan tyrant claims “what . . . thou holdest against the will of citizens, the drawn sword must guard” (*Hercules Furens*, ll. 343–344); Cardinal Pandulph says of the usurping John in Shakespeare’s *King John*, “A sceptre snatched with an unruly hand / Must be as boisterously maintained as gained” (3.3.135–136). Though Davies’s opening address to James declares the loyalty of all his kingdoms, the poet also heaps execrations upon whoever “resists” James I’s harmonizing rule (14). Davies leaves uncertain how much georgic violence might still be necessary in England, Scotland, and Wales, as well as Ireland.

Yet Davies also fashions a very different model of royal excellence for peace-loving James I by singling out “temperate” Henry VII as Britain’s “best” former king. Henry transformed Britain from a land soaked with “civill blood” into a georgic paradise: “He turnéd Swords to Mattocks, Speares to Spades”; “*Plowmen* praise God, and God doth speed the *Plow*, / For such a King that makes their Crops compleate” (62, 58). Davies echoes but pointedly modifies the message of the famous ballad “God spede the Plough” (written ca. 1500) in praise of the husbandman who struggles against sociopolitical corruption.<sup>26</sup> For Davies the cure for society’s ills comes from God’s divine agent, the moderate and moderating king. He calls Henry a “demi-God” (58), for he brought about the apocalyptic peace prophesied in Isa. 2:40: “And they shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their speares into mattocks.”

By turning civil war into georgic peace, Henry VII also played the role assigned to Augustus in the *Georgics*: rectifying the wrongs in a nation torn by civil war, where “the plough meets not its honour due” and the “pruning-hooks are forged into stiff swords” (1.508–509). Unlike Augustus, however, Henry brought peace at home with foreign trade rather than foreign war. Da-

vies declares Henry's policy far preferable to the foreign campaigns of his son Henry VIII, which were "glorious" but not "good." Henry VII wisely recognized that commercial "Trafficke" and attendant "wealth and peace" would make his subjects contented and his country strong by linking adjacent nations to Britain in "friendship's band" (60–61). Davies's progression from William I to Henry VII suggests the possibility of moral progress in statecraft, however unheeded by unworthy rulers.

Like many of his contemporaries, however, Davies is ambivalent about "peace and plenty." Commercial prosperity demands and jeopardizes self-restraint. All things on earth, Davies notes, contain "Good and Ill," depending on their use (71). Davies's opening proclaims that God will turn Britain under James into an "Earthlie *Paradice*, wherein / *Plentie*, and *Peace* shall woove from, and to *sinne*," with "from, and to" registering his ambivalence (12). Davies later notes that God blesses mankind with "*Peace* and *Plentie*," but that from them "oft" arises "*Abuses* which exceed"—"*Pride*, *Strife*, & *Excesse*" (70). With respect to commercial prosperity as much as reason of state, Davies's poem oscillates between traditional calls for moderation and self-consciously modern recommendations of "extreme" policies. Davies reveals an obsessive concern to promote and occupy the middle position even as he acknowledges various extreme policies that monarchs must use to gain power and maintain order.

### *Coopers Hill*: Political Moderation and Commercial Expansion

Published in 1642 on the eve of the English civil war and subsequently revised in 1655 and 1668, Denham's *Coopers Hill* is a georgic that responds to crisis with a similar oscillation between self-consciously moderate and extreme positions. Brendan O'Hehir and other scholars have examined the major debts of *Coopers Hill* to Virgilian georgic.<sup>27</sup> O'Hehir and others have also analyzed the poem's exhortation to the king and Parliament to display moderation in order to avoid chaos.<sup>28</sup> Neither O'Hehir nor his successors, however, have fully synthesized the generic and political readings to show how Denham's 1642 version, with which I will primarily be concerned, transforms georgic notions of moderation in the tense circumstances of the early 1640s.

Like earlier English georgic poets such as Drayton and Davies, Denham displays only vestigial interest in the farmer. Instead he adapts Virgilian passages and images to explore the possibility of recovering national temperance, conceived by Denham primarily in "soft" georgic fashion as living in harmony with beneficent nature. Drawing on Renaissance critics' grouping of Virgil's text with other ancient, nonmimetic didactic verse, Denham reveals his conception of georgic as concerned with order in the state and cosmos by imitating not only the *Georgics* but also Virgil's Roman model for didactic poetry,



Lucretius's Epicurean cosmological work *De rerum natura*, as well as the latter's major poetic model, Empedocles's cosmological hexameters.<sup>29</sup>

Like Virgil's *Georgics*, Denham's poem is filled with tensions and contradictions, responding locally to political crisis rather than expressing a fully coherent doctrine. Denham's call for political moderation by both king and subject deploys positive images of natural "bounds" and "limits" that parallel his celebration of personal contentment. Yet Denham also influentially celebrates an expansionary British trade, based upon the pursuit of luxury, as a beneficent and equally natural breaking of limits. His commercial vision, while aggressively modern, is deeply intertwined with his meditation on Virgil. Denham's commerce links—and transforms—the two ideals of Virgil's *Georgics*: peaceful farming and imperial conquest. Trade, as Denham represents it, follows nature's beneficent laws of growth in order to connect the nation to the world. While Denham juxtaposes rather than reconciles his different viewpoints, the poem's diverse treatment of domestic politics and foreign trade suggests that different values—sociopolitical moderation and limitless appetite—are needed to assure domestic peace and national and international plenty.

Denham situates himself atop an eminence, Coopers Hill, from which he observes with supposed detachment a landscape that emblemizes the past and present state of England. "Secure from danger and from feare" (l. 26), he looks down (literally and metaphorically) upon the strife in London:

So rais'd above the tumult and the crowd  
 I see the City in a thicker cloud  
 Of businesse, then of smoake; where men like Ants  
 Toyle to prevent imaginarie wants;  
 Yet all in vaine, increasing with their store,  
 Their vast desires, but make their wants the more.  
 As food to unsound bodies, though it please  
 The Appetite, feeds onely the disease;  
 Where with like haste, though severall waies they runne:  
 Some to undoe, and some to be undone:  
 While Luxurie, and wealth, like Warre and Peace,  
 Are each the others ruine, and increase.  
 . . . . .  
 Some study plots, and some those plots t'undoe,  
 Others to make 'em, and undoe 'em too,  
 False to their hopes, affraid to be secure,  
 Those mischiefes onely which they make, endure,  
 Blinded with light, and sicke of being well,  
 In tumults seek their peace, their heaven in hell.

(ll. 27–38, 41–46)

The poet equates London, the center of English business and the home of Parliament, with senseless, self-defeating excess. Denham depicts a world dominated by men who vainly “runne”—the traditional image of extreme behavior—without reaching their goals. At the end of the poem, Denham similarly condemns subjects who “R[u]nne to” an “extreme” (l. 347) and thereby create political chaos. His identification of “Luxury and wealth” with one another’s “ruine and increase” expounds the common notion that wealth leads to prodigal excess, which in turn leads to poverty. By beginning with insatiable commercial appetites before proceeding to describe political strife as an equally self-defeating plotting and counterplotting, Denham represents the Parliamentary opposition to Charles I as deluded extremists seeking personal gain.

While the analogy between storms and civil disturbance recalls Virgil’s description of storms as cosmological analogies and presages of civil war in *Georgics* 1.471–492, Denham avoids Virgil’s fearful turn to invoking the gods and the great leader Augustus and takes a more independent Virgilian stance. After the description of London, Denham contrasts his own country retirement with the “Toile” and excessive desires of those below: “O happinesse of sweet retir’d content! / To be at once secure and innocent” (ll. 47–48). Thus framing his attack on the city, Denham distinguishes himself first as a serene philosophic onlooker, “secure from danger and from fear” (l. 26), and then as a retired gentleman, “secure and innocent,” from the busy urban crowds that are “affraid to be secure.” Like Milton in *L’Allegro* and *Il Penseroso*, Denham combines the wishes in *Georgic* 2 to be a natural philosopher or, if that is impossible, an innocent country-dweller.<sup>30</sup> Denham, however, distinctively underscores the two figures’ similar “security” or unanxious state. Virgil describes the philosopher he most wishes to be as knowing “the causes [*causas*] of things” and thereby “casting beneath his feet all fear” of death (*Georgics* 2.491–492). High on Coopers Hill and knowing the foolishness of what he sees below, Denham claims the fearless position of the cosmic philosopher, as free from “fear” of civil disorder as the philosopher is of death. Claiming to be a “secure” countryman, Denham also finds the *secura quies* (*Georgics* 2.467) that Virgil ascribes to the happy farmer and would find for himself as country dweller.

Virgil’s “soft” georgic “*securitas*” embodies a specifically Epicurean ideal of moderation that shapes Denham’s conception of means and extremes. The wish to be a natural philosopher is full of allusions to Lucretius’s *De rerum natura*,<sup>31</sup> and Denham himself appropriately mingles Lucretian with Virgilian echoes. Lucretius celebrates a restful life without *cura* or care (e.g., *De rerum natura* 1.51, 2.19, 2.46) derived from understanding the “causes” of things and from realizing how “little” one needs for contentment (2.20–21).<sup>32</sup> In Lucretius’s famous image, the Epicurean sage “looks down from the height”

of peaceful contemplation upon those below “labouring night and day with surpassing toil [*praestante labore*] to mount upon the pinnacle of riches and to lay hold on power” (2.7–13). Lucretius’s two examples of care-inspiring worldly goals—wealth and political power—are the goals of the extremist activities condemned at the opening of *Coopers Hill*. Just as Lucretius declares this life of incessant striving, in which people are “never able to . . . satisfy” themselves, to be the true Acherusia or underworld (3.1003–1004, 1023), so Denham calls this world of insatiable appetites “hell.”

Lucretius modifies the Greek Epicurean ideal of retirement by suggesting that even the Epicurean cannot be wholly detached from civil strife: in the opening of the poem, he prays for universal peace and admits that he himself cannot have an “untroubled mind” [*aequ(us) anim(us)*] (1.42) while Roman civil war rages. With a circular logic, his poem is intended to convert his Roman audience to a retired Epicurean calm that will both bring about, and subsequently be nourished by, political tranquility.<sup>33</sup> Denham similarly infuses Epicurean retirement with public purport. His own “security,” as the poem’s unfolding reveals, depends upon the security of his nation, about whose future he later registers (non-Epicurean) “feare” (l. 183). “Security” is a catchphrase of political discourse of the early 1640s: Charles I called the Long Parliament to ponder “the Security of this Kingdom,” and all sides claimed to be seeking the nation’s “security.”<sup>34</sup> Denham’s opening description of London already suggests the interconnection between the poet’s Epicurean “security” and the “security” of the established order in its treatment of St. Paul’s Cathedral, whose refurbishment by Charles I made it a symbol of the Caroline church. Between the two representations of his own “secure” state, Denham describes the cathedral as “Preserv’d from ruine by the best of Kings” and eternally “secure” from both natural disasters and violent “zeale” because immortalized by the “best of Poets,” Denham’s friend Waller, the author of “Upon His Majesty’s repairing of Paul’s” (ll. 19–20).<sup>35</sup> Denham’s poem follows Waller’s not only in its topographical mode but also in attempting to render the established order “secure.” Denham’s means, however, are not eternalizing poetry but rhetorical persuasion.

To Denham, Epicurean moderation is not only the proper perspective from which to condemn destabilizing political machinations but also the proper basis for conceiving the reciprocal rights and duties of kings and subjects and thus assuring the “security” of the nation. According to Lucretius, men struggle in vain, consumed with cares and plagued by war, when they do not adhere to a proper “limit” [*finis*] of desire (*De rerum natura* 5.1430–1433). Intervening in the tense moments before the outbreak of civil war, Denham adapts such wisdom by stressing the “limits” and “bounds” of both the monarch’s and subjects’ political positions: he condemns subjects who “to limit Royalty conspire / While each forgets to limit his desire” and he exhorts “Princes” to “draw” their “boundlesse power . . . / Within the Channell, and the shores of

Law" (ll. 329–330, 351–352). Proper political behavior is a version of Epicurean self-restraint, closer to contemplative rest in one's proper position than to inherently disturbing action.

While describing proper political positions in ancient moral generalities, Denham's stance concerning the relationship between the king and his subjects most closely resembles that of the "constitutional royalists," a term coined by David Smith for a group of Charles I's advisors and supporters during the civil war. They included the drafters of the king's *Answer to the 19 Proposals*, which formally conceded that England was a mixed rather than absolute monarchy. Shortly after the 1641 death of the judge George Croke, Denham composed an elegy lauding the judicial independence of Croke, who was famous for condemning the king's attempt in the 1630s to raise "ship money" without Parliamentary consent.<sup>36</sup> Like Denham, several of the constitutional royalists had supported Parliament against the king in constitutional and religious disputes preceding the civil war. They agreed that royal powers should be limited by the rule of law. They also believed, however, that the king was legitimately the most powerful force within a mixed constitution in which Parliament nevertheless had a crucial role. They differed from Parliamentarians in judging that by 1642 Parliament posed a greater threat to the constitution than Charles I and that the king should preserve his discretionary powers to appoint his Privy Councilors and senior officers.<sup>37</sup>

Diverging from most of the constitutional royalists in one respect, however, Denham links his Epicurean moderation to the conception of the *via media* promoted by the Laudian faction of the English church. While strongly opposing root-and-branch anti-episcopacy, the constitutional royalists supported the established Church shorn of its Laudian "abuses" (as it had largely been by Parliamentary mandate in early 1642).<sup>38</sup> In his allusion to St. Paul's, by contrast, Denham specifically praises Charles I's refurbishment of the cathedral and thus supports, by implication, the Caroline-Laudian emphasis upon the "beauty of holiness" and church ceremonial. Gazing upon the ruined Chertsey Abbey, he attacks as "sacriledge" (l. 160) Henry VIII's destruction of the monasteries and appropriation of monastic lands. Such actions implicitly figure as the dangerous precedent for the root-and-branch anti-episcopal movement of Denham's own times when the poet wishes that "no such storme / Fall on our times, where ruine must reforme" (ll. 149–150). Condemnations of Henry VIII's impropropriation and destruction of church property were a largely Laudian theme. In desiring a "temperate Region" (l. 174) between Catholicism and a Protestant extremism traced back to Henry VIII, Denham follows Laudian trends. While mainstream English Calvinists identified the English church as a firmly Protestant mean between radical Protestantism and an abhorrent Roman Catholicism, the Laudians sharply diminished the church's traditional anti-Catholicism—and lent themselves to charges of "popery"—by celebrating an English church that was both "Catholic and Re-

formed” because uniquely situated in a *via media* between Catholicism and all other forms of Protestantism. Aligning with the Laudians’ relative tolerance toward Rome, Denham even condemns the Protestant extremism represented by Henry VIII, and implicitly by contemporary root-and-branchers, as a “worse extreme” (l. 176) than medieval Catholicism.<sup>39</sup>

Denham, however, is more Epicurean than Laudian in his fear of innovative action. He applies to Christianity the classical and humanist contrast between the *vita contemplativa* and *vita activa* in order to oppose a “lazy” monastic Catholicism of “emptie, ayrie contemplations” to a “much too active” Protestant extremism (ll. 169–170, 172). Though his formulation implies that a tempered blend of contemplation and action would be the ideal mean, his claim that “restlesse” Protestantism is “worse” than a Catholic “Lethargicke dreame” (ll. 175–176) reveals an Epicurean preference for restful contemplation over “restlesse” action.<sup>40</sup>

Near the end of *Coopers Hill* Denham describes Charles I’s killing of a stag that is compared to a “declining Statesman” (l. 275). This allegorizes the 1641 execution of Charles’s minister Thomas Wentworth, earl of Strafford, who had come to embody the king’s attempt at arbitrary rule. The king had reluctantly acquiesced in his minister’s death. Denham suggests that Charles I has displayed his moderation, and that Parliament should now lovingly reciprocate with obedience lest the oscillation between extremes begin anew. Yet as Nigel Smith has noted, the allegory is by no means clear-cut. The “royall Stagge” (l. 265) expresses the poet’s fears that Charles I’s acquiescence in Strafford’s death might be a kind of self-wounding (a king kills a “monarch” who partially represents himself).<sup>41</sup> Glossing over Charles I’s reluctance by turning him into the eager hunter, Denham concludes by describing the killing of the deer as a “more Innocent, and happy chase” than when King John’s “tyranny” sought to make a “Prey” of “Liberty” at the battle of Runnymede (ll. 301–304). Verbal echo suggests that Charles I’s “innocent” and “happy” curbing of tyranny is morally equivalent to the “happinesse” of “innocent” contentment that Denham claims for himself at the opening (ll. 47–48). Yet Denham forges this “happy” connection only by turning a violent political act into rural sport: the allegorical scene begins by describing Charles I “unbend his cares” (l. 264) in hunting, as if the stag hunt/execution were carefree pleasure like the poet’s own “secure” Epicurean retirement.

Denham reveals his fear of political action most clearly in his treatment of the barons’ revolt against King John’s tyranny and its outcome, Magna Charta. While the constitutional royalists generally argued that armed resistance to the king was illegal, Denham equivocates because he recognizes the occasional need for active resistance and yet fears its potential consequences. He leaves open whether the barons’ resort to arms was justified self-defense:

For armed subjects can have no pretence  
 Against their Princes, but their just defence;  
 And whether then, or no, I leave to them  
 To justifie, who else themselves condemne.  
 Yet might the fact be just, if we may guesse  
 The justnesse of an action from successe,  
 Here was that Charter seal'd wherein the Crowne  
 All markes of Arbitrary power layes downe:  
 Tyrant and Slave, those names of hate and feare,  
 The happier stile of King and Subject beare.

(ll. 307–316)

Denham cut these lines in the 1655 version of *Coopers Hill*, where they seemed too conciliatory to the Parliamentary cause after the execution of Charles I, but the 1642 version reveals Denham's dilemma. Magna Charta, which embodies a proper constitutional balance between king and subjects, was achieved through violent resistance. The Machiavellian principle that the "successe" justifies the violent "fact" or deed—by which Elizabethan and Jacobean writers like Davies justified imperial expansion—appears to Denham as a dangerous precedent for Parliament's "extreme" violent action. He therefore recommends restraint to his contemporaries by claiming that the very violence by which the balance of Magna Charta was attained also destroyed it:

The Subjects arm'd, the more their Princes gave,  
 But this advantage tooke, the more to crave:  
 Till Kings by giving, give themselves away,  
 And even that power, that should deny, betray.

(ll. 321–324)

Denham warns both sides to go no further in political action: Parliament is to avoid turning to armed resistance and the king is to avoid making further concessions.

Denham's fear of the political "fact" or deed further emerges even where he applies the values of Virgilian georgic labor rather than Epicurean "security" to define political means and extremes. At the end of his poem he compares the relationship of subjects and monarchs to that of farmers and rivers:

When a calme River rais'd with sudden raines,  
 Or Snowes dissolv'd o'reflowes th'adjoyning Plaines,  
 The Husbandmen with high rais'd bankes secure  
 Their greedy hopes, and this he can endure.  
 But if with Bays, and Dammes they strive to force,  
 His channell to a new, or narrow course,  
 No longer then within his bankes he dwels,

First to a Torrent, then a Deluge swels;  
 Stronger, and fiercer by restraint, he roares,  
 And knows no bound, but makes his powers his shores.

(ll. 333–342)

Denham acknowledges that subjects/husbandmen must sometimes actively “secure” their position against rivers/monarchs’ encroachment. Yet the georgic imagery leaves obscure precisely what kind of political resistance Denham would deem appropriate. While the passage suggests that a mean exists between excessive passivity and action on the husbandmen’s/subjects’ part, Denham’s concluding emphasis falls on the danger of foolish actions, which would turn a “calme River” or king into a tyrannical “torrent.”

Although calling for Epicurean self-restraint and eschewal of innovative action in the political sphere, Denham provides a contrasting vision that is also indebted to Lucretius. He celebrates a sublime “boundlessness” as well as contented and tradition-preserving “bounds.” His introductory presentation of his own “boundless” fancy introduces this other side:

Nor wonder, if (advantag’d in my flight,  
 By taking wing from thy [Coopers Hill’s] auspicious height)  
 Through untrac’t waies, and airie paths I flie,  
 More boundless in my fancie, then my ie.

(ll. 9–12)

The poet’s own “boundless” imagination, made possible by his supposed detachment from those involved in political toil and turmoil on the ground (as it were), allows him to see the proper “bounds” of rulers and subjects. Denham’s self-description as an original, daring poet—who, like Davies’s impartial counselor or Drayton’s and Milton’s peripatetic poetic imaginations, surpasses the king as well as his subjects—recalls Lucretius’s descriptions of himself, Epicurus, and Epicurus’s followers. As critics ancient and modern have recognized, Lucretius strikes a sublime note that departs from the restrained tenor of Greek Epicurean doctrine.<sup>42</sup> He proudly describes himself journeying through a “pathless country. . . where no other foot has ever trod”; praises Epicurus as a philosophical hero who “first” [*primum*] “traversed the boundless/immeasurable [*immensum*] universe in thought” to ascertain the true “boundary” [*terminus*] of each element in the cosmos; and bids readers follow Epicurus by scanning the sky as if for the “first” [*primum*] time and by contemplating the infinite cosmos toward which the mind “flies free” [*liber . . . pervolet*] (*De rerum natura* 4.1–2; 1.65, 74, 77; 2.1045–1047). Denham espouses a similar sublime freedom in contemplating a “boundless” world.<sup>43</sup> When he proceeds to compare himself to one “rais’d” above the “Aires middle Vault” (ll. 21–22), he underscores his Lucretian elevation above the “middle” subject matter with which georgic was often associated.

Denham partially resolves the tension between these two Lucretian strands of philosophical contentment and boundless freedom by associating them with his contrasting visions of the domestic realm of politics and the global realm of commerce, for both of which he finds a natural basis in a simultaneously bounded and boundless world. In revealingly strained lines he praises Charles I for having

... within that Azure round confin'd  
 These Realmes, which Nature for their bound design'd.  
 That bound which to the worlds extreamest ends,  
 Endlesse her selfe, her liquid armes extends.

(ll. 131–134)

Denham alludes to the “natural” union of England and Scotland as part of the island kingdom, an accomplishment of James I that Denham shifts to his son by putting the best face on Charles I’s temporary and financially costly termination of conflict with the Scots in 1640. He also alludes to Charles I’s assertion of British maritime claims, treating as successful what was largely a fiasco. Charles I levied the notorious “ship money,” whose dubious constitutionality was one of the major sources of charges of arbitrary rule, because he sought to build a navy capable of defending British sovereignty over the surrounding “Narrow Seas.”<sup>44</sup> Denham’s image recalls John Selden’s *Mare Clausum* (1635), which defended British sovereignty by pronouncing the surrounding sea the “bounds” [*finēs*] of the British kingdoms.<sup>45</sup> Denham similarly declares the aquatic “bound” that should unite fractious Britain in a proud though “bounded” posture. He goes beyond Selden, however, in stressing that this watery “bound” is itself “endlesse.” He thereby hints at the natural basis for his major contrasting theme alongside domestic self-restraint: commerce unites the world’s “extreamest ends” by means of “endlesse” aquatic circulation.

The two parts of Denham’s praise of the Thames correspond to his emphasis on domestic bounds and global boundlessness. He first lauds the Thames’s beneficent restraint toward England’s georgic laborers as a model for domestic politics. The river

... hatches plenty for th’ensuing Spring,  
 Nor with a furious, and unruly wave,  
 Like profuse Kings, resumes the wealth he gave:  
 No unexpected Inundations spoile  
 The Mowers hopes, nor mocke the Plough-mans toyle.

(ll. 196–200)

The Thames here proves England’s natural status as a georgic paradise, like Virgil’s Italy in the *laus Italiae*. Yet *Coopers Hill* transforms the Virgilian relationship between natural and political disorder. The *Georgics*’ description of



the storms that presaged civil war, which included the overflowing Eridanus river's sweeping "all across the plains . . . cattle and stalls alike" (1.482–483), naturalizes political disorder in terms of cosmic disorder. Denham, by contrast, suggests that England's problems stem from perversely ignoring its natural endowments. His contrast between the fruitfully calm Thames and "profuse" monarchs implies a political message: Englishmen—especially kings but also their responsive subjects—should "follow nature" in the political sphere, modeling their behavior upon the Thames's calm.

Denham's major ideological innovation occurs in the second half of the river description, concerning the Thames's passage to the sea. He reverses his earlier condemnation of the pursuit of wealth by celebrating international commerce:

As a wise King first settles fruitfull peace  
 In his owne Realmes, and with their rich increase  
 Seekes warre abroad, and then in triumph brings  
 The spoyles of Kingdomes, and the Crownes of Kings:  
 So Thames to *London* doth at first present  
 Those tributes, which the neighbouring countries sent;  
 But at his second visit from the East,  
 Spices he brings, and treasures from the West;  
 Findes wealth where 'tis, and gives it where it wants,  
 Cities in Desarts, woods in Cities plants,  
 Rounds the whole Globe, and with his flying towers  
 Brings home to us, and makes both Indies ours:  
 So that to us no thing, no place is strange  
 Whilst thy faire bosome is the worlds Exchange:  
 O could my verse freely and smoothly flow,  
 As thy pure flood. . . .

(ll. 205–220)

Shifting the focus from the Thames's restraint within its banks to its boundless flow into the world's oceans, Denham turns from domestic peace based upon moderation to plenty based upon trade. The Thames-propelled "flying towers" that circumnavigate the globe provide a concrete correlative of the poet's own "boundlesse" "flight" of imagination (ll. 9, 12) as well as a "natural" response to the "endlesse" ocean described earlier in the poem. Denham concludes with lines that neatly combine his bifurcated vision of the Thames and his own poetic-philosophic stances: "O could my verse freely and smoothly flow / As thy pure flood" (ll. 219–220). The Thames flows both "smoothly" and "freely" because it remains calmly bounded by its banks even as it flows unhindered into the ocean. The flowing river thus simultaneously supports domestic tranquility based upon "bounded" contentment and national and international wealth based upon "boundlesse" trade.

Denham here influentially substitutes commerce for georgic labor as the primary source of national prosperity.<sup>46</sup> He figures trade itself as georgic planting that enriches and civilizes by working with nature: the chiasmic “Cities in Deserts, woods in Cities plants” blurs the distinction between the natural and the urban. Yet, as with Davies, commerce displaces not only Virgilian farming but also Virgilian imperialism. By initially comparing the products of trade to the “spoyles of Kingdomes” gained by foreign war, Denham adumbrates a new version of the traditional glorification of foreign wars as opposed to civil ones. Commerce peaceably brings to Britain’s capital not only the “tribute” of “neighbouring countries”—perhaps European nations, perhaps the counties (OED s.v. “country,” 2) that send their agricultural produce to the London capital—but also the exotic goods of East and West.

Denham’s Thames passage shares the ambiguities of many early modern English celebrations of trade in relation to empire, which promoted foreign trade as either a glorious means toward an English mercantile empire or as a peaceful endeavor in sharp contrast to foreign powers’ evil imperial designs.<sup>47</sup> While England gains “spoils” that make the world “ours,” Denham also imagines England as the beneficent “worlds Exchange,” the kindly center of a commerce that benefits all. Trade “Finds wealth where ’tis” and “gives it where it wants,” spreading wealth around the world. Even Denham’s description of the national benefits of commerce—“So that to us no thing, no place is strange”—sounds a factitious note of internationalist generosity by recalling Terence’s well-known philanthropic dictum “I am a human, I think nothing human is strange [*alienum*] to me.”<sup>48</sup> To make the world and its products “ours” is not simply to grab lucre but also to unite the world through commercial philanthropy.

Denham’s subsequent additions to the poem underscore the international benefits of trade. In the 1655 version, before the celebration of the Thames’s making “both Indies ours,” Denham inserts an exuberant description of the Thames spreading its “Blessings” to the world:

Nor are his Blessings to his banks confin’d,  
But free, and common, as the Sea or Wind,  
When he to boast, or to disperse his stores;  
Full of the tributes of his grateful shores,  
Visits the world. . . .

(ll. 179–183)<sup>49</sup>

This addition may partly be explained as an attack upon the imperial pretensions of the Interregnum. Possessing a greatly enlarged navy, and as part of their assertion of legitimacy against domestic and continental enemies, the Commonwealth and then the Protectorate not only defended British sovereignty over the Narrow Seas in the first Anglo-Dutch war of 1652–1654 but also began a (mostly unsuccessful) naval challenge to the Spanish empire with

the seizure of Jamaica. Celebrating such expansion, Marchamont Nedham's 1652 translation of Selden's *Mare Clausum* modified Selden's static defense of British sovereignty over the Narrow Seas, the nation's legitimate "bounds" [*fnēs*], by declaring that "Sea-Dominion may as well bee gain'd, / By new acquests as by descent maintain'd."<sup>50</sup> Denham's 1655 celebration of trade as akin to the "common" "Sea or Wind" contrasts with the contemporaneous poem "A Panegyric to my Lord Protector" by Denham's old friend Waller, now a supporter of the Protectorate, who gloats with characteristic hyperbole that the English own the sea: "The sea's our own; and now all nations greet, / With bending sails, each vessel of our fleet / . . . as far as winds can blow" (ll. 17–19).<sup>51</sup> Contradicting his own Seldenian emphasis upon possession of the Narrow Seas, Denham opposes his universalistic vision of trade to his political opponents' appropriations of Selden's nationalist arguments for assertions of the Interregnum regime's imperial might.

Beyond topical attack, however, Denham cannot resolve the tension between his nationalist and universalist motives for trade. During the Restoration Charles II continued the Interregnum policy of asserting British naval strength. Denham nevertheless added a passage to his own copy of *Coopers Hill* sometime after 1668 that further attempts to infuse British global trade with a sense of both imperial power and universal beneficence:

Rome only conquerd halfe the world, but trade  
 One commonwealth of that and her hath made  
 . . . . .  
 Least God and Nature partiall should appeare  
 Commerce makes ev'rything grow ev'rywhere.<sup>52</sup>

Denham represents (British-dominated) commerce as superior to Virgilian imperialism in both scope and beneficence through the georgic image of commerce's making "ev'rything grow ev'rywhere." Virgil notes that even fruitful Italy does not yield every sort of produce since not "all lands can yield everything" ("terrae ferre omnes omnia possunt," *Georgics* 2.109; trans. modified). Denham's commerce overcomes such limitations.

Trade, as a natural principle of growth from universal union, resembles Venus, praised at the opening of Lucretius's poem as the source of life and concord: "through you every kind of living thing is conceived," "without you nothing comes forth," "you alone can delight mortals with quiet peace" (*De rerum natura* 1.4–5, 23, 31–32). Drawing on a long-standing providentialist view of trade, Denham's 1668 addition makes clearest what is implicit in all versions of the poem, namely, that commerce expresses a form of universal love. The Stoic Libanius and his Christian students Basil and John Chrysostom articulated the influential idea that God bestowed different products upon different regions in order to force men to cultivate loving bonds of trade.<sup>53</sup> In a homily on charity Chrysostom declared that God "promoted mutual love"

through trade and “gave each region its own peculiar products” so that men “would communicate and share.” Indebted to this patristic vision, Giovanni Botero, in a work translated in 1606, claims that God gave “no nation” “all things” so that out of mutual need “there might grow a Communitie, and from a Communitie Love.” Like Denham in praise of the Thames, Botero hymns rivers and seas as conduits for charitable trade.<sup>54</sup>

In the 1642 version of *Coopers Hill*, following his panegyric of commerce, Denham suggests the connection between commerce and love in a passage describing the river’s relation to the surrounding forest. Here Denham draws on Empedocles, Lucretius’s poetic model, whom Lucretius echoes in various passages and lauds as a “divine mind” (*De rerum natura* 1.731).<sup>55</sup> Lucretius’s Venus, depicted as pacifying Mars (1.31–40), is an allegorical version of Empedocles’s cosmic unifying force Love [*philia*], which opposes Strife [*eris*]. Aristotle notes that in Empedocles’s system the “universe is differentiated into its elements by Strife,” but that elements “combine together again by Love” (*Metaphysics* 1.4.6; trans. modified). Contemplating the meeting of woods and water, Denham describes nature’s *concordia discors* in Empedoclean terms:

Here Nature, whether more intent to please  
Us or her selfe with strange varieties;  
. . . . .  
Wisely she knew the harmony of things,  
As well as that of sounds, from discords springs;  
Such was the discord, which did first disperse  
Forme, order, beauty through the universe;  
While drynesse moisture, coldnesse heat resists,  
All that we have, and that we are subsists:  
While the steepe horrid roughnesse of the wood  
Strives with the gentle calmnesse of the flood.  
Such huge extremes when Nature doth unite,  
Wonder from thence results, from thence delight.

(ll. 223–224, 229–238)

“Strives” and “unite” allude to the opposed Empedoclean cosmic principles of Strife and Love. Denham asserts his faith that “extremes” can, in fact, be sources of wonder and delight, of aesthetic joy rather than dismay—when “Nature doth unite” them. This Empedoclean cosmos retrospectively justifies trade itself, which unites the “extremest ends” of East and West and cities and deserts, as an instance of such cosmic Love.

Trade, however, is a specifically human—as well as natural—force for uniting the world in one community. Commerce is extreme not only in its grasping of the world’s “extremest ends” but also in its pursuit of the “Spices” and “treasures” of East and West (l. 212), examples of the excessive “Luxurie” condemned at the opening of the poem (l. 37). Denham’s vision of trade thus

diverges from most ancient and early modern claims for trade's global benefits, which normally assume a finite amount of goods and the consequent need for moderation on the part of all. Implicitly invoking the mean, Aristotle argued that proper, "natural" trade ensured that communities had enough rather than suffering superfluity or deficiency (*Politics* 1.3.13). Chrysostom likewise described commerce as an exchange in which peoples give away what they have in abundance to receive what they lack.<sup>56</sup> Denham, by contrast, imagines commerce as a dynamic force that creates new wealth in response to men's appetite for "treasures."

Denham diverges not only from this long-standing cult of international reciprocity based on global moderation but also from the early modern mercantilist focus upon a favorable balance of trade, which presupposed a specifically nationalist notion of moderation. As we saw in Drayton's *Poly-Olbion*, balance of trade required curtailing foreign luxuries. Mercantilists advocated importing only necessities or only enough luxuries to ensure that one's competitors could afford one's products. "An Apologie of the Citie of London" (1598), for example, recommended exporting "superfluties" and importing "necessaries" rather than "excessive importation of superfluous" goods. In a work written in the 1630s, Thomas Mun advised his countrymen to export superfluties and pursue "a middle course" by "spending moderately" on foreign goods.<sup>57</sup> Mercantilism's static model of trade as a zero-sum game, in which one nation's gain was another's loss, demanded national frugality. Denham, by contrast, envisages increasing global wealth with trade that licenses and responds to the elasticity of human appetite.

He prepares for his reversal of values by emphasizing his own failure to adhere to the Epicurean moderation he initially expounds. Early on the poet links himself and his poem with the very appetitive excess he condemns in the London crowd: he cannot fix his wonder on one topographical site, he claims, because

. . . our eies  
 Nice as our tastes, affect varieties;  
 And though one please him most, the hungry guest  
 Tasts every dish, and runs through all the feast;  
 So having tasted *Windsor*, casting round  
 My wandering eye. . . .

(ll. 141–146)

Denham's "wandering eye" recalls Drayton's peregrinating georgic Muse, which knows that the human "mind doth still varietie pursue" (*Poly-Olbion* 6.283) and who will not "stand" or stay with one aspect of the landscape when there is much the "wandering eye to please" (25.84). This subjective eye/I is not simply a convenient device for the celebration of georgic variety or for facilitating a topical—and topographical—transition. It reveals that the poet him-

self, despite his praise of country “content,” is implicated by his desire for georgic variety in the limitless appetite he condemns as a source of sociopolitical disorder. The image of the guest who “runs through every dish” (rather than simply fulfilling his hunger in contented Epicurean fashion) reminds one of the Londoners who “runne” to destructive extremes with their inherently insatiable desires, which are compared to an unhealthy desire for “food” that “please[s]” without filling “Appetite” (ll. 35–37). It also looks forward to Denham’s depiction of the voracious appetite of Henry VIII, who “Condemnes” the monasteries’ “Luxurie, to feed his owne” (ll. 157–158). With its celebration of wealth circulating the globe, the passage on commerce suggests a supposedly nonharmful way of attaining luxuries without feeding upon others.

Denham’s expansive vision of trade articulates an emergent economic paradigm that appears most clearly and systematically in publications of the 1680s and 1690s. In place of the mercantilist calls for moderation, late-seventeenth-century writers advocate increasing consumption of luxuries as the engine of economic growth. In 1690, for example, Nicholas Barbon celebrates the economic benefits of men’s “infinite” desire for “everything that is rare” and can “promote the Ease, Pleasure and Pomp of Life.” In 1691 Dudley North similarly argues that men’s “exorbitant Appetites” are “the main spur to Trade” and that if “Men content[ed] themselves with bare Necessaries, we should have a poor World.”<sup>58</sup> Such thinkers underscore the economic benefits of prodigality, which may be morally harmful for the individual but is crucial for the nation’s economic well-being.

Unable fully to reconcile his divergent views on contentment as the source of domestic tranquility versus boundless appetite and global commerce as the foundation of both national and international wealth, Denham oscillates between a traditional and still dominant viewpoint and an emergent one. His transformation of the georgic to endorse both moderation and commercial luxury helped make the genre crucial for later English poets—anxious, ambivalent celebrants of commercial society.

### Waller and Cowley’s Commercial and Imperial Georgics

Restoration court propaganda associated the restored monarchy not only with domestic peace after disorder but also with commercial prosperity after economic hardship. Charles II continued to strengthen the navy, and while critics worried that his foreign policy reflected his dynastic ambitions and absolutist tendencies, his supporters espoused the mercantilist notion that national power and prosperity were mutually reinforcing and hailed the king as promoter of the nation’s vital political and commercial interests.<sup>59</sup> Although both Virgil’s *Georgics* and Denham’s *Coopers Hill* are important models for Restoration poets, two poems by Waller and two by Cowley reveal how the celebra-

tion of naval might and commercial wealth increasingly marginalizes or trivializes Virgil's and Denham's calls for moderation. Both poets combat Denham's (and their own) anxieties about luxury. Both also celebrate the monarch's power at home and abroad with baroque grandiosity, so that "boundless" power informs their vision of domestic politics as well as international affairs.

Having lauded the global might of Cromwell, Waller was quick to do the same for the restored Charles II in "To the King, upon His Majesty's Happy Return" (1660).<sup>60</sup> Saving his nation from civil war, Waller's Charles II will ensure domestic peace and plenty:

The city's trade, and country's easy life,  
Once more shall flourish without fraud or strife.  
Your reign no less assures the ploughman's peace,  
Than the warm sun advances his increase.

(ll. 111–114)

While Charles II fulfills the Virgilian Augustus's role of ensuring peace for the farmer, Waller avoids Virgil's invidious contrast between the happy farmer's rural simplicity "that knows no fraud" [*nescia fallere*] and the Roman capital's "strife" [*discordia*] and luxury (*Georgics* 2.467, 496, 506–508). Unlike Denham, who attacks London and praises rural "innocence" in Virgilian fashion before inconsistently celebrating trade, Waller declares that under Charles II city trade and agriculture can innocently prosper together.

Waller's Charles II is an imperial Augustus who will "set bounds" to foreign monarchs' ambitions while himself controlling "the world's motion" with his "will" (ll. 44, 53–54). Such hyperbole suggests that "bounds" are only for other nations and their rulers. The only hint of georgic moderation is the subsequent praise of Charles II for being to himself "severe, to others kind / With power unbounded, and a will confined" (ll. 103–104). Waller denies any bounds to the king's power except his own volition, but how a "will" that subdues the world can remain "confined" is unclear.

Waller's "On St. James's Park, As Lately Improved by His Majesty" (1661) adapts Virgilian and Denhamesque motifs to praise the monarchy's promotion of British military and commercial might figured as a defiance rather than an acceptance of limits.<sup>61</sup> The first sixty-six lines of the poem praise Charles's refurbishment of St. James's Park, a royal holding that combines the "various" (l. 46) rural pleasures of a georgic landscape with courtly luxury. Waller's eye moves about the park, viewing its delights and imagining its future use for the "Prince's pleasure" (l. 7) and for the enjoyment of high society. Echoing Denham's admission of luxurious appetite, Waller claims the park has "all" that can delight the "palate" and "feed the greedy eye" (ll. 41–42). Within the park climatic extremes are either to be enjoyed—"gallants . . . bathe in summer, and in winter slide" (l. 24)—or mastered. Waller celebrates one of

the cavernous icehouses used during summer to preserve ice for cooling wine, an expensive novelty that Charles II had just introduced in imitation of French courtly fashion:

Yonder, the harvest of cold months laid up,  
Gives a fresh coolness to the royal cup;  
There ice, like crystal firm, and never lost,  
Tempers hot July with December's frost.

(ll. 49–52)<sup>62</sup>

Waller here transmutes the ideal of georgic moderation into a celebration of royal mastery of extremes. “Tempers” suggests that the “harvesting” of ice for cooling “hot” wine is an allegorical emblem of the georgic “tempering” of extremes.<sup>63</sup> Waller’s language evokes the “tempering” or diluting of wine with water, which (as I will show in more detail in my discussion of symposiastic poetry) is a frequent classical and early modern instance and symbol of temperance: Stefano Guazzo’s handbook of manners *La civil conversazione* (1574; translated into English in 1586) is typical in advising those who would be temperate to “temper” wine’s “heat” with water.<sup>64</sup> Yet Charles II’s “royal cup” is, as Waller knows, at odds with traditional conceptions of moderation, since preserved ice, unlike water, has long-standing connotations of excess. Latin authors attacked the expensive fashion of preserving snow or ice for cooling wine as exemplifying the luxury of decadent imperial Romans: Pliny the Elder excoriates such “monstrosities of gluttony” by which his countrymen abandon “natural” simplicity (*Historia naturalis* 19.19.55); Seneca (*Quaestiones naturales* 4.13.9–10; *Epistulae morales* 95.25) and even pleasure-loving Martial (*Epigrams* 9.22.8, 12.17.6) similarly condemn the practice. Waller concludes the verse paragraph on the icehouse by admiring the wondrous strangeness of “extremes”: “Strange! that extremes should thus preserve the snow, / High on the Alps, or in deep caves below” (ll. 54–55). “Strange! . . . extremes” echoes *Coopers Hill*’s celebration of nature’s “strange varieties” and the natural “extremes” that cause “wonder” and “delight.” For Denham nature’s “extremes” challenge—and justify—extreme human ambitions; Waller conflates the wonderful “extremes” of nature and elegant royal artifice. The icehouse thus playfully prepares for what the rest of the poem treats in a serious political vein, namely, the king’s power over—rather than tempering of—extremes.

Like Denham’s self-depiction at the opening of *Coopers Hill*, Waller’s description of Charles II retired in a grove of “aged trees” (l. 68) recalls both Virgil’s ideals of retired countryman and natural philosopher. Charles II, however, lacks the Epicurean restraint of Virgil’s and Denham’s figures:

Free from the impediments of light and noise,  
Man, thus retired, his nobler thoughts employs.  
Here Charles contrives the ordering of his states,



Here he resolves his neighboring princes' fates;  
 What nation shall have peace, where war be made,  
 Determined is in this oraculous shade;  
 The world, from India to the frozen north,  
 Concerned in what this solitude brings forth.  
 His fancy, objects from his view receives;  
 The prospect, thought and contemplation gives.

(ll. 75–84)

Relinquishing the sense of the retired poet's detachment that inspired Denham, atop Coopers Hill, to call for moderation on the part of monarch as well as subject, Waller cedes the privileged perspective to his powerful king. The king, who is "Man" at his noblest, blurs the distinctions between contemplation and action, retired contentment and boundless ambition: he is politically active in his contemplation, globally powerful in his (courtly, urban) retirement. The fate of the world, from "India" in the hot south to the "frozen north," is supposedly "determined" within the king's bower. While implicitly evoking the traditional contrast between the southern torrid and northern frozen zones, on the one hand, and "temperate" Britain, on the other, Waller praises Charles's mastery rather than his tempering of extremes. As in eighteenth-century imperial georgics like James Thomson's *The Seasons*, climatic superiority implicitly legitimizes imperial might.

"On the Queen's Repairing Somerset House" (1665) by Waller's friend Cowley is an urban—and urbane—minigeorgic that similarly glorifies royal power.<sup>65</sup> The poem gives voice to the house itself, whose defacement under the Interregnum and refurbishing during the Restoration by the Queen Mother, Henrietta Maria, make it an appropriate symbol of the restored monarchy. The poem links royal power with urban commerce:<sup>66</sup>

And here, behold, in a long bending row,  
 How two joint Cities make one glorious bow,  
 The midst, the noblest place, possessed by me;  
 Best to be seen by all, and all o'ersee.  
 Which way soe'er I turn my joyful eye,  
 Here the great Court, there the rich Town, I spy;  
 On either side dwells safety and delight;  
 Wealth on the left, and power upon the right.

(ll. 47–54)

Fowler notes that the poem "duplicate[s] and balance[s] in pairs every object mentioned" and underscores Somerset House's place in the "center" with the line at the poem's midpoint: "Wealth on the left, and power upon the right."<sup>67</sup> Cowley replaces the georgic notion of moderation with Somerset House's topographically middle position between court and town and participating (like

a *medium per participationem*) in the joys of each: the house's claim—"The midst, the noblest place, possessed by me"—transmutes the traditional notion that the mean is best. While Davies at the beginning of the century celebrated the counselor virtuously "in the midst" between the monarch above and people below, Cowley replaces the virtuous mean between high and low with a conception of the middle, no less Virgilian, as a position of majestic authority. Somerset House resembles Virgilian rulers like Augustus, who is promised a place "in the middle" [*medio*] of a figurative temple (*Georgics* 3.16), and Jupiter, who, after making Olympus tremble with his regal nod, strides forth "in the midst" [*medium*] of subordinate divinities (*Aeneid* 10.115; cf. 1.697–698). Cowley's Neolatin poem *De Plantis*, completed sometime between 1665 and 1667, similarly depicts a regal Dryad in "the middle" [*medio*] of her court, and the royal oak, the symbol of the Stuart monarchy, in "the middle" [*mediam*] of lesser trees.<sup>68</sup>

The Somerset House poem proceeds to emphasize not the golden mean between royal and commercial interests but rather the monarchy's necessary subduing of the threat posed by a potentially independent commercial London and fractious Parliament. Like Lucretius's Epicurean sage and Denham atop Coopers Hill, Somerset House "looks down" upon "the pride and business of the Town" (ll. 37–38) and "two vast Cities, troublesomely great" (l. 80). Royal power, however, not only looks down with Epicurean detachment but subdues: the Thames, symbol of London commerce, "does roar, and foam, and rage" at London Bridge but is "into reverence and submission strook" by "the King . . . / Who lays his laws and bridges o'er the main" (ll. 69–78).

Cowley deploys sprightly, witty touches to humanize his depiction of royal power. His 108-line poem playfully expands on the classical epigrammatic topos of the speaking object, in which normally small and/or humble objects briefly describe themselves; its closest model, Martial's *Epigram* 2.59, has a "small" [*parva*] imperial banqueting hall nicknamed "the Crumb" [*Mica*] describe itself in four lines.<sup>69</sup> Somerset House is a soft, female embodiment of royal power. With colloquial repetition and nervous parenthetical remarks, the house reveals herself a thoroughly human "character" anxious to preserve female modesty even amidst boasts:

And now I dare—though proud I must not be,  
 Whilst my great Mistress I so humble see  
 In all her various glories—now I dare  
 Even with the proudest palaces compare.

(ll. 25–28)

Her later declaration that it is "Best to be seen by all, and all o'ersee" not only underscores her Virgilian preeminence but also suggests a fashionable lady of the capital, who wishes, like her Augustan Roman counterparts, "to see" and

“to be seen” (*Ars amatoria* 1.99). Virgilian gravitas is tempered by Ovid’s insouciant emphasis on urban pleasure to depict a benign, joyful royal power.

Like Waller, Cowley in this urban georgic replaces Virgil’s celebration of rural contentment in the middle state with a paean to the blessings of international trade sustained by royal imperial might. Virgilian echo underscores the transformation. In his posthumously published celebration of country retirement in *Essays, in Verse and Prose* (1667), Cowley loosely translates the famous opening lines of Virgil’s happy farmer set piece: “Oh happy (if his Happiness he knows) / The Country Swain, on whom kind Heav’n bestows / At home all Riches that wise Nature needs!”<sup>70</sup> In the Somerset House poem Cowley praises the Royal Navy as “The terror of all lands, the ocean’s pride” and then transforms Virgil’s lines by claiming that because of the navy the “kingdom’s happy now at last, / (Happy, if wise by their misfortunes past)” (ll. 102–104). If they remember the horrors of civil war enough to maintain peace through obedience to their monarch, the people will be happy, not with rural “mediocrity” but rather with national prosperity and power. The Virgilian ideal of country contentment remains only in trivialized form: the house provides the Queen Mother with a pleasantly “various” view of “the Country” for her “content” (ll. 81–84); royal “content” with recreational country spectacle replaces the Virgilian farmer’s contentment with the rural middle station.

Cowley’s urban georgic is at odds with his praise in the roughly contemporaneous *Essays* of retired rural contentment in the “Golden Mean” between “Poor” and “Great.”<sup>71</sup> *De Plantis*, published posthumously in 1668, reveals the tensions—within Cowley’s own mind and within late-seventeenth-century English georgic more generally—by abruptly shifting from a nostalgic celebration of moderation to the glorification of a nation flexing its commercial and military muscle. The poem’s six books treat moral and sociopolitical issues by way of botanic and arboreal description. According to Cowley’s friend and biographer Sprat, the last two books are modeled upon the *Georgics*,<sup>72</sup> and the final book contains Cowley’s extended meditation on modern Britain’s georgic values. I analyze Aphra Behn’s 1689 felicitous and generally accurate translation of this book into heroic couplets, with occasional reference to Cowley’s Latin.<sup>73</sup>

Cowley begins by extolling Caroline England’s peace and plenty:

Royal *Charles* that Prince of peace,  
 . . . . .  
 Sway’d *Englands* Scepter with a God-like hand,  
 Scattering soft Ease and Plenty o’r the Land.

(ll. 61, 64–65)

Just as Virgil compares happy Italian farmers’ lives to the Saturnian golden age (*Georgics* 2.538), so Cowley compares Caroline England to the “Golden Age in *Saturn*’s sway” (l. 87). Yet, with familiar georgic ambivalence, Cowley

describes the inevitable fall from this blessed state to sinful excess with yet another contrastive allusion to Virgil's contented farmer: "Such was the State of *England*, sick with Ease, / Too happy, if she knew her Happiness" (ll. 105–106). Instead of remaining "happy" like Virgil's farmer, Englishmen seek novelty because "good Fortune cloy's" (l. 89). Denying the Parliamentarians any legitimate religious or political grievances, Cowley treats the great rebellion as a degenerate desire for "Change" (l. 96) arising from the peace and plenty Charles I had provided.<sup>74</sup>

Cowley then describes a primeval fall from golden age moderation to excess, a fall that the civil war reenacts. Men once lived contentedly on acorns, free from "the Banes of luxury" (l. 640), but then, alas, new appetites emerged: destroying their "Republick" (l. 655) [*Respublica* 2:223], they divided up the common land and cultivated private property. Cutting down oaks for ship timber, the greedy farmer "Forsakes the Land, and plows the Faithless Sea" (l. 665). Cowley's picture of the golden age and fall is a pastiche of georgic and other classical passages: Virgil (*Georgics* 1.148–149) and Ovid (*Metamorphoses* 1.106) describe how golden age men happily lived on acorns; Virgil's Greek model for georgic verse, Hesiod (*Works and Days* 1:236), as well as Ovid (*Metamorphoses* 1.95–97, 132–136) lament human cupidity's destruction of golden age content through private property and commercial sailing. In a sudden shift, however, Cowley rejects classical primitivism for modern commercialism with a high-style apostrophe to the oak tree that provides the timber for commercial vessels:

. . . search for Man what e'er the Earth can give,  
 All that the spacious Universe brings forth,  
 What Land and Sea conceals of any worth,  
 Bring Aromaticks from the distant East,  
 And Gold so dangerous from the rifl'd West,  
 What e'er the boundless Appetite can feast.  
     With thee the utmost bounds of Earth w'invade,  
 By thee the unlockt Orb is common made.  
 By thee-  
 The great Republique of the World revives,  
 And o'er the Earth luxurious traffick thrives.

(ll. 687–697).

Reimagining commerce as a fortunate fall, Cowley turns the oak into a numinous agent of earthly renewal. "With thee" and the repeated "by thee," which render Cowley's triple "per te" (2:223), recall the solemn anaphoras used to address divinities in ancient hymns and invocations.<sup>75</sup> Cowley's "per te" particularly recalls Lucretius's opening invocation to Venus: "through you [*per te*] every kind of living thing is conceived," Lucretius declaims, before praising Venus's blessings with anaphoric repetitions of "te" and "tibi" (ll. 4–8). Like

Denham, Cowley associates trade with Venus, the symbol of cosmic harmony, and figures commerce as a sublime uniting of peoples in a “common” globe. Such global friendship restores the commonality of the golden age: the “great Republic” (“Respublica,” 2:223) that initially seemed lost with private property is gloriously regained. Behn’s concluding “And o’er the Earth luxurious traffick thrives” freely renders Cowley’s *Omnis nunc possidet omnia tellus* (“The whole earth now possesses all things,” 2:223). While claiming that even idyllic Italy does not have all goods because not “all lands can yield all things,” Virgil declares that during the golden age “Earth yielded all things” (“tellus / omnia . . . ferebat,” *Georgics* 1.127–128; trans. modified). Cowley’s Virgilian diction underscores that modern trade has surpassed Virgil’s Italy by recapturing golden age plenitude.<sup>76</sup> As Behn’s loose translation suggests, however, the modern golden age is based upon a “luxurious” pursuit of riches antithetical to the moderation of its Saturnian precursor.<sup>77</sup>

Like Denham, Cowley hymns British power and prosperity as well as global plenitude: he declares that “Nature” herself intended British empire by stocking the island with oaks for ships to assert “Empire of the Sea” (ll. 719, 741), and he ends his poem by celebrating 1665 naval victories of the second Anglo-Dutch war. Cowley echoes the *Sylva, or a Discourse of Forest-Trees and the Propagation of Timber* (1664) by his friend John Evelyn, which promoted the Royal Society’s project of national reforestation after the devastations of civil war. Lauding Charles II’s arboreal efforts and providing silvicultural advice to the landowning elite, Evelyn stressed timber’s importance for national “Safety” and “Wealth.”<sup>78</sup> Praising Charles II for laying the sylvan “Foundations” of “Towns and Navies,” Cowley apostrophizes him as a georgic hero whose trees embody present and future British naval triumph: “Reap thou those mighty Triumphs then which for thee grow, / And mighty Triumphs for succeeding Ages sow” (ll. 1580, 1582–1583)

With his sublime expansive vision, Cowley shows only vestigial interest in combating excess. He briefly imagines the royal farmer pruning as well as planting:

All over-run with Weeds he finds [the land], but soon  
Luxuriant Branches carefully will prune  
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Much does he plant, and much extirpate too.

(ll. 1555–1556, 1559)

The royal farmer must prune the luxuriant excess of his subjects’ rebellious impulses, so recently displayed in civil war. While suppressing such excess, however, the royal farmer can take up the “immense” (“immensum,” 2:228), that is, literally “boundless,” task of nurturing urbanization and economic growth:


A Work immense, yet sweet, and which in future Days,  
 When the fair Trees their blooming Glories raise,  
 The happy Gard'ners Labor over-pays.  
 Cities and Towns, Great Prince, thy Gardens be.

(ll. 1561–1564)


By celebrating the way Charles II with “Skill make[s] all things new” (l. 1560) [*novat omnia*, 2:228], the poet spurns his earlier strictures against desire for “change” as a manifestation of excess. Cowley imagines his glorious monarch as a commerce- as well as empire-friendly version of the Machiavellian ruler who fascinated Elizabethan and Jacobean imperialists, the prince who must “make everything new” [*fare ogni cosa nuova*] and spurn “middle courses” to assure his power (*Discorsi* 1.26).<sup>79</sup> Cowley counters his earlier nostalgia for georgic restraint, associated with pacific Caroline isolationism, with a celebration of power and prosperity, associated with Restoration empire.

The tensions found in the Restoration georgic have a long poetic and cultural afterlife. Georgic becomes a central mode of eighteenth-century poetry. With Denham as a crucial English mediator of their understanding of Virgil’s text, eighteenth-century georgic poets continue to celebrate rural moderation and British power and commercial “Plenty” conceived of as both a national-imperial and international good.<sup>80</sup> While explicitly didactic, nonmimetic poetic forms such as georgic declined in popularity in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, georgic themes continued powerfully to inform nineteenth- and twentieth-century English poetry. From the seventeenth century until the dissolution of the British Empire, georgic articulated and addressed the ambivalences of modern British citizens, both their pride in national prosperity and global power and their fears of excess and concomitant longings for rural simplicity.<sup>81</sup> While social scientific discourses such as economics and sociology have come to dominate debates concerning modern commercial culture, one can still hear echoes of georgic themes in contemporary social commentary on American materialism, with paeans to America’s global market dynamism answered by critiques of “luxury fever” and by calls for “Aristotelian moderation” in this “period of excess.”<sup>82</sup>

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PART THREE



Erotic Excess and Early Modern  
Social Conflicts



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## CHAPTER FIVE

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### Passionate Extremes and Noble Natures from Elizabethan to Caroline Literature

WHILE EARLY MODERN GEORGIC increasingly places expansionary power and commercial luxury in tension with political and social restraint, erotic literature concurrently displays a similar tension between new celebrations of “extreme” passion and long-standing norms of moderation. Writers often emphasized the importance of a “mean” in conjugal relations. Galenic doctors treated sexual moderation in marriage as part of physical and mental hygiene, while ministers urged moderation in conjugal sexual activity as a mean between frustrating, potentially sin-producing abstinence and fornication.<sup>1</sup> Divines contrasted temperate conjugal love with transient lust, which, as a Jacobean minister noted, lacked the stable “meane” that would sustain lifelong partnership. An Elizabethan lyric enunciated a common view that “Love that is too hot and strong / Burneth soon to waste,” while “Constant love is moderate ever” and “will through life persèver.”<sup>2</sup>

This ideal of conjugal moderation sustained the gender hierarchy. It was a commonplace that women, less rational and more emotional than men, tended to dangerous extremes. Though the ideal wife was both loving and temperate, husbands had to ensure that moderation prevailed. The Elizabethan homily on matrimony, read in every church, claimed that because “woman” was “weak,” the husband must be the “leader” in “increasing concord” through “moderation.”<sup>3</sup>

Yet writers from the Elizabethan to the Caroline period often celebrated, with varying degrees of assurance or ambivalence, diverse forms of “extreme” passion. They challenged the norm of moderation by appropriating diverse ancient and continental Renaissance genres and intellectual currents, including Petrarchan love poetry, Hellenistic and early modern romances, and Neoplatonic and French courtly glorifications of love. Defenders of passionate extremism expressed doubt concerning the gender hierarchy’s legitimacy or stability. Sometimes these authors idealized women as men’s spiritual superiors, thus rejecting the traditional denigration of erotic devotion to women as shamefully effeminating. Sometimes, often alongside and in reaction to such idealization, these authors expressed men’s desire to conquer powerful women, drawing on a strand

within early modern gender constructions that contradicts the norm of moderation: the identification of manliness with “hot,” sexual vigor.

Proponents of extreme passion also challenged assumptions concerning rank in marriage ideology. Georgic poetry, as we have seen, associated the “middle” rank with temperance, and writers often incorporated conjugal moderation within the ideal mean estate. A Tudor poem, for example, treated restrained conjugal love for a “chaste wife,” as opposed to a “censuall lyfe,” as part of the “merrye meane” estate. The protagonist of Thomas Heywood’s tragedy *A Woman Killed with Kindness* (1607) similarly described himself “content” in a “mean estate” with a “chaste, and loving wife.”<sup>4</sup> Writers also often invoked the mean not to celebrate a specific rank but rather to promote the social system as a whole, based on the replication of ascribed social status through marriage and procreation. Ballads and proverbs proclaimed the desirability of marriage between social equals.<sup>5</sup> Admonitions against taking spouses either much higher or much lower in rank or wealth were ubiquitous. “Some loveth too hie, and some too lowe, / And of them both great griefs do grow” lamented a lyric in *A Handful of Pleasant Delights* (1584). Robert Herrick warned his mid-seventeenth-century male reader to find a “fit” wife rather than one “too wealthy, or too poore” because “*Love in extreames, can never long endure.*”<sup>6</sup> Marriage treatises noted that if a man married a woman much higher in social status, he undermined his own “natural” superiority. If he married one far below him, he would debase himself socially and be tempted to treat his wife not as a worthy helpmate but as a drudge.<sup>7</sup>

Yet in their vagueness and merely advisory character, such warnings reveal the relative freedom of marriage across ranks in early modern England. Though socioeconomic endogamy was high, neither laws nor rigid social codes governed marriage choices. Daughters and younger sons, whom primogeniture restricted in economic assets, often married “down” in rank (trading off their lineage-based status for wealth), while marriage to a higher born and/or wealthier mate was perhaps the most common way of improving status.<sup>8</sup> Encomiasts of “extreme” devotion to a socially superior beloved justified such upward mobility by giving an erotic twist to the classical and humanist commonplace that virtue was “true nobility.”<sup>9</sup> Writers treated profound feeling as ethical proof of merit that transcended ascribed social identities and norms.

Vehement passion for a socially superior woman unattainable by marriage—either because she was too high in status, already married, or both—could also serve to justify more intangible rewards, like fame, for the virtuously aspiring lover. But extreme passion, conceived either as exalted devotion or as unrestrained sensuality, sometimes also expressed an aristocratic ethos. The high-born lover’s erotic obsession distinguished him from social inferiors, whose concerns with “mediocrity” revealed baser commitments to economic solvency or social respectability. The passionate aristocrat, by contrast, flaunted his status by demonstrating with erotic abandon that he did not worry about it.

Given the diverse implications of erotic extremism for both gender and rank, I take a “middle” position between scholars who treat early modern literary representations of love as straightforwardly concerned with erotic desire and gender relationships (e.g., some feminists) and those who treat them primarily as coded treatments of social and political expectations and ambitions (e.g., some new historicists).<sup>10</sup> Early modern texts validate both approaches because by turns they intertwine and attempt to disentangle erotic considerations, on the one hand, and social or political ones, on the other. Niklas Luhmann’s treatment of the modern history of love as a process of gradual discursive differentiation elucidates the complex relationship of erotic norms and other values in early modern England. He argues that the late-seventeenth-century French aristocratic codification of a semantics of love that valorized “extreme” extramarital passion represents a crucial stage in the emergence of love as (in his intentionally frosty analytical terminology) a modern discursive system. A sphere of erotic intimacy, with its own specialized terms and modes of analysis, becomes distinguished from other spheres, such as the political and economic domains.<sup>11</sup> This chapter revises key specifics in Luhmann’s historical schema. He dates the celebration of extreme passion too late, identifies it too exclusively with aristocratic values, simplifies its vexed relationship to marriage as pure opposition, and claims as exclusively French what is both a European continental (Italian and Spanish as well as French) and an English development. His treatment nevertheless sheds light upon the relationship between early modern praise of extreme passion and other discursive formations.

Celebrations of moderate and extreme love are asymmetric in one respect. Defenders of the former invariably linked it to the traditional family as a source of sociopolitical order while associating erotic excess with the vices of social climbers or profligate aristocrats. Proponents of erotic extremism, by contrast, not only defended passion as a sign of upwardly mobile or aristocratic worth but also often claimed that love had its own distinctive norms and lovers their unique protocols. Early-seventeenth-century georgic poets linked erotic excess to other socially disruptive extremities: Sylvester’s *Du Bartas*, for example, denounced England’s social elite for “Lust” as one manifestation of “Wanton Pride” alongside “*Strife-full Ambition*,” mercenary “Extortion,” drunkenness and gluttony (“*Second Day of the First Week*,” ll. 933–940), while Drayton’s *Poly-Olbion* treated avarice as a “beastlie lust” (7.290) akin to erotic excess. Contemporaneous authors working in erotic genres, by contrast, often distinguished between praiseworthy extremity in love and vicious extremes like greed or courtly ambition. They thereby sought to affirm the distinctive values of an erotic sphere even as they thematized the conflict between erotic extremism and traditional social norms.

This chapter analyzes lyrics, prose fictions, and dramas from the Elizabethan through the Caroline periods to chart crucial stages in erotic representations.

The first two sections treat parallel developments in Elizabethan verse and prose fiction from condemnation of extreme passion to celebrations that link it to “true nobility” and seek to differentiate it from socioeconomic ambition. The third and fourth sections focus on distinctively aristocratic and courtly appropriations of the ideal of erotic excess—first in Philip Sidney’s influential *Arcadia* and then in the Caroline court drama and verse of William Davenant and Thomas Carew—and trace how writers treated such passion as ethical proof of a hierarchical distinction between the noble and base even as they worried the distinction between erotic passions and public norms.

### Samuel Daniel and Icarean Flight

Just as early modern poets associate moderate, conjugal love with the mean estate, so Elizabethan poetry often associates “extreme” erotic desire with courtly ambition as related forms of dangerous excess. In “I would it were not as it is,” the Elizabethan courtier poet Edward Dyer wishes that his “desire” for an unidentified court lady “knew the mean.” He figures erotic desire as involving, like ambition, a dangerous ascent: “we rise to fall that climb to[o] highe.”<sup>12</sup> Exploiting the traditionally winged Cupid’s similarity to another winged boy, he compares himself to Icarus, whose fall should “teache the wise more low to flie.” Dyer recalls Icarus’s traditional function as a warning against immoderation. According to Ovid, Icarus fatally disobeyed his father’s orders to fly in the “middle,” neither too high nor too low (*Metamorphoses* 8.203–206); praising moral rectitude and moderate fortune, choruses in Senecan tragedy treat Icarus as a warning to those whose desires exceed “measure” [*modum*] (*Hercules Oetaeus*, ll. 675–691; *Oedipus*, ll. 882–910).

Yet Elizabethan Petrarchan poets often celebrate as well as lament their “extreme” desire for a beloved of super-eminent worth. A 1588 sonnet, for example, proclaims that “Ambitious Love,” which “exceedeth” man’s reason, forces the lover to “aspire” with precarious “climbing”; should he fail to attain his mistress, his “brave attempt” will “excuse” his “fall.”<sup>13</sup> As has often been noted, the hierarchical relationship between lover and beloved in Petrarchan poetry parallels and sometimes figures the fraught relationship between the ambitious courtier and his patron or patroness, including Elizabeth I, the ultimate object of every courtier’s devotion. (Dyer’s love lament might itself be an adoring plaint to Elizabeth.) In 1600 Bacon rebuked Robert Devereux, earl of Essex, for having courted “Icarus[’s] fortune” with “waxen wings” in his ill-advised Irish adventure; Essex replied that he “never flew with other wings than desire to merit” Elizabeth’s “favour.” In a sonnet published in 1610 a lover expressed despair at having “too high asspir’de” (l. 7); the anthologist Robert Dowland attributed the poem appropriately, even if inaccurately, to Essex.<sup>14</sup>

Yet the relationship between erotic and sociopolitical aspiration is not straightforward. Samuel Daniel's sonnet sequence *Delia*, whose first edition appeared in 1592, displays both the Elizabethan transvaluation of erotic excess and its complicated relation to ambition.<sup>15</sup> In sonnet 27 Daniel laments his resemblance to Icarus: "My desires wings so high aspiring: / Now melted with the sunne that hath possesst mee, / Downe doe I fall from off my high desiring" (ll. 6–8). The next sonnet defends his "high aspyring will" as humbly aiming at no more than the "blisse" of his beloved's "sight" (ll. 9, 11). However, in the second edition (1594) Daniel inserts between his lament and qualified defense a sonnet that boldly celebrates Icarean excess:

And yet I cannot reprehend the flight,  
 Or blame th'attempt presuming so to sore,  
 The mounting venter for a high delight,  
 Did make the honour of the fall the more.  
 For who gets wealth that puts not from the shore?  
 Daunger hath honour, great designes their fame,  
 Glorie doth follow, courage goes before.  
 And though th'event oft aunswers not the same,  
 Suffise that high attempts have never shame.  
 The Meane-observer, (whom base Safety keepses),  
 Lives without honour, dies without a name,  
 And in eternall darknes ever sleeps.  
 And therefore DELIA, tis to me no blot,  
 To have attempted, though attain'd thee not.

Daniel's Icarus, a positive type of the heroic lover who attains glory though failing in his suit, recalls treatments by continental Petrarchan sonneteers like Jacopo Sannazaro, Luigi Tansillo, and Philippe Desportes.<sup>16</sup> Going beyond his continental predecessors, however, Daniel underscores his love's challenge to the ideal of the mean. Daniel's scorned "Meane-observer" collapses two senses of "meane": the contemptible person "observes the [golden] mean" and is therefore, by Daniel's implicit logic, "mean" in the sense of "lowly." Daniel's eschewal of "Safety" as a "base" concern spurns the cautious, antiheroical thrust of classical and English Renaissance celebrations of the mean and the associated middle estate. Aristotle claims that the middle ranks who hearken to the mean "have the greatest security" [*sôzontai* . . . *malista*] and are "free from danger" [*akindunôs*] (*Politics* 4.9.7); Horace's adherent of *aurea mediocritas*, who avoids both splendid palaces and hovels, is "safe" [*tutus*] (*Ode* 2.10.6). Nicholas Bacon's mid-sixteenth-century "In commendacion of the meane estate" similarly lauds its "Saftye," while Thomas Howell warns "The higher clymde, the fall more deepe" in a 1581 epigram entitled "In mediocritie most safetie."<sup>17</sup> Such formulations blur the distinction between the moral and prudential: the middle ranks are "safe" because they are free from both the vices

and the buffets of fortune to which the high and low are diversely prone. While commending bold virtues like courage and magnanimity in his *Ethics*, in his *Politics* Aristotle argues that the middle ranks are safe not only because they adhere to the ethical mean but also because they do not arouse envy (4.9.7). Daniel derides such cautionary considerations. His rhetorical question "For who gets wealth that puts not from the shore?" rejects the quietistic implications of contented moderation: one may contrast an Elizabethan song that celebrates the man who "lives content" in retirement rather than recklessly "sail[s] in worldly seas."<sup>18</sup>

Daniel's Icarus sonnet transmutes, however, the desire for high social station or wealth, repeatedly attacked in celebrations of the mean estate, into the pursuit of personal "honour" (thrice repeated) and poetic "fame." Later sonnets transfer such "fame" to Delia herself, whom the poet immortalizes and, in so doing, distinguishes himself from "the vulgar" (sonnet 36, l. 12). His love becomes a proof of the "true nobility" that humanists identified with virtue. Because Daniel himself compares his pursuit of fame to the quest for wealth, one might demystify his Icarian daring as a desire for social advancement through patronage (especially given the hints that Delia is Mary Sidney, the countess of Pembroke). Daniel tries to forestall this reduction by distinguishing his noble love and pursuit of fame from "base" socioeconomic goals. In sonnet 48, for example, he distinguishes his praise of Delia, which is based on love, from the "mercenary" encomia of poets who "basely" flatter the unworthy (ll. 6, 8).

The Icarus sonnet's transformative echoes of "The Complaint of Rosamond," which concludes the sonnet sequence, reveal Daniel's concern to distinguish his noble love from both courtly ambition and avarice. Spoken by the spirit of Henry II's murdered mistress, the complaint provides a foil to the sonnets' praise of Delia: Rosamond's sinful yielding to Henry II and neglect of her "fame" (ll. 257–258) set off Delia's chaste refusals and consequent "fame." Yet Rosamond is also a counterpoint to the Icarian poet. Like him, she left a "calme . . . shore" and humble "safety" and "highly" courted "danger" (ll. 92, 534–535). Yet the differences are more striking: ignobly lured by courtly "pompe" and "jewels" into forsaking her "honour" (ll. 254, 260, 268, 370), Rosamond underscores the purity of Daniel's spurning of "safety" and "shore" for the "honour" and metaphorical "wealth" of poetic fame.

#### Icarian and Romance Lovers: Lyly and Lodge

Elizabethan prose fiction reveals a parallel development to the movement in verse from suspicion to celebration of extreme passion. John Lyly's immensely influential *Euphues: The Anatomy of Wit* (1578) represents the dangers of erotic excess as an inherently unstable attraction to what is too high or too

low.<sup>19</sup> The protagonist Euphues leaves scholarly Athens for courtly Naples to embark on a “conquest” (1:185) that encompasses erotic and social desires. Eubulus, the old counselor who seeks to restrain Euphues, rightly perceives his dual motivations by warning against “luste” and “highe climbinge” (1:189). Euphues’s brief dalliance with Lucilla, heir of one of Naples’ “chiefe gouvernours” (1:199), is a simultaneous erotic and social triumph which teaches a chastened Euphues the foolishness of both lust and courtly ambition when she brings it abruptly to an end.

Lucilla’s quick change from “hot” to “colde” feelings for Euphues exemplifies the ubiquitous Elizabethan notion that “violent” passions are not “permanent” (1:209, 237–238). While Euphues aims too high in his desires, Lucilla stoops too low. Her brief passion for Euphues betrays the social norm of love between equals: while her suitor Philautus’s similarity in rank and wealth earns the approval of Lucilla’s father for the match, she prefers the less exalted Euphues’s “love” and “manners” to Philautus’s “lands” and “mannors” (1:225). The narrative displays the danger of such flouting of convention: ever more downwardly mobile in desire, Lucilla discards Euphues for a man socially inferior to both Philautus and Euphues and finally dies a penniless whore, the social as well as moral nadir.

While *Euphues* charts the dangerous mobility of extreme desires, its sequel *Euphues and his England* (1580) depicts the benefits of “honest affection grounded” on “the meane” (2:181). Revising the anticourt narrative of *Euphues*, the sequel portrays Elizabeth’s court as a site of erotic moderation, where ladies are “amiable” within “measure” (2:91). The “temperate” (2:85) court lady Camilla describes her ideal mate’s adherence to the mean in each of the traditional categories of mind, body, and fortune: he would show “temperance” and “modestie” in “govern[ing]” her; appear neither a dandy nor a “wretch”; and display “indifferent” (i.e., moderate) wealth (2:168). A gentlewoman herself, Camilla does not project the lineage of her ideal spouse, so she is not drawn into inconsistency when she falls in love with the nobleman Surlius. Surlius himself celebrates Camilla’s gentle ancestry as the “meane”: “thinking the middest to be the finest,” he chooses a spouse “betweene” the “noble” and “base” (2:219). The nobleman stoops moderately in deference to the mean, while the gentlewoman deservedly rises in status precisely because she has moderate rather than Icarian desires.

One of many works capitalizing upon Lyly’s popularity, Thomas Lodge’s *Rosalynd. Euphues’ Golden Legacy* (1595) purports to have been written by Euphues but revises Lyly’s paradigm to justify a much greater social ascent by way of extreme passion. Richard Helgerson has shown how Lodge undercuts Lyly’s condemnation of erotic profligacy with romance indulgence in “rebellious desire.”<sup>20</sup> Yet Lodge’s romance also works to legitimize rather than simply give rebellious expression to erotic aspirations. While representing these as ethical proof of a “true nobility” that deserves the highest social as well as



erotic rewards, like Daniel Lodge strives to separate love from the taint of sociopolitical ambition.

Like *Euphues*, *Rosalynd* begins with an old man's warnings against excessive aspirations, both social and erotic. In his will the deceased Sir John of Bordeaux admonishes his sons against "aspyring pride," bidding them remember Icarus's fate and "keep the mean" [*medium tenere*], and then proceeds to decry "Cupid's wings."<sup>21</sup> Yet his youngest son, Rosader, proves a triumphant Icarus by winning the hand of the princess Rosalynd, whom he adores with a Petrarchan passion that "exceed[s]" all "measure" and with desires "mounted above" his "degree" (40, 69).

While Luhmann associates extreme passion with aristocratic values, Lodge represents such love as undermining the aristocratic emphasis upon lineage-based worth. Sir John defied primogeniture by leaving Rosader the largest legacy on the grounds that he would surpass his brothers in virtue, and Rosader's erotic and social ascent proves that "virtue is not measured by birth but by action" (126).<sup>22</sup> Younger sons of gentry were a major source of status inconsistency in early modern England. Since primogeniture often forced them to make their own way in the world, they risked falling socially unless, for example, they entered a profession or married a rich (but not necessarily highborn) heiress. Their careers could thus synecdochally represent that of all social strivers, including commoners. Lodge was himself the younger son of a Lord Mayor of London (and thus a younger scion of a merchant class with ambiguous genteel pretensions) who sought success as a professional writer. In Rosader's tale he idealizes his and others' upward mobility based on merit.

When his disguised beloved, Rosalynde, tests Rosader's devotion by warning him against "overlove," Rosader defends his "extreme" passion as proof of true nobility: love, he claims, is "either extreme or mean, according to the mind . . . that entertains it, for . . . mean men are freed from Venus' injuries, when kings are environed with a labyrinth of her cares. . . . Such as have their hearts full of honor, have their loves full of the greatest sorrows" (74, 77). For Rosader, as for Daniel, an erotic "mean" betrays "mean" or base status; "extreme" devotion and suffering reveals a noble—indeed, kingly—lover.

Rosader courts Rosalynd in the pastoral forest of Arden, to which he has been driven by the machinations of his elder brother and to which she has been banished by her usurping uncle. The pastoral interlude and mixture of prose and verse in *Rosalynd* are indebted to Jorge de Montemayor's pastoral romance *Diana*, which was published around 1559 and quickly became famous throughout Europe.<sup>23</sup> For Rosader's defense of "extreme" passion, Lodge borrows from Montemayor's popularization of Neoplatonic theorizing. Just as Bacon secularized the illimitable theological virtue of charity by promoting scientific philanthropy, so Renaissance Neoplatonists secularized the Christian maxim that one should love God "without measure" by analogously elevating all "true" erotic love above rational moderation.<sup>24</sup> In his commentary

on the *Symposium* Marsilio Ficino initially declared that one could never “too much” love beauty of mind or body when regarded as the expression of God’s splendor (rather than as the object of lust). Later he more cautiously argued that one should love everything with “a certain moderation” except God, whom alone one must love without “moderation.” Some of Ficino’s Neoplatonic successors abandoned his distinction between passionate love of God and erotic love of his creatures: Mario Equicola argued that all true love transcended “mediocrity,” while Leone Ebreo celebrated “the extremity” [*l’estremo*] of “excessive” [*l’ecessivo*] desire in various sorts of virtuous love, including conjugal love.<sup>25</sup> Following Ebreo, Montemayor’s Lady Felicia attacks Aristotelian notions of rational moderation in love. Denying that (here I quote from Bartholomew Yong’s faithful 1598 translation of *Diana*) “vertuous” differs from vicious love in being “governed by reason,” Felicia argues that “excesse” [*excesso*] is inherent in “everie kinde of love,” making the virtuous sort more virtuous, the vicious more vicious. She defends a man’s “excessive” love for a good woman: “If the love, which the lover beares to the mistresse of his affections, (although burning in unbridled desire) doth arise” from her “vertues,” it is “neither unlawfull nor dishonest.”<sup>26</sup> Rosader goes even further in celebrating erotic extremes: rather than distinguishing between virtuous and vicious forms of extreme love, he argues that extremity in itself distinguishes “honorable” from “base” eros.

Montemayor’s Felicia reveals how the cult of extreme passion challenges a lineage-based social hierarchy. After claiming that persons of “dignitie, are more enamoured” than those “of baser condition,” she reassures a group of shepherds that “dignitie” is determined not by birth but by “high” aspirations.<sup>27</sup> While Rosader invokes the social distinction between “kings” and “mean” men in order to draw the ethical distinction between those “full of honor” and the base, Lodge’s depiction of amorous shepherds and shepherdesses emphasizes that erotic “extremity”—the proof of a “noble” heart—is compatible, as in Montemayor, with the “meanest” social rank. The two shepherds Corydon and Montanus undercut distinctions between high and low by replicating the rhetorical and ideological differences between John of Bordeaux and his son Rosader, between contentment and aspiring “extreme” desire. Like Rosader’s father, the elderly Corydon attacks “foolish love” and celebrates a “mean” estate (both lowly and virtuously intermediate) in which shepherds seek not to “mount above” their “degrees,” have “enough” rather than “exceed,” and suffer not “extreme” but only “mean misfortunes” (52, 57). Like Rosader, young Montanus is a Petrarchan victim of “overlove” who scorns the “base” nonlover (57, 53), laments his “extreme” passions and “extremity” of “sorrows” (98, 109), and compares himself to Icarus “seeking to pass the mean” (119). As Rosalynd’s father, the deposed king Gerismond, admiringly notes, Montanus proves that “the meanest swains” have noble “passions extreme” (120).

Lodge evades the most radical implications of his humanist stance by ensuring that the gentle characters marry the royal ones while the shepherds marry one another. Despite Montanus's vision of Phoebe as the inaccessible object of high desires, the romance shows the two to be eminently suited to one another in fortune as well as body and mind: Montanus deems Phoebe "beautiful, virtuous" and (by pastoral standards) "wealthy" (113); Phoebe similarly concedes that Montanus is "beautiful," "wise," and "wealthy" (121). Nevertheless, not only the explicit equation of high and low but also the homogeneity of Lodge's style—Rosader and Montanus are stylistically indistinguishable as wooers—suggests the legitimacy of social ascents even greater than that of Rosader, the younger son of a knight, to the crown.

Lodge also underscores the virtue of Rosader's upwardly mobile love by differentiating what John of Bourdeaux conflated: erotic and social aspirations that exceed the mean. Devoted to a princess who is first the "captive" (42) of a usurping king and then banished, Rosader does not seek a throne: he is "beyond measure content" with his "high fortunes" when he marries Rosalind as a forest-dwelling exile (123). Rosalind herself rejects a "servile" concern for "wealth" and high status when she yields to her love for Rosader and thereby relinquishes the prospect of a highborn husband who might "maintain" her "dignities" or even restore her father to the throne (42–43). The usurper banishes her precisely because he fears such an ambitious suitor "will aim at her love" and "then in his wife's right attempt the kingdom" (44). Lodge, however, carefully distributes erotic and political motivations among different characters. The peers revolt in order to restore the rightful king, an action that the newly married Rosader supports but neither originates nor leads. Rosalind and Rosader are rewarded with more than they sought—and with what they therefore all the more deserve—when she is reinstated as princess and he made heir apparent to the throne.

Like Daniel, Lodge contrasts "extreme" love with avarice, a vicious extremity exemplified by Rosader's brother Saladyne.<sup>28</sup> Cheating his brother of his inheritance, Saladyne disobeys his father's warning against "coveting without honour and climbing without virtue" (33). Rosader distinguishes his erotic aspirations from such dishonorable "climbing" when he decides that "honour" demands he save his brother from a death that would confer "revenues" upon Rosader with which he might "triumph in love" (85–86).

Despite the popularity of Lodge's romance, which went through ten printings up to 1642,<sup>29</sup> its implications were not uncontroversial. Shakespeare's *As You Like It* (ca. 1599–1600), modeled upon Lodge's text, diverges from its source by treating both social mobility and "extreme" passion with skepticism. Adopting Lodge's critique of primogeniture, Shakespeare follows Lodge in contrasting the guileless upward mobility of a younger brother, Orlando, with the evil machinations of his elder brother, Oliver (Shakespeare's version of Rosader and Saladyne). However, Shakespeare also reaffirms primogeniture

and depicts the dangers of younger brothers' ambitions by making the usurping Duke Frederick the younger brother of the rightful ruler, the exiled Duke Senior.<sup>30</sup> Shakespeare's Rosalind is both more conscious of rank and more skeptical concerning "extreme" passion than Lodge's character. Although Rosalind at first teases—and thus educates—her Petrarchan adorer Orlando with her good sense, she finally rewards his aspiring love with her hand. Yet she arranges the marriage of lowly Silvius (Shakespeare's version of Montanus) to his beloved Phoebe only after she has divested his extreme passion of all association with noble aspiration. In the only—and, significantly, negative—use of Lodge's key term for intense passion, Rosalind declares Silvius a fool for "extremity of love" (4.3.23).<sup>31</sup> Lodge's Rosalynd seeks to dissuade Montanus from love by emphasizing the hopelessness (but not the absurdity) of his desires for Phoebe (112), whose "excellence" is commended by King Gerismond himself (121). Shakespeare's Rosalind, by contrast, emphasizes Silvius's silliness in idolizing a creature as lowly as himself, who has "a leathern . . . / hussif's hand" and whose beauty lies only in her shepherd-adorer's "flatter[ing] eye" (4.3.24–27, 3.5.54). Shakespeare gives humble characters—like Orlando's old retainer Adam and the elderly shepherd Corin—a dignity that undercuts any identification of moral worth with social rank.<sup>32</sup> Significantly, however, these exemplary lowly figures are contented nonlovers. In *As You Like It* virtue for the lowly resides in contentment with who one is and what one has rather than in passionate desires.

### Sidney and the Ambiguities of Noble Extremism

Like Shakespeare, Philip Sidney presents a hierarchical view of love. His *Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia*, published posthumously in 1593, conflates with various alterations Books 4–5 of the *Old Arcadia*, which circulated in manuscript in the early 1580s, and the incomplete *New Arcadia*, first published posthumously in 1590. Whereas Lodge depicts "extreme" passion as equally present among high and low and as a justification for marriage across ranks, all versions of Sidney's romance treat moderation in love as a virtue for those of "mean" condition and "extreme" passion as the preserve of the aristocracy.

Sidney provides an ambivalent portrait of such passion, however, by associating it with the aristocracy's preeminent virtues and dangerous vices. Restive under the restraints of Elizabeth I, Sidney was obsessed with asserting his own rights as a gentleman and the designated heir of two peerages, as well as the prerogatives of his noble faction at court.<sup>33</sup> Yet he also sought to establish the purity of his restless aspirations, far above mere courtly ambition. With rhetorical colors derived from Montemayor's praise of "extreme" Neoplatonic love and the romance genre's glorification of "extreme" sexual passion, Sidney offers a defense, hedged with ambivalence, of the aristocrat's untrameled de-

sires. Especially in the *New Arcadia* Sidney seeks to distinguish erotic passion, noble even in its most disruptive manifestations, from vicious excess like rebellious political ambition.<sup>34</sup>

The pastoral shepherds of the *Old Arcadia* serve as foils to the extravagant passions of their social superiors. The marriage of the shepherd Lalus and shepherdess Kala, based upon “simple love” and blessed by the couple’s parents and community, exemplifies Sidney’s opening description of the “moderate and well tempered minds of the [Arcadian] people.”<sup>35</sup> While their epithalamion lauds Kala’s capacity to keep the “mean” between extravagance and “sluttery” (247–248), the ensuing poetic debates concerning marriage emphasize the necessity of a husband’s ruling moderation. One shepherd notes that the husband who is neither too harsh nor too doting, neither stingy nor extravagant, has the best chance of keeping his wife faithful (253–254). When a disappointed suitor attacks marriage with misogynist commonplaces about wives’ extremes of “dull silence, or eternal chat,” a respondent answers that a wife learns obedience from a husband who moderately guides her with “wisdom’s rules” (261–263).

Yet humble shepherds, who seek “contentation” rather than heroic “glory” (4), are not viable models either for their social superiors within the text or for Sidney’s gentle readers, who have—for better and for worse—vehement erotic desires that cannot be reduced to a rational Aristotelian mean.<sup>36</sup> Sidney legitimizes the “extreme” (35, 38, 111, 119) passion between the princes Pyrocles and Musidorus and the princesses Philoclea and Pamela by following a conventional comic and romance plot in which faithful lovers finally marry despite the obstructions of misguided or evil parents. The princes and their beloveds are appropriate mates, well matched in royal status, physical beauty, and complementary virtues (e.g., the princes are more physically courageous, while the princesses are calmer in adversity). The foolish attempt of the princesses’ father, the Arcadian ruler Basilius, to keep his daughters from marriage forces the young lovers into subterfuge and sexual transgression instead of proper courtship. By developing “excessive” and “extreme” adulterous desires for Pyrocles that threaten to lead to “violent extremities” (114, 48, 96), both Basilius and his wife, Gynecia, turn into tyrants, conceived of by classical and Renaissance thinkers as rulers subject to their inordinate passions.<sup>37</sup> Their tyranny makes the young lovers’ transgressions in pursuit of their unjustly forbidden love seem, by contrast, pardonable reactions to corrupt power.

Musidorus justifies his passion in terms that modify the vision of love in *Diana*, which both Elizabethan and modern readers have adduced as one of Sidney’s models.<sup>38</sup> Like Lady Felicia, in defense of his love Musidorus claims that “Naught can reason avail in heav’nly matters” (165). Sidney, however, transforms the doctrine of extreme passion as a sign of “true nobility,” enunciated in *Diana* and adopted in Lodge’s *Rosalynd*, by linking such passion to high birth. When disguised as a shepherd, Musidorus distinguishes his love from

that of the real shepherd Lalus: "Thy health too mean a match for my infection. / No, though the heav'ns for high attempt have blamed me, / Yet high is my attempt" (59). Musidorus's contrast between his "high" disease and Lalus's virtuous but "mean" emotional health encodes the social distinction between aristocratic and common lovers. Similarly, when the disguised Musidorus claims that his love could not come from an "unnoble heart" (101), he hints at his lineage-based nobility of spirit. After he has revealed himself and eloped with Pamela, Musidorus compares his audacity to Icarus's flight "to the sun with waxen wings" (200). By giving the rhetoric of Icarean aspiration to a prince in love with a princess, Sidney suggests that Musidorus aspires to the love of which he is worthy by birth and must prove worthy in action.

Sidney relates "extreme" passion to lineage throughout his romance. Motivated by "extremity of love," Pyrocles kills a lion about to seize Philoclea, while Musidorus kills a bear attacking Pamela (47, 51–52). By revealing the princes' love-inspired heroism, the scene subverts the traditional identification of men's extreme devotion to women as "effeminate," an identification that Pyrocles' female disguise initially suggests to both Musidorus and the reader (20). The scene also distinguishes the heroic royal lovers from their social inferiors, the cowardly shepherds who run away. Indeed, unlike Lodge's downwardly mobile Rosalynd, Pamela displays a proper concern for rank even in her response to her savior. Still believing Musidorus a shepherd, Pamela "overmasters" her nascent passion by remembering his supposed "meanness" (55). She agrees to elope with him only after he has revealed his royal identity and promised to "invest" her in his kingdom (172).

Sidney probably reworks a romance source in insisting upon Pamela's consciousness of rank. In an erotic tale in the first volume of William Painter's *The Palace of Pleasure*, published in 1566 and dedicated to Sidney's uncle, a courtier saves an emperor and his companions from a bear—just as Musidorus saves Pamela—and "inflame[s]" the emperor's daughter with love. She elopes with the courtier out of "extreme" passion, thereby "abas[ing]" herself by marrying a "subject."<sup>39</sup> Both Painter's and Sidney's happy endings reward lovers who challenge parental and monarchical authority. But Painter (like Lodge) sanctions passion across ranks, while Sidney's pointedly allows only royal lovers to fulfill the "extreme" desires appropriate to their status.

Yet Pyrocles's and Philoclea's consummation of their passion and Musidorus's attempted rape of Pamela encapsulate the moral ambiguities of the royal lovers' desires. Sidney describes Pyrocles's and Philoclea's clandestine meeting in terms of emotional extremity and sensual excess. Philoclea, who fought the "extreme violence" of her passion for Pyrocles when she believed him a woman and yielded to "extremity of sorrow" when she deemed him unfaithful, is initially "in extremity amazed" to see the man whose supposed inconstancy has caused her an "extremity" of anguish (111, 216, 233). Pyrocles approaches Philoclea's chambers with "excessive forefeeling" and "extremity of joy" re-

garding “his near coming contentment.” His eyes are first “overfilled” with Philoclea’s beauty and he initially feels “too much love” to desire more than to look upon her. At her rebukes for his supposed inconstancy, he falls into an “extreme” faint that causes her, in turn, to castigate herself for having suspected him with “too much haste.” Upon reawakening, he feels a “too excessive joy” that almost makes him faint once again. Overwhelmed by their oscillating emotions, the lovers finally proceed to rapturous consummation, “the excess of all kind joys” (228–231, 235, 237, 242).

The insistent vocabulary of excess evokes Aristotelian norms of judgment. So apparently does Sidney’s parenthetical remark that the scene’s shifting emotions exemplify how each “passion is apt to slide into his contrary,” that is, into the opposite extreme (242–243). Yet Sidney sounds more indulgently witty than gravely moralizing, emphasizing how the two lovers’ emotional excesses have the paradoxical result of almost precluding their sexual “excess.” Sidney continues his mixed tonality when he describes their consummation as the “due bliss” for their “fiery agonies” (243) but then switches to the marriage of Lalus and Kala, a lawful consummation that serves as ethical foil to the two noble lovers’ clandestine tryst.

Sidney further equivocates concerning Pyrocles’s and Philoclea’s consummation by making their marital status ambiguous. The two lovers had secretly “passed the promise of marriage” before the consummation (122). Yet, as Pyrocles remembers to his horror after their sexual tryst is discovered, “the cruelty of the Arcadian laws” mandates that all those found “in act of marriage without solemnity of marriage” (290) are to be put to death. Appealing to the divine order in defiance of her country’s laws, Philoclea stoutly defends her “virtuous marriage, whereto our innocencies were solemnities and the gods themselves the witnesses” (304; see also 319, 396). Sixteenth-century English law and custom regarding betrothal and marriage were ambiguous. Many couples considered themselves married in God’s eyes and entitled to full physical relations on the basis of promises made to one another without a church ceremony.<sup>40</sup> The “cruelty” of Arcadian law in comparison with more flexible English standards garners sympathy for the lovers’ breach and gives credibility to Philoclea’s appeal to divine sanction.

Yet there were powerful social and religious pressures in Reformation England against considering a marriage complete before it was solemnized in church. Ministers inveighed against couples’ lustfully consummating their relationship before the church ceremony, while clergy and laymen alike attacked clandestine conjugal arrangements designed to escape parental oversight. Geoffrey Fenton’s *Certaine Tragicall Discourses* (1567), a translation of moralizing Italian tales dedicated to Sidney’s mother, expresses such views through the story of lovers who slake their “lust” after a secret contract of marriage opposed by the bride’s father: the husband dies from “exceed[ing] . . . measure” in his lovemaking and the wife from excessive grief.<sup>41</sup>

Sidney, by contrast, draws on aristocratic norms of behavior to imply the nobility of Pyrocles's and Philoclea's sexual union. Both the extralegal consummation and Philoclea's proud defense recall several episodes in the *Amadis de Gaule*, the multivolume, multiauthor sixteenth-century French rendition of an originally medieval Spanish chivalric romance. While critics have noted that Sidney drew on *Amadis* for plot and episode, they have scanted Sidney's debt to the work's moral values.<sup>42</sup> The prelude to the lover's consummation, Pyrocles's fainting, derives from a motif in *Amadis*, in which both male and female aristocratic lovers, overcome by their passions, lose consciousness with numbing regularity. Several of the romance's heroes and heroines, imbued with "extreme" passion, secretly pledge their troths to one another as a pre-contract of marriage and defy the law—but not their own code of love—by consummating their relationship. The opening chapters of *Amadis* concern the "extreme amour" and "extreme passion" between Amadis's father and mother, King Perion and Princess Elisenne, which they consummate secretly after pledging mutual fidelity and future marriage. The narrator excoriates the "cruel" law that condemned women to death for involvement in nonmarital affairs and notes that the lovers' mutual vows rendered Elisenne guiltless before God even though she would have been condemned by the world if their lovemaking were discovered.<sup>43</sup> Sidney perhaps eliminates the legal double standard in order to display his lover's nobility: since both partners risk a death sentence, Pyrocles can prove his manly worthiness by focusing upon saving Philoclea rather than himself. Sidney, however, preserves the conflict between the aristocrats' self-legitimizing erotic extremities and the cruel law. Norbert Elias has explained the popularity of *Amadis* in sixteenth-century France in terms of the nostalgic longing for independence of the aristocratic courtier, chafing under the increasing constraints of the centralized, monarchical state.<sup>44</sup> Sidney's creative imitations of the French romance reveal a similar longing.

The passage describing the lovers' discovery in postcoital sleep further equivocates between moralizing blame and sympathetic celebration. Sidney's differing possible explanations of their somnolent embraces pits Aristotelian and Christian norms against "Amadisian" values:

[T]hese unfortunate lovers, who at that time, being not much before the break of day—whether it were they were so divinely surprised to bring their fault to open punishment; or that the too high degrees of their joys had overthrown the wakeful use of their senses; or that their souls, lifted up with extremity of love after mutual satisfaction, had left their bodies dearly joined to unite themselves together so much more freely as they were freer of that earthly prison; or whatsoever other cause may be imagined of it—but so it was that they were as then possessed with a mutual sleep, yet not forgetting with viny embracements to give any eye a perfect model of affection. (273)



The narrator gives three possible explanations of a progressively more exculpatory vein for the lovers' state before throwing up his pen in uncertainty. Both the decreasing blame and the final confession of ignorance underscore the moral ambiguity Sidney wishes to convey. The language of excess—"too high degrees of their joys" and "extremity of love"—in Sidney's second and third proposed explanations might initially be interpreted from an Aristotelian viewpoint as underscoring the dangers of sexual immoderation and thus as consonant with the first and harshest of the narrator's explanations, namely, that Providence kept the lovers asleep in order to punish their moral "fault." But the second and third suggestions associate excess in un-Aristotelian fashion with increasingly positive senses of "extreme" passion. In the second the lovers' "too high . . . joys" are pointedly ambiguous in moral terms, for if such excessive joys make them oblivious of their safety, such joys also clearly transcend sensual transgression by exceeding mere bodily "senses." In the third "extremity of love" is associated even more unequivocally with a body-transcending spiritual love between souls. Sidney's final two explanations, especially the last, have a Neoplatonic resonance that helps justify the description of the lovers' entwined, sleeping bodies as "a perfect model of affection": their affection is not only "perfect" in the sense of "complete" (*OED* s.v. "perfect," 3) because it has reached its goal of consummation but also because the sleeping bodies testify to a "perfect" love that goes beyond (but does not deny) the body. With its entwining of bodily consummation with spiritual rapture, the passage as a whole redeems "extreme" passion with a submerged pun on sexual "excess" as spiritual "ecstasy, trance" (*OED* s.v. "excess," 1c).

Sidney borrows much of his positive tone here from a passage in *Amadis* that approvingly describes the premarital consummation of "extreme" lovers. Sidney derived the notion of Pyrocles's disguising himself as a woman to court his love from two love affairs in *Amadis*, one of which concerns the prince Arlanges's "extreme affection" and "amour trop puissant" for the princess Cleofile.<sup>45</sup> One of the most remarkable (though seldom remarked upon) passages of Renaissance eroticism describes Arlanges's and Cleofile's clandestine consummation, which seals a promise of future marriage and lays an emphasis akin to Sidney's upon a sleep-inducing intensity of gratification and upon the souls' Neoplatonic transcendence of their bodily "prison." The two lovers'

senses, transported and amazed, made way for the souls to be joined by the medium of the body . . . as if ravished in ecstasy, embracing each other with greedy passion as if they had wished to be wholly one in the other, and in this way enjoying the sovereign good of this world, which true lovers alone experience. . . . Their corporal senses were like sleeping slaves while the souls, supreme, caressed each other and visited at the closest proximity their prisons would allow. . . . [They then arose] as if awaking from a deep sleep.<sup>46</sup>

Yoking Neoplatonism to sensuality, the *Amadis* passage justifies a spiritual and physical love in terms of the feelings of “true lovers” rather than legal norms. Sidney’s last two explanations of his royal lovers’ sleep more cautiously allow—as mere hypotheses juxtaposed to a more negative interpretation—such a positive, antinomian interpretation of “extreme” aristocratic love.<sup>47</sup>

While Sidney depicts Musidorus’s attempted rape of his beloved as more opprobrious, he is also indulgent toward this sign of intense passion. Musidorus gains Pamela’s consent to elope with him only after having promised to make her his wife. He also takes an oath not to attempt to consummate their love until after they are married, as Pamela reminds him before they run off together. Though Musidorus assures her that such an oath is superfluous to one of neither “base estate” nor “spotted mind” (197), his desires prove too strong when Pamela falls asleep in his arms. Yet the narrator mixes tonalities once more by treating the interruption of his attempt by brigands as both a “just punishment of his broken promise” and as an “unfortunate bar of his long-pursued . . . desires” (202).

In defense of Musidorus, moreover, Sidney implicitly evokes a Renaissance version of the boys-will-be-boys defense: impetuous young aristocratic males will behave like impetuous young aristocratic males. Sidney counters the widespread conception of gender hierarchy based on the male’s rational authority over the irrational female with an equally long-standing alternative model of gender relations. The Aristotelian-Galenic commonplace that men were hotter in temperament than women, while generally linked to men’s greater rational perfection, could also support the opposite notion that males—especially younger, and therefore hotter, males like Sidney’s princes—were naturally more “inflamed” by desire than women. For example, in 1599 Anthony Gibson argues that hot men are more “unrulye” than women, who do not “runne madde for love” like males; in 1601 Thomas Wright similarly claims that young men’s “incontinencie” arises from their abounding “heat,” while women are less “prone to incontincy.”<sup>48</sup> Speakers in Castiglione’s *Book of the Courtier* suggest the double standard arising from such views. Cardinal Bembo argues (in Thomas Hoby’s translation) that because young men by “nature” are “inclined to sense,” the youthful courtier may be “granted” to “love sensually” and deserves to be “pitied” rather than “blamed” for wantonness. By contrast, another interlocutor notes that a court maiden must by chaste behavior instill in her lover a “respect” that stifles “hope” of “any dishonest matter.”<sup>49</sup> Because a young male like Musidorus is naturally vehement, a naturally more temperate female like Pamela must chastely resist.

Sidney rewrites passages from his major Greek romance model, Heliodorus’s *An Aethiopian History* (translated by the Elizabethan Thomas Underdowne), that reveal this long-standing understanding of gender difference by representing a fundamentally virtuous but naturally lustful male lover’s need of restraint

through his chaste beloved's resistance. Heliodorus focuses on the tribulations of the chaste, faithful lovers Theagenes and Cariclia. Sidney's *Apology* treats Theagenes as the exemplary "true" lover, and Heliodorus's Theagenes on one level provides a virtuous foil to the would-be rapist Musidorus (as well as the seducer Pyrocles).<sup>50</sup> Yet Sidney presents Musidorus's attempted rape as arising out of natural masculine impulses shared with the chaste but still male—and consequently impetuous—Theagenes. Cariclia agrees to run away with Theagenes only after she makes him swear an oath not to try to consummate their love before marriage, because "a man" who has "power to injoye" what "hee loveth" is "incensed, when he seeth that which he desireth." Though Theagenes, like Musidorus, protests no need of oaths, on their travels Cariclia must often remind him of his oath when he would "deale with her over wantonly." While Musidorus comes closer than Theagenes to violating his vows, Sidney offers extenuating circumstances based on Heliodorus. Recognizing the force of male desire and the consequent vulnerability of a sleeping maiden, Cariclia prays that Theagenes not try to possess her while she sleeps.<sup>51</sup> Sleeping Pamela indeed proves (as Sidney puts it) "no vow is so strong as the avoiding of occasions," for her beauty and sweet breath so "tyrannize[d] over" Musidorus that he was "compelled" to seek gratification (201). In a Renaissance version of blaming the victim, Sidney suggests that Pamela is herself partly at fault by unwarily falling asleep and thereby relinquishing her power of resistance. Sidney's description of how after the "virtuous wantonness" of mutually declared love Pamela became "extreme sleepy" (200–201) suggests her own slip from still innocent eroticism to an "extreme" relaxation of her moral authority—and thence to Musidorus's attempt.

Musidorus, in any case, slips rather than irrevocably falls, and he displays by repentance the fundamental virtue of his love. When the lovers are caught by brigands, who decide to return them to Arcadia, Musidorus begs forgiveness of Pamela for having gotten her into this predicament. When he implores her to believe that his "extremest" desire never intended her "hurt" (311), he seems to be simultaneously denying the attempted rape (of which she remains ignorant) and requesting her pardon. Her responsive declaration of loving trust in his "faithful faultlessness" (312) kindles in him a prayer that most clearly betokens repentance: he begs to prove worthy of her as long as he lives and to die, if need be, to save her—an expression of devotion and heroic self-sacrifice to which he remains true.

Yet Sidney seems to have been uncomfortable with the moral ambiguities of his protagonists' extreme desires. Probably on his authority, the 1593 published version of the *Arcadia* sanitizes the young lovers' urges and in so doing strengthens readerly sympathy for their love-inspired defiance of authority. Retaining the language of extremity but omitting both Pyrocles's premarital seduction of Philoclea and Musidorus's attempted rape of Pamela, the revised text celebrates a male erotic extremism that rebels against corrupt power but remains chaste

and obedient to the beloved female, as well as respectful of proper authority. In their fateful tryst Pyrocles now seeks not to make love to Philoclea but to elope with her so they can marry in his kingdom. Their "exceeding" emotions foil their plan by causing them to faint into "chaste embracements" (236–237). While their fainting recalls the "extreme" lovers of *Amadis*, Pyrocles and Philoclea now retain the chastity of Heliodorus's protagonists. Furthermore, their rebellion against patriarchal and royal authority is now tempered since they plan to escape from Philoclea's tyrannical parents to Pyrocles's beneficent royal father. Whereas in the original version Pyrocles scorns the "great estate of his father" to which he is heir as "trifling" in comparison to the clandestine consummation that he anticipates with "extremity of joy" (228), in the revised version Pyrocles's "extremity of joy" comes from imagining Philoclea and himself safely in his kingdom preparing for marriage to the "exceeding joys of his father" (229). By linking Pyrocles's and his father's extreme joys, Sidney suggests the congruity of Pyrocles's passion with patriarchy.

The revised version similarly sanitizes Musidorus's pursuit of Pamela by providing a more innocent version of the Theagenes-Charicles paradigm of impetuous male and restraining female. Instead of attempting rape, the "too-much loving" Musidorus merely tries to kiss Pamela and is repulsed. Aristotelian ethical diction and Icarian imagery describe his excessive daring: his joy beyond "mediocrity" could not "set bounds" to his desires, his "being over-high in happiness" led to "falling."<sup>52</sup> Yet Pamela never loses control of the situation, and Musidorus's despair at her harsh reaction to his transgression accentuates his submission to decorum.

While these revisions eliminate much of the dangerous transgressiveness of the two princes' loves, the *New Arcadia* also elaborates upon aristocratic passion in contradictory ways. In the tale of Argalus and Parthenia, Sidney glorifies two young lovers' noble, "overvehement constancy" (27) by contrasting it with base, vicious excess: greed and rebellious ambition. When Parthenia chooses Argalus over Demagoras, the unworthy suitor selected by her mother, her mother loses all "reason" and goes to all "extremities" to obstruct the lovers' marriage. The mother betrays aristocratic norms out of base avarice: she covets the wealth of Demagoras. While highborn, Demagoras himself reveals the lowly, rebellious nature encoded in his name by heading a "base multitude" in revolt against the aristocracy (29, 398).

Yet in the story of Amphialus's "extremity" of love (428) for his cousin Philoclea, Sidney anatomizes passion's destructive and self-destructive potential. Overwhelmed by his love, Amphialus refuses to free Philoclea and her sister, who have been kidnapped by his mother, Cecropia, in an attempt to make her son heir to the Arcadian throne by forcing one of the princesses to marry him. Like *Amadis de Gaule*, who gains strength in combat from his beloved's spectatorship,<sup>53</sup> Amphialus is inspired in battle by his beloved's gaze. Yet Amphialus's love-fueled defiance of Basilius's army, a recklessness that

“exceed[ed] the bounds of mediocrity” (337), is perverse, since Philoclea professes only abhorrence for his triumphs over her would-be liberators.

Ambitious Cecropia’s “devilish wickedness” (117) nevertheless shifts guilt away from her son. As in the Argalus-Parthenia tale, Sidney differentiates between a nobly immoderate love, however morally compromised in Amphialus’s case, and a far uglier form of excess. While Amphialus pathetically tries to win over the beloved Philoclea with martial heroism and submissive adoration, Cecropia ruthlessly utilizes all “extremities” of torture to bend the imprisoned princesses to her will (419–420). Amphialus defends keeping the princesses on the grounds that love “justifieth the injustice” and that “love,” not he, keeps them imprisoned (374, 323). Appealing to Amphialus to surrender the princesses, Basilius’s moderate counselor Philanax similarly declares Amphialus’s crime “excusable” because “love persuaded” (353). A diplomat’s negotiating gambit, Philanax’s claim nevertheless suggests that Amphialus’s excuse is plausible in Sidney’s chivalric world. While base rebellious ambition such as Cecropia’s has no extenuation, “extreme” erotic desire is, at its worst, a noble, forgivable flaw.

### Caroline Neoplatonism and Libertinism

Kevin Sharpe has argued that many authors associated with Charles I’s court, including William Davenant and Thomas Carew, espouse Aristotelian moderation as the foundation of their ethicopolitical visions and celebrate marriage as the *via media* with respect to erotic desire.<sup>54</sup> The happily married royal couple Charles I and Henrietta Maria—who contrasted so markedly with the virginal Elizabeth I and the misogynist James I—certainly encouraged celebration of a royal “middle way.” William Habington, for example, praised their conjugal union as a *via media* between the passionless rigor of a “Stoicke” and the unregulated fornication of “barb’rous nations.”<sup>55</sup> Yet the most distinctive aspect of representations of desire by Caroline writers like Davenant and Carew is their courtly rejection of erotic moderation and the social “mediocrity” associated with it.

The Caroline court’s exaltation of the French queen as the beloved of both her husband and her court intensified the association of erotic extremism with aristocratic virtue found in Sidney’s *Arcadia*, a work admired at court.<sup>56</sup> Yet while Sidney places extreme passion in tension with the beloved’s restraining authority and with parental and monarchical power, the Caroline court found another model for a more docile, court-friendly and, by traditional standards, “effeminate” erotic passion. The stylized Neoplatonic devotion practiced in the Parisian salons attended by the young Henrietta Maria and codified in Honoré d’Urfé’s early-seventeenth-century romance *L’Astrée* was one major source of courtly erotic protocols. With none of the rebellious vigor of Sidney’s

male lovers, D'Urfé's ideal men (echoing Ebreo and Montemayor) declare their passionately "extreme," long-suffering devotion to their beloveds.<sup>57</sup>

Davenant offered his own version of docile passion in *Love and Honor*, first performed in 1634 to Henrietta Maria's admiration and revived at court at her behest in 1637.<sup>58</sup> His play addressed the court's ideological needs. Despite military ambitions, Charles I felt constrained by financial considerations to avoid entanglement in the Thirty Years' War and to pursue diplomacy, much to the consternation of subjects who wanted an aggressive Protestant stance against the Catholic Habsburgs. Responding to perceptions of weakness at home and abroad, the Caroline court made a cult of peace.<sup>59</sup> As a participant in this cult, Davenant contrasts courtly eroticism with masculinist violence.

*Love and Honour* associates aristocratic passion with a passive, androgynous heroism. Three noblemen seek to die to save the noblewoman they all love, while she and her confidante seek to die in order to save one another and the male lovers. Prince Alvaro, the most virtuous (as well as the highest ranked) of Davenant's male lovers, is strikingly effeminate by traditional standards: he not only worships the virginal Evandra with "most chaste . . . appetite" (1.1.204) but also treats her as a model for masculine behavior.<sup>60</sup> He strives for, and tries to persuade his male companions to seek, a "gentle" and "soft" demeanor and a "valor . . . smooth / As virgins" (4.5.80, 91–92). He condemns "savage" male "courage" and prefers passively to die of grief at his beloved's death rather than fall into the "fury" of "colerick boys" (1.1.236, 5.2.86–87). With similarly passive "female fortitude" the women vie in "glorious" "strife" with each other and with the men as to who can be most self-sacrificing out of "fond excesse / Of love" (3.4.253, 5.3.101, 4.3.16–17). All these noble androgynes are rewarded for their selfless devotion by being paired off in marriages that bring peace to warring dukedoms, thus underscoring love's eirenic power. Only one of the males, less deserving because of a more violent temperament, is left without a bride and must content himself with the traditional masculine occupation, war.

Davenant's friend Carew, appointed Charles I's Sewer in Ordinary in 1630, celebrates a libertine version of "effeminizing" erotic extremism in his most imitated and anthologized but little-analyzed lyric, "Mediocrity in Love Rejected." He exploits extreme passion's aristocratic resonances while spurning courtly idealization:

Give me more love, or more disdain;  
 The Torrid, or the frozen Zone,  
 Bring equall ease unto my paine;  
 The temperate affords me none:  
 Either extreame, of love, or hate,  
 Is sweeter than a calme estate.

Give me a storme; if it be love,  
 Like *Danae* in that golden showre

I swimme in pleasure; if it prove  
 Disdaine, that torrent will devoure  
 My Vulture-hopes; and he's possesst  
 Of Heaven, that's but from Hell releast:  
 Then crowne my joyes, or cure my paine;  
 Give me more love, or more disdaine.<sup>61</sup>

As Carew's editor notes, the demand for love or disdain that powerfully frames this poem is a commonplace ultimately deriving from Petrarch's request that Laura provide either "mercy" [*mercé*], which will bring him bliss, or "cruelty" [*asprezza*], which will put him out of his misery. Carew himself enunciates the theme in conventional fashion in another lyric by wishing that his Celia "give / Love enough to make me live" or "Scorne enough to make me dye."<sup>62</sup> "Mediocrity in Love Rejected" goes well beyond commonplace, however. Its very form—a reversed, metrically innovative sonnet with the sestet preceding the octave and in octosyllabics rather than pentameters—encodes Carew's desire to revivify Petrarchan convention. Like Daniel's Icarus sonnet, Carew's "Mediocrity in Love rejected" highlights the clash between the poet's desire and the ethical mean. The paradoxical association of "storm[s]" and the "Torrid" and "Frozen" regions with erotic "ease" underscores the incompatibility of sexual satisfaction with the tranquil "calme" so often lauded in association with the virtuous "meane estate." "Either extreme, of love or hate" forcefully implies that love is by definition extreme. The poem's spurning of "Mediocrity" implicitly identifies the Aristotelian mean with "mediocrity" in its now standard and less frequent early modern pejorative sense.

Carew associates his desires with court life by deploying a Spenserian usage of "swim" to celebrate the court licentiousness that Spenser attacked. *Colin Clouts Comes Home Againe* (1595) decries the court where men "swim in love" (l. 782); in *The Faerie Queene* the foolish Braggadochio tells the chaste, woodland Belphoebe that at court she could "love, and dearely loved bee, / And swim in pleasure" only to receive her contemptuous retort that "Who so in pompe of proud estate . . . / Does swim, and bathes himself in courtly blis, / Does waste his dayes" (2.3.39.6–7, 2.3.40.1–3).<sup>63</sup> The Spenserian echo implies the link between libertinism and a court life "above" conventional ethics made explicit in Carew's libertine persuasion poem "A Rapture," which mocks the "servile rout / Of baser subjects" who adhere to conventional notions of sexual honor and celebrates the "nobler traine / Of valiant Lovers" who dare escape to the "noblest seates" of love, where "All things are lawfull . . . that may delight / Nature, or unrestrained Appetite" (ll. 4–7, 23, 111–112).

Carew's allusion to the Danae myth in "Mediocrity in Love" flaunts his courtly lubriciousness. The "golden shower" of Jove was traditionally interpreted as both divine seed and riches, associating erotic with material luxuriance.<sup>64</sup> Carew's mythic allusion also brazenly flaunts the traditional association of sexual profligacy with effeminization. Though describing himself as a "he"

(l. 11) who would be free of tormenting desires if he were decisively rejected, by likening himself to a Danae impregnated by Jove if blessed with erotic favor, Carew strikingly imagines his amorous fulfillment as the passive, feminine recipient of erotic largesse. To subvert the gender hierarchy so boldly is itself an aristocratic gesture: as a courtier who would “swimme in pleasure,” Carew scorns lowly anxiety about traditional gender norms.

A comparison between Carew’s love lyrics and his masque *Coelum Britannicum*, performed at court in 1634, reveals continuities as well as contradictions between libertine and idealizing Neoplatonic erotic modes.<sup>65</sup> The masque both praises and condemns “effeminizing” love. It celebrates the royal pair “CARLOMARIA” (l. 276)—united like a hermaphrodite—as the ideal “patterne” (l. 1132) of love and lauds the beauty with which Henrietta and her court ladies “*subdue*” their “*Martiall*” and “fierce” lovers (ll. 276, 1047, 1036, 1045). Yet Mercury, speaking for the Olympian Gods who have been inspired to reform themselves by the royal lovers’ example, expels the “Bewitching Syren” Pleasure for making heroic “Captaines” and “Nations” “effeminate” with vicious “excesse” (ll. 809, 825–827, 830). This attack on erotic effeminization, which certainly applies to the libertine lover of “*Mediocrity in Love Rejected*,” also seems designed to deflect criticism of the masque’s own erotic ideal as excessive and effeminate. Mercury thus obliquely betrays Carew’s sense of the resemblance between his libertine and idealizing modes of erotic extremism.

The masque also lauds nonerotic modes of excess that further counter the charge of courtly effeminacy while preserving aristocratic superiority to “mediocrity” in all its senses. Mercury rejects poverty’s “necessitated Temperance” and “Falsly exalted passive Fortitude / Above the active” as a “low abject brood, / That fix their seats in mediocrity” and suit “servile minds” (ll. 653–659). He instead lauds

Such vertues onely as admit excesse,  
 Brave bounteous Acts, Regall Magnificence,  
 All-seeing Prudence, Magnanimity  
 That knowes no bound, and that Heroicke vertue  
 For which Antiquity hath left no name  
 But patternes onely, such as *Hercules*,  
*Achilles*, *Theseus*.

(ll. 660–666)

Moving from rejection of “passive” fortitude to final praise of “patternes” provided by ancient heroes, Carew here praises virtues whose active, masculinist cast distinguishes them from both the libertine sensuality of “*Mediocrity in Love Rejected*” and the ideal love embodied in the androgynous erotic “patterne” “CARLOMARIA.” Yet Carew indirectly justifies the “extreme” lover, whether Neoplatonic or libertine, by associating glorious excess with the court and “mediocrity” with the “low.” Mercury replaces the traditional ethical contrast between the mean and vicious extremes with the social polarity of noble



and “servile” virtues. Though ostensibly rejecting only “necessitated” temperance (i.e., the involuntary and thus non-Aristotelian self-restraint of those too poor to indulge themselves), Mercury revealingly does not offer a freely chosen version of temperance: temperance as such is antithetical to the aristocratic extremism that Mercury praises.

Carew draws upon Aristotle’s treatment of the virtues as well as Renaissance courtly refractions of Aristotelianism to exalt an aristocratic greatness that “admit[s] excesse” in contravention of the Aristotelian mean. “Bounteous Acts” evoke Aristotelian liberality. While treating liberality as the mean between prodigality and avarice, Aristotle notes that the liberal man is “prone to go to excess” [*huperballein*] and that prodigality is nobler and closer to the mean than avarice, the vice of the ignoble “many” (*NE* 4.1.18, 4.1.36–37). In *The Book named the Governor* (1531) Thomas Elyot similarly claims “liberality” is a “mean,” but that “in a nobleman” liberality is “commended, although it somewhat do exceed . . . measure.”<sup>66</sup> “Regall Magnificence” evokes Aristotle’s magnificence, the aristocratic ability to spend great sums “lavishly” [*proetikôs*] though in a tasteful mean (*NE* 4.2.5, 4.2.20–22), which was commonly associated in the Renaissance not with the mean but with rulers’ conspicuous display (exemplified, for example, in costly masques like *Coelum Britannicum*).<sup>67</sup> Mercury’s culminating parallel celebration of “Magnanimity” as a virtue that “knowes no bounds” and a “Heroicke vertue” that has “no name” most clearly deploys Aristotle against the mean. While treating magnanimity as a mean, Aristotle favorably contrasts aristocrats’ magnanimity to lesser men’s temperance. Contradicting his praise in the *Politics* of the “middle” state of moderate wealth as best (4.9.3–5), he declares the magnanimous aristocrat superior to men of “middle station” (“tous mesous,” *NE* 4.3.26). “Heroic virtue” refers to Aristotle’s definition of “heroic” virtue in the *Ethics* as an “excess” [*huperbolê*] of virtue (7.1.1–3) and the claim in the *Politics* that one cannot give laws to men with “excess” [*huperbolê*] of virtue because they are “themselves a law” (i.e., self-legislating) (3.8.1–2). Heroic “excess” is a paradoxical and briefly mentioned exception to Aristotle’s overall equation of excess with vice. Yet Renaissance writers expatiated upon Aristotle’s brief hints to glorify rulers or aristocrats as exceeding ordinary human norms.<sup>68</sup> Castiglione praised the prince whose “heroicall” virtue “passe[d] the boundes” of human nature; Tasso distinguished between heroes’ “excess” and the virtuous mediocrity of “subjects” [*soggetti*].<sup>69</sup>

The supreme embodiment of the “Regall” virtues Carew celebrates is, of course, Charles I himself. Because the king’s virtues “know no bounds,” the masque implies, he cannot be judged by the ethical norms of “servile” subjects. While the masque presents criticism of court policy through the mouthpiece of Momus the scoffer, Mercury—and Carew—defend Charles I against critics by suggesting that they cannot comprehend his heroic excess. Carew thus both registers and contributes to the rift in values between the Caroline court

and its city and “country” critics. One may contrast Mercury’s speech with the 1631 Lord Mayor of London’s pageant, which expressed the London mercantile elite’s traditional values by advising Londoners to “shunne th’extremes, to keepe the golden meane.” With anticourt animus, Richard Brathwaite’s oft reprinted *The English Gentleman* (1630) similarly warns gentle youth to adhere to the “Middle-Path” rather than seek court preferment, touts the supremacy of “Moderation,” and cautions (against courtly liberality) that to “lash out lavishly” is as vicious as to “hoard up niggardly.”<sup>70</sup>

Carew’s courtly notion of the superior man of “excesse” who transcends ordinary norms and strictures implicitly places above criticism not only the godlike monarch of *Coelum Britannicum* but also the extreme aristocratic lover. In his elegy upon John Donne, published in 1633, Carew revealingly imagines the deceased as both a transgressive lover and a self-legislating king. While Donne the preacher “Committed holy Rapes upon our Will,” Donne the poet rejected “servile imitation” and boldly “ruled as hee thought fit” with “lawes” of his own “fresh invention” (ll. 17, 27, 95, 61, 28).<sup>71</sup> The heroically excessive individual—be he lover or monarch—exceeds slavish norms and strictures.

There is, however, an inherent tension between Carew’s celebrations of heroic, rule-breaking individuals and his own role as political subject. *Coelum Britannicum* posits the love between Charles I and Henrietta Maria as an analogue to the love that supposedly obtains between the monarchs and their subjects: “And as their [Charles’s and Henrietta Maria’s] own pure Soules entwin’d, / So are their Subjects hearts combin’d” (ll. 1103–1104). Yet Carew is not happy with the condition of “Subject,” however loving. He proceeds to glorify the beloved monarchs precisely for taking the sting out of subjection: “So just, so gentle is their sway, / As it seemes Empire to obey” (ll. 1106–1107). “Just” and “gentle” affirm that the royal pair temper the rigors of justice with gentle mercy. For Carew, however, monarchical power must be mystified as well as moderated: he represents the subject’s happiest condition as a fantasy of “Empire.” Tellingly even if unwittingly, Carew echoes a tyrant when describing the subject’s contentment. In Jonson’s *Sejanus* the tyrant Tiberius disingenuously tells the Senate he is their servant and declares with a mordant wit that “’tis empire, to obey / Where such, so great, so grave, so good determine” (1.452–453).<sup>72</sup> Carew’s subject is a would-be Tiberius, wishing to live without limits.

More obliquely yet no less passionately than Sidney, even when preaching loving obedience Carew seeks to escape subjection. Also like Sidney, Carew finds his most dramatic alternative to subjection in an extreme erotic desire that demands fulfillment, no matter how much “mediocre” contemporaries—or even temperate rulers—might object. In locating his vision of passionate love within the Caroline court yet also revealing his restiveness within that setting, Carew points toward one of the major developments discussed in the next chapter, namely, the increasing separation of extreme aristocratic passion from court life.

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## CHAPTER SIX

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### Erotic Excess versus Interest in Mid- to Late-Seventeenth-Century Literature

DURING THE MID- AND LATE seventeenth century, writers celebrated extreme passion in the face of new challenges. The opposition between love and political or economic ambition traced in the preceding chapter crystallized during this period into two opposed discourses. The aristocratic celebration of erotic extremism gained further momentum from the increasing influence of French court culture, which made a cult of both the intense, self-sacrificing devotion of the romance lover and the sexual liaisons of the courtly libertine (as well as various combinations of the two).<sup>1</sup> Yet the discourse celebrating “extreme” passion developed in dialectical interaction with a political and economic discourse centered upon “interest,” another concept that betrayed a strong French influence. An influential work by Henri, Duke of Rohan, translated in 1640 as *A Treatise on the Interests of Princes and States of Christendom*, contrasted “interest guided by reason” with “disorderly appetites” and “violent passions.” While Rohan focused on rulers, English Interregnum and Restoration writers of diverse political and religious positions claimed to be promoting the national or public interest, which included and somehow balanced the legitimate interests of the nation’s various socioeconomic, political, and (sometimes) religious groups. The term “interest” took on a heavily economic connotation, for the public interest was increasingly conceived in terms of the population’s economic well-being.<sup>2</sup> The notion that the state should promote the nation’s “plenty”—so central to mid- and late-seventeenth-century georgic—was frequently couched in terms of interest.

Even when deployed (as it often was) by defenders of the monarchy and the social hierarchy, seventeenth-century interest discourse often relied upon an antiaristocratic contrast between prudential calculation and aristocratic excess. Albert O. Hirschman links interest theory to the “demolition of the hero,” the rejection of the aristocracy’s heroic values as either foolish passions or merely veiled interests.<sup>3</sup> Yet there was also an aggressive counterdiscourse. Authors contrasted “noble” erotic excess with interest conceived of as an ignoble deficiency and as the sordid reality hidden in claims to rational “moderation.” Just as proponents of interest often emphasized its economic dimension, so celebrants of love often scornfully equated all modes of interest, including

political ambition, with lower-class money-grubbing as a mercenary defect unworthy of the true aristocrat, who scorned to reckon the costs of overpowering love.

This chapter focuses on William Davenant's unfinished epic romance *Gondibert* (1651), four plays of John Dryden, and diverse erotic writings of Aphra Behn. With topical glances at Interregnum England, Davenant's *Gondibert* contrasts the virtuous aristocrat's erotic extremes with the popular and demagogic pursuit of interest. Unlike Davenant's Caroline drama, which placed love within an idealized court, *Gondibert* locates ideal love in a private domain free of public corruption even as the work treats such love as the proper foundation of political order. The tensions between the private and public in *Gondibert* reverberate throughout the Restoration. Dryden and Behn both register an increasingly strong, though by no means consistent, sense of the separation between a private erotic realm and a political realm of interest. Their depictions of extreme passion sometimes glorify a Restoration court attacked by its opponents for a sexual profligacy that exemplified the monarch's tyrannical lack of self-control. Yet they also oppose to a faction-ridden court a real or imagined private sphere in which lovers can indulge their passions without restraint.

All three authors seek, albeit in different ways, to combat the traditional denigration of excessive male love as effeminizing. Davenant attempts to link such passion, however problematically, to manly political action. Eroticizing the classical ideal of the fate-defying Stoic, Dryden depicts reckless, world-defying lovers of both genders as modern instances of Stoic heroism. While sympathetically portraying intense desire, Dryden also celebrates a self-sacrificing love on the part of both males and females that demonstrates a heroic strength of will precisely by conquering powerful erotic urges. Behn, by contrast, transvalues effeminization: lovers of both genders are gloriously "effeminate" in their reckless, passive yielding to overwhelming desire and sensual pleasure.

Davenant, Dryden, and Behn are also generically and stylistically experimental in their attempts to celebrate erotic extremity with appropriate sublimity. Yet while both male writers and, to a lesser extent, Behn associate their writings with authoritative classical high-style genres such as epic, tragedy, and Pindaric ode, they also draw attention to their distinctively modern eroticism as well as to their engagement with their own times. Even while defending a residual aristocratic ethos against the values of commercial society, Dryden and Behn in particular influentially adumbrate emergent middle-class literary and cultural norms, especially in their late Jacobite works, which most clearly oppose love to a corrupt public world. While scholars have often noted a reaction against libertinism and rhetorical extravagance in eighteenth-century polite middle-class culture, eighteenth-century authors adapted and transformed the Restoration rhetoric of extremity in order to celebrate (among other contradictory values) an ideal of passionate domesticity opposed to the economic domain of getting and spending. Alongside, and in conflict

with, the traditional and still predominant emphasis upon moderate conjugal love, the ideal of extreme passion infiltrated the literature celebrating middle-class companionate marriage. Writers contrasted to gross materialist interests virtuously extreme love as the proper foundation of marriage. The notion of separate female and male spheres could partially “resolve” the tensions between erotic and acquisitive values.<sup>4</sup> The wife at home embodied the ideal of extreme passion (as well as the contrasting ideal of female modesty), while the husband outside the home soberly pursued economic interest (but sought to avoid the corrupting forces of avarice). Conflicting norms thus came to reign within both the domestic and socioeconomic domains, leading to familiar, enduringly modern ambivalence about the proper limits of both passion and economic self-interest.

### Love versus Interest in *Gondibert*

Davenant’s poem adapts the erotic themes of his Caroline court dramas to respond to the political problems posed for Royalists by the civil war and Interregnum.<sup>5</sup> Recalling the heroic love portrayed in French prose romances and in Spenser’s *Faerie Queene*, its major English precursor in verse romance, *Gondibert* represents erotic passion as an aristocratic challenge to a debased modern world. While ostensibly depicting internecine strife in medieval Lombardy, the poet provides topical analogies in order to ascribe England’s turmoil to the pursuit of self-interest. Oswald, the Cromwellian leader of a rebellious faction, seeks the hand of princess Rhodalind, heiress to the throne, solely out of ambition, for he “never knew love’s ancient Laws” (1.1.49). The head of the loyal faction, the poem’s eponymous hero Gondibert, dubs Oswald’s ambition a “lust of Empire,” suggesting that such ambition is a perversion of erotic passion, both excessive and misdirected (1.3.26). A warrior as well as a demagogue, Oswald possesses heroic grandeur: he is figured as an “aspiring Eagle” even though he “stoops” to the people to gain power (1.1.33). Yet Davenant subsequently reduces rebelliousness to mere “interest” when describing the machinations of Oswald’s sister Gartha, who heads his faction after his death in battle. Like her brother, Gartha prefers “Ambition’s higher taste” to “love” (2.4.13), but she must stoop even lower than he to conquer. Persuading her to disguise herself as a man as part of a court intrigue, her counselor Hermegild overcomes her “shame” at “rude” deceit by arguing that she must do whatever advances “int’rest,” “solid int’rest” (3.1.61). The movement from Oswald’s battles to Gartha’s cross-dressing—from valor to fraud—limns the transition from a noble epic world to a sordid modern one.

This modern world is associated with the Interregnum. Hermegild argues that “Numbers” and “Senates” will excuse Gartha’s vicious “Extremes” in pursuit of interest:

If you approve what Numbers lawfull think,  
 Be bold, for Number cancels bashfulness;  
 Extremes, from which a King would blushing shrink,  
 Unblushing Senates act as no excess.

(3.1.63)

“Numbers” evoke the “many” who rule in a popular state; “Unblushing Senates” who lack the restraint of a “King” glance at England’s Commonwealth Parliament. Allusion heightens the sense of a bathetic fall: Hermegild’s “Be bold” recalls the command repeatedly addressed to another cross-dressing woman, Spenser’s Britomart (3.11.50.4, 3.11.54.3). While Britomart dons men’s apparel in pursuit of a noble love that will found the English monarchy, Gartha disguises herself as a man to connive at power out of antimonarchical interest.

Davenant contrasts Oswald and Gartha’s destructive self-interest with Gondibert and his adored Birtha’s “innocent” erotic “extreames” (3.4.64). Gondibert prefers to dwell with beloved Birtha, the daughter of a retired scholar, in the “shade” rather than “soar at” Princess Rhodalind, whom he could marry to inherit the kingdom (2.8.44, 2.8.46). Yet Davenant is equivocal concerning Gondibert’s amorous retirement. His preface complains that the world is “ill govern’d” because the wicked are excessively ambitious while the virtuous are not ambitious enough, being “guilty” of a “contentednesse” that “evaporate[s]” their “strength of mind” (13–14). The poem hints that Gondibert’s love-inspired content is potentially enfeebling and effeminizing: Davenant ascribes Adam’s fall to his “wonder” at Eve’s “Beauty” and consequent loss of “Manhood” (2.6.64); in the next canto, Davenant ominously describes Gondibert’s “wilde wonder” at Birtha’s “beauty” (2.7.58, 61).

Yet Gondibert’s own praise of Birtha suggests that erotic extremity will guide him back to the manly world of political action:

The world wil be (O thou, the whole world’s Mayd!)

.....

Taught by thy minde, and by thy beauty sway’d;

And I a needless part of it, unless

You think me for the whole a Delegate,

To treat for what they want, of your excesse,

Vertue to serve the universal State.

(2.7.53–54)

Gondibert expresses a hyperbolic version of the notion of extreme passion as a public, pacifying force found in Davenant’s Caroline court drama. Gondibert the rapturous lover analogizes his beloved to the Neoplatonic world soul, the animating principle of the world, and to the Neoplatonic godhead, which overflows with “excess” [*hyperbolê*] of goodness.<sup>6</sup> Such Neoplatonic mythmaking has political implications: while declining to aspire to rule as Rhodalind’s

consort, Gondibert is inspired by Birtha to “serve” the public realm in the most virtuous mission, namely, the overcoming of political discord. Davenant treats all wars as types of “civil warre” on the grounds that humankind should be “One” under one “universall” monarch (2.8.36–37). Inflamed by his beloved with a vision of unity, Gondibert wishes to combat all “civil” war, both national and global.

The problem is that the “many” will not respond to this erotic vision of wholeness as the basis of political order. The mob, with its base interests and irrational “lusts,” must be ruled, as Davenant’s preface notes, by fear of “punishment” (13). Even demagogic aristocrats like Oswald and Gartha scorn love. Virtuous lovers (the few) must therefore overcome the vicious nonlovers (the many). The “noble” Hurgonil, one of Gondibert’s lieutenants, imagines noble lovers and the unloving mob battling for supremacy: “Victors through number never gain’d applause,” he claims, for “One Lover equals [in battle] any other Ten” (1.2.82). Hurgonil’s two claims are revealingly distinct: one asserts the lover’s military victory over the many through passionate courage, while the other more realistically denies even a victorious mob (aristocratic) glory. Davenant’s unfinished poem leaves unclear how love could actually triumph over “interest.”

The generic and tonal diversity of Davenant’s poem reveals its ideological uncertainties. While the poem celebrates wholeness, its epic battles, romance eroticism, furtive court machinations, and allusions to contemporary political realities fail to coalesce. Davenant does not resolve the tension between erotic “extremes” nurtured in retired innocence and the self-interest that dominates the public realm. This tension becomes the theme of much Restoration literature, which increasingly settles for acknowledging rather than seeking to amend the split between public and private domains.

### Love versus Interest in Dryden’s Restoration Dramas: *The Conquest of Granada* and *All for Love*

In his early Restoration poetry, like *Astraea Redux* (1660) and the heavily georgic *Annus Mirabilis* (1667), Dryden imagines an internally peaceful kingdom that with “united Int’rest” (*Astraea Redux* l. 296) seeks power and plenty through commerce or conquest.<sup>7</sup> Yet Dryden’s Restoration dramas forcefully dramatize that interests can divide rather than unite kingdoms, and that heroic individuals must strive to distinguish their noble erotic passions from base interest.

In *The Conquest of Granada* (written 1670–1671 and published 1672), the hero Almanzor’s passion for Almahide, first the betrothed and then the wife of the Moorish king of Granada, reveals both his dangerous unruliness and his aristocratic merit. His sexual desire is superior to but intermittently associ-

ated with contaminating interest. Yet Almanzor also displays a heroic self-sacrifice as lover that is all the more meritorious for struggling against vehement erotic urges. Extreme passion is thus both a snare and a means of transcending a corrupt world of self-interest.

Almanzor's first gesture as a lover demonstrates his virtuous extremity. Falling in love with the captured Almahide at first sight, Almanzor declares his willingness to free her because of his "exalted passion."<sup>8</sup> Accused of an "excess" of "generosity" that shows "want of Love," he declares his "excess of love" "mounts so high / That, seen far off, it lessens to the eye" (pt. 1: 3.1.446–449; 11:59). Almanzor's declaration "Ple Nobly loose her, in her liberty" (pt. 1: 1.3.445; 11:59) introduces a key, polysemous term of the play, "loose," which here means both "release" and "lose." John M. Wallace argued persuasively for the influence of Seneca's *De beneficiis* upon Dryden's notion of aristocratic generosity.<sup>9</sup> Dryden evokes the last line of *De beneficiis*, in which Seneca claims that the magnanimous man will continue to be generous even when he "loses" by doing so: "hoc est magni animi perdere et dare," or, as paraphrased in 1679 by Roger L'Estrange, "To Lose, and to Give still, is the Part of a great Mind."<sup>10</sup> Like Aristotle (*NE* 4.1–2) and Cicero (*De officiis* 2.15.54–2.18.64), Seneca elsewhere associates liberality with the mean ("modus," *De beneficiis* 1.15.3), but Dryden draws upon Seneca's most extreme formulation in glorifying Almanzor.

While Seneca concerns himself with the liberality that binds male friends, Dryden complicates Stoic generosity by grounding it in heterosexual desire. Having freed Almahide, Almanzor demands that she return his love even after he learns she has been promised to the Moorish king and still later begs for an adulterous affair after she is wed. His last plea for consummation, expressing a passion he himself calls "too fierce" and "too full of zeal," fervidly imagines illicit sexual abandon:

... give a loose to love.  
 Love eagerly; let us be gods tonight;  
 . . . . .  
 Live but to night . . .  
 . . . . .  
 Methinks already crown'd with joyes, I lie;  
 Speechless and breathless in an Extasie.  
 Not absent in one thought: I am all there:  
 Still closs; yet wishing still to be more near.

(pt. 2: 4.3.211, 214, 216–217, 231, 233–236; 11:172)

Almanzor's demand that Almahide "give a loose to love" recalls and qualifies his own earlier self-sacrificing willingness to "loose" her. Almanzor wants Almahide free so that she can freely give herself back to him.



Dryden renders Almanzor's demand sympathetically (if not sympathetic to all audiences or readers) by distinguishing his hero's intense desire from brutish lust.<sup>11</sup> Almanzor's parallel imperatives—"Love eagerly" and "Live but to night"—identify, in *carpe diem* fashion, true living with intense loving in the shadow of inevitable death. His demand recalls Catullus's impassioned plea to Lesbia (expressed as a quasi-hendiadys): "let us live and love" ["vivamus . . . atque amemus," 5.1]. Moreover, Almanzor treats sex as a matter of mind and fancy as well as body. His "Extasie" seems twofold: not only the imagined bliss of lovemaking but also the transport of his proleptic imagination, which takes him from the present to this blissful future. His triumphant declaration, "Not absent in one thought: I am all there," imagines his being already present, as embodied consciousness, with his beloved in the act of love. Yet Almanzor also feels proleptic dissatisfaction, for he longs to be "more near" to Almahide than sex will allow. Almanzor echoes the Renaissance Neoplatonic notion that sex is inevitably unsatisfactory because "extreme" lovers yearn for fuller union. As Leone Ebreo puts it with high-minded precision, because "bodies . . . are distinct, each occupying a determinate space of its own," after sex true lovers still desire a "union, which they cannot perfectly consummate."<sup>12</sup>

Dryden further ennobles Almanzor's *carpe diem* plea by linking it to Almanzor's heroic virtue. Drawing on the association of aristocratic magnanimity with heroic virtue that transcends the mean portrayed in Carew's *Coelum Britannicum*, Dryden's dedication and prefatory essay defend Almanzor as a "great spirit" whose "excessive . . . courage" perforce deviates from "strict rules of moral virtue" (11:6, 16). Almanzor's demand for "a loose to love" recalls his own earlier boast that he is "exempted from the rules of War" because "One Loose" of his "Heroes Soul" is more successful than others' caution (pt. 2: 4.2.12–13; 11:159). While specifically denoting an "impetuous course" (OED s.v. "loose," 6), the term "loose" associates Almanzor's rule-breaking valor with his transgressive eroticism as analogous modes of heroic excess.

Dryden qualifies the libertine aspect of Almanzor's heroism, however, by depicting his self-conquest under Almahide's sway as equally heroic and self-affirming. Almanzor is not deterred by the command of his mother's ghost that he desist from "lawless Love" for the married Almahide (pt. 2: 4.3.132; 11:169); only the beloved herself can restrain him. Dryden transforms the romance scenario we saw in Heliodorus and Sidney's *Arcadia*, where the noble male lover naturally inclines to sensual excess and the virtuous beloved must therefore resist and moderate his passion. Almahide lauds Almanzor's precariously achieved erotic self-restraint as a fulfillment, as well as a tempering, of his erotic extremity: "'Tis gen'rous to have conquer'd your desire; / You mount above your wish; and loose it higher" (pt. 2: 4.3.275–276; 11:173). She succinctly glorifies Almanzor's simultaneous self-transcendence and self-affirmation as passionate lover. Recalling his own earlier description of his "generos-

ity" as an "excess of love" that "mounts . . . high," she represents his "mount[ing] above" desire as the fulfillment of his erotic excess. Transmuting Almanzor's uses of "loose," she declares that he "loose[s]" his erotic desire in the triple sense of "losing," "doing away" (OED s.v. "lose," 7) and "releasing" it—the latter by transforming it into a "higher" desire that sustains both his love and her honor.

Almahide herself demonstrates the heroic quality of self-transcendence. She acknowledges that before she loved Almanzor with passionate "strife," her life was "dully blest" with "vulgar good" (pt. 1: 5.1.371, 376; 11:93). Without strong passion to experience and subdue, one cannot escape a "vulgar" life of dull safety. Her continual rebuffing of Almanzor registers her heroic vanquishing of her own strong passions. Critics have long noted Dryden's debt to the dramatic theory and practice of Pierre Corneille.<sup>13</sup> Almahide's self-conquering adherence to her marriage vows—and the self-conquest she inspires in Almanzor—may be glossed by Corneille's remark on the "exalted virtue" of his heroine Chimène in *Le Cid*. Claiming that she "conquers" her passions, to which "she leaves all their force in order to triumph over them more gloriously," he contrasts such self-conquering self-affirmation with the "moderate [*médiocre*] goodness" of ancient tragedy's protagonists.<sup>14</sup> While Corneille's "moderate goodness" refers to the morally mixed character (fundamentally virtuous but committing some tragic error) that Aristotle describes in *Poetics* 14.5 as the most suitable for a tragic protagonist, Corneille also betrays contempt for the unconflicted, virtuous "mediocrity" of Aristotelian ethics. Almahide's "vulgar good" exudes similar scorn for Aristotelian moderation. For Dryden as for Corneille, modern heroes and heroines exhibit more agonized passion and more agonistic strength.

Almanzor's own psychomachia is figured in terms of his struggle to separate heroic love from self-interest.<sup>15</sup> His love draws him into the pursuit of self-interest that he initially opposes. At the opening of the play, Almanzor upbraids king Boabdelin (with topical criticism of Charles II) for not suppressing factions with a firm hand. "Divided int'rests," supported by and inciting the rebellious "Unthinking Crowd," undermine the king's rule (pt. 1: 1.1.226, 284; 11:30, 32). Yet Almanzor eventually fights for the king not from loyalty but from what he confesses to be personal "int'rest" (pt. 1: 4.2.59; 11:64)—his desire to merit Almahide. Almanzor's unstable deployment of commercial rhetoric reveals his contradictory relationship to "interest." Initially he wishes to "buy" Almahide's love with his devotion (pt. 1: 4.2.405; 11:79). Later he demands her as reward from the king even as he proudly denies that he "sets his services to sale" (pt. 1: 5.1. 253; 11:89). Under her sway, Almanzor declares that he will fight for an ungrateful king to prove he did nothing for "profit" or "reward" and is content to deserve the queen he cannot obtain (pt. 2: 2.3.40, 43; 11:149). Yet he subsequently pleads for consummation as a "reward" (pt. 2: 4.3.177; 11:171). Almahide responds by appealing to his "pure

love” and the “secret joy of mind” he should take in virtue for its own sake (pt. 2: 4.3.167, 259; 11:170, 173); to demand consummation, she claims, is “base,” “mercenary,” “low” (pt. 2: 4.3.242, 246, 248; 11:172–173). While Almanzor is persuaded, his previous relapses into the language of commercial quid pro quo suggest his difficulty in separating overpowering love from “mercenary” interest.

Though ending with the widowed Almahide and Almanzor betrothed and integrated into the victorious Christian Spanish court, the play suggests that love is fully separable from interest only in a utopian realm outside politics. Almahide wishes she could “shun the Throne” to lead “an humble life” with Almanzor and thereby attain “private greatness” as his wife (pt. 1: 5.1.358–360; 11:93). Dryden’s *Essay of Dramatick Poesie* (1668) contrasts ancient tragedy’s depictions of “Lust, Cruelty, Revenge, Ambition” with modern drama’s presentation of the “gentleness” of true “Love,” which is “the private concernment of every person” (17:31). While focusing upon aristocratic passion as a playwright, as a critic Dryden associates love with a “private” life that transcends sociopolitical status. Almahide’s utopian association of her love with both heroic greatness and humble privacy reveals Dryden’s attempt to imagine a heroic version of such private eroticism.

Dryden’s *All for Love, or, The World Well Lost* (1678) indeed suggests that to relinquish political power for private passion is the height of heroism. The play simplifies the perspectivalist, relativizing contrasts between Egyptian and Roman values in Dryden’s Shakespearean model to contrast an “extreme” adulterous love that breaks moral conventions but is noble in its self-sacrifice, on the one hand, and a public world dominated by selfish “interest,” on the other. Sounding like Almahide, Cleopatra nobly scorns “vulgar” moderation in favor of a passionate extremity:

Moderate sorrow  
Fits vulgar Love . . .  
But I have lov’d with such transcendent passion,  
I soard, at first, quite out of Reasons view,  
And now am lost above it.

(2.1.18–22; 13:39–40)

“Lost” above reason, Cleopatra is prepared to “lose” all for noble love. Having “lost” a female “Honor” that Shakespeare’s heroine never missed, she “would lose” her life for Antony (3.1.462, 465; 13:70). While Shakespeare’s coquetish Cleopatra delighted in playing lovers’ games to keep her lover, Dryden’s Cleopatra tries to trick Antony into jealousy only when “too much love” makes her heed bad advice. She quickly drops this uncongenial stratagem because she would prefer to “lose” even Antony himself than “ignobly” win him back (4.1.195, 199–200; 13:78). Antony’s claim that “She deserves / More World’s [sic] than I can lose” (1.1.368–369; 13:36) comes to seem, simply, true.

Antony and Cleopatra contrast their noble passion with worldly “interest.” Cleopatra mocks Antony’s desire to continue the fight against Octavian as motivated by “your Int’rest,” “your dear int’reſt” (2.1.408–409; 13:53); her sardonic “dear” suggests Antony’s perverse and temporary Roman attachment to “interest” rather than love. Antony himself contemptuously declares that Octavian “knows no Honour, / Divided from his Int’reſt,” and that he’s “fit” to “buy” rather than “conquer Kingdoms” (3.1.212–213, 215; 13:62).

The final speech of the play, the Egyptian priest Serapion’s blessing upon the dead lovers, paints them as victorious in defeat: “See, see how the Lovers sit in State together, / As they were giving Laws to half Mankind” (5.1.508–509; 13:110). This concluding tableau of the two lovers in their public regalia sitting “as” if they were “giving Laws to half Mankind” literally means that they still appear to be ruling the eastern half of the Roman empire as they did, for a time, in life. It also suggests, however, that the dead lovers figure as moral models for the “half Mankind” who recognize their unworldly passion as exemplary.<sup>16</sup> Dryden underscores their moral victory over the political world by conflating two passages from Virgil’s account of Roman history engraved upon Aeneas’s shield in the *Aeneid*. Virgil culminates his ekphrasis with Octavius Caesar’s “sitting” (“sedens,” *Aeneid* 8.720) in triumph after the defeat of Antony and Cleopatra at Actium. Dryden’s lovers, who “sit in State” in defiance of the Actium defeat that precedes and motivates *All for Love*’s plot, have usurped Octavian’s place. Immediately before describing Actium, Virgil depicts Cato the Younger, the Stoic republican who killed himself rather than admit defeat by Octavian’s uncle Julius Caesar, “giving . . . laws” [*dantem iura*] to pious souls in Elysium (8.670). Dryden’s lovers “giving Laws” assume the role of Virgil’s defiant Cato, committing suicide rather than conceding defeat and thereby gaining a posthumous moral authority despite the political triumphs of tyrannical Caesars. Dryden boldly analogizes his passionate lovers to the ascetic, hypermasculine Stoic suicide who, by traditional moral standards, is their antithesis. The “half” mankind who obey Antony and Cleopatra in heeding love’s all-consuming demands are, like those who heed Cato, implicitly identified as the virtuous.

In 1677 Dryden derived from Longinus (*On the Sublime* 15) the notion that sublimity consists in making readers feel they “behold” what “the Poet paints” (12:94). Serapion’s—and Dryden’s—“See, see” enjoins the audience or reader to “see” the lovers’ loss of empire as love’s moral triumph over the political world. Montaigne singled out Virgil’s description of Cato’s “giving laws” as the greatest example of how sublime, “excessive” [*excessive*] poetry “ravishes” its reader.<sup>17</sup> With Virgilian grandiloquence Dryden seeks a similar sublime excess on behalf of “extreme,” unworldly passion.

In his 1697 translation of the *Aeneid*, Dryden cites Montaigne’s discussion of the Cato passage to note Virgil’s betrayal of sympathy for republicanism in an epic celebrating Augustus (5:280, 6:822–823). The final moment of *All for*

*Love* similarly complicates Dryden's political meanings. One might read the play's celebration of "noble" adultery as a Tory defense of Charles II against those who accused the promiscuous king of neglecting or subverting the public good.<sup>18</sup> Dryden's dedication gives a pro-court accent to the play's attack on interest by attacking the partisan "Interest" of Whigs and their leader, Shaftesbury (13:3, 7). Yet Antony and Cleopatra's grandiose relinquishment of power distinguishes them from Charles II, making the play more antipolitical than Tory. The dedication pillories the court's opponents as hypocrites without concern for the "Publick Good" and praises the king and his chief minister for "Moderation" (13:7, 5). The play itself, however, represents no "Publick Good" worthy of being pursued with moderation, leaving only "extreme" personal passion as alternative to a political world of self-interest.<sup>19</sup>

### Love and Interest in Dryden's Jacobite Drama

Dryden's major poetry of the 1680s rejects the escapist tendencies of his 1670s drama. As poet laureate and verse propagandist for the Stuart monarchy from the Exclusion Crisis through the reign of James II, Dryden decries partisan political "interest" but appeals to public norms of "moderation" and the "common Interest" that his dramatic glorifications of passion ignore.<sup>20</sup> Although he treats Charles II's promiscuity at the opening of *Absalom and Achitophel* as nobler than Shaftesbury's and his party's wish to "embroil the state" out of "interest" (l. 501), Dryden implicitly criticizes his king's libertinism even while explicitly excusing it.<sup>21</sup> The poem's movement from apparent indulgence of royal irresponsibility at the opening to celebration of the sacred king at the end rehearses Dryden's assertion of public over private values within his own career.

In two of his post-Glorious Revolution plays, however, Dryden revives with a new Jacobite tonality his opposition between extreme passion and a corrupt public realm. The topical allusions of *Don Sebastian* (1689) encode a scathing critique of the Glorious Revolution as the apotheosis of interest: the tyrant Muley-Moloch who identifies "Int'rest of State" with his personal interest evokes William of Orange (2.1.429; 15:116; see also 2.1.34; 15:102); rebels who pursue "interest" resemble the English people (1.1.606–608, 2.1.134, 2.1.204, 3.1.399–400; 15:101, 106, 108, 139).<sup>22</sup> A self-sacrificing extremity of love, a figure for Jacobite constancy to the exiled monarch, emerges as the virtuous alternative to a debased political world.

The love of the play's eponymous tragic hero Sebastian for his half sister Almeyda is both nobly extreme and tainted by "interest." Dryden relies on the psychological reasoning for the incest taboo proffered by "Wise Montaigne" (as he is called in the play's preface [15:70]), who argues that incestuous desires are "immoderate" because they combine sexual desire with the natural love

between kin.<sup>23</sup> Unlike Sophocles' or Seneca's Oedipus and Jocasta, whose incestuous love appears horribly distinctive not in its quality but in its tragic misdirection, Sebastian and Almeyda love each other more intensely than ordinary lovers. Before knowing the truth, Almeyda declares a "Sisters love" as well as an "unbounded Love" and "excess of love" for Sebastian, and she expresses foreboding concerning her passionate immoderation (2.1.578, 2.1.633, 3.1.241; 15:120, 122, 134). After the truth is revealed, Sebastian declares, "there's Incest in our very Souls, / For we were form'd too like" (5.1.589–590; 15:213); their excessive love, he now realizes, combines sexual passion with the natural love of kin, based (as Aristotle argues) on likeness (NE 8.12.3–6).<sup>24</sup>

On one level Dryden treats Sebastian's willingness to die at the hands of Muley-Moloch for one night of conjugal bliss with Almeyda as heroic extremism:

Were I to choose again, and knew my fate,  
For such a night I wou'd be what I am.  
The Joys I have possess are ever mine;  
Out of thy reach behind Eternity.

(3.1.180–183; 15:132)

Sebastian's and Muley-Moloch's quarrel over Almeyda figures James II's and William III's contest for England, and Sebastian's brave lines not only glorify James II's doomed struggle but also resound as a credo for all Jacobites, who retain in memory the "Joys" of James's reign amid William's tyranny. The lines have personal resonance for Dryden: Sebastian echoes with new Jacobite poignancy Dryden's 1685 Pindaric imitation of Horace's *Ode* 3.29, in which Dryden, through Horace, declares with Stoic pride that his subsequent fortune matters not because "The joys I have possess, in spite of fate are mine: / Not Heav'n itself upon the past has pow'r" (ll. 70–71; *Poems* 1:436).

Yet there is another perspective upon Sebastian's defiant passion. His honest old adviser Alvarez, who reveals Sebastian and Almeyda's incest, bluntly dismisses their love as their "Int'rest" (5.1.184; 15:198). He then explains that Sebastian's father sought to regain the Moorish kingdom for Almeyda's mother because of an adulterous passion from which Almeyda was born. Both his account of the erotic motive for conquest on the part of Sebastian's father and Sebastian's protesting expostulations revise motifs from *The Conquest of Granada*:

Alvarez.                   And can you finde  
No mistery, couch'd in this excess of kindness?  
Were Kings e're known, in this degenerate Age,  
So passionately fond of noble Acts,  
Where Interest shar'd not more than half with honour?  
Sebastian. Base groveling Soul, who know'st not honours worth;

But weigh'st it out in mercenary Scales;  
 The Secret pleasure of a generous Act,  
 Is the great minds great bribe.  
*Alvarez.* Show me that King, and I'll believe the Phoenix.  
 But knock at your own breast, and ask your Soul  
 If those fair fatal eyes [of Almeyda], edg'd not your Sword,  
 More than your Fathers charge, and all your vows?  
 If so, and so your silence grants it is,  
 Know King, your Father had, like you, a Soul;  
 And Love is your Inheritance from him.

(5.1.293–308; 15:202)

Alvarez's tracing of Sebastian's father's "excess of kindness" back to passionate love recalls Almanzor's declaration, upon releasing Almahide, that his "excess" of "generosity" derives from "excess of love." Yet Alvarez denigrates as mere "Interest" both such passion and the military conquests it inspired. Sebastian's contemptuous, exasperated distinction between the "Secret pleasure" that the "generous" aristocratic soul feels and the "mercenary" motives of the "base" echoes Almeyda's distinction between the "secret joy of mind" of the heroic lover and the "base," "mercenary" desires of lesser men. Alvarez, however, reveals Sebastian to be a naïf who knows neither his father nor himself: his "Inheritance," of which he is so proud, is a curse upon those who espouse high honor but descend from adultery to incest in a generation.

The final scene humbles Sebastian not only as incestuous lover but also as "heroic" soldier and links the two roles' immoderation.<sup>25</sup> In the first scene Sebastian had proudly accepted the accusation of "boundless thirst of Empire." Scorning death, he had boasted that wherever his body or ashes were buried, there he took "Possession" and "Reign[ed]" (1.1.363, 367, 383; 15:92–93). In the final scene, after learning of his incest, Sebastian abjures his "boundless" desire when he abdicates his throne to retire to a hermitage: "The world was once too narrow for my mind, / But one poor little nook will serve me now" (5.1.547–548; 15:211). While at the play's opening Sebastian had imagined a life-in-death of posthumous possession, now he looks forward to a death-in-life of renunciation: he will "dye to" Almeyda and should be reported "dead" (5.1.545, 562; 15:211–212). Sebastian's relinquishment of a "world . . . too narrow" for a gravelike "little nook" recalls the Roman satirist Juvenal's mocking deflation of the exemplary "heroic" conqueror's boundless desires: though Alexander the Great was not content with the "narrow limits of the world" [*angusto limite mundi*], a sarcophagus sufficed for his tiny corpse (*Satire* 10.168–173). Sebastian's vaunt that the "Joys" he "possest" on his wedding night were eternally his retrospectively emerges not only as heroic Jacobitism but also as a symptom of unruly desire to possess both as lover and as warrior—whether the object of desire be too much his own (his sister) or too little

(foreign kingdoms). Sebastian finally learns to quell his “boundless” desire as both warrior and lover. Longing to continue his incestuous love—to “break through Laws Divine, and Humane; / And think ’em Cobwebs, spred for little man”—but condemning such thoughts as “impious” (5.1.629–630, 635; 15:214), the repentant Sebastian rises to the self-conquest of an Almahide, heroic precisely because of the extremity of the passion that he must subdue.

Alvarez’s cynical question—“Were Kings e’re known, in this degenerate Age, / So passionately fond of noble Acts, / Where Interest shar’d not more than half with honour?”—implicitly criticizes James II as well as William III. Sebastian as “boundless” lover-warrior indeed resembles James, for whom Dryden’s standard, ambivalent epithet was “warlike.”<sup>26</sup> While Sebastian’s tragic exile provides a poignant parallel to James II’s in France, Sebastian’s voluntary abdication, which his chief officer hails as “Truly great!” (5.1.557; 15:211), distinguishes him from his real-life analogue. Supporters of the Glorious Revolution used the transparent fiction that the defeated James II had abdicated.<sup>27</sup> With magnanimous self-abasement, Sebastian becomes “truly great”—and thus more heroic than his real-life counterpart—by making a fiction of self-sacrifice real.

Dryden complements his tragic portrait of “extreme” passion, which combines sinful excess and virtuous self-abasement, with glorification of a humble subject’s self-sacrificing fidelity. Alvarez offers his disinterested loyalty as ethical proof of the truth of his revelation of incest:

What Int’reſt can I have, or what delight  
To blaze their [Sebastian’s and Almeyda’s parents’] ſhame, or to divulge my own?  
If prov’d, you hate me; if unprov’d, Condemn.  
Not Racks or Tortures could have forc’d this ſecret,  
But too much care, to ſave you from a Crime.

(5.1.332–336; 15:203)

“Too much care,” a nonerotic form of love, is the only version of extreme love wholly devoid of “Int’reſt.” By following Sebastian into retirement unto “death” (5.1.697 15:216), Alvarez attains heroic status without his king’s flaws. Dryden thereby glorifies the loyal Jacobite, who more purely than any monarch embodies self-sacrifice in a “degenerate Age” of interest.

Yet the late Dryden does not give up on aristocratic passion as an alternative to his age’s ignominy. In *Amphitryon* (1692), his final comedy, he depicts a love that is both nobly “extreme” and virtuously domestic. While heavily based upon Molière’s *Amphitryon* and indebted for details to the *Amphitryon* of Plautus, Dryden’s play diverges from these models in exploring the relationship between passion and interest in the context of the Glorious Revolution. Jupiter, who makes love to Amphitryon’s wife, Alcmena, while disguised as her husband, parallels William III. Like William, who sought legitimacy even while conquering England, Jupiter is an “Arbitrary Power” who, even while



pretending to be Alcmena's rightful husband, declares he "holds" her "by force of Arms; / And claims his Crown by Conquest" (1.1.131, 2.2.86–87; 15:235, 258). Dryden adds to Plautus and Molière the "Interested" servant Phaedra, the embodiment of base English subjects who acquiesce to conquest out of self-interest (2.2.105; 15:259). Jupiter gains his night of love with Alcmena by bribing Phaedra, who herself agrees to a fling with Mercury for gold. Drawing the apposite political analogy, Mercury predicts that a whole island nation's "Men" will, like Phaedra, be concerned only with "Interest" (2.2.108–109; 15:259).<sup>28</sup>

Alcmena's conjugal love, by contrast, belies Mercury's claim that the "Great" only pretend to love while pursuing mere "Int'rest" (5.1.549–553; 15:302). She is both passionate lover and virtuous wife. A self-declared "excess of Fondness" leads her (in an addition to Dryden's sources) to forgive her husband's jealousy as the outgrowth of his own extreme passion, the "noble Crime" of "Passion, in a Fever" (4.1.30, 32, 86; 15:285, 287). While Molière's *Alcmène* declares her "tendresse extrême" for her supposed husband,<sup>29</sup> Dryden's Alcmena conflates intense passion with conjugal virtue when she recounts both her "excess of Joy" and "tenderness of Wively Love" (3.1.168, 275; 15:269, 273) in responding to her supposed husband's lovemaking. She has a capacity for heroic self-sacrifice that distinguishes her from everyone else in her ignoble world (including her military spouse) and recalls the protagonists of Dryden's heroic dramas and tragedies: in her first soliloquy, another addition to Dryden's models, she declares her willingness to die for Amphitryon (1.2.11; 15:240).

Alcmena is passionately committed only to her private sphere of love: everything else is "flat, insipid" (2.2.59; 15:257). In lines that recall not Dryden's dramatic precursors but John Donne's "The Sunne Rising" and "Break of Day"—both lyric defenses of love in opposition to the world—Alcmena castigates her supposed husband for leaving her in the morning. She argues that the day is only for "busie Men" (i.e., men of base mercenary concerns) and that she and her husband could "put out the Sun" simply by drawing the curtains (2.2.22, 25–26; 15:256). When Jupiter demands that she reveal before Phaedra what she felt during their lovemaking, she declines to expose what belongs to "Love and Night, / And Privacy" (2.2.72–73; 15:258); passion and feminine modesty combine to defend her private domain.

Alcmena's private realm represents one of Dryden's final responses to courtly as well as national corruption. Dryden's Jupiter recalls not only the (homosexually inclined) William III but also the heterosexually promiscuous Charles II, who so extravagantly used his power to pursue his pleasures.<sup>30</sup> The play invests moral value not in kings—who, whether Stuart or Orange, are naturally prone to vicious excess—but in a private individual, nobly "extreme" in her passionate loyalty. Yet while Alcmena attractively recombines the intense eroticism and self-sacrificing loyalty that *Don Sebastian* had distributed

among different characters, her private sphere is tragically vulnerable to the public realm. She admits as much in her first lines, when she laments (in verses without precedent in Dryden's models) that when her husband is in battle she herself feels beset by "armed foes" even "at home, in private" (1.2.5–6; 15:240). Plautus and Molière show only Amphitryon's reaction to the revelation of Jupiter's seduction. Dryden, by contrast, brings Alcmena on stage in the final scene and depicts her realization that she has been deprived of her conjugal honor by worldly forces beyond her control. Her final words—"A simple Error, is a real Crime; / And unconsenting Innocence is lost" (5.1.391–392; 15:315)—underscore that her private erotic sphere is vulnerable not only to an external defeat that can be transmuted into moral victory (as in *All for Love*) but also to inner violation. The play celebrates private passion even while suggesting that it cannot escape public contamination.

### Behn's Erotic Excess: Androgynizing Rapture

Like Dryden, Aphra Behn contrasts noble passion to ignoble interest first to praise and critique the Restoration court and then to express Jacobite contempt for the Glorious Revolution. Nevertheless, she articulates a very different conception of erotic extremity. Behn does not valorize extreme aristocratic love as masculinist self-assertion or heroic self-conquest over strong passions. She, too, celebrates self-sacrifice, but reinterpreted in a libertine vein as a rapturous loss of self-control. While Dryden juxtaposes conflicting norms of romance and libertinism, Behn joins the two to depict lovers gloriously driven by reckless, self-shattering passion.

Some feminist critics have emphasized Behn's defense of female freedom through disguise, manipulation of masculine desire, and withholding of a "true" inner self from male domination.<sup>31</sup> Others have also explored her positive representation of the overpowering *jouissance* of a female body that "experiences pleasure almost everywhere."<sup>32</sup> My reading qualifies both trends. Behn often identifies both women's and men's pursuit of independence with selfish interest and in so doing registers profound suspicion of such an assertion of self on the part of either gender. She certainly celebrates *jouissance*, but such erotic joy is neither specifically female nor unambiguously self-affirming. Rather than emphasizing the uniqueness of female sensuality as opposed to male phallic pleasure, Behn depicts an "extreme" desire and intense sensual pleasure that both for men and women leads to passivity, suffering, even death—but also rapture. "To Lysander at the Musick-Meeting" compares Behn's own "Extasie" as she beholds and hears a beautiful man's singing to the rapture of a couple making love: "So Ravisht Lovers in each others Armes, / Faint with excess of Joy, excess of Charmes" (ll. 4–6).<sup>33</sup> Transvaluing the traditional notion of men's excessive passion as "effeminizing" passivity,

Behn celebrates a blissful “excess” where there is neither active male ravisher nor passive female, only the androgynously “Ravisht.”

Behn’s “*In Imitation of Horace*” (1684) (1:84–85) dramatizes most powerfully how extreme passion blurs gender categories with blissful torment.<sup>34</sup> Knowing little Latin, Behn nevertheless testifies to the classical tradition’s prestige with her various translations of Latin works (presumably aided by cribs). In this lyric Behn imitates Abraham Cowley’s generally faithful rendition of Horace’s *Ode* 1.5, whose stanzaic form she slightly modifies but whose warning against passion she radically subverts. She uses Horace’s antierotic verses as a foil for defining her own submission to passion. Behn’s poem addresses a charming youth, ostensibly begging him to cease but actually acquiescing in his seduction of a woman whom the last stanza reveals to be the poet herself:

What mean those Amorous Curles of Jet?  
 For what heart-Ravisht Maid  
 Dost thou thy Hair in order set,  
 Thy Wanton Tresses Braid?  
 And thy vast Store of Beauties open lay,  
 That the deluded Fancy leads astray.

For pittty hide thy Starry eyes,  
 Whose Languishments destroy  
 And look not on the Slave that dyes  
 With an Excess of Joy.  
 Defend thy Coral Lips, thy Amber Breath;  
 To taste these Sweets lets in a Certain Death.

Forbear, fond Charming Youth, forbear,  
 Thy words of Melting Love:  
 Thy Eyes thy Language well may spare,  
 One Dart enough can move.  
 And she that hears thy voice and sees thy Eyes  
 With too much Pleasure, too much Softness dies.

Cease, Cease, with Sighs to warm my Soul,  
 Or press me with thy Hand:  
 Who can the kindling fire controul,  
 The tender force withstand?  
 Thy Sighs and Touches like wing’d Lightning fly,  
 And are the Gods of Loves Artillery.

Though weakened by stock epithets and imagery, the poem revises Cowley’s Horace in daring fashion. Addressing the seductress Pyrrha, Horace laments the unhappy future of the naïve youth who is her latest victim and concludes by declaring that he himself has happily forsworn dangerous erotic desire. Instead of appropriating Horace’s emotionally free, authoritative stance, Behn

succumbs to the role of erotic victim. While in each stanza the speaker bids the youth desist, the poem charts the speaker's weakening resistance and the youth's advances from looking to speaking to touching. The final stanza's surprising grammatical shift transforms Horace's move from third-person description of the naïve male lover to his own first-person declaration of freedom from amorous entanglement. In Behn the pronoun switch reveals the breakdown of resistance: she initially treats her erotic captivation as that of a third party, as if imitating Horace's objectivity could preserve her emotional distance, but she cannot sustain this rhetorical pretence and finally acknowledges that her own subjectivity is defined by a painfully pleasing erotic subjection. Yet the third-person rhetoric also expresses something true about the speaker: she seems filled with disbelief that she really is the "heart-Ravisht Maid" because her "ravisht" state deprives her of a sense of self-possession. The speaker's "I" tellingly appears only in two lines before yielding to a rhetorical question that conveys how the speaker loses all sense of particular identity by being overwhelmed by passion: "Who can the kindling fire controul, / The tender force withstand?"

By presenting herself as erotic victim, Behn takes on a role familiar from female complaints such as those in Ovid's *Heroides*, one of which Behn translated (1:12–19). Yet even leaving aside the male-authored, ventriloquized nature of Ovid's laments, Behn's imitation of Horace's poem concerning a male victim of female seduction forcefully reminds us that her amorous suffering is not gender-specific. Her requests that the lover avert his eyes to prevent the speaker's "excess" of passion adapt a Petrarchan trope most often used by male lovers addressing female beauties. In Behn's comedy *The Younger Brother*, for example, a male lover begs, "Ah, Charmion! *shroud those killing Eyes, / That dart th'Extreams of Pleasure, / Else Celadon, tho' favour'd, dies*" (5.2.1–3; 7:408–409). Behn's lyric "A Translation," published the same year as the Horatian imitation, similarly ends with the speaker begging a beautiful woman to hide her breasts because the speaker has "gaz'd—and kist too much" and now "die[s]" with her "Beauties Luxury" (ll. 24, 27–28; 1:101). Given Behn's explicitly lesbian passages,<sup>35</sup> one might conceivably read the speaker of this lyric as Behn. Since she presents the poem as a translation, however, the speaker is more probably meant to be imagined as a French male libertine. Yet whether Behn speaks for herself or ventriloquizes a male is ultimately irrelevant: in the translation as in the Horatian imitation, passivity trumps gender as the defining feature of erotic desire.

Behn's Horatian imitation also undercuts the sense of the seducer as active male. The poem's "Charming Youth" resembles an enchanting woman as much as a male seducer. The reader does not learn that the youth is male until the third stanza, and Behn's description is strikingly "feminine," beginning with the first stanza's close echo of Cowley's opening description of the courtesan Pyrrha:

To whom now *Pyrrha*, art thou kind?  
 To what heart-ravisht Lover,  
 Dost thou thy golden locks unbind,  
 Thy hidden sweets discover,  
 And with large bounty open set  
 All the bright stores of thy rich *Cabinet*?<sup>36</sup>

Behn's seducer with beautiful hair and seductively "open" beauty sounds as much like a female coquette as the *Pyrrha* he recalls. His "Starry eyes" and "Coral Lips" similarly recall the beloved "Maid" with "starry Eyes" and "Coral Lips" in Behn's "A Translation" (ll. 1, 9, 13; 2:100–101). Behn's youth is even more passive—and in this sense more "feminine"—than Horace's *Pyrrha*, since he combines her female charms with the passivity of Horace's male victim. The erotic power of Behn's "Charming Youth" lies in his own erotic susceptibility: his ocular "Languishments"—the amorous passivity evident in his eyes—arouse a corresponding feeling in the speaker. His "tender force" seems to be forceful precisely because it is tender, and the "too much Softness" that afflicts the speaker is the amorous youth's before it is her own. He resembles the androgynous *Lysander* in "To *Lysander at the Musick-Meeting*," whose feminine "Softness," "Sweetness," and "killing Eyes of Languishment" (ll. 15, 17–18) arouse a corresponding languor in the poet.<sup>37</sup>

Behn highlights the collapse of gender distinctions in glorious passivity with another intertextual echo. Behn's move from third to first person recalls Sappho's famous lament "*phainetai moi*," which is quoted and discussed in Longinus's treatise on sublimity. As Longinus's major lyric and only erotic instance of the sublime, the poem is doubly appropriate as a model for Behn. It depicts (as Boileau puts it in the 1674 translation of Longinus that Behn and her contemporaries consulted) "l'excès et la violence de l'amour."<sup>38</sup> In Boileau's rendering, Sappho moves from a stanza declaring a male "happy" [*heureux*] who has the pleasure of hearing her female beloved speak and seeing the beloved "softly smiling" upon him ("Qui jouit du plaisir de t'entendre parler, / Qui te voit quelquefois doucement lui sourire") to two stanzas in which Sappho, filled with unrequited desire for her beloved, anatomizes the amorous "flame" [*flame*], "soft transports" [*doux transports*] and "soft languishments" [*douces langueurs*] with which she "dies" [*je me meurs*]. Echoing Sappho, Behn's couplet "She that hears thy voice and sees they Eyes / With too much Pleasure, too much Softness dies" associates the charming youth with Sappho's female beloved and suggests that Behn's "She" combines the "happy" condition of Sappho's male rival with the "soft" pain of amorous Sappho herself.

By depicting herself as both Sappho's first- and third-person figures, the female self and the male rival, Behn captures the sense of sublime self-loss in Sappho's poem. Longinus notes that Sappho, who freezes and burns, expresses "contradictory feelings" [*mouvements contraires*]: Behn feels both the supreme

pleasure of the rival and the torment of Sappho. Longinus observes that Sappho anatomizes her feelings as if she were “different persons” [*personnes différentes*] and that she appears at times “entirely out of herself” [*entièrement hors d'elle-mesme*]: Behn’s pronoun shifts literalize such self-estrangement. As Longinus’s only woman-authored instance of sublimity, Sappho’s poem no doubt had a special attraction to Behn. Yet Boileau’s Longinus treats Sappho not as a woman but as representative of all true lovers: what she expresses are the feelings of all “those” (*ceux*, which is grammatically masculine and therefore gender-inclusive) who passionately love. Behn undoubtedly feels the same.

### Noble Passion versus Interest in Behn’s Verse and Prose

While unsettling gender categories, Behn depicts extreme passion as more stable with respect to rank. Countering her own obscure background and déclassé status as a professional writer, Behn embraces the “noble passion” (2:7) of love as the distinguishing sign of the true aristocrat. Like Carew in “Mediocrity in Love Rejected,” Behn defines the male lover’s loss of manliness, conventionally defined, as a sign of noble recklessness. She further links both men and women’s erotic excess to their aristocratic prodigality, which reveals their status by displaying their reckless disregard for preserving it. Contemporaneous georgic—including Book 6 of Cowley’s *De plantis*, which Behn translated in 1689—justified luxury by inscribing it within the patriotic context of national economic growth. Behn exceeds such “prudent” logic by celebrating an eroticized prodigality as its own glorious *raison d’être*.

Behn on occasion associates such passion specifically with the Stuart court. Her 1685 “A Pindarick Poem ON THE HAPPY CORONATION OF . . . JAMES II” (1:200–221) is written in the hyperbolic, would-be sublime style associated with the Pindaric ode as influentially revived by Cowley in the 1650s. The poem praises the bellicose James II as a Mars whom no “soft *Venus*” (l. 38) could subdue. But Behn’s exhortation for the king to cease lovemaking with his queen undercuts this masculinist rhetoric, celebrating an effeminizing passion that it ostensibly warns against:

Thou *HERO* of th’*expecting world* arise!  
 Shake off the downy pleasures from thy eyes;  
 And from the softest Charms of *Love*, Arise!  
 From *joys* too fierce for *any* sense but *Thine*,  
 Whose *Soul*, whose *Faculty*’s are all *Divine*;  
 So *Bodies* when *refin’d*, all Heav’n survey,  
 While *feebler* Mortals *faint* with ev’ry ray:  
 O rise from the *enchanting Ravisher*,

. . . . .  
 Her *Angel Eyes*, and *Voice*, so *conqu'ring* are,  
*Love* will make *humbler Glory* wait too long.

(ll. 95–105)

Behn's call for the king to leave his "*enchanting Ravisher*" for public "*Glory*" halfheartedly evokes the traditional view of passion as effeminizing: Mary of Modena plays the unlikely role of the seductive enchantress who, like Spenser's *Acrasia*, diverts men from duty. Yet Behn subverts this paradigm by representing "*Glory*" as "*humbler*" than "*Love*." Indeed, with campy hyperbole Behn more radically undercuts the condemnation of effeminizing love by representing "*Divine*" James in the throes of sex as simultaneously passive and powerful, enduring "*joys too fierce*" for anyone but himself. Behn later describes the queen's beauty as

Fatal to *All* but her *Lov'd Monarchs* heart,  
 Who of the *same Divine Materials* wrought;  
 Cou'd equally exchange the dart,  
 Receive the wound with *Life*, with *Life* the wound impart.

(ll. 260–263)

James alone can receive the sexual "wound" from his beloved queen without immediately (orgasmically) dying. While James gives as good as he gets, Behn downplays his active phallic role with her final bold cross-gendering comparison of the queen to *Jove* and James to a *Juno* who (unlike mortal *Semele*) could survive the Olympian's erotic thunder: "So the Great *Thund'rer Semele* d'stroy'd, / Whil'st only *Juno* cou'd embrace the *God!*" (ll. 265–266).

Yet despite this perfervid depiction of extreme, gloriously effeminizing passion at the center of the royal court, Behn, like Dryden, also portrays the court as the site of sordid interest. In "On *Desire*. A Pindarick" (1688) (1:281–284) Behn tells a personified erotic "*Desire*" that "In courts I sought thee . . . thy proper spear / But thou in crowds we'rt stiff'd there, / Int'rest did all the loving business do" (ll. 52–54). While the court *should* be the center of aristocratic passion, amorous relations are there reduced to the mercenary "business" of "crowds" indistinguishable from the vulgar. Behn laments that she felt no erotic desire when it was in her "interest" to do so, "When Princes at . . . [her] feet did lye" (ll. 26, 29). She shows herself (at least in fantasy) a "natural" aristocrat worthy of princes precisely because she refused to substitute courtly interest for genuine passion.

Locating true aristocratic values outside the court, Behn often associates erotic fulfillment with luxurious retirement. A Pindaric ode entitled "A *Farewel to Celladon, On his Going into Ireland*" (1:35–39) celebrates the addressee, a "youth" of "lavish Fortune" whom Charles II has appointed to public office in Ireland, as a "nobler Soul" who was "fram'd / For Glorious and Luxurious

Ease" (ll. 46–47, 52). Behn declares that Celladon can indulge his erotic appetites in Ireland with "some dear Shee" in "pretty Solitudes" far removed from "Bus'ness" and the "noisy Great" (ll. 83–97). These imagined *loca amoena* of "Luxurious Ease" combine the Epicurean "ease" of simple country retirement with courtly "Luxury" in its double sense of material indulgence and sensual lasciviousness. Cowley's *Essays, in Verse and Prose*, whose translations and imitations of classical poetry are Behn's major conduit for traditional retirement values, contrasts virtuous retirement in "the Golden Mean" with the "guilty and expensive Luxury" of courts.<sup>39</sup> Behn, by contrast, imagines a retired world that fosters courtly erotic profligacy—but without courtly intrigue.

Behn's *Love-Letters between a Noble-Man and his Sister* (1684–1687) provides her most extended accounts of the luxurious retirement she associates with extreme passion. The "excess[ive]" (2:162, 270, 306) passion that Octavio, a relative of the Prince of Orange, develops for the unworthy Silvia costs him his reputation and much of his estate. Yet while acknowledging he "lov'd too much, and thought and consider'd too little" (2:279), Behn favorably contrasts Octavio's extravagant retirement as a lover to the sordid public life of his social milieu, the Dutch merchant-elite:

[Octavio] grew at last so fond . . . that he neglected all his Interest, his Business in the State . . . and became the common Theam over all the United Provinces, for his Wantonness and Luxury, as they were pleased to call it; and living so contrary to the Humour of those more sordid and slovenly Men of Quality, which make up the Nobility of that parcel of the world. For while thus he lived retired . . . they charge him with . . . having given himself over to Effeminacy. . . . [Silvia,] regarding not the Humours of the stingy censorious Nation, his Interest, or her own Fame . . . puts him upon Balls, and vast expensive Treats. (2:280)

Behn palliates Octavio's retirement in amorous "Effeminacy" and luxurious wastefulness by linking the Dutch public realm with the opposite extremes of "Interest" and greed. Behn's contrast between the amorous prodigal and his avaricious countrymen parallels the division within English society, central to Behn's London comedies, between extravagant aristocrats and money-grubbing city merchants. Embracing the traditional aristocratic cultural logic found in Aristotle and early modern court writers, Behn prefers the noble excess of prodigality, which reveals contempt for materiality, to the base defect of avarice. For a fable in a 1687 edition of Aesop, Behn composed a moralizing tag declaring "*Profuseness . . . farr*" preferable to "*Ill natur'd damning Avarice*" (1:233).<sup>40</sup> By representing the two extremes as the only available ways of life, Behn exculpates Octavio's luxurious retirement.

Octavio's religious retirement, once he has realized the extent of Silvia's duplicity, provides a morally "purified" version of such luxury. Octavio's "sweetest Retreat" (2:380) is an elegant monastery reserved for nobility. While he renounces Silvia, his life of profligate eroticism is displaced onto,



and vindicated by, his numerous female admirers. Behn, who enters her narrative alongside the fashionable “Ladies of the Court” and “Town” to attend Octavio’s induction into his monastic order, is “ravished” and “oppressed with Tenderness” by the rich ceremony and Octavio’s sartorial splendor, which “exceeded all Imagination” and seemed designed for erotic “Conquest” (2:379, 381–382). The fashionable ladies “who at any Price would purchase a Curl” (2:383) of his shorn hair validate, by passionately echoing, Octavio’s own amorous prodigality.

Octavio provides a norm of erotic excess against which the other more “interested” characters are measured and found wanting. The main narrative fictionalizes the scandalous (adulterous and technically incestuous) love affair between the rebel duke of Monmouth’s supporter Ford Lord Grey (Philander), and his sister-in-law Henrietta Berkeley (Silvia). With a libertine and political rebel as protagonist, Behn’s Tory text exploits—for sensation and sales—the perceived kinship between sexual transgression and political treachery. Yet Behn’s account of the affair and its aftermath resists the identification of erotic extremism with political subversion by primarily associating both promiscuity and disloyalty with worldly self-interest and erotic deficiency rather than with the extreme passion of an Octavio.

In the opening love letters that chart Philander’s seduction of his sister-in-law, both correspondents indulge in a fervid rhetoric of “excess” (e.g., 2:16, 55, 70–71). Yet both fail to adhere to their passionate declarations. In the second installment of the romance, Philander acknowledges that he feels “too fiercely” only at the very beginning of affairs but soon becomes “reasonable” and “luke warme,” pursuing amours with “prudence” (2:171). Philander (and Behn) equate rational moderation with selfish, serial lust. Philander’s “prudent” libertinism, a deficiency of passion that causes him to betray his wife for Silvia and to betray her for a new conquest, closely resembles his calculated, serial disloyalty in the political sphere. Having joined Caesario’s/Monmouth’s rebellion out of self-interest, he abandons Caesario’s “Interest” for “Self-Preservation” (2:430).

Silvia herself, the most complex figure in the work, similarly degenerates from feeling overwhelming passion to conniving with erotically deficient prudence.<sup>41</sup> While she declares, early in her affair with Philander, that she would die if he proved unfaithful, she and we discover after his infidelity that she is not “of a Nature to dy for Love” (2:89, 383; see also 2:259). She resolves to conquer men who can help her wreak vengeance upon Philander, but material “Interest” quickly becomes her major “business” (2:375). When Octavio abandons her for God, the narrator suggests that “her Interest, and the loss of his considerable Fortune . . . gave her the greatest Cause of Grief” (2:383–384). Behn retrospectively proceeds to simplify Silvia’s character by declaring interest the major motive of her entire career: “She had this wretched Prudence, even in the highest Flights and Passions of her Love, to have a wise Regard

to Interest; insomuch that . . . she refused to give herself up intirely even to *Philander*. . . How much more then ought we to believe that Interest was the greatest Motive of all her after Passions?" (2:384). Implicitly or explicitly analogizing Silvia to Behn herself as a professional woman, some critics have read Silvia's resilient quest for independence as positive.<sup>42</sup> Yet such an interpretation assumes commitment to a feminist form of possessive individualism that Behn's text explicitly attacks. Since for Behn passion normally trumps gender, it is unsurprising that she expresses more sympathy (as well as love) for Octavio, who is nobly "feminine" in his masochistic passivity, than for Silvia, who is akin to prudent *Philander* in refusing to "give herself up intirely" to rapturous self-loss. Over the course of the narrative Silvia is degraded morally and socially, coming to resemble her "mean" Dutch maid, who subordinates passion to "Love of Money" (2:220, 259).

Silvia is not wholly debased only because her prudential interest remains tied to a prodigality still associated with noble passion. She "lov'd rich Cloths, gay Coaches, and to be lavish"; she immediately spends the money she gains because she "hated to keep" money and "lavish'd it on any Tryfle, rather than hoard it" (2:374, 395). Silvia's final affair with Don Alonzo, a Spanish aristocrat, epitomizes her unstable combination of self-interest and erotic prodigality. She falls "madly in Love" with Alonzo partly because he is "of Quality and Fortune able to serve her" (2:394–395). Silvia's "Love" for Alonzo as a tool for her advancement may be glossed by the following cynical maxim concerning interest penned by La Rochefoucauld and translated by Behn in 1685: "We often persuade our selves that we love persons more powerful and great than our selves, when 'tis only self-interest" (4:59, no. 335). Yet Silvia protests too easily to her jealous husband-of-convenience that "Interest" rather than "Love" draws her to Alonzo (2:396). Her passion for Alonzo as the embodiment of luxury—"richer than ever in his Habit," he seemed "more Beautiful to her Eyes than any thing she had ever seen" (2:417)—resembles the rapture Behn herself expresses as she beholds the splendidly attired Octavio. In its overpowering, erotic intensity, Silvia's attraction to aristocratic luxury transcends sordid calculation.

While Silvia blurs distinctions, Behn's *The History of the Nun* (1689) provides a dark palinode by narrating the disastrous consequences of contaminating aristocratic passion with sordid interest. Raised as a nun, the aristocratic protagonist Isabella breaks her vow of chastity in order to elope with her gallant lover Henault, the son of an earl. Her broken vow obliquely alludes to the faithlessness of English subjects, who (for the Jacobite Behn) had abjured their vows to James II in 1688. As in the *Love-Letters*, however, Behn's penchant for overpowering sexual passion undercuts the apparent condemnation of sexual transgression as akin to political disloyalty: unlike self-interested English subjects, Isabella yields to "irresistible" love (3:233).<sup>43</sup>

Degradation comes when interest replaces passion. When Henault worries that love will turn to hate if he and Isabella elope and he forfeits his inheritance, she fervently replies that “Discretion” is “inconsistent with the Nobler Passion” and that they could live happily together in humble retirement. Reassured, he declares his own contentment with “*retir’d*” life and his joy that she would “*abandon the World*” for him (3:237–238). Yet their protestations prove false; neither of them is so nobly reckless. “Prudent” Isabella (238) elopes with an inheritance and stolen gold. Despite guilty assets and financial aid from a relative, Henault cannot bear their reduced circumstances. To regain his patrimony, he accedes to his father’s wishes that he join the army. Believing him killed in battle, Isabella further deploys her “Discretion” to secure her “Fortune” by marrying a wealthy gentleman out of “Interest” (3:245). When a weathered and poverty-stricken Henault reappears, she kills both Henault and her second husband rather than be forced to return to a “poor” spouse (3:249). Economic “prudence,” the narrative suggests, inevitably degenerates into murderous self-interest. The true lover must wholly abandon worldly concerns, as Isabella’s own father did: at the opening of the tale he is characterized as a count of “considerable Fortune” who, with “unspeakable Grief” upon his wife’s death, entered a monastery to think wholly upon heaven (3:213). The dead father represents an archaic aristocratic extremity of passion against which modern, commercialized society is judged.

### From Aristocratic to Middle-Class Extremism

The cult of erotic “excess” as a contestation of middle-class values has an enduring afterlife. *All for Love*, *Don Sebastian*, and *Amphitryon* were popular on the eighteenth-century stage, and Dryden’s and Behn’s oft-reprinted works celebrating noble erotic “excess” were controversial but influential texts within eighteenth-century literary culture.<sup>44</sup> Recalling aristocratic libertinism, the literature of sensibility often rejected middle-class “prudence” for erotic “excess.”<sup>45</sup> Directly and indirectly indebted to libertine tradition, various twentieth-century thinkers influential in poststructuralist discourse have similarly celebrated hedonistic excess in defiance of bourgeois norms. Georges Bataille influentially saw in sexual transgression a bracing challenge to “normal” (bourgeois) man. Roland Barthes glorified sexual-textual *jouissance*, an “asocial” “extreme” that undermined “petit bourgeois” values by dissolving the “subject” in “extremity.”<sup>46</sup> Expressing dissatisfaction with all the “middle-range pleasures” of “everyday life” and a wish to die of “an overdose of pleasure,” Foucault advocated the “intensification of pleasure” as part of the transformative exploration of the “limits we may go beyond . . . as free beings.”<sup>47</sup> All these writers celebrated the “excesses” of Sade, the aristocratic libertine

in extremis, who was judged akin to Nietzsche in visionary insight.<sup>48</sup> Pierre Bourdieu has accused such authors of "aristocratism" in their "extreme" positions, while Barthes himself acknowledged the resemblance of his *jouissance* to aristocratic "luxury."<sup>49</sup> Such modern (or postmodern) libertinism reveals a deep tension between the aristocratic resonances of "excess," the privilege of the few who scorn bourgeois prudence, and a utopian dream of everyone as potential transgressor of social norms.<sup>50</sup>

Yet one of the ironies of such transgressive rhetoric is how much a cult of erotic "extremity" has become an ordinary part of middle-class private life. Over the course of the eighteenth century, alongside and in continuing tension with notions of middle-class propriety one finds the "normalization" of extreme passion. Eighteenth-century women writers in particular adapt the rhetoric of erotic extremism to a middle-class milieu. While moralists continue to treat moderation as crucial to the endurance of the marriage bond, writers deploy the rhetoric of excess to celebrate (like Dryden's *Amphitryon*) wedded love. Mary Masters expresses a commonplace in 1733: "No Medium in the Wedded Life we find, / To Grief or Pleasure, in Extremes, consign'd." In a much-admired 1719 elegy for her husband, Elizabeth Rowe describes her conjugal love (like Alcmena's) as both decorously fitting and passionately excessive: "Whate'er to such superior worth was due, / Whate'er excess the fondest passion knew, / I felt for thee." Against a social world presumably dominated by interest, she posits herself as virtuous for her all-consuming, unworldly conjugal passion: "Regardless of the world, to gain thy praise, / Was all that could my just ambition raise."<sup>51</sup>

The early-eighteenth-century fiction writer Eliza Haywood seeks to accommodate the late-seventeenth-century contrast between noble love and base interest to the ambivalent values of middle-class commercial society. In her first work, the best-seller *Love in Excess: or, the Fatal Enquiry* (1719–1720), Haywood describes true love, the source of "intollerable torments" and "Un-speakable joys," as incompatible with "moderation and discretion," which she associates, like Behn, with sordid "interest."<sup>52</sup> Haywood largely replaces the social contrast between noble and baser ranks with gender opposition, pitting passionate women of middle-class as well as aristocratic origins against avaricious and lustful men. Yet she also frequently blurs the contrast between love and interest. For example, *The Distress'd Orphan* (1726) contrasts Annilia, the passionate daughter of a merchant, with her mercenary uncle, who out of "Interest" tries to force her to marry his son. Yet although the gallant lover of "violent" passion whom Annilia loves and is finally able to marry professes complete indifference to "mercenary" concerns, in reality he deems Annilia's "Riches" an additional aspect of her "Charms." At the end he is rewarded with both his invaluable beloved and her valuable estate.<sup>53</sup> Haywood suggests that passionate, unworldly women ennoble the domestic sphere with their

boundless love, while even the most virtuous male lovers prudently consider the material conditions that undergird social standing. She thereby registers a familiar and enduring modern ambivalence regarding the relationship between passion, the central value of a personal sphere of intimacy and self-fulfillment, and self-interest, the driving force of an economic sphere defined by the prudential calculations of instrumental reason.<sup>54</sup>



PART FOUR



Moderation and Excess  
in the Seventeenth-Century  
Symposiastic Lyric

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## CHAPTER SEVEN

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# Drinking and the Politics of Poetic Identity from Jonson to Herrick

LYRICS IN THE ANACREONTIC AND HORATIAN symposiastic tradition, in which the poet calls for or enacts a symposium or drinking party, are an important but relatively neglected strand in seventeenth-century English poetry.<sup>1</sup> During the early to mid-seventeenth century, the symposiastic lyric focusing upon the homosocial camaraderie of masculine drinking companions arose to rival the heterosexual love lyric. Just as early modern love literature depicted the clash between long-standing norms of conjugal moderation and the celebration of erotic excess, so symposiastic poetry often expressed conflicting notions of moderation and excess with respect to the primary early modern male social pleasure, drinking.

The archaic Greek poet Anacreon, the *Anacreontea* (a collection of verse imitations of Anacreon composed from the Hellenistic period up to the fifth or sixth century c.e. ascribed to Anacreon throughout the early modern period), and the Roman Augustan poet Horace sometimes call for moderate partaking with warnings against drunken violence. Yet “Anacreon” (by which I refer to both the authentic Anacreon and the *Anacreontea*) also frequently celebrates harmless drunkenness as an escape from anxiety concerning status, wealth, and inevitable death into a timeless world of pleasure and poetic rapture. Horace lauds either moderate drinking or a brief but intense letting go as a Roman citizen’s necessary respite from cares and as a decorous response to an occasion (whether it be the season or a particular private or public event such as a birthday or a military victory).<sup>2</sup>

Henri Estienne’s publication of the *Anacreontea* in 1554 fostered the sense of an Anacreontic-Horatian symposiastic tradition to which early modern poets could contribute. Both Estienne and Renaissance editors of Horace note the Roman poet’s debts to “Anacreon.”<sup>3</sup> Seventeenth-century English poets adapt and transform this tradition in order to express opposing conceptions of moderation and excess. They thereby participate in major sociocultural and political conflicts of the day, conflicts between tavern norms of sociable pleasure, on the one hand, and moral, medical, and mercantilist exhortations to observe the mean in wine drinking, on the other; between elite and popular modes of indul-



gence; between diverse religious viewpoints both inside and outside the English church; and between successive ruling powers and their opponents.

Insofar as Anacreontic-Horatian poetry encouraged a positive view of intoxication, it contested mainstream religious norms. Clerics commended wine drunk in moderation as a God-given blessing but inveighed against drunkenness.<sup>4</sup> Drunkenness was indeed often treated as the most heinous sin; in 1604, for example, James I called “drunkenness” the “root of all evils,” while in 1622 the minister Samuel Ward claimed that drunkenness was “all sinnes” because it fostered them all.<sup>5</sup>

Ancient and early modern medical discourse found great benefits in moderate wine drinking but terrible dangers in abuse. Galenism regarded wine as “hot”; when drunk in moderation, it invigorated, but when abused it overheated body and mind.<sup>6</sup> Tobias Venner praised a “meane,” arguing that wine consumed in moderation “strengtheth the naturall heat,” “sharpneth the wit,” “amendeth the coldnesse of old age,” and “maketh a man more . . . lively both in mind and body”; “intemperancie and drunkennesse,” by contrast, “destroyeth the life,” “disturbeth the reason, dulleth the understanding.” Consumption had to be carefully regulated in accordance with one’s age, temperament, and circumstances. One also had to examine a wine’s qualities. One oft-reprinted medical treatise not only advised moderate quantities but also warned—with an obsessive concern for the mean—that the healthiest wine was a “meane” between “olde and new,” “neither . . . sharpe, nor sweet,” “not grosse nor to[o] much sybtyle,” “not to[o] strong nor to[o] weake,” and hailed from “a cuntry not too hotte nor to colde.”<sup>7</sup> Though frequently drawing on the medical praise of wine, as the seventeenth century wore on English symposiastic poets more often than not rejected such advice regarding moderation.

While all social ranks drank ale or beer as a dietary staple, because of its expense wine was reserved for the social elite. Economic discourse oscillated between considering wine a “natural” need (for those who could afford it) and a foreign luxury to be curtailed. Customs duties on wine were defended as measures against both drunkenness and national prodigality. The *Discourse of the Commonweal of . . . England* (1581) attributed to Thomas Smith was typical in classifying wine as a luxury whose use should be moderated because it exhausted the realm’s “treasure.” In a treatise composed in the 1630s the mercantilist Thomas Mun claimed that wine drinking simultaneously made his nation “effeminate” and “poor.”<sup>8</sup> English Anacreontic-Horatian poets often sought either to minimize or aggressively defend wine’s luxurious connotations.

Responding to changing historical circumstances as well as to competing religious, medical, and economic discourses, English symposiastic lyrics show more variety and undergo more change than scholars have generally recognized. Ben Jonson is the first English poet explicitly to place himself, albeit gingerly, within an Anacreontic-Horatian lyric tradition. In generically complex poems that temper symposiastic motifs with antisymposiastic values, Jon-

son reveals his ambivalent sense of drinking as a source of poetic inspiration and of virtuous friends' civilized, humanist pleasure that is also potentially excessive. Jonson's Caroline followers Edmund Waller, William Habington, and Thomas Randolph simplify his legacy in one crucial respect by defiantly celebrating a drunken excess counter to mainstream norms. Like Carew and Davenant, who espouse forms of erotic excess associated with the Caroline court, Waller and Habington identify hearty drinking with a court culture superior to the straitlaced morality of critics. But Randolph also revives an Anacreontic-Horatian motif ignored by Jonson: the association of heavy drinking with a non-Aristotelian moderation insofar as it leads to humble contentment with one's circumstances.

In some of the thematically richest drinking poems of the mid-seventeenth century, Robert Herrick both continues the Jonsonian celebration of the poet as inspired drinker and adapts the contentment topos to praise himself and the lower orders in defiance of Puritan killjoys. Beyond celebrating conviviality among high and low, however, Herrick constructs in poetry a solitary, largely imaginary domain of ancient symposiastic luxury. Like Davenant's Interregnum epic romance *Gondibert*, which responds to Royalist defeat by celebrating a retired life of "extreme" love, Herrick responds to disordered times by celebrating a private realm of intoxication. While Davenant suggests the need for virtuous "extreme" lovers to reengage with the public realm, however corrupted, Herrick embraces his private world, obliquely acknowledging the vulnerability of his solipsistic excess to extratextual reality.

### Jonson, Wine, and Lyric Modulation

Ben Jonson had a decisive impact on the seventeenth-century English poetic tradition as the first major writer to make wine's association with "wit" central to his poetic vocation.<sup>9</sup> While he wrote no pure Anacreontic or Horatian symposiastic odes, his transformations of classical symposiastic motifs were immensely influential. Jonson associated wine drinking with both an inspired transcendence of everyday reality and the potential for excess. Intervening in the drinking culture of his own time, he associated wine with educated, refined, self-controlled conviviality as opposed to the brutish and ignorant excesses of low-rank beer-and-ale drinkers.<sup>10</sup>

Several relatively neglected lyric passages or poems by Jonson inaugurate the Horatian-Anacreontic lyric in English even as they withhold wholehearted commitment to the genre. A passage from Jonson's "Inviting a Friend to Supper" (8:64–65), published in 1616 but probably written circa 1605–1610,<sup>11</sup> reveals not only Jonson's innovative neoclassical association of heavy drinking with lyric power but also his nervous sense of its potential immoderation. Jonson's extended epigram is modeled upon three of Martial's long epi-

grams inviting friends to meals.<sup>12</sup> Yet the lyric voice of the Anacreontic and Horatian symposiastic ode intrudes, briefly but influentially, when the poet “sing[s]” of the wine he will provide his guest:

But that, which most doth take my *Muse*, and mee,  
Is a pure cup of rich *Canary*-wine,  
Which is the *Mermaids*, now, but shall be mine:  
Of which had *HORACE*, or *ANACREON* tasted,  
Their lives, as doe their lines, till now had lasted.  
*Tobacco*, *Nectar*, or the *Thespian* spring,  
Are all but *LUTHERS* beere, to this I sing.

(ll. 28–34)

Jonson explores the ethical status of drinking by means of a brief, humorous generic ascent from Martial-esque plain-style epistolary epigram to inspired Anacreontic-Horatian lyric, a genre Jonson treats with playful anxiety as both more exalted and more ethically indeterminate than epigram. By hyperbolically claiming that the wine he will obtain from his local tavern would have brought Anacreon and Horace personal immortality, Jonson signals his self-consciously modern, English appropriation of classical drinking motifs and his emulation of the two poets whom he later couples when he imagines playing “*Horace* or *Anacreons* Lyre” (“Ode to Himself,” l. 43; 6:493). Jonson marks his generic modulation stylistically by moving to a lyric “I sing” from the prosaic “Ile tell” (l. 17) and from the Martial-derived promise no “verses to repeat” (l. 24).

The generic shift underscores a brief change in subject. Like Horace in his satires and epistles, the Martial epigrams that are Jonson’s major models evoke a Roman *convivium*, or festive meal. Both the satiric and epistolary Horace and Martial treat food in great detail, with wine merely as one item in the meal. Of the three Martial models for “Inviting,” one mentions no wine (11.52), a second treats cheap wine as accompaniment to fruit (10.48.19–20), while the third mentions wine as a means of further whetting the appetite (5.78.16–18). By contrast, “Anacreon” and Horace in his Greek-inspired odes celebrate symposia, postprandial parties in which wine drinking was the central event.<sup>13</sup> The contrast between Jonson’s little “song” or riff in praise of Canary and his earlier listing of “wine for sauce” (l. 13) in his Martial-derived supper menu underscores the shift from the convivial to the symposiastic: his Canary is not a mere accompaniment to the food but the focus of intense poetic energy.

The centrality of wine in the symposium is linked to other distinctions. While the *convivium* allows for the fulfillment of ordinary bodily needs as well as a limited loosening of social restraints, the symposium produces a heightened sense of liberation from the ordinary. Associated with mind-altering intoxication and the religious “rites” of the wine god, wine drinking is conceived in sharp opposition to the everyday cares of social and political life and as a

pleasurable counter to the ever-present threat of death.<sup>14</sup> Wine is also closely linked to inspired—hence immortal—poetry. In two odes Horace describes himself as inspired by wine to sing the praises of Bacchus: in one of these he declaims that he will say “nothing small nor of humble mode, nothing mortal” (*Ode* 3.25.17–18).<sup>15</sup>

Jonson marks the “ascent” from epigram to inspired lyric thematically: his poem opens with “my poore house, and I” (l. 1), identifying Jonson as a property owner in a way appropriate to the epigrammatist’s status as a plain-style commentator upon his social world; the poem moves to “my *Muse*, and mee” (l. 28), identifying him as an inspired bard. Jonson’s vatic role is comically enacted in his mock-grandiloquent “I sing,” the panegyric “lyric” that declares Canary superior to the classical fountain of inspiration, the Thespian spring. In shifting from the food that he will actively seek to the wine that “take[s]” him and his *Muse*, Jonson plays with the sense of poetic inspiration as overpowering. Jonson is cited as the first writer to use “take” in the sense of “to catch the fancy or affection of; delight” (*OED* s.v. “take,” 10). Jonson’s “take” has the resonance of a Latinate coinage: the wine’s “taking” of Jonson and his *Muse* so that he bursts into song in praise of the wine recalls Horace’s ode that begins: “Whither, O Bacchus, dost thou take [*rapis*] me, full of thy power?” (*Ode* 3.25.1–2; trans. modified). Jonson’s panegyric appears as a comic rapture that “takes” the poet beyond his poem’s epigrammatic mode: he is inspired to flights of song by the mere thought of drinking his wine.<sup>16</sup>

Jonson’s assertion that his Canary wine could make Anacreon or Horace—rather than just their poems—immortal, which “justifies” his comparison of it to the immortals’ nectar, hyperbolically exceeds widespread ancient and early modern medical claims for wine’s invigoration of the elderly.<sup>17</sup> It also outdoes the specifically Anacreontic motif of the poet as an old man rejuvenated by his wine: wine “makes Ages with new years sprout” (to quote Thomas Stanley’s 1651 translation of *Anacreontea* 39 = Loeb 50).<sup>18</sup> “Old” Anacreon, as he was called (Ovid, *Tristia* 2.64), was famous for living beyond “the common span” (Valerius Maximus 9.12.8); in a love elegy Jonson imagines himself (pairing Horace and Anacreon once more) “as *Horace* fat, or as *Anacreon* old” (“An Elegie,” l. 2; 8:199). In ancient symposiastic poetry, however, wine’s invigoration is inevitably limited, for the call to drink responds to the knowledge that one must ultimately die. Snippets from the *Anacreontea* (as faithfully and felicitously translated by Stanley) reveal wine’s role in assuring the pleasures of mortal life:

Let us drink . . .

. . . . .

Ere death come and take us off.

Come, some Wine and Musick give;

Ere we dye, 'tis fit we live.<sup>19</sup>

Horace similarly invites friends to symposiastic pleasures in the face of mortality (e.g., *Ode* 2.3).

Jonson self-consciously praises his Canary with comical excess. His encomium sounds like the swindling Volpone eulogizing his quack medicine: “*Had old HIPPOCRATES, or GALEN. . . / But knowne this secret,*” they would never have praised other medicines; his oil will make its users “*ever . . . yong*” (*Volpone* 2.2.121–122, 191, 194; 5:53, 55). Jonson’s hyperbole in itself foregrounds the problematic relationship between the pleasures of the bottle and moral excess. Aristotle’s *Rhetoric* associates rhetorical hyperbole with youthful vehemence (3.11.16) and youthful vehemence with excess (2.12.14). The Greek rhetorical term “*hyperbolê*” is the same term Aristotle uses in his *Nicomachean Ethics* to describe ethical “*excess*.” Translating the Greek, the Elizabethan rhetorician George Puttenham dubs hyperbole the “*over reacher*” because of its “*immoderate excess*.”<sup>20</sup> In his commonplace book Jonson himself calls hyperbole an “*overmuchness*” and warns—with an obscure distinction betraying his discomfort—that it “*may be above faith, but never above a mean*” (8:434). In “*Inviting a Friend*” Jonson plays with rhetorical excess, as if the very thought of his wine causes his mind to spin out of control.

Jonson’s celebration of “*pure*” wine responds to early modern English conditions, where the customer had good grounds for worrying that the wine he bought might be adulterated. Unscrupulous wine merchants, vintners, and taverners profited from mixing one type with inferior types or with other substances (including water). Enforcing standards of purity, the Vintners’ Company periodically seized diluted wine, and both the Privy Council and Parliament periodically intervened for quality.<sup>21</sup> Jonson’s declaration that he will get his “*pure cup*” from the Mermaid links his wine’s quality with the honesty of one of his favorite London taverns. Yet by emphasizing his intense pleasure in his wine’s purity, Jonson further underscores the risk of excess. He adopts the long-standing association, fraught with moral ambiguities, between undiluted wine and inspiration: in his influential *Poetices* Julius Caesar Scaliger disparages Horace and several other classical poets for being inspired by “*unmixed wine*” [*mer(um)*], while in 1599 Thomas Nashe wishes for “*pure wine*” rather than “*mixt*” because the former “*heates the brain thorowly*” and leads to nobler writing.<sup>22</sup> In both “*Anacreon*” and Horace, calls for unmixed wine alternate with demands for its “*tempering*” with water, an important symposiastic ritual signifying moderation.<sup>23</sup> In a fragment preserved in Athenaeus’s well-known *Deipnosophistes*, a work Jonson often pillaged, Anacreon calls for watered-down wine so that the symposiasts may avoid violence (427a–b). Horace likewise calls for tempered wine (*Ode* 2.11.18–20, 3.19.11–17) and warns against excessive drink and the quarrels that ensue from drunkenness (*Ode* 1.18.7–11). Early modern medical handbooks similarly recommended wine “*alayde*” with water.<sup>24</sup> Renaissance writers on manners concurred: in his *Colloquia* Erasmus commends “*well-diluted*” [*probi diluti*] wine at meals, while

(as was noted in chapter 4) Stefano Guazzo's courtesy manual (translated in 1586) recommends "temper[ing]" wine with water.<sup>25</sup> Some apparently followed such temperate advice: John Clapham noted that Elizabeth I, who was "very temperate," drank wine heavily diluted with water.<sup>26</sup>

Jonson, however, did not. His specification of "rich" Canary underscores his flirtation with excess. Classifying wines' strength by their degree of "heat," medical works treated Canary as one of the hotter wines that "quickly enflame[d]" the body and had to be imbibed with care: it was most appropriate for "cold" individuals (like old men and phlegmatic temperaments) and most dangerous for "hot" individuals (like young men and choleric temperaments).<sup>27</sup> Thirty at most and hardly phlegmatic, Jonson spurns such cautions.

Like his reference to the Mermaid, Jonson's assertions of his Canary's superiority not only to classical potations associated with poetic and divine immortality but also to the New World discovery, tobacco, reinforces his up-to-date modernity. However, his comparison further underscores the risk of immoderation. Tobacco was closely associated with liquor in early modern England: one could "drink" (i.e., smoke) tobacco (*OED* s.v. "drink," 5) in taverns along with one's liquor, whose effects it was supposed to enhance.<sup>28</sup> Like wine, tobacco was both credited with medicinal qualities when taken in moderation and viewed as a dangerous foreign luxury, one of the "idle delights" of "wealth," as James I contemptuously put it in his *Counter-blaste to Tobacco* (1604).<sup>29</sup> Smoking was, James further declared, "a branche of the sinne of drunkennesse"; in 1617 the Puritan minister Thomas Young attacked tavern drinkers for adding "Drunkennes" to "drunkennes" by using "Tobacco."<sup>30</sup> Tobacco also had its extreme devotees, who implicitly and explicitly treated it as wine's rival. Jonson's comic praise closely resembles the rhetoric not only of Volpone—who also lauds his snake oil as superior to tobacco—but also that of tobacco lovers satirized in Jonson's plays. In Jonson's *Every Man in his Humor* (1598; rev. 1616) the braggart soldier Captain Bobadil waxes eloquent in praise of "divine" tobacco, while the "towne gull" Master Matthew extols the "most divine *tabacco*" he has "ever . . . drunke" (3.5.76–95, 135–136; 3:355, 357).<sup>31</sup> John Beaumont's lengthy comic encomium *The Metamorphosis of Tobacco* (1602) declares tobacco the poem's Muse, praises it for the powers traditionally ascribed to wine, and uses the same hyperbolic counterfactual rhetoric as Jonson ("had HORACE, or ANACREON tasted") to declare tobacco superior to both care-drowning wine and classical sources of poetic inspiration:

Teucer had never purg'd his cares with wine,  
Had he but dream't of phisick so divine;

. . . . .  
Had the Castalian Muses knowne the place  
Which this Ambrosia did with honour grace,  
They would have left Parnassus.<sup>32</sup>

Jonson could be specifically emulating Beaumont's encomiastic blarney. In any case, he undercuts his celebration of his Canary by associating it with comically hyperbolic praise of rival substances.

Yet Jonson also begins to distance his exuberant praise from drunken immoderation by contrasting his wine with substances comparable to "LUTHERS beere." "LUTHERS beere" encapsulates all that Jonson wishes to purge from his cup of wine. First sounding a theme that will resound throughout seventeenth-century drinking poetry, Jonson contrasts his "rich" wine with the beer of the lower orders.<sup>33</sup> Classical and early Christian moralists had treated refinement of taste, together with excessive eating and drinking, as corrupt *luxuria*. With a similar cultural logic, the Elizabethan *Homily against Gluttony and Drunkenness* attacks "delicate" connoisseurs of wine for "excess."<sup>34</sup> Jonson combats this traditional association by instead associating wine drinking with a refined fastidiousness that refrains from the brutish, indiscriminate appetite associated with common beer guzzlers. His equation of refinement with restraint may be compared to contemporary middle-class diners' preference for quality over quantity in order to distinguish themselves, as Pierre Bourdieu argues, from working-class indulgence in the "immediate satisfactions of food and drink."<sup>35</sup>

"LUTHERS beere" contrives to associate a distinction of social rank between wine and beer drinkers with early modern ethical and religious differences. Jonson's association of beer with Luther is justified by the fact that beer first became popular in England in the early sixteenth century, at the same time as the Reformation, by way of "Dutch"—the inclusive term for (closely associated) German, Flemish, and Dutch—immigrant brewers. A ditty (ca. 1525) asserts "Hops, Reformation, bays, and beer / Came into England all in one year"; in 1651 John Taylor similarly claims beer was unknown in England until "hops and heresies came among us."<sup>36</sup> But Jonson's association of beer with Luther has pointed significance. Jonson was most probably still a Catholic when he wrote "Inviting a Friend," but even after his reconversion to the Church of England around 1610 he advocated an Erasmian religious moderation and decried the factionalism of post-Reformation Christianity. In "An Execration upon Vulcan," written around 1623, he referred to "wiser" theological "Guides" who avoided "Faction" (ll. 102–104; 8:207). Jonson's contemptuous "LUTHERS beere" glances not only at Counter-Reformation attacks upon Luther as a beer-swigging drunkard but also at the connection between such heavy drinking and religious immoderation.<sup>37</sup> In his *Discoveries* Jonson translates a comparison of religious extremists to drunken quarrelers from Erasmus's *De Libero Arbitrio* (1525), the humanist's first salvo in his debate with Luther: "Some *Controversers* in Divinity are like Swaggerers in a Taverne, that . . . turne every thing into a weapon. . . . Their Arguments are as fluxive as liquour spilt upon a Table" (8:595–596).<sup>38</sup>

Erasmus's association of religious extremism with drunken brawling is the other side of his idealization of an irenic Christianity embodied in the *Conviv-*

*ium Religiosum* (1522), a dinner party in which Christians enjoy (and defend) wine, condemn inebriation and drunken violence, and calmly interpret Scripture amid their moderate cups.<sup>39</sup> Perhaps in order to represent himself as an English humanist opposed to religious extremists without drawing attention to his Catholicism, Jonson imagines a party more secular than Erasmus's: his guest is promised that all will "speake" their "minds" (l. 23) concerning passages from Virgil and Tacitus and a "better booke" (l. 22) that may or may not be the Bible. Jonson is also far more exuberant than Erasmus in praising wine. He nevertheless shares with Erasmus a conception of conviviality that eschews, in the figure of "LUTHERS beere," drunkenness and associated forms of extremism.

"LUTHERS beere" also recalls Anacreon's and Horace's condemnations of drunken excess as a foreign, "barbarian" phenomenon: Anacreon distinguishes his peaceful symposiastic pleasures from Scythians' drunken shouting,<sup>40</sup> while Horace prohibits the "barbarous ways" of Thracians, who fight with their cups, citing in behalf of moderation the negative lessons of the overly passionate Sithonians and the Thessalian Lapiths' drunken quarrel with the Centaurs (*Odes* 1.27.1–3, 1.18.7–11). Jonson's association of beer with Luther would be credible to his countrymen—regardless of religious affiliations—because of the stereotype of Germans as beer-guzzling drunks. In 1576, for example, George Gascoigne claimed that Germans have been drunkards from "auncient tyme[s]." Like Jonson associating German drunkenness with religious immoderation, in *Never Too Late* (1590) Robert Greene described Germans as more devoted "to drincke than to devotion" and "stuffed with schismes and heresies." In 1617 Fynes Moryson reported that beer brewing was Germany's largest trade, that the German elite were all tainted with drunkenness, and that Lutheran ministers, similarly infected, did not preach "against excesse of drinking."<sup>41</sup> Beer had quickly become a homegrown English product in the sixteenth century with the cultivation of hops (whose use in the brewing process distinguished beer from traditional English ale). Beer was the most popular drink in early modern London and a staple (along with ale) for the yeomanry.<sup>42</sup> Nevertheless some early modern authors still associated beer—sometimes playfully but always xenophobically—with foreign vice: in 1542 Andrew Borde called beer "drink for a Dutchman"; as late as 1651 John Taylor mocked it as a "Dutch boorish liquor."<sup>43</sup> Jonson taps into such pejorative discourse not in order to defend native (but equally lowly) ale but to suggest—with audacious pseudologic—that the drinker of imported Canary is not only more refined but also less tainted with foreign vice than the crude beer drinker. Jonson's Canary, however exotic its delights, comes from a respectable local tavern, while beer reeks of foreign excess.<sup>44</sup>

Jonson's flirtation with excess—in wine drinking and in poetic imagination—ends as he proceeds to declaim that he and his guest will, of course, exhibit self-control:



Of this we will sup free, but moderately,  
 And we will have no *Pooly*, or *Parrot* by;  
 Nor shall our cups make any guiltie men:  
 But, at our parting, we will be, as when  
 We innocently met.

(ll. 35–39)

“Sup” here primarily means “sip” (rather than “quaff”), so that “sup free” in and of itself distinguishes free wine drinking from drunken carousing. “But moderately” further underscores the self-conscious limiting. To drink “free” seems primarily to imply freedom from anyone else’s rules, so that the responsibility for control falls on the self. The “pure . . . rich” wine, by its strength and very attractiveness, allows the individual to display his ability to enjoy without losing self-control. One may compare how the *Leges Conviviales*—the house rules Jonson wrote for a special room in the Old Devil Tavern where he and his companions congregated (8:656)—move from a nonclassical demand that the wine be pure (rule 10) to orders that guests exercise moderation—the guests should drink “moderate [*moderatis*] cups” (rule 11) and (conflating Horace’s *Odes* 1.18.7–9 and 1.27.1–4) should not fight like Lapiths (rule 22).

The final passage in “Inviting” defuses the threat of excess on a stylistic as well as thematic level, moving the poem back down from hyperbolic ode to sober epistolary epigram. The word “sup” gracefully encodes the return to the norms of the *convivium*, for “sup” can be read not only as “sip” but as a synecdoche for the entire “supper” to which the friend is invited to partake with joyful moderation. Jonson concludes with prudential considerations derived from his predominant generic model, Martial’s epistolary epigrams, and from Martial’s own major generic model, the Horatian epistle. His claim “Nor shall our cups make any guiltie men” closely echoes the final line of one of Martial’s invitation poems (10.48): at a dinner of frank but not slanderous conversation, Martial asserts, “our cups do not make any man a defendant” (l. 24). Jonson’s assurance that there will be no spies at his supper (*Pooly* and *Parrot* were government informers who would be particularly abhorrent to the probably recusant and therefore vulnerable Jonson) more loosely recalls Horace’s *Epistle* 1.5, where the addressee is offered wine, praised by the reveling and professedly indiscreet poet for its power to reveal men’s secrets, yet is also reassured that there will be nobody to “carry abroad what is said among faithful friends” (ll. 15–16, 24–25). While Martial promises no dangerous conversation, Horace promises an intimate atmosphere where potentially reckless frankness will be harmless. Jonson prudently combines both milieus by representing self-control and the absence of spies together as necessary conditions for enjoying oneself at a party and yet remaining (morally as well as legally) “innocent.” In the *Leges Conviviales* Jonson similarly forbids the participants to discuss serious or sacred (and therefore sensitive) matters (rule 14) and insists that nothing be revealed of conversation at the private banquet (rule 23). In “Inviting” the

only symposiastic excess that the poet ultimately allows in imagining his highly regulated dinner party is his own comically hyperbolic praise of a wine that will be drunk soberly and will not foster reckless talk.

In “*The Dedication of the Kings new Cellar. To Bacchus*” (8:220–222), a much later poem written around 1623, Jonson again uses generic modulations simultaneously to enjoy and draw back from symposiastic pleasures treated in a specifically Anacreontic vein. The poem anticipates the celebration of the (abortive) marriage between Prince Charles and the Spanish Infanta, when, as the last line of the poem puts it with deliberate lack of solemnity, “*Charles brings home the Ladie*” (l. 54). Jonson’s presentation of Bacchus as a “freer / Of cares” (ll. 13–14), curer of “diseases” (l. 24), companion of “*Venus and the Graces*” (l. 33), and overseer of the court’s “skipping” (l. 51) all recall the *Anacreontea*.<sup>45</sup> Jonson’s seven-syllable lines (iambic trimeter couplets with feminine endings) approximate the seven-syllable hemiambics common in the *Anacreontea*. Short, tripping rhythm evokes the gaiety of the poet Jonson calls “light” Anacreon, who “feast[s]” and “sport[s]” in Jonson’s closely contemporaneous 1624 masque *The Fortunate Islands* (ll. 515, 521; 7:725).

Jonson indeed treats the Anacreontic world as comic: awkward metrical padding (such as the claim that Bacchus should “thinke thy streame more quicker / Then *Hippocrenes* liquor” [ll. 27–28]) and a doggerel version of Bacchic inspiration (“And [may] thou [Bacchus] make many a Poet, / Before his braine doe know it” [ll. 29–30]) prevent one from taking his Anacreontic celebration of the wine god too seriously. Jonson does not leave his self-mockery to readerly tact. He adds as a concluding Latin motto a line from Horace’s *Satire* 2.1, a poem that Jonson made his own some twenty years before in *Poetaster* when he presented himself as a satiric Horace: “*Accesit fervor Capiti, Numerusque Lucernis*” (2.1.25). Horace claims he must write satire because of the bad examples he sees around him, instancing a drunkard who (in Jonson’s translation)

... shakes his heeles  
 In ceaselesse dances, when his braine once feelles  
 The stirring fervour of the wine ascend;  
 And that his eyes false number apprehend [i.e., see double].  
 (3.5.43–46; 4:259)

Jonson celebrates the Jacobean court with jolly sprightliness but uses the Horatian satiric viewpoint to “frame” his Anacreontic lyric as a drunkard’s ravings.

### Jonson and the Culture of Healths

Jonson reveals his concern for self-restraint in his ambivalent treatments of the central communal ritual of early modern drinking culture, namely, the health (i.e., toast), in which everyone at a gathering was supposed to drink to

someone present or absent (sometimes from a health-cup, a cup of wine passed around in honor of the person being toasted). Healths probably began in elite circles in the late sixteenth century but quickly moved down the social scale. They affirmed shared values by a ritual of conformity: all drank (or attempted to drink) to the same person either from the same cup or at the same time.<sup>46</sup> However, healths were also frequently decried in early modern England, for critics viewed them as a coercive practice that impelled participants into drunken excess. The Puritan William Prynne's *Healthes: Sicknesse* (1628) attacked healths as a source of drunkenness that abrogated Christian liberty since Christians should determine for themselves in good conscience "the matter, manner, measure, time, and end of drinking"; in his 1630 attack upon drunkenness, Robert Harris warned readers not to feel compelled to join in healths—even to the king.<sup>47</sup> Jonson more equivocally represents healths both as a legitimate drinking ritual fostering conviviality and as a lure for the individual, who should maintain sober self-control despite communal pressures. Though healths were part of classical symposia, they were not important in symposiastic poetry: "Anacreon" never mentions healths and Horace proposes one only once (*Ode* 3.19.9–11). Nevertheless, Jonson links his reservations regarding the health to ambivalence regarding classical drinking poetry.

While Jonson's "*Dedication of the Kings new Cellar*" describes a "health" enlivening the court (l. 49), a line from "An Epistle to a Friend, to perswade him to the Warres," a bitter diatribe against contemporary mores composed around 1619, associates the "health" with "Surfet" and "Quarrel" (l. 115; 8:166). Jonson's "Ode. To Sir William Sydney" (8:120–121), written in 1611 for the birthday of Philip Sidney's nephew, similarly rejects the health as an expression of dangerous communal excess. Rather than celebrate moderate drinking, Jonson's ode spurns festive drinking altogether, which it implicitly treats as a dangerous distraction from the strenuous moral life.

Critics have noted the Stoic-humanist resonance in Jonson's exhortation that the young William Sidney prove his "true nobility" in virtuous action.<sup>48</sup> The poem has also been plausibly read as a response to its addressee's disappointing career.<sup>49</sup> Yet the poem's pointed rejection of the symposiastic motifs of Jonson's generic model, the Horatian ode, has been neglected. While Horace's symposiastic vision revolves around drinking wine, the destroyer of cares, and thereby enjoying the present without anxiety about the future, Jonson's exhortation mandates a sober concentration upon the future.

Jonson begins by transforming a central theme of Horatian symposiastic odes, the decorous response to the moment:

Now that the harth is crown'd with smiling fire,  
 And some doe drink, and some doe dance,  
     Some ring,  
     Some sing,

And all doe strive t[o]’advance  
 The gladnesse higher:  
 Wherefore should I  
 Stand silent by,  
 Who not the least,  
 Both love the cause, and authors of the feast?

(ll. 1–10).

Jonson’s initial description of the festivities and his final assertion of his own regard for the “cause, and authors” of the party recall Horace’s description of the symposiastic celebration of his friend and patron Maecenas’s birthday in *Ode* 4.11: a house “smiles” (l. 6) and the “flames” (l. 11) of a fire bring comfort before Horace explains why it is appropriate for him to celebrate this special day (ll. 17–20). Horace, who invented the birthday ode as a Western literary genre, uses the occasion to recommend seizing the day: Maecenas’s birthday marks a precise moment to be celebrated all the more intently for its brevity within the “on-gliding” (l. 19) years. Jonson’s initial “Now” is a generic marker of the Horatian ode, linking festivity with the demands of the specific moment. In *Ode* 1.4 spring’s arrival calls for a symposium: “Now is the fitting time [*nunc decet*] to garland our glistening locks” (l. 9); in *Ode* 1.37 Augustus’s victory at Actium demands a celebration “now,” with “nunc” thrice repeated in the opening two lines. In a closely related motif, Horace complains about indecorous delay: on Neptune’s festal day, he upbraids a procrastinating companion for not bringing out the wine (3.28.1–2, 5–8); in another ode he impatiently asks, “Why idly hangs the pipe beside the silent lyre?” (3.19.20). Jonson hints at his distance from Horatian immersion in present joys by describing the seemingly decorous activities of *others* and then asking why he himself has not joined the celebration, why he alone—like Horace’s “silent lyre”—“Stand[s] silent.”

Jonson’s implicit answer justifies his aloofness by further distancing him from Horace’s stance:

Give me my cup, but from the *Thespian* well,  
 That I may tell to SYDNEY, what  
 This day  
 Doth say,  
 And he may thinke on that  
 Which I doe tell:  
 When all the noyse  
 Of these forc’d joyes  
 Are fled and gone,  
 And he, with his best *Genius* left alone.

(ll. 11–20).

Instead of offering a health to Sidney, Jonson here offers a lesson wholly purified of wine and its potential excess. He asks for a metaphorical “cup” of inspiration, which he himself provides with his interpretation of the occasion. Jonson rejects not only the Horatian drowning of cares with wine. His inspired exhortation to Sidney to ponder the meaning of his birthday after the party is over similarly rejects Horatian counsel that the drinker “cease to ask what the morrow will bring forth” (1.9.13–14) and “be joyful in the present” and “disdain to be anxious for . . . the future” (2.16.24–25). Jonson reduces the partying of others to the “noise” of “forc’d”—strained and inauthentic but communally enforced—“joys.” He underscores the emptiness of such revelry by imagining Sidney’s pondering “alone” the meaning of Jonson’s message—itsself offered by one who remains solitary amid group merriment. The advice that Sidney soberly confer with his “Best *Genius*” (i.e., his guardian spirit) pointedly contrasts with Horace’s call, in one of his symposiastic odes, for his addressee to “cheer [his] *Genius*/guardian spirit [*genium*] with unmixed wine” (3.17.14; trans. modified). Sidney needs wine no more than Jonson does.

Jonson emphasizes his transcendence of the symposiastic context by representing the moral course he advocates for Sidney as a higher version of the revelers’ activities: while the latter “strive [o]’advance / The gladnesse higher,” Sidney must “Strive . . . / T[o] out-strip” his “peeres” (ll. 25–26). Jonson’s didactic lesson transforms the opening “now” into a Stoic concern for the future: Sidney “Must now” commit himself to moral action, his ethical striving “must be now” (ll. 24, 47). The final lines complete Jonson’s transvaluation of the setting by returning, with a difference, to the opening description:

So may you live in honor, as in name,  
 If with this truth you be inspir’d;  
     So may  
     This day  
 Be more, and long desir’d:  
 And with the flame  
     Of love be bright,  
     As with the light  
     Of bone-fires. Then  
 The Birth-day shines, when logs not burne, but men.  
(ll. 51–60)

The poem moves from the poet inspired by the “*Thespian* well” to the addressee “inspir’d” by the poetic message—a chain of inspiration that bypasses wine. While the revelers make a “ring,” Jonson’s poem is a didactic circle, ending with a new version of the fire with which it began. Horace presents the fire as combining with the wine to dispel the cares represented by the outer cold (itself a reminder of temporality and death): in the Soracte ode (1.9) he bids his companion dispel the cold by building a fire and bringing

out the wine (ll. 5–8); in *Ode* 3.17 he invites a friend to pile up firewood as well as “cheer” his “Genius” with wine (ll. 13–15). In place of Horace’s movement from cold outside to fire and wine inside, Jonson presents a more deeply internalized “inside,” relying on an imaginary cup of inspiration. His cup embodies what he elsewhere calls his “owne true [poetic] fire” (“And must I sing . . .,” l. 29; 8:108) and enables him to exhort Sidney to kindle a corresponding inner fire. The “Ode to Sidney” thus represents Jonson’s most decisive counter-reaction to his own celebrations of wine-inspired poetry.

### Caroline Drinking Poetry: Excess and Contentment

Jonson’s Caroline poetic disciples simplify his equivocal legacy by rejecting moderation in drinking in their Anacreontic-Horatian poems, defiantly celebrating an excess that runs counter to religious and medical norms. Stridently identifying themselves with an elite court culture—particularly with its anti-Calvinism and its toleration of the Catholics who gathered around Queen Henrietta Maria—the Sons of Ben adopt Jonson’s contrast between the cultured, wine-drinking few and the drinkers of “LUTHERS beere” to elevate courtly drinking in opposition to “Puritan” killjoys and lowly drinkers (whom they sometimes equate). Their celebration of symposiastic excess reveals the intense cultural polarization of the pre-civil war period. While scholars have treated the celebration of drunkenness as a Royalist poetic response to defeat in the civil war, the drinking poetry of the 1640s and 1650s intensifies Caroline trends.

Waller’s “For Drinking of Healths,” probably written in the late 1620s or early 1630s against such attacks as Prynne’s *Healthes: Sicknesse*, defends an “ancient friendly” (l. 2) convivial custom.<sup>50</sup> Strikingly, however, Waller does not deny but rather revels in the claim that healths lead to excessive drinking:

Let brutes and vegetals, that cannot think,  
So far as drought and nature urges, drink;  
A more indulgent mistress guides our sprites,  
Reason, that dares beyond our appetites,  
(She would our care, as well as thirst, redress)  
And with divinity [i.e., Bacchus] rewards excess.

(ll. 7–12)

While human reason is treated in both classical and Christian moral discourse as the moderator of excessive appetite, Waller represents it as encouraging the truly rational man to go beyond mere thirst into an “excess” that brings contact with inebriating “divinity.” For Waller the rational man is also the courageous man who “dares” to transcend not only animal nature but also silly cultural norms. Moralists frequently compare drunkards to beasts.<sup>51</sup> Yet they

also sometimes claim that drunkards are worse than brutes because (as Gascoigne argues on Augustine's authority) animals "drinke no more" than what "suffise[s]." In 1638 the pseudonymous R. Junius (probably the Puritan divine Richard Younge) argues that drunken "excesse" makes men "worse" than beasts, who "keepe within the bounds of moderation."<sup>52</sup> Waller turns the argument around by noting that drinking to "excess," defined as drinking beyond the alleviation of thirst, is distinctively human and thus diametrically opposed to "brutish" behavior. Waller's argument is partly sophistry to amuse courtiers and shock prigs. Yet by coupling praise of a divine "excess" with an allusion to wine's traditionally recognized role as cure for "care," Waller underscores the difficulty of defining a properly "moderate" amount once one concedes that human beings appropriately do not restrict their drinking to the quenching of thirst. Waller "solves" the problem by declaring it spurious.

In "To a Friend, Inviting him to a meeting upon promise," probably written soon before its publication in 1634, the Catholic courtier-poet William Habington shows a similar attraction to excess.<sup>53</sup> Rewriting "Inviting a Friend," Habington turns Jonson's convivial meal into a drinking party and uses bantering hyperbole throughout to celebrate heavy wine drinking. Expanding upon Jonson's contrast between Canary and "LUTHERS beere," Habington intensifies the contrast between his own genteel revels and the drinking of plebeians and Protestant zealots:

May you drinke beare, or that adult'rate wine  
Which makes the zeale of *Amsterdam* divine;  
If you make breach of promise. I have now  
So rich a Sacke, that even your selfe will bow  
T'adore my Genius. Of this wine should *Prynne*  
Drinke but a plenteous glasse, he would beginne  
A health to *Shakespeares* ghost.

(ll. 1-7)

"Sack" was a generic term for various strong wines. Habington's "rich . . . Sacke," later described as "pure Canary" (l. 23), recalls Jonson's "pure cup of rich *Canary*-wine." Playing on the widespread view of the "Dutch" as drunkards, Habington's opening lines manage to condemn both Dutch Calvinists and English separatist exiles in Holland as at once hypocritically excessive and deficient with respect to the pleasures of the bottle (their zeal derives from drunkenness, but their cheap wine is "adult'rate" and thus as base as their beer). Habington's hyperbolic claim that the sack would inspire Prynne to toast Shakespeare's ghost recalls Jonson's exaggerated claim that Horace and Anacreon would still have been living had they drunk his wine. Habington's joke is double, since Prynne followed up his 1628 attack on healths with his 1633 antitheatrical diatribe *Histriomastix, the Players Scourge*. While *Histriomastix* decried the theater's close connection to tavern culture,<sup>54</sup> Habington

celebrates the association. Prynne attacked the health as a form of coercion; in imagining Prynne forced by sack to propose a health, Habington jocularly hymns wine's overpowering force.

In sharp contrast to Jonson's oenophobic "Ode to Sidney," Habington celebrates wine as inspiring—or perhaps serving as—his "Genius," not only his "guardian spirit" but also his "natural [though imbibed!] ability" as poet (*OED* s.v. "genius," 4). The poem's penultimate verse paragraph adopts Jonson's praise of unadulterated wine as poetic inspiration without any compensating emphasis upon moderation:

Come then, and bring with you prepar'd for fight,  
 Unmixed Canary, Heaven send both [wines] prove right!  
 This I am sure: My sacke will disingage  
 All humane thoughts, inspire so high a rage,  
 That *Hypocrene* shall henceforth Poets lacke,  
 Since more Enthusiasmes are in my sacke.

(ll. 29–34)

Habington imagines the drinking party as a "fight" among friends, presumably a rivalry concerning who can drink the most and whose wine is the superior poetic intoxicant. Drinking competitions were a regular part of classical symposiastic ritual, and *Anacreontea* 38 (Loeb 47) invites companions to "fight" with the speaker, presumably in drinking, while in *Ode* 4.1 Horace declares himself too old "to fight with unmixed wine" (4.1.30; trans. modified). Such drinking competitions were also central to early modern tavern culture, for drinkers often vied in drinking healths. For religious moralists, of course, such "fights" were invitations to drunken excess. Seneca claimed that the person who has conquered his fellows in drink has been conquered by wine (*Epistulae morales* 83.24–25); Christianizing Seneca, Thomas Young condemns those who boast of "conquering" their companions as "overcome . . . by Satan."<sup>55</sup> In his *Leges Convivales* Jonson advises carefully regulated competition: he first bids the guests "challenge" [*provocare*] each other with "moderate cups" (i.e., compete in drinking while somehow maintaining moderation) and then decrees that the competition should turn on witty conversation rather than wine (8:356). Habington, by contrast, seeks "Enthusiasmes" rather than moderation and conflates rivalry in drinking and in wit by making the latter depend upon the former. Such an emulative "fight" is for him a form of masculinity-affirming camaraderie that links the drinker who "dares" to drink among his peers to the brave soldier.

Unlike both Jonson and religious moralists, Habington treats the social ritual of competitive drinking as a civilizing force and solitary drinking as the true danger. While Prynne emphasizes the freedom of the Christian to determine the appropriate amount of drink for himself, Habington castigates the man who "can in his closet [i.e., chamber] drinke, / Drunke even alone,



and thus made wise create / As dangerous plots as the Low Countrey state” (ll. 14–16). He applies the word “drunke” only to the threatening “foreign” other: the true drunkard is the solitary Calvinist malcontent, who is as drunk with discontent as wine, while the sociable symposiasts will, however much they drink, never be “Drunke” in such a socially disruptive fashion. Habington’s polarity has no counterpart in classical drinking poetry, which worried about excessive drinking within communal symposia rather than the threat of the solitary drinker. Habington’s demonizing of the solitary drinker reflects his worries about sociocultural cohesion.<sup>56</sup>

Habington’s divergence from Jonsonian values partly reflects their different circumstances. Unlike Jonson, who in “Inviting” worries, as a probable recusant, about spies and insists upon his own “innocence” and the “Englishness” of his Canary, Habington writes with the assurance of an insider whose Catholicism was not so risky under Charles I and Henrietta Maria. Habington’s attack on Prynne is a courtier’s easy attack on the outsider, for at about this time Prynne was tried and punished for sedition and libel because *Histrionmastix* had criticized Queen Henrietta Maria’s participation in court entertainments. While Jonson combines delight in conviviality with anxious emphasis on the self-controlled individual’s autonomy, Habington promotes symposiastic norms as a courtly bulwark against threatening critics.

Another Son of Ben, Thomas Randolph, more radically turns the table on opponents of heavy drinking in his university comedy *Aristippus, or the Jovial Philosopher* (1630). With comic sympathy the play presents the life devoted to drinking while contriving to suggest that drunken excess is really a kind of moderation insofar as it curtails unruly desires. A student of Socrates, Aristippus founded Cyrenaic hedonism, which identified happiness with immediate bodily pleasure, and celebrated strong wine (Diogenes Laertius 2.8.66, 22.8.84). Portraying Aristippus as the teacher of tipling “above measure,”<sup>57</sup> Randolph has the philosopher and his students sing many drinking songs to celebrate their hedonistic indulgence in the moment. Randolph’s play is loosely based on Aristophanes’s *The Clouds*, which satirizes Aristippus’s teacher Socrates, but the two plays’ divergent outcomes suggest Randolph’s non-Aristophanic sympathies with “philosophy.” *The Clouds* ends with a legitimately disgruntled student torching the school after having realized the dangers of Socratic teaching. *Aristippus* ends with the conversion of the “Wild-man,” an uncultured brute who initially wishes to destroy the school but who wisely becomes Aristippus’s disciple.

Randolph’s “Wild-man,” a beer drinker until his final transformation, emblemizes one of the dramatist’s major strategies for vindicating the heavy drinking of an intellectual elite. Like Jonson, Randolph’s Aristippus contrasts wine, the drink of classical poetry and philosophy, with ale and beer, the beverages of unruly “barbarism.” His corporeal hedonism contradictorily relies on a hierarchy of body and soul that itself mirrors and supports the hierarchy

the play dramatizes: while beer “drowns” its cloddish imbibers’ “souls in their bodies,” wine allows its refined devotees to spend their wealth and thus be “purged and freed from so much earth.”<sup>58</sup> With comic legerdemain Randolph links the socially coded beverage war to the contemporary conflict between the Caroline court, with its promotion of Arminianism and tolerance of Catholicism, and the court’s supposedly boorish critics, with their vigorous assertions of Reformation values. An Aristippean mocks “Luther’s barrels” of plebeian beer; the “Wild-man” is a “zealous brother” who attacks “Aristippus his Arminianism” until he is converted and renounces the “Dutch heresy of English beer.”<sup>59</sup>

Yet Randolph’s play also contains several poems that defend heavy wine drinking with a very different strategy, glorifying it for moderating unruly desires and leading to virtuous contentment. One drinking song declares wine a cure for material desires:

Then [when I have drunk] all the world is mine: Croesus is poor,  
 Compar’d with me; he’s rich that asks no more.  
 And I in sack have all, which is to me  
 My home, my life: health, wealth, and liberty.

Another opens by condemning avarice in favor of drink:

Slaves are they that heap up mountains,  
 Still desiring more and more;  
 Still let’s carouse in Bacchus’s fountains,  
 Never dreaming to be poor.<sup>60</sup>

Randolph partly relies upon classical resonances to make his case for carousing as a form of non-Aristotelian, hedonistic moderation. His contented drinkers recall Aristippus’s refusal to “toil to procure the enjoyment of something not present” (Diogenes Laertius 8.66), which Aristippus himself declared a wise “middle way” [*mesê . . . hodos*] of “liberty” [*eleutheria*] between painful self-control and excesses like avarice (Xenophon, *Memorabilia* 2.1.1–11). The drinkers’ contrast between symposiastic contentment and avarice also revives an Anacreontic-Horatian theme. The first passage closely echoes *Anacreontea* 26 (Loeb 48), which proclaims (in Estienne’s loose Latin rendering, which was Randolph’s probable source) that when the poet drinks wine, “all care sleeps, / And I scorn [proverbially rich] Croesus in comparison to me.”<sup>61</sup> The second passage recalls Horace’s *Ode* 2.3, which prefers symposiastic pleasures to the pursuit of wealth on the grounds that rich and poor die alike and that an heir will enjoy wealth vainly “heaped up high” (“*exstructis in altum*,” l. 19; trans. modified). Renaissance commentators glossed this ode as an exhortation to golden “mediocrity.”<sup>62</sup> Randolph bolsters the claim for drinking wine “above measure” as a paradoxical instance of virtuous moderation by adducing unobjectionable moral commonplaces against avarice that are not directly

connected to praise of wine. The image of the avaricious as “slaves” derives from Horace’s claim, in his moral epistles, that the person not content with little is a slave (*Epistle* 1.10.39–41); the triumphant claim that “he’s rich that asks no more” is the inverse corollary of the Roman moral commonplace that one who desires more than he has is poor (Seneca, *Epistulae morales* 2.6; Claudian, *In Rufinum* 1. 200). Randolph’s playful challenge is clear: if constant drinking and prodigal spending can be distinguished, however sophistically, from the disorderly drinking of religious extremists and the lower classes and can lead to the contentment celebrated by moralists, can such drinking and spending still be condemned as immoderate?

### Herrick’s High and Low Symposiastic Pleasures

Leah Marcus, Peter Stallybrass, and Thomas Corns have explored Herrick’s simultaneously nostalgic and defiant celebration of a patriarchal community centered around the country pastimes—including the heavy drinking associated with harvest home, wakes, and wassails—promoted by the Caroline court in the *Book of Sports*, decried by the court’s religious critics as pagan and superstitious and outlawed by Parliament during the civil wars period in which *Hesperides* (1648) was published.<sup>63</sup> I focus here instead on Herrick’s representation of the distinctive pleasures and dangers within subcommunities of the high and low. Like Jonson and like other Sons of Ben, Herrick distinguishes wine drinking associated with classical culture, elite refinement, and poetic inspiration from the beer and ale consumption of the common folk. His poem “*The Welcome to Sack*” (H-197), for example, contrasts uplifting wine, which makes the poet’s wit “ayrie” and “active” (l. 49), with debasing beer, associated with earthly “Turfe” and the inability to write immortal “Numbers” (ll. 87–88).<sup>64</sup> Yet Herrick also provides a far more sympathetic portrait of plebeian drinking than do his fellow Jonsonians.

Seeking to control as well as foster the lower orders’ recreations, the *Book of Sports* contrasted wholesome country pastimes, overseen by the social elite, with the raucous pleasures of the alehouses, where the poor would go if deprived of appropriate outlets and where they would indulge in unruly aspersions against church and state. Such fear of the alehouse as a potential locus of popular discontent was widespread. Puritan attacks on drunkenness and Parliamentary policy in the 1640s and 1650s responded to this fear, which was increased by concerns about the alehouse as a meeting place both for radical separatist groups preaching antinomian freedom (as well as the joys of alcohol and tobacco) and for rebellious Royalist sympathizers. The 1640s and 1650s witnessed widespread suppression of unlicensed alehouses by the central government and local Puritan activists.<sup>65</sup> Mocking such concerns, which by the time of *Hesperides* were

identified with the victorious Puritan-Parliamentary powers rather than the defeated Caroline-Laudian order, Herrick celebrates both alehouse revels and neoclassical symposia as distinctive but parallel expressions of the legitimate desire to escape from cares, including those associated with political oppression. Sometimes playing a humble countryman and sometimes a learned symposiastic poet, Herrick himself indulges in both forms of drinking. Thus, he acknowledges while seeking to minimize the negative implications of social fragmentation, pitting both the beer-and-ale-soused tinker and the wine-drinking neoclassical poet against the inhumanity of Puritan killjoys.

Herrick sometimes mocks the excessive indulgence of lowly drinkers, whose names emblemize their subhuman physicality or materiality: "Spunge" boasts that "he's the onely man / Can hold of Beere and Ale an Ocean" (ll. 1–2; H-454); "Punchin" is a "*plant-animall*" who grows fat on "Beere and Ale" (ll. 2, 4; H-832); "Tap" treats his "Beere and Ale" as a corporeal necessity for which he would sacrifice those dearest to him—including his own mother's "Eyes, and Nose" (l. 4; H-829). Yet despite the fact that he revised his poems for publication during the "troublesome times" (H-596), as he calls it, of the civil war and Interregnum, Herrick never suggests any serious threat to himself or to the social elite from such brutish plebeian drinking. By contrast, other Royalist poets politicized the opposition of wine to ale and beer by associating the latter with ignoble Puritan rebels. For example, *A Preparative to Studie: or, The Vertue of Sack* (1641), ascribed to John Taylor, contrasts a Jonsonian cup of sack with ale that doth "tast too much" of "the dull Hynde" and with "here[tical]" beer drunk by "Rebellious" Scottish Presbyterian "Vipers." In the Interregnum "Canary's Coronation," the poet disdains "popular Ale or Beer" that "smell[s] of Anarchy."<sup>66</sup> The contrast between wine-drinking elite Royalists and ale-and-beer-drinking commoner rebels was reinforced by the widespread canard, much favored in Cavalier drinking songs, that "upstart" Cromwell, red-nosed from drink, was of lowly brewer origins.<sup>67</sup>

Herrick instead often exculpates the lowly from charges of excess by extending to the beer-and-ale-drinking lower orders the symposiastic association of wine drinking with virtuous contentment. Sometimes he does so as a patronizing outsider, as when he apostrophizes the countryfolk, "Drencht in Ale, or drown'd in Beere," as "Happy Rusticks, best content / With the cheapest Merriment" ("*The Wake*," ll. 20–22; H-761). In "*The Coblers Catch*" (H-629) and "*The Tinkers Song*" (H-1051), by contrast, Herrick sympathetically ventriloquizes the alehouse contentment of lowly cobblers and tinkers, notorious for their immoderate consumption of ale and beer.<sup>68</sup> His tinkers proclaim their preference for beer over wine:

Who frolick will be,  
For little cost he  
Must not vary,

From Beer-broth at all,  
So much as to call  
For Canary.

(ll. 13–18)

Treating financial necessity as laudable choice, Herrick glorifies the tinkers' heavy drinking of cheap beer rather than costly wine as a symposiastic eschewal of immoderate desires. The drunken alehouse tinkers' contentment with "little cost" resembles the ethics of moderation Herrick often expounds as a didactic epigrammatist: "Who with a little cannot be content, / Endures an everlasting punishment" ("Again"; H-606); "Let's live with that small pittance that we have; / *Who covets more, is evermore a slave*" ("The Covetous Still Captive"; H-607).

In "A Hymn to Bacchus" (H-772), another ventriloquized poem, Herrick has lowly countrymen seek in Anacreontic fashion to "be / From cares and troubles free" (ll. 25–26). When (aided by Herrick's classicism) they declare that drink frees them from fear of "Brutus" and "Cato the severe" (ll. 5–6), Herrick obliquely justifies their Anacreontic drinking as an escapist protest against harsh reigning powers: Lucius Junius Brutus and Cato the Elder, austere heroes of Republican Rome, evoke England's own Puritan republicans.

Herrick sometimes writes poems in which he claims happily to inhabit beer-and-ale culture himself, declaring his contentment with "small cheere" and humble "Ale" ("A Hymne, to the Lares," ll. 10, 17; H-674). In poems depicting himself and his social equals or superiors as symposiastic wine drinkers, however, he justifies heavy drinking as a means of finding not only contentment in troubled times but also consolatory communion with ancient poetry.<sup>69</sup> Herrick revives the classical practice, alluded to by Horace (*Ode* 1.17.18–20) and described by Aulus Gellius (*Noctes atticae* 19.19.1–6), of reciting predecessors' symposiastic lyrics at one's drinking party. Softening the distinction between reciting immortal "lines" and reviving mortal "lives" of the dead poets (to use Jonson's opposition in "Inviting a Friend"), Herrick treats vatic inebriation as a way of reviving the spirits of dead poets even as he acknowledges the inevitability of death. In "A Lyrick to Mirth" (H-111), the reveling poet wishes to get drunk and

Rouze *Anacreon* from the dead;  
And return him drunk to bed:  
Sing o're *Horace*; for ere long  
Death will come and mar the song.

(ll. 9–12)

In "To live merrily, and to trust to Good Verses" (H-201) the poet becomes progressively drunker as he devotes a stanzaic health to six classical poets. Herrick's healths are excessive by ancient standards: Athenaeus and the Hel-

lenistic doxographer Stobaeus cite Greek poets and philosophers on not drinking more than two or three cups at a symposium.<sup>70</sup> Moreover, Herrick's cups get progressively more prodigious (or is the poet simply getting more hyperbolic as he drinks?): "a Goblet" turns into an "immensive cup," "a Tun," and finally "a flood" (ll. 21, 25, 35, 38). Yet Herrick's dizzy drunkenness—"Round, round, the roof do's run" (l. 33)—allows him to "call forth" (l. 16) the classical poets whose physical death but immortal verses are the subject of the poem's final two stanzas. Herrick's opening, "Now is the time for mirth" (l. 1), echoes the opening of Horace's *Ode* 1.37, "Nunc est bibendum," asserting the decorum of revelry. Through drunkenness Herrick seeks to establish contact with his poetic forbears "now"—before it is too late.

The distinctions between Herrick's regimes for popular and elite drinking emerge most clearly in the portrait of a festive community in "*The Hock-cart*" (H-250):

Come Sons of Summer, by whose toile,  
 We are the Lords of Wine and Oile:  
 By whose tough labours, and rough hands,  
 We rip up first, then reap our lands.  
 Crown'd with the eares of corne, now come  
 . . . . .  
 If smirking Wine be wanting here,  
 There's that, which drowns all care, stout Beere;  
 Which freely drink to your Lords health,  
 Then to the Plough, (the Common-wealth)  
 Next to your Flailes, your Fanes, your Fatts;  
 Then to the Maids with Wheaten Hats:  
 To the rough Sickle, and crookt Sythe,  
 Drink frolick boyes, till all be blythe.  
 . . . . .  
 And know, besides, ye must revoke  
 The patient Oxe unto the Yoke,  
 And all goe back unto the Plough.

(ll. 1–5, 36–43, 47–49)

Herrick ordains for the rural laborers a festival of intense drunken pleasure but limited duration, one in which they must not forget their place. Their numerous healths to their tools render them joyous while reminding them of the work to which they must return. The "Stout" beer versus "smirking" wine encodes the difference between the simple, earthy pleasures of the lower orders, who simply want their liquor strong so they can get drunk, and the more refined pleasures of the social elite, who delight in the visual pleasure of the "smirking" or sparkling wine.

Yet in what sense do English laborers, crowned with the “corne” they have grown, turn the elite into “Lords” of “Wine and Oile,” which are, as Leah Marcus notes, notably un-English agricultural products?<sup>71</sup> The poem may be covertly admitting into its idealization of a traditional rural order the cash economy and international trade: the farmworkers’ labors provide the ultimate basis for the cash that the social elite dispenses on foreign luxury goods such as wine and oil. One might compare Thomas Fuller’s 1642 claim that the international merchant “makes England bear wine, and oyl . . . beyond Nature.”<sup>72</sup> Yet “Wine and Oile” need not be taken so literally in order to characterize the blessings that laborers confer upon their social superiors. Corn, wine, and oil considered together are biblical synecdoches for God’s blessings: Deut. 7:13 declares that God will provide the Israelites corn, wine, and oil; Ps. 104:15 thanks God for providing “wine,” “oil,” and “bread” (“corn” in the Psalter). In “*Farewell Frost, or welcome the Spring*” Herrick uses the biblical items to signify earthly prosperity when he laments that the civil war “doth spoil” “our Corn . . . Wine, and Oile” (l. 18; H-642); similarly, in “*Pray and prosper*” he declares that for the pious farmer “Wine, and Oile / Shall run, as rivers” (ll. 5–6; H-370). Such scriptural blessings are spiritual as well as material: God heals the spiritually afflicted in *Noble Numbers* with “oyle” and “wine” (l. 10; N-17).<sup>73</sup> In “*The Hock-cart*” the laborers guarantee that God’s blessings—of material prosperity and spiritual health—continue in England, a new promised land. Since the Israelites pay their tithes in corn, wine, and oil (Deut. 14:23, Neh. 10:39), Herrick indeed conjures an ideal in which the laborers offer sacred tithes to their English “Lords”—both the lord of the manor and Herrick, their minister.

But Herrick’s separation of the Mediterranean “Wine and Oile,” of which the elite are “Lords,” from the English “corne” with which the laborers are crowned, as well as from the simple beer which they drink, also activates a classical resonance that specifies the particular kind of blessedness desired by Herrick as an Anacreontic-Horatian poet. Herrick goes much further than any other English poet in imagining his symposia with classical accoutrements, frequently coupling wine with oil as the classical symbols of symposiastic luxury. Both “Anacreon” and Horace associate symposia with fragrant unguents as well as wine (*Anacreontea* 15 = Loeb 8, *Anacreontea* 41 = Loeb 38; “vina et unguenta,” Horace, *Odes* 2.3, 13; see also *Odes* 2.7.21–23, 3.14.17–18, 3.29.4). Such ointment was often translated in early modern England as “oil.”<sup>74</sup> In tension with his frequent claims to simplicity, Horace’s salves reveal his cosmopolitan opulence. As Eastern imports, unguents were for Roman writers, like imported wine for English poets, an ambiguous symbol both of positive refinement and immoral luxury. In one epigram (8.77) Martial celebrates the symposiastic pleasures of wine and Assyrian unguent (“Syrian Oyle” in Jonson’s translation [1.3; 8:294]); in another (11.11) he mocks himself for straying from traditional Roman sobriety by sporting a luxurious unguent. Attacking

hedonist excess, Seneca decries those who spend their nights amid “wine and unguent” (“vino inguentoque,” *Epistulae morales* 122.3).

Moralizing like Seneca, Herrick’s contemporary Robert Burton treats Horace’s hair unguent in *Ode* 2.11 as an example of ancient luxurious “riot.”<sup>75</sup> Herrick, by contrast, revels in such oil, which he associates with a joyous drunken deliquescence. Based on the vision of Anacreon in the poem that begins modern editions of the *Anacreontea*,<sup>76</sup> which describes the Greek poet smelling of wine, Herrick’s dream vision (H-1017) accentuates Anacreon’s drunken abandon by adding oil, overflowing wine, and an alcoholic flush: “Flusht was his face; his haire with oyle did shine; / And as he spake, his mouth ranne ore with wine” (ll. 3–4). This vision is the poet’s own initiation into such excess: his own “braines about doe swim”—another image of liquid abandon—so that he becomes “wilde and wanton” like Anacreon (ll. 13–14).

Herrick’s “*On himselfe*” (H-170) similarly uses the oil to suggest the luxurious excess of his symposiastic pleasure:

I Feare no Earthly Powers;  
But care for crowns of flowers:  
And love to have my Beard  
With Wine and Oile besmear’d.  
This day Ile drowne all sorrow;  
Who knowes to live to morrow?

“Besmeared,” normally a negative term in early modern English for which the *OED* gives “befouled” as a synonym, signals symposiastic abandon: Anacreon in Elysium is similarly “Besmear’d with Grapes” (l. 37; H-575). Like his poems on lowly drinkers, Herrick’s “*On himselfe*” implicitly justifies such excess as political defiance. While Herrick’s first line is closely based on that of *Anacreontea* 15 (Loeb 8), Herrick generalizes the specific Anacreontic example of drunken unconcern for the powerful (“I do not care about the power of Gyges”) in order to suggest an English Royalist’s drunken disregard for the “Earthly Powers” of Puritan England. While the lower orders drown the cares of work and poverty with stout beer, Herrick drowns the sorrows of defeat much more luxuriously with rich symposiastic liquids.

Elsewhere Herrick highlights his oil’s exotic extravagance. “Th’Arabian Dew” that “besmears” Herrick’s “uncontrolled brow” in “*To live merrily*” (ll. 10–11; H-201) recalls Horatian allusions to Arabian riches (*Odes* 1.29.1–2, 2.12.24, 3.24.1–2). The “*Tyrian Balme*” with which Herrick imagines himself anointed in “*His age . . .*” (l. 34; H-336) similarly conjures Eastern luxury: like Virgil’s references to “Tyrian purple” in the *Georgics* (2.506, 3.17), “Tyrian” throughout Roman literature evokes Eastern opulence because of the expense of Tyrian dye (as Pliny notes in *Natural History* 9.135–137).

Yet Herrick’s prodigal luxury is, of course, an indulgence in classicizing fantasies: he has no Arabian or Tyrian oil outside the poetic world of *Hesperides*.



“Wine and Oile” are at bottom synecdoches for the blessings Herrick does have, the leisure and learning to construct his own fantasy. While ale and beer drinkers risk a debasing but essentially comic immersion in bodily pleasure, Herrick’s deepest worry as neoclassical symposiast seems to be the imaginative excess of solipsism. In its strong sense of poetic solitude, his Anacreontic poem “*On himselfe*” diverges from his contemporaries’ drinking party compositions but resembles other Herrick poems with the same title, in which the poet imagines himself alone in his grave (H-306) or describes his book as a “vast Dominion” that will endure after all extratextual “Monarchies” (like Charles’s!) are “gone” (ll. 3–4; H-592).<sup>77</sup> In “*To Bacchus, A Canticle*,” he suggests his fears:

Whither dost thou whorry me,  
*Bacchus*, being full of thee?  
 This way, that way, that way, this,  
 Here, and there a fresh Love is.  
 That doth like me, this doth please;  
 Thus a thousand Mistresses,  
 I have now; yet I alone,  
 Having All, injoy not *One*.

(H-415)

Herrick’s first two lines literally translate the opening question of Horace’s ode claiming to be inspired by Bacchus (3.25.1–2). Such Bacchic inspiration gets deflated in the subsequent lines, however, which adapt a passage from *Anacreontea* 8 (Loeb 37) in which the poet, in a wine-induced dream, imagines sporting with some girls who flee his embraces until he awakens alone. While the Anacreontic poet wants to sleep and dream again, Herrick ends with a lament concerning his excessive fantasizing: to have all in imagination is to have none in reality. In an epigrammatic distich Herrick notes the isolating privacy of dreams: “Here we are all, by day; By night w’are hurl’d / By dreames, each one, into a sev’rall world” (H-57). Symposiastic fantasy similarly isolates the poet.

While Habington favorably contrasted the sociable excess of the elite with dangerous solitary drinking, Herrick often populates his solitude by communing with the poetic spirits and imagining the accoutrements of ancient symposiastic poetry and ritual. Yet when the drunken dream dissolves, the poet finds himself all the more alone. Such is the danger of his luxurious private world of wines and oils, imagined all the more intently because the public realm seemed so bleak. As the next chapter will demonstrate, the problematic relationship between the drinking party and the public realm so evident in Herrick becomes the central, if sometimes implicit, theme of most subsequent seventeenth-century drinking poetry.

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## CHAPTER EIGHT

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### Drinking and Cultural Conflict from Lovelace to Rochester

ADDRESSING THE RELATIONSHIP of drinking parties to social and political conflict, English poets from the civil war to the Restoration adapt, travesty, and ultimately abandon classical symposiastic poetics. Constructing a Royalist response to defeat, Richard Lovelace situates drinking revels in ever-shrinking subcommunities: first Charles I's soldiers, then Royalist prisoners, and finally pairs of loyal friends and of devil-may-care lovers. Introducing sex, a classical symposiastic motif largely ignored in earlier English drinking poems, Lovelace justifies both drunkenness and heterosexual indulgence as complementary modes of defying the times. In his richest poem, "The Grasse-hopper," Lovelace deftly associates heavy drinking with contentment. Yet with the mounting despair of Cavalier poets that they could do no more than ignobly survive, a new coarseness also infects the drinking poetry of Lovelace and his contemporaries. With jaunty, anticlassical obscenity, two Royalist poets, Alexander Brome and Charles Cotton the younger, promote mindless drunken excess and whoring as sordid survival tactics for defeated Royalists.

Two of John Milton's sonnets of the 1650s counter Cavalier excesses by presenting a Parliamentary-Puritan form of moderate Horatian pleasure appropriate for supporters rather than opponents of the Puritan revolution. Yet Milton distances himself not only from his Royalist contemporaries but also from major aspects of Horatian symposiastic poetry that he deems excessive. While Milton's godly sonnets are not influential, Restoration poets continue to travesty the Anacreontic-Horatian tradition. Tories adapt Brome's drunken contempt for thinking to declare carefree loyalty to the monarchy, which the happy tippler will not trouble, espousing a Royalist politics of supposed anti-politics. Yet like Restoration celebrations of "extreme" aristocratic love, which sometimes glorify the court and sometimes oppose to it a superior private realm, the drinking poem has an ambiguous relation to courtly values. Libertines like John Wilmot, earl of Rochester, celebrate the frenetic pursuit of transgressive drinking and erotic pleasure not as declarations of political loyalty but as assertions of the aristocratic self in all its reckless extremity. In Rochester and fellow libertines, a self-consciously modern, feverish indul-

gence of insatiable appetites replaces the tranquil contentment with present pleasure that “Anacreon” and Horace espouse.

Concurrently one finds a growing disdain for the drinking poem on the part of an increasingly “polite” literary and social elite. This urbane elite increasingly imbibed coffee and tea—more sedate imported luxuries than liquor—and deemed itself sober in its pleasures. Symposiastic poetry came to be treated as a tainted, atavistic genre incapable of espousing moderation and fit only for boors (such as country bumpkins). Authors turned to rival genres, such as the convivial epistle, to glorify the restrained hedonism of a self-consciously refined, enlightened society.

### Lovelace and Royalist Drinking Communities

Lovelace locates symposiastic verse within Royalist subcommunities. His poem “*To Generall Goring, after the pacification at Berwicke*” (composed ca. 1639) proposes enormous healths—the poet wishes to “drinke off an Ocean” (l. 20)—in honor of a general whose company in the First Bishops’ War was notorious for heavy drinking.<sup>1</sup> Lovelace exploits the long-standing association (in life and literature) of soldiers’ heavy alcohol consumption with the fighting spirit. In his 1630 treatise on gentle manners Richard Brathwaite attacks drunkenness but concedes that soldiers “have in some sort a liberty” to get drunk. In his drama *Brennoralt* (composed ca. 1639–1641 and published in 1646), the Cavalier poet-soldier John Suckling has a soldier eulogize a dead comrade-in-arms as a brave “drinker and dier.”<sup>2</sup> Lovelace begins with an admission that the 1639 treaty with the Scots was an ignominious English defeat: “Now the *Peace* is made at the Foes rate” (l. 1). Bitterly echoing the initial “now” of Horace’s call for a victory celebration in his *Actium* ode [*Nunc est bibendum*], Lovelace exhorts his fellow soldiers at least to display drinking prowess since they have been prevented from exhibiting valor.

“*The Vintage to the Dungeon*” (46) takes up the praise of heavy drinking as solace for Royalist prisoners:

Live then Pris’ners uncontrol’d;  
 Drink oth’ [sic] strong, the Rich, the Old,  
 Till Wine too hath your Wits in hold;  
     Then if still your Jollitie,  
     And Throats are free;  
*Chorus.* Tryumph in your Bonds and Paines,  
 And daunce to th’Musick of your Chaines.

(ll. 8–14)

While this poem, written sometime before 1645, seems partly a response to Lovelace’s imprisonment by Parliament in 1642, the poem’s dungeon with chains is more dire than the Gatehouse in which he was incarcerated. Practicing literary

imitation rather than autobiography, Lovelace echoes a drinking song of imprisoned soldiers in William Cartwright's *The Royal Slave* (published in 1639):

Ther's liberty lyes in the bottome o'th'Bowle.  
 . . . . .  
 Then drinke we a round in despite of our Foes,  
 And make our hard Irons cry clinke in the close.<sup>3</sup>

Lovelace's Cartwrightian chains provide a melodramatic representation of duress that justifies the call for "uncontrol'd" drinking. Within Cartwright's play, the drinkers' "Liberty" is rebellious license, for in liberty's name the drinkers vow to kill the play's temperate hero, whom they deem a tyrant because he condemns "beastly" drunken revels. Lovelace's identification with Cartwright's drunken revelers typifies Royalist civil war and Interregnum drinking poems, which defiantly respond to Puritan-Interregnum values with calculated excess. The Cartwright drinkers' contempt for their "Foes" took on new meaning when published in a 1656 anthology alongside numerous drinking songs contra the Protectorate regime.<sup>4</sup>

"To ALTHEA, *From Prison*" (78–79) responds more directly to Lovelace's own imprisonment. In successive stanzas Lovelace evokes the freedom that he attains through lovemaking, heavy drinking, and defiant Royalism. His combined love-and-drinking poem revives an ancient motif largely ignored by earlier Cavalier poets, who glorified male camaraderie. The *Anacreontea* link drinking with both heterosexual and homosexual love and include within symposia courtesans described euphemistically as "Maids" (as Stanley renders *parthenôn* in *Anacreontea* 8 [Loeb 37]) and "Lasse[s]" (as Stanley translates *kourai* in *Anacreontea* 6 [Loeb 43]).<sup>5</sup> Horace, too, closely associates Bacchus with Venus (3.21.21) and delights in refined, music-playing, Greek-named courtesans at his symposia (2.11, 3.19, 3.28, 4.11). Such are the precursors of Lovelace's grandiloquently Greek-named mistress "Althea" ("Truth" [*al(e)the(i)a*] or "All-Divine" [*al(l)-the(i)a*]?). In reviving the classical wine-and-women association, Lovelace defies the long-standing Christian condemnation of drinking as a stimulus to lechery.<sup>6</sup>

Lovelace echoes but outdoes Horace in seeking release from care through excess:

When flowing Cups run swiftly round  
 With no allaying *Thames*,  
 Our carelesse heads with Roses bound,  
 Our hearts with Loyall Flames;  
 When thirsty grieffe in Wine we steepe,  
 When Healths and draughts go free,  
 Fishes that tipple in the Deepe,  
 Know no such Libertie.

In *Ode* 2.11 Horace invites a friend to drink with “locks garlanded with fragrant roses,” notes that wine dispels “cares,” and proceeds to bid a slave “swiftly [*ocius*] temper the bowls of fiery Falernian with water from the passing stream” (ll. 14–15, 18–20). Spurning “allaying” water, Lovelace rejects Horace’s “swiftly” tempering of wine in favor of “swiftly” drinking undiluted wine. Yet Lovelace justifies his non-Horatian excess with a Horatian appeal to decorum: extreme circumstances demand extreme remedies; prison requires a violent assertion of freedom.

Lovelace’s masterpiece “*The Grasse-hopper*. To my Noble Friend, Mr. CHARLES COTTON” (38–40), composed in the late 1640s after the king’s defeat but probably before his execution, celebrates drunkenness with more complexity as a decorous response to extreme conditions. The poem distinguishes between the heedless drinking of the carefree grasshopper first celebrated in the *Anacreontea* and that of Lovelace and his friend, who embrace Horatian calls for heavy carousing as an appropriate response to wintry times, understood here as a harsh political climate. The poem uses Horace to correct excesses inherent in Anacreontic poetics, thus suggesting that the symposiastic tradition has internal answers to its own dangers, just as Royalists can find a proper response to the times even after their king’s downfall.<sup>7</sup>

The first five stanzas apostrophize a grasshopper whose joyous life is qualified from the very first stanza by evocations of its mortal fate:

Oh thou that swing’st upon the waving haire  
 Of some well-filled Oaten Beard,  
 Drunke ev’ry night with a Delicious teare  
 Dropt thee from Heav’n, where now th’art reard.

The Joyes of Earth and Ayre are thine intire,  
 That with thy feet and wings dost hop and flye;  
 And when thy Poppy workes thou dost retire  
 To thy Carv’d Acron-bed [*sic*] to lye.

Up with the Day, the Sun thou welcomst then,  
 Sportst in the guilt-plats of his Beames,  
 And all these merry dayes mak’st merry men,  
 Thy selfe, and Melancholy streames.

But ah the Sickle! Golden Eares are Cropt;  
 Ceres and *Bacchus* bid good night;  
 Sharpe frosty fingers all your Flowr’s have topt,  
 And what sithes spar’d, Winds shave off quite.

Poore verdant foole! and now green Ice! thy Joys  
 Large and as lasting, as thy Peirch of Grasse,  
 Bid us lay in ’gainst Winter, Raine, and poize  
 Their flouds, with an o’reflowing glasse.

(ll. 1–20).

The poem simultaneously praises the grasshopper for its joyful victory over melancholy and mourns and mocks him as a “verdant foole” (l. 17) ignorant of his ultimate fate. Shifts in temporal and spatial perspective convey the grasshopper’s mixture of blessedness and folly. The present-tense descriptions of “Joyes” (l. 5) “ev’ry night” (l. 3) and “all these merry dayes” (l. 11) sympathetically adopt the grasshopper’s own perspective, who delighted in joys he believed “lasting” (l. 18). The poet punctures this false eternal present, however, with his awareness that “now” (ll. 4, 17) the grasshopper is dead. While the claim that the “The Joyes of Earth and Ayre are thine intire” (l. 5) adopts the creature’s own grand outlook, Lovelace undercuts this by revealing that the grasshopper’s “Joys” were only as “Large” (and “lasting”) as his “Peirch of Grasse” (l. 18). Even the grasshopper’s death is double, serving to beatify a hedonistic saint, now “reard” to “Heav’n” (l. 4), and to reduce a naïf to “green Ice” (l. 17). The grasshopper’s drunkenness on dew itself betokens his mixed status as saintly fool: the dew from “Heav’n” brings his earthly life close to beatitude but also serves as a “teare” (l. 3) for the mortal fate he fails to foresee.

The first two stanzas’ depiction of the grasshopper’s carefree life, particularly the claim that “The Joyes of Earth and Ayre are thine intire” (l. 5), draws on *Anacreontea* 43 (Loeb 34), which apostrophizes a cicada (often confused with a grasshopper) as the owner of the earth and happy as a king: “We count you blessed, cicada, when on the treetops, having drunk a little dew, you sing like a king: you own everything that you see in the fields, everything that the woods produce.” The Anacreontic poet celebrates the grasshopper’s brief life, without the cares of old age, as the closest thing to divine immortality: “Age does not distress you . . . you are almost like the gods.” This cicada, satisfied but not drunk on dew, effortlessly embodies the carefree life that the symposiast seeks through drunkenness. By contrast, Lovelace treats his grasshopper as a foolish innocent free of care only because ignorant of death.

Although Lovelace does not explicitly allude to the Anacreontic comparison of the cicada to a king, his debt to the Anacreontic poem hints that his grasshopper is an emblem of the vanquished Charles I and, more generally, the defeated Royalists. Lovelace is too loyal and tactful to criticize his beloved king directly, but the poem implicitly treats the king as a blessed but foolish grasshopper who enjoyed his royal prerogatives without realizing in time the threats to his power. Lovelace’s call to “poize” his “o’reflowing glasse” against “Winter” and “Raine” (ll. 19–20) simultaneously criticizes the defeated Royalists’ naïveté and calls for continuing hedonistic defiance of the victorious Parliamentary regime. While the Anacreontic speaker sentimentally wishes for the cicada’s “natural” blessedness, Lovelace seeks a more cognizant drunkenness that defies rather than ignores the world. Lovelace once more suggests that extreme times call for extreme measures: his “o’reflowing glass” counterbalances (*OED* s.v. “poize,” 6) the “flood,” implying that excess is necessary for balance and that drunkenness is a decorous response to harsh times.

Lovelace's call to "lay in" (l. 19) wine against the rain also plays with Aesop's fable of the grasshopper and the ant by associating the carefree grasshopper-king with imprudence and the poet and his companion with the prudent ant who provides for winter. Symposiasts traditionally prefer drinking to amassing wealth: given death's inevitability, the speaker of *Anacreontea* 23 (Loeb 36) would prefer to drink rather than (in Stanley's translation) "lay . . . up" gold.<sup>8</sup> Lovelace suggests that wine and defiant mirth are themselves the wealth that the defeated Royalists must store up against the harsh times. Symposiastic tradition responds to death with a hedonistic *carpe diem*, while the Aesop fable derives a prudential lesson from winter. Synthesizing these two strands, Lovelace posits symposiastic drunkenness as the authentic prudential response to winter and death.<sup>9</sup>

Lovelace mingles drunkenness and contentment in the second half of the poem in Anacreontic-Horatian fashion: heavy drinking banishes desire for things beyond symposiastic enjoyment. Rather than ignoring the harsh world like the grasshopper, however, Lovelace claims that by drinking together he and his friend can confront and conquer hostile times and even death. His use of the future tense emphasizes his antlike prudential response to temporality:

Thou best of *Men* and *Friends!* we will create  
 A Genuine Summer in each others breast;  
 And spite of this cold Time and frozen Fate  
 Thaw us a warme seate to our rest.

Our sacred harthes shall burne eternally  
 As Vestall Flames, the North-wind, he  
 Shall strike his frost-strech'd Wings, dissolve and flye  
 This *Aetna* in Epitome.

Dropping *December* shall come weeping in,  
 Bewayle th'usurping of his Raigne;  
 But when in show'rs of old Greeke we beginne,  
 Shall crie, he hath his Crowne againe!

Night as cleare *Hesper* shall our Tapers whip  
 From the light Casements where we play,  
 And the darke Hagge from her black mantle strip,  
 And stick there everlasting Day.

(ll. 21–36)

With its startling shift of address from grasshopper to Cotton ("Thou best of *Men* and *Friends!*"), the poem use hendiadys to suggest the fundamental tenet of classical and Renaissance friendship theory: since virtue is the basis of true friendship, the best human being makes the best friend. Implicitly Lovelace contrasts himself, secure in his friendship with Cotton, to the grasshopper,

who relied upon the world but did not, it seems, have enough true friends. Lovelace's move from an outside cold associated with hostile times and death to the inward warmth of symposiastic wine, fire, and friendship recalls Horace, particularly his Soracte ode (1.9). Like Jonson in the "Ode to Sidney," however, Lovelace deepens the sense of inward retreat: the two friends' "sacred harthes" (l. 25)—hearts as/instead of hearths—replace Horace's fire. The "Summer in each others breast" is "Genuine" (l. 22) because it is both more "real" and more internal or "peculiar to a person" (OED s.v. "genuine," 1) than a mere season. The "rest" (l. 24) that Lovelace and Cotton anticipate, which initially seems to mean death, comes to signify the friends' carefree withdrawal from the world. Yet by framing stanzas on inner warmth (ll. 21–28) with ones celebrating wine drinking (ll. 17–20, 29–32), Lovelace underscores that their "hot" intoxicant—"A Loose Saraband" (139) dubs Canary "wet" "Fire" (ll. 3–4)—helps make this "Genuine Summer" of fellow feeling possible.

Lovelace is not only more "inward" than Horace but also more hyperbolic. He moves from claiming that the external world cannot quench the friends' "eternally" burning fires (l. 25) to assertions that they will conquer the external world: they will "whip" and "strip" darkness to create "everlasting Day" (ll. 33–36). Yet these hyperboles are partially offset by the sense that they arise from imagining future drunken bravado. The stanza on December, in particular, reveals the fragile basis upon which Lovelace self-consciously builds. Against the "usurping" of December's "Raigne" (l. 30)—an allusion to Parliament's attempted suppression of traditional Christmas celebrations and to the defeat of the Caroline monarch—the two friends will pose "show'rs of old" (and therefore potent!) "Greeke" (i.e., Anacreontic) wine (l. 31).<sup>10</sup> But how will such intense revelry transform the world? December's imagined cry that "he hath his Crowne againe!" (l. 32) depends on an implicit pun. To "crown" a glass is "to fill to overflowing" (OED s.v. "crown," 8), as when Herrick, in "A Bacchanalian Verse" (H-653), wishes to "Crowne" his glass (l. 4); a "crowned" glass is full or overflowing, as in Herrick's wish in "An Ode to Sir Clipsbie Crew" for "A Goblet, to the brim, / Of Lyrick Wine . . . crown'd" (ll. 15–16; H-544). December may indeed have his "Crowne" again, but only among the "o'reflowing" glasses of the drinkers. A drinking song of 1648 by Alexander Brome explicitly plays with the political resonances of the "crowned" glass as a consolatory substitute for Charles I's rule: "Since we have no King let the goblet be crown'd: / Our Monarchy thus we'l recover." Against such bravado, however, consider Katherine Philips' sardonic dismissal of male carousers "Who crown the cup, then think they crown the day."<sup>11</sup> Lovelace is defiant—but knowingly reductive. His drunken affirmations recover monarchy as a value, not a reality.<sup>12</sup>

After such bravura, the final stanza of the poem sounds soberly Stoic in imagining a contented state higher than mere kingship:



Thus richer than untempted Kings are we,  
 That asking nothing, nothing need:  
 Though Lord of all what Seas embrace; yet he  
 That wants himselfe, is poore indeed.

(ll. 37–40)

Despite its drunken “restoration” of “monarchy,” the poem concludes as post-Royalist rather than Royalist. Lovelace implicitly contrasts the self-sufficient, prudent friends with the foolish grasshopper-king Charles I, who once was “Lord of all what Seas embrace”—the monarch of the sea-girt British Isles—but failed to realize that the true and lasting kingdom is within. The first two lines recall Seneca’s famous chorus from *Thyestes*, which declares that “A king is he who shall desire nothing / Such a kingdom on himself each man bestows” (ll. 389–390). Possessing a Stoic wisdom wrested from adversity, the contented friends are “richer” than mere kings, who (like the unfortunate Charles I) are blessed only for as long as they are “untempted”—probably a Latinism for “not attacked, unassailed” [*intemptatus*]. (The grasshopper-king Charles I, Lovelace implies, had merely the transitory external goods that Seneca belittles as “unassailed by fortune [“intemptata fortunae,” *Epistulae morales* 66.52.3; trans. mine].) In his final two lines Lovelace echoes an aphoristic line from a Stoic Horatian ode by the seventeenth-century Polish poet Casimire Sarbiewski, translated into English in 1646: “He’s poore that wants himself” [*Pauper est, qui se caret*]. The gnomic impersonality of Lovelace’s conclusion has the sober gravity of the impersonal Stoic wisdom with which Jonson closes poems, as in “He that departs with his owne honesty / For vulgar praise, doth it too dearely buy” (“Epigram II,” ll. 13–14).<sup>13</sup>

The Stoic close is both connected to and separated from symposiastic values. “Thus” (l. 37) presents the final stanza’s wisdom as arising from Lovelace’s vision of future drunken revels. After all, Lovelace and Cotton wish for nothing at least partly because, as in Anacreontic-Horatian poetry, they know they will have their wine to content them. One recalls the declaration of drunken contentment in Randolph’s *Aristippus*: “All the world is mine: Croesus is poor, / Compar’d with me; he’s rich that asks no more.” Yet the tonal shift from drunken abandon to sober moralizing suggests that Lovelace need only imagine future intoxication to secure present contentment. While the grasshopper lived in a drunken present without regard for the future, the prudent poet contemplates—and manipulates—past, present, and future to retrieve equanimity.

### Interregnum Drinking: Ambivalence and Oblivion

Lovelace’s defiant poise at the end of “The Grasse-hopper” is unusual in Royalist symposiastic poetry, which in the 1640s and 1650s becomes both more escapist and more equivocal as Royalist poets lose a sense of ethically viable

options.<sup>14</sup> Thomas Stanley's generally faithful renderings of the *Anacreontea* (1651) conjure a poetic world of symposiastic and erotic joy. Yet his notes also criticize Anacreontic drunkenness and "Luxury."<sup>15</sup> Abraham Cowley's more freely rendered "Anacreontiques" (1656) both heighten and critique the genre's escapist excess.<sup>16</sup> Cowley's version of the grasshopper ode depicts the insect as blessed because it evades all cares in a drunken revelry unbroken unto death. While the Anacreontic grasshopper drinks plain dew, Cowley's (with a probable hint from Lovelace) drinks the "dewy Mornings gentle Wine." While the Anacreontic grasshopper sings like a king, Cowley's drunken creature (with a glance at Charles I's unhappy fate) is "Happier then the happiest King!" The Anacreontic grasshopper dies a peaceful death without suffering old age, but Cowley's grasshopper dies in—and from—a delightful satiety:

But when thou'st drunk, and danc'd, and sung,  
Thy fill, the flowry Leaves among  
(*Voluptuous*, and *Wise* with all,  
*Epicurean Animal!*)  
Sated with thy *Summer Feast*,  
Thou retir'est to endless *Rest*.<sup>17</sup>

As Cowley knows, his "Epicurean" grasshopper, who never needs to awaken into sober reality, travesties Epicureanism. In *De rerum natura* Lucretius has nature ask humans afraid to die, "Why not like a banqueter fed full of life withdraw with contentment[?]" (3.938–939). Echoing Lucretius, Horace complains that because of greed one seldom finds a person who "will quit life in contentment, like a well-fed guest" (*Satire* 1.1.118–119; trans. modified). The Epicurean well-fed guest teaches contentment with life's limits; Cowley, by contrast, imagines a life of intoxication that (he implies) alone makes satisfaction possible. Yet Cowley's elegy on Anacreon, an original composition appended to his imitations, provides a final palinode. Adopting the legend that the Greek poet died from choking on a grape husk (Valerius Maximus 9.12.8), Cupid (Cowley's mouthpiece) praises Anacreon for spurning "Bus'iness, Honor, Title, State" but condemns Bacchus, now associated with drunken "rage" and "quarrels," for the poet's death. Cowley thus distances himself from the moral excess of his Anacreontic imitations.<sup>18</sup>

In other symposiastic poetry a growing despair among Cavaliers that they could do no more than shamefully survive yields a new, anticlassical coarseness. Lovelace's own late symposiastic poem "A Loose Saraband" (139–141), published posthumously in 1659–1660, reveals willful degradation: the poet rejects "Honour" for "Love and Sherry" (ll. 42, 48); by claiming that "all the World . . . staggers, / More ugly drunk then we," he declares himself only slightly superior to the "ugly" drunken world (ll. 25–26). Hugh Crompton's "The Puff" (1656) travesties Lovelace's grasshopper ode by conflating the last stanza's assertion of an inner kingdom with drunken fantasy and jaunty anapestic bluster against the Commonwealth:

Do you but anoynt me with unction of bottles,  
 Then I will be King . . .  
 . . . . .  
 My Fancy's an Island that lives by the store  
 Of its own native riches, and needeth no more.  
 Why then should the Lord of the Ocean befool us?  
 Let's drink a free health to our own Commonwealth.<sup>19</sup>

Alexander Brome's drinking poems, which span the crisis years of the 1640s and 1650s, influentially exemplify the cruder mode. Brome sometimes treats drinking as defiant loyalty to the Royalist cause, but his most interesting poems contrast cowardly inebriation with defiance. His 1648 poem "The Safety" (1:129–130) celebrates the "kingdom within" of drunkenness: professing unconcern as to who wins the war and attacking "Misers" whose desires have "no measure" (l. 25), he embraces contentment—"little contents my nature" (l. 27)—equated with the modest desire that "Canary be cheaper" (l. 28). Yet Brome diverges from earlier proponents of symposiastic contentment as a form of moderation like Randolph and Herrick. With antiheroic self-abasement Brome declares that "he that creeps low, lives safe" ("The Safety," l. 17). In the *Ars poetica* Horace warns against opposite extremes: the would-be lofty writer becomes turgid, while another "low / Creepes on the ground" (to cite Jonson's translation) because he plays it "too safe" ("tutus nimium," l. 28; 8:306–307). Horace's stylistic advice parallels his counsel in *Ode* 2.10 concerning the ethical mean: one should neither be too audacious in good times nor too timid in adversity. Brome knowingly opts not for a virtuous mean but for a sordid, cowardly extreme.<sup>20</sup>

Brome innovates by associating drunkenness not simply with the quelling of worrisome or irrelevant thoughts, as in the Anacreontic-Horatian tradition, but with the rejection of thought as such. He contrasts (and rhymes) "drinking" with "thinking." "A Round" (1:110) begins: "[L]eave musing and thinking, / Hang caring and working, let's fall to our drinking." Such calls for mindless drunkenness should be read against Brome's elegies on Charles I and various Royalist martyrs, which exude the guilt of a nonheroic survivor. Brome's friend the younger Charles Cotton—who also wrote an epitaph on a neighbor with the self-castigating lament that the living "cannot be" as heroic as the Interregnum's martyrs—expresses a Bromean survivalist ethic of anti-thought mixed with self-contempt in several drinking poems.<sup>21</sup> Published in 1659 in protest against the powers that be, Cotton's "Ode" begins by condemning the very poem he writes:

Come, let us drink away the time,  
 A pox upon this pelting rhyme!  
 . . . . .  
 Drink, and stout drinkers are true joys,

Odes, Sonnets, and such little toys,  
Are exercises fit for boys.

(ll. 1–2, 4–6) <sup>22</sup>

Alluding to wine's arousal of the soldier's fighting spirit, the poet associates drinking with manly action rather than boyish versifying: "Then to our liquor let us sit, / Wine makes the soul for action fit" (ll. 7–8). Yet rather than fighting, Cotton writes an "Ode," suggesting his reluctant identification with mere "boys" instead of true men.

Cotton ends by settling for louché excess: "Let me have sack, tobacco store, / A drunken friend, a little wh—re, / *Provided*, I will ask no more" (ll. 40–42). Cotton shamelessly wishes for drunken companionship, morally questionable tobacco in abundance (OED s.v. "in store," 4d), and a "wh—re" who, unlike Lovelace's "Althea," violates the generally sedate, euphemistic tone of Anacreontic-Horatian erotics. The request for a "little wh—re" followed by (and rhymed with) "no more" travesties the ideal of contented moderation by brazenly proposing a petite prostitute as the "little" with which the poet can be satisfied. In the posthumous version of 1689—which probably reflects Cotton's original (but before the Restoration dangerous-to-publish) wit—"Provided" reads "*Protector*": asking Cromwell to sanction his ostensibly modest desires, Cotton juxtaposes and rhymes the enjambed words "wh—re"/"*Protector*" in order to besmirch Cromwell with Cotton's own excess. Poetic effrontery is substituted for manly "action" in these wittily impertinent verses in celebration of excess.

Playing with the contradiction of arguing against thought, Cotton's "Clepsydra" (Greek for "water clock"), of uncertain date, initially opposes "drinking" to "thinking" (ll. 10, 12) but concludes by expounding a "philosophy" of intemperate drinking:

The moralist perhaps may prate  
Of virtue from his reading,  
'Tis all but stale and foisted chat  
To men of better breeding.

Time, to define it, is the space  
That men enjoy their being;  
'Tis not the hour, but drinking glass,  
Makes time and life agreeing.

He wisely does oblige his fate  
Does cheerfully obey it,  
And is of fops the greatest that  
By temp'rance thinks to stay it.

(ll. 33–44) <sup>23</sup>

Cotton's sententious definitions of time and the wise man strike an argumentative pose. His rejection of "temp'rance" as an approach to "time" learnedly alludes to the etymological and notional connections between *temperantia*, which involves action at the right time as well as in the right amount, and *tempus* ("time"). Cotton sets his wine-induced contempt for the "hour" against iconographic portrayals of *Temperantia* with a timepiece.<sup>24</sup> Yet casual metrics, colloquial diction, feminine line endings, and the witty central conceit of exchanging water for wine, water clock for wine glass, mock intellectual solemnity. Cotton contracts thinking to a tipping gentleman's insouciant play.

### Convivial Milton among/against the Cavaliers

Some sixty years ago John H. Finley learnedly explored Milton's Horatianism in his two Interregnum convivial sonnets "Lawrence of virtuous father virtuous son" and "Cyriack, whose grandsire on the royal bench."<sup>25</sup> To grasp Milton's polemical intentions, however, his two sonnets in celebration of temperate pleasure should be read not only with Horace in mind but also in light of English symposiastic conventions. In his 1645 volume of verse Milton sought to differentiate himself from contemporary Cavalier poets.<sup>26</sup> Written sometime between 1651 and 1656 while Milton simultaneously participated in the politics of his age and pondered his poetic vocation, the two sonnets deepen Milton's emulative engagement with Cavalier poetics. He contests Royalist symposiastic verse by promoting a moderate pleasure that complements Puritan-Parliamentarian religious and political reformation. He revives sober Horatian motifs largely ignored by Cavalier contemporaries in order to set ideal recreational moments within a larger context of providential history. He also distances himself from the celebration of heavy drinking, moments of unrestrained revelry, and eroticism that Horace shares with "Anacreon" and that the Cavaliers embraced. Milton's convivial sonnets thereby simultaneously adapt and criticize Horace as well as the English poetry he authorized.

Throughout his career, Milton, who prided himself on his temperance, distanced himself from drinking culture and its poetry. As an undergraduate he expressed contempt for those who deemed heavy drinking manly. He distinguished his high-minded conception of great poetry from symposiastic verse, both ancient and contemporary. His *Elegia Sexta* of 1629 contrasted the carousing, wine-drinking poet—including Anacreon and Horace (ll. 21–22, 27–28)—with the austere, water-drinking epic bard that Milton himself wished to become. In *Reason of Church-Government* (1642) he scorned poetry "rays'd from the . . . vapours of wine"; in his *Second Defence* (1654) he attacked tipping poetasters.<sup>27</sup> Though his denunciations of contemporary poetry are loftily general, Milton was certainly familiar with some of his contemporaries' drinking poetry. The Royalist composer Henry Lawes, Milton's old friend,

wrote drinking songs and included Cavalier symposiastic verses in his song-books. Milton's 1648 panegyric sonnet on Lawes was reused, with Milton's approbation, as a dedicatory encomium in Lawes's *Dialogues and Ayres* (1653), which contains two drinking songs.<sup>28</sup>

The Lawrence sonnet responds to Cavalier drinking poems by pointedly transforming the Horatian ode. Milton addresses a friend in his early twenties who became a member of Parliament in 1656 and whose father was a member of Cromwell's Council of State in 1653 and its chairman in 1654, the period during which the sonnet was probably composed. As Horace so often does, in the octave Milton emphasizes that the pleasures he offers respond decorously to the conditions of the times:

Lawrence of virtuous father virtuous son,  
 Now that the fields are dank, and ways are mire,  
 Where shall we sometimes meet, and by the fire  
 Help waste a sullen day; what may be won  
 From the hard season gaining: time will run  
 On smoother, till Favonius reinspire  
 The frozen earth; and clothe in fresh attire  
 The lily and rose, that neither sowed nor spun.

(ll. 1–8)

Like Horace in several odes, Milton recommends a fireside party as a response to winter, using the Horatian "Favonius" (*Ode* 1.4.1) to evoke the changing seasons. Yet with its opening line the poem announces its radical transformation of a Horatian vision. "Lawrence of virtuous father virtuous son" strikingly adapts the opening of Horace's *Ode* 1.16: "O more beautiful daughter of a beautiful mother." Responding to the strong sexual element in Horace's symposiastic odes, Milton's *Elegia Sexta* described Horace as "drenched/drunk [*madens*] with wine as he sang his sweet songs about Glycera and . . . Chloe" (ll. 27–28). The Miltonic sonnet's substitutions of virtue—a virtue that enfolds both Christian moral probity and republican public-spiritedness—for Horace's beauty and of a male friend for Horace's female beloved signal Milton's homo-social avoidance of the sexual themes in Horace's symposiastic poetry, let alone the conjunction of wine and wenches by Milton's contemporaries.

Milton's claim that the spring will "clothe in fresh attire / The lily and rose, that neither sowed nor spun" defends winter pleasure not only as Horatian deference to the season but also as a trust in divine Providence, recalling (as often noted) Jesus' bidding of his disciples to "take . . . no thought for the morrow," since God will feed the fowls that do not "sow" and "array" the "lilies" that do not "spin" (Matt. 6:26–30). Milton's scripturalized flowers sanctify a symposiastic topos. "Anacreon" not only associates rose garlands with symposiastic drinking—Milton's *Elegia Sexta* describes Anacreon's singing of "wines and roses" (l. 21)—but also celebrates the rose as the symbol of erotic

love (*Anacreontea* 5 [Loeb 44]). Horace associates both lily and rose with the pleasures of drink and sex that must be indulged intensely because of their brevity: one symposiastic ode bids its addressee enjoy the “too brief blossoms of the lovely rose” (*Ode* 2.3.13–14); in another Horace demands “roses” and “the brief lily” at a party of heavy drinking and lovemaking (*Ode* 1.36.15–16). Purifying the flowers of their classical associations with hedonistic abandon, Milton instead links them to “virtuous,” companionable pleasures based on Christian trust that God will make all things “fresh” again.

Milton imagines a party of refined and moderate bodily pleasures followed by songs:

What neat repast shall feast us, light and choice,  
 Of Attic taste, with wine, whence we may rise  
 To hear the lute well touched, or artful voice  
 Warble immortal notes and Tuscan air?

(ll. 9–12)

Milton’s repast is strikingly unsymposiastic. Like Jonson’s “Inviting a Friend” but unlike the drinking poetry of Jonson’s disciples, Milton’s sonnet imagines a convivial meal rather than a postprandial drinking party. By mentioning an unspecified wine as part of the meal, Milton inverts the emphasis of symposiastic poetry: while Horace’s odes either ignore or mention food with a single word [*dapes*], they often specify the type, age, quantity, or strength of the wine.<sup>29</sup> Measured against not only Horatian poetry but also numerous extended Cavalier celebrations of unaccompanied “rich” sack or Canary, Milton’s focus on the “neat repast” underscores his rejection of symposiastic excess. His inclusion of the wine within a meal also adheres to a contemporary medicoethical norm of personal temperance. John Harington’s oft-reprinted *The Englishmans Doctor* (1607), for example, recommends wine at meals but cautions against imbibing “after dinner.” John Aubrey’s remark that Milton was “Temperate, rarely drank between meals” presupposes this norm.<sup>30</sup>

Milton’s muting of the role of wine may also reflect ambivalence. Wine was for him, as for his Cavalier contemporaries, the drink of refinement and therefore appropriate for a “choice” meal. Yet it was also tainted as an imported luxury. Himself a moderate wine drinker, in *Tetrachordon* (1645) Milton reveals his misgivings about English wine culture: he attacks those who unjustly limit divorce but do not forbid importing wine. Conflating economic arguments against luxury imports with moralistic disapproval of drunkenness, Milton scornfully finds that none of his opponents is willing to lose his “Sack” or “rich Canary” in order to prevent “Nationall vice” even though such drink is unnecessary for either “health” or “refreshment” (CPW 2:634–635). Milton’s sonnet allows wine—but refuses to glorify or fuss about it.

To accentuate his distance from symposiastic excess, Milton describes a repast that combines refinement with moderation. The “light and choice”

meal of “Attic taste” may recall Attic dinner parties with elegant but small dishes, which Athenaeus contrasts with Thessalian excess (*Deipnosophistes* 137d). “Attic taste” more clearly evokes an ideal meal in terms of ancient rhetorical norms of restraint: Quintilian associates the distinctive “taste” [*sapor*] of Attic style with an urbanity [*urbanitas*] that avoids everything coarse (*Institutio oratoria* 6.3.107), while Cicero compares Attic style to a meal that is elegant but “sparing” [*parcum*] (*Orator* 84; trans. modified).

Milton underscores the moderation of the proffered meal by assuring his guest that they “may rise” from it to music. Both early modern medical and ethical writings associated moderation in dining with the ability to “rise” from the table with bodily and mental vigor intact. The *Regimen Sanitatis Salerni*—the most frequently reprinted medical handbook from the early sixteenth to the mid-seventeenth century—urges readers to “rise [*surgere*] after meals” rather than dine themselves into a stupor. In his *Colloquies* Erasmus praises the man who “rises [*surgit*] from the table not stuffed but revived . . . in mind and body”; a character in Thomas Lodge’s *A Margarite of America* (1596) notes that one should “dine according to the direction of the phisitions, which is to . . . rise with an appetite” for “exercise” or “pleasant discourse.”<sup>31</sup> Milton’s stipulation that he and his guest will “rise” describes a “spiritual” as well as physical ascent enabled by self-restraint: a move from lower to higher pleasures. While deemphasizing his wine, a morally ambiguous import, Milton emphasizes a more uplifting import, namely, a song from the region of Florence, the city he singled out in the *Second Defense* as the center of “all the arts of civilization” (CPW 4:609).<sup>32</sup> Milton’s promise of “Lute” or “Tuscan air” is a seventeenth-century English equivalent for the Anacreontic songs and lyre music performed by courtesans at Horace’s parties (*Odes* 1.17.18–20, 2.11.22, 3.19.20, 3.28.11). Unlike Horace’s demimonde entertainment, however, Milton’s Tuscan songs are presumably of the chaste sort that he praised in his *Apology against a Pamphlet . . . against Smectymnius* (1642) when he claimed that the love poetry of the great Tuscans Dante and Petrarch expressed “pure thoughts, without transgression” (CPW 1:890).

The sonnet ends with a gnomic distillation of its moderate ethos: “He who of those delights can judge, and spare / To interpose them oft, is not unwise” (ll. 13–14). Critics have long disputed as to whether “spare” means “refrain” or “afford (time),” though most recent editors and critics either favor the latter, “liberal” meaning as being more consonant with the poem as a whole or argue (as Stanley Fish has most forcefully) that the line is intentionally ambiguous in order to make the reader responsible for judging how often to indulge in pleasure.<sup>33</sup> At the risk of sounding reactionary in my hermeneutic determinacy, I would argue that “refrain” is the most compelling interpretation of “spare.” “Spare to / Interpose” follows the normal idiomatic usage of “spare to” plus infinitive in the sense of “refrain from” (cf. *Paradise Lost* 2.739), while “spare” in the sense of “spare time” normally takes as a direct object “time” or



a unit of time. Milton celebrates enjoying a refined meal “sometimes” (l. 3) but praises the man who shows his temperance by refraining from enjoyment “oft” (l. 14), a self-restraint all the more laudable precisely because such a person knows how pleasant such a *convivium* is. For his final warning Milton reappropriates the third-person, gnomic rhetoric of Stoic Jonson ignored by so many hedonistic Cavaliers and “abused” by Lovelace at the end of “The Grasse-hopper.”

Milton’s final echoing of the *Disticha Catoni*, a grammar school Latin text—“Interpose [*Interpone*] from time to time joys among your cares / So that you can endure any labor”—might seem to tell against the austere interpretation of “spare.” It has been argued that Milton’s final couplet adduces the authority of Cato the Censor, the reputed author of the *Disticha* famous for his sober gravity, in defense of frequent pleasurable recreation.<sup>34</sup> Yet the *Disticha* recommends recreative joys only “from time to time” [*interdum*].<sup>35</sup> Milton’s echo simultaneously warns against indulging “oft” and reminds censorious readers—like the killjoys whom the undergraduate Milton attacked as would-be “Catos” in his prolusion defending “sportive exercises” (CPW 1:266, 275)—that even Cato recommended *occasional* convivial joys.

Milton’s distinction between a positive “sometimes” and a dangerous “oft” encodes his distance from Horace.<sup>36</sup> Milton’s invitation to “sometimes meet, and by the fire / Help waste a sullen day” (ll. 3–4) tempers Horace’s claim to have “often [*saepe*] broken up the lagging day with unmixed wine” in celebration with a friend (*Ode* 2.7.6–7). Milton’s opening not only changes Horace’s heavy drinking to moderate conviviality but also substitutes the “sometimes” [*interdum*] of the *Disticha* for the Horatian “often” [*saepe*]. Milton’s final line similarly rejects the Horatian “often” by echoing Cato’s *Disticha*. Milton’s implicit distinction between Horace’s and Cato’s recreational norms “corrects” Horace’s own appropriation of Cato: Horace justifies frequent symposia by declaring that Cato himself was “often [*saepe*] warmed by unmixed wine” (*Ode* 3.21.11–12). Milton’s tempering of the hedonistic Augustan Horace’s values with the warnings of the severe republican Cato the Censor undoubtedly has particular topical resonance: Milton appropriates Roman republican sobriety for his own republican-Puritan recreation.<sup>37</sup>

Milton further rejects Horace’s notion that brief abandon has its part in the full life. The sonnet’s final claim regarding true wisdom evokes the Greek virtue of *sophrosunê*, the moral wisdom of self-control, while emphasizing with a litotes the difficulty of attaining it: “he” who is properly “spar[ing]” is “not unwise.” Milton’s emphasis on wisdom contrasts sharply with Horace’s call to attack “wisdom” [*sapientiae*] with wine (*Ode* 2.28.4) as well as the conclusion to *Ode* 4.12, where Horace promises to dispel his addressee’s cares with wine and advises him to “mingle, while you may, brief folly [*stultitiam*] with your wisdom” since “it is sweet to be unwise [*desipere*] on the proper occasion [*in loco*]” (ll. 26–28; trans. modified).<sup>38</sup> Milton cannot imagine any time, however

brief, in which it is appropriate to be “unwise.” Such pleasurable unwisdom, like the Horatian “harmless folly of the time” that Herrick celebrates in “Corinna’s *Going A-Maying*” (l. 58; H-178), was for Milton a Cavalier monstrosity.

Milton’s call to “spare” inverts a fundamental value of symposiastic tradition: the all-out enjoyment of the reveler, who in drinking up his wine wholeheartedly lets go—of cares, money, time, or all three. Calls *not* to “spare” are a generic marker of the drinking poem. Horace calls upon a friend not to “spare [*parce*]” the wine (*Ode* 2.7.20) and urges wild reveling by saying, “I hate sparing [*parcentes*] hands: fling round the roses” (3.19.21–22; trans. modified). This scattering of roses signifies rejection of all miserly restraint.<sup>39</sup> Such prodigality, which ran so counter to Christian notions of sobriety, had its early modern English poetic critics. Sixteenth- and early-seventeenth-century dramas include drinking songs whose “do not spare” topos reveals the singers’ depravity. For example, the personified Folly in Thomas Dekker’s *The Sun’s Darling* (composed ca. 1624, published 1656) bids revelers “Drink on, and spare not.”<sup>40</sup> Cavalier drinking poems, by contrast, wholeheartedly embraced the theme. A drinking song by Henry Lawes’s brother William, published in 1650, bids the carousers to “drink up all. . . what need we to spare.” With a hint from Horace, Stanley’s 1651 translation of *Anacreontea* 25 (Loeb 45) expands the original’s “let us then drink wine” to “Drink we then, nor *Bacchus* spare.” A song of 1656 similarly proclaims, “Drinke and doe not spare, / Troule away the bowl, and take no care.”<sup>41</sup> Milton distances himself from both the Horatian topos and its Cavalier appropriations by giving his poem a Protestant moralizing cast. Milton’s stance recalls that of the Puritan divine William Perkins, who advises mirth at one’s meals that is “sparing and moderate” (a favorite doublet of the sober minister).<sup>42</sup>

Milton’s poem concerning his former student Cyriac Skinner similarly moralizes the Horatian ode. Yet this sonnet not only distances Milton from Horace and his Cavalier disciples but also adapts Horatian motifs ignored by his contemporaries in order to recover what Milton deemed the true spiritual and ethical foundations of moderate conviviality. The opening praises Cyriac’s grandfather, Sir Edward Coke, whose opposition to royal prerogative in the Jacobean and early Caroline period made him a spiritual “grandfather” to the Parliamentary party during the civil war and Interregnum:

Cyriack, whose grandsire on the royal bench  
Of British Themis, with no mean applause  
Pronounced and in his volumes taught our laws,  
Which others at their bar so often wrench.

(ll. 1–4)

Milton recalls the genealogies that open Horace’s symposiastic invitation poems to Aelius, descended from a “king,” and to Maecenas, descended of “Tuscan kings” (*Odes* 3.17.1–9, 3.29.1). By emphasizing the regal ancestry of

his addressees, Horace suggests the compatibility of high station with symposiastic pleasures. Milton similarly suggests that the pleasures he offers will not shame a man of glorious lineage. He also recalls another Horatian topos—the recounting of civic achievements in lyric addresses to public officials (e.g., *Odes* 2.1.13–16, 4.9.34–44)—to construct a particularly Parliamentary aristocracy of merit against which even the amusements of young Cyriack must be judged. While Maecenas’s and Aelius’s ancestors were kings, Edward Coke was—in Milton’s view—raised by merit to the “royal bench,” a seat of power that, in fact, was more truly “royal” than the kings whose tyrannical tendencies Coke opposed. Just as Jonson exhorts William Sidney to live up to his patrimony, so Milton implicitly exhorts Cyriack to do the same.

Milton proceeds with his most direct refashioning of Horatian pleasure to emphasize moderation:

Today deep thoughts resolve with me to drench  
 In mirth, that after no repenting draws;  
 Let Euclid rest and Archimedes pause,  
 And what the Swede intend, and what the French.

(ll. 5–8)

Milton calls for a one-day respite in which the concerns of the speculative and active life can “rest” and “pause” without being forgotten. “Drench / In mirth, that after no repenting draws” takes the Lawrence sonnet’s reticence regarding wine one step further: wine is not even mentioned but only implied in the “mirth.” The enjambment after “drench” makes one expect the name of the liquor with which Milton proposes to drown “deep thoughts” to follow. To be “drenched” with liquor is a synonym for “drunk” in Cavalier poetry (cf. Herrick’s rustics “Drenched in Ale”) and recalls the Roman usage of “madens” deployed by Milton himself in *Elegia Sexta* to describe Horace as “drenched/drunk” [*madens*] with wine.<sup>43</sup> “Drench / in mirth” is thus a verbal act of restraint correlated with behavioral restraint: the friends will presumably drink wine, but they will be “drenched” only in mirth. Innocent mirth that “after no repenting draws” recalls Jonson’s claim in “Inviting a Friend” regarding the moderate drinking he envisages: “Nor shall our cups make any guiltie men: / But, at our parting, we will be, as when / We innocently met.” Milton stresses such innocence all the more by treating mere mirth itself—rather than dangerous wine—as the potential threat to probity.

Milton’s call for Cyriack to “resolve” to join him in convivial pleasure reinforces the sense that innocent “mirth” has replaced symposiastic wine. The primary meaning of “resolve” here (viz. “determine” or “decide”) emphasizes the cautious sobriety of Milton’s convivial ethos: the poet bids his friend act from considered judgment. Yet the collocation of “resolve” and “drench” in “deep thoughts resolve with me to drench” hints at other bypassed senses in a manner familiar to readers of *Paradise Lost*: “resolve” could also mean (but

in context does not) “melt; dissolve” or “loosen” (OED s.v. “resolve,” I.1 and III.10), as if Milton were inviting Cyriack to “melt” or “loosen” so as to “drench” his “deeps thoughts.” The submerged association of liquefying, loosening, and drenching cares hints at—in order to reject—wine’s powerful loosening effects. “Anacreon” and Horace celebrate Bacchus as Lyaeus, “the loosener”: *Anacreontea* 27 (Loeb 49) punningly invokes “Lyaeus who loosens [men] from care” (“ho lusiphron ho Luaios,” l. 2), while Horace deems it pleasant “with sweet Lyaeus to loosen [*solvere*]” care (*Epode* 9.38). Such wine-induced slackening of consciousness Milton half evokes in order, pointedly, to shun.

Milton also distances himself from symposiastic abandon in his most Horatian lines, the exhortation that Cyriack “Let Euclid rest and Archimedes pause, / And what the Swede intend, and what the French.” The second line closely echoes Horace’s calls for his addressees to cease worrying for a time about the dangers foreign peoples pose to Rome (*Ode* 2.11.1–4, 3.8.19–24, 3.29.25–28). But Milton’s call for his former student to take a break from “Euclid” and “Archimedes” as well as from political concerns tempers a common symposiastic theme, namely, the exhortation to abandon superfluous intellectual concerns in favor of revelry. Horace complains that someone worries about ancient history instead of how to arrange the symposium (*Ode* 3.19.1–8). *Anacreontea* 36 (Loeb 52) scorns studying rhetoric in favor of drinking and lovemaking, which Stanley freely translates as: “Vex no more thy self and me / With demure Philosophy.”<sup>44</sup> Like Cotton’s “Clepsydra,” several Interregnum Cavalier drinking songs mock philosophy by proclaiming wine the source of wisdom. Brome’s “The Companion,” for example, dismisses “the precepts of Aristotle” and “learning in books” since “True Philosophy lies in the bottle” (ll. 1–4; 1:131).<sup>45</sup> Milton, by contrast, demands a mere “pause” and “rest” from book learning.

Furthermore, in his sestet Milton turns not to celebrating wine’s wisdom but to moralizing on proper, moderate enjoyment:

To measure life, learn thou betimes, and know  
     Toward solid good what leads the nearest way;  
     For other things mild heaven a time ordains,  
 And disapproves that care, though wise in show,  
     That with superfluous burden loads the day,  
     And when God sends a cheerful hour, refrains.

(ll. 9–14)

The sestet begins with ancient philosophical rhetoric concerning the necessity of knowing and embracing moderation. To “measure life” means both to learn how to evaluate our lives correctly—Milton recalls Seneca’s demand that we properly “measure” [*metiamur*] our life (*Epistulae morales* 93.4)—and (consequently) to live a life of proper “measure” or moderation. “To measure life . . . and know / Toward solid good what leads the nearest way” teases out the

distinction between Archimedes' and Euclid's sort of geometry, which determines the "measure" of a line as the shortest distance between two points and the dimensions of a "solid" shape, and the higher geometry of ethical living, that is, the morally wise person's "measure" of the "nearest way" to "solid" good.<sup>46</sup> While placing book learning below ethics, Milton's playfulness itself exemplifies a bookish, rather ponderous mirth. One may again compare Seneca, who claims that "the geometrist" teaches him to "measure" [*metitri*] his property, but that he wishes to learn "how to measure [*metiar*] what is enough for man" (*Epistle* 88.10; trans. modified).

Milton's sestet concludes by adapting Horace. "For other things mild heaven a time ordains" contains a Horatian phrase encapsulating the Roman poet's exhortations to enjoy the here and now and cease worrying about a temporal future or a spatial elsewhere beyond human control: in the Soracte ode, Horace calls for enjoying the present and leaving to "the gods other things [*cetera*]" (1.9.9; trans. modified); in *Epode* 13 he bids his addressee "cease to speak of other things [*cetera*]" besides the symposium (l. 7; trans. mine). Yet Milton transforms Horace's motif. Whereas Horace advises seizing the moment and avoiding thinking about what might threaten it, Milton urges enjoying the moment as part of a learning process concerning the good life, a process that is indeed the good life itself.

While the Lawrence sonnet's final couplet warns against excessive indulgence in convivial pleasure, the Cyriack sonnet's final three lines caution against an abstemious deficiency arising from foolish "care." Suggesting a complementarity rather like that of *L'Allegro* and *Il Penseroso*, the two sonnets thus end by warning against opposite extremes to the golden mean of convivial pleasure. Yet the Cyriack sonnet's final lines also underscore the necessary restraints on enjoyment. The move from "Today" (l. 5) to "a cheerful hour" (l. 12) underscores Milton's moderation: he ends by imagining not a full day of mirth but only an "hour," thereby signaling that the convivial pleasures are a brief albeit essential part of life. The "cheerful hour" that "God sends" recalls Horace's call for his addressee to be "happy" [*laetus*] to enjoy "the gifts of the present hour" ("dona praesentis . . . horae," *Ode* 3.8.27) as well as his claim that the Father (i.e., Jupiter) will not undo the pleasures of "the fleeting hour" (*Ode* 3.29.44, 48). Relishing the single happy hour is a Horatian topos of moderation rejected by the Cavaliers, with their celebrations of prolonged drinking. While evoking Horace as a guiding spirit for the drinking party, Herrick's "*An Ode to Sir Clipsbie Crew*" (H-544) multiplies Horace's hour by claiming that the symposiasts "spend the hours / In Wine and Flowers" (ll. 19–20). Like Cotton in "Clepsydra," Cavalier poets often decried the tyranny of the "hour." In Brome's "The Club" (1:153), for example, drinkers will "not be to howers confind" (ll. 25–26). Milton at his most authentically Horatian is once more least like his English contemporaries.

Milton's conception of moderate pleasure is also specifically Protestant. The last three lines resonate with all of his Puritan defenses of Christian liberty. The "superfluous burden" recalls Jesus' proclamation that "my yoke is easy, and my burden light" (Matt. 11:30), a crucial passage for defending Christian liberty against the "cruell burdens" of idolatrous rules. Claiming that the Gospels removed the "excessive burdens" of Judaic law, Milton's divorce tracts of the 1640s castigate the "supercilious crew" who—like the sonnet's hypocritical censors "wise in show"—abrogate Christian liberty by setting "straiter limits to obedience" than God has done and by imposing "the greatest burden" of all: anxious "superstition" regarding "imaginary . . . sins" (CPW 2:279, 228).

Milton distinguishes properly moderated Christian liberty from the extreme of licence. Christianizing Horace's sense of the present hour as divine gifts [*donā*], he ascribes to God the "cheerful hour" that must be wisely received—and thus created—by the celebrant. The "cheerful hour" is like Milton's Arminian notion of grace, a divine gift that needs to be gratefully accepted in order to be efficacious: Cyriack must "resolve" to seize the God-given hour. The reminder that the hour is a divine gift implicitly stresses moderation. Protestant casuists argue that the Christian maintained proper moderation in the pleasures of eating and drinking as long as he or she remained gratefully aware of God as the bestower of pleasure. Citing 1 Cor. 10:31, "Whether ye eate or drinke . . . do all to the glory of God," Perkins argues that Christian liberty precludes set rules regarding food and drink, that God has made food and wine for delight as well as necessity, but that one must use a "holy moderation" that tends to God's glory. Milton's old antagonist Joseph Hall similarly claims that Jesus showed his preference for "moderate delight" over "austerity" when he turned water into wine; the Christian will not "exceed" in bodily pleasures as long as he or she remembers with gratitude the divine "Giver" of joy.<sup>47</sup> While Milton's contemporaries generally treat symposiastic pleasures in wholly secular terms, Milton pointedly Christianizes Horace's humble thankfulness for the "hour."

### Restoration and Reaction: Loyalty, Libertinism, and Politeness

The Restoration was widely hailed as a return to pleasure after a reign of Puritan gloom. The celebrations that began on May Day (May 1) 1660, when Parliament invited Charles II to return as king, and continued with his entry into London on May 29 included fountains running with wine, a prodigious number of healths to the king, and symbolic expulsions of the killjoy "saints." Contemporary accounts noted the drunken excess: Samuel Pepys found the celebratory healths "too much," causing him and his companions to vomit. In August 1660 Charles II himself issued a proclamation condemning those who gave "no other evidence of their affection for us but in Drinking Our

health."<sup>48</sup> Cowley's 1660 ode upon the Restoration attempts to deflect such concerns by treating drunken excess in Horatian fashion as a brief madness that decorously responds to the occasion:

With *Wine* all *rooms*, with *Wine* the *Conduits* flow;  
 . . . . .  
 There is no *Stoic* sure who would not now,  
     Even some *Excess* allow;  
 And grant that one *wild fit* of *cheerful folly*  
 Should end our twenty years of *dismal Melancholy*.<sup>49</sup>

Pace Cowley, the association of loyalty to the king with drunken excess was not one "wild fit" but a renewable fashion. Tory drinking songs composed during the struggles between Charles II and his Whig opponents in the late 1670s and early 1680s oppose group drunkenness to rebellious sullenness. Poets transformed the Anacreontic-Horatian theme of subduing "cares" and Horace's calls for respite from public duty into declarations that loyal subjects entrust political affairs to their beloved monarch so that they can spend their lives carelessly enjoying wine and whores to abandon. Thomas Durfey's "The King's Health" (1681), for example, offers a toast to the king and a paean to pleasure:

Joy to great *Caesar*,  
     Long Life, Love and Pleasure;  
 'Tis a Health that Divine is,  
 Fill the Bowl high as mine is.

(ll. 1-4)

Drinking is the antithesis of disruptive "Faction" (l. 50); to get drunk is to be "Loyal," so only a Whig would deem his "Glass too big" (ll. 9, 11).<sup>50</sup> Borrowing the contrast between drinking and thinking from Brome's *Interregnum* drinking poems (which were reissued several times in the 1660s),<sup>51</sup> Tom Brown writes both original compositions and loose Horatian imitations that praise drunkenness and deride political concerns. Responding to the Popish Plot and Exclusion Crisis, Brown's "In Praise of the Bottle" counsels all to be "loyally merry" with a "head full of Wine" rather than "thinking," since all the tipling subject need know is obedience to his king. Topicalizing Horace's *Soracte* ode, in rollicking anapests Brown bids his addressee to stop worrying about "the State" and substitute "drinking" for "impertinent thinking."<sup>52</sup>

The most interesting Restoration drinking poems, however, proclaim libertine loyalty to the self and its pleasures rather than to established order. Like Cotton, they make Anacreontic-Horatian sensuality more shocking by celebrating drinking and sex with utter abandon. Drunkenness becomes the expression of a designedly transgressive hedonism and an aristocratic contempt for the moral codes of servile social inferiors, serving as a "noble" companion

or rival to erotic excess. Barbara Everett remarks that John Wilmot, earl of Rochester, distinguishes himself from his contemporaries by “the strange intensity of his need not only to follow the fashion but to follow it to breaking point—the *extremity*, one might say, of his worldliness.”<sup>53</sup> His drinking poems exemplify such extremity.

Imitating *Anacreontea* 17 (Loeb 4) and 18 (Loeb 5), poems that request drinking cups carved with symposiastic scenes, as well as a Ronsard imitation of *Anacreontea* 17 and 15 (Loeb 8), Rochester’s “*Vulcan* contrive me such a Cupp” adapts these sources to construct a grandiose libertine alternative to traditional military heroism.<sup>54</sup> In *Anacreontea* 17 the speaker embraces drinking and rejects war by asking that Hephaestus/Vulcan make him “not a suit of armor” (as was done for Achilles in *Iliad* 18) but a “hollow cup, as deep as you can” (ll. 2, 5–6). In his expansive imitation Ronsard asks for a cup “*Qui de profondeur surpasse / Celle du vieillard Nestor.*”<sup>55</sup> By alluding to Nestor’s outsized cup (*Iliad* 11.631–636), Ronsard suggests that the poet, while rejecting war and its heroes, has the strength of Iliadic heroes in his drinking. With characteristic hyperbole, Rochester outdoes both “Anacreon” and Ronsard by demanding a cup of prodigious size:

*Vulcan* contrive me such a Cupp  
 As *Nestor* us’d of old:  
 . . . . .  
 Make it so large that fill’d with sack,  
 Up to the swelling brim  
 Vast Toasts on the Delicious lake  
 Like shippes at sea may swim.

(ll. 1–2, 5–8)

Rochester proceeds to treat the Anacreontic rejection of such heroic themes as war with a topical reference to the ongoing or recently concluded third Dutch war between the English and French, on the one side, and Holland, on the other:

Engrave no Battail on its Cheek,  
 (With warr I’ve nought to doe):  
 I’m none of those that took *Mastricht*  
 Nor *Yarmouth* Leaguer knew.

(ll. 9–12)

With his antimilitary animus, Rochester exploits the unpopularity of the war, which by the summer of 1673 was widely perceived as inimical to true English, Protestant interests.<sup>56</sup> Rochester’s battle references mock Charles II’s military adventurism by emphasizing both England’s junior status as a French ally (a small group of English volunteers helped the French seize Maastricht in June 1673) and England’s military failures (an English naval force was sent to Yar-



mouth in July 1673 for a projected invasion of Holland, but the latter was abandoned in September). Unlike “Anacreon” and even more than Ronsard, Rochester conjures a glorious alternative to military action with his cup: while the English naval force was idle and useless, the poet imagines grandly commanding “ships at sea” on the vast liquid expanse of his cup. Distinguishing his stance from those who treat drinking as a badge of loyalty to their king, Rochester implicitly contrasts the monarch’s ineffectual policies with the power exercised by the heavy drinker within his own domain.

Rochester’s last two stanzas associate heavy drinking with illicit sexuality:

But Carve thereon a spreading Vine,  
Then add Two lovely Boyes;  
Their Limbs in amorous folds entwine,  
The Type of Future Joyes.

*Cupid and Bacchus* my saints are:  
May Drink and Love still Reign.  
With wine I wash away my cares  
And then to *Cunt* again.

(ll. 17–24)<sup>57</sup>

The two boys, as the final stanza reveals, are Cupid and Bacchus, “Type[s]” of the joys of wine and sex. The penultimate stanza’s homosexual resonance nevertheless transcends the figures’ final reduction to mere symbols. In his portrait of “lovely Boyes” Rochester was inspired by the voyeuristic celebration of male beauty in the *Anacreontea*.<sup>58</sup> *Anacreontea* 18—which Rochester presumably read in the Neolatin translation of Elie André included in Henri Estienne’s edition—requests that “under a spreading leafy vine covered with bunches of grapes” the maker of the drinking cup “add lovely [*euprepes / venustos*] boys” (ll. 16–18; trans. modified).<sup>59</sup> Rochester’s imagining of Cupid and Bacchus as “lovely Boyes” is itself Anacreontic, for the *Anacreontea* closely associate gods with beautiful boys. *Anacreontea* 17, Rochester’s major model, ends (in Estienne’s edition) with a request that the cup be engraved with pictures of “lovely” [*kaloî*] Bacchus, Cupid, and Bathyllus, Anacreon’s boy beloved (ll. 15–16).<sup>60</sup> *Anacreontea* 29 (Loeb 17) lingers over Bathyllus’s youthful beauty, which is greater than Apollo’s. By delaying the revelation that he is describing Cupid and Bacchus—to Englishmen mere tropes for wine and love—Rochester conjures a vivid Anacreontic scene both for his own and his readers’ pederastic delight.

The homoeroticism, unobjectionable in the Greek context, would be associated with scandalous excess by most early modern Englishmen. Rochester’s homoeroticism is original within English Anacreontic poetry.<sup>61</sup> Cavaliers avoided the theme, and Stanley’s generally faithful translations of the *Anacreontea* expurgate most of the homosexual content by, for example, omitting any mention of the looks of the “youthful Beavy” in *Anacreontea* 18 (Loeb 5),

eliminating Bathyllus from *Anacreontea* 17 (Loeb 4), and transforming him into a female “Fair” in *Anacreontea* 9 (Loeb 15) and 29 (Loeb 17). Rochester might have found inspiration in one of Stanley’s renderings, where “lovely Boyes” appear as the toned-down version of Anacreontic “boys more tender than Dionysus” (ll. 7–8; *Anacreontea* 8 [Loeb 37]).<sup>62</sup> Far from toning down the *Anacreontea*, however, Rochester intensifies the homoeroticism: unlike the *Anacreontea*, which merely describe a beloved’s beauty and charming boys’ symposiastic dancing, Rochester depicts his “lovely Boyes” blissfully making love.

Rochester displays his libertine contempt for restraint first by flirting with pederasty and then by proclaiming his wenching. While the penultimate stanza conjures up the world of “Anacreon” to valorize transgressive homosexual pleasure, the final stanza depicts Rochester’s Restoration milieu as a more scandalous and more degraded successor. In the concluding stanza, which has no Anacreontic source, the speaker ceases to describe the desired cup and instead makes bald claims about his way of life. Rochester discards the Anacreontic worldview by describing heterosexual love with a shocking obscenity—the pursuit of “Cunt”—foreign to ancient symposiastic poetry and even more crudely reductive than his contemporaries’ embracing of whores. By retrospective comparison, the poetic, euphemistic diction with which Rochester bids the carver have “lovely” youths’ “Limbs in amorous folds entwine” makes Anacreontic homosexuality seem an innocent, tender foil to Restoration sexuality.

Rochester’s actions in the final stanza exemplify a distinctive feature of Restoration libertine drinking poetry that further distances the poet’s sensual excess from any classical models. The ephrastic cup of “Anacreon” embodies a static view of hedonist contentment; by contrast, Rochester’s final stanza describes the frenzied alternation between momentary pleasures. While Interregnum English drinking poetry treats wine and women as complementary in the manner of the *Anacreontea* and Horace’s odes, Restoration verse often emphasizes frantic oscillation between them. A ballad of the mid-1670s mocks him who “Fetters himself” with self-restraint instead of alternating between drinking and wenching to achieve “a perpetual motion in pleasure”; one “fill[s] up” the veins with wine, then “drain[s]” them with sex. A drinking poem attributed to George Etherege advocates a cycle of extremes:

Let’s drink until our blood o’erflows  
 Its channels and luxuriant grows;  
 Then when our whores have drained each vein,  
 And the thin mass fresh spirits crave, let’s drink again.

A song in Etherege’s *The Man of Mode* (1676) celebrates lovemaking all day and drinking all night on the grounds that drinking invigorates the “languishing lovers” and “drowns” their “sorrow” until they “relapse again” into womanizing “on the morrow” (4.1.452–472).<sup>63</sup> This libertine vision is far from

Anacreontic-Horatian contentment with present pleasure. It presupposes the insatiable appetite that late-seventeenth-century georgic writers treat as the engine of commercial expansion through the consumption of luxury goods. The febrile fluctuation between womanizing and boozing evokes a distinctively modern, Hobbesian sense of restless, insatiable appetite and the consequent impossibility of classical tranquility.<sup>64</sup>

Rochester's closing lines—"With wine I wash away my cares / And then to *Cunt* again"—imply what the contemporary passages quoted previously make explicit: in the libertine cycle of excess, women provide a necessary but enfeebling pleasure that must continually be countered with invigorating drink. Rochester's alliteratively linked "cares" and "*Cunt*" suggest that women cause trouble, arousing emotional "cares" in men that wine must assuage.<sup>65</sup> While Rochester's synecdochic reduction of women to "*Cunt*" reveals his desire to deny their power, what he calls—to quote "*A Ramble in St. James Park*" (76–80)—"devouring *Cunt*" (l. 119) has its own frightening, disgusting force. Rochester associates women and their genitalia with dirt and excrement, like the whore attacked in "*On Mrs. Willis*" (37), whose "Belly is a Bagg of turds" (l. 19), and the "nasty *Nymph*" reproved in "*Song*" (37–38), who does not wipe menstrual discharge from her genitals (l. 5). Horace claims that wine can "wash away" [*eludere*] cares (*Ode* 4.12.19–20, trans. mine).<sup>66</sup> Once more distancing himself from classical innocence, Rochester gives new and brutal specificity to such cleansing: the drinker "washes away" the "cares" associated with the dirty "*Cunt*" he both desires and abhors.

Rochester's misogynist lyric "*Love to a Woman*" (38) further links drinking to sexual excess. The poem condemns women as the "dullest part of Gods Creation" (l. 4) and, with aristocratic contempt, identifies coitus with the drudgery of "dirty slaves" (l. 6) toiling in women's wombs in order to procreate. Rochester then celebrates all-male drinking as a higher form of procreation:

Farewell *Woman*—I entend  
 Henceforth every Night to sitt  
 With my lewd well natur'd Freind,  
 Drinking to engender witt.

(ll. 9–12)

Rochester gives an original twist to another distinctive Restoration topos: the spurning of fickle, enfeebling women for the dependable pleasures of male companionship and drink.<sup>67</sup> He glorifies this misogynist tippler's ideal by yoking the classical association of drinking with poetic wit to Plato's doctrine, itself espoused at an all-male symposium, that homosexual spiritual love engenders immortal progeny, including poetry, far superior to mortal children produced by intercourse (*Symposium* 208e–209e). Yet by referring to his friend as "lewd," Rochester deflates Platonic pretensions: he and his witty drinking buddy still indulge their bodily impulses.

The final stanza fully and scandalously provides for physical satisfaction:

Then give me health, wealth, Mirth, and wine,  
 And if buizy Love intrinches  
 There's a sweet soft Page of mine  
 Can doe the Trick worth Forty wenches.

(ll. 13–16)

Rejecting the symposiastic commonplace that wine itself fosters or substitutes for health, wealth, and mirth, Rochester voices a more imperious set of needs. For him contentment depends not upon quelling desires (as it did for “Anacreon” and Horace) but upon getting everything one wants. When erotic desire arises—as presumably it must, given how “buizy” (i.e., “busy”) lust is—he can obtain easy sexual satisfaction from a male servant. The intrusion of restless “business” into the symposiastic setting signals Rochester’s distance from ancient symposiastic tranquility.

With patrician arrogance Rochester expresses his right to fulfill all his desires. Aristocratic mastery replaces restful Anacreontic-Horatian contentment. Rochester here represents homosexual acts in his customary vein, not as Anacreontic innocence but as an outlet for sexual desires without the “cares” that threatening women arouse.<sup>68</sup> He cannot have sexual relations with his “lewd” friend—an equal—because homosexual sex enacts a hierarchy of active mastery and passive servitude. The page boy is the “sweet soft” passive plaything of his master.<sup>69</sup>

Rochester effectively ended the classical symposiastic tradition by pushing the celebration of personal excess as far as he could. Both Tory drinking songs, with their extremist politics of antipolitics, and libertine drinking poems, with their wild trumpeting of self-indulgence, were, in any case, battling emergent trends that increasingly made symposiastic poetry seem archaic to the cultural elite of the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The growing availability and popularity of inexpensive, highly alcoholic spirits, especially during the Gin Craze of the 1730s and 1740s, alarmed the elite.<sup>70</sup> Beginning in the Restoration, the increasing consumption first of coffee and then of tea fostered a new sensibility. Like wine, these beverages were imported luxuries and thus signs of both refinement and commercial excess. As their advocates noted, however, coffee and tea provided sober alternatives to liquor and associated pleasure and wit with agreeable alertness rather than drunken *joie de vivre*. “Sober and merry” became a widespread ideal.<sup>71</sup> The coffeehouse, which became popular during the Restoration and developed into a major cultural institution during the next century, had a very different ethos from the tavern or alehouse. It provided a relatively calm meeting place (at least in theory) for sociability and business.<sup>72</sup> By providing a forum for the dissemination of news, it also addressed and encouraged the politicization of the public.<sup>73</sup> The coffeehouse thus fostered concerns directly opposed to the symposiastic call to care-

free pleasure in the moment. Restoration drinking songs lauding drunken trust in the status quo often attacked coffee, tea, and coffee houses.<sup>74</sup> In response, defenders of coffee appropriated the emphasis upon moderation of earlier symposiastic tradition. For example, the “Rules and Orders of the Coffee-house” (1674) adapted Jonson’s *Leges Convivales* as versified by Brome in order to promote witty conversation regulated by moderation.<sup>75</sup>

In eighteenth-century “polite” culture, the drinking poem had an anachronistic, unrefined, primitive feel. Henry Fielding presents Squire Western—the ignorant, xenophobic, misogynist, Jacobite country squire—as a beer-loving tippler whose atavism is proved by his fondness for “Old Simon,” an Elizabethan drinking ballad reprinted in various late-seventeenth- and early-eighteenth-century drinking song collections.<sup>76</sup> Alexander Pope, the eighteenth-century English Horace, imitates Horace’s convivial rather than symposiastic verse. While Jonson enlivened his dinner party with symposiastic motifs in “Inviting a Friend,” Pope even tones down hints of excess in his convivial Horatian model. Replacing Horace’s description of a postprandial drinking competition (*Satire* 2.2.123), Pope’s imitation conjoins healths with prayer: “Then chearful healths (your Mistress shall have place) / And what’s more rare, a Poet shall say *Grace*” (ll. 149–150).<sup>77</sup>

Romantic poets reinvigorated the poetics of drink partly by rediscovering seventeenth-century symposiastic poetry.<sup>78</sup> Since the Romantics, however, poets have largely eschewed the classically inspired celebration of drinking as part of a special occasion for either moderation or temporary excess. Not unlike Restoration libertines, poets have tended to embrace alcoholic (or drug-induced) intoxication as an escape from quotidian bourgeois life. The American poet Donald Hall’s recent imitations of Horace’s first book of odes—several of which are symposiastic—both conjure in Latinate style a Horatian ideal of “reasonable joy” and mock with demotic asperity such fanciful embellishments of late-twentieth-century alcoholism and substance abuse. Hall’s semibuffoonish persona “Horsecollar” (a “Horace scholar” but also a Disney cartoon character) addresses the “aging” “suburban” fellow poet “Flaccus” (Horace’s cognomen, but with undignified resonances in English—a flak[-catching]/flatulent/flaccid Bacchus/ass?), singing with ironic soberness of controlled, sustainable addictions and “whiskey, wine, beer, ale, gin, rum, and the middle way.” With a keen sense of anachronism and incongruity, Hall engages symposiastic poetry and its treatment of moderation and excess as an alien tradition.<sup>79</sup>



PART FIVE



Reimagining Moderation:  
The Miltonic Example

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## CHAPTER NINE

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### *Paradise Lost*, Pleasurable Restraint, and the Mean of Self-Respect

IN MILTON'S *Paradise Lost* unfallen Adam and Eve discover in self-restraint both a moral discipline and the source of truest pleasure. Pleasurable restraint defines their relationship: their shared garden labors and rest, their repasts, their lovemaking, separations, and reunions. Milton's poem embodies the Renaissance conception of epic as a kind of "encyclopedia" of genres,<sup>1</sup> and his depiction of Adam and Eve challenges his countrymen's growing glorification of extremes in the various genres studied in previous chapters. Contesting the increasing legitimization of unlimited appetite and luxury in georgic poetry from Denham onward, Milton celebrates Adam and Eve's georgic labor as a joyful form of self-regulation. Countering the glorification of drunkenness in Cavalier Interregnum symposiastic poetry and Restoration revelry, Milton limns the delights of Adam and Eve's moderate convivial pleasures. Challenging the celebration of extreme passion in aristocratic literature from Sidney to the Restoration, Milton lovingly depicts Adam and Eve's intense but necessarily moderated love. Despite his titular theme of loss, Milton challenges the literary, cultural, and political norms of his contemporaries by representing his Edenic couple as exemplary models of a partially recoverable ideal of moderation and of the "paradise within. . . happier far" (12.587) that is offered as fallen humanity's consolation at the end of the poem.

Adam and Eve's pleasurable restraint is indebted to the conception of moderation first espoused by the Athenian philosopher Xenophon. However, Milton's distinctive inflection of the Xenophonic theme combats an Epicurean variant popularized by his contemporaries to undergird a quietistic Royalism. Milton further grounds the pleasurable restraint of Adam and Eve in their virtuous self-respect, a principle he articulates from an original synthesis of diverse classical and classically inflected patristic views. While scholarship has explored Milton's Edenic couple in relation to scriptural and Protestant views of marriage,<sup>2</sup> his focus on self-respect, which crucially shapes his treatment of Adam and Eve, has been relatively neglected and the sources of his approach largely misconstrued. Adam and Eve corrupt their relationship by deviating, in opposite ways, from a proper sense of self-worth, conceived as a mean between a self-abnegation that idolizes the other and a self-regard that renders



the other superfluous.<sup>3</sup> Challenging the Restoration he detested, Milton portrays unfallen Adam and Eve as proof to his countrymen that proper self-governance depends upon conceptions of pleasurable moderation that his nation has ignored. Whereas in the late sixteenth century Donne uses the mean to define the individual's freedom with respect to socioreligious institutions, late in the following century Milton invokes the mean to present the self-respecting individual and conjugal pair, rather than the state or established church, as the source of national values.

Yet despite its contestatory stance toward the Restoration settlement, Milton's quickly canonized poem was no ineffectual cry in the wilderness.<sup>4</sup> By making the self-governance of the Edenic couple central to his poem, Milton transformed epic tradition by shifting the focus from the heroic deeds of aristocratic political and military leaders to the virtuous pleasures as well as moral dangers of conjugal relations and daily life. His epic vitally contributed to the trend in early modern literature toward celebrating a private sphere of erotic intensity at the expense of the sociopolitical realm. His depiction of Edenic conjugal love appealed to late-seventeenth-century and eighteenth-century readers and writers of different religious and political persuasions for whom the domestic sphere had become the central locus of affect, ethical value, and reflection.<sup>5</sup> Furthermore, Milton's focus on a mean of self-respect as the foundation of self-restraint was in accordance with the growing anti-Calvinist, Arminian strands within late-seventeenth- and eighteenth-century theology (Anglican and dissenting), as well as secular Enlightenment optimism regarding human nature.<sup>6</sup> Unfallen Adam and Eve influentially embody an ideal of individual self-respect and self-governance that remains central to contemporary liberal thought.

### Xenophonic Georgic: Edenic Work and Pleasure

Critics have noted the georgic strand in Milton's Eden.<sup>7</sup> Adam and Eve's God-given "daily work of body or mind" is a sign of their human "dignity" (4.618–619). As in Augustine, who associated Adam and Eve's gardening with both innocent joy and self-discipline ("disciplina," *De genesi ad litteram* 8.9–10), the "sweet gardening labor" (4.328) that the unfallen couple share simultaneously underscores the pleasure of their conjugal bond and the need for virtuous discipline. By marrying the vine with the elm (5.215–219) and happily "prun[ing]" and "reform[ing]" together Eden's "branches overgrown" and "wanton growth" (4.438, 625, 627, 629), Adam and Eve affirm their union and commit themselves to moderation. Pruning is both literal georgic labor and emblematic enactment of temperance: one can compare both Virgil's morally resonant advice that the farmer prune the "luxuriant" wheat (*Georgic* 1.111–113) and

the Spenserian Phineas Fletcher's depiction of "Temperance" "Pruning superfluous boughs" in *The Purple Island* (1633).<sup>8</sup>

J. Martin Evans has connected Milton's nonbiblical, nonpatristic account of Eden's excess—its "wanton growth" and its "too large" or too generous "abundance" (4.730; cf. 5.315, 9.620)—with English Puritan responses to the New World's natural plenty as both a sign of divine beneficence and a temptation to excess that must be resisted.<sup>9</sup> Yet while Milton was inspired by accounts of America for local color, his portrait of Edenic plenitude and of Adam and Eve's virtuously responsive labor more centrally evokes the long-standing ambivalence toward British "plenty"—as both divine blessing and as potential lure to sloth and luxury—expressed in georgic poems like Davies's *Microcosmos*, Sylvester's *Du Bartas* translation, and Drayton's *Poly-Olbion*. While the youthful Milton's georgic *L'Allegro* and *Il Penseroso* had celebrated a temperate England, the older Milton's Eden more closely resembles Drayton's superabundant Albion, boasting pleasantly "wanton" rivers and soil (1.138, 5.224, 23.77, 29.402), "Abounding in excess" (7.58), and "with all abundance blest"—until luxuriously "wanton growne" (8.176, 178). Milton's paradisaical sun, which provides "more warmth than Adam needs" (5.302), echoes in its beneficent but also potentially troubling superfluity Drayton's English soil, which provides "more lavish waste, then oft the Grasier needs" (28.40–42). With their "sweet" labors, unfallen Adam and Eve avoid the "sloth" and "surfeit" that the angel Michael later condemns in a "luxurious" nation such as, Milton implies, late-seventeenth-century England has become (11.788, 794).

Adam and Eve's daily alternations between labor and rest exemplify the general pattern of virtuous Edenic pleasure:

They sat them down, and after no more toil  
Of their sweet gardening labor than sufficed  
To recommend cool zephyr, and made ease  
More easy, wholesome thirst and appetite  
More grateful, to their supper fruits they fell.

(4.327–331)

Working only as much as sufficed to make rest more enjoyable exemplifies Adam and Eve's pleasant moderation. Milton draws on the traditional association (mocked in Cotton's "Clepsydra") of virtuous moderation with proper timing, with knowing when to begin and cease any activity. Aristotle notes that the ethical mean requires action or emotion "at the right time" (*NE* 2.6.11). Explicating the maxim "nothing in excess" [*mêden agan*], the late Latin poet Ausonius notes that all things require "the measure of timely cessation" ("optimae pausae modum," *Ludus Septem Sapientum* 7; trans. mine).<sup>10</sup> Edenic labor is a matter of such timing, for Adam and Eve must know when to begin as well as stop their sufficient labors: in the morning Adam awakens Eve lest they "lose the prime" (5.21).

Moderate labor eventuates in supreme pleasure: “ease” is made more “easy” and thirst and appetite more “grateful” or “pleasing” because of preceding labor. Adam later describes to Raphael fruits “pleasantest to thirst / And hunger both, from labour, at the hour / Of sweet repast” (8.212–214). “From labour”—which blends the senses of “caused by” and “when coming from” labor—suggests that the intensification of appetite and postponement of gratification inherent in labor make ultimate fulfillment all the more gratifying.

As Anthony Low notes, throughout his writings Milton argues the pleasure of alternating between labor and leisure, which (as his university speech, *Prohusion* 6, puts it) prevents “satiety” and makes us “more eager to resume our interrupted tasks” (CPW 1:266).<sup>11</sup> In *Paradise Lost* Milton links the alternations whereby Adam and Eve avoid “satiety” to an influential but now largely forgotten ancient ethical paradigm concerning moderation. The Greek historian and moralist Xenophon expounded the view that temperate forbearance provides the truest and strongest pleasure by making eventual fulfillment all the more enjoyable. In the *Memorabilia* Xenophon claims that Socrates “was so ready for his food that he found appetite the best sauce; and any kind of drink he found pleasant, because he drank only when he was thirsty.” Contending that all good things come through toil, Xenophon’s Socrates argues that the virtuous obtain “more pleasant” [*hêdion*] sleep than the idle because of their preceding labor. Not distinguishing (as Aristotle would later do) between temperance and continence, Xenophon’s Socrates further argues that continence [*enkrateia*] allows people to endure periods of hunger, thirst, desire, or sleeplessness, after which eating, drinking, sex, or sleep will give the greatest satisfaction (*Memorabilia* 1.3.5, 2.1.33, 4.5.9). In Xenophon’s *Cyropaedia* the virtuous Persian king Cyrus similarly notes that food, drink, and rest are “most pleasant” [*hêdistal*] to the self-controlled, hardworking man who feels hunger, thirst, and fatigue (7.5.81; trans. mine). In the 1640s Milton expressed admiration for Xenophon’s ethical treatises (CPW 1:719, 751, 891; 2:396). In his epic he echoes Xenophon’s derivation of pleasure from prior labor and the resultant increase of appetite. By claiming that Edenic labor made “wholesome thirst and appetite”—rather than eating and drinking—more “grateful,” and by having Adam describe fruits as most pleasant to “thirst and hunger” rather than to taste, Milton blurs by metonymic substitution the very distinction between appetites and their pleasurable fulfillment. He thus foregrounds how much true satisfaction depends upon the intensification of appetite through restraint.

Milton softens Xenophon’s focus upon hard work and continence by emphasizing the “sweet,” unforced nature of Edenic labor and restraint. Yet with his Xenophonic emphasis upon the pleasure that follows labor, Milton approaches but crucially diverges from the Epicurean hedonism endorsed by many contemporary Royalists. Epicureans partially adopted Xenophon by emphasizing the pleasure the temperate hedonist found in quenching hunger and

thirst. Epicurus claimed that “bread and water confer the highest possible pleasure” on “hungry lips” (Diogenes Laertius 10.130–131). In the Renaissance Erasmus influentially revived Epicurus’s temperate hedonism: his *Adages* commended the Xenophonic Socrates’ dictum that “hunger is the best sauce,” while his colloquy *Epicureus* derived “deliciousness” from “good appetite.” Owen Felltham’s *Resolves, Divine, Moral, and Political*, which went through many seventeenth-century editions, agreed with Epicurus that “temperance” increased “enjoyment” and that a simple “dish” eaten with “hunger” provided “greater ease” and “pleasure” than “costly viands.”<sup>12</sup>

Spearheading a major philosophical revival that helped shape the cultural values of the Restoration elite, Interregnum Royalists similarly expounded the Epicurean pleasure of temperance.<sup>13</sup> In 1655 Jeremy Taylor cited Epicurus to claim that the temperate man knew that “*want* makes the appetite, and the appetite makes the pleasure.” In the 1656 volume of his *History of Philosophy* Thomas Stanley sympathetically presented Epicurus’s argument that plain food and water were “highly pleasant if taken only when we hunger and thirst.” In *Epicurus’s Morals* (1656) Walter Charleton, who had been Charles I’s personal physician, claimed that a “sober,” hungry man ate with “more delight” than others. In his posthumously published *Christian Morals*, of which portions were probably composed during the 1650s, Thomas Browne claimed that “true Epicurism” rightly derived pleasure from virtuous “mediocrity,” for “Temperate Minds, not pressing their pleasures until the sting appeareth, enjoy their contentations contentedly.”<sup>14</sup>

Royalist Epicureans diverged from Xenophon, however, in downplaying or ignoring the latter’s praise of labor as a “sauce” for rest, instead celebrating the uninterrupted *ataraxia* of retired leisure—the “secure” country life praised at the opening of *Coopers Hill*. Epicureans subordinated the pleasure of temperate eating and drinking, associated with motion, to the higher pleasure associated with rest. During the mid-century tumult Royalists found temperate Epicurean retirement especially congenial. Charleton identified the highest pleasures as “Indolency of Body, and Tranquillity of the Mind.” Robert Herrick’s “A Country Life: To his Brother, Master Thomas Herrick,” which praised the addressee’s Epicurean recognition that “Hunger makes coorse meats, delicates” (l. 110), also celebrated living “at home, blest with securest ease” (l. 69). Whatever the poem’s date of composition, its Epicurean retirement had special resonance for Royalists when *Hesperides* appeared in 1648.<sup>15</sup>

In *Paradise Regained* Jesus scornfully dismisses the Epicurean view of happiness as residing in “corporal pleasure” and “careless ease” (4.299). Like Donne’s pun on “carelesse Phrygius” in “Satire 3,” Milton’s “careless ease” suggests that the *otium* without care sought by the Epicurean is also “carelesse” in the sense of “reckless,” for the Epicureans neglect their God-given duty to labor.<sup>16</sup> While the description in *Paradise Lost* of the pleasures deriving from

thirst and appetite is compatible with Royalist Epicureanism, the epic's depiction of Adam and Eve's enjoyment of "ease" after labor, however "sweet," pointedly reaffirms the Xenophonic understanding of true pleasure as flowing from virtuous labor.

Milton's implicit polemic recalls the Stoics, who deployed Xenophon's views as weapons in their battle against Epicurean idleness. A Stoic in Cicero's *De finibus*, agreeing with the Xenophonic Socrates' view that "the best sauce for food is hunger and the best flavouring for drink thirst," attacked the Epicureans for fearing pain and denigrating virtuous toil (2.28.90–93, 2.34.113). Similarly criticizing Epicureanism, Seneca claimed that hunger made even coarse bread tasty and that labor made rest pleasant (*Epistulae morales* 123.2–4, 12–14). Some Renaissance authors proclaimed in Xenophonic-Stoic fashion the pleasure attendant upon self-restraint and virtuous effort. For example, in the *New Arcadia* Sidney, an avowed admirer of Xenophon's *Cyropaedia*, has Pyrocles claim that his heroic ordeals had taught him "to measure the delicacy of food and rest by hunger and weariness."<sup>17</sup> For Milton Edenic life is a gentler but no less noble version of this Xenophonic-Stoic dynamic.

Milton's anti-Epicurean celebration of Adam and Eve's garden labors is especially pointed because the Epicurean quest for unbroken ease was traditionally associated with retirement in a garden. Epicurus, the "teacher of ease [*otii*]," was reputed to be the first Athenian to retire to a garden (Pliny the Elder, *Natural History* 19.19. 51). Following both the ancients and sixteenth-century humanists, Royalist Epicureans associated their philosophy with gardens: Charleton celebrated his garden of contented repose, while Cowley's essay and poem "The Garden" (1668) praised Epicurus for seeking "Pleasure" in a "Gardens shade."<sup>18</sup>

Recent scholars have explored how Milton encodes republican commitments in *Paradise Lost*.<sup>19</sup> Epicurus avoided participation in Athenian public life by retiring to his garden (Diogenes Laertius 10.10). In projecting Eden as a Xenophonic-Stoic garden, Milton suggests his republicanism by spurning the anticivic implications of Epicurean garden retirement. Taking up a Ciceronian republican theme, in his political prose Milton promoted labor as a primary civic virtue essential to preserving the republic.<sup>20</sup> In his *Second Defense of the People of England* (1654) Milton argued that the English republic depended upon the people's "industry, and endurance of toil" and warned of the domination that befell "slothful" nations. *The Ready and Easy Way to Establish a Free Commonwealth* (1660), written on the eve of the Restoration, declared that only "sluggards" could desire to live under a monarch since virtuous republicans trusted in God and their "own active vertue and industrie." In his *History of Britain* (1670) Milton charted the disastrous consequences of Englishmen shirking "the labour, to use and maintain true libertie" (CPW 5:131, 4:681, 7:362).

To the Restoration Milton the Epicureans' "careless ease" no doubt seemed a philosophical rationalization of the sloth that sustained tyranny. The depiction in *Paradise Lost* of the "slothful" (2.117) rebel angel Belial suggests Epicureanism's servile political implications: out of an Epicurean desire to avoid further pain or even to attain a life wholly "void of pain" (2.165–186, 215–219), Belial advises "ignoble ease and peaceful sloth" (2.227) rather than resistance to a power he (wrongly) considers tyrannical (God). Unfallen Adam and Eve, by contrast, regulate themselves through "daily work of body or mind" in all matters except what they initially and rightly accept as God's "one easy prohibition" (4.433). In contrast to Belial, with their "sweet" gardening and consequent sweeter rest they obliquely evoke the virtuous labors and attendant pleasures of republican liberty.

While unfallen Adam and Eve's pleasurable labor distinguishes them from Interregnum and Restoration Epicureans, their convivial pleasures also differentiate them from more extreme hedonists of Milton's time. Like his convivial sonnets, which opposed a moderate "rest" and "pause" for a "cheerful hour" to the Cavaliers' endless carousing ("Cyriack, whose grandsire," ll. 7, 14), Milton's epic depicts a virtuous alternative to his contemporaries' excesses. Milton describes Adam, Eve, and Raphael eating and drinking enough to have "sufficed, / Not burdened nature" (5.451–452), immediately after which "mind arose / In Adam" (5.452–453) to begin an intellectual discussion with the visiting angel. Milton's emphasis upon temperance and the ascent from bodily to spiritual pleasures recalls his promise in the "Lawrence" sonnet of a modest repast—far different from Royalist drinking parties—from which the participants can "rise" (l. 10) to more refined pleasures, with virtue and vigor intact.

Adam and Eve's "excess" (11.111) at the fall, by contrast, is associated with both overeating and drunkenness. Eve gorges on the forbidden fruit "without restraint" until "sate" (9.791–792). While unfallen Adam and Eve soberly drink only unfermented "must, and meaths" (5.345), at the fall they are as "with new wine intoxicated" (9.1008). Milton's plea that his Muse "drive far off" "Bacchus and his revellers" (7.32–33) and his attack on the "sons / Of Belial, flown with insolence and wine" in "courts" and "luxurious cities" (11.497, 499) suggest that contemporaneous festive behavior—such as that greeting the Restoration—reenacts this primal fall.<sup>21</sup>

Thus, prefallen Adam and Eve's convivial behavior provides a norm for judging both their primal trespass and the sinful pleasures of Milton's contemporaries. Raphael's discussion of the Edenic couple's repasts also has continued applicability to fallen mankind. He suggests an ultimate reward for pleasurable moderation: describing proper human eating and drinking as spiritual (or spiritualizing) acts that turn "corporeal to incorporeal" (5.413), Raphael envisages that Adam and Eve's "bodies may at last turn all to spirit, / Improved by tract of time, and winged ascend / Ethereal" (5.497–499). Such

an ascent in the great food chain of being is predicated upon self-restraint and patient trust in God's long-term cosmic plan. Even as he predicts the ultimate effacement of distinctions between earthly and heavenly life, Raphael's description of the angels' meals illuminates a crucial difference between Edenic and celestial repasts:

They eat, they drink, and in communion sweet  
 Quaff immortality and joy, secure  
 Of surfeit where full measure only bounds  
 Excess, before the all bounteous king, who showered  
 With copious hand, rejoicing in their joy.

(5. 637–641)

The angels are "secure / Of"—both safe from and legitimately without care concerning—"surfeit" or "excess" because their only limit is "full measure"; God's "bounds" are as "bounteous" as he is. Milton here adapts the Old Testament image of the feast of the righteous and its New Testament counterpart, the heavenly banquet: the righteous man is "abundantly satisfied" with God-given food and drink (Ps. 36:8) and "eateth to the satisfying of his soul" (Prov. 13:25); the blessed "shall be filled" (Matt. 5:6) and "hunger no more, neither thirst any more" (Rev. 7:16). Renaissance authors associated the heavenly banquet with a perfect fullness that, like the Aristotelian mean, avoided excess as well as deficiency.<sup>22</sup> Milton similarly combines the Judeo-Christian image of perfect abundance with a classical emphasis on the absence of excess. Yet the angels' "secure" state at the heavenly banquet—safe and therefore as without care as Epicureans' earthly life—is not yet fully shared by Adam and Eve. On earth, before as after the fall, human discipline must labor to attain full measure just short of the excess that is so close to it.

Adam gratefully notes that Raphael's discourse has "satisfied" him "fully" (8.180), but that he still wishes to continue the conversation. He contrasts Raphael's discourse with fruits "pleasantest to thirst / And hunger"; while the latter "satiates, and soon fill, / Though pleasant," Raphael's "words with grace divine / Imbued, bring to thy sweetness no satiety" (8.212–216). Raphael's words, which make Adam "seem in heaven" (8.210), resemble the angels' heavenly feast, providing full satisfaction without ever risking "satiety." By contrast, in Adam's claim that the fruits of Eden "satiates, and soon fill," "satiates" slides from its positive sense of "fill, satisfy" to its negative sense of "glut, cloy" (*OED* s.v. "satiates," 1 and 2). Satiety—like that experienced by the fallen, "satiates" (9.792) Eve—risks infecting the "sweetness" of even the most virtuous and pleasant human meals, those associated with properly delayed gratification. The slippage signals that unfallen Adam in some sense knows as well as refrains from unpleasant satiety, so that his self-restraint stems from moral choice as well as innocence. A moral example for Milton's readers,

Adam resembles the Christian of *Areopagitica*, who must “know, and yet abstain” from excess by combating his tendency to “wander beyond all limit and satiety” (CPW 2:516, 528).<sup>23</sup>

### Conjugal Love: Ovid Moralisé

Just as Milton’s depiction of the Edenic couple glorifies both a labor and a restraint inimical to much contemporaneous literature, so Milton’s treatment of Adam and Eve’s conjugal bond resists the valorization of “extreme” passion that proves aristocratic worth in early modern English erotic literature. Just as he distinguishes between heavenly and earthly meals, so Milton distinguishes between heavenly and earthly love. He celebrates Christ’s “Love without end, and without measure grace” (3.142)—what the young Milton called Christ’s “exceeding love” (“Upon the Circumcision,” l. 15)—but treats such “extreme” love in human beings as sinful: delighted with Adam’s decision to join her in disobedience, the fallen Eve exclaims with deluded rapture of her about-to-fall husband, “Oh glorious example of exceeding love!” (9.961).<sup>24</sup>

Milton endows the unfallen couple with a love whose intensity stems from its moderation. His first description of Eve links the couple’s erotic pleasure with their virtuous restraint:

She as a veil down to the slender waist  
Her unadorned golden tresses wore  
Dishevelled, but in wanton ringlets waved  
As the vine curls her tendrils, which implied  
Subjection, but required with gentle sway,  
And by her yielded, by him best received,  
Yielded with coy submission, modest pride,  
And sweet reluctant amorous delay.

(4.304–311)

Paralleling his treatment of labor and rest, hunger and eating, Milton depicts the pleasures that arise from “coy” (i.e., shy, reserved) “submission” and “sweet reluctant amorous delay.” As William Kerrigan and Gordon Braden have noted, Milton draws upon the long-standing advocacy of restraint to promote the intensification of erotic pleasure in Roman and Cavalier erotic poetry. Milton diverges from his poetic predecessors, however, in giving genuine ethical weight to the concept of amorous delay.<sup>25</sup>

Ovid and his Roman and English imitators applied the Greek ethical notion of pleasurable restraint to extramarital affairs that were intemperate by both conventional Roman and early modern ethical standards, cheekily associating tactical restraint with moderation and the mean.<sup>26</sup> Alastair Fowler compares



Milton's "sweet reluctant amorous delay" (4.311) to a couplet from Ovid's *Ars amatoria*: "love's bliss must not be hastened, / but gradually lured on by slow delay" (2.717–718).<sup>27</sup> Ovid's couplet, complemented by a later warning against delaying too much (2.731–732), forms part of his overall recommendation that lovers' strategies avoid both excess and deficiency. He advises a lover to absent himself from his mistress with a "short . . . delay" ("mora . . . brevis," 2.357; trans. mine) to incite her desire, but not to leave for too long lest she become indifferent or unfaithful (2.349–372). He similarly counsels a mistress to avoid extremes of eagerness or harsh refusal: "Neither promise yourself easily to him who entreats you, / nor yet deny out of hardness what he asks" (3.475–476). Following Ovid, Martial explicitly associates the delay tactics of a mistress—one who's neither "too easy" nor "too difficult"—with the golden "mean" ("medium," *Epigrams* 1.57, ll. 2–3; trans. modified).

During the civil war and Interregnum, Royalist poets take up the *topos* with gusto as part of their campaign against Puritan killjoys. Brome's "Advice to Caelia," for example, tempers his *carpe diem* with a complementary warning against yielding too quickly: "Doat not, nor proudly use denying," he advises, because being either "too free" or "too slow" destroys erotic pleasure. *Sportive Wit* (1656), a collection that mocks the Parliamentary-Puritan regime with bawdy verses, includes a "Song" in which the speaker begs his mistress to practice stimulating coyness rather than "ore joy" him: "Be kindly coy betimes, be smoothly rough, / And buckle now and then, and that's enough."<sup>28</sup> The first line's oxymorons and the jauntily colloquial "buckle"—whose two meanings of "submit" and "grapple" (*OED* s.v. "buckle," 3b, 7) suggest resistance even in yielding—identify the mistress's desired response as an artful tempering of extremes to maximize pleasure.

Eve's "coy submission" and "modest pride" recall the oxymoronic qualities of the Cavalier mistress who tempers giving with withholding for her lover's pleasure. Distancing himself from both Roman and contemporary hedonists, however, Milton stresses a conjugal moderation that is ethical—an expression of virtuous character—rather than merely strategic. He suggests the moral seriousness of his erotics of delay by placing it within the context of scriptural and Protestant conjugal ideals. His depiction of Adam and Eve's "sweet" interactions, while intensely erotic, concerns proper gender relations in general rather than sexual acts in particular. Eve's hair, while enticingly "wanton," is the "veil" or Pauline covering that "implies" her submission to her husband (1 Cor. 11:15). Bodies and their interactions are signs of emotional and moral relations. "Coy submission" and "sweet reluctant amorous delay" do not refer simply to Eve's gradual yielding of her body but include her overall "submission" and "subjection" to Adam; as he later declares, "all [Eve's] words and actions, [are] mixed with love / And sweet compliance" (8.602–603). "Submission" and "subjection" are key terms for a wife's relation to her husband "in all things" in the scriptural passages cited in the *Book of Common Prayer*

and often invoked in Protestant marriage treatises: "Ye women submit yourselves unto your own husbands as unto the Lord. . . [L]et the wives also be in subjection unto their own husbands in all things."<sup>29</sup> Milton thus suggests that in all their virtuous interactions, the first married couple attain a pleasure as superlatively "sweet" as the sexual gratifications celebrated by Ovid and the Cavaliers.

Yet Milton depicts both Adam and Eve as bridging the hierarchical gap between them by moderating their wills and desires in honor of their partner. Let me focus on Adam before returning to Eve. His "gentle sway" evokes the Protestant view that the husband should rule his wife moderately rather than tyrannically. The Stuart Puritan William Gouge, for example, noted that a "husbands authority" must be with "moderation tempered." While this ideal of husbandly moderation sustained the gender hierarchy, it also emphasized harmonious partnership.<sup>30</sup> By elsewhere applying the term "gentle" to Adam and Eve as a pair—Milton earlier describes the "gentle purpose" of the "gentle pair" (4.337, 366), while Satan compares them to "gentle fawns" (4.404)—Milton suggests that Adam's "gentle" behavior toward Eve helps overcome the distance between superior and inferior so that they can become "one flesh, one heart, one soul" (8.499).

Unfallen Adam and Eve's combination of "gentle" hierarchy and communion closely mirrors the paradoxes of the cosmic hierarchy in *Paradise Lost*, which properly functions only when superiors and inferiors are happily united in a spirit of equal fellowship.<sup>31</sup> Adam's gentle sway over his inferior partner Eve is part of the sweet cosmic hierarchy in which Adam's superior, the angel Raphael, is "gentle" to him (8.648). Throughout the cosmos inequalities of rank are real but less important than the fundamental equality of free, virtuous creatures. Thus, the lower angels show "honour due and reverence" to "superior spirits" (3.737–738), but all unfallen angels know that they have—as fallen Satan himself ruefully notes—the "same free will," and that they share in "God's free love . . . equally" (4.66, 68). Adam treats Raphael with "submiss approach and reverence meek, / As to a superior nature" (5.359–360), but "gentle" Raphael himself declares that angels regard human beings as "fellow servant[s]" rewarded with God's "equal love" (8.225, 228). Adam's "gentle" relations toward Eve are similarly based on his recognition that he and his wife, though "Not equal" (4.296) in rank, are equal as virtuous images of God. Their shared daily activities of labor, recreation, and prayer embody this fundamental equality, which allows Adam to find in Eve that "harmony or true delight" he could not find among the beasts, his "unequals" (8.383–384).

Underscoring how much Adam and Eve's bodily interactions convey their moral relations, Adam's "gentle sway" is literally embodied in later passages in Eve's experiences (or imaginings) of his "gentle" hand, voice, and facial expressions (4.488, 5.37, 10.919). Eve's description of Adam's initial pursuit paradoxically suggests that even as he physically overpowered her, he won her

acquiescence through an underlying physical—and moral—gentleness: “thy gentle hand / Seized mine. I yielded” (4.488–489). In the famous passage hailing “wedded love” Milton celebrates but decorously evades describing in detail Adam and Eve’s “rites / Mysterious of connubial love” (4.742–743). The poet, however, frames Book 4’s celebration of wedded love with sensuous cosmic analogies to their lovemaking that together hint that Adam is simultaneously forceful and “gentle” as a lover. Whereas in Book 5 the “mounted sun / Shot down direct his fervid rays to warm / Earth’s inmost womb” (5.300–302), in Book 3 a phallic sun “gently” warms the female earth and “With gentle penetration. . . / Shoots invisible virtue” (3.583–586).

The fact that Eve’s “subjection” is “required with gentle sway” (emphasis mine) further underscores the character of male authority in Eden. “Required” can mean not only “demanded” but also “requested” or “begged” (*OED* s.v. “require,” 4, 5).<sup>32</sup> The ambiguity suggests that within the ideal hierarchy of Eden male authority must be responsive to female desire. Adam’s “sway” primarily refers to his “dominion” or “rule” (*OED* s.v. “sway,” 6); yet, coming shortly after the description of how Eve’s “wanton ringlets waved,” the word “sway” underscores that Adam’s power is not a matter of rigid command but rather a kind of guiding, balancing counter to his wife’s own swaying movements. The assonance and rhyme of “waved,” “sway,” and “delay” further link Adam’s “gentle” sway to his wife’s movements.

By claiming that Eve’s hair “implies”—but does not dictate—what her entire relationship to Adam should be, Milton suggests her own freedom to act (or not act) as her nature dictates she should. With her “modest pride” Eve is, like Adam, a self-moderating being who tempers her sense of self-worth with deference toward her superior spouse. While stressing her “subjection” to her husband, Protestant marriage theorists nevertheless contrasted a wife’s proper role as fit “helpmate” with that of a servant or slave. John Dod and Robert Cleaver proclaimed a wife “not a slave or servant” but a “companion.” Gouge noted a wife should behave and be treated as “yoke-fellow” rather than “maid-servant.” Even William Whately, who approved of refractory wives’ being beaten within “measure,” noted that a wife should not be “slavish” in her “loving subjection.”<sup>33</sup> As the ideal wife, Eve is neither arrogant nor servile. In a far more serious tone than the description in *Sportive Wit* of a mistress as “kindly coy” and “smoothly rough,” Milton’s “modest pride” underscores Eve’s tempering of contrary qualities to achieve a virtuous mean. “Modest” can mean not only “humble” but also “moderate” (*OED* s.v. “modest,” 4), a secondary meaning that reinforces the sense that Eve’s “pride” is not excessive because it is tempered by its opposite.

Eve’s “modest pride” marks the first positive use of a term that previously in the epic was associated with Satan and denoted sinful “pride” (1.36, 1.58, 1.527, 1.572, 1.603, 2.428, 4.40). Both the echo and the paradoxical adjective implicitly contrast Eve’s virtuous self-regard, based on her acceptance of her

place in the divine hierarchy, with the pride of rebellious Satan, who “sdeign[s] subjection” (4.50). Eve is also distinguished from those fallen women who upset the gender hierarchy by assuming the roles of “proud fair[s]” who forever scorn the entreaties of “starved lover[s]” (4.769–770).

In a larger context, Milton’s phrase “modest pride” recalls the love poetry of Spenser, Milton’s major poetic predecessor, who describes the virtuous woman’s proud humility with respect to her two masculine superiors, her husband and God. In *Amoretti* 6 Spenser treats his beloved’s “pride” (l. 2) as that virtuous sense of self-worth that causes her to delay assenting to his suit but—the poet is certain—will ultimately eventuate in true love and conjugal fidelity. In *Amoretti* 13 he claims his beloved mixes “pride” and “humbleness” in a “goodly temperature” (i.e., a balanced, tempered mean) that attests to her proper sense of worth; she is proud because she knows that as an image of God she to “heaven may clime” (l. 10), but she is humble because she remembers her “mortalitie” (l. 7). In the *Epithalamion* Spenser celebrates his bride awaiting him with the “proud humility” (l. 306) of a self-consciously worthy but deferential helpmate.<sup>34</sup> Similarly, Milton’s Eve is both appropriately proud as a virtuous human being and appropriately modest as a helpmate who acknowledges Adam “her guide / And head” (4.442–443). Her delay signifies that she, like the angels who “freely . . . serve” God because they “freely love” (5.538–539) him, freely chooses to “yield” herself to Adam.

Adam interprets Eve’s initial reaction to him in terms of the “modest pride” that the narrator describes as her proper attitude toward Adam:

. . . though divinely brought,  
 Yet innocence and virgin modesty,  
 Her virtue and the conscience of her worth,  
 That would be wooed, and not unsought be won,  
 Not obvious, not obtrusive, but retired,  
 The more desirable, or to say all,  
 Nature herself, though pure of sinful thought,  
 Wrought in her so, that seeing me, she turned;  
 I followed her, she what was honor knew,  
 And with obsequious majesty approved  
 My pleaded reason. To the nuptial bower  
 I led her blushing like the morn . . .

(8.500–511)

As many critics have noted, this passage ascribes to Eve psychological reactions to Adam’s wooing very different from those Eve ascribes to herself when describing the same event (4.478–480). Thus they cannot be read as the final truth about Adam’s first encounter with Eve. With its clear parallels to the narrator’s own description of Eve’s “modest pride” as a wife, Adam’s account of Eve’s first responses to him appears as a heavily retrospective interpretation

in which he endows her from the first with the “modest pride” that as a wife she has come to evince toward him. His account thus registers as both an inaccurate remembrance of the past (a problem to which I will return) and an accurate and sincere account of Eve’s current state. Eve’s “virtue” and the “conscience of her worth” once more recall but significantly differ from Satan, who “With monarchal pride / Conscious of highest worth” (2.428–429) leads the rebel angels. The self-respect of Eve, whose proper mingling of a sense of “worth” and “modesty” causes her to delay but not refuse her kind yielding, contrasts with the presumption of Satan, who falsely believes in his “highest worth” and therefore refuses ever “to submit or yield” (1.108) to his divine superior.<sup>35</sup>

Adam’s claim that Eve’s reluctance revealed her desire to be “wooed” and rendered her “more desirable” to him recalls the Roman and Cavalier poets’ treatment of feminine reserve as a means of arousing male desire. In a poem contending that forbidden things bring greater pleasure, Ovid claims that a woman’s “price” is increased by difficulties in attaining her (*Amores* 3.4.29–30). In “A Song of Dalliance” William Cartwright warns a woman that “Easie riches is no treasure.”<sup>36</sup> Unlike these poets, however, Adam (and Milton) avoid reducing female worth to the pleasure afforded a man. By suggesting that Eve’s “modesty” and her own “conscience of her worth” cause her to behave in the more desirable way, Adam clearly distinguishes elusive causes from their evident effect, Eve’s worth and self-consciousness, on the one hand, and her enticing desirability to Adam, on the other.

Adam’s confused syntax registers his bewildered admiration for his wife, but “Virgin modesty / Her virtue and the conscience of her worth” can be read as a kind of inadvertent hendiadys, reinforcing the sense that Eve’s “modest pride” is a paradoxical but precise definition of her feminine self-respect. “Modesty” was a virtue normally regarded as particularly suitable for (passive) females as opposed to (active) males.<sup>37</sup> In *Paradise Lost*, while the more active Adam is “gentle,” only the more passive Eve is described as “modest.” In *De Doctrina Christiana* Milton defines “modesty” [*verecundia*] as “temperance” [*temperantia*] that “avoids obscene words and lascivious behavior”; he proceeds to exemplify the virtue with the specifically “womanly modesty” [*mulierum verecundia(m)*] of Penelope (*Odyssey* 1.333) and the Shunammite woman (2 Kings 4:15), who hold themselves back from men’s gaze.<sup>38</sup> Modesty, exemplified in the self-inhibition of women who seek to maintain their honor, is in Milton’s view inseparable from feminine self-respect or proper pride. Adam’s memory of the virginal “retired” (8.504) Eve’s initial turning away from her ardent bridegroom and her behavior as a hostess who sits “retired in sight” (8.41) when there is company are instances of such modest female pride. So is Eve’s “reluctant amorous delay.”

## Virtuous Self-Respect

While Milton's insistence on gender inequality qualifies the picture of Adam and Eve as fellow republicans, his emphasis upon Eve's proper sense of self-worth as the foundation of her dignity and freedom within the conjugal bond has a republican resonance. Since the Romantics it has been a commonplace that Milton's characters are, to varying extents, projections of aspects of Milton himself. Despite his reliance on traditional gender categories, Milton imbues his portrait of Eve with aspects of his own most cherished notions concerning himself as a free, self-respecting being. Both Satan, who is "conscious of highest worth," and Eve, with her "conscience of her worth," recall Milton's public self-portrait as a stout defender of the Puritan revolution. Milton consoled himself concerning his blindness with the "conscience" of having lost his eyesight "In liberty's defense, my noble task" ("To Mr Cyriack Skinner upon his Blindness," ll. 10–11) and the "conscience" [*conscientiam*] of "good deeds" on behalf of English liberty. When attacked by political opponents, he proudly claimed that the virtuous man entrenched himself within "the impregnable consciousness [*conscientiam*] of righteous deeds" (CPW 4:791; *Works* 8:215, 271). Milton echoed Cicero, his major republican role model, who described the good man as rejoicing in the "consciousness [*conscientia*] of a life well spent" (*De senectute* 3.9) and obsessively consoled himself and his republican allies with the "consciousness [*conscientia*] of highest resolution" (*Brutus* 250).<sup>39</sup>

Ciceronian republicanism informs Milton's belief that consciousness of self-worth was the foundation of virtuous self-governance. In his *Second Defense* Milton greeted Cromwell's Protectorate as an alternative to the Rump Parliament that had (supposedly) dissolved itself because its members "consider[ed] themselves inadequate." Warning Cromwell not to fail like the Rump, Milton exhorted him to "honor" or "revere" himself and his virtuous accomplishments and to preserve the English people's and his own freedom out of such virtuous self-regard (CPW 4:671, 673; *Works* 8:224–227). Sometime during the Protectorate Milton seems to have come to believe that Cromwell himself had betrayed the nation's freedom.<sup>40</sup> If so, Cromwell had failed, in Milton's view, to maintain a proper sense of self-worth. In his 1660 last-ditch plea for a free commonwealth, Milton declared that only degraded Englishmen "conscious of . . . unworthiness" would accept the "thraldome" of monarchy (CPW 7:482–483). The Miltonic Satan—who is both a military rebel and a tyrant and who moves from an inflated "consciousness of highest worth" to a debased confession that he is a "miserable" (4.74) sinner—may on one level represent the moral degradation of Cromwell and, more generally, of the republican cause.<sup>41</sup> Yet unfallen Eve provides implicit proof that a justified, steady sense

of one's own self-worth—such as Milton possessed even as he completed *Paradise Lost* during the Restoration—remains the bulwark of proper self-governance and cannot be equated with sinful pride.

Milton's republican self-consciousness may seem much closer to Satan's masculinist, heroic sense of self than to Eve's feminine "modest pride." With its celebration of the "better fortitude / Of patience and heroic martyrdom" (9.31–32), however, *Paradise Lost* problematizes even as it deploys the distinction between active male and passive female virtues. Eve's "modest pride" indeed recalls and celebrates an aspect of Milton's long-standing sense (or idealization) of himself that first emerges in his earliest years as a public figure.

Recent criticism has explored Milton's intense identification with female figures. In *Comus* Milton expresses his own deep attachment to sexual purity in the figure of the Lady.<sup>42</sup> In his prose writings Milton synthesizes from diverse classical and patristic views a highly original notion of self-restraint based on self-respect that is strikingly "feminine," according to the norms of early modern gender ideology, and that strongly prefigures the portrait of retired Eve with her "modest pride." In *An Apology against a Pamphlet . . . against Smectymnuus* (1642) Milton attacks the conventional sexual double standard by arguing that men as much as women must be chaste. Declaring his own adherence to the strictest norms, Milton describes how he was restrained from defiling himself with prostitutes and even "lesse incontinenicies" by "a certaine niceness of nature, an honest haughtinesse, and self-esteem either of what I was, or what I might be, (which let envie call pride)," "modesty," and "a certain reserv'dnesse" (CPW 1:890, 892). Given the frequent association of "honest" in seventeenth-century England with the humble, unostentatious virtues of the good but not (socially) great, "honest haughtiness" is a quasi-oxymoron that prefigures Eve's "modest pride"<sup>43</sup> Moreover, Milton's striking association of his "self-esteem," which could be mistaken for "pride," with sexual "modesty" and reserve, evokes a "feminine" sense of self-worth that prefigures even more strikingly his virtuously "retired" Eve.

The autobiographical passage in the *Apology* recalls a passage from *The Reason of Church-Government* (1642), another pamphlet written earlier the same year, that further reveals Milton's long-standing investment in the notion of a retiring self-respect. After noting the classical belief that "shame, or to call it better, the reverence of our elders, our brethren, and friends," was "the greatest incitement to vertuous deeds and the greatest dissuasion from unworthy attempts," Milton describes

a more ingenuous and noble degree of honest shame, or call it if you will an esteem, whereby men bear an inward reverence toward their own persons. . . . [T]his pious and just honoring of our selves . . . may be thought as the radical moisture and fountain head, whence every laudable and worthy enterprise issues forth. . . . [Y]et it is not incontinent to bound it self, as humid things are, but hath

in it a most restraining and powerfull abstinence to start back, and glob it self upward from the mixture of any ungenerous and unbeseeming motion, or any soile wherewith it may peril to stain it self. . . . [H]e that holds himself in reverence and due esteem, both for the dignity of Gods image upon him, and for the price of his redemption . . . accounts himselfe . . . a fit person to do the noblest and godliest deeds, and much better worth than to deject and defile [himself], with such a debasement and such a pollution as sin is. . . . [H]e dreads and would blush at the reflection of his own severe and modest eye upon himselfe, if it should see him doing or imagining that which is sinfull though in the deepest secrecy. (CPW 1:841–842)

Prefiguring Eve's "modest pride," Milton imagines the virtuous man mixing "shame" and "modest[y]," on the one hand, and "[self-]esteem" and "[self-]reverence" or legitimate pride, on the other. Despite the third-person formulation, the deeply personal tone suggests that Milton's arguments express his own sense of self-worth.<sup>44</sup> With his denial that honest shame is "incontinent" like "humid things" and his reference to such shame's preventing sins even "in the deepest secrecy," Milton seems to associate self-respect with his own successful resistance to the temptation to masturbate. The passage thus again suggests Milton's fervent commitment to chastity and his correlative unwillingness to celebrate a traditional, active sense of male virtue: while he declares "reverence" for one's self a source of heroic action, his emphasis and figural flourishes fall upon it as a source of self-restraint. One can compare the implicit reference to abstention from masturbation in Milton's declaration, in his 1629 Neolatin *Elegia Sexta*, that the poet of high themes (like himself) must have a "chaste youth" with "hand unstained" (ll. 63–64). The elegy's Latin diction reinforces the androgynous quality of such sexual self-restraint, for the abstraction "chaste youth" [*casta iuventus*] is notionally masculine but grammatically feminine.

Despite the explicit support for a Presbyterian system in *The Reason of Church-Government*, Milton's commitment to the virtuous, self-respecting layperson has radical implications that will lead to his belief that a true church can consist of one Christian. His idiosyncratic focus, furthermore, reveals his anti-Calvinist commitment to human merit long before his unequivocal rejection of the Calvinist doctrine of grace in his *De Doctrina Christiana*, which was begun in the mid-1650s.<sup>45</sup> Milton may have invented the English term "self-esteem" as a positive alternative to such negative early modern terms as "self-love" and "self-regard"; his use of the term in the *Apology against a Pamphlet* predates the first OED citation of "self-esteem" in a Catholic (!) meditative work of 1657.<sup>46</sup> While some scholars have sought to derive Milton's conception of self-respect from within the Protestant tradition, Milton's treatments of "self-esteem," "honest shame," and "inward reverence" are indebted to classical philosophy and classically influenced patristic thought rather than



to Protestantism.<sup>47</sup> Milton synthesizes diverse ancient and patristic treatments of the complexly resonant Greek words *aidôs* (respect for the feelings or opinions of others or oneself, hence shame, modesty, reverence, self-respect) and *aischunê* (sense of shame or honor); and their Latin counterparts *verecundia* (modesty, reverence) and *pudor* (shame, self-respect).<sup>48</sup> Milton's debt to ancient formulations glorifying self-respect as the source of self-restraint helps explain the similarities between his self-conception and his portrait of Eve.

Milton begins his discussion in *The Reason of Church-Government* by noting the inadequacy of a traditional notion of masculine, outer-directed heroic virtue based on the quest for honor or fame. He cites Hector's refusal to retreat from battle because he feels ashamed [*aideomai*] of what the Trojans would say (*Iliad* 22.105) as ethically inferior to the highest form of shame, "inward reverence." Here Milton draws upon famous ancient critiques of Hector. Aristotle distinguishes Hector's feeling as civic courage rather than true courage because it is based on "shame" ("aidôs," *NE* 3.8.2–3); "shame" is an emotion, a fear of others' opinions, rather than a virtuous disposition that pursues the "noble" for its own sake (*NE* 2.7.14, 4.9). In a passage cited by Milton in his First Proclusion of 1624 (*CPW* 1:219–220), the Stoic satirist Persius similarly scorns Hector's concern for the Trojans' opinions on the grounds that one must "look to no one outside yourself" for evaluating one's actions (*Satire* 1.7).

While Aristotle himself does not distinguish between different kinds of *aidôs*, Milton's move from fearing or revering others' opinions to an internalized sense of shame or reverence with respect to one's own self—a movement he repeats in the *Second Defense* by exhorting Cromwell to "revere" others' opinions but "finally" to "revere" himself ("te ipsum denique reverere," *Works*, 8:224–227)—follows the recommendations of other ancient philosophers. Stobaeus's *Apophthegmata* or *Sententiae*, a late classical collection of philosophical sayings that Milton consults elsewhere in his prose of the 1640s and 1650s (*CPW* 2:398–399, 4:438), contains several relevant aphorisms in the chapter entitled "Peri aidous," which in the Renaissance was translated into Latin as "De Verecundia et Pudore." The Presocratic philosopher Democritus, Aristotle's pupil Theophrastus (deviating from his teacher in this regard), and the Stoic Musonius Rufus, teacher of Epictetus, all exhort one to have (in Theophrastus's words) "reverence for [*aidous*] one's self." In another chapter on proper governance and self-governance that is especially germane to the concerns animating Milton when writing *The Reason of Church-Government*, Stobaeus quotes Democritus's claim that "one should not reverence [*aideisthai*] other people to any greater extent than one does oneself."<sup>49</sup>

The Stoics, in particular, stressed the necessity of self-respect as a source of self-restraint. Milton's claim that the man with a proper sense of self-worth would "blush" at his own "reflection" were he to do evil even in "deepest secrecy" recalls Stoic treatments of *aidôs*.<sup>50</sup> Epictetus claims that the wise few feel proper self-respect [*aidô*] and have no "ignoble thoughts about them-

selves." They perfect a natural human characteristic, for the human disposition to blush at wrongdoing demonstrates that humans are by nature self-respecting ("aidêmones," *Discourses* 1.3.4, 3.7.27). In a Stoicizing mode, Cicero argues that blushing arises from inner *pudor* and *verecundia* rather than concern for reputation (*De legibus* 1.18.50; cf. *De finibus* 4.7.18, 2.19.60, 2.22.73). Seneca, by contrast, treats self-respect as an internalization of the *aidôs* one feels before others. His *Epistulae morales* 11 commends blushes as the sign of a young man's modesty [*verecundia*] in public. Exploiting the etymological connection between *verecundia* and *vereor* ("to revere"), Seneca advises internalizing modesty by imagining one's self continually observed by a virtuous man whom one "reveres" [*veretur*] until one becomes "worthy of reverence" [*verendus*] one's self, even in the "secret place" [*secretum*] of one's soul (1, 9–10; trans. modified). Noting that any person who blushes with shame [*pudor*] at wrongdoing is capable of moral improvement, Seneca argues that one must live as if watched by a virtuous man until one learns a self-restraining "reverence for yourself" [*tui reverentia*] and can become one's own witness (*Epistulae morales* 25.2, 5–6). Milton's trope of blushing at his own self-reflection if he were to do wrong even in "deepest secrecy" synthesizes Epictetus's and Cicero's conception of the blush as arising from self-respect with Seneca's notion of the self-respecting person as moral self-witness.

Milton is probably also indebted to the famous pseudo-Pythagorean gnomic verses known as the *Carmen Aureum* and its fifth-century c.e. commentary by the Neoplatonist Hierocles, which were published in many Renaissance editions and translations.<sup>51</sup> Pseudo-Pythagoras bids his reader, "Neither with others nor by oneself ever do anything shameful; and above all, feel shame before oneself" [*aischuneo sauton*]. Extolling the call for "purity" in the *Carmen*, Hierocles argues that self-respect [*heautou aidôs*] makes one shun shameful things.<sup>52</sup> The *Carmen* and its commentary became especially popular in Interregnum England among anti-Calvinist promoters of human dignity. The Cambridge Platonists echoed Hierocles, Stanley translated the poem in 1651, and John Hall, an admirer of Milton and a fellow republican, translated both poem and commentary in 1657.<sup>53</sup> Jean Courtier's 1583 Latin translation of the verses and commentary was republished in London in 1654, an edition Milton cited in his marginalia (*Works* 18: 305, 307). Given Milton's early fascination with the "Samian master" (as he called Pythagoras in his 1629 *Elegia Sexta*, l. 59), he undoubtedly knew the famous poem and commentary when he wrote *The Reason of Church-Government* in the mid-1640s. Milton's claim that those who properly esteem themselves avoid "any soile" and cannot "defile" themselves with the "pollution" of sinful action or thought suggestively resembles a passage from Marsilio Ficino based on the pseudo-Pythagorean verses. Ficino claims that out of "shame and modesty" [*pudorem verecundiamque*] we "revere [*vereamur*] . . . the conscience of our own mind, as Pythagoras teaches"; the virtuous accordingly "deem it a sacrilege to defile [*temerare*] the august majesty of

their minds . . . with vile thoughts [*vilibus cogitationibus*] and earthly filth [*terrenisque sordibus*].”<sup>54</sup> Though Milton might have been familiar with Ficino’s *Theologica Platonica*, he and Ficino probably responded independently, albeit with similar fervor, to the *Golden Verses* on self-respect as the source of self-restraint.

Mingling the classical and biblical, *The Reason of Church-Government* relates proper self-respect to maintaining one’s dignity as “Gods image.” Milton evokes the identification of humanity with the image of God in Gen. 1:26–27, the scriptural proof-text for patristic, medieval, and Renaissance Christian glorifications of humanity.<sup>55</sup> He probably also recalls Hierocles’ argument that the self-respecting person avoids anything that (in Hall’s translation) “defaces . . . the Divine Image” in him.<sup>56</sup> By also alluding to divine redemption as a source of proper self-respect, Milton guards against the accusation of Pelagianism inherent in his anti-Calvinist emphasis on a self-respect derived from classical philosophy, on the one hand, and the Old Testament vision of Edenic humanity, on the other. His emphasis nevertheless blurs the distinction between fallen and unfallen virtue and thereby helps justify his epic depiction of unfallen humanity as models for fallen humankind.

Milton’s commitment to the ancient norm of inward *aidôs* also explains the striking similarities between his own self-conception and his epic’s portrait of innocent Eve. For ancient thinkers, as for Milton, treating an inward sense of *aidôs* as the central human virtue blurs conventional gendered distinctions. While much in Stoicism fosters a masculinist fear of “effeminacy” and cult of heroic self-conquest, the Stoics’ treatment of *aidôs* as the fundamental virtue supports arguments that virtue is the same for men and women. Musonius, who claims *aidôs* is the greatest good and must be inculcated in both males and females, argues that men and women have the same virtues.<sup>57</sup> When his student Epictetus claims women are properly honored not for feminine beauty but for being, like men, modest and self-respecting (“*aidêmones*,” *Encheiridion* 40; trans. modified), the typically female virtue of modesty takes on gender-neutral significance. Applying Ciceronian ethics to Scripture, the Latin church father Ambrose treats *verecundia* and *pudor* as major virtues for both sexes, exemplified equally by Susanna and Joseph (*De officiis* 1.17.65–1.18.80). Ambrose accordingly extends to all Christians (*De officiis* 1.18.70) Paul’s recommendation that women display *aidôs* (1 Tim. 2:9). In the *Paedagogus*, a work Milton cites with approval in his commonplace book (CPW 1:392), the Greek church father Clement of Alexandria similarly infuses Christianity with the Stoics’ gender-neutral understanding of *aidôs* as a fundamental virtue: he declares men and women endowed with the same “temperance” and “self-respect” (“*aidôs*,” 1.4).<sup>58</sup>

Milton simultaneously evokes and blurs gender distinctions when treating Eve’s modesty in *Paradise Lost*. For the Stoics, as we have seen, blushes are the outward signs of the human capacity for internalized *aidôs*. When Eve slowly proceeds to her nuptial bower knowing the “honour” of marriage but “blushing like the morn” (8.508, 511), her blush reveals not only a bashful,

modest reaction to Adam's wooing ministrations—a conventionally feminine response that Adam (and Milton) find charming<sup>59</sup>—but also her inner sense of the “honest shame” and self-reverence befitting a worthy spouse of either gender. While the description of Eve as blushing tacitly seems to confirm conventional gender distinctions, Raphael's blush while discussing the genderless lovemaking of angels—“Celestial rosy red, love's proper hue” (8.619)—suggests that *aidôs* is a characteristic of virtuous creatures more fundamental than gender.

### Self-Respect and Gender Hierarchy

Milton's early treatments of self-respect help clarify the fall of both Adam and Eve in *Paradise Lost*. As Michael tells the fallen Adam, their gorging on the forbidden fruit is the originary example and ultimate cause of the “ungoverned appetite” with which fallen human beings “pervert nature's healthful rules” because they do not “God's image . . . reverence in themselves” (11.517, 523–525).

Milton also deploys classical conceptions of self-respect to mark the hierarchic differences between the sexes.<sup>60</sup> The problem of proper self-respect is central to the puzzling discrepancy between Adam's description to Raphael of Adam's first encounter with Eve and Eve's own previous recounting to Adam of their first moments. Eve describes to Adam her Narcissuslike “vain desire” (4.466) for her watery image until the divine voice leads her to Adam; her initial turning back to her own image (which she now knows to be her own) because Adam seemed “less fair” (4.478) than that image; and her final acquiescence as Adam's “gentle hand” (4.488) seizes hers. Recounting the same events, Adam omits all reference to Eve's preceding absorption in her reflection; explains her initial reticence in terms of her virgin “modesty,” “conscience of her worth,” and desire to be won; and converts his gentle seizure of Eve into “pleaded reason” (8.510).

Adam omits both Eve's initial “vain desire” for her own image and her subsequent turning back to the image she has learned is her own partly, one assumes, out of a laudable, charitable regard for his wife. Eve's account reveals an instinctive, “unexperienced” (4.457) tendency toward self-absorption, a self-regard that Satan's flattery will pervert at the fall into a sinful desire to be “a goddess . . . adored” (9.547). But Eve recounts her tale to Adam to show how she learned to discipline her own instincts and acknowledge him as her “guide / And head.”<sup>61</sup> Collapsing Eve's original and final states of consciousness, Adam converts Eve's initial self-absorption and subsequent hesitation into something wholly praiseworthy in order to endow her, from the beginning, with the appropriate moral attitude and consequent behavior—the “modest pride” and “sweet reluctant amorous delay”—she learned by accepting him. Yet by obscuring—to Raphael and perhaps to himself—the crucial role of both

the guiding divine “voice” and his own “gentle” but firm hand in turning Eve away from her “vain desire,” Adam reveals himself too eager to forget that Eve ever was—and therefore could once more become—as autonomous in her desires as a “proud fair,” and that his own authoritative intervention was necessary to redirect her desires to himself as her proper consort.

While Eve recounts to Adam how she felt an excessive self-regard that needed correction, Adam reveals to Raphael his own tendency to feel a deficient sense of self-worth with respect to Eve. In Adam’s conversations with the angel, Milton implies that proper self-respect is a kind of mean by having Adam continually invoke the language of deviations from a mean—deficiency and excess, too much and too little—to describe his relation to Eve. Adam’s request for Eve arose from a correct sense that he was ontologically deficient without a partner: revealing his knowledge that it is not good for man to be alone, he characterizes himself with the related terms “deficiency,” “defect,” and “defective” in his speech requesting a helpmate from God (8.416, 419, 425). God grants and Adam receives Eve as Adam’s “other self” and “other half” who will complete and complement Adam and make them “one flesh, one heart, one soul” (8.450, 4.488, 8.499). Yet, as he confesses to Raphael, Adam worries that he and Eve are not complementary parts of one whole (as God has declared) but defective and excessive deviations from virtuous wholeness. He speculates to Raphael that “nature failed in me, and left some part / Not proof enough” against his uxorious passions, or that “from my side subducting, took perhaps / More than enough; at least on her bestowed / Too much of ornament” (8.534–537). Instead of feeling truly united with Eve, he worries that he is both ontologically and morally deficient and that Eve not only embodies excess but also has increased Adam’s own deficiency. After the fall, Adam’s outburst that Eve is a “fair defect / Of nature” (10.891–892) derived from a crooked rib “supernumerary / To my just number” (10.887–888) revealingly seeks to shift all blame onto Eve by treating her as the very embodiment of both deficiency and excess. With his misogynistic application of the Aristotelian identification of women as defective males (*Generation of Animals* 4.1–3), Adam angrily displaces his own earliest feelings—articulated so passionately to Raphael—of being an ontologically and morally defective male himself.<sup>62</sup>

Adam further reveals his sense of deficiency to Raphael by confessing his feeling—which he knows full well to be invalid—that Eve has no need of and is therefore superior to him:

. . . so absolute she seems  
And in herself complete, so well to know  
Her own, that what she wills to do or say,  
Seems wisest, virtuousest, discreetest, best.

(8.547–550)

Adam's oscillation between regarding Eve as excessive and as perfectly complete reveals his emotional confusion; his self-conscious hyperbolizing, underscored by the tongue-twisting, questionably metrical "virtuosest," reveals his inability to know quite what to do or say regarding Eve and his feelings for her. Raphael responds that Adam has (at least temporarily) forgotten the proper gender hierarchy because of his failure to maintain proper self-respect: Eve, insists Raphael, is

. . . worthy well  
 Thy cherishing, thy honoring, and thy love,  
 Not thy subjection: weigh with her thyself;  
 Then value: Oft-times nothing profits more  
 Than self-esteem, grounded on just and right  
 Well-managed; of that skill the more thou know'st,  
 The more she will acknowledge thee her head  
 And to realities yield all her shows.

(8.568–575)

By stressing the desirability of Adam's esteeming himself properly and Eve's consequently "yield[ing]" more, Raphael reminds Adam that his authoritative guidance of Eve, her "yield[ing]" to him, and their consequent union is a continuous, dynamic activity rather than an achieved state, and that Eve's movement from excessive, Narcissuslike absorption in her own image to conjugal commitment is an ongoing process to which Adam must authoritatively contribute as guide. It is Raphael's distinction that God will charge Adam with having forgotten when he followed fallen Eve into sin:

She [Eve] was . . . lovely to attract  
 Thy love, not thy subjection . . .  
 Unseemly to bear rule, which was thy part  
 And person, hadst thou known thyself aright.

(10. 152–153, 155–156)

Raphael's call for Adam to "weigh," "value," and "esteem" both Eve and himself aright so that "shows" can give place to "realities" highlights the Stoic resonances of Milton's view of proper self-worth. Raphael expounds the Stoic view that our passions are incorrect judgments mired in appearances that can only be countered with rational judgments grounded in reality. Raphael echoes Seneca, who argues that one must disregard external appearances in order properly to "esteem" [*aestimare*] and "weigh" [*perpendere*] both others and oneself (*Epistulae morales* 80.9–10). Just as Raphael declares that "Oft-times nothing profits more" than appropriate "self-esteem," so Seneca declares "esteeming" [*aestimans*] things correctly the "most profitable" [*maxime utile*] ethical act (*Epistulae morales* 89.14), arguing that the man of moral wisdom "has weighed" all things "with a true estimation" ("vera aestimatione perpen-

dit," *Epistulae morales* 90.34) and "esteem[s] himself correctly" ("se ipsum aestimare," *De tranquillitate animi* 6.2).

Milton's treatment of Eve and Adam as exhibiting, respectively, the potential for excessive and deficient sense of self-worth displays his creative classicism. While warning, in different places, against estimating one's self too negatively (*Epistulae morales* 25.6) and too highly (*De tranquillitate animi*, 6.2), Seneca does not treat proper self-respect as a virtuous mean poised between two opposite extremes. Yet Justus Lipsius, the most influential Renaissance Neostoic, systematized Senecan wisdom by advising a "mean" between (to quote the Elizabethan translation of *De Constantia*) "too much estimation" of oneself and "abjection."<sup>63</sup> While denying that *aidôs* (conceived as shame before others) is a virtue, Aristotle nevertheless claims that the man of proper *aidôs* adheres to a virtuous mean between excessive modesty and shamelessness (*NE* 2.7.14). Proper self-respect, furthermore, forms the ethical core of Aristotle's mean of magnanimity: the magnanimous man "esteems himself worthy" [*axiôn*] of much honor and is so worthy, while vain and small-souled men deem themselves worthy of more and less than they respectively deserve (*NE* 4.3). Given Aristotle's account of virtue as the pursuit of the "noble" for its own sake, the magnanimous man's concern with external honor creates difficulties for Aristotle and his commentators.<sup>64</sup> Milton avoids such problems by treating "self-esteem" itself as a virtuous mean.

In his polemical prose Milton implicitly figures self-respect as a virtuous mean by characterizing its opposite as a paradoxical and vicious combination of excess and deficiency. In *Of Reformation . . .* (1641) Milton contrasts the virtuous Christian's self-respect with an "arrogant . . . humility" toward God (*CPW* 1:524). In *The Reason of Church-Government* he contrasts self-respect with "an unworthy and abject opinion" of one's self in relation to God that issues in "slavish fear" regarding "holy duties" and "familiar boldness" regarding "unholy doings" (*CPW* 1:843). Milton's combination of "slavish fear" and "familiar boldness" recalls the Aristotelian discussions of deviants from the mean of courage as "rash cowards" [*thrasudeloi*] who exemplify the general rule that vicious men often combine opposite extremes because they lack virtuous self-consistency (*NE* 3.7.9; *Eudemian Ethics* 3.7.13–14). Milton's opposition between proper self-respect and rash cowardice in religious devotion also associates self-respect specifically with the mean of true religion, situated, according to Plutarch's influential account, between superstition, which Plutarch treats as terror of the divine, and reckless atheism (*Moralia* 165d, 171f).<sup>65</sup> In his 1660 call for the maintenance of a "free commonwealth," Milton claims both that monarchy suits sinfully "proud people" and that Englishmen will accept monarchy only by "despairing" of their "vertue" and thence becoming "conscious" of their "unworthiness" to be governed better (*CPW* 7:482–483). While Scholastics and English Protestants treated Christian hope in salvation as the mean between pride and despair, earlier Christians such as Basil of

Caesarea, Ambrose, and Bernard of Clairvaux had treated man's proper knowledge of himself as the fallen but still glorious image of God as the mean between pride and despair.<sup>66</sup> Returning to the earlier Christian emphasis upon proper self-assessment in order to replace Christian hope in the afterlife with the virtue that could perfect earthly life, Milton the republican treats pride and despair as the collapsed opposites of what is once more implicitly featured as the virtuous mean, namely, proper self-respect.

In *Paradise Lost* Satan's soliloquy renouncing "hope" recalls the conventional Scholastic-Protestant formulation: it begins with his recalling the "pride" that led him to rebel and ends with bravado that reveals his "despair" (4.40, 108, 115). Lacking the virtuous mean of hope, Satan vacillates between the opposite extremes of presumption and despair. In the epic's depiction of Adam and Eve, by contrast, Milton reveals his abiding personal and politically inflected concern with self-respect as a virtuous mean essential for human dignity and freedom. Splitting the dangers of excess and deficiency along gender lines, he represents the inferior woman as most vulnerable to self-aggrandizement and the superior man as most susceptible to self-debasement. Both tendencies must be tempered to preserve the ongoing dynamic of Eve's virtuous and pleasurable yielding to Adam.

### Self-Respect and the Fall

Not only in their shared tasks, recreations, and lovemaking do unfallen Adam and Eve display the pleasures of a restraint based on appropriate self-respect. Their moments of separation and return come to partake of the same joy and further reveal how Milton grounds the pleasures of "sweet . . . delay" in proper self-estimation. The couple's first meeting features Eve's separation from and return to Adam, and Eve's decision to return to Adam instead of her watery image becomes the basis of their later joy in separations that, they have learned, will end in harmonious reunions. Adam and Eve destroy their unfallen relationship by forgetting the pleasure of this dynamic.

The first two separations of the wedded pair emphasize the value of Eve's discrete, feminine sphere of action: Eve first leaves to prepare a meal for Raphael and then departs to tend the flowers she has named.<sup>67</sup> Eve's activities, which complement Adam's role as host to Raphael and his dominion over the animals he has named, suggest that the pair thrive on brief separations. Both of her departures are dedicated to increasing the pleasure of her shared life with Adam. Her preparation of a meal "upheld with kindest change" (5.336) is an apt symbol of the pleasing variety she herself provides Adam through such moments of apartness. Eve's recourse to her "nursery" of "fruits and flowers" (8.44–46) when Adam begins discussing with Raphael "studious thoughts abstruse" (8.40) exemplifies even more clearly the virtuous pleasure



of short separation. Milton's use of Homeric ring composition—the opening “With lowliness majestic . . . / Rose, and went forth” (8.42–44) answered by the closing “With goddess-like demeanor forth she went” (8.59)—underscores the epic dignity with which Eve departs and reinforces the sense, explicit in “lowliness majestic,” that her apparently ordinary action is, in fact, high and crucial. Milton dwells upon the dignity of Eve's motive for departure:

Yet went she not, as not with such discourse  
 Delighted, or not capable her ear  
 Of what was high; such pleasure she reserved,  
 Adam relating, she sole auditress;  
 Her husband the relater she preferred  
 Before the angel, and of him to ask  
 Chose rather; he, she knew, would intermix  
 Grateful digressions, and solve high dispute  
 With conjugal caresses, from his lip  
 Not words alone pleased her.

(8.49–58)

Both her “tendance” (8.47) of her “nursery” and her “lowly” preference for her husband's discourse evince the virtuous “lowly” wisdom that star-gazing Adam himself is about to learn from Raphael—“be lowly wise: / Think only what concerns thee and thy being” (8.173–174)—and thus proleptically suggest how far modest Eve falls when she seeks to know higher things. In yet another version of “amorous delay,” both virtuous and pleasant, modest Eve “reserv[es]” or defers—and thereby increases—her conjugal pleasure: she leaves knowing that upon her return Adam will pleasantly mingle—and thus appropriately temper—“high dispute” with amorous gestures. The “grateful digressions” she anticipates imply a lovely pun: since a “digression” is literally a “departure,” Eve digresses *from* Adam so that Adam will later *digress* with her.

Book 9 equates Eve's fall with a departure without return: “much failing, hapless Eve, / Of thy presumed return! Event perverse!” (9.404–405). Though Eve, in fact, returns to Adam, she does so as a radically different creature, so that her return is “perverse,” that is, turned to the opposite direction. In Adam and Eve's fateful argument concerning separation at the opening of Book 9, they begin the corruption of their relationship, which culminates in the fall, by each ignoring in different ways the virtuous pleasures of their separations and returns.

Eve argues that Adam and she should labor apart because their companionship prevents them from working efficiently. She claims that their “pleasant” God-enjoined “task” of tending the garden is frustrated—and presumably rendered unpleasant—by their inability to subdue Edenic nature, which “grows, / Luxurious by restraint” (9.208–209). The negative undertones of “luxurious by restraint” hint that Eve is forgetting the innocent joys of restraint and delay. In her present state of mind all mutual intercourse merely hinders efficiency:

Looks intervene and smiles, or object new  
 Casual discourse draw on, which intermits  
 Our day's work brought to little, though begun  
 Early, and the hour of supper comes unearned.

(9.222–225)

What “intervene[s]” and “intermits” are the “grateful digressions” between Adam and Eve and the delightful variety of “object[s] new” that sustain their ever-new relationship.

Adam seeks to remind Eve of their vital dependence on the rhythms of delay:

Yet not so strictly hath our Lord imposed  
 Labor, as to debar us when we need  
 Refreshment, whether food or talk between,  
 Food of the mind, or this sweet intercourse  
 Of looks and smiles . . .  
 . . . . .  
 For not to irksome toil, but to delight  
 He made us.

(9.235–243)

“Talk” is “between” in two senses: between moments of labor and between Adam and Eve. Adam’s “between” affirms the connection between their relationship and Edenic temporality, in which refreshing pauses from labor—physical replenishment and the analogized replenishment of talk and “sweet intercourse”—make pleasurable their shared life.

Yet, in a crucial turn from dissuading Eve to half yielding to her plan, Adam reveals his own deviation from a proper understanding of Edenic digressions and returns:

But if much converse perhaps  
 Thee satiate, to short absence I could yield.  
 For solitude sometimes is best society,  
 And short retirement urges sweet return.

(9.247–250)

Adam’s pithy, sententious claim that “short retirement urges sweet return” extrapolates a general truth from the everyday rhythm of Edenic delay and fulfillment and hopefully recalls the pleasurable pattern of Eve’s departure and return of the day before. Yet Adam’s intense anxiety that Eve will *not* return to him is evident in the repetition of “short” (9.248, 250), which recalls Ovid’s warning that only a “short” [*brevis*] absence from a mistress is “safe” (“tuta,” *Ars amatoria* 2.357) lest she become indifferent or unfaithful. Adam’s anxiety stems primarily from his own deficient sense of self-worth. He gratuitously suggests that Eve does not really want to labor more efficiently, as she claims,

but simply to converse with him less. Perhaps recalling Eve's first Narcissus-like moment of self-absorption, Adam worries that Eve is bored with him. Even while celebrating their mutual conversation as "Food of the mind," Adam worries that too much interaction might have "satiat[e]" her. Thus, he imagines Eve's experiencing of intimacy with him as more like corporeal food (which always threatens satiety) than like angelic discourse (which fulfills without ever satiating), as if he were an inferior rather than a superior being. With this supposition Adam has now begun the process he continues throughout the conversation, namely, that of ironically providing Eve with new motives to leave. With the crucial word "yield" Adam reverses the pattern whereby Eve is supposed to "yield" to his superior wisdom (4.310, 4.489, 8.575); he cedes more than necessary to Eve because he esteems himself—and fears Eve esteems him—insufficiently.

Adam continues to provide arguments both for and against Eve's departure that betray his insufficient sense of self-worth. Instead of emphasizing the joys and advantages of communion, Adam reveals his own intense sense of dependency. Arguing that the pair can withstand dangers better together than alone, Adam claims that

. . . shame, thou looking on,  
Shame to be overcome or over-reached  
Would utmost vigour raise, and raised unite.  
Why shouldst not thou like sense within thee feel  
When I am present.

(9.312–16)

Confessing his need for Eve while doubting that Eve feels the same need for him, Adam's professed reliance upon his "shame" with respect to Eve as an incentive to virtuous action suggests that he is trapped in "shame" before others because he is deficient in the internalized "honest shame" that Milton identifies with self-respect. Adam's even weaker argument that Eve should not risk being tempted by Satan alone because a tempter "asperses / The tempted with dishonour foul" (9.296–297) reveals a shallow, external view of honor as dependent upon others' false estimations. Eve's acute reply that Satan's "foul esteem"—a phrase she emphatically repeats—brings "no dishonour" (9.328–330) reminds us of Raphael's Stoic rebuke concerning Adam's lack of internalized "self-esteem" and suggests that Adam's deficient self-respect, first evident in his sense of Eve's superiority, underlies his perverse equation of human honor with Satan's foul and false views. Indeed, Eve's rebuke reminds readers that hitherto Satan was the only figure in *Paradise Lost* for whom shame before others was a central motivation: during the war in heaven Satan felt "shame / To find himself not matchless" (6.340–341), and after his defeat he could not submit to God because of "dread of shame / Among the spirits beneath" (4.82–83). Thus, instead of demonstrating his moral strength

to Eve and thereby revealing what she has to gain by willingly staying with him, Adam betrays his weakness and suggests that Eve and he should depend upon shame before others rather than mutual respect grounded in a sense of self-worth. His sending Eve off with a repeated "Go" (9.372–373) despite his strong foreboding that this time she would not return similarly bespeaks his fearful unwillingness to exert his authority—his penultimate failure of proper self-confidence before his fateful decision to follow Eve into disobedience and mortality.

### Self-Respecting, Self-Disciplining Miltonic Readers

Milton's epic nevertheless holds out the possibility that ordinary fallen men and women can regain some of the joys of Eden by reclaiming the self-restraint and self-respect of Adam and Eve at their most harmonious. While the specifically republican resonances of Milton's vision were often condemned or ignored, Milton's depiction of the virtuous pleasures possible for self-respecting, self-disciplining men and women became part of the domestic ideology of middle-class England. Thomas M. Greene argues that Milton's focus on interior consciousness rather than the military heroism of traditional epic points forward to the bourgeois novel, the major genre of the succeeding centuries.<sup>68</sup> While Greene derives Milton's break with epic tradition from his Puritanism, Milton's humanist syncretizing of classical and patristic motifs is paradoxically at the heart of his modern, influential focus on the virtuous delights and vicious perils of domestic life.

Milton's depiction of the pleasures and dangers of marriage captured the imaginations of the late-seventeenth- and eighteenth-century readers who first canonized his epic. His treatment of love was sometimes travestied to fit contemporaneous erotic norms. For example, in a Restoration imitation of *Paradise Lost* in heroic couplets, John Hopkins hymns the Edenic pair's innocent "Excess of Love," thus disregarding Milton's distinctions by converting erotic excess into a prelapsarian virtue. Yet, over the course of the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, middle-class readers also discovered in Milton's vision of unfallen love at its best a delightful blend of intensity and moderation. Thus, in 1739 William Smith claimed that Adam and Eve embody the "warmth of Affection without the violence or fury of Passion" and without "cloying or inspid Fondness."<sup>69</sup>

Milton's emphasis upon a mean of proper self-respect as the foundation of virtuous daily life was consonant with the anti-Calvinist stress upon the self-respecting, self-restrained individual in late-seventeenth- and eighteenth-century theology and ethics. The Restoration latitudinarian Isaac Barrow, much echoed in the eighteenth century, declared that the pious man "rightly esteem[ed]" but did not "overvalue" himself; the high churchman John Norris

similarly argued in oft-reprinted works that Christians must esteem themselves “justly,” keeping the “Balance between the Extreams.” The *Spectator* papers, the influential arbiter of eighteenth-century manners that helped canonize *Paradise Lost* as Britain’s epic, secularized the theme by identifying the “Consciousness of worthy Actions” as virtue’s reward; arguing that the “Modest” person “Blushe[s] in his Closet” to do wrong; claiming that “Modesty and Assurance” together constitute the “Just Mean”; and contrasting “becoming Assurance” with “Extreams” of impudence and timidity. Noting the tendency to “over-value” or “under-value” the self, David Hume similarly praised “just bounds” of “self-esteem” and “conscious worth” as virtue’s “guardian.”<sup>70</sup>

Tempering or rejecting Milton’s patriarchalism, some writers focused on the empowering implications of Eve’s self-respect.<sup>71</sup> In 1706 Anne Finch, the countess of Winchelsea, exhorted women to regain “authority” by displaying Eve’s “modest pride” rather than being “easy to be won.” William Hayley’s *Life of Milton* (published in 1794 and revised in 1798) derived both Milton’s devotion to liberty and his poetry from “upright self-esteem,” a “noble mind . . . conscious of its own integrity.” The most popular poet of his day thanks to his blend of neoclassicism and Whig reformism, Hayley suggested in his verse that women should also evince autonomous self-respect: his *Triumph of Music* (1800) described its heroine, who “herself rever’d,” resisting an arranged marriage with Evelike “modest majesty” and “conscious virtue.”<sup>72</sup> Anna Seward, who wrote a poem commending Hayley’s life of Milton to a woman of “conscious Virtue,” composed an oft-reprinted love tale in epistolary verse entitled *Louisa* (1784), which tempered a rhetoric of extreme female passion ultimately derived from Restoration libertinism (by way of Pope’s *Eloisa to Abelard*) with Miltonic motifs of female self-respect and self-restraint. *Louisa* celebrated its eponymous heroine’s impassioned but chaste love, rooted in a “conscious worth” that prevented her from being “too-conceding” even toward the man she loved with “frail excess.” Emphasizing a virtuous mean, Seward contrasted Louisa, self-respecting but “not arrogant,” to an adulteress who lacked a proper woman’s Evelike “modest pride.”

Extending the application of virtuous self-respect with respect to social rank, Seward also celebrated a “modest” carpenter for being “Conscious of worth.”<sup>73</sup> Readers like Hayley and Seward drew from Milton a theme still central to liberal thought: the need for individuals’ self-respect and self-governance whatever their gender or class—or, later, race.<sup>74</sup> John Rawls, for example, the most influential postwar American liberal theorist, treats self-respect as “the most important primary good” that a just society will foster by ensuring individual liberty and limiting inequality. In Rawls’s just society, individuals earn self-respect through “free access” to “associations” outside the state’s purview, within which they can cultivate the virtues of their self-chosen “rational plan of life.”<sup>75</sup> Such a society would not be paradise, but it would owe an indirect debt to the vision of Eden in *Paradise Lost*.

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## POSTSCRIPT

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### Sublime Excess, Dull Moderation, and Contemporary Ambivalence

THIS STUDY HAS ARGUED that the conflict between means and extremes is central to early modern literature and continues to resonate in contemporary culture. Yet developments beginning in the early modern period have ultimately led to changes in the understanding both of literature and of the mean-extremes polarity, changes that separate the period I have studied from our own. The growing cult of the sublime from the mid-seventeenth century onward, exemplified in georgic and erotic literature, provides an early instance of the now common association of great literature with imaginative extremes. While my final chapter focused on *Paradise Lost's* influential celebration of moderation, the epic's sublime ambition was also central to its canonization. Despite his loving evocation of an Eden of georgic restraint, Milton the poet boldly rejected a safe "middle flight" (1.14) by encompassing all of cosmic space and time. Praising the Miltonic epic's representational "extremes," Edmund Burke argued that the sublime "abhors mediocrity." Partly through the cultural diffusion of sublime aesthetics, declarations like William Hazlitt's that poetry "admits of no medium" and "is every thing by excess" have become increasingly commonplace since the nineteenth century.<sup>1</sup> The associated Romantic and post-Romantic reduction of literature to purely "imaginative" writing has marginalized—at least for those who still care about literature as a normative category—explicitly didactic genres that once espoused moderation and the mean, such as georgic, verse satire, verse epistle, and argumentative prose.<sup>2</sup>

As seventeenth-century georgic and love literature reveal, sublime excess has been yoked to diverse values in different domains of personal and collective life. Eighteenth-century critics generally sought to contain sublimity within a separate aesthetic domain that posed no threat to the political status quo, allowing them to applaud Milton the daring poet while ignoring—or decrying—Milton the Puritan revolutionary.<sup>3</sup> Contemporary scholars, by contrast, have plausibly linked Milton's poetic sublimity to his iconoclastic republicanism.<sup>4</sup> A similarly politicized aesthetics of sublime excess informs a major strain extending from Romantic to postmodern radical critiques of bourgeois culture. William Blake's aphorism "The road of excess leads to the palace of

wisdom" encapsulated his comprehensive attack upon his culture's repressive moderation. Friedrich Nietzsche denounced bourgeois moderation, which he identified with deadening mediocrity, by proclaiming that superior "immoralists" like himself were empowered by the vitalizing, liberating "magic of the extreme" [*Magie des Extremes*], "the seduction that everything extreme [*alles Äusserste*] exercises." Celebrating the artist who created from "excess" [*Überfülle*] of life, Nietzsche sought to become the sublime artist of his own existence.<sup>5</sup> While Nietzsche saw the masses as capable only of mediocrity, some of his postmodern disciples have wished to extend such liberating sublimity to all. "Couldn't everyone's life become a work of art?" asked Foucault, and answered, invoking Nietzsche, that "we have to create ourselves as a work of art." Foucault associated such self-creation with openness to the sublime "overabundance of things to be known," the "infinity" of new things to be experienced, thought, imagined, created. Likewise echoing Nietzsche, Jean Baudrillard exhorts his readers to transcend postmodern alienation by embracing an "extreme" of "excentricity" and yielding to the "sublime" "seduction" of "excess."<sup>6</sup>

By contrast, contemporary defenders of diverse political middle courses often take up antiaesthetic stances. Pierre Bourdieu argues that "extremes" appeal to postmodern intellectuals invested in the "aestheticism of transgression." He offers instead a "reasoned utopianism" conceived as an oppositional middle way between postmodernists' "irresponsible voluntarism" and a "fatalistic scientism" that supports the status quo.<sup>7</sup> Though "reasoned utopianism" would seem a contradiction to many Anglo-American liberals, they are similarly distrustful of aesthetic blandishments. In the early 1960s Daniel Bell, employing a rhetoric of antirhetoric, contrasted a liberal "middle way" that was "without excitement" to extremist "rhetoric" and "bravura"; in the 1980s Judith Shklar represented her "liberalism of fear" as a sober *via media* between more "exhilarating" extremes; while in the 1990s Alan Ryan similarly opposed an "unexciting" liberal "moderation" to "colorful" and "vivid" extremes.<sup>8</sup>

While early modern literary celebrations of the mean assumed Aristotle's exalted view of it as a "summit" of excellence (*NE* 2.6.17), Anglo-American liberal defenses of moderation often make it seem too pedestrian to inspire literary enthusiasm.<sup>9</sup> Liberals often argue for the sober acknowledgment of enduring antinomies and necessary trade-offs. Modern democratic citizens seek diverse goods that are in tension and, pursued to their extremes, contradictory, such as personal autonomy and group solidarity. Democratic mixed economies as a whole pursue plural goals that are also in tension, such as free-market efficiencies and distributive justice, economic growth and environmental protection. Charles Taylor, whose frequent appeals to a reasonable middle ground were noted in my first chapter, advocates modest acceptance of such "unresolvable" "cross-purposes." He declares such moderation superior to "symmetrically situated" opposite extremes while disassociating it from a

utopian notion of an “ideal,” definitive *via media*.<sup>10</sup> Isaiah Berlin—the most influential liberal proponent of “tolerable compromise,” “uneasy equilibrium,” and acceptable “trade-offs” among ultimately irreconcilable values—admitted his vision of moderation was “dull.”<sup>11</sup>

Unsurprisingly, literary and cultural critics in the Anglo-American tradition have often betrayed ambivalence regarding sober moderation and aesthetic extremities. Lionel Trilling, the major post-World War II American liberal critic as well as the recent beneficiary of a modest revival, complained in the 1950s that “the extreme” had become “the commonplace” in modern literature. Yet he himself felt “drawn” to the “extremity” with which modern writers imagined escape from the compromises, “common routine,” and “societal bonds” of ordinary life. Half regarding moderation as boring, he challenged contemporary taste with a strained championing of “moderate” and “mild” William Dean Howells’ depictions of “dull” everyday life.<sup>12</sup> He thus prepared the way for the familiar counterposition of the 1960s, memorably expressed in Susan Sontag’s celebration of “the extreme in art” as a “life-enhancing” antidote to a liberal “compromise” whose drab “sanity” she acknowledged. More recently, Edward Said has limned an oppositional middle way in politics akin to Bourdieu’s, arguing that the public intellectual should avoid both “total quiescence” and “total rebelliousness” by being neither “uncontroversial” nor an intemperate, ignored “Cassandra.” Recalling the ancient and early modern complaint that fools run from one extreme to another instead of adhering to the mean, Said has attacked oscillations from “extreme Left to extreme Right” that betray an irrational “enthusiasm” unbecoming the reasonable intellectual.<sup>13</sup> Yet in the artistic domain Said also celebrates exhilarating transcendence: sublime “ecstasy,” “extreme . . . expression,” “transgressive” “excess.”<sup>14</sup>

I hope that this study has challenged contemporary prejudices by recovering the vital aesthetic excitement and power of celebrations of the mean and moderation in early modern English literature. I also hope that by charting the conflict between means and extremes that energized so much literature of that period, my discussions have helped to uncover the origins of our enduring modern ambivalence regarding moderation and excess in literature and in life.



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# NOTES

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## INTRODUCTION

1. John Donne, *The Sermons of John Donne*, ed. Evelyn M. Simpson and George R. Potter, 10 vols. (Berkeley, 1953–1962), 6:307.

2. See William T. Costello, S.J., *The Scholastic Curriculum at Early Seventeenth-Century Cambridge* (Cambridge, Mass., 1958), 64–69; Harris Francis Fletcher, *The Intellectual Development of John Milton*, 2 vols. (Urbana, Ill., 1961), 1:157–165; and Mordechai Feingold, “The Humanities,” in *The History of the University of Oxford*, vol 4, *Seventeenth-Century Oxford*, ed. Nicholas Tyacke (Oxford, 1997), 313, 321–326.

3. See Charles B. Schmitt, “Aristotle’s Ethics in the Sixteenth Century: Some Preliminary Considerations,” *The Aristotelian Tradition and Renaissance Universities* (London, 1984), pt. 7, 87–112.

4. See Feingold, “Humanities,” 323–324; and Gerald O’Gorman, ed., *Marcus Tullius Cicero’s Three Bokes of Duties* (1556), trans. Nicholas Grimald (Washington, D.C., 1990), 13–15. Grimald claims that Cicero’s treatise surpasses Aristotle’s *Nicomachean Ethics* in “lightsomnesse” and eloquence (*Bokes of Duties*, 45–46). Philip Sidney informs his brother that the *Nicomachean Ethics* is philosophically supreme but “dark,” while *De officiis* is perhaps “not equal” to Aristotle but is (presumably in terms of clarity) “for you and myself, beyond any” (*Sir Philip Sidney: Oxford Authors*, ed. Katherine Duncan-Jones [Oxford, 1989], 288). Meric Casaubon pairs the two works as invaluable moral guides in *On Learning* (London, 1667), 207.

5. Reid Barbour, *English Epicures and Stoics: Ancient Legacies in Early Stuart Culture* (Amherst, Mass., 1998), chaps. 3–6; and Andrew Shifflett, *Stoicism, Politics, and Literature in the Age of Milton* (Cambridge, 1998). For the European context, see Gordon Braden, *Renaissance Tragedy and the Senecan Tradition: Anger’s Privilege* (New Haven, 1985), esp. 63–98.

6. See, e.g., the attacks on “Stoicall” suppression of emotions as opposed to virtuous “Moderation” in Richard Brathwaite, *The English Gentleman* (London, 1630), 78, 347, 356, 459; and the examples in Gilles D. Monserrat, *Light from the Porch: Stoicism and English Renaissance Literature* (Paris, 1984), 54, 73–77, 84–89, 101–108. Braden notes both the frequent Renaissance attacks upon and attraction to Stoic apathy (*Renaissance Tragedy*, 92–98).

7. Cf. Seneca, *De beneficiis* 1.15.3; *De vita beata* 20.4; *De tranquillitate animi* 9.1–6. The most influential Renaissance Stoic, Justus Lipsius, follows Seneca in *De Constantia* (1584) when he claims that “vertue keepeth the meane” (*Two Bookes of Constancie* [1594], trans. John Stradling, ed. Rudolf Kirk and Clayton Morris Hall [New Brunswick, N.J., 1939], 79). Margo Todd exaggerates Seneca’s influence upon English notions of moderation by failing to note that he was most influential when most compatible with a broadly defined, eclectic Aristotelianism. See her *Christian Humanism and*

the *Puritan Social Order* (Cambridge, 1987), 152–158; idem, “Seneca and the Protestant Mind: The Influence of Stoicism on Puritan Ethics,” *Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte* 74 (1983): 182–199.

8. See Horace, *Ode* 2.10; *Satires* 1.1–1.3, 2.2–2.3. Plutarch expounds the mean throughout his *Moralia* and *Lives*, most extensively in his essay on moral virtue (*Moralia* 440d–452d).

9. For patristic applications of the mean to ethical conduct, see Clement of Alexandria, *Paedagogus* 2.1–1; Gregory of Nyssa, *De virginitate* 8, 16; Ambrose, *De officiis*, 1.3.9–1.4.16, 1.18.73–75, 2.29.109–111; and Augustine, *De genesi ad litteram* 9.8.13. For discussion, see Jaroslav Pelikan, *Christianity and Classical Culture: The Metamorphosis of Natural Theology in the Christian Encounter with Hellenism* (New Haven, 1993), 31, 142–143; and Robert G. Babcock, “Augustine’s *De genesi ad litteram* and Horace’s *Satire* 1.2,” *Revue des études Augustiniennes* 33 (1987): 265–268.

10. Morris Palmer Tilley, *Dictionary of the Proverbs in England in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* (Ann Arbor, Mich., 1950), 451–453, 699. For an Elizabethan collection of aphorisms on “mediocrity” with respect to acquisitiveness, study, drinking, and mirth culled from diverse classical and patristic authorities, see Francis Meres, *Palladis Tamia* (1598), ed. Don Cameron Allen (New York, 1938), 107–109. Mary Thomas Crane’s study of sixteenth-century English proverbial writing notes various aphorisms praising the mean (*Framing Authority: Sayings, Self, and Society in Sixteenth-Century England* [Princeton, 1993], 100, 109, 170–171).

11. Samuel Heiland’s Elizabethan commentary on the *Nicomachean Ethics*, for example, identifies whatever lacks “moderation” [*moderatione*] as being “more or less” than it should be (*Aristotelis Ethicorum ad Nicomachum Libri Decem . . .* [London, 1581], 25); Robert Cawdrey’s Jacobean dictionary defines “moderate” as “keeping a meane” (*A Table Alphabeticall* [1604], introd. Robert A. Peters [Gainesville, Fla., 1966], 84); Joseph Hall’s *Christian Moderation* (London, 1639) argues that “Moderation” eschews “too much” and “too little” (*The Works of Joseph Hall*, 12 vols. [Oxford, 1837], 6:367). Some twentieth-century scholars argue against equating the Aristotelian mean with moderation: adherence to the mean entails an appropriate response, neither excessive nor deficient, to a given situation, but the proper intermediate response need not be “moderate”; intense anger, for example, might be the right response to particular circumstances (see J. O. Urmson, “Aristotle’s Doctrine of the Mean,” in *Essays on Aristotle’s Ethics*, ed. Amélie Oksenberg Rorty [Berkeley, 1980], 260–262; and Sarah Broadie, *Ethics with Aristotle* [Oxford, 1991], 99). Early modern Aristotelians, however, generally equated the mean with moderation tautologically by treating the appropriate intermediate response, however intense, as moderate by definition. For a recent argument that Aristotle himself identifies the mean with such a capacious sense of moderation, see Richard Kraut, *Aristotle on Human Good* (Princeton, 1989), 339–341.

12. See Norbert Elias, *The Civilizing Process: The Development of Manners*, trans. Edmund Jephcott (New York, 1978); Frank Whigham, *Ambition and Privilege: The Social Tropes of Elizabethan Courtesy Theory* (Berkeley, 1984); and Anna Bryson, *From Courtesy to Civility: Changing Codes of Conduct in Early Modern England* (Oxford, 1998).

13. See, e.g., Baldesar Castiglione, *The Book of the Courtier*, trans. Thomas Hoby (1561; rpt., New York, 1967), 60–62, 151–152; Giovanni della Casa, *Galataeo*, trans. Robert Peterson (London, 1576), 89–90, 111; Stefano Guazzo, *The Civile Conversation*, trans. George Pettie and Bartholomew Young, 2 vols. (1581–1586; rpt., London,

1925), 1:130–135, 214; John Cleland, *The Institution of a Young Noble Man* (1607), ed. Max Molyneux, 2 vols. (New York, 1948), 1:206–215, 223–226, 271; Henry Peacham, *The Complete Gentleman* (1622), ed. Virgil B. Heltzel (Ithaca, N.Y., 1962), 36–37, 149–154; Brathwaite, *English Gentleman*, esp. 37–38, 135, 176, 179–181, 223, 305–372; and [William Ramesey], *The Gentlemans Companion* (London, 1672), 60, 64, 108–136. While Elias (*Civilizing Process*, 186, 190) and Bryson (*From Courtesy*, 278) stress the importance of “self-control” and “self-discipline” in courtesy books, neither discusses these works’ use of the classical mean.

14. See Richard L. Greaves, *Society and Religion in Elizabethan England* (Minneapolis, Minn., 1981), 26–29, 223–228, 471–477, 483–490; and Lawrence Stone, *The Family, Sex, and Marriage in England, 1500–1800* (New York, 1977), 495–501. Michael Schoenfeldt explores Galenic moderation in early modern poetry in *Bodies and Selves in Early Modern England: Physiology and Inwardness in Spenser, Shakespeare, Herbert, and Milton* (Cambridge, 1999).

15. See, e.g., Richard Greenham, *Works* (London, 1612), 654; William Perkins, *Works*, 3 vols. (London, 1626–1631), 2:132; and Patrick Collinson, “‘A Magazine of Religious Patterns’: An Erasmian Topic Transposed in English Protestantism,” *Godly People: Essays on English Protestantism and Puritanism* (London, 1983), 499–525. On the tension between moderation regarding worldly things and spiritual zeal, see Richard Sibbes’s exhortations to avoid both too little and “exceeding” emotion but to feel “exceeding affection” for God (*Works*, ed. Alexander Grosart, 7 vols. [Edinburgh, 1862–1864], 1:157–160); and Peter Lake, *Moderate Puritans and the Elizabethan Church* (Cambridge, 1982), 147–149.

16. For critiques of the homogenizing tendencies of early new historicism, see Heather Dubrow and Richard Strier, “Introduction,” in *The Historical Renaissance: New Essays on Tudor and Stuart Literature and Culture*, ed. Dubrow and Strier (Chicago, 1988), 9–10; Debora Shuger, *Habits of Thought in the English Renaissance: Religion, Politics, and the Dominant Culture* (Berkeley, 1990), 1–16; and Curtis Perry, *The Making of Jacobean Culture: James I and the Renegotiation of Elizabethan Literary Practice* (Cambridge, 1997), 6–8. For a similar attack upon early Stuart revisionist historiography, see Derek Hirst, “The Place of Principle,” *Past & Present* 92 (1981): 79–99. James Chandler provides a general critique of homogenizing notions of a “cultural-historical period” in *England in 1819: The Politics of Literary Culture and the Case of Romantic Historicism* (Chicago, 1998), esp. 174–194.

17. On “fuzzy” concepts, see John Searle, “Literary Theory and Its Discontents,” in *Beyond Poststructuralism: The Speculations of Theory and the Experience of Reading*, ed. Wendell V. Harris (University Park, Pa., 1996), 102–105; and Michael P. Lynch, *Truth in Context: An Essay on Pluralism and Objectivity* (Cambridge, Mass., 1998), 59–75.

18. On the imprecision of Aristotle’s ethics and doctrine of the mean, see Martha Nussbaum, *The Fragility of Goodness: Luck and Ethics in Greek Tragedy and Philosophy* (Cambridge, 1986), 290–317; Sandra Peterson, “Horos (Limit) in Aristotle’s *Nicomachean Ethics*,” *Phronesis* 33 (1988): 233–250; and Georgios Anagnostopoulos, *Aristotle on the Goals and Exactness of Ethics* (Berkeley, 1994), 316–319.

19. See G. W. Pigman III, *Grief and English Renaissance Elegy* (Cambridge, 1985), 27–39.

20. See Quentin Skinner, *Reason and Rhetoric in the Philosophy of Hobbes* (Cambridge, 1996), 138–180. See also my discussion of Roman and Cavalier poets’ manipu-

lations of the proximity of means to vicious extremes in "The Pleasures of Restraint: The Mean of Coyness in Cavalier Love Poetry," *Criticism* 38 (1996): 253–256.

21. See Plutarch, *Moralia*, 164e–171f; Gregory of Nyssa, *Oratio catechica* 3, *Adversum Arium et Sabellium* 1; Augustine, *De fide et operibus* 4.5, 5.7, In *Johannis evangelium* 36.9, 37.6, 71.2; and Pelikan, *Christianity and Classical Culture*, 186–187, 244–247.

22. Roland Bainton, "Luther and the *Via Media* at the Marburg Colloquy," *Studies in the Reformation* (Boston, 1963), 46–50.

23. On conflicting notions of the *via media* from the Elizabethan period through the Restoration, see Peter Lake, *Anglicans and Puritans? Presbyterianism and English Conformist Thought from Whitgift to Hooker* (London, 1988), esp. 17–24, 55–56, 157–160; idem, "Robert Some and the Ambiguities of Moderation," *Archive for Reformation History* 71 (1980): 254–279; idem, "The Moderate and Irenic Case for Religious War: Joseph Hall's *Via Media* in Context," in *Political Culture and Cultural Politics in Early Modern England: Essays Presented to David Underdown*, ed. Susan D. Amussen and Mark A. Kishlansky (Manchester, 1995), 55–83; Anthony Milton, *Catholic and Reformed: The Roman and Protestant Churches in English Protestant Thought, 1600–1640* (Cambridge, 1995); John Spurr, *The Restoration Church of England, 1646–1689* (New Haven, 1991), 12–13, 31–45, 83–85, 111–165; and Isabel Rivers, *Reason, Grace, and Sentiment: A Study of the Language of Religion and Ethics in England, 1660–1780*, vol. 1, *Whicocote to Wesley* (Cambridge, 1991), esp. 36–37, 138–143.

24. See Richard Strier, "History, Criticism, and Herbert: A Polemical Note," *Papers on Language and Literature* 17 (1981): 347–352; Judy Kronenfeld, "King Lear" and the Naked Truth: *Rethinking the Language of Religion and Resistance* (Durham, N.C., 1998), 69–71; and Joshua Scodel, "John Donne and the Religious Politics of the Mean," in *John Donne's Religious Imagination: Essays in Honor of John T. Shawcross*, ed. Raymond-Jean Frontain and Frances Malpezzi (Conway, Ark., 1995), 60–70.

25. John Morrill, *The Nature of the English Revolution* (London, 1993), 1–69.

26. Samuel Ward, *A Coal from the Altar* (London, 1615), 22, 39–40, 45.

27. On these rhetorical polarities and their Restoration vicissitudes, see Annabel M. Patterson, *Marvell and the Civic Crown* (Princeton, 1978), 178–196.

28. Thomas Fuller, *The Holy State and the Profane State* (1642), ed. Maximilian Graff Walten, 2 vols. (New York, 1938), 2:205–206; Richard Whitlock, *Zootomia* (1654), ed. with introd. McCrea Hazlett (Ph.D. diss.: University of Chicago, 1951), 32.

29. William Cornwallis, *Discourses upon Seneca the Tragedian* (1601), introd. Robert Hood Bowers (Gainesville, Fla., 1952), C3v–C4v. On early Stuart appeals to political moderation, see James Daly, *Cosmic Harmony and Political Thinking in Early Stuart England* (Philadelphia, 1979), 20–21; Kevin Sharpe, *Politics and Ideas in Early Stuart England: Essays and Studies* (London, 1989), 14; and J. P. Sommerville, *Politics and Ideology in England, 1603–1640* (London, 1986), 134–137.

30. On Restoration rhetoric of moderation, extremism, and "trimming," see Mark N. Brown, "Trimmers and Moderates in the Reign of Charles II," *Huntington Library Quarterly* 37 (1974): 311–336; Alan Roper, "Dryden, Sunderland, and the Metamorphoses of a Trimmer," *Huntington Library Quarterly* 54 (1991): 43–72; and Mark Knights, *Politics and Opinion in Crisis, 1678–1681* (Cambridge, 1994), esp. 314–316, 338–339, 345–347.

31. See Michael McKeon, *Politics and Poetry in Restoration England: The Case of Dryden's "Annus Mirabilis"* (Cambridge, Mass., 1975), 17–19; Steven N. Zwicker, *Poli-*

tics and Language in Dryden's Poetry: *The Arts of Disguise* (Princeton, 1984), 85–122; Phillip Harth, *Pen for a Party: Dryden's Tory Propaganda in Its Contexts* (Princeton, 1993), 35–36, 133–135, 209–211; and Susan J. Owen, *Restoration Theatre and Crisis* (Oxford, 1996), 114–118.

32. Nigel Smith, *Literature and Revolution in England, 1640–1660* (New Haven, 1994), 360.

33. See, e.g., [Dudley Digges et al.], *An Answer to a Printed Book* (Oxford, 1642), 6; and the discussions in John Sanderson, "But the People's Creatures": *The Philosophical Basis of the English Civil War* (Manchester, 1989), 34–36, 59–67; Glenn Burgess, "The Impact on Political Thought: Rhetorics for Troubled Times," in *The Impact of the English Civil War*, ed. John Morrill (London, 1991), 74–78, 82–83; and David L. Smith, *Constitutional Royalism and the Search for Settlement, c. 1640–1649* (Cambridge, 1994).

34. For anti-Royalist notions of the constitutional "balance" during the civil war and Interregnum, see David Norbrook, *Writing the English Republic: Poetry, Rhetoric, and Politics, 1627–1660* (Cambridge, 1999), index s.v. "balance"; and Blair Worden, "James Harrington and 'The Commonwealth of Oceana,' 1656," in *Republicanism, Liberty, and Commercial Society, 1649–1776*, ed. David Wooton (Stanford, 1994), 97–99.

35. Marchamont Nedham, *The Case of the Commonwealth of England, Stated* (1650), ed. Philip A. Knachel (Charlottesville, Va., 1969), 61–64, 99–101.

36. Robert Dallington, *Aphorismes Civill and Militarie* (London, 1613), 129–130. On the supposed fickle extremism of the "mob," see Christopher Hill, "The Many-Headed Monster in Late Tudor and Early Stuart Political Thinking," *Change and Continuity in Seventeenth-Century England* (Cambridge, Mass., 1975), 181–294; and C. A. Patrides, "'The Beast with Many Heads': Views on the Multitude," *Premises and Motifs in Renaissance Thought and Literature* (Princeton, 1982), 124–136.

37. See Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan* (1651), ed. C. B. Macpherson (Harmondsworth, Eng., 1968), 216; and Skinner, *Reason and Rhetoric*, 316–326, 338–343.

38. Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 75, 237–238, 372–373.

39. Niklas Luhmann, *The Differentiation of Society*, trans. Stephen Holmes and Charles Larmore (New York, 1982); idem, *Love as Passion: The Codification of Intimacy*, trans. Jeremy Gaines and Doris L. Jones (Cambridge, Mass., 1986). For a rival treatment of modernization-as-differentiation, see Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*, trans. Thomas Burger (Cambridge, Mass., 1989); idem, *The Theory of Communicative Action*, trans. Thomas McCarthy, 2 vols. (Boston, 1984–1987).

40. C. Johan Sommerville, *The Secularization of Early Modern England: From Religious Culture to Religious Faith* (Oxford, 1992), 11; Susan Amussen, "'The Part of a Christian Man': The Cultural Politics of Manhood in Early Modern England," in Amussen and Kishlansky, *Political Culture*, 213–233.

41. Liz Bellamy discusses the conflicting eighteenth-century discourses of civic humanist morality and political economy in *Commerce, Morality, and the Eighteenth-Century Novel* (Cambridge, 1998), 13–38 (quotation at 22). See also John P. Zomchik on "competing" eighteenth-century "discourses" in *Family and the Law in Eighteenth-Century Fiction: The Public Conscience in the Private Sphere* (Cambridge, 1993), 1–32.

42. Louis Adrian Montrose, "Professing the Renaissance: The Poetics and Politics of Culture," in *The New Historicism*, ed. H. Aram Vesser (New York, 1989), 17.

43. Both studies indeed suggest the centrality of the mean in their accounts of the early modern reception of Stoicism and Epicureanism. Shifflett (*Stoicism, Politics, and Literature*) begins with an early modern Stoic articulation of a “middle path” (1–2). While Barbour (*English Epicures*) contends that the Stoics and Epicureans provided early modern Englishmen with their “most impressive” philosophical responses to political and religious issues, he frequently notes that Stoicism and Epicureanism were evaluated as opposite extremes from the standpoint of the Aristotelian mean (2, 10–11, 94–96, 204–205, 216–218, 226–227).

44. See Raymond Williams’s discussion of changing senses of “literature” in *Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society*, 2d ed. (New York, 1983), 183–188.

45. See G. J. Hendrickson, “The Peripatetic Mean of Style and the Three Stylistic Characters,” *American Journal of Philology* 25 (1904): 125–146; S. F. Bonner, “Dionysius of Halicarnassus and the Peripatetic Mean of Style,” *Classical Philology* 33 (1938): 257–266.

46. See Alastair Fowler, *Kinds of Literature: An Introduction to the Theory of Genres and Modes* (Cambridge, Mass., 1982), 37–53, 56–74.

47. Fowler, *Kinds of Literature*, 36. See also Fredric Jameson on generic “sedimentation” in *The Political Unconscious: Narrative as a Socially Symbolic Act* (Ithaca, N.Y., 1981), 140–141; David Quint on genres as bearers of ideological traditions, with reference to epic and romance, in *Epic and Empire: Politics and Generic Form from Virgil to Milton* (Princeton, 1993), 3–18; and Nigel Smith on genres in 1640s and 1650s ideological debate in *Literature and Revolution*, 3–19.

48. For suggestive discussions of means and extremes in Shakespeare, see Kronenfeld, “*King Lear*” and *the Naked Truth*, 170–199; Schoenfeldt, *Bodies*, 74–95; Howard Erskine-Hill, *The Augustan Idea in English Literature* (London, 1983), 140–160; Terry Eagleton, *William Shakespeare* (Oxford, 1986), 35–63; and Constance Jordan, *Shakespeare’s Monarchies: Ruler and Subject in the Romances* (Ithaca, N.Y., 1997), 168–171.

49. Arguing that intellectual history demands “interplay between proximity and distance in the historian’s relation to the ‘object’ of study,” Dominick LaCapra criticizes the opposite “extremes” of “purely documentary” and “presentist” historiography (*Rethinking Intellectual History: Texts, Contexts, Language* [Ithaca, N.Y., 1983], 25, 64). His critique exemplifies as well as advocates this “interplay” of nearness and remoteness between present and past by applying the mean, which becomes a norm of reasonable method in the early modern period, to contemporary academic debates.

#### CHAPTER 1

1. On the young Donne, see R. C. Bald, *John Donne: A Life* (Oxford, 1970), 19–79; and Arthur Marotti, *John Donne, Coterie Poet* (Madison, Wis., 1986), 3–133.

2. There is no decisive evidence as to whether the poem was written shortly before Donne entered Egerton’s services, as Marotti suggests (*Donne, Coterie Poet*, 119), or shortly after, as Bald contends (*Donne: A Life*, 100 n. 1, and 119–120), but Ted-Larry Pebworth and Claude J. Summers provide a plausible circumstantial argument for the later date in “‘Thus Friends Absent Speake’: The Exchange of Verse Letters between John Donne and Henry Wotton,” *Modern Philology* 81 (1984): 361–377.

3. Stephen Greenblatt, *Renaissance Self-Fashioning, from More to Shakespeare* (Chicago, 1983), 256.

4. See, e.g., Stephen Greenblatt, *Shakespearean Negotiations: The Circulation of Social Energy in Renaissance England* (Berkeley, 1988), esp. 1–20; Louis Adrian Montrose, *The Purpose of Playing: Shakespeare and the Cultural Politics of the Elizabethan Theater* (Chicago, 1996), 7–16; and Kronenfeld, “*King Lear*” and *the Naked Truth*, 5–9, 52–66.

5. The brief passage in “Satire 2” celebrating a mean of country hospitality and attacking the extremes of Bacchanalian excess and monklike fasts (ll. 102–109) escapes rather than confronts the poem’s urban universe of hack poets and corrupt lawyers, figures all too close and threatening to the urban satirist. The comic passage in “Satire 4” mocking a fop and a *miles gloriosus* “in the other extreme” (l. 220) does not address the real dangers of court life depicted in the satire, namely, its oppressive power, spies, and capacity for contaminating all who encounter it. I cite Donne’s poetry from John Donne, *The Satires, Epigrams and Verse Letters*, ed. W. Milgate (Oxford, 1967); *The Divine Poems*, ed. Helen Gardner (Oxford, 1952); and *The Elegies and the Songs and Sonnets*, ed. Helen Gardner (Oxford, 1965).

6. M. Thomas Hester, *Kinde Pity and Brave Scorn: John Donne’s “Satyres”* (Durham, N.C., 1982), 56, notes the Juvenalian model but argues that Donne follows rather than deviates from Juvenalian norms, as I contend.

7. John Donne, *Paradoxes and Problems*, ed. Helen Peters (Oxford, 1980), 15. I agree with John Carey (*John Donne: Life, Mind and Art* [London, 1981], 236) that the paradoxes are no mere witticisms but skeptical exercises that freed Donne from conventional views. The paradoxes offer many parallels to “Satire 3.”

8. See also Seneca, *Epistulae morales* 85.3–5 and 116.1.

9. On Juvenalian “railing,” see Norman Knox, *The Word “Irony” and Its Context, 1500–1755* (Durham, N.C., 1961), 190–192.

10. Donne, *Paradoxes*, 9 and 21. Cf. “The Calme,” l. 44.

11. Donne, who had little Greek, could find Aristotle’s oxymoronic coinage “*thrasudeiloi*” rendered literally as “*audaces timidi*” or “*timidaudaces*” in Renaissance Latin versions of the *Nicomachean Ethics*; see, e.g., the translations of Giovanni Bernardo Feliciano (1541; rpt., Paris, 1543), 67; and Antonio Riccobono (1593; rpt., Frankfurt, 1596), 132.

12. Donne’s collapse of opposite extremes is facilitated by his designation of the rash man (Aristotle’s *ho thrasus*) as “desperate.” Though “desperate” in Renaissance English often means “reckless” (OED s.v. “desperate,” II.4), its root meaning of “having lost hope” suggests cowardice. Aristotle argues that cowards are “without hope” (“*du-selpis*,” NE 3.7.11). When treating desperation in a strictly theological context, Donne himself considers it a form of cowardice; see, e.g., the letter, written ca. 1612, in Edmund Gosse, *The Life and Letters of John Donne*, 2 vols. (1899; rpt., Gloucester, Mass., 1959), 2:9. “Desperate coward” is thus pleonastic as well as oxymoronic.

13. For an ancient satiric example, see Persius, *Satire* 3.107–118. James S. Baumlin argues that this satire provides a stylistic model for Donne’s own in *John Donne and the Rhetorics of Renaissance Discourse* (Columbia, Mo., 1991), 122–131. Petrarchan poets often compare their immoderate emotional states to hot and cold.

14. See David Pears, “Courage as a Mean,” in *Essays on Aristotle’s Ethics*, ed. Amélie Oksenberg Rorty (Berkeley, 1980), 171–188; and Stephen R. Leighton, “Aristotle’s Courageous Passions,” *Phronesis* 33 (1988): 76–99.

15. Donne, *Paradoxes*, 9–10.



16. Desiderius Erasmus, *Enchiridion Militis Christiani in Opera Omnia*, ed. Jean Leclerc, 10 vols. (Leiden, 1703–1706), 5:4. Donne's image of the Christian soldier's avoiding the suicidal extremes of the "desperate coward" may have been particularly influenced by Erasmus's exhortation that the *miles Christianus* hew to a middle course [*medius cursus*] between presumption and despair (*Opera*, ed. Leclerc, 5:6). In an oft-reprinted Tudor translation of the *Enchiridion*, these two dangerous extremes are close to those collapsed by Donne's "desperate coward": the Christian soldier must "kepe a meane course," neither becoming "rechelesse" nor losing "courage" (*Enchiridion Militis Christiani: An English Version*, ed. Anne M. O'Donnell [Oxford, 1981], 41).

17. See Pierre Courcelle, "Tradition platonicienne et traditions chrétiennes du corps-prison (*Phédon* 62b; *Cratyle* 400c.)," *Revue des études latines* 43 (1965): 406–443; and J. G. F. Powell, ed., *Cato maior*, by Cicero (Cambridge, 1988), 247–248.

18. Cicero, *De senectute*, 20.73; John of Salisbury, *Frivolities of Courtiers and Footprints of Philosophers*, ed. and trans. Joseph B. Pike (Minneapolis, Minn., 1938), 143; Desiderius Erasmus, *Colloquia*, ed. L.-E. Halkin, F. Bierlaire, and R. Hoven, in *Opera Omnia*, vol. 3 (Amsterdam, 1972), 253; *The Complete Essays of Montaigne*, trans. Donald M. Frame (1958; rpt., Stanford, 1965), 253; Sir Philip Sidney, *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia (The Old Arcadia)*, ed. Jean Robertson (Oxford, 1973), 294; Edmund Spenser, *The Faerie Queene*, ed. A. C. Hamilton (London, 1977), 1.9.41 (hereafter cited parenthetically in text). Donne's editor Milgate cites John of Salisbury's work, about which Donne composed a paradox (*Satires*, 142); C. S. Lewis links the Platonic and Spenserian passages to Donne's lines in *The Discarded Image: An Introduction to Medieval and Renaissance Literature* (Cambridge, 1964), 25–26. All the passages, however, were well known.

19. John Donne, *Pseudo-Martyr* (1610), ed. Anthony Raspa (Montreal, 1993), 27–28.

20. See Charles H. George and Katherine George, *The Protestant Mind of the English Reformation, 1570–1640* (Princeton, 1961), 375–419.

21. *The Book of Common Prayer, 1559: The Elizabethan Prayer Book*, ed. John E. Booty (Charlottesville, Va., 1976), 19.

22. In an Elizabethan dialogue on love, George Whetstone similarly treats the court and country as opposite extremes, analogizing "the courtly dame, and the Countrey Droyle" to the contrary vices of prodigality and avarice. See *An Heptameron of Civill Discourses* (1582), ed. Diana Shklanka (New York, 1987), 159.

23. I agree with Richard Strier's argument that Phrygius and Graccus exemplify more reasonable positions for Donne than the first three figures, but I find Phrygius and Graccus far more flawed than Strier contends; see his *Resistant Structures: Particularity, Radicalism, and Renaissance Texts* (Berkeley, 1995), 139–145. For a striking present-day parallel to Donne's rejection of Phrygius's "none" and Graccus's "all" as extreme responses to the diversity of religious positions, see Nicholas Rescher's critique of the radical skeptic's "none" and the syncretist's "all" as inadequate responses to the diversity of contemporary philosophical doctrines in *The Strife of Systems: An Essay on the Grounds and Implications of Philosophical Diversity* (Pittsburgh, 1985), 241–260.

24. Donne's "Satire 4" treats the "rough carelessness" (l. 221) of a braggart soldier as a reckless unconcern for others: "Whose cloak his spurres teare; whom he spits on / He cares not" (ll. 222–223). Phrygius has a reckless unconcern for himself.

25. Strier, *Resistant Structures*, 141.

26. A textual crux in Diogenes Laertius (10.119), as emended by the Renaissance scholar Isaac Casaubon and some modern editors, records Epicurus's warning against marriage; see Diogenes Laertius, *De vitis, dogmatis . . . clarorum philosophorum*, trans. Henri Estienne with Isaac Casaubon's notes (Geneva, 1593), 782 (text), 119 (notes); and C. W. Chilton, "Did Epicurus Approve of Marriage? A Study of Diogenes Laertius X, 119," *Phronesis* 5 (1960): 71–74. For ancient attacks on the Epicureans' rejection of marriage, see Epictetus, *Discourses* 3.7.19; and Clement of Alexandria, *Stromateis* 2.23.138.

27. For "cura" as beloved, see Virgil, *Eclogue* 10.22 and Horace, *Ode* 2.8.8; as love, see Ovid, *Amores* 1.9 and Propertius, *Elegies* 1.15.31; and as the pains of love, see Virgil, *Aeneid* 6.444.

28. *Shakespeare's Sonnets*, ed. Stephen Booth (New Haven, 1977), 44; William Shakespeare, *King Lear*, Arden edition, ed. Kenneth Muir (London, 1972), 1.1.112; "A carelesse man, scorning and describing, the subtle usage of women toward their lovers," in *Tottel's Miscellany (1557–1587)*, rev. ed., ed. Hyder Edward Rollins, 2 vols. (Cambridge, Mass., 1965), 1:25; Robert Ayton, *English and Latin Poems*, ed. Charles B. Gullans (Edinburgh, 1963), 186; (Pseudo-)Virgil, *Catalepton* 5, ll. 6 and 10.

29. Plutarch, *The Philosophie, commonlie called, The Morals*, trans. Philemon Holland (London, 1603), 588, 598. (I cite Holland's translation, which appeared several years after "Satire 3" was written, as a literal and felicitous Renaissance rendering. Donne could have read the *Moralia* in any of several sixteenth-century Latin translations or in Jacques Amyot's 1572 French edition.)

30. William Rankins, *The English Ape* (London, 1588), 6; cited in William R. Elton, "King Lear" and the Gods (San Marino, Calif., 1966), 20. Elton provides numerous examples of English Renaissance attacks upon Epicurean irreligion (17–29). See also Richard Greenham's attack upon those who seek "ease" in "carelesse . . . unbeleefe" in Greenham, *Works*, 766.

31. Elton ("King Lear" and Gods, 111–112) discusses the Renaissance commonplace that lechery causes blindness, which dates back to pseudo-Aristotle, *Problems* 4.3.

32. For Donnean uses of "habit" and its cognates in the Aristotelian sense, see "To Sir Henry Wotton ('Sir, more then kisses')," ll. 25–26; "To Sir Henry Wotton ('Here's no more newes')," l. 3; and "Oh, to vex me," l. 3.

33. Orthography does not affect my argument for Donne's Juvenalian echo: "Grac-cus," the spelling of the posthumous 1633 edition of Donne's poetry, was a recognized variant of "Gracchus" (Quintilian, *Institutio oratoria* 1.5.20).

34. Edward Guilpin, *Skialetheia, or A Shadowe of Truth, in Certaine Epigrams and Satyres*, ed. D. Allen Carroll (Chapel Hill, N.C., 1974), 75; and *The Poems of John Marston*, ed. Arnold Davenport (Liverpool, 1961), 103, 154. Cf. Guilpin's epigram (*Skialetheia*, 52) mocking the sexual deficiency of a certain "Phrix," i.e., a Phrygian: "Phrix hath a nose; who doubts what ech [sic] man knows; / But what hath Phrix know-worth besides his nose?" For classical comparisons of effeminate men to Phrygian eunuchs, see Peter Guyot, *Eunuchen als Sklaven und Freigelassene in der griechisch-römischen Antike* (Stuttgart, 1980), 42 n. 22.

35. Erasmus, *Colloquia*, 285.

36. See Guyot, *Eunuchen*, 41 n. 19.

37. Perkins, *Works*, 2:225. See also Charles Gibbon's attack upon an "Atheist" or "Newter" in *A Work Worth the Reading* (London, 1591), 12.

38. Diogenes Laertius 4.43; Epictetus, *Discourses* 2.20.17–20. In a farmyard variant, Francis Bacon's 1624 *Apophthegms New and Old* describes Epicureanism turning "cocks" into "capons"; see *The Works of Francis Bacon*, ed. James Spedding, R. L. Ellis, and D. D. Heath, 7 vols. (London, 1857–1859), 7:165. Such attacks parody the Epicureans' and Skeptics' self-descriptions as surgeons eliminating harmful desires and emotions; see Martha Nussbaum, *The Therapy of Desire: Theory and Practice in Hellenistic Ethics* (Princeton, 1994), 102–139, 280–315.

39. See Paul Veyne, *Roman Erotic Elegy: Love, Poetry, and the West*, trans. David Pellauer (Chicago, 1988), 162–163; Thomas Laqueur, *Making Sex: Body and Gender from the Greeks to Freud* (Cambridge, Mass., 1990), 123–124; and Anthony Fletcher, *Gender, Sex, and Subordination in England, 1500–1800* (New Haven, 1995), 96–97. The first line of Donne's epigram "Manliness" assumes the association of excessive attention to women with effeminacy: "Thou call'st me effeminate, for I love women's joys."

40. On Pyrrhonism's influence upon Donne and "Satire 3," see Carey, *Donne: Life, Mind*, 231–260; Baumlin, *Donne and Rhetorics*, 131–141; Strier, *Resistant Structures*, 141; and Margaret L. Wiley, *The Subtle Knot: Creative Scepticism in Seventeenth-Century England* (Cambridge, Mass., 1952), 120–136. Critics have not explored the relationship between Donne's skepticism and his use of the mean.

41. On the rediscovery of Sextus Empiricus and the sixteenth-century Pyrrhonist revival, see Richard H. Popkin, *The History of Scepticism from Erasmus to Descartes*, rev. ed. (Assen, The Netherlands, 1964).

42. See Henri Estienne's standard Renaissance text with literal Latin translation, *Sexti Empirici opera* . . . (1562; rpt., Geneva, 1621), 2 (*Outlines of Pyrrhonism* 1.3–4).

43. Myles Burnyeat, "Can the Skeptic Live His Skepticism?" in *The Skeptical Tradition*, ed. Burnyeat (Berkeley, 1983), 139–141. See also G.E.R. Lloyd, *The Revolutions of Wisdom: Studies in the Claims and Practice of Ancient Greek Science* (Berkeley, 1987), 168.

44. Donne's claim in *Pseudo-Martyr* that he used "no inordinate hast[e], nor precipitation" (13) in joining a church suggests retrospective approval of his stance in "Satire 3" as a cautious "seeker."

45. Carlos M. N. Eire, *War Against the Idols: The Reformation of Worship from Erasmus to Calvin* (Cambridge, 1986), 54–105; and John Phillips, *The Reformation of Images: The Destruction of Art in England, 1535–1660* (Berkeley, 1973), 111–139.

46. Desiderius Erasmus, *Proverbs or Adages*, trans. Richard Taverner (London, 1569), ciiiv.

47. *Sexti Empirici opera*, 1 (*Outlines of Pyrrhonism* 1.1–4).

48. Montaigne, *Essays*, 792; Bacon, *Works*, 4:39.

49. Popkin, *History of Scepticism*, 44–46; and Terence Penelhum, "Skepticism and Fideism," in Burnyeat, *Skeptical Tradition*, 296–297.

50. See, e.g., the *Novum Organum's* attack on mixing theology with natural philosophy (Bacon, *Works*, 1:175–176).

51. The Greek term is "isostheneia"; Estienne translates it literally as "aequa potentia." See *Sexti Empirici opera*, 3, 18–19, 40 (*Outlines of Pyrrhonism* 1.8, 88–90, 202).

52. "Contraries" is the English term for the most extreme form of opposites as defined in Aristotle, *Metaphysics* 10.3.

53. Donne, *Paradoxes*, 2.

54. See Milgate's note in Donne, *Satires*, 147; D. C. Allen, "Two Notes on John Donne," *Modern Language Notes* 65 (1950): 103; and Strier, *Resistant Structures*, 156–158.

55. Martin Luther, *Temporal Authority: To What Extent it Should be Obeyed* (1523), trans. J. J. Schindel, ed. and rev. Walther I. Brandt, in *Luther's Works*, ed. Jaroslav Pelikan and Helmut T. Lehmann, 55 vols. (Philadelphia, 1958–1986), 45:104; John Ponet, *A Short Treatise of Politike Power* (1556), rpt. in *John Ponet, Advocate of Limited Monarchy*, by Winthrop S. Hudson (Chicago, 1942), C8r, D2v–D3r; Stephanus Junius Brutus (pseud.), *Vindiciae contra Tyrannos* (1579; rpt. Basel[?], 1589), A4v, 68 (trans. mine). The *Vindiciae*, which represents itself as a work of "moderation," deploys the notion of proper "bounds" [*finis*] of rule and obedience throughout; see, e.g., A6r. See also the Marian exile Christopher Goodman's argument regarding opposite "extremities" in *How Superior Powers Oght to be Obeyd* (1557), with a preface by Charles H. McIlwain (New York, 1931), 148–149.

56. Overly influenced by the satire's final couplet, some critics (e.g., Hester, *Kinde Pitty*, 69–71; Strier, *Resistant Structures*, 160–161) have interpreted the "calme head" of the stream as referring to God rather than to human power that maintains its legitimacy by avoiding excess. Yet Donne precedes the image with his assertion concerning the "bounds" of human authority. Cf. Donne's declaration in "Satire 5" that the "greatest" ruler, Elizabeth I, is not aware of and is therefore not responsible for the excesses of her judicial officers; echoing the image in "Satire 3" of properly restrained versus excessive human power, Donne compares the queen to the "calme head" of the turbulent Thames (ll. 28–30). Both satires recall Claudian's famous *Panegyricus . . . Manlio Theodoro Consuli*, which compares restrained rulers' "calm" [*quies*] to a tranquil river and tyrants' "violence" [*violential*] to a river's destructive "torrents" [*torrentes*] (ll. 232–241). By comparing moderate and excessive human power to parts of the same stream, Donne (unlike Claudian) emphasizes that such power is naturally prone to excess.

57. Jonathan Dollimore, *Radical Tragedy: Religion, Ideology and Power in the Drama of Shakespeare and His Contemporaries*, 2d ed. (Durham, N.C., 1993), 155, 179–181, 271.

58. Dollimore also simplifies by identifying the Enlightenment with a purely secular ideal of autonomy. J. B. Schneewind traces how an Enlightenment "ethics of self-governance was created by both religious and antireligious philosophers" in *The Invention of Autonomy: A History of Modern Moral Philosophy* (Cambridge, 1988) (quotation at 9); see also Charles Taylor, *Sources of the Self: The Making of the Modern Identity* (Cambridge, Mass., 1989), 321–367. My chapter on Milton will further discuss an early modern Christian notion of self-governance under God that presaged and influenced Enlightenment values.

59. See esp. Horace, *Epistles* 1.10.42–43, 1.18.1–20, 2.2.190–194; and Seneca, *Epistulae morales* 40.3–4, 114.10–14, 120.20–22. On the Horatian and Senecan models for the verse epistles of Donne and his contemporaries, see David Palmer, "The Verse Epistle," in *Metaphysical Poetry*, ed. Malcolm Bradbury and Palmer (London, 1970), 74.

60. Thomas Aquinas, *In Decem Libros Ethicorum Aristotelis ad Nicomachum* (Turin, 1934), 124 (no. 360). For distinctions between the ways in which virtue does and does not "participate" in its opposing vices, see John Buridan's well-known Scholastic commentary, reprinted in seventeenth-century England, *Quaestiones in Decem Libros Ethicorum Aristotelis ad Nicomachum* (Oxford, 1637), 138; and Edward Brerewood's

English Neoscholastic commentary (composed ca. 1586) *Tractatus Ethici, sive Commentarii in aliquot Aristotelis Libros* (Oxford, 1640), 97. On Scholasticism's two kinds of mean, see also Nuntio Signoriello, *Lexicon Peripateticum Philosophico-Theologicum*, 5th ed. (Rome, 1931), 223.

61. Margaret Mann Phillips, *Erasmus on His Times: A Shortened Version of "The Adages" of Erasmus* (Cambridge, 1967), 3–5; Erasmus, *Opera*, ed. Leclerc, 2:397–399; Giordano Bruno, *The Heroic Frenzies*, trans. Paul Eugene Memmo Jr. (Chapel Hill, N.C., 1964), 100, 102; and Thomas Granger, *A Familiar Exposition or Commentarie on Ecclesiastes* (London, 1621), 306.

62. *Ennarationes Aliquot Librorum Ethicorum Aristotelis* (1529) in *Philippi Melanthonis Opera Quae Supersunt Omnia*, ed. Henry Ernest Bindseil, *Corpus Reformatorum* 16 (Halis, 1850), 320; Baldesar Castiglione, *Il cortegiano*, ed. Bruno Maier (Turin, 1955), 343 [3.5] (trans. mine). Thomas Hoby's 1561 translation preserves the hedging: "a certein meane very hard, and (in a maner) dirived of contrarie matters" (*Courtier*, 217).

63. "A Platonick Discourse upon Love," in *The Poems and Translations of Thomas Stanley*, ed. Galbraith Miller Crump (Oxford, 1962), 203. The notion that all intermediates participate in their extremes is expounded most fully in Proclus and most influentially in the Renaissance by Ficino; see Proclus, *The Elements of Theology*, ed. E. R. Dodds (Oxford, 1933), 117–119; and Paul Oskar Kristeller, *The Philosophy of Marsilio Ficino*, trans. Virginia Conant (New York, 1943), 103–104.

64. See Ovid's famous account of the temperate zone's creation in *Metamorphoses* 1.45–51. Leo Spitzer discusses theories of creating harmony through the blending of opposites, often expressed by words derived from the Latin "temperare," in *Classical and Christian Ideas of World Harmony: Prolegomena to an Interpretation of the Word "Stimmung,"* ed. Anna Granville Hatcher (Baltimore, 1963), 64–107; on weather and "temperature," see 80–81 and 193 n. 1. Spitzer does not discuss the interaction between conceptions of "temper" and the Aristotelian mean.

65. On the early modern court-country-city trichotomy and Donne's poetic models, see Lawrence Manley, *Literature and Culture in Early Modern London* (Cambridge, 1997), 110–113, 394–396. On the relationship of Donne's epistle to Bacon's and Wotton's poems, see also Bald, *Donne: A Life*, 119–120; Marotti, *Donne, Coterie Poet*, 119–120; and Pebworth and Summers, "Thus Friends Absent Speake," 370–371. Bald assumes that Wotton was answering Donne, while Marotti and Pebworth and Summers contend that Donne was replying to Wotton. I see no firm evidence either way.

66. See Richard Hooker, *Of the Lawes of Ecclesiastical Polity, Book V* (1598), ed. W. Speed Hill (Cambridge, Mass., 1977), 418 [76.5]; Perkins, *Works*, 1:768; John Downe, *The Plea of the Poor* (London, 1616), 375–376, cited in George and George, *Protestant Mind*, 162; and Todd, *Christian Humanism*, 152, 163. Calvin provided an influential precedent for English Protestants' Aristotelian-scriptural celebration of the "mean" estate; see William J. Bouwsma, *John Calvin: A Sixteenth-Century Portrait* (Oxford, 1988), 198.

67. See Ellen Meiksins Wood and Neal Wood, *Class Ideology and Ancient Political Theory: Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle in Social Context* (Oxford, 1978), 222, 244–245.

68. See, e.g., George Turberville, "The meane is best," in his *Epitaphes, Epigrams, Songs and Sonets* (1567) and *Epitaphes and Sonnettes* (1576), introd. Richard J. Panofsky (Delmar, N.Y., 1977), 377–378; George Gascoigne, "The vaine excesse of flattering Fortunes giftes," in *A Hundreth Sundrie Flowres* (1573, 1575), ed. C. T. Prouty (Colum-

bia, Mo., 1942), 153–154; “A Loving Epistle, writte by . . . a yonge Gentilman . . .,” ll. 23–27, in *A Gorgeous Gallery of Gallant Inventions* (1578), ed. Hyder E. Rollins (Cambridge, Mass., 1926), 10; William Habington, “To My honoured Friend . . . R. St. Esquire” (1635), ll. 11–14, in *The Poems of William Habington*, ed. Kenneth Allott (Liverpool, 1948), 47; and S. W., *The Country-mans Commonwealth* (London, 1640), 25, 29.

69. Granger, *Familiar Exposition*, 123.

70. See Keith Wrightson, “‘Sorts of People’ in Tudor and Stuart England,” in *The Middling Sort of People: Culture, Society and Politics in England, 1550–1800*, ed. Jonathan Barry and Christopher Brooks (New York, 1995), 41–50. Though arguing that “middle sort” became prevalent as a term around the 1620s, Wrightson notes sixteenth-century instances.

71. See Thomas Churchyard, *The First Part of Churchyard’s Chippes* (1575; rpt., Menston, Eng., 1973), 109r; Robert Greene, *Works*, ed. Alexander Grosart, 12 vols. (London, 1881–1883), 7:223; John Stow, *A Survey of London . . .* (London, 1598), 480; Paul Seaver, *Wallington’s World: A Puritan Artisan in Seventeenth-Century London* (Stanford, 1985), 128–138; and Michael Mascuch, “Social Mobility and Middling Self-Identity: The Ethos of British Autobiographers, 1600–1750,” *Social History* 20 (1995): 61. Jacobean London pageants similarly celebrate London merchants’ “golden meane”; see David M. Bergeron, *English Civic Pageantry, 1558–1642* (Columbia, S.C., 1971), 219–220. On the remarkable endurance of the association of the middle social rank with the virtuous mean, see David Cannadine, *The Rise and Fall of Class in Britain* (New York, 1999).

72. Turberville, “The meane is best,” ll. 1–2, in *Epitaphes*, 377. See also Gascoigne’s contrast of the middle state with the “heate” of wealth and the “colde” of poverty (“The vaine excesse of flattering Fortunes gifts,” l. 12) in *Hundreth Sundrie Flowres*, 153.

73. Marotti reads the poem as an argument for “stoical adherence to virtue” (*Donne, Coterie Poet*, 119–120). I agree with David Norbrook (“The Monarchy of Wit and the Republic of Letters: Donne’s Politics,” in *Soliciting Interpretation: Literary Theory and Seventeenth-Century English Poetry*, ed. Elizabeth D. Harvey and Katharine Eisaman Maus [Chicago, 1990], 11) that that the poem as a whole does not recommend traditional Stoic retreat but a more complicated stance toward the world.

74. See Peter Brain, *Galen on Bloodletting: A Study of the Origins, Development and Validity of His Opinions* (Cambridge, 1986), 7–8; and Owsei Temkin, *Galenism: The Rise and Decline of a Medical Philosophy* (Ithaca, N.Y., 1973), 18. For an early modern exposition, see Thomas Elyot, *The Castel of Health* (1541), introd. Samuel A. Tannenbaum (New York, 1937), 40r.

75. For a defense of Donne’s authorship of this poem and an analysis of its sexual ideology, see Janel Mueller, “Troping Utopia: Donne’s Brief for Lesbianism,” in *Sexuality and Gender in Early Modern Europe*, ed. James Grantham Turner (Cambridge, 1993), 182–207.

76. In “The Will” Donne bequeaths his “good works” to “Schismatics” and his “faith” to “Roman Catholics,” knowing that his gifts will be deemed an “indignity” by their recipients (ll. 19–20, 27).

77. In “Loves Ware” Donne describes the “lunatique giddiness” of France, which only recently hated the English God (l. 9).

78. Jean Bodin, *The Six Bookes of a Commonweale*, trans. Richard Knolles (1606), ed. Kenneth Douglas McRae (Cambridge, Mass, 1962), 553–554 (bk. 5, chap. 1), quotations at 563, 566–567. Knolles provides a composite translation of Bodin's 1576 French and 1586 Latin versions, each of which went through numerous editions that young Donne might have known. Donne cites Bodin's work in *Biathanatos* (composed ca. 1607–1608) and in a 1630 sermon; see John Donne, *Biathanatos*, ed. Ernest W. Sullivan II (Newark, Del., 1984), 73; idem, *Sermons*, 9:192. On early modern English interest in Bodin, see J.H.M. Salmon, *The French Religious Wars in English Political Thought* (Oxford: 1959), 22–24; and Glenn Burgess, *Absolute Monarchy and the Stuart Constitution* (New Haven, 1996), 64–70.

79. Dennis Flynn ("Donne, Henry Wotton, and the Earl of Essex," *John Donne Journal* 14 [1995]: 184–188) argues that Donne's friendship with Wotton may partly be ascribed to the latter's unusual religious independence and tolerance. Published posthumously but probably written and circulated in 1594, Wotton's *The State of Christendom* defends the Elizabethan laws against Catholics but nevertheless suggests that allowing religious "liberty" would be both politic and humane; see Henry Wotton, *The State of Christendom* (London, 1657), 129, 134.

80. See Logan Pearsall Smith, *The Life and Letters of Sir Henry Wotton*, 2 vols. (Oxford, 1907), 1:15–18, 30.

81. Jonathan Goldberg, *James I and the Politics of Literature: Jonson, Shakespeare, Donne, and Their Contemporaries* (Baltimore, 1983), 65–67, 107–112.

82. Justus Lipsius, *Epistolarum Centuria Duae* (1586; rpt., Paris, 1599), 5r-5v; Daniel Tuvill, *Essays*, ed. John L. Lievsay (Charlottesville, Va., 1971), 88, 90; Guillaume du Vair, *The True Way to Vertue and Happinesse*, trans. Andrew Court (1622; rpt., London, 1623), 120; Bacon, *Works*, 1:767; *The Art of Complaisance* (London, 1673), 97–98. Shifflett (*Stoicism, Politics*, 1–3) cites the Du Vair translation as representative of English Neostoic "middle paths."

83. Scodel, "Donne and the Via Media," 60–70. On Donne the preacher's conceptions of the "middle way," see also Jeanne Shami, "Kings and Desperate Men: John Donne Preaches at Court," *John Donne Journal* 6 (1987): 9–23; idem, "'The Stars in their Order Fought against Siser': John Donne and the Pulpit Crisis of 1622," *John Donne Journal* 14 (1995): 1–59.

84. Donne, *Sermons*, 6:303. On Donne's defense of the aristocracy, see Carey, *Donne: Life, Mind*, 114–115; and Strier, *Resistant Structures*, 91–93. I find too sharp, however, Strier's contrast (85) between the "aristocratic" values of Catholic "devout humanists" and their English counterparts like Donne and the Reformation "anti-elitist note" of Luther and English Puritans. Strier treats Donne's claim that the rich can be "poor in spirit" as a distinctive "key point" of aristocratic humanism (90, 93). Yet, while noting wealth's potential dangers, Luther and English Puritans alike also emphasize (to quote Perkins) that the rich and powerful who display "moderation" are "poor in spirit" (Perkins, *Works*, 2:127; see also Luther, *Works*, 21:12–15, 171–172; 2:330–31; 15:9, 93). Donne perhaps differs most strikingly from his Protestant contemporaries in his reservations about the mean estate.

85. Donne, *Sermons*, 6:307–308.

86. Francis Barker, *The Tremulous Private Body* (London, 1984), 105–109; Catherine Belsey, *The Subject of Tragedy: Identity and Difference in Renaissance Drama* (London, 1985), 124–125. While arguing for this liberal subject's full articulation in the mid- to

late-seventeenth century, both critics find early expressions in the Elizabethan period (Barker, 36–39; Belsey, 33–35).

87. Barker suggests his use of hermeneutic extremism to counter bourgeois extremism when he concedes the possible “extravagance” of his “over-interpretation” (*Tremulous Private Body*, 107).

88. Greenblatt, *Renaissance Self-Fashioning*, 240, 254. Greenblatt’s later formulations regarding Shakespearean “negotiations” sometimes deploy and at other times eschew binary extremes. While associating art in *The Tempest* with extremes of political “coercion” or total “freedom” from politics and of “empt[iness]” or “pure plenitude,” Greenblatt suggests that Shakespeare’s history plays avoid “extreme” positions to keep “options open” (*Shakespearean Negotiations*, 158–160, 175 n. 65). These divergent formulations arguably reveal Greenblatt’s conflicting hermeneutic commitments as much as differences among Shakespeare’s plays.

89. For a sympathetic treatment of “excess” in poststructuralist and postmodern thought, see Mark C. Taylor, *Altarity* (Chicago, 1987), 57–58, 115–148, 194–195, 232–237.

90. Greenblatt, *Renaissance Self-Fashioning*, 307 n. 70; Georges Bataille, *Death and Sensuality: A Study of Eroticism and the Taboo* (New York, 1962), 11–28, 164–176 (quotation at 175); idem, *L’Erotisme* (Paris, 1957), 17–32, 183–196 (quotation at 195).

91. Friedrich Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morals*, trans. Walter Kaufman (New York, 1967), 59 [2.2]; idem, *Sämtliche Werke*, vol. 5, *Jenseits von Gut und Böse; Zur Genealogie der Moral*, ed. Giorgio Colli and Mazzino Montinari (Berlin, 1988), 293. Nietzsche specifically rejects Immanuel Kant’s argument that autonomous persons are “subjects . . . not sovereigns” with respect to the moral law dictated by practical reason; see his *Critique of Practical Reason*, trans. Lewis White Beck (New York, 1956), 85.

92. Taylor, *Sources of Self*, 514; see also Martin Hollis, *Models of Man: Philosophical Thoughts on Social Action* (Cambridge, 1977), 16, 106.

93. Terry Eagleton, *Ideology: An Introduction* (London, 1991), 169, 171; see also David Simpson, “Introduction: The Moment of Materialism,” in *Subject to History: Ideology, Class, Gender* (Ithaca, N.Y., 1991), 4.

94. Taylor, *Sources*, 205, 306–307; idem, “Freedom and Truth in Foucault,” in *Foucault: A Critical Reader*, ed. David Couzens Hoy (Oxford, 1986), 89–90; see also Taylor’s “Use and Abuse of Theory,” in *Ideology, Philosophy and Politics*, ed. Anthony Parel (Calgary, 1983), 55; idem, “Politics of Recognition,” in Charles Taylor et al., *Multiculturalism: Examining the Politics of Recognition*, ed. with an introd. by Amy Gutmann (Princeton, 1994), 72–73.

95. See, e.g., Eagleton, *Ideology*, 36, 212, 217; idem, *The Illusions of Postmodernism* (Oxford, 1996), 105, 110, 123.

## CHAPTER 2

1. I use masculine rather than gender-neutral terms because Bacon conceives of human mastery as the masculine domination of a feminine nature; on Bacon’s gendered thought and its influence, see Carolyn Merchant, *The Death of Nature: Women, Ecology and the Scientific Revolution* (San Francisco, 1980), 164–190; and Evelyn Fox Keller, *Reflections on Gender and Science* (New Haven, 1985), 33–42.



2. See Hans Jonas, "The Practical Uses of Theory," *The Phenomenon of Life: Toward a Philosophical Biology* (Chicago, 1966), 188–210; and Paolo Rossi, "Truth and Utility in the Science of Francis Bacon," *Philosophy, Technology, and the Arts in the Early Modern Era*, trans. Salvator Attanasio (New York, 1970), 146–173.

3. See Paolo Rossi, *Francis Bacon: From Magic to Science*, trans. Sacha Rabinovitch (Chicago, 1968), 36–51, 59–67.

4. I am indebted to Howard White's contrast between "classical moderation" and Baconian "pliancy" in *Peace among the Willows: The Political Philosophy of Francis Bacon* (The Hague, 1968), 33–38. White's insightful discussion is weakened, however, by his neglect of Bacon's historical context and by his measuring Bacon against an overly monolithic and superior ancient position as idiosyncratically reconstructed by Leo Strauss.

5. Bacon, *Works*, 5:405 (hereafter cited parenthetically in text by volume and page number).

6. Michel Foucault, *Technologies of the Self: A Seminar with Michel Foucault*, ed. Luther H. Martin, Huck Gutman, and Patrick H. Hutton (Amherst, Mass., 1988).

7. See Paul H. Kocher, "Francis Bacon and His Father," *Huntington Library Quarterly* 21 (1958): 133–58; Sir Nicholas Bacon's verses on the mean in *The Recreations of His Age* (Oxford, 1919), 5–8, 14–16; and Patrick Collinson, "Sir Nicholas Bacon and the Elizabethan *Via Media*," *Godly People: Essays on English Protestantism and Puritanism* (London, 1983), 135–53.

8. See Mark H. Curtis, "The Alienated Intellectuals of Early Stuart England," *Past and Present* 23 (1962): 25–43. Lisa Jardine and Alan Stewart's biography (*Hostage to Fortune: The Troubled Life of Francis Bacon* [New York, 1999]) focuses upon Bacon's political ambitions and frustrations.

9. Bacon's universal ambitions for his natural philosophy undermine Julian Martin's influential interpretation of Baconian science as part of Bacon's comprehensive effort to enhance the power of the British monarchy; see his *Francis Bacon, the State, and the Reform of Natural Philosophy* (Cambridge, 1992); and Steven Shapin, *The Scientific Revolution* (Chicago, 1996), 127–131. The reduction of natural philosophy to royalist ideology obscures Bacon's distinctions between scientific and political domains. Martin glosses Bacon's claim that scientific knowledge can effect a "sovereignty of man" over nature greater than that "command[ed]" by "kings" (8:125) as if Bacon's "political language" enforces "the English monarch's . . . dominion over men" rather than contrasts the "realms" of natural philosophy and of royal statecraft (68). On the tensions between Bacon's science and politics, see also Markku Peltonen, "Bacon's Political Philosophy," in *The Cambridge Companion to Bacon*, ed. Peltonen (Cambridge, 1996), 290–295.

10. Francis Bacon, *The Advancement of Learning*, ed. Michael Kiernan (Oxford, 2000), 147, 151 (hereafter cited parenthetically in text as *AL*).

11. Julia Annas (*The Morality of Happiness* [Oxford, 1993], 56–58) argues that Aristotle stresses the difficulty rather than impossibility of a "developed agent" changing from vice to virtue. However one interprets Aristotle, Bacon is far more optimistic concerning the possibility of self-transformation.

12. See Taylor, *Sources*, 159.

13. Francis Bacon, *The Essays or Counsels, Civill and Morall*, ed. Michael Kiernan (Cambridge, 1985), 119 (hereafter cited parenthetically in text as *Essayes*).

14. Plutarch, *Morals*, 105–106.

15. See C. A. Patrides, "'The Beast with Many Heads': Views on the Multitude," *Premises and Motifs in Renaissance Thought and Literature* (Princeton, 1982), 124–136, which quotes the attack upon the mob for running from "one contrary to another" from the 1606 translation of Pierre Charron's *De la sagesse* (134).

16. See Lisa Jardine, *Francis Bacon: Discovery and the Art of Discourse* (Cambridge, 1974), 68–69 n. 4; and Jardine and Stewart, *Hostage to Fortune*, 35–36.

17. A 1578 letter by Bacon's brother Anthony (with whom Bacon was close) discussed the controversy. Bacon's 1589 advice to Elizabeth on the church implicitly criticized the views of Whitgift, then Archbishop of Canterbury; see Jardine and Stewart, *Hostage to Fortune*, 79, 95–98.

18. Lake, *Anglicans and Puritans?*, 18–19.

19. I cite the debate in John Whitgift, *Works*, ed. John Ayre, 3 vols. (Cambridge, 1852), 2:442–443.

20. On Bacon's *Essayes* as a court manual, see Marotti, *Donne, Coterie Poet*, 27–29; and Whigham, *Ambition and Privilege*, 28–29. Neither study discusses Bacon's treatment of the mean.

21. See, e.g., Bacon's claim in "Of Great Place" (1612) that "Power to doe good, is the true and lawfull End of Aspiring" (*Essayes* 34). On Bacon's sense of personal and public goals, see Julie Robin Solomon, *Objectivity in the Making: Francis Bacon and the Politics of Inquiry* (Baltimore, 1998), esp. 142–148.

22. On Bacon's debts to Machiavelli, see Victoria Kahn, *Machiavellian Rhetoric: From the Counter-Reformation to Milton* (Princeton, 1994), 113–119; and Perez Zagorin, *Francis Bacon* (Princeton, 1998), 138–147. The *Advancement's* attack upon Machiavelli's "evill arts," whereby men seek "apparance" of virtue rather than "vertue it selfe" (*AL*, 177), seems a prudential palinode to Bacon's own Machiavellian advice. Contrast his praise of Machiavelli's candor about what men "do" rather than "ought to do" (5:17) in *De Augmentis Scientiarum* (1623).

23. See Terence Irwin, *Aristotle's First Principles* (Oxford, 1988), 440–441.

24. In *De amicitia* Cicero similarly attacks Bias's maxim for reducing friendship, properly based on virtue, to self-interested "utility" ("utilita[s]," 14.51, 16.59). Erasmus commends Aristotle's and Cicero's critiques in the *Adagia* (*Opera*, ed. Leclerc, 2:434 [2.1.72]).

25. Castiglione, *Courtier*, 60–62, 151–152; and *Il cortegiano*, 126–127 [1.27–28], 253–254 [2.40–41]. On the mean in Castiglione, see Albert D. Menut, "Castiglione and the Nicomachean Ethics," *PMLA* 58 (1943): 320–321; J. R. Woodhouse, *Baldesar Castiglione: A Reassessment of the "Courtier"* (Edinburgh, 1978), 44–45, 72–73, 98–102; and Daniel Javitch, *Poetry and Courtliness in Renaissance England* (Princeton, 1978), 31–34, 43–46. None of these studies discusses the shift that is my concern.

26. Castiglione's fourth book abruptly "corrects" this amoral use of the mean when a speaker argues that the courtier should use deception not to promote himself but to guide his prince to virtue defined in terms of the Aristotelian mean (*Courtier*, 302, 330–331; *Il cortegiano*, 457–458 [4.10], 497–499 [4.40]). Renaissance imitators of Castiglione generally ignored his Aristotelian palinode.

27. Philibert de Vienne, *The Philosopher of the Court*, trans. G. North (London, 1575), 31–32; cf. 8. While Daniel Javitch argues that the English translator read the work straight ("*The Philosopher of the Court: A French Satire Misunderstood*," *Comparative Literature* 23 [1971]: 97–124), Bryson rightly registers uncertainty (*From Courtesy*, 201–202).

28. Lorenzo Ducci, *Ars Aulica, or the Courtiers Arte*, trans. Edward Blount (London, 1607), 72, 250.

29. Cf. Bacon's discussion of recapturing methods of prolonging life vouchsafed primeval man in *De Sapientia Veterum* (1609) (7:672–673, 749).

30. On Aristotle's analogies between virtue and health, see G.E.R. Lloyd, "The Role of Medical and Biological Analogies in Aristotle's Ethics," *Phronesis* 13 (1968): 73–76.

31. Robert Copland, trans., *The Secrete of Secretes of Arystotle* (London, 1528), E1r-v. Copland's translation was reprinted in 1572.

32. Elyot, *Castel*, Aiiiiv, 16r, 43r-46v, 53v-54r, 62r-63v. On this work's popularity, see Paul Slack, "Mirrors of Health and Treasures of Poor Men: The Uses of Vernacular Medical Literature in Tudor England," in *Health, Medicine and Mortality in the Sixteenth Century*, ed. Charles Webster (Cambridge, 1979), 249–250. See also the often-reprinted medical books *Regimen Sanitatis Salerni*, trans. Thomas Paynell (London, 1557), B2r-B3v; and William Bullein, *The Government of Health* (London, 1558), A6r.

33. See *Antonii Musae Brasavoli . . . in Octo Libros Aphorismorum Hippocratis & Galeni, Commentaria & Annotationes* (Basel, 1541), 342; Elyot, *Castel*, 17. See also *Secreta Secretorum*, E4v; and the frequently reprinted *The Englishmans Doctor, or, The School of Salerne*, trans. John Harington (London, 1607), B5.

34. Machiavelli, "Il Principe" e "Discorsi", ed. Sergio Bertelli, 5th ed. (Milan, 1977), 193–194. Kiernan notes the parallel (*Essays* 100). For other Machiavellian attacks on the "middle course" [*via del mezzo*] as impracticable, see *Discourses* 1.6, 2.23, 3.2, 3.21, 3.40; cf. the praise of "excessive" [excessive] rigor in state emergencies in *Discourses* 3.1. Machiavelli specifically scorns the compromise "vie del mezzo" recommended in Florentine political debate as instances of normative moderation; see Felix Gilbert, *Machiavelli and Guicciardini: Politics and History in Sixteenth-Century Florence* (Princeton, 1965), 33–34, 120. For Bacon, however, Machiavelli expressed a broad challenge to the Aristotelian mean.

35. George Sarton, *Appreciation of Ancient and Medieval Science During the Renaissance (1450–1600)* (Philadelphia, 1955), 12–14; Allen G. Debus, *Man and Nature in the Renaissance* (Cambridge, 1978), 5.

36. Cf. Milton's 1644 claim that the "wise Physician" applies "one excesse against another to reduce us to a perfect mean" (*The Complete Prose Works of John Milton*, ed. Don M. Wolfe et al., 8 vols. [New Haven, 1953–1982], 2:282–283).

37. The Arab Aristotelian philosopher and Galenic doctor Avicenna, a major authority for early modern medicine, distinguishes medicine's proper goal—maintaining health—from averting natural death or extending life "to the utmost limit" ("ad ultimum . . . longitudinem," *Liber canonis* [Venice, 1507], 53r [1.3.1]). On the ancient notion of a natural life span, see Gerald J. Gruman, "A History of Ideals about the Prolongation of Life," *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society* 56, pt. 9 (1966): 15–17. Gruman treats Bacon as a major "Enlightenment" proponent of "prolongevity" (80–82).

38. Andrew Borde, *The Breviary of Health*, 2d. ed. (London, 1557), 6r. Cf. William Bullein's argument that men cannot "prolong their time" in *Bulleins Bullwarke of Defence against all Sickness . . .* (London, 1579), Aiiir; and Paul H. Kocher, *Science and Religion in Elizabethan England* (San Marino, Calif., 1953), 280–281.

39. On Bacon's relation to alchemy, see Rossi, *Francis Bacon*, 11–22; and Charles Webster, *The Great Instauration: Science, Medicine and Reform, 1626–1660* (New York, 1975), 246–250.

40. See Roger Bacon, *De retardandis senectutis . . .* (Oxford, 1590); and Paracelsus, *Hermetic and Alchemical Writings*, ed. Arthur Edward Waite, 2 vols. (1894; rpt., New York, 1967), 2:108–122, 323–343. Bacon's *Temporis Partus Masculus* (1603) expresses contempt for Paracelsus and alchemy but is more generous toward Bacon's countryman and namesake Roger Bacon (3:533–534).

41. See George and George, *Protestant Mind*, 139–143.

42. Graham Rees's learned comparison between Bacon's methods for prolonging life and those of the "main tradition" represented by Avicenna does not address the divergence in goals. See his "Bacon's Speculative Philosophy," in *Cambridge Companion*, 141–143; idem, ed., *Philosophical Studies*, c. 1611–c. 1619, by Francis Bacon (Oxford, 1996), lxxv–lxxix. Nor does Rees consider the ethical resonances of Bacon's discussion.

43. See Stephen L. Clark, *Aristotle's Man: Speculations upon Aristotelian Anthropology* (Oxford, 1975), 85–87; Brain, *Galen on Bloodletting*, 1–14; and Temkin, *Galenism*, 16–20.

44. Elyot, *Castel of Health*, 40r.

45. See Peltonen, "Bacon's Political Philosophy," in *Cambridge Companion*, 284–290; Margaret Judson, *The Crisis of the Constitution* (New Brunswick, N.J., 1949), 62–63, 168–170; and Glenn Burgess, *The Politics of the Ancient Constitution: An Introduction to English Political Thought, 1603–1642* (University Park, Pa., 1992), 5–6, 22–25, 56–57, 127–128. For the contrary view of Bacon as an innovative royal absolutist, see Martin, *Bacon, State, and Reform*, 105–141.

46. On this commonplace, see Daly, *Cosmic Harmony*, 20.

47. Bacon, it should be noted, appeals to moderation as a generally useful strategy rather than an absolute norm in politics. *De Sapientia Veterum* claims that "moderation" (*mediocritas*) or the "middle way" (*via media*) is to be held "suspect" (*suspecta*) in political matters (i.e., neither to be uncritically embraced or rejected) and applied with "judgment" (6:676, 754). Bacon positions himself between a traditional appeal to the mean as a political norm and Machiavelli's wholesale attack on the political "via del mezzo."

48. Solomon's insightful discussion of Bacon's relation to classical and Renaissance notions of prudence (*Objectivity in the Making*, 103–160) focuses on amoral prudential calculation without addressing Bacon's rejection of Aristotelian *phronesis* or ethical prudence.

49. Albert O. Hirschman cites Bacon on setting "affection against affection" as an early example of the notion that became widespread in the eighteenth century, namely, that sociopolitical order could emerge out of the conflict between opposing passions and interests; see *The Passions and the Interests: Political Arguments for Capitalism before Its Triumph* (Princeton, 1977), 21–23. However, Bacon's emphasis on the necessity of rational, mediating powers in the polity distinguishes him from his Enlightenment heirs.

50. Aristotle claims that all *epistēmê* must observe the mean (*NE* 2.6.10), but his examples suggest that *epistēmê* has its restricted Platonic sense of productive "art" or "skill" rather than its general meaning of "knowledge"; see René Antoine Gauthier and Jean Yves Jolif, eds., *L'Éthique à Nicomaque*, 2 vols. (Paris, 1959), 1:139. While Aristotle's "dialectical" method prompts him to find the kernel of truth in the contrary

views of predecessors, he makes no systematic attempt to articulate a “mean” position; see Nussbaum, *Fragility of Goodness*, 321–322.

51. See Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* 1–2.64.3; Buridan, *Quaestiones*, 134; for an early modern English example, see Brerewood, *Tractatus Ethici*, 96.

52. The *Advancement* normally points out deficiencies rather than excesses but notes, for example, that there is an “excesse” rather than a “deficiency” of (Scholastic) theological speculation and that ancient ethical theory is “prolix” as well as deficient (AL 79, 136).

53. Lorraine Daston and Katherine Park, *Wonders and the Order of Nature, 1150–1750* (New York, 1998), 220–231.

54. Though Bacon did not make the distinction, his critique of Aristotelian logic should be understood as an attack on early modern interpretations of Aristotle rather than on Aristotle’s genuine thought. Antonio Pérez-Ramos demonstrates that Bacon’s attack on Aristotelian induction does not do justice to Aristotle’s complex (and obscure) notions of *epagôgê* but rather responds to late Scholastic and humanist vulgarizations of Aristotle; see Francis Bacon’s *Idea of Science and the Maker’s Knowledge Tradition* (Oxford, 1988), 239–269.

55. Like his attack on Aristotelian induction, Bacon’s critique of the syllogism is misguided as an attack on Aristotle himself if, as modern scholars argue, Aristotle’s *Posterior Analytics* is a methodological guide not to scientific inquiry but rather to the organization and explanation of research results; see M. F. Burnyeat, “Aristotle on Understanding Knowledge,” in *Aristotle on Science: The “Posterior Analytics”*, ed. Enrico Berti (Padua, 1981), 116–120; and Michael Frerejohn, *The Origins of Aristotelian Science* (New Haven, 1991), 2, 141 n. 4. Jardine, however, notes that textbooks on Aristotelian logic used in early modern England blurred the distinction between methods for acquiring and presenting knowledge (*Bacon: Discovery and Art*, 17–65); furthermore, Bacon himself insisted that knowledge should be “delivered” in the “same Methode” as it was “invented” (i.e., discovered) to foster further inquiry (AL 123).

56. Jean Starobinski, *Montaigne in Motion*, trans. Arthur Goldhammer (Chicago, 1985), 138–184.

57. Though Bacon does not acknowledge his debt to Celsus’s mean between empiricism and rationalism, the *Advancement* (108) and the *Novum Organum* (4:74) approvingly cite Celsus’s discussion of “empirical” and “dogmatical” medicine. Bacon also consistently treats “wise” and “prudent” Celsus (2:153; *Essays* 101) more favorably than other ancient medical authorities (cf. 1:617, 3:232, 578, 4:408; AL 100). While violently attacking Hippocrates and Galen, *Temporis Partus Masculus* notes that Celsus practiced “moderation” [*moderationem*] and removed “extremes of error” [*errorum extrema*] (3:535).

58. Citing Valerius, John of Salisbury opposes the fame seekers Aristotle and Alexander to Christ, who promoted his Father’s glory rather than his own (*Frivolities of Courtiers*, 234–235, 312–313). Bacon similarly contrasts glory-hungry Aristotle with Christ, who delivered the “truth” “in nomine Patris” rather than “in nomine suo” (AL 81).

59. Charles Whitney, *Francis Bacon and Modernity* (New Haven, 1986), 98. Whitney brilliantly explores Bacon’s attitude toward old and new but not his adaptation of the Aristotelian mean.

60. Like the “Architecture of Fortune,” Bacon’s rhetorical strategy has a Machiavelian flavor. Machiavelli advises that (political) innovators avoid alienating people by maintaining the appearance of the old ways and, like Bacon, echoes Tacitus on Augustus’s preservation of the magistrates’ titles (*Discourses* 1.25). Renaissance authors often associated Tacitus with Machiavelli as amoral guides to power (see Kahn, *Machiavellian Rhetoric*, 70–71, 250 n. 5). Bacon’s claim that Tacitus’s “lifelike observations” (“vivas. . . observationes,” 3:538; trans. mine) are more useful than Aristotle’s prescriptive ethics resembles *De Augustis*’ praise of Machiavelli’s realism.

61. In 1622 Bacon contrasted the *Advancement*, which presented a “mixture of new conceits and old,” with the *Great Instauration*, which presented the “new unmixed, otherwise than with some little aspersion of the old for taste’s sake” (7:13). While betraying Bacon’s impatience with the earlier work’s rhetoric, Bacon still pays attention to his reader’s “taste” when presenting his philosophy. His most violent, uncompromising attacks on the ancients occur in unpublished fragments. Bacon undoubtedly realized that intemperate rhetoric would gain no adherents.

62. See Graham Parry, *The Golden Age Restor’d: The Culture of the Stuart Court, 1603–1642* (New York, 1981), 16–20, 26, 40; and Goldberg, *James I and Politics*, 47–50.

63. Kenneth Alan Hovey, “‘Mountaigny Saith Prettily’: Bacon’s French and the Essay,” *PMLA* 106 (1991): 73–74.

64. See Ludwig Edelstein, “Empiricism and Skepticism in the Teaching of the Greek Empiricist School,” in *Ancient Medicine: Selected Papers of Ludwig Edelstein*, ed. Owsei Temkin and C. Lilian Temkin (Baltimore, 1967), 195–204; and Carlo Augusto Viano, “Lo scetticismo antico e la medicina,” in *Lo scetticismo antico*, ed. Gabriele Giannantoni, 2 vols. (Rome, 1981), 2:565–656.

65. Bacon later reasserts the Presocratics’ superiority to later philosophers but criticizes even them for unsteadiness in pursuit of truth (NO, bk. 1, no. 71, 4:72–73).

66. See, e.g., Augustine, *Sermones de Scripturis* 142.1. For English Protestant warnings against despair and presumption, see Philip Stubbes, *The Anatomie of Abuses* (1583), ed. Frederick J. Furnivall (London, 1877–1879), 116; Greenham, *Works*, 8–9; Lancelot Andrewes, *Ninety-Six Sermons*, 5 vols. (Oxford, 1841–1843), 3:350–351; Donne, *Sermons*, 6:303, 330.

67. See Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* 2–2.20–21; and the discussion of Scholastic treatments of hope in W. J. Hill, ed. and trans., *St Thomas Aquinas’s Summa Theologiae*, vol. 33, *Hope* (London, 1966), 175–176. For a late English echo of Scholastic doctrine, see Thomas Traherne, *Christian Ethicks* (London, 1675), 250.

68. On Baconian hope, see White, *Peace among Willows*, 20–21; and Michèle le Doeuff, “Hope in Science,” in *Francis Bacon’s Legacy of Texts: The Art of Discovery Grows with Discovery*, ed. William A. Sessions (New York, 1990), 9–24. Though Le Doeuff brilliantly explores Baconian hope as an “epistemo-theological virtue” (10), neither she nor White notes its connection to the mean.

69. Horace, *Opera* (Basel, 1580), 375. Aristotle encouraged the association: he treats the “equal” as an arithmetical mean “between the greater and the less” and compares it to the ethical mean (NE 5.4.9–11, 2.8.2).

70. On the distinctive role of falsification in Baconian induction, see Pérez-Ramos, *Bacon’s Idea of Science*, 243–269; Mary Horton, “In Defence of Francis Bacon: A Criticism of the Critics of the Inductive Method,” *Studies in the History and Philosophy of*

Science 4 (1973): 241–278; and Peter Urbach, *Francis Bacon's Philosophy of Science: An Account and a Reappraisal* (La Salle, Ill., 1987), 25–58. These studies correct the still common view, espoused most recently by Barbara Shapiro (*A Culture of Fact: England, 1550–1720* [Ithaca, N.Y., 2000], 143–144) that Bacon neglected the role of hypotheses in scientific discovery.

71. Montaigne also recounts this tale of Diagoras “the Atheist” (*Essays* 29).

72. *The Works of Thomas Nashe*, ed. Ronald B. McKerrow and rev. F. P. Wilson, 5 vols. (Oxford, 1958), 2:121. Erasmus’s adage “Diagoras Melius” treats the name as synonymous with impiety (*Opera*, ed. Leclerc, 2:820 [3.4.72]).

73. Don Cameron Allen, *Doubt's Boundless Sea: Skepticism and Faith in the Renaissance* (Baltimore, 1964); and George T. Buckley, *Atheism in the English Renaissance* (Chicago, 1932).

74. Plutarch’s “Of Superstition” argues that superstition is worse than atheism (*Morals*, 260–261); “That a Man Cannot Live Pleasantly according to the Doctrine of Epicurus” contends that superstition is preferable and attacks the Epicureans, as Cicero attacks Diagoras, for eliminating superstitious fear at the cost of destroying religion (598); “Of Isis and Osiris” treats the two vices as equally bad (1292).

75. Philip Sidney, *An Apology for Poetry*, ed. Geoffrey Shepherd (London, 1965), 129; Hooker, *Laws*, Book 5, 22 [2.1]; John Harington, *The Sixth Book of Virgil's "Aeneid" Translated and Commented On* (1604), ed. Simon Cauchi (Oxford, 1991), 62. Cf. Greenham, *Works*, 3; Donne, *Sermons*, 8:331–334; and Owen Felltham, *Resolves, Divine, Moral, and Political*, 2d ed. (1628), ed. James Cumming (London, 1820), 288.

76. On later scientists’ critiques of Aristotelianism as a pagan “deification” of the world, see R. Hooykaas, *Religion and the Rise of Modern Science* (Grand Rapids, Mich., 1972), 14–19; and Richard S. Westfall, *Science and Religion in Seventeenth-Century England* (1958; rpt., Ann Arbor, Mich., 1973), 70–71.

77. While Urbach (*Bacon's Philosophy*, 72–78) and Rossi (*Francis Bacon*, 97–101, 120–126) argue that Bacon espoused atomism from around 1604 to 1620, Rees argues that Bacon preferred atomism to Aristotelianism without adopting an atomist position; see “Atomism and ‘Subtlety’ in Francis Bacon’s Philosophy,” *Annals of Science*, 37 (1980): 549–571. Even Rees’s claim that Bacon admired Democritus’s “refusal to contaminate natural philosophy with final causes” (567) suggests Bacon’s preference for atheistic over “superstitious” cosmologies.

78. See Kiernan’s note (*Essays* 207).

79. Plutarch, *Morals*, 268.

80. Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* 1–2.64.4.

81. Aquinas treats true religion as a moral virtue between superstition and irreligion (rather than the vice of atheism revived in the Renaissance) and associates it with the Aristotelian mean of justice; see *Summa Theologiae* 2–2.81.5, 92.

82. Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* 2–2.167.1; idem, *In Decem Libros Ethicorum*, 668 (no. 2106).

83. See Gérard Defaux, *Pantagruel et les sophistes: contribution à l'histoire de l'humanisme chrétien au XVIème siècle* (The Hague, 1973), 94–120.

84. See Howard Schultz, *Milton and Forbidden Knowledge* (New York, 1955), 32–41; and Brian Vickers, “Bacon’s So-Called ‘Utilitarianism’: Sources and Influences,” in *Francis Bacon, terminologia e fortuna nel XVII secolo*, ed. Marta Fallori (Rome, 1984), 281–313.

85. *Certain Sermons or Homilies* (Oxford, 1840), 56. Cf. Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* 2–2.23.5.

86. Hippocrates, *Physician 1, Precepts 6*; Galen, *On the Doctrines of Hippocrates and Plato* 9.5. Owsei Temkin discusses ancient medical “philanthropia” in *Hippocrates in a World of Pagans and Christians* (Baltimore, 1991), 19–34, 61, 222.

87. Jon Amos Comenius, *A Reformation of Schooles* (1642) [trans. Samuel Hartlib], 10, 33–35. Webster’s *Great Instauration* emphasizes the Hartlib circle’s Baconian goals, while Margery Purver (*The Royal Society: Concept and Creation* [Cambridge, Mass., 1967], 206–234) focuses on the circle’s rejection of Baconian method.

88. See Michael Hunter, *Science and Society in Restoration England* (Cambridge, 1981), 8–31; idem, *Establishing the New Science: The Experience of the Early Royal Society* (Woodbridge, Suffolk, Eng., 1989), 10–11, 36–37, 207–208; and Peter Dear, “Totius in Verba: Rhetoric and Authority in the Early Royal Society,” *Isis* 76 (1985): 145–161.

89. Recent scholars have emphasized the Royal Society’s focus upon particular facts at the expense of general hypotheses; see Daston and Park, *Wonders*, 231–253; Dear, “Totius,” 157–159; and Steven Shapin and Simon Schaffer, *Leviathan and the Air-Pump: Hobbes, Boyle, and the Experimental Life* (Princeton, 1985). Hunter persuasively argues (*Science*, 17–19; *Establishing*, 28, 207–208) that Royal Society members were inspired by Bacon both to collect particular facts and to combine hypotheses with observations.

90. Robert Hooke, *Micrographia . . .* (London, 1665), A1v–A2r, B1v; Thomas Sprat, *History of the Royal Society* (1667), ed. Jackson I. Cope and Harold Whitmore Jones (Saint Louis, Mo., 1958), 7, 16, 62, 101; Joseph Glanvill, *Essays on Several Important Subjects* (London, 1676), 45.

91. See Rose-Mary Sargent, *The Diffident Naturalist: Robert Boyle and the Philosophy of Experiment* (Chicago, 1995), 28, 41; and Robert Boyle, *Works*, ed. Thomas Birch, 6 vols. (London, 1772), 5:523, 536. Sargent discusses Boyle’s Baconianism in chaps. 1–3.

92. Defending Aristotle against the Royal Society, Meric Casaubon denounced the latter’s epistemological “presumption” and linked the Royal Society to the Hartlib circle’s millenarian “reformation”; see *A Letter to Peter du Moulin* (London, 1669), 6, 13–15, 25, 34–35. Casaubon reveals the perceived connection between epistemological and religiopolitical extremism that the Royal Society countered with self-descriptions as moderate in both scientific method and religiopolitical values.

93. Shapin and Schaffer (*Leviathan*, chap. 8) and Margaret C. Jacob (*The Newtonians and the English Revolution, 1689–1720* [Ithaca, N.Y., 1976], 35–45) emphasize the “latitudinarian” position of Royal Society propagandists like Sprat, who promoted a national church whose *via media* between papists and dissenting “enthusiasts” could accommodate Presbyterians; Hunter argues for Sprat’s vaguer, platitudinous appeal to “consensus” values (*Establishing*, 45–72). In either case, scientific moderation was associated with Restoration order.

94. Hunter, *Science and Society*, 162–187; and Spurr, *Restoration Church*, 249–268.

95. Sprat, *History*, 351, 428–429; Joseph Glanvill, *Plus Ultra, or The Progress and Advancement of Knowledge since the Days of Aristotle* (London, 1668), 138–149 (quotation at 149). Cf. Joseph Glanvill’s *The Vanity of Dogmatizing* (London, 1661), 228–230.

96. Abraham Cowley, “To the Royal Society,” stanzas 2 and 6, in Sprat, *History*, B1v, B2v; Glanvill, *Plus Ultra*, 91–92, 86–87.



97. On Bacon's promotion of British military greatness versus his pacific scientific goals, see Markku Peltonen, *Classical Humanism and Republicanism in English Political Thought, 1570–1640* (Cambridge, 1995), 195, 206.

98. See Hunter, *Science and Society*, 87–112; J. R. Jacob, "Restoration, Reformation, and the Origins of the Royal Society," *History of Science* 13 (1975): 155–176; and Liah Greenfield, "Science and National Greatness in Seventeenth-Century England," *Minerva* 25 (1987): 107–122.

99. Sprat, *History*, 400, 423–424, 419.

100. See Hilary Putnam, "Sense, Nonsense, and the Senses: An Inquiry into the Powers of the Human Mind," *Journal of Philosophy* 9 (1994): 445–517 (quotation at 446); idem, *Realism with a Human Face*, ed. James Conant (Cambridge, Mass., 1990), 26, 228; idem, *Renewing Philosophy* (Cambridge, Mass., 1992), 128–133, 178–179, 197–198.

101. Susan Haack, *Evidence and Inquiry: Towards Reconstruction in Epistemology* (Cambridge, Mass., 1993), ii, 222, 234 n. 7. Cf. Haack, *Manifesto of a Passionate Moderate: Unfashionable Essays* (Chicago, 1998), vi, 23–27, 123, 167, 204; Catherine Z. Elgin, *Between the Absolute and the Arbitrary* (Ithaca, N.Y., 1997), 1–24, 161–198; Frank B. Farrell, *Subjectivity, Realism and Postmodernism: The Recovery of the World in Recent Philosophy* (Cambridge, 1996), 126–135; and Michael P. Lynch, *Truth in Context: An Essay on Pluralism and Objectivity* (Cambridge, Mass., 1998), 1–13. Contrast Barbara Herrnstein Smith's skeptical critique of contemporary "middle ways" in *Belief and Resistance: Dynamics of Contemporary Intellectual Controversy* (Cambridge, Mass., 1997), xviii, 38, 122–123, 126, 201 n. 2.

102. Stephen Jay Gould, *The Lying Stones of Marrakech: Penultimate Reflections in Natural History* (New York, 2000), 53–71, 123, 255, 288–289, 355–356; idem, *Ever Since Darwin: Reflections in Natural History* (New York, 1977), 212–213; idem, *Hen's Teeth and Horse's Toes* (New York, 1983), 144, 250; idem, *The Flamingo's Smile: Reflections in Natural History* (New York, 1985), 379; idem, *Eight Little Piggies: Reflections in Natural History* (New York, 1993), 411–412, 425, 429–430; idem, "Darwinian Fundamentalism," *New York Review of Books* 44, no. 10 (June 12, 1997): 36.

103. Gould, *Ever Since Darwin*, 205, 271; idem, *Rocks of Ages: Science and Religion in the Fullness of Life* (New York, 1999), 49–51.

104. Gould, *Flamingo's Smile*, 378; idem, *Dinosaur in a Haystack: Reflections in Natural History* (New York, 1995), 84–85. Cf. Putnam's association of his epistemology with Deweyan liberalism in *Renewing Philosophy*, 130, 180–200.

105. Stephen Jay Gould, "The Jew and the Jew Stone," *Natural History* 109, no. 5 (June 2000): 39; idem, "A Wolf at the Door: Environmentalism Becomes an Imperative," in *Our Times: The Illustrated History of the Twentieth Century*, ed. Lorraine Glennon (Atlanta, 1995), 514; idem, *Lying Stones*, 313–314; idem, *Leonardo's Mountain of Clams and the Diet of Worms: Essays on Natural History* (New York, 1998), 3. Contrast Peter Medawar's explicitly Baconian hope that technology can solve all problems it has caused in *The Hope of Progress* (Garden City, N.Y., 1972), 5–10, 94–95, 119–138.

106. Max Horkheimer and Theodor W. Adorno, *The Dialectic of Enlightenment*, trans. James J. Shapiro (New York, 1987), 3–4, 31–32, 41–42; idem, *Dialektik der Aufklärung* (1944; rpt., Frankfurt, 1969), 7–8, 31, 40–41; Herbert Marcuse, "On Hedonism," *Negations: Essays in Critical Theory* (Boston, 1968), 169–170, 190; idem, "Zur Kritik des Hedonismus (1938)," in *Schriften*, 9 vols. (Frankfurt, 1978–1979), 3:259, 277.

107. Slavoj Žižek, *The Ticklish Subject: The Absent Centre of Political Ontology* (London, 1999), 132, 135, 220–221, 336, 392. Contrast Žižek's brusque dismissal of “moderate” responses to global crises with Joel E. Cohen's attempt to provide an account of the population problem and appropriate responses that is neither “alarmist tract” nor “cornucopian lullaby” in *How Many People Can the Earth Support* (New York, 1995), 12; as well as Amartya Sen's warnings against both “apocalyptic pessimism” and “dismissive smugness” in “Population: Delusion and Reality,” *The New York Review of Books* 41, no. 15 (September 21, 1994): 62–71 (quotation at 62).

108. Hans Jonas, *The Imperative of Responsibility: In Search of an Ethics for the Technological Age* (Chicago, 1984), 21–22, 140–144, 202–203.

## CHAPTER 3

1. See Anthony Low, *The Georgic Revolution* (Princeton, 1985); Andrew McRae, *God Speed the Plough: The Representation of Agrarian England, 1500–1660* (Cambridge, 1996); Annabel Patterson, *Pastoral and Ideology: Virgil to Valéry* (Princeton, 1987), esp. 133–163; and James Turner, *The Politics of Landscape: Rural Scenery and Society in English Poetry, 1630–1660* (Cambridge, Mass., 1979), esp. chaps. 5 and 6.

2. Alastair Fowler, “The Beginnings of English Georgic,” in *Renaissance Genres: Essays on Theory, History, and Interpretation*, ed. Barbara Kiefer Lewalski (Cambridge, Mass., 1986), 105–125; idem, “Georgic and Pastoral: Laws of Genre in the Seventeenth Century,” in *Culture and Cultivation in Early Modern England: Writing and the Land*, ed. Michael Leslie and Timothy Raylor (Leicester, 1992), 81–88.

3. Brooks Otis, *Virgil: A Study in Civilized Poetry* (Oxford, 1963), 153.

4. Margaret Tudeau-Clayton's discussion of early modern English treatments of the *Georgics* as natural philosophy is an exception; see her *Jonson, Shakespeare, and Early Modern Virgil* (Cambridge, 1998), 83–94).

5. David O. Ross and Richard F. Thomas demonstrate that much of the diverse materials of the *Georgics* that is not directly related to farming instructions—especially its cosmological, political, and erotic set pieces—make sense in terms of Virgil's conception of agriculture as a science seeking to “temper” the basic qualities of earth, air, water, and fire, whose imbalance creates natural and social discord. See David O. Ross, *Virgil's Elements: Physics and Poetry in the “Georgics”* (Princeton, 1987); and the notes on *tempero/temperies* in Ronald F. Thomas, ed., *Georgics*, by Virgil, 2 vols. (Cambridge, 1988), 1:85, 109–110, 2:104–105. Their approach to the *Georgics* most resembles that of the Renaissance poets I discuss, though they share the common modern view that Virgil's “true” viewpoint is pessimistic.

6. Maren-Sofie Røstvig's *The Happy Man: Studies in the Metamorphoses of a Classical Ideal*, 2 vols. (Oxford, 1954–1958), the standard study of English imitations of Virgil's happy farmer passage, does not treat its relationship to the rest of the *Georgics*, which is crucial for understanding early modern English georgics.

7. Virgil, *Opera* (Venice, 1533), 94. David Wilson-Okamura has traced forty-three sixteenth-century editions of Ascensius's commentary, making him the fourth most popular Renaissance commentator on the *Georgics*, and has noted twenty-two editions in Cambridge libraries; see his “Spenser and the Renaissance *Aeneid*” (Ph.D. diss., University of Chicago, 1998), 206, 230.

8. *The Bucoliks of Publius Virgilius . . . Together with his Georgiks or Ruralls*, trans. A[braham] F[leming] (London, 1589), 34; Nicholas Grimald, In *Quatuor Libros Georgicorum Paraphrasis* (London, 1591), 47v; Marcellus Palingenius, *The Zodiake of Life*, trans. Barnabe Googe (1560; 4th ed. 1576), introd. Rosemund Tuve (New York, 1947), 71.

9. See Low, *Georgic Revolution*, 4, 17, citing Ernst Robert Curtius, *European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages*, trans. Willard R. Trask (New York, 1953), 231–232.

10. Fleming, *Bucoliks*, A4r.

11. Servius, In *Vergilii Bucolica et Georgica Comentarii*, ed. Georg Thilo (Leipzig, 1887), 233; Grimald, *Paraphrasis*, 32. Cf. Ascensius's comment in Virgil, *Opera*, 49.

12. Jacobus Pontanus, *Symbolarum Libri XVII Virgilii* (Augsburg, 1599; rpt., New York, 1976), 367; see also Pliny the Elder, *Historia naturalis* 37.77.201.

13. Virgil, *Opera*, 87; Pontanus, *Symbolarum Libri*, 399; Grimald, *Paraphrasis*, 41v; Richard Crashaw, "Out of Virgil, In the praise of the Spring," line 36 in *The Complete Poetry of Richard Crashaw*, ed. George Walton Williams (New York, 1970), 529.

14. Ross, *Virgil's Elements*, 46.

15. Geoffrey Whitney, *A Choice of Emblems* (1587), ed. Henry Green (New York, 1967), 23.

16. Cf. Vitruvius on Italy's "temperate" ("temperata[m]") region and consequently "most temperate" ("temperatissimae") people, who properly blend (as Aristotle claimed of the Greeks) northern strength with southern intelligence (*On Architecture* 6.9–11).

17. On Spenserian georgic, see Fowler, "Beginnings," 112–113; Low, *Georgic Revolution*, chap. 2; Andrew V. Ettin, "The Georgics in *The Faerie Queene*," *Spenser Studies* 3 (1982): 57–71; John N. King, *Spenser's Poetry and the Reformation Tradition* (Princeton, 1990), 216–220; and William A. Sessions, "Spenser's Georgics," *English Literary Renaissance* 10 (1980): 202–208.

18. C. S. Lewis, *The Allegory of Love: A Study in Medieval Tradition* (Oxford, 1936), 58–60. Cf. Michael C. Schoenfeldt, *Bodies and Selves in Early Modern England: Physiology and Inwardness in Spenser, Shakespeare, Herbert, and Milton* (Cambridge, 1999), 40–73.

19. Torquato Tasso, *Gerusalemme liberata*, ed. Fredi Chiappelli (Florence, 1957), 474 (15.54); Ludovico Ariosto, *Orlando furioso*, ed. Edoardo Sanguineti and Marcello Turchi, 2 vols. (Milan, 1974), 1:123 (6.22).

20. Ariosto implicitly contrasts the merely "lukewarm" [*tiepida*] climate of Alcina's sinful garden with the way Logistilla, the personification of virtuous reason, "temperately" [*temperamente*] controls her garden's springtime climate (*Orlando*, 231 [10.63]). Spenser obliterates this distinction.

21. Harry Berger discusses the relation of Spenserian temperance to climate, but not its poetic and intellectual roots, in *The Allegorical Temper* (New Haven, 1957), 66–68. Alan Sinfield treats the bower's "temperateness" in terms of a contrast between classical temperance and Spenser's Protestant "zeal" in *Faultlines: Cultural Materialism and the Politics of Dissident Reading* (Berkeley, 1992), 194–197.

22. John Skelton, *Magnificence*, ed. Paula Neuss, *The Revels Plays* (Manchester, 1980), 75 [l. 137]; *The Poems of Thomas Howell [1568–1581]*, ed. Alexander B. Grosart (Manchester, 1879), 130.

23. Hieronymus Cardanus, *Commentarii*, In *Hippocratis de Aere, Acquis et Locis* (Basel, 1570), 152 (trans. mine).

24. On competing ancient theories of climate, see Richard F. Thomas, *Lands and Peoples in Roman Poetry: The Ethnographical Tradition* (Cambridge, 1982), esp. 11–12, 46, 126–129.

25. Greenblatt, *Renaissance Self-Fashioning*, 184–188 (quotation at 184). Cf. Andrew Hadfield, *Edmund Spenser's Irish Experience: Wilde Fruit and Salvage Soyl* (Oxford, 1997), 163–164; and Willy Maley, *Salvaging Spenser: Colonialism, Culture, and Identity* (Basingstoke, Hampshire, Eng., 1997), 78–98.

26. For doubts concerning Spenser's authorship, see Jean R. Brink, "Appropriating the Author of *The Faerie Queene*: The Attribution of the *View of the Present State of Ireland* and *A Brief Note of Ireland* to Edmund Spenser," in *Soundings of Things Done: Essays in Early Modern Literature in Honor of S. K. Heninger Jr.*, ed. Peter E. Medine and Joseph Wittreich (Newark, Del., 1997), 93–136.

27. Edmund Spenser, *A View of the Present State of Ireland*, ed. W. L. Renwick (Oxford, 1970), 19.

28. Spenser, *View*, 37–38, 49–59 (quotations at 56, 51–52). The Bower of Bliss's temperate climate might also evoke the New World, but Elizabethan and Jacobean reports, seeking to encourage settlement, treated the climate positively by blaming disasters not on a temperate landscape that occasioned sloth but on the vices brought by lowlife British settlers. Thus *A True Declaration of . . . Virginia* (1610) condemns the "unruly multitude" who indulged in "intemperate" behavior instead of responding appropriately to the New World's "temperat aire"; see John Gillies, "Shakespeare's Virginian Masque," *ELH* 53 (1986): 679–683, which quotes and discusses the *Declaration* (679–680). I argue that Spenser's depiction of a temperate climate encouraging intemperate behavior alludes most directly to oft-avowed problems for Englishmen at home.

29. See Patricia Parker, *Literary Fat Ladies: Rhetoric, Gender, Property* (London, 1987), 54–66.

30. See Z. S. Fink, "Milton and the Theory of Climatic Influence," *Modern Language Quarterly* 2 (1941): 67–80, which cites Bodin and Giovanni Botero. See also Louis le Roy's commentary on Aristotle's *Politics*, which extends Aristotle's praise of Greek "middleness" to France, Italy, and Spain (*Aristotle's Politiques, or Discourses of Government*, trans. I.D. [London, 1598], 360).

31. William Harrison, *Elizabethan England*, ed. with an introd. by F. J. Furnivall (London, 1876), 130–1, 143; William Camden, *Britannia* (London, 1586), 2; idem, *Britain, or A Chorographical Description* (London, 1610), 2–3; John Cleland, *The Institution of a Young Noble Man* (1607), ed. Max Molyneux, 2 vols. (New York, 1948), 1:263; John Speed, *The Theatre of the Empire of Great Britaine* (1611), cited in Louis B. Wright, *Middle-Class Culture in Elizabethan England* (1935; rpt., Ithaca, N.Y., 1958), 40–41; Giovanni Botero, *Relations of the Most Famous Kingdomes and Commonwealths*, trans. Robert Johnson (London, 1616), 5, 77; Giordano Bruno, *Dialoghi italiani: dialoghi metafisici e dialoghi morali*, ed. Giovanni Gentile and Giovanni Aquilecchia, 3rd. ed. (Florence, 1958), 762.

32. Botero, *Relations*, 89 (cf. 92–93); [James Howell], *Dodona's Grove, or The Vocall Forest* (London, 1640), 41; idem, *Instructions for Forreine Travell* (1642), ed. Edward Arber (London, 1869), 75.

33. Harrison, *Elizabethan England*, 24–25; Fynes Moryson, *An Itinerary Containing his Ten Yeeres Travell* (1619), 4 vols. (rpt., Glasgow, 1908), 4:165, 172–173.

34. Fowler, "Beginnings," 109–110.

35. See Anne Lake Prescott, *French Poets and the English Renaissance: Studies in Fame and Transformation* (New Haven, 1978), 205–213.

36. *The Divine Weeks and Works of . . . Du Bartas*, trans. Jos[h]uah Sylvester, ed. Susan Snyder, 2 vols. (Oxford, 1979), 1:115 ["First Day of the First Weeke," ll. 135–139] (hereafter cited in text by book and line number); compare *The Works of . . . Du Bartas*, ed. Urban Tigner Holmes Jr., John Coriden Lyons, and Robert White Linker, 3 vols. (Chapel Hill, N.C., 1938), 2:198–199.

37. Du Bartas, *Works*, 3:169–170 ("Les Colonies," ll. 709–744).

38. Compare Du Bartas, *Works*, 2:410 ("Le Sixiesme Jour," ll. 931–932).

39. Richard Greenham, *Works* (London, 1612), 27–28; Robert Greene, *Complete Works in Prose and Verse*, ed. Alexander Grosart, 12 vols. (London, 1881–1883), 5:256–257, 287; James I, *A Counter-Blaste to Tobacco* (1604), ed. Edmund Goldsmid (Edinburgh, 1884), 7–8. On Elizabethan anxiety about peace and prosperity, see G. R. Wagoner, "An Elizabethan Attitude Toward Peace and War," *Philological Quarterly* 33 (1954): 20–33.

40. Compare Du Bartas, *Works*, 2:303 ("Le Troisieme Jour," ll. 973–978).

41. Thomas Smith, *De Republica Anglorum*, ed. Mary Dewar (Cambridge, 1982), 75; Bacon, *Essays* 93; Thomas Fuller, *The Holy State and the Profane State* (1642), ed. Maximilian Graff Walten, 2 vols. (New York, 1938), 1:116; and Botero, *Relations*, 92–93. Debora Shuger cites Bacon and Fuller in "Irishmen, Aristocrats, and Other White Barbarians," *Renaissance Quarterly* 50 (1997): 519.

42. Elsewhere Sylvester expresses both his desire for the golden mean of the Virgilian farmer and his sense of the ideal's unrealizability. "A contented Minde" celebrates the "meane estate, / Neither too lofty nor too low." Yet *Micro-cosmo-graphia: The Little-Worlds Description* (1614) laments that man never attains the mean because of human sin. Regarding the fate of nations (including his own), Sylvester claims that "Peace is too-drown'd in lust and sloth: / Warre is too-drunke with bloud and wrath" (ll. 151–152) (*The Complete Works of Joshua Sylvester*, ed. Alexander Grosart, 2 vols. [Edinburgh, 1880], 2:340, 2:98–101). Like the Du Bartas translation, *Micro-cosmo-graphia* treats prayers for God's mercy as the only solution to personal and national excess.

43. See Richard Helgerson, *Forms of Nationhood: The Elizabethan Writing of England* (Chicago, 1992), 139–146; and McRae, *God Speed*, 253–261.

44. Fowler, "English Beginnings," 118.

45. I cite *Poy-Olbion* by song and line number from Michael Drayton, *Works*, ed. J. William Hebel, 5 vols. (1931; rpt., Oxford, 1961), vol. 4.

46. See S. F. Bonner, "Dionysius of Halicarnassus and the Peripatetic Mean of Style," *Classical Philology* 33 (1938): 257–266.

47. Helgerson, *Forms*, 139; Claire McEachern, *The Poetics of English Nationhood, 1590–1612* (Cambridge, 1996), 138–191 (quotation at 173).

48. See David Underdown, *Revel, Riot, and Rebellion: Popular Politics and Culture in England, 1603–1660* (Oxford, 1985), esp. 73–105. J. S. Morrill examines local loyalties during the civil war in *The Revolt of the Provinces* (London, 1976).

49. Helgerson, *Forms*, 143–145; for Drayton's contrast between the poet, like a "god," and the "greatest King," see 21.139–150.

50. George Burke Johnston, "Poems by William Camden, with Notes and Translations for the Latin," *Studies in Philology* (special issue: Texts and Studies) 72 (1975): 88–105.

51. Helgerson, *Forms*, 141–142.

52. On this satiric pairing, see Manley, *Literature and Culture*, 313–320.

53. See Joyce Appleby, *Economic Thought and Ideology in Seventeenth-Century England* (Princeton, 1938), 37–41; and Christopher J. Berry, *The Idea of Luxury: A Conceptual and Historical Investigation* (Cambridge, 1994), 102–106. See Fuller's claim that the virtuous merchant does not "export things of necessity" or "bring in forrein needlesse toys" (*Holy State*, 1:113).

54. Drayton underscores this Virgilian echo by describing the Kentish gardener, like the Roman farmer, battling a list of pests that concludes, as in Virgil, with the ant (18.693; *Georgics* 1.186). Cf. Drayton's Virgilian apology for a "triviall" passage on English produce (20.61)

55. Fowler, "Beginnings," 123–124; Low, *Georgic Revolution*, 307; Annabel Patterson, "Forc'd Fingers': Milton's Early Poems and Ideological Constraint," in *The Muses Common-Weal: Poetry and Politics in the Seventeenth Century*, ed. Claude J. Summers and Ted-Larry Pebworth (Columbia, Mo., 1988), 9–22; Marshall Grossman, "The Fruits of One's Labor in Miltonic Practice and Marxian Theory," *ELH* 59 (1992):77–105; and Michael Wilding, *Dragons Teeth: Literature in the English Revolution* (Oxford, 1987), 22–27.

56. Palingenius, *Zodiake*, 60; John Davies of Hereford, *Complete Works*, ed. Alexander Grosart, 2 vols. (Edinburgh, 1878), 1:c, 35. See also William Baldwin, *A Treatise of Morall Philosophie* (London, 1547), N5v and O3r; and John Hall, *The Court of Virtue* (1565), ed. Russell. Fraser (New Brunswick, N.J., 1961), 259.

57. Geoffrey Hartman, *Beyond Formalism* (New Haven, 1970), 287.

58. Cleanth Brooks, *The Well-Wrought Urn* (New York, 1947), 50–66. (I cite 53).

59. See Røstvig, *Happy Man*, 1:154–155.

60. Sarah Ruth Watson, "Milton's Ideal Day," *PMLA* 57 (1942): 407–408.

61. Patterson, "Forc'd Fingers," 10–11.

62. *Ibid.*, 11.

63. *Il Penseroso's* dismissal of the sun as the "day's garish eye" (l. 141) retrospectively reinforces *L'Allegro's* association between the royal sun and the poet's "eye." Milton's poems often echo Sylvester's *Du Bartas* (see Carey's headnote in Milton, *Complete Short Poems*, 135), which figures the sun as both a king on a state progress and an eye: "Daies glorious Eye! Even as a mightie King / About his Countrie stately Progressing" ("Fourth Day of the First Weeke," ll. 551–552).

64. Fink, "Milton and Climatic Influence," 71–80.

65. George Wither, *A Collection of Emblemes* (1635; rpt., Menston, Yorkshire, Eng., 1968), 92, 68, 242, 148; cf. 169. For other views of Withers's georgic poetry, see Low, *Georgic Revolution*, 200–214, 307; and McRae, *God Speed*, 217–222.

66. Wither, *Collection of Emblemes*, 148.

67. Thomas M. Greene, "The Meeting Soul in Milton's Companion Poems," *English Literary Renaissance* 14 (1984): 173. Various scholars have explored the young Milton's association of sexual abstinence with poetic power, particularly in *Lycidas* and *Comus*; see esp. J. Martin Evans, *The Miltonic Moment* (Lexington, Ky., 1998), chap. 2; and William Kerrigan, *The Sacred Complex: On the Psychogenesis of "Paradise Lost"* (Cambridge, Mass., 1983), 26–37, 50–55. *L'Allegro* and *Il Penseroso* reveal Milton's attempt to find appropriate substitutes for eroticism rather than simply suppress erotic desire.

68. See Merritt Hughes, "Lydian Airs," *Ten Perspectives on Milton* (New Haven, 1965), 1–11.

69. C.W.R.D. Moseley, *The Poetic Birth: Milton's Poems of 1645* (Aldershot, Eng., 1991), 127.

70. I cite the libretto from Georg Friedrich Handel, *L'Allegro, Il Penseroso ed Il Moderato* (after poems by John Milton, rearranged by Charles Jennens). John Eliot Gardner, Monteverdi Choir, and English Baroque Soloists. Erato ECD 880752, 53–55.

71. See Felicity A. Nussbaum, *Torrid Zones: Maternity, Sexuality and Empire in Eighteenth-Century English Narratives* (Baltimore, 1995), 7–9.

72. James Thomson, *The Seasons*, ed. James Sambrook (Oxford, 1981), 100–102, 125–133, 245–247.

73. See David N. Livingstone, "The Moral Discourse of Climate: Historical Considerations on Race, Place, and Virtue," *Journal of Historical Geography* 17 (1991): 413–431. David N. Landes has recently resurrected climatology to explain the West's material superiority, arguing that Europe's temperate climate fostered economic success, whereas tropical heat engendered poverty, but that Western technology can combat "nature's inequalities." While rejecting earlier climate theory's "self-congratulatory" moralizing, Landes slips from objectively describing material inequalities to the ethnocentrism he abjures when describing "brutish" tropical life; see *The Wealth and Poverty of Nations: Why Some Are So Rich and Some So Poor* (New York, 1998), 4–16 (quotations at 4, 14).

#### CHAPTER 4

1. Raymond Williams, *Marxism and Literature* (Oxford, 1977), 121–127.

2. Jean-Pierre Vernant, *The Origins of Greek Thought* (Ithaca, N.Y., 1982), 62–65. Etienne Smoes (*Le Courage chez les grecs, d'Homère à Aristote* [Brussels, 1995], 191–209) argues that the account of courage as a mean in the *Nicomachean Ethics* evokes the hoplite ideal.

3. Cf. Livy, *Ab urbe condita* 3.26.7, 27.6, 3.29.7; Columella, *De re rustica*, Preface 14; Pliny the Elder, *Historia naturalis* 18.12.19–20; and Claudian, *Panegyric on . . . Honorius*, ll. 412–415.

4. *Plutarch's Lives of the Noble Grecians and Romans*, trans. Thomas North (1579), introd. George Wyndham, 6 vols. (New York, 1967), 1:189, 3:7, 41.

5. Echoing *Georgics* 2.472, the *Aeneid* conjoins farmer and soldier by celebrating the Italian "youth hardened to toil and inured [*adsueta*] to small fare," whether he "subdues" [*domat*] the earth or fights wars (9.607–608).

6. Paul Jal, *La Guerre civile à Rome: Étude littéraire et morale* (Paris, 1963), 21–27.

7. Joan Thirsk, "Making a Fresh Start: Sixteenth-Century Agriculture and the Classical Inspiration," in *Culture and Cultivation in Early Modern England: Writing and the Land*, ed. Michael Leslie and Timothy Raylor (Leicester, 1992), 21–22.

8. On civil versus foreign war, see Waggoner, "Elizabethan Attitude." Debora Shuger's treatment of Renaissance English idealization of yeomen in terms of "peace and georgic prosperity" brilliantly develops the contrast between a peaceful yeomanry and violent aristocracy ("Irishmen, Aristocrats," 516–519). Yet English authors, who, as Shuger notes, advocated "forcible imposition" of georgic values upon foreign cultures (497, 507), often presupposed the long-standing normative opposition between foreign

war, in which the yeoman-soldier was expert, and internecine strife, the aristocrat's subversive forte. Thomas Smith, encomiast of the yeoman-soldier, attacked aristocrats' "warre among themselves"; see his *De Republica Anglorum*, 127, cited in Shuger, "Irishmen, Aristocrats," 505.

9. John Fortescue, *The Governance of England*, ed. Charles Plummer (Oxford, 1885), 127–130, 137–140.

10. Lawrence Stone, *The Crisis of the Aristocracy, 1558–1641* (Oxford, 1965), 265.

11. Smith, *De Republica Anglorum*, 75; Fuller, *Holy State*, 2:118. Cf. Thomas Starkey, *A Dialogue between Cardinal Pole and Thomas Lupset*, pt. 2 of *England in the Reign of King Henry the Eighth*, ed. J. M. Cowper (London, 1878), 79; Harrison's *Description of England* (1577, 1587) in Harrison, *Elizabethan England*, 13; *The Works of Walter Raleigh*, 8 vols. (Oxford, 1829), 8:163; and Thomas Hedley's remarks in *Proceedings in Parliament, 1610*, ed. Elizabeth Read Foster, 2 vols. (New Haven, 1966), 2:195. Robert Farley (*Kalendarium Humanae Vitae* [London, 1636], H1r-H2r) compares yeomen of "meane estate" to farmer-soldiers like Virgil's "Camilii."

12. On Renaissance epic poets' response to infantry warfare, see Michael Murrin, *History and Warfare in Renaissance Epic* (Chicago, 1994), 13, 136–137, 279 n. 76. Murrin treats Spenser as a poet of "old chivalry" (137).

13. Low, *Georgic Revolution*, 40.

14. Bacon, *Essayes*, 92–93.

15. Low, *Georgic Revolution*, 134.

16. See Josephine Waters Bennett, "Britain among the Fortunate Islands," *Studies in Philology* 53 (1956): 114–140; and Ann Baynes Coiro, *Robert Herrick's "Hesperides" and the Epigram Book Tradition* (Baltimore, 1988), 8.

17. Bacon, *Essayes*, 175.

18. Compare Drayton's wish in *The Barons Warres* (1603; rev. 1619) that the English had avoided civil war by war with France or religious crusades (Drayton, 2:10, 20, 38).

19. Jean R. Brink, *Michael Drayton Revisited* (Boston, 1990), 88.

20. Davies of Hereford, *Complete Works*, vol. 1, pt. c, 38–39 (hereafter cited parenthetically in text by page number).

21. Davies's 1608 commendatory poem on Sylvester's *Du Bartas* similarly idealizes the poet in georgic terms while disdaining real farmers. Davies praises Sylvester as one who "Plow[s]" with "labouring *Thoughts*" but hopes that Sylvester and his fellow poets will be financially rewarded so that they need not "turn" their "*Pens*" to real "*Ploughes*" ("Of the Work, Author, and Translator," ll. 53–55, 126–127, in *Divine Weeks and Works of . . . Du Bartas*, 2:922, 924).

22. See James VI and I, *Political Writings*, ed. Johann P. Sommerville (Cambridge, 1994), 29, 43–44, 49–54.

23. Arthur B. Ferguson, *The Articulate Citizen and the English Renaissance* (Durham, N.C., 1965); and John Guy, "The Rhetoric of Counsel in Early Modern England," in *Tudor Political Culture*, ed. Dale Hoak (Cambridge, 1995), 292–310.

24. Machiavelli, "*Il Principe*" e "*Discorsi*," 153.

25. Without attribution Richard Beacon echoes Machiavelli's attack on the "meane course" in "cases of extremity" (like Ireland) in *Solon his Follie . . .* (1594), ed. Clare Carroll and Vincent Carey (Binghamton, N.Y., 1996), 34, 71. Works attributed to Walter Raleigh attack Machiavelli but espouse his extreme methods for subduing Ireland; see Kahn, *Machiavellian Rhetoric*, 110–111.



26. "Pierce the Ploughmans Crede" . . . to which is appended "God Spede the Plough", ed. Walter W. Skeat, *Early English Text Society*, vol. 30 (London, 1868), 69–72.

27. See Brendan O'Hehir, *Expans'd Hieroglyphicks: A Critical Edition of Sir John Denham's "Coopers Hill"* (Berkeley, 1969), 9–13; Ralph Cohen, "Innovation and Variation: A Problem of Literary History," *Studies in Eighteenth-Century Culture* 4 (1975): 297–316; and David Hill Radcliffe, *Forms of Reflection: Genre and Culture in Meditational Writing* (Baltimore, 1993), 42–59. I cite O'Hehir's texts of the various versions of *Coopers Hill*.

28. See O'Hehir, *Expans'd Hieroglyphicks*, 165–227; John M. Wallace, "Coopers Hill: The Manifesto of Parliamentary Royalism, 1641," *ELH* 4 (1974): 494–540; Turner, *Politics of Landscape*, 49–61; Nigel Smith, *Literature and Revolution in England, 1640–1660* (New Haven, 1994), 321–324; and Robert Wilcher, *The Writing of Royalism, 1628–1660* (Cambridge, 2001), 74–89.

29. Quintilian treats Virgil as emulating Lucretius and associates Lucretius with Empedocles (*Institutio oratoria* 12.11.27, 1.4.4). Renaissance Italian critics associate the *Georgics* with both Lucretius and Empedocles; see Bernard Weinberg, *A History of Literary Criticism in the Renaissance*, 2 vols. (Chicago, 1961), 2:689, 794. Philip Sidney groups the *Georgics* with Lucretius in *Apology for Poetry*, 103.

30. Turner, *Politics of Landscape*, 54.

31. See Philip R. Hardie, *Virgil's "Aeneid": Cosmos and Imperium* (Oxford, 1986), 40.

32. Lucretius uses some form of *causa* sixty-four times; Denham's four reference to "cause[s]" signal his Lucretianism (ll.103, 106, 161, 228).

33. D. P. Fowler, "Lucretius and Politics," in *Philosophia Togata: Essays on Philosophy and Roman Society*, ed. Miriam Griffin and Jonathan Barnes (Oxford, 1989), 128.

34. Wallace, "Coopers Hill," 498–499.

35. *The Poems of Edmund Waller*, ed. G. Thorn Drury (New York, 1893), 16–18.

36. "Elegy on the Death of Judge Croke," in *The Poetical Works of Sir John Denham*, ed. Theodore Howard Banks, 2d ed. (New Haven, 1969), 156–158.

37. See David L. Smith, *Constitutional Royalism and the Search for Settlement, c. 1640–1649* (Cambridge, 1994). On Denham's constitutional royalism, see also Wallace, "Coopers Hill," and Wilcher, *Writing of Royalism*. Turner rightly argues that Denham is royalist rather than "non-partisan" (*Politics of Landscape*, 58) but does not distinguish between constitutional royalists and absolutists.

38. Smith, *Constitutional Royalism*, 68–69, 102, 143–156.

39. See Anthony Milton, *Catholic and Reformed: The Roman and Protestant Churches in English Protestant Thought, 1640–1660* (Cambridge, 1995), 332–334, 523–529. Wilcher argues for Denham's anti-Laudianism by suggesting that the "Lethargicke dreame" and "Lethargy" (ll. 175, 177) criticized by Denham refer to Laudianism (*Writing of Royalism*, 82). I think it more plausible to identify this "Lethargy" with the "lazy" (l. 169) monastic Catholicism described by Denham a few lines before.

40. Conservative distrust of innovative action similarly informs Denham's pre-*Coopers Hill* criticism of Charles I. The Croke elegy praises the judge as a stationary embodiment of golden mediocrity when others (including, primarily, the king) moved in extremes: "when our World did turn," Croke "kept his Ground" and his "fixed Mind" never "inclin'd / To this or that Extream" ("Elegy on . . . Croke," ll. 31, 35–36, in Denham, *Poetical Works*, 157–158).

41. Smith, *Literature and Revolution*, 322.

42. Ovid calls Lucretius “sublime” (*Amores* 1.15.23), while Statius notes his “lofty frenzy” (*Silvae* 2.7.76). On Lucretius’s sublime poetics, see Gian Biagio Conte, *Genres and Readers: Lucretius, Love Elegy, Pliny’s Encyclopedia*, trans. Glenn W. Most (Baltimore, 1994), 1–34.
43. In 1656 Waller similarly associates Lucretius’s representation of the infinite cosmos with sublime freedom: he declares Lucretius’s “boundless wit, / To Nature does no bounds permit” and contrasts Lucretius with “moderate wits” (“To . . . Evelyn, Upon his Translation of Lucretius,” ll. 13–14, 18, in Waller, *Poems*, 149, 327).
44. See O’Hehir, *Expans’d Hieroglyphicks*, 119. On Charles I’s maritime policies, see D. B. Quinn and A. N. Ryan, *England’s Sea Empire, 1550–1642* (London, 1983), 234–240; Brian Quintrell, “Charles I and His Navy,” *Seventeenth Century* 3 (1988): 159–179; and David Armitage, *The Ideological Origins of the British Empire* (Cambridge, 2000), 115–118.
45. John Selden, *Mare Clausum* (London, 1635), 92.
46. Radcliffe, *Forms of Reflection*, 53–57.
47. Kenneth R. Andrews, *Trade, Plunder and Settlement: Maritime Enterprise and the Genesis of the British Empire, 1480–1630* (Cambridge, 1984), 9–10; and Helgerson, *Forms of Nationhood*, 184–191.
48. Terence, *Heauton Timorumenos*, l. 77 (trans. mine). Robert Burton’s unattributed use suggests the tag’s proverbial status; see *The Anatomy of Melancholy*, ed. Thomas C. Faulkner, Nicolas K. Kiessling, and Rhonda L. Blair, 6 vols. (Oxford, 1989–2000), 3:6 [3.1.1.1].
49. O’Hehir, *Expans’d Hieroglyphicks*, 150.
50. See Steven C. A. Pincus, *Protestantism and Patriotism: Ideologies and the Making of English Foreign Policy, 1650–1668* (Cambridge, 1996), 1–194; Bernard Capp, *Cromwell’s Navy: The Fleet and the English Revolution, 1648–1660* (Oxford, 1989), 86–106; and Armitage, *Ideological Origins of Empire*, 118–119; idem, “The Cromwellian Protectorate and the Languages of Empire,” *Historical Journal* 35 (1992): 531–555.
51. John Selden, *Of the Dominion, or Ownership of the Sea*, trans. Marchamont Nedham (London, 1652), frontispiece; Waller, *Poems*, 138. On Waller’s imperial rhetoric, see David Norbrook, *Writing the English Republic: Poetry, Rhetoric, and Politics, 1627–1660* (Cambridge, 1999), 302–305.
52. I have emended O’Hehir’s “everything”/“everywhere” (*Expans’d Hieroglyphicks*, 150) to make a pentameter, but Denham perhaps intended a triumphant alexandrine.
53. Jacob Viner, *The Role of Providence in the Social Order: An Essay in Intellectual History* (Philadelphia, 1972), 36–37; idem, *Essays on the Intellectual History of Economics*, ed. Douglas A. Irwin (Princeton, 1991), 41–42.
54. John Chrysostom’s *Homily on Charity* 1, cited and discussed in Justo L. González, *Faith and Wealth: A History of Early Christian Ideas on the Origin, Significance, and Use of Money* (New York, 1990), 202; Giovanni Botero, *A Treatise Concerning the Causes of the Magnificencie and Greatnes of Cities*, trans. Robert Peterson (London, 1606), 18.
55. See Conte, *Genres and Readers*, 10–16; David Furley, “Variations on Themes from Empedocles in Lucretius’ Proem,” *Cosmic Problems: Essays on Greek and Roman Philosophy of Nature* (Cambridge, 1989), 172–182; and David Sedley, *Lucretius and the Transformation of Greek Wisdom* (Cambridge, 1998), 1–34, 201–202.
56. González, *Faith and Wealth*, 202.

57. John Stow, *A Survey of London*. . . (London, 1598), 465; Thomas Mun, *England's Treasure by Forraign Trade, or The Ballance of our Foreign Trade* (1664), in *Early English Tracts on Commerce* (London, 1861), 180. See also idem, *A Discourse of Trade from England unto the East Indies* (1621), in *Early English Tracts*, 41, 46; and Henry Robinson, *Englands Safety in Trades Encrease. Most humbly Presented to the High Court of Parliament* (London, 1641), 3–4, 23.

58. [Nicholas Barbon,] *A Discourse of Trade* (London, 1690), 15; and [Dudley North], *A Discourse upon Trade* (London, 1691), 14, cited in Appleby, *Economic Thought*, 169–170. On this new paradigm, see Appleby, *Economic Thought*, 168–176; and Berry, *Idea of Luxury*, 108–125.

59. See Pincus, *Protestantism and Patriotism*, 237–271, 458–451; Michael McKeon, *Politics and Poetry in Restoration England: The Case of Dryden's "Annus Mirabilis"* (Cambridge, Mass., 1975), 99–131; and Blair Hoxby, "The Government of Trade: Commerce, Politics, and the Courtly Art of the Restoration," *ELH* 66 (1999): 591–627.

60. Waller, *Poems*, 163–167.

61. *Ibid.*, 168–172.

62. See Sylvia P. Beamon and Susan Roaf, *The Ice-Houses of Britain* (London, 1990), 18–20.

63. Alastair Fowler argues that Waller's royal cup allegorically associates Charles II with the "tempering [of] extremes such as frivolous indifference and stern revengefulness"; see *The Country House Poem: A Cabinet of Seventeenth-Century Estate Poems and Related Items* (Edinburgh, 1994), 195.

64. Stefano Guazzo, *The Civile Conversation*, trans. George Pettie and Bartholomew Young, 2 vols. (1581–1586; rpt., London, 1925), 2:144–145.

65. I cite Fowler's text (*Country House*, 339–343).

66. See Lawrence Manley, *Literature and Culture in Early Modern London* (Cambridge, 1997), 524.

67. Fowler, *Country House*, 342.

68. *The Complete Works in Verse and Prose of Abraham Cowley*, ed. Alexander B. Grosart, 2 vols. (1881; rpt., New York, 1967), 2:220, 222.

69. Charles Larson, "The Somerset House Poems of Cowley and Waller," *Papers in Language and Literature* 10 (1974): 127.

70. Abraham Cowley, *Essays, Plays, and Sundry Verses*, ed. A. R. Waller (Cambridge, 1906), 409.

71. Cowley, *Essays*, 388 ("Ode. Upon Liberty," ll. 3–4).

72. Thomas Sprat, "An Account of the Life and Writings of . . . Cowley," in *Critical Essays of the Seventeenth Century*, ed. J. E. Spingarn, 3 vols. (Oxford, 1907), 3:136.

73. *The Works of Aphra Behn*, ed. Janet Todd, 7 vols. (Columbus, Ohio, 1992–1996), 1: 311–353. I cite Cowley's Latin in *Complete Works*, 2:219–231.

74. Cf. Margaret Cavendish's georgic-inflected verses "Of an Island," which ascribes civil war to pride arising from "Plenty" and "Ease" (*Poems and Fancies* [London, 1652], 118). Royalist historians similarly traced the civil war to a surfeit of peace and plenty; see Royce Macgillivray, *Restoration Historians and the English Civil War* (The Hague, 1974), 237–242).

75. See the anaphoric "te"/"tu" in Horace's hymnal *Odes* 1.10, 1.35, and 2.19.

76. Cowley's commercial golden age also simultaneously fulfills and reverses Virgil's nostalgic prophecy in *Eclogue* 4 of a return to the golden age when commercial sailing

will cease because “Every land shall bear all things” (“omnis feret omnia tellus,” l. 39; trans. modified).

77. As my discussion of her erotic writings (in chapter 6) will emphasize, Behn was herself deeply invested in the celebration of modern “luxury”; witness her 1684 praise of Charles II for providing England “Peace, plenty,” and “luxurious happiness” (*Works* 2:42).

78. *The Writings of John Evelyn*, ed. Guy de la Bédoyère (Woodbridge, Suffolk, Eng., 1995), 183. On Evelyn’s *Sylva* as an expression of Royal Society goals, see Hunter, *Science and Society*, 92–93.

79. Machiavelli’s *Discorsi* 3.21 notes that people’s love of novelty makes them obey innovators. Perhaps Cowley implies that as royal innovator Charles II will channel English giddiness—so evident in the great rebellion—into obedience.

80. See Radcliffe, *Forms of Reflection*, 121–164; John Barrell, *English Literature in History, 1730–80: An Equal, Wide Survey* (New York, 1983), 51–109; and Karen O’Brien, “Imperial Georgic, 1660–1789,” in *The Country and the City Revisited: England and the Politics of Culture, 1550–1850*, ed. Gerald Maclean, Donna Landry, and Joseph P. Ward (Cambridge, 1999), 160–179, which inaccurately dates English georgic’s “imperial concerns” (163) from Dryden’s 1697 Virgil translation.

81. See Kurt Heinzelmann, “Roman Georgic in the Georgian Age: A Theory of Romantic Genre,” *Texas Studies in Literature and Language* 33 (1991): 182–214; John Murdoch, “The Landscape of Labor: Transformations of the Georgic,” in *Romantic Revolutions: Criticism and Theory*, ed. Kenneth R. Johnston et al. (Bloomington, Ind., 1990), 176–193; Elizabeth K. Helsinger, *Rural Scenes and National Representation: Britain, 1815–1850* (Princeton, 1997), esp. 23–29; and Theodore Ziolkowski, *Virgil and the Moderns* (Princeton, 1993), 104–129.

82. See Robert H. Frank, *Luxury Fever: Money and Happiness in an Era of Excess* (Princeton, 1999); and Alan Wolfe’s review of recent books on American consumerism entitled “Undialectical Materialism,” *New Republic*, October 23, 2000, 29–35 (quotations at 34–35).

## CHAPTER 5

1. See Robert Cleaver and John Dod, *A Godlie form of Householde Government* (1598), 158, 163–164; William Gouge, *Workes*, 2 vols. (London, 1627), 1:130; Richard L. Greaves, *Society and Religion in Elizabethan England* (Minneapolis, 1981), 223–228; and Lawrence Stone, *The Family, Sex, and Marriage in England, 1500–1800* (New York, 1977), 498–501.

2. Alexander Niccholes, *A Discourse of Marriage and Wiving* (London, 1620), 7; “Love me Little, Love me long,” in *Elizabethan Lyrics*, ed. Norman Ault (New York: Capricorn Books, 1949), 61. See also Roland M. Frye, “The Teachings of Classical Puritanism on Conjugal Love,” *Studies in the Renaissance* 2 (1955): 156–158.

3. *Certain Sermons or Homilies* (Oxford, 1840), 448. Early modern variants on one of Publilius Syrus’s proverbs, studied in grammar schools, claim that “A woman either loves or hates to extremes” (Morris Palmer Tilley, *A Dictionary of the Proverbs in England in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* [Ann Arbor, Mich., 1950], 743). The Elizabethan Leonard Wright associates women’s “extremism” with dangerous unruliness: “most women” run to “extreames without meane, either loving dearely or hating

deadly: desirous rather to rule than to be ruled" (*A Display of Dutie* . . . [London, 1589], 36). Authoritative male "moderation" was essential.

4. *The Arundel Harington Manuscript of Tudor Poetry*, ed. Ruth Hughey, 2 vols. (Columbus, Ohio, 1960), 1:308–309; and Thomas Heywood, *A Woman Killed with Kindness*, ed. R. W. Van Fossen (London, 1961), 20 (4.2, 11–12). See also Phineas Fletcher, "Elisa" (1633), in Giles and Phineas Fletcher, *Poetical Works*, ed. Frederick S. Boas, 2 vols. (Cambridge, 1908–1909), 2:265–266.

5. David Cressy, *Birth, Marriage, and Death: Ritual, Religion, and the Life-Cycle in Tudor and Stuart England* (Oxford, 1997), 255.

6. Clement Robinson et al., *A Handful of Pleasant Delights* (1584), ed. Hyder E. Rollins (Cambridge, Mass., 1924), 46; and Robert Herrick, "A Caution," in *The Complete Poetry of Robert Herrick*, ed. J. Max Patrick (Garden City, N.Y., 1963), H-494. See also George Whetstone, *An Heptameron of Civill Discourses* (1582), ed. Diana Shklanka (New York, 1987), 159, 195; and *The Life and Complete Works in Prose and Verse of Robert Greene*, ed. Alexander B. Grosart, 15 vols. (London: 1881–1884), 3:88, 11:134.

7. See Cleaver and Dod, *Godlie form*, 148–149; Gouge, *Works*, 1:110–111; Charles Gibbon, *A Work Worth the Reading* (London, 1591), 5; and Susan Dwyer Amussen, *An Ordered Society: Gender and Class in Early Modern England* (Oxford, 1988), 45. Praise of the mean estate and of marrying a social equal often combined. In 1635 William Habington, depicting himself as "not so high . . . nor so low," imagined his ideal wife as likewise "moderately rich" between "penury" and "superfluity" (*The Poems of William Habington*, ed. Kenneth Allott [Liverpool, 1948], 7, 55).

8. See Cressy, *Birth*, 255–256; Stone, *Family*, 60–61; Lawrence Stone, "Social Mobility in England, 1500–1700," in *Society in an Age of Revolution*, ed. Paul S. Seaver (New York, 1976), 43–47; and Alan Macfarlane, *Marriage and Love in England: Modes of Reproduction, 1300–1840* (Oxford, 1986), 161, 256–259.

9. The doctrine of virtue as "true nobility," espoused by Seneca (*Epistulae morales* 44.5) and Juvenal (*Satire* 8), was a central theme of Renaissance humanism; see Quentin Skinner, *The Foundations of Modern Political Thought*, 2 vols. (Cambridge, 1978), 1:45–46, 81–82, 236–238, 257–259. For English instances, see Mervyn James, "English Politics and the Concept of Honour, 1485–1642," *Society, Politics and Culture: Studies in Early Modern England* (Cambridge, 1986), 378–382; and Peltonen, *Classical Humanism and Republicanism*, 10–11, 35–39, 109–112.

10. Arthur F. Marotti interprets "love" as encoded sociopolitical ambition in "'Love is not Love': Elizabethan Sonnet Sequences and the Social Order," *ELH* 49 (1982): 396–428; Mary Beth Rose offers a spirited feminist rejoinder in *The Expense of Spirit: Love and Sexuality in English Renaissance Drama* (Ithaca, N.Y., 1988), 10–11. For treatments of Elizabethan love as connected but not reducible to sociopolitical ambition, see Catherine Bates, *The Rhetoric of Courtship in Elizabethan Language and Literature* (Cambridge, 1992); and Heather Dubrow, *Echoes of Desire: English Petrarchism and Its Counterdiscourses* (Ithaca, N.Y., 1995).

11. Niklas Luhmann, *Love as Passion: The Codification of Intimacy*, trans. Jeremy Gaines and Doris L. Jones (Cambridge, Mass., 1986), 58–75.

12. I cite the text in Stephen W. May, *The Elizabethan Courtier Poets: The Poems and Their Contexts* (Columbia, Mo., 1991), 299–300.

13. The 1588 sonnet appears in William Byrd's song collection, which is reprinted in *English Madrigal Verse*, ed. E. H. Fellowes and rev. Frederick W. Sternfeld and David Greer (Oxford, 1967), 46.
14. Bacon, *Works*, 9:191–192; and Edward Doughtie, ed., *Lyrics from English Airs, 1596–1622* (Cambridge, Mass., 1970), 348, 585–586.
15. I cite Samuel Daniel, "Poems" and "A Defense of Ryme", ed. Arthur Colby Sprague (London, 1950), 7–36, 170–193.
16. See Robert Vivier, *Frères du ciel: quelques aventures poétiques d'Icare et de Phaéton* (Brussels, 1962), 37–73.
17. Sir Nicholas Bacon, *The Recreations of My Age* (Oxford, 1919), 8; *The Poetry of Thomas Howell (1568–1581)*, ed. A. B. Grosart (Manchester, 1879), 218; see also 219–220.
18. *English Madrigal Verse*, 39–40, 77.
19. All references to Lyly are from *The Complete Works of John Lyly*, ed. R. Warwick Bond, 3 vols. (Oxford, 1902), cited parenthetically in text.
20. Richard Helgerson, *The Elizabethan Prodigals* (Berkeley, 1976), 105–123.
21. Thomas Lodge, *Rosalynd*, ed. Brian Nellist with Simône Batin (Keele, England, 1995), 29–30 (hereafter cited parenthetically in text).
22. On Lodge's rejection of primogeniture, see Arthur F. Kinney, *Humanist Poetics: Thought, Rhetoric, and Fiction in Sixteenth-Century England* (Amherst, Mass., 1986), 373; on younger sons in early modern narratives generally, see Michael McKeon, *The Origins of the English Novel, 1600–1740* (Baltimore, 1987), 218–237.
23. See Judith M. Kennedy's introduction to *A Critical Edition of Yong's Translation of . . . Diana*, ed. Kennedy (Oxford, 1968), xxxix–xl; and Nellist's introduction to Lodge, 21.
24. For patristic to early modern Protestant claims that one should love God "without measure," see Augustine, *Epistulae* 109; Bernard of Clairvaux, *On Loving God [De diligendo Deo]*, 1.1, 6.16–17, in *Selected Works*, trans. G. R. Evans (New York, 1987), 174, 186–187; Aquinas, *Summa Theologica* 2–2.27.6; William Ames, *The Marrow of Sacred Divinity* (London, 1636), 206; *The Minor Poems of Joseph Beaumont*, ed. Eloise Robinson (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1914), 252; Robert Boyle, *Seraphic Love* (1659) in *Works*, ed. Thomas Birch, 6 vols. (London, 1772), 1:249; and Thomas Traherne, *Christian Ethics* (London, 1675), 290–292.
25. Marsilio Ficino, *Commentary on Plato's Symposium on Love*, trans. Sears Jayne (Dallas, 1985), 41, 144; Leone Ebreo, *Dialoghi d'amore*, ed. Carl Gebhardt (Heidelberg, 1929), 13–14; and Maxime Gaume, *Les Inspirations et les sources de l'oeuvre d'Honoré d'Urfé* (Saint-Étienne, France, 1977), 447–448 (which cites Equicola).
26. *Diana*, 157–158; for the Spanish, see Jorge de Montemayor, *Los siete libros de la Diana*, ed. Francisco López Estrada and Teresa López García-Berdoy (Madrid, 1993), 281–283. Cf. *Diana*, 135 [*Siete libros*, 247].
27. *Diana*, 137 [*Siete Libros*, 250].
28. Helgerson, *Prodigals*, 113.
29. A. F. Allison, *Thomas Lodge, 1558–1625: A Bibliographical Catalogue of the Early Editions* (London, 1973), 27–30.
30. See Louis Adrian Montrose, "'The Place of a Brother' in *As You Like It*: Social Process and Comic Form," *Shakespeare Quarterly* 32 (1981): 47–48.

31. William Shakespeare, *As You Like It*, Arden edition, ed. Agnes Latham (London, 1975). Cf. Rosalind's claim that those in an "extremity" of joy or melancholy are "abominable" (4.5.1–2).

32. Judy Z. Kronenfeld, "Social Rank and the Pastoral Ideals of *As You Like It*," *Shakespeare Quarterly* 29 (1978): 333–348; and Paul Alpers, *What Is Pastoral?* (Chicago, 1996), 197–203.

33. I owe a general debt to Richard C. McCoy's reading of the *Arcadias* in terms of Sidney's ambivalences as a courtier; see his *Sir Philip Sidney: Rebellion in Arcadia* (New Brunswick, N.J., 1979).

34. On the *Old Arcadia* as a defense of aristocratic autonomy, see also Debora Shuger, "Castigating Livy: The Rape of Lucretius and the *Old Arcadia*," *Renaissance Quarterly* 51 (1998): 526–548. Shuger focuses on the traditions of political theory informing Sidney's defense of aristocratic autonomy, while I examine Sidney's rhetoric of love in relation to its literary-philosophic sources. Shuger argues persuasively that "sex is political" in Sidney's *Old Arcadia*—and the Elizabethan world—because "personal relationships have political consequences" (535). Yet she also observes that Sidney judges actions in terms of "inner motives" rather than consequences (544). One goal of the *New Arcadia* is to disentangle "noble" erotic desire, however disruptive, from "base" political ambition.

35. Philip Sidney, *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia (The Old Arcadia)*, ed. Jean Robertson (Oxford, 1973), 247, 4 (hereafter this edition of the *Old Arcadia* is cited parenthetically in text). On Lalus and Kala, see also Bates, *Rhetoric*, 112–113; and Blair Worden, *The Sound of Virtue: Philip Sidney's "Arcadia" and Elizabethan Politics* (New Haven, 1996), 306–308.

36. For readings of *Arcadia* that argue for Sidney's more consistent commitment to the Aristotelian mean, see Kinney, *Humanist Poetics*, 262–287; and Worden, *Sound*, chaps. 17 and 18.

37. On the tyrant's emotional extremism, see Rebecca W. Bushnell, *Tragedies of Tyrants: Political Thought and Theater in the English Renaissance* (Ithaca, N.Y., 1990).

38. On Sidney's romance sources, see Robertson's introduction to Sidney, *Old Arcadia*, xx–xxii; Kinney, *Humanist Poetics*, 245–251; and A. C. Hamilton, "Sidney's *Arcadia* as Prose Fiction: Its Relation to Its Sources," *English Literary Renaissance* 2 (1972): 29–60.

39. William Painter, *The Palace of Pleasure*, ed. Joseph Jacobs, 3 vols. (London, 1890), 1:240–284 (quotations at 251–252, 254).

40. Cressy, *Birth*, 267–281, 316–335; and Eric Josef Carlson, *Marriage and the English Reformation* (Oxford, 1994). See also Bates, *Rhetoric*, 117–121.

41. Cressy, *Birth*, 277; Matteo Bandello, *Tragical Tales: The Complete Novels Translated by Geoffrey Fenton*, ed. Hugh Harris (London, n.d.), 153–154.

42. Hamilton argues that Sidney "inverts" *Amadis's* chivalric code ("Sidney's *Arcadia*," 38–42). Robert O'Connor claims that Sidney's *Old Arcadia* recalls the "Amadisian code" but records borrowings with little interpretation ("*Amadis de Gaule*" and Its Influence on *Elizabethan Literature* [New Brunswick, N.J., 1970], 183–202 [quotation at 196]).

43. *Le Premier Livre d'Amadis de Gaule* (1540), ed. Hugues Vaganay, 2 vols. (Paris, 1918), 1:5–6, 16. The "extremité" (1:154) of mutual love between Amadis and the

princess Oriane similarly issues in secret pledged troth, premarital consummation, and, after great delay, public marriage.

44. Norbert Elias, *The Court Society*, trans. Edmund Jephcott (Oxford, 1983), 214–225.

45. *L'Onzième Livre d'Amadis de Gaule*, trans. I.G.P. [Jacques Gohorry] (Paris, 1573), 202, 214; see also Arlanges's declaration of "maladie . . . extreme" (216).

46. I have modified O'Connor's translation (*Amadis de Gaule*, 281–282) against the French text (*L'Onzième Livre*, 217). O'Connor discusses the passage's relation to *Astrophil and Stella* but not to the *Arcadia* (150–153).

47. Sidney's *Apology for Poetry* claims that men "even with reading *Amadis de Gaule* (which God knoweth wanteth much of a perfect poesy) have found their hearts moved to the exercise of courtesy, liberality, and especially courage" (114). While Sidney's parenthetical critique may reflect ethical reservations, he defends the work's moral value. Since the virtues *Amadis* inspires, according to Sidney, are inseparable from love within the romance, Sidney hints at an endorsement of "Amadisian" erotic norms.

48. Anthony Gibson, *A Womans Woorth, defended . . .* (London, 1599), B3v, 20v; Thomas Wright, *The Passions of the Minde* (London, 1601), 71, 74; see also John Heydon's claim that "colder" women are "more temperate" than "boiling" men (*Advice to a Daughter* [London, 1658], 7). Michael C. Schoenfeldt discusses Gibson and Wright on "hot" male intemperance in *Bodies and Selves*, 86–87.

49. Baldesar Castiglione, *The Book of the Courtier*, trans. Sir Thomas Hoby (1561; rpt., New York, 1967), 352, 271.

50. Sidney, *Apology*, 100; see Hamilton, "Sidney's *Arcadia*," 44.

51. Heliodorus, *An Aethiopian History*, trans. Thomas Underdowne (rpt., New York, 1967), 117, 127, 163. This translation was first published ca. 1569 and saw two more Elizabethan editions.

52. Philip Sidney, *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia (The New Arcadia)*, ed. Victor Skretkovicz (Oxford, 1987), 308–309 (hereafter this edition of the *New Arcadia* is cited parenthetically in text).

53. *Le Premier Livre d'Amadis de Gaule*, 1:158–163 (I.14).

54. Kevin Sharpe, *Criticism and Compliment: The Politics of Literature in the England of Charles I* (Cambridge, 1987), 240, 247–251, 277–288.

55. Habington, *Poems*, 57.

56. Annabel M. Patterson, *Censorship and Interpretation: The Conditions of Writing and Reading in Early Modern England* (Madison, Wis., 1984), 32–33, 179.

57. See Honoré d'Urfé, *L'Astrée*, ed. Hugues Vaganay, 5 vols. (Lyon, 1925), 1:289–290, 2:181, 381; on Caroline Neoplatonism, see Erica Veevers, *Images of Love and Religion: Queen Henrietta Maria and Court Entertainments* (Cambridge, 1989), 1–74.

58. Mary Edmund, *Rare Sir William Davenant* (New York, 1987), 54–55.

59. See Malcolm Smuts, *Court Culture and the Origins of a Royalist Tradition in Early Stuart England* (Philadelphia, 1987), 247–253; and J. S. A. Adamson, "Chivalry and Political Culture in Caroline England," in *Culture and Politics in Early Stuart England*, ed. Kevin Sharpe and Peter Lake (Stanford, 1993), 170–177.

60. I cite William Davenant, "Love and Honour" and "The Siege of Rhodes", ed. James Tupper (Boston, 1909), 55–166.

61. *The Poems of Thomas Carew*, ed. Rhodes Dunlap (Oxford, 1957), 12–13.



62. *Petrarch's Lyric Poems: The "Rime sparse" and Other Lyrics*, ed. Robert M. Durling (Cambridge, Mass., 1976), 299; Carew, *Poems*, 44–45. For other examples, see Torquato Tasso, *Opere*, ed. Bruno Maier, 2 vols. (Milan, 1963), 1:397; Barnabe Barnes, *Parthenophil and Parthenophe: A Critical Edition*, ed. Victor A. Doyno (Carbondale, Ill., 1971), 15.

63. Edmund Spenser, *The Yale Edition of the Shorter Poems*, ed. William A. Oram et al. (New Haven, 1989), 555.

64. See Leonard Barkan, *The Gods Made Flesh: Metamorphosis & the Pursuit of Paganism* (New Haven, 1986), 189–194.

65. Lawrence Venuti's argument (*Our Halcyon Days: English Prerevolutionary Texts and Postmodern Culture* [Madison, Wis., 1984], 233–256) that Carew's and other Caroline poets' lyrics celebrating sexual promiscuity subvert in "carnavalesque" fashion the Neoplatonic love they expound in works performed at court captures the contradictions, but not the continuities, in Caroline representations of love.

66. Thomas Elyot, *The Book named the Governor* (1531), ed. S. E. Lehmburg (New York, 1962), 130–131.

67. See Curtis Brown Watson, *Shakespeare and the Renaissance Concept of Honor* (Princeton, 1960), 150–154; and Roy Strong, *Splendour at Court: Renaissance Spectacle and the Theater of Power* (Boston, 1973), 72–73.

68. See Merritt W. Hughes, "The Christ of *Paradise Regained* and the Renaissance Heroic Tradition," *Studies in Philology* 35 (1938): 254–277; and John M. Steadman, "Heroic Virtue and the Divine Image in *Paradise Lost*," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institute* 22 (1959): 88–105.

69. Castiglione, *Courtier*, 314; Steadman cites Tasso ("Heroic Virtue," 90).

70. See David M. Bergeron, *English Civic Pageantry, 1558–1642* (Columbia, S.C., 1971), 219–220; and Richard Brathwaite, *The English Gentleman* (London, 1630), 38, 157, 206–372. See also Henry Peacham's oft-reprinted *Complete Gentleman* (1622), which replaces courtly liberality with a mean of "frugality" that "avoideth . . . lavish bestowing" (*The Complete Gentleman*, ed. Virgil B. Heltzel [Ithaca, N.Y., 1962], 148); and Robert Aylett's mean of "thrift" (*Thrifths Equipage* [London, 1622], 2).

71. Carew, *Poems*, 71–74.

72. *Ben Jonson*, ed. C. H. Herford and Percy and Evelyn Simpson, 11 vols. (Oxford, 1925–1952), 4:370.

#### CHAPTER 6

1. See Luhmann, *Love as Passion*, 58–75; and James Grantham Turner on "the cult of the sexually intense moment" in "The Libertine Sublime: Love and Death in Restoration England," *Studies in Eighteenth-Century Culture* 19 (1989): 99–115. Luhmann underplays the tensions between competing notions of erotic extremism. Turner argues that the idealizing French *précieuse* "concept of erotic greatness . . . prepares the way" for the very different ethos of Restoration libertinism (100–101). I see continual interaction between idealizing and libertine notions of overwhelming passion in the late seventeenth century.

2. See J.A.W. Gunn, *Politics and the Public Interest in the Seventeenth Century* (London, 1969); Albert O. Hirschman, *The Passions and the Interests: Political Arguments for Capitalism before Its Triumph* (Princeton, 1977), 31–56; and Steven Pincus, "Neither

Machiavellian Moment nor Possessive Individualism: Commercial Society and the Defenders of the English Commonwealth," *American Historical Review* 103 (1998): 705–736. I owe my Rohan citation to Hirschman (at 34).

3. Hirschman, *Passions*, 11–12.

4. On separate spheres in eighteenth-century ideology, see Nancy Armstrong, *Desire and Domestic Fiction: A Political History of the Novel* (Oxford, 1987); Michael McKeon, "Historicizing Patriarchy: The Emergence of Gender Difference in England, 1660–1760," *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 28 (1995): 295–322; and Shawn Lisa Maurer, *Proposing Men: Dialectics of Gender and Class in the Eighteenth-Century Periodical* (Stanford, 1998), esp. chap. 6.

5. William Davenant, *Gondibert*, ed. David F. Gladish (Oxford, 1971) (hereafter cited parenthetically in text by book, canto, and stanza number for poetry and by page number for Davenant's preface).

6. See the discussion of Iamblichus, Proclus, and Pseudo-Dionysius on the divine One's emanative "excess" [*hyperbolê*] in Stephen Gersh, *From Iamblichus to Eriugena: An Investigation of the Prehistory and Evolution of the Pseudo-Dionysian Tradition* (Leiden, 1978), 33–35.

7. *The Poems and Fables of John Dryden*, ed. James Kinsley, 4 vols. (Oxford, 1962), 1:30 (hereafter cited parenthetically in text as *Poems*). See Phillip Harth, "Dryden's Public Voices," in *Critical Essays on John Dryden*, ed. James A. Winn (New York, 1997), 104–112.

8. *The Works of John Dryden*, ed. Edward Niles Hooker, H. T. Swedenberg et al., 20 vols. (Berkeley, 1956–), 11:59 (pt. 1: 3.1.452). All references to Dryden's dramas and prose are to this edition (hereafter cited parenthetically in text; passages from the plays are cited by act, scene, and line numbers followed by volume and page numbers).

9. John M. Wallace, "John Dryden's Plays and the Conception of an Heroic Society," in *Culture and Politics from Puritanism to the Enlightenment*, ed. Perez Zagorin (Berkeley, 1980), 116–117.

10. Roger L'Estrange, *Seneca's Morals* (London, 1679), 118.

11. See Jean Hagstrum's discussion of Dryden's tempering of sexual desire with sensibility in *Sex and Sensibility from Milton to Mozart* (Chicago, 1980), 50–71.

12. Leone Ebreo, *The Philosophy of Love*, trans. P. Friedeberg-Seeley and Jean H. Barnes (London, 1937), 62; for the Italian, see Ebreo, *Dialoghi d'amore*, 36.

13. See Arthur C. Kirsch, *Dryden's Heroic Drama* (Princeton, 1965), 46–65; and David Bruce Kramer, *The Imperial Dryden: The Poetics of Appropriation in Seventeenth-Century England* (Athens, Ga., 1994), 3–15, 29–46.

14. Pierre Corneille, *Oeuvres complètes*, ed. André Stegmann (Paris, 1963), 219 ("Examen" of "Le Cid" [1660]; my trans.).

15. Derek Hughes focuses on Almanzor's self-interest at the expense of his heroism; see his *Dryden's Heroic Plays* (Lincoln, Nebr., 1981), 79–117.

16. See J. Douglas Canfield, *Heroes & Saints: On the Ideology of Restoration Tragedy* (Louisville, Ky., 2000), 75.

17. *The Complete Essays of Montaigne*, trans. Donald M. Frame (1958; rpt., Stanford, 1965), 171–172 (trans. modified); Michel de Montaigne, *Les Essais*, ed. Pierre Villey and rev. V. L. Saulnier, 2 vols. (Paris, 1965), 1:231–232. Dryden cites Montaigne in his play's preface (13:12).

18. See Harold Weber, *Paper Bullets: Print and Kingship under Charles II* (Lexington, Ky., 1996), 97–99; Rachel Weil, “Sometimes a Scepter Is Only a Scepter: Pornography and Politics in Restoration England,” in *The Invention of Pornography: Obscenity and the Origins of Modernity, 1500–1800*, ed. Lynn Hunt (New York, 1993), 125–153; and Steven Zwicker, *Lines of Authority: Politics and English Literary Culture, 1649–1689* (Ithaca, N.Y., 1993), 90–129.

19. See David B. Haley, *Dryden and the Problem of Freedom: The Republican Aftermath, 1649–1680* (New Haven, 1997), 214–215.

20. On Dryden’s appeals to moderation, see Steven N. Zwicker, *Politics and Language in Dryden’s Poetry: The Arts of Disguise* (Princeton, 1984), 85–122; and Philip Harth, *Pen for a Party: Dryden’s Tory Propaganda in Its Contexts* (Princeton, 1993), esp. 35–36, 133–135, 209–211.

21. See Howard D. Weinbrot, “‘Nature’s Holy Bands’ in *Absalom and Achitophel*: Fathers and Sons, Satire and Change,” in Winn, ed., *Critical Essays*, 138–160.

22. See Zwicker, *Lines of Authority*, chap. 6; David Bywaters, *Dryden in Revolutionary England* (Berkeley, 1992), 34–56; Howard Erskine-Hill, *Poetry and the Realm of Politics: Shakespeare to Dryden* (Oxford, 1996), 216–251.

23. Montaigne, *Essays*, 147.

24. Dryden and Nathaniel Lee’s collaborative *Oedipus* (1678) similarly treats incest not only as a taboo that the main characters unwittingly transgress (as in Sophocles and Seneca) but also as a more intense love than marital affection: in lines by Dryden (who wrote the first and third acts [13:344]), Oedipus and Jocasta declare that they love each other “more” than a conjugal couple because they also love as son and mother respectively (1.1.527–535, 12:139–140); in lines by Lee, Oedipus registers Jocasta’s “excess” of love (4.1.73, 12:179).

25. Derek Hughes reads the play as a critique of military heroism; see his “Dryden’s *Don Sebastian* and the Literature of Heroism,” *The Yearbook of English Studies* 12 (1982): 72–90. Hughes underplays Dryden’s ambivalence and does not link the military and erotic themes as I do.

26. See James Winn, *John Dryden and His World* (New Haven, 1987), 408–410. Topical readings of *Don Sebastian* have denied or downplayed any implied criticism of James II. Zwicker (*Lines of Authority*) and Bywaters (*Dryden in Revolutionary England*) treat the incest motif as mere strategic camouflage by means of which Dryden, writing in a hostile environment, deflected attention away from the play’s topical import by obscuring his equation of Sebastian with an idealized James II. Erskine-Hill inconclusively treats the incest as both “a metaphor for the inexplicable defeat of truth and right” and as a revelation that “the best of rights” can be defeated by “human frailty” (*Poetry and Politics*, 249–250). In my view Dryden represents Sebastian’s—and, by implication, James’s—humiliation not as “inexplicable” precisely because it results from “human frailty.”

27. *The Eighteenth-Century Constitution, 1688–1815: Documents and Commentary*, ed. E. Neville Williams (Cambridge, 1960), 20–26; and J. R. Kenyon, *Revolution Principles: The Politics of Party, 1689–1720* (Cambridge, 1997), 21–34.

28. See Bywaters, *Dryden in Revolutionary England*, 56–74.

29. Molière, *Oeuvres complètes*, 2 vols., ed. Robert Jouanny (Paris, 1962), 2:134 (l. 548).

30. See Brean Hammond, *Professional Imaginative Writing in England, 1670–1740: “Hackney for Bread”* (Oxford, 1997), 122–123.
31. See, e.g., Catherine Gallagher, *Nobody’s Story: The Vanishing Acts of Women Writers in the Marketplace* (Berkeley, 1994), 1–48; and Ellen Pollak, “Beyond Incest: Gender and the Politics of Transgression in Aphra Behn’s *Love-Letters between a Nobleman and his Sister*,” in *Rereading Aphra Behn: History, Theory, and Criticism*, ed. Heidi Hutner (Charlottesville, Va., 1993), 151–186.
32. Paula Backscheider, *Spectacular Politics: Theatrical Power and Mass Culture in Early Modern England* (Baltimore, 1993), 88. Backscheider notes both “free” and “passionate” ideals of womanhood in Behn, but not their incompatibility.
33. *The Works of Aphra Behn*, ed. Janet Todd, 7 vols. (Columbus, Ohio, 1992–1996), 1:94. All references to Behn’s works are to this edition (henceforth cited parenthetically in text).
34. See Warren Chernaik’s discussion of Behn’s “androgynous imagination” in *Sexual Freedom in Restoration Literature* (Cambridge, 1995), 160–213. Chernaik’s conflates two distinct modes of gender-blurring in Behn’s oeuvre: the cross-dressing female adventurer and the passive, “effeminized” male. The former instantiates Chernaik’s central theme: Behn’s protofeminist exploration of female freedom through the appropriation of the “masculine” role of pursuer. By contrast, I am interested in how Behn’s noble lovers of both genders fall into blissful “female” passivity.
35. On same-sex desire in Behn, see Chernaik, *Sexual Freedom*, 179–183; Bernard Duyfhuizen, “‘That Which I Dare Not Name’: Aphra Behn’s ‘The Willing Mistress,’” *ELH* 58 (1991): 63–82; and Jonathan Goldberg, *Desiring Women Writing: English Renaissance Examples* (Stanford, 1997), 42–72.
36. Abraham Cowley, *Poems*, ed. A. R. Waller (Cambridge, 1905), 37.
37. On the “passive power” of Behn’s males, see Robert A. Erickson, *The Language of the Heart, 1600–1750* (Philadelphia, 1997), 150–151, 180. Erickson weakens his insightful discussion with overly schematic gender oppositions, e.g., between the “active female gazer” and “passive” male (151) in the *Lysander* poem (which treats vision as passive reception) and between a female and phallic heart (157).
38. Nicolas Boileau, *Oeuvres complètes*, ed. Françoise Escal (Paris, 1966), 356–357.
39. Cowley, *Essays, Plays, and Sundry Verses*, 388, 403.
40. Behn’s tags for the 1687 *Aesop* generally follow closely those in Thomas Philipott’s 1666 edition, but this verse moral has no analog in Philipott.
41. See Janet Todd, “Who is Silvia? What is She? Feminine Identity in Aphra Behn’s *Love-Letters between a Nobleman and his Sister*,” in *Aphra Behn Studies* (Cambridge, 1996), ed. Todd, 208–217; and William Warner, *Licensing Entertainment: The Elevation of Novel Reading in Britain, 1684–1750* (Berkeley, 1998), 66–68.
42. See, e.g., Pollak, “Beyond Incest”; Ros Ballaster, *Seductive Forms: Women’s Amatory Fiction from 1684 to 1740* (Oxford, 1992), 109–113; and Judith Kegan Gardiner, “The First English Novel: Aphra Behn’s *Love Letters*, The Canon, and Women’s Tastes,” *Tulsa Studies in Women’s Literature* 8 (1989): 215.
43. On Behn’s equivocations, see Susan Staves, *Players’ Scepters: Fictions of Authority in the Restoration* (Lincoln, Nebr., 1979), 247–251.
44. See Hagstrum, *Sex and Sensibility*, 70–71; Warner, *Licensing Entertainment*, 88–276; and James Turner, “‘Illustrious Depravity’ and the Erotic Sublime,” *Age of Johnson* 2 (1989): 1–38.

45. See Jerome McGann, *The Poetics of Sensibility: A Revolution in Literary Style* (Oxford, 1996), 18, 45–49, 61, 110–111, 115–116. McGann notes the aristocratic resonances of “excess” (111).

46. Georges Bataille, *Death and Sensuality: A Study of Eroticism and the Taboo* (New York, 1962), 164–196; Roland Barthes, *The Pleasure of the Text*, trans. Richard Miller (New York, 1975), 38, 52; idem, *Roland Barthes*, trans. Richard Howard (New York, 1977), 112, 133.

47. Michel Foucault, *Ethics: Subjectivity and Truth*, ed. Paul Rabinow and trans. Robert Hurley et al. (New York, 1994), 129, 131, 316. See also Leo Bersani’s celebration of queer sexual “intensities” that undermine “liberal values” and the selves they presuppose in his “Is the Rectum a Grave?,” in *AIDS: Cultural Analysis/Cultural Activism*, ed. Douglas Crimp (Cambridge, Mass., 1998), 217–218, 221–222. Foucault the historian of sexuality highlighted the beautiful “intensity” of classical notions of moderation and individual self-regulation as a cognitively liberating foil to an oppressive Christian and modern concern with general rules and prohibitions. Yet, however attractive classical moderation appeared to Foucault as a “tool” for critique of the present, he underscored his historicist sense of the gulf between such moderation, which was embedded in “disgusting” ancient modes of domination and could not simply be “reactivated,” and his own pursuit of transgressive “limit-experiences”; see his *History of Sexuality*, trans. Robert Hurley, 3 vols. (New York, 1978–1986), 2:9, 89–91, 250–253; idem, *Ethics*, 258–261.

48. For the twentieth-century French reception of Sadean “excess,” see David B. Allison, Mark S. Roberts, and Allen S. Weiss, eds., *Sade and the Narrative of Transgression* (Cambridge, 1995); Michel Foucault, “Preface to Transgression,” in *Language, Counter-Memory, Practice*, ed. and trans. Donald F. Bouchard with Sherry Simon (Ithaca, N.Y., 1977), 39–40; Roland Barthes, *Pleasure*, 57–58, 65.

49. Pierre Bourdieu and Loïc J. D. Wacquant, *An Invitation to Reflexive Sociology* (Chicago, 1992), 153–155, 197; Barthes, *Pleasure*, 23, 38–39. Cf. Rogert Shattuck, *Forbidden Knowledge: From Prometheus to Pornography* (New York, 1996), 241.

50. Contrast Philippe Sollers’s limitation of sexual-textual libertinism to the gifted few in “What is Libertinage?” in Catharine Cusset, ed., *Libertinage and Modernity*, *Yale French Studies* 94 (1998): 205–206, with Foucault’s egalitarian posture in *Ethics*, 261. While committed to Sadean transgression, Foucault increasingly stressed the need to go beyond Sade’s “hierarchical” assumptions; see his *History of Sexuality*, 1:148–150, and James Miller, *The Passion of Michel Foucault* (New York, 1993), esp. 87–89, 242–244, 278–279. Foucault tried to sever a radically antisocial, individualistic (Nietzschean/Sadean) ethics of free self-creation from its hierarchical associations with exceptional individuals and to disjoin egalitarianism from general norms; see Luc Ferry and Alain Renaut, *French Philosophy of the Sixties: An Essay on Antihumanism*, trans. Mary H. S. Cattani (Amherst, Mass., 1990), 107–121. For an egalitarian defense of Barthes’s aristocratic “luxury” as a tactical protest against the suppression of everyone’s right to more pleasure, see Joseph Litvack, *Strange Gourmets: Sophistication, Theory, and the Novel* (Durham, N.C., 1997), 112–150, 168 n. 44.

51. Mary Masters, *Poems on Several Occasions* (London, 1733), 151; Elizabeth Rowe, *Miscellaneous Works in Prose and Verse*, 3d. ed., 2 vols. (London, 1750), 1:112–115.

52. See Eliza Haywood, *Love in Excess: or, The Fatal Enquiry*, ed. David Oakleaf (Peterborough, Ontario, Canada, 1994), 183, 205–206.

53. Eliza Haywood, *Three Novellas*: “*The Distress’d Orphan*,” “*The City Jilt*,” “*The Double Marriage*,” ed. Earla A. Wilputte (East Lansing, Mich., 1995), 29, 32, 35.

54. On the tensions between norms of personal self-fulfillment and of work in contemporary capitalism, see Daniel Bell, *The Cultural Contradictions of Capitalism*, 2d. ed. (New York, 1978); and Alan Ryan, *John Dewey and the High Tide of American Liberalism* (New York, 1995), 328–329.

## CHAPTER 7

1. On aspects of English symposiastic tradition, see Earl Miner, *The Cavalier Mode from Jonson to Cotton* (Princeton, 1971), 109–122; Julia Martindale, “The Best Master of Virtue and Wisdom: The Horace of Ben Jonson and His Heirs,” in *Horace Made New: Horatian Influences on British Writing from the Renaissance to the Twentieth Century*, ed. Charles Martindale and David Hopkins (Cambridge, 1993), 71–84; and Michael Baumann, “*Die Anakreonteen*” in *englischen Übersetzungen* (Heidelberg, 1974), 1–86.

2. On moderate/immoderate drinking in ancient symposiastic poetry, see D. A. Campbell, *The Golden Lyre: The Themes of the Greek Lyric Poets* (London, 1983), 36–47; Patricia A. Rosenmeyer, *The Poetics of Imitation: Anacreon and the Anacreontic Tradition* (Cambridge, 1992), 53–55, 113; Arthur Patch McKinlay, “The Wine Element in Horace,” *Classical Journal* 42 (1946–1947): 161–168, 229–236; Gregson Davis, *Polyhymnia: The Rhetoric of Horatian Lyric Discourse* (Berkeley, 1991), 145–188; and Antonio La Penna, “Il vino di Orazio: nel *modus* e contro il *modus*,” in *In Vino Veritas*, ed. Oswyn Murray and Manuela Tecusan (London, 1995), 266–280.

3. See Henri Estienne, ed., *Anacreontis . . . Odae* (Paris, 1554), 76–77; see also, e.g., Horace, *Opera* (Basel, 1580), 251–252, 254; idem, *Opera*, ed. Bernardino Parthenio (Venice, 1584), 20, 24, 39, 85, 112.

4. Greaves, *Society and Religion*, 483–489.

5. James I, *A Counter-Blaste to Tobacco* (1604), ed. Edmund Goldsmid (Edinburgh, 1884), 27; Samuel Ward, *Woe to Drunkards* (London, 1622), 15. See also Thomas Young, *Englands Bane, or, The Description of Drunkenness* (London, 1617), D1r; and R. Junius [Richard Younge?], *The Drunkard’s Character* (London, 1638), 28–29. Drunkenness was generally treated with more alarm than the related excess of gluttony, perhaps because drunkenness was associated with violent behavior and because the lower orders, for whom ale and beer were staples of a scant diet, were more in danger of drunkenness. See Stephen Mennell, *All Manners of Food: Eating and Taste in England and France from the Middle Ages to the Present* (Oxford, 1985), 29–30, 104–106. J. Rigbie notes drunkenness has greater “Disreputation” than gluttony (*An Ingenious Poem, called the Drunkards Prospective* [London, 1656], 22); William Ramesey declares drunkenness “abundantly worse” (*The Gentlemans Companion* [London, 1672], 117).

6. See Burton, *Anatomy*, 2:247–250 (2.5.1.5).

7. Tobias Venner, *Via Recta ad Vitam Longam* (London, 1637), 27; *Regimen Sanitatis Salerni*, trans. Thomas Paynell (London, 1557), H5r.

8. [Sir Thomas Smith?], *A Discourse of the Commonweal of this realm of England*, ed. Mary Dewar (Charlottesville, Va., 1969), 122–123; Mun, *England’s Treasure*, 193. See also William Harrison, *The Description of England* [1577, rev. 1587], ed. George Edelen (Ithaca, N.Y., 1968), 130, 435–437; Thomas Heywood, *Philocothonista, or, The Drunk-*

and Opened, Dissected, and Anatomized (London, 1635), 47; and Henry Robinson, *Englands Safety in Trades Encrease* (London, 1642), 9.

9. On Jonson's collocation of "wine" and "wit," see "To Lucy Countesse of Bedford," ll. 5–6 in *Ben Jonson*, ed. C. H. Herford and Percy and Evelyn Simpson, 11 vols. (Oxford, 1925–1952), 8:55. All references to Jonson are to this edition (hereafter cited parenthetically in text; I give line numbers or act, scene, and line numbers followed by volume and page numbers).

10. My focus complements the explorations of Jonson's preoccupation with moderation and excess in eating and drinking in Bruce Thomas Boehrer, *The Fury of Men's Gullets: Ben Jonson and the Digestive Canal* (Philadelphia, 1997) and Leah S. Marcus, *The Politics of Mirth: Jonson, Herrick, Milton, Marvell and the Defense of Old Holiday Pastimes* (Chicago, 1986), 1–140. Boehrer examines Jonson's appropriations of Martial's convivial poetics in relation to early modern English notions of civility. This Martialesque strand looms larger in Jonson's own work but is less important for later drinking poetry than the Anacreontic-Horatian strain discussed here. While Marcus examines Jonson the dramatist and masque writer's representations of eating and drinking in relation to court festivity and ideology, I explore how Jonson constructs his own symposiastic occasions and norms by appropriating for English poetry a classical lyric tradition.

11. David Riggs (*Ben Jonson: A Life* [Cambridge, Mass., 1989], 230) suggests 1605–1612 as approximate dates of composition. I argue, however, that the poem probably predates Jonson's return to the English church in 1610.

12. See Thomas M. Greene, *The Light in Troy: Imitation and Discovery in Renaissance Poetry* (New Haven, 1982), 278–284; for other readings, see Boehrer, *Fury*, 87–92; and Joseph Loewenstein, "The Jonsonian Corpulence, or the Poet as Mouthpiece," *ELH* 53 (1986): 491–518. These discussions of Jonson's poem as a whole justify my focus on a passage that has received insufficient attention.

13. Anacreon and the *Anacreontea* celebrate wine but never mention food, while Horace's symposiastic odes dwell lovingly on wine but contain only two allusions to an (unparticularized) "feast" [*dapes*] (2.7.17, 1.37.4). On *convivium* versus *symposium*, see Oswyn Murray, "Symposion and Männerbund," in *Concilium Eirene*, ed. Alena Foličková and Pavel Oliva, 3 vols. (Prague, 1983), 1:47–52; on wine versus food in Horace, see La Penna, "Il vino di Orazio," 269.

14. See Cristiano Grottanelli, "Wine and Death—East and West," in Murray and Tecusan, *In Vino Veritas*, 62–92; and Lowell Edmunds, *From a Sabine Jar: Reading Horace, Odes 1.9* (Chapel Hill, 1992), 62–65.

15. Horace's *Epistle* 1.19 claims that "no poems can please long, nor live, which are written by water-drinkers" (ll. 2–3). While modern readers take this claim ironically, some Renaissance commentators read it as a serious gloss on Horace's odes; see the 1580 *Basel Opera*, 2199–2204, an edition owned by Jonson (as is noted in David Macpherson, "Ben Jonson's Library and Marginalia: An Annotated Catalogue," *Studies in Philology* 71 [1974]: 53–54).

16. In his commonplace book *Discoveries*, Jonson treats poetic excellence more soberly as arising from "naturall wit." He also associates it with symposiastic drunkenness, however, when he notes, regarding "*Poeticall Rapture*," that "Aliquando secundum Anacreontem insanire, iucundum est" ("Sometimes according to Anacreon it is pleasant to rave," 8:637). Inserting the Anacreon reference into a Senecan remark (*De tran-*

*quillitate animi* 17.10), Jonson recalls *Anacreontea* 13 (Loeb 12) and 31 (Loeb 9), in which the poet declares that he wishes to drink in order to “be mad” (“manênai/furere,” *Anacreontis* . . . *Odae*, 101).

17. See A. Lynn Martin, “Old Age, Alcohol, and Identity in Europe, 1300–1700,” in *Food, Drink and Identity: Cooking, Eating and Drinking in Europe Since the Middle Ages*, ed. Peter Scholliers (Oxford, 2001), 125–128.

18. Thomas Stanley, *Poems and Translations*, ed. Galbraith Miller Crump (Oxford, 1962), 92. See also *Anacreontea* 38 (Loeb 47) and 54 (Loeb 53). For individual *Anacreontea* I give Estienne’s number followed by the Loeb number. Estienne subsequently reissued his text and partial translation of the *Anacreontea* with the Neolatin translations by Elie André of the odes he did not himself translate; the Estienne-André edition is, as Gordon Braden notes (*The Classics and English Renaissance Poetry* [New Haven, 1978], 255–258), the major source for early modern Anacreontic poetry. According to Macpherson (“Ben Jonson’s Library,” 77), Jonson owned a 1598 version of this edition.

19. Stanley, *Poems*, 81, 85 (*Anacreontea* 15 = Loeb 8; *Anacreontea* 24 = Loeb 40).

20. George Puttenham, *The Arte of English Poesie*, ed. Gladys Doidge Willcock and Alice Walker (Cambridge, 1936), 191.

21. André L. Simon, *The History of the Wine Trade in England*, 3 vols. (London, 1909), 3:382–389.

22. Giulio Cesare Scaliger, *Poetices Libri Septem* (Heidelberg, 1594), 11; Thomas Nashe, *Nashes Lenten Stuff* (1599), in *The Works of Thomas Nashe*, ed. Ronald B. McKerrow and rev. F. P. Wilson, 5 vols. (Oxford, 1958), 3:152. Cf. Richard Wills, *De re poetica* (1573), ed. A.D.S. Fowler (Oxford, 1958), 58–61.

23. See François Lissarrague, *The Aesthetics of the Greek Banquet: Images of Wine and Ritual*, trans. Andrew Szegedy-Maszak (Princeton, 1990), 3–18; and James N. Davidson, *Courtesans and Fishcakes: The Consuming Passions of Classical Athens* (London, 1997), 45–49, 157–159. Leo Spitzer discusses the etymological and notional associations of the Greek *kerannumi* and its Latin equivalent *temperare* (= “to temper, moderate”) with wine dilution in *Classical and Christian Ideas of World Harmony: Prolegomena to an Interpretation of the Word “Stimmung,”* ed. Anna Granville Hatcher (Baltimore, 1963), 80–82. A medieval emblem of Temperance with wine and water reveals the theme’s endurance; see Bridget Ann Henisch, *Fast and Feast* (Philadelphia, 1976), 202).

24. See, e.g., Thomas Elyot, *The Castel of Health* (1541), introd. Samuel A. Tannenbaum (New York, 1937), 44; Andrew Borde, *A Compendyous Regyment or a Dyetary of Helth* (1542), included in Borde, *The First Boke of . . . Knowledge . . .*, ed. F. J. Furnivall (London, 1870), 254; *Regimen Sanitatis Salerni*, H4v; *The Englishmans Doctor, or, The School of Salerne*, trans. J. Harington (London, 1607), A7v; and Venner, *Via Recta*, 38–42. All these works were frequently reprinted in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

25. Desiderius Erasmus, *Colloquia*, ed. L.-E. Halkin, F. Bierlaire, and R. Hoven, *Opera Omnia*, vol. 3 (Amsterdam, 1972), 731; *The Colloquies of Erasmus*, trans. Craig R. Thompson (Chicago, 1965), 548; Guazzo, *Civil Conversation*, 2:144–145. See also Heywood, *Philocothonista*, 83, 91.



26. Evelyn Plummer Read and Conyers Read, eds., *Elizabeth of England: "Certain Observations concerning the Life and Reign of Queen Elizabeth"* by John Clapham (Philadelphia, 1951), 89.

27. Venner, *Via Recta*, 32; see also R[obert] C[rofts], *The Way to Happinesse on Earth* (London, 1641), 315.

28. Peter Clark, *The English Alehouse: A Social History, 1200–1830* (London, 1983), 132–133; Jerome Friedman, *The Battle of the Frogs and Fairford's Flies: Miracles and the Pulp Press During the English Revolution* (New York, 1993), 171–172. Authors often derived "tobacco" from "Bacchus." See, e.g., [Richard Brathwaite], *The Smoaking Age . . .* (London, 1617), 144–145; Joshua Sylvester, *Tobacco Battered* (1617), ll. 227–228, *Complete Works*, ed. Alexander Grosart (Edinburgh, 1880), 2:269; and Raphael Thorius, *A Poem in Honour of Tobacco*, trans. Peter Hausted (London, 1651), 13ff. Jeffrey Knapp's brilliant analysis of Elizabethans' obsession with tobacco as an American product does not address its association with wine; see *An Empire Nowhere: England, America, and Literature from "Utopia" to "The Tempest"* (Berkeley, 1993), 134–174.

29. James I, *Counter-blaste*, 7–8. Tobias Venner (*A Briefe and Accurate Treatise concerning . . . Tobacco* [1621; rpt., London, 1637], 3) notes tobacco's beneficial effects "taken with moderation" but warns against excess. On tobacco as a dangerous foreign luxury, see Drayton, *Poly-Olbion* 16.351–352; and Mun, *England's Treasury*, 192–193.

30. James I, *Counter-blaste*, 27; Young, *Englands Bane*, E3r. See also Sylvester, *Tobacco Battered* (ll. 221–223), *Complete Works*, 2:269; and Witts *Recreations*, introd. Colin Gibson (1640; rpt., Aldershot, Hampshire, England, 1990), E5v.

31. See Sarah Augusta Dickson, *Panacea or Precious Bane: Tobacco in Sixteenth Century Literature* (New York, 1954), 190–193.

32. *The Poems of Sir John Beaumont*, ed. Alexander Grosart (Blackburn, England, 1869), 313–315.

33. Cf. Jonson's disparaging reference to "poor Hop-Drinkers"—both benighted and impecunious—in "Over the Door at the Entrance into the Apollo" (l. 7; 8:657). Jonson's *Masque of Augurs* (1622) similarly associates ale with the excess of lowly drinkers who "spue and stinke, / And often pisse out" (ll. 206–207; 7:636). For cross-cultural discussions of alcoholic beverages as contrastive social markers, see the essays by Mary Douglas, Mary Anna Thornton, Ndolamb Ngokwey, and Anne Tyler Calabresi in *Constructive Drinking: Perspectives on Drink from Anthropology*, ed. Douglas (Cambridge, 1987), 9–11, 102–134.

34. See Emily Gowers, *The Loaded Table: Representations of Food in Roman Literature* (Oxford, 1993), 19–20; Basil, *Regulae breves* 71; and *Certain Sermons or Homilies*, 270.

35. Pierre Bourdieu, *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgment of Taste*, trans. Richard Nice (Cambridge, Mass., 1984), 196.

36. Judith M. Bennett, *Ale, Beer, and Brewers in England: Women's Work in a Changing World, 1300–1600* (Oxford, 1996), 79–84 (quotations at 80, 212 n. 17).

37. Adolf Herte describes numerous Catholic polemics accusing Luther of being a drunkard; see *Das katholische Lutherbild im Bann der Lutherkommentare des Cochläus*, 2 vols. (Munster, 1943).

38. See Graham Bradshaw, "Three Poems Ben Jonson Did Not Write: A Note on Jonson's Christian Humanism," *ELH* 47 (1980): 488–490.

39. Erasmus, *Colloquia*, 248, 265; *Colloquies*, 62–63, 76–77; cf. *Colloquia*, 563–564; *Colloquies*, 380–381.

40. See Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistes* 427a–b; *Anacreontis . . . odae*, 77. The contrast between the moderate symposium and barbarism is a Greek commonplace; see Ezio Pellizer, “Outlines of a Morphology of Sympotic Entertainment,” in *Symptica: A Symposium on the Symposium*, ed. Oswyn Murray (Oxford, 1990), 178–179.

41. George Gascoigne, *Complete Works*, ed. John W. Cunliffe, 2 vols. (Cambridge, 1910), 2:465; Greene, *Complete Works*, 8:27; Fynes Moryson, *An Itinerary*, 4 vols. (1617; rpt., Glasgow, 1909), 4:40–41. Cf. Guazzo, *Civil Conversation*, 1:213; Nashe, *Pierce Penilesse* (1592), in *Works*, 1:206–207; [Richard Brathwaite], *A Solemne Ioviall Disputation* (1617), A4, 1–2; Heywood, *Philocothonista*, 29–30; and Robert Harris, *The Drunkards Cup* (London, 1630), 23.

42. Jay Allan Anderson, “‘A Solid Sufficiency’: An Ethnography of Yeoman Foodways in Stuart England” (Ph.D. diss., University of Pennsylvania, 1971), 89–99.

43. Bennett (*Ale, Beer, and Brewers*, 80) cites Borde and Taylor. Cf. Nashe, *Summer’s Last Will and Testament* (1600), ll. 1120–1121, in *Works*, 3:269.

44. Loewenstein discerns in Jonson’s Mermaid reference “the mediation of the marketplace” (“Jonsonian Corpulence,” 497–499). I read the Mermaid as a commercial “middleman” that guarantees the purity and symbolic “Englishness” of Jonson’s imported wine.

45. For Bacchus as reliever of care, see *Anacreontea* 4 = Loeb 32, 25 = Loeb 45, 27 = Loeb 49, 41 = Loeb 38, 50 = Loeb 56; as health giver, see *Anacreontea* 50 = Loeb 56; as companion of Venus and the graces, see *Anacreontea* 17 = Loeb 4, 18 = Loeb 5, 41 = Loeb 38, 6 = Loeb 43, 27 = Loeb 49; and as inspirer of dance, see *Anacreontea* 41 = Loeb 38, 24 = Loeb 40, 27 = Loeb 49.

46. See John Brand, *Observations on the Popular Antiquities of Great Britain*, 3 vols. (London, 1854), 2:325–342. For an anthropological analysis of toasts as community builders, see Gerald Mars and Yochanan Altman, “Alternative Mechanisms of Distribution in a Soviet Economy,” in *Constructive Drinking*, ed. Douglas, 272–276.

47. William Prynne, *Healthes: Sicknesse* (London, 1628), 6–7; Harris, *The Drunkards Cup*, 28–29. See also Gascoigne, *Works*, 2:458; Young, *Englands Bane*, B3v; and Ward, *Woe to Drunkards*, 47.

48. See Michael McCandles, *Jonsonian Discriminations: The Humanist Poet and the Praise of True Nobility* (Toronto, 1992), 69; and Katharine Eisaman Maus, *Ben Jonson and the Roman Frame of Mind* (Princeton, 1984), 124.

49. Lisle Cecil John, “Ben Jonson’s ‘To Sir William Sidney, On his Birthday,’” *Modern Language Review* 52 (1957): 168–176.

50. Edmund Waller, *Poems*, ed. G. Thorn Drury (1893; rpt., New York, 1968), 89–90.

51. See Philip Stubbes, *The Anatomie of Abuses* (1583), ed. F. J. Furnivall (London, 1877–1879), 108; Nashe, *Pierce Penilesse*, in *Works*, 1:207–208; Young, *Englands Bane*, F2v–F3r; Heywood, *Philocothonista*, 2–5. Heywood’s title page, which graces the dust jacket of this study, proclaims the bestiality of drunkards by depicting tavern revelers with animal heads quaffing, fighting, smoking, and vomiting.

52. Gascoigne, *Works*, 2:256–258; Junius, *Drunkard’s Character*, 5. See also Stubbes, *The Anatomie of Abuses*, 108.

53. *The Poems of William Habington*, ed. Kenneth Allott (Liverpool, 1948), 61–62.

54. William Prynne, *Histrio-Mastix; The Players Scourge* (London, 1633), 511.

55. Young, *Englands Bane*, E1v. See also Junius, *Drunkard’s Character*, 329.

56. Davidson contrasts “modern Western prejudice against solitary drinking” with ancient Greek worries about excessive social drinking (*Courtesans*, 38, 154). Perhaps

the “prejudice,” as in Habington, responds to social fragmentation and consequent anxiety about alienated individuals.

57. Thomas Randolph, *Poetical and Dramatic Works*, ed. W. Carew Hazlitt (London, 1875), 19.

58. Randolph, *Works*, 15, 17. See Richard Brathwaite’s frontispiece to his *Solemne Joviall Disputation*, which depicts contrasting parties of refined wine drinkers, with the engraved names “Aristippus” and “Apollo” emphasizing their classical pedigree, and lowlife beer guzzlers displaying (according to Brathwaite’s gloss) “beastliness.”

59. Randolph, *Works*, 10–11, 15–16, 33. Nicholas Tyacke cites *Aristippus* to link Cavalier poets’ espousal of ancient hedonism with Arminianism, both of which sought to “rehabilitate natural man by denying predestinarian dogma” (“Arminianism and English Culture,” in *Church and State Since the Reformation*, ed. A. C. Duke and C. A. Tamsie [The Hague, 1981], 113–117). I see a looser connection based not on theological tenets—concerning which Randolph displays little interest—but on the sociocultural resonances of Arminianism versus Puritanism.

60. Randolph, *Works*, 22, 8.

61. “Tunc cura dormit omnis / Croesumque sperno prae me” (Estienne, ed., *Anacreontis . . . Odae*, 97). The Greek is slightly less self-aggrandizing.

62. See, e.g., Horace, *Opera* (1580), 374–375.

63. Marcus, *Politics of Mirth*, 140–168; Peter Stallybrass, “‘Wee feaste in our Defense’: Patrician Carnival in Early Modern England and Robert Herrick’s ‘Hesperides,’” *English Literary Renaissance* 16 (1986): 234–252; and Thomas M. Corns, *Uncloistered Virtue: English Political Literature, 1640–1660* (Oxford, 1992), 91–114.

64. I cite Robert Herrick, *The Complete Poetry*, 2d ed., ed. J. Max Patrick (New York, 1968) (Patrick’s poem numbers appear parenthetically in text).

65. Clark, *English Alehouse*, 145–165, 176–178; Friedman, *Battle of Frogs*, 159–170; and David Underdown, *Revel, Riot, and Rebellion: Popular Politics and Culture in England, 1603–1660* (Oxford, 1987), 241–242. On the radical sects’ cult of alehouse alcohol and tobacco, see Christopher Hill, *The World Turned Upside Down: Radical Ideas During the English Revolution* (Harmondsworth, England, 1975), 197–203.

66. *A Preparative to Studie: or, The Vertue of Sack* (London, 1641), 1–2; *The Loyal Garland, Containing Choice Songs and Sonnets of our Late Unhappy Revolutions* (London, 1673), C3r. The composition date of “Canary’s Coronation” is uncertain.

67. See “A Hymne to Cromwell” (1649) in *Cavalier and Puritan: Ballads and Broad-sides Illustrating the Period of the Great Rebellion, 1640–1650*, ed. Hyder E. Rollins (New York, 1923), 288–290; and “The Protecting Brewer,” in *The Rump: Or an Exact Collection of . . . Poems and Songs* (London, 1661), which declares a “Brewer” may be a “Lord General” and “Lord Protector” (332).

68. See the seventeenth-century jingle “Cobblers and tinkers are the best aledrinkers,” in *The Oxford Dictionary of English Proverbs*, 3d ed., ed. William George Smith and F. P. Wilson (Oxford, 1970), 130; *The Overburian Characters*, ed. W. J. Paylor (Oxford, 1936), 35; and Burton, *Anatomy*, 2:230 (2.4.2.1).

69. See Braden’s excellent treatment of Herrick’s relation to “Anacreon” and Horace in his *Classics and English Renaissance Poetry*, 196–254.

70. Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae*, 35b–d; Stobaeus, *Apophthegmata/Sententiae*, trans. Conrad Gesner (Basel, 1549), 165. Cf. Guazzo, *Civil Conversation*, 2:152.

71. Marcus, *Politics of Mirth*, 147–148.

72. Thomas Fuller, *The Holy State and the Profane State* (1642), ed. Maximilian Graff Walten, 2 vols. (New York, 1938), 1:113.
73. See also Francis Quarles's oft-reprinted *Boanerges and Barnabas . . . Wine and Oil for Wounded and Afflicted Souls* (London, 1645).
74. See, e.g., Horace, *All the Odes and Epodes*, trans. Henry Rider (London, 1638), 75, 89 (*Odes* 3.14 and 3.29).
75. Burton, *Anatomy*, 3:101 (3.2.2.3).
76. Estienne relegated this poem to an appendix because it was obviously not by Anacreon; see Braden, *Classics and English Renaissance Literature*, 257. Herrick was attracted to the poem because it thematized the way a poet could revive "Anacreon" by adopting Anacreontic procedures.
77. See Joshua Scodel, *English Poetic Epitaph: Commemoration and Conflict from Jonson to Wordsworth* (Ithaca, N.Y., 1991), 162–193.

## CHAPTER 8

1. *The Poems of Richard Lovelace*, ed. C. H. Wilkinson (Oxford, 1930), 81–82 (hereafter cited parenthetically in text). On Goring's company, see Corns, *Uncloistered Virtue*, 70. Corns provides insightful discussions of Lovelace's drinking poems (69–70, 248–249).
2. Brathwaite, *English Gentleman*, 180; John Suckling, *Brennoralt* (1646) in *The Works of Sir John Suckling: The Plays*, ed. L. A. Beaurline (Oxford, 1971), 189 (1.2.11). On the cross-cultural use of alcohol to instill "fighting spirit," see John Keegan and Richard Holmes, *Soldiers: A History of Men in Battle* (London, 1985), 53–54.
3. *The Poems and Plays of William Cartwright*, ed. G. Blakemore Evans (Madison, Wis., 1951), 200. See Willa McClung Evans, "Lovelace's Concept of Prison Life in 'The Vintage to the Dungeon,'" *Philological Quarterly* 26 (1947): 62–68.
4. Cartwright, *Poems and Plays*, 224, 227 (3.2.758, 3.3.860–874); [John Hilton,] *Catch that Catch Can* (London, 1658), 28.
5. Stanley, *Poems*, 77–78.
6. Robert Burton cites various church fathers on wine's stirring of lechery (*Anatomy*, 3:64 [3.2.2.2]). The anonymous *Wine and Women* (London, 1646) notes "'tis hard to find a drunkard that is chaste" (7).
7. For other intertextual readings, see Miner, *Cavalier Mode*, 282–297; Martindale, "Best Master," 73–75; D. C. Allen, *Image and Meaning: Metaphoric Traditions in Renaissance Poetry*, rev. ed. (Baltimore, 1968), 152–164; Raymond Anselment, *Loyalist Resolve: Patient Fortitude in the English Civil War* (Newark, Del., 1988), 105–107; and James Loxley, *Royalism and Poetry in the English Civil Wars: The Drawn Sword* (London, 1997), 217–223. On the poem's date of composition, see Anselment, *Loyalist Resolve*, 98, 199 n. 5, 200 n. 32.
8. Stanley, *Poems*, 84.
9. Lovelace's posthumously published "The Ant" (134–135) reads like a companion to "The Grasse-hopper." Lovelace declares the "Austere" (l. 19) ant—who represents killjoy Puritans—as "worse than prodigal" (l. 18) for not recognizing that he should enjoy life while he can. While "The Grasse-hopper" criticizes royal and Royalist imprudence, "The Ant" criticizes Puritanism as false prudence. In both poems Lovelace identifies "true" prudence with Horatian enjoyment of the present.

10. On Puritans' attempted suppression of Christmas celebrations, see Christopher Durston, "Puritan Rule and the Failure of Cultural Revolution, 1645–1660," in *The Culture of English Puritanism, 1560–1700*, ed. Durston and Jacqueline Eales (New York, 1996), 223–224.

11. Alexander Brome, "The New-Courtier" (ll. 4–5), in *Poems*, ed. Roman R. Dubinski, 2 vols. (Toronto, 1982), 1:128 (hereafter cited parenthetically in text); Katherine Philips, "To my dear Sister . . ." (l. 2), in *Poems* (1667), introd. Travis Dupriest (Delmar, N.Y., 1992), 26. In 1657 Hugh Crompton, who often echoes Lovelace, plays with the Royalist resonances of the "crowned" cup. His description of an overflowing "crown" of wine glances at the executed king's lost crown: "since the crown from th'head doth roll, / Upon my nose Ile wear it" ("The Conceit," in *Pierides, or the Muses Mount* [London, 1657], 8–9). Crompton's sporting of a "crown" of wine upon his nose—which he then declares "no crime"—encodes defiant Royalism. It perhaps simultaneously mocks the idea of crowning Cromwell, who, as Laura Lunger Knoppers notes, was famous for a bulbous—and drink-reddened—nose; see her "Noll's Nose or Body Politics in Cromwellian England," in *Form and Reform in Renaissance England: Essays in Honor of Barbara Kiefer Lewalski*, ed. Amy Boesky and Mary Thomas Crane (Newark, Del., 2000), 21–44.

12. Loxley, by contrast, reads the stanza as a call for "armed resistance," brusquely conflating companionate drinking with Royalist riots (*Royalism and Poetry*, 223–224).

13. Mathias Casimire Sarbiewski, *The Odes of Casimire* (1646), trans. G. Hils, ed. Maren-Sofie Røstvig (Los Angeles, 1953), 97 (*Ode* 4.34.9); Ben Jonson, 8:27; cf. "Epigram XVI," l. 10 (8:32) and "Epigram CXIX," ll. 15–16 (8:76).

14. See Lois Potter, *Secret Rites and Secret Writing: Royalist Literature, 1641–1660* (Cambridge, 1989), 140–148; and Anselment, *Loyalist Resolve*, 129–136.

15. Thomas Stanley, *Anacreon, Bion, Moschus* (London, 1651), 85, 87.

16. On the *Anacreontiques'* Royalism, see Stella Revard, "The Politics of Cowley's *Anacreontiques*," *Ben Jonson Journal* 4 (1997): 147–148.

17. Cowley, *Poems*, 57.

18. Cowley, *Poems*, 60–61. Anacreon's legendary death leant itself to moralizing: a Tudor dialogue adduces it to prove "the unhappie end of those, that passe the golden meane, and cleave to the excesse" (Edmund Tilney, *The Flower of Friendship* [1573], ed. Valerie Wayne [Ithaca, N.Y., 1992], 117).

19. Crompton, *Pierides*, 15–16.

20. Cf. "To C. S. Esquire" (1:250–253), in which Brome declares his love for the virtuous "middle" where there is "Safety and delight" (ll. 40–42) but then suggests that if such a position is "too high" he'll "comply" with ruling powers by "creeping lower" (ll. 43–44). His figuring of such lowliness as a sodomitic love of the Rump Parliament—"In an *Italian* way I'll venter, / To love the very Rump" (ll. 47–48)—reveals contempt not only for the Rump but also for himself as an "ass-kisser."

21. See Scodel, *English Poetic Epitaph*, 205–206; Charles Cotton, "Chanson à Boire" and "Anacreontic," in *Poems of Charles Cotton, 1630–1687*, ed. John Beresford (London, 1923), 353–354.

22. The 1659 version appears in [John Gamble, ed.], *Ayres and Dialogues* (London, 1659), 47, which differs by one word (discussed later) from the posthumous 1689 version in Cotton, *Poems*, 358–359.

23. Cotton, *Poems*, 355–357.

24. On *temperantia*'s relation to *tempus* in classical to Renaissance thought, see Spitzer, *Classical and Christian Ideas of World Harmony*, 82, 94–95, 100. On medieval and early modern depictions of *Temperantia* with a timepiece, see Lynn White Jr., "The Iconography of *Temperantia* and the Virtuousness of Technology," in *Action and Conviction in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Theodore K. Rabb and Jerrold E. Seigel (Princeton, 1969), 197–219; see also Caesar Ripa's oft-reprinted *Iconologia*, rev. ed. [1603], ed. Erna Mandowsky (Hidelsheim, Germany, 1970), 480.

25. John H. Finley Jr., "Milton and Horace: A Study of Milton's Sonnets," *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology* 48 (1937): 63–67; cf. Niall Rudd, "Milton, Sonnet XX: An Avoidable Controversy," *Hermathena* 158 (1995): 112–114.

26. Richard Helgerson, *Self-Crowned Laureates: Spenser, Jonson, Milton and the Literary System* (Berkeley, 1983), 252–273.

27. *The Complete Prose Works of John Milton*, ed. Don M. Wolfe et al., 8 vols. (New Haven, 1953–1982), 1:284, 820; 4:593 (hereafter cited parenthetically in text as CPW).

28. Henry Lawes, *Ayres and Dialogues* (1651), pt. 1, 32; pt. 2, 9. See also *Catch that Catch Can*, 77; and *Second Book of Ayres, and Dialogues* (London, 1655), 29.

29. Milton echoes Horatian specificity in his *Elegia Sexta* by describing Horace drinking "four-year-old" [*quadrimoque*] (l. 27) wine (cf. Horace, *Ode* 1.9.7–8) and noting the inspirational power of "Massic" (l. 31) wine (cf. Horace, *Odes* 1.1.19, 3.21.5).

30. *Englishmans Doctor*, B3r; William Riley Parker, *Milton: A Biographical Commentary*, 2d. ed., rev. Gordon Campbell, 2 vols. (Oxford, 1996), 2:1096 n. 75. An almanac with numerous editions from the early sixteenth through the mid-seventeenth century warns against drinking between meals; see *The Kalender of Shepherdes*, ed. H. Oskar Sommer, 3 vols. (London, 1892), 3:120.

31. *Regimen Sanitatis Salerni*, B1r; Erasmus, *Colloquia*, 731; *Colloquies*, 548; Thomas Lodge, *An Old-Spelling Critical Edition of Thomas Lodge's "A Margarite of America"* (1596), ed. James Clyde Addison Jr. (Salzburg, 1980), 126–127. See also *The Kalender of Shepherdes*, 3:118.

32. See Anna K. Nardo, *Milton's Sonnets and the Ideal Community* (Lincoln, Nebr., 1979), 89–90.

33. See A.S.P. Woodhouse's and Douglas Bush's contrasting views in *A Variorum Commentary on the Poems of John Milton*, vol. 2, *The Minor English Poems, part 2* (New York, 1972), 475–476; and Stanley Fish, *Is There a Text in This Class?: The Authority of Interpretive Communities* (Cambridge, Mass., 1980), 149–151.

34. See E.J.A. Honigmann, ed., *Milton's Sonnets* (London, 1966), 181.

35. See Rudd, "Milton, Sonnet XX," 111.

36. Contrast Rudd's treatment of Milton's conclusion as fully Horatian ("Milton, Sonnet XX," 112–113).

37. The implicit political contrast is especially pointed because *Ode* 2.7 associates Horace's symposiastic revelry with his flight from Philippi (ll. 9–16), that is, his abandonment of his youthful republicanism and acceptance of the Augustan order. Milton, by contrast, associates his sober conviviality with steadfast loyalty to republican-Puritan principles.

38. Cf. the conclusion to *Ode* 2.7, where Horace (with a litotes nearly opposite Milton's "not unwise") vows to drink and revel "not more soberly" [*non . . . sanius*] (i.e., more wildly) than barbarians because it is "sweet to be mad" [*furere*] (ll. 26–28; trans. mine).

39. Cf. Horace's contrast of his symposiastic "scattering of flowers" with the "sparing" [*parcus*] miser (*Epistle* 1.5.13–14; trans. mine).

40. Thomas Dekker, *The Sun's Darling* 4.1.174, in *The Dramatic Works of Thomas Dekker*, ed. Fredson Bowers, 4 vols. (Cambridge, 1953–1970), 4:53. For Tudor examples, see *The Dramatic Writings of Ulpian Fulwell*, ed. John S. Farmer (London, 1906), 33–34; and W. Wager, "The Longer Thou Livest" and "Enough Is as Good as a Feast," ed. R. Mark Benbow (Lincoln, Nebr., 1967), 94.

41. *Catch that Catch Can*, 39; Stanley, *Poems*, 85; J.G., *Choyce Drollery, Songs and Sonnets* (London, 1656), 42. See also Cotton, "Anacreontick" (*Poems*, 354); "Thanks for a Welcome," in [John Mennes and James Smith, eds.], *Wit Restor'd* (London, 1658), 194.

42. William Perkins, *Works*, 3 vols. (London, 1626–1631), 1:447; cf. 1:448, 539; 2:142.

43. Seneca attacks a personified symposiastic pleasure "drenched/drunken [*madentem*] with unmixed wine" (*De vita beata* 7.3; trans. modified).

44. Stanley, *Poems*, 91.

45. See also Brome's "Copernicus" (1:132–133); and Crompton's "The Puff" (*Pierides*, 16).

46. Honigmann, *Milton's Sonnets*, 185; Nardo, *Milton's Sonnets and Ideal Community*, 95–97.

47. Perkins, *Works*, 1:539, 2:129–132; Joseph Hall, *Works*, ed. Peter Hall, 12 vols. (Oxford, 1837), 6:210, 377.

48. See Laura Lunger Knoppers, *Historicizing Milton: Spectacle, Power, and Poetry in Restoration England* (Athens, Ga., 1994), 67–78; and Zwicker, *Lines of Authority*, 91–92.

49. Cowley, *Poems*, 430–431.

50. *The Songs of Thomas D'Urfey*, ed. Cyrus Lawrence Day (Cambridge, Mass., 1933), 47, 55. See also *The Works of Alexander Radcliffe* (1696), introd. Ken Robinson (Delmar, N.Y., 1981), 28–30, 33–35; and *The Roxburghe Ballads*, ed. William Chappell (vols. 1–3) and J. Woodfall Ebsworth (vols. 4–8) (Hertford, England, 1874), 3:631–634; 5:82–92, 161–164.

51. Brome's poems were published in 1661, 1664, and 1668 and appeared in numerous Restoration anthologies.

52. *Works of Tom Brown*, 4 vols. (London, 1712–1713), 4:131–142; [Tom] Brown, *A Collection of Miscellany Poems* (London, 1699), 56–58 and 9–11; and (probably by Brown) *The Clarret Drinkers Song. By a Person of Quality* (London, 1680).

53. Barbara Everett, "The Sense of Nothing," in *Spirit of Wit: Reconsiderations of Rochester*, ed. Jeremy Treglown (Oxford, 1982), 2.

54. I cite *The Works of John Wilmot, Earl of Rochester*, ed. Harold Love (Oxford, 1999), 41–43 (hereafter cited parenthetically in text). I am indebted to Marianne Thormählen's intertextual reading in *Rochester: The Poems in Context* (Cambridge, 1993), 16–20.

55. Pierre de Ronsard, "Du grec d'Anacreon," ll. 16–17, in *Oeuvres complètes*, ed. Paul Laumonier, Isidore Silver, and Raymond Lebègue, 20 vols. (Paris, 1914–1983), 5:80.

56. Steven Pincus, "Republicanism, Absolutism and Universal Monarchy: English Popular Sentiment During the Third Dutch War," in *Culture and Society in the Stuart Restoration: Literature, Drama, History*, ed. Gerald McLean (Cambridge, 1995), 261–266.

57. In the last line I restore "Cunt," adopted by other editors, rather than the anodyne manuscript variant "Phill" Love selects (Rochester, 42, 366); cf. *The Complete Poems of John Wilmot, Earl of Rochester*, ed. David M. Vieth (New Haven, 1968), 53; and *Poems of John Wilmot, Earl of Rochester*, ed. Keith Walker (Oxford, 1984), 38. In deciding between more or less obscene versions of Rochester's verses, Love argues that an editor should take into account the poet's "favorite stratagem" of an "unexpected switch between registers," of "set[ting] up an illusion or expectation of refinement and then unexpectedly punctur[ing] it with an indecency" (Rochester, xlii). "Cunt" provides such a shocking switch.

58. On Anacreontic voyeurism, see Rosenmeyer, *Poetics of Imitation*, 113.

59. Anacreon, *Odae et Fragmenta*, ed. Joannis Cornelius de Pauw (Utrecht, Holland, 1732), 85.

60. Estienne, ed., *Anacreontis . . . Odae*, 95. Modern editors prefer a variant reading.

61. See Thormählen, *Rochester*, 20.

62. Stanley, *Poems*, 78–79, 82–83, 87–88.

63. "The Delights of the Bottle," ll. 49–60, in *Roxburghe Ballads*, 4:46–47; "Song," ll. 17–20, in *The Poems of Sir George Etherege*, ed. James Thorpe (Princeton, 1963), 59; *The Plays of Sir George Etherege*, ed. Michael Cordner (Cambridge, 1982), 298–299. Cf. "Song" in *Etheredge, Poems*, 28.

64. See Thomas Hobbes's claim that "there is no such thing as perpetual Tranquility of mind . . . because Life itself is but Motion, and can never be without Desire" (*Leviathan*, ed. C. B. Macpherson [Harmondsworth, England, 1968], 129–130 [pt. 1, chap. 6]). On Rochester's affinities with Hobbes, see Everett, "Sense of Nothing," 7–11; Thormählen, *Rochester*, 174–179; and K. E. Robins, "Rochester's Dilemma," *Durham University Journal* 71 (1979): 223–231.

65. Rochester elsewhere describes a lover's "Anxious cares" and dubs a man "careless" who gets the "joys of love without the pain," that is, sex without the usual emotional complications ("Song," l. 34, and "A very heroic epistle . . ." ll. 42, 44, in *Rochester, Works*, 27, 97).

66. Cf. the caption to Horace's *Ode* 1.7 ("wash away cares with wine") in *Odes and Epodes*, trans. Rider, 8, rpt. in Alexander Brome, *The Poems of Horace* (London, 1666), 13.

67. See, e.g., William Wycherly, *The Country Wife* (1675), ed. Thomas H. Fujimura (Lincoln, Nebr., 1965), 13 (1.1.206); Sir Charles Sedley, "To Phillis: Who Slighted Him," in *The Poetical and Dramatic Works of Sir Charles Sedley*, ed. V. de Sola Pinto, 2 vols. (London, 1928), 1:193; and the 1681 drinking ballad "The Merry Boys of Europe" in *Roxburghe Ballads*, 5:84–87.

68. See Chernaik, *Sexual Freedom*, 64, 71–72.

69. See Harold Weber, "'Drudging in Fair Aurelia's Womb': Constructing Homosexual Economies in Rochester's Poetry," *The Eighteenth Century* 33 (1992): 99–117.



70. Roy Porter, "The Drinking Man's Disease: The 'Pre-History' of Alcoholism in Georgian Britain," *British Journal of Addiction* 80 (1985): 385–396.

71. See *The Mens' Answer to the Women's Petition against Coffee* (London, 1674), 2; and *In Defense of Coffee* (1674), cited in Aytoun Ellis, *The Penny Universities: A History of the Coffee-Houses* (London, 1956), 267. Wolfgang Schivelbusch sketches coffee and tea's history as sober intoxicants in *Tastes of Paradise: A Social History of Spices, Stimulants, and Intoxicants*, trans. David Jacobson (New York, 1992), 15–84.

72. See John Brewer, *The Pleasures of the Imagination: English Culture in the Eighteenth Century* (New York, 1997), 34–50; and Peter Stallybrass and Allon White, *The Politics and Poetics of Transgression* (Ithaca, N.Y., 1986), 94–100.

73. Steven Pincus, "'Coffee Politicians Does Create': Coffee Houses and Restoration Political Culture," *Journal of Modern History* 67 (1995): 807–834.

74. See, e.g., "The Gallant's Worthy Commendation of the Mug" (1682) in *Roxburghe Ballads*, 5:172; and Brown, *A Collection*, 9.

75. See Ellis, *Penny Universities*, 46–47, 51; and Brome, 1:341–342.

76. Henry Fielding, *The History of Tom Jones*, ed. R.P.C. Mutter (Harmondsworth, England, 1966), 205, 309–322. For "Old Simon," see *Wit and Mirth: or Pills to Purge Melancholy*, 6 vols. (London, 1719–20), 3:143–144.

77. Alexander Pope, "Imitations of Horace: Satire II.ii," in *The Poems of Alexander Pope*, ed. John Butt (New Haven, 1963), 623. Jonathan Swift's after-dinner "Grace-Cup served with all decorum" in the Pope-Swift imitation of Horace's *Satire* 2.6 (l.138; Pope, *Poems*, 662) similarly tempers Horace's emphasis upon each guest's drinking as much as he likes (*Satire* 2.6.69–70).

78. See Anya Taylor, "Coleridge, Keats, Lamb, and Seventeenth-Century Drinking Songs," in *Milton, the Metaphysicals, and Romanticism*, ed. Lisa Low and Anthony John Harding (Cambridge, 1994), 221–240; and idem, *Bacchus in Romantic England: Writers and Drink, 1780–1830* (London, 1999).

79. Donald Hall, *The Museum of Clear Ideas* (New York, 1993), 83, 72; see also 57, 59, 66–67, 74, 96–98.

#### CHAPTER 9

1. Barbara Kiefer Lewalski, "*Paradise Lost*" and the Rhetoric of Literary Forms (Princeton, 1985).

2. See esp. James Turner, *One Flesh: Paradisaical Marriage and Sexual Relations in the Age of Milton* (Oxford, 1987).

3. On Miltonic self-respect, see also David Quint, *Epic and Empire: Politics and Generic Form from Virgil to Milton* (Princeton, 1993), 283–299; John Guillory, "Milton, Narcissism, Gender: On the Genealogy of Male Self-Esteem," in *Critical Essays on John Milton*, ed. Christopher Kendrick (New York, 1995), 194–234; and Richard Strier, "Milton Against Humility," in *Religion and Culture in Renaissance England*, ed. Claire McEachern and Debora Shuger (Cambridge, 1997), 258–286. Quint and Guillory do not treat the long-standing philosophical and theological contexts of Milton's treatment. Deriving Milton's conception of self-respect from what is sometimes characterized as a homogeneous "classical ethics" (258, 260, 271, 274) and sometimes as a "pure Aristotelian ideal" (272), Strier argues that Milton's conception is incompatible with "Christian values" (258), which are identified with the Pauline Reformation "attack

on the dignity of man" (280). I, on the contrary, argue that Milton synthesizes diverse classical and Christian views, which are in some respects markedly non-Aristotelian, and that Milton's emphasis on self-respect is part of a rich classicizing strand within pre- and post-Miltonic Christianity, neutrally conceived as the beliefs deemed Christian by those who regarded themselves, and were regarded by others, as Christians. My disagreements with all three critics regarding Milton's gendered inflections of self-respect will emerge in the following discussion.

4. I discuss Milton's seventeenth-century canonization in "Seventeenth-Century English Literary Criticism: Classical Values, English Texts and Contexts," in *The Cambridge History of Literary Criticism*, vol. 3, *The Renaissance c. 1500–1700*, ed. Glyn P. Norton (Cambridge, 1999), 552. On Milton's exalted eighteenth-century status, see Dustin Griffin, *Regaining Paradise: Milton and the Eighteenth Century* (Cambridge, 1986).

5. Nancy Armstrong and Leonard Tennenhouse's Foucauldian study of the influence of *Paradise Lost* upon eighteenth-century conceptualizations of "personal life" (*The Imaginary Puritan: Literature, Intellectual Labor, and the Origins of Personal Life* [Berkeley, 1992]) focuses too much on the postlapsarian books; their claim that the epic's conclusion leaves the reader in "a world of work" (111) obscures the fact that Milton's Eden is itself such a world and that eighteenth-century readers and writers treated Milton's Eden as a partially recoverable ideal.

6. On Arminianism in *Paradise Lost*, see Dennis Richard Danielson, *Milton's Good God: A Study in Literary Theodicy* (Cambridge, 1982), 82–91. On late-seventeenth-century and eighteenth-century anti-Calvinism, see John Spurr, *The Restoration Church of England, 1646–1689* (New Haven, 1991), 279–330; and Isabel Rivers, *Reason, Grace, and Sentiment: A Study of the Language of Religion and Ethics in England, 1660–1780*, vol. 1, *Whichcote to Wesley* (Cambridge, 1991), 18–19, 36–37, 138–139.

7. Lewalski, "Paradise Lost" and Forms, 196–198; Anthony Low, *The Georgic Revolution* (Princeton, 1985), 310–322.

8. Giles and Phineas Fletcher, *Poetical Works*, ed. Frederick S. Boas, 2 vols. (Cambridge, 1908–1909), 1:135 (X.22).

9. J. Martin Evans, *Milton's Imperial Epic: "Paradise Lost" and the Discourse of Colonialism* (Ithaca, N.Y., 1996), 43–52.

10. On classical moderation as an art of timing, see Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, trans. Robert Hurley, 3 vols. (New York, 1978–1986), 2:57–59.

11. Low, *Georgic Revolution*, 304–306, 316–317.

12. Desiderius Erasmus, *Proverbs or Adages*, trans. Richard Taverner (London, 1569), 23r; idem, *Colloquies*, 548; Owen Felltham, *Resolves, Divine, Moral, and Political* (1628), 2d ed., ed. James Cumming (London, 1820), 306–307.

13. See Richard Kroll, *The Material Word: Literate Culture in the Restoration and Early Eighteenth Century* (Baltimore, 1991); Thomas Franklin Mayo, *Epicurus in England (1650–1725)* (College Station, Tex., 1934); and Charles Kay Smith, "French Philosophy and English Politics in Interregnum Poetry," in *The Stuart Court and Europe: Essays in Politics and Political Culture*, ed. Malcolm Smuts (Cambridge, 1996), 177–209. None of these works examines the topos discussed here.

14. Jeremy Taylor, *XXXV Sermons Preached at Golden-Grove* (London, 1655), 204; Thomas Stanley, *The History of Philosophy (1655–1662; rpt., London, 1687)*, 918; Walter Charleton, *Epicurus's Morals* (1656), introd. Frederick Manning (London, 1926), 48; *The Prose of Sir Thomas Browne*, ed. Norman J. Endicott (Norton, 1967), 389–390.

15. Charleton, *Epicurus's Morals*, 15; and Herrick, *Complete Poetry*, H-106.

16. Milton underscores his contempt for Epicurean *otium* by recalling the “carelesse ease” of Phaedria’s floating island in Spenser’s *Faerie Queene*, which (like the Bower of Bliss) tempts temperate Guyon to abandon his “toilesome paines” (2.6.13.6, 2.6.15.1).

17. Philip Sidney, *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia (The New Arcadia)*, ed. Victor Skretkovicz (Oxford, 1987), 244. Milton cited moral maxims from Sidney’s romance appreciatively in his commonplace book years before his dismissal of it in *Eikonoklastes* (1650) as a “vain, amatorious poem,” though “in that kind full of worth and wit” (CPW 1:371–372, 463–464; 3:362–366).

18. Charleton, *Epicurus's Morals*, 50; Abraham Cowley, *Essays, Plays and Sundry Verses*, ed. A. R. Waller (Cambridge, 1906), 420–428. On Renaissance humanists’ Epicurean gardens, see Edward Surtz and J. H. Hexter, eds., *The Complete Works of Saint Thomas More*, vol. 4, *Utopia* (New Haven, 1965), 395.

19. See Quint, *Epic and Empire*, 268–324; Sharon Achinstein, *Milton and the Revolutionary Reader* (Princeton, 1994), 177–223; and David Norbrook, *Writing the English Republic: Poetry, Rhetoric and Politics, 1627–1660* (Cambridge, 1998), 433–495.

20. Cf. Cicero on republican “labors” in *In Catilinam* 3.1; *Pro Sulla* 9.26, 11.33; *Pro Sestio* 68.143; *Pro Balbo* 22.51.

21. On Milton’s critique of Restoration festivity, see Knoppers, *Historicizing Milton*, 67–95; and Steven Zwicker, *Lines of Authority: Politics and English Literary Culture, 1649–1689* (Ithaca, N.Y., 1993), 119–129.

22. Antonio de Barga celebrates the heavenly banquet’s “fullness without the aversion engendered by satiety” [*satietas sine fastidio*] and “abundance without deficiency” [*abundantia sine defectu*]; see Charles Trinkaus, *In Our Image and Likeness: Humanity and Divinity in Italian Humanist Thought*, 2 vols. (Chicago, 1970), 1:224 (trans. mine. Lorenzo Valla claims the banquet will neither “satiatiate” nor “permit hunger and thirst to return”; see *On Pleasure / De voluptate*, trans. A. Kent Hieatt and Maristella Lorch (New York, 1977), 300–301 (trans. modified).

23. For a more detailed discussion of heavenly and earthly meals in *Paradise Lost*, particularly Milton’s representation of culinary “variety” as compatible with moderation, see the earlier version of this chapter entitled “*Paradise Lost* and Classical Ideals of Pleasurable Restraint,” *Comparative Literature* 48 (1996): 198–201. Cf. Michael C. Schoenfeldt, *Bodies and Selves in Early Modern England: Physiology and Inwardness in Spenser, Shakespeare, Herbert, and Milton* (Cambridge, 1999), 136–139.

24. John M. Steadman discusses positive and negative “excess” in *Milton and the Renaissance Hero* (Oxford, 1967), xiii–xvii, 127–129, 200. Steadman compares Milton’s treatment of love to the continental epic’s—but not to English contemporaries’—glorification of erotic excess.

25. William Kerrigan and Gordon Braden, *The Idea of the Renaissance*. (Baltimore, 1989), 191–218. Kerrigan and Braden argue that Eve’s “flirtatious vengery” is consonant with Milton’s overall “moral vision—patient resistance in the service of ideal consummation” (205). I seek to elucidate both the sources and ethical implications of Milton’s “moralization” of erotic tradition.

26. See my “Pleasures of Restraint: The Mean of Coyness in Cavalier Love Poetry,” *Criticism* 38 (1996): 239–279.

27. See Fowler’s note in Milton, *Paradise Lost*, 239.

28. Brome, *Poems*, 1:109; *Sportive Wit* (London, 1656), 114. See also Herrick's "What kind of Mistresse he would have" (H-665); and Crompton, "Her Endowments," in *Pierides*, 141.

29. *The Book of Common Prayer*, 1559, ed. John E. Booty (Charlottesville, Va., 1976), 298; cf. Eph. 5:22, 24; Col. 3:18; 1 Pet. 3:1.

30. William Gouge, *Workes*, 2 vols. (London, 1627), 1:214; cf. William Whately, *A Bride-Bush* (London, 1619), 156–165. On the tensions concerning "unequal partnership" within Protestant marriage theory, see Susan Dwyer Amussen, *An Ordered Society: Gender and Class in Early Modern England* (Oxford, 1988), 38–47; and Sara Mendelson and Patricia Crawford, *Women in Early Modern England, 1550–1720* (Oxford, 1998), 131–137.

31. On hierarchy in *Paradise Lost*, see Michael C. Schoenfeldt, "'Among Unequals What Society?': Strategic Courtesy and Christian Humility in *Paradise Lost*," *Milton Studies* 28 (1992): 69–90. In my view Schoenfeldt's subtle discussion underplays the moral equality of the various ranks of angels and of human beings as possessors of free will and God's love.

32. Heather James, "Milton's Eden, The Romance Genre, and Eve," *Comparative Literature* 45 (1993): 125.

33. John Dod and Robert Cleaver, *A Godlie Form of Householde Government* (London, 1598), 149; Gouge, *Works*, 1:188–189; Whately, *Bride-Bush*, 107, 159–160.

34. Edmund Spenser, *The Yale Edition of the Shorter Poems*, ed. William A. Oram et al. (New Haven, 1989), 604, 608, 674.

35. Quint stresses the resemblance between Eve, as conceived of by Adam, and Satan (*Epic and Empire*, 290); to me the differences seem more important.

36. Cartwright, *Plays and Poems*, 468.

37. Ian Maclean, *The Renaissance Notion of Woman* (Cambridge, 1980), 51; on the relationship in Renaissance England between female and gender-neutral modesty, see Robert A. White, "Shamefastness as *Verecundia* and as *Pudicitia* in *The Faerie Queene*," *Studies in Philology* 78 (1981): 391–408.

38. I cite the Latin text in *The Works of John Milton*, ed. Frank Allen Patterson et al., 20 vols. (New York, 1931–1940), 17:220 (hereafter cited in text as *Works*). On Milton's authorship of *De Doctrina Christiana*, see Stephen B. Dobranski and John P. Rumrich, "Introduction: Heretical Milton," in *Milton and Heresy*, ed. Dobranski and Rumrich (Cambridge, 1998), 6–12.

39. Cf. Cicero, *Epistulae ad familiares* 5.7.2, 6.1.3, 6.4.2; *Epistulae ad Atticum* 12.28, 14.11; *Tusculan Disputations* 2.26.64.

40. On Milton's alleged disenchantment with Cromwell, see Martin Dzelzainis, "Milton and the Protectorate in 1658," and David Armitage, "John Milton: Poet Against Empire," in *Milton and Republicanism*, ed. Armitage, Armand Himy, and Quentin Skinner (Cambridge, 1995), 181–205 and 206–226, respectively. For an opposing view, see Paul Stevens, "Milton's 'Renunciation' of Cromwell: The Problem of Raleigh's *Cabinet-Council*," *Modern Philology* 98 (2001): 363–392.

41. See Norbrook, *Writing the Republic*, 454–455.

42. See Michael Lieb, *Milton and the Culture of Violence* (Ithaca, N.Y., 1994), 83–155; and Katharine Eisaman Maus, *Inwardness and Theater in the English Renaissance* (Chicago, 1995), 198–209.

43. On the humble resonances of “honest,” see Scodel, *English Poetic Epitaph*, 140–163. Milton’s “honest haughtiness” not only looks forward to Eve’s “modest pride” but also suggestively echoes one of Milton’s earliest celebrations of *female* virtue: his “Sonnet IV” (ca. 1629) praises a woman whose manner is “alti onesti” (l. 8), that is, “haughty [yet] honest/modest.”

44. See Arthur Barker, *Milton and the Puritan Dilemma, 1641–1660* (Toronto, 1942), 36.

45. Contrast John Calvin’s claim that Christian humility requires reliance upon grace rather than “consciousness of excellence” [*excellētiaē conscientiaē*]; see *Institutio christianae religionis*, ed. A. Tholuck, 2 vols. (Edinburgh, 1874), 2:24 (III.XII.6).

46. I use the term “self-respect” rather than Milton’s possible coinage “self-esteem” to distinguish his ethical concept of properly valuing one’s self as a moral agent, and thereby recognizing one’s ethical rights and responsibilities, from the current purely psychological sense of “self-esteem” as favorable self-assessment; for the distinction between “self-respect” and “self-esteem,” see Stephen L. Darwall, “Two Kinds of Respect,” *Ethics* 88 (1977): 47–49.

47. Contrast Barker’s derivation of Milton’s emphasis upon self-worth from Reformation doctrine (*Milton and Puritan Dilemma*, 41–42) and Christopher Hill’s from Milton’s Puritan upbringing (*Milton and the English Revolution* [New York, 1977], 255–257).

48. See Bernard Williams’s discussion of “outer-directed” and “inner-directed” shame from Homer to Euripides in *Shame and Necessity* (Berkeley, 1993), 75–102; Douglas Cairns tracks *aidōs* from Homer to Aristotle in *Aidōs: The Psychology and Ethics of Honour and Shame in Ancient Greek Literature* (Oxford, 1993). Scholars have largely neglected the post-Aristotelian developments that influenced Milton.

49. Stobaeus, *Apophthegmata/Sententiae*, trans. Conrad Gesner (Basel, 1549), 208, 310. The Platonic texts cited by the Yale editor as Milton’s sources (841 n. 84) do not articulate the notion of a self-directed *aidōs* (see Cairn, *Aidōs*, 370–392). Stobaeus includes the one Platonic passage Milton clearly alludes to, namely, the discussion of the relationship between “shame” before others and “fear” in *Euythphro* 12 (CPW 1:841; Stobaeus, 210).

50. Reid Barbour examines Milton’s deployment of Stoic reason in his polemical prose in *English Epicures and Stoics: Ancient Legacies in Early Stuart Culture* (Amherst, Mass., 1998), 249–252. Barbour does not discuss Milton’s Stoicizing notion of *aidōs* in either the prose or *Paradise Lost*, which qualifies Barbour’s argument for the epic’s negative treatment of Stoicism (261–264).

51. See S. K. Heninger Jr., *Touches of Sweet Harmony: Pythagorean Cosmology and Renaissance Poetics* (San Marino, Calif., 1974), 55–56, 63–64 n. 41, 259–262, 280.

52. Hierocles, *Commentarius in aurea Pythagoreorum carmina*, trans. Jean Courtier (1583; rpt., London, 1654), n.p. (verses); 8–9, 80–81 (commentary) (trans. mine).

53. See *The Cambridge Platonists*, ed. C. A. Patrides (London, 1969), 5, 12, 19, 155, 335; and Stanley, *Poems*, 68–73. On Hall and Milton, see Parker, *Milton: A Biographical Commentary*, 2:886–887, 931–932; and Norbrook, *Writing the Republic*, 212–221.

54. Marsilio Ficino, *Théologie platonicienne de l’immortalité des âmes*, ed. and trans. Raymond Marcel, 2 vols. (Paris, 1964), 2:274 (trans. mine).

55. Cf. Milton’s glossing of Gen. 1:26–27 as a rebuke to those who have “a servile sense of their own conscious unworthiness” in *Tetrachordon* (CPW 2:587). On patris-

tic and medieval invocations of Gen. 1:26, see Étienne Gilson, *The Spirit of Medieval Philosophy*, trans. A.H.C. Downes (New York, 1936), 209–228; on Renaissance invocations, see Trinkaus, *In Our Image*, 1:173–321, 2:461–551.

56. Hierocles, *Upon the Golden Verses of Pythagoras*, trans. John Hall (London, 1657), 87. “Divine image” is the translation of “divina similitudo/theia homoiōsis” (Hierocles, *Commentarius*, 156–157).

57. See Cora E. Lutz, “Musonius Rufus: ‘The Roman Socrates,’” *Yale Classical Studies* 10 (1947): 42, 48; and Martha Nussbaum, *The Therapy of Desire: Theory and Practice in Hellenistic Ethics* (Princeton, 1994), 320–334.

58. On Clement’s debt to Stoic gender views, see J. P. Broudéhoux, *Mariage et famille chez Clément d’Alexandrie* (Paris, 1970), 143. Michel Spanneut discusses Musonius’s general influence on Clement in *Le Stoïcisme des pères de l’église* (Paris, 1957), 107–112.

59. Cf. Spenser’s evocation of how his bride, “governed with goodly modesty,” blushes as she pledges troth (*Epithalamion*, ll. 235–239, in *Shorter Poems*, 671).

60. Guillory argues that for Milton self-esteem is proper for males, “self-disesteem” for females (“Milton, Narcissism, Gender,” 226). While brilliantly probing Milton’s gender hierarchy, Guillory neglects Eve’s “modest pride.” Strier notes Eve’s “consciousness of her worth” in passing but not its deviation from what he treats as Milton’s Aristotelian celebration of male magnanimity (“Milton Against Humility,” 271, 261).

61. Among numerous feminist discussions of Eve’s awakening and submission, see Mary Nyquist’s influential essay “The Genesis of Gendered Subjectivity in the Divorce Tracts and in *Paradise Lost*,” in *Re-Membering Milton: Essays on the Texts and Traditions*, ed. Nyquist and Margaret W. Ferguson (New York, 1987), 119–123.

62. On the Renaissance reception of Aristotle’s views, see Maclean, *Renaissance Notion*, 7–10. Though Aristotle generally describes female ontological imperfection with locutions unrelated to *elleipsis*—his term for ethical deficiency as a deviation from the mean—in one passage he treats women as an example of *elleipsis* (*Generation of Animals* 4.3, 767b). The association of female imperfection with ethical deficiency was further encouraged by the frequent translation of both Aristotelian concepts with the Latin *deficiens* and its cognates.

63. Justus Lipsius, *Two Bookes of Constancie* (1594), trans. John Stradling, ed. Rudolf Kirk and Clayton Morris Hall (New Brunswick, N.J., 1939), 79.

64. See Neil Cooper, “Aristotle’s Crowning Virtue” *Apeiron* 22 (1989): 191–205; and Julia Annas, *The Morality of Happiness* (Oxford, 1993), 116–118.

65. Cf. Joseph Hall’s contrast between “The Superstitious” man “servile in fear” and “The Profane” man “without” any “fear” of God (*Characters of Virtues and Vices* [1608], in *Works*, 6:107–108).

66. Pierre Courcelle, *Connais-toi toi-même de Socrate à Bernard* (Paris, 1974), 121–122, 271–272.

67. See Diane Kelsey McColley, *Milton’s Eve* (Urbana, Ill., 1983), 113–115.

68. Thomas M. Greene, *The Descent from Heaven: A Study in Epic Continuity* (New Haven, 1963), 404–418.

69. John Hopkins, *Milton’s “Paradise Lost” Imitated in Rhyme* (London, 1699), 5; Smith is cited in Griffin, *Regaining Paradise*, 126.

70. Isaac Barrow, *Works*, 3 vols. (New York, 1845), 1:619; John Norris, *A Practical Treatise concerning Humility* (London, 1707), 4; idem, *A Collection of Miscellanies* (Lon-

don, 1687), 338–339; *The Spectator*, ed. Donald F. Bond, 5 vols. (Oxford, 1965), 2:370; 3:404–406; David Hume, *A Treatise of Human Nature (1739–1740)*, ed. L. A. Selby-Bigge (Oxford, 1888), 592–601; idem, *An Inquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals (1751–1777)*, ed. Tom L. Beauchamp (Oxford, 1998), 133–134, 141–143, 150, 177.

71. For other eighteenth-century feminist readings of Milton, see Joseph Wittreich, *Feminist Milton* (Ithaca, N.Y., 1987).

72. Anne Finch, “The Prodigy,” ll. 26, 53, 56, in *The Poems of Anne Countess of Winchelsea*, ed. Myra Reynolds (Chicago, 1903), 142–144; William Hayley, *The Life of Milton*, 2d ed. (1796; rpt., New York, 1971), 73, 80, 107, 133–134; idem, *The Triumph of Music* (London, 1804), 12.

73. *The Poetical Works of Anna Seward*, ed. Walter Scott, 3 vols. (Edinburgh, 1810), 3:120; 2:219–220, 249, 266, 281, 321. On Seward’s cultural politics, see Brewer, *Pleasures*, 573–612.

74. Kant drew upon late-seventeenth- and eighteenth-century British moralists in stressing the ethical importance of individuals’ self-respect and self-governance; see J. B. Schneewind, *The Invention of Autonomy: A History of Modern Moral Philosophy* (Cambridge, 1988), 511–515. His views, in turn, have influenced contemporary liberalism; see Stephen J. Massey, “Kant on Self-Respect,” *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 21 (1983): 57–73.

75. John Rawls, *A Theory of Justice* (Cambridge, Mass., 1971), 178–183, 440–446, 544–548; idem, *Political Liberalism* (New York, 1996), 318–320. Cf. Michael Walzer’s ideal pluralist society, whose diversity of “spheres” in which individuals can flourish fosters “self-respecting” persons who seek no more and no less than they deserve (*Spheres of Justice: A Defense of Pluralism and Equality* [New York, 1983], 272–280, 320–321); and Alan Gewirth’s ideal liberal democracy that would promote everyone’s “self-respect” and “self-discipline” (*Self-Fulfillment* [Princeton, 1998], 93–101). Focusing on *Paradise Lost*’s cosmology more than its ethical psychology, John Rogers similarly argues for Milton’s anticipation of liberal notions of individual agency; see *The Matter of Revolution: Science, Poetry, and Politics in the Age of Milton* (Ithaca, N.Y., 1996), esp. 159–161, 225–227. Rogers, however, stresses the gap between Milton’s “freely willing saint” and the liberal Enlightenment “citizen” (227); my emphasis on Milton’s ideal of self-respect underscores the continuity. Stanley Fish’s *How Milton Works* (Cambridge, Mass., 2001) reached me when this book was in press. Opposing Milton to liberalism (55–57, 562–563), Fish obscures continuities by grounding Miltonic virtue in “self-abnegation” (7) before God rather than self-respect and by focusing on liberalism’s commitment to disinterested rationality rather than on its concern for the individual’s dignity.

#### POSTSCRIPT

1. Edmund Burke, *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful*, ed. Adam Phillips (Oxford, 1990), 74; William Hazlitt, *Complete Works*, ed. P. P. Howe, 21 vols. (London, 1930–1934), 4:214. Cf. *The Letters of John Keats*, ed. Hyder Edward Rollins, 2 vols. (Cambridge, Mass., 1958), 1:238; Norman O. Brown, *Love’s Body* (New York, 1966), 186–187 (citing, *inter alia*, Hugo, Rilke, and Bachelard); Salman Rushdie, *Imaginary Homelands: Essays and Criticism, 1981–1991* (London, 1991), 277; Susan Howe, *The Birth-Mark: Unsettling the Wilderness in American*

*Literary History* (Hanover, N.H., 1993), 144–149; Tony Hoagland, “On Disproportion,” *Parnassus* 19 (1994): 115–117; and Seamus Heaney, *The Redress of Poetry* (London, 1995), 36.

2. Raymond Williams, *Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society*, 2d ed. (New York, 1983), 183–188.

3. For a discussion of a strand in late-seventeenth-century poetics prefiguring eighteenth-century sublime aesthetics, see Joshua Scodel, “The Cowleyan Pindaric Ode and Sublime Diversions,” in *A Nation Transformed: England after the Restoration*, ed. Alan Houston and Steven Pincus (Cambridge, 2001), 180–210.

4. See Annabel Patterson, *Reading Between the Lines* (Madison, Wis., 1993), 256–272; Victoria Kahn, *Machiavellian Rhetoric from the Counter-Reformation to Milton* (Princeton, 1994), 222–224; and Norbrook, *Writing the Republic*, esp. 137–139, 480–481, 488–489.

5. William Blake, “Proverbs of Hell,” in *The Complete Poetry and Prose of William Blake*, ed. David V. Erdman and Harold Bloom, rev. ed. (Garden City, N.Y., 1982), 35; Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, trans. Walter Kaufmann and R. J. Hollingdale (New York, 1967), 396 (n. 749); idem, *Der Wille Zur Macht*, ed. Peter Gast (Stuttgart, 1964), 503; idem, *The Portable Nietzsche*, ed. and trans. Walter Kaufmann (New York, 1954), 671; idem, *Sämtliche Werke*, vol. 6, *Der Fall Wagner . . . Nietzsche contra Wagner*, ed. Giorgio Colli and Mazzino Motinari (Berlin, 1988), 425.

6. Michel Foucault, *Ethics: Subjectivity and Truth*, ed. Paul Rabinow and trans. Robert Hurley et al. (New York, 1994), 261–262, 325; Jean Baudrillard, *The Transparency of Evil: Essays on Extreme Phenomena*, trans. James Bendecit (London, 1993), 141, 173.

7. Pierre Bourdieu and Loïc J. D. Wacquant, *An Invitation to Reflexive Sociology* (Chicago, 1992), 154, 197; cf. Bourdieu’s middle way between the postmodern “aesthete’s . . . irrationality” and “dogmatic rationality” in Bourdieu et al., *The Weight of the World: Social Suffering in Contemporary Society*, trans. Priscilla Parkhurst Ferguson et al. (Stanford, 1999), 629. For another critique of Nietzschean and postmodern sublime politics, see Richard Wolin, *Labyrinths: Explorations in the Critical History of Ideas* (Amherst, Mass., 1995), esp. 6–12, 103–141, 229–239.

8. Daniel Bell, *The End of Ideology*, rev. ed. (New York, 1961), 398–401; Judith Shklar, *Political Thought and Political Thinkers*, ed. Stanley Hoffman, with a foreword by George Kateb (Chicago 1998), 17, 19; and Alan Ryan, *John Dewey and the High Tide of American Liberalism* (New York, 1995), 33–34.

9. While comparing Shklar’s “aversion to extremism” to Aristotle’s, Kateb notes that she deemed the Aristotelian mean “too lofty” an ideal (Shklar, viii).

10. Charles Taylor, “The Use and Abuse of Theory,” in *Ideology, Philosophy and Politics*, ed. Anthony Parel (Calgary, Canada, 1983), 56; idem, “The Diversity of Goods,” in *Utilitarianism and Beyond*, ed. Amartya Sen and Bernard Williams (Cambridge, 1982), 144; idem, *The Ethics of Authenticity* (Cambridge, Mass., 1991), 23, 111. Cf. Michael Walzer, *On Toleration* (New Haven, 1997), 100–112.

11. Ramin Jahanbegloo, *Conversations with Isaiah Berlin* (London, 1992), 73; Isaiah Berlin, “The Pursuit of the Ideal,” in *The Crooked Timber of Humanity: Chapters in the History of Ideas*, ed. Henry Hardy (New York, 1991), 1–19 (quotation at 17). Michael Stocker’s liberal reinterpretation of the Aristotelian mean in terms of Berlinian “trade-offs” (*Plural and Conflicting Values* [Oxford, 1990], 129–164) obscures Aristotle’s claim for the mean’s noble perfection.



12. Lionel Trilling, *The Opposing Self* (New York, 1955), 76–103 (quotations at 92–93, 103), 145–146; idem, *Beyond Culture: Essays on Literature and Learning* (New York, 1965), 30. For a more recent and more aggressive version of Trilling’s argument, see Michael André Bernstein’s championing of “prosaic,” “undramatic” literature against the contemporary “ideology of the extreme” in *Foregone Conclusions: Against Apocalyptic History* (Berkeley, 1994) (quotations at 91, 121).

13. Susan Sontag, *Against Interpretation* (New York, 1966), 49–51; Edward Said, *Representations of the Intellectual* (London, 1994), xi, 38, 74, 52, 88. See also Said’s reservations regarding Foucauldian “extremism” in “Foucault and the Imagination of Power,” in *Foucault: A Critical Reader*, ed. David Couzens Hoy (Oxford, 1986), 153–154.

14. Edward Said, *Musical Elaborations* (New York, 1991), 29, 64, 72.

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